

**EAST LANGTON**  
**SUSTAINABLE SITE**  
**ASSESSMENT (SSA)**

**April 2021**

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 Meeting the housing need for the parish is a central element of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This Sustainable Site Assessment (SSA) is a comparison of housing supply options to be used for the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) making purposes.
- 1.2 Through undertaking the SSA the local community are involved in identifying the least environmentally damaging and through a detailed assessment, the most sustainable locations for potential residential development. The approach uses publicly available data including from the local authority Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), Natural England, the Environment Agency, Rowmaps and Googlemaps etc. A site visit has been undertaken to determine the locational context but the site itself has not be professionally surveyed during the SSA.

**2. Overview**

- 2.1 One of the important objectives of the NDP is to set out where new residential development should be built within the Parish and to protect the parish from future large scale unsustainable development proposals. Undertaking a SSA is a proven technique to compare the different potential locations for new residential development and has been successful in a large number of communities.
- 2.2 The SSA process is a refinement and update of the findings of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) sites report published by Harborough District Council (HDC) in 2016, a local call for sites by the parish council in Summer 2020 generated further potential residential sites.
- 2.3 There is a housing target set for East Langton in the HDC adopted local plan, based upon a proportionate population and economic development increase in numbers for the HDC area. The objectively assessed need is therefore for a minimum of 30 additional dwellings to be built before 2031, based upon the settlement hierarchy agreed for the parish in the adopted local plan.

2.4 This SSA report sets out how an independent consultant from YourLocale, a planning consultancy specialising in supporting communities to adopt NDP's, worked with local people to appraise the residential site options.

### **3. Involving land owners and site promoters**

3.1 HDC has prepared a SHLAA which identifies the potentially available sites put forward by landowners for residential development. This exercise was substantially updated in 2016 and identified potential residential development sites within East Langton parish. A parish council call for sites in the Summer of 2020 was very successful, landowners offered additional sites that in total would yield approximately 266 units.

The ten sites were then subjected to a professional Sustainable Site Assessment (SSA) exercise conducted by YourLocale against scoring criteria agreed with local people. Two further "sections" of larger sites were re-assessed at the request of the owners or their planning agent, so a total of twelve SSA's were completed.

3.2 A scoring matrix based upon the methodology supported by the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF's) was agreed by parish council members.

### **4. Site Selection Criteria**

4.1 The initial site assessments were undertaken by Derek Doran BSc (Hons) MCIH MBA the Lead Associate from YourLocale to ensure a professional approach based upon past experience of similar assessments and to ensure a high level of objectivity and consistency in scoring.

4.2 The site assessment included a comprehensive desk top study and on line research followed by a visit to each of the sites. This led to some amendments being agreed by members of the parish council and it was then possible to rank each site in order of overall sustainability.

4.3 The policy position of HDC in terms of their assessment of the developability of the sites was a material consideration in the discussions of scoring and their informal planning opinion and the views of the HDC conservation officer were sought and these responses affected the outcome of the process. In particular, the need to protect the unique character of the two settlements was an important strategic planning consideration.

4.4 The sites were then re-visited to ensure that all factors and information were considered in the assessments that were sent as drafts to the owners/agents for their comment and input.

## 5. The Criteria and the RAG Scoring System

- 5.1 The SHELAA methodology jointly agreed between the Local Planning Authorities (including HDC) of Leicester and Leicestershire was used, coupled with the experience of the consultant in recommending past “made” NDP residential site allocations that have been supported through a number of independent planning examinations.
- 5.2 Parish council members agreed twenty six scoring criteria that are relevant to the selection and allocation of sites for new dwellings using amended criteria from the National Planning Policy Frameworks.
- 5.3 The SSA scoring system, based on a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) score was applied to each criterion and listed for each identified site. Red was scored for a negative assessment; Amber was scored where mitigation might be required; Green was scored for a positive assessment. A different methodology for scoring to give varying weights to different criteria was considered but rejected as it would have been more complicated, less transparent to the community and could possibly be too subjective.
- 5.4 The following site assessment scoring matrix was used to compare each site in terms of developability.

**Table 1 – Sustainable Site Assessment (SSA) framework for East Langton**

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Green</u>	<u>Amber</u>	<u>Red</u>
1. Site capacity (3 bed houses)	Small capacity of up to 5 dwellings	Medium capacity of 5 to 9 dwellings	Large capacity of more than 10 dwellings
2. Current Use	Vacant	Specific existing use needs to be relocated(not land)	Loss of important local asset
3. Adjoining Uses	Site wholly within residential area or village envelope	Site joined to village envelope or residential location	No physical direct link to village envelope or residential location
4. Topography/ground condition	Flat or gently sloping site	Undulating site or greater slope that can be mitigated	Severe slope that cannot be mitigated
5. Greenfield or Previously Developed Land	Previously developed land (brownfield) more	Mixture of brownfield –	Mainly greenfield land, less than

	than 50% site area	between 25% & 50%, with the balance greenfield land	24% brownfield
6. Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership	Single ownership	Multiple ownership	Multiple ownership with one or more unwilling partners
7. Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	No harm to quality.	Less than substantial harm to quality.	Substantial harm to quality.
8. Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows	None affected	Mitigation measures are required	Site would harm or require removal of Ancient tree or hedge (or TPO)
9. Relationship with existing pattern of built development	Land visible from a small number of properties	Land visible from a range of sources mitigated through landscaping or planting	Prominent visibility Difficult to improve
10. Ridge and Furrow	None or grade 1	Grade 2 or 3	Grade 4
11. Listed Building or important heritage asset and their setting	No harm to existing building	Less than substantial harm	Substantial harm
12. Impact on the Conservation Area or its setting	No harm	Less than substantial harm	Substantial harm
13. Local Biodiversity score	A score of 1	A score of 2-3	A score of 4-5
14. Safe pedestrian access to and from the site	Existing footpath linked to the site	No footpath but can be easily created with significant improvements	Third party consent required or no potential for footpath
15. Impact on existing vehicular traffic	Impact on village centre minimal	Medium scale impact on village centre	Major impact on village centre
16. Adequate vehicular access to and from the site.	Appropriate access can be easily provided	Appropriate access can only be provided with significant	Appropriate access cannot be provided

		improvement	
17. Distance to school	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
18. Distance to designated village centre East Langton Bell PH, Church Langton Church.	Walking distance of 200m or less	Walking distance of 201-400m	Walking distance of greater than 401m
19. Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site	No recreational uses on site	Informal recreational uses on site	Formal recreational uses on site
20. Ancient monuments or archaeological remains	No harm to an ancient monument or remains site	Less than substantial harm to an ancient monument or remains site	Substantial harm to an ancient monument or remains
21. Any existing public rights of ways/bridle paths	No impact on public right of way	Detriment to a public right of way	Re-routing required or would cause significant harm
22. Gas and/or oil pipelines & electricity transmission network (Not water/sewage)	Site unaffected	Re-siting may be necessary or reduces developable area	Re-siting required or may not be feasible
23. Any nuisance issues (Noise, light, odour?)	No nuisance issues	Mitigation may be necessary	Nuisance issues will be an ongoing concern
24. Any contamination issues	No contamination issues	Minor mitigation required	Major mitigation required
25. Any known flooding issues	Site in flood zone 1 or 2 or no flooding for more than 25 years	Site in flood zone 3a or flooded once in last 25 years	Site in flood zone 3b (functional flood plain) or flooded more than once in last 25 years
26. Any drainage issues.	No drainage issues identified.	Need for mitigation.	Need for substantial mitigation.

## 6. The SSA outcome

- 6.1 The SSA's were considered at a number of meetings of the parish council to ensure that adequate local knowledge was central to the process. This led to a reassessment of some sites by the YourLocale Consultant with amendments subsequently confirmed.
- 6.2 The assessments were amended to reflect this input and they were circulated as drafts to the relevant site sponsors, usually the land owner or a professional agent working on their behalf. Most parties have responded to the drafts and several site visits and meetings with owners have taken place to ensure all detailed matters have been considered. The presentation of findings to the local community also resulted in refinements to the site proposals.
- 6.3 The final SSA reports were then produced and adopted by the parish council.
- 6.4 The outcome of the SSA process is recorded in the following table. The RAG Rating is obtained by deducting the "Red" scores from the "Green" scores. Amber remains a neutral score.

**Table 2 – SSA outcomes**

<b>Site Location &amp; units</b>	<b>HTG SCORE</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1. Back Lane West (85 units)	Red 2	Twelfth
<b>2. Coopers Cottages (4)</b>	<b>Green 19</b>	<b>First</b>
3. Land south east of Home Farm, East Langton (15)	Green 2	Eight
3a. Part of Land south east of Home Farm, East Langton (4)	Green 6	Third
4. Parcel A –Rear of Thornton Crescent (24)	Green 1	Tenth
4. Parcel B – extension off Church Causeway (24)	Green 5	Fourth

4. Parcel C - extension off Church Causeway (24)	Green 5	Fourth
4. Parcel D – extension off Church Causeway.	Green 3	Sixth
<b>5. North of Chic House (6)</b>	<b>Green 15</b>	<b>Second</b>
6. Back Lane South (45)	Red 1	Eleventh
6a. Part of Back Lane South (14)	Green 3	Sixth
7. West of Church Causeway (15)	Green 2	Eight

6.5 The sites were assessed for residential suitability through a robust SSA process and the highest two scoring sites have been negotiated with site owners for potential inclusion in the NDP. The sites have been presented to the community through a series of open web events as the option for development and their opinions sought. The sites in this report recommended for allocation were supported by most of the local community and it will now be subject to a residential allocation through the NDP.

6.6 The parish council having considered all of the evidence have allocated the highest two green scoring sites for residential development;

- Land is allocated at Coopers Cottages for 4 units of residential accommodation.
- Land is allocated North of Chic House for 6 units of residential accommodation.