



St John's Woodland Village, Exmouth

Draft Allocation Exmo_20

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

March 2025

LD&DESIGN

**St John's Woodland Village, Exmouth
Draft Allocation Exmo_20**

**Landscape and Visual Appraisal
for Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation**

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28th March 2025

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1.0 Introduction and Scope

- 1.1.1. This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been prepared on behalf of Eagle Investments (SW) Ltd and 3West Group ('the promoters') with regards to the East Devon Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation and Strategic Policy SD01, Land at St John's, Exmo_20 allocation ('the site'). The draft allocation is located to the east of Exmouth and proposes circa 700 homes, social and community facilities, and at least 2 hectares of employment land.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this Landscape and Visual Appraisal is to accompany the Planning Representations on the emerging EDDC Local Plan submitted by Collier Planning. The appraisal comprises the following sections:
- Introduction and Scope
 - Landscape Planning Policy and Guidance
 - Site Context, Key Issues and Sensitivities
 - Landscape and Visual Analysis
 - Opportunities and Constraints for the Emerging Masterplan
 - Summary and Conclusions
- 1.1.3. This appraisal should be read with the following appendices:
- Site Context and Viewpoint Locations Plan
 - Designated Landscapes Plan
 - Illustrative Viewpoint Photographs 1-8
 - Landscape and Visual Opportunities and Constraints Plan
 - St John's Woodland Village Illustrative Masterplan
- 1.1.4. The promotor has previously consulted with East Devon District Council (EDDC) regarding a potential vision and masterplan for the draft Land at St John's (Exmo_20) allocation to the east of Exmouth. The emerging St John's Woodland Village masterplan would support the policy requirements of the draft allocation including the sensitivities identified within the EDDC Site Selection and Sustainability Appraisal reports (Feb 2025).

2.0 Landscape Planning Policy and Guidance

2.1.1. The relevant landscape planning policies and guidance includes:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2024)
- Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 (28th Jan 2016)
- Reg 19 Publication Draft of the East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042 (Feb 2025)
- East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042, Site Selection report, Exmouth (Feb 2025)
- East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042, Publication Draft Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal report (Feb 2025)

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.2. The NPPF (Dec 2024) advises that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development (Section 2), and that making effective use of land (Section 11), well-designed places (Section 12), and conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Section 15) are important aspects of the policy framework.

2.1.3. **Section 11, Making Effective Use of Land**, notes in para 129 point (d) *'...the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting'*; and point (e) *'the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places'*. Para 130 notes that *'area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places'*.

2.1.4. **Section 12, Achieving Well-Designed Places**, indicates in para 135 point (a) that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments *'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'*; point (b) *'are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping'*; point (c) *'are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and*

landscape setting’; and point (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’.

2.1.5. **Section 15, Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment**, para 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by point (a) *‘protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)’*; point (b) *‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services’...*; and point (c) *‘maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate’*. In respect of valued landscapes, para 188 notes that planning policy and decisions should *‘distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites’*.

2.1.6. With regards to designated landscapes, Section 15, para 189 advises that *‘great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues...while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas’*.

Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013 (28th January 2016)

2.1.7. The East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 was adopted in 28th January 2016 and includes the following policies of relevance:

2.1.8. **Strategy 5, Environment** (pages 38) states:

‘All development proposals will contribute to the delivery of sustainable development, ensure conservation and enhancement of natural historic and

built environmental assets, promote ecosystem services and green infrastructure and geodiversity.

Open spaces and areas of biodiversity importance and interest (including internationally, nationally and locally designated sites and also areas otherwise of value) will be protected from damage, and the restoration, enhancement, expansion and linking of these areas to create green networks will be encouraged through a combination of measures to include:

- 1. Maximising opportunities for the creation of green infrastructure and networks in sites allocated for development;*
- 2. Creating green networks and corridors to link the urban areas and wider countryside to enable access by all potential users...'*

2.1.9. The explanatory text for Strategy 5 goes on to state:

'New development will incorporate open space and high quality landscaping to provide attractive and desirable natural and built environments for new occupants and wildlife. It will contribute to a network of green spaces and ensure potential adverse impacts on the Exe Estuary and East Devon Pebblebed Heaths European wildlife sites are appropriately mitigated against. Where there is no conflict with biodiversity interests, the enjoyment and use of the natural environment will be encouraged and all proposals should seek to encourage public access to the countryside'.

2.1.10. **Strategy 7, Development in the Countryside** (page 41) states:

'The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area that are outside the Built-up Area Boundaries and outside of site specific allocations shown on the Proposals Map. Development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would

not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:

- 1. Land form and patterns of settlement;*
- 2. Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings; and*
- 3. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions'.*

2.1.11. Strategy 44, Undeveloped Coast and Coastal Preservation Area (page 134) which states:

'Land around the coast and estuaries of East Devon, as identified on the Proposals Map, is designated as a Coastal Preservation Area. Development or any change of use will not be allowed if it would damage the undeveloped/open status of the designated area or where visually connected to any adjoining areas. The Coastal Preservation Area is defined on the basis of visual openness and views to and from the sea'.

2.1.12. Strategy 46, Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONB's (page 138) states:

'Development will need to be undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic to, and helps conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of, the natural and historic landscape character of East Devon, in particular in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Development will only be permitted where it:

- 1. Conserves and enhances the landscape character of the area;*
- 2. Does not undermine landscape quality; and*

3. Is appropriate to the economic, social and wellbeing of the area.

When considering development in or affecting AONBs, great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing their natural beauty and major development will only be permitted where it can be shown that it cannot be reasonably accommodated elsewhere outside of the AONB'.

2.1.13. Policy D1, Design and Local Distinctiveness (page 161/162) states:

'In order to ensure that new development...is of a high quality design and locally distinctive, a formal Design and Access Statement should accompany applications setting out the design principles to be adopted...Proposals will only be permitted where they:

- 1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed;*
- 2. Ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration and materials of buildings relate well to their context;*
- 3. Do not adversely affect:*
 - a) The distinctive historic or architectural character of the area;*
 - b) The urban form, in terms of significant street patterns, groups of buildings and open spaces;*
 - c) Important landscape characteristics, prominent topographical features and important ecological features;*
 - d) Trees worthy of retention;*
 - e) The amenity of occupiers of adjoining residential properties; and*
 - f) The amenity of occupants of proposed future residential properties, with respect to access to open space...'*

2.1.14. Policy D2, Landscape Requirements (page 163) states:

'Landscape schemes should meet all of the following criteria:

1. *Existing landscape features should be recorded in a detailed site survey, in accordance with the principles of BS 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Construction' (or current version);*
2. *Existing features of landscape or nature conservation value should be incorporated into the landscaping proposals and where their removal is unavoidable provision for suitable replacement should be made elsewhere on the site. This should be in addition to the requirement for new landscaping proposals. Where appropriate, existing habitat should be improved and where possible new areas of nature conservation value should be created;*
3. *Measures to ensure safe and convenient public access for all should be incorporated;*
4. *Measures to ensure routine maintenance and long term management should be included;*
5. *Provision for the planting of trees, hedgerows, including the replacement of those of amenity value which have to be removed for safety or other reasons, shrub planting and other soft landscaping; and*
6. *The layout and design of roads, parking, footpaths and boundary treatments should make a positive contribution to the street scene and the integration of the development with its surroundings and setting'.*

Regulation 19 Publication Draft of the East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042

2.1.15. Consultation on the Regulation 19 Local Plan runs from 13th February to 31st March 2025 and includes the following policies of relevance:

2.1.16. **Strategic Policy SD01, Exmouth and its Development Fringes: Land at St John's Exmo_20** (page 77/78) covering the draft allocation which states:

'Land at St John's, on the eastern side of Exmouth, is allocated for a comprehensive development scheme to accommodate:

A. Social and community facilities;

B. Around 700 new homes; and

C. At least 2 hectares of employment land.

This site allocation will need to come forward on the basis of an agreed masterplan for the whole site that clearly demonstrates how phased comprehensive development will be undertaken and implemented, including with appropriate mechanisms for apportionment of development costs and contributions across separately owned land parcels. Full agreement will be required before any specific parcels of land can come forward for development.

Built development will need to be concentrated in the southern parts of the site and the scheme will need to place considerable emphasis on protection of the setting and tranquillity of nearby heritage assets, specifically St John in the Wilderness Church. Support will be given for expansion of the churchyard, to provide more burial/interment of ashes space at St John in the Wilderness. Parts of the site and adjoining areas, especially woodlands are of biodiversity importance and sensitivity and great care will be needed in developing proposals to ensure their protection and enhancement. New homes and other development that would result in unacceptable impacts will not be permitted within 400 metres of the Pebblebed Heaths. The development will need to be supported by a new developer provided SANGs, brought forward and implemented as part of the overall scheme on the allocated or on nearby land.

Vehicular access, to accommodate modest levels of development, will be allowed for southern site parts from the road 'Southern Wood', subject to detailed assessment of highway access acceptability and objective review of local road and junction capacity and with mitigation provided to address unacceptable adverse impacts. Primary vehicle access to the site, serving the large majority/large bulk of development, will be from the B3179 to the north. High quality, safe and attractive to use pedestrian, cycle and public transport access, particularly providing southerly site links into Exmouth and to nearby

services, facilities and job opportunities, will need to be an essential part of the overall development scheme’.

2.1.17. **Policy DS04, Green and Blue Infrastructure** (page 179) states:

‘Development in East Devon will deliver high quality multi-functional Green and Blue Infrastructure in accordance with Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Framework...’

2.1.18. **Strategic Policy OL01, Landscape Features** (page 196/197) states:

‘East Devon’s landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where the applicant is able to demonstrate through a proportionate Landscape Appraisal that it will protect and enhance valued landscape attributes and special features and qualities that contribute to the character of East Devon’s landscapes, in particular where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:

- A. Landform and patterns of settlement;*
- B. Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, trees and woodlands, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings;*
- C. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions; and*
- D. Aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquillity, wildness and dark skies.*

All development in the countryside should have regard to the most up to date Landscape Characterisation Assessments as a basis for understanding, maintaining and enhancing local distinctiveness and landscape character as well as up to date strategy and guidance for trees and woodlands’.

2.1.19. **Strategic Policy OL02, National Landscape (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)** (page 199/200) states:

'The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscapes (NL's) in East Devon:

- A. Development in a NL, or outside but affecting its setting or appearance, will only be permitted where it avoids harm and contributes to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the special qualities, character and natural beauty of the NL (including the coastline, where relevant)...*

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042, Site Selection report (Feb 2025)

2.1.20. Page 98 of the Site Selection report provides a landscape summary for the draft St John's allocation (Exmo_20) which acknowledges that:

'Given its overall size, the site is well screened with comparatively limited views in or out of the site on a local scale. More northerly parts of the site are, however, higher and more prominent and visually open, but in indicative agents plans for development, other than for an access road, this northerly area is kept clear of built development'.

[Author's emphasis]

2.1.21. Page 100 of the Site Selection report provides a description of the local landscape character of the site and immediate surrounds:

*'The site is very substantial in scale and sweeps generally upward from lower land at the south, where the site lies close to built up urban edges of Exmouth, to higher more rural land to the north. **Extensive wooded areas in southern parts of the site effectively screen large areas from obvious viewpoints but even for more exposed northerly parts close by viewpoints into the site are comparatively limited.** There are no identified public footpaths into or through the site so this limits more intermediate local views and screening at site boundaries also limits local views. Longer distance viewpoints have not been assessed but*

given the site size it is assumed there are site areas of some prominence, perhaps mostly from southerly areas'. [Author's emphasis]

East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042, Publication Draft Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal report (Feb 2025)

2.1.22. Page 333 of the Sustainability Appraisal for the Exmouth sites including the draft St John's allocation (Exmo_20) also notes:

'Given its overall size, Exmo_20 is well screened with comparatively limited views in or out of the site on a local scale, but more easterly parts of the site are higher and more prominent and visually open'.

Summary

2.1.23. On review of this appraisal and the emerging masterplan, the potential landscape and visual effects arising from the draft St John's allocation (Exmo_20) are not considered to materially conflict with the relevant landscape planning policies outlined within para's 129 (d-e), 130, 135 (a-d), 136, 187 (a-c), 188 and 189 of the NPPF (Dec 24); EDDC strategy policies 5, 7, 44, 46 and policies D1 and D2 of the Adopted Local Plan; and EDDC strategic policies SD01, Exmo_20, OL01, OLO2 and policy DS04 of the Reg 19 Consultation Draft Local Plan.

2.1.24. This appraisal concurs with the findings of the EDDC draft Local Plan Site Selection and Sustainability reports (Feb 2025) in terms of the *'comparatively limited views in or out of the site'* and the *'extensive wooded areas in [the] southern parts of the site [which] effectively screen large areas from obvious viewpoints'*. The emerging masterplan would be designed to support the policy requirements of the allocation including the sensitivities identified within the EDDC Site Selection and Sustainability Appraisal reports (Feb 2025). The emerging masterplan would respect the site's context, enhance local distinctiveness and create a positive sense of place.

3.0 Site Context, Key Issues and Sensitivities

Site Context

- 3.1.1. The site comprises approximately 84.8ha of arable and pastoral farmland between the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road and the Pebblebed Heaths to the north, Liverton Farm to the east, Withycombe Brook and Liverton Business Park to the south, and the settlement edge of Exmouth along Meadowview Road, Dinan Road and St. John's Road to the west (Appendix 1).
- 3.1.2. St John's in the Wilderness Church and a campsite is located towards the centre and west of the site at Withycombe Barton. Existing properties are located within the immediate context of the site at Sevenacre Corner, Barclay Lodge and Four Beeches to the north, St John's Farm and Barton House towards the centre, Briar Patch and Veiges Farm to the south. There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site itself although there is an area of open access land to the north of the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road within Withycombe Raleigh Common and the Pebblebed Heaths.

Landscape Character

- 3.1.3. The site is located within the following published Landscape Character Areas (LCA's):
- Natural England, National Character Area (NCA 184), Devon Redlands
 - Devon Character Area (DCA 11), Pebble Bed Heaths and Farmland
 - East Devon, Landscape Character Type (LCT 1B), Open Coastal Plateaux
 - East Devon, Landscape Character Type (LCT 1C), Pebblebed Heaths
- 3.1.4. The overall character of the site is broadly representative of the published DCA and LCT's comprising rolling pastoral and arable farmland, woodlands, thick hedgerows and hedgebanks, mature trees (predominantly oak), wooded valleys and incised streams. The site forms a discrete 'tongue' of land with enclosed pastoral farmland and horse grazing paddocks bounded

by woodland on southern and western fringes with flatter arable farmland on the elevated ridgeline to the north.

- 3.1.5. A sense of visual containment and enclosure is provided by the surrounding woodland and landform with some extensive views permitted from the higher ridgeline to the north of the site towards the Exe estuary to the south-west. There are some settlement influences in terms of the farm buildings, campsite and churchyard at Withycombe Barton towards the centre, Liverton Solar Farm to the east, and Liverton Business Park to the south.
- 3.1.6. There are notable variations in landscape character across the site including:
- Fields to the north on the fringes of the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road are medium-to-large scale, rectilinear in pattern and flatter, forming part of an elevated ridgeline used for arable cultivation, with fewer strong hedgerows/mature trees and some expansive views towards the Exe estuary to the south-west;
 - Fields towards the centre are medium-to-small scale and irregular in pattern, forming a distinct rolling, semi-enclosed pastoral landscape with thick hedgerows rather than woodland blocks, with some sense of tranquillity and intervisibility with St. John's in the Wilderness Church forming a visible landmark; and
 - Fields in the southern parts of the site are smaller in scale, irregular in pattern, and physically and visually contained by deciduous woodland and thick belts of mature trees creating a strong sense of visual enclosure and containment. Fields to the south are generally used as horse grazing paddocks lending a more domestic, semi-rural character to the southern part of the site with some intervisibility with Liverton Business Park.

Visual Context

3.1.7. In general, visibility of the site in the wider context is restricted by the rising topography and woodland on the fringes of the draft allocation (Exmo_20). Desk based and field assessments (Appendix 3i-viii) have shown that:

- The north-eastern part of the site near the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road is located on an elevated ridgeline which is visible from the roadside with expansive views towards the Exe estuary to the south-west.
- The eastern part of the site is enclosed by mature woodland with limited glimpse views perceptible from the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road, Knowle Hill, Liverton Farm and the B3178 Salterton Road.
- The southern part of the site is visually enclosed by an area of rising woodland to the north of Withycombe Brook and Liverton Business Park.
- The western parts of the site on the urban fringe of Exmouth are partly enclosed by woodland and high-sided hedgebanks although intermittent views are permitted into the site from St. John's Road to the north of Withycombe Barton.

Designated Landscapes

3.1.8. The site is not located within a statutory or non-statutory designated landscape (Appendix 2). The land within the Pebblebed Heaths to the north, Knowle Hill to the east, and beyond the B3178 Salterton Road to the south-east is within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB).

3.1.9. The East Devon National Landscape (AONB) Partnership Plan 2019-2024 identifies the special qualities which require protection. The key sensitivities or special qualities covering the Pebble Bed Heaths and Farmland (DCA 11) character area to the north of the site are defined as:

- *'Distinctive, unspoilt, wooded skyline providing local distinctiveness and orientation;*
- *Outstanding views across East Devon to west and east and also south to the coast;*
- *Sense of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, enhanced by natural qualities of the heath, woodland and commons;*
- *Rarity value as one of Devon's few areas of remaining lowland heath;*
- *Varied wildlife habitats including SSSI, SAC and Special Protection Area (SPA) designations on heathland habitats valued for endangered species such as Dartford Warbler, Nightjar and invertebrates; and*
- *Other habitats of value including ancient semi-natural and broadleaved woodland'.*

3.1.10. A Coastal Preservation Area (CPA) also lies beyond the B3178 Salterton Road approximately 0.25km to the south-east covering the coastline and inland areas between Knowle, Budleigh Salterton and Sandy Bay. The CPA is a local plan designation to protect visual openness and views to and from the sea (adopted Local Plan policy, Strategy 44).

Other Environmental Designations

- 3.1.11. The land immediately to north beyond the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road comprises open access land within the Pebblebed Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SPA/SAC protects a network of ecologically sensitive heathlands including Withycombe Raleigh, East Budleigh and Lympstone Common to the north of the site.
- 3.1.12. Three listed buildings are located within the immediate context of the site including Withycombe Barton and Higher Lodge (Grade II) and St. John's in the Wilderness Church (Grade II*) towards the centre and west of the site.

3.1.13. In summary, the visual envelope of the site is considered to be relatively contained. Due to the rising landform and extent of vegetation within Withycombe Raleigh Common, there is restricted visibility of the site from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) to the north of the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road. Also, due to the extent of woodland to the east, there is limited visibility of the site beyond the B3178 Salterton Road within the Coastal Preservation Area (CPA) and East Devon National Landscape (AONB) designations.

3.1.14. The site is not clearly perceptible from the East Devon Way recreational trail located 1.05km to the north or from the South West Coast Path at West Down View on the cliffs approximately 2.01km to the south-east.

Key Issues and Sensitivities

3.1.15. In summary, the key issues and sensitivities include:

- Potential landscape impacts on the character of the site including the rolling pastoral and arable farmland, woodlands, thick hedgerows and hedgebanks, mature trees (predominantly oak), wooded valleys and incised streams.
- Potential visual impacts from the elevated ridgeline and the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road to the north with expansive views towards the Exe estuary and visual impacts on St. John's in the Wilderness Church towards the centre and west of the site.
- Potential visual impacts on the setting and special qualities of the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) covering the Pebblebed Heaths open access land, SPA, SAC and SSSI (within Withycombe Raleigh, East Budleigh and Lypstone Commons) to the north of the site. The relevant special qualities include the *'distinct, unspoilt wooded skyline'*; the *'outstanding views...south to the coast'*; and the *'sense of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, enhanced by natural qualities of the heath, woodland and commons'*.

3.1.16. These landscape and visual sensitivities identified from our field surveys as well as the EDDC Site Selection and Sustainability appraisals (Feb 2025) has informed the design of the emerging masterplan for the draft St John's (Exmo_20) allocation (Appendix 4).

4.0 Opportunities and Constraints for the Emerging Masterplan

Emerging Masterplan

- 4.1.1. The emerging vision and masterplan for St John's Woodland Village covering the draft allocation has been designed in response to the site context, key issues and sensitivities identified in Section 3.0. The masterplan would deliver circa 719 new homes, a primary school and café set around a central village green or common.
- 4.1.2. The future design of the masterplan will further consider the requirement and integration of the minimum 2-hectare employment land. Subject to further design, this may include commercial, business or light industrial uses dispersed between the Village Core and Community Hub character areas to the east and the Woodland Cluster character area to the south of the site. The employment uses may be located within the ground floors of proposed local and neighbourhood centres.
- 4.1.3. The overall site area of 84.78 hectares would be subdivided by a net developable area of 23.25 hectares, streets and public realm of 12.3 hectares, and green infrastructure of 49.23 hectares (or 58% of the overall land budget).

Opportunities and Constraints

- 4.1.4. The key opportunities and constraints in landscape and visual terms includes:
- 4.1.5. **Designated Landscapes** – the emerging masterplan includes a 400 metre buffer from the Pebble Bed Heaths SPA/SAC to the north which would also reduce the potential impacts on the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) edging the northern boundary of the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road.

- 4.1.6. **Potential landscape impacts** – the emerging masterplan provides an opportunity to reflect the differences in landscape character across the site including the open character and heathland fringe to the north, the semi-enclosed, pastoral rolling character towards the centre, and the more enclosed, heavily wooded character within the southern part of the site. The wooded fringes provide a strong sense of visual containment to the site which would be reinforced to provide a verdant setting and backdrop to the new community.
- 4.1.7. **Potential visual impacts** – the proposed housing would be located within the less sensitive southern and eastern parts of the site. This is intended to protect the elevated ridgeline along the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road within the 400m SPA/SAC buffer and the expansive views towards the Exe estuary. An area of greenspace or village green would be located towards the centre and west of the site to protect the setting and views from St John’s in the Wilderness Church as a distinctive landmark building in the context of the site.
- 4.1.8. **Highways access** – potential highways access points would be sensitively located on the Outer Ting Tong Road to the north, from Dinan Way and Southern Wood to the south-west, and from St John’s Road to the north of Withycombe Barton to the west. The proposed highway access point from Southern Wood would be sensitively designed to limit the extent of woodland removal to the south-west of the site.
- 4.1.9. **Retain and enhance the existing the green infrastructure network** – the emerging masterplan would reinforce the existing hedgerow and woodland framework to enhance the compartmentalisation and character of the development parcels. The masterplan would reconnect the existing landscape features with a ‘spine’ of accessible greenspace including areas of woodland, open grassland, meadows and orchards. The masterplan provides opportunities to enhance the network of footpaths and cycle routes providing connectivity between the urban fringe of Exmouth to the west and the Pebblebed Heaths to the north of the site.

4.1.10. **Creation of a distinct village identity informed by landscape**

character – due to the visual containment provided by woodland, it is considered appropriate to create a separate woodland village community informed by the character of the site. The existing landscape framework suggests that a linear and irregular settlement form would allow for a series of distinct neighbourhoods including a village core, community hub, artisan and woodland residential clusters. A proposed village green to protect St John's in the Wilderness Church would form a central focus and landmark to enhance the sense of place and identity within the draft allocation.

5.0 Landscape and Visual Analysis

5.1.1. Appendix 3i-viii (Viewpoints 1-8) show the key views which have informed this appraisal including:

- Viewpoint 1 - Lypstone Common and the East Devon Way from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
- Viewpoint 2 - East Budleigh Common, East Devon Heaths SAC and Pebblebed Heaths SSSI from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
- Viewpoint 3 - B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road and Dalditch Lane on the edge of the East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
- Viewpoint 4 - Knowle Hill, west of Knowle
- Viewpoint 5 - B3178 Salterton Road on the edge of the East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
- Viewpoint 6 - West Down Lane, Exmouth Footpath 3 and Haven Devon Cliffs Resort from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
- Viewpoint 7 - St John's Road, north-east of Exmouth
- Viewpoint 8 - St John's in the Wilderness Churchyard, north-east of Exmouth

5.1.2. The emerging masterplan for draft allocation (Exmo_20) is likely to result in direct physical impacts to the character and appearance of the site itself resulting from the change from pastoral and arable farmland to a mixed use residential development with integrated employment use comprising circa 719 new homes, a primary school and café with extensive green infrastructure.

5.1.3. In common with other greenfield sites, the draft allocation (Exmo_20) would require the removal of the pastoral and arable land uses. Site clearance and re-contouring would be required to accommodate the development parcels and housing with limited sections of hedgerow and

woodland removal required for highways access. The key characteristics of the Devon Redlands (NCA 148), Pebble Bed Heaths and Farmland (DCA 11), Open Coastal Plateaux (LCT 1B) and the Pebble Bed Heaths (LCT 1C) would be affected within the site itself. However, the effects on landscape character are likely to diminish beyond the immediate site context due to visual containment provided the existing woodland and landform (Viewpoints 1-8).

- 5.1.4. Close proximity views of the proposed housing are likely to be experienced to varying degrees from the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road to the north (Viewpoint 3). The masterplan has been designed to include a 400m buffer from the SPA/SAC to the north. This 400m buffer and development offset would include an extensive area of greenspace along the higher ridgeline. This greenspace to the north may form part of the Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) provision and designed to appear of semi-natural character. The proposed housing would appear contained within the central and southern parts of the site to reduce the visual impacts from the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road.
- 5.1.5. Close proximity views of the proposed housing are likely to be visible from St John's Road to the north of Withycombe Barton (Viewpoint 7) and from St John's in the Wilderness Church (Viewpoint 8) towards the centre and west of the site. The emerging masterplan would provide an area of greenspace or village green to protect the outward views from the churchyard.
- 5.1.6. Close proximity views of the proposed housing are also likely to be visible from the highway access point leading off Southern Wood to the south-west of the site. A limited section of woodland removal would be required at Lower Veiges Plantation which would permit channelled views into the southern part of the site. The proposed highway access point and visibility splays on Southern Wood would be sensitively designed to reduce the extent of tree removal.

- 5.1.7. Due to the extent of woodland enclosure on the margins of the site, views of the proposed housing are likely to be restricted or filtered within more distant views from Knowle Hill (Viewpoint 4), Liverton Farm and the B3178 Salterton Road (Viewpoint 5) to the east, and from Liverton Business Park to the south of the site. Filtered views of the upper elevations and rooflines of the proposed housing are likely to be perceptible to varying degrees beyond the intervening woodland and hedgerows, particularly in the winter months. However, these views from the east and south would be partly in the context of Liverton Solar Farm and existing commercial buildings within Liverton Business Park.
- 5.1.8. Due the 400m SPA/SAC buffer and the existing landform and vegetation within Withycombe Raleigh Common to the north, the proposed housing is unlikely to be visible from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) beyond the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road (Viewpoint 1 and 2). Views from the south-east of the site within the Coastal Protection Area (CPA) and the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) beyond the B3178 Salterton Road are unlikely to be significantly affected due to intervening landform, hedgerows, Laverton Solar Farm and distance from the site (Viewpoint 6).

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1.1. This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been prepared with regards to the Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation and Strategic Policy SD01, Land at St John's (Exmo_20). The draft allocation is located to the east of Exmouth and proposes circa 700 homes, social and community facilities, and at least 2 hectares of employment land.
- 6.1.2. The site is not located within a statutory or non-statutory designated landscape. The land within the Pebblebed Heaths SPA/SAC to the north, Knowle Hill to the east, and beyond the B3178 Salterton Road to the south-east lies within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB). A Coastal Preservation Area (CPA) is found 0.25km to the south-east of the site covering the coastline and inland areas between Knowle, Budleigh Salterton and Sandy Bay.
- 6.1.3. Key issues and sensitivities include:
- Potential landscape impacts on the character of the site including the rolling pastoral and arable farmland, woodlands, thick hedgerows and hedgebanks, mature trees (predominantly oak), wooded valleys and incised streams.
 - Potential visual impacts from the elevated ridgeline and the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road to the north with expansive views towards the Exe estuary and visual impacts on St. John's in the Wilderness Church towards the centre and west of the site.
 - Potential visual impacts on the setting and special qualities of the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) covering the Pebblebed Heaths open access land, SPA, SAC and SSSI (within Withycombe Raleigh, East Budleigh and Lympstone Commons) to the north of the site. The relevant special qualities include the '*distinct, unspoilt wooded skyline*'; the '*outstanding views...south to the coast*'; and the

'sense of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, enhanced by natural qualities of the heath, woodland and commons'.

- 6.1.4. The St John's Woodland Village masterplan covering draft allocation (Exmo_20) has been designed in response to these key issues and sensitivities. The site benefits from sloping 'inwardly' towards the urban fringe and settlement context of Exmouth. Proposed housing within the draft allocation would appear consistent with the elevation and pattern of residential areas in Bystock to the west. Proposed housing within the draft allocation would be visible within a relatively small visual envelope to the east of Exmouth owing to the high degree of visual containment provided by woodland on the fringes of the site.
- 6.1.5. The emerging masterplan has been designed to locate the development parcels within the less sensitive southern and eastern parts of the site. Due the requirement for a 400m buffer from the SPA/SAC, housing would not be proposed on the elevated ridgeline to the north. This offset along with the intervening landform and vegetation within the Pebblebed Heaths SPA/SAC to the north, would restrict the visual effects from within the East Devon National Landscape (AONB) beyond the B3179 Outer Ting Tong Road along the northern boundary. The emerging masterplan would also include a greenspace or village green towards the centre of the site to protect the setting and views from St John's in the Wilderness Church.
- 6.1.6. In summary, the vision and emerging masterplan for St John's Woodland Village has been informed by detailed landscape and visual analysis. The masterplan would be designed to respect local character and distinctiveness and would create a positive sense of place and identity for the new community. The draft Land at St John's (Exmo_20) allocation within the emerging Local Plan is considered appropriate and deliverable in landscape and visual terms.

**Appendix 1: Site Context and Viewpoint Locations Plan
(LDA dwg. 9814_01)**

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LEGEND

- Potential Allocation Site (Exmo_20)
- Illustrative Viewpoints 1-8

LDĀ DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
**ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
 DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20**

DRAWING TITLE
**Appendix 1: Site Context and Viewpoint
 Locations Plan**

ISSUED BY	Bristol	T:	0117 203 3628
DATE	26/03/2025	DRAWN	BFR
SCALE @A3	1:25,000	CHECKED	RF
STATUS	Draft	APPROVED	RF

DWG. NO. 9814_01

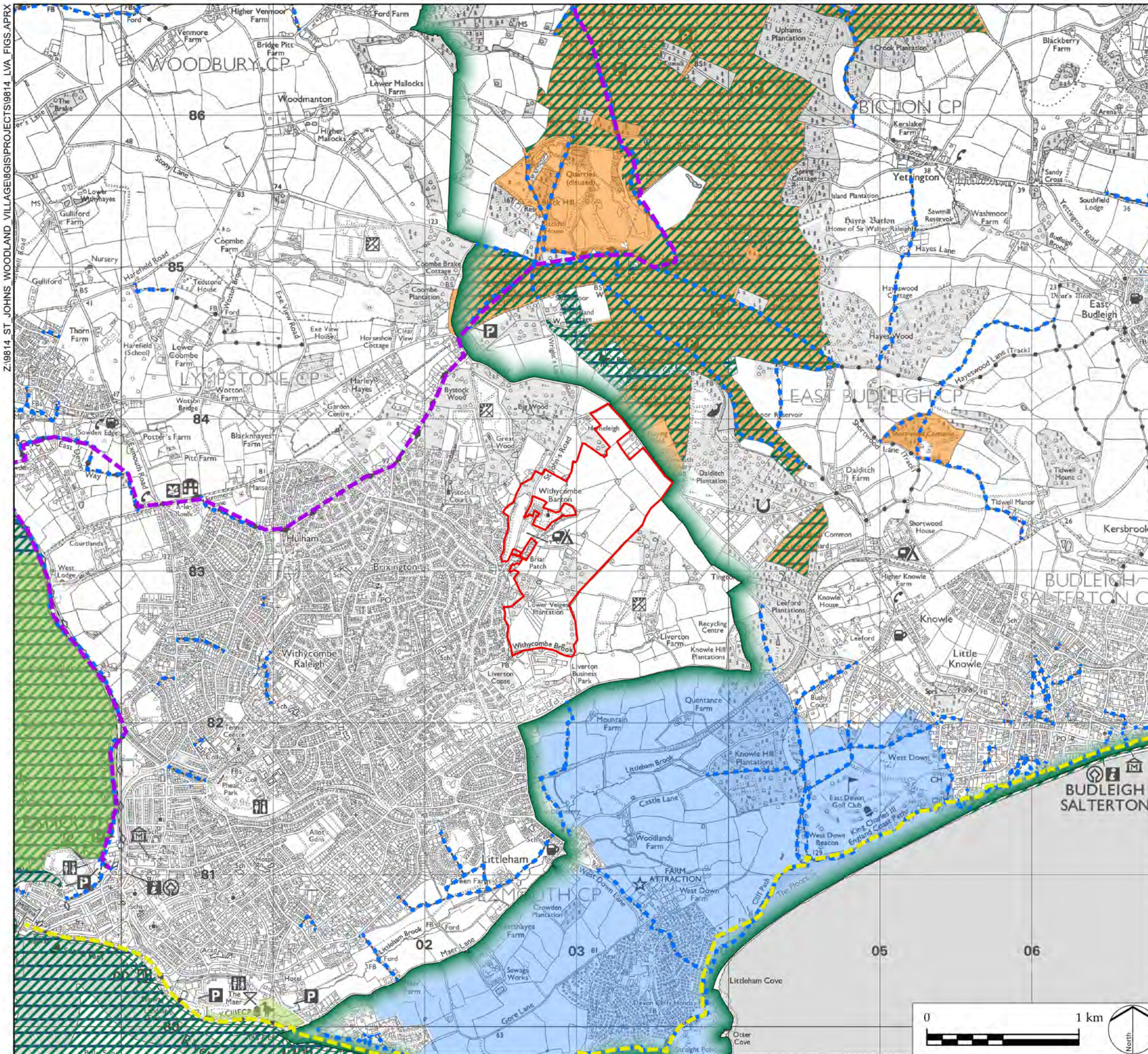
No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.
 All dimensions are to be checked on site.
 Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources: Ordnance Survey



**Appendix 2: Designated Landscapes Plan
(LDA dwg. 9814_02)**



- LEGEND**
- Potential Allocation Site (Exmo_20)
 - - - South West Coast Path (Long Distance Path)
 - - - East Devon Way (Long Distance Path)
 - - - Public Right of Way (PRoW)
 - East Devon National Landscape (AONB)
 - Local Nature Reserve
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - CRoW Open Access Land
 - Special Protection Area (SPA) / Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Coastal Preservation Area

LDĀ DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
**ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
 DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20**

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 2: Designated Landscapes Plan

ISSUED BY	Bristol	T: 0117 203 3628
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Sources: Ordnance Survey



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**Appendix 3: Illustrative Viewpoint Photographs 1-8
(LDA dwg. 9814_03i-viii)**

Approximate extent of Site (not visible)

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Illustrative Viewpoint 1: Lypstone Common and the East Devon Way from within East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3i: Illustrative Viewpoint 1

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Approximate extent of Site (not visible)



Illustrative Viewpoint 2: East Budleigh Common, East Devon Heaths SAC and Pebblebed Heaths SSSI from within East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
STATUS	Draft	APPROVED	RF

DWG. NO. 9814_03ii

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3ii: Illustrative Viewpoint 2

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 3 (Left): B3179 / Outer Ting Tong and Dalditch Lane on the edge of East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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DWG. NO. 9814_03iii

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3iii: Illustrative Viewpoint 3

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 3 (Right): B3179 / Outer Ting Tong and Dalditch Lane on the edge of East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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DWG. NO. 9814_03iii

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3iii: Illustrative Viewpoint 3

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 4 (Left): Knowle Hill, West of Knowle

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
STATUS	Draft	APPROVED	RF

DWG. NO. 9814_03iv

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3iv: Illustrative Viewpoint 4

Approximate extent of Site



Illustrative Viewpoint 4 (Right): Knowle Hill, West of Knowle

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DWG. NO. 9814_03iv

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3iv: Illustrative Viewpoint4

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 5 (Left): B3178 Salterton Road on the edge of East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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DWG. NO. 9814_03v

PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3v: Illustrative Viewpoint 5

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 5 (Right): B3178 Salterton Road on the edge of East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3v: Illustrative Viewpoint 5

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Approximate extent of Site

Illustrative Viewpoint 6: West Down Lane, Exmouth Footpath 3 and Haven Devon Cliffs Resort from within East Devon National Landscape (AONB)

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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3vi: Illustrative Viewpoint 6

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 7 (Left): St John's Road, North-east of Exmouth

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3vii: Illustrative Viewpoint 7

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 7 (Centre): St John's Road, North-east of Exmouth

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3vii: Illustrative Viewpoint 7

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 7 (Right): St John's Road, North-east of Exmouth

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
STATUS	Draft	APPROVED	RF

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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3vii: Illustrative Viewpoint 7

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 8 (Left): St John's in the Wilderness Churchyard, North-east of Exmouth

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PAGE SIZE	420mm x 297mm	CHECKED	RF
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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3viii: Illustrative Viewpoint 8

Approximate extent of Site



Illustrative Viewpoint 8 (Centre): St John's in the Wilderness Churchyard, North-east of Exmouth

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PROJECT TITLE
 ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
 DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
 Appendix 3viii: Illustrative Viewpoint 8

Approximate extent of Site



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Illustrative Viewpoint 8 (Right): St John's in the Wilderness Churchyard, North-east of Exmouth

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PROJECT TITLE
ST JOHN'S WOODLAND, EXMOUTH
DRAFT ALLOCATION EXMO_20

DRAWING TITLE
Appendix 3viii: Illustrative Viewpoint 8

**Appendix 4: St John's Woodland Village Illustrative
Masterplan (LDA dwg. 9814_05)**

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 Appendix 5: Illustrative Masterplan
 (taken from St Johns Woodland Village: A Place to Belong Vision Addendum (LDA Design 2024))

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