

Great Easton Sustainable Housing Development Sites - Site Eleven, land behind 14 - 18 Caldecote 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 the analysis the land behind 14 -18 Caldecote Road is scored green and ranked **third** of the fourteen prospective locations and can now be presented for community consultation as requiring a firm residential 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 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 fourteen sites the one with the most green ratings and the least red and 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 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 the SHLAA
Site name and address:	Land behind 14 – 18 Caldecote Road

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	6 dwellings (owner currently proposing 3-4 large houses) Site 0.39 HA in total (measured by site sponsor)	Green
Current Use:	Agricultural – currently used for horse stables and paddock.	Amber
Adjoining Uses:	Open Countryside to the South and dwellings on each of the adjacent boundaries overlook the site from Caldecote Road and 9 and 11 Banbury Lane. Inside the current village envelope and the new intended Limit To Development (LTD) boundary and within the NP settlement development policy.	Green
Topography:	Undulating site.	Green
Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?	An open green field site (numbers 14-18 Caldecote Road ?).	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
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 site is grade 3 agricultural land of a good to moderate quality.</p>	Red
Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?	<p>One owner, Mrs Rosalind Cooper aiming to develop 3-4 large houses.</p>	Green
Landscape Quality - Visual Impact Assessment ?	<p>Overall, the site is unmodified and has panoramic views over open Countryside and the distant ridge line, of high quality. Currently open vistas to two aspects and completely in the open countryside.</p>	Red
Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows?	<p>A small number of trees are found to the front elevation on Caldecote Road and they are also scattered around the boundaries of the site and some of these will probably require removing for a development to take place. Overall of medium quality.</p>	Amber
Relationship with existing pattern of built development?	<p>Inside the current LTD and included in the settlement development policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. As a backland development this does create a new incursion in to open countryside and would potentially put pressure on the principle of developing further sites behind 20-24 Caldecote Road.</p>	Amber
Local Wildlife considerations?	<p>Nesting birds.</p> <p>Foxes.</p>	Green
Listed Building or important built assets?	<p>The Coopers at 12 Caldecote Road is a very old building (listed?) and the site is in a high profile location on one of the main entrances to the village so might receive negative community feedback.</p>	Amber

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?	Inside the current conservation area in Great Easton and a mixture of traditional and modern housing types are found adjacent so would not have a seriously detrimental effect upon its historical character and setting.	Amber
Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?	A right of way already along Caldecote Road which will potentially be the new site entrance and can easily be extended in to the site as necessary.	Green
Safe vehicular access to and from the site?	The site has a wide frontage to Caldecote Road but due to the severe bend in the road it will be difficult (and certainly expensive) to design a safe highway opening to meet the minimum legal highway standards.	Amber
Impact on existing vehicular traffic?	Additional vehicle flows from this small number of units would have no effect upon vehicular movements in the village.	Green
Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.	Bus stop less than a 100m walk.	Green
Distance to community facilities, specifically 2, High Street the designated village centre shop, post box ect	Walking distance to shops and other facilities is very reasonable at approximately 125m.	Green
Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?	The land used for the horse and stables are presumably rented out by the current owner with no public right of access.	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?	A small cemetery is found to the front elevation adjacent to number 20 Caldecote Road. This small site will have statutory protection and should be retained in its current location.	Amber
Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?	None found, although this is a classical backland site that is overlooked by several neighbours so informal access may be in place.	Green
Gas, oil, pipelines and networks & electricity transmission network?	Electricity poles are found to the South of the site but not impact on the visual amenity.	Green
Any known noise issues?	None found, a very tranquil countryside location.	Green
Any known contamination issues?	None identified although the sewage treatment plant is about 400m from the site.	Amber
Any known flooding issues?	Yes, the local brook nearby has flooded at least once in recent years and is found on the Southern boundary of the site	Amber
Any known drainage issues?	Yes, a sustainable urban drainage solution will be required but this will be costly and require ongoing maintenance.	Amber
Issues related to planning history on the site?	The new owners have engaged brp architects but no planning submission made. (May 2016).	

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Summary	<p>As long as the local community accept the principle of this incursion in to the open countryside to meet local housing need this is a developable and deliverable site. The community should now be consulted on the basis that this site is an allocated residential site. At least one of the units should be designated as affordable rented provision to meet local identified housing need (or sufficient capital funds to buy the land and build the rented unit off-site could be provided by the owner).</p> <p>The risk is that the site is built “too far back” from the Road so the best outcome would be to build within the current village envelope with large gardens to the rear of the site.</p> <p>Red – 3 Amber – 10 Green - 13</p>	<p>GREEN, scoring 10.</p>