

# Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (final draft) and draft Site Selection Methodology Response Form 2016

## **Consultation on the Final Draft Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Methodology and Results, and Draft Site Selection Methodology.**

**Consultation runs from 10am Monday 21 November 2016 until 5pm on Monday 19 December 2016.**

Bracknell Forest Council is currently preparing a Comprehensive Local Plan (CLP) for the Borough up to the year 2036. As part of the CLP the Council will need to include a strategy for the level and distribution of development, including housing and economic uses. This involves the Council assessing submitted sites in relation to their suitability for development. The study for Bracknell Forest is called the 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (SHELAA).

### **Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)**

The purpose of the SHELAA is to identify sites and broad locations (or clusters of sites) and assess their development potential along with their suitability for development, together with the likelihood and timing of development coming forward (availability, achievability and deliverability). The SHELAA will provide an evidence base which will enable the identification of sites and locations suitable to inform development needs to be set out in the CLP. The Council has undertaken various call for sites exercises:

- Initial call for sites January/February 2016.
- Focused call for sites May 2016
- Sites invited to be submitted through the Comprehensive Local Plan Issues and Options consultations, June/July 2016.

Results of the previous consultations have informed the final draft documents. The Council has assessed the submitted sites, and is now publishing the results of the assessment alongside the final draft methodology for comments.

**Inclusion of a site in the SHELAA does not mean it will be allocated for development, and does not mean the Council considers it is appropriate for development either now or in the future. Allocating sites for development is done through the Local Plan process which will allocate the most appropriate sites to meet development needs.**

### **Site Selection Methodology**

The Council has also published for comment a draft 'Site Selection Methodology'. This sets out how the SHELAA fits into the Site Selection process and the stages and range of evidence that will be used to select sites and feed into the final version of the draft CLP.

Further information about the CLP is available on the Council's website:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/comprehensivelocalplan> .

Please supply your name, postal and email address:

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Parish Office  
Benetfeld Road  
Binfield RG42 4EW

[Binfieldparish.council@btinternet.com](mailto:Binfieldparish.council@btinternet.com)

If you are an agent, please supply contact details along with an email address:

N/A

Do you have any comments that you would like to make on the Final Draft Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Methodology? (Please quote relevant paragraph numbers where relevant). Please use additional pages if required.

Binfield Parish Council support the methodology used.

Do you have any comments that you would like to make on the Final Draft Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Results document, including assumptions (or any factual corrections) for specific sites? (If you are making comments on a specific site please include the site reference number). Please use additional pages if required.

### **Individual Site assessments**

#### **BIN1**

##### **Constraints.**

Would it be appropriate, and possible to include access to the site in the constraints?

Terrace Road North is already terribly congested in the rush hour, and substantial increases in traffic could lead to total gridlock. Tilehurst Lane is unsuited to large increases in traffic, and has no pedestrian walkway to the east of York Road, and York road is also often difficult to negotiate with cars parked on both sides. Likewise, the junction at All Saints would be challenging with greatly increased traffic flows.

The Parish Council believes that the road through Binfield Park is in private ownership and questions whether prospective householders have right of way along it?

##### **Potential Capacity**

We understand there may be a restrictive covenant on a large portion of the site limiting development to 2 dwellings per acre (approx 5 dph?).

#### **BIN2**

Should this be considered as a 'cluster' with BIN3?

If development of BIN3 is allowed at appeal (which we believe to be scheduled for January 2017), then the designation of the site as 'isolated' could be called into question, and a higher density may be appropriate.

(We understand this could require access through at least a section of the access to Ryslip kennels, but may allow more options in terms of access to the sites)

#### **BIN3**

##### **Constraints.**

Would it be appropriate, and possible to include access to the site in the constraints?

See comments for BIN1

#### **BIN4**

Forest Road next to this site is subject to flooding during heavy periods of rainfall when water flows off the, current, golf course onto Forest Road causing pooling by the traffic lights over Pitts Bridge. The development on the golf course could cause water table levels to change for the worse meaning that increased flooding risks occur. This should be thoroughly investigated.

#### **BIN5**

It is the view of the parish that this site is already contained within the current SA7 (Blue Mountain) development which includes 400 houses. Therefore, it should not be possible to allocate this site for further housing. This land is clearly included in the Outline Planning Permission site plan for SA7. A further observation is that access to the site, if off Forest Road, would be on a fast road which is already difficult to cross for pedestrians. The main pedestrian access into the school for children living centrally is to be via Wood Lane. Adding a junction here would create more risk for users of the proposed crossing.

#### **BIN6**

Access via the existing gate would be difficult and this is a public right of way which must be maintained. As well as the protected tree, it is also apparent that the access to the gate is of very limited width, with very limited scope for widening due to the driveways of the adjacent properties. Subject to flooding at the bottom of the hill nearest to the housing on Emmets Park – gets very boggy – reeds grow in the back gardens of housing backing onto this land because of the wet. This land is also relatively steep which would limit the no. of units which could be achieved.

**BIN7**

**Potential Capacity**

We understand there may be a restrictive covenant on the plot limiting development to 2 dwellings,

**BIN8**

Constraints should include the need for protection of the 'green corridor' that currently exists linking the areas of ancient woodland, both on this and adjacent sites (as per Binfield Neighborhood plan objectives (3.3 Environment objective 6). To include Swains Copse, Pockets Copse, Blackman's Copse (and Long copse in WBC area) .

We are aware that a planning application (16/01196/OUT) for this site has already been made to BFC. It would be regrettable if this lead to the site being assessed in isolation, rather than as part of the SHELAA 'Cluster 1'. We also note that this outline application includes provision of a primary school, doctors surgery and sports pitches, which would presumably affect the overall C3 availability numbers.

**Further note:**

In the recent open session for residents to discuss the SHELAA with the Parish Council, this site was the hottest topic, and most contentious issue relating to this site was the unsuitability of Foxley lane to carry the extra traffic. There was also great concern about traffic through the Roebuck estate, the junctions at both ends of Foxley Lane, and the possible effect on Murrell Hill lane.

**BIN9**

See all comments re access, green corridor etc. from BIN8.

**BIN10**

See all comments re access, green corridor etc. from BIN8.

As well as the public footpath through the middle of the site, there is also a footpath on the Northern boundary, which is very well used, especially by dog walkers who currently enjoy free access to Picket's copse (just known locally as 'the Bluebell wood') . This access, usually from Popes meadow, is heavily used, and could be badly affected by the increased traffic and urbanization of Murrell Hill Lane.

**BIN11**

See all comments re access, green corridor etc. from BIN8.

**Bin12**

No additional comment

**Bin13**

No additional comment

**Bin14**

The proposed access, through the ancient woodland, would appear to be a big problem. The only viable access without damaging the existing woodland would be to gain a right of way via the access to the existing sites to East or West.

**Bin15**

This site has recently had a planning application refused (16/00225/FUL). One of the major reasons was the affect on protected trees, which would still be a factor, and may lead to a reduction in the number of units that could be achieved.

**Comments on Cluster1**

Binfield Parish Council (BPC) wishes to ensure that BFC are able to consider sites BIN7,8,9,10,11 as a cluster and also consider that the existing SA6 (Amen Corner North) should be seen as a composite part of what could become a major, continuous area of development. Also, under the duty to co-operate, we would suggest there should be some early discussions with Wokingham Borough Council around the inclusion of Wokingham suggested sites 5HU033 and 5HU039 in this cluster.

The Parish is keen to ensure that these are not treated as separate sites. Each, in isolation, may not be

seen as requiring significant highways improvements or community facilities, but when looked at together would obviously require more significant infrastructure improvements and facilities.

BPC is also concerned that the fragmented timescales for the development, with A.C.N development starting now, the possibility of Foxley Oaks coming forward outside of the CLP process, and then later zoning and development of the other sites, will lead to great difficulties in taking a holistic view of the cluster.

These proposed BFC SHELAA sites in Cluster 1, combined, give a continuous development of over 800 dwellings.

That grows to around 1200 with ACN, and probably in excess of 2000 dwellings with the inclusion of the WBC sites.

This volume of houses would need a community centre, sports pitch provision, some local shops and other services as well as the potential of a large combined SANG, which could include and link all the ancient woodland.

While BPC are aware that the current consultation is concerned with the technical appraisal of the sites, we would suggest that the wider implications should be considered as a matter of some urgency.

In recent meetings with residents, there have been 2 or three consistent themes coming forward.

1/ "We like Binfield as it is. Why do we need more houses?"

The parish council has made significant efforts to explain the reason for continued development and expansion, and most residents have gone away, while not happy, at least with a greater understanding, and a degree of resignation to the expansion.

2/ "It's not fair that nearly all the proposed development appears to be coming to the Northern parishes." Again, I think we have been able to explain some of the reasons. The Crown estate, the SPA, the RMA, Wellington college and the fact that the Southern parishes are pretty much full.

3/ "Foxley lane is not suitable as access"

The junction of Foxley lane with Forest road, the junction at the centre of the village, and the junction of Foxley Lane and St Marks road are all unsuitable for the increase in traffic that would result from these developments.

This is, probably, the greatest matter of concern to the residents.

This larger cluster would also, hopefully, allow a more holistic view of the need to improved transportation links, with some consideration for a connecting road through all of the sites. This could alleviate some of the resident's concerns about the burden on Foxley Lane & Murrell hill lane, and would at least allow the possibility of Murrell Hill Lane remaining blocked off, which we think would be very difficult without some other access. Foxley lane, the centre of the village and the St Marks road / London road junction cannot cope with an additional 2000 movements a day.

The Parish Council are not necessarily in support of these developments but if they were to go ahead a unified strategic approach is critical. The issue of cumulative harm (or benefit) must be considered alongside the approach of viewing each site as an individual site as it is the movement of traffic around the area in total that is of greatest concern.

Do you have any comments that you would like to make on the draft 'Site Selection Methodology'. (Please quote paragraph numbers where relevant. If your comments relate to the diagram, please specify which part your comments relate to). Please use additional pages if required.

Binfield Parish Council supports the proposed methodology.