



**NEWARK & SHERWOOD ALLOCATIONS &
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD**

MATTER 5 – SITE SPECIFIC ISSUES

Nottingham Fringe Area

(Issues 22 & 23)

**Statement on behalf of Newark & Sherwood
District Council**

November 2012

Matter 5 – Site Specific Issues

Nottingham Fringe Area

Issue 22: Do the policies include adequate and appropriate safeguards with regard to the potential effects of development on the Green Belt and flooding? Has satisfactory provision been made in respect of transport and other infrastructure requirements?

Green Belt

- 22.1 The Newark and Sherwood Green Belt Study (EB22) was produced in accordance with the provisions of Core Strategy (CS) (LDF10) Spatial Policy 4A Extent of the Green Belt which sets the context for small scale reviews in Blidworth, Lowdham and Rainworth. Its conclusions have fed into the production of the Plan.
- 22.2 In undertaking these small scale reviews through the Allocations & Development Management DPD process the District Council considered whether there were any non Green Belt sites in these settlements that were more or equally sustainable; and considered the importance of the sites in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. Each site was assessed individually against the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. Whilst this guidance has now been revoked, the principles remain the same and have been carried forward in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 22.3 As part of the wider assessment of sites in Rainworth, Blidworth and Lowdham the District Council has considered the suitability of other sites in these settlements first so that comparisons can be made. In the case of Rainworth and Blidworth there were sites outside the Green Belt and within the settlement which were suitable for development. In Lowdham however no sites within the settlement came forward and therefore consideration was only between sites within the Green Belt.
- 22.4 In bringing sites forward for development, the District Council has only considered those sites which were considered to be of lower importance in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. Although the allocated sites were subject to change as a result of the consultation on the Options Report stage of the Plan, all those sites which were initially included, and those which have been taken forward in the Submission version of the Plan, were considered to be the most appropriate in Green Belt terms.

Flood Risk

- 22.5 Assessment of flood risk began with the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 of 2009 (EB32). All initial SHLAA (EB8) sites and a range of those identified by officers were considered within this. As there were no strategic sites allocated through the CS within the Nottingham Fringe Area, the next level of assessment took place when the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2, Phase 2 (SFRA L2 Ph2) (EB34) considered the remainder of

sites to be allocated through the Plan. In selecting sites for inclusion in the Plan, preference was given to locating new development in Flood Zone 1. In order to meet the growth requirements of the CS however, it was necessary to identify some sites where small parts of sites are at risk of flooding. Site Lo/MU/1 which was initially a Preferred Site within the Options Stage of the Plan was removed from the Submission stage as the results of the SFRA L2 Ph2 (EB34) showed that the site was at greater risk of flooding than had initially been realised. Full details of the approach taken to flood risk are set out in the Allocations & Development Management Sequential Approach to Flood Risk (EB36).

Transport and Other Infrastructure Requirements

- 22.6 The District Wide Transport Study (EB30) and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (EB1) were produced as part of the evidence base for the CS. Growth within the district needs to be supported by additional physical and social infrastructure to cater for an increased population and also to improve existing facilities.
- 22.7 Strategic improvements to the highway network which are required because of the growth of the district up to 2026, and which cannot be attributed to the development of any one site, and contributions to a secondary school where the location of growth requires additional secondary school provision will be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy which came into effect on 1st December 2011. Local infrastructure requirements which arise as a result of growth in the Nottingham Fringe Area will be met through Developer Contributions, and where appropriate, through funding assistance as set out in the Funding Statement (EB38).
- 22.8 The District Council is therefore satisfied that appropriate provision has been made for the identified transport and infrastructure requirements of the Nottingham Fringe Area.

Issue 23: Would the scale, density and greenfield location of allocated sites be appropriate and contribute to the sustainable development of the District?

- 23.1 The process of site selection has followed a robust methodology and has been founded on the outcome of Sustainability Appraisal (ADM6), a proportionate, robust and sound evidence base and the taking account of stakeholder consultation input. This has resulted in a sustainable pattern of growth being identified which is considered to be the most appropriate approach when considered against all other reasonable alternatives.
- 23.2 The selection of sites for allocation within the Nottingham Fringe Area was informed by assessments of their effects on the Green Belt and the risk of flooding as primary concerns, as detailed in Issue 22 above. As noted previously all of the potential Lowdham sites were located beyond the village envelope as defined in the Newark and Sherwood Local Plan Adopted in March 1999 (LD1) and are within the Green Belt. Of the 7 SHLAA (EB8) sites identified, 3 were discounted at the beginning of the process due to their

importance in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt as set out within the Green Belt Study (EB22).

- 23.3 Lo/Ho/2 (previously Lo/Ho/1 at the Options Stage) was originally a larger site. However, as a result of information received as part of the consultation on the Options Report, this site was reduced in size. The land to the west was in different ownership and was not deliverable; this area has therefore been removed. An additional area to the rear of the Options allocation was also removed in response to comments from the County Council Archaeologist as “Some very well preserved earthwork features, remnants of medieval farming practices survive in this area”. It was noted that their loss would be regrettable. The site which is now allocated is considered to be the most appropriate developable and deliverable area.
- 23.4 Lo/Ho/1 was originally part of the much larger X6(Lo) site at the Options stage. Consultation response from the landowner indicated a willingness for the small frontage area of the site to be brought forward without the large northern area. As this part of the site is within an area considered to be of lesser importance in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt and does not lie within an area at risk of flooding, this area of land has been allocated as part of the Plan.
- 23.5 Lo/Ho/3 was previously identified as X1(Lo) at the Options Report stage. Whilst Officers acknowledge that objectors may feel that they have been disenfranchised by the process, it is part of the public engagement process that the result of consultation can lead to sites being considered more positively as well as being removed from preferred status. As the site was indentified at the Options Stage, albeit as an ‘X’ site which was considered unsuitable due to lack of access, it was not an additional site which had not been previously identified. It was as a result of the owner’s agents putting forward the site for a limited development of 3 dwellings from a private drive that overcame the original unsuitable status that the site had no suitable adoptable access. No representation was received from The Highways Authority with regard to the inclusion of this site.
- 23.6 Since the Publication of the Plan, an application for four bungalows has been submitted. The Highways Officer has raised objection to the access width advising that it needs to be a minimum 5.5m due to the total length of private drive required. The site agents have submitted a letter from transport consultants stating the available width is adequate. However the Highways officer has maintained an objection and the application has now been withdrawn.
- 23.7 Issues have also been raised with regard to difference in levels between the site and properties at Prospect Villas with regard to stability of the bank. Given the very limited number of dwellings allocated and the size of the site, it is considered that a satisfactory technical solution can be designed to address this issue alongside other material considerations.

Sites not included in the Plan which are subject to Representations

- 23.8 A number of co-owners to site Lo/Ho/2 make representation that their land ownership is greater than the allocation and that the site could be extended and accommodate more dwellings. However, as stated above, the land to the rear of the revised allocation contains evidence of ridge and furrows which it is desirable to preserve. As the land to the west, originally identified in the Options Report is not deliverable, any extension of Lo/Ho/2 would form an isolated intrusion into the Green Belt. The extension of site Lo/Ho/2 is not therefore considered appropriate.
- 23.9 The site identified as X2(Lo) within the Options Report was considered to be of lower importance in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. The site is located within Flood Zone 1. However the assessment of the site against Spatial Policy 9 of the Core Strategy concluded that it does not have a suitable access. This is due to the number of dwellings which can be served off a single point of access being limited to 250. This limit has already been reached on Barker Hill. Further discussions have been undertaken with the Highways Authority but the objection is maintained. It is not therefore considered appropriate to allocate this site.
- 23.10 The site identified as Lo/Mu/1 within the Options Report was also considered to be of lower importance in meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. This site was identified as a Preferred Site within the Options Report Stage of the Plan. It was noted that development would need to be kept to the portion of the site fronting onto Southwell Road as the south east of the site may be subject to flooding. The site was identified for mixed use development incorporating around 15 dwellings and allotments.
- 23.11 The results of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2, Phase 2 (SFRA L2 Ph2) (EB34) indicated that the level of flooding across the site was more extensive than previously identified, amounting to some 60% of the site. Given the historic issues with flooding in Lowdham in general and the dwellings around this site in particular, it was considered appropriate to adopt a precautionary approach and the allocation was not therefore taken forward in the Plan.
- 23.12 The agents for this site [Representor No: 182] have submitted a Flood Risk Statement. The conclusions of this report set out on page 13 acknowledge that the relatively low lying and flat nature of the site indicates that the area may be prone to flooding from more extreme events. It suggests that land next to Southwell Road would be appropriate for approximately 15 dwellings but this is based on the land level being raised. It also notes that the opportunities for including Sustainable Drainage features would need to be located above the 1 in 100 year flood level and that the south of this site may not be suitable as it was at or below this level.
- 23.13 The additional information provided in the Flood Risk Statement lends weight to the precautionary approach which has been adopted by the District Council. The allocation of this site would not contribute to sustainable development in Lowdham.

- 23.14 It is acknowledged that the housing requirement for the Nottingham Fringe, as set out in the Core Strategy, has not been met. However, given the constraints of the Green Belt and the particular flooding issues experienced in Lowdham in recent years, it is more appropriate to adopt a precautionary approach. The Council is satisfied that there is sufficient flexibility within the housing numbers, as set out in the Housing Position Statement (EB10) and in Matter 3 Housing, and that the Vision and Spatial Strategy of the Core Strategy will not be detrimentally affected.
- 23.15 Representor 182 has also suggested that land on the east side of the Peugeot Garage could be allocated for employment development. This site was included in the Options Report of the Plan as X5(Lo). The conclusions of the Green Belt Study (EB22) were that the site was prominently located within open countryside and that its release for development would fail Green Belt Purpose 3 safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Although much of site X5 is subject to flooding, it is acknowledged that this does not affect the field between Southwell Road and the Drain. However, nothing put forward by the Representor has persuaded the Council that this site could be released for development without detriment to the openness of the Green Belt. The requirement for employment development within the Nottingham Fringe Area was upto 1_hectare. 0.11 ha of this has already been completed and additional small scale sites may continue to come forward under the provisions of the Core Strategy and the Development Management Policies. The District Council will continue to monitor the situation through the Annual Monitoring Report.

Lowdham Housing Need

- 23.16 A decision was made that Lowdham would have a small amount of housing allocated through the Core Strategy due to the presence of the Green Belt and the local flooding issues. The level of development anticipated would have delivered both affordable and market housing which would have been considered against the provisions of Core Strategy, Core Policy 3 – Housing Mix, Type and Density. As noted by Representors, this allows for family housing of 3 bedrooms or more; smaller houses of 2 bedrooms or less; and housing for the elderly and disabled population.
- 23.17 Given that it has not been possible to allocate sites for that level of dwellings, as discussed above, a specific Housing Needs Policy has been inserted within the Nottingham Fringe Area in order to secure an appropriate balance of housing. Given the reduced level of development there is a high risk that it will not deliver the smaller units required. Lowdham already has a significant proportion of large family dwellings. By seeking to provide smaller units, larger family housing could be freed up within the village without people needing to leave the area.

Lo/Tr/1

- 23.18 Information has been received, after the Representation period closed, from the agents acting in the sale of land identified in the Plan as site Lo/Tr/1. As noted in the agents email, their client is trying to sell the land and has no intentions of developing the land

themselves at present. It is believed that the land is being marketed as being within the curtilage of the village with possible suitability for development subject to gaining planning permission. As the land lies immediately adjacent to the railway line and is triangular in shape, it is considered that its suitability for residential development would be limited. The location of the railway station leads to a number of parking issues in the locality.

23.19 The opportunity for provision of car parking on this site would provide a great community benefit. Whilst the current owners do not wish to develop the site, the fact that it is up for sale could lead to interest from car park operators if the designation remains. Indeed, a site in Newark which had consent for two dwellings has been acquired and is being operated by an independent parking company. Car parks can generate a reasonable return for limited initial outlay in getting the site up and running. Whilst the site lies within the Village Envelope for Lowdham, the adjacent railway line and the irregular shape of the site could limit the site's suitability for other uses. Not allocating the site for car parking would be an opportunity lost as there are no other sites within the locality which could accommodate this facility.

23.20 It is considered that the approach set out above has provided for a sustainable pattern of growth commensurate with the constraints of this particular Settlement and that in doing so contributes to the sustainable development of the District.