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The Cherwell Group



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Representation to the East Devon Local Plan Review Consultation (Regulation 18) is submitted on behalf of the Cherwell Group. The Cherwell Group control land to the north of the A3052 and to the west of Yeo Business Park and Hill Barton Business Park. The site is known as land at Axehayes Farm.
- 1.2 Together with land in the surrounding area, the Site forms part of the Council's preferred option for a second new town at Strategic Policy 8 of the emerging Local Plan. The second new town is proposed, over the longer-term, to accommodate around 8,000 new homes; housing for Gypsy and Travellers; employment land; a town centre; social, community and education provision; and supporting infrastructure.
- 1.3 Over the past few years, the Cherwell Group have been developing their proposals for land at Axehayes Farm. Their proposals, which were presented to Members in 2021, was summarised into a Vision Document which was submitted to the Local Planning Authority through their 'call for sites' consultation in March 2021, as well as the Issues and Options consultation that was held at the same time. The proposals were founded on initial technical work which included landscape and visual impact; ecology and biodiversity; access and highways; and flood risk and drainage.
- 1.4 Since 2021, further technical assessment work has been undertaken, particularly in relation to further ecological assessments; transport and access; flood risk and drainage and heritage. As such, the 2021 version of the Vision Document has been updated and is provided at Appendix 1. It continues to demonstrate the suitability of the site for development and in this respect mirrors the conclusions presented within the 2017 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, which is being used by the Local Planning Authority as an evidence base document for the Local Plan Review, as well as the 2022 New Community Site Options Report.
- 1.5 Whilst focusing on the potential of land at Axehayes Farm, the Vision Document and the Technical Note provided at Appendix 2 of these Representations demonstrates the suitability of land in the wider environs to accommodate a second new town. Two options are presented, which include: (1) land to the north, north east and east of Axehayes Farm, which broadly corresponds to the land identified at Strategic Policy 8 of the emerging Local Plan; and (2) and option which includes land either side of the A3052, which is put forward to the Local Planning Authority as an alternative option that is considered worthy of further assessment. This wider masterplanning assessment work continues to identify the suitability of land along the A3052 corridor for a second new town within East Devon. It also demonstrates that given its high capacity to accommodate development, any option should include land at Axehayes Farm.
- 1.6 Given their interests, the Cherwell Group are pleased to see the emerging Local Plan progress to the Regulation 18 stage and are generally supportive of its content, including the proposed spatial strategy, which seeks to focus strategic levels of development in the western portion of East Devon, as well as the identification of land at Axehayes Farm as part of the second new town.
- 1.7 Notwithstanding their general support for the Plan, the Cherwell Group also draw attention to a number of areas that they believe require further consideration to ensure that the Plan is a sound proposition. Such considerations include:



- Given the likely lead-in times for its production, the timescales for the emerging Local Plan may need to be extended;
- Having regard to levels of housing affordability, the economic development strategy for the area, unmet needs from neighbouring authorities and the existing shortfall in housing delivery compared to the current Local Plan housing requirement, there may be a need to provide a higher level of housing than is currently being planned for;
- A greater flexibility allowance should be included (10%);
- There is the potential for the double counting of windfall provision; and
- Some of the policies contained within the emerging Plan have not been adequately evidenced, duplicate Government policy and could adversely impact the viability and the deliverability of allocated sites.

1.8 In the context set out above, these Representations therefore focus on:

- Planning policy context;
- The plan period and the timetable for its preparation;
- The emerging Local Plan's proposed vision and strategic objectives;
- The emerging spatial strategy and the distribution of development;
- The objectively assessed level of housing;
- Housing supply;
- The second new town and the opportunity at land at Axehayes Farm;
- Development management policies; and
- The evidence base.

1.9 A summary of these Representations is provided in Section 11.



2 The Policy Context

- 2.1 The following Section of the Representation provides a summary of the policy context that will inform the emerging East Devon Local Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) establishes the Government's planning policies for England and how they are to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can be produced (para. 1).
- 2.3 Para. 15 of the NPPF states that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area, a framework for addressing economic, social and environmental priorities, and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.
- 2.4 Plans should: be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development; be positively prepared, but deliverable; shaped by effective engagement; contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous; be accessible through the use of digital tools; and serve a clear purpose (para. 16).
- 2.5 Development plans must include strategic policies to address an area's priorities for development and the use of land (para. 17). Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for *inter alia* housing; employment; retail; leisure; other commercial development; infrastructure; community facilities; and the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment and measures to address climate change (para. 20).
- 2.6 Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption, to anticipate and respond to the long-term requirements for infrastructure (para. 22). They should also provide a clear strategy for bringing forward sufficient land, at a sufficient rate, to address the objectively assessed needs of the area over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should include planning for, and allocating a sufficient number of sites, to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (para. 23).
- 2.7 Para. 11 states that plans and decisions should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making this means promoting a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: (1) meet the development needs of the area; (2) align growth and infrastructure; (3) improve the environment; and (4) mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects. As a minimum, strategic policies should provide for the objectively assessed needs of the area, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
- i) The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies within the Framework.
- 2.8 Para. 24 confirms that local planning authorities and county councils have a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Effective and on-going collaborative working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is



integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy (para. 26).

- 2.9 The preparation and review of policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence (para. 31). Local Plans should also be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. It should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (para. 32).
- 2.10 Local plans will be examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and whether they are sound (para. 35). Plans are sound if they are:
- a) **Positively prepared** – provide a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs and is informed by agreements with other authorities;
 - b) **Justified** – provide an appropriate strategy, taking into account other reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters; and
 - d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with policies within the NPPF.

East Devon Local Plan

- 2.11 The current East Devon Local Plan, which covers the period 2013 to 2031, was adopted in January 2016.
- 2.12 Whilst land along the A3052 corridor was not allocated for development at that time, its development potential was considered. At para. 7.19 of the Local Plan the characteristics of this corridor are described. It is noted that the A3052 runs from Junction 30 of the M5 motorway eastwards into East Devon. The Local Plan identifies that there are a number of employment sites along this corridor, as well as housing and leisure uses.
- 2.13 At para. 7.20 of the Adopted Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority confirm that they had, during the Local Plan formation, ***“looked at potential for further growth on this corridor, including the possibility of a second new town...”***
- 2.14 It was concluded that at that time any development along that corridor would require infrastructure improvements, particularly in relation to transport and highways. Concerns were raised regarding the viability of a development along the A3052 at that time, particularly given the necessary package of infrastructure works that would have been required to support the development. There were also proposals in other parts of the western portion of East Devon, including Cranbrook, Skypark, Redhayes and the Science Park that were considered to be more viable propositions. As such significant new development along the A3052 corridor was not proposed, although there was an acknowledgement that the Local Planning Authority would ***“keep land supply and demand issues under consideration”*** and would ***“review the provision in the years to come.”***
- 2.15 That conclusion now, as the Local Planning Authority are proposing, needs to be reviewed in the context of the latest objectively assessed levels of housing and other uses and the development opportunities within the District.



Summary

- 2.16 As indicated at para. 2 of the NPPF, the Local Planning Authority must, when preparing the emerging Local Plan Review, take the content of the NPPF into account. The existing Development Plan also provides important context that is material to the formation of the emerging Local Plan.



3 The Plan Period and the Length of Time for Its Preparation

- 3.1 As set out in national planning policy, strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from the date of the adoption of the Local Plan¹. In addition, planning law requires the preparation of a Local Development Scheme, which must specify the development plan documents that, once prepared, will comprise the development plan for the area². The same section of the 2004 Planning Act requires local planning authorities to provide a timetable for the preparation and revision of development plan documents and for local planning authorities to provide up-to-date information showing the *“state of the authority’s compliance (or non-compliance) with the timetable...”*
- 3.2 For East Devon, the latest Local Development Scheme was adopted in April 2022. Para. 4.1 of the documents shows the following stages of preparation for the emerging Local Plan Review:

Table 1 – Local Plan Preparation Timetable as Published in the Local Development Scheme (April 2022)

Plan-Making Stage	Date
Draft Plan	Autumn 2022
Publication Plan	Autumn 2023
Submission	Early 2024
Inspector’s Hearings	2024
Adoption	2025

- 3.3 This timeframe corresponds to that set out in para. 1.3 of the Regulation 18 consultation version of the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.4 Para. 1.4 of the emerging Local Plan confirms that it is the Local Planning Authority’s intent that the Plan will cover the period from April 2020 to the 31st March 2040. This would mean that to ensure compliance with para. 22 of the NPPF, there would be a need for the Local Plan to be adopted before 31st March 2025.
- 3.5 Working backwards, this would mean that over the fifteen month period between the submission of the Local Plan and its proposed adoption, the following likely stages of plan preparation would be required:
- The appointment of the examining Planning Inspector(s) and the Programme Officer by the Planning Inspectorate;
 - The scheduling of the Hearing Sessions;
 - The preparation of Hearing Statements;

¹ Para. 22 of the NPPF.

² Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).



- The Hearing Sessions;
- Proposed Main Modifications (likely to be required), with supporting technical information;
- Publication of the Inspector's Report;
- To seek the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee for the Plan to be Adopted; and
- The Plan to be adopted by Full Council.

3.6 It is considered highly ambitious for the stages of work listed above to be undertaken in the 15 month period allowed for in the Local Development Scheme.

3.7 The most obvious benchmark is the recently adopted Cranbrook Plan. In that case, the Local Planning Authority submitted the Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination on 2nd August 2019. The Hearing Sessions, which were divided into two stages, commenced on 21st January 2020 and ended on 20th November 2020³. A further consultation concerning viability was undertaken in July and August 2021, with the Proposed Main Modifications published in January 2022. The Inspector's Report was published in August 2022, with the Development Plan Document being adopted on 14th September 2022. Consequently, it took over three years from the Submission of the Cranbrook Plan to its adoption. Even allowing for the delays resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, the period from the Submission of the Plan took significantly longer than the timeframe that has been allowed by the Local Development Scheme.

3.8 Consequently, to ensure that the plan is ***consistent with national policy*** and is therefore a sound proposition, the Local Planning Authority must ensure that the plan period covers a 15 year period from the date of adoption. This is likely to require, for the reasons set out above, the plan period to be extended by a further year and most probably two years (i.e. to 2042).

³ It is acknowledged that the Hearing Sessions were adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.



4 Vision and Strategic Objectives

Issues and Opportunities

- 4.1 Para. 15 of the NPPF establishes that local plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area, as well as a framework for addressing needs and the economic, social and environmental priorities of, in this case, East Devon.
- 4.2 As set out at para. 16 of the NPPF, local plans are required to be positively prepared, in a manner that is aspirational, but deliverable. This is reiterated by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS⁴), who also outline that local plans should set out the intended character of the plan area at the end of the plan period, based upon existing 'directions of travel', which could include current trends from key data sources. Objectives should flow from the vision, identifying how the area's priorities will be addressed.
- 4.3 The PAS also state that the vision and objectives should be based on a firm understanding of the area, which can be derived from a number of sources, including community consultation, past plans and sustainability work. Moreover, engagement with neighbouring authorities under the duty to co-operate, particularly on matters that are of mutual importance, should also help to shape the plan⁵.
- 4.4 Some contextual information is provided at Figure 1 of the consultation version of the Plan. This work provides a number of key facts associated with East Devon. However, a significant number of the facts provided relate to current data sources, such as the current resident population, the number of existing homes and the existing number of residents that are aged over 65. The assessment work does not provide any analysis on the 'directions of travel' referred to in the PAS guidance. It will be difficult for the Local Planning Authority to form a positive vision for the future of East Devon in the period up to 2040 and potentially beyond, without a clear understanding of the likely characteristics of the area over that duration.
- 4.5 Given the above, there is a clear necessity for the Local Planning Authority to supplement the information provided at Figure 1 of the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan. Future versions of the Plan should provide contextual information in relation to:
- Population growth forecasts over the Plan period;
 - Whether certain demographic sectors of the community are forecast to grow in the period up to 2040 (i.e. the number of residents aged 65 plus);
 - Levels of household growth for different sectors of the community over the Plan period;
 - Existing levels of employment within East Devon and future employment growth forecasts;
 - The contribution that East Devon makes to the sub-regional and regional economy and how this will compare at 2040;
 - The employment sectors that are forecast to grow and shrink in size;
 - The locations where residents, services, facilities and employment opportunities are located;
 - Key sustainable transport routes, corridors and other opportunities within East Devon;
 - Information related to carbon dioxide emissions for the Local Authority area; and
 - Opportunities presented within the District to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

⁴ Para. 1.1 'Good Plan Making Guide.'

⁵ Para. 1.2 'Good Plan Making Guide.'



- 4.6 The key themes that would result from this contextual analysis could then be used to inform a positive, but deliverable, geographically specific, long-term vision for the area. We note that a significant amount of this information already exists, for instance within the Sustainability Appraisal.

The Vision

- 4.7 As stated at para. 2.2 of the consultation version of the Local Plan, the emerging Vision is based upon work contained in the adopted Council Plan. However, the latest Council Plan only covers the period 2021-23. Therefore the document will be well on its way to being out-of-date by the time the consultation on the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan finishes. It will certainly be out-of-date by the time of the adoption of the Plan, which as outlined in the previous section of these Representations, is envisaged in 2025. Consequently, the Vision contained within the emerging Plan falls short of the national planning policy requirement to provide a positive vision for the future of the area.
- 4.8 Guidance from the PAS suggests that when developing a vision for a local plan over such a timeframe, it should respond to the following considerations:
- A direction of travel as to how the plan area will evolve;
 - The general location of where development will take place and where it will not;
 - What the nature of development activity should be in key parts of the plan area;
 - How levels and types of development will be accommodated, both within the short and longer term, in specific areas and in the most sustainable way;
 - Reference to the wider context of the plan area, introducing the concept of co-operation with neighbouring authorities.
- 4.9 Consequently, future iterations of the Local Plan should develop a geographically specific vision for East Devon that flows from contextual analysis and its conclusions regarding the District's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In this way a positive vision can be developed which provides a clear understanding of the role the Local Plan will have in responding to the area's issues and threats, whilst capitalising on its strengths and opportunities.
- 4.10 Moreover, the Cherwell Group also note that para. 22 of the NPPF suggests that where new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages or towns are being proposed, such as within the consultation version of the Local Plan, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timeframe of delivery.

Strategic Objectives

- 4.11 The following Section provides the Cherwell Group's comments on the emerging East Devon Local Plan's strategic objectives, which should be used to help to facilitate the achievement of the aspirational, but deliverable, geographically specific, long-term vision for the area.

Design for Health and Wellbeing

- 4.12 Strategic Objective 1 seeks to encourage healthy lifestyles and living environments for the District's residents.
- 4.13 Whilst this objective is unobjectionable, it is difficult to see how this objective would help to facilitate the achievement of the Vision, for the emerging vision is silent on these matters.



Moreover, other than reference to 30% of residents in the District being aged over 65, the contextual information provided within the Plan does not suggest that health and wellbeing is an issue worthy of being addressed through the Plan, or a strength that should be built upon.

- 4.14 It is noted that Health and Wellbeing is a Strategic Objective of the Cranbrook Plan. However, the 'issues and summary commentary' information provided in that Plan highlight a range of issues using available sources of information and identify how that Plan could help tackle those identified issues. The evidence/information provided within the Plan include the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2017, which has since been updated), census data relating to causes of sick leave in employment and academic research.
- 4.15 This level of information should be included within the context section of the Plan. Health and wellbeing outcomes should form a part of the emerging Plan's vision, with the strategic objective then demonstrating how the Plan will be used to deliver that element of the vision.

Tackling the Climate Emergency

- 4.16 Whilst the Cherwell Group acknowledge that there is an urgent need to tackle the climate emergency, they are concerned that Strategic Objective 2 seeks to ensure that ***"all new development moves the district towards delivering net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 and that we adapt to the impacts of climate change."***
- 4.17 Whilst concerns relating to net zero carbon are considered in more detail elsewhere within these Representations, the Cherwell Group are concerned that as written, the proposed Strategic Objective is ambiguous and does not clearly articulate the role new development will have in moving the District towards net-zero carbon by 2040.
- 4.18 Any proposed Strategic Objectives and proposed planning policy should reflect the existing legislative framework, national policy and guidance.
- 4.19 Notwithstanding the above, it is instructive to note that the Plan's evidence base identifies that the key method of reducing carbon and other greenhouse emissions concerns the location of development. In this regard, and as demonstrated in Section 5 of this Representation, the most sustainable locations to accommodate strategic levels of development within the District continues to be within the western areas of East Devon.

Meeting Future Housing Needs

- 4.20 Proposed Strategic Objective 3 seeks to provide high-quality homes to meet people's needs. This Strategic Objective is unobjectionable.
- 4.21 As outlined in para.11 of the NPPF, there is a requirement for the Local Plan Review to provide, as a minimum, the objectively assessed level of housing, which for East Devon is currently 946 dwellings per annum.
- 4.22 Moreover, the Plan is also required by para. 62 of the NPPF to provide for the size, type and tenure of housing need by different groups of the community, including, but not limited to, those requiring affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, services families, travellers, people who wish to rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

Supporting Jobs and the Economy

- 4.23 The fourth Strategic Objective concerns providing support for business investment and job



creation, whilst also ensuring that East Devon's economy is resilient.

- 4.24 Again, the Cherwell Group find this emerging Strategic Objective to be unobjectionable. It broadly reflects national planning policy provided at para. 81 of the NPPF and is, to some degree, addressed in the Plan's Vision.
- 4.25 However, to give effect to this Strategic Objective and in turn to deliver the Plan's Vision, there will be a need for the Plan to provide for the objectively assessed need for employment land. Para. 81 of the NPPF confirms that 'significant weight' should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

Promoting Vibrant Town Centres

- 4.26 Noting that the Cherwell Group are not proposing any town centre development, or development that would undermine the role of any existing or proposed town centres within East Devon, they do not specifically have any comments relating to this Strategic Objective.
- 4.27 It is noted that a Town Centre will be required within East Devon's New Town, within which land at Axehayes Farm is located. Depending on the delivery vehicle adopted by the Local Planning Authority relating to the delivery of the new town, proportionate contributions that satisfy Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010, will be provided from the proposed development towards town centre uses, should forthcoming viability work demonstrate that it is a viable proposition to do so.

Designing Beautiful and Healthy Spaces and Buildings

- 4.28 The sixth proposed Strategic Objective concerns promoting high-quality and beautiful development that is constructed to meet 21st century needs and contains healthy spaces. Other than for residential development, which is already included within Strategic Objective 3, the Vision does not provide any commentary relating to the need to ensure other forms of development are of a high-quality. This should be reflected in future versions of the Plan's Vision.
- 4.29 It is also noted that in terms of the creation of healthy spaces and buildings, there is some overlap between this proposed Strategic Objective and Strategic Objective 1 (Design for Health and Wellbeing). Operating as solely a design related Strategic Objective, it would provide a strong fit with Section 12 of the NPPF.

Our Outstanding Built Heritage

- 4.30 Draft Strategic Policy 7 concerns the need to conserve and enhance the District's built heritage. This Strategic Objective accords with the legislative framework provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Section 16 of the NPPF. It is therefore unobjectionable.
- 4.31 Notwithstanding the above, we note that the Plan's proposed Vision does not consider built heritage, focusing only on the natural environment. This should be remedied in future versions of the Local Plan.
- 4.32 In this regard the Cherwell Group draw attention to paras. 3.10 and 3.11 of the Adopted Local Plan, which relate to the historic environment. A similar level of detail should be included within the Local Plan Review.



Our Outstanding Natural Environment

- 4.33 Strategic Objective 8 of the emerging Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance the District's outstanding natural environment and to increase biodiversity. This Strategic Objective is unobjectionable and forms part of the Plan's emerging vision.
- 4.34 As indicated in Sections 5 and 7 of these Representations, the spatial strategy, which seeks to accommodate strategic levels of development in locations away from the most environmentally sensitive areas and principally in the western areas of the District, followed by the towns and then the villages, provides a robust policy response to this Strategic Objective and in turn the Plan's Vision.
- 4.35 Notwithstanding the above, whilst the Cherwell Group support the aspiration of delivering a net gain in biodiversity from new development, they are concerned with the implications of the levels sought by the emerging Local Plan (20%), which is a 100% increase on the minimum level of biodiversity net gain sought through the Environment Act. The response provided at Section 9 of these Representations highlights a number of concerns with the approach being adopted, including it potentially requiring more land than would otherwise have been required to facilitate the objectively assessed development requirements and its impact on viability. These concerns are demonstrated with the use of the Treasbeare Garden Village case study.

Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 4.36 Strategic Objective 9 concerns ensuring walking, cycling and public transport provision are prioritised as modes of transportation, whilst also ensuring that there is provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- 4.37 The Cherwell Group support this Strategic Objective as a matter of principle, which whilst not only providing health benefits for the District's residents, will also reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with journeys that would otherwise have been made in private fossil fuel powered vehicles.
- 4.38 However, to ensure that this Strategic Objective is a deliverable proposition, there will be the need for a package of policy responses. Key to this will be the Plan's spatial strategy, which should focus development close to existing and proposed services, facilities and employment opportunities and existing or proposed locations with strong sustainable transport opportunities. Such an approach would limit the need to travel, whilst offering a genuine choice of transport modes.
- 4.39 For East Devon, successive planning strategies have found that the most sustainable distribution of development, which would place residential development close to strategically important employment locations, services and facilities, is the western portion of East Devon, and the towns. Indeed, this has been demonstrated through the Sustainability Assessment work undertaken in support of this consultation version of the Local Plan, which concludes at page 109 of the document, that Option C, which would result in a strategy that would focus strategic development on the western side of the District, including a second new town of up to 8,000 dwellings, was the most appropriate of the four options assessed. This is because the strategy would focus ***"development where there is good connectivity in close proximity to a much wider range of jobs, services, and facilities in the Western side and Exeter"***, whilst also promoting ***"development at existing settlements where there is a range of jobs, services, and facilities"***⁶.

⁶ Page 109, East Devon Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report, November 2022.



- 4.40 This approach provides a strong fit with para. 105 of the NPPF, which confirms that there are a number of benefits associated with such a strategy, which mirror those included within Exeter University's 'Low Carbon and Climate Change Evidence Base for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan' Report (February 2020).
- 4.41 The policy response to this Strategic Objective is discussed in more detail in Section 5 and 7 of this Representation.

Connections and Infrastructure

- 4.42 The tenth draft Strategic Objective seeks to ensure that infrastructure is delivered alongside, or ahead of development. Again, this, as a matter of principle, is supported by the Cherwell Group. It provides a good fit with paras. 11(a) and 20(b) of the NPPF.
- 4.43 However, as outlined in Section 9 of this Representation, whilst there is undoubtedly a need for development to be supported by necessary infrastructure, there is also a need for the Local Planning Authority, through this plan-making process, to ensure that the cost of the necessary supporting infrastructure does not, when considered alongside other developer contributions, adversely affect the viability of development, which could delay or undermine the delivery of development envisaged by the Plan. This in turn could impact on the deliverability of other Strategic Objectives and the Plan's Vision.

Supporting Sustainable and Thriving Villages

- 4.44 The Cherwell Group are not proposing development at a Village within East Devon. Consequently, they have no comments about Strategic Policy 11.



5 The Spatial Strategy and the Distribution of Development

- 5.1 The following Section of this Representation considers the proposed spatial strategy and the distribution of development proposed within the consultation version of the Local Plan. Each topic is considered in turn below.

The Spatial Strategy

- 5.2 The Local Plan Review's proposed spatial strategy is set out within Strategic Policy 1 and its supporting text. The strategy seeks to direct new development to the most sustainable locations within the District. The policy indicates that development will be focused at the western side of the District in the first instance (an expanded West End), including at a new town and other strategic development sites. Significant development is then planned at the Principal Centre of Exmouth and the five other Main Centres, with development that meets local needs being supported at five Local Centres. Limited development to meet local needs is proposed at 23 Service Villages.
- 5.3 As set out in Section 5 of the consultation version of the Local Plan, the concentration of development in the western area of East Devon has been found to be the most sustainable spatial strategy in successive Development Plans, including the current adopted Local Plan. Indeed, the spatial strategy responds to the District's constraints and opportunities and those found within the surrounding areas.
- 5.4 In terms of constraints, East Devon's three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), East Devon AONB, The Blackdown Hills AONB and the Dorset AONB) account for approximately two-thirds of the District. The designations cover most of the southern, south eastern, eastern and northern areas of the District and include the Local Centre of Budleigh Salterton, as well as a number of villages.
- 5.5 Given the availability of land to accommodate housing outside of these designations and in other areas of the District, major strategic development within the three AONBs is likely to conflict with national planning policy⁷. As shown on Figure 18 of the consultation version of the Local Plan, the largest swathe of land outside of the three AONBs are the central and western areas of the District.
- 5.6 In terms of opportunities, the central and western areas of the District are also located in closest proximity to the city of Exeter. A strategy which focuses growth in the western area of East Devon therefore ensures that new homes are provided in close proximity to the services, facilities, employment opportunities and infrastructure provided within Exeter City Centre and those found within its more peripheral locations, close to East Devon, including Sowton Industrial Estate. As this strategy has been one that has been adopted for East Devon for a number of years, there are strategic developments in the western portion of East Devon that now supplement the services, facilities, employment opportunities and infrastructure found within Exeter.
- 5.7 In terms of employment land, a strategy that focuses new employment land provision on the western side of the District also has its advantages, including: (1) proximity to strategic transport

⁷ Paras. 176 and 177 of the NPPF.



networks, including the M5 motorway; (2) consumers and the labour market at and surrounding Exeter; and (3) clusters of existing businesses, services and higher education establishments.

- 5.8 Given the above, the proposed spatial strategy will ensure that homes are provided closest to where most jobs are likely to arise, where there is the greatest potential to secure increased sustainable transport investment and usage and where there exists the greatest range of services and facilities. Given these characteristics, it will result in a pattern of development which limits the need to travel and provides for a genuine choice of transport modes. In turn, this will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality and public health.
- 5.9 A concentration of development within the western side of East Devon also responds to market demand; there remains strong developer and market interest for residential and commercial development in the western portion of East Devon.
- 5.10 This strategy, which was assessed through the Independent Examination of the now adopted Local Plan and was therefore found to be sound, is firmly based on the sustainable development objectives, including those contained within the NPPF (including paras. 11(a) and 105). As stated in draft Strategic Policy 1, the strategy of focusing development in the western portion of the District is the most sustainable.
- 5.11 Notwithstanding the above, whilst the Cherwell Group are supportive of a spatial strategy that focuses development within the western portion of East Devon, this should not be at the detriment of providing a suitable level of housing in other towns and villages within the District. Whilst there is not a requirement for a spatial strategy to respond to development needs at a settlement level, each settlement will have its own needs. This was a matter which was considered by the Inspector of the current Local Plan⁸. In general terms, the spatial strategy does provide the opportunity for each settlement to meet its own needs.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.12 As indicated above, the proposed spatial strategy seeks to continue to follow that set out in the adopted Local Plan, which itself was prepared in the context of the 2012 version of the Framework. Consequently, at Examination, it would have been necessary for the Local Planning Authority to be ***“the most appropriate strategy, when considered against reasonable alternatives...”***⁹
- 5.13 It follows that unless there has been a material change in circumstance since the Inspector’s Report was published in January 2016, the proposed spatial strategy should again be considered as being appropriate (noting that for the emerging Plan to be justified and therefore a sound proposition, the 2021 version of the NPPF only requires the Local Plan to promote ***“an appropriate strategy”***, rather than ***“the most appropriate strategy”*** in the 2012 version).
- 5.14 The Cherwell Group are not aware of any material considerations that would suggest that a more appropriate spatial strategy should be adopted.
- 5.15 Indeed, the Sustainability Appraisal published alongside the consultation version of the Local Plan continues to suggest that the spatial strategy adopted by the emerging Plan is the most appropriate. Page 109 of the Sustainability Appraisal confirms that Option C, which is the

⁸ Para 26 of the Inspector’s Report, January 2016.

⁹ Para. 182 of the 2012 version of the NPPF.



strategy contained within the emerging Local Plan is:

“...preferred as it promotes development at existing settlements where there is a range of jobs, services, and facilities; whilst also focussing development where there is good connectivity in close proximity to a much wider range of jobs, services, and facilities in the Western side and Exeter.”

Evidence Base

- 5.16 The proposed spatial strategy also provides a suitable response to addressing climate change. Research undertaken by the University of Exeter¹⁰ has demonstrated that *“location is the single most important factor in determining potential emissions arising from new development.”*
- 5.17 The work concluded that in general terms, transport related emissions were lower when development was located closer to existing major urban areas. Indeed, the work concluded that the location of the development and the range of sustainable transport options available to residents of the development would, on average, result in a greater carbon emission reduction than requiring all new dwellings to be constructed to ‘zero carbon’ for regulated emissions.
- 5.18 Consequently, a strategy that focuses development in the western portion of the District, in close proximity to Exeter City and existing developments on the western edge of East Devon, will, with additional sustainable transport measures, result in the least carbon emissions.

The Distribution of Development

Western Side of East Devon

- 5.19 As set out above, the emerging Plan’s spatial strategy seeks a continuation of the spatial strategy adopted in the 2016 Local Plan, which, in the first instance, focused development within East Devon’s West End. For the reasons set out above, this strategy continues to be the most appropriate.
- 5.20 To give effect to the existing and emerging spatial strategy, the emerging Plan confirms that the *“general pattern of development is set to continue¹¹.”*
- 5.21 Excluding the windfall provision, Strategy 2 of the adopted East Devon Local Plan seeks to focus 10,563 dwellings out of the 16,393 dwellings planned for, in East Devon’s West End. This equates to approximately 64% of the planned provision.
- 5.22 Excluding windfall provision, Strategic Policy 2 (Housing Distribution) of the emerging Local Plan, focuses 9,891 dwellings in the Western Side of East Devon out of a total planned supply of 18,167 dwellings. This equates to only approximately 54% of provision. Accordingly, the role and function that the Western Side of East Devon will have in meeting the residential needs of the District will, *prima facie*, be reduced.
- 5.23 However, whilst the 2016 Local Plan sought to focus nearly two-thirds of provision within the West End, this level of provision has not materialised. Para. 4.3 of the latest Housing Monitoring Update¹² confirms that 4,056 dwellings have been completed within the West End over the

¹⁰ Please refer to Section 2.3.1 of the 2020 Low Carbon and Climate Change Evidence Base for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan Report.

¹¹ Para. 3.8 of the Regulation 18 Version of the East Devon Local Plan, November 2022.

¹² Published August 2022.



period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2022. Across the District there have been 8,376 completions over the same period, which means that approximately 48% of delivery has occurred within the West End.

- 5.24 The Housing Monitoring Update also provides a trajectory of completions until the end of the existing Plan period. That work forecasts that by 31st March 2031, 8,440 dwellings will have been constructed within the West End. Over the same period the work forecasts that 15,777 dwellings will have been completed across East Devon. Accordingly, it is forecast that approximately 54% of completions will be focused at the West End. Whilst for the reasons outlined in para. 6.52 of this representation this is an underestimation of the potential supply of dwellings that are likely to come forward within the West End by the end of the Plan period, the evidence does suggest that a concentration of development within the western portion of East Devon akin to that proposed within Strategy 2 of the 2016 Local Plan (i.e. 64%), is unlikely to be deliverable and therefore effective. Consequently, there is a need for a reduced proportion of development to be concentrated within the West End, but to a level that does not undermine the achievement of the benefits of adopting such a strategy. The distribution of development proposed within the emerging Local Plan strikes this appropriate balance.
- 5.25 The provision of 9,891 dwellings (c.54%) in the period 2020 to 2040 is considered to be a **deliverable** and therefore an **effective** proposition. It equates to an annual average delivery rate of 495 dwellings per annum, which is a rate of development that has been achieved in the West End in three of the past nine monitoring years. The deliverability of this planned provision for the Western Side of East Devon is also assisted by the fact that a significant proportion (69%) of the planned provision has been completed, benefits from planning permission or are allocations in an already adopted Development Plan Document (with applications being well advanced for three of the Cranbrook Expansion Areas).
- 5.26 Whilst such a level of development is considered to be a deliverable proposition, it will still be challenging. In order for this rate of development to be achieved, it is right that the Local Planning Authority concentrate development into a geographically wider 'West End'. Consideration will also need to be given to: (1) the planning vehicle used to bring forward the second new community, noting the lead in times involved in producing the Cranbrook Development Plan Document; and (2) ensuring that multiple outlets are able to come forward. This is likely to require land to be identified that is in more than one land ownership.
- 5.27 As set out in Section 2 of these Representations, land along the A3052 corridor has previously been identified as having the potential to accommodate strategic development, including a second new town. Its identification within the emerging Local Plan Review as a key element of the planned provision of housing in an expanded West End (the Western Side of East Devon) is therefore supported by the Cherwell Group.

The Rest of East Devon

- 5.28 The proposed distribution of development also seeks to address some of the concerns raised by the Adopted Local Plan Inspector, who raised concerns about the quantum of development being proposed for the remainder of the District. The Principal and Main Centres (30.1%) and specifically Exmouth have a higher proportion of development, which will help meet their needs and those of the wider hinterland to which they serve. Similarly, a greater focus of development is also proposed for the Local Centres, the Service Villages and the Countryside (15.4%).
- 5.29 In overall terms and excluding windfall provision, the emerging Plan proposes 8,276 dwellings in



the areas of the District that are located outside of the Western Side of East Devon. This equates to an annual average delivery rate of 414 dwellings per annum. This is a rate of delivery that has been achieved in this part of East Devon for seven out of the previous nine monitoring years. Consequently, it is a **deliverable** and therefore an **effective** proposition.

- 5.30 In the context presented in Sections 6 and 7 of this Representation, where there is a need for: (1) the housing requirement to be increased; and (2) further housing opportunities to be identified, we are aware of further opportunities for residential development to be accommodated in some of the Service Villages that are located in the Western Side of East Devon. Whimble for instance, is a settlement where further growth could be accommodated in a sustainable manner, particularly given that it has its own railway station which is located on the West of England Main Line, which provides services to a range of destinations including Cranbrook, Exeter Central and Exeter St Davids to the west and Axminster and London Waterloo to the east. Additional provision at Whimble would respond to the spatial strategy of focusing growth in the Western Side of East Devon.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.31 As outlined on page 110 of the Sustainability Appraisal, the sustainability credentials of four options for the distribution of the objectively assessed need for housing have been considered. The closest option to that taken forward in the consultation version of the Local Plan was Option A, which was considered to be the most appropriate as it offers:

“...the best balance of accessing jobs, services and facilities at the Western side of East Devon and the Principal and Main Centres in an environmentally acceptable way, whilst also allowing for smaller-scale growth to meet needs in more rural areas.”

- 5.32 We do not demure from these conclusions.
- 5.33 However, it is noted that even Option A did not consider the sustainability credentials of the distribution of residential development within the consultation version of the Local Plan. The differences between the distribution of residential development set out within the emerging Local Plan and Option A of the Sustainability Appraisal are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Comparison between the proposed distribution of residential development within the emerging Local Plan and Option A of Page 110 of the Sustainability Appraisal

Geographic Area	Emerging Local Plan	Option A of the Sustainability Appraisal
Western Side	54%	60%
Principal Centre (Exmouth) and Main Centres	31%	30%
Local Centres, Service Villages and the Countryside	15%	10%

- 5.34 As is demonstrated by Table 2, the consultation version of the Local Plan places less emphasis



on the concentration of development in the Western Side of East Devon and a greater proportion of development at the Principal and Main Centres, as well as the Local Centres, the Service Villages and the Countryside. This distribution of development has not been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process. Future versions of the Sustainability Appraisal should ensure that the sustainability credentials of the proposed distribution of development are properly assessed.



6 The Objectively Assessed Need for Housing

- 6.1 Para. 11(b) of the NPPF confirms that, *as a minimum*, strategic policies within emerging Plans should provide for the objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses. Para. 61 of the NPPF confirms that when calculating the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment conducted using the Standard Method, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. Once this local housing need is confirmed, para. 23 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should then provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, at a sufficient rate to address needs over the plan period.
- 6.2 Strategic Policy 3 (Levels of Future Housing Development) outlines that housing provision will be made in East Devon over the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2040 for at least 18,920 dwellings (net). This equates to 946 dwellings per annum. This level of housing results from the Standard Method, as set out in the NPPF (para. 61 refers).
- 6.3 The calculation uses the 2014-based household projections and the medium workplace-based affordability ratio for East Devon, as published in March 2022.
- 6.4 The Planning Practice Guidance confirms that the 2014-based household projections are used to *“provide stability for planning authorities and communities, ensure that historic under-delivery and declining affordability are reflected, and to be consistent with the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes¹³.”*
- 6.5 The Guidance also confirms that an affordability adjustment is applied as household growth on its own is insufficient as an indicator of housing need, as: (1) household formation is constrained by the supply of housing; and (2) people may want to live in an area that they do not currently live in. It is applied to ensure that the Standard Method for assessing local housing needs responds to price signals and is consistent with the national objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and to ensure that the *“minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.”*
- 6.6 It follows that a housing requirement that is lower than the level of housing need calculated using the Standard Method, could result in a level of housing that does not address the affordability of homes and may even worsen it.

Alternative Approach – Reasons to Resist a Lower Local Housing Need

- 6.7 As set out above, para. 61 of the NPPF confirms that the Standard Method for calculating housing need should be employed, other when exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. This is also confirmed in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) where it is stated that an alternative approach can be employed *“if it is felt that circumstances warrant an alternative approach¹⁴...”*
- 6.8 As indicated in para. 3.5 of the ‘Housing Need, Supply and Requirement Interim Topic Paper’ the

¹³ Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 2a-005-20190220, National Planning Practice Guidance, Housing and Economic Needs Assessments, 20th February 2019.

¹⁴ Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 2a-006-20190220, National Planning Practice Guidance, Housing and Economic Needs Assessments, 20th February 2019.



Local Planning Authority rely on the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 to assess whether there are any exceptional circumstances to justify an alternative approach to the Standard Method.

6.9 The work considered a range of demographic data sets, including in relation to: (1) student population; (2) whether it was appropriate to use household growth calculated over a 10 year period for the basis of a housing requirement for a 20-year plan; (3) population change; (4) migration trends; (5) total population; and (6) housing supply, prices and affordability.

6.10 Para. 32 of the Local Housing Needs Assessment concluded that:

“...there is no evidence exceptional circumstances apply in East Devon due to erroneous data, so there are no grounds for seeking a lower housing needs figure. Recent dwelling delivery has also been keeping pace with the LHN figure.”

6.11 On this basis, the Local Planning Authority conclude at para 3.9 of the Interim Housing Topic Paper that:

“...there are no exceptional circumstances that would justify using an alternative approach that would produce a level of housing need lower than the Local Housing Need derived from the Standard Method, identified by the LHNA 2022.”

6.12 This is a position that is supported by the Cherwell Group, who also consider that there are no exceptional circumstances at the present time that would justify the calculation of the minimum level of local housing need in any other way than the Standard Method.

Higher Local Housing Need

6.13 As outlined above, paras. 11(b) and 61 of the NPPF, require, **as a minimum**, for strategic policies to be informed by a local housing needs assessment conducted by the Standard Method.

6.14 Further guidance is provided within the PPG¹⁵, wherein it states that there are circumstances where Local Planning Authorities should consider providing housing at a level above the minimum requirements as set out in the Standard Method. Such considerations include:

- a) Growth strategies for the area;
- b) Strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or
- c) An authority agreeing to take on unmet housing need from neighbouring authorities.

6.15 The Guidance also suggests that there may, occasionally, be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of needs are significantly greater than the outcome of the Standard Method.

6.16 As the Local Plan evolves, it is likely that at least three of the four circumstances present above will exist for East Devon. An analysis of each is provided below.

Growth Strategies

6.17 As outlined in their Representations to the Issues and Options Consultation in 2021, the

¹⁵ Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 2a-010-20201216, National Planning Practice Guidance, Housing and Economic Needs Assessments, 16th December 2020.



Cherwell Group identified that the western portion of East Devon originally formed part of the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point, which had a target of delivering 25,000 new homes and 25,000 new jobs by 2026. East Devon's contribution to this target was 10,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs. Whilst the Growth Point has transitioned to the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone, there remains, albeit with a greater focus on employment land provision, a clear growth agenda.

- 6.18 Indeed, as outlined in the supporting text to Strategic Policy 9 (Development within the Enterprise Zone), the western side of East Devon has been the subject of significant employment growth in recent years. This growth has been assisted by the Exeter and East Devon Enterprise Zone, which covers four geographic areas within the western area of East Devon; Exeter Science Park; Skypark; Power Park and the Cranbrook Town Centre.
- 6.19 Para. 5.16 of the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan confirms that the Council will continue to positively support employment generating uses within the Enterprise Zone. Indeed, this intent is brought forward into policy as Strategic Policy 9.
- 6.20 The justification for Strategic Policy 9 also confirms that there will be a continued focus on developing new Local Development Orders within the Enterprise Zone, the purpose of which is to extend permitted development rights of certain forms of development which will ***“streamline the planning process, providing clarity and certainty for development and encourage investment into the area¹⁶.”***
- 6.21 As well as the four locations that form the Enterprise Zone, there are also other significant employment locations that are also located in close proximity, but outside the designation. Such locations include the Exeter Airport Business Park, the Hill Barton Business Park, the Intermodal Interchange and other employment sites that are coming forward in the area, including at the Treasbeare Expansion Area.
- 6.22 Para. 5.15 of the emerging Local Plan confirms that the proposed employment strategy will see a continuation of this pattern of development, with the western area of East Devon being the focus of strategic employment development. The Plan justifies this approach by confirming that it plays on the ***“particular strengths of this part of East Devon and market demands.”***
- 6.23 To support the economic growth ambitions of the East Devon Enterprise Zone and the growth envisaged in economic development locations in close proximity, but outside of the Enterprise Zone, there is a clear need for an appropriate level of housing provision. Appropriate levels of housing will be a key component of attracting businesses and occupiers into the Enterprise Zone. It is therefore possible that a level of housing in excess of the local housing need figure will be required to support the economic growth ambitions of the Enterprise Zone and the wider area.
- 6.24 This proposition was considered by the Local Planning Authority in their Housing Need, Supply and Requirement Interim Topic Paper and Appendix C of the 2022 Local Housing Needs Assessment. The assessment work considered whether: (1) there would be enough economically active residents within East Devon to fill the number of existing jobs, plus those forecast to be created by the end of the Plan period; (2) whether there is enough housing to accommodate the forecast increase in the number of economically active residents; and if not (3) whether there is a

¹⁶ Para. 5.19, East Devon Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Version.



need to plan for a higher level of housing to fill the forecast increase in jobs.

- 6.25 In terms of economically active residents, the assessment work considered the number of additional economically active residents that would result from the Standard Method calculation. It was concluded that for East Devon as a whole, there would be an increase of 11,304 economically active residents in the period 2020 to 2040, but for the reasons set out in para. 4.8 of the Housing Background Paper, it was concluded that this did not represent the number of jobs which can be supported.
- 6.26 Further work is also being undertaken in relation to the forecast economic needs of the Local Planning Authority. At the time of writing this work has not been finalised but will be integrated overtime into the Local Housing Needs Assessment to consider whether, for economic reasons, there is a need to plan for a higher Local Housing Need than the minimum required by the Standard Method.
- 6.27 Given the above, the Cherwell Group reserve the right to comment on the implications of this unresolved evidence base document at future stages of the plan-making process.
- 6.28 Notwithstanding the above, we note that at present, the evidence base work currently considers the implications of matching jobs and homes over the Plan period at the District geographic level. However, administrative geographic boundaries do not ordinarily follow functioning economic market areas, or indeed sub-areas.
- 6.29 In this regard we note that the PPG suggests that when determining the type of employment land required, an assessment may need to be undertaken at the functioning economic market area. As outlined in para. 3.55 of the consultation version of the Local Plan, the Exeter Functional Economic Market Area is defined as the administrative areas of East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge. To ensure that the economic growth ambitions of the Exeter Functional Economic Market Area are not undermined, which includes East Devon, there is a need to consider whether the jobs and homes being promoted result in equilibrium.
- 6.30 This will be a matter for the Authorities within the Exeter Functional Economic Market Area to consider under the Duty to Cooperate requirement as outlined in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Whilst this is covered in more detail in subsequent sections of this Representation, we note that Teignbridge District Council, which forms part of the Functioning Economic Market Area postponed their Full Council meeting on 15th December 2022, whilst the implications of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Written Ministerial Statement dated 6th December 2022, is considered. The outcome of this review could have implications on the jobs and homes balance across the Functioning Economic Market Area.
- 6.31 In addition, the analysis presented in the evidence base relating to the balance between jobs and homes, which is undertaken at a District level, ignores the existing and proposed economic development strategy. As outlined above, the existing and proposed Local Plan seeks to focus economic development within the western portion of the District.
- 6.32 Consequently, so as to ensure that jobs and homes are located in close proximity, with the aim of reducing the length of commuting trips and encouraging sustainable modes of transport, there is a need to ensure a balance between jobs and homes in the western portion of the District. If an imbalance exists in that part of the District, there may well be justification for increasing the quantum of residential development in that spatial geography. This should, however, not be at



the expense of residential development at the towns and villages, which have their own housing needs. Rather, in such a circumstance, additional housing in the western areas of the District should be secured through additional housing provision at a level in excess of the Standard Method output.

Strategic Infrastructure

- 6.33 The Cherwell Group agree that there is no strategic infrastructure that either exists or is proposed within East Devon that would justify a higher level of housing than the Standard Method output.

Housing Affordability

- 6.34 As outlined above, national planning guidance states that the use of the Standard Method in calculating household need results in a housing requirement that **starts** to address the affordability of homes. In this regard it is instructive to note that the current Standard Method output for East Devon results in a housing requirement that whilst broadly comparable to the housing requirement contained within the adopted Local Plan, is 4 dwellings per annum lower.
- 6.35 Despite the level of planned provision within the adopted Local Plan, the house price to workplace-based earnings ratio has worsened over the first nine monitoring years of the Adopted Local Plan (from 10.00 in 2013 to 10.88 in 2021, with a high-point of 10.56 in 2019). This equates to an increase of 8.8%.
- 6.36 Whilst it could be argued that this is as a result of a shortfall in delivery, completions over the first nine years of the Plan average at 931 dwellings per annum, which is broadly comparable with the Standard Method output.
- 6.37 Consequently, if there is an ambition to address housing affordability within the District, a greater quantum of housing than 946 dwellings per annum should be planned for.

Affordable Housing Need

- 6.38 As outlined above, national planning guidance confirms that the affordability adjustment is made within the Standard Method to ensure that the minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.
- 6.39 However, since the adoption of the Local Plan, which contains a housing requirement which is broadly consistent with the Standard Method output for East Devon, levels of affordable housing need have grown. When considering the now adopted Local Plan, the Inspector concluded that the need for affordable housing across the District was 272 affordable dwellings per annum¹⁷. In comparison, para. 5.51 of the 2022 Local Housing Needs Assessment confirms that the overall need for affordable housing within East Devon is 8,011 dwellings over the period 2020-2040, which provides an annual average of 401 dwellings per annum. This represents an increase of 47% over the intervening period since the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment was published.
- 6.40 The Housing Background Paper acknowledges at Table 3 that the identified need for affordable housing is unlikely to be met by the emerging Local Plan as currently drafted. The Table identifies that 3,551 affordable homes could be delivered in East Devon across the Plan period. Should this affordable housing provision come forward, it would result in a shortfall of 4,460 affordable dwellings (i.e. 56% of affordable housing need would not be met, or to put it another

¹⁷ Para. 18, Report on the Examination into the New East Devon Local Plan 2006 to 2026.



way, housing would only be provided for one in every two households in need of affordable housing)¹⁸.

- 6.41 Notwithstanding the above, the overall level of affordable housing need is further refined by the Local Planning Authority to being only: (1) those who are unable to afford to rent or own market housing; or (2) to those who cannot afford to buy but where there is a realistic prospect of them being able to access an affordable homeownership product (i.e. it excludes households which the Local Planning Authority acknowledge cannot afford to buy a home on the open market or an affordable home ownership product). This reduces the affordable housing need significantly from 401 dwellings per annum, to just 177 households per annum (i.e. a 56% reduction).
- 6.42 However, the methodology employed by the Local Planning Authority effectively dismisses the housing aspirations of 224 households per annum (4,480 households), that have expressed a desire to own their own affordable housing product. The methodology does not consider how the planning system could intervene to make affordable home ownership a more realistic proposition for these households. The delivery of a greater proportion of affordable home ownership products than is currently anticipated could help to make this aspiration a more realistic prospect.

Shortfall in Housing Delivery

- 6.43 The Cherwell Group are aware that the Standard Method for calculating housing need should factor in past under-delivery as part of the affordability ratio¹⁹. However, as outlined above, this cannot be the case for East Devon, where the objectively assessed need for housing within the District using the Standard Method is lower than the current housing requirement within the Adopted Local Plan.
- 6.44 Given this unique circumstance for East Devon, the shortfall in housing delivery since the start of the current Local Plan period should be taken forward and form part of the housing requirement for the District going forward. The Local Planning Authority's latest Housing Monitoring Report suggests that this shortfall was 138 dwellings over the period 2013 to 2022.

Unmet Needs from Neighbouring Authorities

- 6.45 Para. 11(b) of the NPPF confirms that, as a minimum, strategic policies in Local Plans should provide for the objectively assessed needs for, *inter alia*, housing, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless parts (i) and (ii) of the same paragraph apply. Footnote 6 of the NPPF confirms that a statement of common ground should be used to establish whether there are any unmet needs from neighbouring authorities. This is also reiterated at para. 61.
- 6.46 Whilst falling short of the requirements set out in national planning policy regarding the statement of common ground required by footnote 6 of the NPPF, helpfully, at Section 5 of the Local Planning Authority's Housing Background Paper, a summary of the plan-making stage that each neighbouring planning authority has reached and whether they are planning to meet, as a minimum, their objectively assessed need for housing, is provided.

¹⁸ It is acknowledged that this forecast provision excludes exception sites and affordable housing provision that could be delivered through Neighbourhood Plans.

¹⁹ Para. 031 Ref IA: 68-031-20190722, National Planning Practice Guidance, Housing and Supply and Delivery, 22nd July 2019.



- 6.47 Of relevance, the work confirms that Teignbridge District Council are currently working on the next stage of their Local Plan review and clarification on their housing requirement is awaited. Whilst the Local Planning Authority correctly conclude that there is no evidence available at this time to indicate that Teignbridge will have unmet housing needs, it is equally correct to conclude that there is no evidence to suggest that they will plan to meet their full objectively assessed needs for housing either. Indeed, the Full Council meeting which was scheduled for 15th December 2022 was postponed ***“following the announcement by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove MP, regarding proposed changes to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill relating to housebuilding targets.”*** Officers intend to review the details of the proposed changes and identify any implications before the Local Plan is published for consultation. Should Teignbridge District plan for a level of housing less than their objectively assessed needs, under the Duty to Cooperate arrangements, there will be a need for East Devon to consider, through the application of tests (i) and (ii) of para. 11(b) of the NPPF, whether it can accommodate some of this unmet need. This could well result in the need to provide a higher housing requirement for East Devon than the Standard Method output would suggest.
- 6.48 In addition, we are aware that Torbay Council, who whilst not being a neighbouring authority, adjoin the Exeter Functional Economic Area, as well as the Greater Exeter Housing Market Area, which overlaps and abuts with Torbay, have confirmed that the delivery of their local housing need ***“is proving to be very difficult.”*** They have requested that East Devon take into account any unmet housing needs from neighbouring authorities when considering cross boundary matters.

Written Ministerial Statement

- 6.49 On 6th December 2022, the Secretary of State published a Written Ministerial Statement relating to a consultation on proposed amendments to the NPPF. This Written Ministerial Statement has been considered by the Planning Inspectorate, who, on behalf of the Secretary of State, will Examine the emerging Local Plan. In a letter published on 8th December 2022, they confirmed that:

“No action is required in any casework areas, at present, as the WMS sets out proposals for consultation rather than immediate changes to government policy. Consequently, the starting point for decision making remains extant policy, which we will continue to implement and to work to until such time as it may change.”

- 6.50 Whilst the NPPF Prospectus has since been published, it again sets out proposals for consultation, rather than immediate changes to government policy. The conclusions of the Planning Inspectorate’s 8th December 2022 letter therefore remain valid.

Theoretical Housing Supply

- 6.51 Table 1 of the 2022 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) confirms that there is a theoretical supply of housing land sufficient to accommodate 39,888 dwellings. This comprises the following sources of supply:



Table 3: HELAA Conclusions

Source of Supply	No. of Dwellings (approx.)
Available, Suitable and Achievable	27,088
Completions 1 st April 2020 to 31 st March 2022	1,906
Commitments at 31 st March 2022	4,389
Cranbrook Plan DPD	4,170
Windfall Allowance	2,335
TOTAL	39,888

- 6.52 We are aware that the above analysis underplays the true potential of the theoretical supply of housing land within East Devon. For instance, we are aware that 4,544 dwellings are currently proposed from the Cranbrook Expansion Areas, whereas the HELAA only identifies 4,170 dwellings from this source of supply (i.e. there is an increase of 374 dwellings).
- 6.53 Notwithstanding the above, even using the Local Planning Authority's own analysis, there would be a sufficient supply of housing land to meet East Devon's objectively assessed need for housing, with an additional uplift of up to 111%.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 6.54 The Regulation 18 Sustainability Appraisal considered two options for the level of future housing development within the District. The first was the minimum local housing need as calculated via the Standard Method (18,920 dwellings over the 20 year plan period, or 946 dwellings per annum), whilst the second alternative considered the local housing need plus a 20% uplift.
- 6.55 Whilst the first option was considered to be the most appropriate, major positive effects were noted for the second option, particularly in relation to housing. It was however dismissed due to the environmental effects resulting from it.
- 6.56 The Cherwell Group consider that an uplift of 20% over the local housing need for East Devon is an unreasonable alternative. This has been borne out through the conclusions of the assessment work. However, there is a significant gap between both options and the Sustainability Appraisal should have considered a number of other options for an uplift over the local housing need figure, including a 5%, 10% and 15% uplift. These reasonable alternatives might strike a more appropriate balance between environmental effects and the benefits of an increased housing provision and should be considered in future iterations of the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 6.57 It is instructive to note that in the 'outline of reasons for selecting the alternatives' provided on page 121 of the Sustainability Appraisal, the Local Planning Authority conclude that a 20% uplift on the local housing need figure to 1,135 dwellings per annum is a deliverable proposition, as it is only *"slightly above"* the highest annual dwelling completions in recent years. It follows that



the uplifts proposed in the paragraph above would also therefore be a deliverable proposition.

Requirement in Policy

- 6.58 As set out above, the NPPF requires, **as a minimum**, for the objectively assessed needs for housing to be provided. Over the Plan period this equates to a minimum requirement of 18,920 dwellings (net). Given the wording in national planning policy, it is right that the requirement is expressed in Strategic Policy 3 as a minimum.

Summary

- 6.59 The analysis presented above indicates that due to the growth strategy in operation in the western area of East Devon and to address housing affordability and the need for affordable housing, consideration should, in accordance with national planning guidance, be given to planning for a level of housing in excess of the local housing need as calculated by the Standard Method.
- 6.60 Moreover, there exists the potential that neighbouring authorities will not be able to accommodate their local housing need. As confirmed in paras. 11(b) and 61 of the NPPF, East Devon should consider whether they are able to meet any shortfall from neighbouring authorities.
- 6.61 From a delivery perspective, the evidence suggests that a requirement above the local housing need figure for East Devon is a deliverable proposition and there is an adequate quantum of housing land to achieve this.
- 6.62 Further environmental work should be prepared to consider the impact of a 5%, 10% and a 15% uplift over the local housing need requirement for East Devon. These uplifts should be considered in the context of tests (i) and (ii) of para. 11(b) of the NPPF and through future iterations of the Sustainability Appraisal.



7 Housing Supply

7.1 The following Section of this Representation provides a broad assessment of the proposed housing land supply contained within the East Devon Local Plan. It specifically concerns:

1. Lead in times associated with strategic sites and delivery assumptions;
2. Flexibility allowance; and
3. Windfall development.

7.2 Each consideration is addressed in turn below.

Lead-in Times Associated with Strategic Sites

7.3 In order to meet the full objectively assessed need for housing, the emerging Local Plan rightfully identifies the need for strategic housing sites, including a second new town. The latest Housing Monitoring Report confirms that strategic allocations have provided a valuable and consistent component of supply and will continue to do so. The emerging Local Plan intends to continue this approach.

7.4 Notwithstanding the above, so as to ensure that the objectively assessed need for housing is delivered over the plan period, which in turn will ensure that the emerging Local Plan is ***positively prepared, justified, effective*** and ***consistent with national policy***, there is a need to ensure that the components of housing supply will deliver at the levels set out in the Plan.

7.5 As the largest allocation proposed within the emerging Local Plan, the delivery assumptions from the proposed second new town should be carefully considered. Indeed, para. 73 of the NPPF confirms that, when proposing large scale development, Local Planning Authorities should, amongst other things, make realistic assumptions about the likely rate of delivery.

7.6 At the present time, the Local Plan does not confirm how the second new town is to come forward. For Cranbrook, which is the most comparable development within East Devon, two approaches were adopted; the first involving a conventional approach with planning applications submitted pursuant to an allocation within the Local Plan, with the second involving the production of a second geographically specific Development Plan Document, which includes detailed information on the development expectations of each Expansion Area, including their infrastructure requirements (both on and off-site). Planning applications have since been made pursuant to that Development Plan Document.

7.7 There are advantages and disadvantages with both options. Planning applications based on an allocation within the emerging Local Plan are likely to provide a quicker timeframe to implementation, whilst the preparation of a second Development Plan Document or a Supplementary Planning Document would ensure that the development would come forward in a comprehensive and viable manner. It would however involve a longer lead-in time to first completions. The second option, is, therefore, in terms of lead-in times, the worst case scenario.

7.8 Adopting the worst case scenario, the Cherwell Group note that preparation of the Cranbrook Plan began in 2015 and it was adopted in 2022. The process therefore took seven years. Whilst it is likely that as a result of lessons learnt through the Cranbrook Plan process and other unforeseen circumstances (including a delay in the Examination in Public Hearing Sessions due to the Covid-19 pandemic), this preparation time could be reduced, it is likely to take at least five-years.



- 7.9 In terms of the development management process, ordinarily the following stages are required to first completions:
- 1) The pre-application advice process;
 - 2) The submission and determination of an outline planning application (resolution to grant);
 - 3) The completion of the Section 106 Legal Agreement;
 - 4) Site acquisition;
 - 5) Preparation of pre-reserved matters applications, such as a Design Code;
 - 6) Preparation of a reserved matters application;
 - 7) Submission and determination of a reserved matters application;
 - 8) Submission and discharge of any pre-commencement and pre-occupation planning conditions and obligations;
 - 9) Site clearance/infrastructure servicing; and
 - 10) First legal completions.
- 7.10 It is considered that this process could take up to four years and it would appear that the Expansion Areas at Cranbrook are progressing to a not dissimilar timeframe. The Cherwell Group are also aware of research undertaken by others within the development sector that indicate longer lead-in times for housing proposals of the scale proposed for the second new town²⁰. However, it is considered that the preparation of a Development Plan Document similar to the Cranbrook Plan would significantly reduce this timeframe. Certainly that is the case for planning application 22/1532/MOUT, which was validated in late July 2022 and at the time of writing, is likely to be presented to Planning Committee in February 2023. The completion of the Section 106 is, given the detailed Infrastructure Delivery Plan, likely to follow quickly after a resolution.
- 7.11 In addition, using the Expansion Areas as an example, planning applications have been submitted at three of the four expansion areas in advance of adoption of the Cranbrook Plan and it is therefore likely that there could be some overlap between the development plan and development management processes.
- 7.12 Consequently, the Cherwell Group consider that the lead-in times, which are set out in Table 4 below, are realistic for the second new town. It should be noted that the lead-in times for the production of the Local Plan set out in Table 4 below respond to the Cherwell Group's concerns set out in Section 3 above. A more realistic preparation time for the emerging Local Plan is set out in the table and it is assumed that the plan period will end in 2042.

²⁰ Figure 4, Start to finish, Lichfields, February 2020 and 'The Role of Land Pipelines in the UK Housebuilding Process', Chamberlain Walker, September 2017.



Table 4: Lead-in Times Until First Completions at the Second New Town

	Local Plan	DPD	Pre - App Process	Submission to Determination	Conditions and Reserved Matters	Site Clearance	First Legal Completions
2020							
2021	●						
2022							
2023							
2024							
2025							
2026		●					
2027	●						
2028							
2029			●				
2030		●	●	●			
2031				●	●		
2032					●	●	
2033						●	●
2034							●

7.13 On the basis of the lead-in times outlined in Table 4 above, this would leave eight monitoring years for the 2,500 dwellings at the second new town to be delivered in. This equates to an average annual delivery rate of 313 dwellings. This is an average rate of development the Local Planning Authority is expecting from the Cranbrook Expansion Areas over the period 2024/25 to 2030/31, which includes the early years of the developments (the forecast average rate of delivery is 332 dwellings over that timeframe).²¹

7.14 Moreover, a rate of development of over 313 dwellings per annum was also a rate of development considered by the Independent Planning Inspector for the Cranbrook Plan who raised no concerns.

²¹ Para. 3.12 of the East Devon Housing Monitoring Update, August 2022.



- 7.15 Accordingly, even adopting the worst case scenario, which involves the preparation of a second Development Plan Document, the planned provision proposed for the second new community is considered to be a **deliverable** proposition. Therefore, the quantum of development proposed for the second new town in the plan period (2,500 dwellings) will be **effective**.

Flexibility Allowance

- 7.16 The Cherwell Group consider that the Local Planning Authority has rightfully identified the need for a flexibility allowance to be included within the emerging Local Plan but consider that the allowance made in the emerging Local Plan is too low.

Purpose of a Flexibility Allowance

- 7.17 The use of a flexibility allowance is a well-established tool in plan-making. They have historically been used to reflect the fact that not all sites identified for housing will be developed, will only be developed in part, or may achieve planning permission for an alternative use. As outlined in para. 6.5 of the 2016 Local Plan, a flexibility allowance has historically been used by East Devon District Council.

- 7.18 The use of such an allowance provides a suitable response to the Government objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes²² and helps to ensure that, in line with national planning policy, objectively assessed needs for housing are met²³. In doing so, they help ensure that a Local Plan is **positively prepared, effective** and **consistent with national planning policy**.

The Most Appropriate Flexibility Allowance

- 7.19 Limb 3 of Strategic Policy 3 of the emerging Local Plan identifies that provision is to be made for a supply headroom of approximately 10%. However, when comparing the objectively assessed need for housing as outlined in Strategic Policy 3 (18,920 dwellings), with the planned provision contained within Strategic Policy 2 (18,167 dwellings plus a windfall provision of 2,335 dwellings, giving a total supply of 20,502 dwellings), the flexibility allowance is only 8.4%. The Cherwell Group consider this flexibility allowance to be too low.
- 7.20 Research suggests that between 10-20% of planning permissions do not materialise²⁴. The same Paper identifies that for southern regions of England, including the South West, the proportion of completions relative to permissions is between 75% and 85%, suggesting a non-implementation rate of between 15% and 25% should be applied.
- 7.21 Consideration should therefore be given to increasing the flexibility allowance contained within Strategic Policy 3 to, as a minimum, the 10% level referred to in the same Policy. This would require an increase in the planned provision to 20,812 dwellings (i.e. an increase of 310 dwellings).
- 7.22 This additional provision should be found from new allocated sites within the District.

Windfall

- 7.23 Strategic Policy 2 of the emerging Local Plan identifies that 2,335 dwellings are projected to come forward over the plan period from windfall sites. The Cherwell Group have two principal

²² Para. 60, NPPF, 2021.

²³ Para. 11(b), NPPF, 2021.

²⁴ Page 22, "Taking Stock", Lichfields, 2021.



concerns about this projected windfall allowance, as follows:

- 1) Potential for double counting; and
- 2) Compelling evidence for their inclusion.

7.24 Each is addressed in turn.

Potential for Double Counting

7.25 Appendix 3 of the Housing Background Paper confirms that the windfall analysis provided within the East Devon Monitoring Update 2022 is used for the period up to 2030/31, after which an average of 158 dwellings per annum will be applied. As set out in para. 3.8 of the Housing Monitoring Update, the windfall allowance of 158 dwellings is used as it reflects the average rate of windfall completions from April 2017 to March 2022. To avoid double counting, a comparison is then made between windfall development that already has the benefit of planning permission and the average historic levels. If projected completions from windfall sites that benefit from planning permission is higher than the average long-term average, then no additional windfall provision is made. An adjustment is only made if forecast completions are less than the historic annual average.

7.26 On the basis of the above methodology, Appendix 3 of the Housing Background Paper confirms that a windfall provision is only included from 2024/25. To avoid the double counting of provision between commitments and the windfall allowance, this work will need to be updated at all stages of the plan-making process.

Compelling Evidence

7.27 Para. 71 of the NPPF confirms that in order for a windfall allowance to be included within the planned housing provision, there should be ***“compelling evidence”*** that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Such evidence should include: (1) evidence presented within the strategic housing land availability assessment; (2) historic rates of windfall delivery; and (3) expected future trends.

7.28 Care should be taken to ensure that the anticipated level of future windfall provision (158 dwellings per annum) is not over inflated. This is important as the definition of windfall development included within the consultation Local Plan and the NPPF is ***“sites not specifically identified in the development plan.”***

7.29 In this regard, limb 7 of Strategic Policy 3 of the emerging Local Plan anticipates additional allocations to be made in Neighbourhood Plans. Whilst they could be capable of being considered as being windfall sites at the time of writing, the allocation of sites through the Neighbourhood Plan process would, on the basis of the above definition, rule them out of being capable of being considered as windfall development. This may reduce the potential supply of windfall sites to below historic levels.



8 Strategic Policy 8 - The Second New Town

- 8.1 Consistent with the Plan's spatial strategy, which has been demonstrated to be the most appropriate, Strategic Policy 8 proposes the allocation of a second new town. Following an assessment of potential options, the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan has identified land to the north of the A3052, to the south of the A30 and to the east of the M5, as being the preferred location for the second new town.
- 8.2 The Cherwell Group strongly support the Local Planning Authority's assessment that a second new town is required and its proposed location.
- 8.3 However, as set out in Section 10 of these Representations, the Cherwell Group have some concerns with the methodology employed by the Options Appraisal for the Second New Town and the scoring of each option within that assessment work. However, their concerns only strengthen the conclusions presented within the work; that Option 1 is the most sustainable option and has rightfully been taken forward as the preferred option in the consultation version of the Local Plan.
- 8.4 Notwithstanding the above, this Section of these Representations does not focus on the evidence base underpinning the Plan, but instead on Strategic Policy 8 and the Policies Map. A summary of the Cherwell Group's views on these matters are set out below.

Emerging Policy

- 8.5 The following Section provides the Cherwell Group's views on each policy test contained within emerging Strategic Policy 8.

Housing

- 8.6 Limb 1 of emerging Strategic Policy 8 proposes that 2,500 dwellings will be provided at the second new town in the period up to 2040, with a further 5,500 dwellings to follow in the period beyond 2040.
- 8.7 As set out in Section 7 of this Representation, in the period before 2040, this is likely to require a rate of delivery in excess of 300 dwellings per annum. As this is a rate of delivery envisaged for Cranbrook in the period up to 2031, it is considered to be a rate of delivery that is *aspirational, but deliverable*.
- 8.8 In order to achieve that rate of delivery, it is highly likely that a polycentric approach will be required, with multi-development locations delivering housing at the same time. The Vision Document provided at Appendix 1 of these Representations provides a suggested approach to phasing, identifying initial southern and northern development nodes, before the more central areas of the second new town are delivered. With each development node having multiple outlets, it is likely that the required rate of delivery could be met. Indeed, we note that para. 3.4 of the latest East Devon Housing Monitoring Update identifies that theoretically sites of this scale (or in this case nodes), could deliver c.150 dwellings per annum.
- 8.9 Appendix 2 of these Representations also identifies an additional option for the location of the second new town. Referred to as Option 4, it would involve not only the land located between the A30 and the A3052, but also land to the south of the A3052. Whilst this Option is discussed in more detail in Section 10 of these Representations, in relation to housing supply, it would add at least one, and possibly more, development nodes to the second new town. This would likely



increase the rate of delivery further, making it more likely that the planned provision for the second new community would be met in the period up to 2040.

- 8.10 In either scenario, land at Axehayes Farm should form one of the proposed development nodes. The accompanying Vision Document demonstrates how the development of approximately 300 dwellings could be accommodated on the site as part of a sustainable standalone development, or as part of the proposed new town. A range of housing types, sizes and tenures would be provided, which would help meet identified housing needs.

Gypsy and Traveller Provision

- 8.11 The emerging Plan proposes that up to 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches are to be provided in the period up to 2040, with a further 15 pitches to be provided beyond the plan period.
- 8.12 The Cherwell Group acknowledge that the Council has a duty to meet the housing needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community. They also commend the Local Planning Authority's approach to seeking to meet these needs. However, the Cherwell Group have the following concerns relating to the requirements of limb 2 of emerging Strategic Policy 8:
- A need for 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Plan period has not been evidenced. It is noted that para. 8.117 of the emerging Local Plan indicates that a new Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is currently being commissioned and it will inform the Regulation 19 version of the Plan.
 - No evidence has been provided to suggest that, having regard to existing provision, existing commitments (including provision secured through allocations CB3 and CB4 of the Cranbrook Plan, plus the allocation proposed at Strategic Policy 18 and the criteria based approach advocated by Strategic Policy 48 of the emerging Local Plan), that there will be a need for additional provision at the second new community.
 - The second new community represents one option for the location of Gypsy and Traveller provision within East Devon. Potential locations should be carefully assessed and subject of assessment within a Sustainability Appraisal. A location should not be selected first, with the justification provided after the selection process.
 - If a need is identified, it should be distributed in a manner consistent with the spatial strategy and the distribution of development proposed in the emerging Local Plan.
 - Notwithstanding the above, if the second new community is to accommodate Gypsy and Traveller provision, then it should, in line with the latest evidence, be located in close proximity to the A30²⁵, which is identified as being a key travelling route.
 - If a need is identified, careful consideration should be given to locating the pitches in a suitable location. There will be a need to ensure that amongst other things, the chosen site is suitable from a topographical, landscape and access perspective. Experience from the Cranbrook development would also indicate that noise is a significant constraint given the inability for noise mitigation to be provided for trailers. This could suggest a location divorced from existing noise sources, including the strategic transport network and existing employment sites, would be more appropriate.

²⁵ Devon Partnership, Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2015.



Employment Land

- 8.13 Limb 3 of emerging Strategic Policy 8 anticipates that around 17.5ha of employment land will be brought forward at the second new town in the period up to 2040 (Use Classes E, B2 and B8). It is also proposed that approximately 38.5ha of additional employment land will come forward post 2040.
- 8.14 The Cherwell Group support employment land provision at the second new town. Indeed, it provides a strong fit with national planning policy²⁶. The Vision Document accompanying these Representations confirms that land at Axehayes Farm, which is proposed to form a key development node, could deliver 3.9ha of employment land. As part of one of the first development nodes proposed in the new town, this would come forward within the Plan period and would represent approximately 22% of the employment land requirement for the new town in the period up to 2040. The Vision Document also shows the employment land provision at Axehayes Farm being located adjacent to the Hill Barton Industrial Estate. It is therefore proposed in an area which has a proven track record as a successful employment location. Indeed, the Cherwell Group are already aware of one employment occupier who has expressed an aspiration to obtain an interest in all the employment land provision proposed within the Vision Document.
- 8.15 Notwithstanding the Cherwell Group's in principle support for the third limb of emerging Strategic Policy 8, they question how such definitive employment land requirements can be arrived at, absent the Economic Development Needs Assessment. The forthcoming Economic Development Needs Assessment should be used to determine the quantum of employment land provision required in the District in the period up to 2040, having regard to existing provision and commitments. This approach is advocated in the emerging Plan²⁷. It is also instructive to note that the total provision proposed is a quantum that is significantly higher than the quantum of employment land proposed at East Devon's first new town.

Town Centre

- 8.16 As set out in national planning policy, the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be achieved through planning for large scale development, provided that they, amongst other things, are supported by necessary infrastructure and facilities. A town centre will be a key component of the proposed new town and will house a range of services and facilities. On completion, the town centre will ensure that the needs of the new community's residents, employees and visitors are met and therefore limit the need to travel, which will help to reduce congestion and emissions. It therefore follows that the Cherwell Group are supportive of the principle of including a town centre in the second new town.
- 8.17 Whilst supportive of the principle, the Cherwell Group are concerned about the proposed phasing of the town centre. To ensure that the town centre is accessible to the new town's residents, it is likely to be required in a more central area of the wider new town. As set out above, in order to meet the required residential delivery rates, it is likely that several development nodes will need to be brought forward; both from the north and the south. It is therefore feasible that the natural phasing of the site would not have reached the more central areas of the new town, where a town centre is most appropriately located, by the end of the

²⁶ Paras. 73 and 105.

²⁷ Para. 3.57.



Plan period.

- 8.18 In addition, it is questionable as to whether the delivery of 2,500 dwellings would be a sufficient quantum of development to support a town centre. Indeed, a town centre is yet to be delivered at Cranbrook, despite over 3,000 homes having been delivered.
- 8.19 A more sensible and viable approach would be for neighbourhood centres to come forward at each development node. This would mirror the approach adopted at Cranbrook, where the neighbourhood centre on Younghayes Road has supported the first Cranbrook Phases. It is also the approach advocated to meet the day to day needs of the Expansion Areas and will help them to become 400m walkable neighbourhoods. Consequently, a similar approach should be employed at the second new community; there should be a requirement for the initial development nodes to include neighbourhood/local centres, with the town centre to come forward in the period post 2040.
- 8.20 As shown in the accompanying Vision Document, a local centre is proposed within the Axehayes Farm site. This local centre, which is proposed to be c.0.3ha in size, could accommodate retail, other business and community uses.

Social, Community and Education Facilities and Other Infrastructure

- 8.21 The Cherwell Group acknowledge that to ensure that the second new community constitutes sustainable development, there will be a need for it to include social, community and education facilities. For large-scale development such as that being proposed, this is a requirement of national planning policy²⁸.
- 8.22 It is highly likely that the social, community and education requirements for the new town will be informed by consultation with key infrastructure providers. These responses will need to be assessed to ensure that they satisfy the tests of Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and are afforded a prioritisation. As with the Cranbrook Plan, the prioritisation will be an important element of work so as to ensure that the development is a viable proposition.

Opportunity at Axehayes Farm

- 8.23 As demonstrated in the accompanying Vision Document, land at Axehayes Farm, which measures some 32.3ha, is a site that is suitable, available and technically achievable for the development set out therein.
- 8.24 Depending on the approach advocated by the Local Planning Authority for the second new community, it also has the ability to come forward in the next five-year period and is therefore a **deliverable proposition**. It could come forward as part of the proposed second new community, or as a separate and independent development.
- 8.25 The Policy Maps confirm that the site is located within the Western Side of East Devon, which has been found to be the most sustainable location for accommodating strategic levels of development within East Devon. As set out in Section 5 of these Representations, in comparison to other areas of the District, it is technically unconstrained and is in close proximity to the

²⁸ Paras. 11 and 73.



services, facilities and employment opportunities found within the District's West End and Exeter further to the west. It is therefore a sustainable location.

8.26 Building on these key locational advantages, the Vision Document proposes a mix of uses for land at Axehayes Farm that will improve the location's sustainability credentials. The mix of uses proposed includes:

- Up to 370 dwellings on 8.6ha of land, which could include market, affordable, self-build housing and specialist accommodation for the elderly;
- 3.9ha of employment land (Class E, B2 and B8, with the potential to include energy storage facilities);
- A local centre incorporating retail and potentially community facilities on 0.3ha of land;
- The potential for retail/convenience facilities to be provided at the site entrance;
- A Park and Ride on 0.4ha of land;
- 16.3ha of green infrastructure provision, incorporating equipped play; wildlife habitats; structural planting; and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS);
- A sustainable drainage system, with discharge limited to the existing QBAR rate (1 in 2.3 year event) for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event, plus a 45% allowance for climate change. This approach would result in a significant reduction in site run-off in extreme storm events;
- Access from the A3052, which could be via a new roundabout or a similar high capacity junction that would relieve the existing unnamed road which provides access to Axehayes Farm and Hill Pond;
- A new access road which could lead north of the A3052 and serve the wider landholding to the north. It is feasible that this access road could become a new link road between the A3052 and the A30 in conjunction with development to the north. The provision of a new north-south strategic link between these two primary routes would potentially relieve the M5 motorway (between Junctions 29 and 30) and open up access to the Clyst Valley Regional Park;
- New pedestrian and cycle connections to: (1) the A3052; (2) The Cat and Fiddle; (3) the wider development area to the north; (4) the Clyst Valley Regional Park; (5) Hill Barton Business Park; (6) Yeo Business Park; and (7) Hill Pond Caravan Park;
- A range of travel planning measures and initiatives to help to reduce the need to travel using the private car. Such measures could include: (1) mobility hubs; (2) car sharing; (3) car clubs; (4) electric bikes; (5) work related facilities to encourage/assist home working; (6) dynamic demand responsive transport; and (7) new mobility technology;
- A significant biodiversity net gain that, with additional habitat creation and enhancement could achieve at least a 20% net gain; and
- A connection to the district heat network, if feasible.

8.27 Assuming the second new town will not be liable for CIL, where necessary and viable, financial contributions will be made for supporting infrastructure, including: (1) SANGS management and maintenance; (2) off-site habitat mitigation; (3) travel planning; (4) early years, primary, secondary and special education needs facilities; (5) off-site highway mitigation; (6) sports facilities and associated land; and (7) town centre facilities.

8.28 Given the above, land at Axehayes would help to deliver the emerging Vision for the new town, as set out in para. 4.6 of the 'East Devon – Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement' Report.



- 8.29 These proposals are outlined in more detail in the accompanying Vision Document. The Vision Document also provides a summary of the technical work undertaken to date in respect of: (1) landscape and visual impact; (2) flood risk and drainage; (3) ecology and biodiversity net gain; (4) heritage; (5) highways and access; and (6) masterplanning. For brevity, a summary of this work is not included within these Representations.

Policy Map

- 8.30 The Cherwell Group support the inclusion of land at Axehayes Farm within Option 1 (the Preferred Option) for the new community, as shown on the Policy Map.

Other Considerations

- 8.31 At the present time, the Local Plan does not provide any indication of how, in planning terms, the second new town will come forward. The Cherwell Group is aware that developments at Cranbrook have, and are, coming forward via two differing planning vehicles. Most recently the Expansion Areas are coming forward pursuant to a detailed separate Development Plan document; the Cranbrook Plan.
- 8.32 Whilst the Cranbrook Plan took a considerable period of time to prepare, it has proven to be a valuable tool. As outlined in para. 1.2 of the adopted Development Plan Document, its purpose was to speed up and assist with the delivery of the town, in a planned and commercially viable manner, whilst ensuring that it is a healthy and attractive place to live. It will ensure that infrastructure comes forward in parallel to housing development.
- 8.33 However, whilst a valuable tool, as outlined above, it did take a significant period of time to prepare. If the Local Planning Authority intend to adopt a similar approach for the second new community, they will need to ensure that an adequate period of time is left for the full planned provision (2,500 dwellings) to come forward by 2040. To not leave a sufficient length of time would risk elements of the new town not being delivered as forecast, which would be *ineffective*.
- 8.34 The financial viability of development at Cranbrook was also a key consideration, particularly given the requirements for significant levels of infrastructure that is necessary to support a new town. A detailed Infrastructure Delivery Plan was prepared to support the Plan, which will be updated periodically. The Cherwell Group note that that Local Planning Authority intends to publish an Infrastructure Delivery Plan alongside the emerging Local Plan. They welcome this commitment and reserve the right to comment on it in future iterations of the plan-making process.
- 8.35 In addition, whilst the Community Infrastructure Levy is operational in parts of East Devon, the Local Planning Authority made Cranbrook exempt during the plan-making process. Instead, infrastructure has been secured through the conventional Section 106 process. The approach to funding and delivering infrastructure at the second new town needs early consideration and confirmation.



9 Development Management Policies

Strategic Policy 4 – Employment Provision and Distribution Strategy and Strategic Policy 5 – Mixed Use Developments

- 9.1 Strategic Policy 4 seeks a net increase in employment floorspace over the Plan period. An Economic Development Needs Assessment will inform the employment land requirements. As confirmed in the emerging Policy, this work is not available at the present time and therefore a specific requirement is not included.
- 9.2 Emerging Strategic Policy 5 requires that, other than in certain circumstances, for 0.4 hectares of employment land provision to be provided for each 100 homes delivered at Tier 1 and 2 settlements and in Tier 3 and 4 settlements, 0.1 hectares for each 25 homes. Absent an understanding of the specific employment land requirements for the District, there can be no certainty that this level of employment land provision is required.
- 9.3 In this regard, the Cherwell Group note that para. 23 of the NPPF states ***“strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward...this includes planning for and allocating sufficient sites.”***
- 9.4 As outlined in para. 3.57 of the consultation Local Plan, the employment land requirements will be determined by the forthcoming Economic Development Needs Assessment. That work will ***“understand current and potential future requirements. Based on PPG 2019, it will assess the stock of employment land, pattern of supply and loss, market demand, wider market signals and any evidence of market failure, in East Devon district. The EDNA will translate employment and output forecasts into related offices, industry and warehousing land need. Then by taking account of existing supply, it can identify any shortfall in supply compared to District need.”***
- 9.5 Consequently, the Economic Needs Assessment should be used to identify what employment land is required over the Plan period and where it is best located. Through the plan-making process, the Local Planning Authority is therefore able to ensure that a sufficient quantum of employment land provision is allocated at each settlement to secure a sustainable pattern of development. It is therefore inappropriate and unnecessary for the Policy to concern residential allocations proposed within the Plan. Should adequate provision be made, which, as set out above, is a requirement of the NPPF, then it is questionable as to whether the application of the Policy for allocated sites ***serves a clear purpose.***
- 9.6 As indicated above, part of the role of the Economic Development Needs Assessment will be to consider existing employment sites and pipeline supply. It is therefore instructive to note that the most recently available Employment Land Review for the year ending 31st March 2021, which was published in Spring 2022, indicates that 103.45ha of employment land is currently available. Based on the ratio of 1ha for each 250 homes, which is proposed for Tier 1 and 2 settlements, a sufficient quantum of employment land is currently available to support more than 25,850 homes. This is a level of housing that is significantly above the objectively assessed need for East Devon. We therefore question, given the existing availability of employment land provision, whether the policy is required in any event.
- 9.7 The only exceptions to the emerging Policy requirement are as follows:
- “Specific employment only allocations at that settlement provide a quantum of employment***



land that exceeds the ratio of 0.25 hectares of employment land per 100 houses allocated (0.1 hectares per 25 homes) when taking into account firstly total quantum needs generated by the level of housing allocations proposed for a settlement in the local plan and in addition to this the quantum needs generated by the proposed scheme.

It can be clearly demonstrated that off-site provision of employment land at a settlement and at a quantum to meet or exceed above thresholds, will be delivered and is better located to meet needs.

The nature of the housing being proposed (for example elderly person housing) will not generate the need for employment provision.

The site, by way of non-typical characteristics or clear constraints, is wholly unsuited to provide for employment needs."

- 9.8 Additionally, where sufficient viability or other evidence precludes the employment provision sought, developers will be required to make a financial contribution for off-site employment provision to a comparable degree.
- 9.9 Whilst it is appreciated that the intention of the policy is to secure sustainable patterns of development and settlement self-containment, its current approach is too rigid in its application.
- 9.10 In the adopted Local Plan, Strategy 31 seeks 1ha of employment land for each 250 homes, which is the same equivalent ratio to that proposed. However, Strategy 31 applies only to large scale major housing proposals, which is a scale of development that should be strategically planned for. It is also more positively worded as it does not include a list of specific exceptions, it simply adds that ***"employment land evidence will be taken into account on suitability of existing available and unused or underused employments sites and the ability of these to meet the needs for proposed development"***.
- 9.11 This adopted policy approach is much more flexible than that proposed and has better regard for existing and underutilised employment land. There appears to be no rationale for changing the approach. Indeed, this approach is more consistent with Government policy for calculating employment land requirements and the approach advocated in para. 3.57 of the Plan.
- 9.12 Other elements that the Cherwell Group suggest that the Local Planning Authority consider include:
- The changing nature of employment and the role of the internet and home working.
 - Accessibility to existing employment uses and major centres, including public transport opportunities, or active travel.
 - Uses other than employment that contribute to sustainable neighbourhoods.
 - Differing employment densities from varying employment uses.

Strategic Policies 27 and 28 – Climate Zero and Net Zero Carbon Development

- 9.13 We appreciate East Devon have a target to become carbon neutral by 2040, in line with a 'Climate Emergency' declared by the Council in 2019. Strategic Policy 28 seeks all new residential development to deliver net-zero carbon emissions. Developers are expected to



submit a carbon statement to demonstrate how this will be achieved. In addition homes are to be future proofed to avoid temperature discomfort and there is also a requirement for major developments to calculate the whole life-cycle carbon emissions through a nationally recognised Assessment.

- 9.14 As set out in the NPPF²⁹, the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. However, any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards. Moreover, the PPG³⁰ confirms that:

"The National Planning Policy Framework expects local planning authorities when setting any local requirement for a building's sustainability to do so in a way consistent with the government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards. Local requirements should form part of a Local Plan following engagement with appropriate partners, and will need to be based on robust and credible evidence and pay careful attention to viability. In this respect, planning authorities will need to take account of government decisions on the Housing Standards Review when considering a local requirement relating to new homes."

- 9.15 The PPG also confirms that locally set energy performance standards should not exceed the equivalent of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and for policies to impose reasonable requirements for a proportion of energy used in development to be from renewable and/or low carbon energy sources³¹.
- 9.16 The Cherwell Group are aware that the Government has, for residential development, established a clear road map for achieving zero carbon ready homes. This is set out in the 'Future Homes Standards', which is due to be implemented in 2025. The Future Homes Standards will require carbon emissions produced by new homes to be 75-80% lower than those built to current standards. Any new homes built under these new Building Regulations standards will therefore need to be zero carbon ready, which means that they will immediately be able to benefit from the decarbonisation of the electricity grid.
- 9.17 Given the above, whilst the Local Planning Authority's proposed approach is commendable, there is a clear disconnect between emerging Strategic Policy 28, which requires all developments to be net zero carbon immediately and to maximise opportunities for renewable energy, and the Government's forthcoming Building Regulation standards and policy, which require a new home to be zero carbon ready and for requirements for renewable energy to be reasonable. Accordingly, as drafted Strategic Policy 28 cannot be considered as being **consistent with national policy**.
- 9.18 Notwithstanding the above, as set out in para. 9.13 of these Representations, national policy expects any local requirements relating to such matters to be consulted upon, based on robust and credible evidence and be subject of viability testing. Consequently, whatever standards are adopted in future iterations of the Plan, their costs should be properly reflected in a viability assessment, which is subject of consultation.
- 9.19 As set out above, the emerging Strategic Policy also requires a consideration of temperature discomfort. Again, this is a matter controlled by Building Regulations³² and therefore we

²⁹ Para. 152.

³⁰ Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 6-009-20150327, National Planning Practice Guidance, Climate Change, 27th March 2015.

³¹ Paragraph: 0012 Reference ID: 6-012-20190315, National Planning Practice Guidance, Climate Change, 15th March 2019.

³² Overheating: Approved Document O, which took effect on 15th June 2022.



question whether the inclusion of this element of the policy *serves a clear purpose*.

- 9.20 The Cherwell Group also note that emerging Strategic Policy 28 requires the in-use performance of a building to be as close to its design intent as possible. Para. 7.6 suggests that the performance gap could be monitored by requiring 10% of buildings on major development to send energy performance and carbon emissions data to the Local Planning Authority for a period of five years. A similar requirement exists in the Cranbrook Plan, but discussions have been held with the Local Planning Authority about: (1) how a developer could compel a homeowner to provide the information; (2) how the Local Planning Authority would process and manage that data and what steps they would take if a performance gap existed; and (3) the implications on homeowners if remedial action was required. The Cherwell Group echo these concerns and consider the Buildings Regulation process to be sufficient.

Strategic Policy 33 – Heat Networks

- 9.21 Emerging Strategic Policy 33 as worded requires all major developments within 1km of an existing heat network to secure connection to that network and where no heat network currently exists, a new heat network will be required for proposals above 1,200 homes.
- 9.22 Unlike Strategy 40 of the 2016 Local Plan, no flexibility is provided. Unless there is certainty over the feasibility of a viable connection to a heat network (i.e. it is in the control of the Local Planning Authority), it could, in certain circumstances, result in developments becoming unviable and/or undeliverable and therefore *ineffective*. Flexibility should therefore be introduced into the Policy.
- 9.23 In this regard we draw attention to para. 9.116 of the ‘East Devon – Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement’ Report which confirms that decentralised dwelling level systems have the lowest capital expenditure, mainly due to the costs associated with the underground infrastructure required to serve neighbourhood wide solutions. We also note that at para. 9.16 of the same Report, an electric load calculation for the new town is provided. It makes the assumption that all new homes will be electrically heated via air source heat pumps, rather than a district heat network.

Policy 40 – Affordable Housing

- 9.24 Table 1 of Policy 40 proposes the following affordable housing requirements:
- Second new town – at least 15%; and
 - Rest of East Devon (excluding Cranbrook and other existing commitments) – at least 35%.
- 9.25 No viability work has been provided with the consultation version of the Local Plan to assess whether these affordable housing levels are viable propositions. This will need to be undertaken in due course to ensure that the Plan is *deliverable* and therefore *effective*.
- 9.26 Differing tenure levels are provided for the second new town and the remainder of East Devon. The Local Planning Authority will have to satisfy themselves that the requirements of para. 65 of the NPPF can be achieved. We note that as drafted, this will not occur for the second new town. Consequently, the Local Planning Authority are likely to have to demonstrate that this would significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.



- 9.27 Other than where it is demonstrated that the proposal would be unviable, the tenure requirements for the remainder of East Devon are fixed. Whilst responding to para. 65 of the NPPF and the May 2021 Written Ministerial Statement, consideration should be given to allowing for other forms of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF, to come forward.
- 9.28 The mix of property sizes and types outlined in limb 4 of the emerging Policy is acknowledged. However, this reflects needs as established in the latest Housing Needs Assessment. The policy test should be clear that up-to-date evidence, including information contained within updates of the Housing Needs Assessment, may demonstrate an alternative mix is more appropriate.
- 9.29 The Cherwell Group note that limb d of Policy 40 states that ***“the Council will also reappraise viability on subsequent phases of large schemes.”*** Other than in circumstances where policy compliant levels of affordable housing cannot be achieved, there should be no need for further review mechanisms. Para. 34 of the NPPF clearly states that plans should set out the expected contributions from development, which should include the levels and types of affordable housing. Consequently, it would be inappropriate and ***contrary to national policy*** to require a review mechanism for a policy compliant scheme.

Policy 41 – Housing to Meet the Needs of Older People

- 9.30 The Cherwell Group strongly oppose limb 6 of emerging Policy 41.
- 9.31 Using the second new town as an example, this requirement (20%) could, in the period up to 2040, equate to 500 specialist homes (being defined at limb 3 of the same Policy) being required. As the second new community only accounts for approximately 12% of the planned provision in the Local Plan, it is not considered to be a ***justified*** position. As no viability evidence has been provided it also risks the ***deliverability*** and therefore the ***effectiveness*** of the second new town, as well as other proposed residential allocations.
- 9.32 These requirements provide an additional obstacle to conventional residential development. As is the case with employment land, instead of properly planning where specialist accommodation for older people should come forward there is an automatic dependence on housing developers to contribute towards the overall level of specialist affordable accommodation needed. Indeed, the same policy states at para. 4 that suitable locations for specialist older person accommodation should be within 400m walking distance of local shops and easily accessible by walking or public transport to town centres and to health, care and community facilities. Whilst new housing allocations will be within sustainable locations, they will not necessarily meet these specific accessibility requirements, and as such the Council should consider specifically allocating specialist accommodation in the right locations, rather than relying on all housing allocations to deliver 20% specialist older person accommodation.

Policy 42 – Accessible and Adaptable Housing

- 9.33 The PPG³³ states that local planning authorities should set out how they intend to approach demonstrating the need for M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and/or M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings). It suggests a range of factors which should be taken into account, and which

³³ Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327, National Planning Practice Guidance, Optional Technical Standards, 27th March 2015.



include:

- 1) The likely future need for housing for older and disabled people (including wheelchair user dwellings);
- 2) The size, location, type and quality of dwellings needed to meet specifically evidenced needs (for example retirement homes, sheltered homes or care homes);
- 3) The accessibility and adaptability of existing housing stock;
- 4) How needs vary across different housing tenures; and
- 5) The impact on viability.

9.34 The evidence base supporting the Plan³⁴ suggests that the combined need for both Category M4(2) and M4(3) housing, having regard to the accessibility and adaptability of the existing housing stock, would be:

- Affordable Housing – 1,047 dwellings; and
- Market – 4,072 dwellings.

9.35 The assessment work concludes that *“the evidence suggests that East Devon should plan for a minimum of 30% of the LHN to be both M4(2) Category 2 or M4(3) Category 3 housing.”*

9.36 However, as drafted, the emerging Local Plan seeks all new dwellings to meet Category M4(2) Building Regulation standards, with at least 10% of all market and affordable housing being built to Category M4(3) standards. For the reasons set out above, this is not a *justified* proposition.

9.37 Future iterations of the Plan should reduce the requirements of the emerging Policy.

Policy 43 – Market Housing Mix

9.38 The Cherwell Group object to emerging Policy 43. The needs of those looking to purchase an open market home or rent privately, are often difficult to predict and in many cases are financially driven, rather than being reflective of the most appropriate property size for that household. Accordingly, and unlike for affordable housing provision, it is considered that the market housing mix is most appropriately left to developers to determine, having regard to the location, site characteristics and market conditions at the time that the site is brought forward.

Policy 44 – Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

9.39 The Cherwell Group commend the Local Planning Authority for seeking to increase the supply of self and custom build housing within the District.

9.40 They are however concerned with the implications of limbs b and c of the emerging Policy. For large, strategic sites, which are often subject of phasing, it could be impractical to provide road access at an early stage of the development or to make the self-build provision available for sale before 50% of the dwellings on the site have been commenced. A more practical approach would be to require a developer to make available the self and custom housebuilding for sale before 50% of the dwellings had commenced in a phase containing self and custom build housing.

³⁴ Figure 70, East Devon Local Housing Needs Assessment.



Strategic Policy 56 – Town Centres

- 9.41 The Cherwell Group note that emerging Strategic Policy 8 requires the first phase of a new town centre in the period up to 2040. Consideration should therefore be given to including reference to this new town centre in the wording of emerging Strategic Policy 56.

Policy 62 – Design and Local Distinctiveness

- 9.42 Limb 6 of emerging Policy 62 requires all new residential developments to meet the nationally described space standards. No evidence is provided within the emerging Plan, or its accompanying evidence base, to justify the requirement of these optional standards. This falls short of the evidence required by national planning policy³⁵. At the present time, the Policy is therefore *unjustified* and *inconsistent with national policy*.

Policy 63 – Density

- 9.43 The Cherwell Group note that through emerging Policy 63 of the Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority intends to set minimum density standards. Whilst the intent is to make effective use of land, often density standards impede good design. The density of development should be the outcome of a detailed design process and not the starting point.
- 9.44 The Policy also requires all major development proposals and developments in environmentally or heritage sensitive locations to be supported by a Design Code. This element of the Policy should be reconsidered. As currently worded, it would suggest that a design code is required for a ten dwelling scheme, or a scheme of less than ten dwellings, if the site is within a sensitive location. Significant time and resources are required in preparing and agreeing design codes, adding a financial burden and potential delays to development. It is an unreasonable policy burden to require them for non-strategic sites.
- 9.45 The implication of the requirement for a Design Code will also need to be reflected in the forthcoming viability work. Often local planning authorities will use design codes to ensure high-quality materials are used.

Policy 68 – Parking

- 9.46 Policy 68 requires all new residential developments to provide electric vehicle charging points in accordance with Building Regulations standards. As this policy requirement duplicates Building Regulations, it *does not serve a clear purpose*. It is therefore *inconsistent with national policy* and should be removed from future iterations of the Plan.

Strategic Policy 72 – Digital Connectivity

- 9.47 The Strategic Policy confirms that planning permission will not be granted for new development unless the scheme provides access to superfast broadband and high-quality communications.
- 9.48 However, as of the 26th December 2022, developers are required, through Approved Document R of the Building Regulations, to provide: (1) gigabit-ready physical infrastructure necessary for gigabit-capable connections up to a network distribution point, or as close as is reasonably practicable where the developer does not have the right to access land up to that distribution

³⁵ Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 56-020-20150327, National Planning Practice Guidance, Optional Technical Standards, 27th March 2015.



point; and (2) subject to a costs cap, a functioning gigabit-capable connection.

- 9.49 As such it is considered that the policy requirement duplicates Building Regulations and therefore it *does not serve a clear purpose*. Accordingly, it *conflicts with national policy* and should be removed from future iterations of the Plan.

Policy 87 – Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.50 Policy 87 requires development proposals to result in a biodiversity net gain of at least 20%. This is to be calculated in accordance with best practice and local and national guidelines. The Cherwell Group object to this level of biodiversity net gain, which, for the reasons set out below, they considered to be *unjustified* and could potentially result in an *ineffective* Plan. Their concerns, which are set out below, are as follows:

- 1) Consistency with national policy;
- 2) Practical implications on developments;
- 3) Viability; and
- 4) Consistency with evidence.

Consistency with National Policy

- 9.51 Any requirement that was higher than the minimum 10% would result in a conflict with the Environment Act, which seeks a 10% biodiversity net gain. Should a higher level be advocated, it would lead to a situation where planning applications could be refused on the grounds of the local policy framework, despite according with national legislation.
- 9.52 It should also be noted that the mandatory net gain requirement proposed by the Environment Act is expressed as a minimum. As is demonstrated in Table 5 below, applications have been submitted in East Devon which provide a higher net gain than the minimum requirements.

Practical Implications on Developments

- 9.53 Policy CB26 of the recently adopted Cranbrook Plan requires, amongst other things, developments at Cranbrook to deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 9.54 Pursuant to the Cranbrook Plan, planning application 22/1532/MOUT was submitted to East Devon District Council in July 2021. As set out in the Planning Statement Addendum, the application, which was made on a site measuring 91.28ha, provided the following green infrastructure provision:

Table 5 – Green Infrastructure Provision Included in Application 22/1532/MOUT

Land Use	Area (Ha)
Sports Hub	7.29
Indicative Attenuation Basins	3.69
Public Open Space	15.25
SANGS	19.46



Allotments	0.61
TOTAL	46.3

9.55 The application therefore proposes that approximately 51% of the site will come forward as green infrastructure provision. Excluding the sports hub, this would reduce to 43%. Despite this generous level of green infrastructure provision, the metric provided with the application demonstrates that the following biodiversity net gains will be provided:

Table 6 – Biodiversity Net Gain Proposed in Application 22/1532/MOUT

Unit Type	Onsite Baseline Units	Onsite Post-Development Units	Net Unit Change	Percentage Change
Habitat	214.58	240.08	+25.5	+11.88
Hedgerow/Linear	161.63	182.03	+20.41	+12.63
River/Stream	5.68	9.15	+3.47	+61.14

9.56 The table demonstrates that despite providing over half the site as green infrastructure, other than for river/stream units, the application would fall well short of the emerging policy requirement contained within the consultation version of the Local Plan.

9.57 The principal reason for the lower than expected outcome is due to the way that Natural England and the Local Planning Authority require SANGS to be treated within the metric. The applicants were unable to include the full net gain to be provided from SANGS land. Instead, they were only able to include the additionality from the SANGs land, beyond that required to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on Habitat Sites.

9.58 Consequently, to have achieved a higher biodiversity net gain outcome, it would have been necessary for the applicant to have reduced the quantum of development from the application site and increase the provision of green infrastructure.

9.59 The lessons learnt from planning application 22/1532/MOUT should be carefully considered by the Local Planning Authority when considering the most appropriate level of net gain to be included in the emerging Local Plan, particularly as the emerging Local Plan seeks to focus development within the Western Side of East Devon, which will also have to provide similar mitigation. Should the 20% level remain in future versions of the Local Plan, it could necessitate additional land to be identified to deliver the objectively assessed need for housing, or an



increase in density. Both could result in undesirable outcomes.

Viability

9.60 A net gain requirement of 20% will have direct and indirect impacts on development viability. Work undertaken by Swale Borough Council has demonstrated that a 20% Net Gain requirement would add c.19% to the net gain costs.

9.61 In addition, and as outlined above, any increase over that required by the Environment Act would impact on the quantum of developable land, which could worsen the viability of development proposals.

9.62 For the above reasons, Section 6.11.2 of the DEFRA 'Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Impact Assessment' concluded that:

"While this suggests that varying the level of net gain between 5% and 20% has very limited impact on the outcome, there is a trade-off between cost implications for developers and the likelihood of net gain being delivered at a national level (e.g. less costly/likely at 5% net gain compared to 10%, and vice versa for 20%). Our chosen policy approach, which sets out that 10% is the right level to demonstrate net gain, considers this trade-off among other issues."

9.63 No viability work has been provided with the emerging Local Plan consultation at the present time. To ensure that the allocations proposed within the Plan are **deliverable** and therefore **effective**, the viability implications of this higher net gain should be fully considered.

Consistency with Evidence

9.64 As set out in Section 10 of these Representations, Table 3.1 of the 'East Devon – Options Appraisal for a Potential New Settlement' Report confirms that the assessment was undertaken on the basis of a 10% biodiversity net gain requirement, rather than the 20% contained within the emerging policy.

Policy 97 – Open Space and Recreation

9.65 The Cherwell Group have the following concerns about emerging Policy 97:

- The Policy is silent on whether the second new town will be considered as being an urban or rural location;
- The standards are far in excess of the standards secured in the Cranbrook Plan (e.g. limb 4 of Policy CB3); and
- The requirements for outdoor sports provision should be determined through the forthcoming Playing Pitch Strategy.

Viability

9.66 The emerging Local Plan includes a number of strategic allocations. Whilst at the present time, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan has not been prepared to support the emerging Local Plan, a number of emerging policies contain requirements that will have financial implications on development. Such requirements include:

- The requirement for net-zero carbon development and the need to maximise the use of renewable energy;
- The requirement, in certain circumstances, to connect to a heat network;



- Levels of affordable housing;
- The need to include specialist housing for older people;
- The requirements for accessible and adaptable housing;
- The prescriptive housing market mix;
- Self and custom build housing;
- Employment skills strategy;
- Higher construction costs resulting from the requirement for Design Codes;
- Nationally described space standards;
- Electric vehicle charging points;
- Digital infrastructure;
- Biodiversity net gain;
- Open space and sports provision;
- Transport mitigation;
- Social and community infrastructure;
- Gypsy and Traveller provision; and
- Mitigation for internationally protected sites.

9.67 The NPPF³⁶ establishes that Plans should set out the contributions expected from developments and that such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the Plan. To ensure that the allocations proposed within the Plan are deliverable propositions and therefore are effective, the financial implications of these policy requirements should be considered in a detailed viability assessment.

9.68 The Cherwell Group note that there are a number of instances where the emerging Policy requirements go beyond those set out within the Cranbrook Plan. The Local Planning Authority will be aware of the protracted discussions concerning the viability of the Expansion Areas and the implications that the requirements had on the level of affordable housing provision. For similar developments, including the second new town, it is possible that as the emerging policy requirements are greater than the Cranbrook Plan, there could be a need for a lower level of affordable housing provision to be adopted.

9.69 We also note that the Expansion Areas at Cranbrook attract a CIL rate of £0 per sq.m. Infrastructure is instead funded through Section 106 planning obligations. The Local Planning Authority should confirm whether CIL will be applicable for the second new community (and other proposed allocations) at the next stage of the plan-making process.

³⁶ Para. 34.



10 Evidence Base

10.1 As has been demonstrated in the previous Sections of this Representation, the Cherwell Group are generally supportive of the emerging Local Plan, including the proposed second new community. However, they do have a number of concerns relating to the evidence base underpinning the Plan. Their main concerns primarily relate to the 'East Devon – Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement' Report. However, they also have more minor concerns in relation to the Plan's Sustainability Appraisal and the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. These concerns are outlined in turn below.

East Devon – Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement' Report

10.2 The 'East Devon – Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement' Report rightfully concludes that of the options assessed, Option 1 (land to the north of the A3052 and to the south of the A30) is the preferred option. However, the Cherwell Group consider that for the reasons set out below, the assessment work underscores Option 1 and overscores Option 3 (land to the south of the A3052). The revised assessment work undertaken on behalf of the Cherwell Group therefore indicates that Option 1 outperforms Option 3 by a more significant margin.

10.3 The Cherwell Group's revised assessment work is set out below and follows the assessment categories set out in the original Report. It only re-assesses Options 1 and 3, as Option 2 was discounted in the evidence work.

Landscape Sensitivity

10.4 The 'Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for New Community East of Exeter' Report prepared by Fiona Fyfe Associates Ltd concludes that ***"The lowest levels of sensitivity are found to the west-central part of the Area of Search around the A3052."*** This Report goes on to note that ***"...overall Option 3 is preferable in terms of landscape sensitivity. However, this option contains land of varying sensitivity, and therefore not all land within Option 3 will be suitable for development in landscape terms."***

10.5 The author recommends that in fact neither Option 1 nor 3 should be brought forward, but that instead a combination of the southern part of Options 1, i.e. land promoted by the Cherwell Group at Axehayes Farm and its immediate surrounds, and land to the north of Option 3, should be combined to create ***"...a new Western Option."***

10.6 Work by Urban Wilderness (UW) to evaluate landscape capacity broadly corroborates the findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. UW concur that land to the centre west of the study area is indeed the least sensitive in landscape terms, and that sensitivity increases as one travels east.

10.7 UW however conclude that land to the immediate south of the A30 (northern part of LLU A) should be considered of medium sensitivity due to its proximity to the A30, and Exeter Airport, and the influence that these elements exert over the landscape. Moreover, development visible on higher land is not untypical of the wider landscape, and that with sensitive design and structural planting this could be accommodated. The way in which LLU boundaries have been determined does not however allow for this finer grain of assessment. Consequently UW consider that LLU A should in fact be divided into two separate areas and assessed independently in a similar fashion to LLU G and LLU I.



- 10.8 UW also conclude that a broader proportion of LLU G to the south should be considered of High – Medium sensitivity due to the availability of distant views, its openness, its proximity to Clyst St George and its rural character.
- 10.9 On balance UW are of the opinion that Option 1 and 3 should score equally and concur that an option that explores the southern part of Option 1 and the northern part of Option 3 should be explored further.

Ecological Impact/Biodiversity

- 10.10 In the absence of any detailed ecological assessment work for large parts of Option 1 and for Option 3, no amendments are proposed to the original assessment's scoring for both Options in respect of ecological impact/biodiversity.
- 10.11 Notwithstanding the above, we note the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal³⁷ in respect of Option 3, which afforded Option 3 a major negative score ***"given its proximity to the Exe Estuary and greater overall risk to the ecological network."***

Flood Risk

- 10.12 The original Assessment work, for flood risk, concludes for both Options 1 and 3 that they would result in a ***"low to medium flood risk that can be reduced by well designed and implemented drainage and water mitigation strategies."*** Both Options were therefore scored 4.
- 10.13 Work by Calibro has suggested that the access from the A3052 required to deliver Option 3 would need to traverse a large area of floodplain (in excess of 150m). They conclude that delivering this access could require significant engineering works. It is likely that the Environment Agency will seek for minimum works to be included within the floodplain, so a wide clear-span bridge with intermediate supporting piers may be required for some of its length. Openings would need to be at least 0.3m but could be up to 0.6m above the flood level. Road construction is likely to be a further metre but could be higher to allow for buried services.
- 10.14 Whilst watercourse crossings will be required to deliver Option 1, the watercourses flow through much narrower well-defined valleys, so the crossing would be much shorter.
- 10.15 On the basis of the above, Calibro conclude that Option 3 is more constrained by flood risk than the original Assessment work suggests and should be downgraded to a 3, rather than a 4. The mitigation works required for its access could also have implications for other assessment categories, including landscape sensitivity and ecological impact.

Minerals

- 10.16 An assessment of the impact that Options 1 and 3 would have on mineral resources was provided in Section 6 of the original Report. Option 1 was afforded a score of 3, whilst Option 3 scored 5.
- 10.17 As set out in Table 6.5 of the Assessment, Option 1's reduced score reflects the Mineral's Safeguarding Zone within Hill Barton Business Park (Policy M2 of the Devon Minerals Plan) and the established strategic waste facility within the same Business Park (Policy W10 of the Devon Waste Plan).
- 10.18 In both instances the designations and their uses are geographically limited to the Hill Barton

³⁷ Page 222.



Business Park. As set out in para. 3.14 of the Report, the Hill Barton Business Park was excluded from the land take required to deliver the new community. Whilst this is not entirely reflected in Figure 3.3 of the Assessment, it clearly should have been.

10.19 Consequently, the score for Option 1 should be improved by a further 2 points.

Historic Environment

10.20 At the present time, the Cherwell Group do not provide any comment relating to the impact that either Option could have on designated heritage assets. They note that the conclusions presented in the Options Assessment mirrors the conclusions with the Sustainability Appraisal, which itself concludes³⁸ that:

“...all Options are likely to have minor negative effect due to potential impact upon the setting of designated heritage assets.”

10.21 We also note that, as set out in the Technical Note provided at Appendix 2, there is only one Grade II Listed Building within Option 1 and three Grade II Listed Buildings within Option 3. As there are three times the number of designated heritage assets in Option 3, it follows that there is a greater chance of harming the significance of designated assets in Option 3, than Option 1. Therefore whilst the scoring of both Options within this Representation mirrors the Options assessment, it could be argued that Option 3 should score lower than Option 1.

10.22 Given the above, the historic environment scoring from the original assessment work has been used within the revised assessment.

Sustainable Accessibility

10.23 Section 7 of the CBRE report provides scores for the 4 assessment categories: namely, walking, cycling, public transport and proximity to employment.

Walking

10.24 The reports acknowledges that pedestrian infrastructure is presently limited as all three options are in a predominantly rural area. However, there are footways along the A3052 to the west of the Cat and Fiddle, which the report states are in the *“immediate vicinity of all three options”*. Whilst It is true that these footways are within close proximity to Option1 and the western part of Option 2, they are not close to the bulk of Option 3 with only the extreme northern part of this Option located within walking distance. The A376 and B3179 (Woodbury Road) relate better to the bulk of Option 3 and do not have footways.

10.25 The Report also states that the proposed Clyst Valley Trail (CVT) is within the vicinity of Options 1 and 3. However, it is considered that Option 1 is better located for pedestrian access to the CVT in terms of distance and the ability to use existing routes such as Bishops Court Road. Option 3 is located further from the CVT and is separated by the A376, which would need to be safely crossed to access this route.

10.26 Therefore, it is hard to fathom how Option 3 scores higher than Option 1 for walking (by 4 to 3). It is suggested that Option 1 should score higher than Option 3.

³⁸ Page 223.



Cycling

- 10.27 Again, the report acknowledges that cycling infrastructure is presently limited in the area but states that Option 3 is close (within 1.5km) of National Cycle Route 2 (NCN2). This may be correct but fails to mention that cyclists will have to cross the A376 and travel along Topsham Road to access this route. NCN22 is not immediately adjacent to Option 3 and so is not as convenient as the cycling score (4) suggests. This is noted in the Sustainability Appraisal³⁹.
- 10.28 As already noted, it is our view that Option 1 is better located for the CVT, which will provide a direct, safe, green route to employment centres at the Science Park, Sky Park, and close access to Exeter Business Park and Sowton Industrial Estate. In addition, there is a traffic-free/advisory cycle route to the north of the A3052 from Westpoint that provides a route to Digby and Sowton train station and connects with other routes leading into Exeter City centre.
- 10.29 Therefore, it is difficult to comprehend why Option 3 scores higher than Option 1 for cycling (by 4 to 3). It is suggested that Option 1 and Option 3 should have similar scores for cycling (4 each).

Public Transport

- 10.30 The Report states that whilst *“all three options have a good level of existing connectivity by bus”*, high-quality public transport provision will be needed for all options.
- 10.31 The Report identifies that there are already bus services along the A3052. It is worth noting that these stops are located within 500m of the centre of land at Axehayes Farm, and that two Planning Inspectors have found the location to be *“well related in sustainability terms”* in recent Appeal decisions.
- 10.32 The Report states that Options 1 and 3 are well related to train stations located on the Avocet railway line and in Exeter itself.
- 10.33 Therefore, again it is difficult to see why Option 3 scores higher than Option 1 for public transport (by 5 to 4). Given it is acknowledged that services will need to be improved for all options, it is suggested that Option 1 and Option 3 should both score 4 for public transport.

Revised Scoring

- 10.34 Given the above, it is suggested that the Sustainable Accessible assessment category scores should be adjusted as shown below for the three categories (walking, cycling and public transport).

Table 7: Sustainable Accessibility Revised Assessment

Assessment Category	EDDC Option 1	Revised Option 1	EDDC Option 3	Revised Option 3
Walking	3	4	4	3
Cycling	3	4	4	4
Public Transport	4	4	5	4

³⁹ Page 230.



Total	10	12	13	11
Difference		+2		-2

10.35 The above scoring would provide a better fit with the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal⁴⁰, which concludes that Option 1 as having major positive effect for connectivity and transport, with Option 3 only having a minor positive effect.

Highways

10.36 The modelling undertaken by WSP, which was approved by Devon County Council, identifies that Option 1 has a lesser adverse effect upon the surrounding highway network than Option 3. This is mainly due to the significant traffic impact that Option 3 has at the Clyst St Mary roundabout, and also at Junction 30 of the M5 motorway.

10.37 Various improvement options are identified in the report for the Clyst St Mary roundabout. Only two of these are deemed to be easily deliverable; namely the signalisation of the roundabout and the provision of a Park and Ride facility at Westpoint to reduce traffic flows through this junction. The latter could be provided on the Axehayes site as shown within the document provided at Appendix 1 of these Representations. Given this, the score for the impact of Option 1 at the Clyst St Mary roundabout should be increased to 4 (from 3) and the deliverability score similarly increased to 5 (from 4). Indeed, it is odd how Option 2 and 3 have been awarded the same scores for the Clyst St Mary roundabout even though Table 7 in the WSP Technical Note clearly states that Option 3 has the *"highest impact of the scenarios"*.

10.38 The Report states that the East of Exeter Network will only be affected by Option 2. However, this seems hard to believe given that Option 3 will be accessed from the A376 according to the WSP Technical Note (along with an access onto the A3052 and B3179) and so some of this traffic will undoubtedly route onto the road network to the east and south of Clyst St Mary (as defined in Section 8.40 of the CBRE Report). Given this, the score for both the impact and deliverability of Option 3 on the East of Exeter Network should be decreased to 4 (from 5).

Revised Scoring

10.39 The existing and revised scores for the Highways assessment category are shown below for the two categories identified above to reflect the findings of the Hydrock/WSP technical work more accurately.

Table 8: Highways Revised Assessment

Assessment Category	EDDC Option 1	Revised Option 1	EDDC Option 3	Revised Option 3
Clyst St Mary Roundabout	3/4 (7)	4/5 (9)	1/4 (5)	1/4 (5)
East of Exeter Network	5/5 (10)	5/5 (10)	5/5 (10)	4/4 (8)
Total	8/9 (17)	9/10 (19)	6/9 (15)	5/8 (13)
Difference		+2		-2

⁴⁰ Page 230.



Utilities

10.40 The Cherwell Group do not demure from the conclusions presented within Section 9 of the Assessment in relation to utilities.

10.41 We do note that there has been discussion about the development of an additional Bulk Supply Point to the north of Option 1, which will provide capacity for developments coming forward in the western side of East Devon⁴¹.

Net Zero Carbon

10.42 At this stage, the Cherwell Group consider that the scoring for net zero carbon is appropriate. That said, they question why para. 9.131 raises concerns about the proximity of Exeter Airport being a potential constraint for solar energy in Option 1. At Cranbrook, which is located adjacent to the Airport, solar photovoltaic solutions are actively promoted within the Development Plan⁴².

10.43 The Cherwell Group also note that Option 1 performed better than Option 3 in the Sustainability Assessment on minimising carbon emissions and for low carbon energy generation⁴³.

Climate Resilience

10.44 Appendix F of the Options Appraisal includes an assessment of each Option's resilience to climate change. Figures are provided within the assessment work. However, for each element of work the three options appear to be located to the north of the A3052 and to the south of the A30 (i.e. within Options 1 and 2). Consequently, the Cherwell Group are unsure as to whether the climate resilience work has assessed only sub-areas within Options 1 and 2 and not Option 3, or whether the figures presented within the work are inaccurate.

10.45 Given the above, the Cherwell Group reserved the right to comment on this work at subsequent stages of the plan-making process and have excluded climate resilience from their revised assessment work.

10.46 They do however note that the Sustainability Appraisal concluded that ***“Options 1 and 3 have similar overall climate resilience⁴⁴.”***

Deliverability

10.47 The Cherwell Group agree with the Assessment work in relation to deliverability. They also agree that land assembly concerns reflect valuable lessons learnt at Cranbrook. We are also aware that the promoters of Option 1 have a proven record of delivering complex sites. The Cherwell Group are willing to work with other developers with land within Option 1 to bring forward a comprehensive development.

Overall Score

10.48 The revised assessment work presented above would result in the following overall scores:

⁴¹ See paras. 41 and 42 of Cranbrook Plan PSD45.

⁴² Policy CB12.

⁴³ Page 224.

⁴⁴ Page 225.



Table 9: Options Appraisal Technical Assessment – Scoring Summary

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Landscape Sensitivity	2.5	2.5
Ecological Impact/Biodiversity	3.4	3
Flood Risk	4	3
Minerals	5	5
Historic Environment	3	3
Sustainable Accessibility	4.3	3.8
Highways	4.9	4.4
Utilities	3	2.3
Net Zero Carbon	3.3	3
Climate Resilience	-	-
Deliverability	4.5	2.5
TOTAL	37.9	32.5



10.49 This revised assessment work has been tested by UW on behalf of the Cherwell Group. As described in para. 4.1 of the Technical Note provided in Appendix 2 of these Representations, once the suitability maps provided in Figure 22 of the Local Planning Authority's assessment work are overlaid, the following conclusions can be reached:

- 1) Development to the west of the study area is more suitable for development than the east;
- 2) Land to the north of the A3052 (Option 1) has a higher intensity of colour than land to the south (Option 3). This demonstrates the conclusions presented above – that Option 1 is more suitable for development than Option 3 by a more considerable margin than is set out in the original Options Assessment;
- 3) Land to the east of Hill Barton Business Park, including land at Axehayes Farm, has a high level of suitability.

Other Concerns

10.50 The Cherwell Group note that in some cases the land budget assumptions included at Table 3.1 of the original assessment work differ to the emerging policy position as set out in the Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan. These differences are set out in the Table below.

Table 10: Comparison of the Land Budget Assumptions Contained within Table 3.1 of the Original Report with the Emerging Local Plan

Use	Options Assessment Assumptions	Local Plan Position
Employment	48ha	56ha
Retail	15ha	A 20ha town centre (which would be greater with the inclusion of neighbourhood centres).
Biodiversity Net Gain	10%	20%
Gypsy and Traveller	1ha	1.5ha*

*Using the size requirements set out in para. 2.2 of the East Devon Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout SPD, 2017. We are aware that at Cranbrook, the County Council requested 1,000sq.m per pitch, which would double the requirement to 3ha.

10.51 In each case the emerging policy position is larger than the land use budget contained within the



Assessment Report. Consequently, should the policy position for each development typology progress into subsequent versions of the Local Plan, there may be the need to allocate additional land.

Alternatives

- 10.52 Whilst the Cherwell Group are supportive of the Local Planning Authority's conclusions that Option 1 is the most appropriate location of the three Options considered to accommodate a new town, they commissioned UW to undertake a further assessment.
- 10.53 This work, which is presented in Section 4 of the Technical Note provided at Appendix 2 of these Representations, identifies that given the lead-in times associated with a new town, there will be the need for a high rate of delivery in the latter parts of the Plan period.
- 10.54 To provide additional development nodes and therefore construction outlets, the work provided at para. 4.3 of the Technical Note provided at Appendix 2 of these Representations suggests that a fourth Option should be considered, which blends Options 1 and 3. Such an Option would have the following principal benefits:
- It would include land that has been identified as being the least sensitive and the most suitable for development. With sensitive design, the A3052 could be incorporated into the new settlement;
 - This Option enables at least three, and possibly more, development nodes to deliver housing simultaneously. A greater rate of delivery should be achieved, which would help the Local Planning Authority demonstrate compliance with para. 73(d) of the NPPF;
 - It would enable the construction of a new link road between the A376 and the A30. This would alleviate pressure on Junction 29 and 30 of the M5 Motorway; and
 - Existing floodplains within the site present an opportunity for ecological mitigation and the additional land could enable an extension of the Clyst Valley Regional Park to the south.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

- 10.55 Land at Axehayes Farm was assessed in the HELAA as site GH/ED/52. The assessment work rightfully concludes that the site is suitable, available and achievable. The Cherwell Group agree with this conclusion. The work provided in the accompanying Vision Document (see Appendix 1) also demonstrates that this conclusion is appropriate.
- 10.56 Notwithstanding the above, the technical work undertaken by the Cherwell Group indicates that some of the site's suitability assessment work in the HELAA is overly cautious. These matters are set out below:
- **Heritage** – the HELAA assessment work concluded that the heritage sensitivity of the site is medium, as there is the potential for development to impact on Higher Holbrook Farm, which is a designated heritage asset. However, technical work prepared on behalf of the Cherwell Group by Orion Heritage concludes that “*there was no direct intervisibility between the built heritage assets within the 1km study area and the study site due to distance, vegetation and topography.*” Consequently, the development of Axehayes Farm would not impact on the significance of any designated asset, including Higher Holbrook Farm.
 - **Highways** – The HELAA Panel concluded that there was a need for significant



preparatory strategic highways improvements to allow for the site to be developed. This included delivering infrastructure to minimise impacts on Junctions 29 and 30 of the M5 Motorway. However, this conflicts with more recent evidence prepared on behalf of the Council⁴⁵ which concludes that *“development of 2,500 new homes up to the end of the Plan period could be accommodated without significant highways interventions.”*

10.57 These revised conclusions should be reflected in an updated HELAA assessment for the subject site and the other evidence base documents that the HELAA has influenced.

Sustainability Appraisal

10.58 The Cherwell Group have a number of concerns relating to the Sustainability Appraisal. These concerns relate to:

- The Sustainability Appraisal only considers a level of housing that is 20% higher than the objectively assessed need and no other alternatives;
- The work does not assess the correct distribution of development as proposed in Strategic Policy 2 of the emerging Local Plan; and
- A fourth option for the location of the new town should be considered.

10.59 Their concerns are set out in turn below.

Assessment of Alternative Levels of Housing Provision

10.60 As set out in Section 7 of these Representations, the Regulation 18 Sustainability Appraisal only considers two options for the level of future housing development within the District: (1) the objectively assessed need; and (2) the objectively assessed need plus a 20% uplift.

10.61 The Cherwell Group consider that an uplift of 20% over the objectively assessed need for housing is not a reasonable alternative. They suggest that future versions of the Sustainability Appraisal should consider a number of options for an uplift over the local housing need figure, including 5%, 10% and 15%. This will be an important consideration given that there are compelling reasons to consider an uplift (see Section 6 of these representations); the Sustainability Appraisal identifies significant benefits for some topic areas for applying and uplift; and that it has been assessed that any uplift up to 20% above the local housing need is a deliverable proposition.

Distribution of Development

10.62 Section 7 of these representations confirms that an assessment of the sustainability of four options for the distribution of the objectively assessed need for housing is provided on page 110 of the Sustainability Appraisal. Four options were considered, with Option A being selected as being the most appropriate.

10.63 However, as set out in Table 2 of these Representations, Option A does not reflect the distribution of development outlined in Strategic Policy 2. Accordingly, future versions of the Sustainability Appraisal should assess the distribution of development within the Policy.

Fourth Option for a Second New Town

10.64 As set out above, work undertaken on behalf of the Cherwell Group has indicated that a fourth

⁴⁵ Executive Summary, Options Appraisal Technical Assessment – Summary, 'East Devon – Options Appraisal for a Potential New Settlement,' 2022.



option for the location of the new town should be considered in future versions of the Sustainability Appraisal. The benefits associated with such an option are set out above.



11 Summary and Conclusions

11.1 The Representations above are submitted on behalf of the Cherwell Group, who control land at Axehayes Farm. The site is proposed for allocation as part of the proposed new town. It follows that the Cherwell Group are generally supportive of the Regulation 18 version of the Plan.

11.2 Notwithstanding the above, they have the following comments regarding the consultation version of the Plan:

- It is unlikely that the Local Plan will be adopted by 2025. If work on the preparation of the Local Plan extends beyond 2025, there will be an insufficient period after the adoption of the Plan and the proposed end of the Plan period. Consequently, it is likely that the Plan period will need to be extended by two years to 2042.
- The Local Plan should provide further contextual information regarding the 'directions of travel' which should be used to inform the Vision and Strategic Objectives.
- The Vision, which uses the short-term Vision contained within the Council Plan, cannot by definition, provide the necessary positive vision for the future of the area as required by Government policy.
- The Vision is silent on some of the matters referred to in the Strategic Objectives.
- The Cherwell Group are supportive of the Plan's proposed spatial strategy, which focuses growth in the western side of the District. This has been found to be the most sustainable strategy for accommodating development in East Devon in successive Local Plans.
- The distribution of development proposes to reduce the proportion of development directed to the western side of East Devon in comparison to the 2016 Local Plan. However, the level proposed reflects delivery rates in the West End from 2013.
- The distribution of development rightfully acknowledges that the District's towns and villages have their own development needs that should be met. In the context of the need to accommodate additional housing, there are opportunities at villages in the western side of East Devon, which have strong sustainable transport opportunities, to accommodate further development.
- The Local Plan correctly identifies that the local need for housing is 946 dwellings per annum.
- The evidence base rightfully concludes that there is no justification to plan for a lower level of housing than the local housing need figure (946 dwellings per annum), including proposed changes to Government policy.
- Additional housing beyond the local housing need figure could be required to: (1) support the growth strategy for the western portion of the District and the wider Functional Economic Area; (2) to address affordability and the need to provide additional affordable housing; (3) to help meet the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities, including Torbay and potentially Teignbridge; (4) noting the local housing need figure is lower than the housing provision in the 2016 Local Plan, to address the existing shortfall.
- The HELAA demonstrates that there is a theoretical supply of housing to meet a higher housing requirement.
- The flexibility allowance provided within the Plan should be increased to 10%.
- There is the potential for the double counting of windfall provision and allocations made in future neighbourhood plans could reduce windfall provision to below historic levels.
- The delivery anticipated from the new town is achievable over the Plan period, but would require multiple development nodes.



- There is no evidence to suggest that the quantum of Gypsy and Traveller pitches at the proposed new town is required. Their location should be carefully considered.
- Whilst the Cherwell Group is supportive of employment land provision being provided at the new town, the quantum proposed has not been justified.
- The town centre should be phased to after the Plan period. Local/neighbourhood centres should meet the needs of the settlement's residents in the initial phases.
- The new town will require social, community and education facilities.
- Land at Axehayes Farm, which is proposed to be allocated as part of the proposed new town is suitable and available and development could be achieved on the site.
- The Local Planning Authority needs to consider the most appropriate planning vehicle to bring forward the proposed new town and to consider how its supporting infrastructure will be funded. Viability will be a key consideration.
- A number of concerns are raised in relation to some of the proposed development plan policies, including: (1) mixed-use developments; (2) climate zero and net zero carbon development; (3) heat networks; (4) affordable housing; (5) housing for older people; (6) accessible and adaptable housing; (7) the market mix of housing; (8) self and custom build housing; (9) town centres; (10) design and local distinctiveness; (11) density; (12) parking; (13) digital connectivity; (14) biodiversity net gain; and (15) the viability of these policy requirements.
- A number of concerns are raised about the scoring of Options 1 and 3 in the 'East Devon - Options Appraisal for a potential New Settlement' Report. The revised assessment work undertaken by the Cherwell Group demonstrates that of the options assessed, Option 1 is the most appropriate location for the second new town and by a more considerable margin.
- A fourth option should be considered by the Local Planning Authority, which includes land to the north and south of the A3052.
- The HELAA assessment of land at Axehayes Farm is overly negative, particularly in respect of heritage and highways impacts.
- Future versions of the Sustainability Appraisal should: (1) assess the distribution of development proposed within the Plan; (2) the effects of a higher housing requirement should be considered (5%, 10% and 15% above the local housing needs); and (3) a fourth option for the proposed new town should be assessed, which should include land to the north and south of the A3052.



Appendix 1 – Vision Document



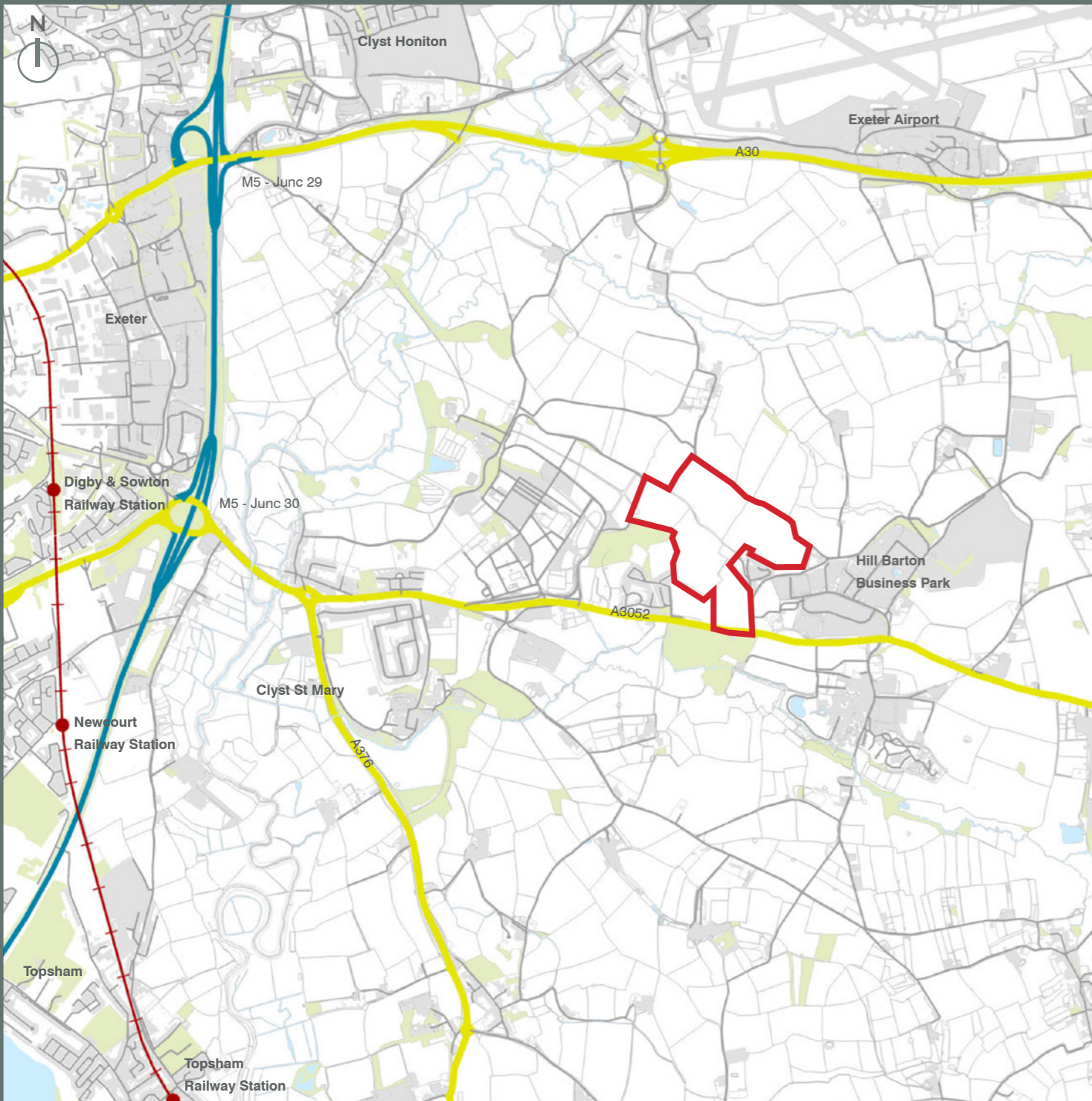
Axehayes Exeter



CHERWELL

GROUP

Jan 2023



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OUR VISION

To work with the landowner and their agents to create a development that is truly sustainable, which provides a framework for social inclusivity, and environmental stewardship, and which helps deliver continued economic prosperity for the region.



Axehayes

LANDSCAPE LED

This vision document describes our evolving thoughts with regards to the potential of the site at Axehayes.

The site is strategically located to support growth both now and in the longer term. It is capable of assisting in the short term delivery of a 5 year shortfall in housing but is also capable of coming forward as part of a new sustainable settlement to the east of Exeter. The site would assist in the delivery of a strategic road link between the A3052 and the A30, and benefits from direct links to the existing waste to energy development to the east of the site.

The site offers the opportunity to create a mixed use urban extension that would see new commercial development, bolstering and diversifying current employment uses at Hill Barton Business Park, high quality housing, and community facilities embedded within the site's landscape through a robust and interconnected Green Infrastructure network. Indeed, a generous Green Infrastructure corridor that threads through the site will sensitively integrate development into the landscape. It will afford an attractive setting to residents, workers and visitors alike, and will deliver Biodiversity net gain alongside excellent recreation opportunities.

We have evaluated the site's known constraints, characteristics and context, and have developed a vision for how the site could be developed sensitively within the landscape. We have also provided a high level evaluation with regard to how the site may be delivered.

Planning Context

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF indicates that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, with three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives. They should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans but are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged (paras. 7-9).

At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For place making this means that plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to meet the needs of the area; aligns growth and infrastructure; improves the environment; mitigates climate change and adapts to its effects. Strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

- (i) the application of policies within the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting development; or
- (ii) any adverse impact would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

The planning system should help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future (para. 81). Para. 82 states that planning policies should, amongst other things, identify strategic sites to meet anticipated needs over the plan period.

Para. 60 of the Framework requires that to significantly boost the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

Para. 73 confirms that the supply of new homes can often best be achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided that they are well located and designed and are supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities. In doing so, proposals should be informed by amongst other things:

- (1) opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure;
- (2) the area's economic potential;
- (3) that it will function as a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself;
- (4) clear expectations are set about the quality of the places to be created and that they meet the needs of the community; and
- (5) a realistic assessment of the likely rate of delivery is adopted.

Planning Context

It is the planning system's role to actively manage patterns of growth and significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable. This helps to reduce congestion and emissions and will improve air quality and public health (para. 105).

Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting development needs, whilst at the same time safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Amongst other things, the planning process should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and achieving opportunities to achieve net environmental gains (para. 120). Para. 98 of the NPPF also identifies the importance of providing access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity.

The planning system should also support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It should, inter alia, help to contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (para. 152). To increase the use and the supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-located potential heat customers and suppliers (para. 155).

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Existing Development Requirements and Spatial Strategy

The principal document in the Development Plan relevant to the development proposed within this document is the East Devon Local Plan 2013-31, which was adopted in January 2016. It establishes the overarching policy framework for East Devon. In doing so it confirms where development will take place and how the natural and built environment in the area will be protected and enhanced. Key strategic sites are identified in order to meet the development needs of the area.

Strategy 1 identifies a need for 17,100 dwellings across the Plan period, which equates to 950 dwellings per annum. Strategy 2 confirms that 10,563 dwellings (60%) of all new housing within the Local Authority area will be focused within the West End. The supporting text for Strategy 1 confirms that the West End will also be the focal point for economic development over the plan period.

Accordingly, the spatial strategy seeks to focus development closest to where jobs are likely to arise; where there is the greatest potential to secure increased public transport investment and usage; and close to where there is an existing sub-regionally important retail and cultural offering (Exeter). Development within this area also assists Exeter to realise its full potential as an economic and commercial centre.

Given the requirements of national planning policy at the time the Local Plan was written, this strategy for accommodating East Devon's needs must have been considered the most appropriate when considered against other reasonable alternatives.

The adopted Local Plan (2016) is undergoing a review. The Local Planning Authority published a Regulation 18 version of the emerging Local Plan in November 2022. The Plan will cover the period 2020 to 2040.

Planning Context

EMERGING LOCAL PLAN

The emerging Plan confirms that the latest assessment of housing need indicates that there is, as a minimum, a requirement to provide at least 18,920 dwellings over the plan period (946 dwellings per annum). At the time of writing the Economic Development Needs Assessment has not been completed and therefore the consultation version of the Plan does not contain an employment land requirement.

EXISTING GROWTH STRATEGY

Strategic Policy 1 confirms that the spatial strategy in the emerging Local Plan will broadly mirror the spatial strategy adopted in the 2016 Local Plan; the western side of East Devon is to continue to be the focus of development. Strategic Policy 2 confirms that 9,891 dwellings (54%) will be focused in this area of the District. The planned provision outlined in the same Policy confirms that a second new town will form part of the planned provision in the western side of East Devon.

Strategic Policy 8 of the emerging Local Plan provides the proposed policy framework for the second new town. It confirms that the new town will be a long-term strategic development that will be constructed over the course of this plan period and the next and on an agreed phase basis. It will accommodate:

New Homes

- Up to 2040 – around 2,500 dwellings; and
- Beyond 2040 – a further 5,500 additional dwellings.

The new homes will be constructed to the highest standards in terms of energy and resource efficiency, design quality and access to services and facilities.

Gypsy and Traveller Provision

- Up to 2040 – at least 15 pitches; and
- Beyond 2040 – at least 15 pitches.

Jobs

- Up to 2040 – around 17.5ha of E, B2 and B8 land; and
- Beyond 2040 – Around 38.5ha of E, B2 and B8 land.

Employment land will be made throughout the town to provide a range of business space suitable for the needs of businesses as they develop and grow. Land will also be allocated for other uses in addition to those set out above.

Town Centre

- Up to 2040 – the completion of 5ha of land for town centre uses that will include retail; and
- Beyond 2040 – the completion of a further 15ha of land for additional town centre development.

Planning Context

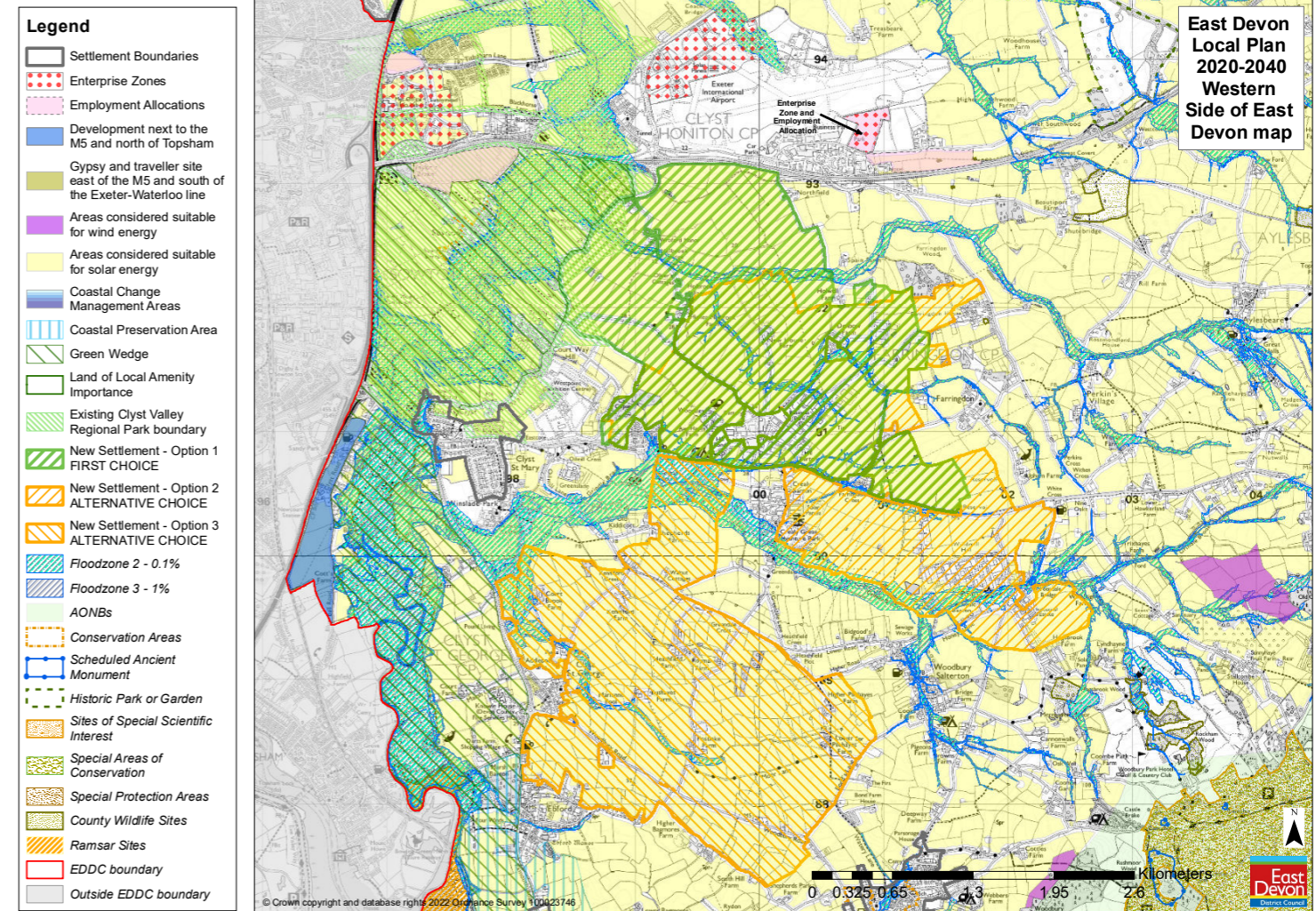
Social, Community and Educational Facilities

A full range of social, leisure, health, community and education facilities (including new schools). Around 23ha of land for education provision will be provided.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure provision including 254ha of green infrastructure. Further information on the infrastructure requirements will be set out in a Infrastructure Delivery Plan and will include transport and highways improvements, district heating connections, education provision, high speed broadband and other services.

The Policy Maps provided with the Regulation 18 consultation version of the Plan confirms that the land subject of this Vision Document is included as part of the Local Planning Authority's preferred location for the second new town.



East Devon Local Plan - Proposals Map

Evaluation of Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

INTRODUCTION

Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessments (LSCA) evaluate the scale and type of development to be accommodated without compromising landscape character (NPPF Planning Practice Guidance, 2021).

The report was commissioned by East Devon District Council (May 2022) and was prepared by Fiona Fyfe Associates (June to September 2022).

This study considers landscape sensitivity to three types of development: A) Residential, B) Employment / Commercial, and C) Large-scale Warehousing / Distribution

PURPOSE

The LSCA forms part of the evidence base for the new East Devon District Council Local Plan. Its purpose is to inform the sitting and design of a new community east of Exeter to meet additional housing requirements identified within the District.

METHODOLOGY

The Area of Search was divided into nine Local Landscape Units (LLUs). Desk studies and fieldwork were undertaken to consider a range of landscape and visual criteria for each LLU (*scale, landform, land cover, built environment, perceptual qualities, visual and landscape value*).

Each LLU was given a rating based on the susceptibility of key landscape and visual characteristics with regards to the three potential development types.

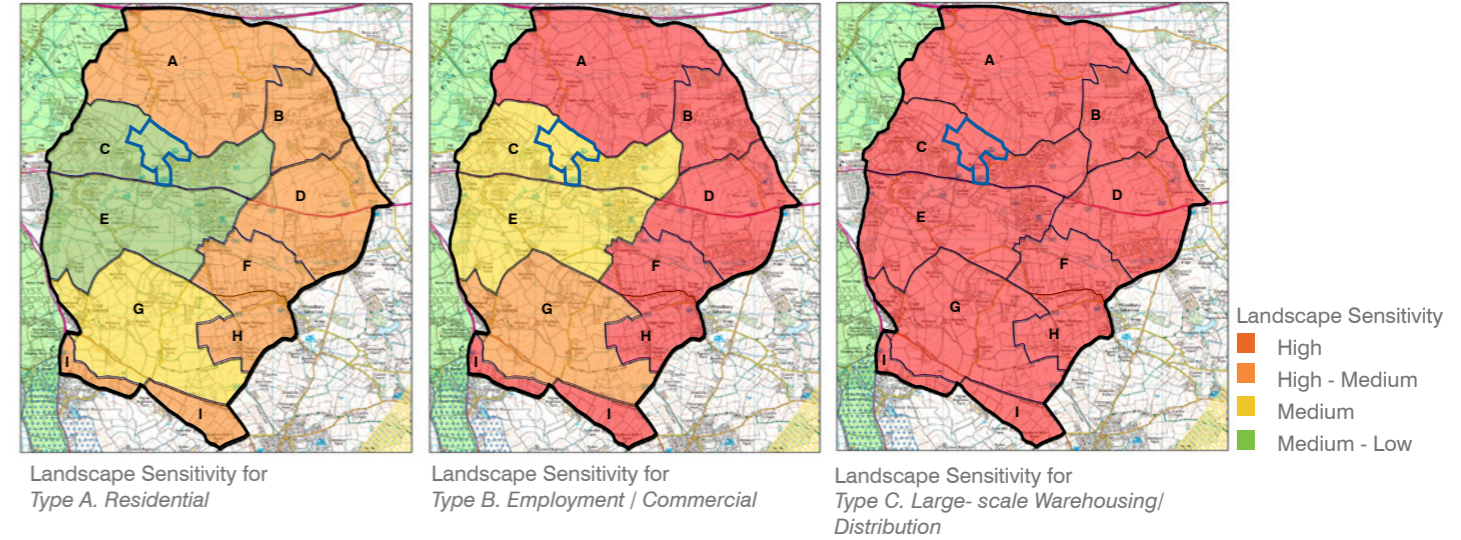
KEY FINDINGS

The Axehayes site lies within LLU C_Cat and Fiddle. This unit is of lower landscape sensitivity.

Site Characteristics

The site is characterised by its flat and gently undulating landform, thus relatively little modification would be needed to accommodate built development.

Pastoral fields and areas of grassland are contained by hedgerows and trees to the site boundaries, whilst the Cat Copse stands as a prominent landmark to the west.



An existing business park, residential chalet park, cattery and some permanent buildings associated with the County Showground together with the busy A3052 create a fragmented pattern of development within the immediate context of the site.

The low elevation of this Unit and the screening provided by surrounding mature woodland and hedgerows reduces the site's visibility from medium to long distance aspects.

The County Showground holds some value as a community resource, though the absence of footpaths and other recreational facilities within the LLU renders the development as being relatively isolated.

Scope for Development

This area is not considered suitable for warehouses/distribution, though potential lies in developing the site for residential and commercial purposes.

The busy A3052 highway is a key connecting route to Exeter, with strong associated infrastructure and public transport routes. It provides an opportunity to create green corridor links to existing and proposed housing in the wider setting of the site.

Some development of commercial use is advised due to the site's proximity to the neighbouring Hill Barton Business Park in the east. Supplementary tree planting should also be promoted to further screen key views of the development from the east.

New recreational, and sustainable transport routes, are also recommended.

Landscape Context

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL

This section of the document considers the baseline conditions for the site and its environs, including relevant designations, character assessments and preliminary descriptions of visual amenity.

Based on the information gathered, a series of recommendations have been constructed relating to the likely impacts of future development on the site in question. Observations within this report are derived from desktop study and site visitation which was carried out on the 4th and 5th March 2021.

BASELINE

The site is approximately 32.3 Ha in size and is located directly east of the Cat and Fiddle Park and north of the A3052. It lies approximately 2km east of the edge of Exeter and 1km east of Clyst St Mary. The land is comprised entirely of arable farmland, subdivided into irregular fields by mature hedgerows, trees and timber fencing.

The site is defined by vegetation aligning the perimeter, with the exception of sections to the north west and the south east which are defined by no physical boundary and a small linear bund respectively. The site is accessed via a route from the A3052 and from two points to the north from a minor road. This minor road also provides a circuitous 'country' route between the A3052 and the A30 to the north. These A roads in turn connect the M5 at Junctions 30 and 29 to the east of Exeter.

Levels within the site range from approximately 18.5m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), to the south western corner and 40.5m AOD to the north; part of a local ridgeline formed alongside the road abutting the site. The site falls generally from north to south, with the steeper gradients concentrated to the north.

The wider landscape is undulating and ranges from circa 5m to 70m AOD. A ditch line runs west to east across the centre of the site, joining the Grindle Brook, beyond the western boundary. The Holbrook is located approximately 1.5km north of the site. Both run west and form tributaries to the River Clyst and Clyst Valley.

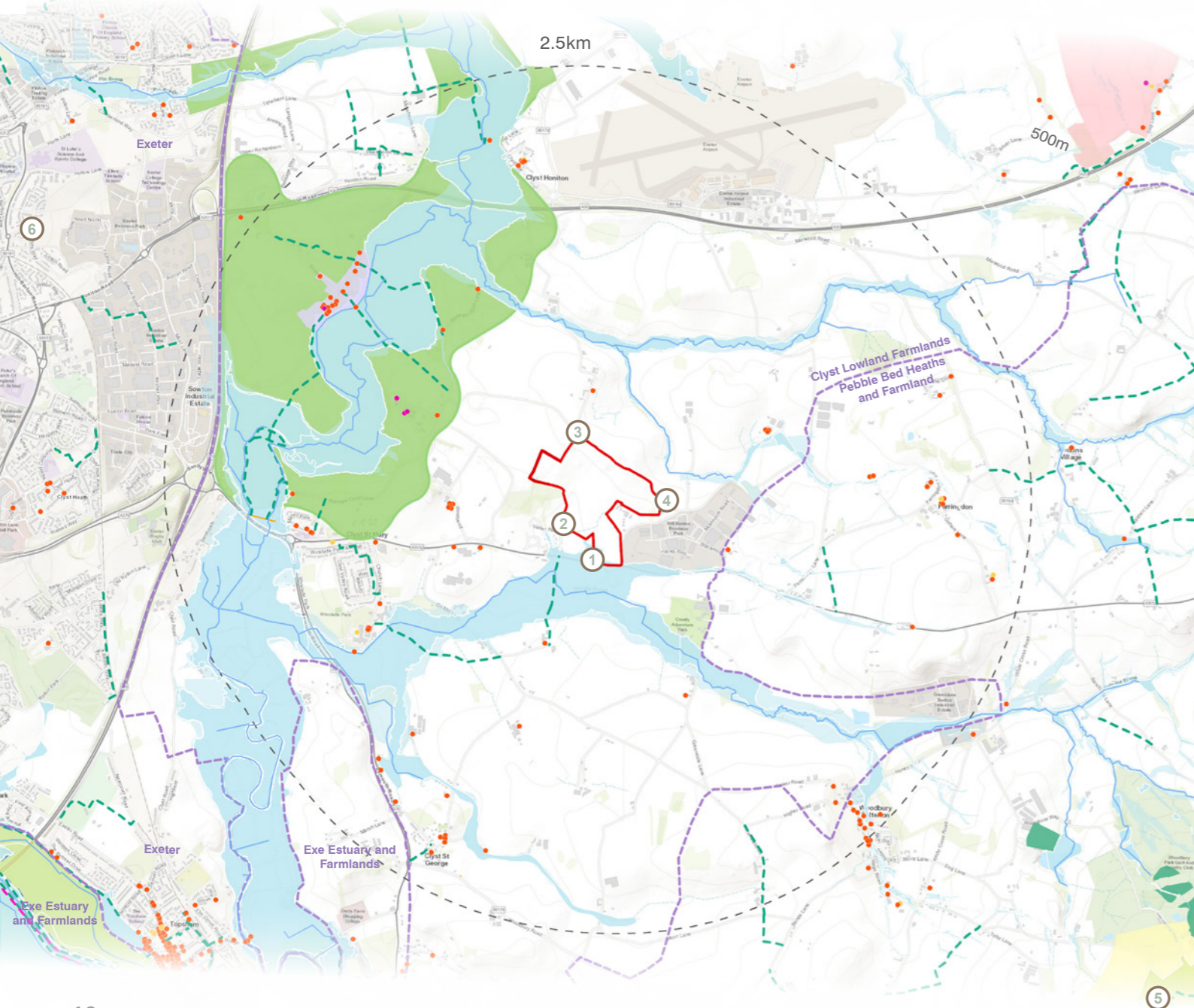
The majority of the site adjoins farmland, which is the dominant land use within the local area. A small section of the Cat & Fiddle residential park is located to the south west corner of the site, with the remainder separated from the site by an intervening field.

A small woodland abuts part of the western boundary. The eastern edge of the site wraps around Axehayes Farm; a working farm and small business park. The eastern boundary of the site neighbours a cat protection centre, the Hill Barton Business Park and Hill Pond Caravan and Camping Park. A recent permission for a new waste to energy centre within the Business

park is of note and affords a potential connection to the site. Beyond the A3052, directly south lies Exeter City Football Club's Training Ground.

The local landscape incorporates a large number of urbanising features, including the A3052, overhead powerlines that traverse this route, and the Hill Barton Business Park. Accessible from the A3052, within short distance of the site, there are a number of commercial, leisure and infrastructure projects including Westpoint, an event centre, Crealy Theme Park and Resort, the Cat & Fiddle Inn, Yeo Business Park / Axehayes Business Park, Old Mill Sewage Works and a number of small groups of residential properties.

There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the site, although there is an extensive network of routes accessible within the local countryside.



- Site Boundary
- Study Area
- Public Rights of Way
- Existing Water Course/Water Bodies
- Flood Zone 2 & 3 (approx. extents)
- Special Protection Areas/SSSIs
- East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- Cyst Valley Regional Park
- East Devon Landscape Character Areas
- Viewpoints (see following pages)

Landscape Context

DESIGNATIONS

The site does not fall within any designations. The nearest of note include:

- The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (approximately 4.5km to the east),
- East Devon Pebble bed Heaths Special Protected Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (4.5km to the south east), and
- Exe Estuary SPA (approximately 3.1km south west).

Landscape Context

LANDSCAPE

The site falls within the National Character Area 148 'Devon Redlands', produced by Natural England and the local character area 'Clyst Lowland Farmlands' by East Devon District Council. The study area is typical of the local character area and the following key characteristics recorded in the study are relevant:

- 'Lowland, undulating farmed landscape...'
- 'Landscape crossed by streams and meandering watercourses which feed into the more distinct valleys of the Clyst (a tributary to the Exe)...'
- 'Generally well treed appearance due to significant numbers of hedgerow trees although few woodlands...'
- 'Mixture of small to medium scale fields often with curving boundaries reflecting medieval origin'
- 'Mixed farming including arable and some pasture along watercourses where there is seasonal flooding, as well as areas of horsiculture and hobby farming'
- 'Nature conservation interest provided by unimproved neutral grassland and marshy grassland, particularly fringing streams and

plantation/ semi-natural and ancient woodland in the north-west'

- '*Historic parkland in the north-west of this area with notable areas of parkland and veteran trees'*
- '*Dispersed pattern of small villages...'*
- '*Overarching perceptions of tranquillity and quintessential English lowland farmland when away from infrastructure and communication corridors and a sense of isolation in parts'*
- '*Views to surrounding ridges of higher land'*

Of most relevance to the site and its context, the document promotes the following objectives.

Protect:

'Protect the character and setting of the parkland landscapes, ensuring any new development does not encroach upon the historic landscape or views to it'

'Protect the sparse settlement pattern of clustered hamlets, villages and farmsteads, preventing the linear spread of development along river valleys and roads wherever possible'

'Protect the landscape's network of quiet lanes enclosed by woodland and species-rich hedgebanks...'

Manage:

'Manage the landscape's distinctive hedges to strengthen the strong square field pattern. Reinstate coppicing to mature sections and grown-out trees to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features'

Plan:

'Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape, reducing soil erosion, agricultural run-off and downstream flooding and improving water quality'

'Encourage the natural regeneration of woodland and new planting...to link fragmented sites'

'Minimise soil erosion and reduce diffuse pollution by replanting of former hedgelines'

'The planting of hedgerow trees including oaks to provide vertical elements and future veterans for wildlife.'

'Plan to ensure the sensitive location of new development...avoiding prominent open ridges and slopes'

Landscape Context

VISUAL

The site is aligned by two single-storey residential properties representing a portion of the south western edge, set beyond a dense hedgerow boundary, with views across the centre of the site towards the business parks to the east. These residential receptors, given their proximity to the site and any potential change of view are considered to be sensitive to the effects of development. In addition, approximately ten more properties, including those aligning Valley Road and two properties south west of the A3052 may appreciate similar views, seen across the intervening field. These properties would similarly be sensitive to development. It is not anticipated that any additional residential receptor within the study area would be able to view the site.

The southern boundary of the site is defined by the A3052. The vast majority of the route would be screened from views of the site by either existing vegetation or built form. Opportunities to view the site and distant countryside to the north are restricted to a short stretch leading up to the southern boundary, upon passing Hill Pond Caravan and Camping Park from the east and Cat & Fiddle Park from the west.

Road users experiencing views of and across the site along this route would be largely restricted to motorists and cyclists, as no footpath aligns the abutting section of road. Road users would experience a break along a route largely defined by built form, or otherwise enclosed by vegetation. Motorists would experience the site quickly and obliquely, whilst cyclists would appreciate the environment for longer. It is therefore judged that the motorists would have a low sensitivity to the nature of the change proposed, whilst the cyclists would have a medium sensitivity.



Viewpoint 1 | View from A3052 towards the Site



Viewpoint 1 | Key Plan



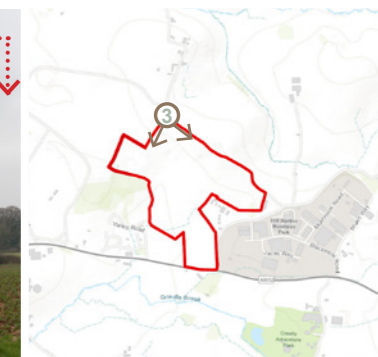
Viewpoint 2 | View from Meadow Close, Cat & Fiddle Park, towards the Site



Viewpoint 2 | Key Plan



Viewpoint 3 | View from unnamed lane towards the Site



Viewpoint 3 | Key Plan

Landscape Context

VISUAL

The unnamed roads wrapping around the east and north of the site, are both narrow, framed by hedgerow and are national speed limit. From the east, the site is seen above hedgerow and experienced in the context of the A3052, vegetation associated with the route, properties fronting the Cat & Fiddle Park, the neighbouring woodland, Axehayes Farm, Hill Barton Business Park, and glimpsed distant views to the south west. Further north, beyond Axehayes Farm, a portion of site is visible in isolation, rising to the form a ridge. The route bounding the north of the site is set within a more rural context and is afforded distant views across the site towards the countryside and a ridgeline to the south. The site is clear, but experienced within the context of prominent commercial buildings located beyond Axehayes Farm to the south east and residential properties within Cat & Fiddle Park to the south west. Given the routes are local routes likely to be navigated at slower speeds by cars, and enjoyed by cyclists and pedestrians for leisure, all receptors would have a medium to high sensitivity to change.

It may be possible to see the site from a limited number of receptors within the immediately surrounding business parks, albeit occupants and visitors are judged to have a low sensitivity to change.

There are a very small number of distant receptors found 1km or more from the site, that would receive a glimpsed or partial view of the site. In all cases, the site would be appreciated as a small part of a scene, not the focus of the view, and typically seen alongside urbanising elements, such as the surrounding business parks, or intervening theme park and often set against a backdrop of the urban form of Exeter.

It is not anticipated that the site will be visible from the local Public Right of Way network.

From the AONB the site is visible at distance within the context of the neighbouring business parks, a theme park, and seen against a backdrop of Exeter. The site appears as a small part of the scene and not the focus, as part of a landscape accommodating a mosaic of land uses set within countryside. The receptors from this designation would be sensitive, but any development would realise slight change at this scale of view.

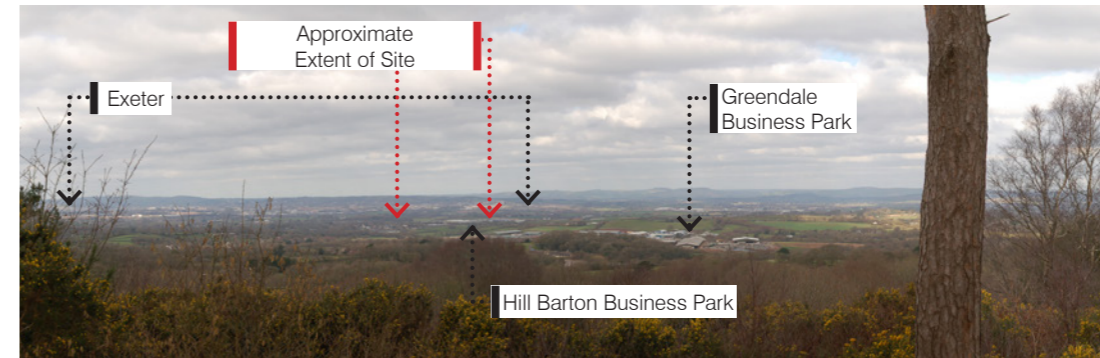
It is not anticipated that any views of the site exist from any Listed Building, Registered Parkland or Scheduled Monument.



Viewpoint 4 | View from unnamed lane towards the Site



Viewpoint 4 | Key Plan



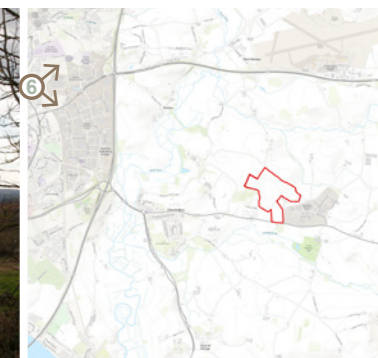
Viewpoint 5 | View from East Devon AONB towards the Site



Viewpoint 5 | Key Plan



Viewpoint 6 | View from Exeter towards the Site



Viewpoint 6 | Key Plan

Landscape Context

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Any landscape strategy should seek to embed the following considerations, to ensure the proposed development is sensitive to the landscape and visual assets of the site and its context:

- Existing vegetation on site should be maintained and supplemented to aid assimilation of the development within any view, whilst reinforcing effective green infrastructure for the benefits of function, setting and ecology.
- Proposed woodland belts are to be established within the development, across and up the slopes, to soften and screen sensitive views, whilst promoting an attractive residential and commercial setting.
- Opportunities should be taken to create and enhance wetland to promote ecology, amenity and sensitive water management.
- Land use should be designated to respond to setting and neighbouring land uses.
- Promote a positive setting to existing residents aligning the west of the site, through set back of properties, appropriate planting and/or arrangement of open space and land use.
- Development should be avoided to the ridge line and building heights should reduce towards the top of slopes perceptible from sensitive locations.
- Buildings are to be of high quality and designed to respond to local vernacular.



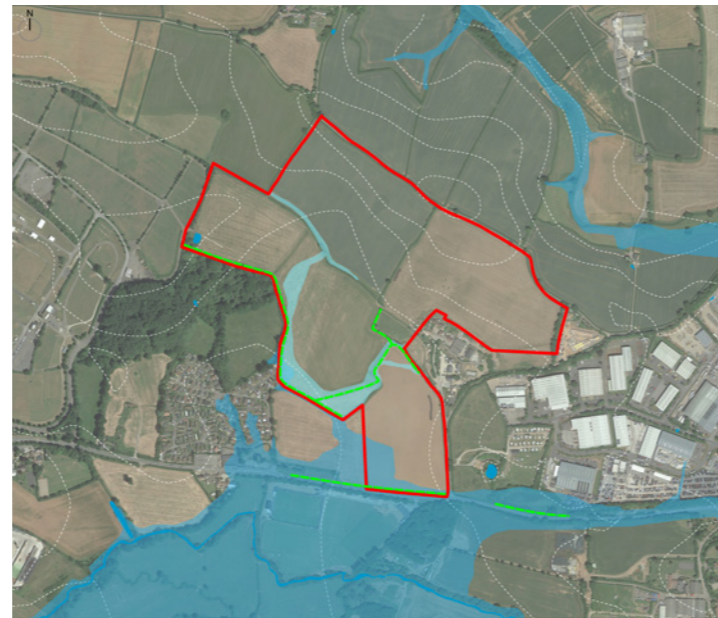
Evaluation of Site Drainage

TECHNICAL SUMMARY - REPORT PREPARED BY CALIBRO

The southernmost part of the site is shown to fall in Flood Zones 2 and 3, however reviews of the model data suggest that flooding is overestimated. Nevertheless, a precautionary approach has been taken that avoids development in these flood zones.

Land to the south west, adjacent to the Cat and Fiddle Park is shown to be at risk of surface water flooding, but further reviews suggest that the risk here is also overestimated. It is also concluded that the risk of flooding from surface water arising outside the site is low. Nonetheless it is recommended that the low-lying medium to high risk area is used to create a wetland which would provide a reduction in runoff rates and downstream flood risk.

A series of surface water attenuation features are also proposed, linked by swales designed to enhance the aesthetics of the development, treat the water and offer ecological benefits. These will ultimately discharge into an existing ditch after flowing through the proposed wetland. Adaptations to this existing ditch to create a more naturalised form will be considered.



- Site Boundary
- Flood Zone 2 & 3 (approx. extents)
- Risk of Flooding From Surface Water
- Existing Ditches

Evaluation of Site Ecology

TECHNICAL SUMMARY - REPORT PREPARED BY GE CONSULTING

Habitats within the site include arable and agricultural grass fields with native species-rich and species-poor hedgerows (Habitat of Principal Importance), drainage ditches and two ponds. The habitats present are of Local importance.

Following an extended UK Habitat Classification and Biodiversity Net Gain baseline survey and desk study in August 2021, further surveys for Great Crested Newt, breeding birds, bats, dormouse and reptiles were undertaken in 2022.

These were negative for Great Crested Newt and dormouse with a very low population of common reptiles recorded. The Site was found to have potential to support common amphibians and hedgehogs.

The breeding bird survey recorded several Species of Principal Importance or red/amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern in numbers that can be expected from the habitats present.

There was no roosting habitat for bats on Site. Bat activity was generally low and was dominated by more common species, though occasional passes of the rarer lesser horseshoe, greater horseshoe and barbastelle were recorded.

Overall, the Site is of up to Local importance for the species present. It is considered that with suitable mitigation measures and sensitive design there will be no significant impact to protected and notable species.

There are opportunities to enhance the Site through habitat creation and enhancement for the benefit of wildlife in the local area.

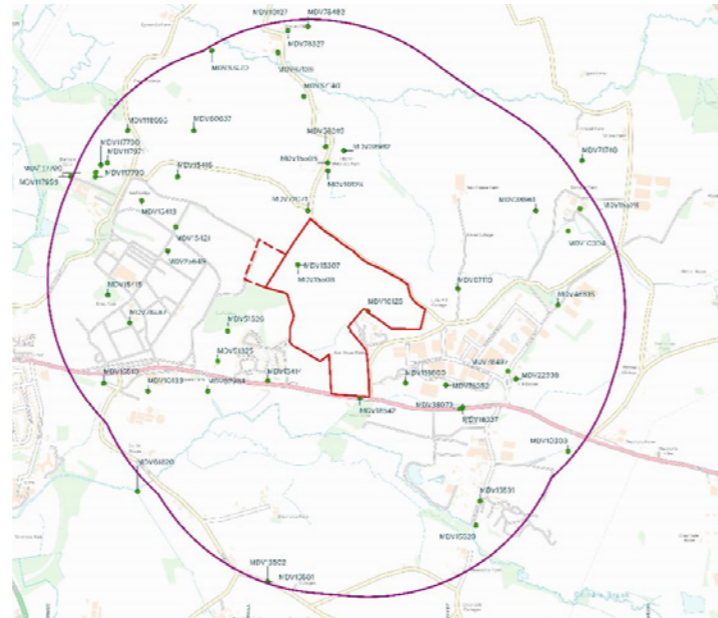
An initial BNG assessment based on the illustrative masterplan suggests that a <10% net gain can be achieved, with potential to achieve at least 20%.

Evaluation of Site Heritage

TECHNICAL SUMMARY - REPORT PREPARED BY ORION HERITAGE

Following a review of Historic Environment Records and National and local lists, alongside a site walkover survey, no built heritage assets have been identified with the potential to be affected by the proposed development. As such, the proposed development will have no effect on designated assets of the highest sensitivity.

In relation to non-designated archaeological remains, the proposals will retain the historic parish boundary which survives as a field boundary within the study site. However, there may be some loss of previously unrecorded archaeological features of local significance. Overall, this is considered to be a low level of harm to the historic environment.



Evaluation of Sustainable Travel Options

TECHNICAL SUMMARY - REPORT PREPARED BY MILES WHITE

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Several bus services currently operate along the A3052, providing regular connections to Exeter, Sidmouth, Seaton and Honiton.

The concept masterplan allows for a potential bus route within the site that the existing bus service/s could utilise to better serve the site area and increase patronage. Potential improvements to the current level of bus services along the A3052 will also be considered.

Bus will be a viable travel choice for future residents of the site.

The nearest railway station to the site is at Digby and Sowton, which enables travel to Exeter Central and Exeter St Davids stations. From Exeter St Davids there are regular connections to numerous locations including Plymouth, Bristol and London Waterloo.

WALKING AND CYCLING

The Site is located within a short walk of the Yeo Business Park and Hill Barton Industrial Estate and is within a 20-minute walk of Clyst St Mary.

A number of local facilities can be found within Clyst St Mary, including a primary school, a post office, a shop and a public house. A neighbourhood Centre and employment sites are proposed within the site.

Besides the A3052, the roads surrounding the site are generally low trafficked and on gentle gradients, which is conducive for cyclists.

Much of eastern Exeter is within the 5km cycling distance widely considered to be appropriate to encourage day to day use.

Cycling and walking is therefore considered to be a viable travel choice for future residents, employees and visitors.

Evaluation of Site Access

TECHNICAL SUMMARY - REPORT PREPARED BY MILES WHITE

VEHICULAR ACCESS

The existing junction serving Yeo and Hill Barton Business Parks is not suitable to provide access to the proposed Axehayes site and so a new access is proposed.

The site can be accessed directly from the A3052 by the provision of a new roundabout that could also relieve the existing unnamed road providing access to Axehayes Farm and Hill Pond.

The new access road could lead north from the A3052 and serve the wider landholding to the north and could also facilitate a new link road between the A3052 and A30 to the north in conjunction with development to the south of the A30.

The provision of a new north-south strategic link between these two primary routes would potentially relieve the M5 motorway.

PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

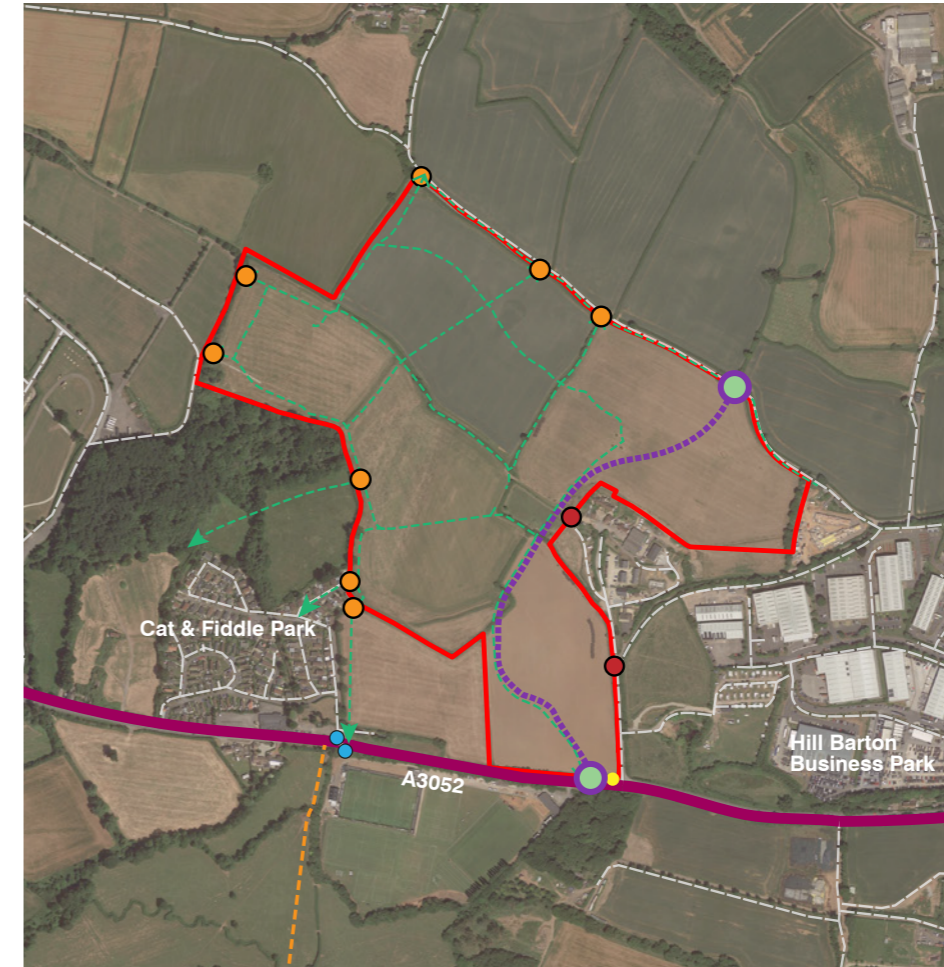
Pedestrian and cycle access to/from the site is proposed via the vehicular access and other locations surrounding the Axehayes site area.

New or improved footways/cycleways could be provided along the A3052 or via the CVRP, as well as all internal routes, to enable access to bus services on foot and by cycle.

EMERGENCY

Emergency access could be gained from several locations around the site area including the business parks to the east, the potential development area to the north and Cat & Fiddle Park.















Thus, emergency access could be provided should the main vehicular access ever be blocked, which is highly unlikely given that the access road can be designed with wide verges to enable emergency vehicles to manoeuvre around any such obstacle.



Site Opportunities & Constraints

CONTEXT IS KEY

Understanding the Site and its constraints is a crucial part in helping us to develop a sense of place at Axehayes. Further detail concerning the site's key constraints are provided overleaf. These environmental considerations have informed the plans represented within the Emerging Narrative to follow.

- Constraints**
- Site Boundary 
 - Public Right of Way 
 - Existing Water Course/Water Bodies 
 - Existing Woodland/Hedgerows 
 - Flood Zone 2 & 3 (approx. extents) 
 - Existing Field Gate / Vehicular Access 
 - Existing Business Park Pedestrian Access 
 - Existing Bus Stops 
 - Existing Overhead Power Cables 
 - Views Across Site & Wider Countryside 
 - Mobile Home Park Sensitivity 
 - Dominant Architectural Presence of Hill Barton Business Park 
 - Energy Recovery Site (Devon Waste Plan: Policy W6C) land within 0.5km subject to requirements of waste consultation zone (Devon Waste Plan: Policy W10) 
 - Existing Employment Area 
 - Existing Sports Facility 
 - Contour Lines (5m) 

- Opportunities**
- ① Potential for landscape frontage to the site with wetland enhancements
 - ② Opportunity to provide public open space with wide ranging views and enhanced landscape composition of higher slopes
 - ③ Use of rural lanes for active travel routes linked to Clyst Valley Regional Park to be explored as wider potential development comes forward
 - ④ Integrated green infrastructure network to be explored, utilising the framework provided by existing landscape features
 - ⑤ Potential to deliver A3052/A30 link road through the site and land immediately to the north
 - ⑥ Links to potential District Heating Network facilitated by nearby Energy Recovery Site to be explored
 - ⑦ Opportunity to expand employment offering in the local area & deliver much needed housing with associated community facilities



Design Considerations

SITE CONSTRAINTS

The analysis of site characteristics has identified the following considerations to inform site design:

Flood Risk

To the south of the site is Grindle Brook, which is a tributary to the River Clyst. Grindle Brook is subject to fluvial flooding as identified by the Environment Agency and as such is bound by Flood Zones 2 and 3. There will be no buildings located within this zone. The siting of a primary site access from the A3052 should be explored in more detail, making use of the most narrow stretch of Flood Zone/Site overlap, and the multiple options for the necessary floodplain mitigation available within the bounds of the site.

The site contains a single ditch running east/west across the site, which runs from the boundary of Cat & Fiddle Park to the existing Axehayes Farm. The Environment Agency indicates that the ditch is likely to experience surface water flooding.

Character and Views

Steep slopes are present in the north of the site which are visible to the east, south and west in the wider landscape. The nature of the landform also restricts development in this area of the site.

The Hill Barton Business Park is located immediately adjacent the south-eastern site boundary and is a strong visual influence upon this area. Further business parks are located to the south east and east at Yeo Business Park and Axehayes Business Park. Consideration should be given to complementary land uses in this location.

Exeter Airport

The site sits within the Exeter Airport 'Aerodrome' Safeguarding Zone', requiring all developments to consult with the Airport and Defence Estates.

SITE OPPORTUNITIES

Site Access

The primary site access could be delivered off of the A3052 on the southern boundary of the site. Within the immediate extent of the site, the A3052 is subject to a 50mph speed limit and provides a single traffic lane in each direction, but does not provide any formal footways or street lighting. New footway infrastructure should be explored along the A3052, connecting the site to local facilities.

Access and Transport

Development of the site has the potential to come forward as appropriate to reflect a detailed understanding of A3052 traffic capacity. A phased approach should be explored that directly correlates with this understanding.

There is potential to deliver an A3052/A30 link road through the site and to the land immediately to the north, that has potential to relieve the M5 motorway (between Junctions 29 and 30) and also open up access to the proposed Clyst Valley Regional Park.

Development

The site offers the opportunity to expand the employment offering in the area as well as deliver much needed housing and associated community facilities.

Pedestrian & Cycle Connectivity

There is potential for new pedestrian links across the site improving access to, and the experience of, the wider countryside. Furthermore, existing rural lanes could be re-imagined as active travel routes linked to Clyst Valley Regional Park as wider potential development comes forward.

Waste to Energy

There is potential to connect the site to a permitted waste to energy plant within the Hill Barton Business Park to the east of the site.

Green Infrastructure

An integrated green infrastructure network should be explored, utilising the framework provided by existing landscape features. The northern slopes have potential to deliver dynamic public open space with wide ranging views and an enhanced ridgeline.

Additional functions should also be explored, including wetland enhancements for nutrient neutrality as required, improvement of strategic ecological networks, sustainable drainage systems, walking loops, active travel networks and recreation opportunities.

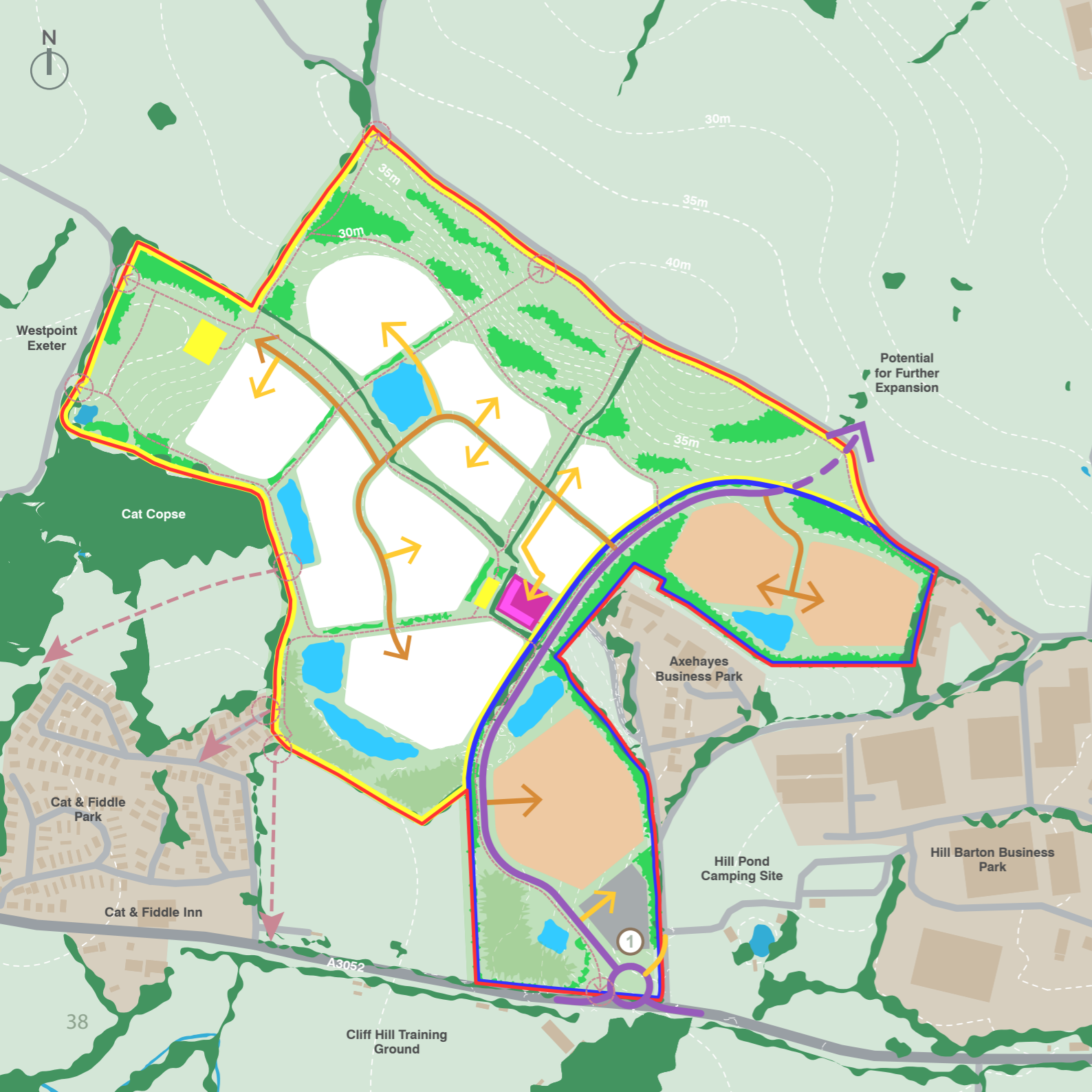
Emerging Narrative

LANDSCAPE LED MASTERPLAN

The site offers the potential to deliver commercial and residential development alongside supporting community infrastructure, set away from sensitive landscapes and within a sustainable location. The extension of neighbouring employment uses into the site is logical, and can readily be designed alongside the opportunity for new housing and community infrastructure.

This 'landscape led' scheme, would respond to existing assets and sensitivities, maximising the value of the site to deliver development appropriate to context and for the benefit of existing and future communities. Considerations include the siting of built form away from ridgelines, the retention and enhancement of landscape patterns to positively shape the development, and the inclusion of multifunctional and connected green infrastructure, offering ecological, water management and amenity benefits, to the site and wider setting.

The proposed land uses are consistent with contextual patterns and offer a logical transition of character as perceived locally and through the site.



- Site Boundary - 32.3 Ha
- Phase 1 - 10.2 Ha
Green Infrastructure (incl. key road infrastructure) - 4.9 Ha
- Phase 2 - 22.1 Ha
Green Infrastructure (incl. key road infrastructure) - 11.4 Ha
- Employment - 3.9 Ha
- Residential - 8.6 Ha (Up to 370 Dwellings at 37 Dwellings per Hectare)
- Local Centre / Community Use - 0.3 Ha
- Primary Road (Potential to Extend North and South, forming A3052 -A30 Link Road and A3052-A376 Link Road)
- Secondary Roads
- Tertiary Roads
- Potential Equipped Play - 0.2 Ha
- Public Open Space
- Proposed Structural Planting - 3.7 Ha
- Potential Sustainable Drainage Features - 1.3 Ha
- Potential Wetland Habitat - 1.3 Ha
- Potential Park and Ride - 0.4 Ha
- Potential Public Right of Way (PRoW)
- Potential pedestrian & cycle connections
- Existing Structural Planting
- Existing Water Features
- Existing Topography
- 1 Potential Retail/Convenience Store Provision at Site Frontage

HIGH QUALITY EMPLOYMENT USE

The first phase of development would deliver the primary site access, linking the A3052 to a new employment provision with potential to deliver high quality commercial spaces and associated retail possibilities. Moreover, the site provides an opportunity to deliver a modest park and ride site which in turn seeks to help develop a modal shift away from private car use to public transport.

Emerging Narrative

LANDSCAPE LED MASTERPLAN

The site is deliverable in phases, as determined by the capacity of the serving A3052. The commercial development could be delivered initially, alongside a section of link road, unlocking a potential strategic development connecting through to the A30 in the north.

COMMUNAL LIVING

The site has the scope to deliver high quality housing, and community infrastructure such as a local centre, community hub and play space. The new residential area would be well catered by sustainable transport linkages, local amenities and recreational spaces.

Emerging Narrative

LANDSCAPE LED MASTERPLAN

Proposed housing areas would be well located for employment opportunities, green links to the existing woodland and wetland areas, and to Westpoint Arena and the Clyst Valley Regional Park slightly further afield. Establishing local amenities like community centre, shops and play spaces would strengthen social inclusion and independence.



Development Proposals

Housing

The Axehayes site can contribute to the delivery of a New Settlement as outlined in the East Devon Local Plan (see p13) through the provision of circa 370 new homes. This figure is based on an average overall density of 37 dwellings per hectare, reflecting the imperative to use land efficiently and to foster more sustainable and mixed communities.

The development would comprise a variety of dwelling types and sizes, offering a broad choice of accommodation, from smaller homes for first time buyers to family homes, with the potential to support a range of needs. There is an acknowledged demand for more affordable housing, which would be included in the proposed housing mix.

The layout will take cues from surrounding residential areas and will seek to reflect local distinctiveness whilst creating its own identity. In addition, the layout will respond to the requirement for new community facilities.

The opportunity for housing to be designed to Lifetime Homes standards or similar will be explored with the Council. Housing will be designed to embody low carbon technology, energy and water efficiency and high levels of insulation. Housing will also be positioned to be south facing wherever possible in order to maximise its solar gain.



Community Hub

Key to the development is the delivery of a successful community hub as a focus for the community.

In order to achieve this, the proposed facilities and assets must be legible and accessible. To this end a new spine road is proposed to extend through the site with access stemming from the A3052. The meandering route would extend from the southern site boundary to the unnamed road in the north, with the local centre standing as a key feature and destination along the journey.

The proposed Local Centre will provide a new facility for future residents and existing local communities in the wider context.

Provisions for an equipped play space are proposed to complement and enhance the relationship between the new built facility and surrounding associated external space.

Picnic areas, street furniture and shelters will be included to encourage users of public space around the local hub to stop and enjoy the environment.



Development Proposals

Green Infrastructure

The scheme has been developed within a comprehensive Green Infrastructure, which is well connected and multifunctional, ensuring an efficient use of resource and a rich and stimulating residential environment. In addition to the delivery of housing, the site has the capacity to deliver both formal and informal green spaces, play space and habitat creation.

The development will deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain within a well connected landscape setting.

Open spaces will comprise of a mosaic of grass species, meadow areas, scrub and woodland. These areas will incorporate a network of informal footpaths and cycle routes in order to provide connections within the site and existing neighbourhoods. Seating will be located at regular intervals and opportunities exist to introduce incidental play and fitness features in amenity areas, as well as wetland in habitat areas.

Planting will be designed to soften the development, create intimacy, frame views and provide seasonal and sensory interest. Privacy and security will be provided through the structural planting of trees and hedges. Planting will be selected on the basis that it is hardy, suited to the ground conditions, attractive and to contribute to the ecology of the site and the character of the area. Native planting will be used wherever possible.



Sustainable Drainage & Flood Risk Mitigation

The masterplan incorporates a robust drainage network to accompany and reinforce the overall green and blue infrastructure of the site.

Constraints have been identified surrounding the risk of flooding due to both surface water and the site's presence in Flood zones 2 and 3. It is concluded that a series of surface water attenuation features, inter-connecting swales and areas of wetland should be integrated throughout the scheme.



Emerging Narrative A New Sustainable Community

CLYST VALLEY COMMUNITY

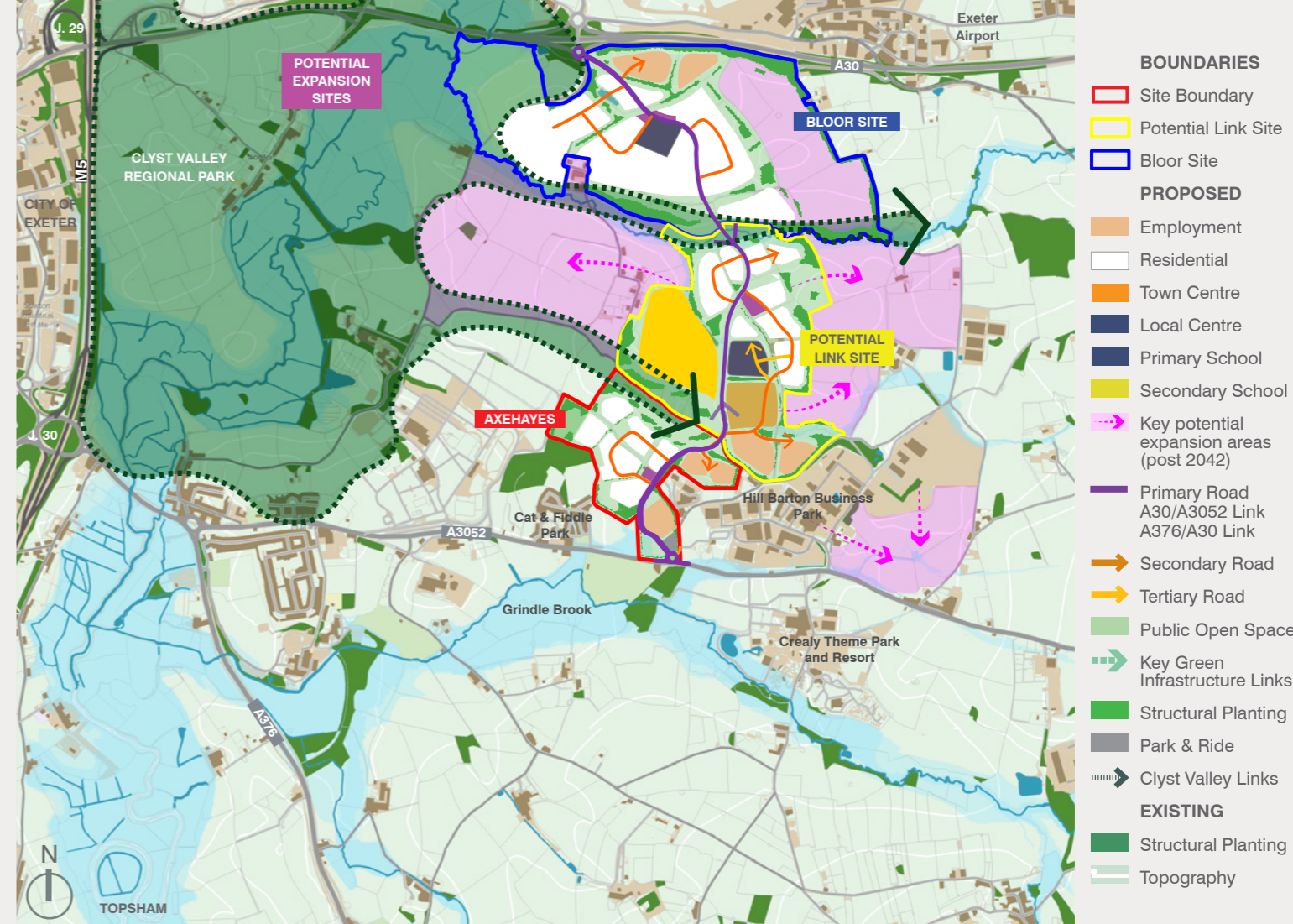
Should the Council wish to take forward a strategic new settlement to the east of Exeter (Strategic Policy 8 - in the Emerging local Plan), the site could play a key part in helping to realise this ambition. The site would open up a development node to the south of the area, enabling the creation of a strategic link between the A3052 and the A30, and would deliver a notable proportion of the allocations employment and housing target.

Development between the A3052 and the A30 is capable of delivering a new multi-nodal community, with associated services and employment opportunities. This community would benefit from generous green infrastructure that provides a positive setting to

the development and strong recreational corridors throughout with potential to link through to the proposed Clyst Valley Regional Park.

Possible 'landscape led' strategic development, promoting housing and commercial land use alongside associated schools and infrastructure, with strong links to the Clyst Valley Regional Park.

Potential road link, providing direct route through to A30 via access to swathe of strategic land. Efficient link road offers potential of easing pressure on local road network, including the M5.

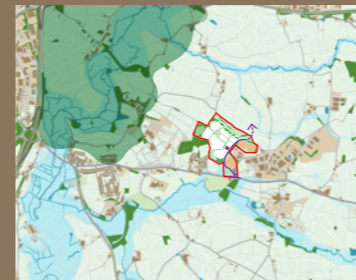


A PHASED APPROACH

There is an opportunity to deliver the strategic vision in phases. A logical approach would be to commence with the commercial potential of the Axehayes site and the associated first phase of the link road, which would serve future residential phases of this site and the strategic vision of the wider area.

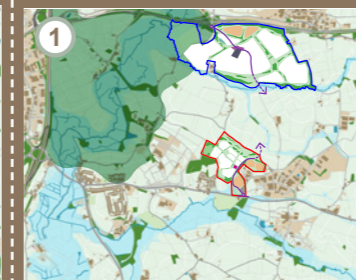
Each phase of development should seek to provide a coordinated and comprehensive network of green infrastructure, with routes and planting potentially implemented ahead of associated built works, to promote early ecological benefit of proposals. The illustrations represent a potential means of phasing the delivery of Clyst Valley Community.

OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER THE SITE AS A STANDALONE DEVELOPMENT TO MEET CURRENT 5 YEAR SHORTFALL IN HOUSING SUPPLY



PHASED APPROACH TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF NEW SETTLEMENT

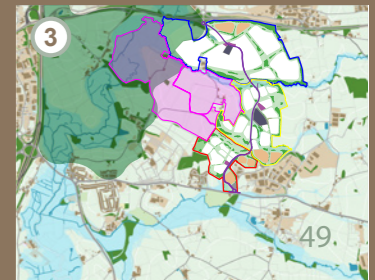
1 COMMENCE DEVELOPMENT NORTH AND SOUTH WITH 2 OUTLETS



2 CONNECT DEVELOPMENTS WITH LINK ROAD BETWEEN A3052 AND A30



3 EXPLORE EXPANSION BEYOND 2042



Emerging Narrative An Alternative Option

CLYST VALLEY & GRINDLE BROOK COMMUNITY

An alternative approach would be to explore the creation of a new sustainable community to the north and south of the A3052 corridor. In this scenario Axehayes lies between, and could help to interlink the A30, A3052 and the A376. While these roads enable ease of east-west movement, they lack north-south connectivity. The strategy addresses the need for longitudinal congruence, in terms of both sustainable access and ecological linkages. It would establish a multi-nodal urban extension, with housing and employment opportunities; without dependency on the M5.

The Clyst Valley Regional Park would cater to the needs of the community in the north, while the south would

benefit from the Grindle Brook. These communities would be inter-linked by green corridors and recreational open spaces.

The Axehayes site is strategically positioned at the epicentre for development. The development would be achieved in phases, first extending southward and then towards the north.

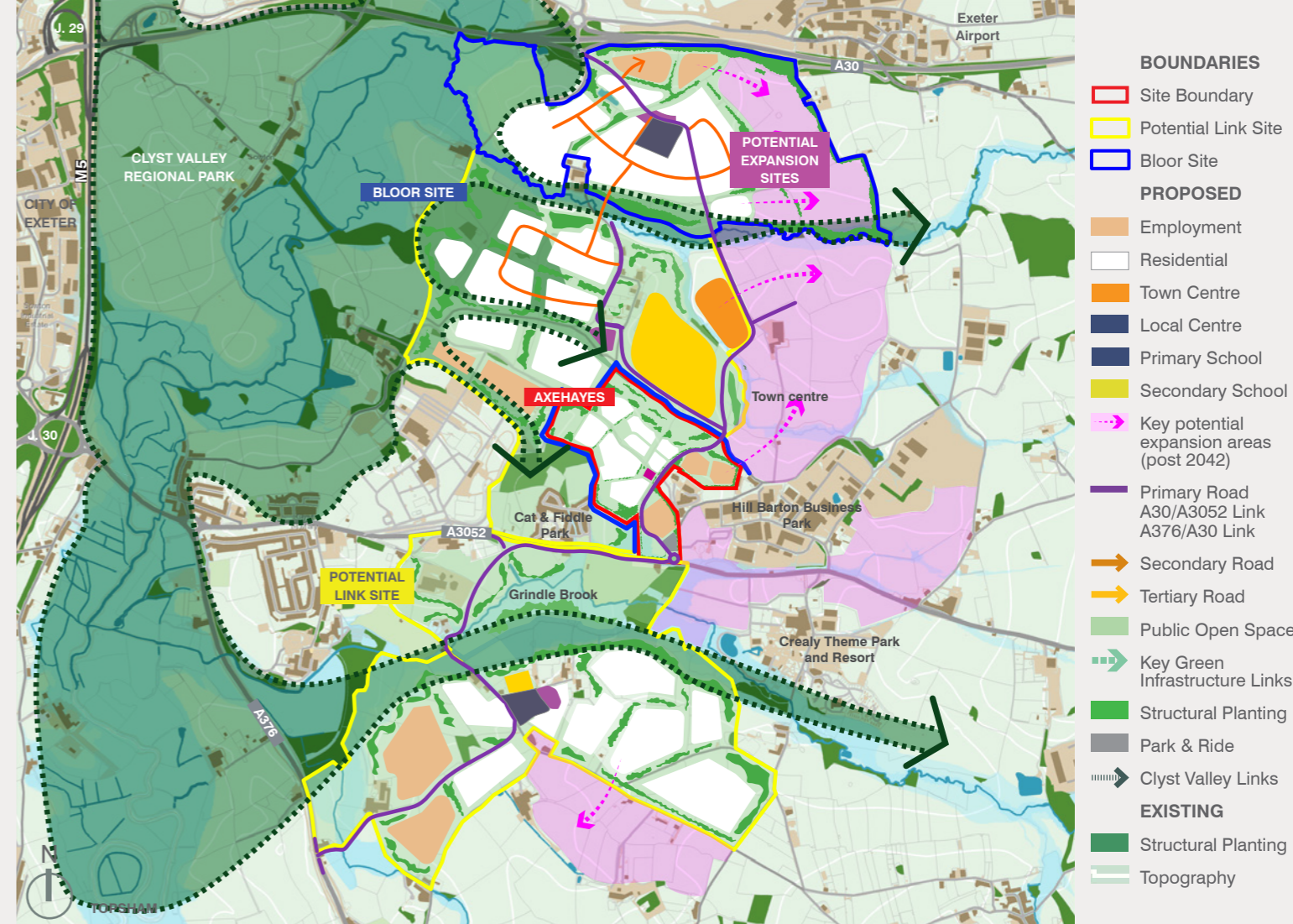
A PHASED APPROACH

The first phase would undertake the development of the commercial area of the Axehayes site, followed by the housing development. The same chain of development would need to be achieved for the second phase.

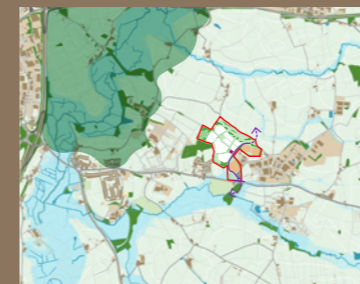
The proposed strategy aims to establish primary road and green infrastructure links, before built

works commence in the third phase. This would ensure early ecological benefits and also mitigate the effects of ongoing construction.

The first three phases are concentrated in the west due to the strong connections with Exeter, Topsham, and the Clyst Valley Regional Park. The eastward expansion is subject to arising need for housing.

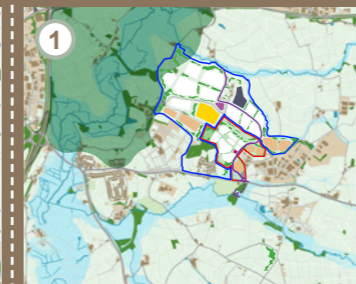


OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER THE SITE AS A STANDALONE DEVELOPMENT TO MEET CURRENT 5 YEAR SHORTFALL IN HOUSING SUPPLY

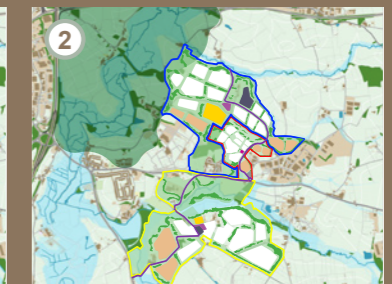


PHASED APPROACH TOWARDS THE PROVISION OF NEW SETTLEMENT

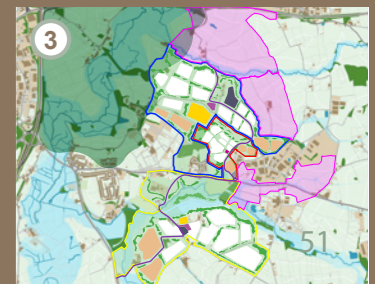
1 COMMENCE DEVELOPMENT NORTH AND SOUTH WITH 2 OUTLETS



2 CONNECT DEVELOPMENTS WITH LINK ROAD BETWEEN A3052 AND A30



3 EXPLORE EXPANSION BEYOND 2042



Delivering the Vision

This document outlines how development can be delivered sustainably on the land north of the A3052, and its potential role within the development of a new settlement to the east of Exeter.

The proposed site does not have any physical or environmental constraints that would preclude its development and as such is considered to provide a suitable location for development of the type proposed.

The site is deliverable and there is strong developer interest to bring the site forward in the short to medium term. The site is therefore suitable, available and achievable in the context of National Planning Policy Framework.

The Cherwell Group are committed to positive engagement and consultation with both the local community and the Local Authority. The views of local people, both the relevant Parish Councils, and Council Officers will help shape the proposals as they evolve through an iterative design process.

The site will deliver a high-quality, sustainable settlement, tackling the issues of CO2 emissions and fuel poverty highlighted by UK Building Regulations and step changes to Part L and F and the introduction of Part S.

The development will comply with Future Homes Standards in order to secure a holistically sustainable development in terms integrated environmental, economic and social cohesion.

The proposed development aims to reduce energy demand on the site through the careful selection of carbon neutral building materials, reduced water consumption, open space provision and ecological factors, amongst others.

It is important to ensure flexibility with a range of viable options/solutions for the development to ensure that a suitable strategy is available in an ever-changing market to ensure the site will robustly achieve a carbon reduction in line with national and local planning requirements.



The Team

EXPERIENCED PLACEMAKERS

The Cherwell Group

The Cherwell Group was established in 1991 and is a privately owned residential and mixed use development company specialising in high quality new build developments across London, the home countries and the west country.

The Cherwell Group is based in the London Borough of Wandsworth since inception and has successfully designed, built and delivered prime residential and mixed use projects on demanding and complex sites. The Cherwell Group are passionate about creating unique destinations of high architectural merit whilst ensuring our projects are sustainable.



CHERWELL
GROUP

LRM

LRM Planning Ltd is an independent town planning consultancy, that was founded in 2013. Operating from offices in Exeter and Cardiff, they are heavily involved in promoting sites through both the development plan and development management processes.

LRM Planning is heavily involved in the promotion of strategic land and have secured a great many allocations on behalf of their clients. Many of these are large scale strategic projects and are central to Development Plan strategies.



Urban Wilderness

Established in 2010, Urban Wilderness is a landscape design, masterplanning, urban design and environmental consultancy based across two design studios in Holbeck, Leeds, and Sheffield City Centre.

Urban Wilderness are place makers and strategists with a track record in the promotion, and detailed design of strategic sites across the UK.



GE Consulting

GE Consulting is a well-established consultancy providing expert advice on ecology, arboriculture and land management. Operating from offices in Exeter and Bristol, GE cover a wide range of expertise and have a strong reputation for technically sound yet pro-active and pragmatic advice. Supporting clients across England and south Wales, GE have extensive experience of supporting the design and promotion of strategic land projects.



Miles White Transport Ltd.

Miles White Transport Limited (MWT) was established in early 2018 as a specialist highways engineering and transportation planning practice that provides professional advice to private and public sector clients on development and land use matters.

The company was founded by Chris Miles and Richard White and currently operates from offices in South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. We serve clients on projects spread throughout England, Wales and Ireland. Chris and Richard have well over 30 years' experience as consulting engineers, most of which has focussed on the traffic and transport aspects and implications of new development schemes.

MWT are involved in numerous development schemes covering residential, employment, retail and leisure uses. MWT have worked extensively in Devon on a range of sites located across the County.



Calibro Consultants Ltd.

Calibro is a specialist infrastructure planning consultancy of experienced and highly qualified transport planners, flood risk, infrastructure and drainage engineers with in-house modelling expertise in transport planning, hydrology, hydraulics and groundworks.

The teams have a wealth of experience in supporting a broad range of developments from site identification through to detailed design and a reputation for our collaborative and innovative approach to challenging sites. We pride ourselves on our ability to provide robust flood risk management and drainage strategies considering buildability and opportunities to deliver biodiversity and amenity benefits from the outset.



Orion Heritage

Orion Heritage is a an archaeological and built heritage consultancy with over 60 years collective experience. The company provides independent advice to the private sector aimed at resolving the often-conflicting demands of heritage conservation while enabling profitable and sustainable development. The company prides itself in understanding our client's businesses and projects, and responding positively to their aims and objectives.

The company was formed in June 2015 by Rob Bourn and Rob Smith. The Directors and Consultants bring with them a wealth of experience of providing advice on all stages of the promotion and construction of proposed developments. This ranges from land acquisition/due diligence, through the design and planning application (both outline and detailed) process, to the eventual discharge of archaeological and historic building conditions. This work routinely involves the production of Heritage Statements; desk-based assessments and historic environment ES chapters, negotiations with local planning authorities, the costing and management of archaeological investigations, and expert witness at public inquiry. Orion operates throughout the UK and across all development sectors from offices in Brighton, Manchester and the Cotswolds.



Axehayes Exeter

JANUARY 2023

Prepared for and on behalf of The Cherwell Group by





Appendix 2 – Technical Note



Technical Note

Recommendation for New Option for proposed Community development in East Devon

January, 2023

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Urban Wilderness were appointed by the Cherwell Group to provide a high level evaluation of the Council's East Devon - Options Appraisal for a Potential Second New Community. This report underpins the Council's draft allocation for a second new town at Strategic Policy 8 of the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.2 As part of this exercise Urban Wilderness evaluated whether the available evidence supports the consideration of a further option, as yet to be tested by the Council.
- 1.3 This technical note accompanies representations made to the East Devon Local Plan Review Consultation (Regulation 18) submitted on behalf of the Cherwell Group by LRM Planning.

- 1.4 In the preparation of the emerging local plan a high-level assessment was undertaken and three broad areas of search were selected. CBRE were commissioned by the Council to evaluate the three potential areas of search, (refer Fig. 1).
- 1.5 The three site options were assessed against technical criteria (refer Fig. 2) by different specialists. These categories were confirmed by the Council after extensive discussions and consultations.
- 1.6 In all 11 technical assessments ranging from landscape sensitivity to flood risk, sustainable access to deliverability were carried out.
- 1.7 Following a quantitative evaluation of the 3 options identified, a recommendation for Option 1 (land between the A3052 and the A30), was put forward.
- 1.8 Option 3 (land to the south of the A3052), only scored marginally lower than Option 1 and thus is still under consideration (refer Fig. 3).
- 1.9 Section 10 of the representations made to the East Devon Local Plan Review by LRM provide a reasoned justification as to why the difference in score attributed to Options 1 and 3 should be considered greater than 0.1 points, placing option 1 firmly as the most suitable option for growth.
- 1.10 This technical note does not deviate from this conclusion but instead also puts forward the rationale for the consideration of a new site option - Option 4.
- 1.11 A fourth option that brings forward development to the north and south of the A3052 would boost housing delivery through the provision of 3 'development nodes', it would enable the provision of a new strategic link between the A376 and the A30, and enable the extension of the Clyst Valley Regional Park to the south.

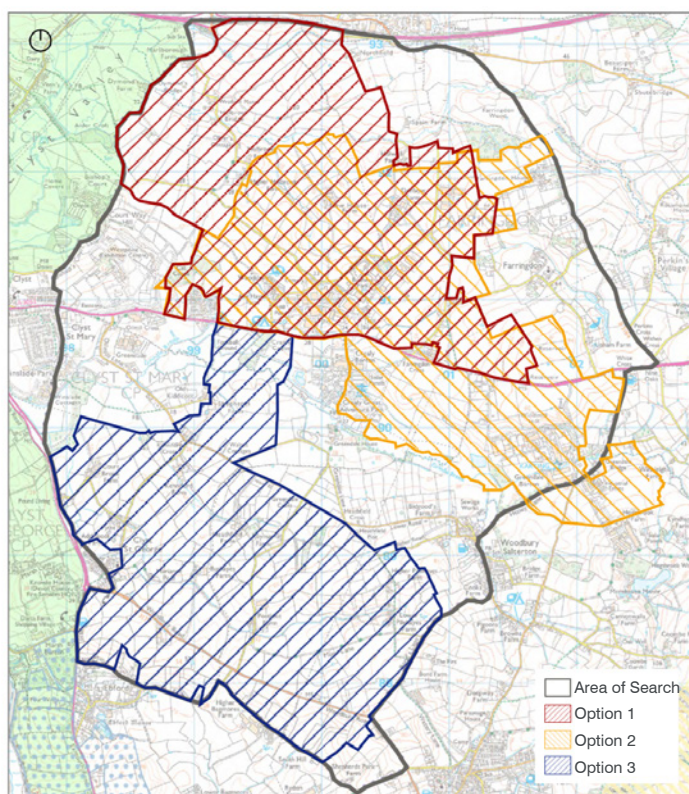


Fig. 1 Site Options for New Community Development for East Devon District Council

Assessment Category		Scoring Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Landscape Sensitivity		Sensitivity	High		Medium		Low
Ecological Impact/ Biodiversity		Impact	High		Medium		Low
Environmental Constraints	Flood Risk	Constraints' Level	High		Medium		Low
	Minerals						
	Historic Environment						
Sustainable Accessibility		Sustainability	Low		Medium		High
Highways		Impact	High		Medium		Low
Utilities		Capacity	Low		Medium		High
Net Zero Carbon		Contribution to Net Zero	High Exposure/ Low Opportunity		Medium Exposure/ Medium Opportunity		Low Exposure/ High Opportunity
Climate Resilience		Resilience	High Exposure/ Low Opportunity		Medium Exposure/ Medium Opportunity		Low Exposure/ High Opportunity
Deliverability (Land)		Impact	No landowners known, many businesses to relocate, significant land assembly required		Majority of land put forward in call for sites, some landowners known, some businesses to relocate		Majority of landowners known, few businesses to relocate

Fig. 2 Assessment Categories and Scoring Criteria

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Landscape Sensitivity	2	2	3
Ecological Impact/ Biodiversity	3.4	3.6	3
Flood Risk	4	4	4
Minerals	3	1	5
Historic Environment	3	3	3
Sustainable Accessibility	3.8	1.8	4.3
Highways	4.8	4.1	4.6
Utilities	3	2.3	2.3
Net Zero Carbon	3.3	2.3	3
Climate Resilience	2.7	3.4	2.7
Deliverability	4.5	3	2.5
Total	37.5	30.5	37.4

Fig. 3 Options Appraisal Technical Assessment - Scoring Summary (CBRE, 2022)

Technical Note

Recommendation for New Option for Proposed
Community development in East Devon.



2.0 Technical Report Findings

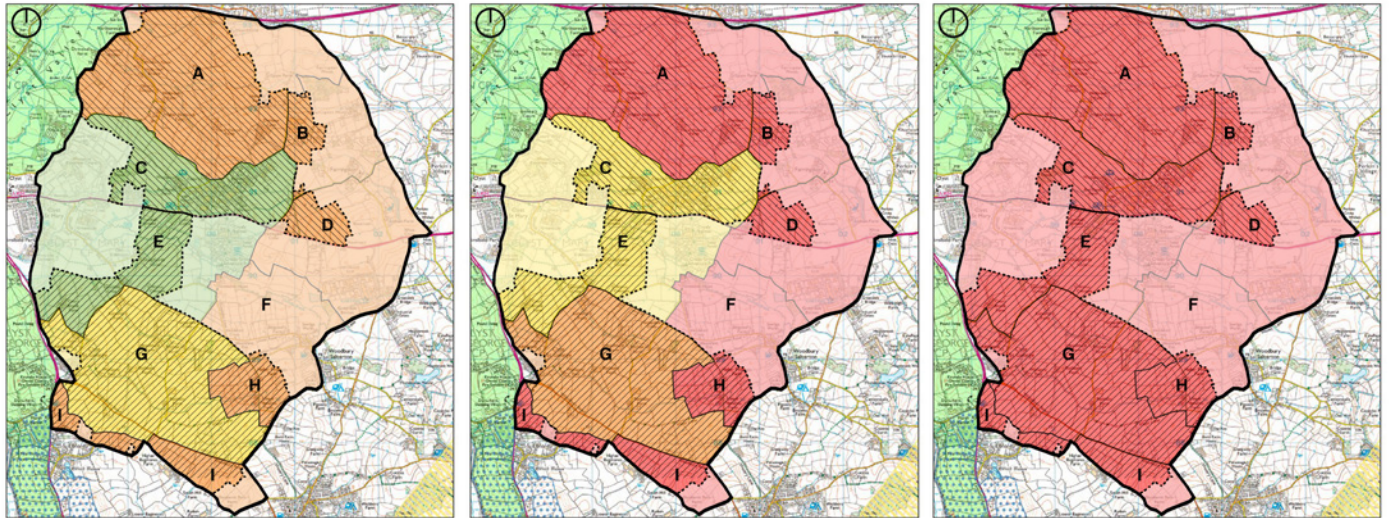
- 2.1 This section provides a high level review of the relevant findings of the technical reports prepared by CBRE. As it has already been established that Option 1 and 3 score the highest, Option 2 will not be considered further.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

- 2.3 A Landscape Sensitivity Assessment was undertaken by Fiona Fyfe Associates Ltd. The key points arising are as follows:
- 3 types of development were considered - residential, employment /commercial, and large-scale Warehousing/ distribution.
 - The Area of Search was divided into nine Local Landscape Units (LLUs), based on defining characteristics, land use and likely levels of sensitivity. Each LLU was given a rating based on the susceptibility of key landscape and visual characteristics with regards to the three potential development types.
 - The report notes that some of the LLU boundaries are clearly defined whilst others are more transitional. There is clearly therefore scope to alter boundaries following a finer grain evaluation.
 - Whilst a commentary on mitigation measures is provided, in our opinion this adds little value to the findings given the exact nature, extent and the phasing of development is unknown.
 - The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment concludes that Option 3 ranks higher than Option 1 in terms of Landscape Sensitivity. This is predominantly as a result of LLU G which has been assessed as being of medium sensitivity. The assessment recognises that Option 3 contains land of varying sensitivities, and therefore not all land within Option 3 is suitable for development.
 - The author recommends that the least sensitive land i.e. a combination of the southern part of Options 1, (land promoted by the Cherwell Group and its immediate surrounds), and land to the north of Option 3 should be combined to create “...a new Western Option.”
 - Work by Urban Wilderness to evaluate landscape capacity broadly corroborates the findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. UW concur that land to the centre west of the study area is the least sensitive in landscape terms, and that sensitivity increases as one travels east.
- UW however conclude that land to the immediate south of the A30 (northern part of LLU A) should be considered of medium sensitivity due to its proximity to the A30, and Exeter Airport, and the influence that these elements exert over the landscape. Moreover, development visible on higher land is not untypical of the wider landscape, and that with sensitive design and structural planting this could be accommodated. The way in which LLU boundaries have been determined does not however allow for this finer grain of assessment. Consequently UW consider that LLU A should in fact be divided into two separate areas and assessed independently in a similar fashion to LLU G and LLU I.
 - UW also conclude that a broader proportion of LLU G to the south should be considered of High – Medium sensitivity due to the availability of distant views, its openness, its proximity to Clyst St George and its rural character.
 - On balance UW are of the opinion that Option 1 and 3 should score equally and concur that an option that explores the southern part of Option 1 and the northern part of Option 3 should be explored further.

Technical Note

Recommendation for New Option for Proposed Community development in East Devon.



Landscape Sensitivity for Type A. Housing

Landscape Sensitivity for Type B. Employment / Commercial

Landscape Sensitivity for Type C. Large-scale Warehousing / Distribution

LLU	Scope for Development		
	Type A	Type B	Type C
A	●	⊘	⊘
B	●	⊘	⊘
C	●	●	⊘
D	●	⊘	⊘

Option 1 - Scope for Development

LLU	Scope for Development		
	Type A	Type B	Type C
E	●	●	⊘
G	●	●	⊘
H	●	⊘	⊘
I	●	⊘	⊘

Option 3 - Scope for Development

Key

- Area of Search
- ▨ Option 1
- ▨ Option 3
- Landscape Sensitivity
 - High
 - High - Medium
 - Medium
 - Medium - Low

Fig. 4 Landscape Sensitivity for Options 1 and 3
(Data Source : Fiona Fyfe and Associates, 2022)

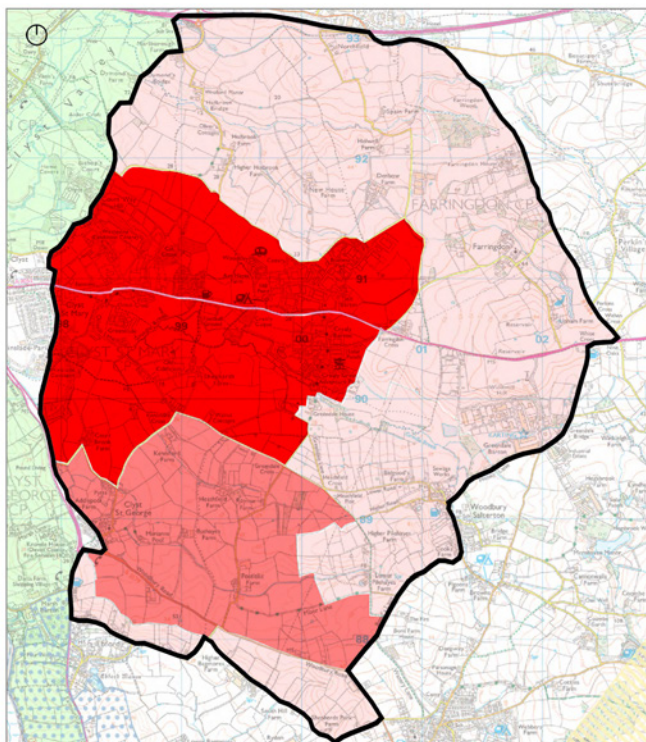
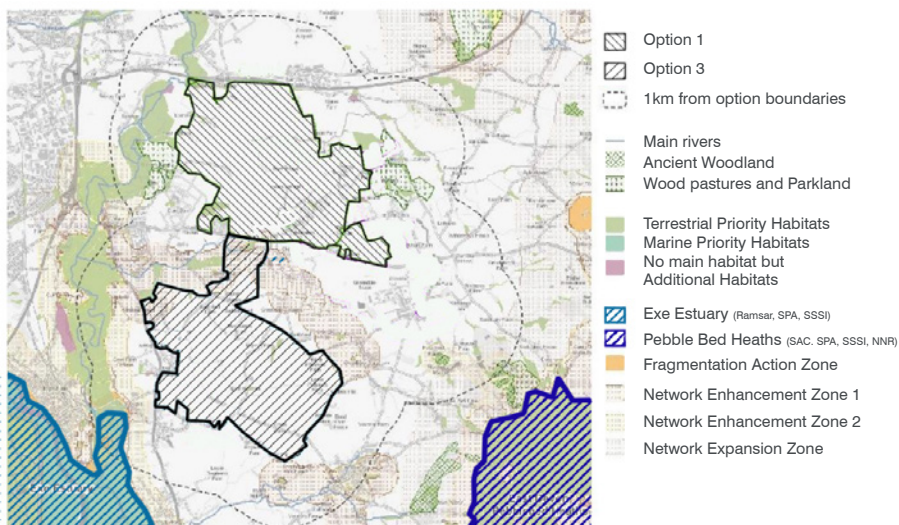


Fig. 5 Landscape Sensitivity Suitability Map
(The intensity of the red is indicative of higher potential for development)
(Data Source : Fiona Fyfe and Associates, 2022)

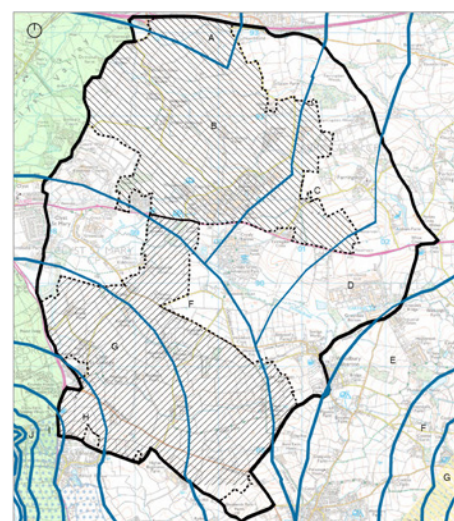
ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

- 2.4 An Ecological Desk Study was undertaken by The Environment Partnership (TEP). The key points arising are as follows:
- The Desk Study Report details the statutory wildlife designations of international, national, regional or local significance within the Area of Search.
 - The study provides a desk-based appraisal of the impact on wildlife sites, SSSI Risk Zones, ecological networks and diversity of species at different regional scopes.
 - The findings revealed that the areas to the east and west of Options 1 and 3 have particular local, regional, national and international relevance for wildlife, including mobile species with particular seasonal activities.
 - **Option 1_** The option presents opportunities for biodiversity gains due to its proximity to the Clyst Valley Regional Park, land identified within network enhancement or expansion zones, SANGS and flood zones. The option scores higher than Option 3 as a consequence of perceived impact on local wildlife sites and diversity of species (refer Fig. 6).
 - **Option 3_** The option was found to be the least preferred option. Its proximity to the Exe Estuary (400m to the south) makes it most vulnerable to development. The SSSI value of the Estuary also restricts planning permission for most types of development (refer Fig. 6).
 - It is important to consider the layering of different ecological zones and habitats when identifying an area that is considered to provide a fine balance between distance from the High Risk SSSI zones and Wildlife sites, both Local and National (refer Fig. 7).
 - **CBRE consider that Option 1 scores 3.4 whilst Option 3 scores 3.**

ECOLOGICAL REPORT



Statutory Wildlife Designations relevant to the Options



SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the Options

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Statutory Wildlife Sites of International & National Significance	5	3
Strategy 47 Applies (Recreational Pressure)	3	2
SSSI Impact Risk Zones	5	3
Statutory Wildlife Sites of Regional / Local Significance	5	5
Local Wildlife Sites	3	5
Potential for Impact on Wildlife Sites Network (in absence of mitigation)	2	3
National or Devon Priority Habitats	2	2
Overall Risk to Ecological Network	3	2
Diversity of Protected or notable species records in locality	3	2

Assessment Category Scoring

Fig. 6 Ecological Impact for Options 1 and 3
(Data Source : TEP, 2022)

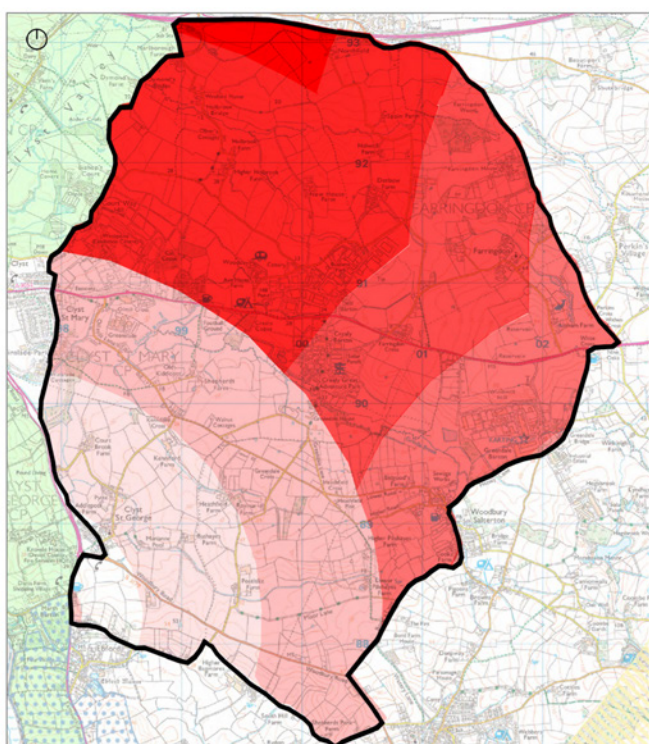


Fig. 7 Ecological Impact Suitability Map
(The intensity of the red is indicative of higher potential for development)
(Data Source : TEP, 2022)

FLOOD RISK

2.5 An evaluation of flood risk across the Search Area has been considered. The key points arising are as follows:

- The Flood Risk for the Options was evaluated by dividing land into Flood Zones - 1,2,3a and 3b.
- A large portion of the land in both options falls within Flood Zone 1, i.e. at low risk of flooding. Both options do however have some areas that fall within Flood Risk Zones 2 & 3a.
- Option 1_** Flood zones 2 and 3a are present around the watercourses that run through the

centre of the option. Areas to the south fall within Zone 3a. Overall there is considered to be a low to medium risk of surface water flooding.

- Option 3_** The centre of the site and the north portion contain Flood zones 2 and 3a with a low to medium risk of surface water flooding.
- CBRE consider that both Options score the same as per the flood risk criteria.**
- Work by Calibro has suggested that the access from the A3052 required to deliver Option 3 would need to traverse a large area of floodplain (in excess of 150m). They conclude that delivering this access could require significant engineering works. It is likely that the Environment Agency will seek for minimum works to be included within the floodplain, so a wide clear-span bridge with intermediate supporting piers may be required for some of its length. Openings would need to be at least 0.3m but could be up to 0.6m above the flood level. Road construction is likely to be a further metre but could be higher to allow for buried services.

Flood Zone	Annual Flood Risk	Source of Flooding	Risk Level
1	0.1% chance of flooding	Rivers & Sea	Low
2	0.1% to 1% chance of flooding	Rivers	Medium
	0.1% to 0.5% chance of flooding	Sea	
3a	1% to >1% chance of flooding	Rivers	High
	0.5% to >0.5% chance of flooding	Sea	
3b	5% chance of flooding	Rivers & Sea	Very High

Fig. 8 Flood Risk for Options 1 and 3
(Data Source : Tibbalds, 2022)

- Flood risk can be mitigated through well-designed drainage systems and ecological strategies. The floodplains provide opportunities for biodiversity gains, and SANGs.

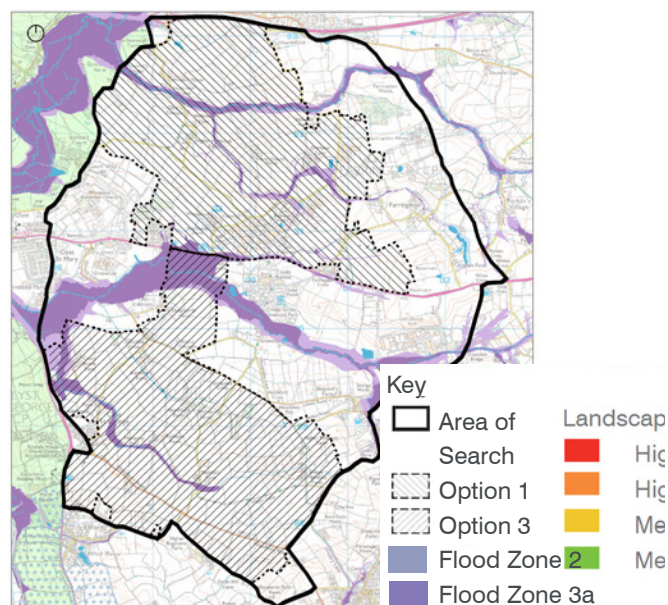
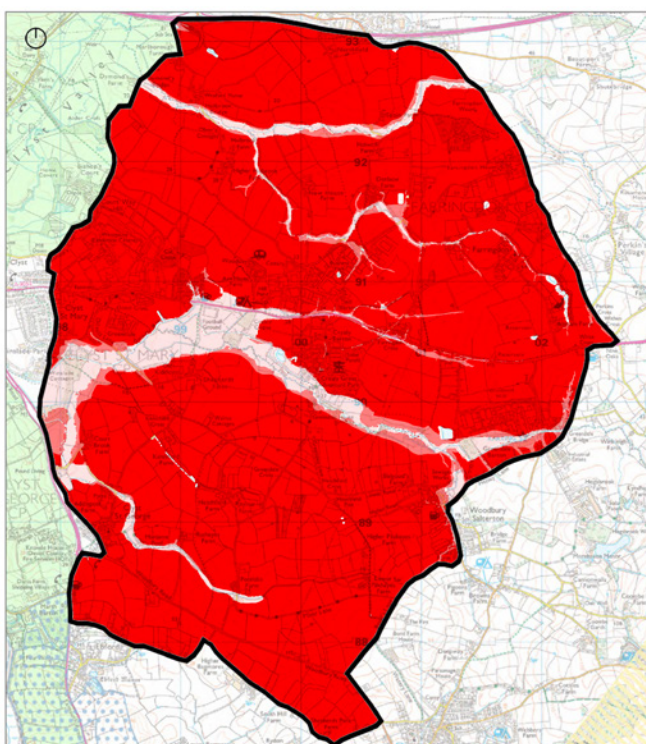


Fig. 9 Flood Zone Suitability Map
(The intensity of the red is indicative of higher potential for development)
(Data Source : Tibbalds, 2022)

- Callibro consider that Option1 should score 4 whilst Option 3 should score 3.**

MINERALS / AGRICULTURE AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

2.6 An evaluation of mineral safeguarding, agricultural land classification and historic assets across the Search Area has been considered. The key points arising are as follows:

- The Options were assessed in line with the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, Devon Minerals Plan 2011-2033 and Devon Waste Plan 2011-2031.
- Both options fall outside areas affected by coal mining and have no nitrates and phosphates.
- There is a mineral safeguarding zone at Hill Barton industrial estate. There are waste facilities at both Hill Barton and Greendale Barton. **The presence of these areas within Option 1 affected its impact rating. Option 1 scored lower than Option 3.**
- In conclusion, the New Option should not include Hill Barton and Greendale Barton (refer Fig. 10).

Agriculture

- Option 1 was found to comprise entirely Grade 3 agricultural land, whilst there are large areas of Grade 2 agricultural land in the north and west of Option 3. Consequently Option 1 is considered to have a higher capacity for development in these terms.

- Land use and quality of soil have not presently been investigated for the Options.

A fourth option could be drawn up to prioritise land within Option 1 due to its low agricultural soil quality, and also maintain a clear demarcation from designated historic sites (refer Fig. 11).

Historic Environment

- **Option 1_** There is only one Grade II listed property. There is a registered park and garden located close to the north western boundary.
- **Option 3_** There are three Grade II listed properties within the site area. There is a scheduled monument (Animal Pound) off Woodbury Road located on the western boundary of the site.
- Despite Option 3 potentially affecting a greater number of heritage assets both Options received the same score in the impact assessment i.e. resulting in a medium risk.
- Where areas about historic environments these would require adequate separation to respect and maintain their setting / existing character.
- **The Cherwell Group consider that Option 1 should score marginally higher than Option 3.**

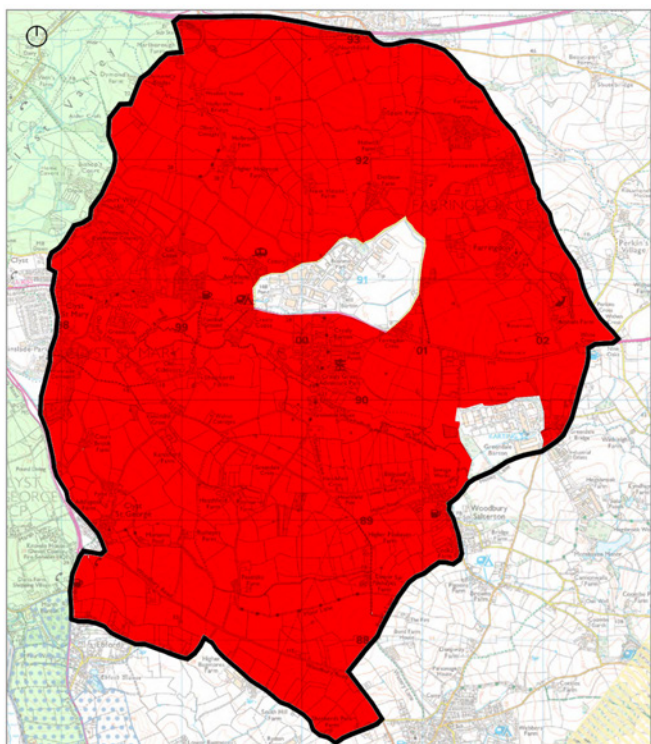


Fig. 10 Minerals Suitability Map

(The intensity of the red is indicative of higher potential for development)

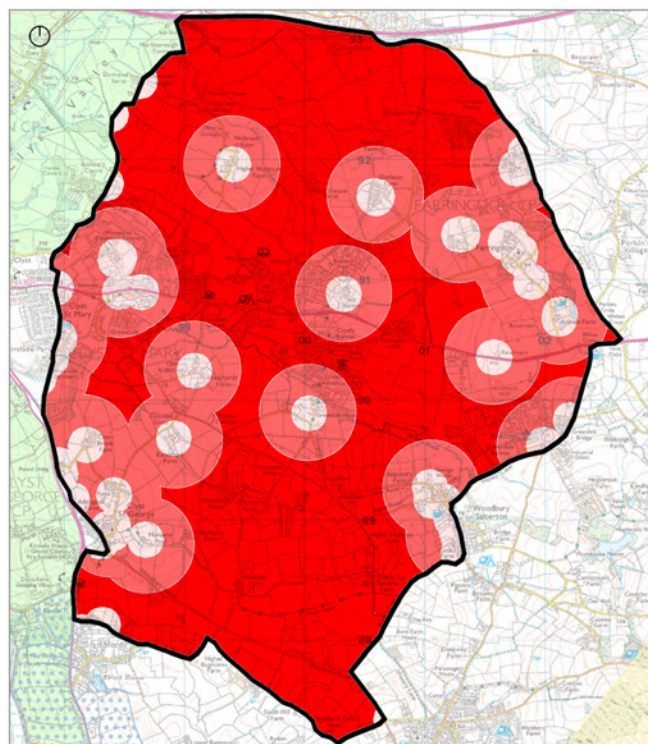


Fig. 11 Historic Environment Suitability Map

SUSTAINABLE ACCESS ASSESSMENT

2.7 An evaluation of the opportunities and constraints for enabling Sustainable Access, i.e. walking, cycling and public transport, has been considered by Hydrock. The key points arising are as follows (refer Fig. 12):

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Walking	5	3
Cycling	3	2
Public Transport	5	3
Employment	5	5

Fig. 12 Assessment Scoring
(Data Source: Hydrock, 2022)

Walking

- The Options are located in predominantly rural areas. The new community requires a network of convenient, direct, safe, and, legible internal pedestrian routes. It should include areas of no to low traffic, shared spaces, play streets and green streets.
- There are footways along A3052 and B3174 Old Honiton Road which provide key pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of both Options (east-west connectivity). The Clyst Valley Trail offers north-south pedestrian linkages.
- Option 3 has marginally more existing Public Rights of Way than Option 1 and as such has been scored higher.

Cycling

- The Area of Search has limited dedicated cycling infrastructure. The rural nature of the local lanes do however present opportunities for cyclists.
- **Option1_** benefits from a shared footway/cycleway along Old Honiton Road. It connects Cranbrook and Exeter via the Science Park.
- **Option 3_** scores comparatively better than Option 1 due to its proximity to the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2, providing a traffic-free link along the eastern edge of the Exe Estuary.

Public Transport

- The new community will require high-quality, frequent and direct public transport linking nearby settlements, amenities, and services.
- The A-3052 is a primary east-west bus corridor into Exeter, with bus stops in proximity to both Options. Both Options also benefit from proximity to Exeter and a series of rail stations located on the Avocet Line.
- **Option1_** Cranbrook station is the nearest railway station. It benefits from bus stops and services in the north (towards Cranbrook/Clyst Honiton).
- **Option 3_** Topsham station is the nearest railway station. It is also served by additional bus stops and services in the south-west (Ebford and Topsham).
- The score accounts for both bus and rail considerations, gauging the present scenario and ability to deliver future upgrades to incentivise public transport use.

Employment Accessibility

- The 20 min neighbourhood principle promotes a mixed use development that includes employment, minimising external movement. Both options benefit from their proximity to the city of Exeter, which provides multiple job opportunities.
- **Option 1_** The site has the largest number of employment opportunities: Exeter Airport and the associated Airport Business Park as well as the Sky Park, Science Park and Exeter Business Park/ Met Office facility.
- **Option 3_** The site is in close proximity to Winslade Park and Topsham Town Centre.

Summary

- Overall Option 3 scores marginally better than Option 1 due to the presence of existing walking and cycle routes, and closer and more frequent public transport services.

Technical Note

Recommendation for New Option for Proposed Community development in East Devon.

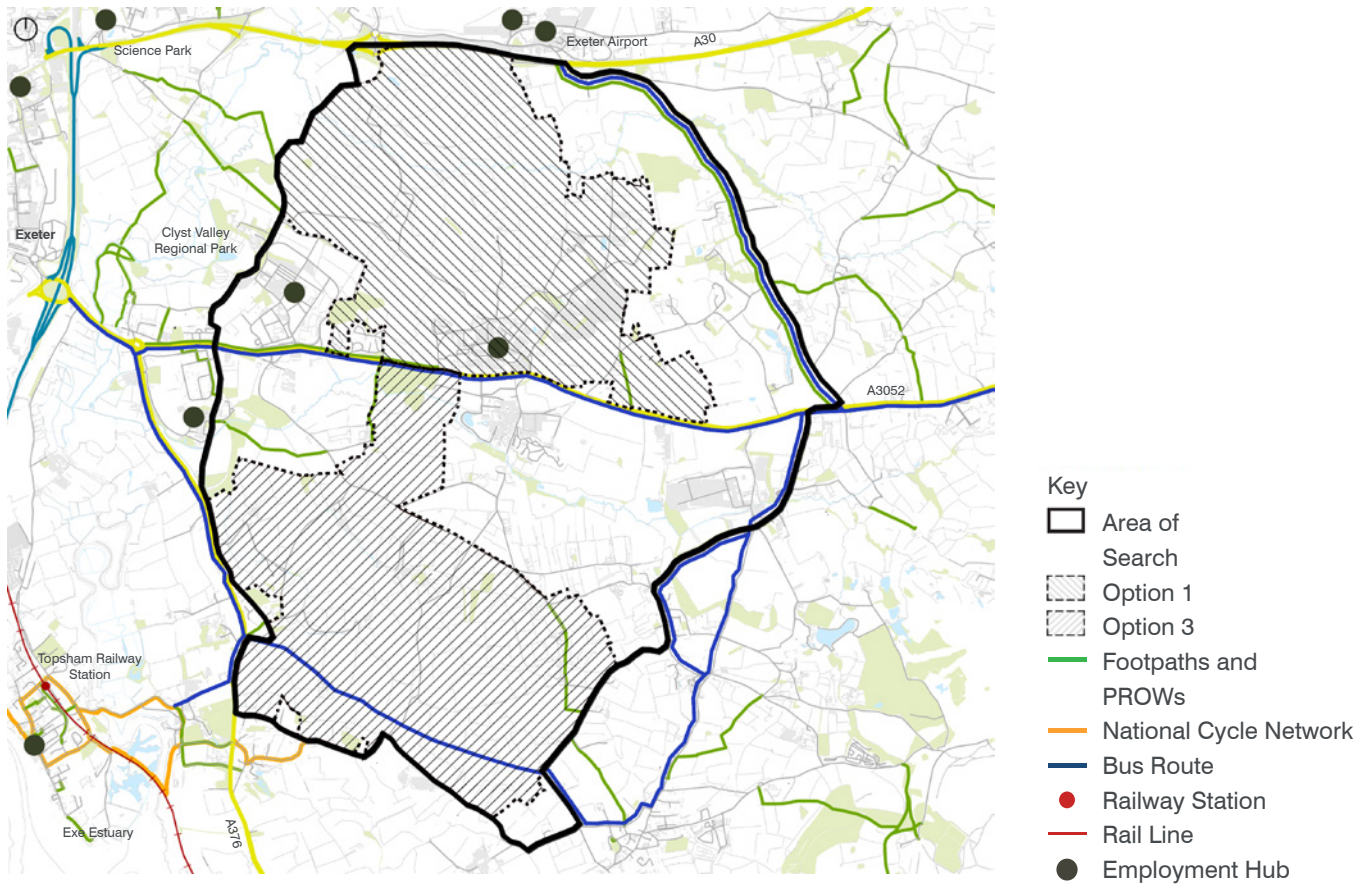


Fig. 13 Sustainable Access for Options 1 and 3
(Data Source : Hydrock, 2022)

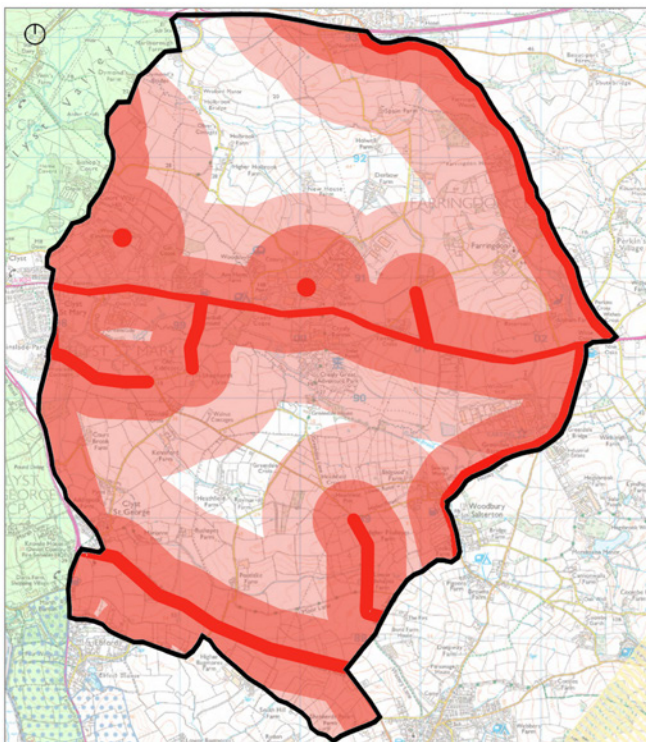


Fig. 14 Sustainable Access Suitability Map
(The intensity of the red is indicative of higher potential for development)
(Data Source : Hydrock, 2022)

HIGHWAYS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2.8 An evaluation of the highways impact has been considered by WSP. The key points arising are as follows:

- The report assesses the potential impact of the proposed development on local and strategic highway networks. It is based on a modeling report using SATURN. It examines the future development scenarios for the Options with 2,500 dwellings and an assumed level of build-out up to the end of the Plan period (2040). The report also considered the mitigation potential for the Options to improve changes in delay, and the deliverability of these measures.
- Option 1_** Is considered to have the least significant highway impact. The initial development could easily be accommodated without significant highway interventions. While the study identified an increase in traffic in some areas, significant delays are not estimated.
- Option 3_** This option could be accommodated with relatively low mitigation works. However, the Clyst St. Mary Junction is anticipated to see significant delays. This would also impact the M5 Junction 30 due to its close proximity.

- The report summarises that Option 1 would be the preferred scenario as it requires no substantive mitigation measures. Option 3 would require improvements at the Clyst St. Mary Roundabout.

Assessment Category	Option 1		Option 3	
	Impact	Deliverability	Impact	Deliverability
M5 J29	5	5	5	5
M5 J30	5	5	4	5
M5 J31	5	5	5	5
A30	5	5	5	5
A3052	4	5	4	5
A38 & A380	5	5	5	5
Clyst St. Mary Junction	3	4	1	4
East of Exeter Network Impacts	5	5	5	5
Total	37	39	34	39

Fig. 15 Assessment scoring
(Data Source: WSP, 2022)



Fig. 16 Highways relevant to Options 1 and 3
(Data Source: WSP, 2022)

UTILITIES AND NET ZERO CARBON INFRASTRUCTURE

2.9 Two reports by Hydrock provide an overview of the potential capacity and development of utility and net zero carbon infrastructure to serve the Option sites. The key points arising are as follows:

Utilities

- The assessment studies the scope for the following utility services; *Electricity (heat and Energy), Gas, Potable Water, Telecommunications, and Foul drainage.*
- **Option 1_** This is the highest-scoring site, due to the relatively minimal impact predicted to existing major infrastructure, with opportunities to connect to WPD’s overhead for power supply.
- **Option 3_** This option would need to consider diversions or clearance of existing infrastructure to enable developable space to come forward. Comparatively, it does not provide as good an option to electric network.
- Both Options are constrained for Foul drainage connections due to their rural location.

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Utility capacities and opportunities for connection	4	2
Foul Drainage capacities and opportunities for connection	2	2
Existing Infrastructure impact	3	3

Fig. 17 Assessment scoring - Utilities
(Data Source: Hydrock, 2022)

Contribution To Net Zero

- The energy and carbon performance expectations for new developments are rapidly evolving, towards a legislated net zero commitment by 2050.
- Each Option is provided with a score across three key areas; *network capacity (generation), zero or low carbon energy technologies and energy storage.*

- At primary substation level, there is capacity at Clyst Honiton and Pinhoe for Option 1 and at Topsham for Option 3. The assessment considered that both Options have potential for open loop ground source technology. The Energy from Waste (EfW) plant at Hill Barton benefits Option 1, as it provides a ‘ready made’ suitable heat network source.
- The north and west of Option 1 and the west of Option 3 are underlain by a moderately productive aquifer.
- Both Options are suitable for Solar Energy, although Option 1 has reduced coverage due to proximity to Exeter Airport.
- Both Options perform strongly in relation to low and zero carbon energy technologies. However, Option 1 is considered to perform marginally better due to the proximity of the Hill Barton EfW plant.

Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Network Capacity	5	5
Low or Zero Carbon Energy Technologies	5	4
Energy Storage	5	5

Fig. 18 Assessment scoring - Contribution to Net Zero (Data Source: Hydrock, 2022)

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- 2.10 A sustainability report provides an overview of the Options potential to support climate resilience. The key points arising are as follows:
- The key climate drivers and physical risks were assessed in order to study their impact on the Options.
 - The categories evaluated are *drought, heatwaves, extreme precipitation, and storm events*.
 - Certain criteria within these categories have not been assessed at preliminary stage as the options would require consideration of soil geology which factors into significant number of risks.
 - The study concludes that both Options showed a similar level of resilience through low exposure and/ or vulnerability.
 - The study noted that to bring forward ground mount solar PV arrays at scale, additional risks and drainage design mitigation against surface water run-off from the panels must be considered.
 - Any potential interaction of surface water drainage, power distribution and access and movement strategies must be key considerations during masterplanning, to ensure that the site is not locked into an approach which could trigger cascading failures to infrastructure networks.

Future Climate Risk	Key Considerations for Infrastructure	Option 1	Option 3
Drought	Water Availability	4	4
	Ground Movement/ Subsidence	3	2
	Soil Erosion (water)	2	5
	Ground Permeability	3	2
Heatwaves	Extreme or prolonged high temperatures	Not assessed	Not assessed
	Wildfires	Not assessed	Not assessed
Extreme precipitation	Surface Water	2	2
	Ground Saturation	3	2
Storm Events	High winds	Not assessed	Not assessed
	Soil erosion (wind)	2	2

Fig. 19 Climate Resilience Performance Summary
(Data Source: Hydrock, 2022)

DELIVERABILITY

2.11 The deliverability of the project is reliant on two key considerations - land ownership and existing land use - as follows:

Land Ownership

- **Option 1_** A large proportion of the land is being promoted by a single entity. The majority of the landowners are known and present fewer constraints for assemblage of land.
- **Option 3_** The majority of the landowners are unknown. Significant land assembly would be required to move forward with this option. It increases the risk of resistance from landowners for large scale development.
- The land within both Options is located within an aerodrome safeguarding zone. The northern part of the Option 1 is within noise contours from the Airport/A30. These will need to be taken into consideration at Masterplanning stage.

Existing Land Use

- The boundaries of the Options have been defined using landscape features, including existing watercourses, field boundaries and hedgerows to create settlement edges.
- Certain areas would need to be eliminated from development boundaries due to ecological, economic and social reasons.
- The report acknowledges the presence of certain bad neighbour uses in both Options, especially the waste transfer facility at Hill Barton.

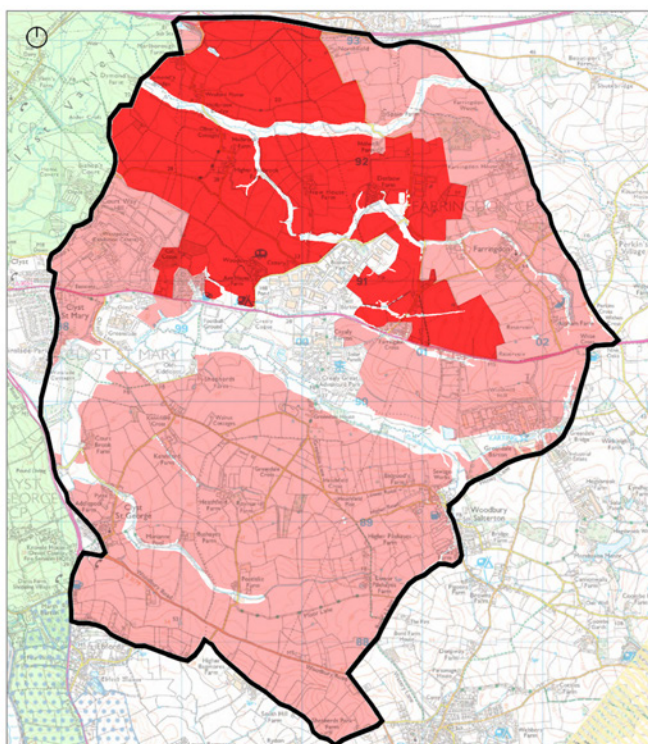


Fig. 21 Deliverability Suitability Map
(Data Source: CBRE, 2022)

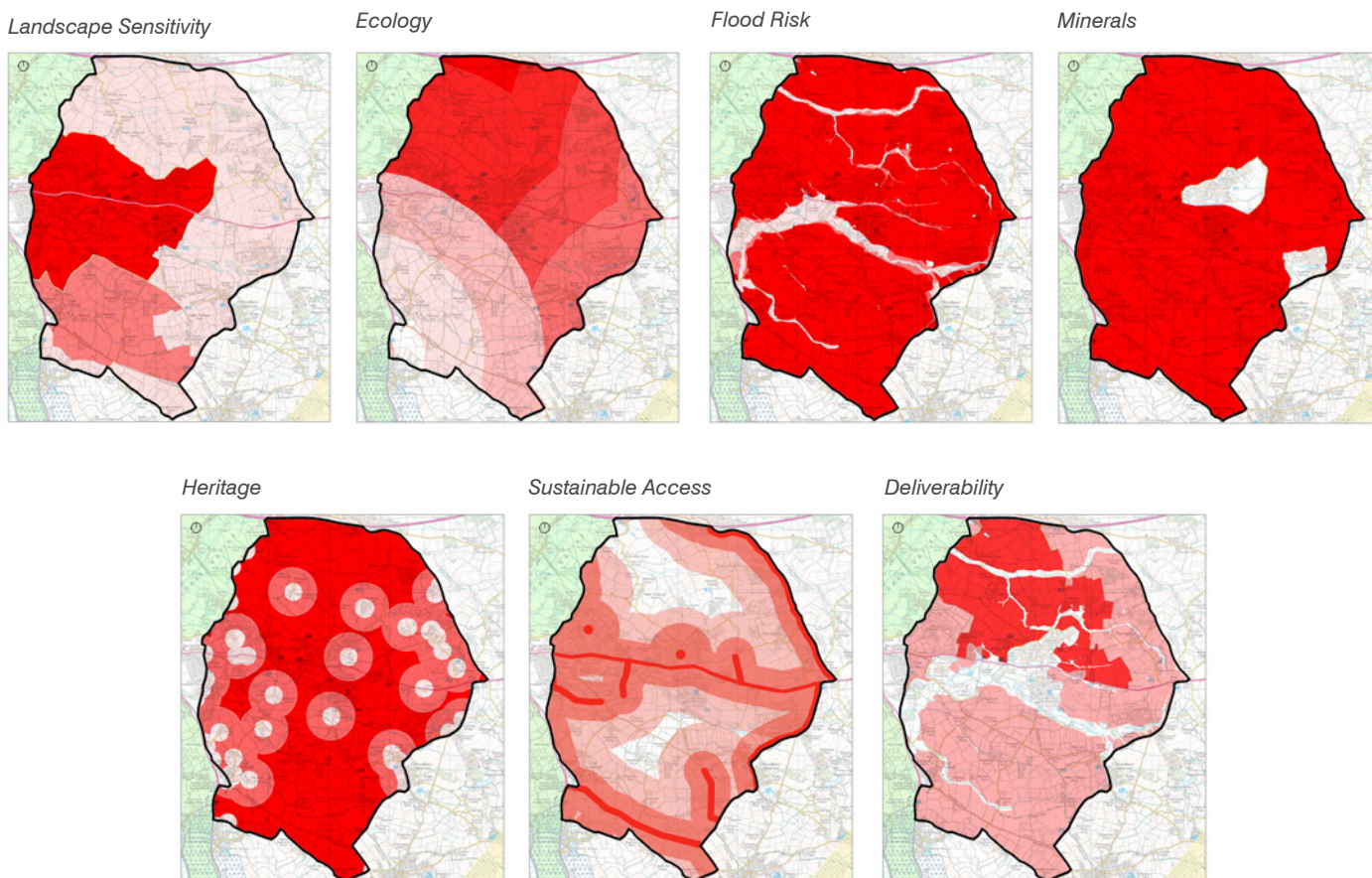
Assessment Category	Option 1	Option 3
Land Ownership	4	4
Existing Land Use	3	2

Fig. 20 Assessment scoring - Deliverability
(Data Source: CBRE, 2022)

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 The findings of the CBRE Technical Assessments have been examined and collated to create Suitability maps. These maps identify the most appropriate areas for development as identified by each individual technical report. The intensity of the colour red in these maps is representative of the most suitable areas for development.
- 3.2 The East Devon – Options Appraisal for a Potential Second New Community’ Report rightfully concludes that of the options assessed, Option 1 (land to the north of the A3052 and to the south of the A30) is the preferred option. However, the Cherwell Group consider that, the assessment work underscores Option 1 and over-scores Option 3 (land to the south of the A3052). The revised assessment work undertaken on behalf of the Cherwell Group in respect of landscape sensitivity, flood risk, minerals and historic impact indicates that Option 1 outperforms Option 3 by a more significant margin.

Fig. 22 Suitability Maps Overview



4.0 Consideration of a Fourth Option

4.1 When all of the suitability maps set out in Figure 22 are overlaid with one another one can clearly see the following:

- Development to the west of the study area is more suitable for development than the east.
- Land to the north of the A3052 (Option 1) has a higher intensity of colour than the majority of land to the south of the A3052 (Option 3). Consequently, Option 1 is by measure more suitable than Option 3.
- The northern part of Option 3 has a similar level of intensity and therefore is considered suitable for development.
- Land to the immediate east of the Hill Barton Business Park has a high level of suitability.

4.2 Given the need to deliver 2500 new homes, associated education space, a 5Ha new town centre, 17.5Ha of employment and an extensive area of Green Infrastructure by 2040, regular and sustained delivery will be essential. Moreover, the new community will need to have scope for further expansion beyond the plan period to include additional employment land, an expanded town centre and circa 5500 further homes.

4.3 In our opinion a fourth Option, which blends Option 1 with land within Option 3 should be considered for the following reasons:

- land either side of the A3052 is shown to be the least sensitive and most suitable for development. With sensitive design the A3052 could be incorporated within a new settlement.
- This option enables three development nodes to deliver housing simultaneously (north, central and south), thereby enabling a greater rate of delivery to be realised. Options 1 and 3 are likely to only deliver 2 development nodes.
- A fourth option would enable a new strategic link between the A376 and the A30, thereby alleviating pressure on the M5.
- Existing floodplains within the site present an opportunity for ecological mitigation, through creation of woodlands, wetlands and green links. Option 4 enables the extension of the Clyst Valley Regional Park, to link with the Grindle Brook.
- A fourth option will provide additional development capacity thereby enabling the Council to meet its post 2040 targets with more certainty.

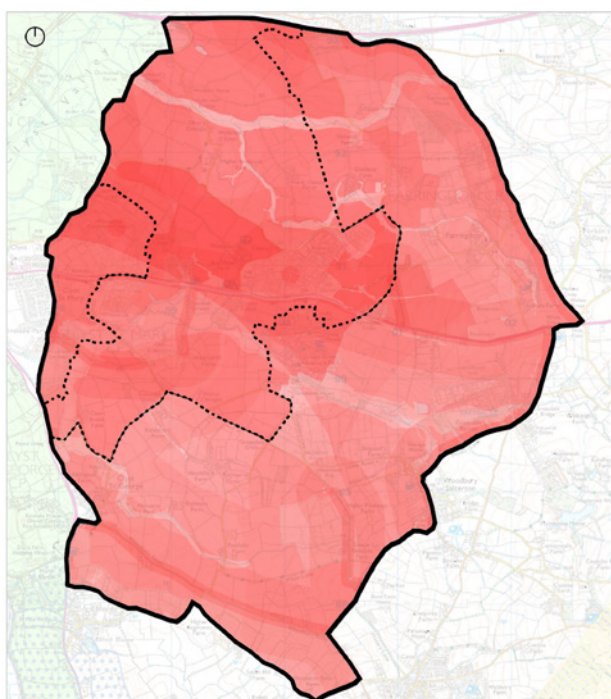


Fig. 23 Overlay of the Suitability Maps and outline of a potential fourth option.

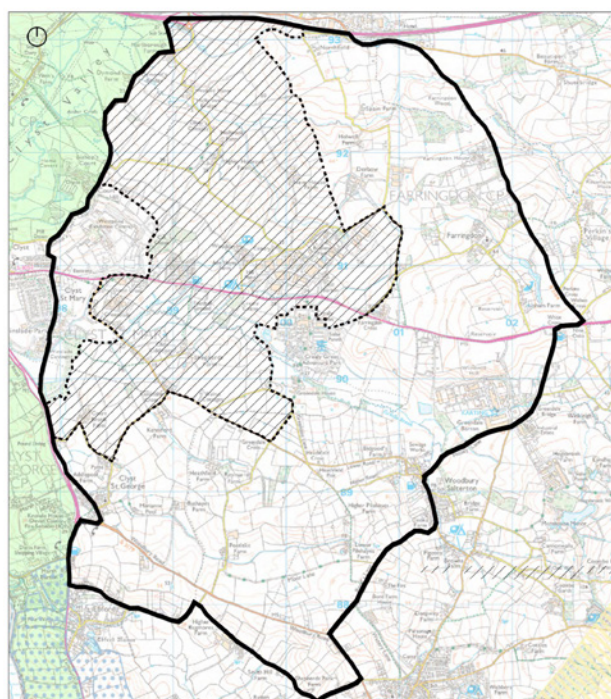


Fig. 24 Option 4 Profile

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