



Georgeham Parish Council

Review by GPC of existing sites and proposals for potential new sites for development

Incorporating GPC general views on future development in the Parish

Spring 2026

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF GPC'S VIEWS ON POTENTIAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PARISH

GPC has considered the published Panel assessments for the HELAA parcels of land in Georgeham Parish.

The views GPC has expressed on those individual assessments flow from the following broad principles that GPC recommend for consideration in future development in the Parish:

1. Encourage development in or directly adjacent to the commercial centre of the Villages of Georgeham and Croyde provided such development does not compromise:
 - 1.1 the protected landscape and in particular its key features such as the;
 - 1.1.1 Green swathe of fields that runs from Croyde Bay along the Crydda Valley to the historic centre of Croyde and up to the northern and easterly ridges
 - 1.1.2 Green fingers that push down from the ridges irregularly into built areas of the villages
 - 1.1.3 Green horseshoe backdrop of the ridges, green fields and downland slopes surrounding Croyde Bay
 - 1.1.4 Undeveloped expanses of green fields and downland slopes and medieval field strip patterns that frame and form the Crydda Valley, its tributary combes and Croyde Bay;
 - 1.1.5 The coastline and its rural backdrop along the access routes to it and between the main village centres
 - 1.2 Heritage assets
 - 1.3 Sensitive environments and habitats
2. Avoid ribbon and other development at the outer and remoter edges of the Villages in the Parish
3. The potential for development in hamlets away from the coastal areas.



It is the coastal areas of the Parish and the rural backdrop to it that are highly visible and prominent in the protected landscape, seascape and Heritage Coast that have and continue to take the brunt of new development, which development is having a sizeable and cumulative harmful impact on that part of the protected landscape

Accordingly, GPC consider that it may now be appropriate to provide some new housing in the central area of hamlets such as Darracott and North Buckland (North Buckland is outside the protected landscape designation). Number, size, design and tenure of new dwellings should meet the housing needs of the Parish community. Such housing would need to be small in number and scale and designed to fit in well with current central built areas of these hamlets and the rural landscape backdrop through less dense smaller scale buildings with adequate and effective landscaping and light pollution controls to mitigate any potential harms.

It is a reality with the inherited ancient and restricted size road system, lack of pavements and current inadequate bus service provision in the Parish, that most people in the Parish are completely reliant on cars rather than public transport, wherever they reside in the Parish.

There is however concern about adopting a similar approach to the hamlets of Pickwell and Putsborough because of their heritage assets and proximity to the coast.

There is a concern about adopting a similar approach to Forda and Cross owing to the impact on the views of the landscape of the Parish from this main route through the Parish and the risk of blurring the definition of the historic settlements between the two villages of Croyde and Georgeham.

HEA/GEO/OO89

FIELD OFF CLOUTMAN'S LANE AND PROPERTIES COMPRISING 22 TO 26A ST MARY'S ROAD CROYDE

1. GPC agree with the Panel assessment that the site is not developable. It is understood that North Devon Homes no longer own any of the housing along St Mary's Road that are included in this site for development. These houses are all in individual and private ownership. Some of the new owners have applied for planning permission and have or are in the process of improving their properties. It is questionable whether new owners would wish to sell and at what price, if at all. The acquisition of the existing residential housing is likely to be costly. This appears to be acknowledged in the Panel assessment by the reference to the development of this parcel of land being unviable.
2. The site is not suitable for development for reasons that include the following:



- a. The proposal includes demolishing 4 existing smaller scale bungalow dwellings, which is a type of housing that is in scarce supply in the Parish.
- b. Land is directly adjacent to grade listed heritage assets (The Old Cider Barn and outbuildings) and there are other grade listed heritage assets close by
- c. Land is in or directly adjacent to the Croyde Conservation Area – a heritage asset in itself
- d. Impact on and change of character of the public rights of way for walkers and other users for countryside pursuits (Mill Lane and Cloutmans Lane, Parish FP 48). These are rough, steep and narrow country tracks
- e. Impact on the character of the historic centre of Croyde and St Mary's Road inside the Croyde Conservation Area and including the series of miniature narrow footbridges across the stream.
- f. The vast majority of the site is steep rising agricultural land that drains downwards and northwards into the Crydda stream which is a high flood risk
- g. The field provides the rural green backdrop to the conservation area and the North Devon Coast National Landscape echoing the green fields rising above St Mary's Road to the north
- h. There are no pavements on Mill Lane and the long upper section of Cloutman's Lane and no pavement or easily usable pedestrian pavement along St Mary's Road which is the main through road to Georgeham going east and Braunton going west.

HEA/GEO/0095

Land off Frog Street Hill

This is identified in the Georgeham Parish Neighbourhood Plan for development (GEO1) and the Parish Council continues to support development of housing on this field.

The owner has since died and it is not known how his estate view development of the field.

HEA/GEO/0099

Fairleigh, Crowborough Road EX33 1JZ

The principle of development for housing on this site has been established as the result of extant planning permissions. On any new planning applications for this site consideration should be given to the number and design of the proposed houses,



landscaping, lighting and access, given the location in the protected landscape, local bat populations and other environmental factors and the nature of the access roads which are minor and without pavements.

Development on this site is off a road between Georgeham Village and Darracott (Crowborough Road as it becomes Jenkers Hill) where ribbon housing development has gradually taken place over the years between the Village of Georgeham and the hamlet of Darracott along these roads. This has resulted in the demarcation between Georgeham and Darracott becoming more blurred.

Given the extant status of the land it is considered acceptable for housing development.

HEA/GEO/0125

Land off and including Down End Car Park, Croyde Road, Croyde EX33 1QE

GPC agrees with much of the information provided in the assessment but views this area as **not developable** for the similar reasons that planning permission was refused (including on appeal) in relation to the site **HEA/GEO/0186** which is also along Croyde Road and **HEA/GEO/0322**.

It is in a highly prominent and highly visible coastal location in the protected landscape at the gateway to Croyde Bay where the green slopes of Saunton Down sweep down to the road and its irregular interspersed development of houses with green fields is clearly visible and a characteristic of this area.

The site is visible from land and sea and from the South West Coast Path, the beach, Baggy Point and many other public footpaths and routes around the village and bay and dune system area. Placing a housing development here at the very outer and remoter edges of the village on the lower slopes of Saunton Down, by the coast, would urbanise and change the character of the coast line in this area irrevocably.

In addition to the sensitivity of the landscape the environment is a sensitive one for light pollution and water run off with the nature of flora and fauna in the vicinity.

The slopes of Saunton Down in that area are known for containing a number of natural water routes that drain down from the upper parts of the ridge and can create significant surface water issues in rainy periods or short heavy bursts of rain, which has potential impacts, including for the Saunton to Baggy SSSI and the cliffs above the beach.

The land is not well related to the centre of the Village and its facilities.



There is an access track with hedge banks that bisects the western most section of this listing from the remainder section of land. It is not a contiguous parcel of land.

HEA/GEO/0186

Land off Croyde Road (adjacent to Langs Field) EX33 1QD

GPC agree with the assessment that this field is not developable given its prominence in the protected landscape that has led to the decision to refuse a previous planning application for housing, including on appeal.

It is an important feature of the landscape – the green finger that runs down the slope of Saunton Down and to the road, forming a natural demarcation between Croyde Village and Down End. The field is highly visible and prominent in the landscape from various public footpaths and other routes in and around the village, the dunes and Baggy and the ridges.

HEA/GEO/0198

Land South of Putsborough Road, EX33 1LD

Large and prominent tract of land highly visible in the protected landscape from Parish public footpaths through fields to the north and from the higher ridges of Saunton Down and from roads in and around the Parish. The size of the field is too large and out of proportion to the built area nearby. The field has an isolated appearance in the landscape having long boundaries with open fields to the south to the west and partly to the north

Flood risk issues, including downstream where there is development that has the potential to be impacted.

The site is on the main route to Putsborough beach (tourist destination) from Georgeham. Putsborough beach is on the SW Coast Path and there are linking public footpath routes and single-track vehicle routes to the coast from the Village that would be impacted visually by development of this site.

GPC whilst agreeing with much of the assessment does not agree that it is potentially developable, in particular because of the landscape impact and impact on agriculture. GPC does not agree that it is suitable for 10 houses.

GPC view development on routes to the beaches and coastline (especially where farmland is being proposed for housing development) as something to be avoided because of the impact it has on the protected landscape character of the area for those living and visiting the coastline, and the potential impact on the agricultural economy.



HEA/GEO/0211

Land to West of Cott Lane and East of Bay View Campsite, Croyde EX33 1ND

1. GPC agree with the Panel Assessment that the land is not developable for the reasons given. The access via Cott Lane is of particular concern. Although the access will be at the lower end of Cott Lane so that only a short section of the lane will be used before the junction of Cott Lane with Hobbs Hill, that junction is for single access and extremely tight, visibility is poor as is room to manoeuvre and there is no pavement.
2. Views of this assessment may change if at some time in the future there is housing development on the low-lying fields at Bay View Campsite. It may be possible to build in an acceptable access route through Bay View should such an opportunity arise. Bay View has a good access onto Croyde Road. The entrance to the Campsite is wide with good visibility.

HEA/GEO/0243

Land South of Croft Cottage, Cott Lane, Croyde EX33 1ND

1. GPC agree with the Panel Assessment that the land is not developable for the reasons given.
2. The access via Cott Lane is of particular concern. The development would use a long and extended stretch of Cott lane which is extremely narrow in parts, being single track. There is no pavement on the lane.
3. There is a public footpath (Georgeham Parish FP13) that runs along the northern edge of the land linking Cott Lane up to the main walking route to a key viewpoint on Saunton Down overlooking Croyde Bay, the Crydda Valley and beyond on FP17. This route is also an alternative to the SW Coast Path for walking between Saunton and Croyde as it avoids walking on the main road itself in the Down End Point area.
4. The field is a large field at a raised level in the landscape and being clearly visible and highly prominent in the protected landscape from many viewpoints and public walking and road routes in and around the village and coast. Including from Moor Lane the dunes and the walking routes on the ridges.
5. There are concerns about light and noise pollution and impact on the local bat and raptor population. There is an owl and bat tower in an adjacent field.
6. The field is a large area, outside the development line and juts out on an isolated limb that is not visually well related to the built area of the village. Any building on this field would be highly visible and would appear distinct in the landscape given its height and position in the network of other adjacent field and the slopes of Saunton Down.



HEA/GEO/0248

Land on the south side of Bottoms Lane

Whilst it is recognised that Bottoms Lane is in the protected landscape it is towards the eastern boundary of the designation and away from the coast. The field is located on a lane with other residential houses in the core area of the hamlet of Darracott.

GPC could support appropriate and sensitive development on this parcel of land of affordable housing to meet the needs of the Parish Community.

HEA/GEO/0268

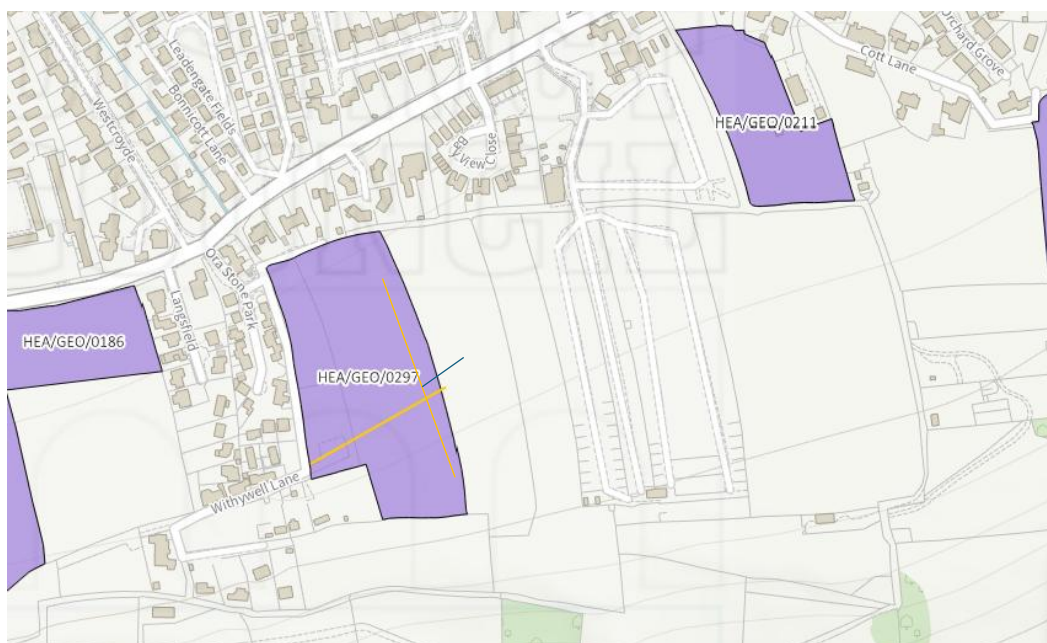
Land to the east of Hedgend Buckland Road Georgeham

This site is towards the eastern boundary of the protected landscape designation and away from the coast.

Whilst GPC has concerns about ribbon development of this type that extends development further outwards from the centre of Georgeham Village and highways and hedgerow concerns, its view is that there is a potential case for a sensitive development of affordable housing to meet the needs of the Parish community on a parcel of land like this.

HEA/GEO/0297

Land off Withywell Lane, Croyde, EX33 1PZ





GPC generally agree with the assessment and that **part** of this parcel land is potentially developable.

Whilst there are significant concerns about the impact on the protected landscape (it being on the lower coastal slopes of Saunton Down with medieval field patterns) there could be potential scope for a smaller scale development that does not go too far up the slope to the south (as this would have a detrimental impact) and keeps more to the western end of the parcel of land with buildings that relate in height to those in Ora Stone Park.

GPC suggest the yellow line on the screen shot of the parcel of land above would keep a similar distance from Croyde Road as that of Ora Stone Park at its southern boundary. Ora Stone Park does go too far up the slope so GPC would not wish to see any new development going further away from Croyde Road and up the Saunton Down slope than this going east in this particular location. Ora Stone Park should provide some screening on the approach for the west, but there are concerns about the views from Croyde Road travelling east, and there are concerns that the upper section and its width have the potential to have a noticeable an adverse impact on the protected landscape.

There is also a need to maintain the irregularity and scattered nature of development in the village. Therefore if development of the eastern end of the parcel was proposed it would fit in with the landscape better if was a much smaller advancement into Saunton Down to help preserve that irregular character of development and provide less structured approach. (See black line on the above screenshot to the east, for example as a possible line for development on that part of the parcel.) This would help to maintain the different lengths of green fingers coming down from the ridges and interspersing between built areas. It will help to reflect medieval field patterns by creating patchworks of development rather than standard solid blocks.

GPC also agrees with Planning that any development should be kept more to the western end of the parcel and not extend to the full extent of the land to the east.

Provided the site's drainage issues can be overcome and there is suitable landscaping /maintenance of hedgerows, it is considered there is scope for future development with modest height buildings whose height (including roofs) do not block off large sections of lines of sight to the green slopes. It would be preferable to avoid high and dense mass roofs and instead retain roof heights that are in keeping with those of the houses of Ora Stone Close or lower and adopt the more irregular scattered approach for the positioning of individual and clusters of buildings.



HEA/GEO/0322

Land opposite Down End Car Park, Croyde, EX33 1QE

GPC agree with the assessment and its conclusions: not developable

HEA/GEO/0338

Land off Newberry Road Georgeham EX33 1JS

This site is the subject of an active community backed planning application. The applicants are Georgeham Parish Community Land Trust and Aster (a registered housing provider).

This matter is under consideration so GPC will not comment further.