

# **Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan**



## **Evidence underpinning the Spatial Strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan**

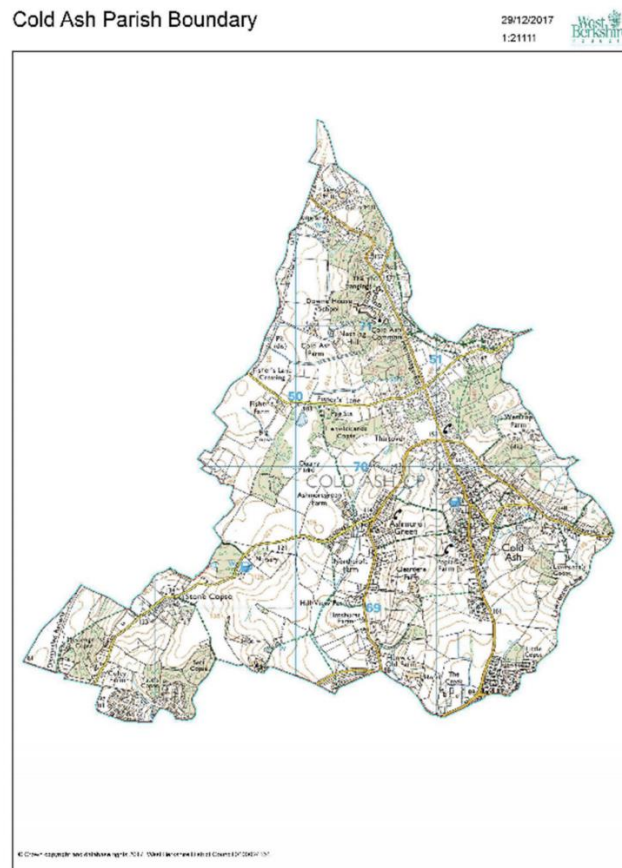
**November 2021**

## Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	2
THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS.....	3
CONCLUSION.....	4
Appendix A – Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan Site Identification and Assessment Approach.....	5
Appendix B – WBC approach to residential allocations in Neighbourhood Development Plans .....	52

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report has been prepared to provide further information to underpin the Spatial Strategy approach that is set out in Policy CAP1 of the emerging Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2. Cold Ash Parish Council began work on the Neighbourhood Plan in 2018 and the neighbourhood area, which shares its boundary with the parish, was designated by West Berkshire Council (WBC) in March 2018 (Figure 1.1). A Steering Group has been set up to lead on the project.



*Figure 1.1: Cold Ash Neighbourhood Area*

- 1.3. Policy CAP1 of the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan establishes a spatial strategy for the neighbourhood area, setting out the Plan's approach to the location of development within the area. It states that it is important that new development takes place in the most sustainable locations, near to local services and amenities, while protecting the valued green corridors and designated landscapes in the area and avoiding sprawl and coalescence with nearby settlements.
- 1.4. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate sites for housing as it has been agreed with WBC that this is to be undertaken at a strategic level. This follows an advice note, published in October 2021, by WBC.
- 1.5. Prior to this advice, however, the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had undertaken a significant amount of work in assessing potential sites for development.

- 1.6. This report provides further information on the advice provided by WBC on housing allocations and the agreed approach for the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan. As a record of the work to date, it also documents the preliminary sites work undertaken by the Steering Group.
- 1.7. Further consideration of sites may take place as part of a future review of the neighbourhood plan, however it is considered that the current approach is consistent with national and strategic planning policy and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

## **THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO HOUSING ALLOCATIONS**

- 2.1. WBC is in the process of preparing a Local Plan Review (LPR), which will replace the existing Local Plan documents, which comprise:
  - [Core Strategy Development Document 2006 to 2026 \(adopted 2012\)](#)
  - [Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document \(adopted May 2017\)](#)
  - [Saved policies from the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991 to 2006](#)
- 2.2. The draft LPR was consulted on at Regulation 18 between 11 December 2020 and 5 February 2021. Whilst not yet adopted, it is well-advanced and provides much of the strategic framework for the emerging Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.3. Policy SP12 of the Regulation 18 draft LPR set a target of between 8,840 to 9,775 new homes to be delivered between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2037 through the following ways:
  - retained allocations in the Local Plan and Cold Ash NDP
  - existing planning commitments on unallocated sites
  - windfall sites: sites not specifically identified in the development plan but that will come forward through the development control process in accordance with policies set out in the Local Plan and through the use of permitted development rights
  - new sites allocated in this Local Plan Review
  - new sites to be allocated in Neighbourhood Plans
- 2.4. A number of Neighbourhood Plans are in preparation across the local authority area, which could allocate further sites for housing development. The draft LPR proposed that a further 315 dwellings would be allocated by local communities through their Plans.
- 2.5. For Cold Ash parish, Policy SP13 set out a requirement to deliver 40 dwellings. This is in addition to three strategic allocations within the parish:
  - Policy HSA3 - Land at Coley Farm, Stoney Lane, Newbury – 75 dwellings
  - Policy HSA6 - Land at Poplar Farm, Cold Ash (site reference COL002) – 10 to 20 dwellings
  - Policy HSA7 - St Gabriel's Farm, Cold Ash (SHLAA site reference COL006) - 5 dwellings

- 2.6. In order to consider how the 40 dwelling allocation might be delivered, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group progressed work on site identification and assessments, based on the sites emerging from the Berkshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). The conclusions are presented in Appendix A. Of the shortlisted sites, the one assessed to date to be the most suitable is within the settlement boundary. The part of one other site considered potentially suitable is also within the settlement boundary. The sites located outside the settlement boundary were not found to be suitable. Any site allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan would therefore have likely focussed on sites within the development boundary.
- 2.7. In October 2021, WBC issued a guidance note to neighbourhood planning groups stating that their advice on and approach to site allocations within neighbourhood plans had changed. A copy of the guidance note is contained in Appendix B.

*“The information published in the HELAA was a point in time. As work has progressed on the LPR and more evidence has been gathered some of the development opportunities we originally identified have changed. Some NDPs have therefore found that they are unable to allocate the housing numbers they have been given and are looking to allocate sites inside settlement boundaries instead.*

*The principle of development inside settlement boundaries is established in the Development Plan.*

*As the principle of development is already established, the approach for the Local Plan has been to not allocate sites within the settlement.*

*The most appropriate approach going forward in West Berkshire district, and the one with the least negative implications, is for NDPs to not include allocations within settlement boundaries.”*

- 3.1. WBC has confirmed that the requirement for 40 dwellings to be delivered through the neighbourhood plan will be removed from the LPR.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 3.2. As a result of WBC’s guidance note, it has been agreed with WBC that the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan will not allocate sites for housing. This is because the sites considered to be most suitable all fall either wholly or predominantly within the settlement boundary.

## Appendix A – Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan Site Identification and Assessment Approach

Policy SP 13 of the draft Local Plan Review sets out a requirement for 40 dwellings to be allocated in the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan. The approach taken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to consider how this might be delivered is set out below.

It should be noted that WBC has confirmed that the allocation of 40 dwellings will be removed from the next iteration of the LPR. The information contained in this Appendix is as a record of the work undertaken prior to this decision.

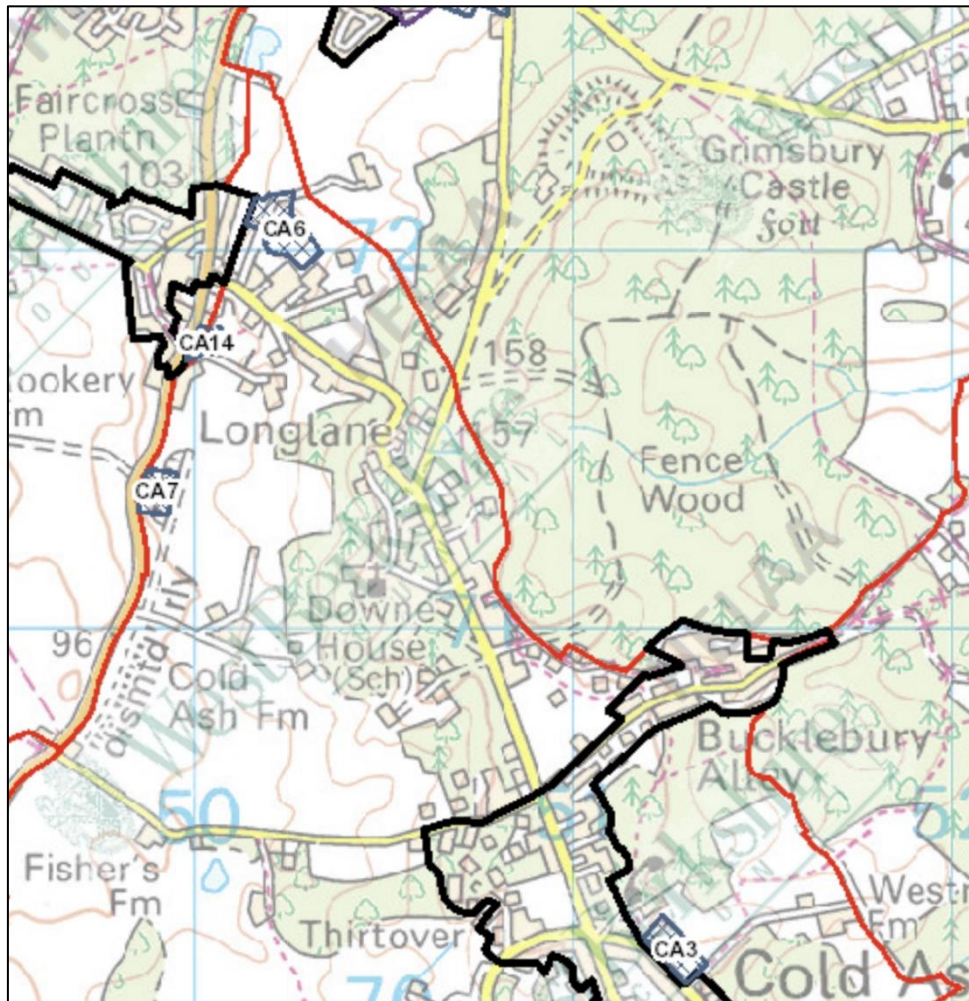
### Identification of potential sites in Cold Ash

The Steering Group based their work on the available development opportunities that had been identified by WBC in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), published in Autumn 2020<sup>1</sup>. Of the 282 sites identified across West Berkshire, 19 are located within Cold Ash parish:

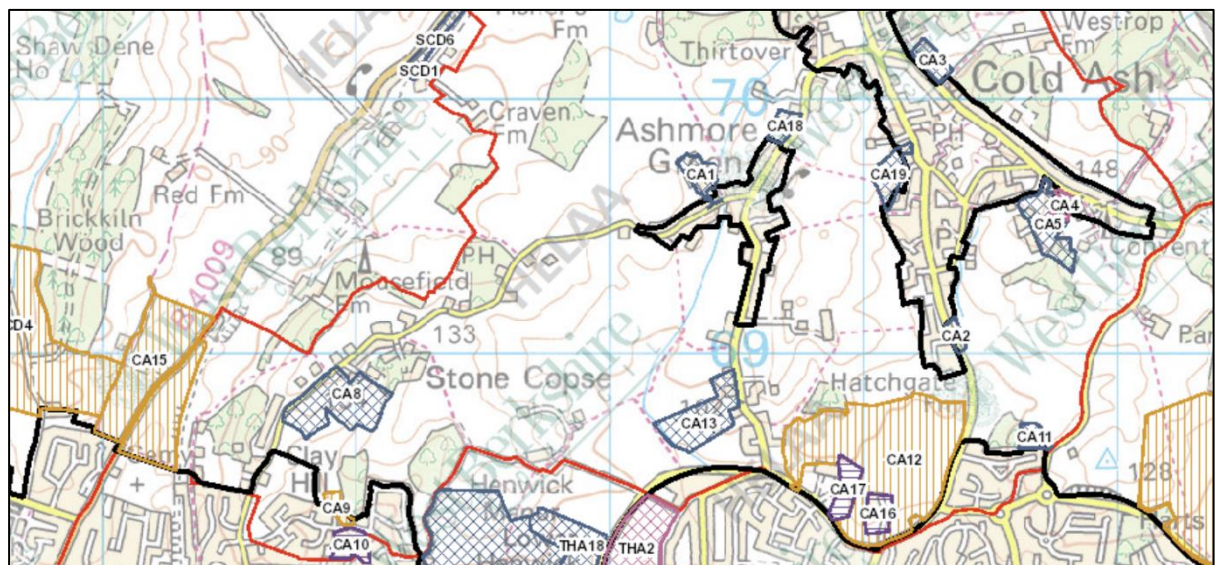
- CA1 Ashmore Green Farm, Stoney Lane, Ashmore Green
- CA2 Land south of Pound Cottage, Cold Ash Hill, Cold Ash, RG18 9PA
- CA3 New Farm, The Ridge, Cold Ash, RG18 9JA
- CA4 St. Gabriel's Convent, The Ridge, Cold Ash
- CA5 Land adjacent St. Gabriels Convent, The Ridge, Cold Ash
- CA6 Old Sand Pit, Land north of Red Shute Hill, Hermitage
- CA7 Chivers Pits, Long Lane, Hermitage
- CA8 Land off Stoney Lane, Stone Copse, Newbury
- CA9 Land north of Waller Drive (west of Yate's Copse), Newbury
- CA10 Sims Metal Management & B6J. Passey & Son Butchers, Turnpike Road, Newbury
- CA11 Land adjacent Little Copse, Off Lawrences Lane, Thattham
- CA12 Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thattham, RG18 3BY
- CA13 Land at Elmhurst Farm, Ashmore Green Road, Thattham
- CA14 Land East of Long Lane, Cold Ash RG18 9LY
- CA15 Land at Long Lane, North of Highwood Close & Shaw Cemetery, Long Lane, Newbury
- CA16 The Creek, Heath Lane, Thattham
- CA17 Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thattham, RG18 3RP
- CA18 The Field, Ashmore Green Road, Ashmore Green
- CA19 Land at Woodland Leaves, Cold Ash Hill, Cold Ash, RG18 9PS

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<sup>1</sup> [Microsoft Word - HELAA \(December 2020\) FINAL \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#)



Map showing sites identified in Cold Ash parish (north) (source: WBC sites map)



Map showing sites identified in Cold Ash parish (south) (source: WBC sites map)

## How the sites were assessed

An initial assessment was undertaken by WBC as part of the HELAA process. Each site was considered in terms of its:

- Development potential
- Suitability for development
- Availability
- Achievability
- Deliverability

The findings for the 19 Cold Ash sites is shown in Table A1. A red/amber/green (RAG) rating was applied where Red is not suitable to take forward; Amber is potentially suitable subject to further work and Green is suitable.

Twelve sites were not considered to be deliverable.

Of the remaining shortlist of seven sites, one site, CA4, was assessed in the HEELA as suitable for delivery in 1 to 5 years. Six sites, CA9, CA10, CA12, CA15, CA16 and CA17 were potentially developable, either all or in part.

The Cold Ash Steering Group undertook a further high-level assessment of the seven sites against a wide ranging and detailed list of criteria. It also considered the sites in the context of the emerging policies of the neighbourhood plan, to identify any potential areas of conflict. The site assessment reports with their preliminary conclusions are shown in Tables A2 to A8.

Of the sites, CA10 was considered the most suitable for development. It falls wholly within the settlement boundary, hence the principle for development is already set out at a strategic level. Site CA4, whilst not found to be suitable from a neighbourhood perspective (following the high-level review), it was found to be suitable at the strategic level within the HEELA. The majority of the site falls within the settlement boundary, hence the principle for development is established here.

Prior to the advice published by WBC in October 2021, the intention had been to prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment to accompany and inform the neighbourhood plan; the Scoping Report would have assisted in devising a more detailed local set of sustainability objectives and indicators against which to critique the Neighbourhood Development Plan's policies and potential sites/ site options in more detail.

In light of WBC's advice, however, and the removal of the 40 dwelling allocation requirement, the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Plan no longer seeks to allocate sites. It is considered that there is sufficient scope within the settlement boundaries to accommodate necessary growth at this time. This may be reconsidered as part of a future review of the Plan.



HELAA REF	SITE	DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL	SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT	AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT	ACHIEVABILITY ASSESSMENT	DELIVERABILITY ASSESSMENT
CA1	Ashmore Green Farm, Stoney Lane, Ashmore Green	33 dwellings. Promoter has suggested a lower number ( <b>30 dwellings</b> ), and this will be used as the estimated development potential	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA2	Land south of Pound Cottage, Cold Ash Hill, Cold Ash, RG18 9PA	Up to 12 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA3	New Farm, The Ridge, Cold Ash, RG18 9JA	Up to 54 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA4	St. Gabriel's Convent, The Ridge, Cold Ash	21 dwellings	Suitable	Available	Achievable	Deliverable (Years 1-5)
CA5	Land adjacent St. Gabriels Convent, The Ridge, Cold Ash	Up to 57 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA6	Old Sand Pit, Land north of Red Shute Hill, Hermitage	n/a	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA7	Chivers Pits, Long Lane, Hermitage	Up to 11 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA8	Land off Stoney Lane, Stone Copse, Newbury	Up to 81 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA9	Land north of Waller Drive (west of Yate's Copse), Newbury	Up to 17 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Part of site potentially suitable	Available	Achievable	Potentially developable in part

CA10	Sims Metal Management & B6J. Passey & Son Butchers, Turnpike Road, Newbury	Up to 42 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Suitable	Potentially available	Achievability unknown	Potentially developable
CA11	Land adjacent Little Copse, Off Lawrences Lane, Thatcham	21 dwellings	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA12	Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham, RG18 3BY	651 dwellings. Promoter has suggested a lower number ( <b>225 dwellings</b> ), and this will be used as the estimated development potential.	Suitability unknown	Available	Achievability unknown	Potentially developable in part
CA13	Land at Elmhurst Farm, Ashmore Green Road, Thatcham	Up to 70 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA14	Land East of Long Lane, Cold Ash RG18 9LY	Up to 4 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA15	Land at Long Lane, North of Highwood Close and Shaw Cemetery, Long Lane, Newbury	Up to 351 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Suitability unknown	Available	Achievability unknown	Potentially developable in part
CA16	The Creek, Heath Lane, Thatcham	Up to 45 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number	Suitability unknown	Available	Achievable	Potentially developable
CA17	Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham, RG18 3RP	Residential: up to 55 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number OR Residential (as part of mixed use development): up to 28 dwellings but known issues	Potentially suitable	Available	Achievable	Potentially developable

		exist which may reduce this number				
CA18	The Field, Ashmore Green Road, Ashmore Green	27 dwellings	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years
CA19	Land at Woodland Leaves, Cold Ash Hill, Cold Ash, RG18 9PS	Up to 32 dwellings but known issues exist which may reduce this number.	Unsuitable	Not assessed	Not assessed	Not developable within the next 15 years

*Table A1: Findings of the HEELA assessment of sites in Cold Ash Parish*

**Tables A2 to A8 – High level site assessments undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**Site Assessment Criteria**

**Site** CA4 (St. Gabriel's Convent, The Ridge, Cold Ash)

**HEELA Assessment:** Developable in the next 1-5 years

**Summary**

**Site not deemed viable for a number of reasons:**

- 1. The number of dwellings are not suitable in a rural setting.**
- 2. It would exacerbate traffic problems & safety around the school pick-up and drop-off times.**
- 3. Potential impact on a heritage asset.**
- 4. Straddles settlement boundary**

**Community Benefits**

**None**

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	
Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	

	parish or reduce the physical spacing between them				
	SP2 Sites in rural settings should be maximum 10 dwellings or fewer, ideally 5 or fewer	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer than 5 dwellings	
	SP3 Sites in urban fringe settings should be for up to 40 dwellings maximum	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer than 25 dwellings	NA
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	

	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	"Not within BOA. Within habitat network. Net gains in biodiversity should be delivered."
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	Lawrences Copse 150m Away
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	

	LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained	Contains natural sinks and drains	Some capacity to hold excess water	Not an area that helps minimise flooding	"Surface water flood risk: No  Groundwater flood risk: No. Groundwater is generally over 5m below surface level  Further comments from Council's Drainage Officer None."
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	
	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further minimise the impact	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	Pick up and drop off congestion & safety issues at St Gabriel's School

	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	Pick up and drop off congestion & safety issues at St Gabriel's School
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	NA
Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	Impact on St Gabriel's Convent & Chapel  Historic Environment Record MWB17850:  Complex of early 20th century convent with chapel and adjacent Catholic primary school, originating as a private house
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the	Site is Wholly outside the	NOT RELEVANT



			Conservation Area	Conservation Area	
Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	3/4 inside the settlement boundary
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	

**Site Assessment Criteria**

**Site** CA9 (Land north of Waller Drive [west of Yate's Copse], Newbury)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable in part

**Summary**

**Site deemed not suitable for development. Narrow site profile & substantial gradient, its proximity to the Ancient Woodlands and surface water/flooding issues suggest not suitable for development.**

**Community Benefits**

None

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	Narrow site profile does not lend itself to appropriate development given:  Site is adjacent to ancient woodland. Buffers will be required. Surface water flood flow runs adjacent to site. Site is sloping in nature.

Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	
	SP2 Sites in rural settings should be maximum 10 dwellings or fewer, ideally 5 or fewer	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer than 5 dwellings	
	SP3 Sites in urban fringe settings should be for up to 40 dwellings maximum	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer than 25 dwellings	No number proposed by promoter, although WBC view is the site can accommodate 17 dwellings  Proximity to ancient woodland, flood drain and access road would reduce developable area significantly.
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	Currently a rural field adjacent to an Ancient Woodland with a TPO oak tree at the entrance. Taken in the context of the adjacent Coley Farm development this is arguably over-urbanisation of the site.
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	

	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	Within a habitat network. Local Wildlife Site adjacent.
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	- Site is directly adjacent to an Ancient Woodland. There is a substantial risk of harmful impacts on the Ancient Woodland if adequate avoidance and mitigation measures are not implemented. It may be inappropriate to develop this site; detailed assessment is required.

	<p>LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)</p>	<p>Key wildlife corridor runs through the site</p>	<p>Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site</p>	<p>There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site</p>	<p>Not within a BOA. Within a habitat network. Local Wildlife Site adjacent. Net gain in biodiversity should be delivered.</p> <p>Site is directly adjacent to or includes a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). There is a substantial risk of harmful impacts on the LWS if adequate avoidance and mitigation measures are not implemented. It may be inappropriate to develop this site; detailed assessment is required.</p>
	<p>LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form</p>	<p>Adjacent to a Sunken Lane</p>	<p>Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane</p>	<p>No impact on any Sunken Lanes</p>	

	<p>LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained</p>	<p>Contains natural sinks and drains</p>	<p>Some capacity to hold excess water</p>	<p>Not an area that helps minimise flooding</p>	<p>Surface water flood risk: Surface water flood flow route along western boundary and southern tip which could be mitigated for but will reduce developable area.</p> <p>Further comments from WB Council's Drainage Officer Suitable for development but site will require sizable attenuation measures such as a system of ponds to overcome surface water flows which will limit the developable area. Site is downstream of surface water flow route from CA8 and Coley Farm site</p>

	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	Six TPOs adjacent to this site.
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further minimise the impact	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	The site is narrow & has significant gradient. While the site is adjacent to Waller Drive the access road will be close to ancient woodland and the TPO'd oak tree.
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	

Commercial	C4 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	NA
Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	Yate's Copse on eastern boundary is Ancient Woodland and any trees along this boundary should be protected. This and the northern boundary are at least 19th century in date but likely older and features along their courses (ditches, hedges, trees) should be preserved.
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	NOT RELEVANT



Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	Site is partially in the Newbury settlement boundary. Northern part of the site is outside of the settlement boundary.
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	Site is partially in the Newbury settlement boundary. Northern part of the site is outside of the settlement boundary.

### Site Assessment Criteria

**Site** CA10 (Sims Metal Management & J. Passey & Son Butchers, Turnpike Road, Newbury)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable

### Summary

Site deemed suitable for development. The only concern is the number of dwellings being greater than our policy for an urban setting, but this is more than offset by the community benefit. Minor questions around traffic and flood risks need to be addressed - early engagement with developers recommended.

### Community Benefits

The site is currently used for commercial purposes that are both odious and out of keeping with the surrounding residential area. Replacing the current commercial business with residential dwellings would therefore be of significant benefit to the community.

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	

Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	
	Sites in rural settings should be for less than 10 dwellings	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer than 5 dwellings	Not relevant as urban setting
	Sites in urban settings should be for less than 40 dwellings	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer than 25 dwellings	Developer proposing up to 65 dwellings
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002 – all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	

	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	Ancient Woodland 50m away - the otherside of the road from the site.
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	Further work would need to be carried out to asses this.
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	

	LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained	Contains natural sinks and drains	Some capacity to hold excess water	Not an area that helps minimise flooding	<p>Surface water flood risk: Yes. Surface Water flood flow route from north to south through centre of site. 600mm diameter Thames Water Surface Water sewer culvert exists through site on similar route. Attenuation may be possible but would need to take into account the Thames Water culvert.</p> <p>Groundwater flood risk: Negligible.</p> <p>Further comments from Council's Drainage Officer Current use of site likely to mean contamination on site so remediation necessary; possible limit to infiltration potential for run-off into the ground.</p>
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	

	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	TPO Group on site boundary.
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further minimise the impact	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	<p>Access: An adoptable access road will be required.</p> <p>The site promoter has advised that the site was subject to pre-application planning advice in early 2020. The Council's Highways Team on the pre-application advised that it is unlikely that they would not have any have significant issues with the redevelopment of the site. They advised that 2.4 x 43.0 metre sight lines must be provided onto Waller Drive and that this would seem possible within land that is public highway and within what will be the applicant's ownership.</p>

					<p>Local Highway Capacity: The site is currently a scrap yard so would already have had an impact. The site is therefore supported by Highways.</p> <p>Strategic Road Network: Highways England have advised that individually the site would unlikely materially impact the operation of the strategic road network.</p>
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	not relevant

Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	
Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	Within the Newbury settlement boundary.
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	This is infill, but not within Cold Ash or Ashmore Green
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	



**Site Assessment Criteria**

**Site** CA12 (Land at Henwick Park, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham, RG18 3BY)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable in part

**Summary**

The site is deemed unsuitable for development for a number of reasons:

1. It represents an important gap between the settlements of Cold Ash and Thatcham.
2. It is a natural sink and forms a key service in the parishes flood defences.
3. The number of potential dwellings represents an unacceptable level of urbanisation.
4. The site sits in an area that is a particular traffic hotspot (ie. traffic leaving the site that needs to join the strategic road network [M4/A34] will add to traffic issues on Cold Ash Hill / Hermitage Road / Red Shute Hill)
5. Development boundary within in 100m of Grade II listed building

**Community Benefits**

Possible community sports facilities and new public open space.

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	

Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	
	SP2 Sites in rural settings should be maximum 10 dwellings or fewer, ideally 5 or fewer	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer then 5 dwellings	HELAA Assessment: 651 dwellings. Promoter has suggested a lower number (225 dwellings), and this will be used as the estimated development potential.
	SP3 Sites in urban fringe settings should be for up to 40 dwellings maximum	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer then 25 dwellings	Site is rural but close to Thatcham Urban Fringe.  HELAA Assessment: 651 dwellings. Promoter has suggested a lower number (225 dwellings), and this will be used as the estimated

					development potential.
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from	

				Dark Skies Zone	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	"Not within a BOA.  Within a habitat network.  Local Wildlife Site adjacent. Net gains in biodiversity should be delivered."
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	Site is directly adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site. There is a substantial risk of harmful impacts on the LWS if adequate avoidance and mitigation

					<p>measures are not implemented. It may be inappropriate to develop this site; detailed assessment is required.</p> <p>Other comments: Local Wildlife Site adjoins part of northern site boundary.</p>
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	

	<p>LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained</p>	<p>Contains natural sinks and drains</p>	<p>Some capacity to hold excess water</p>	<p>Not an area that helps minimise flooding</p>	<p>"Surface water flood risk:  Yes. Major surface water flood flow route passes through the site towards the east side and in the south east and south west corners. Substantial attenuation measures required to mitigate for this which will have some impact on the developable area</p> <p>Groundwater flood risk:  Negligible.</p> <p>Further comments from West Berkshire</p>
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					<p>Council's Drainage Officer Partially suitable for development subject to adequate attenuation measures being provided along the routes of the surface water flood flow paths which will limit the developable area. Site may be on clay ground which will limit use of infiltration Sustainable Drainage Systems. This site was subject to Application 15/01949 which was refused and</p>
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					<p>also turned down at Appeal. Far south west corner has been identified as a potential site for a WBC Flood Alleviation Scheme.</p> <p>Other: The site promoter has indicated that the northern half of the site would include flood alleviation ponds."</p>
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	



	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further minimise the impact	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	Further assessment would be required.
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	Further assessment required.
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	N/A

Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	Old Henwick Cottage is a Grade II listed building and CA12 border is within 100m
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	
Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	N/A
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	

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### Site Assessment Criteria

**Site** CA15 (Land at Long Lane, North of Highwood Close and Shaw Cemetery, Long Lane, Newbury)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable in part

### Summary

Site has a number of negative points but could potentially be developable if they were addressed. The key ones are resolution of traffic issues into Newbury (a bypass onto Vodafone roundabout could address this), the number of dwellings (this should be ok, based on the location) and substantial surface flood risks.

For the whole site to be developed consideration would need to be given to an access road through to the A339. In lieu of this being developed the eastern section of the site is potentially developable.

### Community Benefits

No specific community benefit other than it would introduce less traffic pressure on the centre of the parish than other options.

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	
Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	
	Sites in rural settings should be for less than 10 dwellings	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer than 5 dwellings	Not relevant as urban setting

	Sites in urban settings should be for less than 40 dwellings	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer than 25 dwellings	WBC HELAA assessment states potential >300 dwellings
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	

	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	Site is within 100m of at least one Messenger's Copse Ancient Woodland. There may be a risk of harmful impacts on the Ancient Woodland if adequate mitigation measures are not implemented.
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	
	LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained	Contains natural sinks and drains	Some capacity to hold excess water	Not an area that helps minimise flooding	<p><u>Surface water flood risk:</u> Yes. High risk for north part of west site and south part of east site. Major surface water flood flow route follows course of valley through the site crossing the B4009 roughly in the centre. Some potential for attenuation measures to control the surface water flood flow route but will involve significant engineering work and will significantly reduce developable area.</p> <p><u>Groundwater flood risk:</u> Yes. High with groundwater 0-0.25m below surface and chance of emergence at significant rates over most of the site. This will</p>

					prevent use of infiltration for Sustainable Drainage Systems
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	
	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	We believe this to be true but it needs to be tested
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further minimise the impact	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	Would require resolution of traffic issues into Newbury
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	

Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	Not relevant
Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site is adjacent to Shaw Cemetery
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	
Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement bounday	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	No impact on village settlement boundaries, but may need a change to Newbury's
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	N/A
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	

### Site Assessment Criteria

**Site** CA16 (The Creek, Heath Lane, Thatcham)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable

### Summary

The site is not recommended as it sits outside of any settlement boundary and would lead to an isolated development. Development here would represent urban creep from Thatcham into the Parish, blurring the gap and seriously eroding the separate identity of Henwick and Cold Ash villages. Possible access issues with CA12.

### Community Benefits

None

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Notes
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	
Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	



	SP2 Sites in rural settings should be maximum 10 dwellings or fewer, ideally 5 or fewer	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer then 5 dwellings	
	SP3 Sites in urban fringe settings should be for up to 40 dwellings maximum	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer then 25 dwellings	HELAA assessment says up to 45 dwellings, but constraints may reduce this number
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	May impact on views identified in the NP
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	

	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	

	LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained	Contains natural sinks and drains	Some capacity to hold excess water	Not an area that helps minimise flooding	<p>HELAA Assessment:</p> <p>"Surface water flood risk: No</p> <p>Groundwater flood risk: Negligible</p> <p>Further comments from Council's Drainage Officer Suitable although site may be on clay ground which will limit use of infiltration Sustainable Drainage Systems."</p>
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	
	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to further	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	

			minimise the impact		
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	HELAA Assessment: The site is effectively land locked by CA12 (Land at Henwick Park). Access to the site is dependent on agreement from adjacent landowner.
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	NA
Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	TBC
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE

Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	NA
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	NA
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	The site is detached from any settlement boundary.

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### Site Assessment Criteria

**Site** CA17 (Regency Park Hotel, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham, RG18 3RP)

**HEELA Assessment:** Potentially developable

### Summary

The site is not recommended as it sits between the Cold Ash and Thatcham settlements and development here would represent urban creep from Thatcham into the parish, blurring the gap and seriously eroding the separate identity of Henwick and Cold Ash villages.

### Community Benefits

Little/None

Subject Area	Policy	Level of negative impact			Note if 'Not Relevant'
		High	Medium	Low	
Site physical constraints	Sites which have significant physical constraints will be less likely to be deemed suitable for development. Such constraints include topology, and spatial characteristics such as width or height restrictions.	Site is severely constrained	Site is moderately constrained	Minor or no constraints	
Strategy Principles	SP1 - Any development site must not significantly compromise the separate identities of the main village settlements in the parish or reduce the physical spacing between them	Serious impact on reducing identity & separation	Moderate impact	Relatively little impact	

	SP2 Sites in rural settings should be maximum 10 dwellings or fewer, ideally 5 or fewer	Greater than 10 dwellings	5 to 10 dwellings	Fewer then 5 dwellings	
	SP3 Sites in urban fringe settings should be for up to 40 dwellings maximum	Greater than 40 dwellings	25 to 40 dwellings	Fewer then 25 dwellings	No current developer proposal but HELAA suggests between 28 and 55 dwellings
Environment, Landscape, Green Space and Biodiversity	LE001 - The landscape character of the rural areas of the parish must be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced	Over-urbanisation	Moderate urbanisation	Low urbanisation OR urban area of the parish	
	LE002– all development must protect the recognised iconic views	Direct impact on iconic view	Some / partial impact on iconic view	Little / no impact on iconic view	May impact on views identified in the NP
	LE003 – Local Green Space must be protected from development and be maintained for the benefit of parish and surrounding area	Designated Local Green Space	Believed to be suitable for designation as Local Green space but not yet designated	Not suitable for Local Green Space designation	
	LE004 – the maintenance of the Public Rights of way (footpaths and bridleways) and their interaction with the countryside and nature must be protected	PROW runs through or adjacent	PROW nearby / some impact	No PROW nearby / no impact	
	LE005 – the central heights of the parish, that are predominantly rural, will be protected from light pollution	In Dark Skies Zone	Within 50m of Dark Skies zone	More than 50m from Dark Skies Zone	

	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Local Wildlife Sites	Designated Local Wildlife Area	Believed to be suitable for designation as a Local Wildlife Area but not yet secured	Not seen as an area that would warrant designation	HELAA Assessment: "Not within a BOA. Within a habitat network. Net gain in biodiversity should be delivered."
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including Ancient woodlands	Designated Ancient Woodland or within 50m of one	Greater than 50m, but fewer than 100m, from an Ancient Woodland	Greater than 100m from an Ancient Woodland	
	LE006 - all development must seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved and enhanced and that no development shall lead to a loss or deterioration of protected habitats including maintaining the flow of wildlife throughout the parish (Wildlife corridors)	Key wildlife corridor runs through the site	Key wildlife corridors run adjacent to the site	There are no key wildlife corridors in the vicinity of the site	
	LE007 - to maintain the rural character of the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, the identified sunken lanes should be maintained in their current form	Adjacent to a Sunken Lane	Traffic impact on a Sunken Lane	No impact on any Sunken Lanes	



	LE008 - to avoid potential flooding, areas containing natural issues, sinks and drains must be protected and maintained	Contains natural sinks and drains	Some capacity to hold excess water	Not an area that helps minimise flooding	<p>HELAA assessment: "Surface water flood risk: Yes. Minor risk at far south of site which can be mitigated for.</p> <p>Groundwater flood risk: Negligible</p> <p>Further comments from Council's Drainage Officer Suitable although site may be on clay ground which will limit use of infiltration Sustainable Drainage Systems."</p>
	LE009 - Relationship to AONB	Inside AONB	Adjacent to AONB (within 100m)	Outside and more than 100m from AONB	
	LE010 - Significant trees and hedgerows must be protected	Significant level of TPOs in place on site	Some TPOs that will need to be worked around and/or missing TPOs	No TPOs on the site	Mature trees surround the site.
Traffic, Transport and Travel	TTT1 - Impact on traffic flow and congestion is acceptable or viable actions are possible to make it so	Significant impact on traffic flow with no viable solutions	Medium impact on traffic flow with possible viable solutions to	Minimal or no impact on traffic flow	

			further minimise the impact		
	Ease of access to/from site	Very difficult to access the site	Moderate but manageable access issues	Easy access to and from the site	
Community and Social	CS2 - The following items have been designated in this NDP as important community assets: Acland Hall, WAG, Village Shop ...	Site would impact on one of our community assets	Site may indirectly impact on one of our community assets	Site does not impact on any of our community assets	
Commercial	C1 - Applications for new independent local businesses and (reasonable) expansion of existing will be supported, providing they meet the following criteria: a) The scale and nature of development will be appropriate to the size and character of the immediate surroundings; b) will not adversely affect the locality and the amenities of local residents.	Items a) and/or b) are not met	Some impact to items a) and/or b) but may be manageable	Items a) and/or b) are met	Proposal needs to be clarified
Heritage	H1 Does the site affect, detract and is it sensitive to local listed or historic buildings?	Site Boundary <50m from nearest Listed/historic building	Site Boundary >50m <250m from nearest listed/historic building	Site Boundary >250m from nearest listed/historic building	TBC
	H2 Is the site in proximity to or in a conservation area?	Site is Wholly within the Conservation Area	Site is partly within the Conservation Area	Site is Wholly outside the Conservation Area	RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE

Settlement Boundaries and Infilling	SB1 - Existing (ie 2018) Cold Ash and Ashmore Green settlement boundaries should be held where they are, with no further extension.	Outside settlement boundary	Overlaps with settlement boundary	Inside settlement boundary	NA
	SB2 - Avoid where at all possible infill development within the Ashmore Green and Cold Ash village settlement boundaries.	Unacceptable infill	Possibly acceptable infill	Not infill	NA
	SB3 - In-filling should particularly be avoided near or adjacent to settlement boundaries where it might impair or interrupt sensitive views or progression into the rural landscape.	Adjacent to settlement boundary	Close to settlement boundary	Not close to settlement boundary	Adjacent to Thatcham settlement boundary

## **Appendix B – WBC approach to residential allocations in Neighbourhood Development Plans**

The matter of allocating sites in a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) within defined settlement boundaries, and in particular whether it is acceptable to take this approach or not, was recently raised by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group in West Berkshire.

Planning Policy officers have reflected on this, and whilst there is justification for both approaches, on balance it was concluded that the most appropriate approach going forward in West Berkshire is for NDPs not to include allocations within settlement boundaries. The reasoning for this is set out below.

### **What are settlement boundaries?**

Settlement boundaries are a long established planning tool. They identify the main built up area of a settlement within which development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to other policy considerations. While allowing for development, settlement boundaries protect the character of a settlement and prevent unrestricted growth into the countryside. They create a level of certainty about whether or not the principle of development is likely to be acceptable.

### **What was our approach to allocating housing numbers to NDPs?**

The numbers given to NDP groups through the emerging draft West Berkshire Local Plan Review to 2037 (LPR) were based on available development opportunities identified in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) in the autumn of 2020. Consideration was also given to the placing of a settlement within the settlement hierarchy.

### **Changing circumstances**

The information published in the HELAA was a point in time. As work has progressed on the LPR and more evidence has been gathered some of the development opportunities we originally identified have changed. Some NDPs have therefore found that they are unable to allocate the housing numbers they have been given and are looking to allocate sites inside settlement boundaries instead.

### **Approach 1: Allocating housing sites outside of settlement boundaries**

The principle of development inside settlement boundaries is established in the Development Plan.

As the principle of development is already established, the approach for the Local Plan has been to not allocate sites within the settlement.

Not allocating sites within the settlement boundary has also given the Council flexibility in the housing numbers which we have successfully relied on in the past at both Local Plan examinations and at S78 appeals when challenged by developers.

#### *Implications of Approach 1*

- Consistent approach
- Clear conformity with the Local Plan
- Principle of development already established. NDPs can then concentrate on matters such as design codes to set out what they would like to see, and the value attached to good design is increasing via national policy and likely legislation

- NDPs do not have to allocate sites for housing.

### **Approach 2: Allocating housing sites within the settlement boundary**

NDPs must meet a set of tests known as Basic Conditions. One of the Basic Conditions is that policies in a NDP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

NDPs are a tool for the Steering Group to bring into effect material policies that they want and they generally have a wide remit on what to include. Allocations in a NDP are an expression of the Local Plan settlement boundary policies (ie. policies ADPP1 and CS1 of the Core Strategy) rather than an obstacle to its goals and purpose.

NDPs can bring in certain policies that might restrict what is acceptable development compared to that that might be approved under the Local Plan policies only. As long as those 'restrictions' don't undermine the overall delivery, it can be argued that allocations in the settlement boundary are acceptable.

#### *Implications of Approach 2*

- Inconsistency – one approach would be taken in a NDP and another in the Local Plan. The Council would need to have clear justification as to why we don't allocate inside settlement boundaries and why we are altering our approach to allow NDPs to do so
- The Council could open itself up to pressure to allocate inside settlement boundaries in the Local Plan.
- NDP allocations for small sites of less than 10 units could be challenged as double counting. These could be taken off the windfall allowance but then this starts to make the windfall allowance open to further examination. The allowance is not an exact figure and can change. Opening it up to forensic scrutiny would not be helpful.
- Allocating medium sites of over 10 dwellings in NDPs would not impact the windfall allowance in the same way but it would reduce the flexibility the Council has in housing numbers.

- To achieve consistency in the Local Plan, the Council then has the option to make an allowance in the LPR for currently identified medium sites that are assessed as developable in the HELAA. This would be different to windfall as it would not be based on past trends, but on evidence from the HELAA. This would reduce our flexibility with numbers though and could start to be open to challenge through the forensic examination of individual sites
- The policies in both the existing Local Plan and LPR are written to refer to allocating sites outside settlement boundaries (although this is not explicitly stated).

### **Conclusions**

The most appropriate approach going forward in West Berkshire district, and the one with the least negative implications, is for NDPs to not include allocations within settlement boundaries.

**Planning Policy Team, West Berkshire District Council**

**October 2021**

