

## Great Glen Sustainable Housing Development Sites

### Site Five – Sycamores Farm Expansion site (SHLAA Ref HSG/11)

#### 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 Sycamores Farm Expansion site is ranked **SEVENTH** 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)	GG/HSG/11 Developable in 10-14 years ( Last years ref was 11-15 years)
Site name and address:	Sycamores Farm expansion site

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Site capacity: 3 bed houses with garden and in-curtilage parking.	400 dwellings (SHLAA – 413 units). Alternative option for 312 units. 24.5 HA	Red
Current Use:	Agricultural – in grazing use.  Almost all of the site is ridge and furrow. It 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.	Red
Adjoining Uses:	Open Countryside across the site.  Outside of the current village envelope but could link well to the new development with planning consent for 41 units on the opposite side of London Road.	Amber

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Topography:</b>	Undulating land that is a reasonable fall for construction at the top end of the site, steeper towards the A6 trunk road on the Southern edge. This would be worked into the scheme design by a developer	Amber
<b>Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?</b>	Greenfield open countryside, currently farmed.	Red
<b>Good Quality Agricultural Land?</b>	The High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area covers this site and ranks it as only having a low to medium capacity to accommodate new development.  Grade 3 – Good to moderate agricultural land, currently being farmed.	Red
<b>Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?</b>	One owner, Libby Carter – keen to proceed with all or a part of the site.	Green
<b>Landscape Quality?</b>	<b>The draft Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect most of this site as Local Green Space 02.</b>  Some of the best views South from the village are found across this site and should be protected.  Mainly unmodified land of a very high quality.	Red
<b>Important Trees, Woodlands &amp; Hedgerows?</b>	Substantial hedgerows and trees define most of the site with a number of trees also present and will need to be retained. Individual trees of reasonable quality, overall high quality.  Developer could still develop the site, although some of the hedges would have to be removed. Trees dependent upon Tree Preservation Orders.	Amber
<b>Relationship with existing pattern of built development?</b>	The site is separated from the current built up area by London Road, although residential properties on both sides of London Road could make this site a potentially suitable extension to the village.	Red

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
	A significant potential over-development, not required to meet the needs of the Parish.	
<b>Local Wildlife considerations?</b>	Nesting birds, retained with hedgerows. Foxes Badgers	Red
<b>Listed Building or important built assets?</b>	St Cuthberts church is opposite part of the site and is one of the most important buildings in the Parish, its integrity would be compromised with this scale of over development.	Red
<b>Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting?</b>	No designated conservation area in Great Glen.	Green
<b>Safe pedestrian access to and from the site?</b>	Existing footpath on London Road, fairly straightforward to extend in to the site in a safe and financially viable manner given this large number of units (through site MXD/05 or MX/D08).	Green
<b>Safe vehicular access to and from the site?</b>	London Road can provide a new junction in to the site in several locations, the bypass has allowed this to be a safe option (previously additional turnings would have been dangerous) (through site MXD/05 or MX/D08).	Green
<b>Impact on existing vehicular traffic?</b>	Additional vehicle flows from this site through the new development to London Road would provide too many additional vehicle movements. Clearly the scale of the development, at 312 to 413 units will have a major negative impact.	Red
<b>Safe access to public transport? Specifically a bus stop.</b>	Bus stops, both directions within a very short walking distance.	Green

<b>Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings &amp; Constraints</b>		<b>RAG Rating</b>
<b>Distance to community facilities, specifically village centre or shops including Village Hall, post box, pub, playground/sports areas</b>	Walking distance to shops and other facilities is acceptable for the upper parts of the site but unacceptable at over 800m from the bottom end of the site.	Amber
<b>Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?</b>	Used extensively for dog walking and joggers, although there are other options close by	Amber
<b>Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?</b>	None identified.	Green
<b>Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?</b>	Yes, two existing paths exist, and these are protected in the draft Neighbourhood Plan as C26 and C27, could be re-aligned.	Amber
<b>Gas, oil, pipelines and networks &amp; electricity transmission network?</b>	Telephone cabling across part of the site.	Amber
<b>Any known noise issues?</b>	Traffic noise from the bypass trunk road can be heard when busy and subject to wind and weather conditions. Could be ameliorated with additional planting bunds.	Amber
<b>Any known contamination issues?</b>	No major issues identified, although small fly tips across the site. Not relevant to re-development in contamination terms, unless hazardous waste in tipping material	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
Any known flooding issues?	None identified.	Green
Any known drainage issues?	None identified, the fall of the land provides adequate surface drainage.	Green
Issues related to planning history on the site?	The conflict with the quality of most of this site is such that about two thirds (detail TBC with Environment Group) should not be developed.	
Summary	<p>Red – 9</p> <p>Amber – 8</p> <p>Green – 9</p> <p>As a red site this should not be developed, now or in the future.</p> <p>Smaller sites to the North (site A and site B) may be built out adding a potential pressure on this area of Local Green Space in the medium to long term.</p>	RED