

**East Devon Local Plan 2020-2042**

# **Site Selection report**

## **Land North of the Science Park**



**February 2025**

**Contact details**

Planning Policy  
East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Industrial Estate, HONITON,  
EX14 1EJ

Phone: 01404 515616

Email: [planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@eastdevon.gov.uk)

[www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/)  
[@eastdevon](https://www.instagram.com/eastdevon)

To request this information in an alternative format or language please phone 01404 515616 or email [csc@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:csc@eastdevon.gov.uk)

---

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Site Reference Brcl_23.....	6

## 1 Introduction

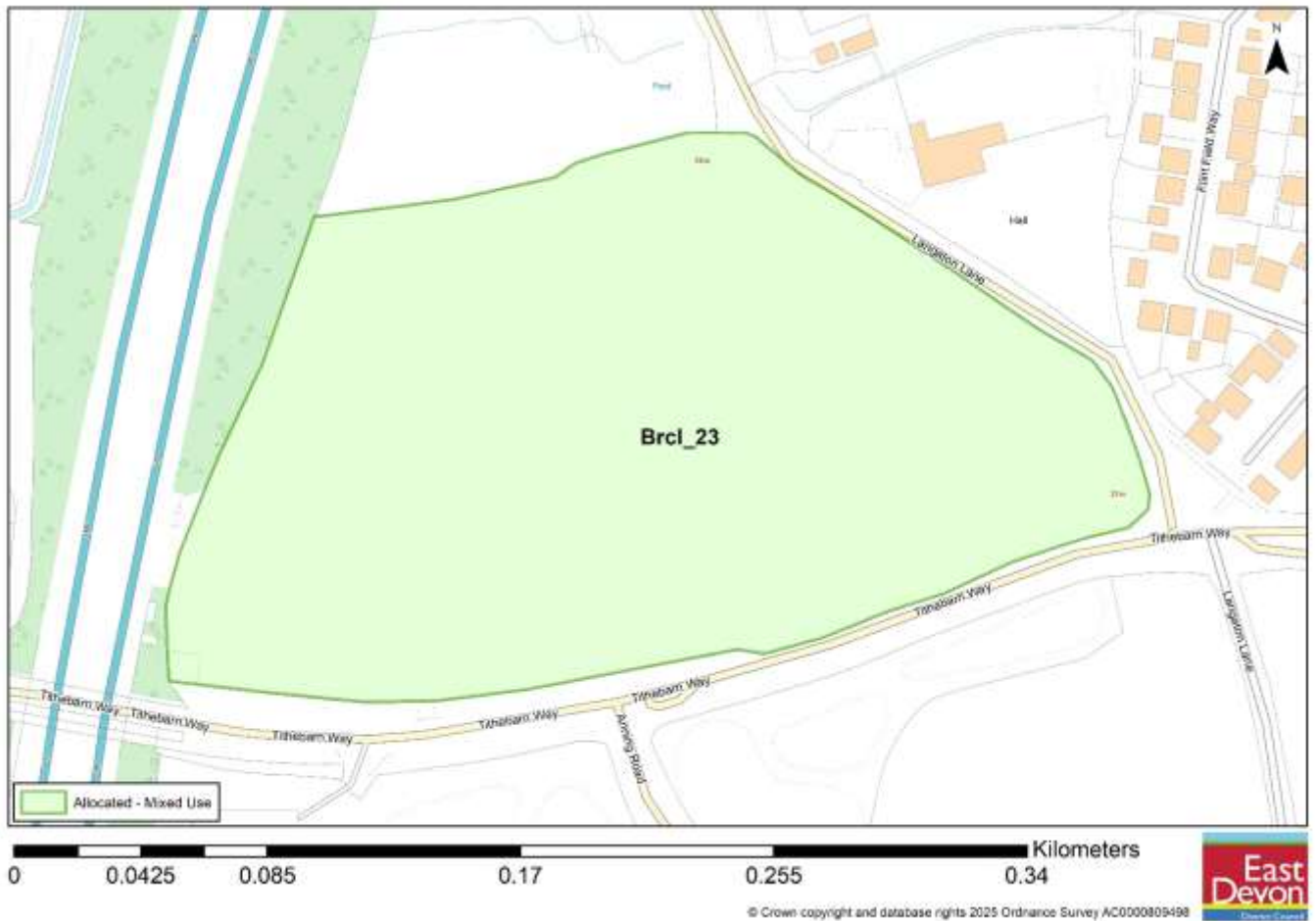
- 1.1 East Devon District Council is preparing a Local Plan covering the period 2020 to 2042 that will allocate sites for development. The Site Selection methodology explains the process of how sites are identified, assessed, and selected for allocation, or not.<sup>1</sup> The selection process is a 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 one site to the North of the Science Park, Tithebarn Way. A map of the site which has been assessed is below, followed by a table which highlights the site selection findings.
- 1.5 In addition to the sites which have been subject to assessment, other sites were not assessed because they did not pass '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. For obvious reasons, overlapping sites will only be assessed once. Further detail is contained in the Site Selection methodology.
- 1.6 The following sites did not pass site sifting at land to the North of the Science Park, Tithebarn Way:
  - Brcl\_03 overlaps with Brcl\_23.

---

<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](#)

- Brcl\_28 overlaps with Brcl\_23.



**Figure 1.1: Overview of Site Selection findings on land North of the Science Park, Tithebarn Way**

Site reference	Number of dwellings / hectares of employment land	Allocate?
Brcl_23	4.37 hectares	Yes- 2ha for employment, 2.37ha for residential (90 houses)

## 2 Site Reference Brcl\_23

### Site details

**Settlement:** Employment land north of the Science Park

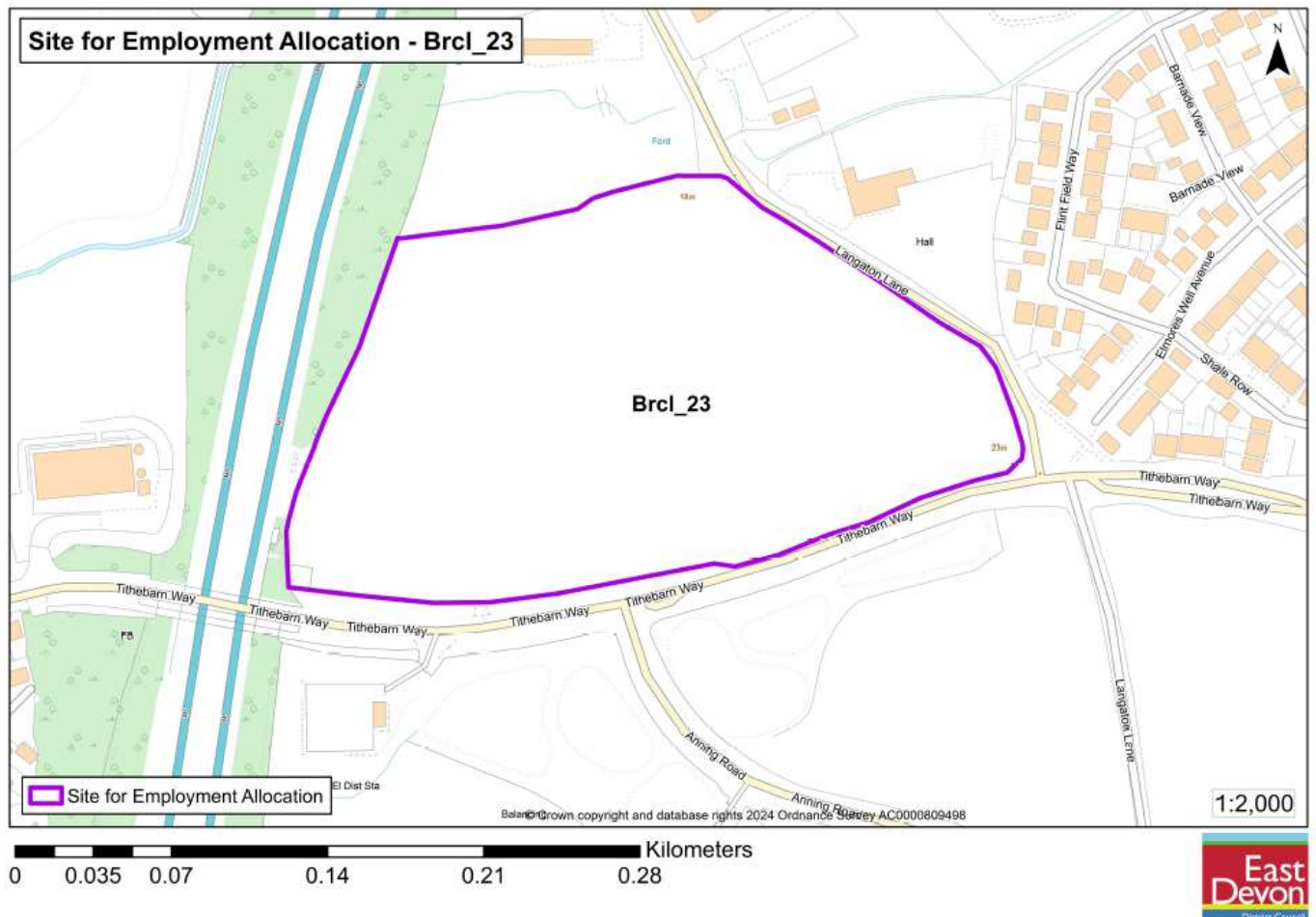
**Reference number:** Brcl\_23

**Site area (ha):** 4.37

**Address:** Land north of the Science Park, Tithebarn Way

**Proposed use:** Employment and residential

### Site map



## Photos



Looking west across the site from the south eastern corner



Looking south across the site from the eastern boundary



Looking north east across the site from the Science Park junction on Tithebarn Way

## **Site Assessment Summary and Conclusion**

### **Infrastructure**

Land to the north of an existing business park. Good access via Tithebarn Way but Langaton Lane to the east is unsuited to large amounts of additional traffic. Well located with regard to the adjoining business park and nearby housing.

### **Landscape**

The sensitivity is low as the site is surrounded by development and lies close to the motorway. It is, however, an attractive agricultural field so does provide a visual green space in an otherwise built up area.

### **Historic environment**

Medium- there is evidence of prehistoric enclosure and cropmarks. An archaeological survey is needed prior to development and it may be possible to design a layout to incorporate any subterranean remains.

### **Ecology**

Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)

### **Accessibility**

Site lies within the West End, in close proximity to residential and employment development.

### **Other constraints**

Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land. Sliver of land to the north is in the floodplain. Adjoins M5

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

No

**Opportunities**

The existing business park could be extended, providing an opportunity for existing businesses to expand

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

4.37 hectares

**Contribution to spatial strategy**

Site is not best suited to wholly residential due to proximity to M5 and distance from facilities. The western section is therefore preferred for employment use.

**Should the site be allocated?**

Yes, for residential and employment use

**Reasons for allocating or not allocating**

The site is well located, being in the West End, close to housing and employment. It has the potential to form an expansion area for the Science Park or a stand alone employment site. Proximity to the M5 and distance from everyday facilities makes the western section poorly suited for residential use, although the eastern section could be.

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

Whole site should be allocated- 2ha for employment, 2.37ha for residential

## **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

### **Context**

#### **Landscape designation context**

Outside of National Landscape

#### **For sites within National Landscape, applicable special qualities**

Not applicable

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

Grade 1 agricultural land

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

3B. Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes

- Gently rolling lower valley slopes
- Gently rolling lower valley slopes
- Pastoral farmland, with a wooded appearance
- Variable field patterns and sizes with either wide, low boundaries and irregular patterns or small fields  
with medium to tall boundaries and a regular pattern.
- Many hedgerow trees, copses and streamside tree rows
- Settled, with varied settlement size, building ages and styles, sometimes with unity of materials in  
places through use of stone.
- Presence of leisure-related development often associated with coast
- Winding, often narrow sunken lanes with very tall earth banks. Main roads may dominate locally.
- Streams and ditches
- Some parts tranquil and intimate all year round, except near main transport routes.

- Enclosed and sheltered landscape and wider views often restricted by vegetation

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

Flat site in agricultural use, located next to the M5 between areas of recent development

### **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**

- Introduction of built form and associated infrastructure
- Impact of light spill from street lighting or windows
- Impact on tranquillity through increased levels of site activity and increased traffic movement on surrounding roads
- Site access requirements- major alteration/ new access provision required
- Typical access works- grading to accommodate level differences, visibility splays, highway infrastructure, tree/ hedgerow loss
- Loss of trees/ hedgerow
- Impact on boundaries –tree and hedgerow root protection areas,
- Offsite access to services – eg need for extended footways/ cycleways/ bus stops
- Construction phase impacts including potential off site impacts eg large delivery vehicles/ construction plant

### **Analysis**

<b>Physical and natural characteristics</b>	
Low-medium	The site contributes to local landscape character through hedgerow boundaries and a sense of openness. The site is undistinctive in terms of landform or land cover. It is Grade 1 agricultural land. This site is semi-rural but will be surrounded by development during the local plan period. The site lies close to the railway and adjoins the M5.

<b>Cultural and historic associations</b>	
Medium	Historic boundary hedgerows, present on 1890 OS map. Subterranean evidence of historic (medieval) field boundaries.
<b>Relationship to existing settlement edge</b>	
Low-medium	Existing development and infrastructure have eroded the pastoral setting of the field so that it now sits on the edge of the urban area; this area is due to become more urbanised during the plan period
<b>Experiential landscape character</b>	
Low-medium	Looking north, and moving north, the site feels rural, however visually the areas on the other sides of the site are being increasingly urbanised and this dominates the appearance. The site is noisy due to its proximity to the M5, airport and railway line, however the roads immediately around it remain quiet.
<b>Views</b>	
Low-medium	The site is largely flat and there is limited screening from field boundaries. There is intervisibility with the Science Park to the south, although the new planting seeks to reduce this. There is intervisibility with Exeter and the wider countryside in long range views
<b>Overall landscape susceptibility</b>	
Low-Medium	The site is impacted by existing development and infrastructure. Development would not give rise to wider landscape harm or intrude into the wider countryside
<b>Within nationally designated landscape?</b>	
Site is not within a designated landscape.	
<b>Degree of intervisibility with nationally designated landscape</b>	
No intervisibility with the National Landscape.	
<b>If outside designated landscape, factors which may raise or lower value from moderate</b>	
Medium – An ordinary landscape which is appreciated by the community but has little or no wider recognition of its value	
<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>	
Low. The landscape is attractive but is already degraded/impacted by the M5 and substantial recent development.	
<b>Landscape guidance: opportunities in relation to development</b>	
None identified	

---

## Historic Environment Site Assessment

### Notes on history of area

Former estate farm, probably associated with the Poltimore Estate. Separated from the original estate by substantial infrastructure including the railway line and M5 so that, whilst the site is still farmed, it is only suitable for crops/haycut due to the difficulties with moving livestock to it and the distance from any farmbuildings/farmhouse.

### 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
Could development of the site affect any heritage asset (designated or non-designated) or its setting?	Yes One possible non-designated heritage asset
List any heritage assets potentially affected.	Archaeological features- field boundary and cropmark

---

**Step 2. Existing contribution of site to significance of heritage asset**

Heritage asset 1

Description of asset	"MDV103403, MDV28621, MDV126667, MDV28622, MDV124515 Various-Settlement Evidence comprising Enclosure, Ring Ditches, Pits, Ditches and former Field Boundaries See HER record for full details- The evaluation identified a number of archaeological features throughout the proposed development area which generally correlated well with the results of a preceding geophysical survey. Archaeological features encountered comprised ditches, pits and postholes, generally dated to one of two broad periods; prehistoric and post-medieval/modern. Evidence of Neolithic activity was identified in Trench 7 where four pits, seemingly forming a north-west/south-east alignment, were found to contain pottery of probable Middle Neolithic date. A 14C date recovered from one of the pits compliments such an interpretation.
Significance of asset and setting	Medium
Relationship of site with heritage asset	Evidence has been found across the site and the whole site is identified as potentially important
Level of contribution (site to heritage asset)	Moderate
Further assessment required?	Not at this stage Archaeological assessment can be undertaken as part of a planning application

<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 Development could potentially destroy the earthworks and any associated evidence. An archaeological assessment is required to establish the importance of this asset.
Could the site be developed in a way that minimised potential impact?	Potential impact could be minimised by identifying the extent of the earthworks. An archaeological assessment should be undertaken as part of the development to properly assess and record and subterranean evidence. Potentially the remnants could be retained as part of a landscaping scheme or open space or development could be limited to those parts of the site where no remains are present.
Would the development affect the heritage asset in other ways?	Unknown

<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?	See notes
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
Could the site boundary be changed to avoid harm?	Yes
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	It may be possible to design a layout which incorporates the earthworks as part of a landscaping scheme or open space. In any case, an archaeological assessment should be undertaken to gauge the extent and importance of the assets. limiting development to the western section of the site may avoid the enclosure remains.

## 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	8100	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Special Protection Area (SPA)	International	8100	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Ramsar site	International	5445	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ)	National	28000	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	National	5600	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	National	7900	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Regional	5000	Minor adverse effect

			predicted (not significant)
Ancient Woodland Inventory Site (AWSI)	Regional	2200	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	County	1800	Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)
Unconfirmed Wildlife Site (UWS)	County	96	Significant moderate adverse effect predicted
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	1	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? Yes**

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

**Number of European sites potentially impacted by site: 2**

## **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**

Yes, some mature hedgerow 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.

**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**

Minor adverse effect predicted (not significant)