

INTRODUCTION

To date, our analysis of population projections, past build rates and evidenced local needs suggests that an appropriate level of development for the neighbourhood plan area is likely to be about 45 to 50 new dwellings over the plan period (2017 – 2031), of which 17 already have planning consent. The direction of future growth in Gillingham and Shaftesbury is a separate, strategic matter that will be dealt with through the Local Plan Review process.

Whether the Neighbourhood Plan process can say where the housing Motcombe needs should be located, depends upon finding sites that would be acceptable to the local community, acceptable on environmental grounds, and broadly in line with national and local planning policies. Factors such as flooding, poor access and the presence of protected species can all rule out possible development sites.

THE PROCESS

North Dorset hold a database of all sites that have been submitted by landowners wishing for their land for be considered for development. The Council's website (dorsetforyou.gov.uk/shlaa/north) shows all of the sites submitted as a result of a 'Call for Sites' in 2009. In September to October 2016 a further 'Call for Sites' was run. The additional sites from the 2016 call have been passed to the Parish Council (as the District Council has yet to publish and update its online map and database). Due to the extensive coverage of available sites this provided, a further 'call for sites' was not considered necessary.

Members of the neighbourhood plan working group, together with their planning advisor, visited all of the sites, and took notes of possible issues. Technical expertise was also sought from the District and County Councils regarding highways, flooding and contaminated land. An independent heritage consultant was appointed to review the heritage impact of certain sites. The following site summaries show the main findings.

Stage 1 – assessment against Neighbourhood Plan objectives

Based on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan objectives the following criteria were used to rank the sites, to be tested further through an options consultation stage:

- 1. Strengthening the village character:** the site (in whole or part) could be developed in a form that appears as an incremental, organic scale of growth in keeping with the village character (as opposed to larger urban estate style development)
- 2. Reinforcing the compact form of village:** the site is well related to the built-up area of the village and would not extend its general spread beyond the existing limit of development or breach significant boundaries
- 3. Retaining green spaces and key views:** the site does not form an important green space, and its development would not result in the loss of an important view from a public area or highway to the wider countryside
- 4. Promoting a walkable village:** most of the main amenities (Village Shop, School, Memorial Hall / playing fields and Motcombe Meadows), are within 800m walking distance of the site entrance, and the pedestrian routes would or could be made safe
- 5. Minimising the risk of traffic accidents:** the traffic that would be generated by the site is not likely to create or exacerbate traffic problems, based on the location and likely access
- 6. Promoting a working environment:** the development is likely to be well served by mobile and broadband coverage to allow working from home, taking into account current and planned availability

REJECTED ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

As a result of the assessment process (explained on the following pages) a number of sites have been rejected at the first stage, in order to focus on those that are likely to be sustainable and meet the neighbourhood plan objectives. The options consultation will however provide people with an opportunity to say whether any of the rejected sites should be reconsidered.

The following sites were considered to not provide ‘reasonable alternatives’ as they failed to score well against a significant number of the above objectives, either as a whole or if reduced in size.

Ref	SHLAA	Location	Low score – main Issues	Conclusions
5	[new]	NE corner Frog Lane / Motcombe Rd	Negative score: (4) Marginal scores: (2) (3) & (6)	Outlying sites which also potentially impact on character. Concerns raised re safety of Frog Lane. Noted: surface water flood risk also indicated across much of sites 6 / 7 / 8
6/7	0009 / 0010	RO Yew Tree Cottage (Frog Lane)	Negative score: (4) Marginal scores: (1) (5) & (6)	
8	0531	Lakemead Kennels (Frog Lane)	Negative scores: (4) & (5) Marginal score: (6)	
9	0409	Turks Field (Frog Lane)	Negative scores: (1), (2), (3) & (5) Marginal score: (4)	Large site difficult to develop organically and comparatively elevated to main village
15/16	0440 / 0536	RO Summer Oaks / Heathfield	Negative scores: (1) & (2) Marginal score: (3)	General scored poorly in terms of impact on linear village character, and also impacting on views out to the countryside
17	[new]	Land south Elm Hill	Negative scores: (3) & (5), Marginal scores: (1), (2) & (4)	
22/23	0004 / 0005	Land Red House Farm (Elm Hill)	Negative scores: (1), (2) & (5) Marginal score: --	Large sites difficult to develop organically and poorly related to linear village character

The following sites passed the Stage 1 assessment but were subsequently rejected due to potential heritage impact (see Stage 2 additional checks)

Ref	SHLAA	Location	Main Issues
1	0528	Land opposite Church Farm	Impact on setting of Church (Listed Building) likely to cause some degree of harm
24	0435	Rear Red House Farm / Stainers Mead	Impact on setting of Red House Farm (Listed Building) likely to cause some degree of harm

Stage 2 – Additional Checks

Additional detailed checks were made in terms of heritage impacts, flood risk, and the contaminated land register

Heritage checks – the independent assessment by Kevin Morris suggested that sites 1 and 24 are likely to cause some degree of harm to heritage assets, and therefore these have been rejected

Flood risk checks – the Flood Risk Management Team of Dorset County Council has suggested the need for further assessment in relation to sites 1, 2, 4 and 13 if these are to be allocated, to ascertain the extent and significance of the flood risk affecting parts of these sites.

Contaminated land checks – the Environmental Health team of North Dorset District Council provided maps of the contaminated land records, which indicate that none of the remaining site options is likely to be affected by contamination.

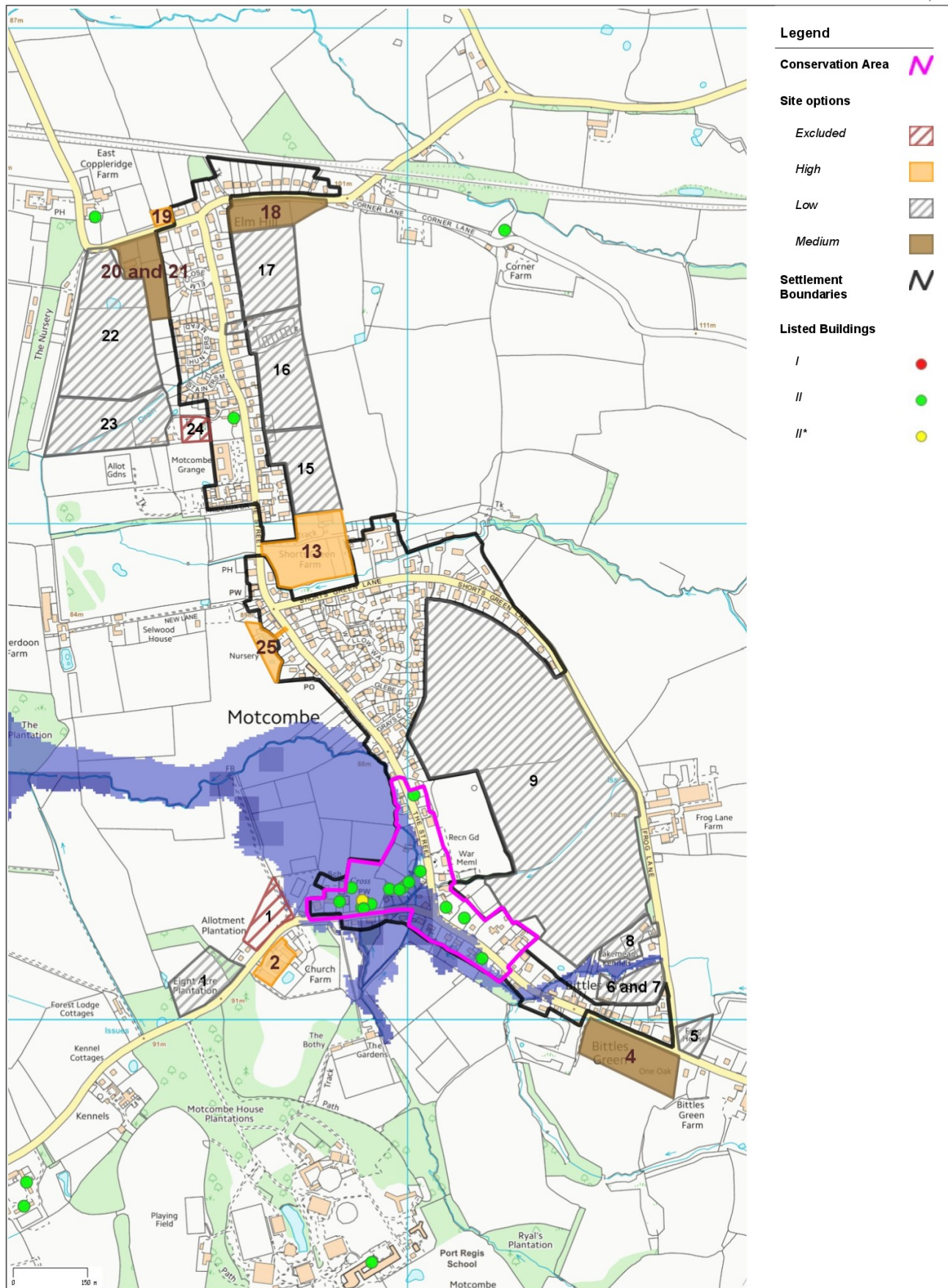
PREFERRED SITES

The remaining sites being considered for allocation are therefore as follows:

Ref	Location	SHLAA	Objectives	Dwelling estimate
2	Church Farm barns	0398 EXCLUDED “outside of settlement boundary and away from main part of village”	High Score	5 dwellings
13	Shorts Green Farm, The Street	0407	High Score	20 dwellings (or higher: outline app’n for 38)
19	Garden at Sunset Ridge, Elm Hill	0005	High Score	2 dwellings
25	The Nursery (The Street)	0006	High Score	2 – 3 dwellings
4	Beside Shire Meadows, Motcombe Rd	0408	Medium Score	10 (part site) or higher (45)
18	Elm Hill (SE) – land off Knapp Hill	0004	Medium Score	9 dwellings
20 / 21	Elm Hill (SW) – land west of Highfields	0441 / 0439	Medium Score	15 – 20 dwellings

The availability of sites that scored well against the assessment criteria have also checked with the landowners.

The following map shows the location of the remaining sites and the main environmental constraints (as available mapped).



SUSTAINABILITY CHECKS

Although the District Council have confirmed that, based on the above selection of sites, the environmental constraints that apply across much of the area and the likely quantity of development, the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant environmental affect, sustainability checks have still been carried out to ensure that the Plan will ultimately contribute towards sustainable development. The following table highlights the sustainability objectives used and how sites were considered:

Objective	Assessment basis for site allocations
Ecology – safeguard and where possible enhance ecological interests	Is there likely to be protected species / habitats on site, or potential for enhancement?
Landscape – Ensure development respects and reinforces the area's rural character	Is the site likely to be particularly visible in public views, especially from the AONB, does it contain local landscape features that could be harmed, and are there opportunities for enhancement?
Heritage – Protect the area's heritage assets, and where opportunities arise, enhance the historic character of the area	Is the site likely to cause harm to any heritage assets, and are there opportunities for enhancement?
Pollution – Ensure development does not result in an unacceptable risk of pollution.	Are there any existing industries or other nearby uses that may give rise to noise / emissions?
Flooding – Reduce flood risk	Is the site at risk of flooding or may cause flood risk to increase off-site?
Local Needs – Provide housing, employment and community facilities to help meet local needs	How much housing could be provided (or might be lost) including affordable homes, and could the site to accommodate new jobs or community facilities?
Safe Access – Ensure safe access and a pedestrian-friendly environment	Is the site safe and accessible, taking into account vehicular access and walking routes to facilities?

All sites were scored as follows:

++	significant positive effect	--	significant negative effect
+	positive effect	-	negative effect
0	neutral effect	?	uncertain effect

An explanation of the scores is provided in the following sections, with the 'overview' shown in the table below (in the order the sites are displayed).

Objective ⇨ Site ⇩	Ecology	Land- scape	Heritage	Pollution	Flooding	Local Needs	Safe Access
2 Church Farm Barns	?	+	+	?	?	+	-
13 Shorts Green Farm	?	0	0	0	?	++	++
19 Garden at Sunset Ridge	?	0	0	0	0	+	-
25 The Nursery	?	+	0	0	0	+	+
4 Adj Shire Meadows	?	0	0	0	0	++	-
18 Elm Hill (SE)	?	0	0	0	0	+	-
20 / 21 Elm Hill (SW)	?	0	0	0	0	++	-

For more information on the basis for the above 'scores' please see separate document

Site 2: Church Farm Barns



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: Existing farmyard (in active use) with large, open farm buildings of no intrinsic architectural or historic merit on relatively level site. Adjoining farmland, with residential properties to north-east and across road to north-west. Site size (entire area): 0.39ha

ACCESS

Observations: Just outside existing 30mph zone. Existing vehicular access appears fine, but there is no pavement into the village from this site. Area outside school can be busy at school pick-up / drop-off times.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays, away from the bend. No footway link to settlement centre. Provide pedestrian footway across frontage of site?

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: Rural agricultural character. Large open ditch and occasional trees running along road frontage. No other notable features. Farm buildings do not contribute significantly to landscape character – potential for visual enhancement. Farm buildings may provide possible bat / bird roosts.

Heritage expert comments: It is not considered that the allocation will affect the setting of the conservation area or any Listed Buildings. To the south and east of the site is a former orchard recorded on the Historic Environment Record (HER Number 02792097). Sensitive development which creates a more suitable and soft edge to the designation combined with a more domestic scale of buildings with sensitive forms and materials which reflect local character would lead to an enhanced setting of the former orchard.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: Large open ditch running along road frontage. Brownfield site – although no specific risks identified there may be contamination from slurry and other agricultural processes.

DCC FRM comments: the site is shown by relevant mapping to be at significant (theoretical) risk of surface water flooding, with the received flow running through the site towards the north-east and Motcombe Stream. Any redevelopment proposals would need to consider both the prevailing risk of received surface water, and the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Manage surface water flows to reduce possible flood risk – to be determined through detailed flood risk assessment
- Secure relocation of farmyard uses to acceptable alternative site (unless current site is redundant)
- Secure biodiversity gains – to be determined through biodiversity mitigation and appraisal plan
- Landscape planting scheme to provide suitable soft edge to the adjoining former orchard and enhance character of streamside ditch
- Replacement buildings to be of reduced height and bulk (ie more domestic scale) with sensitive forms and materials appropriate to village edge character
- Provision of footway / improved pedestrian safety to school
- Contamination checks during build phase

Site 13: Shorts Green Farm, The Street



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: relatively flat pasture, adjoining mainly residential areas, watercourse and lane to south with links through the farmland (to north-east) and to Motcombe Meadows (across road to west).

Site size (entire area): 1.87ha

ACCESS

Observations: Existing vehicular access off The Street. Pavement only on west side of road at this point.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays. Provide a 2m wide footway across the site frontage.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: Stream and related vegetation along southern edge. Woody hedgerows along site boundaries. No other notable features.

Heritage expert comments: It is not considered that the allocation will affect any heritage assets.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: Stream runs along southern edge

DCC FRM comments: the site is shown by relevant mapping to be at significant (theoretical) risk of surface water flooding, with the received flow running through the site towards the watercourse along the south and west boundaries. Any redevelopment proposals would need to consider both the prevailing risk of received surface water, and the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Manage surface water flows to reduce possible flood risk – to be determined through detailed flood risk assessment
- Secure biodiversity gains – to be determined through biodiversity mitigation and appraisal plan
- Landscape planting scheme to retain / reinforce hedgerow boundaries and enhance character of stream
- Provision of footway along east side of the Street

Site 19: Garden at Sunset Ridge

SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: Garden / paddock area adjacent to residential property. Broadly level site adjoining housing to east side, farmland to rear and west. Noted that planning decision 2/2017/0472 suggests the site remains outside the residential curtilage.

Site size: 0.36ha

ACCESS

Observations: Existing vehicular access off Elm Hill. No pavements at this point.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays but will need to be sited away from the bend. No footway link to settlement centre.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: No notable features. Impact on heritage assets considered likely to be similar to site 20/21

Heritage expert comments: (in relation to site 20/21) East Coppleridge Farm (Grade II Listed) lies to the north of the site - a typical farmhouse with associated farm buildings falling within its immediate and close curtilage. Existing hedgerows provide comprehensive visual barriers particularly from the south, east and west. A post-medieval/modern orchard lies immediately to the east of the farm (HER Number MD027906). To the south and now covered by properties within Elm Close is another entry on the Record (HER Number MDO27907) again a post medieval to modern (1800 AD? to 1950 AD) orchard. The farmhouse and adjacent orchard both are sufficiently divorced from the site allocation which together with existing screening and topography would not result in harm being caused.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: Small site on high ground – no risks identified from current use.

DCC FRM comments: The site is not shown to be at risk of flooding. However any development proposals would need to consider the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Retain and strengthen hedgerow boundaries to north and west.
- Improved vehicular access
- Provision of footway / improved pedestrian safety into village if feasible



Site 25: The Nursery (The Street)



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: former plant nursery with collection of nursery sheds / poly tunnels. Broadly level site adjoining (to rear of) housing to west side, farmland to east.

Site size (entire area): 0.36ha

ACCESS

Observations: Existing vehicular access off The Street. Pavement along side of road at this point.

DCC comments: Need clarification that 2.4m by 43m visibility splays can be provided at the junction with The Street – may limit number of dwellings possible.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: No notable features. Current buildings do not contribute to landscape character – potential for visual enhancement. Site visible from public bridleway to north-west.

Heritage expert comments: It is not considered that the allocation will affect any heritage assets.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: Brownfield site – no risks identified from current use.

DCC FRM comments: Not shown to be at risk of flooding.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Landscape planting scheme to eastern boundary
- Replacement buildings to be of reduced height and bulk (ie more domestic scale) with sensitive forms and materials appropriate to village edge character
- Due to the limited nature of the site, the scale, orientation and location of dwellings should avoid over-looking / overbearing impact on adjoining properties.

Site 4: Beside Shire Meadows, Motcombe Rd



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: sloping pasture rising up away from road, open in character. Housing along road front to either side.

Site size (entire area): 1.60ha (taken to pylons - depends on where southern boundary is drawn)

ACCESS

Observations: Two access points existing and potential to create other access points off Motcombe Road. No pavements alongside the road at this point.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays. May need to allow for above 30mph approach speeds from the east? No footway link to settlement centre.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: No notable features other than hedgerow boundaries. Pylons crossing middle of field. Site visible from footpath to east of site, which rises up to south giving wider views.

Heritage expert comments: To the north, now forming the domestic curtilages of properties is a former Orchard and allotment site identified on the Historic Environment Record (HER 027926 and 027825) although due to being developed former orchard does not have a setting. Development of the site will not affect its historic interest.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: Boggy conditions along road frontage, especially at NW corner

DCC FRM comments: The site is not shown to be at (theoretical) risk of flooding, although the adjacent highway is thought to be at risk from surface water flooding during severe rainfall events (1:1000 year). Any development proposals would need to consider the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Landscape planting scheme to southern boundary
- Designs to respect linear pattern of roadside development
- Secure biodiversity gains (particularly if hedgerow needs to be removed) – to be determined through biodiversity mitigation and appraisal plan
- Provision of footway / improved pedestrian safety into village

Site 18: Elm Hill (SE) – land off Knapp Hill



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: site on higher ground with sloping pasture falling away from road, open and elevated in character. Housing opposite and to either side, farmland to rear.

Site size (entire area): 1.00ha (may vary depending on where southern boundary is drawn)

ACCESS

Observations: Field gate close to junction with Elm Hill. No pavements alongside the road at this point. Safety concerns unless improved.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays but will need to be sited away from the dwelling on the bend to achieve them. No footway link to settlement centre.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: No notable features other than hedgerow boundaries.

Heritage expert comments: North of the allocation is a post-medieval/modern orchard which follows the curtilage of Nods Fold (HER Number MDO27908). A further Orchard lies within the area immediately to the west of the site. Both Orchards have been developed and any significance has been compromised by that redevelopment including domestic curtilages. As such they do not have a setting which contributes to any significance they may once have had. Development of the site will not affect their historic interest.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: No issues identified

DCC FRM comments: The site is not shown to be at (theoretical) risk of flooding. Any development proposals would need to consider the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Landscape planting scheme to southern boundary
- Designs to respect linear pattern of roadside development
- Secure biodiversity gains (particularly if hedgerow needs to be removed) – to be determined through biodiversity mitigation and appraisal plan
- Improved vehicular access
- Provision of footway / improved pedestrian safety into village

Sites 20 and 21: Elm Hill (SW) - land west of Highfields



SITE DESCRIPTION

Observations: paddock and pasture on higher ground with a detached farm building lying within the site. Moderately open and elevated in character sloping gently away from road. More intimate character to fields achieved through subdivisions. Housing to east, farmland to remaining sides.

Site size (entire area): 1.00ha

ACCESS

Observations: Existing vehicular access to barn, in proximity to sharp bend and junction. No pavements alongside the road at this point. Safety concerns unless improved.

DCC comments: Access can be formed to this site with adequate visibility splays. No footway link to settlement centre.

HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL FEATURES

Observations: Mature (oak) trees within site and hedgerow boundaries. Site visible from public bridleway to west.

Heritage expert comments: East Coppleridge Farm (Grade II Listed) lies to the north of the site - a typical farmhouse with associated farm buildings falling within its immediate and close curtilage. Existing hedgerows provide comprehensive visual barriers particularly from the south, east and west. Also North of the allocations is the post-medieval/modern orchard immediately to the east of the farm (HER Number MD027906). To the east of the site allocations and now covered by properties within Elm Close is another entry on the Record (HER Number MDO27907) again a post medieval to modern (1800 AD? to 1950 AD) orchard. The farmhouse and adjacent orchard both are sufficiently divorced from the site allocation which together with existing screening and topography would not result in harm being caused.

FLOOD RISK, CONTAMINATION AND OTHER MATTERS

Observations: No issues identified

DCC FRM comments: The site is not shown to be at (theoretical) risk of flooding. Any development proposals would need to consider the management of surface water runoff generated by the site.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

- Landscape planting scheme to southern and eastern boundary
- Retention of mature deciduous trees.
- Secure biodiversity gains (particularly if any hedgerows need to be removed) – to be determined through biodiversity mitigation and appraisal plan
- Improved vehicular access
- Provision of footway / improved pedestrian safety into village