

# GREAT HORWOOD PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2014–2031

## Site Assessments, April 2014

### 1. Sites considered for the Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 The Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan (GHPNP) proposes development on specific sites within the designated Neighbourhood Area, and this document describes the process used for allocating those sites. The process was undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Team (NPT) on behalf of Great Horwood Parish Council, the qualifying body preparing the Plan.

1.2 The initial stage of this process was undertaken in the summer of 2012. It was noted that the current AVDC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA 2009) did not list any sites in Great Horwood on which ten or more houses could be built (NPT minutes, 19 Sep 2012), and so local knowledge was used to identify possible sites. Five potential sites had been found by November (NPT minutes, 7 Nov 2012), and these sites are labelled A–E below.

1.3 An assessment of the five sites was carried out, and it was found that sites A and B were unsuitable for development. Although Site E was suitable, its ownership was in three parts and the owner of one part was not willing to sell. The site was therefore not available. Sites C and D were found to be suitable in principle for development. This assessment was confirmed in the updated SHLAA published by AVDC in 2013.

1.4 A public meeting was held on 18 May 2013 to discuss the proposition that the GHPNP should promote development on Sites C and D, with 20 dwellings on each site. Feedback from this meeting indicated disquiet that all development was to be concentrated at the eastern end of the village. There was also concern about extending the village along Little Horwood Road (site D).

1.5 As a result of the view expressed at the public meeting, it was agreed to re-assess Site B (NPT minutes, 21 May 2013). Discussions with AVDC confirmed that this site was not suitable, in that it was detached from the village (NPPF paragraph 55) and that it had inadequate vehicle access (Spring Lane is congested, and reopening the route through Greenway Business Park would involve using roads not suitable for residential traffic).

1.6 In order to progress, further sites were investigated. A modified proposal, for developments on site C and a new site F, was suggested in the July edition of the parish magazine “Focus”, but again there was concern about all proposed development being at the eastern end of the village.

1.7 After a pause for reflection, it was decided to investigate the possibility of slightly smaller developments on three sites rather than two. The option of a small development on part of site A, of a nature that would overcome previous objections, was considered. However the landowner indicated that the site was not available.

1.8 A new site G was considered, and this was found to be suitable. The landowner has confirmed that this site is available.

1.10 The concerns of residents about a development on Site D have been ameliorated by reducing its size, and by using the proposed developments on sites D and F to create an attractive entrance to the village.

1.11 As a result of these considerations, the GHPNP proposes developments on sites D, F and G, of fifteen dwellings on each site. A Community Event held on 29/30 March 2014 provided details of these proposals, and also provided opportunities for the promoters of other sites (see section 2) to describe their proposals. Feedback from this event indicated strong support for the GHPNP proposals.

## 2. Other proposed sites

2.1 The owner of Site C is no longer willing to make this site available for the GHPNP, and has provided an option to a developer. The development proposed for this site would comprise 48 dwellings and would not accord with the spatial policy proposed in the GHPNP. This site is therefore not included in the GHPNP.

2.2 A proposal for a development of 46 houses on land off Willow Road has been made. This site has not previously been considered as there is inadequate vehicle access along Willow Road. In addition this development would not accord with the spatial policy proposed in the GHPNP. This site is therefore not included in the GHPNP.

2.3 A proposal for a development of 5 houses on land of Wigwell Gardens has been made. This site has been found unsuitable for development in the SHLAA 2009, and also in the SHLAA 2013, as there are issues concerning access and impacts on landscape and the Great Horwood Conservation Area. This site is therefore not included in the GHPNP.

## 3. Site assessments

The table below gives assessments for the sites considered during the preparation of the GHPNP, together with the other sites that have been proposed.

<b>Site A (3.9 ha)</b>	
Land south of Pilch Lane	
	<p><b>SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/011):</b> Not suitable – long distance landscape views to and from the site, with a high recreational value. Road access also inadequate.</p> <p><b>GHPNP assessment:</b> Investigate whether a development on a small part of the site might be acceptable. However the landowner indicates that the site is not available.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Not included.</p>
<b>Site B (2.4 ha)</b>	
The Old Mill, land off Spring Lane.	

	<p><b>SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/015):</b> Not suitable – site forms a redundant farm yard which is poorly related to the village. Poor vehicular access from Spring Lane which would exasperate (!) current traffic congestion.</p> <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework (2012) paragraph 55:</b> “Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances” and the listed special circumstances do not apply.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Not included.</p>
<p><b>Site C (2.4 ha)</b> Land south of Weston Road and The Close.</p>	
	<p><b>SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/013):</b> Suitable – no significant constraints, although any development should be designed to minimise impact on long distance views.</p> <p><b>GHPNP assessment:</b> A large development would be inappropriate. Objections received, but a small development would be possible; however the landowner has indicated that the site is not now available for a small development.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Not included.</p>
<p><b>Site D (2.4 ha)</b> Land south of Little Horwood Road</p>	
	<p><b>SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/014):</b> Part suitable – development should follow the existing building line and be low density to match the adjoining dwellings.</p> <p><b>GHPNP assessment:</b> Objections received, but a small development would be possible.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Development on part of this site is included.</p>
<p><b>Site E (1 ha)</b> Land east of Nash Road</p>	
	<p><b>SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/012):</b> Not currently developable - Landowner/developer confirm site is not available for development.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Not included.</p>
<p><b>Site F (0.85 ha – part)</b> Land north of Little Horwood Road</p>	
	<p><b>AVDC preliminary assessment:</b> Part suitable – 15 dwellings could be accommodated reflecting the nature of the development surrounding, this could be extending to 16 dwellings to allow for 8 semi’s to be built.</p> <p><b>GHPNP assessment:</b> Objections received, but a small development would be possible.</p> <p><b>GHPNP site proposals:</b> Development on part of this site is included.</p>

**Site G (1.87 ha)**

Land west of Nash Road

**AVDC preliminary assessment:** Part suitable – whilst there are no significant constraints to preclude development, when compared to other potential sites (particularly against those located on the eastern side of the village) there are some issues to be aware of.

**GHPNP assessment:** A small development would be possible.

**GHPNP site proposals:** Development on part of this site is included.

**Site H (1.73 ha)**

Land south of Willow Road

**GHPNP assessment:** Size of proposed development is significantly greater than allowed by the GHPNP spatial policy. Also, poor vehicular access from Willow Road.

**GHPNP site proposals:** Not included.

**Site J (0.98 ha)**

Land off Wigwell Gardens

**SHLAA assessment (SHL/GHW/008):** Not suitable – site forms an important area of green space which is near to listed buildings. Development would have significant landscape and Conservation Area impacts. There is also no highway access.

**GHPNP assessment:** Evidence has been presented of legal right to use Wigwell Gardens for access, but this evidence has been challenged and might require judicial determination. Development would add to congestion in the part of Spring Lane near Winslow Road. In addition, the site is in the Conservation Area.

**GHPNP site proposals:** Not included.

