

GREAT & LITTLE KIMBLE CUM MARSH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT

MAY 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report summarises the site assessment process to inform the selection of housing site allocations in the Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council has been advised throughout this process by the professional planning consultancy, O'Neill Homer, and by officers of Wycombe District Council.
2. The Plan is obliged by the new Wycombe Local Plan Policy RUR6 to allocate land with a total housing capacity of 160 homes in the plan period to 2033. A 'call for sites' by the Project Steering Group led to 29 sites in the Parish being appraised for their potential housing development. Ten of these sites qualified for the Stage 2 assessment process, but one has since received planning consent. The remaining nine sites have the potential capacity to deliver a total of 217 homes which exceeds the residual total of 131 homes in Policy RUR6 (as 29 homes are already built/committed).
3. To reduce their total number to below the RUR6 cap, the assessment comprised a Sustainability Appraisal; the suitability of a site to deliver a non-housing use that will benefit the local community; and a further community survey of site preferences. The conclusion of these assessments is that **sites 1, 10, 14, 15 and 17A should be selected**. They will deliver an approx. total of 130 homes, a new playing field area (on Site 14) and a new village shop (on either Site 1 or Site 17A). The remaining homes required by Policy RUR6 may come forward as windfall schemes at Marsh and/or Kimblewick over the plan period.
4. Policy RUR6 requires development to be phased over the lifetime of the Plan. This can be achieved by the Neighbourhood Plan having a policy that requires no more than 50 homes are consented on the allocated sites in three periods between 2019/20 and 2032/33.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report summarises the site assessment process to inform the selection of housing site allocations in the Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council has been advised throughout this process by the professional planning consultancy, O'Neill Homer, and by officers of Wycombe District Council.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is obliged by the new Wycombe Local Plan Policy RUR6 to allocate land with a total housing capacity of 160 homes in the plan period to 2033, subject to any reasonable allowance made for windfall schemes over the period. The report explains the two-stage site assessment process and how recommendations have been arrived at for the selection of the sites.

2. STAGE ONE

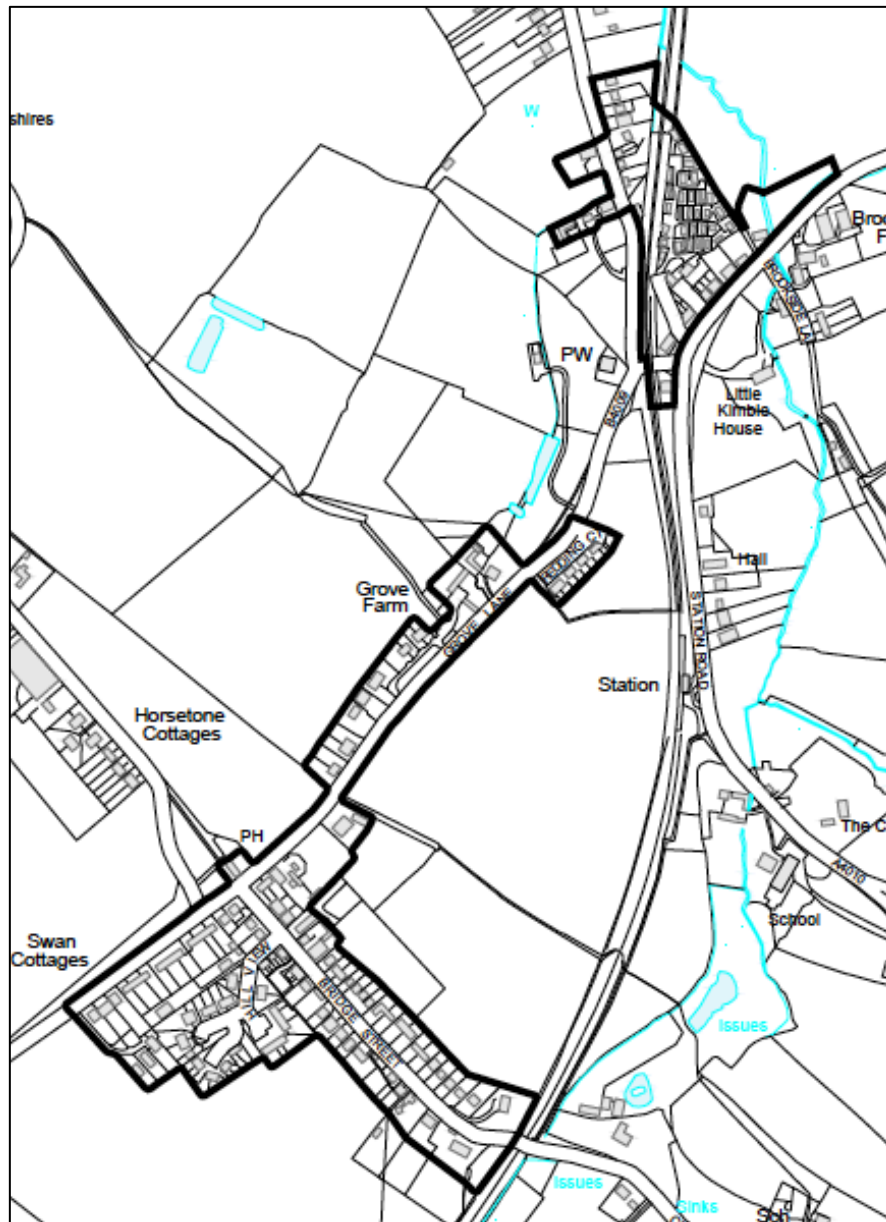
2.1 The process began with a 'call for sites' by the Project Steering Group in February 2018. Prior to that, the Parish Council had engaged the local community to publicise the Plan and to seek opinions and preferences on its vision and objectives (in October 2017 and earlier in February 2018). The 'call for sites' led to 29 sites in the Parish being appraised for their potential housing development. They included a number of sites identified and appraised in Wycombe District Council's 'Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment' (HELAA) of 2017 but revealed that, given another opportunity to confirm land availability, 7 of the HELAA sites were not put forward so were deemed unavailable.

2.2 Those available sites (including the HELAA sites) have been numbered and are shown in the table comprising the Stage 1 assessment in Appendix A. The table names each site and shows the outcome of that assessment, i.e. the compatibility of each site with the provisions of Local Plan Policy RUR6, which provides the essential framework of criteria for site selection in the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.3 Policy RUR6 requires that only sites that lie within or adjoining the villages of Great Kimble (including that part known as Smoky Row) and Little Kimble may be considered for allocation. These sites are shown as 'Y1' in Appendix A and proceed to the Stage 2 assessment. Given the 2007 Wycombe District Local Plan did not define settlement boundaries in Tier 5 'small villages' like the Kimbles, its Policies Map does not show a boundary to enable 'within or adjoining' to be defined.

2.4 To address this, the normal conventions (as used by the District Council elsewhere) have been used to draw a boundary following the existing (2018) observable edge of the villages (see Plan A). For the most part, these edges are obvious, as they are defined by buildings and rear plot boundaries. However, boundaries exclude garden land that blends into the surrounding countryside as it has a weak or no clearly defined boundary and so will be drawn tightly around the main building(s). The boundary may not therefore coincide with how local people perceive their sense of belonging to a community, which very often covers a wider area.

2.5 Those sites that are compatible with the provisions of RUR6 in that they lie within the Marsh or Kimblewick rural area for windfall schemes are shown as 'Y2'. They cannot proceed to Stage 2 as they cannot be allocated but some land may come forward under the separate windfall policy for those hamlets in the Neighbourhood Plan.



Plan A: Existing Settlement Boundaries for Great Kimble (inc. Smoky Row) and Little Kimble (Ordnance Survey, (c) Crown Copyright 2017. All rights reserved. License number 100022432)

2.6 Sites that lie within the Green Belt and Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are shown as 'N1'. Although the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of February 2019 now makes provision for Neighbourhood Plans to modify Green Belt boundaries (see §136), this provision had not been made at the time of the completion of the Stage One process. In any event, given it was clear that more than sufficient land had been made available for development outside the Green Belt, it was not considered necessary or desirable to consider any further land in the Green Belt.

2.7 Similarly, proposals for major development in the AONB must pass a number of tests (see §172 NPPF) to demonstrate they are acceptable. As more than sufficient land had been made available outside the AONB (which extends into the Parish beyond the Green Belt at Great Kimble), again it was not necessary to give this land any further consideration. In both cases, should land owners wish to make proposals in these locations, then they may do so through the normal planning application process.

2.8 Sites that are not available are shown as 'N2'. In the case of site (HELAA Ref: 198) off Bridge Street, the land owner has confirmed that the land will not be made available, even though a separate land promoter responded positively to the Call for Sites.

3. STAGE TWO

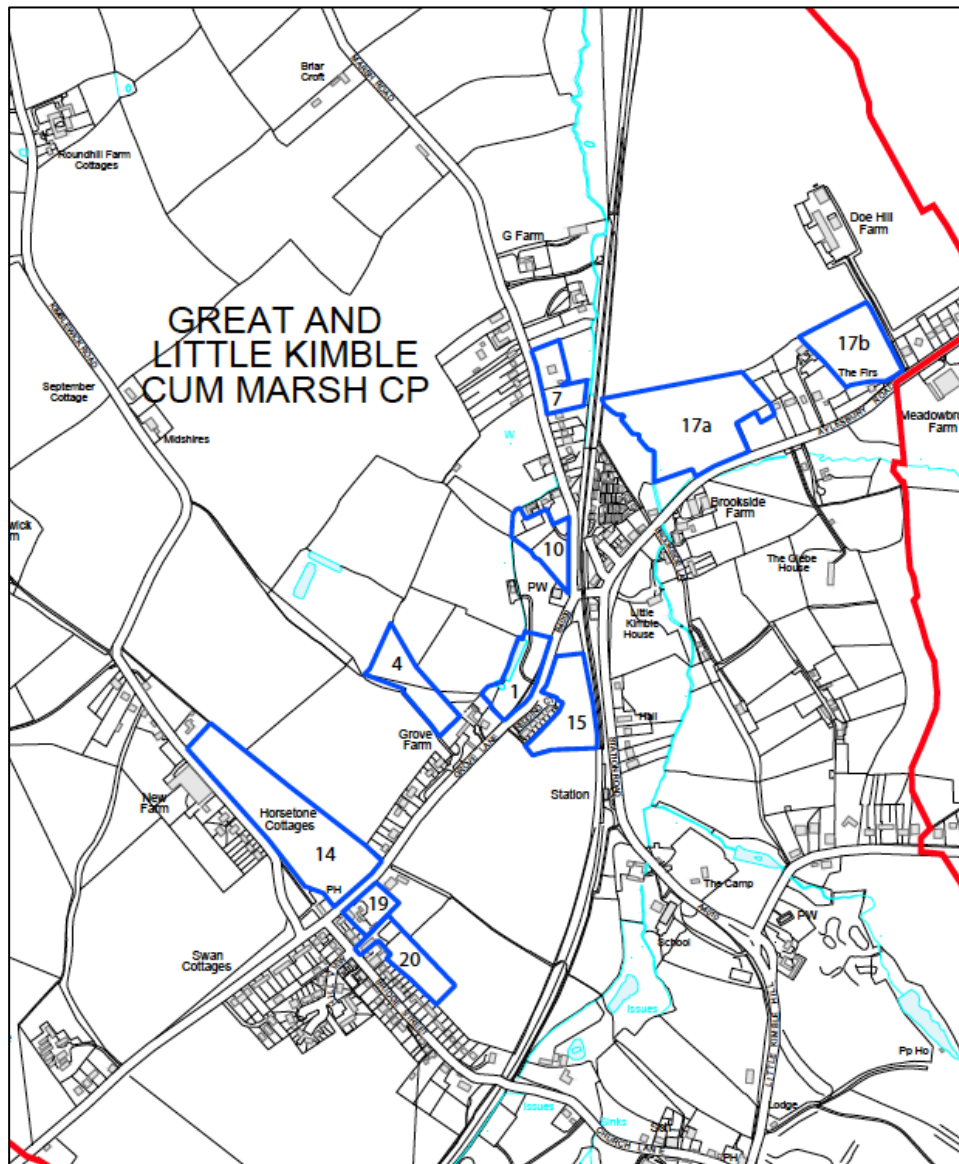
3.1 There are 9 sites that qualify for the Stage 2 assessment process, as one (Site 19, The Orchards) has since received planning consent. Plan B below shows all of the sites and separate plans are shown in Appendix C. A summary of site data is shown in Appendix B, including for each site:

- their gross site areas (in Ha)
- the assumptions made about net site area for housing use (in Ha)
- the assumption made about density of the net site area (dwellings per Ha)
- the resulting housing capacity of the site (no.)

3.2 On this basis, the sites have the potential capacity to deliver a total of 218 homes over the plan period, which far exceeds the total of 160 homes in Policy RUR6, less the 29 homes consented since 2013, i.e. 131 homes. This total must be an effective maximum as the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment of Policy RUR6 have been based on screening out the potential for significant environmental effects at this scale of development.

3.3 In which case, it has been necessary to deploy three additional criteria in the Stage 2 process, namely:

- the Sustainability Appraisal of the Neighbourhood Plan, which provides an assessment of the technical attributes of the sites, as per part 2 of Policy RUR6
- an assessment of the suitability of the site to deliver a non-housing use that will benefit the local community and the willingness of the land owner to commit to the Neighbourhood Plan making such a provision
- the Community Survey, which summarises the preferences of the local community of each site for development (bearing in mind that the Plan can only be made following a successful referendum in due course)



Plan B: Stage Two Sites

(Ordnance Survey, (c) Crown Copyright 2017. All rights reserved. License number 100022432)

Sustainability Appraisal

3.4 The Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out in iterations by AECOM for the Project Steering Group from September 2018 to March 2019, using the site information provided by the land owners during the call for sites and the relevant sustainability baseline data (see separate report).

3.5 The Appraisal has assessed the 9 sites as shown in Table A below. The appraisal has used the seven sustainability objectives agreed at the scoping stage and has determined the potential for the likely positive or adverse effects (prior to determining mitigation measures) and neutral or uncertain effects of development resulting from an allocation in the Plan. The report does not itself give weight to the objectives and does not seek to rank the sites, as this is not the purpose of the Appraisal.

Site	Biodiversity	Climate change	Landscape and Historic Environment	Land, soil and water resources	Community	Health and wellbeing	Transport
Site 1							
Site 4							
Site 7							
Site 10							
Site 14							
Site 15							
Site 17A							
Site 17B							
Site 20							
Key							
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)			Likely positive effect		Neutral/uncertain effects		

Table A: Summary Site Appraisal
(Source: Table 4.10, Draft Sustainability Appraisal, AECOM, March 2019)

3.6 Site 15 is the only one to have no adverse effects and it has a positive transport effect, as do sites 1, 17A and 17B. Sites 1 and 10 have only one adverse effect and sites 4, 7, 14, 17B and 20 have two adverse effects. Although Site 17a has three adverse effects, this can be reduced to two on the basis that mitigation is incorporated into the proposed scheme by ensuring the developable area is restricted to the land outside the flood zone. This is true of Site 7 as well, but its poor location in respect of access to public transport cannot be mitigated and is therefore excluded from further consideration.

3.7 If sites with no or only one adverse effect are to be chosen then sites 1, 10 and 15 should be considered for allocation. However, given they would deliver a total capacity of only approx. 45 homes, which is insufficient to be consistent with Policy RUR6, some of the sites with two adverse (but mitigatable) effects will also need to be considered for allocation, i.e. sites 4, 14, 17A, 17B and 20.

Community Benefit

3.8 Four sites – sites 1, 14, 17A and 20 - have offered to deliver either a new village shop or a playing field area for the benefit of the whole community, over and above the standard requirements of Local Plan policy to make such provision. This reflects the importance of the Neighbourhood Plan seeking to address the cumulative effects of significant housing growth in two small and relatively remote villages with few facilities.

3.9 Site 20 is not considered a suitable location for a local shop as the land does not have a road frontage, unlike sites 1 and 17A. Site 14 is considered a suitable location for a new playing field area, which will help mitigate the landscape effect of the development scheme. In which case, as site 1 is already considered for allocation, sites 14 and 17A should also be considered. The combined housing capacity of sites 1, 10, 14, 15 and 17A (130 homes) now meets the requirement of Policy RUR6.

Community Survey

3.10 The community survey was undertaken on the sites in June – August 2018 and the results are published in a separate report by Local Dialogue. The community was invited to identify the top 3 (shown as ‘+’ below, with 3 points awarded for highest preference, 2 for second and 1 for third) and bottom 3 (shown as ‘-’, with -3 points awarded for lowest preference etc) preferred sites, based on the ‘call for sites’ information that was presented.

3.11 A ranking has been derived from the aggregate of those preference scores as shown in Table B below:

Site No./Name & Survey Top 3/Bottom 3 Net Scores	Community Ranking
17A. Doe Hill Farm (lower) +167 – 44 = +123	1
17B. Doe Hill Farm (upper) +140 – 42 = +98	2
15. Village Foundations Grove Lane +124 – 40 = +84	3
1. Grove Lane (west) +60 – 29 = +31	4
14. Kimblewick Rd, Grove Lane +107 – 106 = +1	5
7. Birdbrook, Marsh Rd +81 – 88 = -7	6
10. The Laurels, Marsh Rd +62 – 84 = -22	7
4. Grove Barn +35 – 67 = -32	8
20. Rear of Chequers/Hawthorn, Bridge St +14 – 224 = -210	9

Table B: Sites Community Ranking

3.12 Although the survey and engagement activities have been effective in terms of the number of local people engaging with the project, it is acknowledged that no survey can provide a definitive view of community opinion. However, experience elsewhere suggests that those people that do engage at this stage of a neighbourhood plan project are also more likely to comment at the Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) and Pre-Examination Publicity (Regulation 16) stages, as well as to turn out to vote at the referendum. It is therefore a helpful insight and its conclusions must be given some weight in the final selection of sites.

3.13 As it is, with sufficient sites considered for allocation as a result of the sustainability appraisal and community benefit tests, there is no need to use the survey to identify any other sites for allocation. However, it is noted that there is a broad correlation between the five sites considered and community preferences, with four of the sites in the top five of those preferences.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SITE ALLOCATIONS

4.1 On this basis, it is recommended that sites 1, 10, 14, 15 and 17A are selected to deliver a total of approx. 130 homes over the plan period. Although not a site selection criterion, it is noted that the five sites are reasonably well distributed around the defined edges of the villages. The remaining homes required by Policy RUR6 may come forward as windfall schemes at Marsh and/or Kimblewick over the plan period.

4.2 The Appraisal has indicated how each site should seek to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects (notably in respect of landscape, climate change and access) and these requirements will be made in the respective allocation policies.

Phasing

4.3 Part 2 of Policy RUR6 states that, “Development should be phased to be delivered over the lifetime of the Local Plan”. In its supporting text, it states that, “In allocating specific sites, a Neighbourhood Plan will take this policy as the starting point but review the exact proportion of homes to be provided by windfall and to be allocated through specific sites, and the phasing of development”.

4.4 All of the preferred allocation sites are available now, as the landowners have confirmed there are no known legal or other encumbrances to prevent planning applications being submitted shortly. However, both Policy RUR6, and the local community, require that the homes are delivered over the full plan period, and not all in its first five years.

4.5 It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan includes a policy provision whereby no more than 50 homes are consented in relation to the allocated site in each of the periods: 2019/20 – 2022/23; 2023/24 – 2027/28; and 2028/29 – 2032/33. Such a provision would not apply to windfall schemes in the Parish.

APPENDIX 1

STAGE ONE SITES SUMMARY

KIMBLES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Site Assessments (Stage 1 Assessment)

8.10.18

Site Ref	HELAA Ref	Location	RUR6
1	185	Grove Lane (west)	Y1
2	-	Old Rifle Range Farm	N1
3	-	Marsh Lane	Y2
4	-	Grove Barn	Y1
5	-	Marsh Lane	N1
6	-	Stables Fm, Marsh Rd	Y2
7	184	Birdbrook, Marsh Rd	Y1
8	-	Marsh	Y2
9	-	Little Kimble House	N1
10	-	The Laurels, Marsh Rd	Y1
11	-	Askett Nurseries	N1
12	-	Old Stocks Farm, Kimblewick Rd	Y2
13	-	Various	Y2
14	190	Kimblewick Rd, Grove Lane	Y1
15	182	Village Foundations Grove Lane	Y1
16	-	Brookside Farm	N1
17A	196	Doe Hill Farm (lower)	Y1
17B	197	Doe Hill Farm (upper)	Y1
18	-	Box Cottage, Church Lane	N1
19	-	The Orchards, Grove Lane	*
20	-	Rear of Chequers/Hawthorn, Bridge St	Y1
21	186/187/188	Grangelands Farm	N1
22	-	White Croft, Lower Icknield Way	Y2
23	-	Silver Nugget, Marsh Lane	Y2
24	-	NW of Moat Cottage,	Y2
25	-	Brookside Farm and Land	N1
26	-	Hollytree Farm	Y2
27	-	Marsh Green	Y2
28	-	Woodhouse Farm	Y2
29	189	Grove Lane	N2
30	192	Hill View	N2
31	193	Marsh Road A	N2
32	194	Marsh Road B	N2
33	195	Kimble Court	N2
34	198	Bridge Street	N2
35	199	Horsetone Cottages	N2

NOTES:

RUR6:

Y1 = Yes, proceed to Stage 2 assessment as part of core area

Y2 = Yes, consider for site specific policy outside core area

N1 = No, Green Belt & AONB

N2 = No, unavailable

* planning consent issued since shortlisting

APPENDIX B

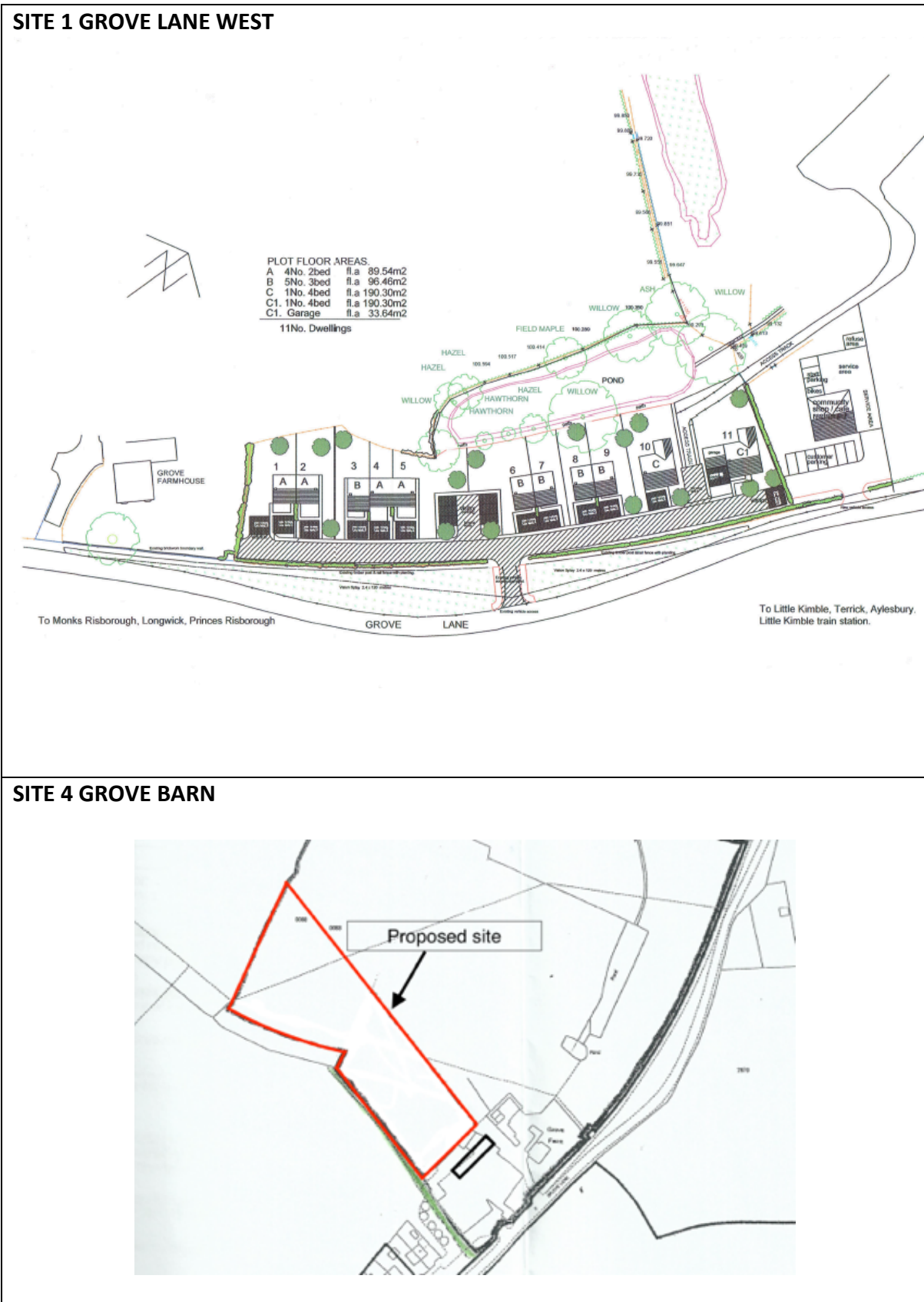
STAGE TWO SITES SUMMARY

Site Ref	Location	Gross Ha	Net Ha	DPH	No.
1	Grove Lane (west)	0.4	0.4	25	11
4	Grove Barn	1.0	0.9	25	23
7	Birdbrook, Marsh Rd	1.1	0.6	25	15
10	The Laurels, Marsh Rd	0.8	0.6	25	14
14	Kimblewick Rd, Grove Lane	3.4	1.7	25	45
15	Village Foundations Grove Lane	0.7	0.7	30	20
17A	Doe Hill Farm (lower)	3.2	1.6	25	40
17B	Doe Hill Farm (upper)	1.5	1.4	25	35
20*	Rear of Chequers/Hawthorn, Bridge St	0.8	0.8	20	15
				total homes	218

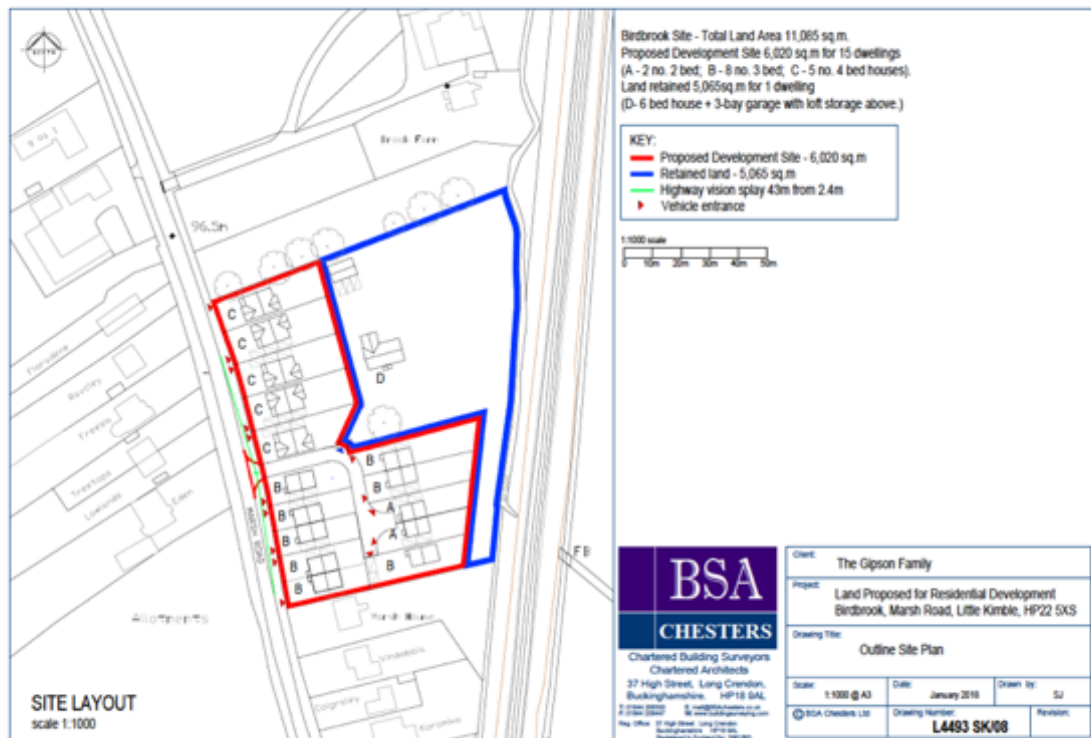
** amended plans for Site 20 showing new access and two configuration options were submitted for consideration in March 2019 – the amended plans were assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal (and are shown in Appendix C).*

APPENDIX C

SITE INFORMATION



SITE 7 BIRDBROOK, MARSH ROAD



SITE 10 THE LAURELS, MARSH ROAD



SITE 14 KIMBLEWICK ROAD/GROVE LANE



SITE 15 VILLAGE FOUNDATIONS, GROVE LANE



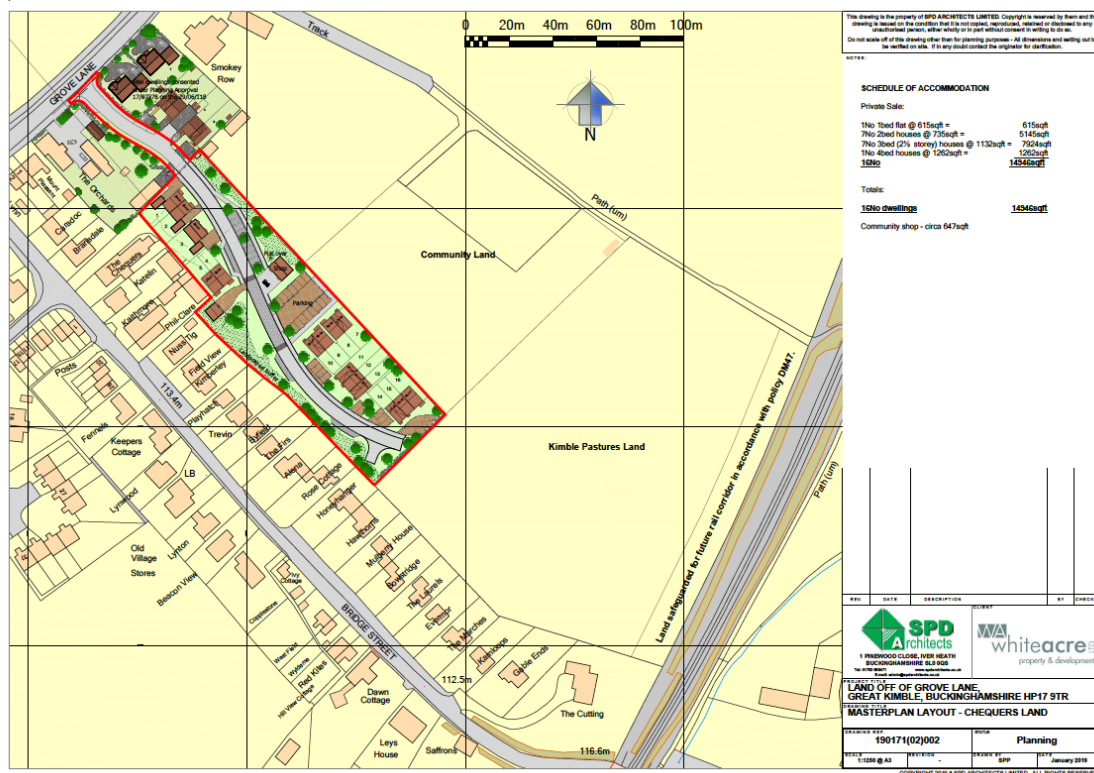
SITE 17A DOE HILL FARM (LOWER)



SITE 17A DOE HILL FARM (UPPER)



SITE 20 REAR OF CHEQUERS, BRIDGE STREET (OPTION 1)



SITE 20 REAR OF CHEQUERS, BRIDGE STREET (OPTION 2)

