

Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Plan (First Review) Summary of the Representations Submitted to the Independent Examination

Use of this Document

This document sets out a summary of the representations (comments) received on the Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Plan, which were passed to the independent examiner for consideration. Please note that the full wording of all representations is available on the [Clyst St Mary and Sowton \(Bishops Clyst\) Neighbourhood Plan](https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-and-community-plans) page of the District Council website (found at: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-and-community-plans>)

The Examiner's Final Report is also available on this webpage and forms part of the documentation for the referendum. In addition, correspondence that took place during the examination and documentation for every previous stage in the development of the neighbourhood plan can be viewed.

Please note that the Submission Version of the Plan has been updated to the Referendum Version, following consideration of the Examiner's final report by East Devon District Council. The District Council Decision Notice sets out the changes agreed between the versions. The Decision Notice and the Referendum Version of the Plan are also part of the referendum documentation and available on the webpage above.

Paper copies can be supplied if strictly necessary.

Summary of Representations (in alphabetical order)

1. Bell Cornwell on Behalf of Darts Farm

Notes that Darts Farm Ltd is a significant landowner and local employer in/around the Clyst St Mary area and owns part of the land allocated in the draft neighbourhood plan for housing. Supports the plan's recognition of the need for making provision for 'at least 72 new dwellings', derived from Strategic Policy SP03 of the emerging new East Devon Local Plan, emphasising that this figure is a minimum. In respect of the neighbourhood plan allocation policy (BisC12) to accommodate this, it is stated that additional housing will be necessary to meet broader neighbourhood plan objectives, particularly the delivery of a link road between the A3052 and Bishops Court Lane to alleviate traffic congestion in the village centre. Notes the village location is generally a sustainable one and that more housing would contribute to the district housing supply position. Accordingly, seeks the supporting text at paragraph 8.5 in the built environment overview to 'make it clear that additional housing may be provided where this is needed to fulfil wider neighbourhood plan objectives'.

Strongly supports Policy BisC11, which defines the settlement boundary, and Policy BisC12 (and supporting text), which allocates land east of Clyst St Mary for residential development - and the inclusion of this land within the settlement boundary. Affirms that the proposed development is feasible in alignment with policy requirements, including the infrastructure improvements sought, including a link road, cycle route and crossing. Advises that comprehensive master planning, including the part of the site controlled by Core Strategic Land, is underway, and that technical assessments by consultants confirm the viability and deliverability of the scheme, which is expected to deliver both local and strategic benefits in terms of terms of housing, connectivity, and significant planting/landscaping to protect local character.

Includes an [illustrative masterplan](#) for the housing allocation site.

2. Carney Sweeney on Behalf of CR Down Farming Ltd and Stuart Partners Ltd

Representation in respect of land south of the A3052 and east of the A376, part of which lies in the NP area, and which is being actively promoted by these clients as a strategic allocation for new homes and associated uses in respect of the emerging new Local Plan. Notes very little change to the Plan following comments made at Regulation 14 stage and that therefore these still apply. In this context, understands the concerns laid out in plan regarding infrastructure capacity/constraints and states a willingness to work with the Parish

Council and EDDC to address these issues and help deliver key objectives of the Plan through the development of this site. In particular, lends support to the objectives/principles of policy BisC09 (sustainable development), BisC16 (business development) and BisC18 (footpaths and cycleways) and the new design code. The full detailed Regulation 14 stage representation which expands on these aspects in more depth is appended to the representation and is available to view on the website in full. Detailed technical supporting documentation in respect of the development of the strategic land holding is also included.

3. Devon and Cornwall Police

Objects to the wording of Policy BisC10 regarding infrastructure as it refers to 'physical and social infrastructure' and not also specifically to 'public service infrastructure'. Requests that it refers to this to be consistent with this terminology as used in the revised national Planning Policy Framework (2024) and to help further the securing of contributions to blue light services. Provides a suggested amendment to the policy wording accordingly.

4. Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF)

Comments in respect of the housing allocation policy BisC12 only. Objects to the phrasing of Clause d) in that policy and proposes two possible alternatives to clarify that the Clyst Valley Trail is a shared-use trail for both walkers and cyclists, and not only a 'cycle route' as stated in the policy.

5. Devon County Council (Highways Authority)

Comments specifically in relation to the housing allocation policy (BisC12). Advises the Highways Authority is unable to support the provision of a vehicular link through the site from the A3052 to Bishops Court Lane as proposed by the policy due to road safety concerns linked to traffic turning right into the new route from the A3052 and volume of traffic potentially choosing to do so, and the creation of a 'rat run' to the business park, the A30 and the airport along the lane. Seeks access to be restricted to the development site only. Considers that the potential to create a through-link to Bishops Court Lane is premature because of the relationship with the emerging new local plan proposals for a new community and the potential for this to provide a vehicular link that may relieve traffic in Clyst St Mary village and/or for the proposed through link to at least be considered in the light of new community proposals when they are known. In the interim, the Highways Authority advises it would support measures to deter through traffic from using Bishops Court Lane and Frog

Lane. Proposes specific wording amendments to clause b of Policy BisC13 to address its comments. In addition, it suggests minor revisions to improve clauses c and e, in respect of traffic mitigation measures and pedestrian links respectively and asks that all references to DCC Highways are replaced with the 'Local Highways Authority' to allow for changes through to Local Government Reorganisation.

6. Devon County Council (Historic Environment Team)

Considers the neighbourhood plan to be generally a good document. Makes various suggestions and recommendations including adding photos to show the local character of the area and an historical summary to the document of settlement and development of Clyst St Mary and Sowton. Provides information that could be used to inform this including an overview of key historical sites and features from DCC's Historic Environment Register.

7. East Devon District Council

Overall, welcomes the clear and concise nature of the plan and the changes made to it since the Regulation 14 stage. Observes that whilst most of the policies are not controversial, the extent to which they add to/extend existing higher tier policies is questioned and that not all plan objectives or requirements in supporting text appear to be translated into policy.

Notes the most significant change from the current plan is the addition of the allocation for housing under Policy Bisc12 and records that for this reason, amongst others, it agrees with Parish Council's modification statement that the changes to the plan warrant both independent examination and a referendum.

Offers commentary on the relationship with the emerging new Local Plan, including to suggest that the plan periods are aligned, ending 2042.

Makes numerous policy specific comments to help ensure greater clarity and longevity of the policies and alignment to national/strategic policy and sustainable development principles including:

- **Policy BisC01 Protecting and Enhancing Geodiversity, Biodiversity and Wildlife:** Suggests wording amendments to all clauses in the first part of the policy intended to strengthen it and seeks clarity on the relationship with the sites shown on maps 3a and 3b.
- **Policy BisC02: Protecting Trees and Woodlands:** Generally supportive but suggests changes to clauses 2 and 4 and their possible amalgamation for clarity on the requirement and reflection of latest best practice.

- **Policy BisC03: Minimising Flood Risk:** welcome changes made since Regulation 14 and suggests a further improvement could be encouragement of natural flood management measures.
- **Policy BisC04: Development Outside the Clyst St Mary Settlement Boundary:** Supports the policy intent but some concern it is too broad and there could be differences in its interpretation, which could have unintended outcomes in the development that could be supported under it. Makes suggestions to tighten the policy and to rely instead on Local Plan policy.
- **Policy BisC05 Green Wedge:** Notes overlap with Local Plan policy but does not consider there to be a conflict.
- **Policy BisC06 Heritage Assets:** Notes this is new policy but that it is not locally specific enough and makes suggestions to this end.
- **Policy BisC07 Maintaining Local Character:** supports the modifications to the policy and the addition of a design code. Offers some observations on the design code document itself.
- **Policy BisC08 Local Green Space:** Notes that the modified policy reduces the number of LGS designations in the plan area from three to one, in favour of giving protection to 2 of the areas under the sport and recreation policy instead and seeks clarity on the rationale.
- **Policy BisC09 Sustainable Development:** Understands the desire for a single policy but considers that this may be / already is in part, be covered by specific topic-based policies. Also advises again the use of the term 'land of local amenity importance' as this is used in the Local Plan for specific areas, none of which are in this neighbourhood area. Also suggests that the ability to implement the policy will be limited if these areas are not being identified.
- **Policy BisC10 Infrastructure:** Understands the reason for the policy but suggests it is out of kilter with how infrastructure might be delivered and suggests an alternative form of wording to the first part of the policy to address this.
- **Policy BisC11 Clyst St Mary Settlement Boundary:** Comments on the relationship with the emerging Local Plan which includes a settlement boundary for the village which does not entirely align but would supersede the NP boundary. Suggests the LP could potentially incorporate some of the variations. Also makes suggested wording amends to policy clauses for greater clarity.
- **Policy BisC12 Land East of Clyst St Mary:** Notwithstanding differing conclusions of the LPAs own site assessments for potential allocations at the village, supports the NP in making this allocation and welcomes the further clarification in the final Strategic Environmental Assessment to support site selection. Notes and flags a concern regarding the representation received from the Highways Authority. Reiterates previously raised concerns about landscape impact but welcomes the potential for delivery of a part of the Clyst Valley trail and the incorporation of our suggested requirement for planting of a significant woodland buffer. Proposes amended wording relating to the coordinated and integrated planning and delivery of the site and the requirement in terms of strategic habitat mitigation.
- **Policy BisC13 Community Facilities:** Suggests there may be some conflict between policy clauses and suggests how this could be addressed. Advises there is significant protection already in Local Plan policy and makes suggestions for how policy could be strengthened, informed by emerging new LP policy.

- **Policy BisC14 Primary School Provision:** Supports, subject to any comments from the Local Education Authority.
- **Policy BisC15 Existing Business Space:** Understands the reason for inclusion but suggest the Local Plan policy is and will be more robust regarding the marketing of sites/premises and concern it could inadvertently support conversion to residential uses in the open countryside.
- **Policy BisC16 Business Areas:** Suggests the policy should allow for the proposed expansion of Langdon Business Park under the emerging Local Plan, and qualify the clauses referring to adverse impacts, as ‘any **significant** adverse impact’. Notes some tension with Policy E7 of the Local Plan but that this is not a strategic policy.
- **Policy BisC17 Business Development:** Generally supportive but considers the blanket restriction regarding loss of a dwelling under clause 1 is too restrictive and could thwart conversion to employment uses and expresses reservations about support in clause 2 for ‘live-work’ units’ both in terms of the concept and the risk of supporting isolated new dwellings in the countryside without greater control.
- **Policy BisC18 Footpaths and Cycleways:** Suggests the policy could go further by including an expectation that new developments take the opportunity to make appropriate links to connect / further foot and cycle links.
- **Policy BisC19 Parking Provision:** No objection but notes the policy is slightly at odds with emerging new Local Plan policy which would supersede it and suggests therefore including specific parking requirement in the allocation policy BisC12.
- **Policy BisC20 Vehicular Access to Sowton Village:** Overall, no objection subject to any comments by the Highways Authority but suggests it may be worth caveating the support to ensure no harm to the character/heritage of the village from proposals.
- **Policy BisC21 Sports and Recreation Facilities:** Supports.

In addition, makes a range of suggestions for improvements to the plan, beyond policy wording, for accuracy and clarity, including for several new/revised maps, and some instances where we would take a different view to that expressed in Plan text.

8. Environment Agency

Supports the plan’s overall aims and objectives. Reiterates comments made at Regulation 14 stage in relation to site layout to avoid areas of flood risk and potentially require flood risk ‘betterment’ or reduction in the development of the Winslade Park Business Area.

(Note: this site is commented upon by the EA as an “allocation” for business development in the neighbourhood plan. However, the Plan is showing the area already consented for mixed/business use as part of the overall regeneration of Winslade Park under the adopted East Devon local Plan).

9. Greenslade Taylor Hunt of Behalf of Waddeton Park Ltd

- **Policy BisC17 Business Areas** – objects on the basis it has the potential to stifle growth and development of the identified sites, in conflict with the national policy requirement for plans to be positively prepared.
- **Policy BisC18 Business Development** – Considers the policy to be at odds with the emerging new Local Plan which seeks to allocate new employment sites in the plan area and again, to be overly restrictive and negative in focusing on small-scale development only. Calls for the removal of the reference to ‘small-scale’.
- **Policy BisC05 Green Wedges** – with reference to papers relating to areas included in the Green Wedges relating to the reconsideration of these areas for the emerging new Local Plan, advises that the area is too broad for general restriction of development, and that its extent should be reviewed to ensure its focussed on preventing coalescence between settlements.

10. Historic England

Focus their comments on the housing site allocation and the evidence that potential harm to heritage assets has been appropriately considered in making this allocation. Considers that the submitted Strategic Environmental Assessment makes a ‘comprehensive audit of the designated heritage assets’, and a ‘strong argument for justification of the allocation’, in particular noting the potential impact and proposed mitigation in relation to the relationship with the nearby Grade II listed Red Lodge.

11. Honiton Town Council

Confirms no comments on this modification proposal.

12. National Highways

Comments in relation to traffic impact on the strategic road network which it manages in/adjacent to the plan area, including the M5 / M5 junctions 29 and 30 and the A30, and notes the proposals in the emerging new Local Plan for a new town in the vicinity. Calls to ensure that plan policies ensure that growth is proportionate and reflects local needs and that major development mitigate the traffic impact arising. Advises that any large-scale development within the plan area will need to be supported by an appropriate assessment of traffic impact, in line with Government advice. Similar to comments made at Regulation 14 stage, National Highways seeks clarity on how the Neighbourhood Plan will improve walking, cycling, and sustainable transport links, and supports policies that protect and enhance local facilities to reduce reliance on private vehicles.

13. Natural England

Confirms there are no specific comments on the plan. Provides a range of advice and sources of further information in respect of its remit and the preparation of a neighbourhood plan, in general terms.

14. Oliver Keates Planning on behalf of Core Strategic Land Ltd

Submission made as landowner of the southern part of the site allocated for residential development under Policy BisC12. Confirms support for the allocation and the opportunity presented to provide affordable housing and local infrastructure improvements sought by the policy. Confirms engagement with the landowner of the northern portion of the allocation site to ensure a collaborate approach to master planning but also advises that the land in its control could be delivered independently. Highlights the importance of this site in helping Clyst St Mary meet its housing requirement under the emerging East Devon Local Plan and suggests that more than the 72 dwellings currently identified may be necessary to deliver the required infrastructure. Recommends that the supporting text in the Neighbourhood Plan be updated to allow for this.

Makes specific comments on Policy BisC12 wording include to clarify that the Concept Plan should be agreed by the determining authority, allowing for separate drainage schemes for different site parcels, and revising wording around housing mix to reflect broader needs. Also suggests broadening design requirements from only that set out in the local design code to design policy in the Local Plan, and reference to specific local cycle/footpaths in securing connectivity of the development. Finally, supports the revision of the settlement boundary for Clyst St Mary village in Policy BisC11, including the proposed extension to include the BisC12 site.

15. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

Shares links to two sources of guidance in respect of nature conservation and new housing development which sets out good practice in this area, to inform neighbourhood plan preparation.

16. South West Water

Support the objectives to promote flood resilience and ensure suitable provision of infrastructure, and the inclusion of Policy BisC03 to minimise flood risk and encourage use of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDs) and Policy BisC10 to ensure infrastructure needs arising from development are addressed. Suggests various policy requirements that it would support being added to the plan to support sustainable water consumption and efficiency in water use, including with regards to specific limits and standards and to encourage rainwater harvesting in both residential and non-residential development. Also suggests wording to broaden policy BisC10 to include reference to infrastructure requiring involvement of a statutory undertaker. Provides further detail and evidence sources to support the suggestions made. Confirms that the level of development proposed by the plan can be accommodated through the existing water supply network and infrastructure and if any reinforcements are required, this would be funded through infrastructure levy receipts. Advises however that the wastewater network will require work to enable it to accommodate the development proposed, in order to avoid an unacceptable impact on existing infrastructure and risk of pollution events resulting, and that it is planned to complete work within the next 2 to 3 years. Advises that SWW will continue to engage proactively with the LPA on applications in the area in respects of this matter.

17. Sport England

In their role as a statutory consultee on planning matters, comments in general terms only, with no specific comments on plan text or policies.

Emphasises the importance of planning for sport to facilitate social interaction and create healthy, inclusive communities. Highlights the need for neighbourhood plans to comply with national planning policy for sport, protect existing sports facilities, and integrate new and improved sports facilities as required to meet demand and in an integrated way with proposals for new housing and employment land. Provides a range of sources for guidance and further information to support the development and implementation of planning policies for sport.

18. Summerfield Planning Limited on Behalf of 3West Group

Questions the justification of the chosen allocation site for housing (subject of Policy BisC12), with reference to the site options considered, particularly through the submitted Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the site assessment/selection undertaken by Aecom and the Parish Council's NP consultant. The representation includes a detailed description and critique of the site selection process and overall considers that the evidence does not support the allocation of this site and therefore the site is contrary to national policy, and as such,

does not meet the 'basic conditions'. Considers the SEA not to be fit for purpose and that a flawed rationale, on highways grounds, has been relied upon to justify the site selection. Seeks the removal of Policy BisC12 as currently worded from the plan and its replacement with a policy to allocate site 'Option 4' (as assessed in the SEA) (site ref 'Sowt_03 and Sowt_09'), further to the evidence documents as well as the purposes of a neighbourhood plan and adopted and emerging Local Plan strategy and policy relating to Clyst St Mary as a suitable location for growth. The representation refers to the current planning application on Site Sowt_09 and the submitted views of the highway authority on this site and the NP allocation site in terms of highway matters, and to records of EDDC officer's reservations about the allocation of part of the NP site (known as 'Sowt_11A), in support of the recommendation to allocate Option 4/Sowt_03 & 09. The matters raised were considered to be of a such a fundamental nature to require a hearing.

19. Swifts Local Network – Swifts and Planning Group

Welcomes the Plan chapter on the natural environment but seeks addition of suggested text to further support for building-dependent wildlife, such as 'red-listed' bird species through requirement for swift bricks or similar to be installed in all new development, and to protect (or mitigate for unavoidable loss) of existing nest sites for these species. Provides detail of supporting evidence and links to evidence sources, including examples from other Local Planning Authorities, to support the request.

20. West Hill Parish Council

Supports the modified plan and congratulations the neighbourhood plan steering group.

Important Note

- i. This document seeks to set out a factual summary of the key points made in each representation in order to give an overview. However, to view further detail and the original wording of the representations as submitted in full, please go to the [Clyst St Mary and Sowton \(Bishops Clyst\) Neighbourhood plan page](#) on our website (see under 'Submission Consultation').
- ii. Summaries have been produced with some limited assistance of Microsoft Office 'Co-pilot' AI tool, with manual checking and adjustment for accuracy.
- iii. In addition to these Regulation 16 consultation responses, some further responses adding to those summarised above in respect of Plan Policy BisC12 allocating land for residential development were supplied in response to examiner's questions during the subsequent independent examination of this plan. These are referred to in the Examiner's report and available to view in full on our website:

- [Bell Cornwall on Behalf of Darts Farm](#) (site landowner) and their [Transport Consultant, Stantec](#)
- [Devon County Council as Highways Authority](#)
- [East Devon District Council](#)
- [Oliver Keates Planning on behalf of Core Strategic Land Ltd \(site landowner\)](#)

For completeness, responses, also shown on our website, were also made by Bishops Clyst Parish Council as the qualifying body as follows:

- [PC comment on Regulation 16 Responses](#)
- [PC response to initial Examiner's Questions](#)
- [PC response to Examiner's further Questions](#)