

Gedling Borough Council

Site Selection Document – Main Report



March 2016

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following the adoption of the Aligned Core Strategy (ACS) in September 2014 Gedling Borough Council has been working on the second part of the Local Plan, the Local Planning Document (LPD). One of the key tasks that the LPD will perform is to allocate new sites for development. This involves identifying which sites will be developed for housing.
- 1.2 A number of sites have been identified as being 'Reasonable Alternatives'. These are sites which are located close to existing built up areas and are generally suitable for residential development. In order to assess which of these sites will be allocated for development consideration needs to be given to a wide range of factors including:
- Landscape and Visual Impact;
 - Historic Environment;
 - Green Belt;
 - Flooding;
 - Biodiversity; and
 - Infrastructure.
- 1.3 In order to ensure that decisions about which of the Reasonable Alternative sites will be allocated are made in a transparent and objective way, a process of assembling relevant information and then considering this information in a consistent manner has been undertaken. A two stage process has been used to determine firstly whether the site could be allocated and secondly recommendations made as to whether the site should be allocated in preference to other Reasonable Alternatives so that the housing requirement for the particular part of the Borough in which the site is located is met.
- 1.4 This document summarises the site selection process and presents its findings. It has been prepared in tandem with the Housing Background Paper and Local Housing Need Report. The site selection process has helped identify the scale of development that can be accommodated in and adjacent to the main built up areas of Nottingham. This figure has then informed the scale of development needed at the Key Settlements for Growth of Bestwood Village, Calverton and Ravenshead and also at the Other Villages. The Housing Background Paper confirms that more development than expected can be accommodated in and adjacent to Arnold and Carlton and, therefore, it has been possible to reduce the amount to be accommodated at other locations. The assessments made in this document have helped inform where this reduction could be made and the sites that are recommended for allocation.
- 1.5 The document is structured into two parts; a Main Report and a series of Appendices. The Main Report sets out the approach that has been taken and summarises the outcome of the site selection process. The appendices provide the detail of the site selection process. The following appendices are included:
- Appendix A – Urban Area;
 - Appendix B – Bestwood Village;
 - Appendix C – Calverton;

- Appendix D – Ravenshead;
- Appendix E – Burton Joyce;
- Appendix F – Lambley;
- Appendix G – Woodborough; and
- Appendix H – Linby, Newstead, Papplewick and Stoke Bardolph.

These appendices set out the decisions that have been made to arrive at the final list of sites recommended for allocation. This includes decisions about individual sites and combinations of sites. A key part of these appendices are the A3 Site Schedules that have been compiled to inform the site selection process.

2.0 Reasonable Alternatives

2.1 The starting point for this work was the creation of a pool of potential sites known as ‘Reasonable Alternatives’. These were sites which, in the view of Planning Officers, warranted consideration in order to ensure that sufficient regard was had to alternative options. This was done to ensure that the Local Plan process is robust and accords with the requirement that consideration is given to reasonable alternatives through the Sustainability Appraisal.

2.2 These ‘Reasonable Alternatives’ have been identified from the sites assessed through the 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The SHLAA is an annual process which assesses sites for their suitability, availability and achievability for residential development. It includes sites that have been granted planning permission, sites put forward for consideration by landowners and developers and sites identified by the Borough Council. The SHLAA assesses sites as:

- Deliverable or Developable – there are no significant constraints to development and the site is likely to be developed within the next 15 years;
- Suitable If Policy Changes – the site is only constrained by a planning policy which could be amended to allow development; or
- Non-deliverable or Developable – the site has significant constraints and there is no evidence as yet that these can be overcome.

2.3 The final pool of ‘Reasonable Alternatives’ has been developed using the following criteria:

Location	Sites should be within, adjacent to or close to the existing built up area of Nottingham, a Key Settlement for Growth or Other Village. Sites which are in isolated locations are not included.
Size	To be included sites need to be capable of accommodating at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Area – 50 dwellings • Rural Area – 10 dwellings

	<p>This ensures that the work needed to determine whether to allocate the site is proportionate to its impact on the local area and does not result in an unmanageable number of sites being included.</p> <p>The thresholds will be applied flexibly and sites which are just under the threshold may be included.</p>
Planning Status	<p>Sites which do not yet have planning permission are included. This includes sites which were allocated by the Replacement Local Plan but do not yet have planning permission.</p> <p>Sites with planning permission will be included if development has not yet commenced or the site has not been substantially completed. Sites with planning permission may need to be allocated to ensure that their ability to deliver houses in the future is appropriately protected.</p>
2014 SHLAA Assessment	<p>Sites which have been assessed as Deliverable or Developable or Suitable if Policy Changes are included.</p> <p>Sites which have been assessed as Non-deliverable or Developable may be included where their constraints are deemed to be such that further work may overcome them or if there is the potential that the benefits of developing the site may outweigh the impact of the constraint.</p>

2.4 In total there are 114 sites across the Borough which have been included as Reasonable Alternatives. A list of sites included from each settlement can be found in the relevant Appendix.

3.0 Approach

3.1 Having identified a list of sites to be included as Reasonable Alternatives it was then necessary to consider the approach to take to assessing the sites. This included identifying the information required to assess the sites, identifying supporting materials such as maps and also identifying the best way to present this information in a clear way.

3.2 Making decisions about whether sites can and should be allocated requires that information from a range of sources is used in order to come to a balanced decision. Information was sourced from the range of evidence used to inform the Local Planning Document and Aligned Core Strategy. Some of this evidence was used to inform the Sustainability Appraisal for the Local Planning Document which is also a source of information for the Site Selection Document.

3.3 To present the information it was decided to use a series of Site Schedules. These Schedules would present the relevant information for each site in a clear and consistent manner. Maps and photographs would also be presented in these Schedules.

Sources of Information

3.4 The table below sets out the information used in the Schedule, the reason it has been used and its source. A brief explanation of how the evidence documents were prepared is provided below to provide background to the information presented.

Information	Reason	Source
Site Name and Reference	Unique and consistent name and reference number to ensure that there is clarity about which site is being discussed.	SHLAA Review 2015
Number of dwellings	To identify the level of development that is being initially considered on site.	SHLAA Review 2015
Brownfield or Greenfield	Paragraph 111 of the NPPF requires that the re-use of previously developed land is encouraged. In making decisions preference will be given to sites which are previously developed or contain a proportion of previously developed land.	SHLAA Review 2015
SHLAA Conclusion	The SHLAA identifies constraints to the development of the site and provides contextual information about the site such as whether it is already allocated for development or has extant planning permission.	SHLAA Review 2015
Infrastructure	Impact on infrastructure is an important part of making decisions. Information will be presented on a range of types of infrastructure.	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	The SA assesses sites against a range of different factors and scores them for their sustainability.	GBC Sustainability Appraisal (2015)
Green Belt	The protection of the Green Belt is an important factor and changes to Green Belt boundaries require 'exceptional circumstances'. In accordance with ACS Policy 3.2 preference will be given to sites which are not in the Green Belt.	Green Belt Assessment (2015)
Compliance with the ACS	Sites will be assessed for compliance with policies within the ACS. Key policies will include Policy 2 (The Spatial Strategy), Policy 4 (Employment Provision and Economic Development).	ACS
Highways	Ensuring that sites have suitable and safe access to the road	In-house assessment with input from County

	network and will not affect its operation is an important part of determining whether sites can be allocated.	Highways.
Historic Environment	The protection and enhancement of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is a requirement of the law. Including this alongside the criteria in the SA highlights the importance given to the historic environment.	Impact of Possible Development Sites on Heritage Assets (2015)
Consultation Responses	It is important that the views of local people are taken into account when preparing Local Plans. Responses made during previous consultations may indicate a preference for a certain site or broad area.	Responses to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues & Options (Oct 2013) • Masterplan Workshops (Oct/Nov 2013) • Community Workshops (March/April 2015)

SHLAA Review 2015

- 3.5 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is an annual review of potential housing sites. Its purpose is to help us understand where and when housing could be built in the future. Sites in the SHLAA are assessed against a range of criteria to establish their suitability, availability and achievability for development. The SHLAA was the starting point for the identification of the Reasonable Alternatives.
- 3.6 Sites are identified from a range of sources including sites where a planning application has been submitted and sites that have specifically submitted by the landowner or a developer for assessment through the SHLAA. Additionally the Borough Council have undertaken searches for sites using mapping, aerial photography and site visits and also held a 'call for sites' allowing sites to be put forward for consideration.
- 3.7 Sites are assessed for:
- Suitability – whether the site offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable communities. This involves assessing any planning policy restrictions, physical problems or limitations such as access or flooding, potential impacts on the landscape and conservation and the environmental conditions which would be experienced by prospective residents;
 - Availability – whether there are any ownership or other legal issues that might affect the ability of the site to be developed and when these might be overcome; and
 - Achievability – whether the site is economically viable when considering the market and the cost of development and when the site might be viable.

3.8 Sites which are deemed to be suitable, available and achievable are classed as Deliverable or Developable. Where a site is constrained by a planning policy which may be amended through the review of the Local Plan it may be classed as 'Suitable if Policy Changes'. Sites which are not suitable, not available or not achievable are classed as 'Non-Deliverable or Developable' however these sites are not automatically ruled out. Work to address the reasons a site is non-deliverable or developable may be possible or the constraints may be outweighed by other benefits of development on site.

3.9 Further details about the SHLAA can be found at www.gedling.gov.uk/shlaa.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

3.10 The purpose of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is to identify infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth set out in the Local Planning Document. It considers the key site specific infrastructure requirements of the reasonable alternative sites and the likely costs of this infrastructure. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is based on information gathered from various service providers and also from their various strategies and investment plans. The site schedules set out in the appendices to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan summarise the key infrastructure requirements for each reasonable alternative site. Such requirements are important considerations in site selection indicating where service capacity imposes constraints on development and the potential for mitigation and likely costs.

GBC Sustainability Appraisal

3.11 The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal is to assess the economic, social and environmental impacts of projects, strategies or plans, so that the preferred option promotes, rather than inhibits, sustainable development. It also aims to minimise adverse impacts and resolve as far as possible conflicting or contradictory outcomes of the plan or strategy. The Sustainability Appraisal has looked at reasonable alternative options for site allocations.

3.12 The Sustainability Appraisal has assessed each of the reasonable alternative sites against the SA Framework. The SA Framework contains 15 objectives which cover housing; health; heritage and design; crime; social; environment, biodiversity and Green Infrastructure; landscape; natural resources; flooding; waste; energy and climate change; transport; employment; innovation and economic structure. The SA assessment has been undertaken for each site and a SA score against each SA objective was given to indicate whether the effect is likely to be positive, negative or neutral.

3.13 The proposed site allocations have been assessed against the SA Framework. The findings and outcomes of the Sustainability Appraisal of the reasonable alternative sites and site allocations are in the Sustainability Appraisal report. For further information, please see the separate document on the Sustainability Appraisal.

Green Belt Assessment

3.14 The Green Belt Assessment assesses how well areas of land are performing against the purposes of the Green Belt. The Assessment identifies those parts

most and least valuable in Green Belt terms. It can then be considered whether there are the exceptional circumstances to remove sites from the Green Belt either to allow development or to be designated as Safeguarded Land. This does not automatically mean that the least valuable parts will be allocated for development. Whilst substantial weight should be given to the harm to the Green Belt, other factors such as flooding, landscape or the deliverability of sites may mean that more valuable parts of the Green Belt are ultimately allocated.

- 3.15 The Green Belt Assessment has assessed sites against four of the purposes of the Green Belt. These are:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; and
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
- 3.16 Criteria for each of the four purposes was drafted to assist in assessing the value of each site using a scoring matrix. Sites were given a score from 1 (least contribution to the Green Belt purpose) to 5 (most contribution to the Green Belt purpose). The assessment presents the overall score for each site. However, in making decisions about which sites to allocate it has been important to consider whether sites are so important for one of the Green Belt purposes that they should not be removed from the Green Belt.

County Highways

- 3.17 Using the information in the 6Cs Highway Design Guide¹, an approach was developed to enable the assessment of whether access to the site was possible. This included consideration of the number of homes proposed on site and the speed of the road which would be used to access the site. This information was then used to establish:
- Number of access points;
 - Width of access including carriageway and footways;
 - Visibility splays required; and
 - Supporting information.
- 3.18 Consideration of impact on the operation of the road network was considered cumulatively. This is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Impact of Possible Development Sites on Heritage Assets

- 3.19 This work was undertaken by an independent consultant who has extensive knowledge of heritage assets in the Borough. The approach was based on guidance produced by Historic England and assesses the impact of development sites on a range of different types of heritage assets including Historic Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings, Local Interest Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological sites.
- 3.20 A two stage approach has been used:

¹ <http://www.leics.gov.uk/htd>

1. A desk top exercise was undertaken to establish if development of the site would affect the character or context of a heritage asset. This was undertaken to sieve out sites which have no impact; and
2. For the sites which do impact, a more detailed survey was undertaken looking at which assets may be affected, how the assets would be impacted, the significance and importance of the assets and potential mitigation.

3.21 Overall, 69 out of the 121 sites were considered to have some degree of impact on heritage assets. Sites with no or little impact on heritage assets are preferred for allocation.

Consultation Responses

3.22 Public consultation is an important part of preparing Local Plans. Consultation on the Local Planning Document has involved a number of different stages and methods. The first stage was an Issues & Options consultation which took place between October and November 2013. This took the form of a questionnaire covering the various topics that the LPD would need to cover including design, protecting the environment and tackling climate change. It also identified a number of the Reasonable Alternatives allowing comments to be made on them.

3.23 Following the Issues & Options stage, masterplanning work was undertaken for the Key Settlements for Growth. This work included a series of public workshops co-ordinated by independent consultants to provide information on the views of the community on different potential sites and issues that arose from the level of development identified in the ACS. People who attended the consultation were asked to identify where they thought the best place for development around the Key Settlement was. Technical evidence was also prepared to inform the final recommendations in the report.

3.24 Additional community workshops were held in three of the 'other villages' (Burton Joyce, Lambley and Woodborough) to inform the decisions over which, if any, of the sites to allocate. Workshops were held in these villages as there were choices over which of the sites to allocate, to allow the community to identify a preference for one site over another. The workshops included questionnaires which asked respondents to identify a choice of up to three sites.

3.25 Some of the sites have undergone public consultation through other processes. These include the preparation of the Replacement Local Plan, preparation of the ACS and, in some cases, when the planning application was determined. Where relevant, the details of the consultation have been set out. If the site has not been specifically consulted upon, potential reasons for support or objection have been identified based on comments received on similar sites.

Supporting Material

3.26 Supporting information in the form of photographs and mapping has also been provided and includes the following material:

- *Location Map* – a map showing the location of the site in the terms of the settlement which it would, if allocated, form part of;

- *Aerial Photograph* – a photograph of the site taken from above showing the existing buildings, vegetation, areas of hard standing and other features;
- *Site Photograph* – a photograph of the site taken from ground level showing a key feature of the site or surrounding area; and
- *Constraints Map* – a map of the site showing key constraints such as Local Wildlife Sites and Conservation Areas.

Site Schedules

3.27 As identified above, the information and supporting material has been presented in a series of Site Schedules with one schedule per site.

4.0 Decision Making

4.1 As part of this process two key decisions have been made. Firstly, whether there are any 'showstoppers' which mean that the site should not be allocated. Secondly, whether, having regard to the available alternatives, the site should be recommended for allocation.

4.2 The first decision is taken with reference to the site in isolation. This determines whether the site can be allocated. This includes considering whether:

- the site has practical and achievable means of access to the public highway;
- if the site is within the Green Belt, there are defensible features which could be used to define the boundary of the Green Belt;
- the site is being promoted for development;
- there are other policy designations (such as open space or employment) and evidence suggesting the designation should continue;
- a significant portion of the site is at risk of flooding;
- development of the site would cause significant harm to a number of the factors identified (such as heritage, landscape, flooding).

4.3 Determining whether a site should be allocated is a comparative exercise between the sites being considered. Account will need to be taken of different ways to achieve the scale of housing identified for the settlement in the Housing Background Paper. Making decisions will need to have regard to:

- the harm development of the site would cause (including in terms of Green Belt, landscape and heritage) with preference given to sites which, on balance, would cause less or no harm;
- whether there are 'exceptional circumstances' in terms of the need for the release of Green Belt land to meet the identified 'left to find' figure for the settlement;
- whether the site would substantially exceed the 'left to find' figure and there are no options to reduce the site to a size that better relates to the 'left to find figure';
- whether the site would require additional, unsuitable land to be allocated (for instance to allow access to be achieved); and

- the cumulative impacts of allocating the site and any other sites required nearby.

- 4.4 Where a number of sites are adjacent to each other, they have been considered together. Where this has been done, sites may have been allocated as one site. Where it is considered appropriate to recommend allocation of a site, the whole of the site identified in the SHLAA has not automatically been recommended; rather consideration has been given to the need to retain open areas to act as buffers, for example for landscape reasons or to protect a heritage asset. Consideration has also been given to the need to use defensible boundaries to define the Green Belt; where this would result in more land than required being released consideration has been given to designating the land as safeguarded land. Some site names have been changed from those in the list of Reasonable Alternatives to keep site names short and for future clarity.
- 4.5 Housing numbers for recommended sites are based on the density established in Policy LPD 33 (30, 25 or 20 dwellings per hectare depending on location) and have been rounded to the nearest 5 homes. In some cases, site specific issues have resulted in a lower density. Housing numbers are provided as a guide only; planning applications for a higher number of homes may be acceptable subject to consideration of the impact on local infrastructure and character.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Of the housing target of 7,250 homes set out in the ACS for Gedling Borough during the plan period 40% have already been built or granted planning permission². The remaining 4,347 homes will be delivered mainly through the sites recommended for allocation in this document.
- 5.2 114 sites were originally identified as 'Reasonable Alternatives' which required consideration as to whether to allocate them in the Local Planning Document. The appendices to this document set out the assessments that were made about these sites, whether they could be allocated and whether they should be allocated. In addition, a number of sites with extant planning permission are being recommended for allocation. This is to protect the residential use of the site in case the planning permission were to lapse. Overall 24 sites are being recommended for allocation for housing; this includes sites which already having planning permission. A list of these sites and maps of them can be found below.

Sites	Number of Homes
Urban Area	
Rolleston Drive	90
Brookfields Garden Centre	105
Willow Farm	110
Linden Grove	115
Lodge Farm Lane	150

² 2903 homes including 1134 completions (April 2011 to March 2015) and 1769 with extant planning permission (as of 31st March 2015).

	Spring Lane	150
	Howbeck Road/Mapperley Plains	205
	Killisick Lane	215
	Gedling Colliery/Chase Farm	1055
Around Hucknall		
	Hayden Lane	120
Bestwood Village		
	The Sycamores	25
	Westhouse Farm	210
	Bestwood Business Park	220
Calverton		
	Dark Lane	70
	Main Road	75
	Park Road	390
Ravenshead		
	Longdale Lane A	30
	Longdale Lane B	30
	Longdale Lane C	70
Burton Joyce		
	Millfield Close	20
	Orchard Rise	15
Newstead		
	Station Road	40
Woodborough		
	Ash Grove	10
	Broad Close	15

- 5.3 These sites have been used to prepare the Housing Background Paper (2016) which sets out how the 7,250 homes will be delivered in Gedling Borough.

6.0 Next Steps

- 6.1 The sites identified for allocation will be included in the Publication Draft of the Local Planning Document. This will be issued for a 6 week period so that local residents, landowners, developers, businesses, organisations and any other individual or group can make representations on whether they support or object to the sites proposed to be allocated; comments can include support for the allocation of other sites not proposed for allocation. The comments received will be submitted alongside the Publication Draft for examination by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. This examination will include Hearing Sessions run by the Inspector who may invite people who have made comments to participate.
- 6.2 Following the examination the Inspector will issue a report into whether the Local Planning Document is sound and legal and recommend whether it can be adopted as part of the statutory Development Plan for Gedling Borough. The Inspector may recommend that it be adopted with number of modifications. Once adopted as part of the Development Plan the sites will be allocated for

development. Prior to being developed a planning application will have to be submitted and considered by the Borough Council. The determination of the applications will include public consultation; this consultation, however, will be focussed on the detail of development and not the principle of development. The Local Planning Document also includes a number of policies on matters such as design, infrastructure, and the provision of open space, infrastructure and affordable housing; these policies help improve the quality and sustainability of the development. Development proposals will need to accord with these proposals or provide robust justification as to why it is not possible to accord.



