

# **HUSBANDS BOSWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

## **SUSTAINABLE SITE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Husbands Bosworth Parish Council has been prepared by the Husbands Bosworth Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) on behalf of the parish council. One of the most important aims of the NP has been to consider and meet the parish housing need during the plan period and set out the most sustainable locations where this need could be delivered through allocating new residential development sites.

The objectively assessed need (OAN) for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area is 4,829 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (96,580 in total) and for the Harborough District this is an additional 532 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment), giving a total plan requirement across the 20 year plan period of 10,640 dwellings”.

- 1.2 A final housing target for Husbands Bosworth has been identified by HDC based upon an agreed population and economic development increase in numbers and activity. HDC have then apportioned this District-wide housing provision target in line with their settlement hierarchy, this gave a minimum target number of residential dwellings required to be built by 2031. Due to the ongoing development on site in the parish and taking extant planning permissions in to account HDC set a target of zero additional properties to be constructed by 2031. The housing theme group discussed the evidence of need in the parish and agreed that to “future proof” the target of zero units required by HDC they would add an additional parish level buffer of about an additional 20 to 25 units, this meant the NP target to be recommended to the community was for a minimum of 25 units to be built by 2031.

- 1.3 This site selection framework sets out how the Husbands Bosworth NPAC identified sustainable sites for the allocation of land for housing development. The recommendations made by the Advisory Committee were informed by evidence collected and assessed by a Housing Theme Group (HTG), supported by an independent consultant from the NP consultancy specialists YourLocale.

The NP supports the provision of sustainable housing in the Parish and has embraced the desire to exceed the Borough-wide housing provision target by identifying potential housing sites within the Parish to meet these requirements within locations that are deliverable, developable and are the most acceptable to the local community.

## **2. Where did the site suggestions come from?**

- 2.1 HDC had prepared a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which identified the sites put forward by landowners for residential development. This exercise was completed in 2016 and identified 4 potential residential sites within Husbands Bosworth parish. The parish council then undertook its own “call for sites” in July 2018 by writing to all landowners and stakeholders with known sites near to the village. A scoring matrix based upon the methodology supported by the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF) guidance (2012 and 2018) was drafted by HTG members to reflect the unique characteristics and scale of Husbands Bosworth parish.
- 2.2 The HTG received an excellent response and eight sites were offered for residential development by owners and their professional advisers, these sites would have yielded over 425 units (against the agreed parish requirement of about 20 to 25 units). A total of eight Sustainable Site Assessments (SSA’s) were completed to arrive at a ranking of sites to determine which would be presented to the community as being subject to allocation through the neighbourhood plan.

## **3 The Criteria and the RAG Scoring System**

- 3.1 The SHLAA methodology jointly agreed between the Local Planning Authorities (including HDC) of Leicester and Leicestershire was used, coupled with the experience of the consultant in devising past “made” neighbourhood plan site allocations that have been supported in an independent planning examination.
- 3.2 The initial site assessments were undertaken by the Consultant from YourLocale to ensure a professional approach based upon past experience of similar assessments and to ensure a high level of objectivity and consistency in scoring. YourLocale have extensive experience in undertaking SSA’s and have helped communities in delivering “made” neighbourhood plan residential site allocations. The assessment included a comprehensive desk top study followed by a visit to each of the sites. These initial results were then considered in detail by the HTG members including the Consultant to ensure that all the local factors had been fully considered and were reflected in the reports. This led to some amendments being agreed by members of the HTG and it was then possible to rank each site in order of overall sustainability. The policy position of HDC in terms of the SHLAA reports was a material consideration in these discussions of scoring.
- 3.3 The HTG agreed twenty eight sustainability indicators as the criteria in the SSA scoring matrix that are relevant to the selection and allocation of sites for new dwellings using evidence from the NPPF’s of 2012 and 2018.
- 3.4 A scoring system, based on a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) score was applied to each criterion and listed for each identified site. Red was scored for a negative

assessment; Amber was scored where mitigation might be required; Green was scored for a positive assessment. A different methodology for scoring to give varying weights to different criteria was considered by the HTG but rejected as it would have been more complicated, less transparent and it could therefore have been more subjective and difficult to justify to the community.

3.5 The following SSA scoring framework was used to compare each site.

**Table 1 Sustainable Site Assessment (SSA) scoring matrix – Husbands Bosworth**

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Green</u>	<u>Amber</u>	<u>Red</u>
1. Site capacity	Small capacity up to 5 dwellings alone or in conjunction with another site	Medium capacity of between 6-15 dwellings	Large capacity of more than 16 dwellings
2. Current Use	Vacant	Existing uses need to be relocated	Loss of important local asset
3. Adjoining Uses	Site wholly within residential area or village envelope	Site adjoining village envelope or residential location	Extending village envelope outside boundary
4. Topography	Flat or gently sloping site	Undulating site or greater slope that can be mitigated	Severe slope that cannot be mitigated
5. Greenfield or Previously Developed Land	Previously developed land (brownfield)	Mixture of brownfield & greenfield land	Greenfield land
6. Good Quality Agricultural Land ( Natural England classification)	Land classified 4 or 5 (poor and very poor)	Land classified 3 (good to moderate)	Land classified 1 or 2 ( Excellent and very good)
7. Site availability – Single ownership or multiple ownership	Single ownership	Multiple ownership	Multiple ownership with one or more unwilling partners
8. Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	No harm to quality.	Less than substantial harm to quality.	Substantial harm to quality.
9. Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows	None affected	Mitigation measures required	Site would harm or require removal of Ancient tree or hedge (or TPO)
10. Relationship with existing pattern of built development	Land visible from a small number of properties	Land visible from a range of sources mitigated through landscaping or planting	Prominent visibility  Difficult to improve
11. Local Wildlife considerations	No impact on wildlife site	Small to medium impact but with	Statutorily protected

		potential to mitigate	species in place
12. Listed Building or important built assets and their setting	No harm to existing building	Less than substantial harm	Substantial harm
13. Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting	No harm	Less than substantial harm	Substantial harm
14. Safe pedestrian access to and from the site	Existing footpath	No footpath but can be created	No potential for footpath
15. Impact on existing vehicular traffic	Impact on village centre minimal	Medium scale impact on village centre	Major impact on village centre
16. Safe vehicular access to and from the site.	Appropriate access can be easily provided	Appropriate access can only be provided with significant improvement	Appropriate access cannot be provided
17. Safe access to public transport (specifically a bus stop with current service)	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
18. Distance to designated village centre (the shop)	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
19. Distance to GP/Health Centre	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
20. Distance to Primary School.	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
21. Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site	No recreational uses on site	Informal recreational uses on site	Formal recreational uses on site
22. Ancient monuments or archaeological remains	No harm to an ancient monument or remains site	Less than substantial harm to an ancient monument or remains site	Substantial harm to an ancient monument or remains
23. Any existing public rights of ways/bridle paths	No impact on public right of way	Detriment to public right of way	Re-routing required or would cause significant harm
24. Gas and/or oil pipelines & electricity transmission network (Not water/sewage)	Site unaffected	Re-siting may be necessary	Re-siting may not be possible
25. Any noise issues	No noise issues	Mitigation may be necessary	Noise issues will be an ongoing concern
26. Any contamination issues	No contamination issues	Minor mitigation required	Major mitigation required
27. Any known flooding issues	Site in flood zone 1 or 2 or no flooding for more than 25 years	Site in flood zone 3a or flooded once in last 25 years	Site in flood zone 3b (functional flood plain) or flooded more than once in last 25 years
28. Any drainage issues.	No drainage issues identified.	Need for mitigation.	Need for substantial mitigation.

**4. The assessment outcome**

- 4.1 The assessments were considered at a number of meetings of the HTG to ensure that adequate local knowledge was central to the process. This led to a reassessment of some sites by the YourLocale Consultant with amendments subsequently agreed with the HTG members to ensure an objective and transparent approach prior to the assessments being circulated more widely.
- 4.2 The eight identified sites (without an indication of the assessment outcome) were shared at an Open Event in the Village Hall where residents of the village were asked to indicate which sites they believed to be the most sustainable locations.
- 4.3 The assessments were amended to reflect this input and then circulated as drafts to the relevant site sponsor, usually the land owner or a professional agent working on their behalf. All parties were invited to comment upon the reports, the feedback was considered and the reports were analysed line by line and further amendments made.
- 4.4 A final HTG meeting was held to ensure that all factors had been fairly considered. Some of the assessments were amended in the light of new information provided and the final SSA scores were then debated and signed off by the NPAC.
- 4.5 The final outcome of the assessment is as recorded below in the following table. The RAG Rating is obtained by deducting the “Red” scores from the “Green” scores, an “Amber” remains neutral.
- 4.6 The final approved site is highlighted in the table below in **bold** type:

**Table 2 – Sustainable Site Assessment (SSA) outcome**

Site Location and SSA letter	RAG Score	Rank
A. Donkey Paddock field	Red - negative.	N/A
B. Sledging field rear of Broad Lane	Red - negative.	N/A
C. Rear of Marsh House 34 Honeypot Lane	Red - negative.	N/A
D. Honeypot Farm	Green 3.	Second
E. Vitters site	Red - negative.	N/A
F. Priory Barn extension.	Red - negative.	N/A
<b>G. Welford Road South West.</b>	<b>Green 12.</b>	<b>First</b>
H. Southern expansion area.	Red - negative.	N/A

- 4.7 The NPAC having considered all of the evidence has allocated the highest scoring green site,

Welford Road South West for up to about 28 residential units.

- 4.8 Allocating this site exceeds the HDC target by 28 units and the site is confirmed to be developable and deliverable by the owners and the HDC SHLAA analysis. A planning application for 32 units is currently being considered by HDC and the site is for sale on the open market.