

Appendix 3 - Desborough Housing Site Options

1. Desborough's Housing requirements

- 1.1 The housing requirement for the market town of Desborough is set in the Joint Core Strategy (July 2016) as 1,360 dwellings for the plan period 2011-2031. As indicated in Section 2 of the main part of this report.
- 1.2 Since 2011, Desborough has experienced a number of sites come forward for development. Between the period of 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2016 there have been completions of 247 new dwellings. In terms of existing commitments, planning permission is outstanding for the construction of 842 dwellings in the town. This includes the Desborough North Sustainable Urban Extension which has consent for up to 700 dwellings.
- 1.3 Given the above figures, the identification of land to accommodate a further 247 dwellings to meet the JCS requirements is required to be identified in the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2). However, a buffer of 10% in addition to the Joint Core Strategy requirement would mean a requirement for 407 dwellings for this town.

2. Desborough Site Options (at January 2014)

- 2.1 At the Planning Policy Committee on 30 January 2014, Members resolved to agree a series of recommendations on sites. Plan 3 identifies the location of those sites in Desborough under consideration. It was concluded that a number of sites, should be progressed as potential housing allocations in the SSP2. These were sites with references DE/063, DE/073 and DE/188. Further work was necessary on two other sites - ref. DE/067 and DE/210 - before concluding whether they should be progressed as housing allocations.
- 2.2 A further new site (ref. DE/211) which was promoted through the consultation process at the Options Stage was to be considered against the criteria for site assessment set out in the Housing Background Paper.
- 2.3 Table D1 below sets out the decisions on the next steps agreed at this committee meeting with regards sites. This table demonstrates that the total indicative yield from all potential sites is in excess of the number of dwellings. In some cases a revised housing figure is shown as this takes into account more recent information received from landowners/site promoters.
- 2.4 Site DE/073 (Land at Harrington Road) has subsequently been subject to a planning application for 75 dwellings which has been approved. This development is currently under construction and is sufficiently progressed to the extent that its allocation is not required. The dwelling yield from this site is therefore included in the commitments and completions figures for Desborough.

Table D1: Desborough Site Options (as at January 2014)

Desborough					
Site reference	Site name	Site area hectares (ha)	Approximate yield (Provided at 30 January 2014 Committee)	Status of site (agreed at PPC 30 January 2014)	Updated Indicative housing figures (update - October 2016)
DE/063	Land off Pipewell Road	2.5ha	81	Progress as housing allocation	92
DE/067	Land adj. Orchard Close, off Harrington Road	1.8ha	60	Further work required	75
DE/073	Land at Harrington Road	2.4ha	69	Progress as housing allocation	75 (planning permission granted and under construction)
DE/188	Land off Buxton Drive	1.7ha	46	Progress as housing allocation	32
DE/210	Land to the south of Desborough	10ha	304	Further work required	304
DE/211	Land off Federation Ave	6.2ha	180 (to be determined)-	New site - assessment required	180
Total indicative housing yield from all sites*			671*		683*

*These figures do not include Site DE/073.

2.5 Since 2014, a neighbourhood plan for Desborough has been in preparation. A draft plan was published in February 2016 for public consultation, and does support the provision of housing. It has identified sites to accommodate up to 422 new residential units. This provision is broadly in-line with the requirements of the new JCS, taking account of the additional buffer which is explained at Section 1.3 above.

2.6 It is now understood that further work is taking place to establish the need to identify further sites for different land uses, including housing. A revised timescale for this work, as well as when publication on a new draft plan will take place, is not known at this stage.

3. Desborough Site Options Update (November 2016)

Consultation with technical and statutory consultees

3.1 As part of the work on preparing the SSP2 and to ensure that previous information regarding the site assessments undertaken between 2012 and

2013 were still up to date in respect of previous comments, technical and statutory consultees have been asked to provide comments on the sites still under consideration. The following points have been made with relevance to all sites across Desborough in respect of issues covering infrastructure.

- 3.2 **Highways** - Highways England has indicated the majority of sites across Desborough on an individual basis are of a scale that are unlikely to cause significant impacts on the operation of the A14 and the nearby junctions 3 and 4. However, if the majority of the sites were to come forward in both Desborough and Rothwell then there could be cumulative impacts. A transport assessment would then be required to determine the cumulative impacts of these particular sites.
- 3.3 **Education** - Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) has commented that it has land for a new primary school on the Desborough North Sustainable Urban Extension. This school is intended to have two form entry, providing for one form entry over that which Desborough North is generating. Other new developments in Desborough are expected to contribute towards this additional provision. If more capacity is required then further provision will need to be identified. There are constraints to expanding current facilities within the town as well as at Rothwell. NCC and KBC have engaged in discussions regarding this. In terms of secondary school provision, contributions would be required for all developments.
- 3.4 **Flood risk** – All sites have been looked at for the purpose of the individual site assessments using information supplied from the Environment Agency and NCC, the Local Lead Flood Authority. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applicants to submit a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for planning applications when development is greater than one hectare and located in Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3 defined as having a low, medium and high probability of flooding.
- 3.5 **Drainage and Water Infrastructure** – Anglian Water have provided feedback with regards to a number of criteria which have informed their conclusions with regards to both the capacity of the existing infrastructure, including both water and sewerage of the potential housing allocations in Kettering and Barton Seagrave.
- 3.6 This indicates if the existing infrastructure in a settlement is sufficient to accommodate growth, and determine the extent of potential improvements/upgrades that may be required.
- 3.7 For Desborough, no significant constraints have been identified in relation to the capacity of the existing infrastructure, however it is noted that capacity is limited or insufficient on some of the sites. Under this criteria, water supply, the capacity of the nearest Water Recycling Centre (WRC) and the foul sewerage

network have been assessed. However, Anglian Water has stated that this could be overcome with the necessary improvements/upgrades.

- 3.8 More specifically in relation to drainage infrastructure, no sites have been identified which require extensive new infrastructure, which has been determined through an assessment of the 'foul sewerage network capacity' by Anglian Water.
- 3.09 In addition to this, the capacity of the surface water network, although not deemed to be a constraint, Anglian Water advise that all applicants in relation to the identified sites, demonstrate that they have considered alternatives to discharging surface water such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).
- 3.10 **Land contamination** – Due to the underlying geology present throughout Northamptonshire, the land in this area could be contaminated by arsenic. KBC's Environmental Protection Team has stated that a full ground investigation will be required to ascertain any levels or prevent unacceptable risks to future occupants of these sites. This can be carried out at the planning application stage.

Potential housing site options

- 3.11 Those sites from the current shortlist of housing options are located in three broad areas of the town:
- South area - DE/210.
 - West area - DE/067, DE/188, DE/211 (as well as site ref. DE/212).
 - East/ north east area - DE/063.
- 3.12 The following two sites have previously been recommended for progression as housing allocations and an update on these is as follows:
- 3.13 **DE/063 – Land off Pipewell Road.** This site is in the existing town boundary and was previously discounted along with a neighbouring larger site to the north prior to the Options stage consultation.
- 3.14 The site is located in distance terms close to the town centre but the earlier assessment of the site had recognised that there were limitations to access the town. This is due to concerns over the capacity of the nearby single signal-controlled bridge over the railway line and with limited pedestrian route from the school. Some additional information was submitted at this point to demonstrate that there was a technical solution to this issue and the site was re-introduced for consideration.

- 3.15 The site promoter has indicated a revised yield of 91 dwellings (based on 32 dwellings per hectare of the net developable area).
- 3.16 More recent consultation with NCC Highways has flagged up these issues once more and which requires serious consideration. NCC Highways considers the site to currently score as Amber using a “RAG rating” of red, amber, yellow or green. This means highways access is constrained but could be achieved with mitigation. The site promoter has been given an opportunity to respond but this is still awaited. This is the type of overriding issue which will determine whether a site can in principle be allocated and also if there are to be any housing numbers restrictions for this site.
- 3.17 It is, therefore, difficult to fully conclude at this stage on whether it is appropriate to allocate this site and further discussions with both the site promoter and NCC Highways are required.
- 3.18 **DE/188 - Land off Buxton Drive.** This site sits within the existing town boundary of Desborough. The site promoter has supplied a revised potential yield which is reduced down to 32 to take account of a pond in the eastern part of the site and the presence of protected species (great crested newts). Access is proposed off Buxton Drive and a footpath link might also be achieved off Eyam Close and it is considered that this can be achieved satisfactorily. It is also relatively easy to reach the A6 from this part of town. In terms of impact on the landscape, this is judged to be low as the site is well screened and visibility is limited. There are no new overriding concerns with regards this site and it therefore remains appropriate to recommend for allocation.
- 3.19 It was previously agreed that additional work would be carried out in relation to the sites DE/067 and DE/210.
- 3.20 **DE/067 - Land Adjoining Orchard Close and off Harrington Road.** The site is on the western edge of the town, directly south of the site DE/073 currently under construction for residential development.
- 3.21 The site promoter has submitted a revised indicative yield of 75 dwellings, based on 31 dwellings per hectare. Further work on the assessment of the site has highlighted the need to consider the adequacy of the existing road infrastructure, both on Harrington Road and on the wider highway network to support the development of the site. This was raised through previous public consultation on earlier work on the emerging SSP2.
- 3.22 Two potential points of access have been identified by the site promoters, one at Orchard Close and the other off Harrington Road but there are access issues at both these points. In summary, NCC Highways have stated they are concerned that proposed access arrangements off Orchard Close would require the acquisition of a private drive and provision of a new parking area.

There would be a limit on the number of dwellings that could be served off this road. The current width of Harrington Road is insufficient and would require widening in order to allow the number of dwellings indicated to be accessed off this road.

3.23 NCC Highways considers the site currently scores as Amber using a “RAG rating” of red, amber, yellow and green. This means highways access is constrained but could be achieved with mitigation.

3.24 The site promoter has been given an opportunity to respond on these matters and this is awaited. However, it must be made clear that this is potentially an overriding issue and could determine whether this land can in principle be allocated and importantly the likely number of dwellings on the site which could be served off the highway network.

3.25 **Site DE210 - Land to the south of Desborough.** This site has previously been considered as a number of separate smaller sites, but was then looked at as a more comprehensive parcel of land and consulted upon. The site lies within the existing town boundary of Desborough.

3.26 Since 2014, the site has been subject to an outline planning application for residential development. Access was considered as part of this application. The application area has also included an additional area of land to the west and north-west of the proposed allocation site towards St. Giles Church. The application has been refused.

3.27 It is recognised that there are ecology and landscape sensitivities associated with this part of the town. For the purposes of allocation, however, the assessment has not raised issues which would conclude that the site should be excluded from consideration as a housing site. The extent of the site under consideration as an allocation does not include the area of proposed Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space i.e. land to the south of the Church referred to as The Damms.

3.28 The planning application has allowed further exploration of access and highways arrangements and these aspects of the proposal did not form part of the reasons for refusal. Given the size of the site which could contribute to the overall housing requirements in Desborough, and concern over other sites under consideration being able to make up this number; it is recommended that this site remains in contention.

3.29 **DE/211 - Land off Federation Ave.** This has been a new site to consider as it was introduced during consultation on the Options stage of the plan. In terms of assessment work the main issues are in relation to highways and access. This is reflected in the RAG rating supplied by NCC Highways. This proposal would introduce a site of a significant size in this location on the edge of the

town, which can only be reached off the B576/Rothwell Road along Federation Ave and then extending the access into the site from other existing minor roads.

- 3.30 Two points of access are potentially achievable but it raises concerns on the adequacy of Federation Ave as well as the junction with the B576/Rothwell Road. Further discussion is required with the site promoter before concluding whether the site has merit in being allocated. Also, public consultation has not been undertaken for this site to date. It is, therefore, difficult to fully conclude at this stage on the appropriateness to allocate this site.
- 3.31 **Promotion of further new site (“DE/212”)**. It has been requested that a site not previously promoted through the SSP2 be considered for allocation. For the purposes of identifying this site on the accompanying plan it has been given the site reference “DE/212”. The site is 3.1 hectares in size and vehicular and pedestrian access may possibly be provided off the existing highway at Eyam Close and /or Elton Close. The site could provide for approximately 90 dwellings.
- 3.32 This site has not been assessed but can be if Members wish it to be considered for its suitability for allocation; particularly given its siting on the western edge to the town adjacent to another housing site currently under construction (DE/073) and another site being considered for allocation (DE/067). Public consultation has not been undertaken for this site.

4. Proposed next steps

- 4.1 The total indicative capacity of development of all these sites (683 dwellings) could significantly exceed the number of allocations required, even with the inclusion of a buffer. A combination of some of these sites is, therefore, only required to make up the requirement of 407 dwellings.
- 4.2 However, this relies on knowing whether sites DE/063, DE/067 and DE211 have the potential to accommodate development and their number. At present the total indicative figure is some 350 dwellings. It is necessary to give further consideration to the prospects of these sites coming forward and in terms of their appropriateness to meet the remaining housing requirement for Desborough.
- 4.3 In order to make up a combination of sites of c.400 dwellings, this is likely to incorporate a large site as this figure cannot be met through several of the small sites and would rely on them all coming forward. There is also the prospect of including DE212 which if suitable in assessment terms could deliver c.90 dwellings.

4.4 It is recommended that further work is undertaken as set out below and reported back to Members at the earliest opportunity in order to provide a more precise list from the current shortlist of potential housing sites (see Table D2 below).

1. Clarify outstanding issues with the site promoter/landowner with regards DE/063, DE/067 and DE/211 before concluding on appropriateness of these sites for allocation.
2. If Members are minded to consider “site ref. DE/212”, an assessment of the site assessed against the criteria set out in the Housing Allocation Background Paper will need to be undertaken.
3. Clarify the extent of infrastructure requirements for the town of Desborough and the likelihood of any cumulative impacts which need to be addressed.
4. Following on from work identified in steps 1 to 3, consider the overall quantum of development required for Desborough and make recommendations from those remaining on the shortlist of sites, in terms of being developable and deliverable, for inclusion in the draft SSP2 as preferred sites.

Table D2: Desborough - recommended next steps

Desborough			
Site reference	Site name	Updated Indicative housing figures (October 2016)	Proposed next steps
DE/063	Land off Pipewell Road	92	Further work required
DE/067	Land adj. Orchard Close, off Harrington Road	75	Further work required
DE/188	Land off Buxton Drive	32	Progress for consideration as housing allocation
DE/210	Land to the south of Desborough	304	Progress for consideration as housing allocation
DE/211	Land off Federation Ave	180	Further work required
Total indicative yield		683	