

#### Melton Local Plan Examination 2018

Matter 5 Response to Inspector's Questions on behalf of Barratt David Wilson Homes

### Matter 5: Other Housing Allocations (Policy C1 (A) and Appendix 1) and Reserve Sites (Policy C1 (B) and Appendix 1)

- 5.1 Overall, has the allocation of the sites in Policy C1 (A) been based on a clear, robust process of site assessment and informed by sustainability appraisal? In particular:
- i) Has an appropriate selection of potential sites been assessed?

It has been the consistent position of Barratt Homes in representations to the emerging Local Plan that there has been insufficient provision made for the settlement of Bottesford having regard to its sustainability credentials as by far and away the most sustainable village in the Borough as identified in the Settlement Roles and Relationships Report of April 2015. Appendix 1 – Village Performance (MBC/SS2). There has not therefore been an appropriate level of site allocations made within Bottesford commensurate with its position as the second largest and second most sustainable settlement after Melton Mowbray.

ii) Has an appropriate methodology been used and has it been applied consistently?

The methodology is considered to be appropriate yet as with all sustainability appraisals, much is left to individual interpretation and application of the respective criteria and substantially different conclusions can be derived from just modest adjustments to the SA criteria. Barratt's strongest objection is to the overall strategy of the proportionate approach and consider it is not a robust strategy in Melton Borough where very few settlements have a good base of services and facilities.

iii) Are the reasons for selecting the preferred sites and rejecting the others clear and sufficient? Would any inaccuracies in the assessments significantly undermine the overall conclusions?

Barratt are concerned that the reasons for selecting/ justifying one of the allocations within Bottesford have not been made sufficiently clear. They are particularly concerned at the absence of evidence in the public domain to justify the allocation of the substantial Rectory Farm allocation BOT 3 in respect of securing satisfactory vehicular access to the landholding. Appendix 1 of the local plan in respect of this proposed allocation states that *'The Council has been provided with information explaining how the access arrangements could be resolved.* This access information is not shared with consultees and raises questions of transparency, certainty and deliverability, particularly as there are no reasons given as to why access information for the largest allocation in Bottesford cannot be made available for scrutiny. In the absence of the opportunity for independent scrutiny of a key requirement for this site to come forward there is no chance to evaluate any potential inaccuracies which could justify de-allocation of the site and its substitution with an alternative site or the allocation of the alternative site such as the Belvoir Road landholding as an addition to bolster delivery within Bottesford.

Barratt Homes commissioned their own site accessibility appraisal in March 2016 (appended to this Statement), which looks at access options for both the Rectory Farm site and their own option landholding off Belvoir Road. The study references the 2014 SHLAA which concluded that

the Rectory Farm site was at that time undeliverable (whilst the Belvoir Road site was deliverable and developable in part). The engaged consultants, Waterman, looked at four potential access points to the Rectory Farm site and concluded that the site is not easily accessible and would require the use of third party land or the upgrade of existing infrastructure to achieve this. In comparison the Belvoir Road site is considered to be easily accessible by vehicular traffic and pedestrians, and access could be achieved via the consented (now completed) David Wilson Homes scheme and further access(es) could be provided from Belvoir Road given the significant site frontage along the adopted highway

The 2015 SHLAA (MBC/HS2) similarly concluded that Rectory Road was currently undeliverable whilst Belvoir Road was developable and deliverable. The 2016 final SHLAA database (MBC/HS3b) subsequently indicated however that the Rectory Farm site could be accessed off Normanton Lane, Devon Lane, Albert Street and Pinfold Lane and is deliverable. These are the access points examined by Waterman (see Statement Appendix) and where significant concerns have been raised. To date Barratt have not seen any publicly available evidence to change their view and remove their concerns about the housing allocation BOT3.

There is a further allocation in Bottesford - BOT 4, which raises concerns about its suitability relative to other assessed sites in terms of its relationship to the settlement form and setting. However, planning permission is now understood to be granted for this site which lies beyond a clear definitive and logical physical boundary to the northern side of the town and so any debate on its suitability is now largely meaningless.

iv) Has a reasonable balance been struck between the residual requirement figure for each of the settlements in Table 4 and the allocation of sites to meet the residual requirement as closely as possible?

In responses to Matters 2 and 3, Barratt have re-iterated their argument that the proportionate approach employed by the Council in establishing a residual housing requirement for its service centres is not a sound approach and they further dispute the positon taken by the Council that Bottesford is unable to meet its residual requirement through housing allocations. They maintain that where the more sustainable settlements have the capacity to reach and potentially exceed their residual capacity through an additional allocation, then such opportunity should be taken on the grounds of sustainability benefits rather than a pure mathematical balancing exercise.

5.2 Overall, will the allocations provide sufficient flexibility to help deliver the spatial strategy?

With the nature and scale of the Borough's housing requirement including two major urban neighbourhoods and a delivery strategy set out in the housing trajectory which proposes a massive step change in delivery as early as 2019/20, Barratt consider that there is insufficient flexibility within the strategy to deliver the spatial strategy particularly within the short term.

5.3 Are the specific policy requirements for the site allocations in Appendix 1 justified and effective? Together with the Plan policies as a whole, is there reasonable assurance that the development of the allocations will be sustainable and in accordance with national planning policy?

The policy requirements for the allocated sites as set out in Appendix 1 appear to be lacking in detail and do not appear to be tied to any timetable for the delivery of the essential infrastructure and flood mitigation relative to site commencement and/or dwelling occupation. In respect of BOT 3 there is no reference in the policy to the delivery of satisfactory vehicular access. The vagueness of this policy where access, flood risk, heritage and wildlife constraints are recorded in the subsequent site assessment does not at this stage give any substantive assurance that this allocation is sustainable and deliverable.

5.4 Is the identification of `reserve sites' in Policy C1 (B) appropriate in principle?

In principle, the identification of reserve sites in Policy C1 (B) is considered to be appropriate in the absence of further site allocations which Barratt would prefer. However, the policy completely lacks justification and clarity in a number of areas, not least in how it is intended to operate in sequence with the local plan review policy SS6

5.5 Has the basis for their identification been robust? Is there clear justification for the identification of the individual sites as reserve sites?

The Reserve Sites Policy does not include any sites within Bottesford or Asfordby which are the second and third largest and most sustainable settlements respectively within the Borough. It is the view of Barratt Homes that there are available and developable sites within Bottesford and given the sustainability credentials of that settlement above all others (excepting Melton Mowbray itself), the list of Reserve Sites is not robust or positively prepared irrespective of the merits of the currently identified sites.

5.6 Are the policy criteria of Policy C1 (B) justified and effective? How will criteria iii) and iv) be assessed?

Policy C1 (B) contains no stated trigger to determine when allocated sites are unable to meet the identified housing target for the relevant settlement category. Criterion ii) offers no guidance in this important area and the policy is therefore ineffective without any formal steer on when the development of Reserve Sites will be supported.

The timing of support for release of Reserve Sites must also be considered alongside the application of policy SS6 to trigger a local plan review and/or an alternative development strategy. This does not appear to have been fully thought through in a sequential manner.

The requirement that reserve site release must comply with each of the criteria of Policy SS3 only adds to the burden of ineffectiveness of this policy as drafted. Indeed, Barratt have made previous submission in representations to Focussed Changes that Policy SS3 itself is now cumbersome and bureaucratic in its requirements and likely to further delay rather than advance housing delivery.

#### **APPENDIX**

# LAND EAST OF BELVOIR ROAD & RECTORY FARM SITE APPRAISAL MARCH 2016



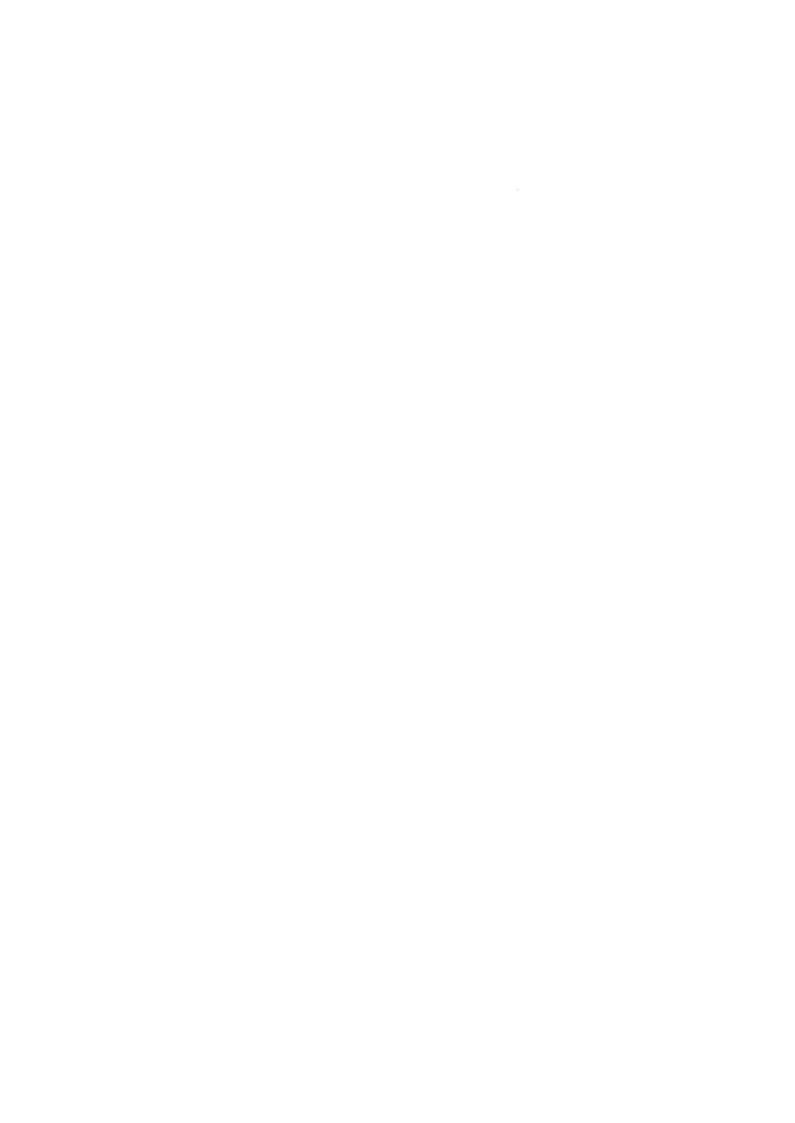


# Land East of Belvoir Road & Rectory Farm Site Appraisal

March 2016

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Client Name: Barratt David Wilson Homes

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#### Quality Assurance – Approval Status

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with Waterman Group's IMS (BS EN ISO 9001; 2008, BS EN ISO 14001; 2004 and BS OHSAS 18001;2007)

Issue

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Comments

Comments



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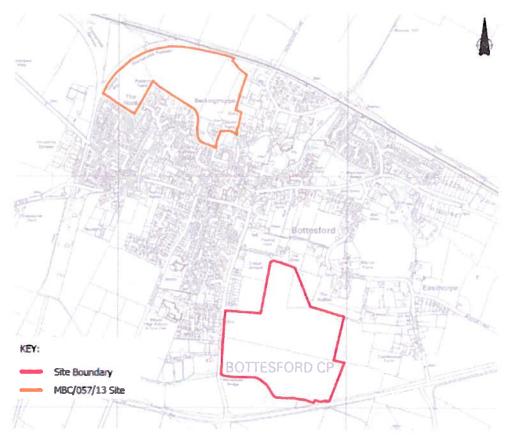
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#### 1. Introduction

Waterman Infrastructure and Environment Ltd have been appointed by Barratt David Wilson Homes to undertake an appraisal of two sites within Bottesford. The sites can be seen in **Figure 1** below and also shown within **Appendix A**.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



The purpose of the report is to provide an appraisal of the two sites, with specific regards to traffic and transportation, and provide Melton Borough Council with additional information in respect of the site on Belvoir Road, Bottesford. The report format is as follows:

- Section 2 will provide an overview of the Emerging Melton Borough Council Local Plan and provides details on the two sites being considered within this Site Appraisal;
- An overview of traffic and transportation regard to the two sites will be provided in Section 3; and
- Section 4 will provide a summary of the two sites and constraints and opportunities for both.



#### 2. Emerging Local Plan and Site Descriptions

#### 2.1 Melton Borough Council Emerging Local Plan

The Melton Borough Council draft Local Plan sets out a strategy for guiding development in the Borough up to 2036. It sets out a vision for the Borough, what the Borough would look like in 2036 and outlines the objectives to meet that vision.

The plan also sets out the amount of new homes needed for the plan period. The Draft Local Plan being consulting on identifies two sustainable urban extensions for Melton Mowbray and also indicates a selection of potential housing sites in the larger, better serviced villages, considered suitable to meet the identified housing need, including Bottesford.

Consultation on the Melton Borough Council draft Local Plan began on the 11 January 2016 and concludes on the 4 April 2016. This provides the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the Local Plan and to ensure the Council has considered all possible options before preparing the Submission document.

The policies map for Bottesford is provided in **Appendix B** and covers both Bottesford and Eastthorpe. This identifies a potential option for housing (Rectory Farm) and a number of other sites which have been rejected within the Emerging Local Plan, including the Barratt David Wilson Homes site on Belvoir Road.

#### 2.2 Rectory Farm (MBC/057/13)

A site appraisal for the Rectory farm site was undertaken and included within Melton Borough Council 2014 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). A copy of the site appraisal can be seen in **Appendix C** for information and the location of the site can be seen below in **Figure 2**.

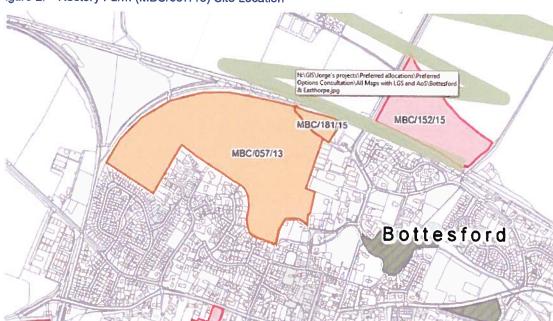


Figure 2: Rectory Farm (MBC/057/13) Site Location



Regarding access, it is noted that this could be taken via Normanton Lane, Devon Lane, Albert Street and Pinfold Lane. Accessibility is discussed in greater detail in Section 3 of this Appraisal document. With reference to accessibility, the site is identified as being located in close proximity to a number of local facilities including:

- Bus stops (120m)
- Local Centre (400m)
- Post office (400m)
- Health Centre (400m)
- Secondary School (950)

What is key, is that the conclusion in the SHLAA states that the Rectory Farm Site (MBC/057/13) is undeliverable.

#### 2.3 Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13)

A site appraisal for Land East of Belvoir Road was undertaken and included within Melton Borough Council 2014 SHLAA. A copy of the site appraisal can be seen in **Appendix D** for information and the location of the site can be seen below in **Figure 3** below.



Figure 3: Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13) Site Location



With reference to access, it is stated that this could be achieved through the approved David Wilson Homes scheme (Planning Ref: 12/00123/OUT). Alternative accesses to the north and west could also achieved through land under the control of the Marsh Trust. With regards to accessibility, the site is identified as being located in close proximity to a number of local facilities including:

- Bus stops (300m)
- Local Centre (700m)
- Post office (700m)
- Health Centre (850m)
- Secondary School (370)

Within the site appraisal it is acknowledged that parts of the site are suitable for development and that it is deliverable.



#### 3. Site Accessibility Appraisal

#### 3.1 Rectory Farm (MBC/057/13)

#### 3.1.1 Vehicular Access

As stated in Section 2, a number of potential access points have been identified into the Rectory Farm site. The potential access points are listed below and considered in more detail in this section of the report:

- Normanton Lane
- Devon Lane
- Albert Street
- Pinfold Lane

#### 3.1.2 Normanton Lane

Normanton Lane is a single carriageway road, which provides a north / south link between the A52 to the south and the villages of Normanton and Long Bennington to the north. As can be seen from the extract below, footways are provided on both sides of Normanton Lane and direct frontage access is provided along its route.



A review of the highway boundary plan provided by Leicestershire County Council Highways has been undertaken, as shown in **Appendix** E. As can be seen from the highway plan the Rectory Farm site does not abut up to Normanton Lane. At present therefore it would not be possible to deliver access directly from Normanton Lane without the need for third party land, which is not within the control of the promoters of the Rectory Farm site.



#### 3.1.3 Devon Lane

Devon Lane provides a link to Normanton Lane / Rectory Lane to the east and Chapel Street to the south.

To the south, Devon Lane is a narrow lane which crosses the River Devon through a ford, as can be seen in an extract taken from Google Maps below. It is possible that works could be undertaken to Devon Lane, as the verge on the right is part of the adopted highway and maintained by Leicestershire County Council. This would require the construction of a new bridge and would also have to consider the impact on adjacent properties in terms of maintaining access etc. Chapel Street is also not considered to be suitable for a significant increase in traffic, as it is narrow in nature with dwellings abutting up to the edge of the carriageway, making necessary highway improvements considerably difficult. Chapel Street is shown below for information. A number of properties on Chapel Street also do not have off-street parking, which could result in issues for vehicular movements.





To the east Devon Lane connects with Normanton Lane / Rectory Lane. As can be seen from the extract below, Devon Lane is a single carriageway road. A footway is present along the northern side of Devon Lane. As can be seen below, there is significant on-street parking, as a result of a number of properties not having off-street parking. This would likely restrict vehicular movements on Devon Lane and it is unlikely that a significant increase in vehicular movements along this route would be acceptable.





Furthermore, following a review of the highway boundary information provided by Leicestershire County Council and included in **Appendix E** it would appear that the site does not abut to Devon Lane. In order to achieve an access to Rectory Farm from Devon Lane therefore, it is likely that third party land would be required, which is not believed to be within the control off the promoters of the site.

#### 3.1.4 Albert Street

Albert Street is a single carriageway road, which provides a north / south link to High Street. As can be seen from the extracts below, a bridge is located to the north of Albert Street, which could provide access into the Rectory Farm site. It is likely that the bridge crossing the River Devon would need to be upgraded (and potential strengthened) to accommodate the increase in vehicular traffic and also to provide access for pedestrians (as the current width is not sufficient for a carriageway and footways.





Following a review of the highway boundary plan shown in **Appendix E** and images extracted from Google Earth, it is clear that frontages of those dwellings along the northern part of Albert Street (can just be seen to the left of the first extract above) have encroached into the highway. It would be necessary to return this back to highway land in order to deliver the improvements required to provide access to the site.

Further south Albert Street is typically 5.5m wide, and provides access to a large area of existing housing. Given the quantum of development proposed on the Rectory Farm site, it is likely that two points of access would ideally be required. As stated in Section 3.1.3 also, Chapel Street (which is accessible from Albert Street) is not suitable to accommodate significant increases in traffic and could potential become a rat-run for residents wishing to avoid any potential queuing at the Albert Street / High Street junction.

Although it is likely that access could be achieved to the Rectory Farm site from Albert Street, significant works would be required to the bridge at the northern end of Albert Street crossing the River Devon. Albert Street also serves a significant number of dwellings and may not be suitable therefore to serve the quantum being considered on the Rectory Farm site. Furthermore, traffic would likely rat-run via Chapel Street in order to avoid queues at the Albert Street / High Street junction which would not be acceptable.

#### 3.1.5 Pinfold Lane

Pinfold Lane is a single carriageway road which provides a north / south link to Nottingham Road / High Street. It is typically 5.5m wide and footways are present on both sides of the carriageway. Street lighting is present along Pinfold Lane. An extract is provided overleaf showing the northern section of Pinfold Lane in the vicinity of the site.



Following a review of the highway boundary plan provided by Leicestershire County Council and included in **Appendix E**, it would appear that the site does not abut to the edge of the highway extent. To facilitate access therefore it is likely that third party land would be required, which is not believed to be within the gift or control of the promoters of the Rectory Farm site.

Although Pinfold Lane may be suitable to serve the Rectory Farm site, given that direct access is not considered to be deliverable it is considered reasonable to assume that access can be taken from Pinfold Lane.



#### 3.1.6 Sustainable Accessibility

Within Appendix F a sustainability plan has been prepared showing the location of the Rectory Farm site in relation to Bottesford and local facilities. The site is considered to be reasonable walking distance, however this is dependent on where the main vehicular / pedestrian access it provided into the site. If access were to be taken from Pinfold Lane for example, the centre of Bottesford would be approximately 900m from the edge of the site (as opposed to the 400m which is referred to in to SHLAA site appraisal).

Furthermore, accessibility to education facilities in Bottesford (both primary and secondary) are restricted, as they are located to the south of the village. It is likely that a majority of these trips would likely take place by car.

#### 3.2 Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13)

#### 3.2.1 Vehicular Access

As stated in Section 2 of this report, within the SHLAA site appraisal for the Belvoir site it is stated that access could be taken via the approved David Wilson Homes scheme (Planning Ref:12/00123/OUT). This consented site takes access from Belvoir Road from a priority controlled T-junction.



Belvoir Road is a single carriageway road, which provides a north/south link between High Street to the north and the A52 to the south. Belvoir Road is subject to a 30mph speed limit and street lighting is present on the western side of the carriageway. Belvoir Road can be seen on the extract overleaf.



As can be seen below in **Figure 4** and included within **Appendix G** the alignment of the consented access to the David Wilson Homes site is shown (Green arrow). It is expected that this access could be extended into the wider site (blue arrow).

Cricket Ground

The Hollies

BOTTESFORD CP

Wintercass Bridge

Figure 4: Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13) Site Access Options



Additional access(es) may be required depending on the quantum of development proposed on Land East of Belvoir Road. As shown on the highway boundary plan extract below, the site has significant frontage along Belvoir Road and subject to further technical studies (such as junction spacing etc) it is expected that additional accesses could be achieved on land either controlled by the promoters, or on highway land maintained by Leicestershire County Council (potential access shown on yellow arrow on Figure 4).



A key consideration is that access to Land East of Belvoir Road would be taken directly from a principle route within the village. Access and associated vehicular traffic would cause little disruption to minor roads within the village, with the majority of residents travelling to / from the A52 to the south. With regards to impact on the local highway network therefore, this would be expected to be minimal from this site.

#### 3.2.2 Sustainable Accessibility

As can be seen in **Appendix F**, a sustainability plan has been prepared showing the location of the Belvoir Road site in relation to Bottesford and local facilities. Bottesford High Street and local bus stops are approximately 500-600m from site, with good pedestrian facilities available along Belvoir Road.

With regards to accessibility to education, Bottesford Primary School is approximately 400m to the east of the site, whilst Belvoir High School is approximately 450m to the east. Both sites would be accessible from the Belvoir site by pedestrians, and again there are good facilities available to facilitate this.



#### 4. Summary

#### 4.1 Rectory Farm (MBC/057/13)

Potential access points have been identified into the Rectory Farm site from a number of locations, which are listed below:

- Normanton Lane
- Devon Lane
- Albert Street
- Pinfold Lane

Following a review of the local highway network and highway boundary however, it would appear that a number of these are undeliverable or would require the use of third party land. In particular, the site is shown not to abut to the adopted highway from Normanton Lane, Devon Lane or Pinfold Lane and would likely require the use of third party land, which is not believed to be within the control of the promoters of the site.

Access from Albert Street is possible, however this would require the upgrading of an existing bridge crossing the River Devon. A number of properties and their drives etc. appeared to have encroached into the adopted highway and it would be necessary to return this back to highway land to deliver the necessary improvements. However, given the quantum of development proposed, it is unlikely that Albert Street is suitable to accommodate a significant increase in vehicular traffic. It is possible that traffic could rat-run through Chapel Street, which is narrow in nature with on-street parking observed and dwellings in close proximity to the edge of the highway.

Furthermore, with regards to sustainability the site is located within an acceptable distance from the centre of Bottesford. With regards to education, the site is located someway from existing facilities in Bottesford and it is likely therefore that a number of these journeys would be undertaken by car.

In summary therefore, it is considered that the site is not easily accessible and would require the use of third party land or the upgrade of existing infrastructure to achieve this. Furthermore, depending on the access location, the site is within a reasonable walking distance Bottesford centre, but is somewhat detached from local education facilities (both primary and secondary).

#### 4.2 Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13)

It is proposed that access be taken from Belvoir Road. This could be achieved via the approved David Wilson Homes scheme (Planning Ref:12/00123/OUT). Given the quantum of development however, further access(es) may be required. Following a review of the highway boundary information the site has significant frontage on to the adopted highway. Subject to further technical work therefore, an additional access could be provided from Belvoir Road.

Given the location of the site also, it is unlikely that this would impact on the local highway network in Bottesford with the majority of associated vehicular trips travelling to / from the A52, to the south of the village.

With reference to accessibility, the site is considered to be reasonably located to access Bottesford village centre, with good pedestrian links on Belvoir Road. The site is also well located to access existing education facilities, which are to the west of the site and within a reasonable walking distance.



In summary therefore, the site is considered to be easily accessible by vehicular traffic and pedestrians. Access could be achieved via the consented David Wilson Homes site, and further access(es) could be provided from Belvoir Road, given the significant site frontage on the adopted highway network. Furthermore, the site is well located to facilitate pedestrians accessing local education and other facilities within Bottesford.



#### **APPENDICES**

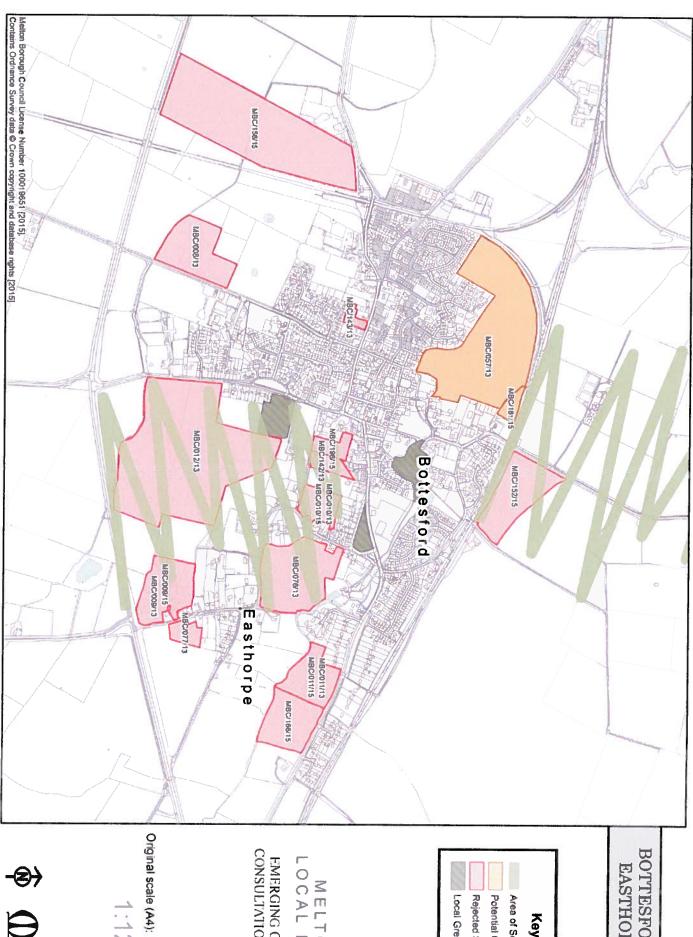


#### A. Site Location Plan



#### B. Bottesford Local Plan Policies Map

Document Reference: R.2.1.NJH



BOTTESFORD & EASTHORPE

Area of Separation

Key

Local Green Space Rejected SHLAA Site Potential Option

MELTON LOCAL PLAN

EMERGING OPTIONS CONSULTATION DRAFT

1:12,500



C. Rectory Farm (MBC/057/13) Site Appraisal

Site ID MBC/057/13

Site address Rectory Farm, Bottesford

Planning history None

Adjoining use Residential, agricultural, railway

**Northing** 339391 **Easting** 480289

Area (ha) 15.00

Number of units 300 to 450 dwellings

**Density** 30 x 15 = 450 units at 30dph

Type of units Wide mix of housing

**Constraints** 

Land ownership Unknown

**Biodiversity constraints** Need to consider river Devon

**Contamination** N/A **Landscape constraints** None

Access description Off Normanton Lane, Devon Lane, Albert Street and Pinfold Lane

Flood risk Yes, flood zones 2 and 3

Mitigation Possible

Accessibility

Bus stop120 mLocal Centre400 mPost Office400 mHealth Centre400 mOpen Space700 mSecondary School950 m

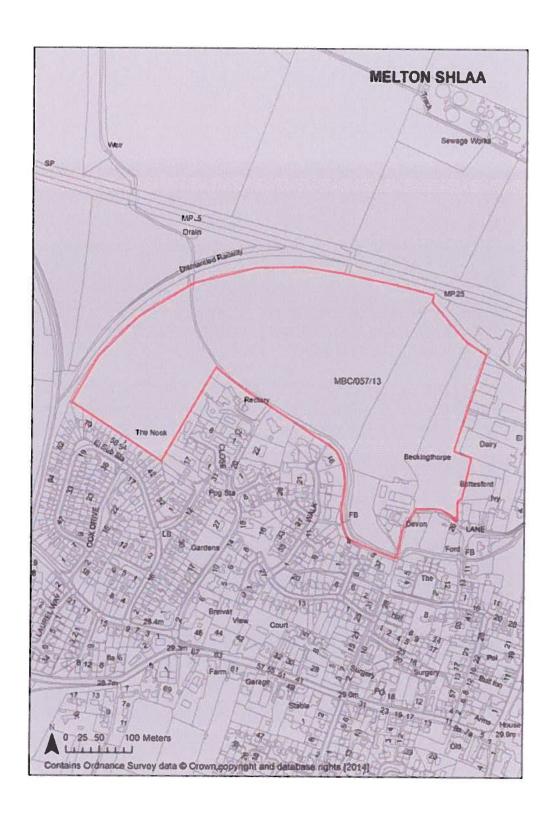
**Conclusions** 

Suitable Yes - parts of site

Available Yes
Achievable Yes
Deliverable No

**Developable** Yes - parts of site

**Currently undeliverable** 





D. Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford (MBC/012/13) Site Appraisal

Site ID MBC/012/13

Site address Land East of Belvoir Road, Bottesford

Planning history 12/00123/OUT and outstanding REM 13/00722/REM relate to

adjoining site

Adjoining use Residential and recreational ground, agricultural land

**Northing** 338287 **Easting** 480730

Area (ha) 20.47

Number of units Subject to negotiation on need, location and impact, but there is

potential capacity for a major housing scheme in the flood zone 1

land. 30dph (20.47 ha site) = 614 units

Density Approx. 30 dwellings per hectare
Type of units 2-5 bed units and affordable housing

**Constraints** 

Land ownership The Marsh Trust/ option to Barratt/ David Wilson Homes

Biodiversity constraintsPossibleContaminationNoneLandscape constraintsPossible

Access description Access available from newly approved David Wilson Homes scheme

on Belvoir Road. Ref (12/00123/OUT). Marsh trust do own other land to the north and to the west from which alternative/ additional site

access could be gained.

Flood risk Yes, site within zones 2 and 3.

Mitigation Maybe

Accessibility

Bus stop300 mLocal Centre700 mPost Office700 mHealth Centre850 mOpen Space400 mSecondary School370 m

**Conclusions** 

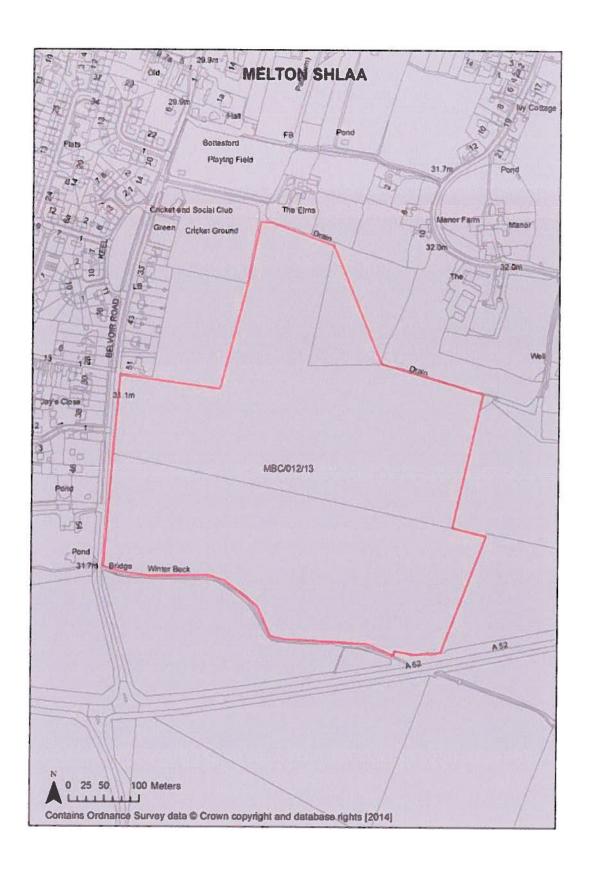
Suitable Yes - part of site

Available Yes

Achievable Yes - part of site

**Deliverable** Yes

**Developable** Yes - part of site





E. Highway Boundary Plan



#### F. Sustainability Plan



G. Land East of Belvoir Road Access Strategy



## UK and Ireland Office Locations



