



FINAL SITE SELECTION

Sites shortlisted for Phase 2 were assessed by Navigus Planning Ltd against a comprehensive matrix of sustainability criteria and were given a colour code: Red (significant negative impact likely), Amber (potential negative impact but likely to be capable of being mitigated), Green (positive impact likely), White (no issue/neutral impact), Purple (not relevant). This information is displayed in Column 2 of the table below.

Developers were then asked to give details of which of the Neighbourhood Plan's identified Community Needs and Priorities could be delivered on their site. This information is displayed in Column 3 of the table below.

The Housing Needs Assessment states that 123-200 homes should be delivered to address local needs in Ashington Parish over the period 2017 to 2031. The Horsham Development Planning Framework requires neighbourhood plans across the district to contribute at least 1,500 dwellings to the district-wide housing requirements. In order to demonstrably contribute towards this requirement, the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan should not only address its own housing needs but should make a contribution towards addressing wider needs as well. There is no guidance as to what the extent of this wider need should be, other than the HDPF stating that the overall contribution towards the 1,500-dwelling requirement should be 'in accordance with the settlement hierarchy' and Ashington being classified as a 'medium village'. It is considered reasonable that an addition 10-15% should be added to the number of dwellings the Neighbourhood Plan should allocate, particularly if the higher end of the local housing need requirement is being addressed. So, if the Neighbourhood Plan were to address the full 200-dwelling local housing need, the overall number of dwellings to be allocated should be between 220 and 230 dwellings.

CIL funds – all developments generate CIL funds. If Ashington has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan then the Parish Council is given 25% of all CIL funds raised from developments within the parish; without a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan this reduces to 15% (capped). In both cases, HDC retains the balance of CIL monies raised to be spent on district-wide infrastructure projects. It is possible to require delivery of certain items that would be funded through CIL by providing them in lieu of the CIL payment; in other words, it provides more certainty to require developers to deliver specific community infrastructure items on their site allocations within the Parish. This is a key priority for the Neighbourhood Plan and has informed the assessment in the table below (Scenario 1).

This document summarises all of the site assessment information and makes recommendations for selection of Preferred Options of sites to be allocated in the draft Ashington Neighbourhood Plan. All development sites would trigger CIL payments so these are not seen as giving any site an advantage over other sites. The same is true for play area provision.

Scenario 1:

Site Number	Site Assessment	Community Needs offered by Site Promoters	Comments	Recommendation and reasons
1 Chanctonbury Nurseries	Green, @60-77 units, part within BUAB, part PDL	Upgrading of FP2507 will help link site & Penn Gardens to village Possible allotments, business space, outdoor gym, Parish office	Close to 'community cluster' Priority 1 allocation due to PDL/BUAB situation	Yes, up to 77 units. Delivering: - FP2507 upgrade including suitable low level lighting - allotments? - outdoor gym? - CIL money for refurbish surface of existing MUGA, Scout Hall refurb, play area improvements, Parish Office - could create a link into Site 6 (see below)
2 Near Kate's Cakes	Amber, issues due to distance from main village, access	No response	Likely to be no community benefit, separate from village	No, site poorly located for services and facilities in Ashington village
4 North & West of Oast House Farm, Billingshurst Road	White, @80 units	Upgrade of Billingshurst Road pavement will benefit site access Improve FP 2491 Possible 'multi-use' community building, allotments, business space, outdoor gym, football pitches, bmx circuit, parish office, fishing lake (although no lake on site)	Some distance from Community Cluster, not enough space to accommodate all sports pitches, would result in two pavilions in village.	No, too far from 'community cluster'.
5 Church Farm House	Green, land for up to 125 units on offer	Upgrade of FP2611 towards Storrington Flood relief scheme for Mill Lane	Access could be an issue – route is narrow Close to community cluster 125 units would mean building south of Spring Copse and would link Malthouse Lane to the	Yes, up to 25 units only, north of Spring Copse due to landscape sensitivity to the south. No units south of Spring Copse. Delivering:

Site Number	Site Assessment	Community Needs offered by Site Promoters	Comments	Recommendation and reasons
		<p>Parking area for 'community cluster'</p> <p>Possible allotments, football pitch, bmx circuit, 'multi-use' community building</p> <p>Depends on number of homes built</p>	<p>main village. Spring Copse is a good, natural landscape buffer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flood relief solution - FP upgrade - parking - football pitch (in conjunction with Site 6) - CIL money for refurbish surface of existing MUGA, Scout Hall refurb, play area improvements, Parish Office <p>Concern: access is narrow – combine with Site 6 to create joint route?</p>
6 Church Farm	Green, @80 units	<p>Possible Nursing home, MUGA, land for school expansion, medical facilities, country park, upgrade to footpaths + new paths, Sports pitches, 'multi-use' community building, fishing lakes, business centre, Parish office, outdoor gym, allotments, parking, bmx track, home for a Church Warden</p>	<p>Close to community cluster.</p> <p>Access could be an issue – route is narrow. May be reliant upon purchase of part of school field to create access. May not be supported by Governors.</p> <p>Could help link Penn Gardens to village.</p> <p>Sufficient land size to accommodate all sports pitches.</p> <p>Site viability questioned if community facilities are to be delivered. Many offered facilities are not on the 'needs & priorities' list.</p>	<p>Yes, @80 units.</p> <p>Delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one 'sports area' with enough pitches for both junior and senior football for the village as a whole (alongside provision on Site 5?) - one sports pavilion/youth club with parking - sports MUGA (community owned) - outdoor gym/trim trail (depends on Site 1) - bmx circuit - cycle/walk routes to Penn Gardens - fishing lake <p>Grass pitches to the west of housing will soften the landscape impact. This leaves the Recreation Ground free for recreation eg dog walking and new sports pitches exclusively for sports.</p> <p>Concerns: access is narrow – combine with Site 5 to create joint route? Not keen on route across the existing school field.</p> <p>Developer wants to deliver land for school extension, nursing home & medical facilities which are not needed.</p>
8 Kensetts Stables	Purple	No response	Development of site would only benefit site owners, not wider village	No, site poorly located for services and facilities in Ashington village with no wider

Site Number	Site Assessment	Community Needs offered by Site Promoters	Comments	Recommendation and reasons
				community benefits
9 Lodge Farm, Malthouse Lane	Red	Possible business centre	Not suitable for homes. Separate from village	No, site poorly located for services and facilities in Ashington village with no wider community benefits
10 North of Rectory Lane	White, up to 200 homes	Parking & allotments Possible business centre, youth club, sports pavilion, scout hall, outdoor gym, MUGA, sports pitches, BMX circuit depending on number of homes.	Some distance from Community Cluster.	Too far from community cluster compared with other sites.
11 Green shed, London Road	Purple	Could be sold to fund a community facility elsewhere or could be used for business centre	Within the BUAB, brownfield so principle of development is supported by HDPF	No need to allocate as development would be supported because a brownfield site within settlement boundary.
12 Old village hall, pavilion etc	Amber, @10 homes	Owners wish to sell/lease to raise funds for Community Facilities elsewhere, enabling development	Community owned land in the heart of the 'community cluster'	No. Safeguard for future community use. Other community facilities can be provided on other neighbouring site allocation options.
13 One acre, Foster Lane	Amber, @15 homes	Owners wish to sell/lease to raise funds for Community Facilities elsewhere, enabling development	Community owned land in the heart of the 'community cluster'	No. Safeguard for future community use. Other community facilities can be provided on other neighbouring site allocation options.
14 Ashington Mill	Red, @15-18 homes, poor location, access issues, flooding problems	No response	Unlikely to be any community benefit due to small size of site.	No, site providing limited community benefit and significant flooding issues as well as poor access.
15 Old School, Rectory Lane	Purple, @1-2 homes	Loss would mean community facility would need to be replaced elsewhere.	No community benefit due to small size of site. Historic building in community use	No, would result in loss of community facility which may not be provided elsewhere.
16	Amber, @10-	No response	Unlikely to be any community benefit due to	Possibly consider ONLY if agreement can

Site Number	Site Assessment	Community Needs offered by Site Promoters	Comments	Recommendation and reasons
Chanctonbury House, Rectory Lane	12 units		small size of site.	be reached with Site 1 so that affordable homes and other community benefits are triggered.
22 & 23 North & West of Old School	White, @108-130 units	Parking, Allotments and possibly fishing (although very small pond on site)	Some distance from Community Cluster (compared with other sustainable site options). Minimal community benefit offered (CIL payments preferred)	No, site providing limited community benefit.
26 The White House, Mill Lane	Red, @12-16 units, poor location, access issues, flooding problems	Private allotments for each unit.	No community benefit due to small size of site, poor location	No, site providing limited community benefit and significant flooding issues as well as poor access.
27 Sparrows Lane	Amber, @28-34 units	Parking, improvements to FP2491, allotments Possible outdoor gym	Some distance from Community Cluster (compared with other sustainable site options). Minimal community benefit offered (CIL payments preferred)	No, site providing limited community benefit.

Summary

Sites with potential are:

1. Chanctonbury Nurseries: 60-77 units
5. Church Farm House: 25 units
6. Church Farm: 80 units
10. North of Rectory Lane: 200 units
16. Chanctonbury House: 10-12 units

Total: 375-394 units

Due to the fact that Site 1 is partly within the BUAB, partly Previously Developed Land and only partly outside (but adjacent to) the BUAB it is considered that this site is highest priority for allocation.

The two largest options are Sites 5/6 (allocation would likely be as a single site), totalling 105 units, and Site 10 for 200 units. In light of the Housing Needs Assessment requirement for between 123 and 200 homes (plus the additional 10-15% to account for Ashington's contribution towards wider housing needs) and the extent/range of community benefits sought, it is considered appropriate to allocate only some of these sites.

The creation of a community cluster in the heart of the village is a key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst Site 10 would be accessible to that cluster, the allocation of Sites 5 and 6 provide the opportunity to directly enhance the community facilities at that cluster. It is therefore recommended that Sites 5 and 6 are taken forward for allocation.

Sites 1, 5, 6, 16 = **175-194 homes**.

If Site 16 can't reach agreement for joint development with Site 1 then development of Sites 1,5,6 only = **182 homes**.

In light of the need to allocate for between 220 and 230 dwellings, either these sites need to deliver higher numbers of dwellings or additional sites or land needs to be allocated. In this regard:

- i. The density of development on Site 5 could possibly be low. Whilst there is a need to protect the setting of the existing listed property and the landscape impact should reasonably restrict development to the south of Spring Copse, it will be important to explore with the site promoter whether a higher number of dwellings could be allocated on the site. An objective of the Plan – supported by HDPF policy – is to provide a greater proportion of smaller properties, particularly to address the needs of older people. This is relevant in this regard as the existing density may be based on a larger proportion of large dwellings.
- ii. A large proportion of Site 6 that was put forward was identified to be retained as agricultural fields. Potentially therefore, a small proportion of this land could be released as part of an allocation in order to increase the number of units to be delivered on this site.

Alternative Options/Strategies considered:

Scenario 2: Few tangible community benefits, mostly CIL. Could be achieved through developing Site 1 + Site 22, 23 & 27 = 216 to 234 homes. Could possibly fund replacement of Youth Club, Sports pavilion and other community projects on existing community land (Sites 12 & 13) although most CIL money would go to HDC. Not financially efficient.

Scenario 3: Tangible benefits offered on Site 10 + Site 1 = up to 277 homes but community facilities would be located on Site 10 away from the 'community cluster'. Not geographically acceptable.

Scenario 4: development of small sites only eg Site 1 + 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 26, 27 = 160-180 homes but this results in a loss of community land in the 'community cluster' (Sites 12 + 13). This 'enabling development' could fund new facilities, but deliver no community benefits from developing the other small sites. Not efficient regarding developer delivery of community needs nor CIL contributions.

Scenario 5: development of a smaller number of very large sites, e.g. Sites 10 + 5/6 = 405 homes. This would clearly address all housing needs in full but would spread community facilities across two separate sites. This would fail to deliver the objective of creating a community cluster in the heart of the village.

Conclusion:

It is considered that maximum benefit for the village and delivery of the right number of homes can be achieved through developments on sites 1, 5, 6 and possibly 16 (Scenario 1). Due to their close proximity it may be possible to 'link' the sites to enable comprehensive planning of community benefits across the sites. Discussions with Site Promoters would be needed to ensure community benefits can be delivered.

Issues that would need to be addressed before sites could be allocated:

- i. vehicular access to Sites 5 and 6 – either a combined access from Church Close or across the school field (subject to land transfer agreements being secured);
- ii. cumulative impacts on traffic/congestion if Sites 5 and 6 are developed together;
- iii. impact on Grade II listed building (Church Farm House) – Site 5;
- iv. ensuring delivery of flood relief solution on Site 5;
- v. landscaping to soften views from the South Downs (all sites).

Next steps:

The key next steps will be to engage with the landowners/promoters of the respective sites which have been recommended for allocation and to ensure that the issues relevant to each can be addressed. These are:

- i. Site 1: That the provision of an improved, footpath for year-round use can be delivered along with the other specific community benefits that the Steering Group consider should be sought from that site.
- ii. Site 5: That the flood solution for Mill Lane can be provided without increasing the risk of flooding of the existing listed property. In this regard, contact should also be made with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) which commissioned the initial report that established the possible solution.
- iii. Site 5/6: That vehicular access to this single area encompassing the two sites can be achieved through a single access road off Church Close.
- iv. Site 6: That all of the community benefits stated can be delivered without the landowner having concerns about the viability of the development as a result. It is understood that the landowner is willing to deliver some of these benefits as part of a wider 'legacy'.
- v. Site 6: That interested parties in any proposals of relevance to the school (including the School House Trust, the school governors and WSCC as education authority) are content with any proposals. This is particularly relevant in respect of vehicular access.
- vi. Site 16: That this could be brought forward as a single allocation along with Site 1 so that wider affordable housing and community benefits can be secured.
- vii. All sites: That WSCC, as highway authority, would not have any fundamental issues with the potential to deliver vehicular access to the sites, based on the likely number of dwellings at each.
- viii. Engage with Horsham District Council to ensure that they are content with the approach on overall housing numbers and to understand how allocations of this scale would be considered within the context of the emerging Local Plan Review.

Karen Dare
9th July 2018