

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040

Site Selection report

Musbury



July 2024. Version 01.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 East Devon District Council is preparing a Local Plan covering the period 2020 to 2040 that will allocate sites for development. The Site Selection methodology explains the process of how sites are identified, assessed, and selected for allocation, or not.¹ The selection process is a judgement that balances top-down strategic issues relating to the Local Plan district-wide housing and employment requirements and the spatial strategy for the distribution of development, with the specific factors in the site assessments.
- 1.2 For each settlement, a Site Selection report contains the assessment of sites and identifies those which will be allocated, alongside those that will not, with reasons why. It collates evidence from numerous other sources in assessing whether to allocate sites.²
- 1.3 For each site, the report contains identifying details, a map and photos, followed by a summary of the site assessment and conclusion on whether to allocate the site. This is followed by a more detailed assessment of the landscape, historic environment, and ecological impacts of each site.
- 1.4 This report contains the assessment and selection of sites at Musbury. A map of all the sites which have been assessed is below, followed by a table which highlights the site selection findings.
- 1.5 In addition to the sites which have been subject to assessment, other sites were not assessed because they failed 'site sifting'. This stage of the process rules out sites that are not 'reasonable alternatives' and therefore not considered as potential allocations in the Local Plan. In summary, to pass site sifting and therefore be considered as a potential allocation, the site should be identified as suitable, available, achievable in the HELAA; in a suitable location; not already allocated in a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan; and not already have planning permission. For obvious reasons, overlapping sites will only be assessed once. Further detail is contained in the Site Selection methodology.
- 1.6 The following sites did not pass site sifting at Musbury:
 - Musb_02 is not within or adjacent, or otherwise well-related, to Musbury.

¹ INSERT WEB LINK TO UPDATED VERSION OF METHODOLOGY, ALSO INCL. ECOLOGY, LANDSCAPE, HESA SPECIFIC METHODOLOGIES

² Following the approach advocated by the Planning Advisory Service – see Topic 5 – Site Selection Process: [Future Proofing the Plan Making Process | Local Government Association](#)

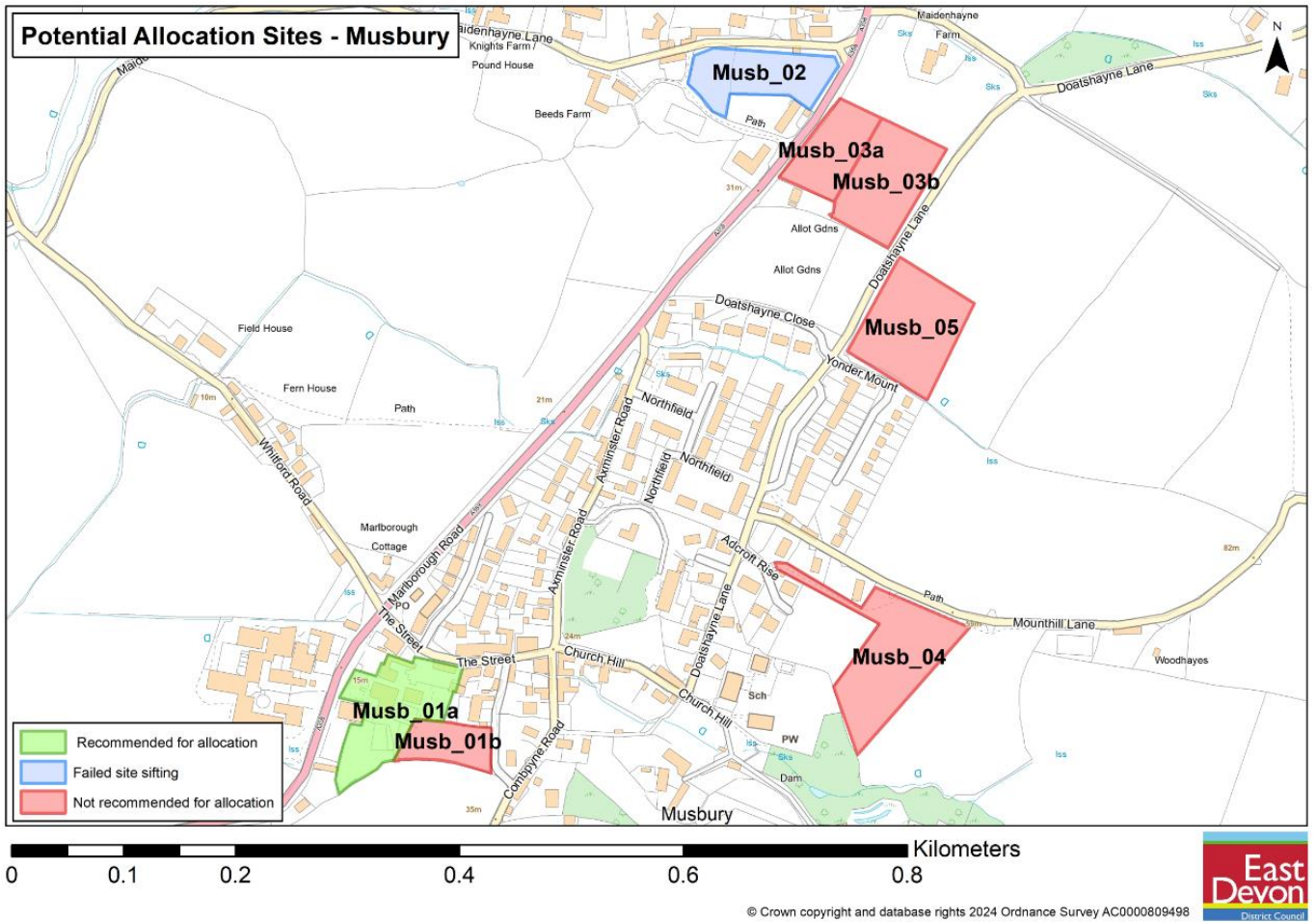


Figure 1.1: Overview of Site Selection findings at Musbury

Site reference	Number of dwellings / hectares of employment land	Allocate?
Musb_01	22 dwellings	No
Musb_01a	15 dwellings plus 0.06ha of employment	Yes
Musb_01b	8 dwellings	No
Musb_03	25 dwellings	No
Musb_04	21 dwellings	No
Musb_05	16 dwellings	No

2 Site Reference Musb_01

Site details

Settlement: Musbury

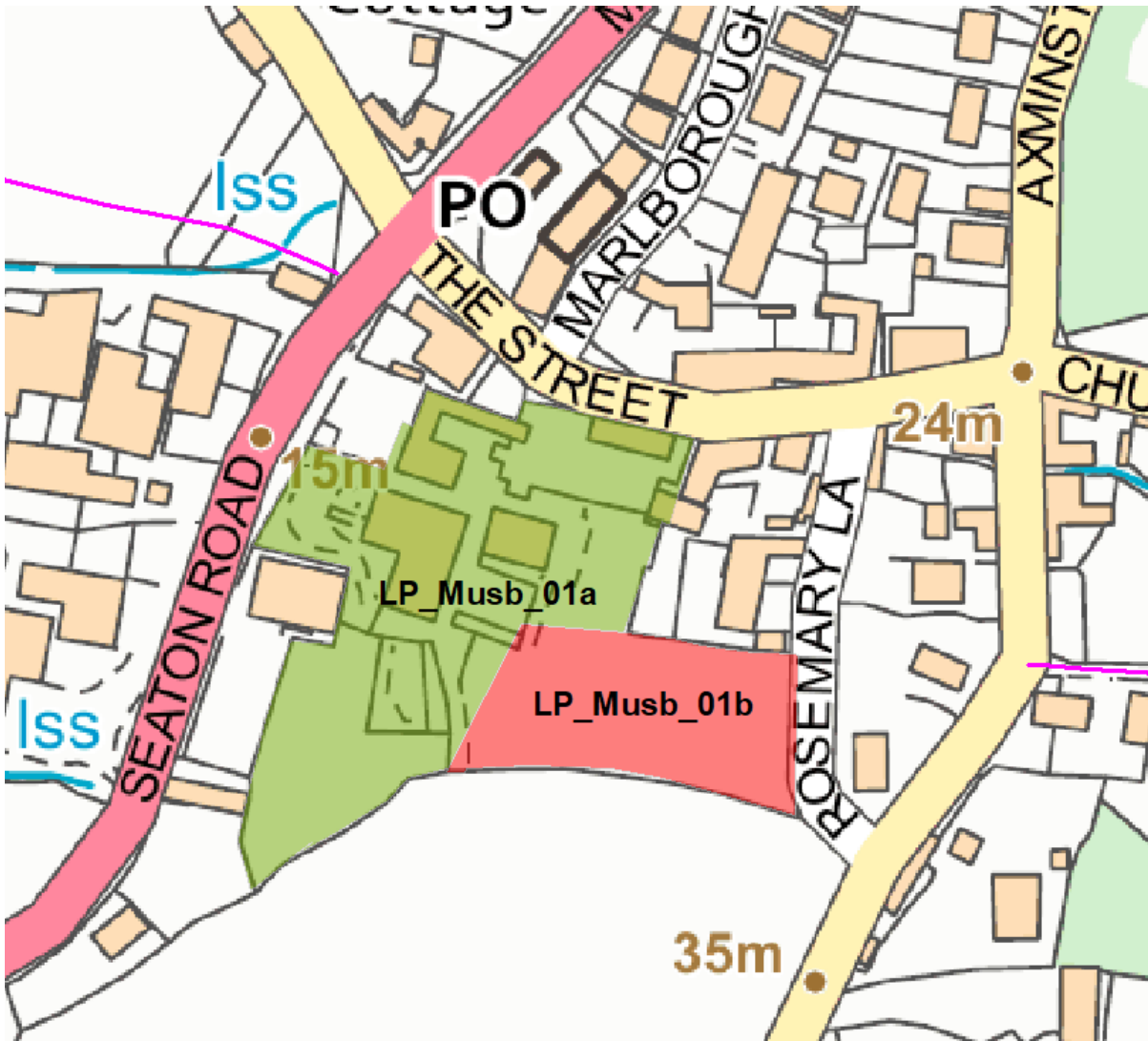
Reference number: Musb_01

Site area (ha): 0.97

Address: Baxter's Farm, The Street,

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



For assessment and commentary purposes we have split LP_Musb_01 into two areas a) and b).

Photos



Taken in site looking east to Baxter's Farmhouse in 2018.



From Rosemary Lane looking south towards Seaton Road.



Agricultural buildings within site taken 2018.



From edge of farmyard looking south taken in 2018.

Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

Devon County Highways advise that there are no known highway issues. The Baxters Farm development brief includes vehicular access from A358 with provision for a pedestrian link to The Street, to encourage walking to village facilities. Devon County Education advise that Musbury primary school has capacity to accommodate some development and that transport costs will apply to secondary provision.

Landscape

Musb_01 is located in the East Devon National Landscape. The character of the site can be divided into two distinct areas. Firstly the developed northern part of the site associated with the former farmhouse and agricultural buildings and structures (including a former slurry pit). By contrast the south eastern part of the site comprises a small field on steeply sloping land that forms the immediate setting for the historic village core there is a smaller field adjacent to the village hall car park on flatter land. There are extensive views over the site and across the Axe valley from a field gate on Combpyne Road. The overall landscape susceptibility rating is medium, but this masks clear differences in sensitivity between the majority of the site and the eastern field, which is far more susceptible to change due to the landform and extensive views. Overall landscape sensitivity is high/ medium.

Historic environment

An appraisal was undertaken to the heritage impacts of development on much of the site as part of the Villages Plan. This informed a draft development brief, which was prepared in 2018. It is recommended that this be updated to cover the slightly larger site considered for allocation. The overall heritage rating is medium: no significant effects which cannot be mitigated. An impact is predicted, but would not compromise the asset(s) cultural heritage value to the extent that the attributes that led to its designation, or ability to understand or appreciate its value, are diminished or compromised. Mitigation may make the impact acceptable. The overall significance of the asset would not therefore be materially changed.

Ecology

Musb_01 is within the River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone and the Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone. The development brief noted that the presence of historic buildings means that bats and barn owls are likely to be present. A survey would be required as part of any planning application. Bat boxes should be incorporated into the scheme due to the proximity of the site to the bat feeding grounds across the Coly Valley.

Accessibility

Musb_01 is within 1600m of seven services and facilities and is within 210 metres of a primary school, pub and convenience store. It is also on an hourly bus route.

Other constraints

The northern part of the site is within flood zone 3 (which runs along the Street) and large parts of the site are at risk of surface water flooding. The site is the subject of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 work. The site is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land. The site is opposite an intensively used farm complex and residential use on the part of the site fronting this may be incompatible with this. The Baxter's Farm Development Brief proposed employment uses here to overcome this issue.

Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?

No

Opportunities

Mixed use development of the northern part of the site could help to conserve a local heritage asset (Baxters Farmhouse) and provide a use for a range of attractive agricultural buildings. Provision of a small range of business uses fronting Seaton Road (in accordance with the development brief) would help to create employment opportunities in the village.

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

15 plus 0.06 ha employment.

Contribution to spatial strategy

Musbury is a 'Tier 4' settlement, where the draft local plan seeks to promote limited development to meet local needs. The standard yield of the whole site is 22 dwellings. However, the south eastern part of the site is not considered to be suitable for allocation. The reuse and redevelopment of the existing farm complex plus around 4 homes on the southern part of the site to provide a total of around 15 new homes and employment generating uses fits well in terms of the spatial strategy for the local plan.

Should the site be allocated?

Musb_01a Yes

Musb_01b No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Musb_01a

Much of the northern part of Musb_01a forms a former farmyard and there is potential to retain and conserve the older buildings, which are non-designated heritage assets.

Conversion/redevelopment of this part of the site provides an opportunity to provide housing and employment opportunities on a site that is very well related to village centre. This land is already within the Built-up Area Boundary for Musbury, which was defined in the Villages Plan, and development is promoted through a draft Baxter's Farm Development Brief. This also provides for gypsy and traveller pitches on the south of the site and possible community uses on those parts of the site not included in the BUAB (such as a community garden/orchard and expansion area for the village hall. However, this new local plan provides an opportunity for additional housing and the flatter part of the south western area (next to the village hall car park) appears to be a good location for this (subject to suitable alternative provision being made for gypsy and traveller pitches by Devon County Council). The site is less than 1 ha in size and would therefore contribute to the percentage of homes that need to be built on smaller sites. Development levels are a good fit with the local plan strategy and there is potential to improve visual appearance and conservation of historic assets. The site is very well related to services and facilities in village centre.

Musb_01b

This steeply sloping site part is in the East Devon National Landscape and forms part of the immediate setting of the historic core to Musbury. There are extensive views of the site from the wider landscape and the site is considered to be highly sensitive to landscape change.

If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?

Yes – recommended to allocate part a) only.

3 Site Reference Musb_03

Site details

Settlement: Musbury

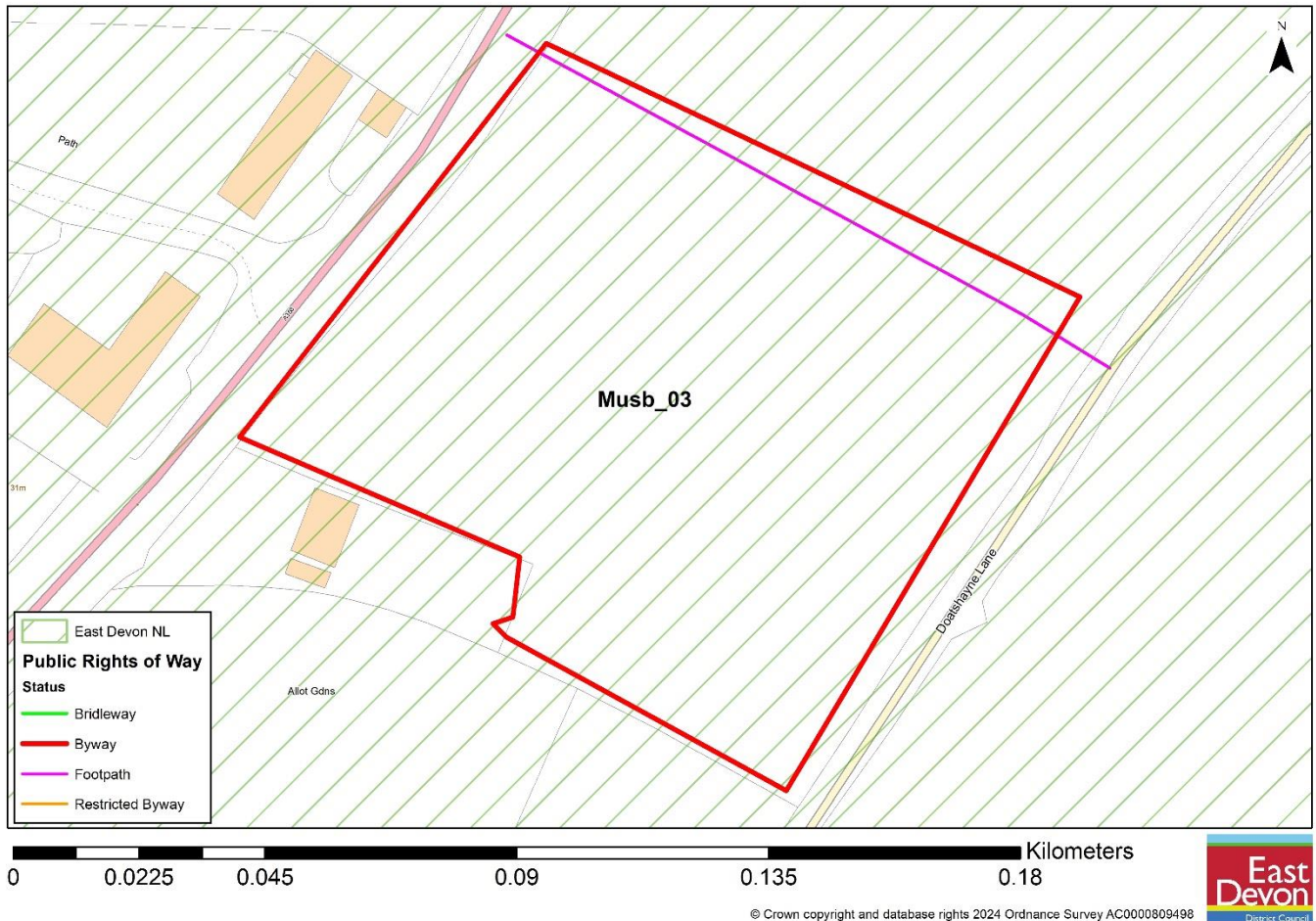
Reference number: Musb_03

Site area (ha): 1.04

Address: Churchpath field, Axminster Road

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



Photos



From Doatshayne Lane looking west over site.



From A358 looking southeast across the site.

Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

Devon County Highways advise that the site is remote from the centre of Musbury village. Access from Doatshayne Lane is not recommended because it is very narrow. Access to the A358 may be possible although visibility may be difficult to achieve. Devon County Education advise that Musbury primary school has capacity to accommodate some development and that transport costs will apply to secondary provision.

Landscape

Musb_03 is located in the East Devon National Landscape. It forms part of quite large grassed field on sloping ground outside of village with views across site to Musbury Castle from main road and across site over Axe Valley from Dosthayne Lane to the east of the site. Overall landscape sensitivity is high.

Historic environment

Low: no concerns identified on current evidence, although archaeological mitigation measures may be required. No impact upon an asset is predicted or, if an impact is predicted, the cultural heritage value of the asset(s) would be unaffected.

Ecology

Site is adjacent to two nature recovery network sites (allotments and grassland) and on opposite side of main road from a core nature area. Significant moderate adverse effect predicted. Musb_03 is within the River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone and the Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone.

Accessibility

Musb_03 is within 1600m of seven services and facilities and is on an hourly bus route, although the nearest bus stop is around 450 metres away. The primary school, shop, pub and village hall are within 650 metres and there is a pavement from the site along the main road towards the village centre. Pedestrian and cycle access is possible along the village lanes to the services and facilities, although there is no separate footway.

Other constraints

The site is classified as grade 3 agricultural land.

Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?

No

Opportunities

Development of the site would provide housing within a reasonable distance of the village centre.

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

Contribution to spatial strategy

Musbury is a 'Tier 4' settlement, where the draft local plan seeks to promote limited development to meet local needs. The site has a potential yield of 25 homes using the standard maximum density, which would represent a substantial amount of development relative to the existing size of the village, when combined with the Baxter's Farm allocation.

Should the site be allocated?

No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Although within a reasonable walking distance of the village centre, this is quite a large site in relation to the scale of the village and is located on rising ground in a National Landscape. Likely to constitute 'major' development in the context of a National Landscape for which there are no 'exceptional circumstances'. The overall landscape sensitivity is high. A suitable highways access may be difficult to achieve.

If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?

No – the western part of the site was put forward in the draft Regulation 18 Local Plan, but this is not considered to be suitable for allocation.

4 Site Reference Musb_04

Site details

Settlement: Musbury

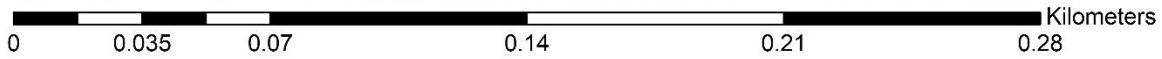
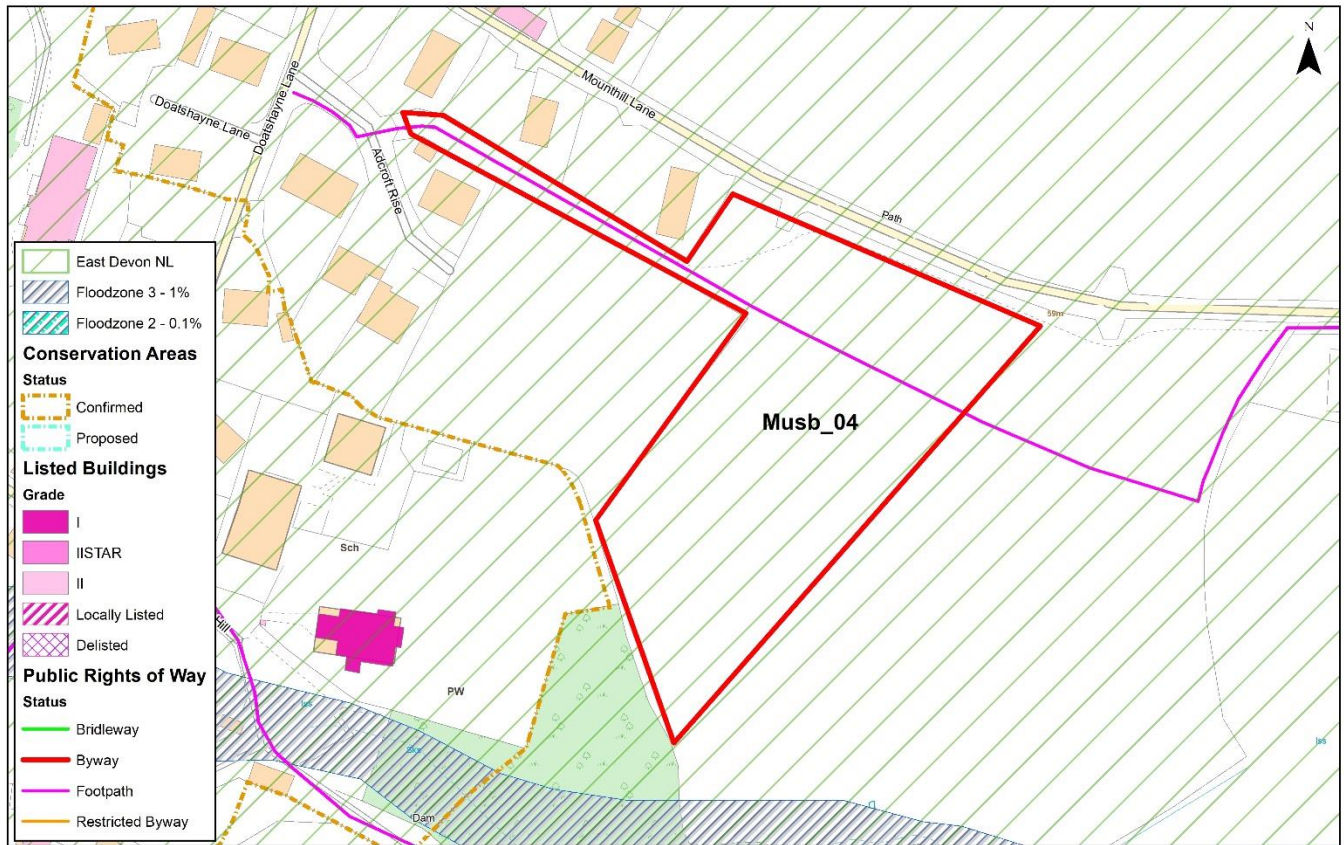
Reference number: Musb_04

Site area (ha): 0.87

Address: Field known as Adcroft, Adjacent to Westbank, Mounthill Lane

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



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Photos



From Mounthill Lane showing existing access into site.



Looking east from Adcroft Rise.

Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

Devon County Highways advise that access should be derived from Adcroft Rise due to the substandard junction of Mounthill Lane with Doatshayne Lane. The site design will need to accommodate the existing right of way that crosses the land. Devon County Education advise that Musbury primary school has capacity to accommodate some development and that transport costs will apply to secondary provision.

Landscape

Musb_04 is located in the East Devon National Landscape. Part of fairly large open grassed field on gently sloping land above main part of village. A public footpath runs through the site and affords extensive views up to Musbury Castle and over the Axe Valley. Overall sensitivity to landscape change is high.

Historic environment

High: significant effect predicted and St. Micahels Church, a grade I listed building. Mitigation unlikely to be possible. An impact that would compromise the asset(s) cultural heritage value to the extent that the attributes that led to its designation, or ability to understand or appreciate its value, are diminished and compromised. This would involve a loss of significance that could not be resolved through mitigation.

Ecology

Musb_04 is adjacent to two nature recovery network areas (urban and grassland) and adjacent to a core nature area (woodland). Significant moderate adverse effect predicted. Musb_04 is within the River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone and the Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone.

Accessibility

Musb_04 is within 1600m of seven services and facilities and close to an hourly bus route, although the nearest bus stop is around 300 metres away. The primary school, shop, pub and village hall are within 400 metres, although there is no pavement along the narrow village lanes.

Other constraints

The site is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land. Planning permission for 6 dwellings on part of the site was refused in 1988 (ref. 87/P2331).

Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?

No

Opportunities

Development of the site would provide housing within a reasonable distance of the village centre, which is accessed along narrow village lanes without separate footways.

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

21

Contribution to spatial strategy

Musbury is a 'Tier 4' settlement, where the draft local plan seeks to promote limited development to meet local needs. The site has a potential yield of 21 homes using the standard maximum density, which would represent a substantial amount of development relative to the existing size of the village.

Should the site be allocated?

No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Although within a reasonable walking distance of the village centre, this is quite a large site in relation to the scale of the village and is located on rising ground in a National Landscape. Likely to constitute 'major' development in the context of a National Landscape for which there are no 'exceptional circumstances'. The overall landscape sensitivity is high. Development of the site likely to have a significant effect on St. Michaels Church, a grade I listed building, and its setting.

If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?

no

5 Site Reference Musb_05

Site details

Settlement: Musbury

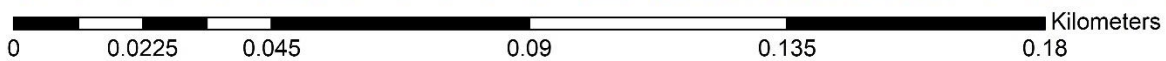
Reference number: Musb_05

Site area (ha): 0.78

Address: Doatshayne Lane

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



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Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

Devon County Council Highways advise that access to the site from the 20m.p.h. zone would be possible. The site is slightly remote from the centre of Musbury although it could be a possible extension to the built-up area.

Landscape

The site has a high scenic quality and is exposed to extensive views across the Axe Valley. Overall sensitivity to change is high.

Historic environment

Low: no concerns identified on current evidence, although archaeological mitigation measures may be required. No impact upon an asset is predicted or, if an impact is predicted, the cultural heritage value of the asset(s) would be unaffected.

Ecology

Site is within 10 metres of a nature recovery network (grassland) that is to the west on the other side of Dosthayne Lane. There is a stream along the southern site boundary. Significant moderate adverse effect predicted. is within the River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone and the Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone.

Accessibility

Musb_05 is within 1600m of seven services and facilities and an hourly bus route, . The primary school, shop, pub and village hall are within 500 metres, although there is no pavement along the narrow village lanes.

Other constraints

Grade 3 agricultural land. Part of the southern part of the site is in floodzone 3.

Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?

No

Opportunities

none identified

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

16

Contribution to spatial strategy

Musbury is a 'Tier 4' settlement, where the draft local plan seeks to promote limited development to meet local needs. The site has a potential yield of 16 homes using the standard maximum density, which would represent a substantial amount of development relative to the existing size of the village when combined with the proposed allocation site.

Should the site be allocated?

No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

The site is located on rising ground in a National Landscape where the overall landscape sensitivity is high, and development would cause harm to the designated landscape. Likely to constitute 'major' development in the context of a National Landscape for which there are no 'exceptional circumstances'.

If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?

No