

Cossington 4 – Floodplain opposite Derry’s garden site

1. Executive Summary

The whole of the site is within flood zone 3, drainage is a major concern.

A RED SCORING SITE OF NEGATIVE EIGHT SO NO FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED.

2. Overview

This Strategic Sustainability Assessment (SSA) is a comparison of housing supply options to be used for the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) making purposes. The level of detail provided is appropriate for this purpose and is proportionate to the requirement of meeting the Basic Conditions for a NDP. The SSA is not a substitute for detailed professional assessments of site viability and other legal or regulatory matters that will require approval as a part of testing a residential planning application. The SSA is a community led process and does not contain detailed professional site investigations and the SSA should be read and understood in this context.

Through undertaking the SSA the local community are identifying the least environmentally damaging and the most sustainable locations which are prioritised 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 accessed in detail during the SSA.

Locally important factors have been considered and it is recommended that the wider community comment on the result of the SSA’s to help support a ranking of the potential sites. The SSA’s are only a part of any potential development site selection process to rank potential sites in a NDP and the methodology is accepted by developers, landowners, Local Authorities and Planning Inspectors as being robust and proportionate for this task. This first stage of the SSA process assesses how developable a location is, the second stage assesses how deliverable the location is. Working in partnership with landowners and Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) enables a positive SSA process that meets or exceeds the housing target and affordable housing requirements in CBC’s adopted Local Plan.

3. Site Selection in two stages

The first stage is to use a scoring system for the residential sites based on a traffic light (Red, Amber or Green - RAG) score. For Cossington twenty-six indicators are being evaluated and the sites are numerically scored and ranked. This process provides an overall picture of the comparative developability of the potential sites. A high green score indicates the more sustainable sites in the SSA process and provides an indication of how developable a site is. However, it is important to note that there may be other factors which result in that site not being appropriate so a second stage of analysis considers if a site is deliverable. Accordingly, both stages of the SSA process are used in determining the selection of allocated sites.

- Red is scored for a negative assessment where significant mitigation is required.

- Amber is scored where there are negative elements to the site and costly or difficult mitigation measures will be required.
- Green is scored for a generally positive assessment.

Within the different scoring categories sites will be ranked on their individual score - effectively the total of green scores minus red scores.

The second stage of the SSA process will ideally involve dialogue with the landowners and possibly other agencies, the aim is to agree sites that are both developable and deliverable. If sites are found that pass both tests they may be allocated for residential use in the NDP.

Contact Details	
Name(s) of Assessor(s)	Derek Doran BSc (Hons) MCIH MBA – Your Locale
Site - Details	
SHLAA/ current planning position:	No SHELAA reference.
Site name:	Floodplain opposite Derry's garden centre.

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
1. Site area and capacity:	Approximately 4.5HA in total about 111 units (three bedroomed houses).	Red
2. Current Use:	The site consists of two large arable fields this existing use will need to be reprovioned as agricultural land is a finite resource.	Amber
3. Adjoining Uses:	The site has open countryside to three elevations and is meaningfully attached to the current built form on Main Street, it is in the main adjacent to the locally recognised village envelope. Most of the location is currently classified as countryside.	Amber
4. Topography/ground condition:	The site is undulating and appears straightforward to develop.	Amber
5. Greenfield or Previously Developed Land?	A greenfield site.	Red
6. Site availability - Single ownership or multiple ownership?	Single ownership.	Green

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
7. Landscape & Visual Impact (LVIA) considerations.	The site is within the Soar Valley Landscape Character Area and is bounded on all elevations by trees and hedgerow, with open vistas to two aspects. The site sits within open countryside of a high quality and the location feels rural in character. Development of this scale would cause a very substantial harm to the overall setting and amenity of the village and the conservation area.	Red
8. Important Trees, Woodlands & Hedgerows?	The site has mature trees and hedges around all of its boundaries, some of the hedges may be of an ancient origin. A number of trees and sections of hedge will need to be destroyed to create a vehicular access in to and within the site.	Red
9. Good Quality Agricultural Land (Natural England classification).	The vast majority of the site is classified by Natural England as grade 4, poor quality land due to its susceptibility to flooding.	Green
10. Relationship with existing pattern of built development?	Development would significantly reduce the current area of separation between the neighbouring town of Sileby and the village built-form. Although the site is attached to the existing built form development of 111 units is over-development and will ruin the character of Cossington and is unsustainable.	Red
11. Local wildlife corridors affected	Less than a substantial harm.	Amber
12. Listed Building or important heritage assets and their setting?	The site overlooks a grade 2 listed property on Main Street and would cause a less than substantial harm.	Amber
13. Impact on the conservation area or its setting?	As the boundary of the Cossington conservation area is nearby development of this scale will have a severe negative impact on its setting and amenity, creating irreversible damage.	Red
14. A pavement access to and from the site?	An adequate footpath connection is found from Cossington Road and significant works will be required to access the whole site.	Amber
15. Impact on existing vehicular traffic?	A very negative impact on the village due to the location of the site and the sheer scale of development. The traffic generated will produce up to an additional 1,665 vehicle movements per day (111 units times 3 vehicles per property times 5 journeys per day). The peace and tranquillity of the village will be demolished.	Red
16. Adequate vehicular access to and from the site?	No adequate existing provision and it appears impossible to provide access without the active support of a third-party landowner, early dialogue with the highways authority (Leicestershire County Council) is	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
	advised as the site may not be accessible to additional vehicular traffic. The severe curvature of the road limits the potential of the access.	
17. Distance to designated village centre (War memorial)?	A distance of about 200m.	Amber
18. Distance to primary school entrance?	A distance of more than 210m.	Amber
19. Current existing informal/formal recreational opportunities on site?	Joggers/dog walkers.	Amber
20. Ancient monuments or archaeological remains?	None identified.	Green
21. Any public rights of ways/bridle paths?	A major PROW crosses through the centre of the site and re-routing will be required.	Red
22. Gas, oil, pipelines and networks & electricity transmission network?	Yes, a utility cable will need to be relocated, very straightforward.	Amber
23. Any nuisance issues (noise, light, odour)?	The site is adjacent to a main road that is heavily used, noise and headlight penetration will remain an ongoing concern.	Amber
24. Any known contamination issues?	A couple of waste tips identified within the site, they will require investigation for the site to proceed.	Amber
25. Any known flooding or surface water issues?	The whole of the site is within flood zone 3 and development would be opposed by the Environment Agency. In addition, it is very unlikely that the strategic flood risk assessment for the Soar valley will be changed without a massive increase in infrastructure spending.	Red
26. Any drainage issues?	Major pooling found on site, appears to be a major concern.	Red

Site – Sustainability criteria relating to Location, Surroundings & Constraints		RAG Rating
SUMMARY SCORE	Red - 11 Amber - 12 Green - 3	A HIGH RED scoring site of negative 8.