

Boxford Neighbourhood Plan

Site Options and Assessment

Boxford Parish Council

DRAFT REPORT

June 2021

Quality information

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Abbreviations used in the report

Abbreviation

BMSJLP	Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan
CfS	Call for Sites
Ha	Hectare
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
SHELAA	Strategic Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment

Disclaimer

This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP) and can be used to guide decision making, and, if the Qualifying body chooses, as evidence to support draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is not a neighbourhood plan policy document. It is a 'snapshot' in time and may become superseded by more recent information. The QB is not bound to accept its conclusions. If landowners or any other party can demonstrate that any of the evidence presented herein is inaccurate or out of date, such evidence can be presented to the QB at the consultation stage. Where evidence is presented that conflicts with this report, the QB should seek advice from the Local Planning Authority in deciding how to take new information into account in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An explanation and justification for all decision making should be documented and submitted with the draft Neighbourhood Plan, together with supporting evidence.

Executive Summary

Boxford Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Babergh Local Plan (adopted 2006) and the emerging Joint Local Plan¹ for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts, which will eventually replace the Local Plan and cover a 20-year period up to 2037.

The housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan area set in the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) is 13 homes, which has largely been delivered through existing planning permissions (12 homes have been built through existing consents). The emerging Local Plan also allocates a site within Boxford for five dwellings.

The Neighbourhood Plan group is proposing to exceed the Local Plan requirement and to allocate additional homes to meet the demand identified in its Housing Needs Assessment. Of a target of approximately 23 homes, the group is aiming for two or three bed bungalows or two storey dwellings as starter or retirement homes to be built at a steady rate over the plan period and to be available at a discounted market homes rate of 40% for people with a local connection to the village.

In total, 11 sites are considered in this report, three of which came forward through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites and an additional eight sites identified through the Babergh and Mid Suffolk SHELAA (October 2020).

The assessment concludes that while no site is entirely free of constraints and is immediately suitable for development, three sites are potentially suitable for development and therefore could be allocated for residential use in the Plan, either in full or in part, subject to identified constraints being mitigated. These sites are:

- BNP1 / SS1247 Land East of Stone Street Road
- BNP3 Fitzgerald Meadow
- SS0292 Land west of Sand Hill

The remaining eight sites are not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, either due to site constraints or the fact they have already received planning permission. These sites are:

- BNP2 Daking Avenue
- SS0898 Land South of Daking Avenue
- SS1128 Land West of Butchers Lane
- SS0293 Land East of Sand Hill
- SS0403 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Calais Street
- SS0922 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Boxford
- SS0402 Land South of Calais Street
- SS1257 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Boxford

The Neighbourhood Plan group's intention is to identify sites for affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Plan to meet local needs. This could potentially be achieved in a number of ways. If the affordable housing type complies with the description set out in the National Planning Policy Framework² the sites will need to be offered for this use by the landowner (i.e. the landowner will essentially need to provide the land for free.³ This could involve an element of market housing on each site to subsidise the affordable housing. Alternatively, market housing could be provided on the sites which, if over a certain threshold, would necessitate a quantity of affordable housing under Local Plan policies. Alternatively, the site allocation policy could stipulate the sites would be for starter homes/retirement homes which would not be affordable under the NPPF definition but could dictate the size and type of homes provided to increase the stock of smaller homes for these groups.

¹ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/joint-local-plan-r19-pre-submission/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

³ If sites are proposed as rural exception sites in the Neighbourhood Plan (sites for affordable housing which would not normally be permitted) these are not generally sites that would be allocated in a Neighbourhood Plan as by definition they are exceptions to policy. However a Rural Exception policy could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan to set out the criteria for these sites and could also specify the locations.

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This assessment is the first step in the process of making site allocations. From the shortlist of potentially suitable sites identified in this report, the Parish Council should engage with Babergh District Council, the community and landowners to select sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan which best meet the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and the needs of the plan area.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent site appraisal for the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Boxford Parish Council. The work undertaken was agreed with the Parish Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as part of the national Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support Programme led by Locality.
- 1.2 It is important that the site assessment process is carried out in a transparent, fair, robust and defensible way and that the same process is applied to each potential site. Equally important is the way in which the work is recorded and communicated to interested parties.
- 1.3 The site appraisal will assess sites to establish if they are suitable, available and likely to be viable for the proposed use (housing) under the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The intention is that this is the starting point for selecting preferred sites for allocation or inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan based on the specific housing requirement, Neighbourhood Plan objectives and community consultation.

Local context

- 1.4 Boxford village is a medieval linear settlement and civil parish in the Babergh District of Suffolk, located on the River Box. It is approximately 6 miles east of Sudbury and 14 miles west of Ipswich. The A12, located to the south east of Boxford, provides a link between Colchester and Ipswich.
- 1.5 The road network includes the A1071 running to the south of Boxford village and the secondary roads, Swan Street, Sand Hill and School Hill, running through the village. There is a bus service to Sudbury and the closest railway station is in Sudbury.
- 1.6 The village contains a number of facilities including St Mary's church and primary school, a GP, pub, shops and other services.
- 1.7 The village has a well-preserved linear core containing a number of listed buildings along Swan Street and Broad Street, with the Grade I Church of St Mary sited in a prominent location in the historic core of the settlement. There are outlying clusters of listed buildings at Stone Street, Calais Street and on Sherbourne Street. The Boxford Conservation Area (originally designated by West Suffolk County Council in 1973), covers the main village and extends south of the settlement area to include Stone Street, further down the Box valley. The settlement also has areas of modern development to the north and east including development within the conservation area⁴. The landscape within and immediately surrounding Boxford is classified as Rolling Valley Farmlands, with Ancient Rolling Farmlands located in the higher land surrounding the settlement⁵.
- 1.8 The River Box played an important role in the formation of the village pattern, running along its historic linear core. In addition, it serves some linear green spaces that are set along its route connecting them back to the village and creating an interesting landscape. The rest of the parish is countryside.

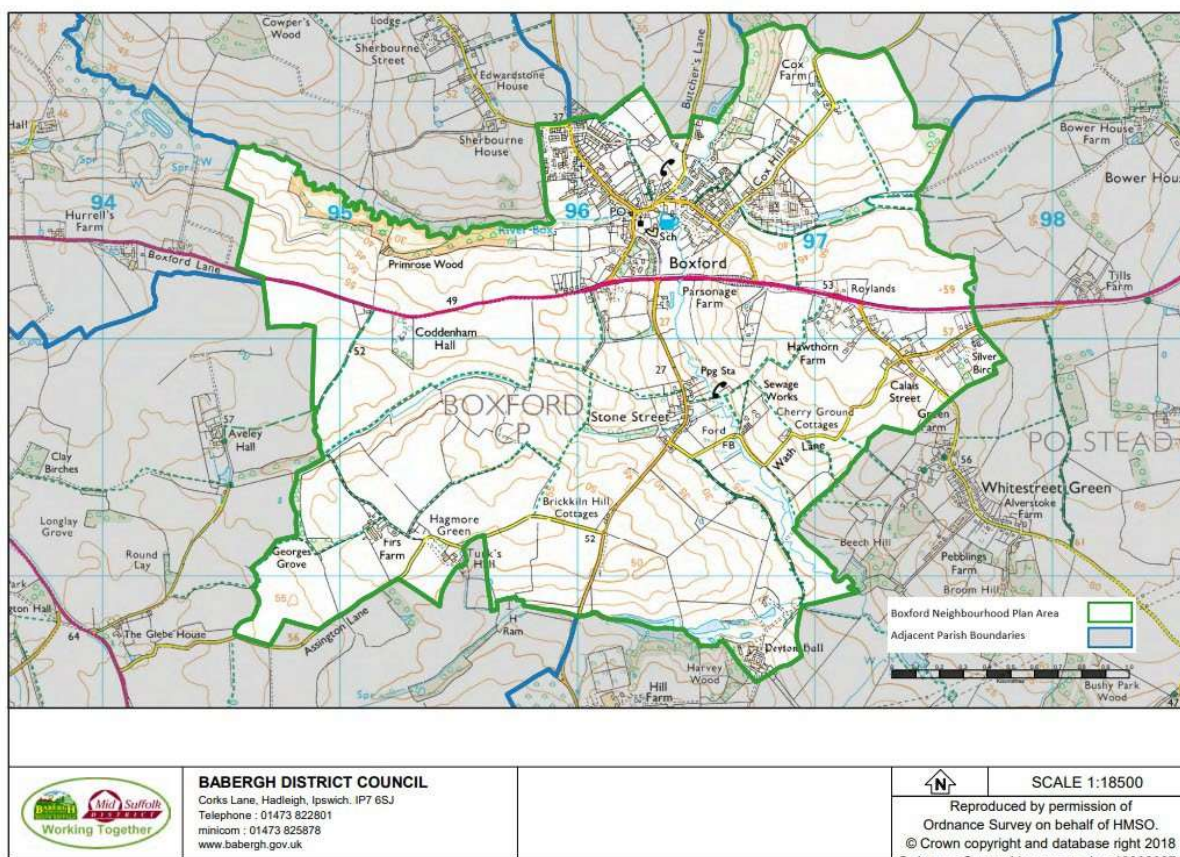
Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the Civil Parish of Boxford (see Figure 1-1) and was designated on 6th August 2018. It includes Boxford village as well as Stone Street, Calais Street and Hagmore Green settlements located to the south.

⁴ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/evidence-base/current-evidence/>

⁵ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPReg19/Part-3-Babergh-Settlement-Maps-A-H.pdf>

Figure 1-1 Boxford Neighbourhood Plan boundary (Source: Babergh District Council)



1.10 The housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan boundary in the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) is 13 homes, which has largely been delivered through existing planning permissions (12 homes have been developed through existing consents). The emerging Local Plan also allocates a site within Boxford for five dwellings. The Neighbourhood Plan group is proposing to exceed the Local Plan requirement and to allocate approximately 23 additional homes based on a Housing Needs Assessment. These are intended to be two or three bed bungalows or two storey dwellings at a starter/retirement discounted market homes rate of 40% for people with a local connection within the plan period. Development of all sites, if suitable, will, ideally, be phased over the period to provide a fairly steady incremental stream of availability to meet local housing needs as they arise rather than in a single tranche.

1.11 The Neighbourhood Plan aims to retain Boxford village as a desirable place to live, work and play. In order to do this, the Parish recognises that they must respond to the demand for new homes and provide suitable locations for appropriate market and affordable housing as well as other development. The plan aims to maintain the village and hamlets as thriving communities with strong rural characteristics, safe pedestrian routes, green spaces and a quality built environment. Potential locations for small scale development are to be based on the following objectives:

- No unacceptable impact on the conservation area and the village infrastructure from residential development
- Developments that ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the village centre
- Housing growth is sustainable, future proofed against climate change and well related in planning and infrastructure terms to the village centre
- Housing growth of mixed tenures that is of suitable scale and size to complement all settlements which are rural in nature and strong wish to remain so

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- Enhance the rural setting and character of the settlements through appropriate built design
- Support the need for and creation of a village car park
- Protects significant views and links to open countryside.

1.12 The purpose of this site assessment is therefore to assess all potential sites against a set of criteria to establish which, if any, are suitable, available and likely to be viable for development, and therefore whether the identified sites are appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. The report is intended to guide decision making and can be used as evidence to support Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is intended to help the Group to ensure that the Basic Conditions considered by the LPA and Independent Examiner are met, as well as any potential challenges by developers and other interested parties.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The approach to the site assessment is based on the Government's Planning Practice Guidance. The relevant sections are the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (March 2015)⁶ and Neighbourhood Planning (updated February 2018)⁷. More information on the approach and the detailed criteria applied can be found in the Locality Neighbourhood Planning Site Assessment Toolkit and Appendices⁸.
- 2.2 The site assessment methodology is set out below:

Task 1: Identify Sites to be included in the Assessment.

- 2.3 The first task is to identify which sites should be considered as part of the assessment. This included sites identified in the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan Area through:
- The Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites
 - Babergh and Mid Suffolk Strategic Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) (October 2020)

Task 2: Site Assessment

- 2.4 All sites identified through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites were taken forward for a full assessment to determine their potential suitability for development. This task involves reviewing the information related to each site submitted through the Call for Sites, as well as gathering additional information on the characteristics and constraints affecting each site.
- 2.5 A site appraisal pro-forma has been developed to assess potential sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. It is based on the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance, the Site Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: A Toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners (Locality, 2015)⁹ and the knowledge and experience gained through previous neighbourhood Planning site assessments. The purpose of the pro-forma is to enable a consistent evaluation of each site against an objective set of criteria.
- 2.6 The pro-forma used for the assessment records the following information:
- General information:
 - o Site location and use; and
 - o Site context and planning history.
 - Context:
 - o Type of site (greenfield, brownfield etc.); and
 - o Planning history
 - Suitability:
 - o Site characteristics;
 - o Environmental considerations;
 - o Heritage considerations;

⁶ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

⁷ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

⁸ Available at <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

⁹ Available at <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

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- Community facilities and services; and
 - Other key considerations (e.g. flood risk, agricultural land, tree preservation orders).
- Availability.
- 2.7 A site visit was also conducted in order to verify the information gathered through the desktop assessment and to add further detail on aspects which need a visual inspection, such as potential landscape impact and visual amenity.

Task 3: Consolidation of Results

- 2.8 Following the site visit, the desktop assessment was revisited to finalise the assessment and compare the sites to judge which were the most suitable to meet the affordable housing requirement.
- 2.9 All the site assessment information is drawn together into a summary table which ranks sites from most to least appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, based on the level of constraints and issues identified which would need to be resolved or mitigated.
- 2.10 A 'traffic light' rating of all sites has been given based on whether the site is an appropriate candidate to be considered for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. The traffic light rating indicates the following judgement, based on the three 'tests' of whether a site is appropriate for allocation – i.e. the site is suitable, available and achievable.
- **'Green'** is for sites free from constraints, or which have constraints that can be resolved, and therefore are suitable for development. Sites rated green are appropriate for allocation for proposed use in a neighbourhood plan (if it is viable).
 - **'Amber'** sites have constraints that would need to be resolved or mitigated, so the site is potentially appropriate for allocation (if also viable) for proposed use in a neighbourhood plan.
 - **'Red'** sites are unsuitable for development and therefore not appropriate to allocate for proposed use in a neighbourhood plan.

Task 4: Indicative Housing Capacity

- 2.11 The Babergh Local Plan states that the PPG3 encourages local planning authorities to promote housing developments with a net density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare.
- 2.12 Neighbourhood Plans, however, can set their own policies for housing density which respond to local circumstances. Alternatively, within the SHELAA, where landowners/developers have put forward a housing figure for a site, this has been used if appropriate. If a site has been granted planning permission but the site has not yet been started or completed, then the capacity figure quoted in the permission has been used.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan policies and allocations must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan, and should take account of any emerging development plan so that Neighbourhood Plan policies are not superseded when a new Local Plan is adopted.
- 3.2 A number of sources have been reviewed in order to understand the context for potential site allocations. This includes national and local planning policy (adopted and emerging Local plan policies) and relevant evidence base documents.
- 3.3 National policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)¹⁰ (NPPF) and is supported by Planning Practice Guidance¹¹ (PPG). The NPPF is a high-level document which sets the overall framework for the more detailed policies contained in local and neighbourhood plans.
- 3.4 The statutory local-plan making authority for Boxford is Babergh District Council. The Babergh Local Plan¹² was adopted in 2006. Due to changes in planning regulation, and the adoption of subsequent planning documents (such as the Babergh Core Strategy¹³ which was adopted in 2014) some policies have been superseded. A list of saved policies¹⁴ are listed on the Babergh District Council's website.
- 3.5 The Council has begun working on the new Joint Local Plan¹⁵ document for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts, which will replace the Local Plan. The new Joint Local Plan will cover a 20-year period up to 2037. The aim is to adopt the new Local Plan by Winter 2021/22. The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan – Pre-submission document (Regulation 19) (November 2020) was approved by both Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council¹⁶.
- 3.6 The relevant policies and findings from the above plans and evidence base documents are presented below.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.7 The policies of relevance to the development in Boxford are set out below, but this report has regard to all other aspects of national planning policy where appropriate.
- 3.8 **Paragraph 14** states that in situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided all of the following apply:
 - a) The neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;
 - b) The neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;
 - c) The local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 73); and

¹⁰ Available at www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework

¹¹ Available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

¹² Available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/babergh-district-council/babergh-local-plan/>

¹³ Available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/babergh-district-council/core-strategy/>

¹⁴ Available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/babergh-district-council/saved-policies/>

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/>

¹⁶ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/joint-local-plan-r19-pre-submission/>

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- d) The local planning authority's housing delivery was at least 45% of that required over the previous three years.
- 3.9 **Paragraph 69** states that neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites (i.e. sites of no more than one hectares, consistent with paragraph 68a) suitable for housing in their area.
- 3.10 **Paragraph 78** states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 3.11 **Paragraph 79** states that planning policies should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:
- there is an essential need for a rural worker;
 - the development would present the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would enable development to secure the future of heritage assets;
 - the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
 - the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or
 - the design is of exceptional quality.
- 3.12 **Paragraph 118** outlines that planning policies and decisions should:
- Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains;
 - Recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as wildlife, recreation etc.;
 - Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
 - Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively; and
 - Support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes.
- 3.13 **Paragraph 170** states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ... b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'.
- 3.14 **Paragraph 171** states that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the NPPF. Footnote 53 suggests that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of high quality.
- 3.15 **Paragraph 185** states that plans should set out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and seek new development which makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.16 **Paragraph 193** sets out that great weight should be given to the impact of a proposed development on any designated heritage assets.
- 3.17 **Paragraph 200** states that proposals in Conservation Areas should be encouraged where they enhance or better reveal their local significance.

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Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy & Policies (Part 1 of New Babergh Local Plan) (February 2014)

3.18 The Core Strategy & Policies (Part 1 of the new Local Plan) provides a high-level, strategic plan for Babergh for 20 years from 2011-2031. The Core Strategy replaces many of policies in the (2006) Babergh Local Plan.

3.19 The policies that are relevant to Boxford are set out below:

3.20 **Policy CS2: Settlement Pattern Policy** states that most new development in Babergh will be directed sequentially to the towns/urban areas, and to the Core Villages and Hinterland Villages. In all cases the scale and location of development will depend upon the local housing need, the role of settlements as employment providers and retail/service centres, the capacity of existing physical and social infrastructure to meet forecast demands and the provision of new/enhanced infrastructure, as well as having regard to environmental constraints and the views of local communities as expressed in parish/community/neighbourhood plans.

Boxford is classed as a Core Village which serves functional clusters. The Local Plan states that 'Core Villages will act as a focus for development within their functional cluster and, where appropriate, site allocations to meet housing and employment needs will be made in the Site Allocations document.

3.21 **Policy CS3: Strategy for Growth and Development** sets out the number and distribution of new homes. It states that 1,050 homes will be allocated in Core and Hinterland Villages to meet the target of 2,500 proposed new land allocations.

3.22 **Policy CS11: Strategy for Development for Core and Hinterland Villages** states that proposals for development for Core Villages will be approved where proposals score positively when assessed against Policy CS15 and the following matters are addressed to the satisfaction of the local planning authority where relevant and appropriate to the scale and location of the proposal:

- i) The landscape, environmental and heritage characteristics of the village;
- ii) The locational context of the village and the proposed development (particularly the AONBs, Conservation Areas, and heritage assets);
- iii) Site location and sequential approach to site selection;
- iv) Locally identified need – housing and employment, and specific local needs such as affordable housing;
- v) Locally identified community needs; and
- vi) Cumulative impact of development in the area in respect of social, physical and environmental impacts.

The Core and Hinterland Villages identified in the Spatial Strategy provide for the day-to-day needs of local communities, and facilities and services such as shops, post offices, pubs, petrol stations, community halls, etc that provide for the needs of local communities will be safeguarded.

3.23 **Policy CS15: Implementing Sustainable Development in Babergh** emphasises that proposals for development must ensure adequate protection, enhancement, compensation and/or mitigation, as appropriate are given to distinctive local features which characterise the landscape and heritage assets of Babergh's built and natural environment within designated sites covered by statutory legislation, such as AONBs, Conservation Areas, etc.

3.24 **Policy CS19: Affordable Homes** states that in order to promote inclusive and mixed communities all residential development will be required to provide 35% affordable housing.

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Individual targets may be set for the Strategic Broad Location for Growth and in Core/Hinterland Villages in Area Action Plan and Site Allocation DPDs.

Babergh Local Plan (2006) Saved Local Plan policies

3.25 The policies below are saved policies from the Local Plan (2006) which are of relevance to Boxford.

3.26 **Policy HS04 Protecting the Countryside** states that in the interests of agriculture, rural amenity, road safety and the economy of services, new housing will be integrated into the defined areas of Towns and Villages. In the Countryside outside Towns and Villages it is intended that existing land uses will remain for the most part undisturbed.

3.27 **Policy HS08 Affordable Housing – Allocated Sites** sets out that on allocated sites listed (site of relevance is Goodlands Farm, Boxford) and others which come forward for residential development in a settlement with a population of 3,000 or more and which are 0.5 hectares or more in size, capable of accommodating at least 15 dwellings, or on sites of similar size and capacity on which a renewal of planning permission is sought, the District Council will require up to 35% of dwellings to be provided in the form of affordable housing to meet identified local need.

The precise number, size and type of affordable housing units and appropriate tenure arrangements to be provided on any site will relate to contemporary demands, as indicated in the most recent Housing Needs Survey, site location and other factors.

3.28 **Policy HS09 Affordable Housing – Small Settlements** states that on windfall sites in settlements in rural areas with a population of 3,000 or fewer, the Council will seek to negotiate on a site to site basis an element of affordable housing of up to 35% of total provision, having regard to the up to date Housing Needs Survey, market and site considerations and the sustainability of the proposed development.

3.29 **Policy HS21 Goodlands Farm, Daking Avenue, Boxford** allocates approximately 0.7 hectares of land at Goodlands Farm, Boxford for 20 homes. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:

- Vehicular access from Daking Avenue;
- A footpath and cycleway connecting the site to Swan Street;
- 2.4 hectares of land to the south and west of the site, to be conveyed into public ownership for recreational use, and surrounded by extensive tree landscaping to mitigate the impact of development and to provide adequate public open space for the development;
- The adjacent barn to be retained and refurbished, and incorporated into the overall redevelopment; and
- A small informal car park for visitors to the recreational area and overspill car parking for residents of Daking Avenue.

3.30 **Policy CN08 Development in or near conservation areas** states that proposals for the alteration, extension or change of use of an existing building, or for the erection of new buildings in a conservation area or which have an impact on views into or out of a conservation area should:

- Preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area or its setting;
- Retain all elements and components, including spaces, which contribute to the special character of the area;
- Be of an appropriate scale, form, and detailed design to harmonise with its setting;
- Include fenestration which respects its setting;

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- Use materials and components that complement or harmonise with the character and appearance of the area; and
- Ensure that natural features such as trees and hedges are retained and integrated into any development proposals.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) Document (November 2020)

- 3.31 The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan - Pre-submission document (Regulation 19) (November 2020) was approved by Babergh Full Council on 10 November 2020 and Mid Suffolk Full Council on 11 November 2020. This document will provide the strategy for the growth of the Districts, setting out what and where development will take place up to 2037.
- 3.32 The policies that are relevant to Boxford are set out below:
- 3.33 **Policy SP01 – Housing Needs** states that the Joint Local Plan will seek to deliver a minimum of 7,904 net additional dwellings within the Babergh district over the plan period (2018-2037).
- 3.34 **Policy SP02 – Affordable Housing** states that proposals for new affordable housing will be expected to have regard to the mix and type of housing needs identified in the most relevant district needs assessment evidence supported by the Council.
- 3.35 **Policy SP03 – Settlement Hierarchy** classes Boxford as a Core Village. The policy states that Core Villages will act as a focus for development, which will be delivered through site allocations in the Plan and/or in Neighbourhood Plans, and windfall development in accordance with the relevant policies.
- Settlement boundaries have been created as defined on the Policies Map in order to demonstrate the extent of land which is required to meet the development needs of the Plan. New allocations are included with the defined settlement boundary. The principle of development is established within settlement boundaries, subject to the other policies in the Plan. Outside of the defined boundaries in isolated locations development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.36 **Policy SP04 – Housing Spatial Distribution** sets out the broad distribution of new additional housing provision from April 2018 to March 2037. The number of additional houses in Core Villages is set at 2,699 (28%) within Babergh District.

In order to assist with the delivery of the overall district housing need requirements, designated Neighbourhood Plan areas will be expected to plan to deliver the minimum housing requirements set out in Table 4 (requirement of Boxford to produce 13 homes). Neighbourhood Plan documents can seek to exceed these requirements, should the unique characteristics and planning context of the designated area enable so.

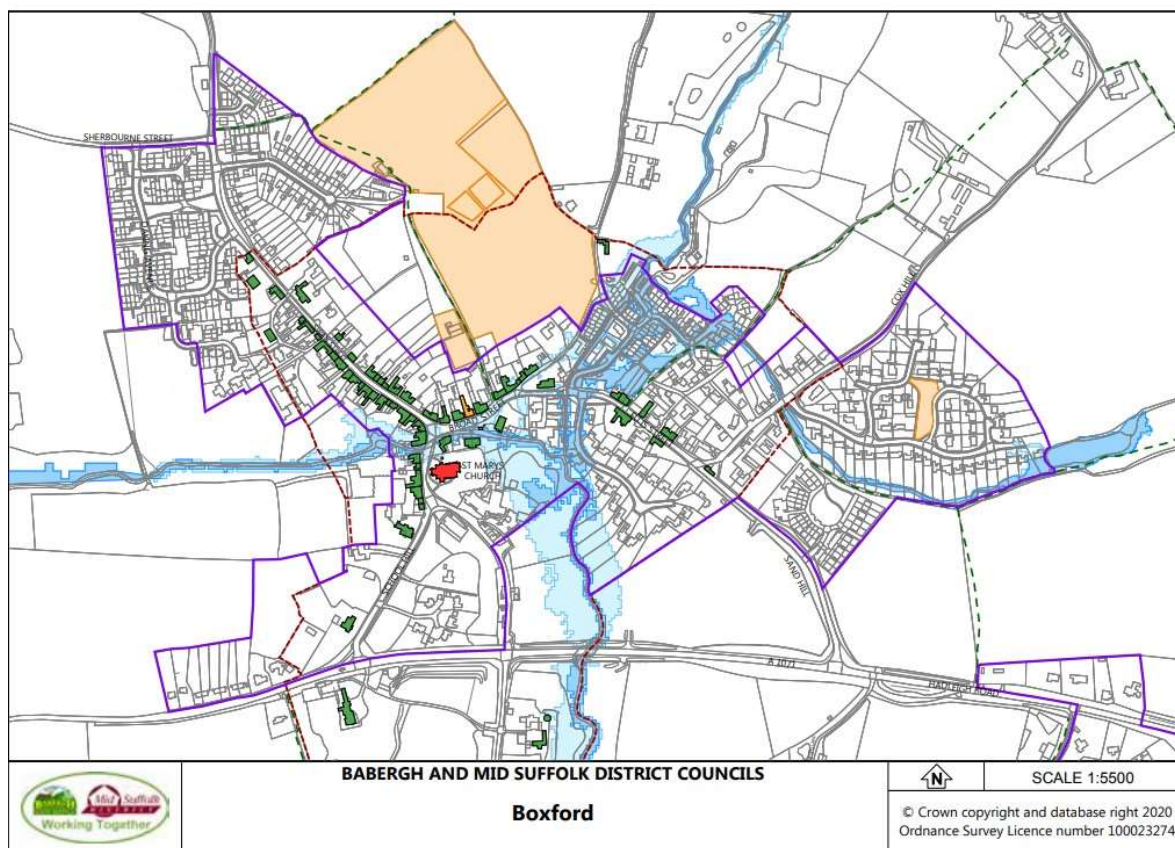
- 3.37 **Policy LP08 – Affordable, community led and rural exception housing:** section 2 of the policy states that Community Led Housing proposals must demonstrate that:
- a) The scheme was initiated by, and is being led by a legitimate local community group such as a Parish Council or Community Land Trust; and
 - b) The scheme has general community support, with evidence of meaningful public engagement.

Babergh District Council Place Maps and Policies¹⁷

- 3.38 Figure 3-1 illustrates the settlement boundary and policy map for Boxford.

¹⁷ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPRReg19/Part-3-Babergh-Settlement-Maps-A-H.pdf>

Figure 3-1 Boxford settlement boundary and policy map



Policies Map Key

Key					
	Residential Allocations (LA###/ LS01)				
	Strategic Employment Sites (SP05)				
	Settlement Boundaries (SP03)				
	District Boundaries				
	Parish Boundaries (where settlements span multiple parishes)				
	Key Infrastructure Requirements				
	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (LP20)				
	Local Nature Reserve				
	Protected Habitats and Species Sites (SPA, SAC and Ramsar)				
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest				
	Designated Open Space (LP30)				
	Gypsy and Traveller Sites (LP09)				
	Public Rights of Way				
	Flood Zone 2 (LP29)				
	Flood Zone 3 (LP29)				
	Ancient Woodland				
	Conservation Area				
	County Geodiversity Sites				
Listed Buildings					
	Grade I		Grade II*		Grade II
	Registered Parks and Gardens				
	Scheduled Ancient Monuments				

Evidence base documents

3.39 The following evidence base documents have been used to inform the site assessment:

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan: Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) (October 2020)¹⁸

¹⁸ Available at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/Current-Evidence-Base/SHELAA2020/BMSDC-Joint-SHELAA-Report-Oct-2020.pdf>

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- Boxford Conservation Area Appraisal (2011)¹⁹
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of SHELAA sites (September 2020)²⁰

¹⁹ Available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Conservation-Area-Appraisals/Boxford2011CAA.pdf>

²⁰ Available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/Current-Evidence-Base/LSA2020/Part1-BMSDC-LSA-Final-Report-Sept20.pdf>

4. Site Assessment

- 4.1 As noted in Chapter 2 of this report, site options for the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan have been identified through Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2020 and Boxford Parish Council Call for Sites (CfS) exercise which was undertaken specifically to support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.2 Three sites came forward through the Call for Sites process and there are eight additional different sites from the SHELAA. It is important to note that Site BNP1 is also in the SHELAA (SS1247) which makes it nine sites from the SHELAA. A full list of the eleven site options in Boxford is presented in Table 4-1 below, disaggregated by source.

Boxford Call for Sites

- 4.3 Boxford Parish Council undertook a CfS exercise in 2021 to establish a comprehensive understanding of the available site options within the plan area and to enable landowners and developers in the Neighbourhood Area to promote their land (in whole or in part) for development. The CfS yielded a total of three sites, of which two were new sites which had not been identified through the SHELAA and there was one site which had already been identified in the SHELAA.
- 4.4 Table 4-1 lists all identified sites in the Neighbourhood Area and details whether these sites have been carried forward for further assessment. The map at Figure 4-3 shows all eleven sites which are assessed in the report. Individual site boundaries can be seen in the proformas at Appendix B.

SHELAA sites

- 4.5 The 2020 Babergh SHELAA identifies a total of nine sites in Boxford and is the most recently published iteration. Each SHELAA site underwent a high-level assessment to determine whether it could be considered potentially suitable, available and achievable in principle.
- 4.6 Of the nine sites assessed by Babergh District Council, six sites were proposed as being unsuitable. One of these sites was subsequently promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites (BNP1: Stone Street Road) and is considered to be potentially suitable for small-scale development on part of the site. Another SHELAA site (SS0293) was assessed as being unsuitable for development in the SHELAA but received planning permission in December 2020. The site is located on the land to The East of Sand Hill Boxford (reference: DC/20/00330) (SHELAA ref: SS0293) and was granted permission for 64 dwellings even though the SHELAA states that the site is unsuitable for development due to poor pedestrian access to core services and facilities (Table 4-2). The Parish Council launched a Judicial Review against the decision in January 2021. Whilst the SOA has been undertaken, the High Court has quashed the permission on the basis that a section 106 planning obligations agreement entered into with the developer failed to secure construction of a community building, as required by a resolution of the council's planning committee. After an order was approved by High Court judge, Mrs Justice Lang, on 26th March 2021, Catesby's planning application has now be returned to Babergh Council's planning committee for reconsideration.
- 4.7 AECOM have assessed the suitability of all nine SHELAA sites to determine whether the conclusions can be applied to the Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix B).

Figure 4-1 All identified sites in the neighbourhood area

Site Ref	Site name	Source	Is the site available?	Carried forward for assessment?
BNP1	Stone Street Road, Boxford	Call for Sites	Yes	Yes
BNP2	Daking Avenue, Boxford	Call for Sites	Unknown	Yes

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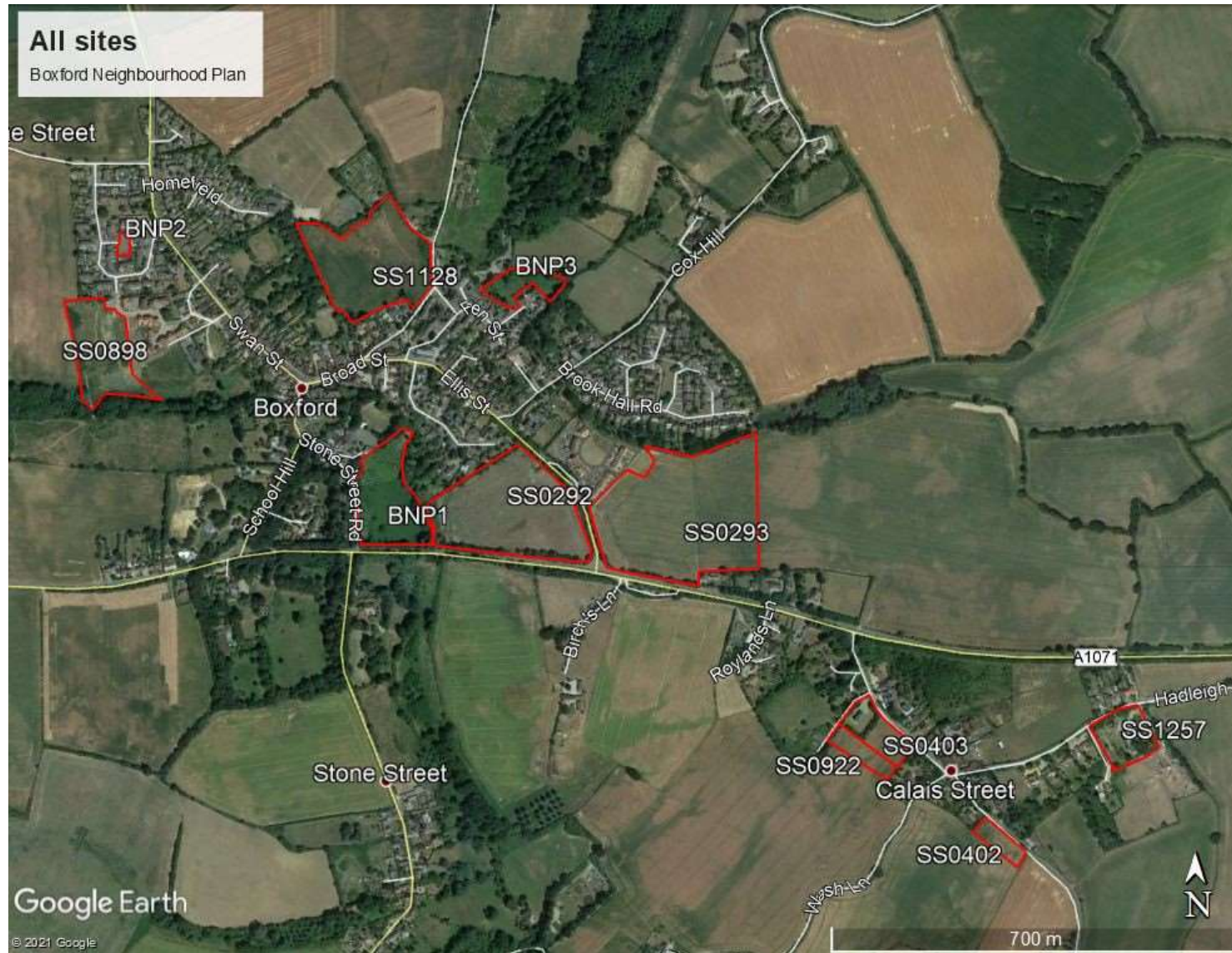
Site Ref	Site name	Source	Is the site available?	Carried forward for assessment?
BNP3	Fitzgerald Meadow, Boxford	Call for Sites	Unknown	Yes
SS0292	Land west of Sand Hill, Boxford	SHELAA	Yes	Yes
SS0293	Land to The East of Sand Hill, Boxford	SHELAA	Yes	Yes
SS1247	Stone Street Road, Boxford	SHELAA	Yes	Yes
SS1128	Land west of Butchers Lane, Boxford	SHELAA	n/a (unsuitable)	Yes
SS0898	Land south of Daking Avenue, Boxford	SHELAA	n/a (unsuitable)	Yes
SS1257	Land south of Hadleigh Road, Calais Street	SHELAA	Yes	Yes
SS0402	Land south of Calais Street	SHELAA	n/a (unsuitable)	Yes
SS0403	Land south of Hadleigh Road, Calais Street	SHELAA	No	Yes
SS0922	Land south of Hadleigh Road, Boxford	SHELAA	n/a (unsuitable)	yes

Figure 4-2 Relevant Planning Applications

Ref	Address	Proposal	Decision
DC/20/00330 (SHELAA ref: SS0293)	Land To The East Of Sand Hill Boxford CO10 5AD	Outline Planning Application (Access to be considered all other matters reserved) - Erection of up to 64no. dwellings and provision of land for a community building (Use Class D1)	Granted (11 December 2020) however, permission quashed by the High Court (26 March 2021)

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Figure 4-3 Map showing all sites included in the assessment



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- 4.8 The assessment of the sites submitted through the Call for Sites is presented in full in the proformas at Appendix B, including potential mitigation of identified constraints where relevant.
- 4.9 Table 5.1 provides a summary of the findings of the assessment of development sites within the Boxford Neighbourhood Area which came forward through the Call for Sites process. The final column in the table represents a 'traffic' light rating of each site, indicating whether the site is considered potentially appropriate for allocation. **Red** indicates the site is not considered to be appropriate for allocation through the Neighbourhood Plan, whilst **Amber** indicates that the site may be suitable in principle for allocation subject to the resolution of identified issues or constraints. No sites achieved a **Green** rating. Table 5.2 provides a review of the SHELAA sites. The findings summarised in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 are shown in the map at Figure 5.1.
- 4.10 The assessment has identified that no sites were considered to be immediately suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.11 Three sites are considered to be potentially suitable for allocation for residential and associated uses, either in full or in part, subject to identified constraints being mitigated.
- 4.12 The remaining 8 sites are not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, either due to site constraints or the fact they have already received planning permission (SS0293 & SS1257).

DRAFT**Table 5-1 Boxford Call for Sites Site Assessment Summary Table**

Site Ref.	Address	Gross Site Area (Ha)	Capacity (Indicative number of homes)	Land use being considered	Overall Red/ Amber/ Green rating	Conclusion
BNP1	Land East of Stone Street Road	1.67 (AECOM estimate)	7 dwellings and a car park proposed by the landowner	Residential		<p>The site is potentially suitable for development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The site is currently a field (Grade 3 agricultural land) and is available for development. There is currently no access to the site, however access could potentially be gained from Stone Street Road, subject to discussions with the Highways Authority. Possible access from the A1071 but this may not be acceptable to Highways officers or viable. A pedestrian footpath would also need to be created on one of these roads if the site is developed as there is currently no pedestrian footpath. The site is in close proximity to the centre of Boxford which consists of various shops and facilities including a village store and primary school. A key environmental constraint is that 50% of the site is within Flood Zone 2/3 and therefore development would not be appropriate on this part of the site. However, the western section of the site could be developed to provide approx. 7 dwellings and a car park (as proposed by the landowner). The site is within Boxford Conservation Area and therefore development should contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of Boxford. In addition, the southern boundary of the site is adjacent to an environmentally sensitive area which does not prohibit development but if developed the scheme would need to be sympathetic to its surroundings. Likewise, there are two TPOs within the site and therefore development would need to take these into consideration.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary. Therefore, the western section of the site which is not within Flood Zone 2/3 is considered potentially suitable for development and allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the identified constraints being resolved or mitigated, particularly access, impact on the conservation area and the TPOs. The inclusion of a car park should be discussed with BDC planning officers to understand whether this is likely to be acceptable. The car park site is within Flood Zone 2/3 but this should not preclude development of a car park at this location. Evidence that there is a need for</p>

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					parking here should be provided (e.g. through parking surveys) and ways of mitigating traffic entering the village should be explored.
BNP2	Daking Avenue	0.1 (AECOM estimate)	2 dwellings suggested by NP Steering Group	Residential	<p>The site is not suitable for development and therefore not appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>The site is currently being used as a car park which is enclosed within a housing development. The site is owned by the Council and could be an infill opportunity but at present there is no evidence it is available for redevelopment and information provided by the Steering Group indicates that four private houses backing on to this area from Gunnary Close have an easement across the access and would not support development of the site.</p> <p>The site is therefore not currently available and possibly not viable for development due to the potential costs and therefore cannot be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>It is advised that the site is discussed with BDC to understand if there are wider plans for redevelopment of council owned land within villages such as parking courts and what the feasibility of this proposal could be.</p> <p>The site could be listed as an aspiration or project to communicate community support for redevelopment of the site, should it become available in the future.</p>
BNP3	Fitzgerald Meadow	0.52 (AECOM estimate)	6-7 dwellings proposed by NP Steering Group	Residential	<p>The site is potentially suitable for development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The site is currently a field (Grade 3 agricultural land). The availability of the site is unknown although the title deed show it has been transferred to a Housing Association. The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing built up area and settlement boundary of Boxford. If developed, access could be gained from Fitzgerald Meadow. However, the access created would need to cross the flood zone part of the site. The site is reasonable distance to the centre of Boxford which consists of various shops and facilities including a village store and primary school. The area of the site to the rear of the housing fronting Fen Street (western part of site) is within Flood Zone 3 and has a medium risk of surface water flooding. The area within Flood Zone 3 could not be developed for residential use but it is possible that an access road could be built through the area of high flood risk and a small number of homes built on the eastern side. The site is within Boxford Conservation Area and therefore development should contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of Boxford.</p>

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						If the site is confirmed as available and the identified constraints can be resolved or mitigated, including in particular the flood risk, the site is potentially suitable for development and allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
SS0292 (Boxford)	N/A	3.50	60	Residential		<p>The site is potentially suitable for limited development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Site is potentially suitable for development subject to the following constraints being investigated further: access, potential flood risk, impact on heritage assets and the Conservation Area.</p> <p>From the site visit it is clear that the access road to the site could be a constraint – it is the main route into the village and is narrow beyond the entrance to the site which may prevent the creation of a safe pedestrian access.</p> <p>The SHELAA does not consider the landscape and visual impacts of the site. The site is very large and sits on much higher ground than the rest of village as it has a fairly steep topography. The eastern section of site is the highest section and development here would be very visible. There are also telegraph wires crossing the south western part of the site which could restrict development.</p> <p>As the NP is seeking to meet a lower housing requirement than the capacity of the site (approx. 60 dwellings) then this could be accommodated on a smaller portion of the site – for example the section between the agricultural access and the existing housing on Sand Hill.</p>
SS0293 (Boxford) (planning application: DC/20/00330)	N/A	5.37 (AECOM estimate)	64	Housing		<p>The site has planning permission (currently being redetermined) and it is not necessary to allocate it for development in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Planning permission has been granted for 64 dwellings but the application quashed by the High Court (March 2021) following a Judicial Review launched by the Parish Council).</p> <p>This outcome means that the matter will now be returned to Babergh' s planning committee for redetermination and the permission may still be implemented in due course.</p> <p>It is not necessary for the site to be considered for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it has received planning permission and although that permission was subsequently withdrawn, the application is currently going through a redetermination process with the Local Planning Authority and the decision will be made outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.</p>

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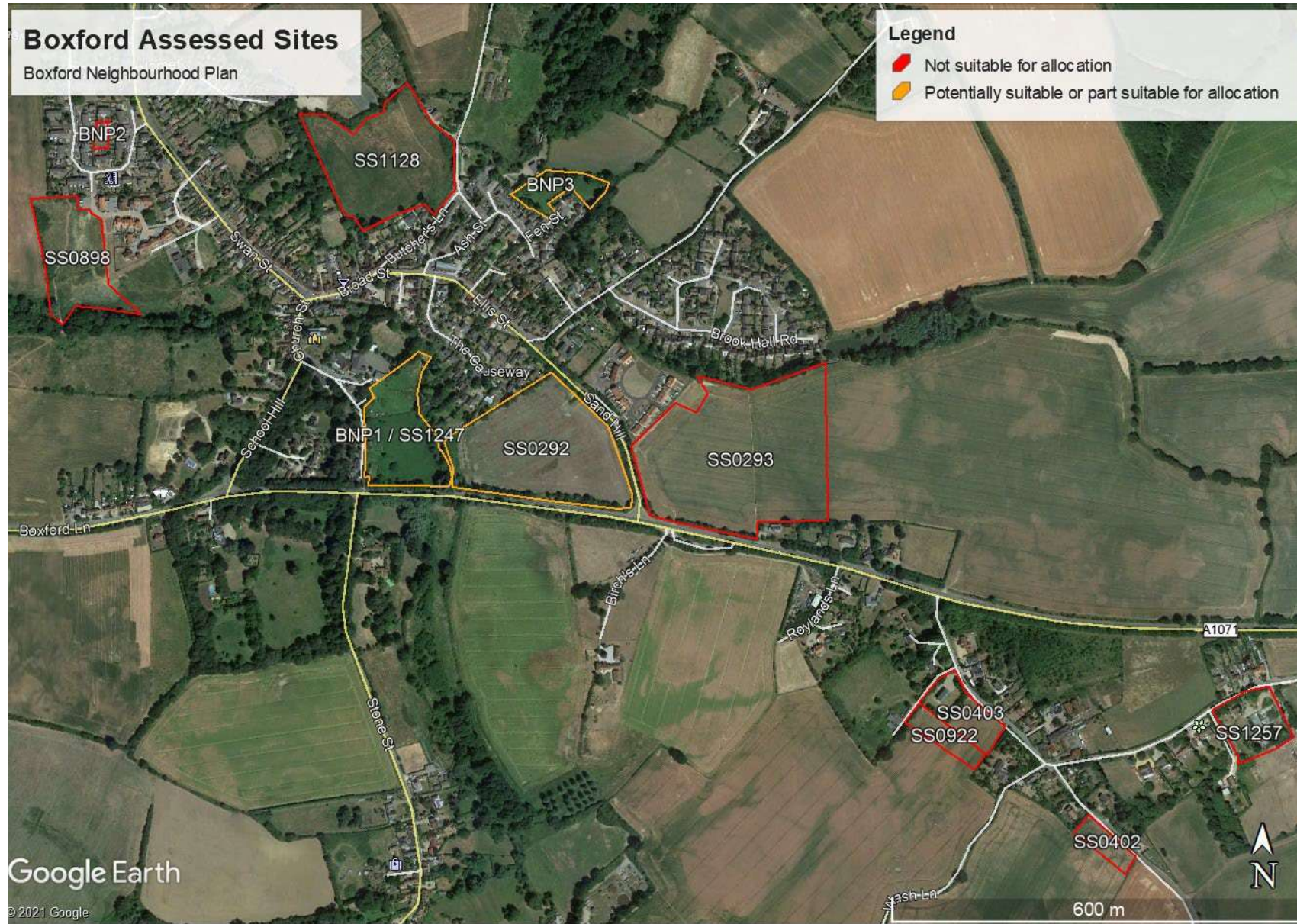
SS1247 (Boxford)	N/A	1.67 (AECOM estimate)	7 (Owners of the site have put forward an illustrative masterplan which contains 7 dwellings)	Housing		<p>The site is potentially suitable for limited development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The western section of the site which is not within Flood Zone 2/3 is potentially suitable for housing subject to access being agreed with the Highways Authority. The owners of the site have proposed seven dwellings and a car park. The proposed homes are positioned outside Flood Zone 2 and 3. There would need to be evidence that additional parking was needed in the village but the proposed location within Flood Zone 2 is possible given the proposed use is a car park. This should be discussed with Babergh District Council.</p>
SS1128 (Boxford)	N/A	2.85 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown		<p>The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions can be applied.</p> <p>There are also issues with telegraph wires and poles crossing the site and visual impact as the site sits on higher ground than the surrounding area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the site is proposed as a designated as a green space in the BMSDCJLP Pre-Submission (November 2020)</p>
SS0898 (Boxford)	N/A	1.58 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown		<p>The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions are applicable to a certain extent as there is a PRoW crossing adjacent to the site and there are relatively long views to the south of the site and a steep gradient north to south which provides views to the other side of the valley. However, from the site visit it appears that access could be created especially given the recent development adjacent to the site which provides a link into the village centre. The SHELAA (2020) was published 6 years after this development received permission (reference: B/14/012251).</p> <p>The SHELAA notes that the site is high in historic sensitivity, however there is a new build development on one side of the site and post-war style housing on the other side. Therefore, development of the site would be in keeping with the surrounding area.</p> <p>The site has been subject to two applications for consent. The first application put forward was for the erection of 2 dwellings (access to be considered) which was refused at appeal (ref: DC/20/01050) (date: 7 May 2020). The inspector notes that the main issues was whether the proposal would be appreciate with regard to the character and appearance of the area, a demonstrate need for two dwellings on this site and the density of development.</p> <p>The second planning application for 6 dwellings, ancillary outbuildings vehicular access and associated works (including access to Primrose Wood was refused 28 May 2021. The reasons for refusal are: 1) the development would increase vehicular</p>

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						traffic along Swan Street; 2) development would likely result in harm to the landscape setting and character of Boxford in this location; and 3) development would run counter to the interests of proper planning, which seeks to prevent the unplanned spread of development in a sporadic and piecemeal fashion. The appeal is currently lodged.
SS1257 (Calais Street)	N/A	0.75	5	Residential		The site has planning permission and therefore is not necessary to allocate it for development in the Neighbourhood Plan. As the site has planning permission, the housing (4 dwellings) will count towards the housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area and therefore the site does not need to be duplicated with an allocation.
SS0402 (Calais Street)	N/A	0.30 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown		The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. SHELAA conclusions can be applied. In addition, the site visit identified that there would be significant landscape/ visual impacts with far reaching views out to the west of the site. Furthermore, access is a key constraint due to the access road being very narrow and it would have to cross a large ditch from the road to the site.
SS0403 (Calais Street)	N/A	0.75	5	Residential		The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it has been proposed for allocation in the emerging BMSDC Joint Local Plan and the allocations should not be duplicated. SHELAA conclusions can be applied. Site is potentially suitable for development subject to the following constraints being investigated further: access, landscape, heritage, minerals and utilities. The site is included in the emerging BMSDC JLP (under policy LS01) which is now under examination and this allocation should not be duplicated in a Neighbourhood Plan to avoid double counting.
SS0922 (Calais Street)	N/A	0.38 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown		The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. SHELAA conclusions can be applied.

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Figure 5-4 RAG rating map for all assessed sites



5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Boxford Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Babergh Local Plan (adopted 2006) and the emerging Joint Local Plan document for Babergh and Mid Suffolk districts, which will eventually replace the Local Plan and cover a 20-year period up to 2037.
- 5.2 The housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan area set in the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (BMSJLP) is 13 homes, which has largely been delivered through existing planning permissions (12 homes have been developed through existing consents). The emerging Local Plan also allocates a site within Boxford for five dwellings. The Neighbourhood Plan group is proposing to exceed the Local Plan requirement and to allocate additional homes to meet the demand identified in its Housing Needs Assessment. Of a target of approximately 23 homes, the group is aiming for two or three bed bungalows or two storey dwellings as starter or retirement homes to be built at a steady rate over the plan period and to be available at a discounted market homes rate of 40% for people with a local connection to the village.
- 5.3 In total, 11 sites are considered in this report, three of which came forward through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites and an additional eight sites identified through the Babergh and Mid Suffolk SHELAA (October 2020).
- 5.4 The assessment concludes that while no site is entirely free of constraints and is immediately suitable for development, three sites are potentially suitable for development and therefore could be allocated for residential use in the Plan, either in full or in part, subject to identified constraints being mitigated. These sites are:
- BNP1 / SS1247 Land East of Stone Street Road
 - BNP3 Fitzgerald Meadow
 - SS0292 Land west of Sand Hill
- 5.5 The remaining eight sites are not considered suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, either due to site constraints or the fact they have already received planning permission. These sites are:
- BNP2 Daking Avenue
 - SS0898 Land South of Daking Avenue
 - SS1128 Land West of Butchers Lane
 - SS0293 Land East of Sand Hill
 - SS0403 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Calais Street
 - SS0922 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Boxford
 - SS0402 Land South of Calais Street
 - SS1257 Land South of Hadleigh Road, Boxford
- 5.6 The estimated residential capacity of the sites considered potentially suitable for development is above the identified housing needs figure and therefore not every suitable site or the whole part of every suitable site would need to be allocated to meet the requirement.

Affordable Housing

- 5.7 The Neighbourhood Plan group's intention is to identify sites for affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Plan to meet local needs. This could potentially be achieved in a number of ways. If the affordable housing type complies with the description set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ²¹ the sites will need to be offered for this use by the landowner (i.e. on a not for profit basis).²² This could involve an element of market housing on each site to

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>

²² If sites are proposed as rural exception sites in the Neighbourhood Plan (sites for affordable housing which would not normally be permitted) these are not generally sites that would be allocated in a Neighbourhood Plan as by definition they are exceptions to policy. However a Rural Exception policy could be included in the Neighbourhood Plan to set out the criteria for these sites and could also specify the locations.

subsidise the affordable housing. Alternatively, market housing could be provided on the sites which, if over a certain threshold, would necessitate a quantity of affordable housing under Local Plan policies. Alternatively, the site allocation policy could stipulate the sites would be for starter homes/retirement homes which would not be affordable under the NPPF definition but could dictate the size and type of homes provided to increase the stock of smaller homes for these groups.

- 5.8 Three of the 11 sites considered in this assessment are suitable or potentially suitable for allocation for housing or mixed-use development. One of these sites (SS0292) has the potential to accommodate 10 or more dwellings and if it was allocated for market housing (rather than affordable housing) could be required to include a proportion of affordable housing depending on the thresholds for provision of affordable housing in Boxford²³. The site is potentially suitable for Discounted Market Housing (e.g. First Homes²⁴), affordable housing for rent, or other affordable housing types (see NPPF Annex 2). The proportion of affordable housing is usually set by the Local Plan but is expected to be above 10%, unless the proposed development meets the exemptions set out in NPPF para 64.
- 5.9 The requirement for Affordable Housing provision on sites proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan should be discussed with the Local Planning Authority (usually your neighbourhood planning officer) to understand the specific requirements for the sites proposed for allocation.

Viability

- 5.10 The Parish Council should be able to demonstrate that the sites are viable for the development proposed i.e. that they will be delivered without financial loss to the developer. It is recommended that the Parish Council discuss site viability with Babergh District Council. It is further suggested that any landowner or developer promoting a site for development should be contacted to request evidence of viability (e.g. a site financial viability appraisal), especially if the sites will be allocated for affordable housing.

Next Steps

- 5.11 This assessment is the first step in the process of making site allocations. From the shortlist of potentially suitable sites identified in this report, Boxford Parish Council should engage with Babergh District Council and the community to select sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan which best meet community needs and plan objectives.
- 5.12 The site selection process should therefore take into account:
- The findings of the site assessment;
 - Discussions with the planning authority, including with regard to the infrastructure required to support major development;
 - The extent to which the sites support the vision and objectives of the NP;
 - The potential for the sites to meet the identified infrastructure needs of the community;
 - Engagement with key stakeholders; and
 - Neighbourhood Plan conformity with strategic Local Plan policy.

²³ see NPPF para 62-64

²⁴ The Government recently consulted on the First Homes Policy and a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions will need to be first homes. You can find out more here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>.

Appendix A: SHELAA Site Assessments

Table A-1 SHELAA Site Assessment Summary Table

Site Ref.	Gross Site Area (ha)	Net site area (ha)	Land use being considered	Capacity (Indicative number of homes)	SHELAA conclusions Is the site suitable, available and achievable for the development proposed? What is the justification for this conclusion	Are the SHELAA conclusions reasonable to be carried forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment? If not, how would the conclusions change for the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment?	Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment conclusion. (What is the justification for this judgement?)
SS0292 (Boxford)	3.50	Unknown	Residential	60	<p>Site is potentially suitable but the following constraints would require further investigation:</p> <p>Highways – regarding access, footpaths, and infrastructure required.</p> <p>Flood risks – potential flood risk.</p> <p>Heritage – potential impact on heritage assets and Conservation Area.</p> <p>Availability: Land is under single ownership and is available within 0-5 years. Submission form indicates that the site is under option to a developer.</p> <p>Achievability: The submission confirms that the site could come forward in 0-5 years. The submission confirms that there are no legal</p>	<p>SHELAA conclusions can be applied, subject to safe pedestrian access being achieved and the proposed development being sympathetic to the landscape and visual constraints.</p>	<p>The site is potentially suitable for limited development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Site is potentially suitable for development subject to the following constraints being investigated further: access, potential flood risk, impact on heritage assets and the Conservation Area.</p> <p>From the site visit it is clear that the access road to the site could be a constraint – it is the main route into the village and is narrow beyond the entrance to the site which may prevent the creation of a safe pedestrian access.</p> <p>The SHELAA does not consider the landscape and visual impacts of the site. The site is very large and sits on much</p>

restrictions on the land and no known abnormal costs which would affect viability. The submission does not provide indication of the likely build out rate.

Conclusion: Site is suitable for residential development taking identified constraints into account. Part development of the eastern aspect recommended.

higher ground than the rest of village as it has a fairly steep topography. The eastern section of site is the highest section and development here would be very visible. There are also telegraph wires crossing the south western part of the site which could restrict development.

As the NP is seeking to meet a lower housing requirement than the capacity of the site (approx. 60 dwellings) then this could be accommodated on a smaller portion of the site – for example the section between the agricultural access and the existing housing on Sand Hill.

SS0293 (Boxford) (planning application: DC/20/00330)	5.37 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Housing	64	Unsuitable – site has poor pedestrian access to core services and facilities	<p>Planning permission has been granted for 64 dwellings but subsequently quashed by High Court (26 March 2021) following Judicial Review.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions are accurate in that the site is disconnected from the village and would likely have significant landscape impacts.</p> <p>However the decision at High Court was that the development was quashed as BDC failed to properly consider the proposed community building through the S106 but the other issues such as highways and the impact on the village were not part of the</p>	<p>The site has planning permission (currently being redetermined) and it is not necessary to allocate it for development in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Planning permission has been granted for 64 dwellings but the application quashed by the High Court (March 2021) following a Judicial Review launched by the Parish Council).</p> <p>This outcome means that the matter will now be returned to Babergh’s planning committee for redetermination and the permission may still be implemented in due course.</p>
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decision. This outcome means that the matter will now be returned to Babergh's planning committee for redetermination. The planning permission could be implemented as the decision has not been ruled that development on the site is unsuitable.

It is not necessary for the site to be considered for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it has received planning permission and although that permission was subsequently withdrawn, the application is currently going through a redetermination process with the Local Planning Authority and the decision will be made outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

SS1247 (Boxford)	1.67 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Housing	7 (Owners of the site have put forward an illustrative masterplan which contains 7 dwellings)	Unsuitable – in excess of 50% of the site is within Flood Zone 2/3	Site has been put forward in the Call for Sites (BNP1). The owners of the site have proposed seven dwellings and a car park. The SHELAA states that the section of the site which is within Flood Zone 2/3 is not suitable for development. However, the western part of the site which is not at risk of flooding is potentially suitable for development.	<p>The site is potentially suitable for limited development and therefore potentially appropriate for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The western section of the site which is not within Flood Zone 2/3 is potentially suitable for housing subject to access being agreed with the Highways Authority. The owners of the site have proposed seven dwellings and a car park. The proposed homes are positioned outside Flood Zone 2 and 3. There would need to be evidence that additional parking was needed in the village but the proposed location within Flood Zone 2 is possible given the proposed use is a car park. This should be</p>
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							discussed with Babergh District Council.
SS1128 (Boxford)	2.85 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unsuitable – no possibility of creating suitable access to the site. Development of the site would result in a loss of designated open space, which is either not surplus to requirements or could not be replaced locally.	SHELAA conclusions can be applied.	<p>The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions can be applied.</p> <p>There are also issues with telegraph wires and poles crossing the site and visual impact as the site sits on higher ground than the surrounding area.</p> <p>Furthermore, the site is proposed as a designated as a green space in the BMSDCJLP Pre-Submission (November 2020)</p>
SS0898 (Boxford)	1.58 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unsuitable – no possibility of creating suitable access to the site. Site has poor connectivity to the existing settlement and lies within an area of high heritage sensitivity.	SHELAA conclusions can be applied. The site has been refused planning permission very recently on the grounds of harm to the landscape setting, character and appearance and increase in vehicular traffic along swan lane.	<p>The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions are applicable to a certain extent as there is a PRow crossing adjacent to the site and there are relatively long views to the south of the site and a steep gradient north to south which provides views to the other side of the valley.</p> <p>However, from the site visit it is appears that access could be created especially given the recent development adjacent to the site which provides a link into the village centre. The</p>

SHELAA (2020) was published 6 years after this development received permission (reference: B/14/012251).

The SHELAA notes that the site is high in historic sensitivity, however there is a new build development on one side of the site and post-war style housing on the other side. Therefore, development of the site would be in keeping with the surrounding area.

The site has been subject to two applications for consent. The first application put forward was for the erection of 2 dwellings (access to be considered) which was refused at appeal (ref: DC/20/01050) (date: 7 May 2020). The inspector notes that the main issues was whether the proposal would be appreciate with regard to the character and appearance of the area, a demonstrate need for two dwellings on this site and the density of development.

The second planning application for 6 dwellings, ancillary outbuildings vehicular access and associated works (including access to Primrose Wood was refused 28 May 2021. The reasons for refusal are: 1) the development would increase vehicular traffic along Swan

Street; 2) development would likely result in harm to the landscape setting and character of Boxford in this location; and 3) development would run counter to the interests of proper planning, which seeks to prevent the unplanned spread of development in a sporadic and piecemeal fashion. The appeal is currently lodged.

SS1257 (Calais Street)	0.75 Unknown Residential 5	<p>Site is potentially suitable, but the following considerations would require further investigation: Highways – regarding access, footpaths and infrastructure required Biodiversity – HRA may be required.</p> <p>Availability: Site is under multiple ownership. Submission states that land is available within 0-5 years. No build out rates have been provided.</p> <p>Achievability: Submission states that there are no legal constraints on the site.</p> <p>Conclusion: Site is potentially considered suitable for residential development taking identified constraints into account.</p>	<p>SHELAA conclusions superseded by a planning application. Outline Planning Application (DC/18/04967) for 4 dwellings was refused July 2019 however the scheme was accepted at appeal with conditions (11 March 2020). Reason for original refusal: 1. It is located in the countryside for the purposes of adopted Core Strategy policy CS2 which goes on to state that development within the countryside is acceptable only in exceptional circumstances subject to a proven justifiable need. 2. Consultation with Natural England identifies the site as falling within the 13 km 'zone of influence' for the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar</p>	<p>The site has planning permission and therefore is not necessary to allocate it for development in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>As the site has planning permission, the housing (4 dwellings) will count towards the housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area and therefore the site does not need to be duplicated with an allocation.</p>
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site, as set out in the emerging Suffolk Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy ('RAMS'). It is anticipated that new housing development in this area is 'likely to have a significant effect', when considered either alone or in combination, upon the interest features of European Sites due to the risk of increased recreational pressure caused by that development.

SS0402 (Calais Street)	0.30 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unsuitable – site has poor connectivity to the existing settlement and is not consistent with the settlement pattern.	SHELAA conclusions can be applied.	<p>The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>SHELAA conclusions can be applied. In addition, the site visit identified that there would be significant landscape/ visual impacts with far reaching views out to the west of the site. Furthermore, access is a key constraint due to the access road being very narrow and it would have to cross a large ditch from the road to the site.</p>
SS0403 (Calais Street)	0.75	Unknown	Residential	5	Site is potentially suitable, but the following considerations would require further investigation: Highways – regarding access, footpaths and the infrastructure required.	SHELAA conclusions can be applied.	<p>The site is not suitable for allocation as it has been proposed for allocation in the emerging BMSDC Joint Local Plan and should not be duplicated in a Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Landscape – potential impact on Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Heritage – impact on the historic environment.

Minerals – Site lies within Mineral Consultation Zone.

Utilities – water mains passes through the site.

Availability: Site has not been marketed. It is under single ownership, site submitted by a land agent on behalf of the landowner.

Achievability: The submission confirms that the site could come forward in 0-5 years. The submission confirms that there are no legal restrictions on the land no known abnormal costs which would affect viability. The submission does not provide indication of the likely annual build out rate.

Site conclusion: The site is potentially considered suitable for residential development, taking identified constraints into consideration. A low density development would be recommended, in line with

SHELAA conclusions can be applied. Site is potentially suitable for development subject to the following constraints being investigated further: access, landscape, heritage, minerals and utilities. The site is included in the emerging BMSDC JLP (under policy LS01) which is now under examination and this allocation should not be duplicated in a Neighbourhood Plan.

the existing settlement pattern.

SS0922 (Calais Street)	0.38 (AECOM estimate)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unsuitable – adjoining land uses would be incompatible with the proposed employment development with no scope for mitigation.	SHELAA conclusions can be applied.	The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan. SHELAA conclusions can be applied.
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Appendix B: Individual Site Proformas

BNP1

1. Site Details	
Site Reference / Name	BNP1
Site Address / Location	Stone Street Road
Gross Site Area (Hectares)	1.67
SHLAA/SHELAA Reference (if applicable)	SS1247
Existing land use	Field
Land use being considered	Residential
Development Capacity (Proposed by Landowner or SHLAA/HELAA)	7 dwellings and a car park proposed by landowner
Site identification method / source	Call for Sites & SHELAA
Planning history	None
Neighbouring uses	The northern boundary is adjacent to Boxford CEVC Primary School. The eastern boundary is adjacent to residential private gardens. The southern boundary is adjacent to the A1071 and the western boundary is adjacent to Stone Street Road.



2. Assessment of Suitability

Environmental Constraints

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent

- Ancient Woodland
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Biosphere Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- National Park
- Ramsar Site
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Does the site fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and would the proposed use/development trigger the requirement to consult Natural England?*

Yes - within Boxford Conservation Area. Southern boundary is adjacent to an environmentally sensitive area (Suffolk River Valleys) (Source: Natural England Open Data).

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following non statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent / Unknown

- Green Infrastructure Corridor
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Public Open Space
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Nature Improvement Area
- Regionally Important Geological Site
- Other

No

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within Flood Zones 2 or 3?

See guidance notes:

- Flood Zone 1: *Low Risk*
- Flood Zone 2: *Medium Risk*
- Flood Zone 3 (less or more vulnerable site use): *Medium Risk*
- Flood Zone 3 (highly vulnerable site use): *High Risk*

High Risk - over 50% of the site is within Flood Zone 2/3. However the smaller portion of the site being proposed for development is outside the flood zones except for the car park which is within flood zone 2 and 3.

Site is at risk of surface water flooding?

See guidance notes:

- Less than 15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – *Low Risk*
- >15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – *Medium Risk*

Medium Risk

Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - Grade 3 (DEFRA does not specify whether Grade 3a or 3b)

2. Assessment of Suitability

Site contains habitats with the potential to support priority species? Does the site contain local wildlife-rich habitats? Is the site part of:

- UK BAP Priority Habitat;
- a wider ecological network (including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity);
- wildlife corridors (and stepping stones that connect them); and/or
- an area identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - Priority Species for CS Targeting - Lapwing

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Physical Constraints

Is the site:

Flat or relatively flat / Gently sloping or uneven / Steeply sloping

Flat or relatively flat

Is there existing vehicle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - there is currently no access but access could be gained from Stone Street Road or the A1071. Stone Street Road is fairly narrow (much like the rest of the Village). However, improving the cars parked near the school at drop off and pick up time with the proposed car park would significantly help with this.

Is there existing pedestrian access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - there is currently no access but access could be gained from Stone Street Road or the A1071. However both roads do not have pedestrian footpaths.

Is there existing cycle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - there is currently no access but access could be gained from Stone Street Road or the A1071.

Are there any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Are there any known Tree Preservation Orders on the site?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - two TPOs within the site

Are there veteran/ancient trees within or adjacent to the site?

Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown

Unknown

Are there other significant trees within or adjacent to the site?

Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown

Unknown

2. Assessment of Suitability

Is the site likely to be affected by ground contamination?

Yes / No / Unknown

Unknown

Is there any utilities infrastructure crossing the site i.e. power lines/pipe lines, or is the site in close proximity to hazardous installations?

Yes / No / Unknown

Unknown

Would development of the site result in a loss of social, amenity or community value?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Accessibility

Distances to community facilities and services should be measured using walking routes from the centre of each site to each facility. The distances are based on the assumption that 400m is equal to approximately 5 minutes' walk and are measured from the edge of the site.

Facilities	Town / local centre / shop	Bus / Tram Stop	Train station	Primary School	Secondary School	Open Space / recreation facilities	Cycle Route
Distance (metres)	<400m (Boxford Village Stores)	>800m (Boxford does not have a bus / tram service)	>1200m (Boxford does not have a train station)	<400m (Boxford CEVC Primary School)	>3900m (Thomas Gainsborough School)	>800m (no public open space / recreation facilities within Boxford)	>800m

Landscape and Visual Constraints

This section should be answered based on existing evidence or by a qualified landscape consultant.

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape?

- **Low sensitivity:** the site has few or no valued features, and/or valued features that are less susceptible to development and can accommodate change.
- **Medium sensitivity:** the site has many valued features, and/or valued features that are susceptible to development but could potentially accommodate some change with appropriate mitigation.
- **High sensitivity:** the site has highly valued features, and/or valued features that are highly susceptible to development. The site can accommodate minimal change.

Medium sensitivity - due to proximity to open countryside on the other side of the A1071 and the different trees, shrubs and watercourse that runs along the boundary of the site.

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of visual amenity?

- **Low sensitivity:** the site is visually enclosed and has low intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would not adversely impact any identified views.
- **Medium sensitivity:** the site is somewhat enclosed and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it may adversely impact any identified views.
- **High sensitivity:** the site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would adversely impact any recognised views.

Low sensitivity - the site is on lower ground than the surrounding roads and villages. It is also very enclosed so unlikely to be any views into or out of the site.

2. Assessment of Suitability

Heritage Constraints

Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Planning Policy Constraints

Is the site in the Green Belt?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Is the site allocated for a particular use (e.g. housing / employment) or designated as open space in the adopted and / or emerging Local Plan?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Are there any other relevant planning policies relating to the site?

Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy & Policies - Policy CS2 Settlement Pattern Policy, CS11 Strategy for Development for Core and Hinterland Villages. Babergh Local Plan (2006) Saved Local Plan policies - HS04: Protecting the Countryside, CN08 Development in or near conservation areas. Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) - SP03 Settlement Hierarchy

Is the site:

Greenfield / A mix of greenfield and previously developed land / Previously developed land

Greenfield

Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing built up area?

*Within / Adjacent to and connected to /
Outside and not connected to*

Adjacent to and connected to the existing built up area

Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing settlement boundary (if one exists)?

*Within / Adjacent to and connected to /
Outside and not connected to*

Adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary

Would development of the site result in neighbouring settlements merging into one another?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Is the size of the site large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

3. Assessment of Availability

Is the site available for development? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	Yes
Are there any known legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, or operational requirements of landowners? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	No
Is there a known time frame for availability? Available now / 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years	Available now

4. Assessment of Viability

Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities? What evidence is available to support this judgement? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	No
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5. Conclusions

<p>What is the expected development capacity of the site? (either as proposed by site promoter or estimated through SHLAA/HELAA or Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment)</p>	<p>7 dwellings and a car park proposed by landowner</p>
<p>What is the likely timeframe for development (0-5 / 6-10 / 11-15 / 15+ years)</p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Other key information</p>	<p>Information provided by the Group: the owners of the site made a pitch to the parish council about 15 months ago proposing seven dwellings and a car park and have more recently confirmed their interest in developing the site (illustrative masterplan saved in folder). The plan envisages seven dwellings and a car park adjacent to the existing village primary school. The Group are keen to make use of part of the site to create a much needed car park near to the centre of the village which will also cater for the traffic generated at school drop off and pick up times. The flood plain is also a significant factor on this site which significantly restricts its development potential and increase the cost of engineering dwellings to mitigate the flood risk. There is an old telephone exchange box on the site which is likely to be included in the allocation for revamping using the money from the houses to provide another community communal space in the village.</p>
<p>Overall rating (Red/Amber/Green) The site is suitable and available The site is potentially suitable, and available. The site is not currently suitable, and available. Are there any known viability issues? Yes / No</p>	<p>The site is potentially suitable, available and achievable No</p>

Summary of justification for rating

The site is currently a field (Grade 3 agricultural land) and is available for development. There is currently no access to the site, however, access could potentially be gained from Stone Street Road, subject to discussions with the Highways Authority. Possible access from the A1071 but this may not be acceptable to Highways officers or viable. A pedestrian footpath would also need to be created on one of these roads if the site is developed as there is currently no pedestrian footpath. The site is in close proximity to the centre of Boxford which consists of various shops and facilities including a village store and primary school.

A key environmental constraint is that 50% of the site is within Flood Zone 2/3 and therefore development can not take place on this part of the site which is why the SHELAA concludes that the site is not suitable for development. However, the western section of the site could be developed to provide approx. 7 dwellings and a car park (illustrated in the illustrative plan sent by the owners of the site). The site is within Boxford Conservation Area and therefore development should contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of Boxford. In addition, the southern boundary of the site is adjacent to an environmentally sensitive area which does not prohibit development but if developed the scheme would need to be sympathetic to its surroundings. Likewise, there are two TPOs within the site and therefore development would need to take these into consideration.

The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary.

Therefore, the western section of the site which is not within Flood Zone 2/3 is considered potentially suitable for development and allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the identified constraints being resolved or mitigated, particularly access, impact on the conservation area and the TPOs. The inclusion of a car park should be discussed with BDC planning officers to understand whether this is likely to be acceptable. The car park site is within Flood Zone 2/3 but this should not preclude development of a car park at this location. Evidence that there is a need for parking here should be provided (e.g. through parking surveys) and ways of mitigating traffic entering the village should be explored.

BNP2

1. Site Details

Site Reference / Name	BNP2
Site Address / Location	Daking Avenue
Gross Site Area (Hectares)	0.10
SHLAA/SHELAA Reference (if applicable)	n/a
Existing land use	Used car park enclosed within a housing development
Land use being considered	Residential
Development Capacity (Proposed by Landowner or SHLAA/HELAA)	2 dwellings suggested by NP Steering Group
Site identification method / source	Call for Sites
Planning history	None
Neighbouring uses	All 4 boundaries are adjacent to private gardens. The western boundary is also adjacent to Daking Avenue.



2. Assessment of Suitability

Environmental Constraints

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent

- Ancient Woodland
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Biosphere Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- National Park
- Ramsar Site
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Does the site fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and would the proposed use/development trigger the requirement to consult Natural England?*

No

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following non statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent / Unknown

- Green Infrastructure Corridor
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Public Open Space
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Nature Improvement Area
- Regionally Important Geological Site
- Other

No

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within Flood Zones 2 or 3?

See guidance notes:

- *Flood Zone 1: Low Risk*
- *Flood Zone 2: Medium Risk*
- *Flood Zone 3 (less or more vulnerable site use): Medium Risk*
- *Flood Zone 3 (highly vulnerable site use): High Risk*

Low Risk

Site is at risk of surface water flooding?

See guidance notes:

- *Less than 15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Low Risk*
- *>15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Medium Risk*

Medium Risk

Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - Grade 3 (DEFRA does not specify whether Grade 3a or 3b)

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Site contains habitats with the potential to support priority species? Does the site contain local wildlife-rich habitats? Is the site part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK BAP Priority Habitat; • a wider ecological network (including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity); • wildlife corridors (and stepping stones that connect them); and/or • an area identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation? <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - Priority Species for CS Targeting - Lapwing</p>
<p>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Physical Constraints</p>	
<p>Is the site:</p> <p><i>Flat or relatively flat / Gently sloping or uneven / Steeply sloping</i></p>	<p>Flat or relatively flat</p>
<p>Is there existing vehicle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Daking Avenue.</p>
<p>Is there existing pedestrian access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Daking Avenue.</p>
<p>Is there existing cycle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Daking Avenue.</p>
<p>Are there any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Are there any known Tree Preservation Orders on the site?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Are there veteran/ancient trees within or adjacent to the site?</p> <p><i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Are there other significant trees within or adjacent to the site?</p> <p><i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown</p>

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Is the site likely to be affected by ground contamination? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	Unknown
<p>Is there any utilities infrastructure crossing the site i.e. power lines/pipe lines, or is the site in close proximity to hazardous installations? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	Unknown
<p>Would development of the site result in a loss of social, amenity or community value? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	No

Accessibility

Distances to community facilities and services should be measured using walking routes from the centre of each site to each facility. The distances are based on the assumption that 400m is equal to approximately 5 minutes' walk and are measured from the edge of the site.

Facilities	Town / local centre / shop	Bus / Tram Stop	Train station	Primary School	Secondary School	Open Space / recreation facilities	Cycle Route
Distance (metres)	400-1200m (Boxford Village Stores)	>800m (Boxford does not have a bus / tram service)	>1200m (Boxford does not have a train station)	400-1200m (Boxford CEVC Primary School)	>3900m (Thomas Gainsborough School)	>800m (no public open space / recreation facilities within Boxford)	>800m

Landscape and Visual Constraints

This section should be answered based on existing evidence or by a qualified landscape consultant.

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape?

- **Low sensitivity:** the site has few or no valued features, and/or valued features that are less susceptible to development and can accommodate change.
- **Medium sensitivity:** the site has many valued features, and/or valued features that are susceptible to development but could potentially accommodate some change with appropriate mitigation.
- **High sensitivity:** the site has highly valued features, and/or valued features that are highly susceptible to development. The site can accommodate minimal change.

Low sensitivity - the site is located in the middle of the built up area.

2. Assessment of Suitability

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of visual amenity?

- *Low sensitivity: the site is visually enclosed and has low intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would not adversely impact any identified views.*
- *Medium sensitivity: the site is somewhat enclosed and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it may adversely impact any identified views.*
- *High sensitivity: the site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would adversely impact any recognised views.*

Low sensitivity - the site is surrounded by dwellings and therefore feels enclosed.

Heritage Constraints

Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Planning Policy Constraints

Is the site in the Green Belt?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Is the site allocated for a particular use (e.g. housing / employment) or designated as open space in the adopted and / or emerging Local Plan?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Are there any other relevant planning policies relating to the site?

Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy & Policies - Policy CS2 Settlement Pattern Policy, CS11 Strategy for Development for Core and Hinterland Villages.
Babergh Local Plan (2006) Saved Local Plan policies - HS04: Protecting the Countryside, CN08 Development in or near conservation areas. Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) - SP03 Settlement Hierarchy

Is the site:

Greenfield / A mix of greenfield and previously developed land / Previously developed land

Previously developed land

Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing built up area?

*Within / Adjacent to and connected to /
Outside and not connected to*

Within the existing built up area (infill)

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing settlement boundary (if one exists)? <i>Within / Adjacent to and connected to / Outside and not connected to</i></p>	<p>Within the existing settlement boundary</p>
<p>Would development of the site result in neighbouring settlements merging into one another? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is the size of the site large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>

3. Assessment of Availability

Is the site available for development? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	Unknown (Owned by the Council)
Are there any known legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, or operational requirements of landowners? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	No
Is there a known time frame for availability? Available now / 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years	Unknown (Owned by the Council)

4. Assessment of Viability

Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities? What evidence is available to support this judgement? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	Yes - potential demolition of garages and breaking up of hardstanding
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5. Conclusions

<p>What is the expected development capacity of the site? (either as proposed by site promoter or estimated through SHLAA/HELAA or Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment)</p>	<p>2 dwellings suggested by NP Steering Group</p>
<p>What is the likely timeframe for development (0-5 / 6-10 / 11-15 / 15+ years)</p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Other key information</p>	<p>In-fill opportunity using land which is currently a little used car park largely enclosed within a housing development. The Group envisage two dwellings here.</p>
<p>Overall rating (Red/Amber/Green) The site is suitable and available The site is potentially suitable, and available. The site is not currently suitable, and available. Are there any known viability issues? Yes / No</p>	<p>The site is not currently suitable, available and achievable</p> <p>Yes - potential demolition of garages and breaking up of hardstanding</p>
<p>Summary of justification for rating</p>	<p>The site is currently being used as a car park which is enclosed within a housing development. The site is owned by the Council and could be an infill opportunity but at present there is no evidence it is available for redevelopment and information provided by the Steering Group indicates that four private houses backing on to this area from Gunnary Close have an easement across the access and would not support development of the site. The site is therefore not currently available and possibly not viable for development due to the potential costs and therefore cannot be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan. It is advised that the site is discussed with BDC to understand if there are wider plans for redevelopment of council owned land within villages such as parking courts and what the feasibility of this proposal could be. The site could be listed as an aspiration or project to communicate community support for redevelopment of the site, should it become available in the future.</p>

BNP3

1. Site Details

Site Reference / Name	BNP3
Site Address / Location	Fitzgerald Meadow, Boxford, Sudbury
Gross Site Area (Hectares)	0.52
SHLAA/SHELAA Reference (if applicable)	n/a
Existing land use	Field
Land use being considered	Residential
Development Capacity (Proposed by Landowner or SHLAA/HELAA)	6-7 dwellings proposed by NP Steering Group
Site identification method / source	Call for Sites
Planning history	None
Neighbouring uses	The northern boundary is adjacent to Boxford Spinney Scout Campsite. The eastern boundary is adjacent to a field. The southern and western boundary is adjacent to housing and private gardens.



2. Assessment of Suitability

Environmental Constraints

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent

- Ancient Woodland
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Biosphere Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- National Nature Reserve (NNR)
- National Park
- Ramsar Site
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)

**Does the site fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and would the proposed use/development trigger the requirement to consult Natural England?*

Yes - within Boxford Conservation Area

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following non statutory environmental designations:

Yes / No / partly or adjacent / Unknown

- Green Infrastructure Corridor
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Public Open Space
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Nature Improvement Area
- Regionally Important Geological Site
- Other

No

Site is predominantly, or wholly, within Flood Zones 2 or 3?

See guidance notes:

- *Flood Zone 1: Low Risk*
- *Flood Zone 2: Medium Risk*
- *Flood Zone 3 (less or more vulnerable site use): Medium Risk*
- *Flood Zone 3 (highly vulnerable site use): High Risk*

Medium Risk - western section (to the rear of the gardens of the houses fronting Fen Street) of the site is within Flood Zone 3

Site is at risk of surface water flooding?

See guidance notes:

- *Less than 15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Low Risk*
- *>15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – Medium Risk*

Medium Risk

Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)?

Yes / No / Unknown

Yes - Grade 3 (DEFRA does not specify whether Grade 3a or 3b)

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Site contains habitats with the potential to support priority species? Does the site contain local wildlife-rich habitats? Is the site part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK BAP Priority Habitat; • a wider ecological network (including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity); • wildlife corridors (and stepping stones that connect them); and/or • an area identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation? <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - Priority Species for CS Targeting - Lapwing</p>
<p>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Physical Constraints</p>	
<p>Is the site:</p> <p><i>Flat or relatively flat / Gently sloping or uneven / Steeply sloping</i></p>	<p>Flat or relatively flat</p>
<p>Is there existing vehicle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Fitzgerald Meadow. However the access created would need to cross the flood zone part of the site.</p>
<p>Is there existing pedestrian access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Fitzgerald Meadow. However the access created would need to cross the flood zone part of the site. In addition, there is a footpath that runs along the south eastern part of the site.</p>
<p>Is there existing cycle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes - access could be gained from Fitzgerald Meadow. However the access created would need to cross the flood zone part of the site.</p>
<p>Are there any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No (public right of way adjacent to the site)</p>
<p>Are there any known Tree Preservation Orders on the site?</p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Are there veteran/ancient trees within or adjacent to the site?</p> <p><i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Are there other significant trees within or adjacent to the site?</p> <p><i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown</p>

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Is the site likely to be affected by ground contamination? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	Unknown
<p>Is there any utilities infrastructure crossing the site i.e. power lines/pipe lines, or is the site in close proximity to hazardous installations? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	Unknown
<p>Would development of the site result in a loss of social, amenity or community value? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	No

Accessibility

Distances to community facilities and services should be measured using walking routes from the centre of each site to each facility. The distances are based on the assumption that 400m is equal to approximately 5 minutes' walk and are measured from the edge of the site.

Facilities	Town / local centre / shop	Bus / Tram Stop	Train station	Primary School	Secondary School	Open Space / recreation facilities	Cycle Route
Distance (metres)	400-1200m (Boxford Village Stores)	>800m (Boxford does not have a bus / tram service)	>1200m (Boxford does not have a train station)	400-1200m (Boxford CEVC Primary School)	>3900m (Thomas Gainsborough School)	>800m (no public open space / recreation facilities within Boxford)	>800m

Landscape and Visual Constraints

This section should be answered based on existing evidence or by a qualified landscape consultant.

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape?

- **Low sensitivity:** the site has few or no valued features, and/or valued features that are less susceptible to development and can accommodate change.
- **Medium sensitivity:** the site has many valued features, and/or valued features that are susceptible to development but could potentially accommodate some change with appropriate mitigation.
- **High sensitivity:** the site has highly valued features, and/or valued features that are highly susceptible to development. The site can accommodate minimal change.

Low sensitivity / medium sensitivity - due to the proximity of the site to open countryside, however the site is wrapped around the built up area and does not extend much into the open countryside.

2. Assessment of Suitability

Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of visual amenity?

- *Low sensitivity: the site is visually enclosed and has low intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would not adversely impact any identified views.*
- *Medium sensitivity: the site is somewhat enclosed and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it may adversely impact any identified views.*
- *High sensitivity: the site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would adversely impact any recognised views.*

Low sensitivity / medium sensitivity - likely to be a localised visual impact as the land where housing council be put (outside the flood zone to the east of the site) sits higher than the adjacent dwellings. However, there is unlikely to be far reaching views as the site is fairly well contained by vegetation.

Heritage Constraints

Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting?

*Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /
Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /
Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation*

Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation

Planning Policy Constraints

Is the site in the Green Belt?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Is the site allocated for a particular use (e.g. housing / employment) or designated as open space in the adopted and / or emerging Local Plan?

Yes / No / Unknown

No

Are there any other relevant planning policies relating to the site?

Babergh Local Plan 2011-2031 Core Strategy & Policies - Policy CS2 Settlement Pattern Policy, CS11 Strategy for Development for Core and Hinterland Villages.
Babergh Local Plan (2006) Saved Local Plan policies - HS04: Protecting the Countryside, CN08 Development in or near conservation areas. Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) - SP03 Settlement Hierarchy

Is the site:

Greenfield / A mix of greenfield and previously developed land / Previously developed land

Greenfield

Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing built up area?

*Within / Adjacent to and connected to /
Outside and not connected to*

Adjacent to and connected to the existing built up area

2. Assessment of Suitability

<p>Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing settlement boundary (if one exists)? <i>Within / Adjacent to and connected to / Outside and not connected to</i></p>	<p>Adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary</p>
<p>Would development of the site result in neighbouring settlements merging into one another? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Is the size of the site large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>

3. Assessment of Availability

Is the site available for development? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	Unknown
Are there any known legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, or operational requirements of landowners? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	No
Is there a known time frame for availability? Available now / 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years	Unknown

4. Assessment of Viability

Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities? What evidence is available to support this judgement? <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	No
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5. Conclusions

<p>What is the expected development capacity of the site? (either as proposed by site promoter or estimated through SHLAA/HELAA or Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment)</p>	<p>6-7 dwellings proposed by NP Steering Group</p>
<p>What is the likely timeframe for development (0-5 / 6-10 / 11-15 / 15+ years)</p>	<p>Unknown</p>
<p>Other key information</p>	<p>The Group state that this site is in effect an extension to an existing housing development and the Group believe it could potentially accommodate six or seven dwellings. From the site visit it was noted that the Group were concerned that if this site is included in the plan as an allocation or just developed anyway that it would set a precedent for the adjacent fields to the north east to be developed given they are not actually addressing a housing requirement currently.</p>
<p>Overall rating (Red/Amber/Green) The site is suitable and available The site is potentially suitable, and available. The site is not currently suitable, and available. Are there any known viability issues? Yes / No</p>	<p>The site is potentially suitable, available and achievable</p> <p>No</p>
<p>Summary of justification for rating</p>	<p>The site is currently a field (Grade 3 agricultural land). The availability of the site is unknown although the title deed show it has been transferred to a Housing Association. The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing built up area and settlement boundary of Boxford. If developed, access could be gained from Fitzgerald Meadow. However, the access created would need to cross the flood zone part of the site. The site is reasonable distance to the centre of Boxford which consists of various shops and facilities including a village store and primary school.</p> <p>The area of the site to the rear of the housing fronting Fen Street (western part of site) is within Flood Zone 3 and has a medium risk of surface water flooding. The area within Flood Zone 3 could not be developed for residential use but it is possible that an access road could be built through the area of high flood risk and a small number of homes built on the eastern side. The site is within Boxford Conservation Area and therefore development should contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of Boxford.</p> <p>If the site is confirmed as available and the identified constraints can be resolved or mitigated, including in particular the flood risk, the site is potentially suitable for development and allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

