

Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Support

Site Allocations

The purpose of site allocations in neighbourhood plans

The allocation of sites within neighbourhood plans for new development, including housing, employment use, leisure and infrastructure, can provide developers, service providers, the relevant local authorities and local residents with more certainty about the sites for future development in the area. Allocations can also help to protect and safeguard land for future development such as open space uses.

Decisions made in relation to planning applications on sites that are allocated within the neighbourhood plan can be given a clear steer on what would be considered appropriate on the site. It should however be noted that allocating sites within the plan does not provide planning permission for the proposed development uses. Applications for planning permission will still need to be made to the relevant local authority.

The site allocations included in the final version of the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan therefore need to deliver the plan's vision and objectives and should be based upon robust evidence and the outcome of community consultation.

Approach to choosing sites to be allocated

The consideration and assessment of all sites which could possibly come forward for development will help the Loxwood Neighbourhood Plan Working Group decide which sites should be included in the plan.

A transparent, robust and objective selection process supported by evidence is recommended to be undertaken to choose areas of land to allocate within the plan. This should include an assessment of the sites against clear planning focused selection criteria. This will ensure the allocations made can stand up to scrutiny as part of the independent examination and from local developers. Consultation with the community, the local authority and landowners also needs to be undertaken to assist with justifying the sites chosen.

The set of criteria used to assess sites should ideally be agreed with the local authority, in this case Chichester District Council, and other key stakeholders before sites are assessed and allocated in the plan to avoid any potential conflicts at a later stage and ensure all relevant issues are addressed.

The following sections detail a possible approach for Loxwood.

Stage 1: Identifying land and initial sifting

The first stage involves the identification of all land which could possibly be developed within the Parish. This may include sites known to the community and Parish Council, sites identified by Chichester District Council, for example as part of their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, or sites promoted by local developers or landowners. Sites identified can include land which could be developed for housing or other uses such as future community facilities.

URS notes that the recent Community Led Plan Survey in September 2012 and the workshops run by the Glass House in March 2012 included consideration of, and consultation on, the following

sites with the local community which have also been identified in Chichester District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2010):

- Farm Close – south of the doctor's surgery
- Land adjacent to North Hall
- Conifer Nursery Site to west of B2133
- Land adjacent to Willetts Way
- Land immediately south of Loxwood Farm Place
- Loxwood Primary School site

In addition, the Loxwood Sports Association site has been suggested as a potential site by a member of the local community. URS also notes that Chichester District Council's SHLAA 2010 and email correspondence between Chichester District Council (CDC) Officers in 2011 in relation to the suitability of sites for social housing also identified the following additional sites:

- Spy Lane - Emmanuel Fellowship Playing Field
- Spy Lane - rear of the chapel

Once a list of sites and their locations are mapped a 'sifting out' process can then be undertaken of any sites which are considered to be unacceptable based upon 'showstopper' criteria. The showstopper criteria for Loxwood might be:

1. Is the centre of the site further than 500m (approximately 10-15 mins walk) from the village centre (need to determine this location)? If yes, the site should be discounted.
2. Is there a national environmental designation on the site or a significant part of the site e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty? If yes, site should be discounted
3. Is the site within flood risk zone 3a or 3b? - Zones according to Environment Agency flood mapping these zones have the highest risk of river flooding – If the site is within flood zones 3a and 3b the site should be discounted.
4. Is the landowner or developer of the site willing for it to be developed for housing or other uses over the plan period? – If not site should be discounted. If yes identify when this would be available to come forward and size of development area.

Sourcing the information to assess the sites against the above criteria will involve mapping the sites and designations/flood risk zones, as well as consultation with landowners and developers.

Stage 2: Detailed assessment of suitability

Once each site has been assessed against the 'showstopper' criteria, and sites have been 'discounted' a smaller group of sites should remain which can then be considered against additional criteria to determine their suitability for development. The criteria for this stage could include those relating to key site opportunities and constraints and each site could be given a traffic light grading as shown below. This will help to judge overall how the site performs in order to indicate whether a site is:

- Unsuitable for development;
- Potentially suitable but further information is needed; or
- Potentially suitable for development

For each site it is also recommended that possible uses for the site are considered as some sites considered unsuitable for housing may be suitable for other types of development such as recreational uses.

Criterion	Potential sources of information/ indicators	Grading (colour as appropriate)	Justification
Environmental			
Is the site within Environment Agency (EA) flood zone 2?	EA mapping or CDC mapping	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	<i>Provide commentary to justify the grading given.</i>
Is the site known to be susceptible to surface water flooding?	Local knowledge/ CDC environment/ water team	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Does the site contain any features designated for historic importance? E.g listed buildings, scheduled monuments	CDC mapping/ or mapping on magic.gov.uk	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Does the site contain a number of trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders?	CDC/ Village Design Statement (VDS)	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Is the site or does the site contain a local nature reserve or a local geological site?	CDC mapping	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Is the site previously developed land?	Local knowledge / planning history from CDC	Yes = GREEN Unknown = AMBER No = RED	
Current land use/ constraints			
Is the site, or does it form, part of a consecrated site?	Site visit/ landowners	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Does the site contain good quality agricultural land? (Best and most versatile land)	CDC mapping / landowners	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Does the site contain a key community asset, such as a school, village hall, health centre, recreation ground etc.?	Local knowledge/ site visit	Yes = RED Unknown/ possible opportunity for relocation = AMBER No = GREEN	
Does the site contain overhead cables, pylons or have any obvious physical	Site visit	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	

Criterion	Potential sources of information/ indicators	Grading (colour as appropriate)	Justification
constraint e.g in relation to topography?			
Does the site have any known utilities access or capacity issues e.g access to water, sewerage, power, telecoms? .	Information from statutory undertakers	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
Is the site known to be contaminated?	CDC Environment team input/ local knowledge	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
How many households would be directly impacted by development of this site, i.e. are immediately adjoining?	Site visit	16+ = RED 6-15 = AMBER 1-5 = GREEN	
Access and proximity			
Does the site have suitable vehicle and pedestrian access points or could an access points be created?	URS transport evidence if appointed	Yes = RED Unknown = AMBER No = GREEN	
What distance is the site from the village centre?	CDC mapping or Magic.gov.uk measuring tool	Under 100m = GREEN 100-400m = AMBER More than 400m = RED	
Is the site outside the village's settlement boundary, as defined by the Neighbourhood Plan?	Village settlement boundary for the NP	Yes = RED No = GREEN	

Making site allocations in the plan

In the submission Neighbourhood Plan each allocation should be identified on a proposals map which would accompany the Neighbourhood Plan. Policies within the plan for the site allocations could specify the criteria for the development of the site where appropriate and provide a more detailed plan. The policy could include how the allocation will be delivered, by who, when and what infrastructure is required for delivery, or how it fits with the delivery of the plan.