

**GREAT & LITTLE KIMBLE CUM MARSH  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**SEPTEMBER 2019**

# GREAT & LITTLE KIMBLE CUM MARSH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

## SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT

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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 officers of Wycombe District Council and by the professional planning consultancy, O'Neill Homer.
2. The Plan is obliged by Policy RUR6 of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan to allocate land with a total housing capacity of 160 homes in the plan period to 2033. A 'call for sites' by a Committee of the Parish Council (the 'NPWG') 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 218 homes which far 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; an assessment of the suitability of a site to deliver a non-housing use that will benefit the local community; and a community survey of site preferences. The conclusion of these assessments is that **sites 1, 10, 14 15 and 17A should be selected, although it is acknowledged that Site 15 may comprise a smaller scheme (and increase windfall numbers) and/or be delayed in delivery pending the final approval of the Grove Lane realignment scheme. Based on the proposals submitted to the NPWG, they would 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 would 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 should be achieved by the Neighbourhood Plan having a policy that planning permission should be granted on the basis that no more than approx. 50 homes be delivered in each of the three periods between 2019/20 and 2032/33. However, this policy may need amendment to reflect progress on the planning permissions granted in each period.

## 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 and NPWG have been advised throughout this process by officers of Wycombe District Council and the professional planning consultancy, O'Neill Homer.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is obliged by Policy RUR6 of the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan of August 2019 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 (see policy extract below). The report explains the two-stage site assessment process and how recommendations have been arrived at for the selection of the sites.

### ***POLICY RUR6 - GREAT AND LITTLE KIMBLE-CUM-MARSH PARISH***

*1. The Council requires 160 homes to be developed in the Parish of Great and Little Kimble-cum-Marsh over the Plan period.*

*2. A Neighbourhood Plan will determine the distribution of development across the Parish, and allocate specific sites for housing and other uses as appropriate. The Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the following principles:*

*a) Development should be phased to be delivered over the lifetime of the Local Plan;*

*b) The required housing be provided:*

*i. On a range of small sites within or adjacent to the existing villages of Great Kimble (including Smokey Row), Little Kimble and*

*ii. Through including a small allowance for windfall sites in the hamlets of Marsh and Kimblewick;*

*c) Development sites should be selected based on an appraisal of local sustainability issues, including an assessment of:*

*i. The capacity of the landscape to accommodate development without having a major impact on the setting of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;*

*ii. The location of the proposed development sites in relation to public transport services, and / or their capacity to support improvements.*

*3. In the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, development will be required to meet the principles set out in 2 above;*

*4. Development proposals or allocations will not be permitted which would prejudice the delivery of infrastructure improvements required for the expansion of Princes Risborough.*

From adopted Wycombe District Local Plan, August 2019, pp292-293

1.3 A draft version of this report was published in May 2019 alongside the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan and draft Sustainability Appraisal report for consultation. This final version takes into account the representations made on all three documents and forms part of the submission documentation.

## **2. STAGE ONE**

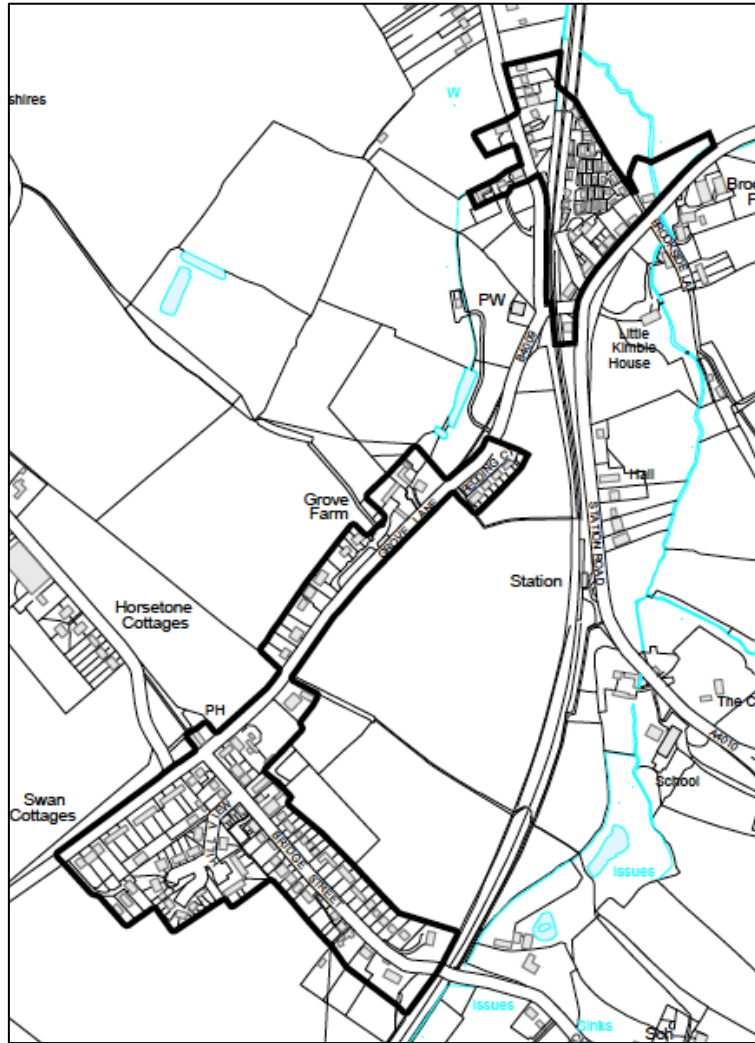
2.1 The process began with the Parish Council engaging the local community to publicise the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and to seek opinions and preferences on its vision and objectives in October 2017. In February 2018 the NPWG commenced a ‘call for sites’ exercise, which led to 29 sites in 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, given another opportunity to confirm land availability, 7 of the HELAA sites were not put forward so were deemed unavailable.

2.2 The 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, the boundaries also exclude garden land that blends into the surrounding countryside. In which case, they have been drawn tightly around the main building(s). The boundaries 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 allowance in policy RUR6 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 landowners 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 company that owns a significant part of the site informed the NPWG that it does not intend to make the land available for development despite , an independent land promoter providing proposals for the site in response to the Call for Sites.

### 3. STAGE TWO

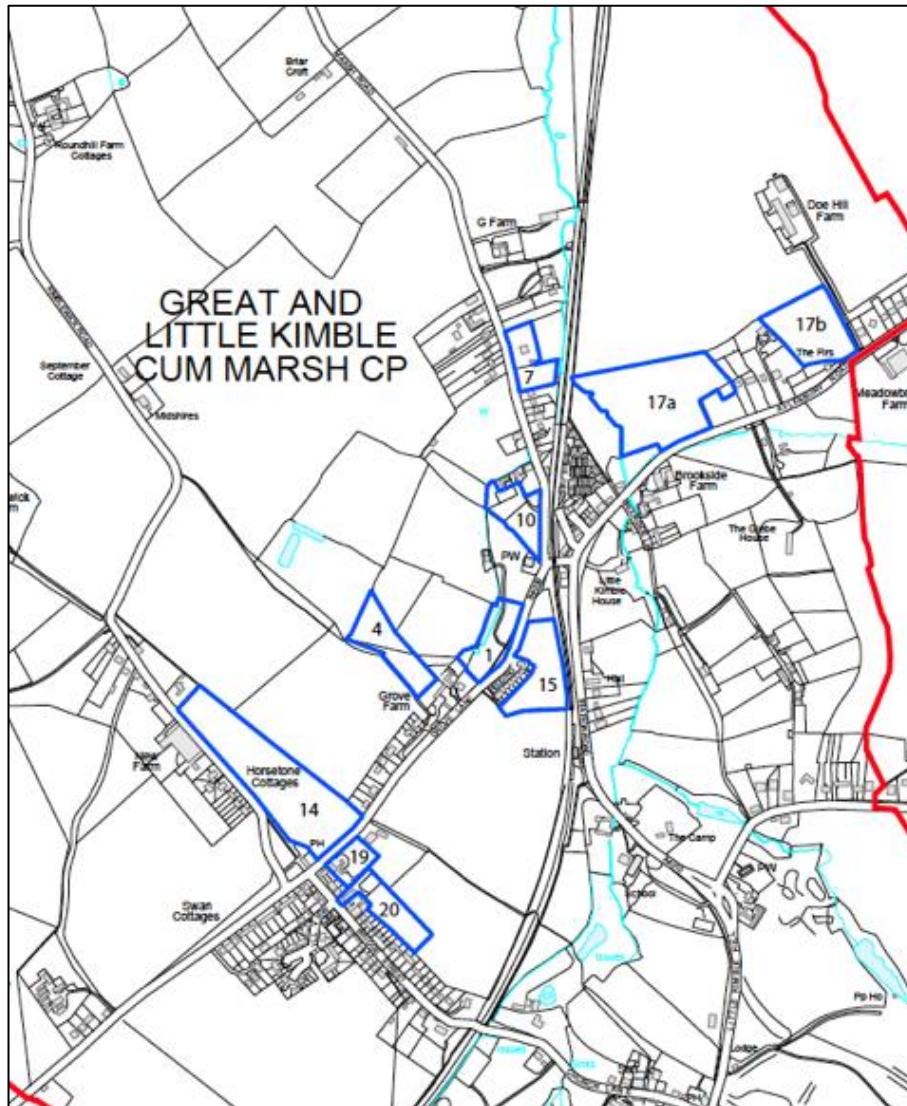
3.1 There are 9 sites that qualify for the Stage 2 assessment process, as one, Site 19, The Orchards, has since received planning consent. However, the land promoter of Site 20 has offered to revisit the approved scheme if the two sites are considered together, which has been assumed for the purposes of preparing the Plan. 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. Although Policy RUR6 does not define the total as a maximum, the total should be regarded 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 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 landowner 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)*

### Assessment

3.4 The Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out in iterations by AECOM for the Project Steering Group from September 2018 to August 2019, using the site information provided by the landowners during the call for sites and the relevant sustainability baseline data. A final version of the report has been modified to correct a small number of inaccuracies and to take into account the final draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.5 The Appraisal has assessed the 9 sites as shown in Table A below. As noted above, it is assumed that Site 19 now forms part of the consideration of Site 20. 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	Blue	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 4	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 7	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 10	Blue	Blue	Red	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 14	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 15	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	
Site 17A	Blue	Red	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Green	
Site 17B	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Green	
Site 20	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Blue	Blue	Red	
<b>Key</b>								
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Red	Likely positive effect		Green	Neutral/uncertain effects		Blue

*Table A: Summary Site Appraisal  
(Source: Table 4.10, Sustainability Appraisal, AECOM, August 2019)*

3.6 The outcome of the appraisal is that there is no stark difference between any of the sites assessed; none stand out as having either significant positive effects or adverse effects to the extent that the site selection choice is obvious. This is not surprising, as the Sustainability Appraisal of Policy RUR6 in the Local Plan screened out the potential for significant effects arising from its site selection criteria. Rather, there are some minor differences, notably in the relative landscape and transport effects.

3.7 Once mitigation measures are taken into account, by excluding land subject to flood risk from sites 7 and 17A, then sites 7 and 15 have only one adverse effect. However, site 7 suffers from poor pedestrian access through Clanking, which cannot be mitigated. Site 15 will be able to deliver a new access to the realigned Grove Lane and replacement railway bridge footways in due course, thus overcoming its current adverse transport effect. For that reason, it should be allocated, but can only be reserved at this stage, pending the final highways and bridge scheme being agreed.

3.8 Sites 1 and 10 can also be selected, as their transport effects can be mitigated. There will remain some adverse landscape effects of both sites, given their location, but well-designed landscape scheme proposals ought to be able to overcome most of the potential harm. Together with Site 15, these sites will deliver a total of 45 homes (and potentially a new village shop), which falls too far short of the total required by Policy RUR6. Site 1 has offered to provide a shop and is centrally located for this use in a prominent roadside position.

3.9 Additional sites are therefore required for allocation. Once the mitigation of adverse transport effects is taken into account, sites 4, 14, 17A, 17B and 20 each have two remaining adverse effects. Sites 4 and 17B have not offered a community benefit and are not considered further. As part of its proposed landscape mitigation package, Site 14 would deliver a new public park, which will incorporate a community playing field with services for



events, and so this site should be selected. This brings the total to 90 homes, which is still too few.

3.10 But, only one of the two remaining sites (site 17A and site 20) is required to meet the RUR6 requirement. The proposals for both sites include a new shop and the adverse effects of each site are noted as similar and both should may be able to mitigate much of these effects through successful scheme design. Site 17a does have a likely positive effect in respect of its Transport impact given the safe access to sustainable transport on the A4010.

3.11 It is consequently appropriate to consider the ranking of those sites in the Community Survey. As described in the Consultation Statement, the Survey was an effective and statistically relevant exercise to inform decision making. It was undertaken on the sites in June – August 2018, with the results 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.

3.12 A ranking was 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*

3.13 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 Parish referendum. It is therefore a helpful insight and its conclusions should be given some weight in the final selection of sites.

3.14 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 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 to mitigate any adverse effects (notably in respect of landscape, climate change and access and transport) and these requirements are 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 the Parish Council has already expressed publicly its concern that development should not proceed at any location potentially affected by the proposed infrastructure improvements and this will of itself lead to an element of phasing so that it is likely that homes are delivered over the full plan period, and not all in its first five years.

4.5 Accordingly the Neighbourhood Plan should include a policy that the developments should be approved on a basis that only in the order of 50 new homes are delivered in each of the periods: 2019/20 – 2022/23; 2023/24 – 2027/28; and 2028/29 – 2032/33. This would not apply to windfall schemes and may need to be adjusted in light of the planning permissions that are granted.

## APPENDIX A

### 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

\* the site boundary was amended by the land promoter part way through the assessment process and now includes Site 19 The Orchards. An option to extend the boundary was also provided but finally discounted given the uncertainty of land availability.

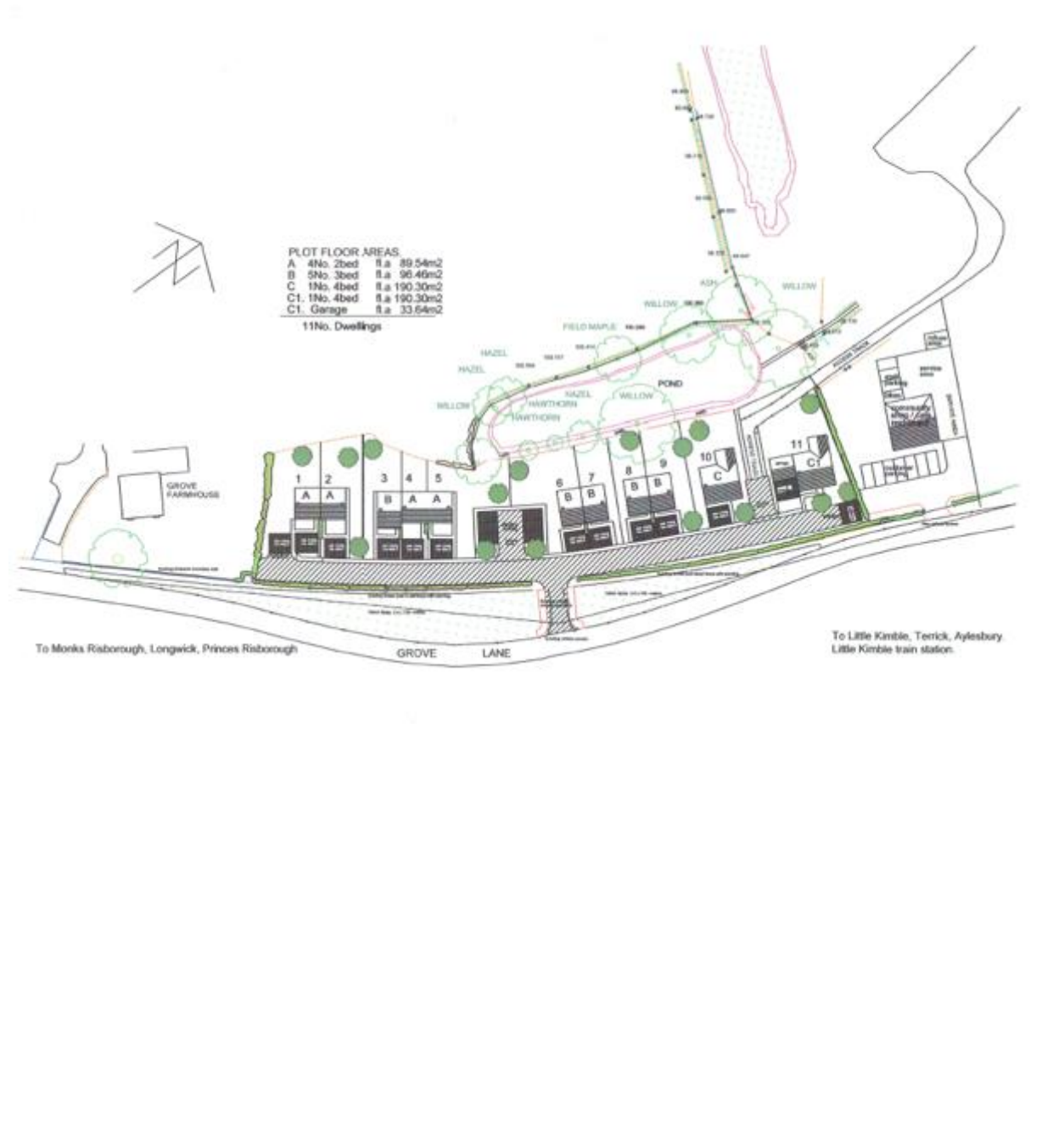
## APPENDIX C

### SITE INFORMATION

#### Important note:

These plans show the location of the sites allocated. Where the plans include specific locations for and numbers of new housing these are based on the proposals submitted to the NPWG. These proposals are not binding and the number of new houses and their locations at each site will depend on the planning permissions granted.

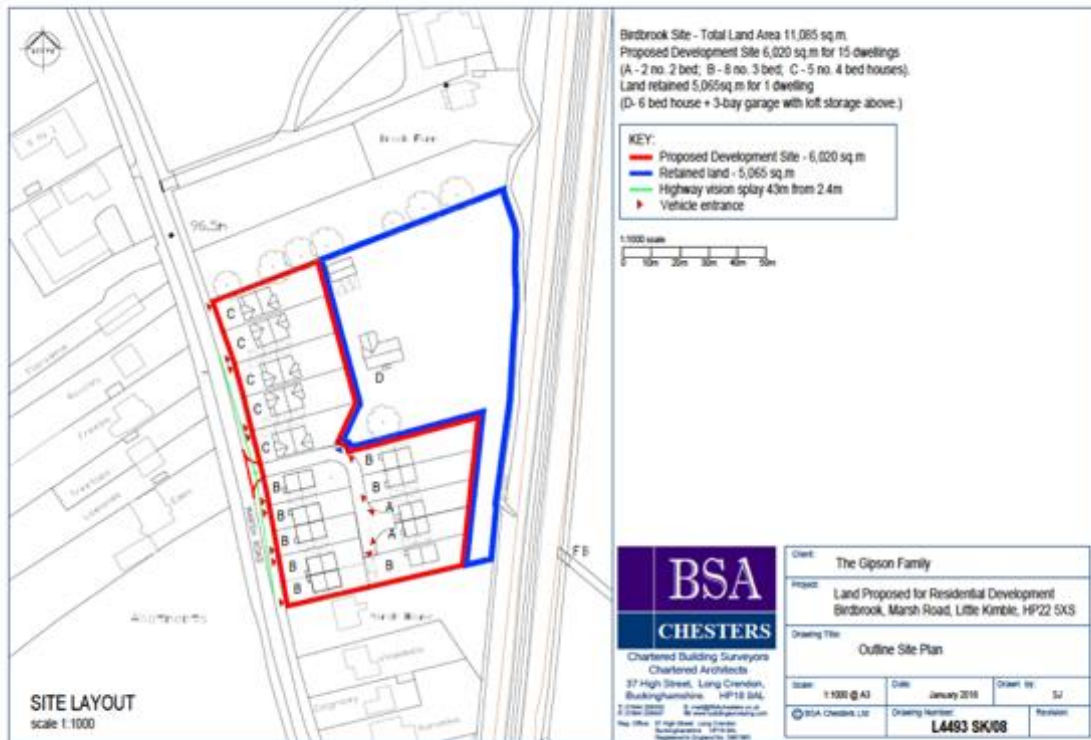
#### SITE 1 GROVE LANE WEST



**SITE 4 GROVE BARN**



**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 17B DOE HILL FARM (UPPER)**



**SITE 20 REAR OF CHEQUERS, BRIDGE STREET (INC. SITE 19 THE ORCHARDS)**

