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**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING STEERING GROUP FOR URBAN VISION**

**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

**JUNE 2020**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ***What is a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)***

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (CPNP). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan, and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality and community vitality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan.

### ***The Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (CPNP)***

The CPNP is being prepared by the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, in the context of the East Devon Local Plan and the East Devon Villages Plan. Once 'made' it will have material weight when deciding on planning applications, alongside the development plan for the region. It is currently anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan will be taken to Regulation-14 in 2020.

### ***What is the purpose of this Environmental Report?***

This Environmental Report will accompany the Pre-Submission version of the CPNP when it is submitted to East Devon District Council for consultation. This report is the second document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (March 2020<sup>1</sup>) (Appendix 1), which includes information about the Neighbourhood Plan area's environment and community.

The purpose of this report is to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment through the implementation of the CPNP and its reasonable alternatives.

### ***Assessment of alternative approaches for the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan***

Alternative levels of growth in Colyton in the plan period have already been compared and assessed at a higher level of plan-making, through the Local Plan and Villages Plan. As such, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is limited in terms of potential alternatives that can be considered for the Neighbourhood Plan. The CDNP therefore does not allocate any development nor propose any development above and beyond that which is considered within the relevant Local Plan and Villages Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Updated for the purpose of the Environmental Report in May 2020 to address Natural England comments.

Given the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has chosen not to allocate any sites for development within the CDNP it would not be appropriate for the SEA process to consider different levels of growth for the CDNP area beyond which have already been established at a higher level of plan-making through the East Devon Local Plan and East Devon Villages Plan. For these reasons it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives which can be meaningfully appraised for the Neighbourhood Plan.

### ***Assessment of the Pre-submission (January 2020) Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan***

To support the vision, aims and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan area the CDNP contains a number of positively worded policies which seek to have positive effect upon the environment.

Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage, the SEA process has assessed the policies put forward through the current version of the CPNP. The Environmental Report has presented the findings of the assessment under the SEA theme, ecology. The remaining topics detailed in the Scoping Report have been scoped out of the Environmental Report. This approach has been agreed with East Devon District Council, Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England.

The assessment concluded that the Plan supports the status of designated sites within or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area, in that it contains policies which support development which protects designated sites and important semi-natural habitats, as well as providing policy support for development to enhance ecological networks and provide net gains for biodiversity wherever possible. Where policies have the potential to lead to development which could impact upon important natural assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area, additional criteria regarding protecting such assets is included. As specific sites for such development are not identified in the CDNP, as planning applications come forward, they will be assessed, in part, against the policies within the CDNP, thereby securing protection, and where possible, the enhancement of European, national and local designated sites, important semi-natural habitats, wildlife corridors and ecological networks across the plan area.

### ***Next Steps***

This Environmental Report will accompany the Pre-Submission version of the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan where it will be taken to consultation under Regulation-14. Following this round of consultation, any comments made will be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, when finalising the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan for submission.

Following finalisation the Neighbourhood Plan will then be submitted to East Devon District Council where it will be subject to further consultation under Regulation-16. The Independent Examiner will then consider the Neighbourhood Plan in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans, legal requirements and its general conformity with higher level planning policy.

Should the subsequent Independent Examination be favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by East Devon District Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once made, the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for the Parish.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong (WA) has been commissioned by Urban Vision North Staffordshire on behalf of Colyton Neighbourhood Planning Group to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the pre-submission Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (CPDP) covering the area of Colyton Parish, in the district of East Devon.
- 1.1.2 The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan (CPNP) is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the East Devon Local Plan.
- 1.1.3 In April 2019 East Devon District Council (EDDC) adopted a SEA Screening Report in which they concluded:
- “With regard to the SEA, the conclusion of the assessment is that the Plan has the potential to result in a significant adverse effect on the environment, subsequently SEA is required”.*
- 1.1.4 Wardell Armstrong subsequently undertook a SEA Scoping exercise to determine the content and extent of the matters to be covered within this SEA Environmental Report. A copy of the SEA Scoping Report can be found at Appendix 1.
- 1.1.5 A HRA ‘Report to Inform an Appropriate Assessment’ was produced by WA to inform the CPNP in March 2020.

## 2 COLYTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### 2.1.1 The CPNP describes Colyton as:

*'a relatively large parish of 2,573 hectares, situated in the south-east of Devon, some two miles to the north of the coastal settlements of Seaton and Axmouth. The two main settlements are Colyton, a small town with a population of circa 2,300, and Colyford (population circa 800) both towards the south-east of the Parish'.*

### 2.1.2 The CPNP sets out:

*'how the community would like to see the area developed over the next 15 to 20 years and, through its policies, help shape and direct sustainable development that will benefit those that live, work or visit in our area'.*

2.1.3 The objectives and policies of the CPNP are indicative of the group's desire to protect the existing character of the parish, whilst facilitating appropriate development and growth.

2.1.4 When adopted the CPNP will form part of the East Devon Local Plan. The policies will then form part of the development plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications.

2.1.5 The NPSG provided Wardell Armstrong with a pre-submission version of their CPNP dated January 2020 for the purpose of undertaking SEA following the screening conclusion reached by EDDC. The CPNP details a number of policies accompanied by explanatory and supportive text.

### **3 RELATIONSHIP OF THE COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WITH EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL'S LOCAL PLAN**

- 3.1.1 The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the East Devon Local Plan and will form part of the development plan for East Devon. The Local Plan seeks to be responsive to the views of appropriate community-led planning policy documents, including neighbourhood plans, in order to determine what is right and best for East Devon's locality.
- 3.1.2 Neighbourhood Plans provide a direct opportunity for communities to develop a positive and shared vision for their Neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local needs or add local detail to strategic policies.
- 3.1.3 Future decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, and any other material considerations.
- 3.1.4 The current Local Plan is the adopted *East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031*<sup>2</sup>. It is the overarching planning document that identifies/ allocates sites for a particular type of development or use; and identifies environmental, social, design and economic objectives relevant to the local area.
- 3.1.5 The Local Plan provides a 'Spatial Strategy for Development in East Devon' which looks to accommodate significant residential development and major employment development to attract strategic inward investment along with supporting infrastructure and community facilities. The intends for a minimum of 17,100 housing units to be built over the plan period, of which 1,123<sup>3</sup> will be distributed in villages and rural areas, as well as development on around 150 hectares of land for employment purposes.
- 3.1.6 Whilst the Local Plan does not set a baseline housing figure for Colyton between 2018 to 2031 it does identify Colyton, within Strategy 27 'Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages', as a small settlement which offers a range of accessible services and facilities to meet many of the everyday needs of local residents and has reasonable public transport. These smaller towns and larger villages, which includes

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<sup>2</sup> East Devon District Council (2016): 'Local Plan 2013-2031' [online] Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2013-2031/> [accessed 19/02/2020]

<sup>3</sup> Figure is based on monitoring to a base date of 30 September 2014.

Colyton, will be designated a Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) (delineated within the East Devon Villages Plan) however this will not allocate land specifically for development. Strategy 27 highlights that communities who wish to promote development above and beyond that which is supported through the Local Plan can do so through the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.1.7 The CPNP supports the designation of a BUAB and the Town Centre Vitality (Policy E9 of the East Devon Local Plan). The Vitality and Shopping Area is also delineated within the Villages Plan. Policy Coly10 supports Local Plan Policy S31 and Policy Colyton VP03 of the East Devon Villages Plan in promoting development that would *“maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and protects existing business and commercial uses, including the retention of the shopfront”*.
- 3.1.8 The CPNP does not propose to explicitly allocate land for housing. It is noted that however that the Ceramtec factory site is currently awaiting decision for ‘outline planning permission (all matters reserved for later approval except for access) for demolition of existing buildings and the development of up to 72 new houses and six B1 use class light industrial units (up to 1,000 sq. meters)’. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have raised no objection to the redevelopment at the Ceramtec factory site and given its current planning status have not allocated it within the CDNP.
- 3.1.9 The Local Plan also includes a number of key issues considered to be of greatest importance and relevance for East Devon and the objectives to address these. The subjects in which these relate to are:
1. Jobs and Economic Growth;
  2. Housing;
  3. Balanced Communities;
  4. Transport;
  5. Carbon Emissions & Climate Change;
  6. Biodiversity;
  7. Green Infrastructure and Recreation;
  8. Landscape, AONBs and the Coastal Zone;
  9. Heritage Assets;
  10. Education;

11. Older Age;
12. Safety and Crime issues; and
13. Town Centre and Brownfield.

3.1.10 A designated Green Wedge is located between Seaton and Colyford, and Colyford and Colyton. The Local Plan highlights the risk that development growth in towns and villages could lead to the coalescence of adjacent or neighbouring settlements. To prevent such coalescence Strategy 8 of the Local Plan stresses the importance that open land between settlements is retained thus helping them maintain their separate identities, their landscape settings and to avoid the creation of unrelieved development.

3.1.11 The Local Plan also highlights the need to safeguard former transport routes and their green re-use. Disused railway lines, such as the Seaton junction within Colyton, offer huge potential for re-use as future walking, cycling or public transport routes. Therefore, their continuity should be protected from development which may impact on the future provision of such a route. Through policy TC5 'Safeguarding Disused Railway Lines' East Devon District Council *'will resist the granting of planning permission for development on undeveloped sections of disused railway lines which have potential for re-use as a transport and recreation route, if it prejudices the future ability of the route to perform this function'*.

## 4 WHAT IS SEA?

- 4.1.1 SEA is a mechanism for considering, judging and communicating the potential key environmental impacts of an emerging public plan. The aim of SEA is to offer a high level of protection of the environment by informing and influencing the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts. Through this approach, the SEA for the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 4.1.2 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment is the European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (SEA Directive). This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed guidance on these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005).
- 4.1.3 The objective of SEA is *"to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of development plans with a view to promoting sustainable development"* (EU Directive 2001/42/EC (Article 1)).

### 4.2 Requirement for SEA

- 4.2.1 The CPNP has been judged by EDDC as requiring a SEA with their screening assessment concluding that *"the Plan has the potential to result in a significant adverse effect on the environment"*.
- 4.2.2 On the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England were asked to review and comment upon EDDC's Colyton Neighbourhood Development Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report. Their responses are set out below.
- 4.2.3 Natural England, in their consultation response to the screening request noted:
- 'Based on the policies as they are written in the consultation version, it is not possible for us to conclude that the plan will not have a likely significant effect on a European site'.*
- 'We advise that if the locational aspects of a number of policies could be tightened up, this may enable different conclusions on SEA to be reached'.*

- 4.2.4 Environment Agency in their response noted:

*'In general we consider that neighbourhood plans are unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects unless the plan allocates or encourages development over that set out in the Local Plan. In this case we note that this plan does propose an increase in housing numbers for the parish compared to the existing local plan. Whilst we have not identified any specific significant effects we are happy to support your conclusion that SEA is required'.*

4.2.5 Historic England in their response noted:

*'Having looked at the draft Plan I can confirm that there are no issues upon which we wish to comment and unless it changes significantly this will remain our position through the various stages of its preparation.*

*On that basis there are no issues from our perspective which prompt us to advise that a full SEA is necessary. At the same time, we have no objection to the conclusion that a full SEA is in fact required'.*

### **4.3 Scope of the SEA**

- 4.3.1 As required by the SEA Regulations, nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues (comprising the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) must be consulted on the proposed scope of the SEA. Details of their responses are included in Table 6.1
- 4.3.2 A Scoping Report has been prepared (Appendix 1) to outline and justify the proposed scope of the SEA in order to inform the consultation process. This report has attempted to ensure the scope of the SEA is proportionate, by focusing only on the likely significant effects of the CPNP.
- 4.3.3 Following the scoping process, an Environmental Report is required to communicate the findings of the environmental assessment and reasonable alternatives. The Environmental Report will be published for wider consultation alongside the draft CPNP.

## 5 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

5.1.1 This report has been based on a preferred methodology (as set out in Section 9.2) provided to Wardell Armstrong by Locality (the Client).

5.1.2 The report will be produced in line with ‘*The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*’. Regulation 12 of this details that an environmental report must be in accordance with the following:

*“(2) The report shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of -*

*a) Implementing the plan programme; and*

*b) Reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geological scope of the plan or programme.*

*(3) The report shall include such of the information referred to in Schedule 2 to these Regulations as may reasonably be required, taking account of –*

*a) Current knowledge and methods of assessment;*

*b) The contents and level of detail in the plan or programme;*

*c) The stage of the plan or programme in the decision making process; and*

*d) The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of assessment”.*

## 6 WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE SEA?

- 6.1.1 The SEA Regulations require that: *“When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”*. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- 6.1.2 Wardell Armstrong produced a Scoping Report (Appendix 1) which was submitted to the relevant consultation bodies in March of 2020. The purpose of the Scoping Report was to determine the content and extent of the matters to be covered in the SEA Environmental Report. The following steps were undertaken during scoping:
1. Identify policies, plans and sustainability objectives relevant to the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan and associated SEA (i.e. EU, UK Government and local policy and commitments) to summarise the regulatory and legislative landscape;
  2. Establish the baseline conditions for the SEA (the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan) in order to identify the plan’s likely significant effects;
  3. Identify key sustainability issues and environmental problems in the CPNP area that should be a particular focus of the SEA; and
  4. Develop a set of SEA assessment objectives and appraisal questions on the basis of these issues which can then be used to appraise the draft plan.
- 6.1.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal) states that a SEA *‘should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of the neighbourhood plan. It should focus on the environmental impacts which are likely to be significant. It does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the neighbourhood plan’*.
- 6.1.4 As such, the Scoping Report determined that only Ecology would need to be addressed within the SEA Environmental Report. The remaining issues were scoped out on the basis of the unlikelihood for significant effects upon the environment and given that the CPNP does not propose development above and beyond that which has already been established at a higher level of plan-making through the East Devon Local Plan and East Devon Villages Plan.

6.1.5 The comments received from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England, and how they have been addressed, have been summarised in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Consultation Responses to the SEA Scoping Report	
Consultation response	How the response has been addressed
<b>Natural England</b>	
<p><i>“from the draft of the CPNP supplied it appears that policy support is given to development within the Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) for Colyton. There is already a presumption in favour of development within the BUAB established in the East Devon Local Plan (Strategy 6) (adopted 2016), and the associated East Devon Villages Plan (adopted 2018). The latter delineates the BUAB for Colyton. It is therefore important that the Scoping report reflects clearly the Neighbourhood Plan’s position regarding the existing BUAB established in the East Devon Local Plan/Villages Plan. If The Neighbourhood Plan is supporting adopted policy in the East Devon Local Plan/Villages Plan this should be made clear in both the scoping report and the Neighbourhood Plan text”.</i></p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is supporting adopted policy in the East Devon Local Plan/Villages Plan (see Chapter 3)</p>
<p><i>“clarification is required regarding the Ceramtec site. The Plan text states (para 8.6) that “Given its scale and location, the redevelopment of the Ceramtec site has the potential to fulfil the short- to medium-term need for affordable housing and provide sufficient open market housing to satisfy the local housing demands in the Parish as well as provide for small scale business development”. That would appear to be a statement of fact rather than a policy position about development of the site. There is no CPNP plan policy regarding this site or a plan delineating its boundary. However the scoping report states (para 3.1.7) that the CPNP is proposing to support the development of the Ceramtec factory. The Plan position regarding the Ceramtec factory should be clarified in the scoping report. If the site is to be allocated it will need to be addressed as part of the SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment. If the site is not to be allocated/formerly supported through policy in the CPNP this should be made clear in the scoping report”.</i></p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose to explicitly allocate land for housing and therefore the proposed development upon the Ceramtec Factory site is not allocated (see Chapter 3).</p>
<p>Scoping Report comment (Section 7.2)  <i>“We suggest that this para refers to the Conservation Objectives and our Supplementary Advice for the European sites”.</i> Link at <a href="https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx">https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx</a></p>	<p>Natural England’s objectives and Improvement Plans for the relevant SAC’s have been covered, as red text, within Appendix 1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report</p>

<b>Table 6.1: Consultation Responses to the SEA Scoping Report</b>	
<b>Consultation response</b>	<b>How the response has been addressed</b>
<p>Scoping Report comment (Section 11 and 12)</p> <p><i>“Reference to the River Axe SAC should be made in these sections and para 12.3.14 should be expanded to note that the Rive Axe SAC is failing targets on phosphate and sediment. Reference should also be made here to the evolving River Axe Nutrient Management Plan for the catchment, which is described in Local Plan Strategy 20 (Development at Axminster)”.</i></p>	<p>Text on the River Axe SAC has been expanded and text on the River Axe Nutrient Management Plan covered, as red text, within Appendix 1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report</p>
<b>Environmental Agency</b>	
<p><i>“In general we consider that it is unlikely that neighbourhood plans will result in any significant environmental effects unless the plan allocates or encourages development over that set out in the Local Plan. Otherwise we consider that any potential for environmental effects from growth in the parish should already have been addressed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which supported the adopted Local Plan”.</i></p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<b>Historic England</b>	
<p><i>“In our response to your authority on its SEA Screening Opinion consultation last year we confirmed that on the basis of the Plan as then drafted there were no issues which attracted our attention and we had no objection to whether a full SEA was, or was not, deemed necessary.</i></p> <p><i>Having looked at the latest version of the Plan I can confirm that this remains our position. We therefore have no comments we wish to submit on the Scoping Report”.</i></p>	<p>No action required.</p>

6.1.6 Given the comments received the following issues will be addressed in the SEA Environmental Report:

- Ecology.

## 7 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

7.1.1 This section outlines the key issues which will be addressed in this SEA Environmental Report. The issues fall under the SEA objective, protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features, and comprise a number of questions, to be addressed within the appraisal.

### 7.2 Ecology

- Bolshayne Fen SSSI and the River Axe SSSI are located within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Some areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area are located within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for residential development of 50 units or more and rural-residential development of 10 or more houses outside existing settlements/ urban areas.
- There are numerous Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats present in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

7.2.1 As such the following SEA objectives and appraisal questions have been selected for the ecology SEA theme.

SEA OBJECTIVE	ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS
<p><b>PROTECT AND ENHANCE ALL BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.</b></p>	<p><b>WILL THE OPTION/PROPOSAL HELP TO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the status of the European designed sites within and/ or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary, including Beer Quarry Caves SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC?</li> <li>• Support the status of the nationally designated sites of significance within and/ or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary, including Bolshayne Fen SSSI and River Axe SSSI?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance locally designated sites?</li> <li>• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>• Support enhancements to ecological networks, including through improvements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?</li> </ul>

## **8 WHAT HAS THE PLAN MAKING/ SEA INVOLVED UP TO THIS POINT?**

8.1.1 A key part of the process of assessing the likely significant effects of Neighbourhood Plans is to appraise the 'reasonable alternatives' for such plan. The SEA Regulations<sup>4</sup> are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.

8.1.2 The following therefore describes how the SEA process to date has informed the development of the Neighbourhood Plan through the consideration of reasonable alternatives.

### **8.2 Overview of the plan making / SEA work undertaken since 2015**

8.2.1 The plan area was designated as a neighbourhood area by East Devon District Council on the 28th July 2015. The area covered is the whole of the parish and includes the town of Colyton and the village of Colyford in their entirety.

8.2.2 Since 2015 The Parish Council has an established planning position on many aspects of physical development, which has evolved through regular interaction with the local planning authority and the planning system as operated by East Devon District Council and Devon County Council. Through regular and inclusive programme of consultation with all the community interests in the Parish Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group has been able to test and update these positions. The group have also taken account the views of relevant agencies and authorities and has taken account of evidence of need, the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the existing development plans.

8.2.3 Through the programme of consultation, the group have been given a clear community steer on the overall neighbourhood planning framework that they should adopt (i.e. the aims and objectives); the priorities for attention; and the policy approach they should be taking.

### **8.3 Assessment of Reasonable Alternatives**

8.3.1 As mentioned above the assessment of reasonable alternatives is a key element of the SEA process. It is noted that the CDNP must be in general conformity with, and support, the development plan for the region, as such the Colyton Neighbourhood

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<sup>4</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Plan Steering Group is limited in the potential alternatives that can be considered for the CDNP.

- 8.3.2 Alternative levels of growth in Colyton in the plan period have already been compared and assessed at a higher level of plan-making, through the Local Plan and Villages Plan. As such, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is limited in terms of potential alternatives that can be considered for the Neighbourhood Plan. The CDNP therefore does not allocate any development nor propose any development above and beyond that which is considered within the relevant Local Plan and Villages Plan.
- 8.3.3 The East Devon Local Plan sets out the current context for development in the Parish. Strategy 6 of the Local Plan effectively says that development will be allowed with defined 'Built-up Area Boundaries' (BUAB's) subject to certain criteria. A BUAB has been formulated for Colyton with the settlement listed under Strategy 27 of the Local Plan. Strategy 27 states that the settlements listed will have a BUAB designated in the East Devon Villages Plan but will not have land specifically allocated for development, although additional development may be promoted through a Neighbourhood Plan or community led development.
- 8.3.4 Given the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has chosen not to allocate any sites for development within the CDNP it would not be appropriate for the SEA process to consider different levels of growth for the CDNP area beyond which have already been established at a higher level of plan-making through the East Devon Local Plan and East Devon Villages Plan.
- 8.3.5 For these reasons it is considered that there are no reasonable alternatives which can be meaningfully appraised for the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **8.4 Current Approach in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Development of Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

##### ***Current Approach in the Neighbourhood Plan***

- 8.4.1 As discussed above, the CDNP does not seek to allocate any development, and does not seek to deviate from the current Local Plan or Villages Plan.
- 8.4.2 In taking this approach, the CDNP however outlines a number of aims and objectives seeking to protect and enhance '*a uniquely characterful and caring place to live and work*'. In order to fulfil this the plan seeks to:
- Protect and enhance the natural and rural environment;

- Encourage responsible management of the countryside;
- Minimise waste and pollution;
- Increase resilience to climate change;
- Safeguard the character and heritage of the built environment;
- Minimise loss of greenfield sites;
- Ensure local housing meets local needs;
- Support sustainable growth in housing and population;
- Retain strong sense of community and increase our sustainability;
- Enhance local leisure opportunities;
- Encourage use of alternative transport modes;
- Improve road safety in the Parish;
- Support sustainable business development; and
- Promote sustainable tourism.

**Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

8.4.3 To support the vision, aims and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan area the CDNP contains a number of positively worded policies which seek to have positive effects upon the environment and where future development is proposed there are higher tier policies, within the EDLP which offer adequate protection of the environment.

8.4.4 The Regulation-14 Pre-Submission version of the CPNP puts forward 19 policies to guide new development within the Neighbourhood Plan area. These were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering, and have been grouped under the five themes underpinning the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. The policies and a brief overview are detailed in Table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies	
Policy	Overview
<b>Natural Environment</b>	
Policy No. Coly1	Development proposals should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. respect local wildlife sites and habitats/species of principal importance, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, and appropriate mitigation measures provided; and</li> </ol>

Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies	
Policy	Overview
	<p>II. protect and, where possible, enhance the network of habitats, species and sites of importance including trees and woodlands, hedgerows and roadside verges; and</p> <p>III. minimise impacts on biodiversity; and</p> <p>IV. where possible seek to deliver a net gain in biodiversity.</p> <p>Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or which would create unacceptable harm to, wildlife sites and other areas of ecological or geological importance, will not be supported.</p>
Policy No. Coly2	<p>Development proposals that will cause the loss of or damage to trees, woodland or hedgerows (including hedgerows of importance) that contribute positively to the character and amenity of the area must provide for appropriate replacement planting together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting.</p> <p>Areas of natural woodland are regarded as important natural features. Any development proposals that would result in the loss, damage or deterioration of these woodlands will be resisted, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.</p>
Policy No. Coly3	<p>Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way are supported so long as their value as wildlife corridors is recognised and protected, and efforts are made to enhance biodiversity as part of the 'development' work wherever appropriate.</p>
Policy No. Coly4	<p>Development proposals in the designated Green Wedge area (shown on Map 5) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that no harm to the character or purpose of this area will occur and development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. for the purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or</li> <li>II. within the curtilage of a site that is already in residential or employment use; and</li> <li>III. proportionate to its location in scale and type; and</li> <li>IV. complies with the requirements of Strategy 8 of the East Devon Local Plan.</li> </ul>
Policy No. Coly5	<p>Proposals for new development on designated Local Green Spaces, listed below, will not be supported unless ancillary to their existing recreation or amenity use, or very special circumstances can be demonstrated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Bridge House Garden;</li> <li>B. Colyford Play Park;</li> <li>C. Colyton Community Woodland;</li> <li>D. Cuthouse Meadow Play Area;</li> <li>E. Road Green and Play Area;</li> <li>F. St Andrews Churchyard and St Andrews Garden;</li> </ul>

<b>Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Overview</b>
	G. The Elms Amenity Area; and H. St Michaels Churchyard
<b>Built Environment, Heritage and Housing</b>	
Policy No. Coly6	Development within the Built-Up Area Boundary will generally be supported provided it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. is appropriate to its setting in terms of scale, height and massing;</li> <li>II. is demonstrated to be sustainable, having regard to the settlement hierarchy; and</li> <li>III. makes an appropriate use of a brownfield site, or</li> <li>IV. is infill and surrounded by existing development; and</li> <li>V. there is no adverse impact on the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings.</li> </ol>
Policy No. Coly7	New housing development within the Colyton Built-up Area Boundary will be supported provided the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. design and layout are generally in keeping with the character of the town;</li> <li>II. boundary treatments complement the character of the area;</li> <li>III. opportunities to provide safe and secure pedestrian links throughout the development, and to and from other parts of Colyton are incorporated;</li> <li>IV. opportunities to re-use existing buildings on the site are considered; and</li> <li>V. the mix of housing sizes and tenures reflects local needs and contributes to the diversity of the area's housing mix.</li> </ol>
Policy No. Coly8	Proposals for housing development outside the built-up area boundary will only be supported if it is demonstrated that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. it is on a small site and would provide affordable housing for local need, that is evidenced in accordance with Local Plan Strategy 35; and</li> <li>II. it will not have a harmful visual impact on its setting or the landscape;</li> <li>III. it conserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area; and</li> <li>IV. where relevant, it brings redundant or vacant historic buildings back into beneficial re-use.</li> </ol> <p>A small number of market homes may be permitted where this is essential to enable the delivery of affordable units.</p>
Policy No. Coly9	A. Minor housing development, of between one and nine dwellings, should seek to provide at least one off-road car parking space for one-bedroom

<b>Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Overview</b>
	<p>homes and two off-road car parking spaces per home with two or more bedrooms.</p> <p>B. Major housing development, of ten dwellings or more, should provide at least one off-road car parking space for one-bedroom homes and two off-road car parking spaces per homes with two or more bedrooms. Additional off-street visitor parking spaces should be incorporated into the layout.</p> <p>C. Parking provision for major developments should be contained within the site boundary and include charging points for electric cars.</p> <p>D. Development at all scales should provide at least one bicycle parking space per home.</p> <p>E. Permeable materials for surface parking areas should be used where practicable.</p>
<b>Local Economy</b>	
Policy No. Coly10	<p>Development proposals to provide employment opportunities in residential areas, including the creation of live-work units, will be supported provided that the proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. do not involve the loss of a dwelling;</li> <li>II. contribute to the character and vitality of the local area;</li> <li>III. do not harm residential amenity;</li> <li>IV. do not adversely impact upon road safety; and</li> <li>V. do not harm the convenience, vitality or viability of existing village centre commercial uses.</li> </ul>
Policy No. Coly11	<p>Proposals for the development and expansion of tourism-related businesses will be supported providing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. the scale of development is proportionate to existing activity and the immediate locality;</li> <li>II. the potential impact on neighbouring residential properties is acceptable, having regard to potential noise and disturbance;</li> <li>III. they do not have a significant adverse impact on the character of the landscape and are mitigated by extensive landscaping and visual screening; and</li> <li>IV. traffic, access and highway issues are satisfactorily addressed.</li> </ul>
Policy No. Coly12	Measures to improve pedestrian links between the tramway stations and the centre of the settlement areas of Colyford and Colyton will be supported.
Policy No. Coly13	The development of a super-fast communication infrastructure to serve the area will be supported where it is sensitively sited and sympathetically designed.

Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies	
Policy	Overview
	All new residential, educational and business premises development should seek to make adequate, appropriate and effective provision for high speed broadband and other communication networks.
<b>Transport and Travel</b>	
Policy No. Coly14	Development proposals specifically to maintain and enhance existing public transport provision, within the area will be supported provided the proposals would not have significant harmful effects on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the amenity of residents and other neighbouring uses; and</li> <li>ii. the local landscape, including environmental features and assets.</li> </ul>
Policy No. Coly15	Development proposals will be supported that are intended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. improve and extend existing walking and cycle routes and link them to the wider network; or</li> <li>ii. provide shared pedestrian and cycle links between settlement area; or</li> <li>iii. create wider and safer footpaths in settlement areas.</li> </ul> <p>Where appropriate, proposals will be required to demonstrate that measures will be put in place to protect wildlife and opportunities to enhance wildlife habitats and corridors will be taken.</p>
Policy No. Coly16	Development proposals to ease traffic congestion around local schools will be supported provided they do not have an adverse impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. local character;</li> <li>ii. residential amenity;</li> <li>iii. highway safety; and,</li> <li>iv. flood risk (including local surface water flooding).</li> </ul> <p>Permeable materials for surface parking areas should be used where practicable.</p>
Policy No. Coly17	Proposals for public car parking areas within the Colyton built-up area boundary, will be supported in their entirety or as part of new developments on suitable sites where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. there is appropriate vehicular and pedestrian accessibility; and</li> <li>ii. appropriate hard and soft landscaping is provided to ensure the design and layout are sensitive to the setting of the conservation area and to protect the amenity of neighbours.</li> </ul>

Table 8.1 : Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Policies	
Policy	Overview
	The provision of electric vehicle charging outlets at public car parks and at other suitable locations to serve public demand will be supported.
<b>Community and Recreation Facilities</b>	
Policy No. Coly18	<p>The use of redundant land for community allotments, orchards and community horticulture initiatives in suitable locations and where viable will be considered favourably.</p> <p>Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of existing allotment spaces will not be supported unless alternative and equivalent allotment space is provided.</p> <p>Proposals for built development on allotment sites, beyond what is allowed by way of permitted development rights, will be supported if it is of a limited nature and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of the site, and it would not have significant harmful effects on nearby uses and the landscape and visual amenity of the area.</p> <p>Proposals that have an adverse impact on nature conservation interests will not be supported.</p>
Policy No. Coly19	<p>The following sports and recreation facilities and pitches (shown on map 8) will be safeguarded for their existing use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colyton Leisure Centre</li> <li>• Peace Memorial Playing Fields</li> </ul> <p>Proposals which result in a loss of these recreation and sports facilities and pitches and/or their capacity and/or community accessibility (availability for community use) will not be supported.</p> <p>Proposals to enhance and improve existing facilities or to provide additional sports and recreation facilities in or on the edge of settlements will be supported where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the scale is related to the needs of the area and in keeping with the character of the location;</li> <li>ii. they have no detrimental impact upon nature conservation interests;</li> <li>iii. they do not create unacceptable disturbance to neighbouring residential properties by way of noise, light spillage and unsociable hours;</li> <li>iv. the use of any floodlighting has mitigation measures in place to protect nearby residential property; and</li> <li>v. access and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without harming existing residential and other uses.</li> </ol>

## **9 THE APPRAISAL FINDINGS AT THIS CURRENT STAGE**

### **9.1 Introduction**

9.1.1 This section of the report presents an assessment of the Pre-submission version of the CPNP.

### **9.2 Approach/ Methodology to the Appraisal**

9.2.1 The appraisal is structured under one of the ten SEA themes considered through the SEA. The single theme to be considered is Ecology. The remaining themes have been scoped out on the basis of the unlikelihood for significant effects upon the environment and given that the CPNP does not propose development above and beyond that which has already been established at a higher level of plan-making through the East Devon Local Plan and East Devon Villages Plan.

9.2.2 For the theme of Ecology, 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

9.2.3 Every effort is made to identify/ evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

### **9.3 Ecology**

9.3.1 There are a number of European and nationally designated sites located within the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area. These include the River Axe Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which lies to the east of the NP area, and Bolyshone Fen SSSI, which lies towards the west of the Neighbourhood Plan area. These designated sites are all located outside of the main settlement areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area. In addition, the SSSI impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for a further one SSSI (located outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area) overlaps the Neighbourhood Plan area; Sidmouth to Beer Coast SSSI/SAC, located approximately 1.5 km south of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Beer Quarry and

Caves SAC/SSI is also located outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area, located approximately 1km south, although its corresponding SSSI IRZ does not overlap with the NP area.

- 9.3.2 In the local context, there are a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including areas of deciduous woodland, lowland meadows, lowland wetlands and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are also present within the Neighbourhood Plan area; Colyford Common LNR and Holyford Wood LNR, both located towards the south of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 9.3.3 The majority of the NP area overlaps with a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for ‘all planning applications (except householder) outside or extending outside existing settlements/urban areas affecting greenspace, farmland, semi natural habitats or landscape features such as trees, hedges, streams, rural buildings/structures’. Specific impacts to these nationally designated sites are difficult to determine in the absence of any specific allocations through the Neighbourhood Plan, and this will need to be addressed through the planning process. The Ceramtec site, allocated through the East Devon Villages Plan, is located within the Built-Up Area Boundary of Colyton, and therefore falls outside of the IRZ definition.
- 9.3.4 Under the Natural Environment theme, Policy Coly1 provides an overarching environmental policy context for any development proposals which come forward within the parish, and includes for the protection of important sites, species and features of value to biodiversity, as well as promoting a net gain in biodiversity and enhancement of ecological networks. Further support for the protection of trees, woodland and hedges is provided by Coly2, and this will also serve to protect ecological connectivity and habitat networks within the parish.
- 9.3.5 Policy Coly3 provides additional protection to wildlife corridors, where these are associated with PROW, as they commonly are, and seeks to achieve a net gain for biodiversity as part of any PROW improvement or extension proposals, and Coly15, which supports improvements to existing walking and cycling routes, highlights that such proposals should protect wildlife and take opportunities to enhance wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors.
- 9.3.6 Coly 4 and Coly5 are protective policies, limiting development in specific areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area outside of the BUABs. Coly5, in particular, focusses on protecting local green spaces, thereby supporting a multi-functional green

infrastructure network within the Neighbourhood Plan area and promoting access to biodiversity.

- 9.3.7 Further policies within the Neighbourhood Plan support specific development types, such as car parking, housing and employment within existing BUABs, thereby assisting with the protection of designated natural heritage sites, where impacts are likely to occur outside of BUABs, closer to designated sites.
- 9.3.8 Policies Coly18 and Coly19 relate to community and recreation facilities, and although locations supporting new facilities for community horticulture and sports/recreation are not allocated or identified in any way, they are likely to be associated with settlements, and therefore not in close proximity to any European or nationally designated sites. However, to ensure protection of wider biodiversity interests, such as local wildlife sites and important semi-natural habitats, these policies include specific reference to the protection of important ecological assets.
- 9.3.9 It is therefore considered that the Plan supports the status of designated sites within or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area, in that it contains policies which support development which protects designated sites and important semi-natural habitats, as well as providing policy support for development to enhance ecological networks and provide net gains for biodiversity wherever possible. Where policies have the potential to lead to development which could impact upon important natural assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area, additional criteria regarding protecting such assets is included. As specific sites for such development are not identified in the Neighbourhood Plan, as planning applications come forward, they will be assessed, in part, against the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan, thereby securing protection, and where possible, the enhancement of European, national and local designated sites, important semi-natural habitats, wildlife corridors and ecological networks across the plan area.

## 10 NEXT STEPS

10.1.1 The five stages of the SEA process<sup>5</sup> are identified below.

1. Screening;
2. Scoping;
3. Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan;
4. Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation; and
5. Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making / SEA (and present 'measures concerning monitoring')

10.1.2 This Environmental Report will accompany the Pre-Submission version of the Colyton Parish Neighbourhood Plan where they will be taken to consultation under Regulation-14<sup>6</sup>.

10.1.3 Following this stage of consultation, comments made will be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, when finalising the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan for submission.

10.1.4 The finalised Neighbourhood Plan, and updated Environmental Report if necessary, will then be submitted to East Devon District Council who will commence Regulation-16 where it will be subject to further consultation.

10.1.5 Following this stage of consultation the Colyton Neighbourhood Pan will be subject to Independent Examination, during which, the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans, legal requirements and is in general conformity with the development plan for the region of East Devon.

Should the subsequent Independent Examination be favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by East Devon District Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once made, the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the development plan for the Parish.

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<sup>5</sup> In accordance with the stages set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance

<sup>6</sup> For further information about Regulation-14 and the Neighbourhood Development Plan process please visit: [https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/NP\\_Roadmap\\_online\\_full.pdf](https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/NP_Roadmap_online_full.pdf)

**Appendix 1**  
**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report**

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ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES  
LAND AND PROPERTY  
MINING AND MINERAL PROCESSING  
MINERAL ESTATES  
WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING STEERING GROUP FOR URBAN VISION**

**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) SCOPING REPORT**

**MARCH 2020**

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**STATUS: FINAL**

**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING STEERING GROUP FOR URBAN VISION**

**COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) SCOPING REPORT**

**MARCH 2020**

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ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES  
LAND AND PROPERTY  
MINING AND MINERAL PROCESSING  
MINERAL ESTATES  
WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong (WA) has been commissioned by Urban Vision North Staffordshire on behalf of Colyton Neighbourhood Planning Group to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the pre-submission Colyton Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP) covering the area of Colyton Parish, in the district of East Devon.
- 1.1.2 The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan (CNDP) is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the East Devon Local Plan.
- 1.1.3 East Devon District Council (EDDC) have adopted a SEA Screening Report in which they concluded;
- “With regard to the SEA, the conclusion of the assessment is that the Plan has the potential to result in a significant adverse effect on the environment, subsequently SEA is required”.*
- 1.1.4 Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England all responded to EDDCs Screening Report. Further details are provided in Section 4.
- 1.1.5 Therefore, the purpose of this Scoping Report is to determine the draft scope for the SEA Environmental Report.
- 1.1.6 A HRA ‘Report to Inform an Appropriate Assessment’ was produced by WA to inform the CNDP in March 2020.

## 2 COLYTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### 2.1.1 The CNDP describes Colyton as;

*'a relatively large parish of 2,573 hectares, situated in the south-east of Devon, some two miles to the north of the coastal settlements of Seaton and Axmouth. The two main settlements are Colyton, a small town with a population of circa 2,300, and Colyford (population circa 800) both towards the south-east of the Parish'.*

### 2.1.2 The CNDP sets out;

*'how the community would like to see the area developed over the next 15 to 20 years and, through its policies, help shape and direct sustainable development that will benefit those that live, work or visit in our area'.*

2.1.3 The objectives and policies of the CNDP are indicative of the group's desire to protect the existing character of the parish, whilst facilitating appropriate development and growth.

2.1.4 When adopted the CNDP will form part of the East Devon Local Plan. The policies will then form part of the development plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications.

2.1.5 The NPSG provided Wardell Armstrong with a pre-submission version of their CNDP dated January 2020 for the purpose of undertaking SEA following the screening conclusion reached by EDDC. The CNDP details a number of policies accompanied by explanatory and supportive text.

### **3 RELATIONSHIP OF THE COLYTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WITH EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL'S LOCAL PLAN**

- 3.1.1 The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the East Devon Local Plan and will form part of the development plan for East Devon. The Local Plan seeks to be responsive to the views of appropriate community-led planning policy documents, including neighbourhood plans, in order to determine what is right and best for East Devon's locality.
- 3.1.2 Neighbourhood Plans provide a direct opportunity for communities to develop a positive and shared vision for their Neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local needs or add local detail to strategic policies.
- 3.1.3 Future decisions on planning applications will be made using both the local plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, and any other material considerations.
- 3.1.4 The current Local Plan is the adopted *East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031*<sup>1</sup>. It is the overarching planning document that encourage the development and use of land; identifies identifies/ allocates sites for a particular type of development or use; and identifies environmental, social, design and economic objectives relevant to the local area.
- 3.1.5 The Local Plan provides a 'Spatial Strategy for Development in East Devon' which looks to accommodate significant residential development and major employment development to attract strategic inward investment along with supporting infrastructure and community facilities. The intends for a minimum of 17,100 housing units to be built over the plan period, of which 1,123<sup>2</sup> will be distributed in villages and rural areas, as well as development on around 150 hectares of land for employment purposes.
- 3.1.6 Whilst the Local Plan does not set a baseline housing figure for Colyton between 2018 to 2031 it does identify Colyton, within Strategy 27 'Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages', as a small settlement which offers a range of accessible services and facilities to meet many of the everyday needs of local residents and has

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<sup>1</sup> East Devon District Council (2016): 'Local Plan 2013-2031' [online] Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2013-2031/> [accessed 19/02/2020]

<sup>2</sup> Figure is based on monitoring to a base date of 30 September 2014.

reasonable public transport. These smaller towns and larger villages, which includes Colyton, will be designated a Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) however this will not allocate land specifically for development. Strategy 27 highlights that communities who wish to promote development above and beyond that which is supported through the Local Plan can do so through the production of a Neighbourhood Plan.

3.1.7 The CNDP does not propose to explicitly allocate land for housing, however it is proposing to support the development of the former Ceramtec factory subject to certain policy considerations being met.

3.1.8 The Local Plan also includes a number of key issues considered to be of greatest importance and relevance for East Devon and the objectives to address these. The subjects in which these relate to are;

1. Jobs and Economic Growth
2. Housing;
3. Balanced Communities;
4. Transport;
5. Carbon Emissions & Climate Change;
6. Biodiversity;
7. Green Infrastructure and Recreation;
8. Landscape, AONBs and the Coastal Zone;
9. Heritage Assets;
10. Education;
11. Older Age;
12. Safety and Crime issues; and
13. Town Centre and Brownfield first.

3.1.9 A designated Green Wedge is located between Seaton and Colyford, and Colyford and Colyton. The Local Plan highlights the risk that development growth at towns and villages could lead to the coalescence of adjacent or neighbouring settlements. To prevent such coalescence the Local Plan stresses the importance that open land between settlements is retained thus helping them maintain their separate identities, their landscape settings and to avoid the creation of unrelieved development within Strategy 8.

3.1.10 The Local Plan also highlights the need to safeguard former transport routes and their green re-use. Disused railway lines, such as the Seaton junction within Colyton, offer huge potential for re-use as future walking, cycling or public transport routes. Therefore, their continuity should be protected from development which may impact on the future provision of such a route. Through policy TC5 'Safeguarding Disused Railway Lines' East Devon District Council *'will resist the granting of planning permission for development on undeveloped sections of disused railway lines which have potential for re-use as a transport and recreation route, if it prejudices the future ability of the route to perform this function'*.

## 4 WHAT IS SEA?

4.1.1 The CNDP has been judged by EDDC as requiring a SEA with their screening assessment concluding that *“the Plan has the potential to result in a significant adverse effect on the environment”*.

4.1.2 On the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England were asked to review and comment upon EDDCs Screening Report. Their responses are as follows;

4.1.3 Natural England, in their consultation response to the screening request noted:

*‘Based on the policies as they are written in the consultation version, it is not possible for us to conclude that the plan will not have a likely significant effect on a European site’.*

*‘We advise that if the locational aspects of a number of policies could be tightened up, this may enable different conclusions on SEA to be reached’.*

4.1.4 Environment Agency in their response noted:

*‘In general we consider that neighbourhood plans are unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects unless the plan allocates or encourages development over that set out in the Local Plan. In this case we note that this plan does propose an increase in housing numbers for the parish compared to the existing local plan. Whilst we have not identified any specific significant effects we are happy to support your conclusion that SEA is required’.*

4.1.5 Historic England in their response noted:

*‘Having looked at the draft Plan I can confirm that there are no issues upon which we wish to comment and unless it changes significantly this will remain our position through the various stages of its preparation.*

*On that basis there are no issues from our perspective which prompt us to advise that a full SEA is necessary. At the same time, we have no objection to the conclusion that a full SEA is in fact required’.*

## 4.2 SEA Explained

4.2.1 SEA is a mechanism for considering, judging and communicating the potential key environmental impacts of an emerging public plan. The aim of SEA is to offer a high level of protection of the environment by informing and influencing the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts. Through

this approach, the SEA for the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.

- 4.2.2 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment is the European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (SEA Directive). This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed guidance on these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005).
- 4.2.3 The objective of SEA is *"to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of development plans with a view to promoting sustainable development"* (EU Directive 2001/42/EC (Article 1)).
- 4.2.4 As required by the SEA Regulations, nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues (comprising the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) must be consulted on the proposed scope of the SEA.
- 4.2.5 This Scoping Report has been prepared to outline and justify the proposed scope of the SEA in order to inform the consultation process. This report has attempted to ensure the scope of the SEA is proportionate, by focusing only on the likely significant effects of the CNDP.
- 4.2.6 Following the scoping process, an Environmental Report will be produced to communicate the findings of the SEA. The Environmental Report will be published for wider consultation alongside the draft CNDP.

### **4.3 SEA 'scoping' explained**

- 4.3.1 As set out above, scoping is the stage of the SEA process that determines the content and extent of the matters to be covered in the SEA report to be submitted to a competent authority and is obligatory under the SEA Regulations.
- 4.3.2 In order to develop the draft scope for the SEA the following steps have been undertaken;
1. Identify policies, plans and sustainability objectives relevant to the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan and associated SEA (i.e. EU, UK Government and local policy and commitments) to summarise the regulatory and legislative landscape;

2. Establish the baseline conditions for the SEA (the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan) in order to identify the plan's likely significant effects;
3. Identifying key sustainability issues and environmental problems in the CNDP area that should be a particular focus of the SEA; and
4. Develop a set of SEA assessment objectives and appraisal questions on the basis of these issues which can then be used to appraise the draft plan.

## 5 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

- 5.1.1 This report has been based on a preferred methodology provided to Wardell Armstrong by Locality (the Client), as set out below.
- 5.1.2 Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive details a number of topics for which likely significant effects on the environment may occur. These include issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape. It should be noted that the SEA Directive is ‘of a procedural nature’ (paragraph 9 of the Directive preamble) and as such does not look to stipulate a particular focus for the assessment, beyond requiring a focus on the environment.
- 5.1.3 In addition, the Planning Practice Guidance (Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal) states that a SEA ‘*should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of the neighbourhood plan. It should focus on the environmental impacts which are likely to be significant. It does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the neighbourhood plan*’.
- 5.1.4 On the basis of the above, this report aims to identify the likely significant impacts of the CNDP and the SEA will focus on these topics only.
- 5.1.5 The following key environmental topics have been considered within this report:
- Air Quality;
  - Ecology;
  - Climate Factors (including flood risk);
  - Landscape;
  - Historic Environment;
  - Soil and Agricultural Land;
  - Water Resources;
  - Population and Community;
  - Health and Wellbeing; and
  - Transportation.

5.1.6 The scope of the Environmental Report will be informed by the conclusions of this report and the subsequent consultation.

## 6 AIR QUALITY

### 6.1 Legislative Context

6.1.1 As required by the Environment Act 1995 the UK National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) was published in March 1997 setting out policies for the management of ambient air quality. The Strategy sets objectives for eight pollutants, which may potentially occur in the UK at levels that give cause for concern. These pollutants are: nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, lead, fine particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), benzene, 1, 3-butadiene and ozone. This Strategy has been superseded, revised and strengthened a number of times with the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, July 2007 constituting the latest iteration.

6.1.2 The 2007 Air Quality Strategy establishes the framework for air quality improvements based on measures agreed at a national and international level. However, despite these measures, it is recognised that areas of poor air quality will remain, and these should be dealt with through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) process using locally implemented measures.

6.1.3 LAQM legislation in the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to conduct periodic review and assessments of air quality. These aim to identify all those areas where the air quality objectives are being, or are likely to be, exceeded.

### 6.2 Policy Context

6.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>3</sup>, introduced in March 2012 and most recently updated in February 2019, requires that:

*“Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of AQMAs and CAZs, and the cumulative impacts individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new*

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<sup>3</sup> National Planning Policy Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Access 19-02-2020]

*development in AQMAs and CAZs is consistent with the local air quality action plan.”*

6.2.2 Within section 15 ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ the NPPF states that *“planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment”*. In relation to air quality this will be implemented by *“preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of [...] air [...] pollution”*.

6.2.3 Policies Strategy 38 – Sustainable Design and Construction and EN14 – Control of Pollution from the East Devon Local Plan relate to the Air Quality SEA theme.

6.2.4 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Air Quality theme include:

- Strategy 5B - Sustainable Transport;
- Strategy 38 - Sustainable Design and Construction;
- D1 - Design and Local Distinctiveness;
- D7 - Agricultural Buildings and Development;
- D8 - Re-use of Rural Buildings Outside of Settlements;
- EN14 - Control of Pollution;
- E4 - Rural Diversification; and
- E12 - Neighbourhood Centres and Shops.

### **6.3 Baseline**

#### *Summary of Current Baseline*

6.3.1 A review of the October 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) for East Devon outlines that there are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) present within EDDC, and therefore within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. As a result, the Council has no active Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs) and as such the Council has no formal measures related to control and mitigation of sources of local air quality issues.

6.3.2 There are no recent or anticipated exceedances of national air quality objectives in the Neighbourhood Plan area. From the time of publication, of the ASR, NO<sub>2</sub> annual mean concentration has fallen gradually over the previous 5 years within EDDC.

### *Summary of Future Baseline*

- 6.3.3 Although the Neighbourhood Plan allocates no quantum of development and only promotes a single development (the former Ceramtec factory), it is possible that any new housing and employment provision, within the parish and the wider area, brought about by the development plan for East Devon, including through the East Devon Local Plan, has the potential for adverse effects on air quality through increasing traffic flows and associated levels of pollutants such as NO<sub>2</sub>. It should be noted that NO<sub>2</sub> is the main pollutant of concern in East Devon and the ASR states that *'annual results for nitrogen dioxide may be of concern if they deteriorate'*.
- 6.3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan may have a beneficial effect through Policy Coly17 which states *'the provision of electric vehicle charging outlets at public car parks and at other suitable locations to serve public demand will be supported'*. Electric vehicle points and measures to discourage car use, by the provision of cycle and walking routes, are encouraged by EDDC.

## **6.4 Sustainability Issues**

- 6.4.1 There are no exceedances or anticipated exceedances of national air quality objectives.
- 6.4.2 Traffic and congestion arising from planned new development within and surrounding the area have the potential to increase emissions; however, this is unlikely to significantly affect air quality within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

## **6.5 Scope**

- 6.5.1 Owing to absence of any AQMAs and exceedances of national air quality objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan area, it is not considered likely that the CNDP will result in significant air quality effects and therefore it is proposed to scope Air Quality out of the SEA Environmental Report.

## 7 ECOLOGY

### 7.1 Policy Context

7.1.1 The NPPF 2019 is a material consideration for the purposes of planning decision making. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature (paragraph 170, d), and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.

7.1.2 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that *'to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*

*a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*

*b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'.*

7.1.3 It should be note that *'the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site'.*

7.1.4 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Updated July 2019) provides information on the implementation of the policies set out within the NPPF and how these policies are associated with supporting legislation, policies and supplementary guidelines. The NPPG states that *'development plans and planning decisions have the potential to affect biodiversity or geodiversity outside as well as inside relevant designated areas'.*

7.1.5 Extracts from the NPPG which are relevant to nature conservation are:

*[Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise*

*of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by government in its [25 Year Environment Plan](#).*

*Guidance on the law concerning designated sites and protected species is published separately because its application is wider than planning. In applying this, the aim should be to fulfil statutory obligations in a way that minimises delays and burdens’.*

7.1.6 The NPPG identifies that the commitments within the 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>4</sup> are of relevance to biodiversity and geodiversity. The plan sets out the Government’s environmental plan of action over the next quarter century, in the context of Brexit and aims to tackle the growing problems of waste and soil degradation, improving social justice through tackling pollution and promoting the mental and physical health benefits of the natural world. On a more specific scale the plan looks to achieve thriving plants and wildlife (Goal 3) and will do so through the actions set out in Chapter 2 ‘Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes’.

7.1.7 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Ecology theme include:

- Strategy 3 - Sustainable Development;
- Strategy 5 – Environment;
- Strategy 6 – Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 7 - Development in the Countryside;
- Strategy 38 – Sustainable Design and Construction;
- Strategy 47 – Nature Conservation and Geology;
- D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness;
- D3 – Trees and Development Sites;

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<sup>4</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 27/02/20]

- EN4 - Protection of Local Nature Reserves, County Wildlife Sites and County Geological Sites; and
- EN5 – Wildlife Habitats and Features.

## 7.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Existing Baseline*

#### European designated sites

7.2.1 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated under the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) for containing habitats and species listed in Annex I and II of the Directive. A small section of the River Axe SAC lies in the east of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

7.2.2 The River Axe SAC is described as follows:

*‘The lower reaches of the River Axe feature a mixed catchment geology of sandstones and limestones giving rise to calcareous waters and associated water-crowfoots and water-starworts. The river also supports the significant presence of sea lamprey, brook lamprey and bullhead’.*

7.2.3 Natural England have set the objective for the River Axe SAC<sup>5</sup> as;

*“Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;*

- *The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species*
- *The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats*
- *The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species*
- *The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely*
- *The populations of qualifying species, and,*
- *The distribution of qualifying species within the site”.*

7.2.4 Natural England’s Site Improvement Plan for the River Axe details the prioritised issues for the site, the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and

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<sup>5</sup> Site Improvement Plan: River Axe (SIP186) Available at:  
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5156988124135424>

the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The Plan lists; water pollution; siltation; invasive species; and inappropriate weirs, dams and other structures as being of priority and issue. The features attached these are, H3260 Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot, S1095 Sea lamprey, S1096 Brook lamprey and S1163 Bullhead. The Plan advises that pollution levels (particularly phosphate), siltation and the impact of physical modifications along the river are reduced and that the spread of invasive species is managed and where possible eradicated.

7.2.5 The Beer Quarry and Caves SAC and the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC are both located outside of the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, being located 1.1 km and 1.7 km distant of the Colyton parish boundary respectively.

7.2.6 The Beer Quarry and Caves SAC is described as follows:

*‘This complex of abandoned mines in south-west England is divided in two by a road, with a working quarry to the north and a disused quarry and cave system to the south. This site supports important populations of hibernating bats. Its use as a hibernation site by the Bechstein’s bat is the primary reason for its designation as a SAC. The area also supports a significant presence of both the Lesser horseshoe bat and the Greater horseshoe bat which are both qualifying features but are not primary reasons for the site’s selection’.*

7.2.7 Natural England have set the objective for the Beer Quarry and Caves SAC<sup>6</sup> as;

*“Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;*

- *The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species*
- *The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species*
- *The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely*
- *The populations of qualifying species, and,*
- *The distribution of qualifying species within the site”.*

7.2.8 Natural England’s Site Improvement Plan for the Beer Quarry & Caves SAC details the prioritised issues for the site, the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver

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<sup>6</sup> European Site Conservation Objectives for Beer Quarry & Caves SAC (UK0012585) Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5373286804357120>

the measures. The Plan lists; direct impact from third party, planning permission: general, habitat vulnerability, inappropriate scrub control and habitat connectivity as being of priority and issue. The features attached these are, S1303 Lesser horseshoe bat, S1304 Greater horseshoe bat, S1323 Bechstein`s bat. The Plan advises that access is controlled to the site, planning guidance is developed, an access strategy and install gates/ grilles is developed, a scrub management plan is devised and implemented and opportunities for agri-environment schemes on key bat Habitat are considered.

7.2.9 The Sidmouth to West Bay SAC is described as follows:

*‘Sidmouth to West Bay is an example of a highly unstable soft cliff coastline subject to mudslides and landslips. The principal rock types are soft mudstones, clays and silty limestones, with a small chalk outlier in the west. Vegetation is very varied and includes pioneer communities on recent slips, calcareous grassland and scrub on detached chalk blocks, and extensive self-sown woodland dominated by ash Fraxinus excelsior or sycamore Acer pseudoplatanus’.*

7.2.10 Natural England have set the objective for the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC<sup>7</sup> as;

*“Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;*

- *The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats*
- *The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and*
- *The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely”.*

7.2.11 Natural England’s Site Improvement Plan for the Sidmouth to West Bay SAC details the prioritised issues for the site, the features they affect, the proposed measures to address the issues and the delivery bodies whose involvement is required to deliver the measures. The Plan lists; invasive species; disease; direct impact from third party; planning permission: general; and water pollution as being of priority and issue. The features attached these are, H1230 Vegetated sea cliffs, H9180 Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes. The Plan advises that the removal non-native invasive species and the impacts of ash die-back are planned and managed for, sea cliff habitat and SAC habitats are safeguarded through advice and the use

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<sup>7</sup> European Site Conservation Objectives for Sidmouth to West Bay SAC (UK0019864) Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5076579893903360>

enforcement action if necessary and by better understanding the combined impact of existing small scale developments and identifying positive solutions respectively. The Plan also advises that where areas of poor water quality may be an issue this is investigated.

7.2.12 Under the Habitats Regulations, there is a legal requirement to assess whether there are any likely significant effects of plans and/ or programmes on Natura 2000 (SACs and SPAs), and if there are, to undertake an appropriate assessment of the plan or project. Plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site(s) in question OR there are no alternatives to them and there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation would be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network is maintained. The above process, is known as a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

#### Nationally designated sites

7.2.13 Two SSSIs are located within the Neighbourhood Plan area; Bolshayne Fen SSSI and River Axe SSSI'.

7.2.14 The Bolshayne Fen SSSI was notified in 1992 for its biological interests. The site is approximately 1.7ha in size and is located towards the west of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The reasons for the site's designation are as follows;

*'This site contains an unusually large and intact valley fen, supporting rich marsh vegetation of a type known only at two other sites in Devon and which is now nationally scarce.*

*The fen occupies a single field at an altitude of 40 m A.O.D., through which runs Nanny's Water, a small tributary of the River Coly. Its soils consist of deep waterlogged peaty loam above Triassic mudstones, with Cretaceous Greensand on the valley sides above. During winter it periodically floods.*

*The vegetation is comprised mainly of a mosaic of yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, branched burred *Sparganium erectum* and rushes *Juncus spp.*, while greater tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata* is locally dominant. Other conspicuous plants include meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris*, ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, water mint *Mentha aquatica* and southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*. Also present are four species which are*

*local in Devon: wood club-rush Scirpus sylvaticus, marsh valerian Valeriana dioica, fen bedstraw Galium uliginosum and common spike-rush Eleocharis palustris.*

*The stream is bordered for most of its length by alder Alnus glutinosa, with a ground flora dominated by ramsons Allium ursinum. Brown trout Salmo trutta fario and eels Anguilla anguilla are known to occur in its waters.*

*The site supports a varied reptile fauna, including grass snake Natrrix natrix and adder Vipera berus, which is commonly seen. It also supports a number of bird species including water rail Rallus aquaticus, which rarely breeds in Devon but has been recorded during the summer in recent years. During the winter snipe Gallinago gallinago and woodcock Scolopax rusticola commonly feed within the fen, whilst both grey heron Ardea cinerea and barn owl Tyto alba are recorded throughout the year<sup>8</sup>.*

7.2.15 Natural England report that the whole site is considered to be in a 'favourable' condition<sup>9</sup>.

7.2.16 The River Axe SSSI was notified in 1999 for a mixture of interests. The site is approximately 69.5ha in size and is located within Devon and Dorset. The citation statement for the SSSI states the following<sup>10</sup>:

*'The River Axe SSSI extends for 13 kilometres from the confluence with the Blackwater River to the tidal limit near Colyford, meandering through a flood plain dominated by improved dairy pasture. The majority of the SSSI is in Devon, with less than 150 metres flowing through Dorset. The underlying geology of the riverbed is alluvium with areas of valley gravel, clay, shale and marl. The water is base-rich with a high content of dissolved solids. The main flow at Whitford is 5 cubic metres per second, though the river is subject to winter and spring spates averaging over 20 times the mean flow.*

*The SSSI supports an exceptionally diverse aquatic and marginal flora. A variety of plant communities are represented, including in the higher reaches a community type usually confined to sandstone catchments in Scotland. In the lower reaches,*

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<sup>8</sup> <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1006370.pdf> [accessed 27/02/2020]

<sup>9</sup> Bolshayne Fen SSI Condition summary. Available at:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ReportConditionSummary.aspx?SiteCode=S1006370&ReportTitle=BolshayneFenSSSI> [accessed 27/02/2020]

<sup>10</sup> Natural England (no date): 'River Axe SSSI', [online] available to download via:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S2000139&SiteName=Axe&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=> [accessed 27/02/2020]

*this gives way to a community more typical of rivers flowing slowly over clay. All of the community types represented within the SSSI have an above average diversity of higher plants.*

*The diverse flora results from a number of contributing factors. Firstly, the lower reaches of the Axe have a high bed stability compared to the upper reaches where the steep banks concentrate the energy of floodwaters onto the riverbed. Secondly, the river has few trees along its banks, allowing much light to reach the riverbed. Finally, the active geomorphology of the river has generated a range of natural features (including long riffles, deep pools, islands and meanders), which provide a variety of ecological niches.*

*The SSSI is notable for a large population of Short-leaved Water-starwort *Callitriche truncata*, a nationally scarce species more usually associated with ditches. The river also supports diverse communities of invertebrates, including some that are nationally scarce or rare. The presence of Medicinal Leech *Hirudo medicinalis* is of particular interest.*

*The river also contains geomorphological interest of national importance, demonstrating contrasting patterns of meander formation.'*

7.2.17 Natural England report that 63.9% of the site is considered to be in a 'favourable' condition with the remaining 36.1% in an 'unfavourable – declining' condition<sup>11</sup>.

7.2.18 Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.

7.2.19 The Neighbourhood Plan area is located within the IRZs for the two SSSIs mentioned above, the Beer Quarry and Caves SSSI which is located approximately 1.1km from the Neighbourhood Plan area and the Sidmouth to Beer Coast (SSSI), located approximately 1.5 km.

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<sup>11</sup> River Axe SSI condition summary. Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ReportConditionSummary.aspx?SiteCode=S2000139&ReportTitle=RiverAxeSSSI> [accessed 27/02/2020]

- 7.2.20 The IRZ for Beer Quarry and Caves SSSI identifies all non-householder planning applications outside or extending outside existing settlements/urban areas affecting greenspace, farmland, semi-natural habitats or landscape features such as trees, hedges, streams, and rural buildings/structures as potentially having adverse impacts on the SSSI. Residential applications within existing settlements/urban areas are excluded from this.
- 7.2.21 In addition to the above potential adverse impacts listed, the IRZ for Sidmouth to Beer Coast SSSI also identifies residential developments of 50 units or more, and rural residential developments of 50 or more houses outside existing settlements/urban areas as also potentially impacting this SSSI.

#### Locally Designated Sites

- 7.2.22 There are two Local Nature reserves (LNRs) within Colyton Parish; Colyford Common LNR and Holyford Wood LNR,
- 7.2.23 Colyford Common LNR is an important wetland site on the Axe Estuary. Being regularly flooded by high tides, this salt marsh has a very unusual flora and fauna. Little egret fish in the creeks and lagoons on the estuary and large black and white shelduck can be seen grazing on the Local Nature Reserve. Wheatears flit across the Common as you walk through it and you can find evidence of Water Vole in the new reedbed close to the village.
- 7.2.24 Holyford Wood LNR is a deciduous woodland in a deeply incised valley with fine examples of veteran trees. Woodland plants, birds and mammals, including dormice and bats. The ground flora is best in April/May with bluebells, primrose, ramsons and wood anemone. The woods are dominated by oak and ash.

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

- 7.2.25 Habitats, species and sites are likely to continue to be offered protection through the higher level planning framework, however; they will potentially face increasing pressures from future development within the Neighbourhood Plan area with the potential for negative effects on the wider ecological network, which can be exacerbated by the effects of climate change.
- 7.2.26 The Neighbourhood Plan presents an opportunity to maximise benefits for biodiversity by including consideration of local wildlife sites and habitats/species of principal importance at an early stage of planning for future growth.

### **7.3 Sustainability Issues**

- Bolshayne Fen SSSI and the River Axe SSSI are located within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Some areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area are located within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for residential development of 50 units or more and rural-residential development of 10 or more houses outside existing settlements/ urban areas.
- There are numerous Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats present in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### **7.4 Scope**

- 7.4.1 Owing to the potential significant effects upon European designated sites it is proposed to scope in Ecology within the SEA Environmental Report.

## 8 CLIMATE CHANGE

### 8.1 Policy Context

- 8.1.1 The Climate Change Act 2008<sup>12</sup> establishes the framework for the UK to set and deliver greenhouse gas emission reduction targets; mainly through the establishment of the Committee on Climate Change which ensures targets are evidence based and independently assessed. The Act commits the UK government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum of 80% below 1990 baseline levels by 2050. In addition to this, the Government is also required to regularly report on emission target progress, assess the risks and opportunities to the UK associated with climate change, and develop preparation and adaptive plans for these.
- 8.1.2 The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment<sup>13</sup> is required to be produced every five years under the Climate Change Act 2008, with the most recent series being published in 2017
- 8.1.3 The policies within the NPPF relevant to climate change can be found in chapter 14 'Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change'. Those most specific to this assessment are detailed below:

Paragraph 148: *"The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure."*

Paragraph 149: *"Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure."*

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<sup>12</sup> HM Government, 2008. Climate Change Act 2008. HMSO, London.

<sup>13</sup> HM Government (2017). UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017. HMSO, London.

Paragraph 150: *“New development should be planned for in ways that: a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government’s policy for national technical standards.”*

Paragraph 151: *“To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should: a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts); b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.”*

Paragraph 153: *“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to: a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.”*

Paragraph 157: *“All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account the current and future impacts of climate change – so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by: a) applying the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test as set out below; b) safeguarding land from development that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management; c) using opportunities provided by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding (where appropriate through the use of natural flood management techniques); and d) where climate change is expected to increase flood risk so that some existing development may not be sustainable*

*in the long-term, seeking opportunities to relocate development, including housing, to more sustainable locations.”*

8.1.4 The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan identifies climate change as the most serious long-term risk to the environment and sets out how the Government plan to tackle such issues as higher land and sea temperatures, rising sea levels, extreme weather patterns and ocean acidification, which harms marine species.

8.1.5 The Flood and Water Management Act<sup>14</sup> highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings);
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water;
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and
- Creating sustainable drainage systems.

8.1.6 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Climate Change SEA theme include:

- Strategy 3 – Sustainable Development;
- Strategy 5 – Environment;
- Strategy 6 – Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 38 – Sustainable Design and Construction;
- Strategy 39 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Projects;
- Strategy 41 – Allowable Solutions; and
- Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness.

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<sup>14</sup> Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at:  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents> [accessed 20/05/19]

## 8.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Current Baseline*

- 8.2.1 A review of the Department of Energy and Climate Change greenhouse gas emission data for 2005 - 2017 has suggested that East Devon has lower per capita emissions compared to the South West of England and England as a whole since 2005. East Devon has seen a 31.9% reduction in the percentage of total emissions per capita between 2005 and 2017. This is lower than the reductions for the South West of England (38.0%) and England (40.0%).
- 8.2.2 The Met Office UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP18) provides the most up-to-date assessment of how the climate of the UK may change over the 21st century. The projections are based on the latest developments in climate science and were subject to an independent peer review, from the commencement of the project, to assess the science that underpins UKCP18.
- 8.2.3 A number of 'headline findings'<sup>15</sup> for the UK have been made from the research and the findings of relevance are as follows;
- The average temperature over the most recent decade (2009-2018) has been on average 0.3°C warmer than the 1981-2010 average and 0.9°C warmer than the 1961-1990 average. All of the top ten warmest years for the UK, in the series from 1884, have occurred since 2002;
  - The most recent decade (2009-2018) has been on average 1% wetter than 1981-2010 and 5% wetter than 1961-1990 for the UK overall; and
  - Winters in the UK, for the most recent decade (2009-2018), have been on average 5% wetter than 1981-2010 and 12% wetter than 1961-1990. Summers in the UK have also been wetter, by 11% and 13% respectively.
- 8.2.4 The MET Office also provide a summary of the climate characteristics of 11 regions of the UK<sup>16</sup>. It is reported that the mean annual temperature for the South West region is around the region of 9°C to 12°C. The summary also suggests that annual rainfall totals for the coastal areas of Cornwall and Devon are between 900-1000 mm.

### Flood Risk

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp-headline-findings-v2.pdf> [accessed 24-02-20]

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/regional-climates/index> [accessed 24/02/20]

8.2.5 The majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area is situated within Flood Zone 1 which indicates an annual probability of flooding of less than 1 in 1000 (i.e. a probability of less than 0.1%). Areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are also located within the Neighbourhood Plan area and are associated with the River Coly. Representing a worst-case, areas within Flood Zone 3 have an annual probability of flooding of greater than 1 in 100 (i.e. a probability of greater than 1 in 100).

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

8.2.6 The UKCP18 research<sup>17</sup> has highlighted a number of future climate projections for the UK. A review of the data suggests that the effects of climate change (under medium emissions scenario, 50th percentile) for South West England during the period 2040-2059 compared to the period 1981-2000 are likely to be as follows;

- Mean temperatures will increase by 1°C - 2°C;
- Mean winter and summer temperatures will increase by 2°C;
- Annual rainfall (precipitation) will change by between -20% and +10% ;
- Winter rainfall (precipitation) will increase by between 0% and 20%; and
- Summer rainfall (precipitation) will decrease by between 40% and 10%.

8.2.7 These projections could result in risks to the plan area including increased flooding, impacts on water resources, health issues related to higher temperatures and increased risk of injuries and damage to properties and infrastructure due to higher incidences of storm events.

### **8.3 Sustainability Issues**

- Any increases in the built footprint of the Neighbourhood Plan area (associated with the delivery of new housing and employment land) has the potential to increase overall greenhouse gas emissions in the Parish. Owing to the fact the CDNP proposes no direct development this is unlikely to be significant either as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan alone or in-combination with other plans and programmes.
- The total CO2 emissions per capita within East Devon are less than the regional and national totals but the overall percentage reduction of emissions within the

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<sup>17</sup> Met Office (2018): 'Land Projection Maps: Probabilistic Projections', [online map] available to access via: <<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp/land-projection-maps>> last accessed [24/02/20]

Neighbourhood Plan area between 2005 and 2016 was slightly lower than regional and national totals.

- The majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area is located within Flood Zone 1 however a portion of the area is located within Flood Zone 3 particularly surrounding the River Coly, showing that there is a 1% chance (1 in 100) of river flooding in any given year.
- The Colyton Neighbourhood Plan should seek to increase the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change by supporting and encouraging adaptation strategies.

## 8.4 Scope

- 8.4.1 Owing to the fact the CNDP provides no quantum of development above and beyond that of the development plan for the region, it is unlikely that the CNDP will result in significant GHG emissions or impacts on the climate. It should also be noted that Climate Change is a global issue and such the individual contribution from a single development, possible within Colyton, is almost indistinguishable. It would be the additive effects from all other development going on around the world that poses the potential catastrophic threat.
- 8.4.2 The CNDP does contain a number of positively worded paragraphs which support flood prevention measures and the sustainable design of new homes (*'to be designed to address climate change issues in a meaningful way'*).
- 8.4.3 In 2014 EDDC undertook an assessment, the Small Towns and Villages Development Suitability Assessment, to consider the suitability of settlements including Colyton and Colyford for sustainable growth. It concluded 'any potential development in Colyton is restricted by the flood zone to the north and east of the settlement'. The policies proposed within the Plan provide no quantum of development and therefore are unlikely to exert a significant impact on the existing approach to development in areas of flooding, and flooding issues are addressed by policies in the wider development plan/other legislation.
- 8.4.4 As such it is not expected that the CNDP will propose a risk to climate change and therefore it is proposed to scope climate change out of the SEA Environmental Report.

## 9 LANDSCAPE

### 9.1 Legislation Context

9.1.1 The following paragraphs, from the NPPF are considered relevant to this section of the report.

9.1.2 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the requirements of well-designed places and Paragraph 124 states that:

*“...Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.*

9.1.3 Paragraph 125 states that:

*“Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development”.*

9.1.4 Paragraph 126 states that:

*“To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However, their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified”.*

9.1.5 Paragraph 127 states that:

*“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

*a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

*b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) *.... do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

9.1.6 Paragraph 131 states that:

*“...great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*

9.1.7 Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

9.1.8 Paragraph 170 states that the planning system “contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment”, through amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

9.1.9 Paragraph 172 states that:

*“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.”*

9.1.10 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Landscape SEA theme include:

- Strategy 3 – Sustainable Development;
- Strategy 6 – Development within Built- Up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 7 – Development in the Countryside;

- Strategy 8 – Development in Green Wedges;
- Strategy 46 – Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs;
- Strategy 48 – Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment;
- D1 – Design and Local distinctiveness; and
- D2 – Landscape Requirements.

9.1.11 The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership Plan<sup>18</sup> focuses primarily on conserving and enhancing the quality of the AONB landscape. Strategic aims of the plan are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB;
- Encourage and support sustainable economic development, social engagement and recreational activity that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the AONB; and
- To ensure the AONB is recognised and valued as a national, regional and local asset and is effectively managed in partnership with our stakeholders.

## 9.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Current Baseline*

#### National Landscape Character

9.2.1 At the national level, the neighbourhood planning area is located within NCA 147: Blackdowns<sup>19</sup>. In summary this NCA comprises Long, dark ridges, deep valleys and dynamic cliffs and is characterised by a marked north–south trend of rivers, valleys and ridges, a product of its geology. Key Characteristics of the NCA include;

- *“Long, flat-topped Greensand ridges create distinctive landscape features offering far-reaching views. Narrow, steep-sided valleys with a strong sense of enclosure dissect the ridges and contrast with the broad, open valley of the River Axe with its flood plain.*

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<sup>18</sup> East Devon AONB (2019) Partnership Plan 2019-2024 [online] available at: <  
[http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/documents/ourwork/AONB%20Management%20Plan/S0245\\_AONB%20management%20plan\\_lowres\\_final.pdf](http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/uploads/documents/ourwork/AONB%20Management%20Plan/S0245_AONB%20management%20plan_lowres_final.pdf)> [accessed 21/05/19]

<sup>19</sup> Natural England (2018) NCA Profile: 147 Blackdowns [online] available at:  
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5233925605556224?category=587130> [accessed 24/02/20]

- *A dynamic coastline of tall [...] cliffs [...], exposed cliff-top plateaux, [...] enclosed combe valleys or open estuaries and tidal marsh. Narrow sand, shingle and pebble beaches feature along the coast.*
- *A landscape drained by small streams radiating out from the ridges into rivers with relatively short courses south to the sea. Springs emerge from the interface of the Greensand and clays.*
- *Densely-wooded, steep scarp slopes with both ancient oak woodland, carpeted in bluebells and primroses, and conifer plantations which extend onto the ridges. Across the valleys a strong hedgerow pattern with hedgerow trees and small broadleaved woodlands exists with carr woodland along some watercourses. The combination of these woodlands and their location gives the perception that the area is relatively well wooded.*
- *A mainly pastoral landscape with small, irregular fields of medieval origin on the slopes and in the smaller valleys. Across the wider valleys and flood plains there is a transition to larger fields and the occurrence of some arable. Regular modern and Parliamentary enclosure fields of medium and large scale feature on the Greensand ridges; medium sized, regular fields reflecting late enclosure of waste, now often under arable production, feature on the coastal chalk plateau.*
- *An ancient dispersed settlement pattern with clustered hamlets and villages at road or river crossings, along springlines or at the mouth of rivers and estuaries. Farmsteads scattered throughout, nestled in dips or along springlines, with a noticeable occurrence of beech shelterbelts.*
- *The ridges are characterised by straight roads with verges and featuring beech avenues. These descend abruptly to sinuous lanes tightly enclosed by hedgebanks.*
- *An area offering opportunities to experience tranquillity, outstanding natural beauty in three designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and recreation, particularly along the South West Coast Path National Trail and the East Devon Way regional route”.*

9.2.2 The NCA also provides a number of Environmental Opportunities for the area. These include:

- *SEO 1: Manage the coastal and estuarine landscape with its diversity of cliffs, geology, geomorphology, palaeontology, historic features, habitats and associated wildlife, contributing to livelihoods, enjoyment and education of people.*
- *SEO 2: Protect and manage the tranquil, enclosed valleys and the network of streams, springs and associated semi-natural habitats set within a farmed landscape, for the maintenance and enhancement of livelihoods, public enjoyment and ecosystem services.*
- *SEO 3: Protect and manage the open, exposed character of the ridgetop plateaux and the associated rich cultural heritage. Plan for the restoration and extension of semi-natural habitats and promote and create opportunities to enhance public understanding and enjoyment.*
- *SEO 4: Protect the relatively unsettled, rural character of this nationally important landscape, maintaining open skylines and historic settlement form. Reflect the local vernacular and geodiversity in new development and encourage provision of high-quality green infrastructure.*

#### Regional Landscape Character

- 9.2.3 At a regional level the Devon’s landscape character assessment (DLCA) and the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Assessment (2019) both describes the variations in character between different areas and types of landscape in the county.
- 9.2.4 The DCLA divides the Devon-wide landscape into seven NCAs, 68 Character Areas and 37 Landscape Character Types (LCTs). The majority of the Neighbourhood Planning Area sits within the ‘Axe Valley’ character area. The area is described as *“a broad, distinctive lowland river valley landscape with a wide floodplain, tightly meandering river course and valley sides which are formed by surrounding higher land”*.
- 9.2.5 Axe Valley has a number of distinctive characteristics which include;
- *“The middle and lower reaches of the valley floor are typically broad and open while further north the valley floor narrows becoming more undulating.*
  - *Strong hedgerow pattern with hedgerow trees coupled with small broadleaved woods, occasional farm orchards, and carr woodlands along tributary rivers particularly north of Axminster, give rise to a generally wooded character overall.*

- *Mainly pastoral landscape within small fields in the upper tributary valleys; larger fields within the main Axe Valley and some arable farming on the floodplains and lower slopes.*
- *Elsewhere, a dispersed pattern of farmsteads scattered across the valley sides, often nestling next to spinglines.*
- *Local vernacular includes cob and thatch buildings.*
- *Generally open character with views across valley floor to gentle valley sides with more intimate, enclosed tributary valleys”.*

9.2.6 The overall strategy of the Character Area is to *“protect the landscape’s watery and open character, historic settlements and pastoral valley sides and its important picturesque qualities”.*

9.2.7 A review of the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Assessment (2019) shows that a number of LCTs constitute the Neighbourhood Planning Area. These include;

- *1A. Open inland planned plateaux;*
- *2A. Steep wooded scarp slopes;*
- *3B. Lower rolling farmed and settled valley; and*
- *3C. Sparsely settled armed valley floors.*

#### *East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)*

9.2.8 The East Devon AONB covers the majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area and is characterised by intimate wooded combes, vast areas of heathland, fertile river valleys and breathtaking coastal and hilltop views.

9.2.9 The AONB was designated in 1963 and covers 103 square miles (268 sq kms) approximately 32% of East Devon District. The vision for the AONB is that *“the natural beauty of the East Devon AONB landscape, its dramatic World Heritage Site coastline, internationally important habitats and species and its cultural heritage, is conserved managed and enhanced to support and benefit present and future generations”.*

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

9.2.10 New development has the potential to lead to incremental but small changes in landscape and villagescape character and quality in and around the Colyton

Neighbourhood Plan area. This includes from the loss of landscape features and areas with an important visual amenity value.

9.2.11 Without a considered and responsive approach to masterplanning (which would include green infrastructure provision), potential effects could include the following:

- Landscape harm through a scenario of the complete loss and removal of all landscape features on, or near a development, and no compensatory landscape habitats or any additional landscape enhancement;
- Landscape and visual harm, through an inappropriate design response, such as poorly conceived masterplan in terms of the quantum of development, disposition of land uses, and the scale and height of buildings; and
- Effects on the visual resource through, for example, the removal of all existing Site features which provide screening, such as hedgerow and tree planting, and no replacement or additional planting to provide containment or screening effects.

9.2.12 However, the plan does not propose any built development. Where development may come forward the plan has a number of positively worded policies in relation to landscape to ensure good design and respect for the local landscape character.

### 9.3 Sustainability Issues

- The Neighbourhood Plan area lies within East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is recognised as a national asset.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area lies within the Blackdowns NCA which is characterised by a marked north-south trend of rivers, valleys and ridges.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area lies within a number of LCTs.
- The potential effects of development supported by the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan may have implications for the overall character and appearance of Colyton in the future.

### 9.4 Scope

9.4.1 The CNDP policies seek to ensure that new development does not adversely affect local landscape character and the rural setting of the Parish and its unique and varied wildlife habitat. The East Devon Landscape Character Assessment identifies the wooded nature of the area as being of particular importance. The Plan stresses that where new development will cause the loss of or damage to trees, woodlands or

hedgerows that contribute positively to the character and amenity of the area developers must look to protect, retain and enhance these features.

- 9.4.2 Two green wedges, to the north and south of Colyton, have been designed with the local plan. The CNDP will support these (Policy No. Coly4) in order to maintain Colyford's and Colyton's landscape setting.
- 9.4.3 Where future development within the Parish of Colyton may come forward, this is likely to be within the BUAB. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote the current character of the townscape and landscape through Policy Coly7.
- 9.4.4 It should be noted that the Neighbourhood Plan only supports a single brownfield development. As such it is expected that this development will improve the landscape/visual character of the area.
- 9.4.5 Whilst development outside of the BUAB could have an impact on the local landscape, that impact is likely to be localised and minor due to the presumption against new development unless it is very small-scale and is permitted to meet a specific need. Where new development outside of the BUAB is permitted it will be subject to a site specific Landscape and Visual Assessment.
- 9.4.6 Therefore, it is proposed to scope landscape out of the SEA Environmental Report.

## 10 ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

### 10.1 Legislative Context

10.1.1 Designated heritage assets protected by statutory legislation comprise Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. Nationally significant archaeological sites, monuments and structures are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)<sup>20</sup>.

10.1.2 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are protected under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)<sup>21</sup>. In relation to development proposals, the legislation states that *'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the secretary of state shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'* (section 66).

### 10.2 Policy Context

10.2.1 Non-statutory designated heritage assets, comprising Registered Parks and Gardens and Registered Battlefields, are protected under national and local planning policy only. This is also the case for the remainder of the archaeological resource; entries onto a historic environment record or sites and monument record as well as previously unknown features which may be recorded during the course of data collection in respect to a given development proposal.

10.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>22</sup> supported by the National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)<sup>23</sup>, which endorses the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment (Department for Communities and Local Government 2014), defines the role of the planning system as to promote and achieve sustainable development and involves *'protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'* (Ministry of Housing, Community & Local Government (MHCLG) 2019, para:8).

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<sup>20</sup> Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1979/46>

<sup>21</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

<sup>22</sup> National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>23</sup> Planning Practice Guidance [online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

- 10.2.3 In ensuring the statutory duty of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, the NPPF requires that in determining applications *'great weight'* should be given to the asset's conservation and that *'substantial harm to or loss of... grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional'* whilst *'substantial harm to or loss of...assets of the highest significance, notably Scheduled Monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, Grade I and II\* listed buildings, Grade I and II\* Registered Parks And Gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional'* (MHCLG 2019, para:194).
- 10.2.4 Developments where substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should be assessed against specific tests and should deliver substantial public benefits which outweigh any loss or harm (MHCLG 2019, para:195). Less than substantial harm to a designated asset would require public benefits including the securement of an optimum viable use (MHCLG 2019, para:196).
- 10.2.5 Impacts to the significance of non-designated assets will require a balanced judgement based on the level of significance and the scale of harm (MHCLG 2019, para:197), although non-designated assets which are of equivalent significance to designated assets will be considered as such (MHCLG 2019, page:56). Where heritage assets of an archaeological nature may be impacted upon by development *'local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'* (MHCLG 2019, para:189).
- 10.2.6 At the local level, relevant East Devon Local Plan (2013 – 2031)<sup>24</sup> policies that relate to the Historic Environment comprise:
- Strategy 5 – Environment;
  - Strategy 48 - Local Distinctiveness in the Built Environment;
  - Strategy 49 – The Historic Environment;
  - D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness;
  - EN6 – Nationally and Locally Important Archaeological Sites;
  - EN7 – Proposals Affecting Sites which may potentially be of Archaeological Importance;

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<sup>24</sup> East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 [online]. Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1772841/local-plan-final-adopted-plan-2016.pdf>

- EN8 – Significance of Heritage Assets and their Setting;
- EN9 – Development Affecting a Designated Heritage Asset; and
- EN10 – Conservation Areas.

10.2.7 The East Devon District Council also adopted a Heritage Strategy (2019 – 2031)<sup>25</sup> in March 2019. The document presents a summary of East Devon’s heritage, its significance and its benefits whilst developing objectives for the future, with a broad action plan for the delivery of recommendations. The strategy co-ordinates with the local plan.

### 10.3 Baseline

#### *Summary of Current Baseline*

10.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area records the following designated heritage assets within the Parish:

- One Grade I Listed Building (Church of St Andrew within Colyton, on Vicarage Road);
- One Grade II\* Listed Building (Great House within Colyton, on South Street); and
- One-hundred-and-twelve Grade II listed buildings.

10.3.2 With regards to non-designated heritage assets within Colyton Parish, 724 records have been noted including a variety of archaeological sites, historic buildings and landscapes<sup>26</sup>. These features are listed on the Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environmental Record (HER) and can be accessed via the Heritage Gateway<sup>27</sup>.

10.3.3 There are no Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, scheduled monuments or World heritage Sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

10.3.4 A total of two Conservation Areas are situated within the Neighbourhood Plan area; Colyford Conservation Area and Colyton Conservation Area. Conservation areas exist to manage and protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place (i.e. the features that make it unique).

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<sup>25</sup> Heritage Strategy 2019–2031 [online] Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/3413423/final-heritage-strategy-2019-2031.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> AECOM (2019) Unpublished Report

<sup>27</sup> Heritage Gateway. Available at: <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

10.3.5 Both the Colyford Conservation Area and Colyton Conservation Area were subject to reviews in 1999.

10.3.6 Colyford Conservation Area was designated in 1990. The review for Colyford<sup>28</sup> describes the areas as ‘a somewhat unco-ordinated village with no strong focal point’.

10.3.7 The review also describes the key features of the area as follows;

*‘Colyford lacks a coherent street pattern or continuous building frontages, yet there are several good small groups of cottages, often lightly angled to the carriageway, and able to be viewed against a backdrop of trees. The main road [...] separates the Conservation Area into two parts visually. A considerable amount of 20th century development has occurred within or immediately adjoining the Conservation Area. Otherwise the conservation area boundary defines a settlement pattern that has changed little since the 19th century and earlier with a remarkable and largely undisturbed survival of field patterns and apparently relatively ancient boundaries. Tree cover within the conservation area is considerable and contributes significantly to its character. Chert stone, usually in exposed random rubble form is the dominant traditional building material. There are several examples of brick and tile, normally found in late 19th and early 20th century houses. Elsewhere roofing is almost exclusively thatch or slate. Ornament is mainly confined to 18th/19th century classical detail in porches, gate piers and iron gates; there being a particularly fine example at a former entrance to the Manor House’.*

10.3.8 The main features of Colyford Conservation Area which can be considered as most worthy of retention are:

- *‘A general feeling of spaciousness;*
- *The extensive use of chert in boundary walls and sometimes attractive use of rubblestone, brick or render in buildings generally;*
- *A sometimes sharp, contrast between built frontages and open countryside;*
- *Important frontage gaps giving good views across the Axe Valley;*
- *Gate piers and iron gates forming the entrance to the Manor house;*

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<sup>28</sup> Colyford Interim Conservation Area Review (1999) Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-services/conservation-and-listed-buildings/conservation-areas/> [Accessed 09/03/2020]

- *Fine specimen trees and other important tree groups;*
- *A scattering of cottages with modest vernacular features; and*
- *Discreet signage and restrained commercial features on the village shop and petrol filling station.'*

10.3.9 The review also considers the principle reasons from erosion or changes to the conservation are character to be:

- *'Speed of traffic and traffic noise;*
- *Development pressure of new houses;*
- *Significant mature trees are being lost;*
- *New building work is using inappropriate materials (such as PVCu windows);*
- *Increase in signage at Coly Road junction; and*
- *Over-zealous health and safety compliance on new highways and developments.'*

10.3.10 Much of the centre of Colyton was designated as a Conservation Area in 1969. The present conservation area, which is an extension of this, was designated in 1979. The Colyton Interim Conservation Area Review (1999)<sup>29</sup> describes the key features of the area as follows;

*'Colyton is a town on a small scale, rather than a village, [...] with a history dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> Century. Colyton undoubtedly has a remarkably cohesive character, as a miniature market town with park, river, mills, church, market place, houses and surrounding hills. Because of this cohesive nature, it is correspondingly difficult to separate into separate geographical units with distinctive characteristics. Colyton has a pleasing mix of traditional building materials throughout, with no particular areas of concentration of different types. Colyton also has a number of good Victorian villas. Overall the town has a good level of attractiveness deatilig to a wide variety of properties, both vernacular and classical, in stonework, woodwork or ironwork. Colyton has a number of important buildings that are part of the town's history and development. There are several buildings in the vicinity of Colyton that have significant architectural or historic*

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<sup>29</sup> Colyton Interim Conservation Area Review (1999) Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-services/conservation-and-listed-buildings/conservation-areas/> [Accessed 09/03/2020]

*links with the town. Much of the charm of the Conservation Area depends on the mixture of cottages and more formal buildings from different periods, and on the informal street pattern. The main character elements which may be considered as most worthy of retention are:*

- *The mixture of thatched and rendered cottages with more formal stone or classical featured houses;*
- *The mixture of uses and ages of property which makes up the historic fabric of the town;*
- *The close and continuous or semi-continuous, street frontages of cottages and houses;*
- *The visually important high stone boundary walls;*
- *Many of the fine or pleasing vernacular details on cottages and house;*
- *Traditional shop fronts, well preserved ironwork, carved wood porches, eaves and gable details;*
- *The pleasant vistas both in to and out of the town;*
- *The areas of green space and ;*
- *The sharply defined contrast between the town and surrounding countryside.*

*In general, it must be said that the survival of most features from the 19th century and earlier periods, and the wealth of vernacular ornament and detail adds immeasurably to the period charm and character of the town’.*

10.3.11 The review also considers the principle reasons from erosion or changes to the conservation are character to be;

- *‘Loss of commercial and manufacturing uses to housing use;*
- *Poor maintenance of the library;*
- *Removal of stucco exposing random rubble on historic buildings;*
- *Loss of stone walls to car parking;*
- *Traffic calming measures using inappropriate modern paving surfaces;*
- *Large areas of tarmac and loss of all traditional road and pavements surfacing materials; and*

- *Pressure to replace traditional timber windows with PVCu alternatives.'*

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

10.3.12 Development in the Neighbourhood Plan area has the potential to cause neutral, adverse or beneficial effects upon the significance of archaeology and cultural heritage assets through direct and/ or in-direct impacts. Direct impacts would be caused by ground disturbance. In-direct impacts would be caused by changes in the setting of a heritage asset which may affect an appreciation of the significance of that given heritage asset. This change could also provide enhancement.

### **10.4 Sustainability Issues**

- A number of heritage assets are located within the BUAB, in which development will be supported by the CNDP. However, Policy No. Coly 7 seeks to ensure to promote the character of the townscape and landscape of the area through the preservation of *'local man-made and natural heritage and culture.'*
- Where new development should come forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area it has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of cultural heritage assets; for example through inappropriate design and layout. It should be noted; however, that existing historic environment designations offer a degree of protection to cultural heritage assets and their settings.
- However, through good design, there may be opportunity for new development to enhance the historic setting of the village and better reveal assets' cultural heritage significance.

### **10.5 Scope**

10.5.1 There are a number of heritage assets in Colyton Parish, in particular within the villages of Colyton and Colyford. The Plan seeks to protect the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings within the BUAB and in the countryside of Colyton Parish. The local plan emphasises the strong national guidance and legislation that protects listed buildings. Policies in the Plan seek to protect heritage assets, supporting the Local Plan and NPPF by continuing to apply existing legislation and guidance in the most effective way to conserve the built environment. Therefore, the policies overall are unlikely to enable the delivery of new development which would not already be possible under the existing local framework. As such the Neighbourhood Plan policies are unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets directly or on the approach taken to heritage assets in the development planning process.

10.5.2 Therefore, it is proposed to scope the topic of historic environment out of the SEA Environmental Report.

## 11 SOILS AND AGRICULTURAL LAND

### 11.1 Legislative Context

11.1.1 The European Union's Soils Thematic Strategy (COM (2006) 231)<sup>30</sup> was adopted in 2006, with the objective of protecting soils across the European Union (EU). This was followed by the proposed Soils Framework Directive (COM (2006) 232)<sup>31</sup> which set out the principles for soil protection through a comprehensive Thematic Strategy. The proposed Soils Framework Directive was never formally adopted and was withdrawn by the European Commission in May 2014.

11.1.2 However, the Seventh Environment Action Programme<sup>32</sup> (EAP) was adopted in November 2013. The 7th EAP sets out nine priority objectives and will guide European environment policy until 2020. Additionally, in order to give more long-term direction, the EAP also sets out a vision for 2050. The EAP recognises that soil degradation is a serious challenge and requires that all land within the Union is managed sustainably by 2020, so that soils are adequately protected. The EAP commits the EU and its Member States to increasing efforts to reduce soil erosion, increase soil organic matter and to remediate contaminated sites.

### 11.2 Policy Context

11.2.1 Under Section 15 of the NPPF 2019: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, Paragraph 170 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

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<sup>30</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2006) Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52006DC0231>

<sup>31</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2006) Soils Framework Directive. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52006PC0232>

<sup>32</sup> Council of the European Union (2013) Seventh Environment Action Programme to 2020. Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013D1386>

- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

11.2.2 The footnote to Paragraph 171 also states that 'Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality'.

11.2.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which accompanies the NPPF is split into a number of guidance notes. Guidance on soils and agricultural land is found in the Planning Practice Guidance for the Natural Environment 2019 (PPGNE) under the heading Agricultural Land, Soil and Brownfield Land of Environmental Value. This advises that the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) be used to assess the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system; and explains that the ALC places agricultural land into five Grades with Grade 3 subdivided into 3a and 3b. The best and most versatile (BMV) land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. The PPGNE states that 'Planning policies and decisions should take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land'.

11.2.4 The PPGNE also recognises soil as an essential natural capital asset that provides important ecosystem services, for example as a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, as a store for carbon and water, as a reservoir of biodiversity and as a buffer against pollution. It also recommends Defra's Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites as a useful tool when setting planning conditions for development sites, as it provides advice on the use and protection of soil in construction projects, including the movement and management of soil resources.

11.2.5 Natural England's Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land 2018 (NE; 2018) sets out the government policies and legislation which developers and local planning authorities (LPA) should refer to when considering development proposals that affect agricultural land and guidance on when Natural England should be

consulted on development proposals. It also provides a detailed explanation of the ALC, information on published ALC resources and explains circumstances in which new detailed surveys may be required. It also explains how ALC data should be used in the assessment of planning decisions. Importantly, the guidance states that the LPA should ensure that development proposals include plans to protect soils; that where insufficient data are available new surveys should be undertaken to better inform the planning decision; and that these surveys should be carried out by soil scientists or experienced soil specialists. The guidance also summarises the required survey methodology (also presented in TIN049<sup>33</sup>).

11.2.6 Natural England Technical Information Note TIN049 promotes the use of ALC to assess farmland quality and ensure informed choices are made about its future use within the planning system. It advocates the use of soil surveys to inform environmental assessment, particularly where development is around urban boundaries. TIN049 states where development is proposed on more than 20 ha of BMV agricultural land, if that development is not for agricultural purposes and is not in accordance with the provisions of a development plan, Natural England must be consulted in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order, 2010.

11.2.7 At the local level, relevant East Devon Local Plan (2013 – 2031)<sup>34</sup> policies that relate to the Soils and Agricultural Land comprise:

- Strategy 3 – Sustainable Development;
- D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness;
- EN13 – Developments of High Quality Agricultural Land;
- E4 – Rural Diversification; and
- RC2 – New Open Space, Sports Facilities and Parks.

### 11.3 Baseline

#### *Summary of Current Baseline*

11.3.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) is a system in which the quality of land for agricultural use can be classified. Grade 1 to Subgrade 3a are considered to be Best &

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<sup>33</sup> Natural England (2012) Agricultural Land Classification; protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. Available at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4424325>

<sup>34</sup> East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 [online] Available at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1772841/local-plan-final-adopted-plan-2016.pdf>

Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land in the current planning system with Subgrade 3b to Grade 5 being of poorer quality.

11.3.2 A review of the Provisional Agricultural Land Quality dataset<sup>35</sup> shows that the majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area comprises Grade 3 agricultural land with pockets of Grade 2 and Grade 4 land. However, it should be noted that the national dataset is of very low resolution and may not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of the agricultural land quality within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

11.3.3 Future development within the Neighbourhood Plan area has the potential to result in the permanent loss of BMV land depending on its location. However, given the lack of a detailed ALC survey of land within the Parish it cannot be determined whether development proposals will result in the loss of BMV land. In addition, the only site which is being promoted (development upon former Ceramtec factory) is a brownfield site and as such the CNDP is unlikely to result in the loss of BMV land.

### **11.4 Sustainability Issues**

- The Neighbourhood Plan area comprises a large amount of Grade 3 agricultural land. The national provisional quality datasets do not indicate how much of this land is of Grade 3a 'best and most versatile' agricultural land and therefore as a worst case approach it should be noted that this BMV land could be permanently lost with future development proposals.
- A small area of Grade 2 land is also situated in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Land of Grade 2 is considered to be 'BMV' and therefore future development could lead to the loss of 'Very Good' quality agricultural land. However, the only site which is prompted within the CNDP is upon a brownfield site as mentioned above.

### **11.5 Scope**

11.5.1 Agricultural land of Grade 2, 3 and 4 quality is present within the Neighbourhood Plan area. As stated above, Natural England must be consulted on a development that involves the loss of 20 ha or more of grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land. However, as the Plan proposes no quantum of development and states that only small scale residential development, permitted to meet a specific need (e.g. affordable housing

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<sup>35</sup> Natural England (2018) Agricultural Land Classification map South West (ALC006) [online] available at <<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/144017?category=5954148537204736>> [accessed 23/05/19]

or an agricultural workers dwelling), will be supported it is considered that the Plan is unlikely to lead to significant harm to soil or highly graded agricultural land.

11.5.2 Therefore, it is proposed to scope the topic of Soils and Agricultural Land out of the SEA Environmental Report.

## 12 WATER RESOURCES

### 12.1 Legislative context

#### European Directive: The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

12.1.1 Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and Council (the Water Framework Directive (WFD)) came into force on 22nd December 2000 and established a framework for community action in the field of water policy. The WFD required member states to aim to reach good chemical and ecological status in inland and coastal waters by 2015. The WFD is designed to enhance the status and prevent further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands, to promote sustainable water use, to reduce pollution of water and to ensure a progressive reduction in groundwater pollution. The WFD established a strategic framework for managing the water environment and requires a Management Plan for each river basin to be developed every six years. In cases where good status/potential could not be achieved by 2015, a provision is given under Article 4.4 of the WFD extending the deadline to 2021 or 2027. The date has been extended to 2027 in respect of a large number of waterbodies. The competent authority (in England) for delivering the WFD is the Environment Agency (EA).

#### European Directive: The Groundwater Daughter Directive (2006/118/EC)

12.1.2 Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and Council (the Groundwater Daughter Directive) came into force on 12th December 2006 and aims to protect groundwater against pollution and deterioration. The Groundwater Daughter Directive was developed in response to the requirements of Article 17 of the WFD (2000/60/EC) and specifies measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution (by providing criteria for the assessment of good groundwater chemical status, criteria for the identification and reversal of significant and sustained upward trends and for defining a baseline status).

#### European Directive: The Priority Substances Directive (2008/105/EC)

12.1.3 Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and Council (the Priority Substances Directive) came into force on 16th December 2008 and sets environmental quality standards in the field of water policy. The Priority Substances Directive amended and subsequently repealed Council Directives 82/176/EEC, 83/513/EEC, 84/156/EEC, 84/491/EEC, 86/280/EEC and amended the WFD of the European Parliament and Council. The Priority Substances Directive was developed in response

to the requirements of Article 16 of the WFD and requires the identification of priority substances to set Environmental Quality Standards (EQSs) for the concentrations of the priority substances in surface waterbodies and to review periodically the list of priority substances.

Act of Parliament: The Environmental Protection Act 1990

12.1.4 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 brought in a system of integrated pollution control for the disposal of wastes to land, water and air and covers statutory nuisances.

Act of Parliament: The Land Drainage Act 1991

12.1.5 The Land Drainage Act 1991 requires the owner of a watercourse to maintain the watercourse in such a condition that the free flow of water is not impeded. The owner must accept the natural flow from upstream, but need not carry out work to cater for increased flows resulting from some types of works carried out upstream, for example a new housing development.

Act of Parliament: The Water Resources Act 1991, Water Act 2003 and Water Act 2014

12.1.6 The Water Resources Act 1991 aims to prevent and minimise pollution of water (surface and groundwater) and tasks the policing of this Act to the EA. The Water Act 2003 amended the Water Resources Act 1991 to improve long-term water resource management by making changes to licensing. The Water Act 2003 also aims to promote water conservation, increase competition, strengthen the voice of consumers and promote the suitable use of water resources. The Water Act 2014 aims to reform the water industry to make it more responsive to customers and to increase the resilience of water supplies to droughts and flooding. It also brings in measures to address the availability and affordability of insurances in high flood risk areas.

12.1.7 The UK government have advised that following the exit of the UK from the EU, the EU Withdrawal Act 2018 will ensure that all existing EU environmental law will continue to operate in UK law<sup>36</sup>. The UK government and devolved administrations will “amend current legislation to correct references to EU legislation [...] and ensure we meet international agreement obligations.”

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<sup>36</sup> DEFRA (2018) Upholding Environmental Standards if there’s no Brexit Deal [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/upholding-environmental-standards-if-theres-no-brexit-deal/upholding-environmental-standards-if-theres-no-brexit-deal> [accessed 26/02/2020]

12.1.8 The UK Environment Bill January 2020 stresses the importance of water resources sustainability<sup>37</sup>. Measures within the Bill aim to secure long-term, resilient water and wastewater services including, but not limited to reforms to elements of abstraction licensing, requirements for Water Companies to plan for future water supply; and to enhance flood and coastal erosion risk management.

## 12.2 Policy Context

### The National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2019)

12.2.1 The 2019 NPPF replaces the guidance previously contained within Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25): Development and Flood Risk. The NPPF contains numerous paragraphs concerning water resources, flooding, water quality and protection of the environment during development.

### Planning Practice Guidance: Flood Risk and Coastal Change (2014)

12.2.2 The PPG provides additional guidance to local planning authorities to ensure the effective implementation of the planning policies set out in the NPPF on development in areas at risk of flooding. It identifies that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Where development is necessary, it should be made flood resilient without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

### East Devon District Council Local Plan 2006 to 2026 (Dec 2011)

12.2.3 The following policies outlined in the East Devon District Council Local Plan 2006 to 2026<sup>38</sup> (Dec 2011) that relate to Water Resources SEA theme include:

- Strategy 6 – Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 38 – Sustainable Design and Construction;
- EN16 – Contaminated Land;
- EN18 - Maintenance of Water Quality and Quantity;
- EN19 – Adequacy of Foul Sewers and Adequacy of Sewage Treatment Systems;
- EN21 – River and Coastal Flooding; and

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<sup>37</sup> DEFRA (2020) Environment Bill [online] available at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020/30-january-2020-environment-bill-2020-policy-statement#delivering-sustainable-water-resources> [accessed 26/02/2020]

<sup>38</sup> East Devon District Council (2016) East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2030 [online] available at:  
<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/1772841/local-plan-final-adopted-plan-2016.pdf> [accessed 26/02/2020]

- EN22 – Surface Run-Off Implications of New Development.

#### Other Policies

12.2.4 In addition to the national and local policies, there are several other policies which future developments will need to abide to in relation to Water Resources including but not limited to:

- River Basin Management Plan (RBMP);
- Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS); and
- Environment Agency positional statements.

### 12.3 Baseline

#### *Summary of Existing Baseline*

##### Surface water

12.3.1 There are several surface watercourses within the Neighbourhood Plan area including, but not limited to: River Coly and tributaries, Umborne Brook and tributaries, and the River Axe. The River Coly, Umborne Brook and River Axe are all classified by the EA as ‘main rivers’.

12.3.2 There are several surface water catchments within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Lower Axe and Lower Coly are designated by the EA as having ‘Poor’ ecological status and ‘Good’ chemical status. The Upper Coly, Offwell Brook and Umborne Brook surface water catchments are designated by the EA as ‘Moderate’ ecological status and ‘Good’ chemical status.

##### Geology

12.3.3 There are several superficial deposits within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Clay with Flints Formation and head deposits are located in higher topographical areas; and river terrace deposits (undifferentiated), alluvial fan deposits and alluvium, located in lower topographical areas typically associated with surface water features.

12.3.4 The bedrock geology underlying the Neighbourhood Plan area comprises of the Upper Greensand Formation and Branscombe Mudstone Formation. The Upper Greensand Formation is located within the vicinity of Phillips Moor and Downhyre Farm, and also Colyton Hill and Ashdown Farm. The rest of the Neighbourhood Plan area is underlain by Branscombe Mudstone Formation.

### Hydrogeology

- 12.3.5 Superficial aquifers present within the area comprise of Secondary A Aquifers associated with the alluvium, alluvial fan and river terrace deposits; and Secondary Undifferentiated Aquifers associated with head deposits. The Clay with Flint Formation is designated as Unproductive Strata.
- 12.3.6 The EA do not classify superficial deposit aquifers as part of a groundwater body.
- 12.3.7 Bedrock aquifers present within the area comprise a Principal Aquifer associated with the Upper Greensand Formation and a Secondary B Aquifer associated with the Branscombe mudstone.
- 12.3.8 The bedrock Principal Aquifer is within the Devon East Greensand groundwater body which is classified by the EA as 'Good' quantitative status and 'Poor' Chemical status. The groundwater within the bedrock Secondary B Aquifer is within the Yarty River and Axe Lower – Mercia Mudstone groundwater body which is classified by the EA as 'Good' quantitative and chemical status.

### Designations

- 12.3.9 There are two groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) within the Neighbourhood Plan area associated with abstractions from the Upper Greensand Formation. One SPZ1 and 2 is located near Ashdown Farm and another one located in the built-up area of Colyton. SPZs have been defined by the EA to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. SPZ1 is categorised as the inner zone of an SPZ and is the most vulnerable to contamination and most likely to influence the use of infiltration. Adjacent to this SPZ1 area are areas of SPZ2 (outer zone). No SPZ3 (catchment) are present within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 12.3.10 The EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwater has nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or is thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. There is a groundwater Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) within the southern area of the Neighbourhood Plan area. These areas are recognised as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution.
- 12.3.11 There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with associated SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The two SSSIs, Bolshayne Fen and River Axe, appear to be water dependent.

- 12.3.12 Bolshayne Fen is described as: *“This site contains an unusually large and intact valley fen, supporting rich marsh vegetation of a type known only at two other sites in Devon and which is now nationally scarce. The fen occupies a single field at an altitude of 40 m A.O.D., through which runs Nanny’s Water, a small tributary of the River Coly. Its soils consist of deep waterlogged peaty loam above Triassic mudstones, with Cretaceous Greensand on the valley sides above. During winter it periodically floods.”*
- 12.3.13 The River Axe is described as: *“The River Axe SSSI extends for 13 kilometres from the confluence with the Blackwater River to the tidal limit near Colyford, meandering through a flood plain dominated by improved dairy pasture. The majority of the SSSI is in Devon, with less than 150 metres flowing through Dorset. The underlying geology of the riverbed is alluvium with areas of valley gravel, clay, shale and marl. The water is base-rich with a high content of dissolved solids. The main flow at Whitford is 5 cubic metres per second, though the river is subject to winter and spring spates averaging over 20 times the mean flow.”*
- 12.3.14 The River Axe is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). **The Rive Axe SAC is failing targets on phosphate and sediment. It is noted that a River Axe Nutrient Management Plan is currently evolving (Local Plan Strategy 20 (Development at Axminster). The Nutrient Management Plan will work in collaboration with the diffuse Water Pollution Plan, and will seek to restore water quality for the River Axe SAC to enable it to meet its conservation objectives within a specified timescale, and in accordance with commitments to European Directives. Depending on the findings of the plan, growth will only proceed in accordance with the mitigation delivery set out within that plan.**

#### **Summary of Future Baseline**

- 12.3.15 Future development has the potential to affect:
- Rainfall runoff and recharge relationships;
  - Water quality; and
  - Water quantity.
- 12.3.16 Rainfall runoff and recharge relationships will be managed on a catchment scale though the used of sustainable drainage systems.
- 12.3.17 Water quality could potentially be affected through diffuse pollution, wastewater discharges, water run-off, and modification. The requirements of the Water

Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality within the Neighbourhood Plan area and wider areas.

12.3.18 Water quantity could potentially be affected should a development require groundwater abstraction. Any developments that require an abstraction licence and/or discharge consent will be dealt with through the Environment Agency via permitting regime.

12.3.19 The Neighbourhood Plan area is located within the South West Water (SWW) utilities area. SWW have produced a Business Plan for 2020-2025 and a long-term vision plan for 2020 to 2050. SWW highlight future challenges on water quantity through increased demand for new housing, population growth as well as climate change. Their long-term plan includes looking to move surplus water around the region; improve natural storage by managing wetlands; improve pipe infrastructure and continuing to ensure capacity to deal with increase in population and the effects of climate change.

## **12.4 Sustainability Issues**

12.4.1 The following sensitive water features are located within the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- Three main rivers: River Axe, River Coly and Umborne Brook.
- Two areas of principal aquifers, both associated with the locations of the Upper Greensand Formation.
- Superficial secondary A aquifers.
- Two separate Source Protection Zones each comprising of SPZ 1 and 2.
- A groundwater Nitrate Vulnerability Zone.
- Two water dependent ecological sites: Bolshayne Fen SSSI and River Axe SSSI (also an SAC).

12.4.2 The CNDP does not specifically allocate any land for development, and any proposals that do come forward will be in accordance with relevant policies and legislation.

## **12.5 Scope**

12.5.1 Developments undertaken within the Neighbourhood Plan area will follow planning policies, best practice and guidance and therefore are unlikely to result in significant adverse effect on the Water Resources. However, there are several sensitive areas as

outlined in Section 12.4.1 which should be considered by future developments. However, it should be noted that the CNDP does not propose any development.

## 13 POPULATION AND COMMUNITY

### 13.1 Policy Context

13.1.1 The NPPF (2019) is considered relevant to this topic. In order to ‘achieve sustainable development’ the NPPF proposes three overarching objectives. Of relevance to this topic are the;

*‘economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; and*

*social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being’.*

13.1.2 Paragraph 92 of the NPPF relates to the promotion of healthy communities, including the need to ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

13.1.3 The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change<sup>39</sup> have published The ‘Ready for Ageing?’ report, providing a warning that society is underprepared for an ageing population. It states that ‘longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises’. The report recognises that the rate of specialist housing being delivered is insufficient for the demand. Highlighted is the need for central and local Government, housing associations, and house builders to ensure that these housing needs are better addressed, giving as much priority to promoting an adequate market of social housing for the older generation as is given to the younger generation.

13.1.4 Of relevance to the Population and Communities theme are the policies contained in Chapter 1 ‘Using and managing land sustainably’ and Chapter 4 ‘Increasing resource

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<sup>39</sup> Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change (2013) Ready for Ageing? [online] available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldpublic/140/140.pdf> [accessed 20/05/19]

efficiency and reducing pollution and waste’ of the Government’s ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’<sup>40</sup>.

13.1.5 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Population and Community SEA theme include:

- Strategy 1 - Spatial Strategy for Development in East Devon;
- Strategy 2 - Scale and Distribution of Residential Development;
- Strategy 3 - Sustainable Development;
- Strategy 4 - Balanced Communities;
- Strategy 27 - Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages;
- Strategy 29 - Promoting Opportunities for Young People;
- Strategy 30 - Inward Investment, Communication Links and Local Benefits;
- Strategy 31 - Future Job and Employment Land Provision;
- Strategy 32 - Resisting Loss of Employment, Retail and Community Sites and Buildings;
- Strategy 34 - District Wide Affordable Housing Provision Targets;
- Strategy 35 - Exception Mixed Market and Affordable Housing At Villages, Small Towns and Outside Built-up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 37 - Community Safety;
- H2 - Range and Mix of New Housing Development;
- H3 - Conversion of Existing Dwellings and Other Buildings to Flats;
- H5 - Occupancy Conditions on Rural Workers Dwellings;
- E2 - Employment Generating Development in Built-Up Areas;
- E5 - Small Scale Economic Development in Rural Areas;
- RC1 – Retention of Land for Sport and Recreation;
- RC2 – New Open Space, Sports Facilities and Parks;

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<sup>40</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 20/05/19]

- RC5 – Community Buildings;
- RC6 - Local Community Facilities; and
- RC7 - Shared Community Facilities.

## 13.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Current Baseline*

#### Population and age profile

Age	Colyton Parish	East Devon	South West	England
Aged 0-4	3.3	4.1	5.6	6.3
Aged 5 to 7	2.2	2.7	3.1	3.4
Aged 8 to 9	2.0	1.8	2.0	2.2
Aged 10 to 14	5.6	5.3	5.6	5.8
Aged 15	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.2
Aged 16 to 17	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.5
Aged 18 to 19	1.8	2.0	2.6	2.6
Aged 20 to 24	2.9	4.2	6.3	6.8
Aged 25 to 29	2.9	3.9	5.8	6.9
Aged 30 to 44	11.9	15.5	18.8	20.6
Aged 45 to 59	20.2	20.1	20.1	19.4
Aged 60 to 64	9.2	8.2	6.8	6.0
Aged 65 to 74	16.4	13.7	10.1	8.6
Aged 75 to 84	11.8	9.7	6.6	5.5
Aged 85 to 89	4.0	3.1	1.9	1.5
Aged 90 and over	2.0	1.7	1.0	0.8
Average age (value)	50.4	46.9	41.6	39.3

13.2.1 The age breakdown for the Neighbourhood Planning area is illustrated above. It illustrates that the Parish of Colyton has, on average, a much older population demographic when compared with the regional and national averages. Generally, there are a greater proportion of residents over the age of 60 within the Neighbourhood Plan area (43.4%) in comparison to the total for East Devon (36.4%), the South West (26.4%) and England (22.4%).

13.2.2 Table [13.1] also illustrates that the Neighbourhood Planning area has a much lower proportion of younger people with 14.4% of the population being under the age of 16

<sup>41</sup> ONS (no date): Census 2011: Age Structure 2011 (Table KS102EW) available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks102ew> [accessed 26/02/2020]

compared with 15.0% for East Devon, 17.5% for the South West and 18.9% for England.

13.2.3 It is considered that those within the age range of 16 to 64 are of 'working age'<sup>42</sup>. Overall, a lower proportion of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area (51.2%) are of a working age compared with East Devon (56.3%), the South West (62.8%) of England (64.8%).

#### Qualifications and skills

<b>Table 13.2: Qualifications of residents aged 16 and over<sup>43</sup> (%)</b>				
<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Colyton Parish</b>	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
No qualifications	21.4	21.1	20.7	22.5
Level 1 qualifications	11.8	13.1	13.6	13.3
Level 2 qualifications	17.4	17.0	16.4	15.2
Apprenticeship	4.4	4.1	4.3	3.6
Level 3 qualifications	11.0	11.3	13.2	12.4
Level 4 qualifications and above	29.9	29.1	27.4	27.4
Other qualifications	4.0	4.3	4.5	5.7

13.2.4 The residents of Colyton Parish have a greater percentage of persons with no qualifications when compared to figures for the region of the South West. However, the table above illustrates that local residents are have a greater level of qualification when compared to the England average.

#### Economy

13.2.5 GVA is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. GVA per head is a key metric for measuring economic output and performance. Total GVA for Devon<sup>44</sup>, the wider impact area and national

<sup>42</sup> Ethnicity facts and Figures: Working age population. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/working-age-population/latest>

<sup>43</sup> Census 2011: 'Qualifications and students' (Table KS501EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks501ew>

<sup>44</sup> Data for regions smaller than Devon CC is not available and therefore the data has been used a reflection of the region as a whole.

comparators between 2002 and 2017 are included at Table [13.3] below. Devon's GVA in 2017 (£17146. million) is equivalent to 12.9% of South West's total GVA (2017)<sup>45</sup>.

Area	2002	2007	2012	2017
Devon CC	10254	13395	13973	17146
South West	80543	103467	111793	133319
England	901509	1170378	1287832	1554487

### Employment

13.2.6 Self-employment in Colyton Parish accounts for 17.4% of the local working population which is somewhat lower than at a regional level (14.1% - East Devon), (11.2% - South West) and National levels (9.8%).

13.2.7 The sectors which support the highest proportion of jobs in are skilled trades occupations, professional occupations and managers, directors and senior officials.

Occupation	Colyton Parish	East Devon	South West	England
Managers, directors and senior officials	12.5	12.2	11.1	10.9
Professional occupations	14.7	15.3	16.5	17.5
Associate professional and technical occupations	10.7	12.2	12.1	12.8
Administrative and secretarial occupations	9.5	10.2	11.0	11.5
Skilled trades occupations	19.6	15.3	13.4	11.4
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	9.5	10.7	9.8	9.3
Sales and customer service occupations	6.9	8.0	8.4	8.4
Process plant and machine operatives	5.1	5.3	6.7	7.2
Elementary occupations	11.5	10.7	11.0	11.1

\* All usual residents aged 16 to 74 in employment the week before the census

13.2.8 As illustrated in Table 13.4 above the following occupations support the most residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area;

- Skilled trade occupations (19.6%);
- Professional occupations (14.7%); and
- Managers, directors, senior officials (12.5%).

<sup>45</sup> Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey (2017)

<sup>46</sup> Census 2011: 'Occupation by sex' (Table KS608EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks608ew>

13.2.9 Overall, 46.8% of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area are employed in one of the above three occupation categories, higher than the totals for East Devon (42.8%), the South West of England (41.0%) and England (39.8%). This suggests that the Neighbourhood Plan area has a highly skilled workforce, supported by the percentage of residents with a Level 4 qualification or above.

#### House Tenure

13.2.10 Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, 79.4% of residents either own their home outright or with a mortgage; greater than the totals for East Devon (75.0%), the South West of England (67.4%) and England (63.3%). There are a lower proportion of residents living within privately rented homes in the Neighbourhood Plan area in comparison to the regional and national trends. Additionally, there are a lower proportion of residents living in social rented accommodation in comparison to the South West of England and England. The percentage of residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area living in shared ownership accommodation (0.2%) is slightly lower than the totals for East Devon (0.5%), the South West of England (0.8%) and England (0.8%). Additionally, there is a lower proportion of people living rent free within the Neighbourhood Plan area in comparison to the regional and national proportions. This could relate to the age demographic for the parish which sees a much older average age suggesting a lower probability of younger people are living at home with parents within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

#### Household Deprivation

13.2.11 The dimensions of deprivation used to classify households are indicators based on the four selected household characteristics. A household is deprived in a dimension if they meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Employment: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick;
- Education: no person in the household has at least level 2 education (see highest level of qualification), and no person aged 16-18 is a fulltime student;
- Health and disability: any person in the household has general health 'bad or very bad' or has a long term health problem; and
- Housing: Household's accommodation is ether overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

13.2.12 A household is classified as being deprived in none, or one to four of these dimensions in any combination.

	<b>Colyton</b>	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
Household not deprived	43.0%	44.4%	44.8%	42.5%
Deprived in 1 dimension	39.3%	35.3%	33.2%	32.7%
Deprived in 2 dimensions	15.4%	17.1%	17.6%	19.1%
Deprived in 3 dimensions	1.9%	2.9%	4.0%	5.1%
Deprived in 4 dimensions	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%

13.2.13 Based on the information presented in Table 13.5 less than half of the households within the Neighbourhood Plan area are not deprived, similar to the regional and national averages. The majority of households are deprived in at least 1 or more dimensions within the Neighbourhood Plan area (57.0%) which is higher than East Devon (55.6%) and the South West of England (55.2%). However, this is broadly similar to England (57.5%). Out of the 57.0% of households which are deprived in the Neighbourhood Plan area, the majority are deprived in one or two dimensions, which is similar to the regional and national averages.

*Summary of Future Baseline*

13.2.14 The following estimations have been identified regarding how key aspects of the baseline environment will likely change in the future up until 2031 (the end of the Neighbourhood Plan period).

- Population – ONS projections

	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
Population (Total)	160,700	6,036,400	59,789,800
Males	78,700	2,979,600	29,686,300
Females	82,100	3,056,900	30,103,500

13.2.15 ONS projections estimate that East Devon’s population could increase to an estimated 160,700 by 2031, an increase of approximately 21.3% from the 2011 census figures. For context, the projected population increase for England is 12.8% by 2031. Although population projection for Colyton is not available it is assumed any increase will be proportionate and hence similar to that of East Devon.

<sup>47</sup> ONS (no date): Census 2011: ‘Households by Deprivation Dimensions 2011 (Table QS119EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/QS119EW>

13.2.16 The ONS predicts that the population of people aged over 65 in the local impact area will increase by 46.2% during the same timeframe. In contrast the estimated increase of people under the age of 24 is 19.3%

13.2.17 As the population continues to age, this has the potential to place pressures on the existing services and facilities within the timeframe of the Neighbourhood Plan. Such pressures could include; a decline in working-age population; an increase in health care costs; an increase in dependency ratio; and changes to the economy. This could negatively impact on the future vitality of the local community and economy.

13.2.18 Considering that the area is not deprived in relation to indices such as health deprivation and disability, it is expected that increasing numbers of elderly residents will continue. This can have implications for housing and may indicate a need for more specialist accommodation to meet the needs of the elderly in the future.

### **13.3 Sustainability Issues**

- The average age of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area is much higher than the England average.
- It is expected that the population of residents over the age of 65, during the CNDP period, will increase at a greater rate than that of residents under the age of 24.
- The majority of Households in the Neighbourhood Plan area are deprived in one or two dimensions, which is similar to the regional and national averages.
- It is suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan area has a highly skilled workforce, supported by the percentage of residents with a Level 4 qualification or above.

### **13.4 Scope**

13.4.1 The policies in the neighbourhood plan are unlikely to exert a significant impact on population/demographic change but do seek to ensure that local housing needs are met. Therefore, it is proposed to scope out Population and Community from the SEA Environmental Report.

## 14 HUMAN HEALTH

### 14.1 Policy Context

14.1.1 The relevant policies from the NPPF are set out within:

- Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development;
- Chapter 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities;
- Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport;
- Chapter 11 – Making Effective Use of Land;
- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places; and
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment.

14.1.2 The NPPF outlines three overarching objectives in order to achieve sustainable development. Relevant to this topic is the social objective which looks to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

14.1.3 It is further stated that '*planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which; [...] promote social interaction; [...] are safe and accessible; and [...] enable and support healthy lifestyles*'. Planning policies should also '*take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community*'.

14.1.4 The 'Healthy and Safe Communities' PPG provides further guidance on achieving healthy and inclusive communities and states that '*Planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account the changing needs of the population)*'.

14.1.5 Recent government legislation demonstrates the increasing role that local level authorities are expected to play in providing health outcomes. The Health and Social Care Act 2012<sup>48</sup> gave a much stronger role to local governments to shape services and

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<sup>48</sup> Health and Social Care Act 2012: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>

take over responsibility to improve the health of the people who live in their areas. This will require a more holistic approach to health across all local government functions.

14.1.6 At the local level, policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Health and Wellbeing SEA theme include:

- Strategy 3 - Sustainable Development;
- Strategy 4 - Balanced Communities;
- Strategy 37 - Community Safety;
- Strategy 43 - Open Space Standards;
- Strategy 46 - Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs;
- D1 - Design and Local Distinctiveness;
- RC1 - Retention of Land for Sport and Recreation;
- RC2 - New Open Space, Sports Facilities and Parks;
- RC4 - Recreation Facilities in the Countryside and on the Coast;
- RC6 - Local Community Facilities;
- TC2 - Accessibility of New Development;
- TC3 - Traffic Management Schemes; and
- TC4 - Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways.

14.1.7 The Devon joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025<sup>49</sup> highlights the following as the main current and future health and wellbeing challenges across the Devon Sustainability and Transformation Partnership area:

1. An ageing and growing population;
2. Access to services, including socio-economic and cultural barriers;
3. Complex patterns of urban and rural deprivation;
4. Housing issues (quality and affordability);
5. Earlier onset of health problems in more deprived areas (typically 10-15 years earlier than the least deprived areas);

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<sup>49</sup> Devon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy [online] Available at: <https://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk/strategies/> [accessed 25/02/2020]

6. Poor mental health and wellbeing, social isolation and loneliness;
7. Poor health outcomes caused by modifiable health-related behaviours;
8. Pressures on services (especially unplanned care) caused by increasing long-term conditions, multi-morbidity and frailty;
9. Shifting to a prevention focus across the health and care system; and
10. Unpaid care and associated health outcomes for carers..

## 14.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Current Baseline*

14.2.1 Deprivation is a significant contributor to poor health and can have adverse effects on wellbeing, with elements related to poor housing quality, living environment, income and employment previously discussed in Chapter 13. The Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>50</sup> shows that the Parish of Colyton (East Devon 007B LSOA) is amongst the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The village of Colyton has its own neighbourhood LSOA (East Devon 007A) and is amongst the 40% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country. On the whole, levels of deprivation are low within East Devon.

	<b>Colyton Parish</b>	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
Very Good Health	40.5	43.8	46.9	47.2
Good Health	39.3	36.0	34.6	34.2
Fair Health	15.9	15.1	13.4	13.1
Bad Health	3.4	4.0	4.0	4.2
Very Bad Health	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.2

14.2.2 As highlighted in Table 14.1 above 79.8% of residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area consider themselves as having to have ‘good health’ or better, similar to the totals for East Devon (79.8%), the South West of England (81.4%) and England (81.4%). On the other hand, 4.2% of the Neighbourhood Plan area residents consider themselves to have ‘bad health’ or worse, which when compared to the values for East Devon (5.1%),

<sup>50</sup> It should be noted that this index varies from the household deprivation mentioned in section 13, and instead combines the information from seven domain indices, not just one. As such the results are different.

<sup>51</sup> ONS (no date): Census 2011: ‘General Health’ (Table QS302EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs302ew> [accessed 02/03/2020]

the South West of England (5.1%) and England (5.4%), is considered to be slightly better.

	<b>Colyton Parish</b>	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
<b>Activities limited 'a lot'</b>	8.4	8.9	8.3	8.3
<b>Activities limited 'a little'</b>	14.1	12.1	10.2	9.3
<b>Activities 'not limited'</b>	77.6	79.0	81.6	82.4

14.2.3 Table 14.2 above highlights that a greater number of the residents in the Neighbourhood Plan area consider themselves to be 'limited' when it comes to day-to-day activities compared with the regional and national figures. Given the higher average age of the parish this is not unexpected.

14.2.4 Table 14.3 below details the existing baseline profile for East Devon based upon the 2018 Local Authority Health Profile prepared by Public Health England. Note the data for Districts are not available, therefore the data for Colyton has not been included below.

<b>Indicator Factor</b>	<b>East Devon (value)</b>	<b>South West (Value)</b>	<b>England (value)</b>
<b><i>Life Expectancy and Causes of Death</i></b>			
1. Life Expectancy at Birth (Male) (All ages)	81.5 ^	80.2	79.6
2. Life Expectancy at Birth (Female) (All ages)	84.9 ^	83.8	83.2
3. Under 75 mortality rate from all causes (<75 yrs)	253.5	301.5	330.5
4. Mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases (<75 yrs)	47.9	61.9	71.7
5. Mortality rate from cancer (<75 yrs)	115.7	125.6	132.3
6. Suicide Rate (+10 yrs)	7.0	11.1	9.6
<b><i>Injuries and Ill Health</i></b>			
7. Killed and seriously injured (KSI) rate on England's roads (All ages)	58.3	39.8	42.6
8. Emergency hospital admission rate for intentional self-harm (All ages)	187.6	272.8	193.4
9. Emergency hospital admission rate for hip fractures (65+ yrs)	625.6	566.3	558.4

<sup>52</sup> ONS (no date): Census 2011: 'General Health' (Table QS302EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs302ew> [accessed 02/03/2020]

<sup>53</sup> Public Health England Health Profiles 2019 – East Devon [online] Available at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e07000040.html?area-name=eastdevon> [accessed 25/02/20]

<b>Table 14.3: Health Profile Comparison of Study Area Profile and England (2019)<sup>53</sup></b>			
<b>Indicator Factor</b>	<b>East Devon (value)</b>	<b>South West (Value)</b>	<b>England (value)</b>
10. Percentage of cancer diagnosed at early stage (All ages)	58.5	53.3	52.2
11. Estimated diabetes diagnosis rate (17+ yrs)	75.2	74.0	78.0
12. Estimated dementia diagnosis rate (65+ yrs)	64.8*	62.4*	68.7*
<b>Behavioural Risk Factors</b>			
13. Hospital admission rate for alcohol-specific conditions (<18 yrs)	45.8	44.1	31.6
14. Hospital admission rate for alcohol-related conditions (All ages)	460.7	680.0	663.7
15. Smoking prevalence in adults (18+ yrs)	8.6	13.9	14.4
16. Percentage of physically active adults (19+ yrs)	77.3	70.7	66.3
17. Percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese (18+ yrs)	55.8	61.0	62.0
<b>Child Health</b>			
18. Under 18 Conceptions (per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17)	15.4	14.9	17.8
19. Smoking Status at Time of Delivery (%)	11.2	10.9 &	10.6
20. Breastfeeding Initiation (%)	- \$	79.5	74.5
21. Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births)	2.6	3.3	3.9
22. Obese Children (aged 10 – 11) (%)	12.7	16.5	20.2
<b>Inequalities</b>			
23. Deprivation score (IMD 2015) (All ages)	12.7	- &	21.8
24. Smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations (18-64 yrs)	7.7	25.5	25.4
25. Inequality in life expectancy at birth (male) (All ages)	4.0	7.4	9.5
26. Inequality in life expectancy at birth (female) (All ages)	1.6	5.7	7.5
<b>Wider Determinants of Health</b>			
27. Percentage of children in low income families (<16 yrs)	11.3	14.0	17.0
28. GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score) (15-16 yrs)	48.6	46.7	46.7
29. Percentage of people in employment (16-64 yrs)	84.9	78.9	75.6
30. Statutory homelessness rate - eligible homeless people not in priority need (N/A)	- ~	0.3	0.8
31. Violent crime - hospital admission rate for violence (including sexual violence) (All ages)	15.1	34.9	44.9

<b>Table 14.3: Health Profile Comparison of Study Area Profile and England (2019)<sup>53</sup></b>			
<b>Indicator Factor</b>	<b>East Devon (value)</b>	<b>South West (Value)</b>	<b>England (value)</b>
<b>Health Protection</b>			
32. Excess winter deaths index (All ages)	30.2	29.5	30.1
33. New STI diagnoses rate (exc chlamydia aged <25) (15-64 yrs)	509.7	655.3	850.6
34. TB incidence rate (All ages)	1.6	2.8	9.2
<p>1,2 Life expectancy - years 3,4,5 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged under 75 6 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged 10 and over 7 Crude rate per 100,000 population 8 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population 9 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population aged 65 and over 10 Proportion - % of cancers diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 11 Proportion - % recorded diagnosis of diabetes as a proportion of the estimated number with diabetes 12 Proportion - % recorded diagnosis of dementia as a proportion of the estimated number with dementia 13 Crude rate per 100,000 population aged under 18 14 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population 15,16,17 Proportion 18 Crude rate per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17 19,20 Proportion 21 Crude rate per 1,000 live births 22 Proportion 23 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 score 24 Proportion 25,26 Slope index of inequality 27 Proportion 28 Mean average across 8 qualifications 29 Proportion 30 Crude rate per 1,000 households 31 Directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population 32 Ratio of excess winter deaths to average of non-winter deaths 33 Crude rate per 100,000 population aged 15 to 64 (excluding Chlamydia) 34 Crude rate per 100,000 population</p> <p>* Value compared to a goal                      ~ Value suppressed for disclosure control due to small count                      \$ Value not published for data quality reasons                      ^ Confidence intervals could not be calculated                      &amp; Aggregated from all known lower geography values</p>			

14.2.5 Overall, the health of the population living within East Devon is generally better in comparison to the goal / average for England.

14.2.6 However, the factors for which East Devon is considered significantly worse for health and wellbeing than the England average are as follows:

- Killed and seriously injured (KSI) rate on England’s roads; and
- Hospital admission rate for alcohol-specific conditions.

14.2.7 The East Devon Local Authority Health Profile 2019 highlights the following aspects of the findings:

- 11.3% (2,315) of children live in low income families.
- Life expectancy is 4.0 years lower for men in the most deprived areas of East Devon than in the least deprived areas.

- In Year 6, 12.7% (142) of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England.
- Levels of GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score) are better than the England average.
- The rate for alcohol-related harm hospital admissions is 461\*, better than the average for England. This represents 722 admissions per year.
- The rate for self-harm hospital admissions is 188\*. This represents 235 admissions per year.
- Estimated levels of excess weight in adults (aged 18+), smoking prevalence in adults (aged 18+), smoking prevalence (in routine and manual occupations) and physically active adults (aged 19+) are better than the England average.
- The rates of new sexually transmitted infections and new cases of tuberculosis are better than the England average
- The rate of killed and seriously injured on roads is worse than the England average.
- The rates of violent crime (hospital admissions for violence), under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases, under 75 mortality rate from cancer and employment (aged 16-64) are better than the England average.

\* rate per 100,000 population.

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

14.2.8 The East Devon Local Authority Health Profile 2019 shows that only two indicators have changed significantly over the past year. The Percentage of children in low income families is shown to have increased negatively since 2018 whereas GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score) is shown to have increased beneficially. Should this trend continue these indicators may move closer or further to the UK average respectively. It should be noted that the percentage of children in low income families within East Devon is significantly lower than the UK average for 2019.

#### *Summary of Future Baseline*

14.2.9 It is expected that the health and wellbeing levels within the Neighbourhood Plan area will remain generally better than regional and national averages taking into account the current trends.

14.2.10 It is noted that the average age within the Neighbourhood Development area is much higher than that within England. Should the Neighbourhood Plan area experience a

growing and ageing population then there may be an increase in the reported cases of disability, a reduction in the levels of good health, and future pressures on health services in the area. Similarly, ongoing cuts to community services have the potential to lead to effects on health and wellbeing.

14.2.11 Obesity is also seen as an increasing issue by health professionals, and one that will contribute to significant health impacts on individuals, including increasing the risk of a range of diseases, including heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer.

14.2.12 Overall levels of deprivation in the Neighbourhood Plan area are likely to remain low.

### **14.3 Sustainability Issues**

- The Parish of Colyton is amongst the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country.
- The health of the population living within East Devon is generally better in comparison to the goal / average for England
- Two factors in East Devon are considered significantly worse for health and wellbeing than the England average are as follows; KSI rate on England's roads; and hospital admission rate for alcohol-specific conditions. The CNDP provides a number of positively worded policies that look to encourage a healthier lifestyle (Policy No. Coly18) and improve road safety (Policy No. Coly 15, Coly 16 and Coly 17)

### **14.4 Scope**

14.4.1 A review of the 2019 Public Health profile for East Devon has shown that the majority of indicators are significantly better and not significantly different to the England average. Only two indicators, KSI rate on England's roads and Hospital admission rate for alcohol-specific conditions, are significantly worse than the England average.

14.4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan introduces a number of positively worded policies to assist in delivering the type of development that will look to further enhance the health of the Plan area.

14.4.3 The East Devon Local Plan is committed to creating healthy living environments and has a number of overarching policies and strategies reflecting the health considerations of the District.

14.4.4 The policies contained within the CNDP are unlikely to result in significant effects on health. Therefore, it is proposed to scope out Human Health from the SEA Environmental Report.

## 15 TRANSPORT

### 15.1 Policy Context

15.1.1 Chapter 9 'Promoting sustainable transport' of the NPPF (2019) highlights the importance of transport issues being considered at the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals. This is so that:

- a) *'the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- b) *opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) *opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) *the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) *patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places'.*

15.1.2 The NPPF goes on to state that *'significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making'.*

15.1.3 The Local Transport Plan for Devon and Torbay<sup>54</sup> highlights the strategic transport objectives in Devon and Torbay which are:

- Deliver and support new development and economic growth;

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<sup>54</sup> Devon County Council and Torbay Council (2011) Local Transport Plan Devon and Torbay Strategy 2011 - 2026 [online] available at: < <https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/traffic-information/transport-planning/devon-and-torbay-local-transport-plan-3-2011-2026/>> [accessed 23/05/19]

- Make best use of the transport network and protect the existing transport asset by prioritising maintenance;
- Work with communities to provide safe, sustainable and low carbon transport choices;
- Strengthen and improve the public transport network; and
- Make Devon the 'Place to be naturally active'.

15.1.4 The policies in the East Devon Local Plan that relate to the Transport SEA theme include:

- Strategy 5B – Sustainable Transport;
- Strategy 6 – Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries;
- Strategy 27 – Development at the Small Towns and Larger Villages;
- TC2 – Accessibility of New Development;
- TC3 – Traffic Management Schemes;
- TC4 – Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways;
- TC5 - Safeguarding Disused Railway Lines;
- TC6 – Park and Ride and Share/Change;
- TC7 – Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access;
- TC8 – Safeguarding of Land Required for Highway and Access Improvements;
- TC9 – Parking Provision in New Development; and
- TC10 - Rear Servicing of Shopping/Commercial Development.

## 15.2 Baseline

### *Summary of Current Baseline*

#### Highway Network

15.2.1 The A3052 forms the main highway which passes through the Neighbourhood Planning area. To the west, the A3052 provides access to the M5 at junction 30, which provides a key route to the north. The A3052 also provides a means of access to Exeter International Airport. To the east, the A3052 provides access to the A35 which provides a direct route to Bridport and Dorchester. Additionally, the A3052 joins the A358 just outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area, providing links to Axminster and

onwards to Taunton. The A35 also lies just north of the Neighbourhood Plan area providing an easy route to Honiton.

#### Highways safety

15.2.2 As mentioned above the amount of people killed and seriously injured in road traffic accidents is considered higher than the England average. However, a review of the crashmap.co.uk<sup>55</sup> database shows that only one serious accident has occurred since 2014<sup>56</sup>. The accident occurred along Yardbury Hill Road and involved two vehicles with one casualty<sup>57</sup>.

#### Rail Network

15.2.3 There are no train stations within the plan area. The closest rail connections to Colyton, from the nearest edge of the plan boundary, are Axminster (c. 4.4m) and Honiton (c. 5.2km). Both of these stations are located along the South Western Railway and offer services to Exeter and Yeovil and further afield to London Waterloo.

#### Bus Network

15.2.4 There are two bus services (20 and 885) running between Honiton, Seaton, Beer, Colyton and Axminster. Number 20 runs every three hours in both directions between Seaton and Honiton. Number 885 runs every hour in both directions between Beer and Axminster.

#### Cycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

15.2.5 National Cycle Network route 2 runs through the Neighbourhood Plan area. The route runs along the coast to the west and towards Axminster to the north. The parish also has a well-developed public rights of way network.

#### Seaton Tramway

15.2.6 Seaton Tramway operates between Seaton, Colyford and Colyton. A full service runs between April and October with the first tram departing Seaton at 10am and the last tram departing from Colyton between 5pm and 6pm, depending on the service.

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<sup>55</sup> <https://www.crashmap.co.uk/> [accessed 26/02/2020]

<sup>56</sup> Excluding 2019 due to data not being available.

<sup>57</sup> WA do not have access to crashmaps.co.uk records and therefore the it is not known what the cause of the accident was.

## Car ownership

	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
All households	1,441	100
No cars or vans in household	191	13.3
1 car or van in household	658	45.7
2 cars or vans in household	433	30.0
3 cars or vans in household	112	7.8
4 or more cars or vans in household	47	3.3
Sum of all car or vans in the area	2,079	-

15.2.7 Based on the 2011 census data presented in Table 15.1, 86.8% of households in the Neighbourhood Plan area have access to at least one car or van, which is higher than the percentages for East Devon (84.1%), the South West of England (81.1%) and England (74.3%). A fewer number of households in the Neighbourhood Plan area do not own a car or van in comparison to regional and national averages.

## Methods of Travel to work

<b>Method</b>	<b>Region (%)</b>			
	<b>Colyton Parish</b>	<b>East Devon</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
Work mainly at or from home	8.2	6.3	4.6	3.5
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0.1	0.1	0.1	2.6
Train	0.7	1.6	1.0	3.5
Bus, minibus or coach	1.5	1.7	3.1	4.9
Taxi	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.5
Driving a car or van	37.2	40.3	41.4	36.9
Passenger in a car or van	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.3
Bicycle	1.3	1.4	2.3	1.9
On foot	7.9	8.5	9.0	6.9
Other method of travel to work	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.4
Not in employment	38.7	35.4	33.6	35.3

15.2.8 As shown in Table 15.2 above the most popular method of travelling to work in the Neighbourhood Plan area is via driving a car or van (37.2%) which is slightly lower than East Devon (40.3%) and the South West of England (41.4%) but slightly greater than

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> [accessed 26/02/2020]

<sup>59</sup> ONS (no date): Census 2011: 'Method of Travel to Work 2011' (Table QS701EW) Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/qs701EW>

England (36.9%). Given the age demographic of Colyton parish compared with England this figure is expected. A higher percentage of residents in the Neighbourhood Plan work mainly from home in comparison to the regional and national trends. Owing to these two the amount of people who take use public transport (bus, train, etc.) to get to work are lower than the regional and national trends.

### *Summary of Future Baseline*

- 15.2.9 Should future development occur within the Parish of Colyton it is expected that there will be a growth in traffic flows potentially leading to increases in congestion. Given the scale of development likely to come forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area, it is unlikely that an increase in traffic flows will impact upon highway safety.
- 15.2.10 A continued reliance on private cars is highly likely within the Neighbourhood Plan area, particularly given the size of the village, its rural nature and its limited public transport options; residents are likely to continue to travel outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area to access the workplace and key services and facilities.
- 15.2.11 Given the scale of development likely to come forward through the Neighbourhood Plan area, it is unlikely that this development will contribute to any significant improvements in public transport provision.

### **15.3 Sustainability Issues**

- The Neighbourhood Plan area is well linked to the strategic road network, with access to the A3052 and A35.
- No train stations are located in the Neighbourhood Planning area.
- Bus services from Colyton provides residents with access to surrounding villages and towns.
- A single 'serious' traffic accident has occurred since 2014 within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- The most popular method of travelling to work in the Neighbourhood Plan area is via driving a car or van.

### **15.4 Scope**

- 15.4.1 Owing to the fact no quantum of development is proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan it is unlikely that there will be an impact upon the highways network or transport provision within the Parish.
- 15.4.2 The plan also contains a number of positively worded policies which support developments which will maintain and enhance the current transport network.
- 15.4.3 As such, it is proposed to scope out transport from the SEA Environmental Report.

**16 PROPOSED SCOPE OF THE SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

16.1.1 It is anticipated that the following issues will need to be addressed in the SEA Environmental Report;

- Ecology.

***What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the biodiversity and geodiversity SEA theme?***

SEA OBJECTIVE	ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS
<p><b>PROTECT AND ENHANCE ALL BIODIVERSITY AND GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.</b></p>	<p><b>WILL THE OPTION/PROPOSAL HELP TO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the status of the European designed sites within and/ or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary, including Beer Quarry Caves SAC, River Axe SAC and Sidmouth to West Bay SAC</li> <li>• Support the status of the nationally designated sites of significance within and/ or adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary, including Bolshayne Fen SSSI and River Axe SSSI?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance locally designated sites?</li> <li>• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>• Support enhancements to ecological networks, including through improvements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?</li> </ul>

## **17 NEXT STEPS**

### **17.1 Subsequent Stages for the SEA Process**

17.1.1 The five stages of the SEA process<sup>60</sup> are identified below. Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage of the SEA process.

1. Screening;
2. Scoping;
3. Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan;
4. Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation; and
5. Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making / SEA (and present 'measures concerning monitoring').

17.1.2 The next stage will involve appraising reasonable alternatives for the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan. This will consider alternative policy approaches for the plan, including alternative spatial strategies. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back to Colyton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (the Neighbourhood Plan group) so that they might be taken into account when preparing the draft plan.

17.1.3 Once the draft ('submission version') plan has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan group, it will be subjected to SEA and the Environmental Report prepared for consultation alongside it.

17.1.4 Following submission to Devon County Council, and consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan will be put forward for Independent Examination.

### **17.2 Consultation on the Scoping Report**

17.2.1 Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public.

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<sup>60</sup> In accordance with the stages set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance

- 17.2.2 The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.
- 17.2.3 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, in particular the evidence base for the SEA, the identified likely significant issues and the proposed scope of the SEA Environmental Report.
- 17.2.4 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

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