

Plumpton Neighbourhood Plan

Site Assessment Report



May 2016

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1. Introduction

This report is produced as part of the evidence base for the Plumpton Neighbourhood Plan. It includes assessments of all sites that have been considered by the Steering Group and sets out the group's recommendations for the allocation of sites for future housing development.

Plumpton is a rural parish located north west of the town of Lewes and contains two primary settlements, Plumpton and Plumpton Green. The parish is partly located in the South Downs National Park and the downland, rural character is very much valued by parish residents.

However, there is a need for new housing nationwide which the Plumpton Neighbourhood Plan aims to address, in line with the targets set in the emerging (but almost adopted) Lewes District Joint Core Strategy. This Site Assessment Report contains a thorough assessment of sites considered through the process and is considered a comprehensive and robust component of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base which sets out the reasoning for selecting the development sites allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Through the site assessment, a comprehensive objective assessment of each site is carried out alongside a consideration of the achievability and availability of sites. This is then balanced against an 'acceptability' assessment whereby considerations that are important to the parish community are taken into account.

The Lewes District Council Emerging Joint Core Strategy sets a target of a minimum of 50 additional homes for the settlement of Plumpton Green in the period to 2030. The target that the Neighbourhood Plan is planning for is therefore considered in line with the latest housing need evidence for the Parish and settlement of Plumpton Green.

2. Methodology

2.1 Identification of potential sites

The initial list of development site options was identified through two key sources: Lewes District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and the Parish Council's Call for Sites process.

SHLAA

As local planning authority, Lewes District Council (LDC) is required to produce a SHLAA to identify sites throughout the District with potential for housing, assess their housing suitability and consider when they could potentially be developed. The document is updated regularly on an annual basis and helps to inform judgements on future development and allocation of land for housing, but does not allocate sites.

The Parish Council made the decision to consider 'suitable' SHLAA sites in the site assessment process although, as noted in the next section, some of these 'suitable' sites were also put forward by landowners/agents through the Call for Sites.

Call for Sites

Following designation of the Plumpton Neighbourhood Area, and formulation of the Steering Group, a Call for Sites process was undertaken to identify further potential development sites in addition to those 'suitable' sites identified in the SHLAA. The Parish Council wrote to Parish landowners on 1 September 2014 offering the opportunity to put land forward for consideration. A number of responses were received, including sites already identified in the SHLAA, as well as other previously unidentified sites.

In addition to previously unidentified sites (that have subsequently been included in the SHLAA), some of the sites put forward through the Call for Sites were sites considered 'unsuitable' in the SHLAA (usually as a result of development constraints). The Parish Council considers it appropriate to consider sites that the District Council has assessed as 'unsuitable' in the SHLAA to form its own opinions of the sites, carry out its own assessments against community-led criteria and to ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken.

Furthermore, an additional site was put forward to the Steering Group by the owners of the Racecourse at a later stage than the other sites and so this has not been consulted on with the parish community as other sites have (see paragraph 2.2 below regarding the Land Sponsors Meeting). However, it was concluded that the site should be given due consideration in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan as it would essentially form enabling development to secure the future of the Racecourse and also has the potential to tie in with other Neighbourhood Plan policies (specifically Policy 6 – Racecourse). Inclusion in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan would also provide an opportunity for residents to comment on the site to ultimately determine whether the site should be included in the submitted Neighbourhood Plan and, if so, inform the detailed policy wording.

The sites are as follows:

List of development options

- Site 1 - Riddens Lane (SHLAA Ref 14PL, approximately 15 units)
- Site 2 - Little Inholmes Farm (SHLAA Ref 16PL, approximately 40 units)

- Site 3 - Shaw/Inholmes Farm (SHLAA Ref 19PL, approximately 20 units)
- Site 4 - Inholms Farm (northernmost) (SHLAA Ref 18PL, approximately 30 units)
- Site 5 - Lentrige/Old Police House (SHLAA Ref 20PL, approximately 30 units)
- Site 6 - Wells Close (SHLAA Ref 13PL, approximately 6 units)
- Site 7 - Glebe Land (SHLAA Ref 04PL, approximately 30 units)
- Site 8 - Land rear of Oakfield (SHLAA Ref 05PL, approximately 30 units)
- Site 9 - Land East of Nolands (SHLAA Ref 10PL, approximately 10 units)
- Site 10 - Land behind school (SHLAA Ref 21PL, approximately 17 units)
- Site 11 - Site South of Railway (SHLAA Ref 22PL, approximately 15 units)
- Site 12 - Racecourse Land (not included in SHLAA, approximately 19 units)

During the Neighbourhood Plan process, alternative levels of development (options) on some sites were put forward to the Parish Council for consideration.

2.2 Assessment Process

Parish Questionnaire

The Plumpton Parish Neighbourhood Plan survey was issued in January 2015 and gained valuable feedback for the Steering Group in informing the site assessment criteria and, ultimately, the allocation of sites in the Neighbourhood Plan. The main feeling among parishioners was an appreciation of the rural nature of the Parish and a feeling that the Parish should not change or expand too rapidly. There was also a strong preference for 'linear development' of Plumpton Green, with 63% of residents favouring this growth option.

[Further information on the Neighbourhood Plan survey can be found here](#)

Land Sponsor Meetings

Following the identification of the above sites, two public land sponsor meetings were arranged to provide landowners/agents with the opportunity to present their sites. These events also provided an opportunity for Parish residents to put questions to landowners/agents, make any concerns known and allowed the Parish Council to gain feedback to inform the site selection process. These events took place on 6 January and 3 March 2015 and provided valuable feedback for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

2.3 Assessment Criteria

With two key sources of evidence attained, the Steering Group, with assistance from planning consultants AiRS and the District Council's Neighbourhood Planning Officer, set about the process of forming an assessment criteria matrix to assess the sites against.

The basis of the Assessment Criteria was derived from a number of relevant sources and much evidence was taken into consideration. The sources are listed below:

- Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and Vision;
- Issues and factors shown to be of key importance to the community through the Parish Survey and village consultations;
- Consideration of national planning policies (NPPF), guidance (NPPG) and LDC adopted (2003 Local Plan) and emerging (Joint Core Strategy) policies.

The following components make up the assessment process.

Suitability (see Section 2.4)

A site is considered suitable for housing if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. An objective assessment of the suitability of a site will give an indication of whether there are any constraints to development.

Sustainability (Scoring Matrix can be found in Appendix 1)

A Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) has been produced to comply with European and UK Regulations and inform the Neighbourhood Plan process. A list of Sustainability Objectives and Indicators can be found in the Sustainability Appraisal and have been used to appraise and identify the environmental (and wider social and economic) impacts of the options and policies in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. This has then fed into the assessment process.

Achievability

A site is considered achievable if the site is economically viable. Viability varies from site to site and can be influenced by considerations such as physical constraints and the numbers of market and affordable houses.

Availability

A site is considered to be available when there are no known legal or ownership problems and the landowner has expressed an intention to develop. All sites are considered to be immediately available for development unless information to the contrary has been received or needs further investigation.

Acceptability (see Section 2.5)

Neighbourhood Plans must be approved by a majority of electors voting in a local referendum. Thus the site assessment must include consideration of the acceptability of the site to the local community based on issues of importance that have been drawn out through consultation feedback.

2.4 Suitability assessment explanation and criteria table

National Planning Practice Guidance states the need to assess sites against clearly identified criteria.

The Suitability Assessment forms the objective part of the assessment process and the table below sets out the criteria and questions that have been used in carrying out this assessment.

Ref	Site Criterion - Suitability	Score	
	SOCIAL		
A	1. Housing: Affordable housing?		+ positively meets criteria
	Could the site provide affordable housing	+	0 meets criteria/ neutral
	The site could not provide affordable housing	-	- doesn't meet criteria
	1.Transport/accessibility: impact on highway network		
	Adequate car and pedestrian access	+	
	Inadequate car and pedestrian access	-	
	2.Transport/accessibility: safety		
	Traffic naturally slows near the site entrance	+	

B	Traffic doesn't slow/speeds up near the site entrance	-	
	3.Transport/accessibility: visibility		
	Suitable visibility from potential access point	+	
	Unsuitable visibility from potential access point	-	
C	1. Additional/improved community facilities		
	The development brings about additional/improved facilities	+	
	The development does not bring about additional/improved facilities	0	
	ENVIRONMENTAL		
D	1.Biodiversity & Ecology: protected plant, animal, insect life		
	There is no presence of protected species	+	
	There is some presence of protected species	-	
	2.Biodiversity & Ecology: wider species & habitats		
	There is no presence of wider species & habitats	+	
	There is some presence of wider species & habitats	-	
	3. Geodiversity: geological, soil conservation, or mineral deposits		
	There is no geological interest	+	
	There is some geological interest	-	
	4.Landscape & Green Infrastructure: ancient trees & hedges & TPOs		
	No ancient trees/ hedges/ TPOs on the site/within the vicinity	+	
	Ancient trees/ hedges/ TPOs on the site/within the vicinity	-	
E	5.Historical assets		
	No listed building within the vicinity	+	
	Listed building within the vicinity	-	
	1. Flood Risk	+	
	Flood Zone 1		
	Flood Zone 2	0	
	Flood Zone 3 a/b	-	
	2.Topography/ drainage/ surface water		
	There is no evidence of surface water	+	
	There is some evidence of surface water which run into a natural water course	0	
There is some evidence of surface water which doesn't run into a natural water course	-		
ECONOMIC			
1.Support of local business: is the site within 800m of the shop?			

F	The site is less than 399m from the shop	+	
	The site is between 400m to 799m to the shop	0	
	The site is more than 800m to the shop	-	
	2.Support of local business: loss of employment/facility		
	Vacant site	+	
	In active use or development results in loss of community/ services/ employment uses	-	

2.5 Acceptability assessment explanation and criteria table

To complement the Suitability Assessment, a more subjective element to the assessment was carried out which reflects the aspirations of the Parish residents. The following table was developed to include consideration of National Planning Policy and local considerations.

Ref	Site Criterion- ACCEPTABILITY	Score	
H	Brownfield site	+	Prioritising smaller sites (Source: PPNP Survey results)
	Greenfield site	-	
	Size of the site-number of units being considered		
	Up to 20 units	+	
	More than 21 units	-	
J	Location of site-geographical		63% of residents voted for a natural extension of the village in a northerly/southerly direction to retain its natural linear shape (Source: PPNP Survey results)
	The site is to the North/South of village	+	
	The site is East/West of the village	-	
K	1.Landscape & Green Infrastructure: impact on land adjoining		To maintain the rural character of the village (Source: PPNP Consultations)
	Minimal adverse impact on adjoining property/development	+	
	Significant adverse impact on adjoining by the development	-	
	2.Landscape & Green Infrastructure: natural screening		To maintain the rural character of the village (Source: PPNP Consultations)
	The site is naturally well screened	+	
	The site has some natural screening	0	
	The site is exposed and not naturally well screened	-	
	3.Landscape & Green Infrastructure: views from the South Downs		
The site is not visible from the South Downs	+		

	The site is partially visible from the South Downs	0	
	The site is completely visible from the South Downs	-	

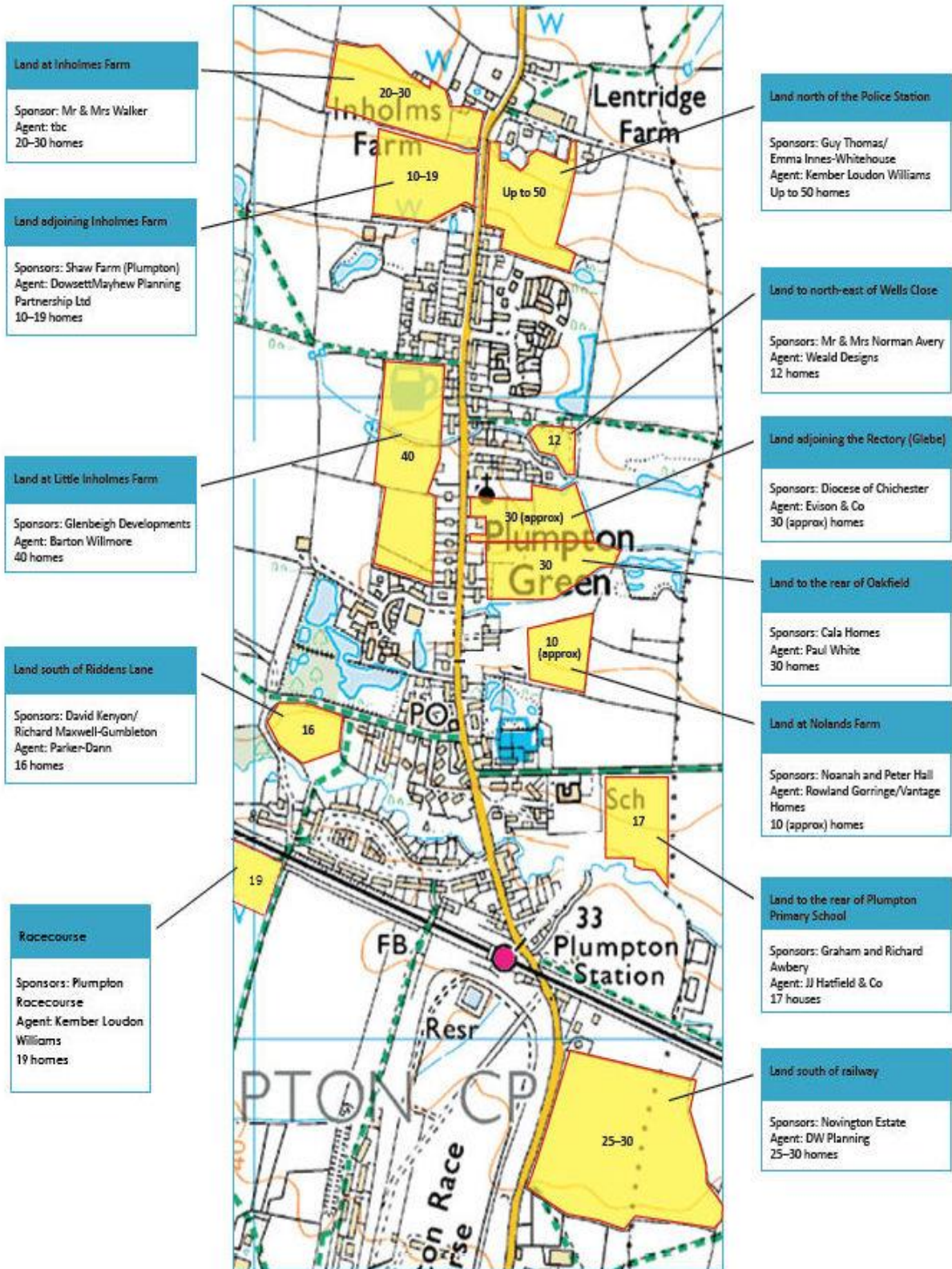
2.6 Assessment of individual sites

An Assessment Table has been produced for each site considered through the Neighbourhood Plan process. The tables below form a summary of the various strands of the assessment process including the following:

- Relevant site specific information;
- Summary of the Suitability Assessment;
- Reference to and/or reference to the Sustainability Appraisal assessment;
- Achievability assessment;
- Availability assessment;
- Acceptability assessment.

For some sites, more than one option for development has been put forward to the Parish Council. Sites have been considered as broad areas. The Sustainability Appraisal considers different and distinct options ('reasonable alternatives') that have been put forward to the Parish Council for consideration. This has fed in to the site assessment below.

2.7 Map of Potential Development Sites



3. Site Assessments

Site 1 – Riddens Lane	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan call for sites.</p> <p>It is located to the west of the village off Riddens Lane and is approximately 0.6 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 16 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary.</p> <p>There is presence of protected/wider species and habitats which should be preserved along with the ancient trees, hedges and geological interest also in evidence.</p> <p>There are no listed buildings within the vicinity.</p> <p>The higher northern part of this site is within Flood Zone 1. The lower southern part falls within Flood Zone 3 where it slopes down to a natural water course. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Traffic slows naturally near the site entrance but visibility for the access onto Station Road is limited. Vehicle and pedestrian access to Riddens Lane and Station Road would need to be upgraded with a suitable surface.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the developer.</p>

Acceptability	<p>This is a green field site which could provide affordable housing, with a minimal impact on existing adjoining properties.</p> <p>It is partially screened and not visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The site does not explicitly represent the preference for linear growth of the village but is considered small in scale and nature</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>This site scored well when appraised against the sustainability framework, in particular against the social objectives due to the central location of the site near to village services. However, due to the existing constraints that impact on pedestrian and vehicle access to the site, as well as the flood risk that affect parts of the site, there are question marks surrounding some of the objectives.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>The site scores fairly well against the suitability and acceptability criteria albeit some adverse environmental impacts were identified. However, given that it does not have any insurmountable obstacles preventing the site from being developed, the Steering Group recommends allocating the Riddens Lane site as a Reserve Site for approximately 16 units which would help to demonstrate the Parish Council's positive approach to the plan making process.</p> <p>In light of the findings of the above assessment and the SEA, this allocation would be subject to steps being taken to mitigate the effects on wildlife and biodiversity and the provision of suitable vehicle and pedestrian access to Station Road. Also, development would need to be kept to the higher northern part of the site and the area within Flood Zone 3 preserved as green space.</p>

Site 2 – Little Inholmes Farm	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the west of the village, north of West Gate, and is approximately 4.53 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 20 units within the Neighbourhood Plan period. A larger option of approximately 40 units was also put forward to the Parish Council for consideration.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary.</p> <p>There is presence of protected/wider species and habitats which should be preserved along with the ancient trees and hedges also in evidence. There is no indication of geological interest.</p> <p>There is a Listed building immediately adjacent to the site vulnerable to subsidence and flooding which could be exacerbated if the site was developed.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. There is a history of surface water flooding on the site which slopes to a natural watercourse running through the centre of the village to other proposed sites. Waste water/sewage infrastructure improvements would need to be addressed.</p> <p>Vehicle and pedestrian access is good via West Gate onto Station Road but only the southern end of the site is within 399 metres of the shop and close to village amenities.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the developer.</p>

<p>Acceptability</p>	<p>Although this is a green field site which could provide affordable housing, the scale does not reflect the Parish preference for modest development when compared with other sites</p> <p>Of all the proposed sites, this would affect the greatest number of adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>The site is exposed and visible from the South Downs.</p> <p>The site would not represent the preference for linear growth of the village, nor is it considered small in scale and nature.</p> <p>The site carries a Section 106 agreement limiting development to agricultural use only for 80 years, valid until 26 September 2074. This agreement is of great importance to the Parish who wish to preserve the site as agricultural land and local green space.</p>
<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Two options (one approximately 20 units and another approximately 40) were considered for this site and both scored similarly with a mix of positives and negatives when appraised against the sustainability framework. Both options would provide housing to meet Parish housing needs (option 2 more so) and, due to the central location, both scored well against the social objectives. Both appraisals identified potential concerns over landscape impact, the National Park and the village's built environment and heritage assets. Option 2, being of a higher density and greater scale, is likely to have more pronounced adverse impact against these objectives. This area also suffers from surface water flood issues. It is considered that a lower density of development may have more scope to mitigate this adverse effect, whereas option 2 scores negatively against Env/4.</p>
<p>Steering Group Recommendation</p>	<p>This site was assessed as only partially suitable and the acceptability to the Parish was deemed to be very poor. It does not support the Parish preference for small developments when compared with other sites and there is a strong sense in the village that the Section 106 agreement be upheld, adding weight to the assessment of the site being unacceptable to the Parish. As highlighted in the SEA, the site also suffers from significant surface water flood issues which were considered to be unfavourable.</p> <p>For these reasons the Steering Group does not recommend this site for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Site 3 – Shaw/Inholms Farm	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the north of the village, west of Station Road, and is approximately 0.8 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 12 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary which could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is no indication of protected/wider species or habitats, ancient trees or hedges but some geological interest is in evidence.</p> <p>There are no Listed buildings within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is more than 800 metres from the shop and not immediately close to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access would require the current 30mph zone on Station Road to be extended northwards to ensure safe passage for traffic. However, traffic would have the opportunity to exit the village without going through the village centre and adding to existing congestion.</p> <p>The existing pavement would need to be extended for pedestrian access</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owners.</p>

Acceptability	<p>This site would have a minimal impact on surrounding existing properties.</p> <p>It is not naturally well screened and is visible from the South Downs.</p> <p>The site reflects the community aspiration for future growth to retain the linear nature of the village.</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>Broadly speaking, this site scored neutrally against the sustainability framework. There is some risk of a potential adverse environmental impact as the site would encroach into the green gap between the built up boundary of the village and the farmstead to the north, however no negative impact was identified at this stage. There are also question marks surrounding some of the objectives due to the lack of pedestrian access to the site currently.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>The site scored well against the suitability and acceptability criteria. The distance from existing village services is acknowledged, however its location on the edge of the village may help to ease traffic and congestion in the centre of the village as traffic can exit to the north.</p> <p>For the reasons above, the Steering Group recommends allocation on an east-west axis on the southern part of the site only. The northern part of the site should remain undeveloped to maintain the green space between new development to the south and the existing buildings to the north.</p> <p>The site assessment and Sustainability Appraisal highlighted particular issues and so the recommendation would be subject to mitigation of the effects of poor screening, provision of suitable footpath access to the village for pedestrians, an extended 30mph speed restriction to ensure safe passage for traffic and an appropriate drainage of surface water (although this is not a site most at risk from surface water flooding).</p>

Site 4 – Inholms Farm North	
Background Information	<p>The site was promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the north of the village, west of Station Road, and is approximately 2.45 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for a flexible number of units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site remote from the planning boundary but could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is no indication of protected/wider species or habitats, ancient trees or hedges but some geological interest is in evidence.</p> <p>There are no Listed buildings within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is more than 800 metres from the shop and not immediately close to other village amenities.</p> <p>It is likely that access would need to be via the site to the south, impinging on its green space to the north; it would require the current 30mph zone on Station Road to be extended northwards to ensure safe passage for traffic. However, traffic would have the opportunity to exit the village without going through the village centre and adding to existing congestion.</p> <p>Existing pavement would need to be extended northwards for pedestrian access.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owners.</p>

Acceptability	<p>This site is likely to have a minimal impact on the small number of existing properties nearby.</p> <p>It is not naturally screened and is visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The site reflects the community aspiration for future growth to retain the linear nature of the village.</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>This site scored potential negative impacts against Soc/2 and Soc/3 of the sustainability framework due to its remote location, being the northernmost site considered. It is also likely that development of this site could have an adverse landscape impact (Env/2), again due to its remote location, the loss of green gap between the village and the farmstead to the north and the visibility from the Downs.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>The site assessment, and in particular the Sustainability Appraisal, highlighted significant adverse landscape and environmental effects as a result of the site's remote location, high visibility from the Downs and the loss of the green gap between the current boundary of the village and the farmstead to the north. Primarily for these landscape impacts, the Steering Group does not recommend allocation of this site.</p>

Site 5 – Lentridge / Old Police House	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the north of the village, east of Station Road, and is approximately 2.2 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 15-20 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary and could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is no presence of protected species but evidence of wider species, habitats and geological interest which should be preserved.</p> <p>There are no Listed buildings within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site falls within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is between 400-799 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Although visibility is good, access onto Station Road would require the current 30mph zone to be extended northwards to ensure safe passage for traffic. However, traffic would have the opportunity to exit the village without going through the village centre and adding to existing congestion.</p> <p>Pedestrian access would need to be provided.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owners.</p>
Acceptability	<p>This site is likely to have a minimal adverse impact on adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>The site reflects the community aspiration for future growth to retain the linear nature of the village.</p> <p>It has some natural screening and is partially visible from the Downs.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>This site scored neutrally against the sustainability framework although there are also question marks surrounding some of the objectives due to the lack of pedestrian access to the site currently and the potential landscape impact of development as it would result in some loss of the green gap between the built-up area of the village and the farmstead to the north. However, development in this area would be consistent with the existing character of the village and a modest development may be able to retain this green gap</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>The site was one of the highest scoring sites against the suitability and acceptability criteria. Despite being one of the furthest sites from village services, its location on the edge of the village could ease traffic and congestion in the centre of the village as traffic can exit to the north.</p> <p>For the reasons above, the Steering Group recommends allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan for development on an east-west axis of the southern part of the site only. The northern part of the site should remain undeveloped to maintain the green space between new development to the south and the existing buildings to the north.</p> <p>This recommendation would be subject to provision of suitable footpath access to the village for pedestrians, an extended speed restriction for traffic and appropriate drainage of surface water.</p>

Site 6 – Wells Close	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the east of the village between Wells Close and Strawlands and is approximately 0.5 hectares currently vacant.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 6-10 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This site could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is presence of protected/wider species and habitats which should be preserved but no evidence of ancient trees, hedges or geological interest.</p> <p>There are no Listed buildings within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is between 400-799 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Vehicle and pedestrian access to Station Road would be via Wells Close.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development. Being a former brickworks, there may be some land remediation required, although it is not expected that this would affect viability.</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the owner.</p>

<p>Acceptability</p>	<p>There are no buildings currently on the site and it is currently vacant grassland. However, the site was previously used for clay extraction, the manufacturing of bricks and most recently a coal yard and so it is likely that there were previously buildings on the site. Therefore, although not technically brownfield land, the site scores well regardless.</p> <p>The site could potentially have an adverse impact on existing adjoining properties.</p> <p>The site has some natural screening and is partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The site does not represent the preference for linear growth of the village, although is considered small in scale and nature</p>
<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Broadly speaking, this site scored well against the sustainability framework, scoring a number of positives against the social and environmental objectives. This was particularly the case for Soc/1 as the site would provide additional housing on a vacant former brickworks site. The site is also centrally located and so within easy reach of existing village services and facilities. The site is also well screened and unlikely to have an adverse landscape impact. However, the site is located in area of surface water flood risk and so scored negatively against objective Env/4.</p>
<p>Steering Group Recommendation</p>	<p>This site is currently vacant and, due to its use as a former brickworks, could be considered previously developed. Access to Station Road is good.</p> <p>Although 12 units are proposed by the owner, 6 units are recommended by the Steering Group for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, in line with the village preference for small developments at an acceptable density.</p> <p>In light of the findings of the site assessment and the SEA, if this site is allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, appropriate criteria should be included in the policy wording to mitigate any surface water issues.</p>

Site 7 – Glebe Land	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the east of the village and All Saints Church, and is approximately 1.5 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 20-30 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary which could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is presence of protected species and habitats which should be preserved along with the ancient trees, hedges and geological interest also in evidence.</p> <p>There are no Listed buildings within the vicinity. However, development of this site is likely to affect the environment of the church and adjacent burial ground.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. There is evidence of waste water/sewage and surface water issues which would need to be addressed.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access would be directly onto Station Road at a point where, although visibility is good, traffic does not naturally slow down.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the agent</p>
Acceptability	<p>This site would have an adverse impact on adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>It is partially screened and partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The scale of the proposed development does not reflect the preference for linear growth of the village or for modest developments when compared with other sites.</p>

Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>Overall, this site scored a mix of positive, negative and neutral outcomes against the sustainability framework, scoring particularly well against the social objectives due to its central location near to village amenities. However, there are question marks surrounding the impact against some of the environment objectives due to evidence of protected species, trees (including Tree Preservation Orders) and hedges on the site, the potential landscape impact and visibility from the Downs and the potential impact on the environment of the church, rectory and adjacent burial ground. A potential adverse impact against Env/4 objective was identified due to existing waste water/sewage issues and surface water flood risk.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>The site did not assess particularly well against suitability or acceptability criteria and does not reflect the village's aspirations for future growth. It is adjacent to another proposed site which together could lead to an excessively large area of development.</p> <p>Also, the site assessment and, in particular the Sustainability Appraisal, highlighted surface water flood issues on the site which is located in an area with a 1 in 30 year surface water flood risk. This is a significant issue within the village, and a concern for many village residents, and so for the above reasons the Steering Group does not recommend this site for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Site 8 – Land rear of Oakfield	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>The site is located to the east of the village and is approximately 1.5 hectares in size and currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 20-30 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a greenfield site adjacent to the planning boundary which could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is presence of protected species and habitats which should be preserved along with the ancient trees, hedges and geological interest also in evidence.</p> <p>There is a Listed building within the vicinity which could potentially be impacted upon.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. There is evidence of waste water/sewage and surface water issues which would need to be addressed.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access would be directly onto Station Road at a point where, although visibility is good, traffic does not naturally slow down.</p> <p>Development of this site would result in the loss of the garage service.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development.</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the developer.</p>
Acceptability	<p>This is a green field site and is likely to have an adverse impact on adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>It is partially screened and partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The proposed development does not represent the preference for linear growth of the village or modest developments when compared with other sites.</p>

<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Overall, this site scored a mix of scores against the sustainability framework. The site scored well against some of the social objectives (Soc/3) due to its central location near to village amenities. However, due to the potential loss of the existing garage site, there is a likely adverse impact against Eco/1 and to some extent Soc/2.</p> <p>There are also question marks surrounding the impact against some of the environment objectives due to evidence of protected species, trees and hedges on the site, the potential landscape impact and visibility from the Downs. There is also a Grade 2 listed building within the vicinity of the site which could be impacted upon. A potential adverse impact against Env/4 objective was identified due to existing waste water/sewage issues and surface water flood risk.</p>
<p>Steering Group Recommendation</p>	<p>The site did not assess well against suitability or acceptability criteria and does not reflect the village preference for modest development when compared with other sites. It is adjacent to another proposed site which together could lead to an excessively large area of development.</p> <p>The site would result in the loss of a local employment site and service (garage).</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal also highlighted surface water flood issues on the site which is located in an area with a 1 in 30 year surface water flood risk. This is a significant issue within the village, and a concern for many village residents</p> <p>For these reasons the Steering Group does not recommended this site for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Site 9 – Land East of Nolands Farm

<p>Background Information</p>	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>It is located to the east of the village and Nolands Farm and is approximately 6.1 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 10 units.</p>
<p>Suitability</p>	<p>This is a green field site which could provide affordable housing</p> <p>There is no presence of protected/wider species and habitats and no evidence of ancient trees, hedges or geological interest.</p> <p>There is a Listed building within the vicinity which could potentially be impacted upon.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>At present there is no confirmed access to the site for vehicles or pedestrians.</p>
<p>Achievability</p>	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development.</p> <p>However, the site is isolated and no access arrangements have been confirmed as yet and so the deliverability of the site is in question.</p>
<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owner.</p>

Acceptability	<p>This is a green field site remote from the planning boundary and could potentially have an adverse impact on adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>The site is poorly screened and partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The site would not represent the preference for linear growth of the village, although is considered small in scale and nature.</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>Overall this site scored a mix of positive, negative and neutral impacts against the sustainability framework. While scoring positively against the social objectives due to its central location, questions marks surround the site as no access has yet been formalised. The foremost impact identified however was the potential adverse landscape impact due to the exposed nature of the site and visibility from the Downs.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>Although the site is small and within easy distance of village facilities, the delivery of the site is severely hampered by the fact that no access arrangements to the site have yet been confirmed. There is also a listed building nearby which would be impacted upon.</p> <p>The Sustainability Appraisal highlighted a potential adverse landscape impact due to its isolated nature, including from the current planning boundary, and so for these reasons the Steering Group does not recommend this site for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Site 10 – Land behind School	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified by the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites.</p> <p>The site is located to the east of the village and the school and is approximately 1.2 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 17 units.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary.</p> <p>There is no presence of protected/wider species and habitats and no evidence of ancient trees, hedges or geological interest.</p> <p>There is no Listed building within the vicinity.</p> <p>The higher northern part of the site is within Flood Zone 1. The lower southern part falls within Flood Zone 3 where the site slopes down to a natural water course. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access to Station Road would be via North Barnes Lane which is already used to capacity. Visibility onto Station Road is restricted although traffic naturally slows at this point.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development.</p> <p>However, highways improvements would be required along North Barnes Lane to enable development which could affect viability.</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Lewes District Council SHLAA and the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the developer.</p>

<p>Acceptability</p>	<p>This is a green field site which could provide affordable housing but could potentially have an adverse impact on adjoining existing properties.</p> <p>The site is not naturally screened and is visible from the Downs.</p> <p>The site does not represent the preference for linear growth of the village.</p> <p>Vehicle access onto North Barnes Lane would impact negatively on existing traffic and properties.</p>
<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment</p>	<p>Overall this site scored a mix of positive, negative and neutral impacts against the sustainability framework. While scoring positively against the social objectives due to its central location, questions marks surround the site as the current access along North Barnes Lane is not sufficient for vehicles or pedestrians.</p> <p>There are also question marks surrounding the impact against some of the environment objectives due to the exposed nature of the site and the visibility from the Downs. A potential adverse impact against Env/4 objective was identified due to existing waste water/sewage issues and flood risk.</p>
<p>Steering Group Recommendation</p>	<p>As highlighted in the site assessment and the Sustainability Appraisal, this site is subject to a number of issues, such as landscape/environmental, flood risk and concerns over the provision of a suitable safe access for pedestrians and vehicles. Access onto North Barnes Lane would be problematic as this route is already heavily used.</p> <p>For these reasons the Steering Group does not recommended this site for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Site 11 – Site South of Railway	
Background Information	<p>The site was identified through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has since been included in the Lewes District Council SHLAA.</p> <p>It is located to the south of the village and the railway line, east of Plumpton Lane, and is approximately 6.7 hectares currently grade 3 agricultural use.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 12 units and potential car parking for the station with a drop-off point.</p>
Suitability	<p>This is a green field site adjacent to the planning boundary which could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>There is presence of protected/wider species and habitats which should be preserved along with the ancient trees and hedges also in evidence. There is no indication of geological interest.</p> <p>There is no Listed building within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1. Evidence of surface water issues would need to be addressed and waste water/sewage infrastructure put in place.</p> <p>The site is less than 399 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access would be directly onto Plumpton Lane at a point where traffic naturally slows and visibility is good. The current 30 mph speed restriction would need to be extended southwards. However, traffic would have the opportunity to exit the village without going through the village centre and adding to existing congestion.</p> <p>Pedestrian access to the village would need to be provided although a demarcated pedestrian zone across the rail tracks has recently been completed.</p>
Achievability	<p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable. This is also the case as the site is being promoted for development</p>
Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owner.</p>

Acceptability	<p>This is a green field site which would have a minimal impact on existing adjoining properties.</p> <p>It is partially screened and partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>There is potential for a drop-off point and extra car parking for the station to relieve excessive parking in the village.</p> <p>The site represents the community's preference for linear growth of the village</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>This site scored a mix of positive, neutral and negative outcomes against the sustainability framework. It scored well against the social objectives due to its close proximity to village services and the prospect of additional car parking for the village. However, there are question marks surrounding the access as there is currently no pedestrian footway linking the site to the village.</p> <p>The SEA did identify potential environmental and landscape impacts due to the site's location in an open setting south of the railway line.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>This site assessed well against both suitability and acceptability criteria and is close to the station and other village amenities with potential for relief of the current excessive car parking in the village.</p> <p>Although outside the village boundary, partial development of this site would have minimal impact on neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The Steering Group recommends allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan for development in the north western corner with the remainder being designated as local green space.</p> <p>This recommendation would be subject to the extension of the restricted speed zone and provision of suitable and safe pedestrian access to the village. The Sustainability Appraisal recognises the challenge of developing this site which is situated in an open setting. It is recommended that strong mitigation criteria are detailed in the policy wording to mitigate this impact</p>

Site 12 - Racecourse Land	
Background Information	<p>The site was put forward to the steering group at a later stage of the site assessment process than other sites.</p> <p>It is located at the north western corner of the racecourse, to the south of the village and the railway line, west of Plumpton Lane, and is approximately 0.5 hectares, currently vacant.</p> <p>The site is being promoted for approximately 19 units and car parking for the railway station.</p>
Suitability	<p>This site is currently primarily amenity grassland, although it does incorporate some hard standing and it is therefore a mix of brownfield and greenfield land. The site is almost adjacent to the planning boundary.</p> <p>There is presence of protected/wider species and habitats which should be preserved but no evidence of ancient trees and hedges. There is no indication of geological interest.</p> <p>There is no Listed building within the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is within Flood Zone 1, although a small area is also within an area of 1 in 30 year surface water flood risk.</p> <p>The site is between 400-799 metres from the shop and near to other village amenities.</p> <p>Access to Plumpton Lane for vehicular traffic would be via Plumpton Racecourse's southern main entrance which is at a point where traffic naturally slows and visibility is good and would allow traffic to exit the village without going through the village centre and adding to existing congestion. The current tarmac road through the racecourse to the northern car park and Hills Driving School would need to be upgraded to allow vehicles to pass easily through to the site, especially on race days.</p> <p>Pedestrian access to the village would be via the current footpath from the racecourse to the station and East View Fields.</p>
Achievability	<p>The site is being promoted by the Racecourse as an enabling development option that would help fund necessary improvements to the Racecourse and ultimately secure its future.</p> <p>Plumpton Green is located in an area of strong housing market demand and so the site is considered to be commercially viable.</p>

Availability	<p>The site has been promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call For Sites and has been confirmed in subsequent discussion with the site owner.</p> <p>The site is likely to be developed in tandem with the wider development of the Racecourse but otherwise there are no delivery constraints.</p>
Acceptability	<p>This site is a mix of brownfield and greenfield land which could provide affordable housing.</p> <p>Being part of the Racecourse and divided from the village by the railway, development would have a minimal impact on existing adjoining properties.</p> <p>The site reflects the community aspiration for future growth to retain the linear nature of the village. It is partially screened and partially visible from the Downs.</p> <p>There is potential for extra car parking for the station to relieve excessive parking in the village.</p>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<p>This site scored a number of positive and neutral outcomes against the sustainability framework. It scored well against the social objectives due to its close proximity to village services and the prospect of additional car parking for the village. The site would also have a positive impact on the local economy and would help to secure the future of a key village business.</p> <p>The site would extend the village core beyond the railway line which currently acts as a defensible boundary, however it is contained within the boundary of the Racecourse and so would not result in the development of open greenfield land. However, it is recommended that the policy wording reflects the site's location in that it would extend the village south, beyond the railway line, towards the National Park.</p>
Steering Group Recommendation	<p>This site assessed well against both suitability and acceptability criteria and is close to the station and other village amenities with potential for relief of the current excessive car parking in the village.</p> <p>The Steering Group recommends allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan for development of this site subject to the redevelopment of the Racecourse buildings and upgrading of the access road to Plumpton Lane.</p>

Appendix 1 – Site Assessment Scoring Matrix

Site	Name	A	B1	B2	B3	C1	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	E1	E2	F1	F2	H	I	J	K1	K2	K3	+ & o score	-ve score	Rank	Approximate Development Numbers
1	Riddens Lane	+	+	+	-	0	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	0	+	12	8	8a	Reserve: 16
2	Little Inholmes Farm/Glenbeigh	+	+	+	+	0	-	-	+	-	-	+	0	0	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	11	9	10	N/A
3	Shaw/Inholms Farm	+	+	-	+	0	+	+	-	+	+	+	0	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	14	6	5	12
4	Inholms Farm (northernmost)	+	-	-	+	0	+	+	-	+	+	+	0	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	13	7	6	N/A
5	Lentridge/Old Police House	+	+	-	+	0	+	-	-	-	+	+	0	0	+	-	+	+	+	0	0	15	5	4	12
6	Wells Close	+	+	+	+	0	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	0	+	+	+	-	-	0	0	15	5	3	6
7	Glebe Land	+	+	-	+	0	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	0	0	12	8	9	N/A
8	Land rear of Oakfield	+	+	-	+	0	-	-	-	-	-	+	0	+	-	-	+	-	-	0	0	10	10	11	N/A
9	Land East of Nolands	+	-	+	-	0	+	+	+	+	-	+	0	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	0	13	7	7	N/A
10	Land behind school	+	-	+	-	0	+	+	+	+	+	-	0	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	12	8	8b	N/A
11	Site South of Railway	+	+	+	+	0	-	-	+	-	+	+	0	0	+	-	+	+	+	0	0	16	4	2	12
12	Racecourse	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	19	1	1	19