

## **Great Easton Sustainable Housing Development Sites - Site Ten, Clarkes Farm off Great Easton Road**

### **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 analysis the Clarkes Farm site off Great Easton Road is scored green and ranked **fifth** of the fourteen prospective locations and can now be presented for community consultation as a reserve residential development site 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 consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant plans and documents including reference to 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 eleven sites the one with the most green ratings and the least red and/or amber scores is the one which is most sustainable. The sites have been professionally ranked and the intention is that only the highest scoring green sites should be developed and that the 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)	Not in SHLAA
Site name and address:	Clarkes Farm off Great Easton Road

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	<p>Approximately 0.8 HA – not measured to scale.</p> <p>About 15 units.</p> <p>The current initial scheme proposal from Langton homes (May 2016) is for eight large units – of a similar design to Easton Square and not affordable housing.</p>	Amber
Current Use:	<p>Clarkes farm is currently a working farm in daily use as livestock barns and a yard/storage and is a brownfield site with metalled roadways.</p> <p>Langton Homes claim that the farm buildings are nearing the end of their economic life.</p>	Amber
Adjoining Uses:	<p>The new development at Easton Square is under construction in the adjacent field.</p> <p>Open Countryside to three sides of the site with a silage and bales storage area to the South of the site. Great Easton Road forms the Northern boundary of the site.</p> <p>Over 300m from the current village envelope and outside of the new intended Limit To Development (LTD) boundary, to be adopted in the settlement development policy of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Topography:</b>	Flat land with a large pond adjacent in the next field.	Green
<b>Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?</b>	Previously developed land forms the whole of the site and this will therefore require the demolition of five large farm buildings and the removal of an old truck and associated debris.	Green
<b>Good Quality Agricultural Land?</b>	The agricultural sections of the site are grade 3 agricultural land of a good to moderate quality.	Amber
<b>Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?</b>	Believed to be in the Clarkes family ownership with Langton Developments having an option to undertake a purchase of the site.	Green
<b>Landscape Quality?</b>	Overall, the actual site itself is brownfield and currently has industrial style farm buildings of little architectural merit or quality.  However, the panoramic vistas from the Southern boundary of the site are of an exceptional quality.	Amber
<b>Important Trees, Woodlands &amp; Hedgerows?</b>	A large and significant uninterrupted hedgerow forms the Eastern boundary of the site, interspersed with several medium sized trees. The Western boundary is also an established hedgerow and both of these boundaries should be preserved.	Amber
<b>Relationship with existing pattern of built development?</b>	Not linked to the current built form and has no connection with the village. It is not viable in planning best practise terms although the adjacent site at Easton Square is currently being built as residential units and these will partly overlook this site. Totally outside of the current village envelope and an incongruous site to develop.	Red
<b>Local Wildlife considerations?</b>	Nesting birds.	Green

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Listed Building or important built assets?</b>	None identified.	Green
<b>Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?</b>	Outside of the current conservation area in Great Easton and has no relationship with it so no impact upon it.	Green
<b>Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?</b>	None exists and a long length of footpath will be required to physically link up with the village.	Amber
<b>Safe vehicular access to and from the site?</b>	None at present but possible to construct a spine road to serve the site with visibility splays of an acceptable size possible along Great Easton Road. Although a new Highways solution will be expensive this can be based upon the current entrance and the metalled farm surfaces currently in place.	Amber
<b>Impact on existing vehicular traffic?</b>	Additional vehicle flows from this location would not have a major negative effect upon vehicular movements in the village core.	Green
<b>Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.</b>	The nearest bus stop is approximately 450m walk from the furthest point of the site.	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Distance to community facilities, specifically 2, High Street the designated village centre</b>	The village centre is over a 450m walk from the furthest point of the site.	Red
<b>Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?</b>	None identified, although fishing pond in adjacent field.	Green
<b>Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?</b>	None nearby.	Green
<b>Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?</b>	None found, although the Jurassic Way is found to the South of the site.	Green
<b>Gas, oil, pipelines and networks &amp; electricity transmission network?</b>	Yes. A high pressure gas transmission pipeline is buried to the South East of the site. The regulations concerning residential development near to these hazards are complex and are covered by the pipeline safety regulations Act 1996 and various Town and Country Planning Act (development control procedures). The Health and Safety Executive have a complex methodology for assessing risk, based upon risk contours of an inner, middle and outer zone and the “sensitivity level” of people affected. For the purposes of this assessment a further full specialist professional evaluation is recommended.	Red
<b>Any known noise issues?</b>	No noxious noise sources nearby.	Green
<b>Any known contamination issues?</b>	Yes, the site is contaminated and will require professional assessment and will certainly require extensive remediation given its current agricultural use. An active sewage treatment works is found about 200m from the site.	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Any known flooding issues?</b>	The site is very near to a fishing lake and a brook, the latter has flooded more than once in the last 25 years.	Red
<b>Any known drainage issues?</b>	Yes, sections of the site are regularly waterlogged and given the high level of the water table it might require a balancing pond to be provided on a part of the site.	Amber
<b>Issues related to planning history on the site?</b>	No previous history.	
<b>Summary</b>	<p>A site in this location is not connected to the village and has not formed part of the consideration to date of land to be allocated for housing.</p> <p>It should be consulted upon with the community to see if they will support its designation as a reserve residential allocation site.</p> <p>The scheme mix and valuations will prove very contentious elements to be agreed upon a several of the units will need to be affordable rented provision.</p> <p>Red – 7</p> <p>Amber – 8</p> <p>Green - 11</p>	<b>GREEN, scoring 4.</b>