

Great Easton Sustainable Housing Development Sites - Site One Barnsdale Sub Plot A (SHLAA Ref HSG/02) (Part of)

1. Introduction

The Great Easton Neighbourhood Plan Group are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Great Easton in Harborough District, Leicestershire. A key priority of the Neighbourhood Plan is ensuring the Parish remains sustainable in the long term by a balanced residential expansion that meets identified local needs. A plan for up to about 25 units is required to meet the known housing need identified by Harborough District Council in May 2016 as between 17 and 32 units to 2031. Windfall sites will provide about 7 units over the next 15 years based upon past performance. The residual target is therefore to allocate new sites for between 10 and 25 units. This comprehensive analysis sets out the size and relative sustainability of the potential housing sites and ranks those in order of which are the most and which are the least sustainable over the term of the plan (15 years). The ranking of the sites allows comparative priorities to be agreed. Following the analysis the Barnsdale - Sub Plot A is scored red and ranked equal **ninth** of the fourteen prospective locations and can now be presented for community consultation as not requiring an allocation in the neighbourhood plan.

2. Site Selection Criteria

The sustainable development criteria for the selection and allocation of sites for new dwellings were identified using best practise methodology, supplemented with evidence from Harborough District Council, other approved Neighbourhood Plans, issues from the consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant plans and documents referencing the National Planning Policy Framework. A scoring system, based on a traffic light (i.e. Red, Amber or Green - RAG) scores has been used. This reflects best practice and is a robust methodology to understand and use. After analysing the fourteen sites the one with the most green ratings and the least red and amber scores is the one which is most sustainable. The fourteen sites have been professionally ranked and the intention is that the highest green scoring sites should be developed and that red scoring sites should not be developed in the next 15 years, subject to community consultation and support to the proposals.

- Red is scored for a negative assessment where significant mitigation is required and/or there is a “deal-breaker” concern;
A red scoring site should not be developed.
- Amber is scored where there are negative elements to the site and costly/disruptive mitigation measures will be required;
An amber scoring site will require significant remediation works to allow development, it may be developed at some future date.
- Green is scored for a positive assessment with no major constraints on future development.
A green scoring site can be developed subject to owner and community support, market demands, planning and a viable cost achievement. Within the green scoring category, the site with the highest green score will be ranked first.

Contact Details	
Name of Assessor	Derek Doran BSc (Hons) MCIH MBA
Site - Details	
Site reference : (SHLAA)	A/HSG/02 Developable in 6 -10 years
Site name and address:	Barnsdale – Sub plot A

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	Ref HSG/02 (Part site 45 - 55 dwellings (Whole SHLAA – 169 units). Approximately 3.3 HA – not measured to scale (whole is 10 HA)	Red
Current Use:	Agricultural (permanent pasture) plus recreational use locally and more widely, the Jurassic Way, a Regionally important right of way has expansive views across Welland Valley. All of the site is ridge and furrow. This is a good example of Medieval strip farming and has a historically important context. Leicestershire is one of only 11 Counties in England with concentrations of preserved sites of this type and this type of field pattern should be preserved.	Red
Adjoining Uses:	Open Countryside to the South and a working farm, riding stables and then the Primary school to the West. Totally outside and separated from the current village envelope and the new intended Limit To Development (LTD) boundary, to be adopted in the settlement development policy of the Neighbourhood Plan. Fails to reflect the existing settlement pattern that is historically significant.	Red
Topography:	Gently sloping land.	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?	Greenfield land in open countryside, currently farmed and used partly for ad-hoc recreational purposes.	Red
Good Quality Agricultural Land?	<p>The High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area covers this site and ranks it as only having a low to medium capacity to accommodate new development.</p> <p>The Northern two thirds of the site (approximately) are grade 3 agricultural land of a good to moderate quality, the Southern section is Grade 4 and of poor quality.</p>	Red
Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?	One owner Raj Uppal.	Green
Landscape Quality/Visual impact assessment (VIA)?	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan shows the view at this elevated location in to the village and out from it across the Welland Valley as historically significant and important for it to be protected from new development. The diversity of the semi-natural features area major contributor to the high landscape value of the village and its environs.</p> <p>The traditional, open countryside aspect of this site separates it totally from the village visually and physically.</p> <p>Overall, although the site is partly modified it is of a very high quality – currently open panoramic views to the South and East.</p>	Red
Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows?	Ancient and significant hedgerows to all boundaries of the site, all with openings in them, overall of a very high quality that should be preserved.	Red
Relationship with existing pattern of built development?	Not linked to the current built form and if built in isolation would maintain the significant “gap” between the Primary School and the village residential boundary (unless sub plots B and C were also built out from the village first). Totally outside of the current village envelope and separated from it making it an incongruous site to develop. Unacceptable to proceed with this scale of significant over - development in the Parish, given the low level of housing need and adverse community opinion.	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Local Wildlife considerations?	Nesting birds of various notable species and habitat for small mammals.	Green
Listed Building or important built assets?	None identified.	Green
Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?	Outside of the current conservation area in Great Easton but due to the sites setting and high elevation it would undermine the quality of the conservation area's historical setting and integrity.	Red
Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?	A right of way already exists along Great Easton Road, straightforward to extend this in to the site in a safe and financially viable manner.	Amber
Safe vehicular access to and from the site?	None at present but a turning circle for vehicles and farm machinery already exists, this could be adopted and built out with sufficient visibility splays to meet current Highways safety standards that would require the destruction of mature hedgerows. The nearness to the school is an important safety concern with congestion at specific times of day a concern.	Amber
Impact on existing vehicular traffic?	Additional vehicle flows from this number of units would have a negative effect upon vehicular movements in this small village, particularly exacerbating the problems at school drop off and collection times and adding to the already problematic congestion, even if additional on-site school car parking were provided as a part of the scheme.	Red
Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.	The bus stop in the town centre is more than 300m from the site.	Amber
Distance to community facilities, specifically 2, High Street, the designated village centre.	Walking distance to the community facilities is reasonable at between 300 and 400m.	Amber
Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?	Used for dog walking, horse riding and jogging.	Amber

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?	None within a reasonable distance of the site boundary.	Green
Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?	Yes, the Jurassic Way footpath bisects the Southern section of the site although this could possibly be protected by a sensitive design of any residential scheme.	Amber
Gas, oil, pipelines and networks & electricity transmission network?	Yes. A high pressure gas transmission pipeline is buried a considerable distance to the South of the site. Telephone/electricity supply cables cross the site but are easily resited.	Amber
Any known noise issues?	None found.	Green
Any known contamination issues?	No major issues identified.	Green
Any known flooding issues?	Yes, regular flooding reported to the lower sections of the site.	Red
Any known drainage issues?	Yes, given the weak fall of the land and nearness to water courses the bottom section of the site is regularly saturated at the level of the water table. In addition a spring is found on the site.	Amber
Issues related to planning history on the site?	The owner, Raj Uppal has a successful history of developing other residential sites in the village maintaining the economic vibrancy of the Parish.	N.A.
Summary	<p>A site of this size and scale is not required in the initial phase of the Neighbourhood Plan, to 2031. This site should be recommended to the community as not requiring a residential allocation in the neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>The substantial risk is that if one of the Barnsdale sub plots, A, B or C are developed then all three will become economically viable over the medium term, with pressure from interested parties to allow development of between 125 and 145 units in total - the SHLAA identified 169 units.</p> <p>Unrequired development at this largest scale would increase the size of the village by almost half and extend housing development over areas of high landscape value.</p> <p>Red – 11, Amber – 8, Green – 7.</p>	RED scoring minus 4.

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints

RAG Rating

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