

Report to: Strategic Planning Committee

Date of Meeting: 12 March 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Coastal Preservation Area policy boundaries in the new Local Plan

Report summary:

At the 7 September 2021 meeting, this committee agreed that “that the Coastal Preservation Area boundary be reassessed in light of any new development or change of use which has taken place since the previous assessment. The assessment would follow the format used in the previous assessment”. This report explains the process that was followed to achieve this review and the attached appendix sets out the proposed new boundaries. It is intended that the proposed Coastal Preservation Areas, supported by the assessment work, be subject to public consultation in Spring 2024.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. That Strategic Planning Committee endorse the assessment supporting the Coastal Preservation Area policy of the Local Plan, set out in appendix 1 of this report.
2. That Strategic Planning Committee agree that the draft Coastal Preservation Areas, drawn in accordance with the methodology set out in the appendix, be subject to public consultation.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that Coastal Preservation Areas are based on a logical and transparent assessment process and that the public are given an opportunity to comment on the proposals as part of the local plan production process.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Assistant Director, Planning Strategy and Development Management, e-mail – efreeman@eastdevon.gov.uk, Tel 01395 517519

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications

- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; It is important that we set out how Coastal Preservation Area boundaries are to be defined to ensure a rational process is followed and can subsequently be justified. It is important that the public are given the opportunity to provide feedback in response to the draft proposals.

Links to background information

See links in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Local Plan contains a number of designations (and associated policies) that will protect the landscape element of the natural environment. The NPPF (para. 180 c) requires local authorities to “maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate”. The current Local Plan contains Strategy 44 which protects the character of the undeveloped coast (including the World Heritage Site) and designates a Coastal Preservation Area (CPA). This local designation is based on the (now obsolete) Devon Structure Plan Coastal Protection Area, updated through a detailed character assessment of undeveloped coast in terms of openness and views to and from the sea carried out in 2012 (based on guidance from the Devon Landscape Policy Group).
- 1.2 The CPA is a policy to protect the finite resource of the undeveloped coast from development. Restrictions against development in CPAs are stronger than those for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).
- 1.3 To inform the new EDDC Local Plan a further re-assessment of the CPA boundary is required in the light of new development or land use change which has taken place since the previous assessment. The assessment is to follow the format used in the

previous assessment and as described in Appendix 1.

- 1.4 The continued protection of the undeveloped coast was supported at Issues and Options consultation stage and this was reinforced by the strong support for the suggested Coastal Preservation Area policy approach shown through the Draft Local Plan consultation last year.

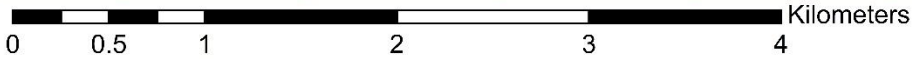
2 Proposed Coastal Preservation Area Boundary and relationship to potential development allocations

- 2.1 An assessment of the coastal area of East Devon (Appendix 1) has been undertaken by the EDDC Landscape Architect in accordance with the methodology set out within that assessment.
- 2.2 The methodology is based on 'An approach for defining undeveloped coast' DLPG Advice note 3. The original Coastal Preservation Area designation provides a starting point or baseline for defining 'Undeveloped Coast' through the Local Plans and Local Development Documents. This reflects the approach already adopted by many coastal planning authorities to date and uses the criteria recommended by the Devon Landscape Policy Group.
- 2.3 Areas for inclusion within the CPA should be substantially unaffected by development, and should be generally either visible from cliff top, beach, sea or estuary, or form part of the view from significant lengths of an access road, public footpath or bridleway leading to the coast or from the long-distance coastal footpath. Members should be aware that several proposed development allocations are located within the CPA area and there could be potential for conflict between these allocations and the 'undeveloped' character of the CPA, this is discussed below.
- 2.4 Generally the CPA extends inland to the visual horizon beyond which close inter-visibility with the marine environment ceases and coastal influences are largely lost. On the low-lying coastal levels, there is no abrupt cessation of views and maritime influence, but a progressive reduction inland. The inclusion of these areas within the Undeveloped Coast is principally related to the maritime influence on the vegetation, ecology and resulting character of the coastal hinterland.
- 2.5 The outer (coastal) extents of the CPA designation follow that of the council's jurisdiction to the Low Water Mark. Where estuaries and tidal creeks are present, a line is drawn across the mouth of these to include the waterbody extending inland within the designation. This is in recognition of the key associations and visual relationships between the estuaries and their landscapes, and the significant contribution these locally distinctive stretches of water make to the character of their associated landscapes.
- 2.6 Settlements are excluded from the CPA where their size and form would be a clear departure from the key "undeveloped" characteristic. Smaller development features

may be included in the designation where they either positively contribute to the coastal character (e.g. historic hamlets, farmsteads and landmark buildings) or where their exclusion may perpetuate harmful forms of development in an otherwise undeveloped coastal location (eg. caravan/ holiday parks, and modern agricultural sheds).

- 2.7 Taking the existing CPA boundaries as a starting point the review is a light touch assessment of their continuing appropriateness based on a combination of desk study and field observation. The assessment refers in detail to the recent development and policy changes that have occurred since the current boundaries were adopted. It also identifies land within the CPA that is currently proposed for development in the emerging local plan and notes that the CPA boundary may need to be further amended (at Regulation 19 stage) to exclude the finalised development allocations.
- 2.8 Along the East Devon coastline the exclusion of the larger settlements breaks the CPA up in to five distinct sections defined in the assessment as:
 - Area 1 – Lyme Regis to Seaton
 - Area 2 – Seaton to Sidmouth
 - Area 3 – Sidmouth to Budleigh Salterton
 - Area 4 – Budleigh Salterton to Exmouth
 - Area 5 – Exmouth to Topsham
- 2.9 Each of these areas has been reviewed in the assessment and maps showing the proposed new extent of each section of the CPA are shown overleaf. Larger scale maps of these sections are shown in the proposed consultation material in Appendix 3, along with detailed extracts showing the proposed changes in greater detail- these form the basis of the consultation.

Coastal Preservation Area - Lyme Regis to Seaton



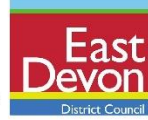
1:32,000 at A4

Coastal Preservation Area - Seaton to Sidmouth

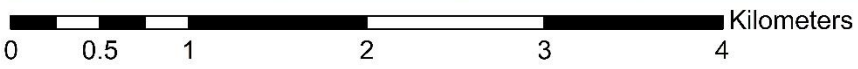
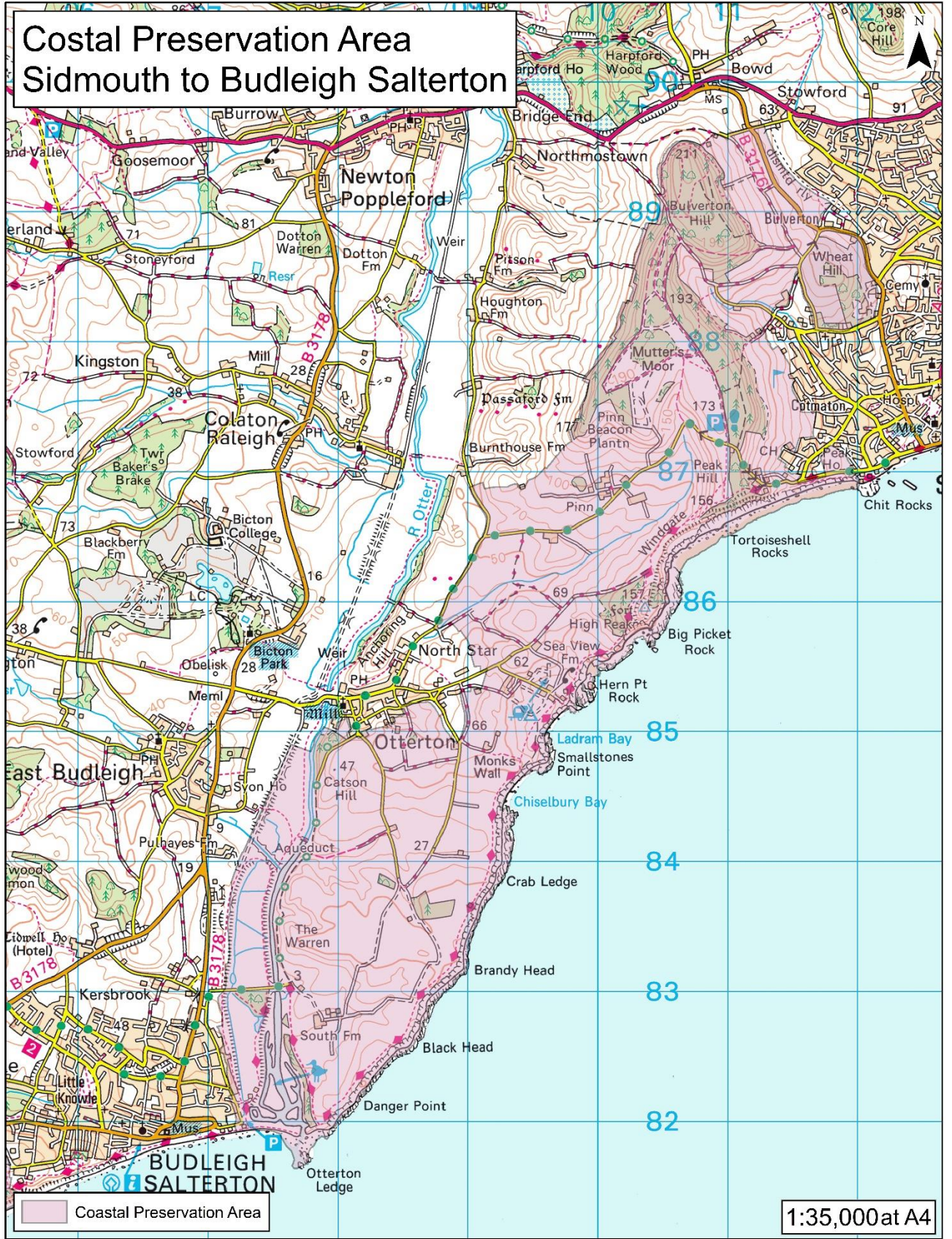


0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Kilometers

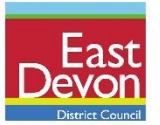
1:40,000 at A4



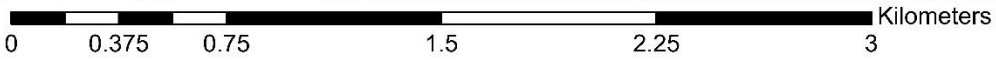
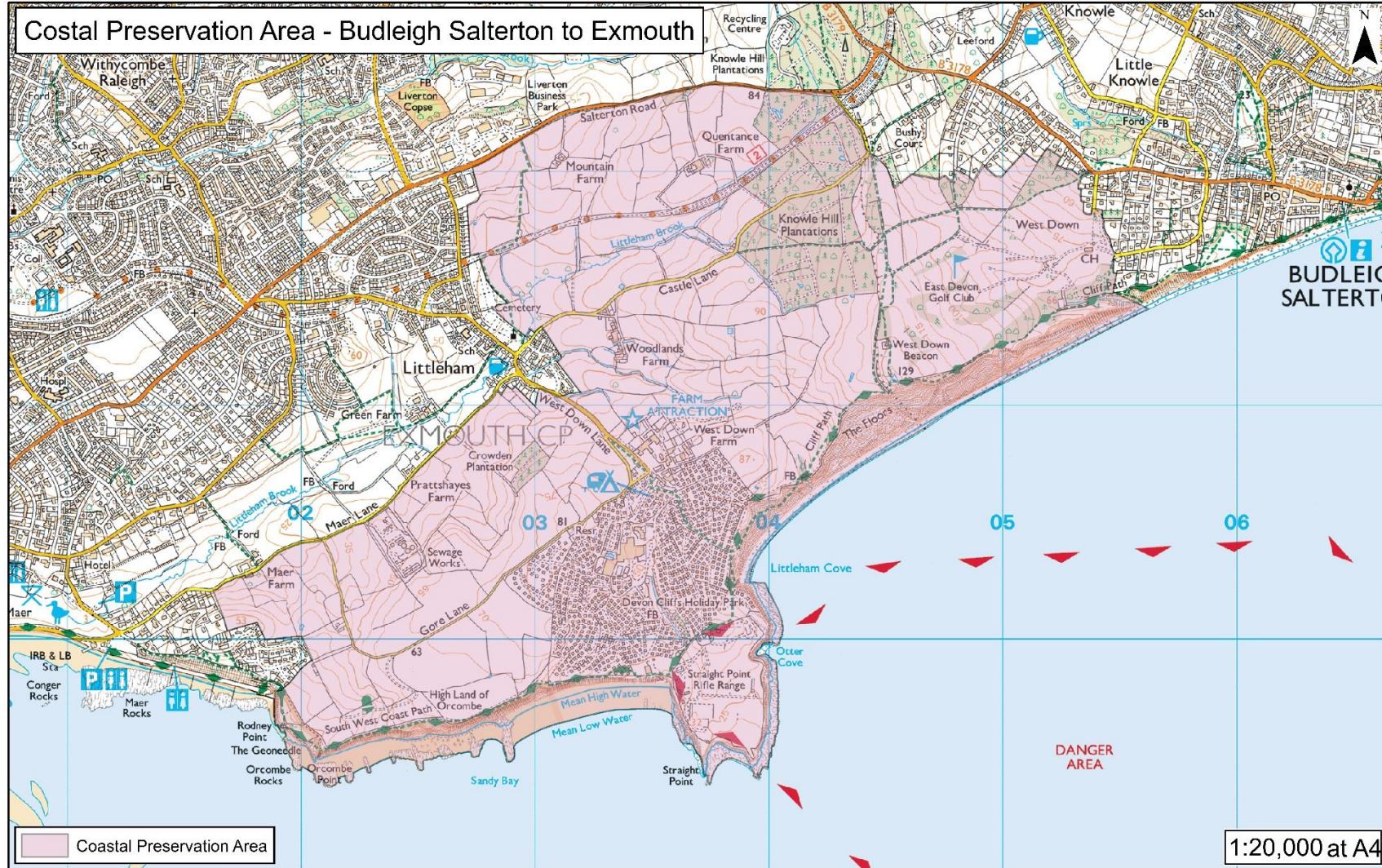
Costal Preservation Area Sidmouth to Budleigh Salterton

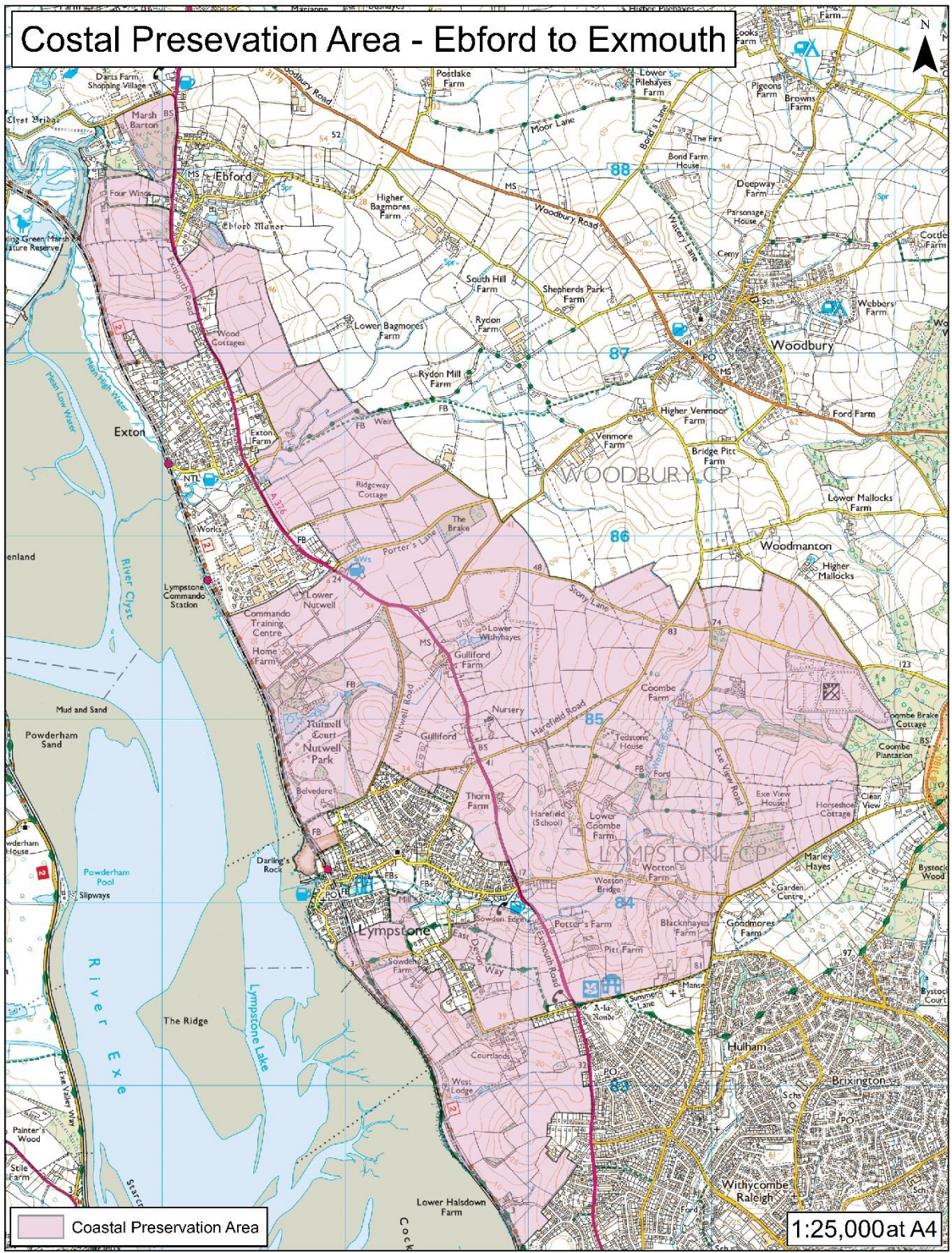


1:35,000 at A4



Coastal Preservation Area - Budleigh Salterton to Exmouth





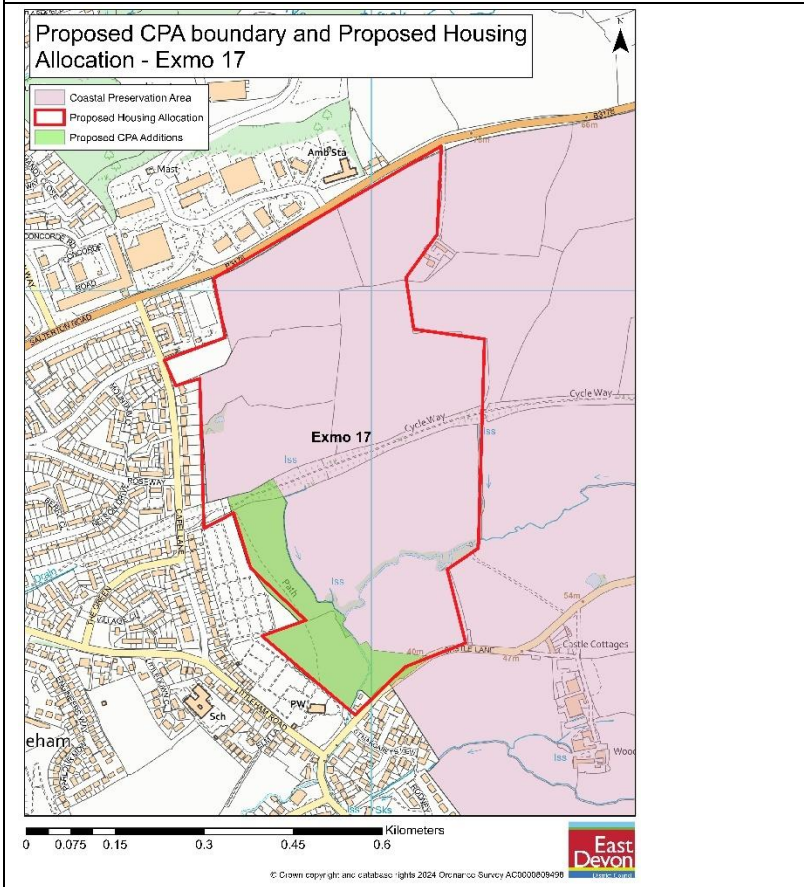
0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 3 Kilometers



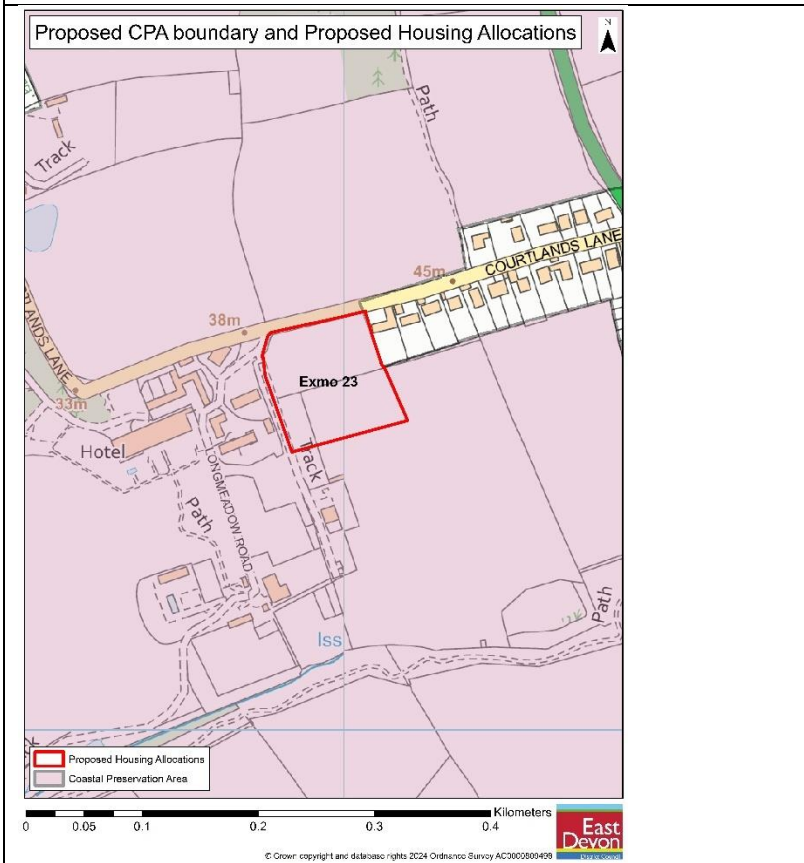
© Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000809498

2.10 Overall, the assessment concludes that relatively little development impacting upon the character of the undeveloped coast has taken place since the current Local Plan was adopted. This suggests that the policy approach has been successful in practice and supports the continued designation.

Budleigh Salterton to Exmouth Section (Exmouth)
Exmo 17 proposed for 410 homes, 1.6ha employment

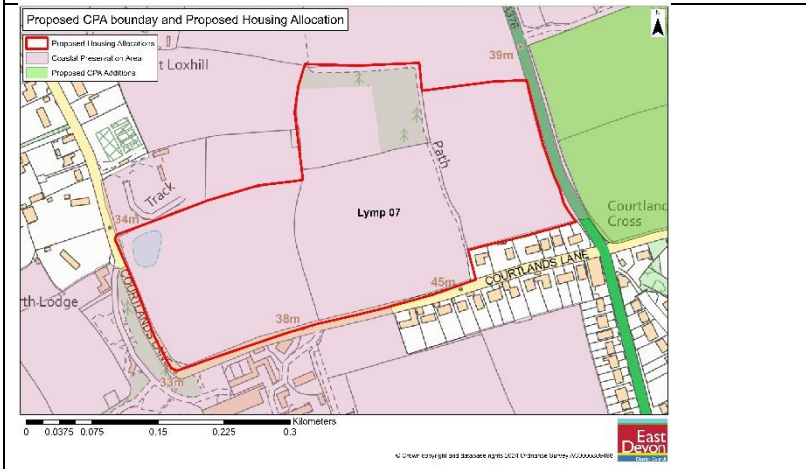


Ebford to Exmouth Section
Exmo 23 proposed for 12 homes (Exmouth)



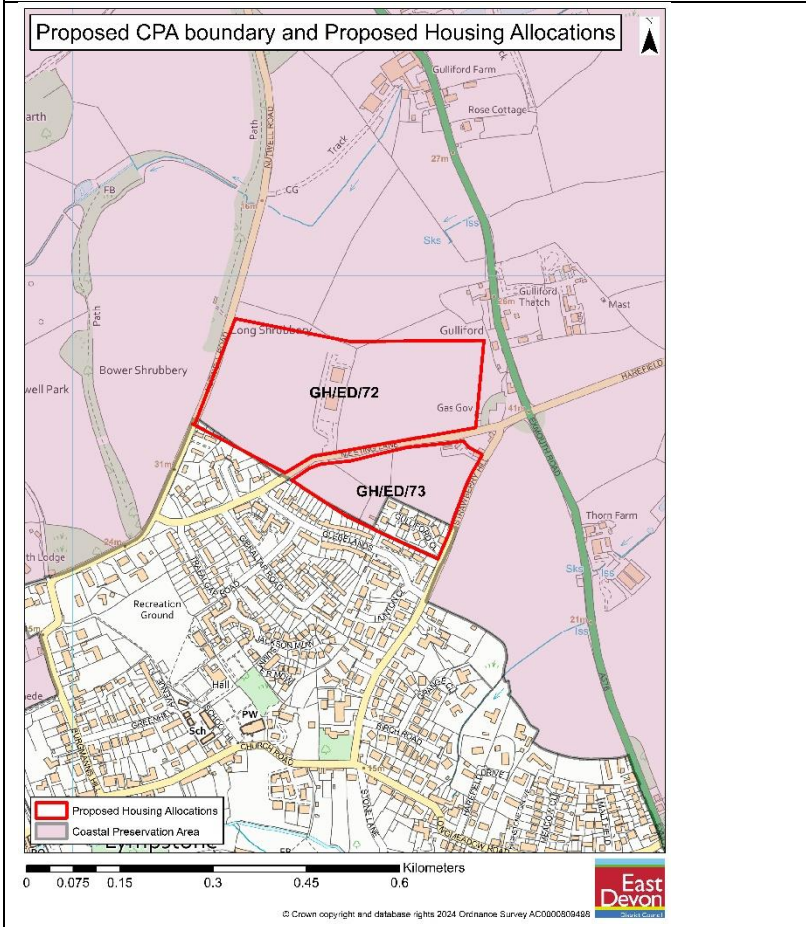
Ebford to Exmouth Section

[Lymp_07](#) proposed for 100 homes and 0.4ha employment (Exmouth)



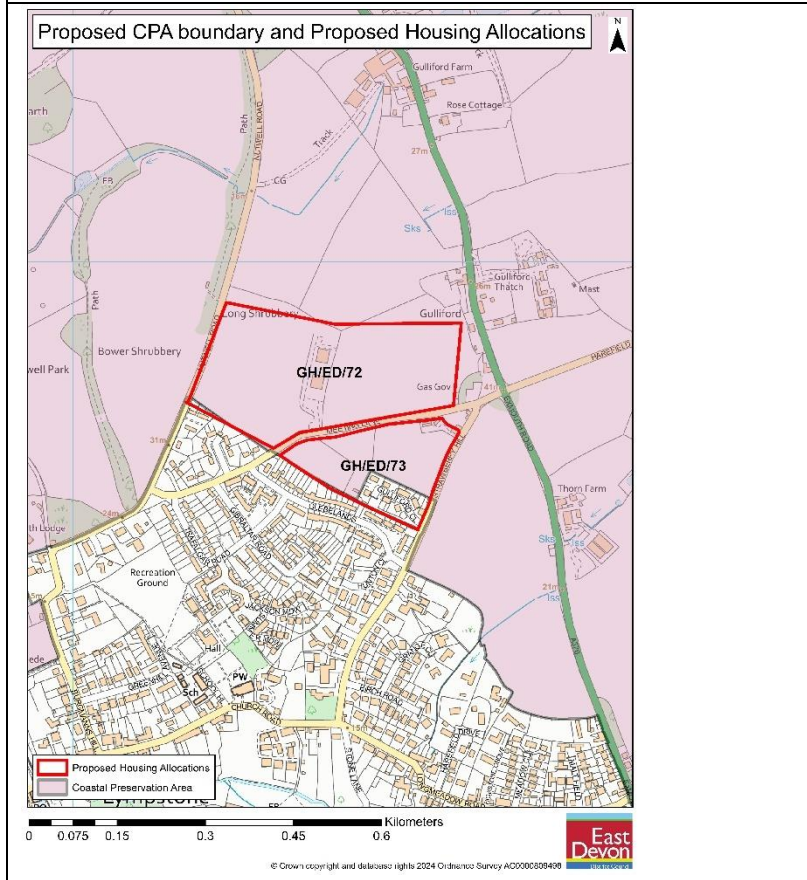
Ebford to Exmouth Section

[GH/ED/72](#) proposed for 131 homes and 0.52ha employment (Lymington)



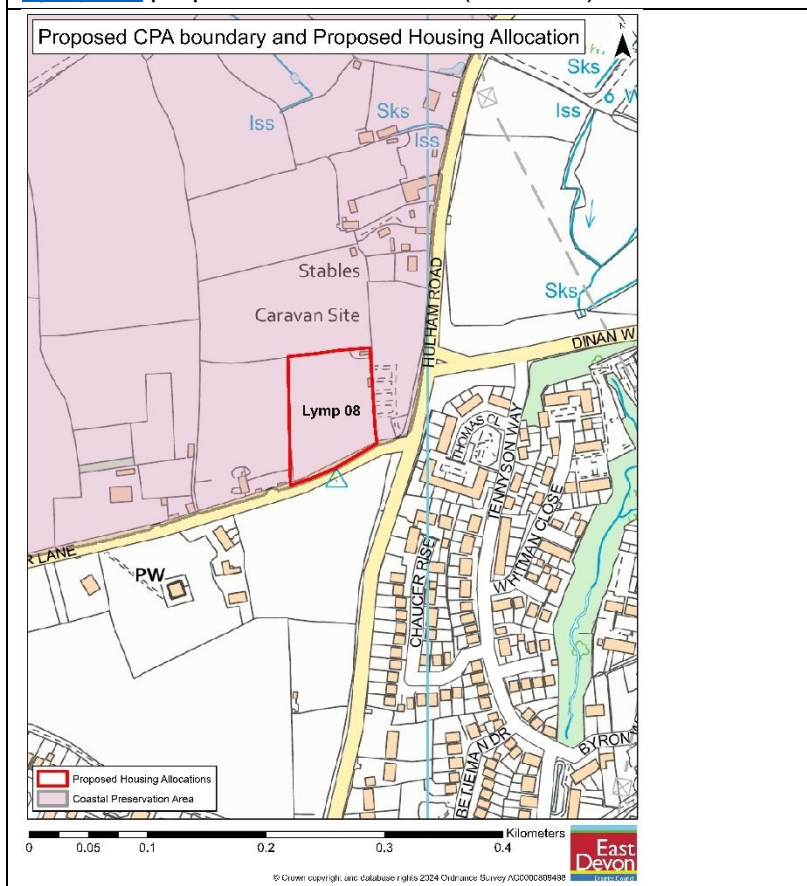
Ebford to Exmouth Section (Lympstone)

[GH/ED/73](#) proposed for 46 homes and 0.18 employment



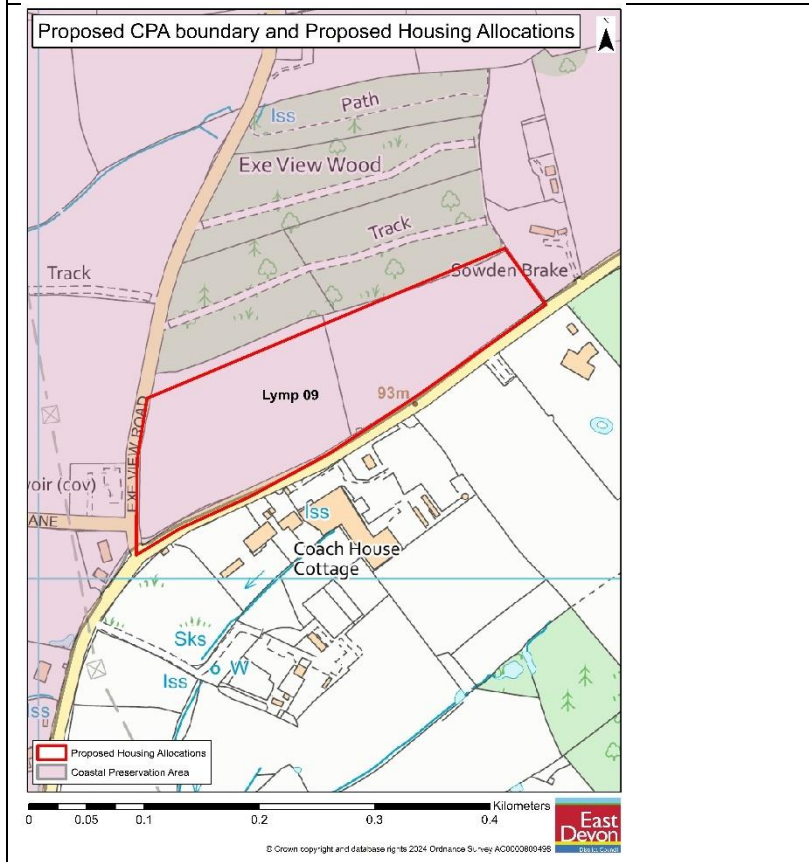
Ebford to Exmouth Section

[Lymp_08](#) proposed for 14 homes (Exmouth)



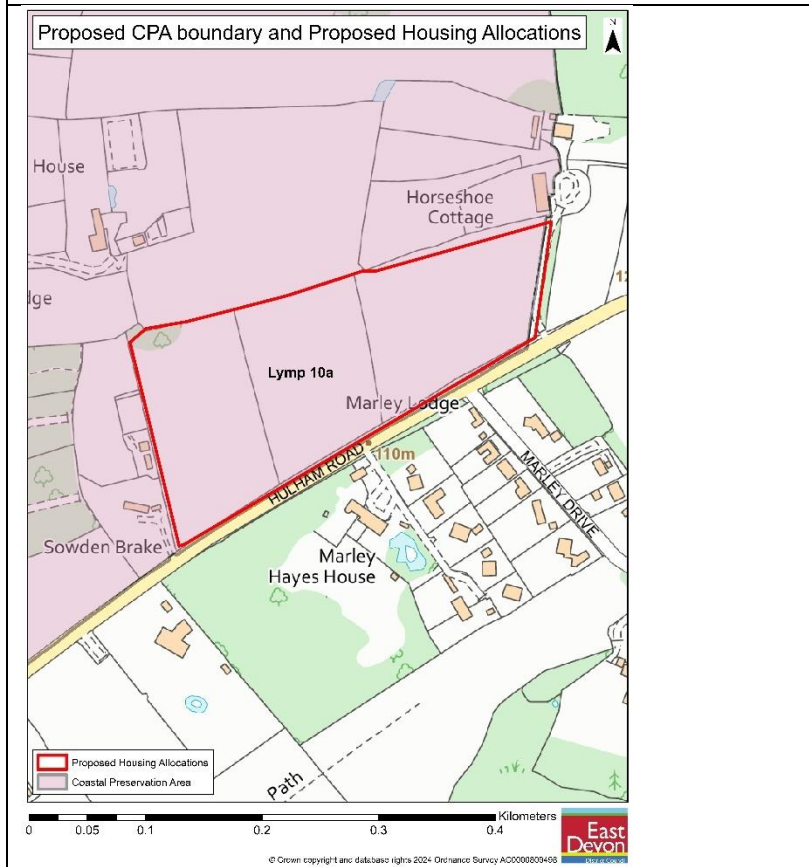
Ebford to Exmouth Section

[Lymp_09](#) proposed for 54 homes (Exmouth)



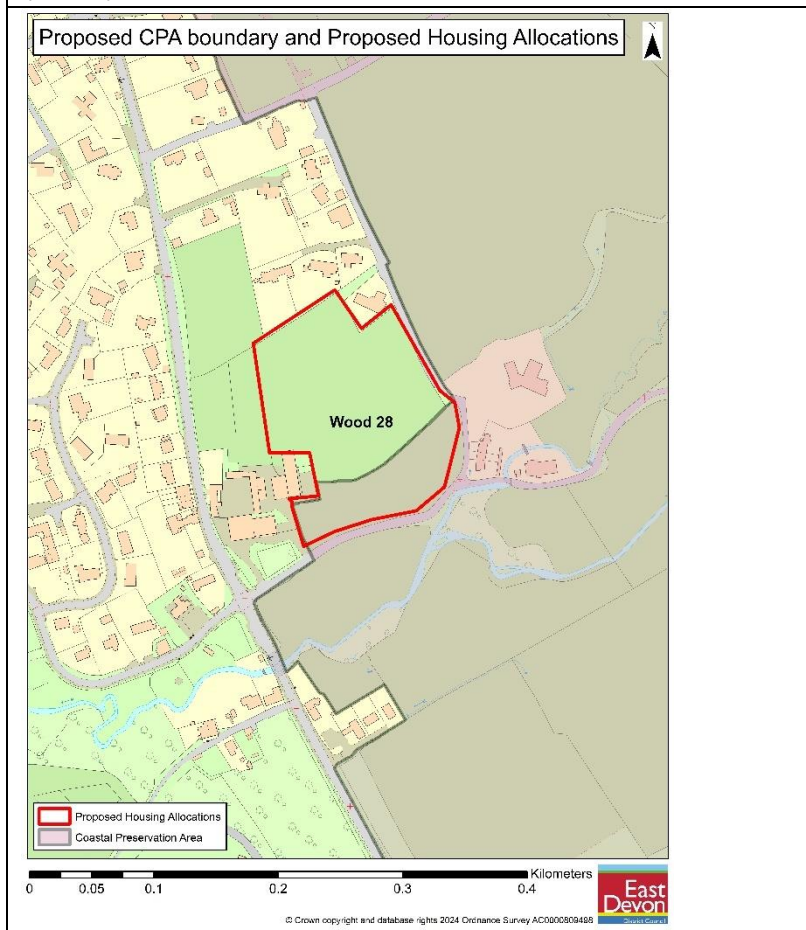
Ebford to Exmouth Section (Exmouth)

[Lymp_10a](#) proposed for 75 homes and 1ha employment



Ebford to Exmouth Section

[Wood 28](#) proposed for 33 homes and 0.13ha employment (Exton)



3 Consultation

- 3.1 It is proposed that public consultation on various local plan designations and allocations, including Coastal Preservation Areas as set out in Appendix 2, will be undertaken as soon as possible after receiving SPC approval. Such consultation will last for a minimum of 6 weeks.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the report.

Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications resulting from the report.