

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**



Date of Meeting Wednesday 11 September 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **Site allocations at Seaton and surrounding settlements**

### **Report summary:**

This report sets out recommendations for sites to be allocated for development in the emerging Local Plan at the settlements of Seaton, Colyton, Beer, Branscombe, and Uplyme. Subject to Committee approval, and any further assessment undertaken, the recommended site allocations will be included as development allocations in the Regulation 19 Publication Local Plan that is proposed to be considered at Strategic Planning Committee in November 2024.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### **Recommendation:**

That Strategic Planning Committee agree to include the recommended site allocations set out in this report, at Seaton and surrounding settlements, for inclusion in the Regulation 19 draft of the plan scheduled to be considered by this Committee in November 2024.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To ensure that appropriate land, at Seaton and surrounding settlements, is allocated in the emerging Local Plan to provide for development needs, specifically for housing.

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### Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** High Risk; To be found sound at Examination, and therefore to be in position where it can be adopted, the Local Plan will need to provide for sufficient and appropriate housing growth to meet levels set out by Government. This requires the allocation of land for development. Should decisions be taken to **not** allocate appropriate and sufficient land the expectation is that the Local Plan will not be in a position where it can be adopted. Amongst other impacts this is likely to lessen or remove controls and influence that this council will have on the type, nature and location of development, notably housing, that may be built in the future, with speculative planning applications, for example, being far more likely. In the absence of a plan we anticipate far more planning appeals with the costs and other impacts that arise from these. There are powers, should a planning authority not produce a local plan, for Government intervention and imposition of a third party to produce a local plan on behalf of the authority.

**Links to background information** [Site Selection methodology](#) [Feedback report on consultation on the Draft Local Plan \(Reg. 18\)](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
  - Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
  - Resilient economy that supports local business
  - Financially secure and improving quality of services
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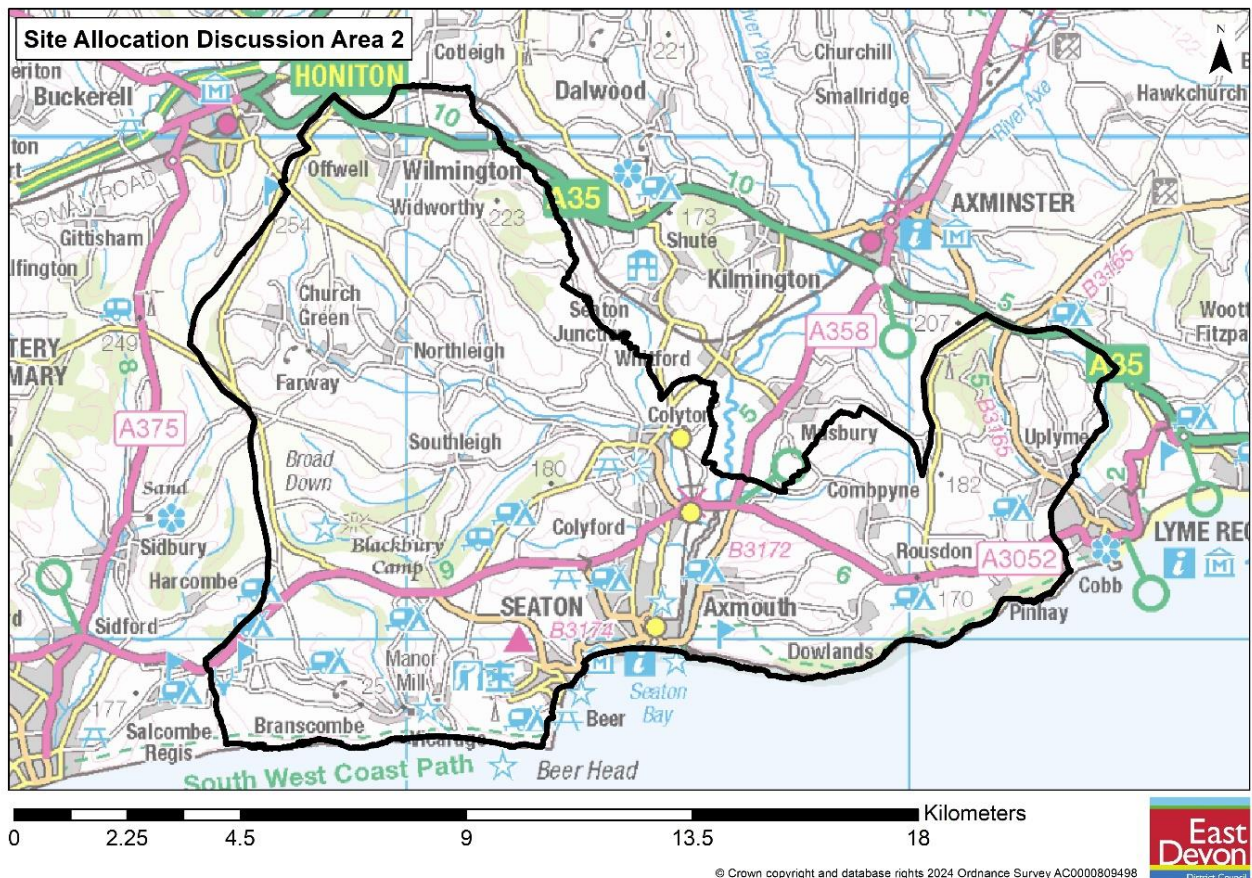
## Report in full

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This report is concerned with sites being considered for allocation in the emerging Local Plan at Seaton and surrounding settlements, namely:

- Seaton
- Colyton
- Beer
- Branscombe
- Uplyme

1.2 This area is known as Site Allocation Discussion Area 2, shown on the following map.



- 1.3 As set out in the Site Selection methodology, with the exception of the new settlement, we are only proposing to allocate sites for development that fall in/at/next to settlements in the draft Local Plan settlement hierarchy (see [commonplace-reg-18-final-071122.pdf](https://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/commonplace-reg-18-final-071122.pdf) ([eastdevon.gov.uk](https://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)) – Strategic Policy 1). Therefore, other smaller settlements, hamlets and rural areas that fall within the overall black line area above are not included in this report and are not identified as locations for allocation of land for development.
- 2. Technical assessment of sites and Working Group considerations**
- 2.1 To support site selection work officers have produced technical assessments of site options and choices. The assessment reports for sites that are referenced in this committee report can be viewed in the appendices. These technical reports are amended redrafts of reports that went to Member Working Group meetings held in July and August 2024 to reflect discussions held at those meetings and points raised. In addition, there are some amendments to correct matters of accuracy and update on relevant new information.
- 2.2 The technical reports contain summary information only and behind them there is more detailed assessment work in respect of landscape, historic environment, and biodiversity considerations. Full reports, with all details (again as might be refined and adjusted in the light of new information), will accompany the Publication Local Plan when presented to Strategic Planning Committee in November 2024.
- 2.3 The notes taken from the Working Group meeting for Seaton and surrounding areas are appended as Appendix f. Two of the sites (Seat\_13a and Beer\_03) in this report were included in the Further Draft Local Plan consultation, May-June 2024 – a summary of the main consultation issues raised on these sites is appended as Appendix g.
- 3. Summary of key site allocation recommendations by location**
- 3.1 In this section we set out some headline commentary around recommended site allocation choices at the settlements addressed in this report. This is intended to provide an overview of some key considerations. In the next section of this report we list, on a settlement by

settlement basis, all of the sites that have been promoted for development in various calls for sites and that were not sifted out on account of being deemed not developable or not being in accordance with the settlement hierarchy – see [1a. Role and Function of Settlements report v3 final draft for SPC.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#).

### **Seaton and development options at and around the settlement**

- 3.2 Seaton is a Main Centre in the emerging Local Plan, home to a wide range of community facilities including a variety of shops, sports facilities, a library, primary school, GP and hospital. The environmental constraints around Seaton limit the potential options for growth, comprising the River Axe and associated flood zone to the east, National Landscape also to the east, a rising landscape to the west, and sea to the south. In addition, the current adopted Local Plan designates land around the north of Seaton as Green Wedge.
- 3.3 When considering all of these constraints, it is not possible to avoid areas of Green Wedge if Seaton is to deliver development consistent with its role in the spatial strategy for significant development (Draft Local Plan, Strategic Policy 1). Of the four recommended allocations at Seaton, three (Seat\_02, 03 and 13a) are entirely within the existing Green Wedge, whilst the other site (Seat\_05) is partly covered by Green Wedge.

### **Colyton and development options at and around the settlement**

- 3.4 Colyton is a Local Centre in the emerging Local Plan, the third tier of the settlement hierarchy. It has a selection of facilities meaning it performs an important local role, with a primary school, range of shops, GP and library. Therefore, Colyton is seen as appropriate to meet local development needs and those in the immediate surroundings. The north and east of the settlement is constrained by flood risk and National Landscape.
- 3.5 Three sites are recommended for allocation at Colyton, Coly\_02a, 02b and 06a.

### **Beer, Branscombe and Uplyme and development options at and around these settlements**

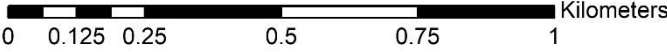
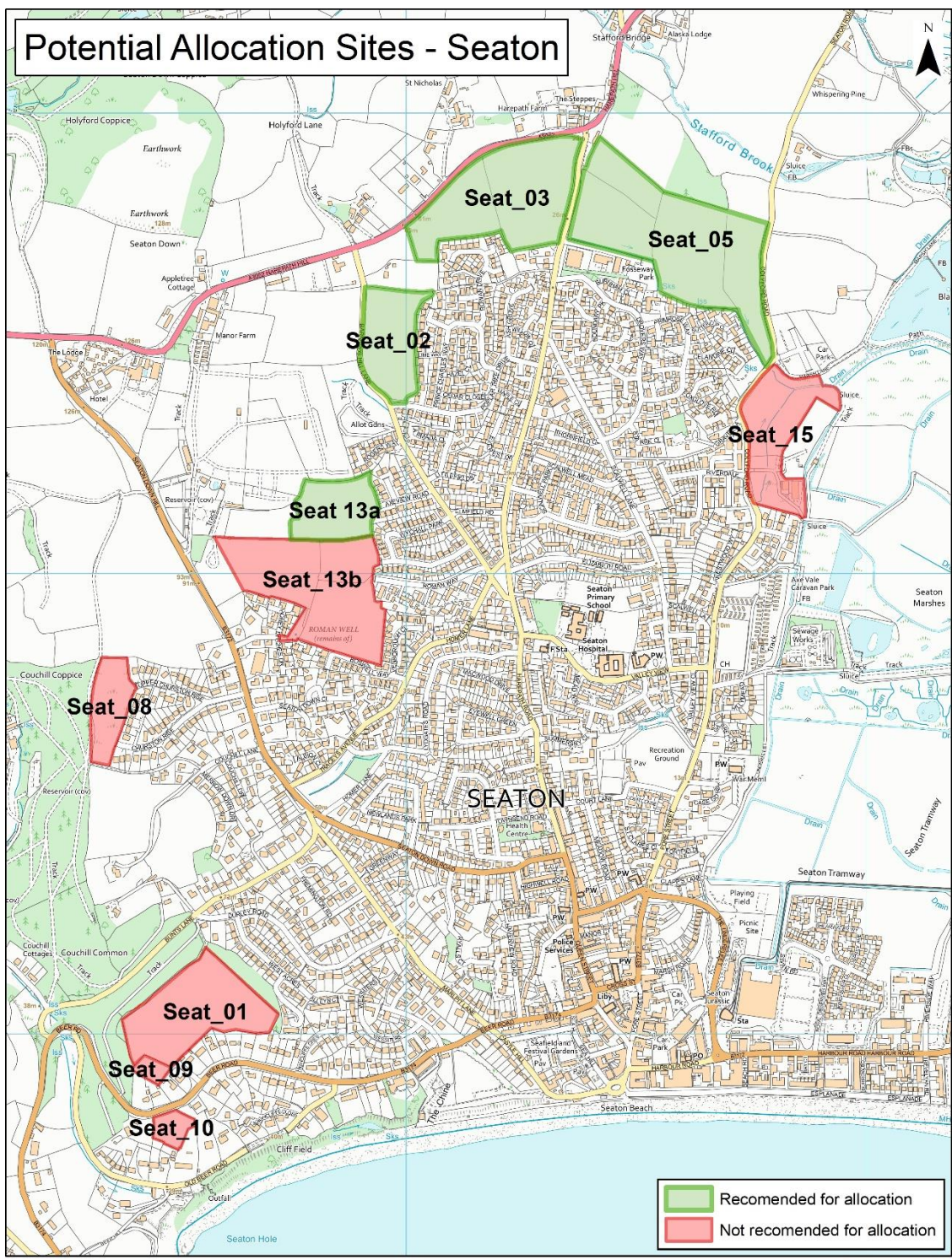
- 3.6 These villages all fall in the fourth tier of the settlement hierarchy, they are classified as Service Villages with some facilities and services to meet basic day-to-day needs. Draft plan policy provides for limited development to meet local needs. Few sites have been assessed at these settlements, with no recommended allocations.

## **4. Sites recommended as allocations for the Regulation 19 Publication Local Plan**

- 4.1 Set out below, in settlement order (for settlements listed and addressed in this report) are lists of sites, as referenced and that feature in the site technical assessment documents. The tables below provide an officer recommendation on whether they should be allocated for development in the Regulation 19 draft of the local plan or not. We do not list sites that have a planning permission for development or that were sifted out from assessment.
- 4.2 For feedback that relates to the sites listed in this section at the draft plan stage of consultation see: [accessible-reg-18-consultation-feedback-report-spring-2023.pdf \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#) Feedback highlights a range of concerns associated with nearly all sites referenced in this report, whether proposed for allocation or not. There were, however, some favourable comments raised for some sites.
- 4.3 The recent Further Draft Local Plan consultation also included three Green Wedges in the area covered by this report:
- Beer to Seaton
  - Seaton to Colyford
  - Colyford to Colyton

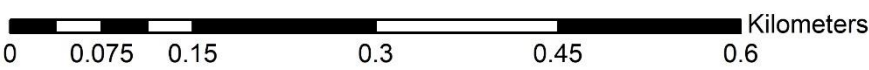
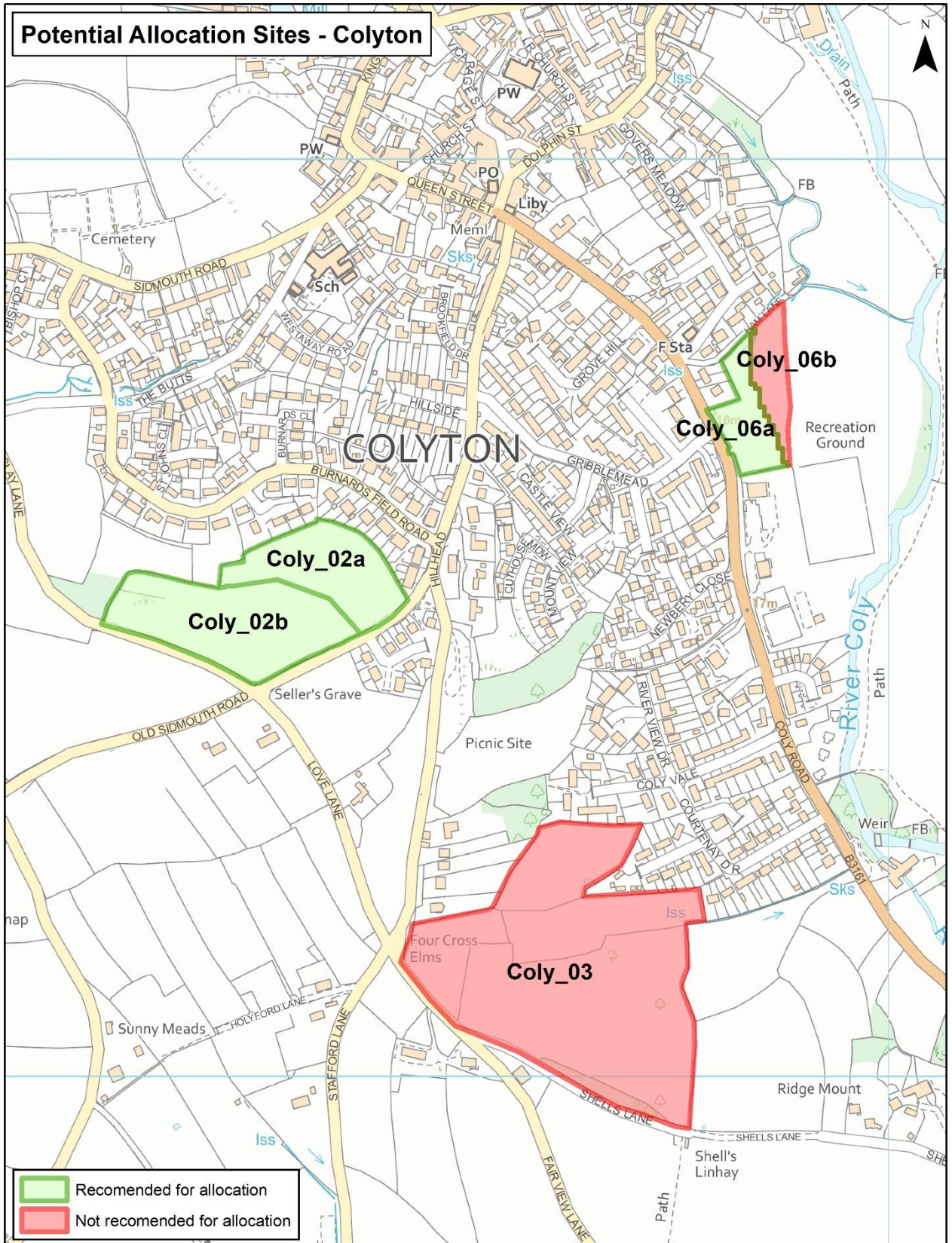
- 4.4 A summary of the main consultation issues is appended to this report. In brief, there was strong support for maintaining or expanding the Green Wedge at Beer-Seaton and Colyford-Colyton, with opposition to development being the main issue raised at the Seaton-Colyford Green Wedge.
- 4.5 A spreadsheet showing these allocations will be presented at this Committee, for Members to discuss and endorse (or not), and to show a 'running total' of the number of homes being allocated. This will enable Members to see in "real time" the impact of decisions to allocate or not allocate sites, in terms of the overall district-wide housing requirement.

**Sites at Seaton**



Site reference	Number of dwellings	Recommend allocating?	Succinct Officer commentary – if relevant (see technical report for full assessment)
Seat_01	50	No	
Seat_02	40	Yes	In Green Wedge. Working Group queried the access to Seat_02 from Poplar Tree Drive, as Land Registry records show the road is owned by the developer Baker Estates. This is similar to a comment by the HELAA Panel who expressed concern about land ownership on land bordering Poplar Tree Drive, although they still concluded the site was achievable. Devon County Council (DCC) have since checked their road records and have confirmed that Poplar Tree Drive is highways maintainable at public expense (HMPE) i.e. public highway. It is considered this issue (if there is one) can be addressed over the life of the Local Plan period and does not preclude allocating the site.
Seat_03	75	Yes	In Green Wedge. Working Group noted flood risk concerns, and remote from town centre, but aspirations to accommodate football club here.
Seat_05	130 dw; 2.2 hectares employment land	Yes	Partly in Green Wedge - the Working Group was concerned on the impact of development on the Green Wedge between Seaton and Colyford. Also need to ensure employment land delivery, and address impacts upon the Wetlands.
Seat_08	38	No	
Seat_09	7	No	Working Group questioned whether it can accommodate 7 dwellings – Officers agree that even allocating the minimum of five dwellings would be contrary to character and appearance of the surrounding area.
Seat_10	12	No	
Seat_13a	39	Yes	In Green Wedge. Owned by East Devon District Council. Residents concerned about flooding, loss of farmland for the tenant farmer. In Further Draft LP consultation, Historic England and Devon County Council state the impacts upon the Roman Villa must be properly assessed before allocating this site.
Seat_15	36	No	

# Sites at Colyton



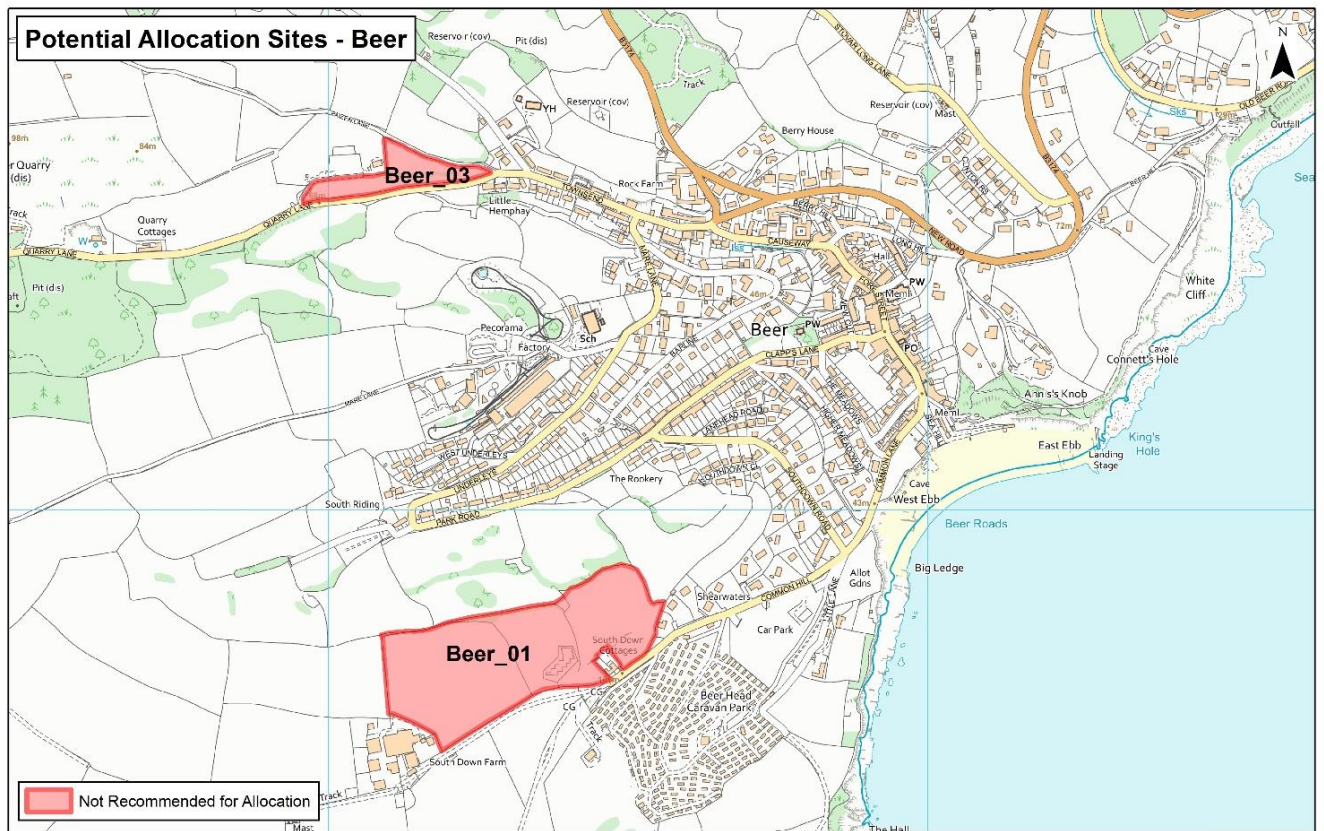
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Site reference	Number of dwellings	Recommend allocating?	Succinct Officer commentary – if relevant (see technical report for full assessment)
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Coly_02a	25	Yes	Working Group had mixed views on landscape impact, with some concern. Sewage capacity, highways access, flooding, distance to centre were other concerns.
Coly_02b	24	Yes	See above.
Coly_03	100	No	
Coly_06a	12	Yes	The Working Group mentioned a community aspiration to develop a new primary school on the site and concerns were expressed that this will not be able to come forward if the site were to be allocated for housing. However, this is not mentioned in the Neighbourhood Plan, and there has been no indication from DCC that a new primary school is necessary or desirable on this site. Coly_06b is excluded as within high flood risk (flood zone 3)

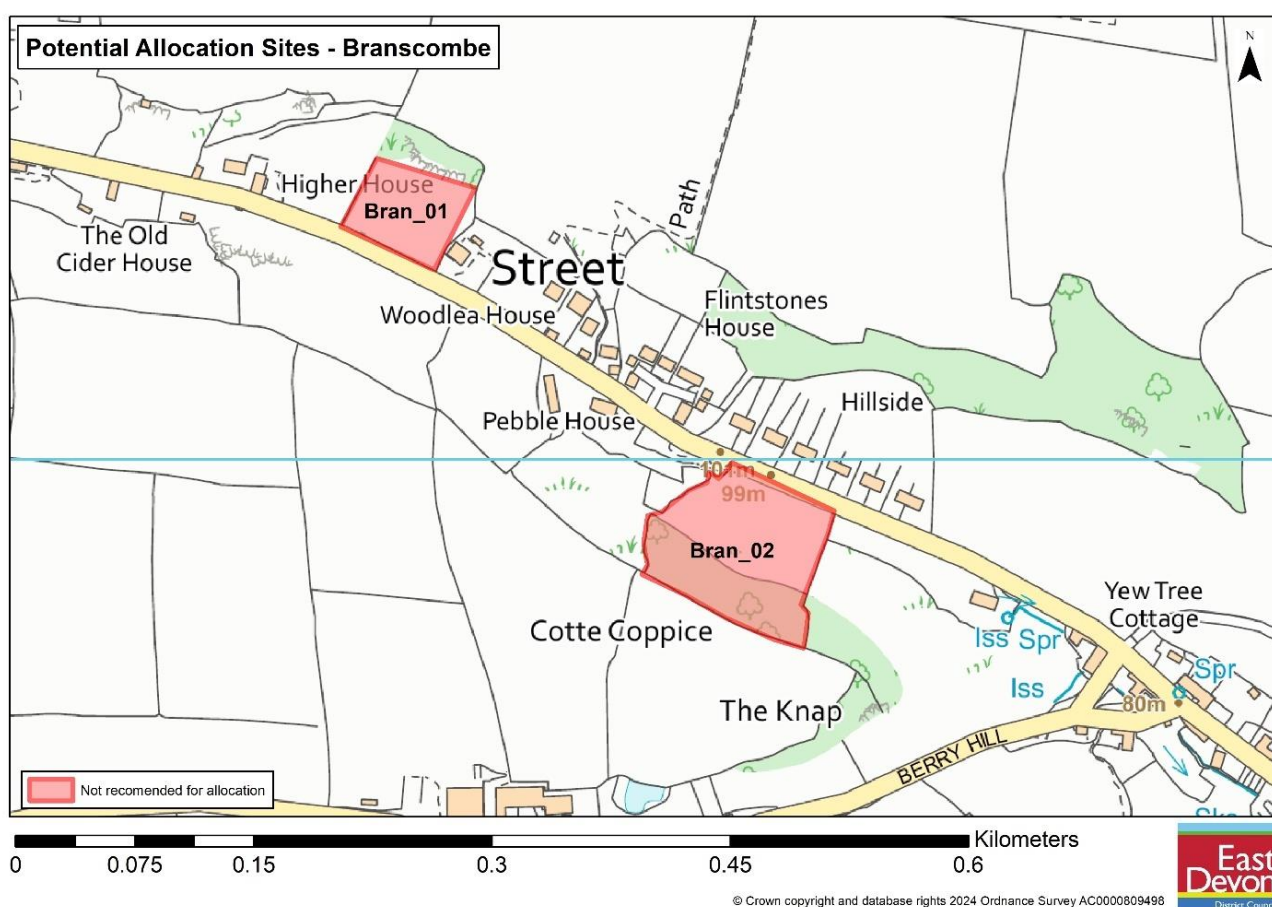
### Sites at Beer





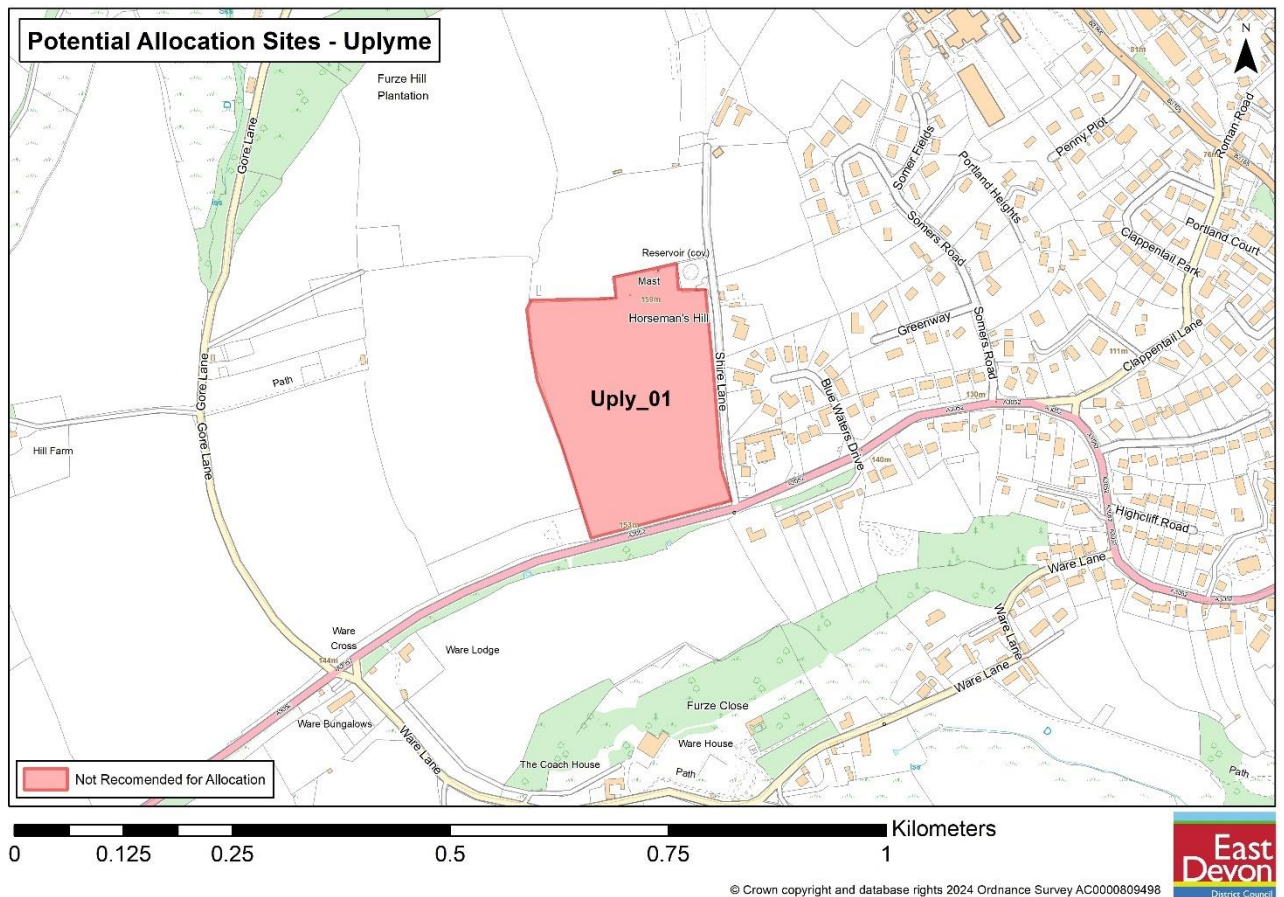
Site reference	Number of dwellings	Recommend allocating?	Succinct Officer commentary – if relevant (see technical report for full assessment)
Beer_01	130	No	Substantial landscape concerns from the Working Group.
Beer_03	35	No	The Working Group felt that Beer_03 could potentially accommodate a small number of homes in the eastern part of the site, but probably below the threshold for Local Plan allocation and better brought forward through a revised neighbourhood plan or the Community Land Trust.

### Sites at Branscombe



Site reference	Number of dwellings	Recommend allocating?	Succinct Officer commentary – if relevant (see technical report for full assessment)
Bran_01	10	No	The Working Group noted the village is quite fragmented with very narrow lanes and no footpaths in between which makes delivering homes with access to services and facilities challenging.
Bran_02	21	No	

## Sites at Uplyme



Site reference	Number of dwellings	Recommend allocating?	Succinct Officer commentary – if relevant (see technical report for full assessment)
Uply_01	92	No	The Working Group noted some support if it delivers much needed affordable housing, but concerns on location and landscape impact and location (extension to Lyme Regis rather than Uplyme).

## 5. Next steps

- 5.1 Officers will use the resolutions of this meeting to finalise drafting the Local Plan housing requirement, and the allocation of sites to meet this requirement, in the Regulation 19 Publication Local Plan. Depending on outcomes of other committee meetings, that consider other settlements and sites, there may however be a need to revisit site choices. This maybe so if total land allocations recommended for inclusion in the plan, and the dwellings they may accommodate, fall short of the levels of provision that are required to meet Government housing requirements.
- 5.2 There will, however, also need to be further refinement and testing work on sites, projected delivery rates and constraints (and opportunities) before final conclusions can be drawn.
- 5.3 As previously discussed and agreed, the Regulation 19 Publication Local Plan will come to this Committee in November 2024 with consultation scheduled to run from December 2024 to January 2025.

**Financial implications:**

Officer time, reports and consultancy associated in producing this report have been covered within existing budgets. There are no other specific financial implications regarding the council's finances on which to comment.

**Legal implications:**

The legal implications are set out within the report (002533/September/ALW