

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040



Site Selection report

Branscombe



Summary for SPC 11.09.24

East Devon – an outstanding place

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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. □ 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. □
- 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 Branscombe. 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 did not pass ‘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 Branscombe:
 - Bran_03 is below site size threshold so not suitable in the HELAA.

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

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

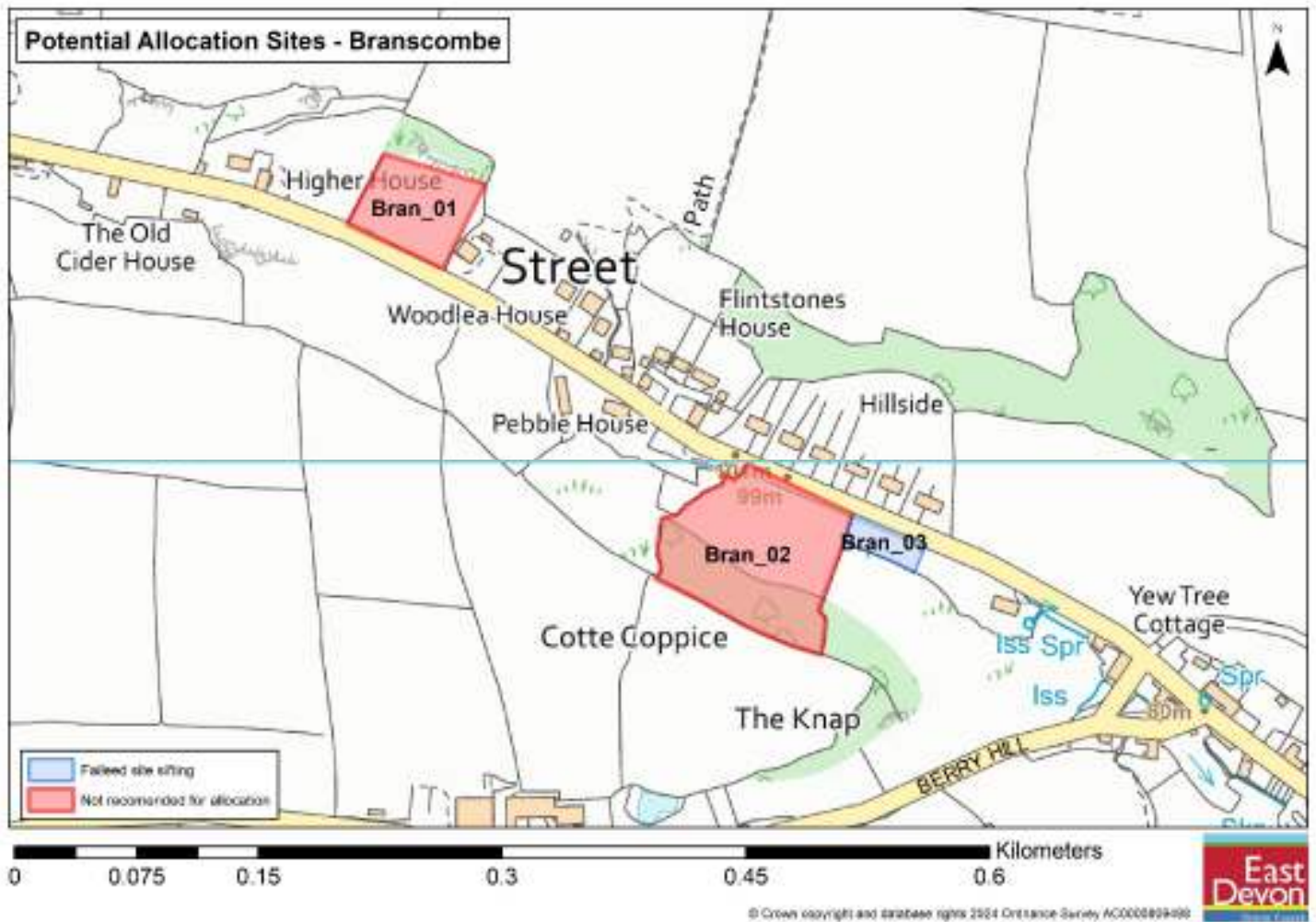


Figure 1.1: Overview of Site Selection findings at Branscombe

Site reference	Number of dwellings / hectares of employment land	Allocate?
Bran_01	10	No
Bran_02	21	No

2 Site Reference Bran_01

Site details

Settlement: Branscombe

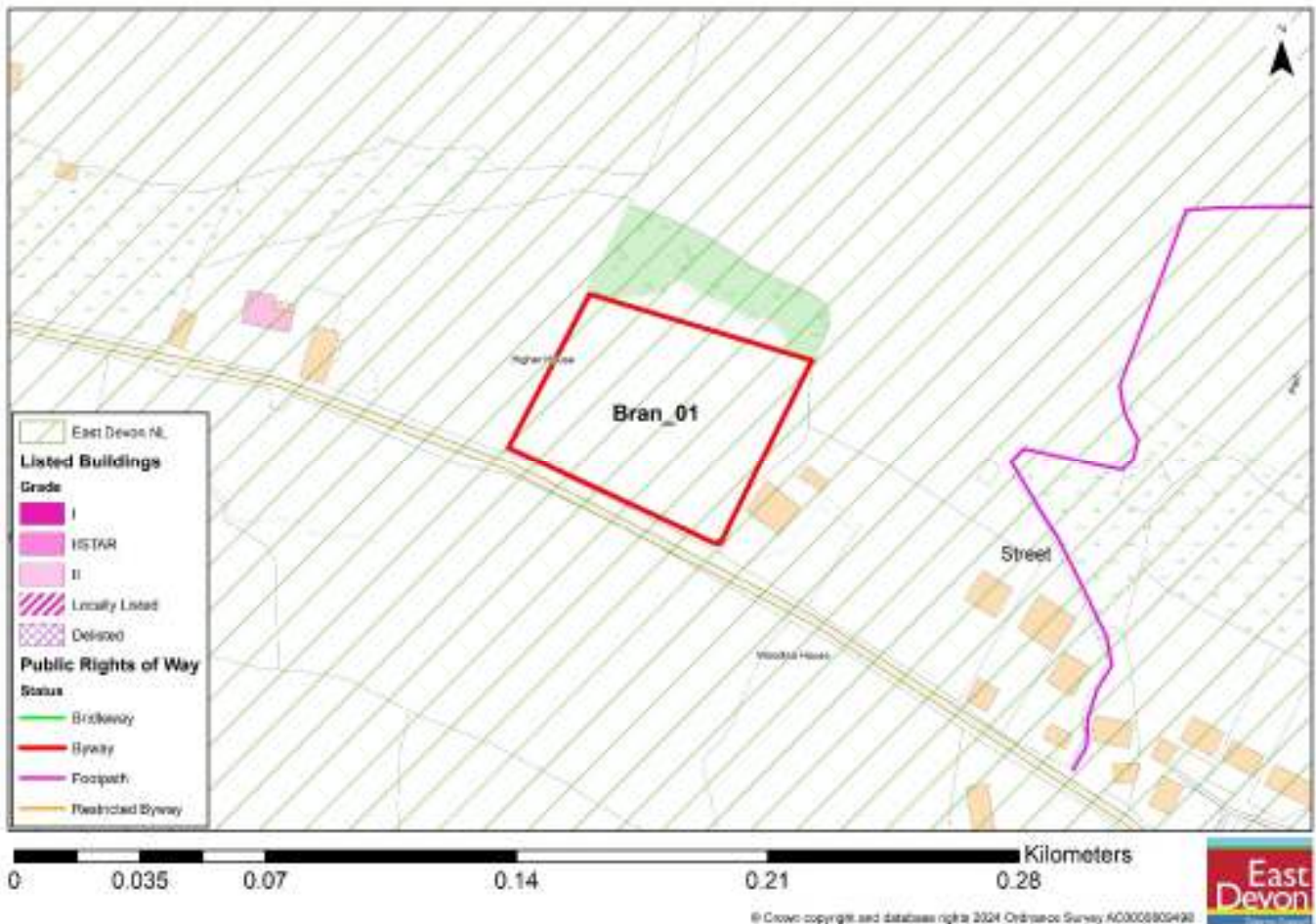
Reference number: Bran_01

Site area (ha): 0.34

Address: Land to the west of Cott Mead, north side of the road, EX12 3BH

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



Photos



View across and into the site in a north-westerly direction



View at start of site from the lane looking east



View of approach towards site from adjacent to Higher House farmhouse (arrow shows approx. site location)

Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

DCC Highways - although it may be technically possible to access this site for development it is very remote from services and facilities and the site has quite a steep gradient.

DCC Education - notes that Branscombe Primary has capacity to support development, home to school transport costs implications for secondary. Secondary capacity limited and would need to be looked at in combination with other sites.

Landscape

The site lies entirely within the East Devon National Landscape (NL) on the lower slopes of a steep coombe valley side. Overall landscape sensitivity is assessed to be high. The site has some intervisibility from across the valley side and through the valley in both directions and stands apart from the sporadic ribbon development beyond.

Historic environment

Assessed as an overall medium impact due to the relationship/intervisibility with the setting of the nearest identified heritage asset - a Grade II listed farmhouse. The land provides a countryside/agricultural context to the farmhouse, lying between it and the start of the more modern ribbon development of housing beyond that marks the start of the outskirts of Branscombe.

Ecology

Assessed as overall significant moderate adverse effect. The site is across the lane from an area of grassland which is s41 Priority Habitat, and is bounded by hedgerow with mature trees. It is an area of unimproved pasture and site lies within the Beer Quarry Caves consultation zone.

Accessibility

The site is recorded as having up to 7 community facilities and services within 1600m (primary school, children's play area, convenience store, post office, community hall, pub, open space/allotment). However, the shop has in fact now closed and the PO is only open for a few hours a week. Moreover, the site lies at the western extremity of the linear settlement of Branscombe, beyond a cluster of almost entirely residential /holiday accommodation uses. It is only the pub (Fountain Head) which is in the immediate vicinity. With a less than hourly bus service and narrow winding lanes with no pavement (and no opportunities to provide any), for the route to the majority of the facilities, which are clustered in the vicinity of the village hall over 1700m away, it is not considered an accessible/sustainable location and would be reasonable to assume the vast majority of services would be accessed by car, via the narrow network of lanes.

Other constraints

Potentially part Grade 3 agricultural land. Band of surface water flooding (1 in 100 years) along road boundary.

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

No

Opportunities

Potential to support Branscombe Primary school which has capacity.

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

10 dwellings

Contribution to spatial strategy

Branscombe is a service village in the emerging Local Plan settlement hierarchy and therefore allocation would support the strategy to allow limited development to meet local needs.

Should the site be allocated?

No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Primarily for reasons of landscape and heritage impact and the poor accessibility of the location by sustainable modes of transport to facilities and services, which also have declined since the Role and Function Study assessment was undertaken.

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

Landscape impact would be lessened by developing only the lower, flatter part of the site but this would not overcome the accessibility issues linked to development in this location.

3 Site Reference Bran_02

Site details

Settlement: Branscombe

Reference number: Bran_02

Site area (ha): 0.87

Address: Field forming part of Cotte Barton Farm, EX12 3BH

Proposed use: Residential

Site map



Photos



View into site, looking south-east, showing boundary hedging and topography



View from south-west corner of site, looking towards the lane and post-war housing opposite.



Internal view across the lower slopes of the site towards the south-east.

Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

Infrastructure

DCC Highways - consider the site could be acceptable for possible frontage development, but the carriageway would be likely to require localised widening to accommodate the additional vehicle / pedestrian movements.

DCC Education - Notes Branscombe Primary has capacity to support development, home to school transport costs implications for secondary. Secondary capacity limited, and would need to be looked at in combination with other sites.

Landscape

The site lies entirely within the East Devon National Landscape (NL) on the lower slopes of a steep coombe valley side. Overall landscape sensitivity is assessed to be high. The site has some intervisibility from across the valley side and through the valley in both directions and whilst it lies opposite existing housing, introducing further built form would intensify development here at odds with the existing character of sporadic, ribbon development, mainly on the opposite side / along one (or other) side of the lane.

Historic environment

Assessed as an overall medium impact due to the limited direct relationship/intervisibility with the nearest (within 100m) identified heritage assets (2 Grade II listed buildings) and their setting.

Ecology

Assessed as overall significant moderate adverse effect as the site lies within the Beer Quarry Caves consultation zone, includes and is adjoining an area of deciduous woodland identified as s41 priority habitat, and is considered also to have value as an unimproved pasture.

Accessibility

The site is recorded as having up to 7 community facilities and services within 1600m (primary school, children's play area, convenience store, post office, community hall, pub, open space/allotment). However, the shop has in fact now closed and the PO is only open for a few hours a week. Moreover, the site lies at the western extremity of the linear settlement of Branscombe, beyond a cluster of almost entirely residential /holiday accommodation uses. It is only the pub (Fountain Head) which is in the immediate vicinity. With a less than hourly bus service and narrow winding lanes with no pavement (and no opportunities to provide any), for the route to the majority of the facilities, which are clustered in the vicinity of the village hall over 1700m away, it is not considered an accessible/sustainable location and would be reasonable to assume the vast majority of services would be accessed by car, via the narrow network of lanes.

Other constraints

Band of surface water flooding (1 in 100 years) along road boundary.

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

No

Opportunities

Potential to support Branscombe Primary school which has capacity. Potential if carriageway was widened to make some contribution to alleviate traffic issues due to narrow road, limited passing and off-road parking, but this would result in substantial removal of hedgerow which makes an important contribution to character of the approach into the village.

Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)

21 dwellings

Contribution to spatial strategy

Branscombe is a service village in the emerging Local Plan settlement hierarchy and therefore allocation would support the strategy to allow limited development to meet local needs.

Should the site be allocated?

No

Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Primarily for reasons of landscape impact and the poor accessibility of the location by sustainable modes of transport to facilities and services.

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

Landscape impact would be lessened by developing only the lower, flatter part of the site but this would not overcome the accessibility issues linked to development in this location.

