

**East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042**

# **Site Selection report**

## **Payhembury**



**February 2025**

**East Devon – an outstanding place**

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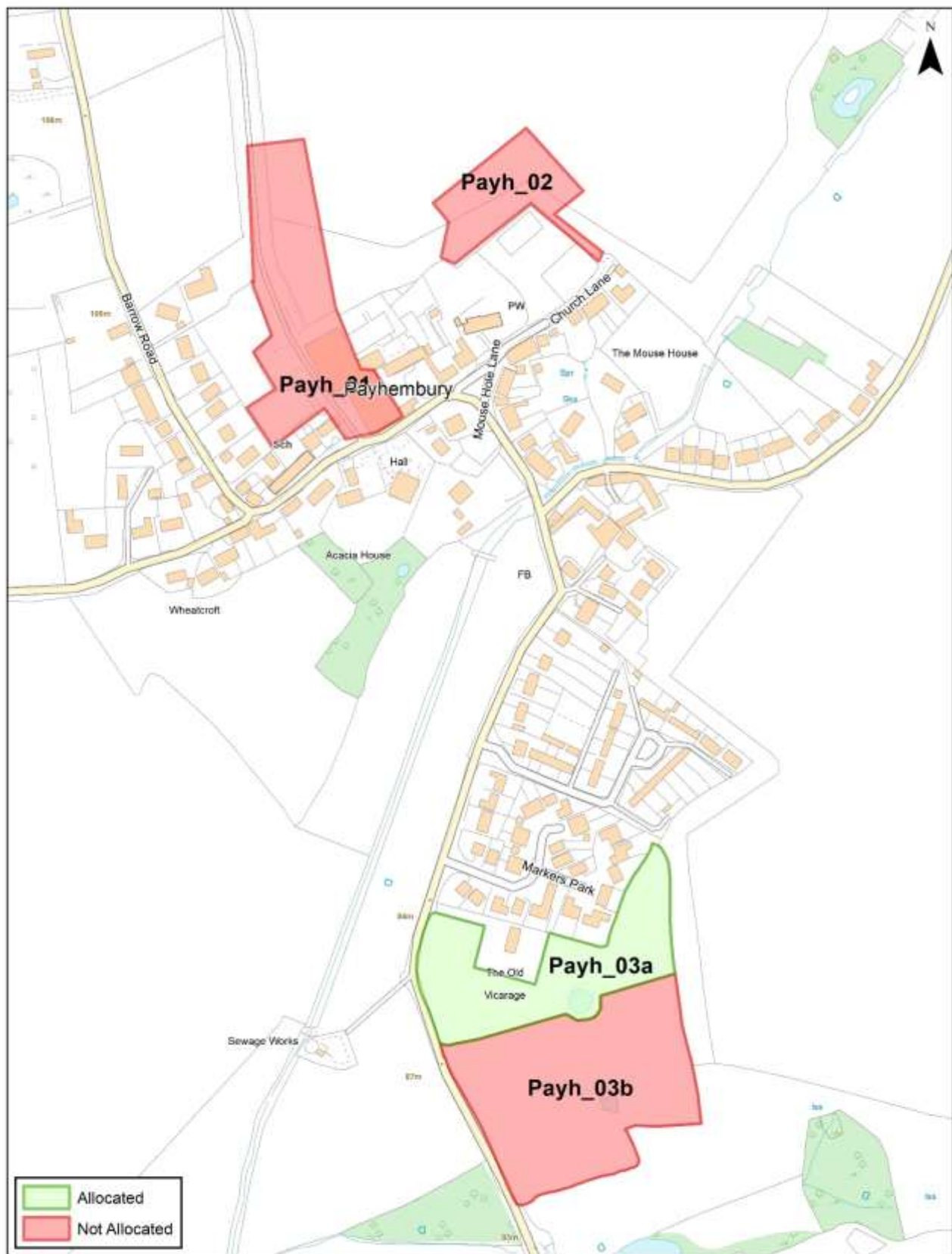
# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 East Devon District Council is preparing a Local Plan covering the period 2020 to 2042 that will allocate sites for development. The Site Selection methodology explains the process of how sites are identified, assessed, and selected for allocation, or not.<sup>1</sup> The selection process is a judgement that balances top-down strategic issues relating to the Local Plan district-wide housing and employment requirements and the spatial strategy for the distribution of development, with the specific factors in the site assessments.
- 1.2 For each settlement, a Site Selection report contains the assessment of sites and identifies those which will be allocated, alongside those that will not, with reasons why. It collates evidence from numerous other sources in assessing whether to allocate sites.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.3 For each site, the report contains identifying details, a map and photos, followed by a summary of the site assessment and conclusion on whether to allocate the site. This is followed by a more detailed assessment of the landscape, historic environment, and ecological impacts of each site.
- 1.4 This report contains the assessment and selection of sites at Payhembury. A map of all the sites which have been assessed is below, followed by a table which highlights the site selection findings.
- 1.5 No sites at Payhembury failed ‘site sifting’. This stage of the process rules out sites that are not ‘reasonable alternatives’ and therefore not considered as potential allocations in the Local Plan. In summary, to pass site sifting and therefore be considered as a potential allocation, the site should be identified as suitable, available, achievable in the HELAA; in a suitable location; not already allocated in a ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plan; and not already have planning permission. Further detail is contained in the Site Selection methodology.

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<sup>1</sup> Site Selection Methodology (2024): [sal-001-site-selection-methodology\\_v2-2020-2042.pdf](#); Landscape Assessment: [sal-002-landscape-sensitivity-assessment-methodology.pdf](#); HESA Methodology: [sal-003-historic-environment-site-assessment-methodology.pdf](#); Ecology Guidelines: [sal-004-ecology-guidelines-for-housing-allocation.pdf](#)

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



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Figure 1.1: Overview of Site Selection findings at Payhembury

<b>Site reference</b>	<b>Number of dwellings / hectares of employment land</b>	<b>Allocate?</b>
Payh_01	15 dwellings	No
Payh_02	14 dwellings (consent for 9; remaining area for 5 dwellings)	No
Payh_03	50 dwellings	Yes, part – 03a only for around 15 dwellings

## 2 Site Reference Payh\_01

### Site details

**Settlement:** Payhembury

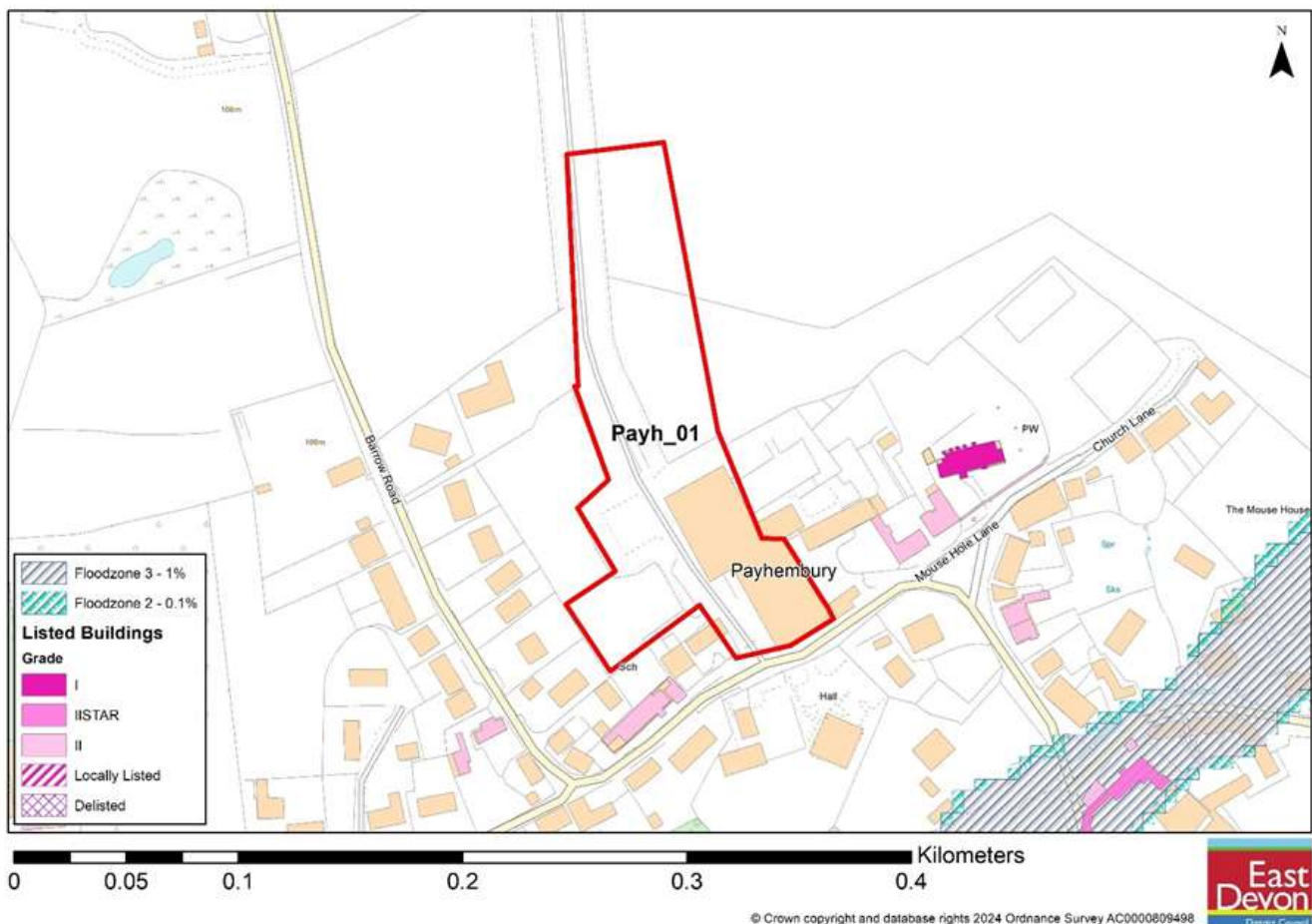
**Reference number:** Payh\_01

**Site area (ha):** 1.419

**Address:** Slade Barton, EX14 3HR

**Proposed use:** Approx. 15 dwellings

### Site map



## Photos



From village road into site – already consented for mixed use (re-)development (under construction)



Looking further into consented area for (re-)development, towards remaining site area beyond



View looking towards northern extent of site from edge of St Marys churchyard (heritage asset)

## Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

### Infrastructure

**Access:** Current industrial/local employment units near to Payhembury school and village facilities, exiting access and footway on south side of carriageway.

**DCC Education:** Site within walking distance of Payhembury primary school. The primary has some capacity to support development, but as it is a popular school with out-of-area children this is likely to cause a pushback on other primary schools. Advised site is adjacent/ takes in part of the school site and impact on school could be a concern and needs to be carefully assessed. However, this would have been a consideration for the current permissions. Additional secondary capacity required and transport costs for secondary apply. The Kings academy has previously clearly indicated it will not expand without significant investment and potentially new school.

### Landscape

Outside of National Landscape (AONB). Employment units and agricultural field at Slade Barton in Payhembury village. Site slopes up towards the north. Current permission for 9 dwellings and relocated workshop on southern part of the site. Remainder of site is considered to have capacity for 5 dwellings. Remainder of the site to north is highly exposed and poorly related to the existing village development. Overall, the site has a medium landscape sensitivity to new development.

### **Historic environment**

Heritage assets present: Grade II Apple Tree Cottage (50m), Grade II Yeomans Cottage (72m), Grade II Payhembury VC School and School House (18m), Grade II Sunnyside (48m), Grade II Higher House (59m), Grade I St Mary's Church (75m). Potential for adverse heritage impact subject to final design and layout. Northern extent of site more exposed.

Overall, medium - no significant effects which cannot be mitigated.

### **Ecology**

Ecology: Nature Recovery Network (1m), Section 41 (S41) Habitat of Principle Importance (including rivers and streams, excluding hedgerows) (73m). Site is within the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone.

Overall, significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### **Accessibility**

5 out of 12 facilities within 1,600m of site.

### **Other constraints**

Site is not in the flood zone but central road running through the site is at low risk of surface water runoff. Grade 3 agricultural land in strategic assessment which may include best and most versatile land (3a).

### **Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?**

No

### **Opportunities**

#### **Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)**

34 max yield based on total site area. However consent for 9 plus employment (being implemented), with potential for approx 5 on remaining land.

### **Contribution to spatial strategy**

Payhembury is a Service Village (Tier 4) in the emerging Local Plan. This limited level of development would therefore support the spatial strategy.

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

No

**Reasons for allocating or not allocating**

Large proportion of the site has permission for 9 dwellings and relocated workshop (planning permission under ref. 20/0550/MOUT and 22/0989/MRES) which is on site at time of writing. Remainder of site is considered to have capacity for 5 dwellings. However, this area to the north of the consented scheme is highly exposed with higher landscape sensitivity, potential for adverse heritage impact and poorly related to the existing village development, protruding into the countryside beyond existing built form.

**If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?**

Southern two-thirds of site would be suitable for allocation but already has consent for mixed use (residential and employment) use. Not considered a need to allocate this area as the consented works are underway.

## **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

### **Context**

#### **Landscape designation context**

Outside of National Landscape (AONB).

#### **For sites within the AONB, applicable special qualities**

-

#### **Other relevant biodiversity, historic environment and/or geological designations**

Nature recovery network area, Section 41 (S41) Habitat of Principle Importance adjacent

Site is located near a cluster of grade II listed buildings and 70m from the grade I listed church which would need to be considered.

#### **Landscape Character Type and relevant key characteristics**

LCT 3E Lowland Plains

- Level to gently sloping or rolling plain between the valley floors and the start of steeper valley sides.
- Small discrete woodland blocks.
- Mixed farmland, often in arable cultivation. Regular medium to large field pattern with local variation, particularly around settlements.
- Semi-natural habitats include roadside hedges and hedgerow trees - particularly oaks – streams and pockets of grassland.
- Historic villages, farms and lanes, but some features lost due to ploughing. Notable concentration of historic parklands including veteran trees.
- Settled, with a mixed pattern of villages, hamlets and isolated farms. Great variety of building materials and styles, even within single settlements.
- Sparse rural lanes. Relatively few public rights of way.
- Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts. Despite local impacts of development and infrastructure, much of the area retains a pleasant, rural feel.
- Long views over low hedges. Some views marred by pylons and other infrastructure.
- Lowland Plains visible from surrounding higher LCTs.

#### **Local landscape character of site and immediate surrounds**

Units and agricultural field at Slade Barton in Payhembury village with current permission (under construction) for 9 dwellings and relocated workshop on southern part of the site. Remainder of site (considered to have capacity for 5 dwellings) slopes up towards the north into medium sized agricultural (arable) field following treed field boundary, and sits above the village.

**Does the local landscape character of the site and immediate surrounds conform to published assessments?**

Yes

**General and site-specific affects that could arise from development**

Uncommitted part of site to north is highly exposed and poorly related to the existing village development. Effects from introduction of further built form and light spill, potential impact on boundary vegetation and designated assets in vicinity of site. Construction phase impacts including potential off site impacts eg large delivery vehicles/ construction plant accessing narrow winding lanes.

**Analysis**

<b>Physical and natural characteristics</b>	
Medium	Simple grassland/arable landscape. Contriubution as part of the setting of Payhembury, above the Grade I listed church. Site slopes up towards the north. Highly exposed site, with some boundary trees
<b>Cultural and historic associations</b>	
Medium	Close to historic core of Payhembury with direct intervisibility between northern part of site and St Mary Grade I listed churchyard. Reference to OS (1891, 1912) shows removal over time of boundary hedgerow as field size enlarged for modern agricultural use.
<b>Relationship to existing settlement edge</b>	
Medium-high	The existing consented development on the lower part of the site has a good relationship with the settlement, however the remaining area would be a linear pertrusion into the open countryside, close to existing built development, but with a poor direct relationship with it.
<b>Experiential landscape character</b>	
Medium	Current development works on lower part of site but feels like open countryside in the remainder and relatively tranquil and remote still.
<b>Views</b>	
Medium-high	The site is on rising ground, with part screening from the west by existing built development (on the lower consented part of the site) and trees lined boundary track. Intervisibiity with Grade I listed church setting and extensive views over countryside especially to the east towards the Blackdown Hills NL (allbeit several miles away)

<b>Overall landscape susceptibility</b>	
Medium-high	Relatively exposed and elevated nature of the site and poor relationship with existing and consented development on the lower part of site / remainder of village.
<b>Within nationally designated landscape? No</b>	
<b>Degree of intervisibility with designated landscape</b>	<b>If outside designated landscape, factors which may raise or lower value from moderate</b>
Moderate	Site likely visible from NL to the east - footpaths at Hembury Fort - due to lack of intervening high ground and location just below the ridge line, but at some considerable distance (c.2.5km). Unlikely from NL to distant south/south-east, in part beyond other settlements.
<b>Landscape value</b>	
Medium – An ordinary landscape which is appreciated by the community but has little or no wider recognition of its value	
<b>Overall landscape sensitivity</b>	
Medium	
<b>Landscape guidance: opportunities in relation to development</b>	
Majority of site has permission for development with little or no landscape impact and some opportunities for enhancement from approved landscaping scheme. Currently under construction.	

## Historic Environment Site Assessment

### Notes on history of area

The parish of Payhembury lies on the western fringe of the Blackdown Hills and the north east of the parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Agricultural activity has played a significant part in shaping the community and much of the land within the parish is still used for agricultural purposes. Features of historical interest include the parish church (St Mary the Virgin) and its yew tree (considered to be amongst the oldest in the UK at over 1,200 years old), Leyhill (15th century manor house), Lower House (late 16th century farmhouse) and Hembury Fort (a Neolithic and Roman hill fort with some of the most impressive earth ramparts in the south west).

### Overall conclusion

Medium: no significant effects which cannot be mitigated. An impact is predicted, but would not compromise the asset(s) cultural heritage value to the extent that the attributes that led to its designation, or ability to understand or appreciate its value, are diminished or compromised. Mitigation may make the impact acceptable. The overall significance of the asset would not therefore be materially changed.

<b>Step 1. Identify any heritage assets potentially affected</b>	
Is the site within 100 metres of a designated heritage asset?	Yes
Could development of the site affect any heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting?	Yes
List any heritage assets potentially affected.	1. St Mary's Church (GI), 2. Higher House (GII), 3. Sunnyside (GII), 4. Payhembury VC School / Payhembury School House (GII), 5. Appletree Cottage (GII) / Yeomans Cottage (GII) HER checked - no additional features.

## Ecological assessment

### Context – Sites and features (desk study)

Site / feature name	Geographic value	Distance from site / feature (metres)	Predicted impact
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	International	9481	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Special Protection Area (SPA)	International	9481	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ramsar site	International	17434	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	National	17815	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	National	9481	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	National	20729	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Regional	8972	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ancient Woodland Inventory Site (AWSI)	Regional	1905	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	County	698	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Unconfirmed Wildlife Site (UWS)	County	1145	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Draft Nature Recovery Network areas (NRN)	County	11	Significant moderate adverse effect predicted
Section 41 Habitat of Principle Importance (including rivers and streams, excluding hedgerow)	County	73	Significant moderate adverse effect predicted

### Comments

-

**Within River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone? No**

**Within Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone? Yes**

**Within Exe Estuary SPA HRA mitigation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths 400m exclusion zone? No**

**Number of European sites potentially impacted by site: 1**

### **On site assessment**

**Does the site consist of any habitats other than agriculturally improved grassland or arable (excluding small/negligible areas of habitat)?**

No.

**Presence of veteran or ancient trees**

No.

**Large numbers of mature trees within hedgerows or otherwise**

No.

**Presence of ponds not identified on aerial imagery**

No.

**Networks of small field parcel and hedgerows (any areas where allocation is likely to require removal of substantial areas of hedgerow to facilitate a suitable development footprint)**

No.

**Any other incidental features of ecological interest (protected/notable species incidentally recorded)**

No.

**Is there any evidence which contradicts the desk study results?**

No.

### **Conclusion**

Significant moderate adverse effect predicted

### 3 Site Reference Payh\_02

#### Site details

**Settlement:** Payhembury

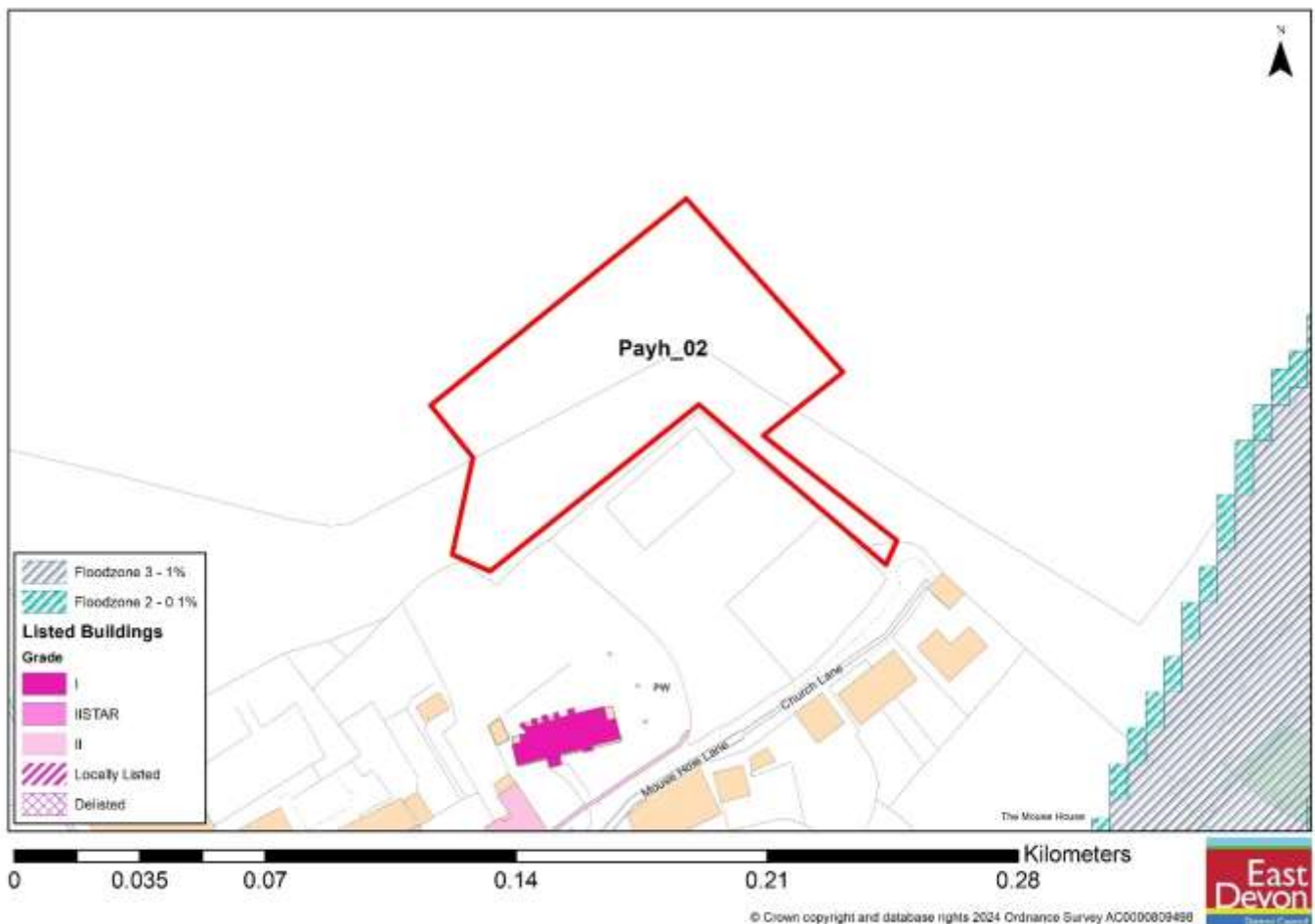
**Reference number:** Payh\_03

**Site area (ha):** 0.57

**Address:** Behind Playing fields, EX14 3HR

**Proposed use:** Approx. 15 dwellings

#### Site map



## Photos



Looking east across site towards NL, from where site adjoins church yard of St Marys (heritage asset)



View from within recreation field, just below site, to housing further below and open countryside below, indicating prominence of site.



Looking across site SE-NW from churchyard, showing steep topography and skyline

## **Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion**

### **Infrastructure**

**Access:** Restricted access through Church Lane but a possible connection through Payh\_01 should that parcel come through would make the parcel more viable. Limited visibility for peds and cycles on Church Lane.

**DCC Education:** Site within walking distance of Payhembury primary school. The primary has some capacity to support development, but as it is a popular school with out-of-area children this is likely to cause a pushback on other primary schools. Additional secondary capacity required and transport costs for secondary apply. The Kings academy has previously clearly indicated it will not expand with significant investment and potentially new school.

### **Landscape**

Outside of NL. Agricultural field adjoining Payhembury village recreation ground. Site slopes up towards the north. Highly exposed site to north of village adjacent to Grade I listed building and curtilage (St Mary's Church). Overall, the site has a medium-high landscape sensitivity to new development.

### **Historic environment**

Heritage assets present: Grade II Sunnyside (75m), Grade II Higher House (61m), Grade I St Mary's Church (45m). Likely significant heritage impact to adjacent Grade I listed church and curtilage.

Overall, impact considered to be high, with significant effects which cannot be mitigated.

### **Ecology**

Ecology: Nature Recovery Network (1m). Site is within the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone.

Overall, significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### **Accessibility**

5 out of 12 facilities within 1,600m of site.

### **Other constraints**

Site does not contain any areas at risk of flooding. Grade 2 agricultural land in strategic assessment.

### **Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?**

No

### **Opportunities**

#### **Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)**

14

#### **Contribution to spatial strategy**

Payhembury is a Service Village (Tier 4) in the emerging Local Plan. This limited level of development would therefore support the spatial strategy.

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

No

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

Outside of NL but highly exposed site, on northerly sloping ground, to north of village adjacent to Grade I listed building and curtilage (St Mary's Church), with high landscape sensitivity and likely high impact on the significance of this heritage asset.

**If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?**

No

## **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

### **Context**

#### **Landscape designation context**

Outside of National Landscape (AONB)

#### **For sites within AONB, applicable special qualities**

-

#### **Other relevant biodiversity, historic environment and/or geological designations**

Nature recovery network area adjacent

Site is located near a cluster of grade II listed buildings and 40m from the grade I listed church which would need to be considered. Impact on the church may be unacceptable although this would need to be established through a more detailed assessment.

#### **Landscape Character Type and relevant key characteristics**

LCT 3E Lowland Plains

- Level to gently sloping or rolling plain between the valley floors and the start of steeper valley sides.
- Small discrete woodland blocks.
- Mixed farmland, often in arable cultivation. Regular medium to large field pattern with local variation, particularly around settlements.
- Semi-natural habitats include roadside hedges and hedgerow trees - particularly oaks – streams and pockets of grassland.
- Historic villages, farms and lanes, but some features lost due to ploughing. Notable concentration of historic parklands including veteran trees.
- Settled, with a mixed pattern of villages, hamlets and isolated farms. Great variety of building materials and styles, even within single settlements.
- Sparse rural lanes. Relatively few public rights of way.
- Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts. Despite local impacts of development and infrastructure, much of the area retains a pleasant, rural feel.
- Long views over low hedges. Some views marred by pylons and other infrastructure.
- Lowland Plains visible from surrounding higher LCTs.

#### **Local landscape character of site and immediate surrounds**

Adjoining/part of medium sized agricultural field in arable use adjoining Payhembury village recreation ground. Site slopes up towards the north and sits in exposed location above the village.

**Does the local landscape character of the site and immediate surrounds conform to published assessments?**

Yes

**General and site-specific affects that could arise from development**

Highly exposed site. Effects from introduction of built-form and associated infrastructure; impact of light spill on dark skies, difficulties with access and construction phase impact including potential off site impacts eg large delivery vehicles/ construction plant accessing narrow winding lanes.; impacts on designated assets in vicinity of site.

**Analysis**

<b>Physical and natural characteristics</b>	
Medium-high	Simple grassland / arable landscape, with few hedges and fairly large but varying field sizes. Contribution as part of the setting of Payhembury, sitting above the Grade I listed church with little screening. Site slopes up towards the north. Highly exposed site
<b>Cultural and historic associations</b>	
Medium-high	Village of Payhembury has developed out from the church to the south, east and west. Historic OS (1891) shows site sub-divided by boundary hedgerow, since removed as field size enlarged for modern agricultural use. This land to the north of the church forms part of the setting behind it to the north and development would diminish the significance of this Grade I listed asset.
<b>Relationship to existing settlement edge</b>	
High	Development here would have a poor relationship and be divorced from the existing settlement edge and be at odds with the existing settlement pattern. It would sit on high ground in an exposed location above the village.
<b>Experiential landscape character</b>	
Medium-high	There is a degree of tranquility at this site, sitting beyond /above the churchyard and recreation field, with no modern built development adjoining and far reaching views. Overhead lines crossing the site which in itself has limited intrinsic scenic value.
<b>Views</b>	
High	The site is open and exposed on rising ground to the north. Development here would sit above the skyline and with many short, medium and long range views to the site. There are extensive views over surrounding countryside especially to the south and east including intervisibility with Blackdown Hills NL to the east including from Hembury Fort, albeit several miles away.

<b>Overall landscape susceptibility</b>	
High	Exposed open and elevated nature of the site and impact on significance of nearby Grade I heritage asset and poor relationship with current settlement edge.
<b>Within nationally designated landscape? No</b>	
<b>Degree of intervisibility with designated landscape</b>	<b>If outside designated landscape, factors which may raise or lower value from moderate</b>
Moderate	Site likely visible from NL to the east - footpaths at Hembury Fort - due to lack of intervening high ground and location just below the ridge line, but at some considerable distance (c2.4km). Unlikely from NL to distant south/south-east, in part beyond other settlements.
<b>Landscape value</b>	
Medium – An ordinary landscape which is appreciated by the community but has little or no wider recognition of its value	
<b>Overall landscape sensitivity</b>	
Medium - high	
<b>Landscape guidance: opportunities in relation to development</b>	
None identified.	

## Historic Environment Site Assessment

### Notes on history of area

The parish of Payhembury lies on the western fringe of the Blackdown Hills and the north east of the parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Agricultural activity has played a significant part in shaping the community and much of the land within the parish is still used for agricultural purposes. Features of historical interest include the parish church (St Mary the Virgin) and its yew tree (considered to be amongst the oldest in the UK at over 1,200 years old), Leyhill (15th century manor house), Lower House (late 16th century farmhouse) and Hembury Fort (a Neolithic and Roman hill fort with some of the most impressive earth ramparts in the south west).

### Overall conclusion

High: significant effect predicted. Mitigation unlikely to be possible. An impact that would compromise the asset(s) cultural heritage value to the extent that the attributes that led to its designation, or ability to understand or appreciate its value, are diminished and compromised. This would involve a loss of significance that could not be resolved through mitigation.

<b>Step 1. Identify any heritage assets potentially affected</b>	
Is the site within 100 metres of a designated heritage asset?	Yes
Could development of the site affect any heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting?	Yes
List any heritage assets potentially affected.	1. St Mary's Church (GI), 2. Higher House (GII), 3. Sunnyside (GII) HER checked - no additional features.

## Ecological assessment

### Context – Sites and features (desk study)

Site / feature name	Geographic value	Distance from site / feature (metres)	Predicted impact
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	International	9654	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Special Protection Area (SPA)	International	9654	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ramsar site	International	17628	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	National	17965	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	National	9379	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	National	20677	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Regional	8941	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ancient Woodland Inventory Site (AWSI)	Regional	1754	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	County	842	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Unconfirmed Wildlife Site (UWS)	County	1103	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Draft Nature Recovery Network areas (NRN)	County	1	Significant moderate adverse effect predicted
Section 41 Habitat of Principle Importance (including rivers and streams, excluding hedgerow)	County	213	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)

### Comments

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**Within River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone? No**

**Within Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone? Yes**

**Within Exe Estuary SPA HRA mitigation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths 400m exclusion zone? No**

**Number of European sites potentially impacted by site: 1**

### **On site assessment**

**Does the site consist of any habitats other than agriculturally improved grassland or arable (excluding small/negligible areas of habitat)?**

No.

#### **Presence of veteran or ancient trees**

See notes. Possible ancient/veteran trees just beyond southern site boundary within adjacent St Mary's churchyard.

#### **Large numbers of mature trees within hedgerows or otherwise**

No.

#### **Presence of ponds not identified on aerial imagery**

No.

**Networks of small field parcel and hedgerows (any areas where allocation is likely to require removal of substantial areas of hedgerow to facilitate a suitable development footprint)**

No.

**Any other incidental features of ecological interest (protected/notable species incidentally recorded)**

No.

**Is there any evidence which contradicts the desk study results?**

No.

### **Conclusion**

Significant moderate adverse effect predicted

## 4 Site Reference Payh\_03

### Site details

**Settlement:** Payhembury

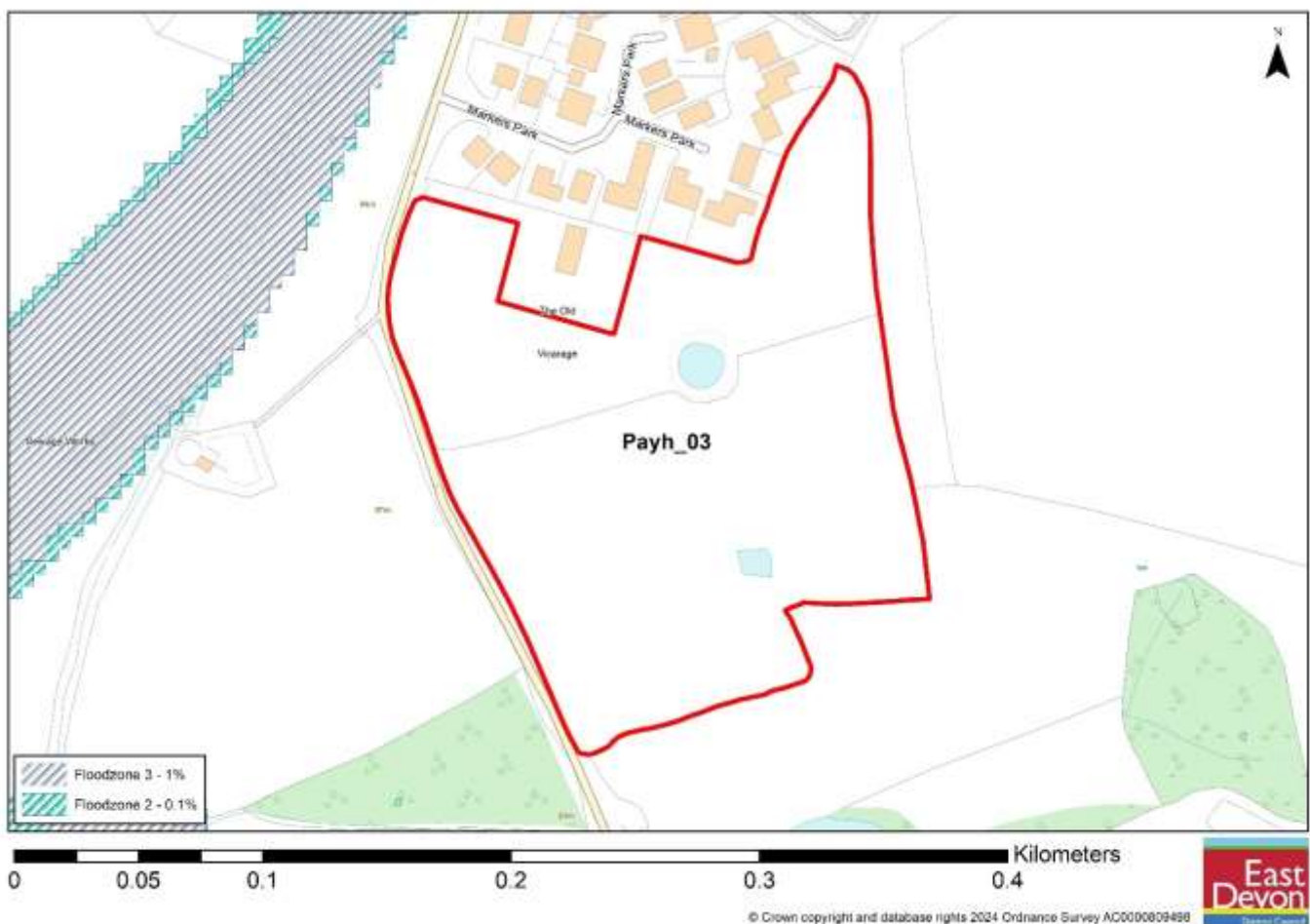
**Reference number:** Payh\_03

**Site area (ha):** 3.34

**Address:** Markers Park, Payhembury, EX14 3NL

**Proposed use:** Up to approx. 65 dwellings (mid yield 50)

### Site map



## Photos



Far northern corner of site, adjoining drive to Old Vicarage (n.b. not a heritage asset)



North across site towards Old Vicarage



View into site from southern approach



Within site towards Marl Pit / pond (centre of image)

## Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion

### Infrastructure

As for Payh\_01: Payhembury primary school has some capacity to support development, but as it is a popular school with out-of-area children this is likely to cause a pushback on other primary schools. Additional secondary capacity required and transport costs for secondary apply.

DCC Highways comments - Direct access onto highway, local services & facilities in area, no concerns with road collisions, site accessibility - no significant issues. ***New/further DCC advice re. Payh\_03a allocation (September 2024):*** Approach roads of mixed width. Modest development may be acceptable. Opportunity to provide non-motorised user infrastructure to make the scheme accessible to wider network, however absence of footways towards the school for a period is noted. Limited bus services in the village, shopping trip to Honiton three days a week and Exeter once a week. Based on the number of dwellings it is unlikely that it will be possible to fund sustainable improvements so the development would be primarily car dependent.

### Landscape

Outside of NL (AONB). Prominent site with high intervisibility with undesignated lowland plain landscape to the west across the floodplain and through boundary trees from southern approach to Payhembury. Agricultural field adjoining Payhembury built-up area. Site slopes up towards the east. Overall, the site has a medium-high landscape sensitivity to new development.

### Historic environment

Heritage assets present: Grade II Glebe Farm to south (115m). Other heritage assets to north in and around historic village core, with intervening modern development / intervisibility. Marl pit within site which is recorded on the HER and reflects the long standing association with agricultural activity which has played a significant part in shaping the community. Overall, medium - no significant effects which cannot be mitigated.

### Ecology

Ecology: Nature Recovery Network (5m). Site is within the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone. Mature trees and hedgerows to borders. Mature trees in open field. Ponds to centre of field. Overall, significant moderate adverse effect predicted.

### Accessibility

5 out of 12 facilities within 1,600m of site. (nb HELAA assessment says 6 but includes play area (presumably recreation ground) that is not recorded as such for Payh01 and 02)

**Other constraints**

Site does not contain any areas at risk of flooding. Grade 3 agricultural land in strategic assessment which may include best and most versatile land (3a)..

**Within Green Wedge in adopted Local Plan 2013-31 or made Neighbourhood Plan?**

No

**Opportunities**

-

**Yield (number of dwellings or hectares of employment land)**

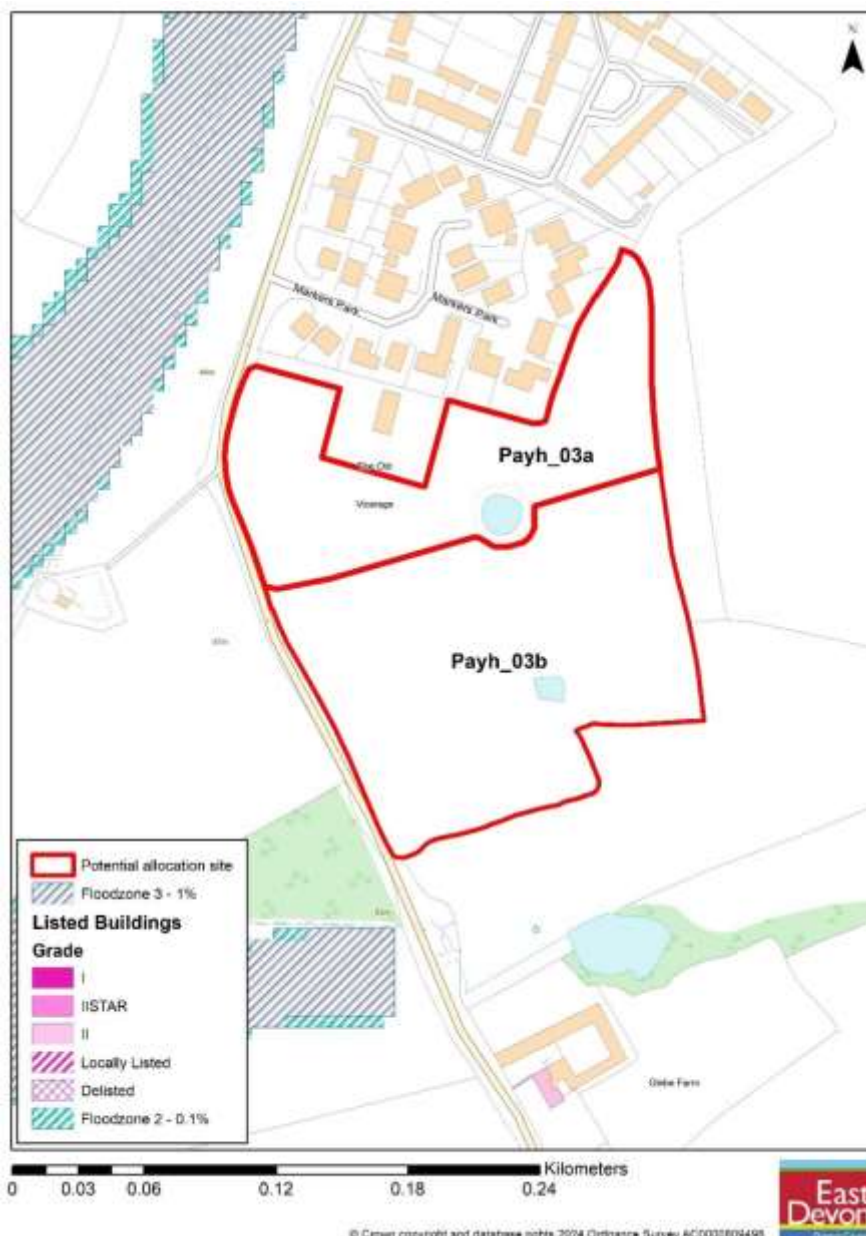
Potential for part of northern area of site to be developed (only) – approx 15 dwellings

**Contribution to spatial strategy**

Payhembury is a Service Village (Tier 4) in the emerging Local Plan. This limited level of development would therefore support the spatial strategy.

**Should the site be allocated?**

Yes (in part – 3a only). See map overleaf below.



### Reasons for allocating or not allocating

Prominent site but outside of, and with no/little intervisibility with, the National Landscape. Northern section adjoins Payhembury built-up area. No absolute landscape, ecological or heritage impacts identified to preclude development of this site, in addition to the small number of units (9) under development on site Payh\_01.

However, the site context and constraints do not support allocation of the whole site primarily due to scale, infrastructure constraints and also presence of mature internal trees. Transport links and narrow lanes in particular need to be considered and development beyond c.15 dwellings is unlikely to be appropriate.

Potential for development to be designed sensitively regarding Marl pit pond.

**If whole site is not suitable for allocation, could a smaller part be allocated?**

Yes – part of site (3a) adjoining existing built development at current southern extent of Payhembury.

## **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

### **Context**

#### **Landscape designation context**

Outside of National Landscape (AONB)

#### **For sites within AONB, applicable special qualities**

-

#### **Other relevant biodiversity, historic environment and/or geological designations**

Nature recovery network area on opposite side of lane.

On site marl pit on HER. Nearest designated asset is Glebe Farm Grade II listed building (115m south of site) with limited relationship. Other designated heritage assets in historic core of village c. 300m north. Note: 'Old Vicarage' adjacent is not a recognised heritage asset and is a modern building.

#### **Landscape Character Type and relevant key characteristics**

##### LCT 3E Lowland Plains

- Level to gently sloping or rolling plain between the valley floors and the start of steeper valley sides.
- Small discrete woodland blocks.
- Mixed farmland, often in arable cultivation. Regular medium to large field pattern with local variation, particularly around settlements.
- Semi-natural habitats include roadside hedges and hedgerow trees - particularly oaks – streams and pockets of grassland.
- Historic villages, farms and lanes, but some features lost due to ploughing. Notable concentration of historic parklands including veteran trees.
- Settled, with a mixed pattern of villages, hamlets and isolated farms. Great variety of building materials and styles, even within single settlements.
- Sparse rural lanes. Relatively few public rights of way.
- Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts. Despite local impacts of development and infrastructure, much of the area retains a pleasant, rural feel.
- Long views over low hedges. Some views marred by pylons and other infrastructure.
- Lowland Plains visible from surrounding higher LCTs.

### Local landscape character of site and immediate surrounds

A small-medium irregular shape pasture on the far southern edge of the village adjacent to modern (1980's) estate development, on rising ground from the lane with low well-managed boundary hedges and some mature internal and boundary trees. Extensive visibility across the lowland plain landscape.

### Does the local landscape character of the site and immediate surrounds conform to published assessments?

Yes

### General and site-specific affects that could arise from development

Prominent gateway site.

Effects from introduction of built form and associated infrastructure; potential impact on topography likely to require earthworks; impact of light spill and tranquility; potential effects re. creation of access, and on integral pond/marl pit and trees (root protection areas); Construction phase impacts including potential off site impacts eg large delivery vehicles/ construction plant accessing narrow winding lanes.

### Analysis

<b>Physical and natural characteristics</b>	
High	The site as a whole make a contribution to the surrounding landscape, including the gateway to the village of Payhembury from the south. It is more intimate than is typical of the wider landscape due to size and presence of trees (within the site and the boundary hedgerows) with 2 ponds being features of interest and it's irregular shape. It is also prominent as the site slopes up to the east.
<b>Cultural and historic associations</b>	
Medium	Presence of marl pit on site and maintained irregular field shape gives a sense of being an historic landscape. (Adjacent 'Old Vicarage' is not a heritage asset and no record related to it on the Devon Historic Environment Record. Modern (1970's?) construction.) Southernmost extent of site is 115m from Grade II listed farmhouse, which is currently isolated. However there is limited or no intervisibility due to intervening tree screen and non-listed farmyard buildings, but development here would reduce sense of separation from the built extent of the village as part of setting.
<b>Relationship to existing settlement edge</b>	
Medium	Gateway site to Payhembury from the south adjoining/framing the current clear extent of the settlement edge here which comprises modern (1980s

	estate development), indented with the adjoining Old Vicarage property, which has no notable local character. No further scattered dwellings beyond the site. Site is prominent but with reasonably strong relationship with the settlement edge where adjoining, although any development here would extend built form further from the village core and unclear if access could be linked to current estate roads. Relationship rapidly diminishes further south through the site as it starts to feel more remote and tranquil, and part of the wider landscape setting/approach to the village which itself is well-screened from the road until almost arriving at the current settlement edge due to alignment of the lane and presence of mature boundary trees.
<b>Experiential landscape character</b>	
High	Site has a scenic quality as part of the approach and setting to Payhembury and feels relatively remote/tranquil with a traditional rural feel and a largely intact rural character, particularly when viewed from the south.
<b>Views</b>	
Medium-high	The site is partially open due to being on rising ground visible from the road, above low hedgerows. It is more enclosed further south as the extent of tree screening increases. There are expansive views and high intervisibility NW across the floodplain and farmland. This is however largely unsettled land, away from the distant NL to the east and south and few footpaths. Views from the NL / Hembury Fort SAM to the east are distant and read against immediate adjoining built extent of the village.
<b>Overall landscape susceptibility</b>	
High	Outside of NL, but a highly prominent site due its topography sloping up towards the east opposite lower lying land, and its extent. High intervisibility with surrounding landscape and from southern approach to Payhembury. However, adjoining Payhembury built-up area and potentially less incongruous that Payh_01 (remaining available land) and Payh_02. Overall, the site has a high landscape susceptibility to new development.
<b>Within nationally designated landscape? No</b>	
<b>Degree of intervisibility with designated landscape</b>	<b>If outside designated landscape, factors which may raise or lower value from moderate</b>
Slight	Site unlikely to be visible due to intervening topography from NL to east/south/south-east and also being at some considerable distance (c2.6km plus).
<b>Landscape value</b>	
Medium – An ordinary landscape which is appreciated by the community but has little or no wider recognition of its value	
<b>Overall landscape sensitivity</b>	

High / Medium
<b>Landscape guidance: opportunities in relation to development</b>
Some potential opportunity to introduce good/more sympathetic design at this end / gateway to the village.

## Historic Environment Site Assessment

### Notes on history of area

The parish of Payhembury lies on the western fringe of the Blackdown Hills and the north east of the parish lies within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Agricultural activity has played a significant part in shaping the community and much of the land within the parish is still used for agricultural purposes. Features of historical interest include the parish church (St Mary the Virgin) and its yew tree (considered to be amongst the oldest in the UK at over 1,200 years old), Leyhill (15th century manor house), Lower House (late 16th century farmhouse) and Hembury Fort (a Neolithic and Roman hill fort with some of the most impressive earth ramparts in the south west).

### Overall conclusion

Medium: no significant effects which cannot be mitigated. An impact is predicted, but would not compromise the asset(s) cultural heritage value to the extent that the attributes that led to its designation, or ability to understand or appreciate its value, are diminished or compromised. Mitigation may make the impact acceptable. The overall significance of the asset would not therefore be materially changed.

<b>Step 1. Identify any heritage assets potentially affected</b>	
Is the site within 100 metres of a designated heritage asset?	No  (n.b. Site is 115m north of Glebe Farm Grade II listed building)
Could development of the site affect any heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting?	Yes
List any heritage assets potentially affected.	1. MDV66578 Name: MARL PIT in the Parish of Payhembury

<b>Step 2. Existing contribution of site to significance of heritage asset</b>	
Heritage asset 1	
Description of asset	MDV66578 Name: MARL PIT in the Parish of Payhembury MARL PIT (XVIII to XXI - 1751 AD to 2009 AD (Between))
Significance of asset and setting	Lesser
Relationship of site with heritage asset	Integral, on site
Level of contribution (site to heritage asset)	Significant
Further assessment required?	No Feature could be integrated into any future development. Biodiversity potential.

<b>Step 3. Identifying potential impact on significance of heritage asset</b>	
Heritage asset 1	
What impact would development have on the heritage asset and its setting?	Moderate
Could the site be developed in a way that minimised potential impact?	Yes, feature could be integrated.
Would the development affect the heritage asset in other ways?	Yes, increased urbanisation, traffic, light pollution, noise.

<b>Step 4. How to maximise enhancements and avoid harm</b>	
Heritage asset 1 maximising enhancement	
Could the development improve public access to and interpretation of the heritage asset?	Yes
Would development enable further research and recording of the heritage asset?	Yes
Would development enable better revealing of the significance of the heritage asset?	Yes
Would development enable the asset to be removed from the at risk register?	No
Heritage asset 1 avoiding harm	
Are there reasonable alternative sites?	Yes (but Payh_01 already committed)
Could the site boundary be changed to avoid harm?	No
Could the amount of development be reduced to avoid harm?	Yes
Would a different type of development (use) avoid harm?	No
Could design avoid harm?	Yes
Notes	Yes

## Ecological assessment

### Context – Sites and features (desk study)

Site / feature name	Geographic value	Distance from site / feature (metres)	Predicted impact
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	International	8998	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Special Protection Area (SPA)	International	8998	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ramsar site	International	17150	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	National	36990	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	National	9224	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	National	9244	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Regional	8590	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ancient Woodland Inventory Site (AWSI)	Regional	1883	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	County	1245	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Unconfirmed Wildlife Site (UWS)	County	635	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Draft Nature Recovery Network areas (NRN)	County	5	Significant moderate adverse effect predicted
Section 41 Habitat of Principle Importance (including rivers and streams, excluding hedgerow)	County	221	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)

### Comments

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**Within River Axe SAC Nutrient catchment zone? No**

**Within Beer Quarry and Caves SAC bat consultation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths SAC HRA mitigation zone? Yes**

**Within Exe Estuary SPA HRA mitigation zone? No**

**Within East Devon Pebblebed Heaths 400m exclusion zone? No**

**Number of European sites potentially impacted by site: 1**

### **On site assessment**

**Does the site consist of any habitats other than agriculturally improved grassland or arable (excluding small/negligible areas of habitat)?**

Yes. Some mature trees within site not within hedgerows and two ponds with vegetation adjoining.

**Presence of veteran or ancient trees**

Yes - some possible ancient/veteran trees

**Large numbers of mature trees within hedgerows or otherwise**

Yes.

**Presence of ponds not identified on aerial imagery**

No.

**Networks of small field parcel and hedgerows (any areas where allocation is likely to require removal of substantial areas of hedgerow to facilitate a suitable development footprint)**

No. Some hedgerow removal may be required for access

**Any other incidental features of ecological interest (protected/notable species incidentally recorded)**

No.

**Is there any evidence which contradicts the desk study results?**

No.

### **Conclusion**

Significant moderate adverse effect predicted

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