

Edington Neighbourhood Plan

Site Assessment Process

General Approach

The identification of site(s) for potential housing development in accordance with the descriptive criteria proposed in the draft Edington Neighbourhood Plan (the “ENP”) requires the use of a clearly stated methodology. This is to ensure that any site identified and put forward for inclusion in the ENP is chosen on the basis of objective criteria which are applied in a fair and reasonable manner.

Having regard to detailed guidelines contained in the publication “Neighbourhood Planning brought to you by Locality – How to assess and allocate sites for development” the process outlined below has been drawn up to address the specific factors relevant to Edington.

Timing and Scale of Potential Sites

Once it has been made, the ENP will become part of the Wiltshire Local Plan which applies until 2035. During this period the requirement for potential housing development may need be re-assessed in the light of changes to a number of factors, such as the amount of development which has already occurred, any periodic re-assessment of housing needs, population changes and so forth.

It is also relevant that the ENP is required to be reviewed at 5 yearly intervals in any event; and that neighbourhood plan areas cease to benefit from protection against speculative development once the plan is more than two years old, unless it is reviewed and revalidated. Further, the Wiltshire Council Local Plan 5 yearly review is taking place in parallel with the process to make the ENP; changes may therefore need to be considered to the ENP for the purposes of consistency.

In accordance with the Local Plan, the provision of adequate Affordable Housing is to be a priority in considering development proposals. However, this objective needs to be considered along with other relevant considerations, such as the need to allow the realistic development of open market property to help fund the Affordable Housing; and the need to address trends such as increased holiday lettings which may lead to shortages of smaller properties and/or depopulation.

In the light of these factors it will not be appropriate at the outset to seek to identify sufficient land for development requirements throughout the lifetime of the Wiltshire Local Plan, but rather to proceed in stages, so that incremental growth can be considered on a regular basis in the light of all relevant factors.

The Assessment Process for the ENP

Subject to the above considerations, a two stage assessment process will be used, as set out below, when considering the need to assess or allocate sites for housing development, whether at the outset, or at subsequent reviews.

The first stage of the process is to examine each potential development site against factors which will or may prevent development from taking place, so that sites which are unsuitable for development are not taken further in the process. Sites will need to be allocated into one of three categories, namely green, orange or red. Green means that the site is suitable for development; orange means that some mitigation actions are needed in order to allow development to proceed; and red means that development at the site cannot be supported. Any site which is assessed as red against any of the factors listed in Stage 1 will not be included in the Stage 2 list of sites.

The second stage assesses the remaining sites for compliance with additional criteria. Each of the criteria is scored and weighted according to its significance. The result is therefore a balanced scorecard which puts the sites into a list in order of priority.

The Assessment Process – other applications

This Site Assessment Process has also been designed to be suitable for use to inform Edington Parish Council's consideration of any applications for permission to develop land which may be made in the future (outside the scope of any planned site assessment process), as well as for the prioritisation of any sites specifically mentioned in the ENP from time to time.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

“Affordable Housing” has the meaning given to that phrase in the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019, namely housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) Affordable Housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions:

(i) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable);

(ii) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and

(iii) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

c) Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

“Brownfield Land” means land which, at the date of any application for permission to develop the same: (1) is not used actively for business purposes; but has been so used prior to the cessation of such use; (2) is substantially covered by redundant buildings; and (3) is not agricultural land (other than any part of such land covered by redundant buildings previously used in connection with agriculture)

“Core Area” means:

- (1) Housing Land;
- (2) Land of an infill nature situated between plots of Housing Land; and
- (3) Land, including Brownfield Land, adjacent or well related to land referred to in (1) and (2) above.

“Housing Land” means land which is used for housing purposes within the main built environment of the village of Edington as at the date of this document, together with any gardens ancillary to such use, but not isolated homes situated at a significant distance from the main built environment of the village and separated from it by land used for agricultural purposes.

“Infill Land” means land of the type described in paragraph (2) in the above definition of Core Area.

Stage 1 - Assessment of Sites against Exclusionary Factors

Assessment Guidelines			
Factor	Green – suitable for development	Orange – may be suitable for development subject to mitigation actions	Red – not suitable for development
Site of Special Scientific Interest	Greater than 200m	100m-200m	Less than 100m
Distance from Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area	Greater than 800m	400m-800m	Less than 400m
Impact on Green Space / recreational areas	Not on or adjacent to Green Space or recreation area	Adjacent to Green Space or recreation area	On site of Green Space or recreation area
Compliance with Local Plan policies on location and size of growth	Compliant	Partially compliant	Not compliant
The Core Area/compliance with scale parameters specified in any call for sites for inclusion in ENP	Within Core Area and compliant with specified scale parameters	Within Core Area but not within specified scale parameters	Land not falling within the preceding categories

Stage 2 – Prioritisation of Sites

(References below to “Accommodation” shall be taken to include (1) development proposals for the specified types of housing and (2) sites without any specific development proposals but which are considered potentially suitable to provide the relevant types of housing)

Factor	Weighting	Score				
		4	3	2	1	0
Efficient use of land (1): land within the Core Area	5	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey either alone or as part of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family homes	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey as part of a small development which to the extent necessary to achieve economic viability needs to include at least one home providing more than 3 bedrooms	No Affordable Housing but proposal consists of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family homes		Any homes providing 4 or more bedrooms with no contemporaneous provision of Affordable Housing
Efficient use of land (2): Brownfield Sites (may include new business use in combination with housing types mentioned opposite)	5	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey either alone or as part of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey as part of a small	No Affordable Housing but proposal consists of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family homes		Other developments

		homes	development which to the extent necessary to achieve economic viability needs to include at least one home providing more than 3 bedrooms			
Proposed development type (where not assessed under "Efficient use of land" above)	4	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey either alone or as part of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family homes	Accommodation which meets in whole or part the requirement for Affordable Housing in line with the Housing Needs Survey as part of a small development which to the extent necessary to achieve economic viability needs to include at least one home providing more than 3 bedrooms	No Affordable Housing but proposal consists of a small development of 2-3 bedroom family homes		Any homes providing 4 or more bedrooms with no contemporaneous provision of Affordable Housing
Visibility of New Development from Listed Buildings	4	No visibility		Partial visibility		Substantial or complete visibility
View of Listed Buildings	4	Little or no impact		Some impact		Substantial or significant impact
Landscape Quality	4	No impact on village views settings or features		Minor impact on village views settings or features		Intrusive and damaging impact

Conservation Area	4	50 metres or more from Conservation Area		Under 50 metres from Conservation Area		Within Conservation Area
Viability of site access	4	Easy access on existing maintained roads – additional infrastructure not required		Existing road and /or site access needs upgrading or widening	Narrow lane	On bend with poor visibility or new roads/ infrastructure required
Topography	3	Flat Site – less than 5 degree slope		Site sloping between 5 and 15 degree		Steep slope – levelling/piling major excavation works required
Flooding risk	3	Well drained		Some saturation of ground and/or temporary standing water after significant rainfall		Poorly drained ground – saturated/standing water after any rainfall
Traffic Impact	3	No impact on existing local traffic flow, street scene or the local environment		Deterioration in local traffic flow and some effect on the street scene and environment		Location already recognised as having a severe impact on traffic flow and/or damage to the street scene and environment
Access: community facilities (Parish Hall or Three Dagers complex/Post Office)	2	Within 200 metres – level access including at least some footpaths	Within 400 metres, level access including at least some footpaths	Within 800 metres, undulating route	Route requires crossing B3098	More than 800 metres or use of transport required
Access – distance from bus stop	2	Within 200 metres – level access including at least some footpaths	Within 400 metres, level access including at least some	Within 800 metres, undulating route	Route requires crossing B3098	More than 800 metres or use of transport required

			footpaths			
Tree Preservation Order	2	No TPOs on or adjacent to the site.		TPOs adjacent to the site		TPOs for specimen trees on the site
Agricultural Land Quality	2	Grade 4		Grade 3		Grades 1 and 2
Contamination	2	None present		Unknown/suspected		Too contaminated for housing development

Where a site or a development proposal does not meet the requirement(s) of the highest possible score for any category, it will then be progressively assessed for compliance against the criteria for each lower score in turn until the correct applicable score is reached.

An overall score for each site is achieved by multiplying the weighting by the score for each factor and adding them up. The higher the resulting score, the higher the priority of the site. However, in order to minimise environmental and landscape impacts, sites or development proposals will be prioritised firstly as those which are within Housing Land, Infill Land and Brownfield Land; and secondly as to sites elsewhere in the Core Area.