



Council's Response to Inspectors' Matters, Issues, Questions

Matter 3 – Housing Allocations

Issue 5 – Eastry and Shepherdswell Housing Sites

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Policy SAP32 – Land at Buttsole Pond, Eastry

Q1 How has the scale of development proposed been established? Is it commensurate with the character, role and function of Eastry?

Q1 DDC Response:

1. An initial site capacity was identified using the density standards for the location of the site (as set out in response to Matter 4 Issue 1 Q3). In this case, 30dph was used as a starting point. The capacity was reduced to take account of the likely net developable area for a site of this size, the need for a landscape buffer and structural planting, and the character and pattern of development in the surrounding area. A draft masterplan¹ has been prepared by the landowner showing how a development of 80 dwellings on the site can be achieved.
2. Matter 2, Issue 2 (Settlement Hierarchy), Question 2 explains the methodology used to determine which settlements fall within each category in the settlement hierarchy. Eastry is a Local Centre with a primary school, regular bus services, Post Office, 12 shops, village hall, church, scout hut, nursery and recreational facilities including open spaces and 2 play areas (from settlement hierarchy paper Matter 2, Issue 3 (Housing Distribution). Question 1 sets out the process the Council followed to enable the distribution of new development and the reasonable judgements made. As set out in paragraph 1.7 of the Selection of Site Allocations (Housing Sites) Addendum², the '*Council did not identify a specific number or range of number of homes that should be allocated within each rural settlement, as there were other factors that have influenced the suitability of individual settlements to accommodate a certain level of growth, including for example constraints such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the suitability and availability of sites*'.
3. Three sites have been allocated in Eastry, this site being the largest of them. The total indicative capacity of sites allocated at the settlement is 95. It is the Council's view that the cumulative scale of development is commensurate with the size, role and function of Eastry as a Local Centre.

¹ DLP 1627

² ED3 Selection of Site Allocations Housing Sites Addendum (April 2023)



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Q2 Can a safe and suitable access be achieved for both vehicles and pedestrians? How has this been assessed as part of the allocation of the site?

Q2 DDC Response:

4. As set out in response to Matter 2 – Issue 4 – Question 3, constraint on the local highways network has been a factor influencing the selection of sites for allocation and has been informed through consultation with Kent County Council Highways (KCC) and the Transport Modelling that has been carried out. KCC has provided comments on all HELAA sites subject to the suitability assessment in relation to access requirements and potential impacts on the local highway network, with updates to their comments being provided following the Regulation 18 consultation, targeted call for sites, and in response to additional information submitted by site promoters, and post Regulation 19 stage.
5. As can be seen in Appendix 3B of the HELAA³, KCC provided advice in relation to the access and pedestrian connections which required further assessment. Access arrangements were clarified by the site promoter which KCC confirmed were acceptable.
6. Upon review of the current policy wording, comments from KCC Highways and indicative design proposals for the site which show a pedestrian access is feasible outside of the current site boundary, the Council proposes a p[st submission modification to the plan to add clarity in relation to the pedestrian connection requirements. The proposed further modification has been agreed with KCC Highways to criterion e, as set out below:
 - e) A pedestrian link is to be provided from the north of the site through land outside the boundary (but within the same ownership) to Lower Street to provide a direct connection to Eastry village, which should include and pedestrian crossing improvements within Eastry village;

³ [GEB09d-HELAA-Appendix-3-a-to-g-HELAA-2020-Site-Assessments-October-2022.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)



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Policy SAP33 – Eastry Small Sites

Q1 Are the Eastry small housing sites justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy?

Q1 DDC Response:

7. The NPPF at paragraph 35 states that Plans are 'sound' if they are: ...
 - a. *'Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;*
 - b. *Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and*
 - c. *Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant'.*
8. Policy SAP33 allocates two small sites for development, both of which are immediately adjacent to the defined settlement confines and have existing development on three sides. The allocations would form logical extensions to the village.
9. In allocating the two sites, the Plan reflects its evidence base where each was found suitable and available for development. [ED3 Selection of Site Allocations – Housing Sites Addendum \(2023\)](#) justifies the selection of the sites allocated over other options within Eastry based on their ability to deliver new housing on sites that are well connected by foot to the village centre. The site allocations are therefore justified.
10. The small sites allocations in Eastry could deliver an estimated 15 dwellings on one brownfield and one smaller greenfield site with excellent connections to the services and facilities within the Local Centre. The sites are therefore consistent with the NPPF aim of achieving sustainable development.



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Q2 What is the justification for the suggested changes to EAS009? Why are they necessary for soundness?

Q2 DDC Response:

11. The proposed amendments respond to representations made by residents in response to the Regulation 19 consultation. The additional wording (AM60) is suggested to highlight the need for the development's soft landscaping scheme to also reinforce the existing planting along the south-eastern boundary to protect the amenity of existing residential properties adjacent the site. AM60 also indicates that access should be taken from Church Street. The changes would provide additional guidance to applicants but is not considered to be necessary for soundness.

Policy SAP36 – Land north and east of St Andrews Gardens, Shepherdswell

Q1 What is the justification for the primary access being taken from St Andrews Gardens? Is a safe and suitable access achievable and how have the effects on the highways network been considered?

Q1 DDC Response:

12. As part of the plan preparation, the Council, through transport consultants WSP, has developed a strategic traffic model which represents the impact in 2040 of the Local Plan sites in Dover and Deal as reported on in Regulation 19 Transport Modelling Forecasting Report (TIEB02a)⁴. This report then undertakes detailed junction modelling at locations where Local Plan sites are impacting the performance of local junctions. The Land North and East of St Andrews Gardens, Shepherdswell was included in this. The strategic model predicts the impacts that the Local Plan sites will have on the highway network and identifies any issues which are being generated by the proposed development. Detailed analysis has been undertaken in the Shepherdswell area in Chapter 9 of the Regulation 19 Transport Modelling Forecasting Report and impacts of the Plan in this area are presented in 9.2.33.
13. As set out in response to Matter 2 – Issue 4 – Question 3, constraint on the local highways network has been a factor influencing the selection of sites for allocation and has been informed through consultation with KCC Highways and the Transport

⁴ [TIEB02a Regulation 19 Transport Modelling Forecasting - Main Report October 2022 \(doverdistrictlocalplan.co.uk\)](https://doverdistrictlocalplan.co.uk)



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Modelling that has been carried out. KCC has provided comments on all HELAA sites subject to the suitability assessment in relation to access requirements and potential impacts on the local highway network, with updates to their comments being provided following the Regulation 18 consultation, targeted call for sites, and in response to additional information submitted by site promoters, and post Regulation 19 stage.

14. The advice from KCC Highways is that St Andrews Gardens is a cul-de-sac with access split between two parcels. Some on-street parking takes place on St Andrews Gardens, but this does not preclude access. The traffic impact of this site is unlikely to be severe, as it will generate little more than one additional vehicle movement every 2/3 minutes on average.
15. At the time the policy was drafted, it had not been demonstrated that a suitable access could be achieved from Mill Lane, and therefore the whole site was to be accessed from St Andrews Gardens (with a potential secondary emergency access from Mill Lane). Recent planning applications⁵ have been submitted for both parcels of land separately, showing that different access points are potentially achievable.
16. The submission of the applications has shown that an access can be achieved from Mill Lane as well as St Andrews Gardens. KCC consider that both accesses are required with a vehicular connection linking the sites, so that an emergency access can be provided to St Andrews Gardens (in accordance with Kent Design Guidance which requires emergency accesses for cul-de-sacs serving more than 50 dwellings).

Q2 Is it sufficiently clear to users of the Plan what off-site highway infrastructure is required? What is reason for specially referring to pram crossings?

Q2 DDC Response:

17. As set out in response to Matter 2 – Issue 4 – Question 3, constraint on the local highways network has been a factor influencing the selection of sites for allocation and has been informed through consultation with KCC Highways and the Transport Modelling that has been carried out. KCC has provided comments on all HELAA sites subject to the suitability assessment in relation to access requirements and potential impacts on the local highway network, with updates to their comments being provided following the Regulation 18 consultation, targeted call for sites, and in

⁵ 22/01207 and 23/00235



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response to additional information submitted by site promoters, and post Regulation 19 stage.

18. Criteria d) and e) of the policy set out the requirements for off-site highway infrastructure. Improving pedestrian accessibility to both the station and village centre is an essential aspect of creating a sustainable development. A pedestrian routing strategy was provided to illustrate where residents will route to local facilities and services. The reference to pram crossings is to stipulate an uncontrolled crossing point with dropped kerbs and tactile paving, in locations where carriageway width, vehicle volumes and speeds safely allow and has been specified as a requirement by KCC Highways. It is considered appropriate that the detail and precise location of the improvements can be determined at the planning application stage.

Q3 How will the two parcels of land come forward to create a single, coherent development site? Is the allocation as a whole deliverable?

Q3 DDC Response:

19. As set out in response to Question 1 above, the current applications being considered for the site propose for the site to be brought forward as two separate developments with no vehicular connection. As a result at the time of writing, both applications have outstanding KCC highway objections in relation to this matter. In order to deliver safe access to the sites required by KCC, the sites will need to be provided with a vehicular connection linking them. Whilst neither application currently sets this out, the Council do not consider there to be any reason why the landowners cannot work together to deliver this. The allocation of the site is therefore considered to be deliverable.



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Policy SAP37 – Shepherdswell Small Housing Sites

Q1 Are the Shepherdswell small housing sites justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy? In particular, how has the ability to create a safe vehicle and pedestrian access been taken into account in the allocation of site SHE006, whilst retaining the existing hedgerow?

Q1 DDC Response:

The NPPF at paragraph 35 states that Plans are 'sound' if they are: ...

- b) *'Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;*
 - c) *Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and*
 - d) *Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant'.*
20. Policy SAP37 allocates two sites for development. Both sites are located immediately adjacent to the defined settlement confines. Site SHE006 has existing development to the north-east and southwest along the Coxhill Road frontage. Site SHE008 has existing development on three sides. The allocations would form logical extensions to the village.
21. In allocating the two sites, the Plan reflects its evidence base where each was found suitable and available for development. The Selection of Site Allocations – Housing Sites Addendum (2023)⁶ justifies the selection of the sites allocated over other options within Shepherdswell based on their ability to deliver new housing on sites that are well connected by foot to the village centre. The site allocations are therefore justified.
22. The small sites allocations in Shepherdswell could deliver an estimated 20 dwellings with good connections to the services and facilities within the Local Centre. The sites are therefore consistent with the NPPF aim of achieving sustainable development.
23. As set out in response to Matter 2 – Issue 4 – Question 3, constraint on the local highways network has been a factor influencing the selection of sites for allocation

⁶ [ED3 Selection of Site Allocations – Housing Sites Addendum \(2023\)](#)



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and has been informed through consultation with KCC Highways and the Transport Modelling that has been carried out. KCC has provided comments on all HELAA sites subject to the suitability assessment in relation to access requirements and potential impacts on the local highway network, with updates to their comments being provided following the Regulation 18 consultation, targeted call for sites, and in response to additional information submitted by site promoters, and post Regulation 19 stage.

24. Following a review of the criteria in the policy in relation to the hedgerows and trees, it is accepted that that the current wording is not clear which boundary this applied to. A proposed modification to the plan is set out below to add clarity that this is related to the boundary with the countryside, and not in relation to the road boundary, where some removal of the trees and hedgerow will be required to create access which has required visibility splays.

Proposed Post Submission Modification:

25. Existing trees and hedgerows along the boundary of the site should be retained and enhanced, where possible, to provide an appropriate landscape buffer. The removal of trees/hedgerows will be permitted, where necessary to facilitate safe access for vehicles and pedestrian connectivity to existing footway.