

## Great Easton Sustainable Housing Development Sites - Site Twelve, Brook Lane Paddock

### 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 development of the Brook Lane Paddock site is scored as red and is ranked **eighth** of the fourteen prospective locations. It can now be presented for community consultation as not requiring an allocation for residential development.

### 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 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 sites have been professionally ranked and the intention is that only the highest green scoring sites should be developed first and 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 consent being achieved and a viable cost model. Within the green scoring category, the site with the highest green score will be ranked first.

<b>Contact Details</b>	
<b>Name of Assessor</b>	Derek Doran BSc (Hons) MCIH MBA

<b>Site - Details</b>	
<b>Site reference : (SHLAA)</b>	Not in the SHLAA
<b>Site name and address:</b>	Brook Lane Paddock.

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.</b>	5-6 dwellings Site 0.9 HA in total (not measured to scale)	Green
<b>Current Use:</b>	Agricultural – currently used for grazing (sheep).	Red
<b>Adjoining Uses:</b>	The village hall is found to the North of the site and the houses on Ford Bank to the Eastern boundary. Moulds Lane encloses the site along a substantial North Western boundary providing a particular rural feel in the heart of the village centre setting.  Although the site is inside the current village envelope and the new Limits To Development it has been preliminarily designated by Harborough District Council as a local green space.	Red
<b>Topography:</b>	A very uneven site with multiple levels and a rough paddock site.	Amber
<b>Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?</b>	Greenfield land providing a unique enclave of undeveloped open space (a green lung), literally in the geographical centre of the village, currently used as a paddock and for grazing. The site is of a very high historical significance and amenity value and is one of only three sites in the village to receive a preliminary designation as local green space from Harborough District Council. The site is also provisionally designated as Local Green Space in the emerging neighbourhood plan.	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Good Quality Agricultural Land?</b>	<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 4 agricultural land of a good to moderate quality.</p>	Amber
<b>Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?</b>	One owner, Raj Uppal. (about one quarter of the whole paddock site was recently purchased by three adjoining owners for agricultural use only).	Green
<b>Landscape Quality - Visual Impact Assessment ?</b>	Overall, site is completely unmodified and a rare example of common grazing land in a village centre setting. Of very high visual quality – currently enclosed to all aspects and overlooked by residential neighbours and the garden of the village hall.	Red
<b>Important Trees, Woodlands &amp; Hedgerows?</b>	Substantial hedgerows are found to two boundaries. Several large and ancient trees are dotted across the site, one of the ash trees near the centre of the site has a tree preservation order in place and is believed to be the oldest tree in the Parish. All of these features must be retained to protect the unique landscape character at the heart of the village and the current high quality views from the neighbouring properties. Overall of very high quality.	Red
<b>Relationship with existing pattern of built development?</b>	Inside of the current LTD but provisionally designated in the neighbourhood plan as one of only three local green spaces in the village that will be statutorily protected against development. As a backland development at the core of the village this site should not be developed due to its significance in the history (for droving cattle) and context of the Parish.	Red
<b>Local Wildlife considerations?</b>	Nesting birds.	Green
<b>Listed Building or important built assets?</b>	A major listed property is on the boundary and directly overlooks the site and given its high profile, the integrity of this must be maintained. Major mitigation measures will be required to avoid harm to the setting and context of this building.	Amber
<b>Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?</b>	Inside the current conservation area in Great Easton and a very important paddock to retain as a green lung and to maintain the overall character and history of the village. A wholly inappropriate site to build on.	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?</b>	A right of way is found outside the boundary and this could be reasonably extended to create a safe pedestrian access in to the site at a reasonable cost.	Amber
<b>Safe vehicular access to and from the site?</b>	None at present and difficult to create an access due to the layout of Brook Lane, it would need a bridge over the brook and due to the curve in the highway the visibility is poor. Moulds Lane is a single track and it is probably not possible to expand to provide a safe highways solution. Overall, an expensive infrastructure cost depending upon the final number of units that could be constructed.	Amber
<b>Impact on existing vehicular traffic?</b>	Additional vehicle flows in this location are inappropriate given the curve in the road and the special environmental characteristics of the site.	Red
<b>Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.</b>	The bus stop is less than a 150m walk so is very accessible.	Green
<b>Distance to community facilities, specifically 2, High Street the designated village centre shop, post box ect</b>	Walking distance to shops and other facilities is very good at approximately 150m.	Green
<b>Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?</b>	Site not used as it is a private location.	Green
<b>Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?</b>	The Time Team archaeological specialists have undertaken a provisional assessment of the site and found historical footpaths and several artefacts. A further, more comprehensive archaeological study is required.	Red
<b>Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?</b>	Important rights of way exists along Moulds Lane and Brook Lane and these will need to be maintained to allow the free access of pedestrians.	Amber

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Gas, oil, pipelines and networks &amp; electricity transmission network?</b>	None identified on the site.	Green
<b>Any known noise issues?</b>	None found, a very tranquil and calm location.	Green
<b>Any known contamination issues?</b>	Minor issues with farm slurry but can be easily remediated.	Amber
<b>Any known flooding issues?</b>	Yes, the local brook nearby has flooded more than once in recent years and sufficient remediation or no building to the lower levels of the site will be required to mitigate the problem.	Amber
<b>Any known drainage issues?</b>	Yes, a design solution will be possible but the site does regularly get waterlogged and it will be costly and require ongoing maintenance.	Amber
<b>Issues related to planning history on the site?</b>	Raj Uppal has informally raised the potential for a residential development with the Parish Council for one unit and more recently with the neighbourhood plan advisory committee for four units.	
<b>Summary</b>	<p>This site is very sensitive as it is the green space core of the village and provides a rural, quiet feel to the village centre. It is one of the distinct features of the Great Easton Parish and has been provisionally accepted by Harborough District Council as a local green space. The emerging neighbourhood plan has also adopted the principle of protecting this high value amenity site.</p> <p>It is not sustainable or developable due to its unique historical character, feel and location. This position must now be consulted upon with the local community.</p> <p>Red – 9 Amber – 9 Green - 8</p>	<b>RED scoring minus 1.</b>

**Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints**

**RAG Rating**