



enquiries@afaplanningconsultants.co.uk

www.afaplanningconsultants.co.uk

Free Phone: 0800 088 6415

UK company registration number: 05243251

VAT Registration No: 911 437 056

PLANNING STATEMENT

**OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 26 NEW DWELLINGS
WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED
AT
LAND AT HIND QUARTERS, MAIN STREET, BOTCHESTON,
LEICESTERSHIRE, LE9 9FF**

London:

The Lansdowne Building
2 Lansdowne Road, Croydon
London. CR9 2ER

Gloucestershire (Postal Address):

Unit 1, Nailors Court
The Slipway, Back of Avon
Tewkesbury. GL20 5UR

Cambridgeshire:

4 Fenice Court,
Phoenix Business Park, St Neots
Cambridgeshire. PE19 8EP

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1.0 Site Description and Proposal

1.1 Site Description

Botcheston is a small village located approximately 10 kilometres to the west of the city centre of Leicester. The larger village of Desford is located approximately 1.5 kilometres to the south west. Development follows a primarily linear pattern along the central Main Street, which runs in a predominantly east to west direction through the village.

The village of Botcheston is served by The Greyhound Public House as well as the Botcheston Village Hall.

The planning application site is located to the western edge of the village, on the south-western side of Main Street as it becomes Merrylees Road. It consists of a roughly triangular wedge that fronts onto Main Street/Merrylees Road, before falling away to the Rothley Brook to the west of Botcheston.

The planning application site sits outside of the boundary of the village in the countryside and is presently in equestrian use.

1.2 Proposed Development

This outline planning application seeks to provide 26 new dwellings within the planning application site.

Seven of the new dwellings would face towards Main Street/Merrylees Road – separated by a new access road running parallel with the existing highway – with a further 19 homes located either side of the access road as it travels to the western edge of the application site.

A Proposed Site Layout Plan accompanies the planning application, showing these schematic details, although the detailed design, scale, layout, landscaping and access arrangements constitute reserved matters. Nevertheless, it is envisaged that the access into the site will be from the existing access point into the site.

It is proposed that 40% of the 26 new dwellings would be brought forward as affordable housing. Consequently, for this development, ten dwellings would be affordable housing units. Of these, seven of the dwellings would

be for affordable rent units, and three dwellings would be for shared ownership housing.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 Site History

There is no planning history relating to the planning application site.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 National and Local Policy documents

Of relevance and consideration for the purposes of this outline planning application are the following:

The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF)

The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted in December 2024.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2009.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD 2006-2026

The DPD was adopted in July 2016.

3.2 The Principle of Development

The designation of the site

The applicants have engaged with the Council in respect of their aspirations to develop the planning application site for housing. Following the Call for Sites exercise as part of the Local Plan Review, the site was identified as being suitable for residential development. The site has subsequently been included, and designated as Site AS195, within the

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Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Report of 2022.

As set out within the SHELAA, paragraph 69 of the NPPF states that 'planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:

- a) specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption; and
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6- 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.'

On this basis, the SHELAA assesses the site as being capable of delivering 36 dwellings within a timeframe of 6 to 10 years.

Housing Land Supply

Chapter 5 of the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to deliver a sufficient supply of homes to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes without unnecessary delay.

Paragraph 73 of the NPPF states that small and medium sized sites, such as windfall sites, can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirements of an area. Furthermore, these are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and the NPPF identifies that they are often completed relatively quickly.

As of April 2024, the Council had a 5.26-year supply of land for housing. However, the most recent figures as of April 2025 demonstrate that the Council has a housing land supply of up to 3.95 years. This represents a significant shortfall in housing land supply.

The shortage of housing land supply should be the starting point for the consideration of this outline planning application. As set out in paragraph 11d) of the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of granting planning permission where the policies for determining the planning application are out of date. Paragraph 11d) explains that "this includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing

sites". This is the case unless "any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination".

As a consequence of this, the policies of the Core Strategy are considered out of date and only offer limited weight when considering this outline planning application.

The NPPF further identifies that when considering the planning balance where there is a recognised shortage of housing land supply, consideration must be made with reference to paragraphs 66 and 84 of chapter 5 of the NPPF; 91 of chapter 7; 110 and 115 of chapter 9; 129 of chapter 11; and 135 and 139 of chapter 12. It is these paragraphs of the NPPF that will be focused on within this Planning Statement.

3.2 The Considerations of the NPPF

Affordable Housing Provision

Paragraph 66 of the NPPF states that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across Social Rent, other affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures.

Policy 15 of the Core Strategy reinforces this, identifying that a minimum of 2090 affordable homes need to be provided in the borough from 2006 to 2026, with at least 480 dwellings contributing to this target in rural areas. The policy continues by stating that there is an expectation that a proportion of affordable housing will be provided on eligible sites. In respect of Rural Sites, the expectation is that for sites where four new dwellings or more will be provided, then the affordable housing provision should be 40%. Of this 40%, the expected tenure split is 75% social rented and 25% intermediate housing.

With reference to Policy 15, the application has been submitted on the basis that 10 of the 26 proposed dwellings within the site will consist of affordable housing. This represents a 38.5% provision of affordable

housing within the planning application site, which meets the objectives of both the NPPF and Policy 15 of the Core Strategy. Of these 10 homes, it is anticipated that 7 of them will be social rented, with 3 consisting of intermediate housing.

The affordable housing provision from this one site will provide a significant level of affordable housing within the Rural Area, meeting the Council's identified need as well as the needs of the rural community.

Location of the site in the countryside

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, subject to a range of criteria.

In this instance, the homes will not be isolated, forming a natural linear continuation of the built form of the village of Botcheston as one travels along Main Street into Merrylees Road. As such, the proposed development is not in breach of the requirements of paragraph 84 of the NPPF.

Sustainable Transport

Section 9 of the NPPF focuses on the promotion of sustainable transport. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF follows this core principle, stating that "significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health."

Paragraph 110 continues, however, by acknowledging that this core aim is not always achievable, depending on the location of the development, stating that "opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions **will vary between urban and rural areas**, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making" (our emphasis).

Importantly, paragraph 83 of the NPPF looks to promote the provision of rural housing, identifying the benefits of locating housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The principle aim of paragraph 83 is to "identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services". It is further

acknowledged that development in one village may support the services of a nearby village to survive.

In respect of sustainable transport provision within Botcheston, the village is served by bus services LC15, LC15A and LC15B. As confirmed by Leicestershire County Council, service LC15 is an existing county council supported fixed route bus service that extends some journeys in to Bagworth and Thornton. Service LC15A is a taxi based service providing two return peak time scholar and commuter journeys to Groby from Bagworth, Thornton, Merry Lees, and Botcheston. This is primarily to cater for scholars travelling to and from college in Groby, although the service also allows workers to travel and interchange with other bus services in Groby for onward travel. Finally, LC15B is a taxi based Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service operating between 6.30 a.m. and 7p.m. This is a bookable service that enables residents in Botcheston to travel to Coalville, Groby and Glenfield (allowing onward connections where necessary).

In addition, bus service 153 runs through the nearby village of Desford, connecting Leicester with Market Bosworth. Approximately 17 buses a day run on this route.

Consequently, it can be concluded that despite its rural location, Botcheston is very well served in respect of public transport. The 26 new dwellings would not be reliant on the public car and the proposed development accords with the NPPF.

Botcheston is also very well connected to the public rights of way network, with footpaths running in all directions from the village. In particular, a public right of way links the village with Desford, some 1500 metres to the south.

Furthermore, the creation of 26 new dwellings will provide invaluable support for the existing public house within Botcheston, The Greyhound, as well as the continued running of the village hall. This accords with the fundamental aims of paragraph 83 of the NPPF.

Density and design of development

Paragraph 129 of the NPPF states, amongst other matters, that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land,

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taking into account a range of criteria; the first of which is the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it.

There is a clearly identified need within the Core Strategy for new homes, hence the identified shortage in housing land supply. The proposed development will meet some of this overwhelming need, being situated on land that is readily suited for the accommodation of new housing.

Paragraph 129 also requires that development seeks to maintain the prevailing character and setting of an area, together with securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

This is reinforced within paragraph 135 of the NPPF, which requires, amongst other matters, development to function well and add to the overall quality of the area, as well as being visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. The NPPF continues in this regard by stating that development should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

It is important to state that the proposed development is only set out in a schematic layout at present. However, it is clear that this is an effective layout for this site, being one that complements the density and character of other residential properties within the village of Botcheston, following the broadly linear development pattern that is evident along the Main Street that runs through the centre of the village. As such, the proposed development will be of a scale, layout and density that accords with and complements the existing built development of the village, in accordance with paragraph 129 of the NPPF. Landscaping proposals, as well as the finalised design of the residential properties, will be able to assist in ensuring that the development is sympathetic to its nearby – as well as wider – surroundings.

3.3 Other material considerations

Although the lack of a five year land supply for housing renders the policies of the Development Plan as being out of date, it is still important to set out how the proposed development will be in general accordance with the aims of the Development Plan.

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Landscape

Policy DM4 of the DPD seeks to safeguard the countryside and ensure that there is settlement separation. The policy states, inter alia, that development should not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside, and that it should not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements.

Within the Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment 2017, the planning application site is located within the Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA). Within this LCA, the key characteristics include:

- Gently rolling landform rising to the north from the lower lying land around the River Soar.
- Clustered villages of varying size centred on crossroads.
- Predominantly arable farmland with clustered areas of industry and recreational facilities near to the village fringes.
- Large to medium sized field pattern defined by single species hawthorn hedgerows.
- Good network of footpaths link settlements.
- Open views where hedgerows have been removed, giving an impression of a large scale landscape.

One of the identified Landscape Strategies within this LCA is to conserve the relatively small-scale villages and ensure any new development contributes positively to the character and built vernacular.

The proposed development will not result in any significant erosion of the separation between Botcheston and its neighbouring settlements; all of which are significantly physically separate.

Furthermore, the proposed development will be seen as a natural and relatively small-scale extension to the existing village of Botcheston, continuing the linear pattern of development that runs along Main Street. It will be seen as a positive contributor to the existing village in accordance with the aims of the Landscape Character Assessment.

Flood Risk

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Policy DM7 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD considers pollution and flood control. The policy states, inter alia, that there is an overriding need to ensure that development does not create or exacerbate flooding by being located away from areas of flood risk unless adequately mitigated against in line with National Policy.

This is reinforced within the NPPF, with paragraph 170 stating that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk.

The planning application site is almost entirely located within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of fluvial flooding). Where the site overlays both Flood Zones 2 and 3, this is at the western extent of the site where there will not be any form of built development. Accordingly, the proposed development will not create or exacerbate flooding, in line with the DPD and the NPPF. In order to demonstrate this, a Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted at the reserved matters stage of the planning process.

Amenity issues

Policy DM10 of the DPD states that developments will be permitted providing that they do not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion (criterion a); and so long as the occupiers of the development are not adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site (criterion b).

It is clear from the Proposed Site Layout Plan that accompanies this application that the new residential dwellings would have a negligible impact upon the privacy of existing residents. The new dwellings are sufficiently distant from the existing properties along Main Street, with those that are proposed alongside the existing houses on the southern side of Main Street following the existing pattern of development. This means that there will be no sense of overlooking and no subsequent visual intrusion. Similarly, the amenities of the future occupiers of the new homes will be protected as there will be no invasion of their privacy from the existing dwellinghouses, or from within the development itself. The new houses themselves will be built to high quality with sufficient private garden space (again as per the Good Design Guide and nationally described space standards).

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The proposed development therefore accords with the DPD in this regard.

Traffic Impacts and Highway Safety

Policy DM17 of the DPD provides a general support for development that does not have significant adverse impacts on highway safety. There is an existing access point onto Main Street that can be utilised and upgraded to ensure that it provides a safe and satisfactory access/egress point; not only for car users but also pedestrians and cyclists. This issue can be dealt with in liaison with the Highways Authority at the Reserved Matters stage.

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on transport grounds if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network as a result of the development would be “severe” or if there are unacceptable safety issues. The proposed development consists of just 26 new dwellings. This is a relatively small development that will have a negligible impact upon the efficiency of the local highway network. There will be no cumulative impact upon the highway network and, as such, permission should not be refused.

DM18 of the DPD requires adequate parking provision on-site. The site benefits from sufficient land in order to be able to accommodate on-plot parking for each dwelling, in line with local parking standards.

Biodiversity

Policy DM6 of the DPD stresses the importance of conserving and enhancing features of nature conservation.

At present, the site is used for equestrian activities. The existing site does not offer a great deal in terms of suitable nature conservation habitats. However, the application site offers a significant potential opportunity to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This can be primarily achieved through landscape planting, with native species being used to encourage biodiversity within the site. Such details will be provided, together with a full assessment of the BNG for the site, at the Reserved Matters stage.

Heritage Assets

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The village of Botcheston is not located within a designated Conservation Area. Furthermore, there are no listed buildings present within the village or within the vicinity of the planning application site. Consequently, it is not proposed to submit a Heritage Assessment as part of this planning application.

4.0 Conclusions

In conclusion, the proposal for 26 dwellings at of Hind Quarters, Main Street, Botcheston is considered to consist of sustainable development in principle.

In considering the planning balance, it is clear that there is a recognised shortage of the supply of housing land within the borough of Hinckley and Bosworth. The proposed development meets the needs in providing 26 new dwellings. The site has already been assessed as being suitable for residential development by its inclusion within the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Report of 2022.

It is clear that if there if the Local Planning Authority has any residual concerns regarding the development, then these can be addressed either through the imposition of conditions or through the provision of further technical details at the Reserved Matters stage.

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