

**East Devon Local Plan 2020-2040**

# Site Selection report

## Colyton



Summary for SPC 11.09.24

East Devon – an outstanding place

**Contact details**

Planning Policy  
East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, HONITON,  
EX14 1EJ

Phone: 01404 515616

Email: [planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk)

[www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/)  
[@eastdevon](https://www.instagram.com/eastdevon)

To request this information in an  
alternative format or language  
please phone 01404 515616 or  
email [csc@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:csc@eastdevon.gov.uk)

---

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Site Reference: Coly_02.....	8
3	Site Reference: Coly_03.....	15
4	Site Reference: Coly_06.....	21

# 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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, or not. 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 Colyton. 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 Colyton:

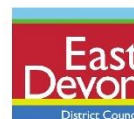
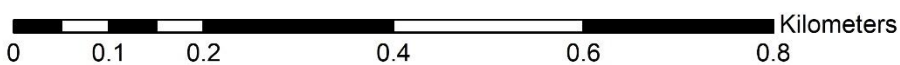
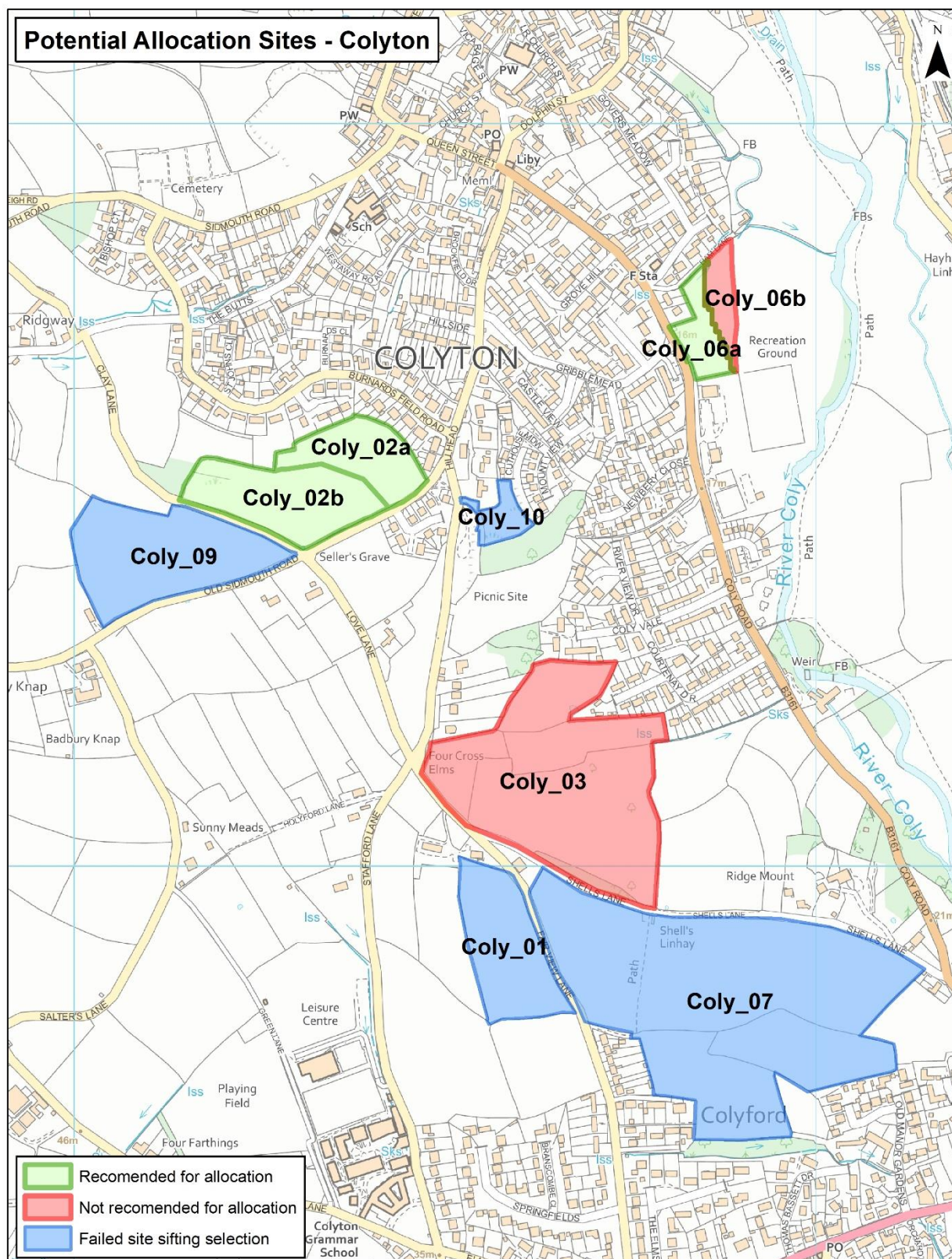
- Coly\_01 is not within or adjacent, or otherwise well-related, to Colyton.
- Coly\_07 is not within or adjacent, or otherwise well-related, to Colyton.
- Coly\_09 is not within or adjacent, or otherwise well-related, to Colyton.

---

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

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

- Coly\_10 is probably unachievable in the HELAA due to poor road access – it is unlikely that access could be obtained from Hillhead because of width and steepness.



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000809498

**Figure 1.1: Overview of Site Selection findings at Colyton**

<b>Site reference</b>	<b>Number of dwellings / hectares of employment land</b>	<b>Allocate?</b>
Coly_02	49 dwellings (25 on Coly_02a and 24 on Coly_02b)	Coly_02a – Yes Coly_02b – Yes ('second choice' at the last consultation)
Coly_03	97 dwellings (but not recommended for allocation)	No
Coly_06	12 dwellings	Coly_06a – Yes (previously rejected at the last consultation) Coly_06b – No

## 2 Site Reference: Coly\_02

### Site details

**Settlement:** Colyton

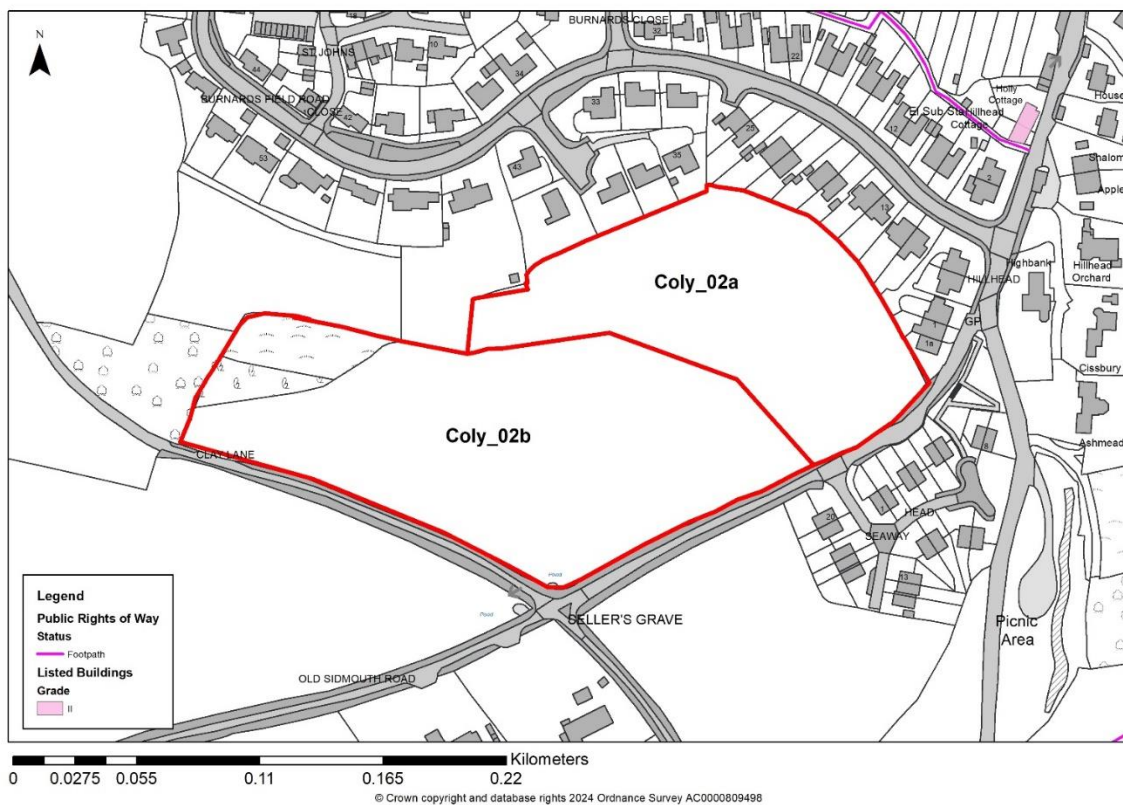
**Reference number:** Coly\_02a & Coly\_02b

**Site area (ha):** 3.28 (Coly\_02a – 1.26ha & Coly\_02b – 2.02ha)

**Address:** Land at Hillhead, Colyton

**Proposed use:** Residential

### Site map





## Photos





## Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

### Infrastructure

**Devon County Council (DCC) Highways:** Accessible from Clay Lane & Old Sidmouth Rd OK. **DCC Education:** Proposed sites in the vicinity of Colyton and Colyford approx. 46ha – Colyton and Seaton primary schools have some capacity to support development, but not to total level. Additional capacity would need to be funded by developers. Axe Valley has some capacity to support development, but not at this level. Transport costs would apply for secondary.

### Landscape

The site is to the south-west of the town centre, sloping from south to north (towards the settlement). Dwellings are to the north and east of the site. The site was in use for growing barley (recently harvested) at the time of assessment. There are narrow country lanes adjacent to the south-west and south-east of the site with a crossroads to the south of the site, where the access point to the field is located. There is woodland to the west of the site, with individual TPOs along the aforementioned country lanes and a group of TPOs separating the north-west of the site from dwellings off Burnards Field Road. The site itself forms a large simple field sitting on the northern side of a low hill. The wider landscape is more complex, with smaller fields with more trees to the north and west and large, open fields along the high ground to the east. The site also forms the backdrop for Colyton when viewed across the river valley from the National Landscape to the north of the town. The topography provides a well-defined settlement edge, with the majority of development being a field depth below the top of the hill (the notable exception is recently built housing to the south-east of the site). The site feels exposed but relatively tranquil for an area close to the town. There are extensive and expansive views from the hilltop site to visual landmarks, including over the river valley to a range of hills beyond. The visible skylines are generally open or lightly settled. The site forms part of a predominant skyline that is important for the reasons stated above. Overall, the site has a high/medium landscape sensitivity to new development.

### Historic environment

Assets Present: Grade II listed dwelling – 1 Hillhead Cottages is approximately 87 metres from the eastern edge of the site. The listed building is already surrounded by modern development and is probably too far from the site for it to impact. Devon's Historic Environment Records show possible firing butts (Butt Ground) directly north of the site.

Overall, Minor - Limited change to elements that contribute to the significance of assets and their setting, where harm is minimal.

### **Ecology**

There is woodland to the west of the site, with individual TPOs on two oaks along the aforementioned country lanes (one to the south-west and one to the south-east) and a group of TPOs (oaks) separating the north-west of the site from dwellings off Burnards Field Road in a 'L'-shape. The site is within the Beer Quarry Caves Consultation Zone and, specifically, the Landscape Connectivity Zones (the complex network of commuting routes used by the SAC's population of bats which provides connectivity between designated roosts) for both the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and the Greater Horseshoe Bat, as well as the Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat Sustenance Zone (the area which includes critical foraging and commuting habitat for the bats). The Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost at Coles Mill, Colyford is around 1,075 metres from the site, whilst the roost at Alaska Farm, Colyford is around 1,200 metres from the site. Overall, significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### **Accessibility**

The sites passes 10 out of the 12 criteria set, with a bus route, primary school, convenience store, post office, community hall, pub, open space/allotments, play area, doctor's surgery and employment site all within a 20 minute walk. However, both the nearest train station and secondary school are located in Axminster, which is roughly a 25 minute bus journey or seven mile car journey.

### **Other constraints**

Grade 3 Agricultural Land: Good to Moderate Quality – This land has moderate limitations that affect the choice of crops to be grown, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or yield; the yield of more demanding crops grown on this land is generally lower or more variable than on Grade 1 and 2.

### **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)**

49 dwellings

### **Contribution to spatial strategy**

Colyton is a Tier 3 settlement and acts as a Local Centre that should meet local needs and those in the immediate surrounding. This development would help to maintain the town's role as a local centre.

### **Should the site be allocated?**

Yes

### **Reasons for allocating or not allocating**

This site has been split into two parts ('a' and 'b') with 'a' in the more acceptable / less prominent location (Preferred Allocation – 25 homes) and 'b' the more visible location ('Second Best' Allocation – 24 homes). This greenfield site, in agricultural use, is sensitively located on open land at the top of a hill that forms the backdrop for Colyton when viewed from across the river. The site may not be located in National Landscape but, when viewed from the NL to the north of the town, forms a key undeveloped skyline to the town's immediate south. The eastern portion of the site is surrounded by housing to the north, east and south, which provides some context of built form, but the site is otherwise bordered by agricultural fields. The site is within walking distance of the facilities on offer within Colyton, albeit, at the top of a very steep hill. The topography makes for a very well-defined existing settlement edge, which is still significant despite being undermined by the Seaway Head development. Overall, the site has a high-medium landscape sensitivity to new development, and minor heritage sensitivity. With regard to ecology, significant moderate adverse effect is predicted. Members should please note: There is local opposition to development on both 'a' and 'b' parts of this site, with objections including the loss of scenic views and the negative impact on the East

Devon National Landscape should development take place. Site is considered appropriate for development, subject to final detailed scheme.

### 3 Site Reference: Coly\_03

#### Site details

**Settlement:** Colyton

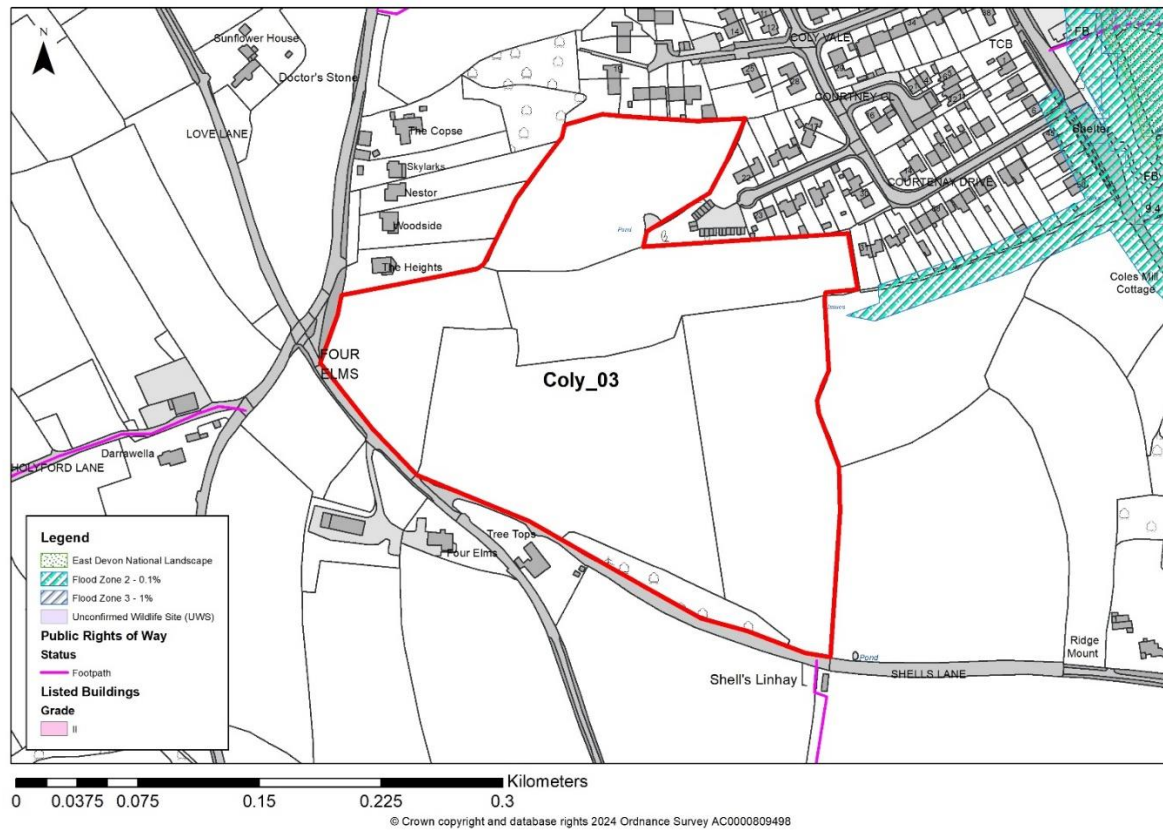
**Reference number:** Coly\_03

**Site area (ha):** 6.44

**Address:** Land adjacent to Fair View Lane, Colyton

**Proposed use:** Residential

#### Site map



## Photos







## Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

### Infrastructure

**DCC Highways:** Accessible from Fair View Lane OK. **DCC Education:** Proposed sites in the vicinity of Colyton and Colyford approx. 46ha – Colyton and Seaton primary schools have some capacity to support development, but not to total level. Additional capacity would need to be funded by developers. Axe Valley has some capacity to support development, but not at this level. Transport costs would apply for secondary.

### Landscape

The site is to the south of the town centre, sloping from west to east. Dwellings are mainly to the north and north-east of the site, with a handful to the north-west. There is a country lane running to the west of the site, with a sunken footpath (Shells Lane) running adjacent to the south of the site. The site is a series of interconnecting fields, separated by hedgerows and trees, in a beautifully bucolic setting, with current uses including an orchard and a sheep pasture. Much of the land has the feel of a wild meadow, with many butterflies in evidence. The intricate field pattern, topography, hedgerows and trees contribute to a rich landscape pattern that would be highly sensitive to change. Although

outside of the National Landscape, there are extensive views from/to the National Landscape on the other side of the valley that raises the sensitivity rating. Part of the site is identified as a traditional orchard. The southern fields are detached from the settlement boundary and form an important backdrop to the settlement that visually separates Colyton and Colyford. Parts of the two northern fields adjoin the settlement boundary, but this is relatively well integrated into the landscape. The character of the landscape is tranquil with few discordant features. The southern part of the site forms part of a ridge with extensive views across the river valley. The site forms the foreground for picturesque views across the valley from the crossroads at Four Cross Elms. Although the site is located on rising ground with fairly extensive views, including towards the National Landscape to the east, the small field size, attractive boundary and field trees and hedgerows reduce the sense of openness. There is a small but distinctive ridge to the south, which is well treed and very lightly settled. Skylines in the vicinity are generally undeveloped or lightly settled, although to the north the settlement level increases. The site forms part of a rich and complex landscape on rising ground to the south of Colyford, which would be sensitive to landscape change. Overall, the site has a high/medium landscape sensitivity to new development.

### **Historic environment**

**Assets Present:** There are no listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments or historic parks & gardens within 100 metres. Devon's Historic Environment Records show, on site, a possible trackway (Hollow Way) and probable post-medieval orchard tree planting ridges (Orchard; Tree Mound). The site abuts the location of two 19th century lincays and, also, where a fragment of a Bronze Age sword was found. Overall, Minor - Limited change to elements that contribute to the significance of assets and their setting, where harm is minimal.

### **Ecology**

The site includes an orchard and many butterflies are present. The site is within the Beer Quarry Caves Consultation Zone and, specifically, the Landscape Connectivity Zones (the complex network of commuting routes used by the SAC's population of bats which provides connectivity between designated roosts) for both the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and the Greater Horseshoe Bat, as well as the Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat Sustainance Zone (the area which includes critical foraging and commuting habitat for the bats). The Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost at Coles Mill, Colyford is around 500 metres from the site, whilst the roost at Alaska Farm, Colyford is around 730 metres from the site. Significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### **Accessibility**

The sites passes 10 out of the 12 criteria set, with a bus route, primary school, convenience store, post office, community hall, pub, open space/allotments, play area, doctor's surgery and employment site all within a 20 minute walk. However, both the nearest train station and secondary school are located in Axminster, which is roughly a 25 minute bus journey or seven mile car journey.

### **Other constraints**

The majority of the sites is Grade 3 Agricultural Land: good to moderate quality – moderate limitations that affect the choice of crops to be grown, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or yield; the yield of more demanding crops grown on this land is generally lower or more variable than on Grade 1 and 2. However, the western portion of the site is Grade 2: very good quality agricultural land – minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting.

### **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)**

97 dwellings

### **Contribution to spatial strategy**

Colyton is a Tier 3 settlement and acts as a Local Centre that should meet local needs and those in the immediate surrounding.

**Should the site be allocated?**

No

**Reasons for allocating or not allocating**

The site forms part of a rich and complex landscape on rising ground to the south of Colyford, which would be highly sensitive to change. Although outside of the National Landscape, there are extensive views from/to the National Landscape on the other side of the valley that raises the sensitivity rating. The southern fields are detached from the settlement boundary and form an important backdrop to the settlement that visually separates Colyton from Colyford. Parts of the two northern fields adjoin the settlement boundary, but this is relatively well integrated into the landscape and creating new access points here would be highly challenging.

## 4 Site Reference: Coly\_06

### Site details

**Settlement:** Colyton

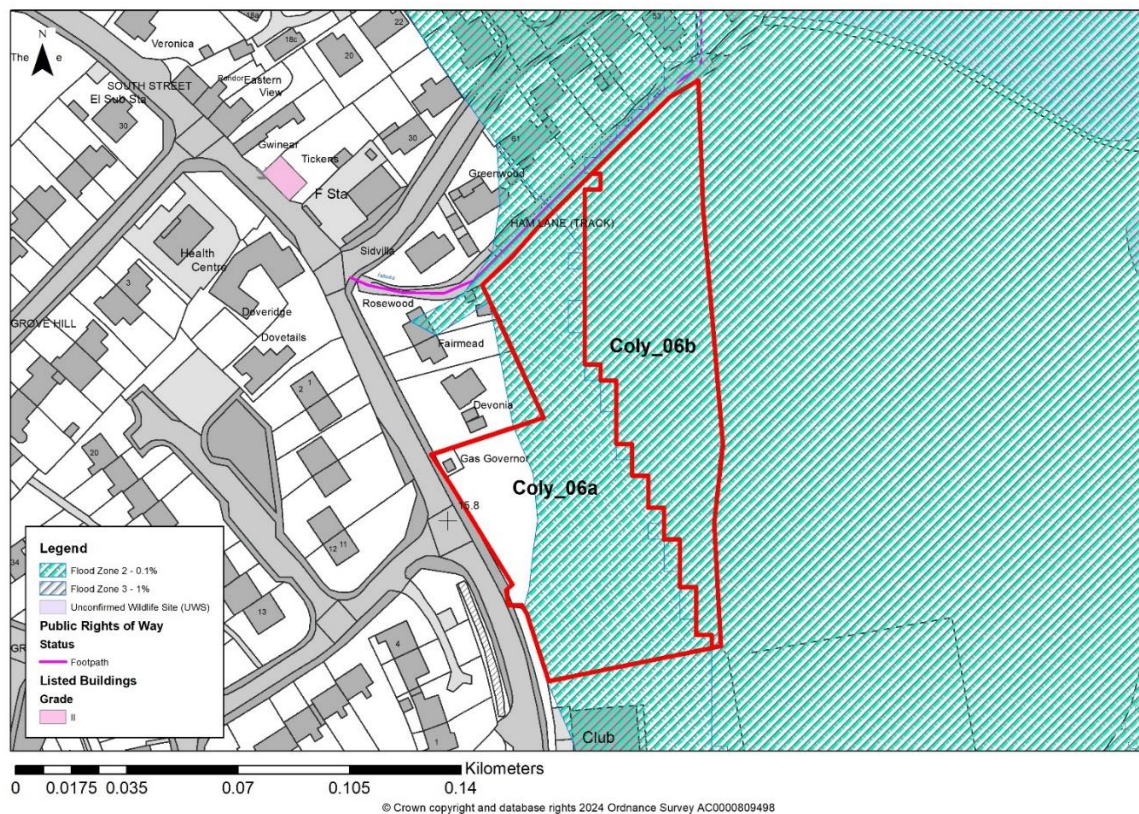
**Reference number:** Coly\_06a & Coly\_06b

**Site area (ha):** 1.06 (Coly\_06a – 0.6ha & Coly\_06b – 0.46ha)

**Address:** Land to the south and east of Colyton (adjacent to Peace Memorial Playing Fields, Coly Road)

**Proposed use:** Residential

### Site map



## Photos





## Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

### Infrastructure

**DCC Highways:** Access would be available from the B3161 (Coly Road) | **DCC Education:** Proposed sites in the vicinity of Colyton and Colyford approx. 46ha - Colyton and Seaton primary schools have some capacity to support development, but not to total level. Additional capacity would need to be funded by developers. Axe valley has some capacity to support development, but not at this level. Transport costs would apply for secondary.

### Landscape

The site lies adjacent to a busy road and opposite/adjacent to established development where there is a low sensitivity to experiential change. The site is quite overgrown and unkempt in appearance, but forms part of the broad sweep of the river valley that lies just to the east of Colyton. The landscape is quite simple with wide fields in the valley bottom, mature trees along the course of the river and low unsettled hills to the west. To the east the settlement extends mainly along the higher valley slopes, although there is sporadic

development to the south of the site and more concentrated development to the north. The skyline to the west is predominantly settled but to the west the skylines of the AONB landscape are mainly unsettled. The site forms the very lowest part of the valley side, only just up from the valley floor. The valley itself is very broad and open in the vicinity of the site. The site forms part of the broad, shallow river valley, with no boundary treatment to the wider valley to the west and gappy hedgerows to the other boundaries.

### **Historic environment**

Grade II listed Tickens House is within 100m of the site. The listed building is already surrounded by modern development and is probably too far from the site for it to impact.

### **Ecology**

The site is currently overgrown / scrubland. It is within the Beer Quarry Caves Consultation Zone and, specifically, the Landscape Connectivity Zones (the complex network of commuting routes used by the SAC's population of bats which provides connectivity between designated roosts) for both the Lesser Horseshoe Bat and the Greater Horseshoe Bat, as well as the Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat Sustenance Zone (the area which includes critical foraging and commuting habitat for the bats). The Key Lesser Horseshoe Bat roost at Coles Mill, Colyford is around 900 metres from the site, whilst the roost at Alaska Farm, Colyford is around 1,400 metres from the site. Significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### **Accessibility**

The sites passes 10 out of the 12 criteria set, with a bus route, primary school, convenience store, post office, community hall, pub, open space/allotments, play area, doctor's surgery and employment site all within a 20 minute walk. However, both the nearest train station and secondary school are located in Axminster; this is roughly a 25 minute bus journey or seven mile car journey.

### **Other constraints**

Grade 3 Agricultural Land: Good to Moderate Quality – This land has moderate limitations that affect the choice of crops to be grown, timing and type of cultivation,



harvesting or yield; the yield of more demanding crops grown on this land is generally lower or more variable than on Grade 1 and 2.

**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)**

12 dwellings (excluding the rejected Coly\_06b portion of land).

**Contribution to spatial strategy**

Colyton is a Tier 3 settlement and acts as a Local Centre that should meet local needs and those in the immediate surrounding. This development would help to maintain the town's role as a local centre.

**Should the site be allocated?**

Yes, in part – Coly\_06a.

**Reasons for allocating or not allocating**

This 1.06ha site was originally rejected due to being in the flood zone but much of this was FZ2 rather than 3. The site, excluding FZ3 (Coly\_06b), is still 0.6ha and on inspection is found to be suitable for development. It is well located, with existing housing to the north and west, and adjoins Colyton's recreation ground. Site lies outside of the National Landscape, but there is extensive intervisibility between the site and the National Landscape landscape to the north and particularly the east across the river valley. Overall, the site has a medium landscape sensitivity to new development, and

moderate heritage sensitivity. With regard to ecology, significant moderate adverse effect is predicted. The remainder of the site (Coly\_02a) after FZ3 land (Coly\_02b) has been excluded is considered appropriate for development, subject to final detailed scheme.

