



**CONSULTATION DRAFT BLUNSDON - EAST
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (BENP)
2019**

APPENDIX J

Allocation of sites for development 2019

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Purpose

This paper sets out the processes and methodology used to identify and select potential sites for development within the BENP area.

Introduction

During development of the BENP it became apparent that the SBCLP 2026 indicated that there was a shortage of supply of housing which needed to be addressed. The impact on the neighbourhood plan was that the policies it contained could be overridden unless SBC could demonstrate a strategy that delivered a 5 year supply of housing.

However, neighbourhood plans that took a positive approach to (residential) development would remain in-date if SBC could demonstrate a 3 year supply. Whilst previous community engagement had shown very little appetite amongst local residents for additional housing in the BENP area, the Steering Group considered that majority support may be achievable for sustainably located and sensitively planned small scale development, at a scale commensurate with the limited size of the village and its range of facilities.

This approach was considered to have support in the revised NPPF July 2018, particularly paragraph 69: *“Neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 68a*) suitable for housing in their area.”* *No larger than 1 Ha.

Therefore, the community were asked to consider this at a public consultation on 28th July 2018 where opinion was indeed in favour of the identification of sites for small scale developments (defined as up to 9 dwellings). With this mandate, the BENP team set out a process to identify and evaluate potential any such suitable and deliverable sites.

Long list process

A call for sites was undertaken, being published locally via the BENP website, the team’s Facebook page, an advertisement placed in the village magazine and in the Swindon Advertiser, the local newspaper. The BENP team engaged the services of an independent consultancy, AECOM, to review the submitted sites, together with sites within the BENP area assessed within the SBC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011¹.

This process resulted in 11 sites being nominated under the call for sites and 15 sites being identified within the SHLAA. In their introductory remarks, AECOM identified that no sites necessarily needed to be allocated, in recognition of the level of consented housing within the BENP area, compared to the SBC Local Plan policy context (paragraph 3.26).

¹ SBC were in the course of updating this document via a new Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment. However this process was not complete and no results had been published when the site assessment process was commenced and finished.

AECOM inspected each site and a full copy of their report is include in the Evidence Base. Sites were rated as red, amber or green to indicate whether a site was appropriate for allocation². No sites were rated as green and sites rated as red were excluded from further consideration due to the various adverse conditions or constraints that were identified. 10 of the SHLAA sites were omitted from consideration due to having been already consented for development.

Of the 11 sites nominated under the call for sites 4 failed to meet basic requirements, either being too large or within an area of separation identified in the SBC Local Plan³.

7 sites were identified by the BENP team as having a degree of development potential (rated as 'yellow' by AECOM) and were of suitable size and availability (i.e. not already developed).

Short listing process

These 7 sites were the subject of a public consultation in July 2018, in order to ensure that only sites with majority community support could be selected. Questionnaires were provided and information identifying each site was displayed in the village hall. A good turnout was received, and likewise a strong response rate with many questionnaires completed and returned.

Two of the sites were regarded as unacceptable; three were clearly favoured, while two other sites were marginal in terms of public opinion. The BENP team decided that the benefit of the doubt should be afforded to all sites, therefore only the two sites where the total number of negative responses outweighed the combination of both positive and 'unsure' responses were discounted, the other 5 being taken forward to the final assessment.

Final Assessment methodology

The BENP team produced a set of planning related assessment criteria (taking a similar approach to the AECOM assessment but adding local knowledge, for example distance to key services and facilities within the village). Again, only criteria which were identified as most important by the local community through the consultation were included.

Weightings were attributed to each criterion, to ensure that key elements of sustainable development were achieved. Having established the weighting (x3 for moderately important criteria and x6 for key criteria) a scoring matrix was developed.

² The assessment of sites was based on the AECOM report draft version 5 as being the document available at the time the final assessment process commenced. A final version was subsequently issued but contained only minor variances to version 5.

³ One objection to the sites identified was received, however, this related to a site that was deemed undevelopable in the SHLAA and no submission was made under the call for sites so this site was not included in the final assessment.

A score of 0, 3 or 5 was attributed to each of these scores (0 being poor, 3 being average and 5 being good). Of the 12 criteria two were regarded as quantitative, based on distance and hence directly measurable while the others, such as impacts on the village and its residents, were more qualitative.

The criteria and weighting for the assessment of the five short-listed sites were as follows:

Criteria for assessing sites - 0 to 5 (0=poor)							
	Weighting						
Distance to facilities	6	>900m	0	>600m	3	<300m	5
Access to public transport	3	>400m	0	>300m	3	<300m	5
Access to site on foot	3	None	0	Difficult	3	Easy	5
Access by private car	3	None	0	Difficult	3	Easy	5
Impact on heritage/conservation	6	High	0	Moderate	3	Low	5
Visual Impact on village setting	6	High	0	Moderate	3	Low	5
Physical impact on the character of the village	6	High	0	Moderate	3	Low	5
Quality of life for future residents	3	Low	0	Moderate	3	High	5
Impact on existing neighbours' quality of life	6	High	0	Moderate	3	Low	5
Proximity to Settlement boundary	6	Outside	0	Edge	3	Within	5
Impact on mature trees and hedgerows	3	High	0	Moderate	3	Low	5
Deliverability	6	Low	0	Moderate	3	High	5

Final Assessment process

The BENP discussed and reviewed the overall process on 10th September 2018 and decided that the process was sound. Scores were then allocated to each of the five sites that had been short-listed. The full matrix for the scores is set out below in Appendix A.

The maximum score for any site was 285. As can be seen in Appendix A the final score for each site and the percentage of maximum score was as follows:

Site	Score	% of maximum score
6 Grove Field	132	46.32%
7 Dinton in Broadbush	243	85.26%

9 Blunsdon Land Ltd (adjacent to approved Holdcroft development)	177	62.11%
10 St Leonard's Farm House	126	44.21%
720 Land East of A419, North of Cold Harbour PH	159	55.79%

Site Selection

The BENP team decided that a cut-off of 51% of the possible maximum score was an appropriate measure to identify acceptable sites as this indicates a site had more positive than negative attributes. Based on this cut-off the following sites are proposed within the neighbourhood plan as suitable for development and hence as Allocated sites under Policy 1:

Site	Score	% of maximum score
7 Dinton in Broadbush	243	85.26%
9 Blunsdon Land Ltd (adjacent to approved Holdcroft development)	177	62.11%
11 Land East of A419, North of Cold Harbour PH	159	55.79%

It was also concluded that the following sites be regarded as unsuitable for inclusion within the BENP as allocated sites;

Site	Score	% of maximum score
6 Grove Field	132	46.32%
10 St Leonard's Farm House	126	44.21%

Summary

The process resulted in 3 sites being identified as suitable for inclusion in the plan.

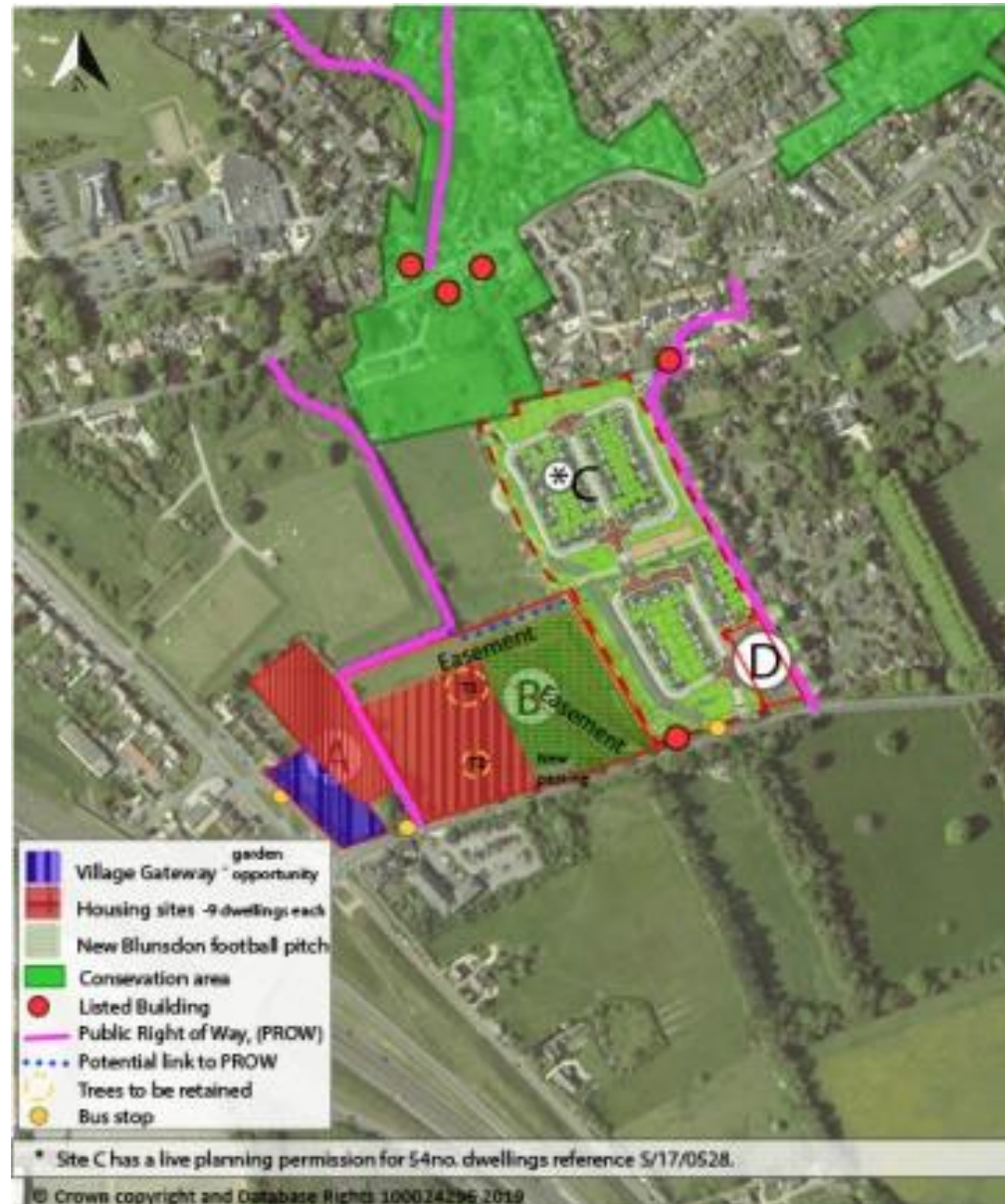
Contact was made with the nominators for the sites asking them to confirm acceptance of the sites' inclusion in the Plan for small-scale residential development (up to 9 dwellings).

The BENP team believe that this process was both sound and accountable, with community engagement at the heart of the process. Only sites with majority community support have been selected, having been assessed against agreed criteria and weightings.

Appendix A – Scoring matrix for site assessment

	Site/Score (B)	6 Grove Field		7 Dinton in Broadbush		9 Blunsdon Land Ltd (adjacent to approved Holdcroft development)		10 St Leonard's Farm House		11 Land East of A419, North of Cold Harbour PH SHLAA 720	
		Weighting (A)	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score
Distance to facilities	6	3	18	3	18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access to public transport	3	0	0	5	15	5	15	0	0	5	15
Access to site on foot	3	3	9	5	15	5	15	3	9	5	15
Access by private car	3	3	9	5	15	5	15	3	9	5	15
Impact on heritage/conservation	6	0	0	5	30	5	30	0	0	5	30
Visual Impact on village setting	6	0	0	5	30	3	18	0	0	0	0
Physical impact on the character of the village	6	0	0	5	30	3	18	3	18	3	18
Quality of life for future residents	3	5	15	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9
Impact on existing neighbours quality of Life	6	3	18	3	18	3	18	3	18	5	30
Proximity to Settlement boundary	6	3	18	3	18	0	0	3	18	0	0
Impact on mature trees and hedgerows	3	5	15	5	15	3	9	5	15	3	9
Deliverability	6	5	30	5	30	5	30	5	30	3	18
Total Score (A*B)			132		243		177		126		159

Appendix B -Allocated Sites Context Map



Appendix C - Development Brief for Site 7 - Dinton in Broadbush

1. Overview

Site Reference / name	Dinton in Broadbush Proposed Site D
Site Address and brief description	Broad Bush, Blunsdon, Swindon SN26 7DH Residential Curtilage of Bungalow
Capacity and house type	2 additional dwellings (detached family homes or bungalows)
Gross site area (Ha)	c. 0.18Ha
Method of site identification	Proposed by Landowners to Call for Sites



2. Description

- 2.1. The site is outside but adjacent to the Broad Blunsdon Rural Settlement Boundary and can be considered 'infill' land within the curtilage of an existing bungalow within an over-sized plot. The adjacent Beech Lee is characterised by low density detached family housing.
- 2.2. Land immediately to the north and west is consented for 54 dwellings of a higher density, which, if implemented, will make the site surrounded by housing on three sides.
- 2.3. The site is connected to the village by footpath, although there is no street lighting along this stretch of the B4019.

3. Opportunities and Constraints

- 3.1 In order to gain access to, and obtain sufficient space to develop the dwellings the existing dwelling will first need to be demolished.

4. Development Parameters

- 4.1. Design of housing is to comply with policy 5 in the BENP and all other relevant requirements of the Development Plan including the Residential Design Guide (June 2016).

- 4.2. The privacy and residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers should be a key consideration.
- 4.3. Sufficient parking to avoid the need for on-street parking is required.
- 4.4. Provision of sufficient gardens and landscaping to strengthen field boundaries is required, along with careful siting and orientation in order to protect future residential amenity.
- 4.5. Main external elevational treatments to be sympathetic to the character area and should not exceed two stories.
- 4.6. Retention and preservation of boundary trees and hedgerows will be required.
- 4.7. Early pre-application consultation with the local community including the Parish Council is advised prior to submission of any planning application.
- 4.8. A comprehensive planting scheme should be submitted with any planning application.
- 4.9. Appropriate archaeological assessment will also be necessary as part of any submission.

Appendix D - Development Brief for Site 9 - Land south of Holdcroft, B4019

1. General Information

Site Reference / name	Blunsdon Land Ltd – Proposed Site B
Site Address and brief description	Current use Horse paddock opposite Coldharbour Pub / Premier Inn
Proposed use	Residential development up to 9 dwellings
Gross area (Ha)	2.36 Ha.
Method of site identification	Proposed by Landowners to Call for Sites.



2. Description

- 2.1. Situated between the consented Holdcroft site and proposed Site A.
- 2.2. Fronts the B4019 from which there are glimpsed views into the site.
- 2.3. The site is relatively flat with mature hedgerows and trees on all boundaries.
- 2.4. Good accessibility with pedestrian footpath along frontage, albeit no street lighting.

3. Constraints

- 3.1. The site is outside the settlement boundary but adjacent to a consented residential development of 54 units offering opportunity for connection into footpaths.
- 3.2. A public footpath runs parallel to the site's north western boundary
- 3.3. The site is relatively prominent and (albeit to a lesser degree than site A) represents the visual 'entrance' to the village, therefore development needs to reflect the village setting.
- 3.4. Underground utilities cross the site, reducing its net developable area, particularly the south eastern half. Opportunity thus exists to provide open green space, in the form of a much-needed new football pitch for the village.
- 3.5. Two mature trees are worthy of retention in the western part of the site (T1 and T2).
- 3.6. A Listed milestone is situated close to the site's south-eastern boundary.
- 3.7. The site is within the setting of the Blunsdon Conservation Area.

4. Development Parameters

- 4.1. A maximum of 9 dwellings with family homes or bungalows favoured, within the western part of the site, set around the mature trees.
- 4.2. The development should reflect the edge of village setting with low density housing set in generous gardens to reflect local dwellings along the B4019 and Beech Lea.
- 4.3. Pedestrian accessibility should be provided into the adjacent footpaths and developments.
- 4.4. Vehicular access should be carefully designed so as to minimise loss of hedgerow.
- 4.5. Main external elevational treatments to be sympathetic to the character area and should not exceed a maximum of 2 stories.
- 4.6. Retention and preservation of existing trees and hedgerows will be required.
- 4.7. A comprehensive planting scheme should be submitted with any planning application.
- 4.8. Appropriate archaeological assessment will also be necessary as part of any submission.
- 4.9. Protection of the nearby Listed Milestone should be ensured.
- 4.10. Retention of the open, rural setting in the context of the nearby Conservation Area means restricting development to the western part of the site.

Appendix E - Development Brief for Site 11 - Land opposite Coldharbour (Corner of B4019 with Ermin Street)

1. General Information

Site Reference / name	SHLAA site 720 – Proposed Site A
Site Address and brief description	Land east of A 419, north of Coldharbour PH
Capacity and house type	Residential development up to 9 dwellings
Gross Site area (Ha)	1.00 Ha
Method of site identification	Swindon SHLAA 2013 submission site



2. Description

- 2.1. The site is a gateway location at the western edge of Blunsdon Village, set back from the junction of the B4019 with Ermin Street and obscured from view by a mature hedgerow and trees.
- 2.2. The southern boundary faces the Coldharbour Pub/restaurant and the northern boundary abuts the Thames Water reservoir site.
- 2.3. The site is relatively level and of low landscape quality, being essentially scrubland.
- 2.4. Good accessibility with street lighting and footpath connections to bus stops within walking distance.

3. Constraints

- 3.1. The site is outside the settlement boundary but adjacent to residential and commercial development to the west and south.
- 3.2. A public footpath runs along the site's eastern boundary offering clear views into the site.
- 3.3. The site's gateway position offers an opportunity to define the edge of Blunsdon Village with appropriate landscaping to create a soft edge to the settlement.
- 3.4. The site is understood to have various utility services running across and underneath, the requisite easements for such may well reduce its net developable area.
- 3.5. Strong hedgerow boundaries to north, south and west.
- 3.6. Potential for upgrading of pedestrian crossing of B4019 linking the site with the Coldharbour.
- 3.7. Vehicular access difficult if taken direct from B4019 due to peak time queuing traffic adjacent the site's southern boundary.

4. Development Parameters

- 4.1. A maximum of 9 dwellings with family homes or bungalows favoured
- 4.2. The development should reflect the prominent position at the entrance to the village and the proximity of the existing 'gateway garden'. This means setting the development back, with an area of open space at the south western end fronting Ermin Street.
- 4.3. Pedestrian connectivity should be provided into the adjacent footpath along the site's eastern boundary
- 4.4. Vehicular access will need to be taken from Ermin Street rather than from the B4019.
- 4.5. Design of housing is to comply with policy 5 in the BENP and all other relevant requirements of the Development Plan including the Residential Design Guide.
- 4.6. Careful siting and orientation of dwellings is necessary in order to protect both existing and future residential amenity.
- 4.7. Main external elevational treatments are to be sympathetic to the character of the area and should not exceed two stories.
- 4.8. Retention and preservation of boundary trees and hedgerows will be required.
- 4.9. A comprehensive planting scheme should be submitted with any planning application.
- 4.10. Appropriate archaeological assessment will also be necessary as part of any submission.