

Harborough District Local Plan – Inspection Matters, Issues and Questions

The following challenge and proposed improvement/mitigation to the plan are primarily with regard to the impact on Broughton Astley,

Matters 7

Matter 7: Locating Development in the Right Place

Whether the Plan is justified, effective and consistent with national policy in relation to Locating Development in the Right Place?

Policies AP01, AP03, AP04, SA01, SA02, SA03, SA04, DS01 and DS02

LARGE VILLAGES

Plan Policies

Broughton Astley

SA01, DS01

Site BA1: Land off Frolesworth Road (475 homes)

Site Specific Questions

Broughton Astley

Site BA1: Land off Frolesworth Road (475 homes) Policy SA01

1. Is there sufficient community infrastructure within Broughton Astley to support the addition of a further 475 homes? If not, how could the impact of the increase in population be mitigated?
2. Would there be any impact from the development on the operation of the nearby cricket ground?
3. Could the highways impact of the proposed development be adequately alleviated?
4. Is the wording of the policy effective? How would the provision of a Heritage Impact Assessment impact on the determination of a planning application on the site?
5. What is the status of the wildlife site referenced in criterion 6?
6. Are there any further existing operations nearby which may be impacted by the proposed development? If so, how will the agent of change principle be followed?

To respond to each in turn

- 1) *It can be argued that since the expansion of Broughton Astley during the period 2014 – 2025, the current infrastructure is already at or exceeding capacity. One example is the sewage treatment works which is rated for fewer than 9000 population currently has to deal with a population of over 10,000. With the proposed increase of 475 dwellings but actually a most likely increase of over 670 new dwelling then a further 1,500 additional residents will need to be catered for.*

There is no costed evidence to show how new infrastructure is going to be provide in a timely manner.

If some of this cost is to be born on the preferred site developer then it is unclear if the site is even viable and hence undeliverable.

Similarly, the known flood problems on Frolesworth Road would need to be mitigated. Although new regulations require a reduction in run off rates, there is not a costed credible plan proposed to ensure the development does not increase the flood for residents on Frolesworth Road. Serious questions need to be answered about how any SUDs system would be maintained over the long term if the development took place. The site cannot be allowed to proceed unless there are guaranteed solutions in place before any development was allowed to begin. The cost of these mitigations are unknown and could make the site unviable. This must be established before the Local Plan is adopted so that any modification to the LP can be made.

The traffic infrastructure is unlikely to cope with the proposed Frolesworth Road development. No traffic modelling has been presented to determine how much mitigation would be required and whether the cost of any mitigation would render the site unviable.

- 2) It is likely that the development on Frolesworth Road would only be limited impact on the cricket club other than the volume of traffic making access and exit from the recreation ground more difficult.*
- 3) It is unclear what is being proposed to mitigate the increased traffic on Frolesworth Road. In some of the traffic assessments there is mention of traffic lights at the Bulls Head Cross roads. However, this junction is already heavily congested at peak times and the introduction of traffic lights would grid lock the village at peak times.
No costed credible plans have been proposed for the traffic mitigations although it has been noted that an original budget of £3.4M has been reduced to £1.0M without explanation. It is not considered credible to mitigate these off-site traffic issues for such a sum. The viability of the site must be investigated in full before the Local Plan can be consider sound.*
- 4) A heritage Impact assessment for the War memorial has not been presented. Any remodelling of the Bulls Head cross roads would be required to respect this key heritage asset.*
- 5) No details have been provided.*
- 6) The proposed site on Frolesworth Road and the resultant traffic will have a very significant impact on the Tea Pots Nursery located on the corner of Frolesworth Road and Main Street. Parents drop off their children at peak times and any traffic mitigations are likely to make access and exit from their car park extremely difficult. This would deter parents from using this child care and thus damage the business, potentially causing it to fail. With child care being a service which is in short supply, and loss of provision must be avoided.*

Proposal to Improve the Local Plan

To remove Frolesworth Road as the preferred site for housing development and replace it with the multi-site proposal from BAPC which is fully supported by a proper consultation. This avoids the need

for the traffic mitigations thus saving over £1.0, even if the lowest, and not considered credible budget, is used.

Note this does not solve the problem of the excess number of people impacting the sewage works. An increase in capacity must be put in place so as to be operational in parallel with the build out of any new dwellings.

As noted from the HDC documents

1. A comprehensive masterplan is required for this site.
2. A high-voltage power line, with accompanying pylons cutting diagonally across the site from north to south, requires an appropriate buffer and development offset.
3. Mitigate impacts on local roads, particularly the B581, B4114, and A426, through necessary improvements to ensure highway capacity and safety. Improvements may be required at the Main Street/Station Road/Cosby Road junction, potentially involving traffic signals. The impacts will be informed by a Transport Assessment that sets out off-site and on-site transport measures to mitigate impacts from the development. Footway improvements and connections should be included, along with discussions around extending bus service provision to serve the development.
4. Two Public Rights of Way (W60 and W48) cross the site: one runs west-east, and another follows the north-western boundary. These must be incorporated into the development proposals.
5. A Potential Local Wildlife Site is identified towards the north-western edge of the site, associated with a pond. Any development must respect and protect this area with appropriate mitigation measures.
6. Development of the site must contribute to the reasonable costs of the provision of primary and secondary education expansion, as necessary.
7. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required to assess the risk of surface water flooding and access/egress arrangements along Frolesworth Road. A carefully considered and integrated flood resilient and sustainable drainage design will also be required, including a site-specific Surface Water Drainage plan. The sequential approach to site layout should be taken.
8. The site is in the catchment zone of the Narborough Bog SSSI, and any development must provide sufficient evidence that the drainage will not cause significant impact to the designated site.
9. There are heritage assets in the vicinity, including Grade II* Church of St Mary, and a Heritage Impact Assessment will be required as part of any planning application.
10. A contaminated land assessment will be required to address potential risks and mitigation arising from agricultural development on parts of the site.

As can be seen from the long list of investigations and high-cost mitigations, the proposed site is not deliverable. It has long been the contention that this is the least favourable site, carrying the highest risk and higher adverse impact.

There is no costed plan for the traffic mitigations nor a credible plan for flood mitigation.

This site will require the majority of traffic movements to pass through the Bulls Head crossroads which is a key crossing point for children attending Old Mill Primary school and Thomas Estley Community college. Installing traffic light will create significant congestion, effectively gridlocking the village both morning and night time.

Frolesworth Road is a "rat run" for workers from Narborough, Whetstone, Littlethorpe and Cosby travelling to Magna Park. With the continued expansion of Magna park and along the A5, these traffic volumes can only increase.

Frolesworth Road is a known flood area and despite sketches of some balancing ponds no detailed cost plans have been put forward. There are major concerns over the long-term maintenance and operation of any SUDs systems installed.

Proposed Improvements to the Local Plan.

To make the Local Plan less risky and more deliverable is for the Frolesworth Road site to be replaced by the four sites proposed by BAPC and supported by the consultation.

Note two of the sites already have planning approval demonstrating that this option is deliverable, and less impactful. It also provides a better balance of population for accessing shops and routes through and out of the village.