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Harrold Neighbourhood Plan

Site Assessments

August 2017

Introduction

In preparation of the proposed Harrold Neighbourhood Plan, Matodesign was instructed to carry out residential site assessments on behalf of Harrold Parish Council in September 2016. The sites considered are those put forward to the Borough Council as part of their proposed new Local Plan. The Local Plan will set out how much growth there should be in the borough in coming years (housing, jobs and associated infrastructure) and where it should take place. The Harrold Neighbourhood Plan will enable residents of Harrold Parish to have their say about where they believe development should be located in their village.

The assessment of sites is intended to assist parishioners understand each proposed site option and identify any issues that may prevent or limit the extent of development.

This is a revised version of the original site assessment report originally prepared in October 2017. This was revised to include an additional site put forward during the Local Plan 2035 consultation period from early 2017.

The National Planning Policy Framework

This document sets out the Government's nationwide planning policies and objectives. The following paragraphs are taken from the NPPF and are provided to give some general context to the neighbourhood plan process -

1. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

6. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The policies in paragraphs 18 to 219, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

7. There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- *an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.*

14. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

16. The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:

- *develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;*
- *plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan; and*
- *identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with their neighbourhood plan to proceed.*

Housing numbers

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) undertaken by the Borough Council in December 2015 in preparation for the new Local Plan 2032 identified a need for 17,672 additional dwellings over the plan period 2012-32. The Development Strategy and Site Selection Methodology Background Paper subsequently published by the Borough Council in September 2015 confirmed that Group 2 villages (including Harrold) should each expect land allocations to accommodate between 50 and 150 additional dwellings (an average of 100). Since then, the Borough Council decided to extend the Local Plan period to 2035 and this resulted in a second call for sites and a review of the SHLAA. At the time of writing, the Borough Council's evaluation of sites and SHLAA have not been published. However, it is anticipated that the change to the local plan period is not likely to result in a significant increase in further dwellings for Group 2 villages. It should be noted that the Local Plan is only in draft stage and the aforementioned Strategy is not adopted. Further details about the Local Plan 2035 can be found on the Borough Council's website here - http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose/local_plan_2035.aspx

The sites

The two 'call for sites' processes undertaken by the Borough Council in 2014 and 2015, resulted in a total of 12 sites being put forward for consideration in Harrold. Of those 12 sites, one was for a solar farm. The remaining 11 were for residential development and two of those sites were duplicate or similar site applications. You can find details of each proposed site including a location plan on the

Bedford Borough website here -

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/PlanningBrowse.aspx?id=7nVoOrB4tQyGwqgie2ZGxA%3d%3d>

An additional site – Town Farm (710) – was proposed during the Council’s Local Plan Consultation carried out in early 2017. This is included in this revised version of the site assessment report.

The sites are listed as follows. The initial number is the Borough Council’s site number –

136 – Land at 81 Odell Road

137 – Land at Brook Lane and recreation ground

138 – Land at Brook Lane

139 – Land at Orchard Lane (Site 1)

140 – Land at Orchard Lane (Site 2)

141 – Rear of 66-72 High Street (Site B)

142 – Rear of 66-72 High Street Roman Paddock (Site A)

143 – Site 1 Land at Odell Road, Little Odell

482 – Site 2 Land at Odell Road, Little Odell

554 – Land off Dungee Road

579 – Land East of Orchard Lane

606 – Land at Priory Farm

710 – Town Farm

The method of assessment

This was a desk top assessment only. Each site has been assessed against its suitability, availability and achievability, and acceptability as required by paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. A standard method of assessment known as RAG (Red, Amber, Green) has been used to score site constraints, local or national land designations, and other planning policies, history and criteria to ascertain each sites suitability for development. If a constraint is identified and is considered to be a fundamental and unresolvable, then it is scored 1 (Red). Where there is a constraint which may affect the development of a site or part of a site, it is scored 2 (Amber). In instances where no constraint is identified, then it is scored 3 (Green).

The RAG results should be used as a guide only. Each site assessment contains a ‘Concluding recommendation’ which attempts to weigh up all of the planning constraints and considerations identified and draw out the key and sometimes minor differences between the sites (i.e. the distance from or accessibility to a site the village centre, its sustainability or problematical and fundamental technical issues such as absence of safe highway access or an Important Open Space designation). It is

suggested therefore that the Steering Group considers both the RAG score and 'Concluding recommendation' together.

Findings

From the table below you will see that the RAG site scores are quite close. The scoring process undertaken was quite ridged and there should be a correlation between any identified site constraint, comments and the score given (see above). The majority of assessments related to 'green field' sites, which rarely have many, if any, complex constraints. As many of these sites were relatively large, constraints on small parts of a site would not necessarily preclude its development as a whole (i.e. parts of the site might need to be omitted). Of course, the findings are recommendations only and are not binding on the Parish.

Site reference	Site name	No. of dwellings	RAG score	Comment	Recommendation
141	Rear of 66-72 High Street (Site B)	3	52		GREEN
142	Rear of 66-72 High Street (Site A)	3	52		GREEN
138	Land at Brook Lane	15	51	Duplicate site	GREEN
137	Land at Brook Lane & Recreation Ground	30 estimated	50	Duplicate site	GREEN
710	Town Farm	20	50		AMBER
579	Land East of Orchard Lane	135	48		AMBER
606	Land at Priory Farm	150	47		AMBER
140	Land at Orchard Lane (Site 2)	15-20	48		RED
139	Land at Orchard Lane (Site 1)	10	48		RED
143	Land at Odell Road, Little Odell (site 1)	40	50		RED
482	Land at Odell Road, Little Odell (site 2)	60	46		RED
136	Land at 81 Odell Road (S)	10-15	46		RED
554	Land off Dungee Road	N/A	Solar photo voltaic site (see separate report from Bedford Borough Council)		NOT SCORED

GREEN – recommends that site should be supported

AMBER – recommends that the site should be considered further

RED – recommends that the site is unsuitable

Data sources

The following websites were used to collect the data for these site assessments –

Borough Maps –

<http://apps.bedford.gov.uk/lvplanning/>

http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/countryside/public_rights_of_way/online_maps_localview_fusion.aspx

Central Bedfordshire website -

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/minerals-waste/framework/policies.aspx>

Google Maps –

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps>

Old Maps –

<https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/>

Environment Agency website –

<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37837.aspx>

Heritage Gateway –

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

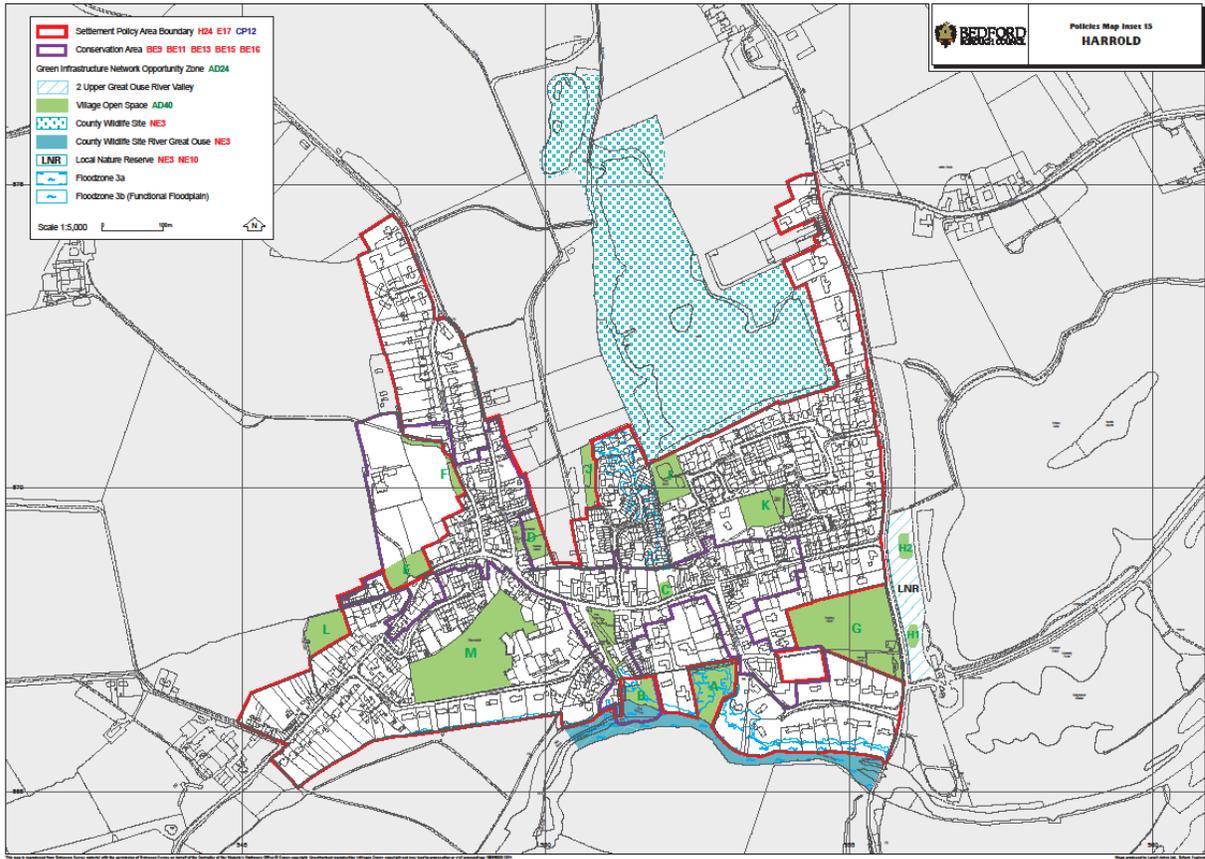
Magic Map Application –

<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Bedford Borough Council's Important Open Space Review (2009) as part of the Allocations and Designations Plan submission -

<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=3Y19D%2fwfzdEmSue5%2bd65lw%3d%3d&name=Harrold.pdf>

Harrold Village Policy Map (as prepared and published by Bedford Borough Council)



Source - http://www.bedford.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/planning_town_and_country/planning_policy_its_purpose.aspx

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