

Great Glen Sustainable Housing Development Sites

Site One - Grammar School Expansion site (SHLAA Ref HSG/03)

1. Introduction

The Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan Group are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Great Glen in Harborough District, Leicestershire. One of the key priorities of the Neighbourhood Plan is ensuring the Parish remains sustainable in the long term by ensuring a balanced residential expansion. Additional large scale residential developments are required because the Parish (@ April 2016) has an identified housing need in its local plan of between 100 and 150 units (TBC). This comprehensive analysis sets out the relative sustainability of the potential housing sites and ranks them 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 for a site(s) to be agreed. Following the analysis the Grammar School Expansion site is ranked **SIXTH** out of the eight prospective locations.

2. Site Selection Criteria

The sustainable development criteria relevant to the selection and allocation of sites for new dwellings were identified using best practise methodologies, supplemented with evidence from Harborough District Council, approved Neighbourhood Plans, issues identified in 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 traffic light (i.e. Red, Amber or Green - RAG) scores has been adopted. This reflects best practice and is a robust methodology to understand and use. After analysing the eight sites the one with the most green ratings and the least red and/or amber scores is the one which is most sustainable. The eight sites have been ranked such that green scoring sites should be developed first and red sites should never be developed.

- Red is scored for a negative assessment where significant mitigation is required and/or there is a serious “deal-breaker” ;
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 date.
- Green is scored for a positive assessment with no major constraints on future development.
A green scoring site can be developed subject to market demands, planning and cost constraints.

Contact Details	
Name of Assessor	Derek Doran/Nic Jepson

Site - Details	
Site reference : (SHLAA)	A/GG/HSG/03 Developable in 15 + years (Last years' ref was 16+ years)
Site name and address:	Grammar School Expansion Site

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	350 - 370 dwellings (SHLAA – 393 units). 23.3 HA	Red
Current Use:	Agricultural – in current use. Most of the site is ridge and furrow, this is an excellent example of Medieval strip farming and has a historically important context (although no legal protection against development). Leicestershire is one of only 11 Counties in England with concentrations of preserved sites of this type, this site in Great Glen is one of the best preserved sites in the Region.	Red
Adjoining Uses:	Leicester Grammar school is found to the West of the site, future expansion land for this use may be required. Heron Close to the East of the site and all back gardens currently face on to open Countryside so views severely compromised if developed.	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
	<p>Outside of the current village envelope.</p> <p>New development with planning consent for 41 units to the Southern edge of the site.</p>	
Topography:	Variable gradients across the site will require substantial remediation, although not an unusual development issue	Amber
Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?	Greenfield open countryside, currently farmed, mixture of arable and grazing.	Red
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>Grade 3 – Good to moderate agricultural land, currently being farmed.</p>	Red
Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?	The Duncan family own the land, but potentially a “deal breaking” ransom strip to the Southern edge. No current interest in developing the site.	Red
Landscape Quality?	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan does not define this site as a proposed local green space, but a section of the site appears as a site of environmental significance and should be retained.</p> <p>Mixture of modified and unmodified and of reasonable quality – currently open aspect to rear gardens on Heron Close. Creates an open space between the village and the Grammar school that protects the integrity of both sites.</p>	Amber
Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows?	Substantial hedgerows to most boundaries of the site will need to be retained. Individual trees of reasonable quality, overall medium quality. Developer will work these matters into their overall master plan	Amber

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Relationship with existing pattern of built development?	<p>An extensive overdevelopment that is not needed in the Parish, particularly as other sites will be available.</p> <p>An unnecessary extension in to open space that will skew the built form of the village in an unacceptable way thereby reducing the character of the area.</p>	Red
Local Wildlife considerations?	<p>Small number of nesting birds, retained with hedgerows, but nothing unusual.</p> <p>Potentially foxes.</p>	Green
Listed Building or important built assets?	<p>Cricks Retreat, Grade 2 listing is adjacent to the site.</p>	Amber
Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?	<p>No designated conservation area currently in Great Glen.</p>	Green
Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?	<p>None at present and very difficult to connect to existing built form due to the design of the cul-de-sacs on Bridgewater Drive and Heron Close. However, access would more than likely be from London Road where there are existing footpaths to the entrance of the site</p>	Green
Safe vehicular access to and from the site?	<p>None at present and will require major new highways infrastructure possibly from the new development site adjacent or using the grammar school access to London Road (continuous ransom strip). Access available from London Road subject to negotiation with the School re Ransom strip. Traffic management measures required to London Road</p> <p>Could be possible to access from the cul-de-sacs on Bridgewater Drive and Heron Close, as the potential for future access has been accommodated already, and especially if new development was phased</p>	Amber

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Impact on existing vehicular traffic?	Dependent upon Highways access route, potentially two options. Additional vehicle flows from this site through the new development to the A6 could provide an acceptable vehicular movement flow. Routing through Heron Close would be very damaging to the “top end” of the village where there is already serious overcapacity and congestion problems, the site would be extremely unpopular with local residents. The site is directly opposite/adjacent to two sites currently being developed – Davidsons and Francis Jackson Homes	Amber
Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.	Bus stop within a lengthy walking distance on London Road – both directions (if accessible through the new site - potential for a ransom strip). Potential for new bus stops	Amber
Distance to community facilities, specifically village centre or shops including Village Hall, post box, pub, playground/sports areas	Walking distance to shops and other facilities is unacceptable from the top end of the site at between 800 and 1000m, depending upon route established.	Red
Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?	Used for informal dog walking. Play area and formal recreation grounds adjacent to the site.	Amber
Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?	None identified.	Green
Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?	A well used bridleway borders the Eastern boundary of the site and this would need to be accommodated in a sensitive design solution. An existing footpath links to the existing residential housing and would be difficult to re-site.	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Gas, oil, pipelines and networks & electricity transmission network?	None identified.	Green
Any known noise issues?	None found.	Green
Any known contamination issues?	No major issues identified.	Green
Any known flooding issues?	None.	Green
Any known drainage issues?	Two balancing lakes are found to the Western edge of the site, where potential vehicular access could take place. These are however off-site, on the school land.	Green
Issues related to planning history on the site?	None identified.	

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Summary	<p>Red – 9</p> <p>Amber - 8</p> <p>Green - 9</p> <p>A red site and should not be developed.</p> <p>Ranked number 6 out of 8.</p> <p>The “lower end” of the site could have some future development potential and should be reviewed in ten to fifteen years’ time, about 2026.</p>	RED