

## Clyst St Mary and Sowton (Bishops Clyst) Neighbourhood Plan

### Examiners' Clarification Questions supplied 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – NP Review Group Response

| NP Policy | Examiner's Question   | Response   |
|-----------|---|--|
| BisC11    | What is the methodology used by the NPG to establish the settlement boundary in Policy BisC11?              | <p>As we decided to allocate land for development in the new NP, we thought it appropriate that this land should be recognised as part of the built-up area of Clyst St Mary as defined by the development plan.</p> <p>We decided therefore to include a policy in the new, modified, version of the NP, which extended the defined built-up area to include land allocated for development by policy BisC12. In doing so, we took the opportunity to include other land on the periphery of Clyst St Mary that had been developed or committed for development by way of a planning permission, since the current built-up area boundary for Clyst St Mary was approved by the local planning authority.</p> <p>The resultant proposed settlement area boundary delineated on map 8 accompanying policy Bisc11 remains consistent, we believe, with the criteria used by the LPA to define the existing built-up area boundary for Clyst St Mary as defined by Policy VP01 in the East Devon Villages Plan (Adopted 26th July 2018).</p> <p>The proposed boundary was not objected to by EDDC during the Reg.14 consultation. We were informed by the LPA during the Reg.14 consultation that the boundary should henceforth be referred to as the "<i>settlement area boundary</i>" to be consistent with the terminology of new Local Plan. This is therefore the term used in the Submission Version of the NP.</p> <p>After the preparation of the Submission Version of the NP, we have become aware that EDDC is seeking to amend the settlement area of Clyst St Mary in the new Local Plan using revised criteria devised as part of a new methodology for settlement boundaries in the developing Local Plan. This has resulted in some minor amendments being proposed elsewhere to the settlement boundary of Clyst St Mary. We have not raised objection to these changes.</p> |
| BisC11    | Why have EDDC used a different methodology to establish the settlement boundary in the emerging local plan? | No comment   |

| NP Policy | Examiner's Question  | Response  |
|-----------|--|---|
| BisC12    | Why the Land to the East of Clyst St Mary was selected as the preferred site allocation despite not achieving the highest score in the site selection process? | <p>As part of our neighbourhood planning for future sustainable growth, we commissioned an independent expert assessment of sites that were known, or thought, to be potentially available for development within the plan period.</p> <p>On our behalf, AECOM considered the 'developability' of 37 possible locations in the parish area. Of these, 17 were discounted by the Study. The remaining 20 sites were included in a full assessment of the sites against several local criteria and the NP objectives.</p> <p>It was concluded that 11 sites were potentially suitable for allocation "<i>subject to the mitigation of various constraints and/or consultation with East Devon District Council</i>".</p> <p><a href="https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/220510-Bishops-Clyst-Site-Options-and-Assessment-Final-Report.pdf">https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/220510-Bishops-Clyst-Site-Options-and-Assessment-Final-Report.pdf</a></p> <p>The Review Group considered the implications of the assessment report in detail and even went as far as scoring and weighting the results of the assessment to build up a detailed understanding of the potential impacts of their development.</p> <p>However, it was agreed that the selection of greenfield sites for residential development should not rely on a quasi-scientific exercise. The purpose of weighting and scores was to relate one site to another and by doing so help narrow the selection options.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Bishops-Clyst-Site-Residential-Selection-Process-Report-9Jun22.pdf">https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Bishops-Clyst-Site-Residential-Selection-Process-Report-9Jun22.pdf</a></p> <p>AECOM advised it was important that the community was involved in the selection process.</p> <p>The results of the assessment exercises were presented to the community in the form of an exhibition and online consultation in 2022.</p> <p>It was agreed to present seven sites to the community. Each short-listed site was accompanied on its exhibition panel by a summary of the key points made in the AECOM Site Assessment Report and an indication of the preferences and 'ranking' agreed by the Review Group.</p> <p>The sites were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sowt01 Land at Bishops Court Lane</li> <li>• Sowt02 Land south of Bishops Court Road (full or in part)</li> <li>• Sowt03 Land north of Sidmouth Road</li> <li>• Sowt06 Langdon's Business Park and the occupied units</li> <li>• Sowt09 Bishops Court Lane</li> <li>• Sowt11 Land at Bishops Court Lane (full or in part)</li> <li>• NP2 the Football Ground, Winslade Park</li> </ul> |

| NP Policy | Examiner's Question   | Response   |
|-----------|---|--|
|           |   | <p>The consultation response was fully reported to the Parish Council and the options considered by the Review Group.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CSMSNP-Site-Consultation-Report-September22.pdf">https://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CSMSNP-Site-Consultation-Report-September22.pdf</a></p> <p>The community's preferences and weight of opposition to certain sites was fully taken into consideration, when the residential development options were further explored and refined.</p> <p>In the meantime the community opposition to housing development on Sowt09 was becoming even more apparent in the many representations being made by the community to the LPA after a planning application for the site had been made. The view of the community is a very pertinent consideration in the context of a neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>The selection of the preferred development area to be included in policy BisC12 was then subjected to a thorough environmental impact assessment (see answer to next question) before the publication of the Pre-Submission Version of the NP.</p>   |
| BisC12    | Is the allocation of Land to the East of Clyst St Mary consistent with the findings of the SEA? | <p>We understand the purpose of an SEA is to integrate environmental considerations into policies and plans at the earliest stages of decision-making.</p> <p>We commissioned an SEA assessment on a range of site allocation options before we decided on our preferred development strategy.</p> <p><a href="https://bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Clyst-St-Mary-NP-SEA-options-assessment_v2.0_051023.pdf">https://bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Clyst-St-Mary-NP-SEA-options-assessment_v2.0_051023.pdf</a></p> <p>The SEA considered six options, which reflected potential growth scenarios options and were considered as being reasonable alternatives. Options 3 and 4 corresponded with the number of houses that EDDC had, at that time, informed us were required. There was very little difference in overall score between the two options.</p> <p>The findings of the SEA assessment were analysed by the Review Group in October 2023. Option 3 was preferred because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) it also provided essential infrastructure to reduce traffic problems in the village of Clyst St Mary</li> <li>b) it provided a route for the Clyst Valley Cycle Trail, and</li> <li>c) it reflected the clear preference of the people as expressed at the public consultation carried out in September 2022.</li> </ul> <p>Further, it was agreed that should the strategic housing requirement necessitate additional housing numbers having to be provided for, then Option 5, which involves an additional, but limited extension of a single site development, was the preference and consistent with the NP's objectives.</p> |

| NP Policy | Examiner's Question   | Response  |
|-----------|---|---|
|           |   | <p>In October 2023 the Review Group <i>“agreed that site Sowt03 is the preferred site with Sowt11A as a logical addition if required”</i>.</p> <p>Our intended policy approach and its implications was discussed on several occasions with EDDC.</p> <p>Given the messages regarding housing numbers coming from the new Government, guidance from the local planning authority and the decisions of EDDC’s Strategic Planning Committee, a single area of land, comprising Sowt03 and part of Sowt11A, was allocated in the NP because of the need to satisfy local needs and meet a strategic housing requirement of <i>“at least 72 dwellings”</i>.</p> <p>The findings of the SEA site assessment and the more recent SEA for the Submission Version of the NP were used to inform the criteria of policy BisC12 to help mitigate the environmental impact of the development.</p> <p><a href="https://bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/241113-Clyst-St-Mary-and-Sowton-NP_SEA-Environmental-Report_v3.0.pdf">https://bishopsclyst.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/241113-Clyst-St-Mary-and-Sowton-NP_SEA-Environmental-Report_v3.0.pdf</a></p>  |
| BisC12    | <p>As a result of the Highway Authority's objection, can the proposed site allocation still be considered achievable?</p> <p>(A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This is essentially a judgement about the <a href="#">economic viability</a> of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period.)</p> | <p>The development agents for the land in question consider the requirements of policy BisC12 to be achievable with or without the link in place.</p> <p>The Highway Authority has concerns about the proposed link between Bishops Court Lane and the A3052 being used as a <i>“rat run”</i> to and from the A30.</p> <p>We have always supported proposals to reduce the traffic using Bishops Court Lane. This two-way traffic flow currently exits the area through Clyst St Mary Village along Frog Lane, which is extremely narrow, has roadside parking and has no footpath thereby creating major problems and risks to our residents which our plan is designed to alleviate.</p> <p>DCC has suggested that the route for the exit of the link road onto Bishops Court Lane should be safeguarded but not constructed at present. We would prefer that the link is constructed, and appropriate traffic management measures put in place. DCC’s concerns could be tested by traffic observations. If excessive traffic is generated, the link should then be further restricted or closed off. If this is not acceptable, we would reluctantly accept DCC amendments.</p> <p>We are mindful too that if a new settlement is built to the east of Clyst St Mary, a major review of the highway network will be necessary.</p> |