

Great Easton Sustainable Housing Development Sites - Site Three, Barnsdale House extension site (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 House extension site is scored red and ranked **eighth** of the 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 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) score has been used. This reflects best practice and is a robust methodology to understand and use. After analysing the 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)	Part of A/HSG/02 Developable in 6 -10 years
Site name and address:	Barnsdale House extension site

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	13 units Part of site Ref HSG/02 BRP measured - 2.01 HA (whole of Barnsdale is about 3.3 HA – Plot C, to 10 HA in total)	Amber
Current Use:	Paddock and agricultural – currently in use. A section of the site is ridge and furrow, it 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.	Amber
Adjoining Uses:	Open Countryside to the South and working fields to the West. The houses opposite on Barnsdale overlook this location. Site adjacent and contiguous with the new intended Limit To Development (LTD) boundary, to be adopted in the settlement development policy of the Neighbourhood Plan. Totally fails to reflect the existing settlement pattern that is historically significant.	Amber
Topography:	Gently sloping land.	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?	Greenfield open countryside, currently farmed and used partly as a paddock and residential garden.	Red
Good Quality Agricultural Land?	The High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area covers this site and ranks it as only having a low to medium capacity to accommodate new development. The site is grade 3 agricultural land of a good to moderate quality.	Amber
Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?	One owner Mr and Mrs Uppal, suggesting initial development of 13 units (May 2016) very keen to proceed with a residential development, having recently acquired all of the site.	Green
Landscape Quality?	The draft Neighbourhood Plan shows the view in to the village at this location as a historically significant and important one to be protected from development. Overall, site is partly modified and with quality open views of high quality – currently open aspect to South and West.	Red
Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows?	Significant ancient hedgerows to two boundaries of the site, two stands of trees either side of Barnsdale House of very high quality.	Red
Relationship with existing pattern of built development?	A backland site not linked to the current built form and would extend the village envelope in a Southerly direction in a prominent fashion. Adjacent to the current village envelope and adjacent to the intended Limits To Development set out in the settlement policy of the neighbourhood plan. Therefore, very sensitive site to develop. Unacceptable to proceed with an initial 13 units as they would be overlooked and if developed open up land for a further 22 – 27 units and this is an unnecessary scale of over - development in the Parish, given the limited housing need and community opinion.	Red
Local Wildlife considerations?	Nesting birds, small mammals, foxes.	Amber
Listed Building or important built assets?	Barnsdale House is grade 2 listed and a development scheme would undermine the integrity and setting of this important property.	Amber

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?	On the edge of the current conservation area in Great Easton and would severely undermine the unique historical character and setting of this entrance to the village, extending the mass of the village in an incongruous manner.	Red
Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?	None in place, will have to extend from the current car parking area within the curtilage of Barnsdale House so difficult to achieve.	Amber
Safe vehicular access to and from the site?	None at present and due to the severe curve in the road very difficult to provide a suitably wide visibility splay to meet current highways safety standards in to the site for 13 units along this particular section of road, especially as congestion is already a severe traffic problem during school drop off and collect times nearby.	Red
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 very near to this location.	Amber
Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.	Bus stop less than a 200m walk.	Green
Distance to community facilities, specifically 2, High Street the designated village centre	Walking distance to shops and other facilities is satisfactory at between 150 and 200m.	Green
Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?	Paddock used for horses but a private use, dog walkers use the bottom section of the site.	Amber
Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?	None identified.	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?	Yes, the Jurassic Way footpath crosses nearby in the next field and an informal footpath exists along the Western boundary - although a design solution is possible.	Amber
Gas, oil, pipelines and networks & electricity transmission network?	Yes. A high pressure gas transmission pipeline is buried to the South 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 the 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 the bottom section of the site is sterilised, subject to a full specialist professional evaluation.	Red
Any known noise issues?	None found.	Green
Any known contamination issues?	Yes, the SHLAA identifies that contamination is an issue to a small part of this site (from a previous usage) this will need a professional assessment to suggest the remediation required. A sewage treatment works is found about 300m from the Southern boundary of the site.	Red
Any known flooding issues?	Yes, this site is adjacent to flood zone 2 and a section of the lower part of the site is regularly flooded. The Brook to the Western boundary has also flooded several times in the last 25 years.	Red
Any known drainage issues?	Yes, given the weak fall of the land and the extensive past flooding a section of the site regularly remains waterlogged so remediation through a sustainable urban drainage system and/or a balancing lake will be required.	Red
Issues related to planning history on the site?	The owners Mr and Mrs Uppal, have formally raised the potential for a residential development of an initial 13 units with the Parish Council.	N.A.

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
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 land that is a part of one of the Barnsdale sub plots, A, B or C is developed then all three sites could be opened up over the medium (or long) term, with major pressure from interested parties to allow further development of between 125 and 145 units in total - the SHLAA states a capacity of up to 169 units in adjacent land to this location.</p> <p>In effect, unrequired over development of the latter scale would increase the size of the village by almost half.</p> <p>Red – 10</p> <p>Amber – 10</p> <p>Green - 6</p>	RED, scoring minus 4.