

## Great Easton Neighbourhood Plan

### Appendix 12. Housing Site Selection Process – explanatory note

#### *Introduction*

The housing allocations for the Great Easton Neighbourhood Plan have been designed within the context of the emerging Local Plan for Harborough District and the numbers of houses that this Plan is likely to allocate to Great Easton. Policies for the Housing element of the Neighbourhood Plan have been developed in light of national planning guidance, the requirements of Harborough District Council (HDC) and the consultation with people in the village as part of the Neighbourhood Plan development process.

The final number of houses allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan amounts to 35, over the Plan Period to 2031. The policies and the allocations particularly reflect the expressed views from the consultation about the need to provide a wide range of houses, including affordable homes and those at the middle to lower end of the commercial market. Views were also expressed that development should be spread around the settlement, rather than concentrated in one part. The allocations reflect those views.

Although the allocations proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan are endorsed by both the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and the Parish Council, the actual recommendations were developed by a Housing Advisory Group, comprising some members of the Advisory Committee and other interested people from the village community.

#### *Source of proposals*

The initial source of information as to the availability of potentially developable land was the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) undertaken on behalf of HDC and the other Districts in the Leicestershire Housing Market Area. All owners of land identified in the SHLAA were approached to determine their interest in the possibility of developing their land for housing prior to any assessment taking place.

Notwithstanding the expressed views of some of these landowners that they were not interested in developing their land for housing, all sites were subject to a systemised analysis, along with certain other sites not identified in the SHLAA but put forward by landowners at a later stage.

### ***Assessment***

15 sites were subject to the systemised assessment as referred to above. This information, along with the consultation responses, was used to develop the final housing allocation for the Great Easton Neighbourhood Plan in the following manner:

- The Red Amber Green (RAG) rating from the systemised assessment was considered by the Housing Group and was also supplied to the interested and affected developers. It was subject to challenge by the developers and others and these responses were fed into the Housing Group's deliberations
- The views expressed in the village consultation, in particular the identified need for affordable housing and the wish to spread development across the settlement were also taken into account.
- A "Developers' Day" was held, at which the public was invited to attend, where developers who chose to do so were able to present their ideas to a panel comprising members of the Housing Group, the Parish Council and the Advisory Committee. Although a scoring matrix was used following the Developers' Day presentations, neither it nor the RAG ratings were considered as the final determinants leading to a definitive ranked score. Rather, the Housing Group, including those members who were not able to attend the Developers' Day, considered all the evidence and arrived at a reasoned conclusion.
- The minimum target of 35 houses required by HDC has been met through the allocations detailed below, with a reserve site identified should the housing need increase or delivery on the allocated sites stall. There was no appetite expressed, either in the consultation responses or during the planning process, which suggested that the provision of more than 35 houses would be acceptable to the village

community and so the upper limit of 35 was set, in accordance with the projected demands from HDC.

Following the approval of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan by Great Easton Parish Council, this was then the subject of a public consultation. The draft housing allocations were generally supported.

### *Outcome*

Four sites have been allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, for a total of 35 houses. These are as follows:

- Broadgate – 13 houses (in addition to 9 already approved prior to the start of the Neighbourhood Plan). This development has now received planning approval from HDC and work on site has commenced. The inclusion of affordable and lower-end market housing, following negotiation between the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and the developer, has resulted in a housing mix which reflects the housing need identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Land to the rear of 2 High Street – 11 houses. A brownfield site formerly used as chicken sheds with established access to the High Street. Includes four affordable units
- Barnsdale House – 7 houses, including a tied house at the stables further along Barnsdale. A development that makes use of land to the rear of a significant listed building in the village and will enable the reintroduction into use of Barnsdale House itself.
- Land to the rear of 14–18 Caldecott Road – 4 houses. Includes at least one house of three bedrooms or fewer. Within the village envelope and set apart from other proposed sites.

Although the requirement for affordable housing has been removed in national policy for developments of this scale, the Neighbourhood Plan process has succeeded in securing much needed affordable housing which will maintain and enhance the diversity of the village community.

A reserve site has been allocated, in the unlikely event that the sites mentioned above do not come to fruition.

- Station Yard (Caldecott) – 12 houses, combined with local retail space. Although this site is not within Great Easton village, it is within the Parish of Great Easton and is well connected to Caldecott (Rutland). This is a brownfield site on the former Rockingham Station yard.

With the exception of the 14–18 Caldecott Road site, these proposals were all shown at the Developers’ Day referred to above.

Many sites originally appraised as part of the RAG process were not put forward by their owners. There were two sites put forward for development during the process which have not been selected. This is because the required housing numbers have been met in full by the four preferred sites listed above and the fact that neither of these two proposals could provide a better outcome for the village than those that were finally allocated.

The two sites not selected were:

- Clarke’s Farm, Caldecott Road – a proposal for housing on the present farmyard on the Caldecott Road, near the “Easton Square” development. This was considered to be too separate from either Great Easton village itself or another established settlement and would present a danger of development in the countryside extending the village footprint in an unacceptable way.
- Land to the rear of 22 Broadgate – a late submission for a development of houses adjacent to the current development of 22 houses at 28 Broadgate. Access arrangements had not been resolved but the main concern is that it would over burden one part of the village with development and would run against the expressed views from the consultation.
- The four sites described above, which have been allocated, were preferable in terms of the balance of development for the village and the use of brownfield sites. The housing requirement for the Local Plan has been met in full.