Site Delivery Statement

School Lane, Harpole

Submitted by Persimmon Homes Midlands

November 2018
# Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION ...........................................................................................................3  
2.0 SUSTAINABILITY & SPATIAL LOGIC .........................................................................4  
3.0 LANDSCAPE & VISUAL ............................................................................................7  
4.0 HERITAGE ...............................................................................................................9  
5.0 ECOLOGY .................................................................................................................9  
6.0 FLOODING & DRAINAGE .........................................................................................9  
7.0 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT .......................................................................................10  
8.0 BENEFITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT .........................................................................10  
LIST OF APPENDICES ....................................................................................................12
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document has been prepared by Persimmon Homes Midlands to promote Land at School Lane, Harpole. Its purpose is to provide an overview of the site’s planning merits and deliverability. It will be demonstrated how the site can be brought forward to deliver a high quality residential scheme in a location accessible to a variety of local facilities including regular bus services to and from Northampton.

1.2 Harpole is proposed in Policy SS1 of the Part 2 Local Plan as a Secondary Service Village (B). Category B Secondary Service Villages are settlements where some growth is still appropriate but are less sustainable than their Category A counterparts. While Persimmon Homes in its representations to the consultation has objected to the proposed settlement hierarchy and the methodology used to formulate it, even Harpole’s proposed classification illustrates the village’s robust sustainability credentials and therefore its ability to accommodate proportionate new growth. However, the distinction between two tiers of Secondary Service Villages is not supported by the parent plan and even if it was, Harpole should clearly be placed in the upper tier for reasons explained in Persimmon’s main representations.

1.3 Persimmon’s land interest at Harpole comprises a roughly rectangular parcel of land to the west of the village. The site comprises some 2ha and access can be achieved from both School Lane and Glassthorpe Lane.

1.4 The site currently comprises pasture land which slopes gently upwards to the north and abuts the existing built envelope of the village to the east. It is contained by Glassthorpe Lane to the south and a well-defined field boundary to the north and to the west. The site is not subject to any absolute constraints such as Green Belt or flood zones and is not subject to any ecological designations. There are no designated heritage assets on the site or in
reasonable proximity of the site. The site is, however, covered by a local landscape designation which is proposed for retention in the Part 2 Local Plan.

2.0 SUSTAINABILITY & SPATIAL LOGIC

2.1 The objective of the South Northamptonshire Part 2 Local Plan is to deliver the general strategy identified in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2014 (WNJCS 2014). The Council’s position is that the rural housing requirement identified in the WNJCS 2014 has already been satisfied through existing commitments and that therefore no additional allocations for residential development are proposed in the Part 2 Local Plan.

2.2 The most recent monitoring evidence from the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) indicates a housing land supply well below what it should be. It is clear that the release of additional sites through the Part 2 Local Plan in geographical proximity of and with good connections to Northampton will contribute towards easing the shortfall in the NRDA. By virtue of the WNJCS’s spatial strategy which aims to focus significant growth around Northampton, bringing forward suitable and sustainably-located sites in villages both close to and with good connections to Northampton should be seriously considered as a way of boosting housing land supply NRDA.

2.3 For reasons explained in Persimmon’s main representations to the Regulation 19 draft of the Part 2 Local Plan, we believe that such an approach would be consistent with the WNJCS 2014. Policy S4 of the WNJCS 2014 states that outside the NRDA additional development to meet Northampton’s needs will be supported provided that it meets the vision, objectives and policies of the WNJCS.
2.4 The WNJCS vision set out on pages 19 and 20 envisages the West Northants rural areas as supporting a “network of vibrant communities” and the villages as retaining “their local distinctiveness and character, providing affordable homes for local people...” The WNJCS objectives set out, among other things, the need to reduce the need to travel and the need to shorten travel distances (Objective 3) and providing a range of housing in sustainable locations to ensure that all residents have access to a home that they can afford. It states that limited development in the rural areas will be provided for to meet local needs and to support local services.

2.5 For the reasons set out below, it is our contention that bringing forward the land at School Lane, Harpole for a high quality residential scheme will meet both the objectives and the vision of the WNJCS as well as contributing to boosting housing delivery in and around Northampton.

2.6 Harpole benefits from the D3 bus service operated by Stagecoach which runs between Northampton and Daventry on an hourly frequency. The journey time into the centre of Northampton is approximately 15 minutes. The nearest bus stop is on High Street approximately 370m from the subject site. The subject site is linked to the bus stop along with other services in the village by a contiguous footway suitable for pedestrian travel. A bus timetable is included in Appendix 1.

2.7 The settlement and the subject site are therefore well-linked to Northampton by sustainable means of travel. This is an important sustainability credential of Harpole given that census data demonstrates that there is a greater outflow from South Northamptonshire to
Northampton than to any other higher order settlement. This can be expected to be even more pronounced with Harpole given that the settlement is just 4.5 miles from the centre of Northampton, a major employment and service centre.

2.8 It is noted that the Council intends to submit the Part 2 Local Plan under the transitional arrangements so the soundness of the plan will be assessed against the NPPF 2012. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF 2012 sets out that in order to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It also gives the example of services and facilities in larger settlements supporting new development in smaller settlements. The relationship between Northampton and Harpole is a case in point.

2.9 Given the interdependency between the two settlements it is easily justifiable to bring forward development in Harpole which as well as relying on the services and facilities present in the village can also rely on the village’s good public transport links to Northampton.

2.10 In addition to its public transport links, Harpole benefits from a full range of services and facilities which are easily accessible via foot and cycle to the subject site including a primary school, general store, recreational facilities, a pre-school, community facilities, a public house, and allotments. These facilities are reachable on foot and cycle from the subject site and connected to it by the existing footway network.

2.11 For the reasons set out it is considered that allocation of the site can be fully supported by both the WNJCS and the principles of sustainable development by virtue of the presence of a good level of services and facilities in Harpole itself and its public transport links and physical proximity to Northampton. By virtue of the village’s proximity and functional dependence on Northampton as illustrated by commuting patterns for instance, bringing forward this site in
Harpole through the Part 2 Local Plan can help to alleviate the significant shortfall of housing land in the NRDA.

3.0 LANDSCAPE & VISUAL

3.1 Appendix 2 contains a landscape and visual impact report by Pegasus. The analysis within the report finds that development of the site would only affect limited local views and not result in any material change to the character of the wider landscape. The subject site would adjoin an existing, high density pattern of existing residential development and the built envelope of the settlement to the east.

3.2 To south the site would be contained by Glassthorpe Lane to the south and to the west and north by strong field boundaries which give a sense of visual containment from the open countryside beyond these boundaries. As shown by the illustrate layout plan above, the western portion of the site would be utilised to provide high quality public open space and a green buffer to the open countryside thereby resulting in a visually sensitive transition from the built-up area to the rural landscape beyond.

3.3 As set out in the landscape and visual impact report by Pegasus, the site does not accommodate any landscape features of note other than mature hedgerows and the occasional tree which can be retained as part of any development.
3.4 As noted in the landscape report, the subject site forms part of a “Special Landscape Area” (SLA) and this is proposed for retention through the Part 2 Local Plan following work undertaken to review the SLAs dated June 2017. The corresponding draft policy (Policy NE2) in the Part 2 Local Plan sets out a number of criteria against which development proposals lying in SLAs will be judged.

3.5 It is considered that delivery of the site for residential development would not undermine the purposes or characteristics of the Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke, and Brington SLA having regard to the significance, qualities, and character of the landscape. The SLA is described in the Review of Special Landscape Areas Report (June 2017) as a pocket of tranquillity with views of high scenic quality defined by an undulating landscape, hilltop woodlands, and broad views into Daventry District.

3.6 The subject site itself is enclosed by mature hedgerows and boundary trees which can be retained as part of any proposed development, nothing that these are features which contribute towards landscape character. As discussed above, the parcel is well-contained from the surrounding rural landscape and visually influenced by its edge-of-settlement location. As discussed in the landscape report, long-range views into and out of the site are not possible and to the extent that localised views are achievable, these would result in the site being seen against the backdrop of existing, consolidated residential development which forms part of the built-up area of Harpole and the village’s settlement boundary.

3.7 In design terms the layout has been conceived to provide both visual and functional integration to the village connecting to both School Lane and to Glassthorpe Lane. The development would address Glassthorpe Lane with an active frontage and address the development’s internal spaces with a perimeter block layout providing active frontages and natural surveillance, including natural surveillance of the open space.

3.8 The overall density of the proposed development would make best use of the site and would integrate with the existing development to the east in an acceptable manner, providing a seamless and logical continuation of the village.
4.0 HERITAGE

4.1 The subject site is separated from the historic core of the village, the listed buildings located within, as well as the village’s conservation area by a considerable intervening distance as well as existing built form. The nearest listed building is located approximately 180m to the south east of the subject site separated from it by existing houses.

4.2 A desk-based heritage assessment has been undertaken which has confirmed that the site has slow potential for archaeology for all historic periods.

5.0 ECOLOGY

5.1 To support proposals for development of the site an Ecological Assessment was undertaken which included an extended Phase 1 survey. The ecology work found that there are no statutory or non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within the site. The nearest SSSI and LWS would be unaffected by virtue of the distance between these designations and the subject site. No evidence of badger or bat activity was recorded although one of the semi-mature trees was considered to have very limited potential for bats.

5.2 The ecology report recommends measures to safeguard protected species such as nesting birds and measures to achieve a net gain in biodiversity as required by national policy. Such measures can be secured by way of a suitably-worded planning condition at the application stage.

6.0 FLOODING & DRAINAGE

6.1 A Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken on the site by BWB. This report confirms that the site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability) and is not at risk from any other source of flooding. These other sources were considered and are shown to pose no risk to a proposed development subject to simple mitigation measures. Surface water drainage can be managed in accordance with national policy guidance and best practice and the site can be made safe from flooding for the development’s lifetime and will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
7.0 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

7.1 A highways/transport appraisal was commissioned to consider the merits of the site access points as well as its connectivity with surrounding services, facilities, and other settlements. This found that the site is well-located in respect of all the services and facilities available in Harpole and that the village benefits from a high quality bus service linking it to Northampton which is just a short journey away.

7.2 Access to the development was considered to be achievable from both School Lane and Glassthorpe Lane and that the limited trips generated by the development would not have an adverse impact on highway safety or capacity.

8.0 BENEFITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Delivery of the site would be accompanied by a number of benefits, including the provision of affordable homes. As discussed in Persimmon’s main representations, the South Northamptonshire rural area has a severe quantitative deficiency of affordable homes with sizable under-delivery against the WNJCS target reported each monitoring year. Without allocating suitable sites for development through the Part 2 Local Plan, it is very unlikely that the affordable housing targets in the WNJCS will be met in the remainder of the plan period.

8.2 Land at School Lane Harpole can contribute towards the affordable housing targets identified in the WNJCS, delivering new market and affordable homes in a sustainable location. Given Harpole’s proximity to and connections with Northampton, delivery of new market and affordable homes in the village can also help to alleviate the housing land supply shortfall in the NRDA. This would be consistent with the aims and objectives of the WNJCS.

8.3 Land at School Lane, Harpole remains both developable and fully deliverable within five years. Upon adoption of the Part 2 Local Plan allocating the site for development, a full planning application could be lodged, planning permission secured, pre-commencement conditions discharged, and a material start made within the space of 1.5 to 2 years.
8.4 Upon commencement, completions would be in the region of 50 dwellings per year meaning that the site will be fully built out within two years of commencement.

8.5 As a major national housebuilder, Persimmon can deliver the site rapidly without the need for any onward sale of the land. Thus the site can contribute to recovering the shortfall of housing land in the NRDA and the affordable housing shortfall in South Northamptonshire early on.

8.6 The economic benefits of housebuilding are well documented and in the case of Land at School are summarised in Figure 6. In addition, new residents in the village can help to support the vitality of settlement and support local services and facilities, ensuring that these remain viable and ensuring the future sustainability of the village.

8.7 Environmentally there would be some loss of open agricultural land to provide new homes. However, the site is well contained by existing natural features and adjoins a consolidated pattern of high density residential development. The site’s relationship with the services and facilities in Harpole mean that these can be readily accessed via sustainable modes of travel as can opportunities for public transport in the form of a regular bus service to Northampton. This will reduce reliance on the private car, providing a net sustainability benefit along with the wider benefits of new residents and new homes.

8.8 Overall it is clear that the site is deliverable for a high quality scheme comprising much-needed new homes. The technical evidence demonstrates that this can be achieved without creating any materially adverse impacts and in a manner that would be consistent with the aims and objectives of the WNJCS.
LIST OF APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** – Bus Time Table (D3)
- **Appendix 2** – Landscape Report
- **Appendix 3** – Flood Risk Assessment
- **Appendix 4** – Block Plan
- **Appendix 5** – Ecology Report