



# Stanstead Abbotts Neighbourhood Plan

Site Options and Assessment Review

December 2020

## Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
Jessica Cooke Graduate Planner	Una McGaughrin Associate Director	Una McGaughrin Associate Director	Una McGaughrin Associate Director

## Revision History

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V4	03/12/2020	Locality Review	AO	Annabel Osbourne	Neighbourhood Planning Officer

### Prepared for:

Stanstead Abbotts Parish Council

### Prepared by:

Jessica Cooke  
Graduate Planner

### AECOM

Aldgate Tower  
2 Leman Street,  
London, E1 8FA  
United Kingdom

T: +44 20 32033600  
aecom.com

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## Abbreviations used in the report

### Abbreviation

EHDC	East Hertfordshire District Council
Ha	Hectare
LP	Local Plan
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
SANP	Stanstead Abbotts Neighbourhood Plan
SAPC	Stanstead Abbotts Parish Council
SLAA	Strategic Land Availability Assessment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TPO	Tree Preservation Order

# Executive Summary

Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the adopted East Hertfordshire District Council District Plan (2018)<sup>1</sup>. The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the villages of Stanstead Abbott and St. Margarets as well as The Folly. Stanstead Abbots Parish Council is seeking to identify sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan in order to guide development in the Parish towards locations which will preserve and enhance the setting of the village of Stanstead Abbots.

Stanstead Abbots Parish Council has formed a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which has carried out its own site assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan. As part of the Site Assessment Technical Support awarded to Stanstead Abbots Parish Council through the national neighbourhood planning support programme, it was agreed that AECOM would review the site assessment work carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and to provide advice to the group to help to ensure that the site allocations proposed were supported by robust, transparent and defensible evidence.

This report sets out the review carried out by AECOM, which consisted of two stages: the first was an initial review of the approach taken by the Steering Group in its assessment and the second was a more in-depth review of the site conclusions, following a review of all available evidence. Two advice notes outlining the findings of each stage were produced for the Steering Group and both received feedback from the group before proceeding. This report sets out the findings of the two stages and recommends next steps in the site assessment process.

Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets are classified as 'Group 1 Villages' in the adopted Local Plan, which is based on the relative sustainability of these villages. Growth in these areas will help to sustain existing shops, services and facilities, deliver affordable housing, provide local job opportunities and deliver community benefits. The East Herts District Plan has set a housing requirement of 94 dwellings for the two villages combined. A comprehensive review of the potential development sites will help to inform neighbourhood plan policies to influence future development in the village.

The assessment carried out by the Steering Group has largely followed Planning Practice Guidance and correctly applies the 'tests' of whether an identified site is suitable, available and achievable for development. However, this review has identified a number of issues that could lead to challenges by site promoters, the Local Planning Authority or the Neighbourhood Plan examiner. In order for the Steering Group's site assessment to be robust and defensible, it is advised that the following points are taken into account:

- The assessment of site suitability requires redrafting to ensure that all sites which have significant environmental, physical or policy constraints are not considered in the final shortlist of sites from which potential sites are selected for allocation.
- It is important to distinguish between standard planning criteria that could be applied to any site to establish whether the site is suitable for development, and local criteria that is best used to select sites from a pool of suitable sites. The current assessment combines both 'national' and 'local' criteria which may give rise to challenge, as sites that could be argued as suitable sites may have been ruled out on the basis of a local criteria which could be seen as biased. The application of local criteria and community choice is a key step in the site selection process; however, it is advised that these criteria are applied after the sites have been assessed against national criteria so there is a clear shortlist of suitable sites from which to select candidates for allocation.
- It would be useful to establish certainty with the LPA on the process of deducting dwelling numbers from the Neighbourhood Area housing requirement, in particular whether sites which are built/ under construction or already have planning permission would count towards the housing requirement.

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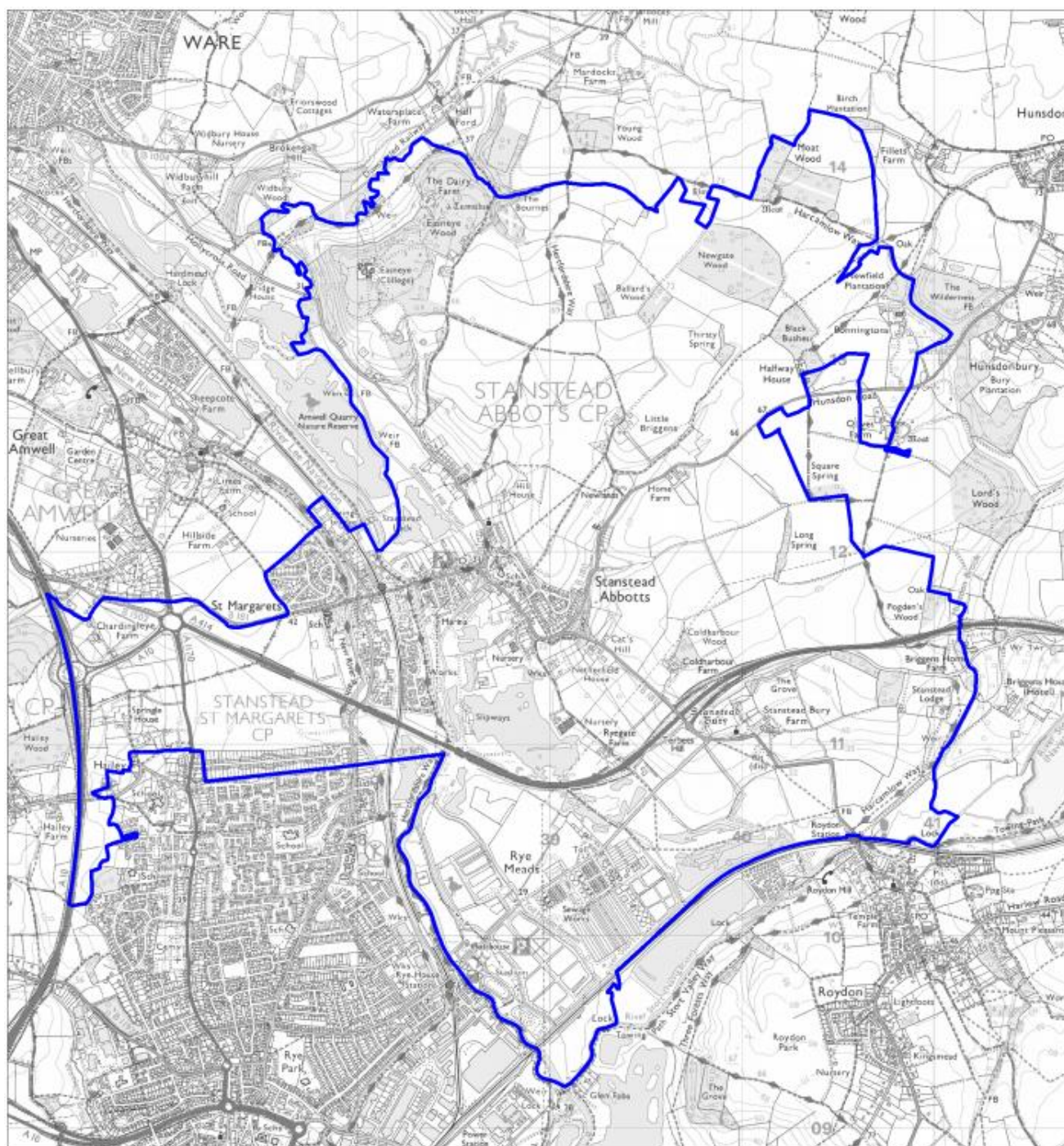
<sup>1</sup> Available at: [https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/District\\_Plan\\_Publish\\_web\\_view.pdf](https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/District_Plan_Publish_web_view.pdf)

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 This report is an independent review of the site assessment carried out by Stanstead Abbots Parish Council (SAPC) for the Stanstead Abbots Plan (SANP). The work 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 any site assessment process is carried out in a transparent and clear 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 neighbourhood area (which covers the both the parishes of Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets as well as an extra portion of land connected to St. Margarets built up area) was designated in September 2018 and the SAPC are in the early stages of preparing the Plan. Initial engagement is underway and key themes include: Business; Communications; Culture & Community; Ecology & Green Environment; Heritage & Built Environment; Housing & Development Management; Transport & Traffic; Economy.
- 1.4 Stanstead Abbots is located north of London in Hertfordshire. The A10 links the neighbourhood area to Cambridge to the north and London to the south. In addition, Stanstead Airport is located approximately 20km north east. The neighbourhood area has two train stations, St. Margarets, Roydon and Rye House, providing regular services to Stratford, Hertford, Cambridge and London. In addition, the neighbourhood area is well connected to surrounding neighbourhoods via bus services.
- 1.5 There are a large number of Listed Buildings within the neighbourhood area, mostly clustered in the villages of Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets as well as in Stanstead Bury park and garden. In addition, there is a significant Conservation Area covering the same two villages and scheduled monuments located in the neighbourhood area.
- 1.6 The neighbourhood area is very well served with community facilities including schools, health services, shops, cafes and pubs.
- 1.7 The neighbourhood area sits in the Lee Valley corridor and is environmentally very constrained, covered by Green Belt with the exception of Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets as 'inset villages'. Large areas of flood zone 2 and 3 and close proximity to a number of high valued landscapes, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas (SPA's) and registered parks and gardens means that development opportunities are limited.
- 1.8 Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan as well as having regard to the emerging Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans can add value to the development plan by developing policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. The intention, therefore, is for the Local Plan documents (adopted and emerging) to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Stanstead Abbots whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.
- 1.9 This assessment in itself does not allocate sites. It is the responsibility of the SAPC to decide, guided by this report and other relevant available information, whether to allocate sites and if so, which sites to select for allocation to best address the Neighbourhood Plan objectives.
- 1.10 **Figure 1-2** provides a map of the designated Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan Area.





**Figure 1-1: Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area (2018)**

Source: Extract from East Herts Neighbourhood Planning Webpage.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/AD\\_Map\\_1.pdf](https://cdn-eastherts.onwebcurl.com/s3fs-public/documents/AD_Map_1.pdf)

## 2. Planning Policy and Evidence Base

- 2.1 All Neighbourhood Plan policies and site allocations must be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the associated national planning guidance, the strategic policies of the adopted Development Plan and have regard to the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.2 The key documents for the EHDC planning framework include:
- East Herts Local Plan (2018).

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 2.3 NPPF<sup>3</sup> (2019) paragraph 69 states that neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites (less than one hectare) suitable for housing in their area.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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 represent 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.

### East Herts District Local Plan (2018)

- 2.6 **Policy DPS5 Neighbourhood Planning:** the Council will support in principle development brought forward through Neighbourhood Plans, where such development is in conformity with the strategic objectives and policies set out in the District Plan.
- 2.7 **Policy GBNR1 Green Belt:** the villages of Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets will be encouraged to consider whether through the formulation of Neighbourhood Plan to accommodate additional development. Where such proposals would involve changes to the Green Belt boundaries, the District Council will consider making these amendments either through the next review of the District Plan or a separate Site Allocations Plan.
- 2.8 **Policy GBR2 Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt:** the following types of development will be permitted, provided that they are compatible with the character and appearance of the rural area:
- Buildings for agriculture;
  - Facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries;
  - New employment generating uses where they are sustainably located;
  - Replacement, extension or alteration of a building;

<sup>3</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)



- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites, whether redundant or in continuing use in sustainable locations;
- Rural housing in accordance with policy HOU4 on Rural Exception Sites;
- Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in accordance with Policy HOU9; and
- Development identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

2.9 **Policy VILL1 Group 1 Villages:** Stanstead Abbots and St. Margarets are both identified as Group 1 Villages. The Policy also states that development in these villages should:

- Relate well to the village in terms of location, layout and connectivity;
- Be of scale appropriate to the size of the village, having regard to potential cumulative impact of development in the locality;
- Be well designed and in keeping with the character of the village;
- Not represent the loss of a significant open space or gap important to the form and/or setting of the village;
- Not represent an extension of ribbon development or an addition to an isolated group of buildings;
- Not unacceptably block important views or vistas and/or detract from the openness of the countryside; and
- Not be significantly detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

2.10 **Policy CFLR1 Open Space, Sport and Recreation:** proposals that result in the loss or reduction of open space, indoor or outdoor sport and recreation facilities including playing fields (as defined on the policies map) will be refused unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown that the facility is no longer needed in its current form; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by enhanced provision in terms of quantity and/or quality in a suitable location prior to the commencement of development (in the case of school playing fields, the timing of delivery will be negotiated on a case by case basis in accordance with Policy CFLR10); or
- The development is for an alternative open space, sport and recreation facility, the need for which clearly outweigh the loss.

2.11 **Policy ED1 Employment:** Development which would cause the loss of an existing designated Employment Area, or a site/premises which is currently, or was last, in employment use (Classes B1, B2, B8 or related Sui Generis), will only be permitted where all the following criteria are met:

- The retention of the site or premises for Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 has been fully explored without success. This should also consider whether improvements to the existing site/premises would make it more attractive to alternative B1, B2 or B8 uses. The applicant will be expected to undertake discussions with officers as to the potential for and suitability of alternative uses. Evidence of a period of marketing of at least 12 months must be provided. For a non-designated employment area, a proportionate approach should be taken;
- The retention of the B1, B2 or B8 use is unable to be facilitated by the partial conversion to a non-employment generating use; and
- The proposal does not prejudice the continued viability of existing Employment Areas and neighbouring uses and existing operational employment sites and neighbouring uses.

- 2.12 ***Policy HA3 Archaeology:*** Where a site has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest (whether scheduled or unscheduled), applicants should consult with the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit to submit an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, the results of a field evaluation, prior to the submission of an application.

## 3. Stanstead Abbots Site Assessment

- 3.1 A number of documents that had been prepared by the Steering Group as part of the Parish Council Site Assessment were submitted to AECOM as part of the review. These are:
- The Site Assessment Rating Matrix;
  - Site Assessment List;
  - Site Assessment Map1, Map2 and Map3;
  - Site Assessment Spreadsheet MRD updated; and
  - Site Ranking.
- 3.2 These assessment documents can be found in Appendix A. In addition to these main assessment documents, further information, including the Call for Sites information, was also submitted for the relevant sites.
- 3.3 The site assessment carried out by the Steering Group was undertaken in two rounds. The first sifted out sites on higher level constraints including flooding, proximity to the settlement boundary, Local Plan designations, access, coalescence and availability.
- 3.4 The second round of the assessment gave each site a scoring from 0 to 4 against 19 criteria. These scores were then added to give each site an overall rating. The sites were then ranked from highest scoring to lowest to show which sites are most favourable.
- 3.5 The assessment included 64 sites. Six of those came forward through the Neighbourhood Plan Call for Sites, 40 were identified by the Steering Group and the remaining 18 were identified during public consultation.
- 3.6 Of the 64 sites assessed, 31 of the sites were taken through to the second round of assessment. A map of these sites is shown in Figure 3-1. This set of sites was then ranked based on the second set of criteria listed in Figure 3-2.

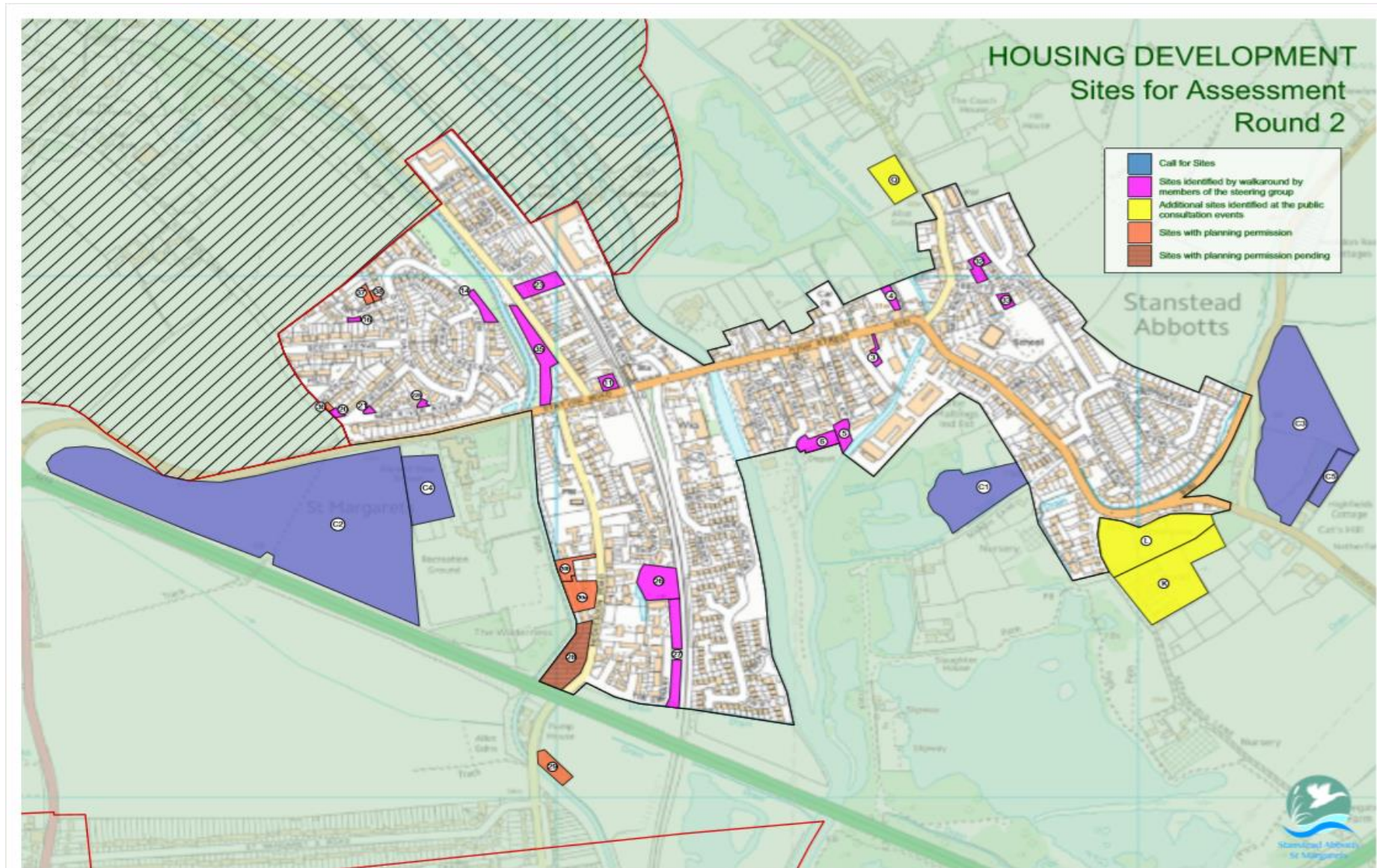


Figure 3-1 Map of Sites Included in Round 2



Site No. (refer to Map 2)	Site Name / Location	Score	Approximate Size of Site (hectares)	No of Dwellings based on gross site area at 30dph	No of Dwellings as proposed (planning application or architects drawings)	Land Owner	Availability (Green = available, Amber = In discussions, Yellow = unknown)
K	Netherfield Lane	64	1.5	45	30 (20dph)	Webster	pending plng
30a	West of Hoddesdon Road	64	0.28	8	6(21dph)		Started on Site
30b	West of Hoddesdon Road	63	0.13	4	2(15dph)		
36	Hillside Crescent	62	0.02	1	1		COMPLETED
37	French's Close	62	0.04	1	1		COMPLETED
38	French's Close	62	0.03	1	1		COMPLETED
28	North of Hoddesdon Road	62	0.53	16	8(15dph)		pending plng
32	Chapelfields - garages	58	0.12	4		Network Homes	
33	Chapelfields - garages	58	0.06	2		Network Homes	
5	Millers Lane	57	0.12	4		Lee Valley	
6	South Street	57	0.18	5		Lee Valley	
11	North Station Road	56	0.14	4		BT	
35	Amwell Lane	55	0.4	12		Thames Water	
29	East of Hoddesdon Road	55	0.18	5	4(22dph)		Started on Site
26	The Granary - green space	52	0.41	12			
L	Field behind almshouses	52	1.38	41			
16	French's Close	52	0.02	1		Network Homes	
23	Amwell Lane - garages	51	0.22	7		East Herts	
C1	Marsh Lane	50	1.27	38	18 (14 dph)	David Jupp	
22b	New River Ave - garages	50	0.02	1			too small
3	South of High Street	49	0.05	2			
27	The Granary - green / railway	48	0.32	10			
C5	Roydon Road	48	0.31	9	4 (12dph) to 13 (41dph)	Peter Bridgman	
20	Hillside Lane/Fieldway	47	0.03	1			too small
21	Fieldway / New River Ave	47	0.02	1			too small
C2	Land south of Station Road	46	10	300		Nick Collingridge	
14	Folly View	46	0.1	3			
C4	St Margaretsbury Recreation	41	0.87	26		St Margaretsbury	
C3	Roydon Rd / Hunsdon Road	39	3.8	114	77 (20 dph)	Peter Bridgman	
4	North of High Street	39	0.07	2			
Q	Cappell Lane	32	0.4	12			

Figure 3-2 Stanstead Abbots Site Assessment Ranking Table

## 4. Site Assessment Review

- 4.1 The AECOM site assessment review consisted of two stages. The first was a high level review of the Steering Group's Site Assessment methodology. The findings were shared with the group and a discussion was held on Microsoft Teams between AECOM and the group on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- 4.2 It was agreed at this meeting that the Steering Group would progress the site assessment internally and that AECOM would continue to build upon the review in the first note and provide a more detailed check of the conclusions of individual sites as part of a Stage 2 review. This review was limited to the sites which were taken forward for full assessment and final ranking by the group and did not revisit sites that were excluded at the outset by the group. However, advice was provided to the Steering Group with regards to the site sifting process to ensure the justification for excluding sites at the outset on policy grounds was sound.
- 4.3 The Stage 2 assessment was shared with the group and was updated following feedback from the group.
- 4.4 The Stage 1 and Stage 2 reviews are provided below:

### Stage One: Review of approach to site assessment Introduction

As part of the Site Assessment Technical Support awarded to Stanstead Abbots Parish Council through the national neighbourhood planning support programme, it was agreed that AECOM would review the site assessment work carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. This note sets out the initial findings of that review to advise whether the approach complies with National Planning Practice Guidance and the documents prepared are robust, defensible and able to justify proposed site allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The documents received and assessed as part of this review are:

- The Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Ratings Matrix (2019);
- Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment List (2019);
- Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Maps 1, 2 and 3;
- Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment Spreadsheet MRD Updated (2019);
- Neighbourhood Plan Site Ranking; and
- Call for Sites completed submission documents for sites C1, C2, C3, C4, K and L.

### Review of site assessment documents

The site assessment appears to have been carried out in two parts. The first part – Round 1 (documented in the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment List) sets out the original list of sites, identified through a Call for Sites, sites identified by the Steering Group and sites and through consultation. It sets out a shortlist of sites to proceed to full site assessment and rules out a number of sites. This document has been reviewed and 'sticky notes' have been added to the PDF document highlighting a number of issues that it is advised are explored further.

The second part of the assessment is an assessment of the sites from Round 1 against a set of criteria. The table below compares the criteria used in the Steering Group assessment to assess the sites against the standard assessment criteria used in the AECOM site assessment, which follows

both National Planning Practice Guidance<sup>4</sup> and the Locality Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit<sup>5</sup>. National Planning Practice Guidance is not prescriptive in terms of a set of criteria to use, so it is acceptable to use a different set of criteria. This review is to ensure that the key 'tests' of whether a site is deliverable/developable and therefore can be allocated in a development plan, i.e. that sites are suitable, available and achievable are all included and that there are no weaknesses in the assessment that could leave it open to challenge by landowners and site promoters or by the Local Planning Authority or Neighbourhood Plan examiner. The notes column at the right of Table 1 identifies potential issues with the criteria used or the application of the criteria.

**Table 1. Standard Assessment Criteria**

Standard Assessment Criteria	Included in the Stanstead Abbots assessment?	Notes/ Importance of criteria
Site reference/ name	Yes	
Site address/ location	Yes	
Map	Yes	
Gross area	Yes	
SLAA reference	No	It is helpful to review the SLAA findings to understand what the LPA findings are and what constraints have been identified
Existing land use	No, however this information is included on the call for sites submissions for sites C1,C2,C3 and C4.	This can be added into the assessment
Neighbouring land uses	No	This can be added into the assessment
Land use being considered	No, however this information is included on the call for sites submissions for sites C1,C2,C3 and C4.	This can be added into the assessment
Site source /identification method	Yes	
Planning history	Partly looked at in initial sift, looks like it has just looked at current applications and not past apps.	Important to understand whether there have been relevant planning decisions on any of the sites
Proximity to statutory environmental designations	Partly / No	This is a key criterion that should be considered
SSSI's and Risk Zones	Partly / No	This is a key criterion that should be considered
Proximity to non-statutory environmental designations	Partly / No	This is a key criterion that should be considered
Flood Zone	Yes, covered in criteria 2.11.	
Surface water flooding risk	Partly covered in 2.11.	
Agricultural land grade	No	This should be included if choices need to be made between sites
Priority habitats/ species	No	This is a key criterion that has to be considered
AQMA	No, but not relevant the area	
Topography	No	This should be included

<sup>4</sup><https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

<sup>5</sup><https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/>

Standard Assessment Criteria	Included in the Stanstead Abbots assessment?	Notes/ Importance of criteria
Existing vehicle access/ possibility to create access	Yes, covered in initial sift	Not clear whether the possibility to create access has been included. E.g. for site E the assessment puts no to access however, access could be created to this site if adjoining sites were developed.
Pedestrian access	No specific reference /covered as part of overall access	This is a key criterion that has to be considered
Cycle access	No specific reference / covered as part of overall access	This is a key criterion that has to be considered
TPO's	No	Not necessary
Significant trees	No	Should be noted
PROWs	Yes, covered by criteria 2.4	
Ground contamination	No	Ideally should be included
Utilities infrastructure	No	Ideally should be included
Would development result in a loss of social, amenity or community value?	Not directly included however, criteria 2.5 may be trying to point in this direction.	
Distances to key facilities; local shop, bus stop, train station, primary school, secondary school, open space/ recreation, cycle routes	Partly covered by criteria 2.8, does not state individual distances/ name any facilities.	
Landscape sensitivity	No	Key criteria that should be considered but this may be covered by Visual amenity
Visual amenity sensitivity	Yes, covered in criteria 2.7	
Designated heritage assets	Yes, covered by criteria 2.14	
Non designated heritage assets	Yes, covered by criteria 2.14	
Green Belt	Yes, covered by criteria 2.15	East Herts Council Green Belt Review
Is the site allocated for a particular use in the Local Plan	Yes, covered by criteria 2.12	
Relevant planning policies	Partly, 2.1 and 2.2 ask about ribbon development and isolated buildings both of which are relevant planning policies.	This needs to be covered fully to ensure any allocated site is in full compliance with Local Plan policy
Typology (greenfield/ PDL/ mix)	Yes, covered by 2.13	
Relationship to built up area	Yes, covered in initial sift and criteria 2.6	
Potential coalescence	Yes, covered in initial sift	
Is the site large enough to change the size and character of the existing settlement?	No	Not necessary
Availability	Yes, covered by criteria 3.1	
Legal ownership issues	Yes, covered by criteria 4.1	
Time frame for availability	Yes, covered by criteria 4.2	
Viability	Partly addressed in criteria 2.3.	
Estimated capacity of development	No	



Standard Assessment Criteria	Included in the Stanstead Abbots assessment?	Notes/ Importance of criteria
Justification for rating/ scoring	No	This could be added

The review above shows that most of the expected key site assessment criteria have been covered in the Stanstead Abbots assessment. However, there are a small number of key factors that may not been adequately assessed, in particular:

- Whether development of the site would conflict with specific Local Plan policies
- Whether the site falls within a statutory or non-statutory environmental designation
- Ecology considerations
- Whether there is potential to create access to the site, even if none exists currently.

Table 2 reviews the additional criteria included in the Steering Group assessment that is not covered in the Locality site assessment toolkit.

**Table 2. Additional Criteria used in the Stanstead Abbots Assessment**

Criteria	Comments
5.1 Community View	Community views are important but should only be used in the site selection process once the assessment has demonstrated which sites are suitable, available and achievable for development and ruled out those that aren't. These two steps should be clearly separated as the community views should not be used to rule out sites that could be suitable for development. This could be challenged by landowners/site promoters.
2.12 has the site been identified as one that should be protected by outside bodies or as identified within this plan?	This is not a clearly defined criteria and it would need to be qualified. Ideally this would be dealt with by assessing whether there are any statutory or non-statutory environmental designations or planning policies that would either preclude development entirely or reduce the developable area.
2.10 Does the site have potential to provide community infrastructure?	This falls into the same category as community view – if it is a priority for the neighbourhood plan/community then it should be used in the site selection process but only once all sites had been assessed for their suitability.
2.9 Can the site deliver affordable homes and a mix of types and sizes?	As above, this should be a criterion used to refine the site assessment and shortlist sites for allocation, but not in the first stage of the assessment.
2.5 Will the development result in the loss of open space?	This would benefit from being clearly defined. What is meant by open space? There is a difference between protected open space, valued open space and less valuable open space. It is also partly covered in 2.13 typology of the site (greenfield/PDL) – any greenfield would be open space presumably.

The criteria in Table 2 are important as a way of selecting sites from a shortlist of suitable sites. However, it is easier to demonstrate how the preferred site(s) have been selected if the site assessment and site selection processes are separate. Site assessment is the assessment of whether a site is suitable, available and achievable. Site selection is the application of local criteria such as loss of open space, what types of housing the site can deliver and whether the site can provide community infrastructure. Whether the site is supported by the community should be the last part of the site selection process, and should be as a result of consultation with the community to allow them to see all the information on the sites including the constraints and opportunities.

In addition, it is difficult to justify the scoring/ranking of sites and it is usually possible to challenge this approach. Scoring can be appropriate, but only in the site selection part once the shortlist of developable sites has been identified. Community views should not be a consideration in suitability of a site and should only be applied to the assessment once the other 'tests' have been applied.

The points above indicate that there are some issues with the site assessment as it stands. It may be that the answers are correct, but the way it has been presented could be improved. The key issues are:

- Potentially ruling out sites at the initial sift without proper justification. This should be checked to ensure ruling the reason for ruling particular sites out is justified.
- Robust application of suitability criteria. The key criteria should be checked to ensure everything is covered.
- Use of scoring/ranking in site assessment. A clearer way of setting out the assessment would be to assess the sites for suitability, then apply the 'local' criteria to the suitable/potentially suitable sites.
- The assessment does not provide any detail on how the constraints impact the site or could be mitigated. This should be added to allow a greater understanding of the constraints and justification for ruling out sites.

The assessment carried out by the Steering Group has largely followed Planning Practice Guidance and correctly applies the tests of whether a site is suitable, available and achievable. However, there are a number of issues with the assessment that have been highlighted that could lead to challenges by site promoters, or by the Neighbourhood Plan examiner. Although the results may be correct, the process for ruling out sites, the application of criteria and the way the assessment results are presented would benefit from a reworking. Our recommendation is that either the current site assessment is improved to address the issues above or that a new site assessment is carried out, either by the group focusing on the points above or by AECOM. In either instance this would build on the work already completed but would present it in such a way to ensure that the assessment process was transparent and the results were fully explained and defensible.

## Stage Two: AECOM high level review of sites

### Introduction

As part of the Site Assessment Technical Support awarded to Stanstead Abbots Parish Council through the national neighbourhood planning support programme, it was agreed that AECOM would review the site assessment work carried out by the neighbourhood plan Steering Group. Stage 1 set out the initial findings of the review to advise whether the approach taken is sound and likely to meet the requirements of the Local Authority and a Neighbourhood Plan Examiner.

It was found that while a lot of useful information had been provided, there were some suggested areas for improvement. This included a recommendation that the site assessment documents would benefit from setting out more clearly the application of national criteria to the site assessment and then separately show how local criteria /neighbourhood plan objectives are used to rank the sites in order of how the sites perform. This will give greater transparency to the site assessment and selection process to all parties (LPA, Neighbourhood Plan examiner, landowners/developers and community) and will allow any challenges to the site allocations to be defended in a clear and simple way.

Following Stage 1 of the AECOM support, the neighbourhood group decided they would like to progress the site assessment internally and agreed that AECOM would continue to build upon the review in the first note and provide a quality check of the conclusions of individual sites. The initial sift of sites carried out by the group has been carried forward and not revisited by AECOM, although comments have been provided to ensure the group checks the process is sound. This Stage 2 review is therefore limited to a review of the sites which are included in the full assessment and final ranking list.

## Review of sites

Table 1 lists the sites in the ranking order as stated in the 'Neighbourhood Plan Ranking' document. It then adds the AECOM assessment of suitability using the RAG (red/amber/green) method of assessment. Red sites are those which are considered to have insurmountable constraints (policy, environmental and physical) which are not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan; amber sites are those with constraints that could be mitigated or resolved so are potentially suitable for allocation and green sites are those which are free from constraints and therefore suitable for allocation.

**Table 3. Site Conclusion Review**

Ranking	Site Ref	NP assessment conclusion	AECOM conclusion
1	L&K	Sites L and K were considered separately in the NP assessment and were given scores of 52 and 64 respectively- The availability of Site L is in discussion and Site K is available – both are included on design map	<b>Amber</b> - The SLAA assessed Site L as being unsuitable as it is not within the settlement boundary and its Green Belt designation however, the conclusions are not appropriate to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment as the site is well related to the existing settlement. Site K was last in use as an employment area therefore development on this part of the site would have to meet the requirements set out in East Herts Local Plan Policy ED1. Therefore, both sites combined are potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with East Herts on the Green Belt boundary review, consultation with Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit on the impact of the Area of Archaeological Importance, compliance with Policy ED1 and meeting the requirements set out in the Lee Valley Park Development Framework. However, availability would need to be confirmed before the site could be allocated.
2	30a	Score 64 - Available	<b>Green (but under construction)</b> - The site is already under construction and East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
3	30b	Score 63 - Available	<b>Green (but already has planning permission)</b> - The site is already consented and East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
4	36	Score 62 - Available	<b>Green (but already developed)</b> - The site is already developed and East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
5	37	Score 62 – Available	<b>Green (but already developed)</b> - The site is already developed and East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
6	38	Score 62 – Available	<b>Green (but already developed)</b> - The site is already developed and East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
7	28	Score 62 – Availability in discussion	<b>Green (but already has planning permission)</b> - Planning Application Ref 3/19/1689/FUL for eight new dwellings was approved in August 2019. East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.

Ranking	Site Ref	NP assessment conclusion	AECOM conclusion
8	32	Score 58 – Availability in discussion – included on design map	<b>Green</b> - The site consists of surface car parking and garage courts. It is suitable for approx. 4 homes as infill development.
9	33	Score 58 – Availability in discussion – included on design map	<b>Green</b> - The site consists of surface car parking and garage courts. It is suitable for approx. 2 homes as infill development.
10	5	Score 57 – Available – included on design map	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan due to significant flood risk. Any land within Flood Zone 2 or 3 should be excluded from the development area unless there is evidence that the land within Flood Zone 2 is developable (i.e. that a sequential test has shown there are no other available sites and that the flood risk can be mitigated). The whole of Site 5 is within Flood Zone 3.
11	6	Score 57 – Available – included on design map	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan due to significant flood risk. Any land within Flood Zone 2 or 3 should be excluded from the development area unless there is evidence that the land within Flood Zone 2 is developable (i.e. that a sequential test has shown there are no other available sites and that the flood risk can be mitigated). The whole of Site 6 is within Flood Zone 2 and 3.
12	11	Score 56 – Availability in discussion – included on design map	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it is within Flood Zone 3, albeit with flood defences. It is small and contains trees/vegetation. Large enough for one home but unlikely to be viable for development. Availability not established. Overall unsuitable for allocation although if availability and viability were established it could come forward as a windfall site through a planning application.
13	35	Score 55 – Available	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as it is within Flood Zone 3, albeit with flood defences. It is a narrow strip of land with the new river public footpath running along the top. Steep topography and awkward shape likely to make site unviable.
14	29	Score 55 – Available	<b>Green</b> - The site is already under construction and however East Herts has advised that such sites should be allocated to allow the permission to count towards the housing requirement.
15	26	Score 52 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan as the site is within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and although in an area benefitting from flood defences it is also likely to act as natural water storage for the surrounding residential area. There is currently no access and it is designated open space as well as being densely vegetated. Not suitable for allocation.
16	16	Score 52 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is potentially suitable for approx. 3 homes, if availability was confirmed. If availability cannot be established the site cannot be allocated, however the neighbourhood plan could have a policy of supporting the redevelopment of garage courts should they become available.
17	23	Score 51 – Availability in discussion – included on design map	<b>Amber</b> - The SLAA conclusions are appropriate to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment and is potentially suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.



Ranking	Site Ref	NP assessment conclusion	AECOM conclusion
			However, this is a very constrained site and is likely to be undevelopable unless the existing infrastructure was removed including depot and pumping station. If the proposals included removing the infrastructure, the viability of the site would need to be established given the cost of clearing the site. Potentially suitable for development if the identified constraints were resolved.
18	C1	Score 50 – Available – included on design map	<b>Red</b> - The SLAA conclusions are reasonable to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment given the flood risk on the site, the location within the Lee Valley Regional Park and the Local Plan Open Space designation, therefore the site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
19	22b	Score 50 (red) – too small	<b>Red</b> - The site consists of surface car parking and garage courts. It is potentially suitable for infill development. However, it is unlikely the site would be available over the period of the neighbourhood plan particularly the garages if it is associated with the existing residential. If a site is not available for development it cannot be allocated. If availability cannot be established the neighbourhood plan could include a policy to support redevelopment of infill brownfield sites such as garage courts, if they were to become available.
20	3	Score 49 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as the access point would not be wide enough to accommodate development, in addition its availability has not been established.
21	27	Score 48 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is a narrow strip of land adjacent to railway, in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and although in an area benefitting from flood defences, it is likely to have been deliberately left as a rainwater storage area for the housing opposite. It also contains a play area and what appears to be an electricity substation. Not suitable for allocation.
22	C5	Score 48 – Available	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as it is not in conformity with Local Plan Policy GBR1 or Policy VILL1 Group1 as it is not well related to the settlement. In addition, point of access has not been established.
23	20	Score 47 (red) – too small	<b>Red</b> - The site is potentially suitable for 1 dwelling however it is not suitable for allocation unless availability is established.
24	21	Score 47 (red) – too small	<b>Red</b> - The site is potentially suitable for 1 dwelling however it is not suitable for allocation unless availability is established.
25	C2	Score 46 – Available	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as it is not in conformity with Policy GBR1 or Policy VILL1 Group1 as it is not well related to the settlement. In addition, smaller sections of the site are not appropriate to consider as there are no existing defensible boundaries and development would risk coalescence with Great Amwell.
26	14	Score 46 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as it is a narrow strip of land, unlikely to be wide enough to accommodate housing. In addition, availability has not been established.
27	C4	Score 41 – Available	<b>Red</b> - The site is designated in EHDC Local Plan as adopted open space (with an operating sports club) and there is no agreement with the LPA regarding re-provision of the open space therefore the site is not suitable for allocation.

Ranking	Site Ref	NP assessment conclusion	AECOM conclusion
28	C3	Score 39 – Available	<b>Red</b> - The SLAA conclusions are reasonable to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment as the site does not relate well to village and would be a significant incursion into open countryside. The site does not comply with Policy VILL1 and is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.
29	4	Score 39 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as the access point is not wide enough to accommodate development, in addition availability has not been established.
30	Q	Score 32 – Availability unknown	<b>Red</b> - The site is not suitable for allocation as it is not in conformity with Policy GBR1 or Policy VILL1 Group1 as it is not well related to the settlement and is located in the Green Belt. In addition, the whole site is within Flood Zone 2 and availability is unknown.

The AECOM conclusions in Table 1 help to illustrate a number of points. These should be considered as part of the update to the site assessment should the Steering Group choose to do so.

1. Sites that have already been built, are under construction or have gained planning permission would not usually need to be allocated. It is usual practice for the number of homes either permitted or built to count towards the housing requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan, and the residual figure to become the housing target. For Stanstead Abbots the number of homes permitted or delivered on these sites (and any development since a base date of 1st April 2017) can be deducted from the neighbourhood plan requirement of 94 dwellings. However, the Parish Council have indicated that they have been advised by East Herts that sites which have already been built or are under construction (since the base date) or which have planning permission, should be included as an allocation to ensure they are deducted from the total requirement. Therefore, subject to confirmation by EHDC, these sites have been given an automatically green rating and can be allocated in the neighbourhood Plan.
2. There are a number of sites which have been rated as 'red' i.e. undevelopable in the AECOM assessment due to insurmountable development constraints such as flooding or lack of conformity with Local Plan policy. This is problematic as these sites were not ruled out in the Stanstead Abbots assessment meaning they are included in the final list of sites from which allocations would be selected. We would recommend these sites are reviewed in light of the assessment review in terms of whether they should continue to be on the shortlist of sites for allocation.
3. Our high level review of the sites has shown how constrained the area is for development, which was discussed in the initial phone call. Our review has shown that there are only four sites from the Neighbourhood Plan group's list (and one additional – see Table 2 below) which haven't been ruled out due to environmental, physical or policy constraints. However, we would have expected the amber sites to be at the top of the ranked list as these are the sites with the least constraints that could be suitable for development. Hopefully this will illustrate the point we have raised in the initial review, which is that in separating the national planning criteria from the local/neighbourhood plan criteria, the most suitable sites for development are ranked at the top of the list. This is the shortlist from which sites should be selected for allocation to meet the housing requirement, based on consultation with community, East Herts and landowners/site promoters.

In addition, it was found that there are four sites included in the SHLAA assessment which were not considered in the Stanstead Abbots assessment. These sites are listed in Table 2 alongside AECOM's review of the SHLAA conclusions, using the same red/amber/green rating as before. Appendix 1 includes a map of these sites for reference. Our assessment has shown that three of the four sites not included are not suitable for development, but if these sites are available it is important that you can demonstrate why they have not been included in the assessment. One of the sites (NEW3) is potentially suitable for development and its omission from the neighbourhood plan site assessment could leave the neighbourhood plan open to challenge.

**Table 4. SHLAA sites not included in Stanstead Abbots assessment**

Site Ref	Conclusion
Site NEW3	<b>Amber</b> - The SLAA conclusions are that the site could potentially be delivered through a Neighbourhood Plan. The site appears to be on a sloping site to the rear of the church. The site is adjacent to a residential area and a sensitively designed scheme could be designed which was well screened and did not detract from the setting of the church. Any proposal would have to consider the impact upon the Grade II* Listed parish church directly adjacent to the site. Therefore, the site is potentially suitable subject to consultation with Historic England.
Site NEW10	<b>Red</b> - The SLAA conclusions are appropriate to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment as the site is not well related to the village and does not meet Policy VILL1.
Site NEW11	<b>Red</b> - The SLAA conclusions are appropriate to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment as the site is located on the edge of Hoddeston and not well located for access to local services, it is located within the strategic gap and does not meet Policy VILL1 therefore it is not suitable for allocation.
Site NEW2	<b>Red</b> - The SLAA conclusions are appropriate to apply to the neighbourhood plan site assessment as the site is not well located to the village and is unlikely to be suitable location for Green Belt review as it does not adjoin the current boundary.

## Application of 'Local' Criteria

The AECOM assessment above shows the list of sites that are potentially suitable for development, when assessed against national planning criteria. This could be seen as a shortlist of sites that can then be assessed against the neighbourhood plan criteria to select the most favourable sites to meet the neighbourhood plan objectives. We have taken the local criteria from the NP SASM Site Assessment Ratings Matrix as:

- Is the size of the site/development proposed sufficient to deliver affordable homes and a mix of types and sizes?
- Does the site have potential to provide community infrastructure?
- Has the community expressed a view on the potential development?

Using the 'NP Assessment Spreadsheet MRD Update' where individual site scores for each criterion is set out, the scores for each potentially suitable site for the three local criteria was applied to rank the sites. To be noted, the sites that were found unsuitable (red) have been excluded and the SLAA site which was not assessed by the neighbourhood group (NEW3) has also been excluded due to lack of scoring data. Table 3 demonstrates the comparison between the ranking of the Stanstead Abbots assessment and AECOM's assessment.

It can be noted that the sites that are completed, under construction or have planning permission have not been included in the assessment of local criteria as given their status this exercise would have no impact.

**Table 5. Ranking comparison**

Ranking	Stanstead Abbots Ranking	AECOM ranking
1	L&K	L&K
2	32	23
3	33	32
4	23	33

This exercise was done solely to demonstrate the difference in results when applying the same criteria in a different way and it is up to the neighbourhood group whether the previously devised scoring is still appropriate or whether there is other local criteria that could be added to the list.

## 5. Conclusions

### Key findings

- 5.1 The review of the Stanstead Abbots Site Assessment has found that the assessment carried out by Stanstead Abbots would benefit from additional work to ensure that the conclusions in terms of the most suitable sites for development and the site selection process are robust and defensible.
- 5.2 The key advice to ensure the site assessment is robust and defensible is:
- The assessment of site suitability should be revisited to ensure that all sites which have insurmountable environmental, physical or policy constraints are excluded from the final shortlist of sites from which potential allocations will be selected. These are set out in the Stage 2 review.
  - The site assessment would benefit from being separated out into two parts – firstly by showing how sites have been assessed against generic planning criteria and then separately show how local criteria /neighbourhood plan objectives are used to rank the sites in order of how each perform. This will give greater transparency to the site assessment and selection process to all parties (LPA, Neighbourhood Plan examiner, landowners/developers and community) and will allow any challenges to the site allocations to be dealt with more easily.
  - It would be useful to gain written communication from the LPA on the process around deducting dwelling numbers off the area requirement and whether sites which are built/ under construction or already have planning permission are required to be allocated to count towards the housing requirement. Any sites that have already been granted planning permission would not need to be reassessed as part of a Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment.
  - This assessment found that the majority of the sites in the final ranking list, as shown in Figure 4-2, were in fact not suitable for allocation. It found that of the 31 sites, only two were suitable (Site 32 and 33) and a further two (K&L and 23) potentially suitable.
  - In addition, after reviewing the SLAA it was found that 4 sites, previously assessed by East Hertfordshire District Council, had not been included in the site assessment - one of which was found to be potentially suitable for allocation.
  - The findings of the AECOM review are that there are five suitable or potentially suitable sites, four of which were included in the Stanstead Abbots Site Assessment and one identified through the East Hertfordshire District Council SLAA.



## Next Steps

- 5.3 Should SAPC decide to allocate a site or sites, the next steps will be for the Parish Council to select the sites for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, based on:
- The findings of this site assessment;
  - An assessment of viability;
  - Community consultation;
  - Discussions with East Hertfordshire District Council;
  - Local criteria that can be applied to differentiate between the suitable sites, in particular the extent to which the sites support the vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan;
  - Any other evidence that becomes available, such as assessments of constraints such as local transport or infrastructure capacity; and
  - Other considerations such as the appropriate density of the proposed sites to reflect local character.

## Other considerations

### Viability

- 5.4 As part of the site selection process, it is recommended that the Neighbourhood Group discusses site viability with East Hertfordshire District Council and with landowners and site developers. The Local Plan evidence bases may contain evidence of the viability of certain types of sites or locations which can be used to support the Neighbourhood Plan site allocations.

### Affordable Housing

- 5.5 This report is a review of the site assessment carried out by Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan Steering group and therefore does not recommend sites to be proposed for allocation. However, it should be noted that of the potential sites for allocation, there are opportunities for the provision of affordable housing.
- 5.6 Five of the 35 sites identified in this assessment are suitable or potentially suitable for allocation for housing or mixed-use development. One of these sites has the potential to accommodate 10 or more dwellings and would be required to include a proportion of affordable housing<sup>6</sup>. They are therefore potentially suitable for Discounted Market Housing (e.g. First Homes<sup>7</sup>), 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.
- 5.7 The Government is currently consulting on changes to the current planning system. As part of this they are considering increasing the site size threshold for which developers need to make contributions towards affordable housing from sites of 10 dwellings or more, to sites of 40 or 50 dwellings or more<sup>8</sup>. One of the sites that is suitable or potentially suitable for residential or mixed-use allocation have the potential to accommodate 40 or more dwellings, as well as having the potential to accommodate 50 or more.
- 5.8 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

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<sup>6</sup> see NPPF para 62-64

<sup>7</sup> The Government are currently consulting on the detail of the First Homes policy, however, it is expected that that a minimum of 25 per cent of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes. You can find more information here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>

<sup>8</sup> The proposal to increase the threshold is subject to ongoing consultation, and it is understood that the uplift in the threshold would be temporary in nature. You can find more information here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>

neighbourhood planning officer) to understand the specific requirements for the sites proposed for allocation.

# Appendix A – Site Assessment Documents for Review

## Site Assessment Rating Matrix

STANSTEAD ABBOTTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
SITE ASSESSMENT RATINGS MATRIX

FINAL VERSION  
Date: 09.10.2019

		4 (best outcome)	3	2	1	0 (worst outcome)
<b>2</b>	<b>SUITABILITY</b>					
2.1	Will the development of the site produce ribbon development?	NO		Has the potential to produce ribbon development		Yes
2.2	Will the development of the site produce an isolated building or an addition to an isolated group of buildings?	No, site is within an established settlement	No, is an addition to an established settlement	Could be an addition to an established settlement	Will result in an addition to an isolated group of buildings	Will result in an isolated building
2.3	Are there any significant infrastructure requirements needed to enable development (e.g. creation of new site access to the site)?	Adjacent to maintained public road and to domestic utilities and mains drainage; requires no additional infrastructure outside of site	Deficient compared to 4 in one or more respects but better than 2 in all respects		Requires new access road to connect site to public highway / existing road needs upgrading or widening / requires new infrastructure outside of site	Major access issues e.g. over 100m from public highway; significant demolition or excavation required; major infrastructure investment required
2.4	Are there any public rights of way running through the site?		No	Rights of way on site / access, will need to be investigated	Yes	

STANSTEAD ABBOTTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
SITE ASSESSMENT RATINGS MATRIX

FINAL VERSION  
Date: 09.10.2019

		4 (best outcome)	3	2	1	0 (worst outcome)
<b>2</b>	<b>SUITABILITY</b>					
2.5	Will the development of the site result in loss of open space?	No				Yes - Loss of Green Belt or public open space (as defined by East Herts)
2.6	Will the development of the site fill in a gap between buildings? (infill)	Yes - Infill is appropriate to the form and setting of the village with no loss of open space or gap important to the form of the village	Minimal impact to the form of the village but does include loss of open space	Has potential to impact on open space/gap important to the form of the village		No - Represents loss of a significant open space or gap important to the form of the village
2.7	Does the site impact negatively on any protected views or vistas as identified in the NP?	No		Has potential to impact on protected views or vistas		Yes
2.8	Does the site relate well to the village facilities in terms of location and connectivity?	Within 300m of facilities and well connected via safe and accessible routes	Within 500m of facilities and reasonably well connected via safe and accessible routes	Within 750m of facilities and connected by some safe and accessible routes	Within 1000m from facilities and connected by some safe and accessible routes	More than 1000m from facilities and not connections

**STANSTEAD ABBOTTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
SITE ASSESSMENT RATINGS MATRIX**
**FINAL VERSION  
Date: 09.10.2019**

		4 (best outcome)	3	2	1	0 (worst outcome)
<b>2</b>	<b>SUITABILITY</b>					
2.9	Is the size of the site/ development proposed sufficient to deliver affordable homes and a mix of types and sizes? (based on 30dph)	More than 20 homes would give the most beneficial mix of types tenures and size including affordable homes (site area over 0.6h)	More than 10 but less than 20 homes would give a mix of types tenures and size including affordable homes (site area between 0.3h and 0.6h)	More than 5 and less than 10 homes would give a mix but unlikely to provide affordable homes (Site area between 0.15h and 0.3h)	Less than 5 homes (Site area under 0.15h)	Single dwelling
2.10	Does the site have potential to provide community infrastructure?	Yes - size is over 1 hectare and therefore higher probability	0.5- 1 hectare - Limited potential for community infrasture		Less than 0.5 hectares - low probability	No - single dwelling therefore low probability
2.11	What is the flood risk associated with the developable area of the site?	In flood zone 1 and no identified surface water flooding	In flood zone 1 but affected by surface water	In flood zone 2	In flood zone 3 benefiting from flood defences	In flood zone 3
2.12	Has the site been identified as one that should be protected by outside bodies or as identified within this neighbourhood plan?	No		Partial part of the site or could be mitigated		Yes

**STANSTEAD ABBOTTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
SITE ASSESSMENT RATINGS MATRIX**
**FINAL VERSION  
Date: 09.10.2019**

		4 (best outcome)	3	2	1	0 (worst outcome)
<b>2</b>	<b>SUITABILITY</b>					
2.13	Is the site greenfield or brownfield?	Likely uncontaminated / lightly contaminated brownfield site e.g. no below ground liquid storage	Likely heavily contaminated brownfield site e.g. buried fuel tanks	Undeveloped land not greenfield e.g. gardens; greenfield but low grade (4 or 5) agricultural land	Greenfield; agricultural land of a higher grade (1-3)	Greenfield <u>and</u> within a designated green / open space / preserved view
2.14	Could development potentially affect listed heritage assets, or non-designated heritage assets as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan?	No		Not at present, but future development could prejudice later development which would have a deleterious effect		Yes
2.15	Has the land been identified as suitable for development according to Green Belt policy and as identified by East Herts Council Green Belt Review?	Site not in Green Belt or considered of no importance to the Green Belt (such as areas in flood zones or already considered part of a settlement area).	Site in Green Belt with <b>high suitability</b> for development, includes previously developed land in Green Belt	Site in Green Belt with <b>moderate suitability</b> for development	Site in Green Belt with <b>low suitability</b> for development	Site in Green Belt with <b>very low suitability</b> for development

**STANSTEAD ABBOTTS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
SITE ASSESSMENT RATINGS MATRIX**

**FINAL VERSION  
Date: 09.10.2019**

		4 (best outcome)	3	2	1	0 (worst outcome)
<b>3</b>	<b>AVAILABILITY</b>					
<b>3.1</b>	When is the site available?	Planning permission granted	Owner confirmed 0-5 years	Owner confirmed 6-10 years	Owner has put site forward	No or unknown
<b>4</b>	<b>DELIVERABILITY</b>					
<b>4.1</b>	Is the site under single or multiple ownership/ control?	Established single ownership/ control	Ownership by two established partners, in agreement with development	Ownership by more than two partners	Multiple ownership with some owners not identified/not agreed to developmen	Unable to establish ownership
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Landowner's state of readiness to develop</b>	Architect's site plans already completed in anticipation of seeking planning permission; developer chosen or process for selection in place	Owner has confirmed the nature of preferred development by 2033	Owner has promoted site	No work done, owner has simply agreed site may be put forward for consideration in NP	Landowner still to confirm site may be developed within the plan period
<b>5</b>	<b>COMMUNITY VIEW</b>					
<b>5.1</b>	Has the community expressed a view on the potential development?	Strongly positive views expressed for development, clearly identified site	Some positive views	Mixed views or no identified views	Identified by few people, mostly negatively	Strongly negative views expressed, site identified as one the community has strong objections to developing



## Site Assessment List

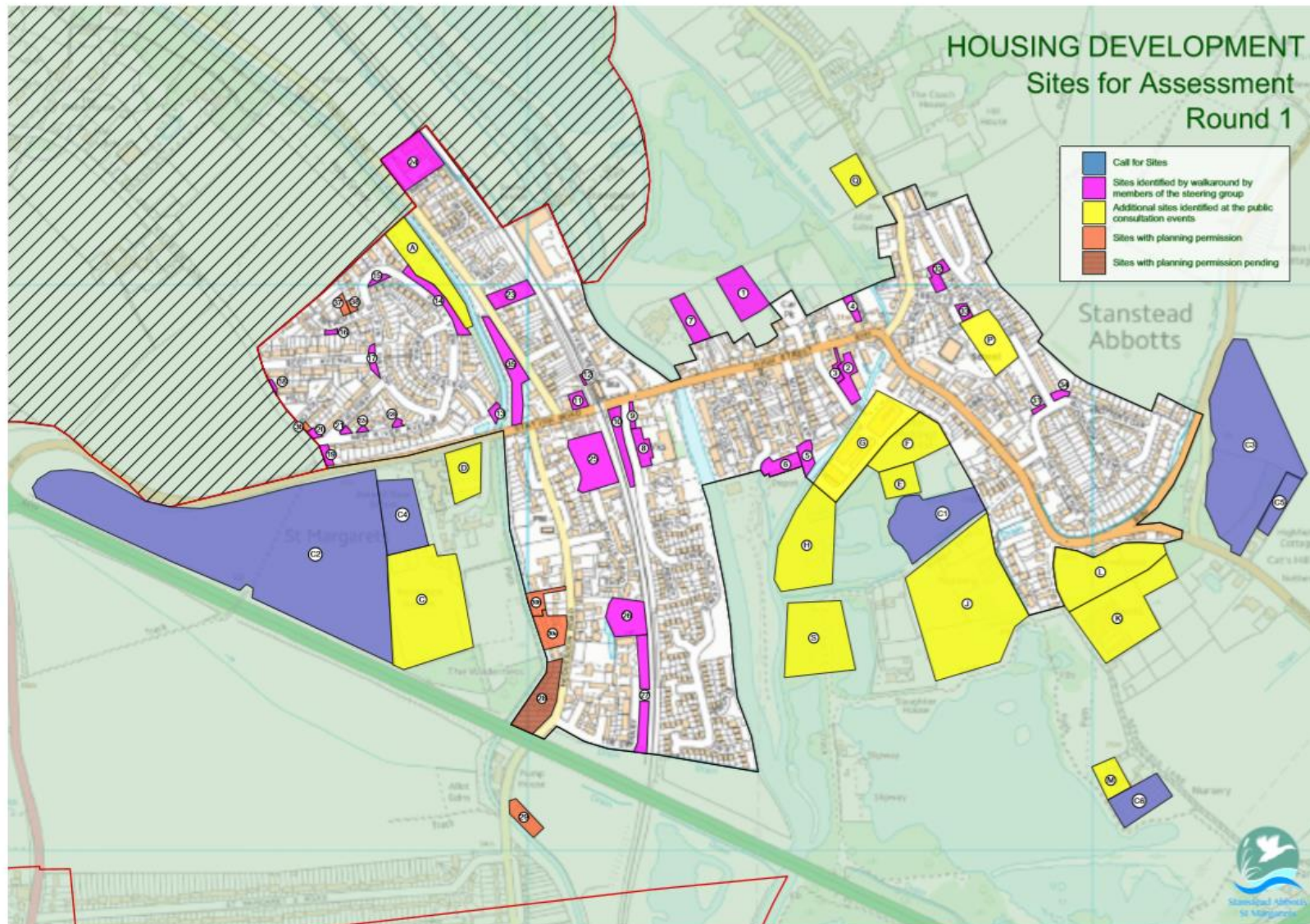
### Neighbourhood Plan - Site Assessment Critical Criteria - Round 1

10th July 2019

	Reason for refusal / inclusion	Is the site outside of Flood Zone 3?	Is the site outside of an area allocated for employment in the DP?	Is the site within the settlement boundary or adjacent/close (50-100m) to it?	Does the site have access?	Does the site have access that does not require use of third party land?	Is the site outside of an area that would cause coalescence of the village?	Is the site available for development?	Sites to proceed to full site assessment
<b>Call for Sites</b>									
C1 Marsh Lane	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C2 Land south of Station Road		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C3 Roydon Rd / Hunadon Road		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C4 St Margaretsbury Recreation	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C5 Roydon Road		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C6 Nursery Netherfield Lane		Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Sites identified by Steering Group</b>									
1 North of High Street		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Unknown	No
2 Village Club car park		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
3 South of High St / W of car park		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
4 North of High Street		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes	Unknown	Yes
5 Millers Lane		Part	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
6 South Street		Part	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
7 North of High Street		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No
8 Lawrence Ave - east	Employment Area per DP	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No
9 Lawrence Ave - east / high st	Removed due to trees and site dimensions								No
10 Lawrence Ave - west/railway	Removed due to site dimensions								No
11 North Station Road		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
12 Signal box	Removed as unsuitable for housing								No
13 North Station Road	Removed as impractical for development								No
14 Folly View	Removed half of area due to parking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
15 Folly View	Removed due to site dims and overlooking								No
16 French Close - garages		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
17 Scott Ave / Gilpins Gallop	Removed due to site dims and overlooking								No
18 Hillaide Lane	Removed due to size – parking spaces								No
19 Hillaide Lane / entrance	Removed due to overlooking								No
20 Hillaide Lane/Fieldway		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
21 Fieldway / New River Ave		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
22a New River Ave - garages	Removed due to site dims								No
22b New River Ave - garages		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
23 Amwell Lane - garages	Edge of Nature Conservation Site per DP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
24 Amwell Lane - industrial	Employment Area per District Plan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No

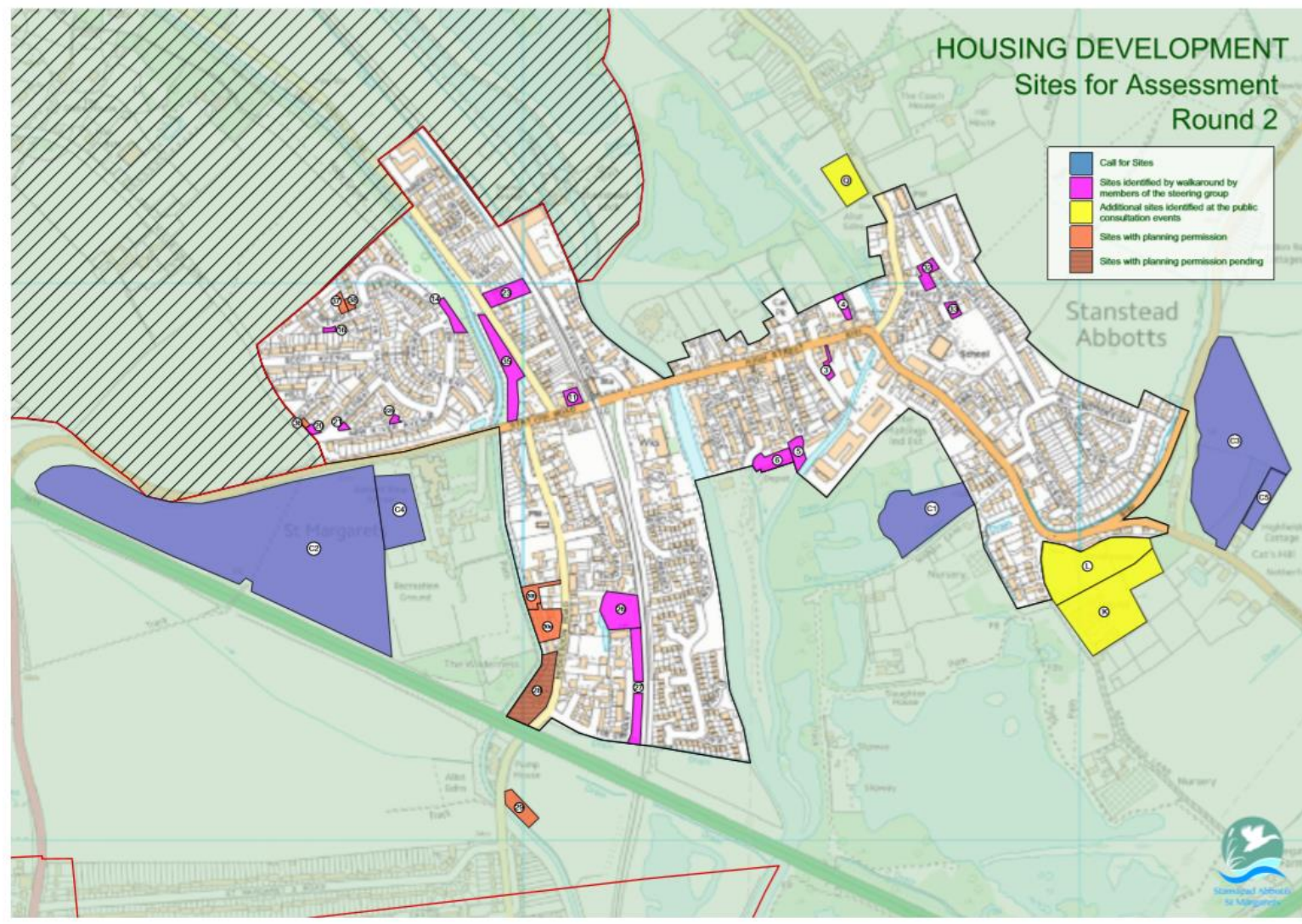
25 Sanville Gardens-green space	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
26 The Granary - green space	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
27 The Granary - green / railway	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
28 North of Hoddesdon Road	Planning permission pending 3/18/1228FP (8)								N/A
29 East of Hoddesdon Road	Planning permission – 3/16/2565/FP (4)								N/A
30a West of Hoddesdon Road	Planning permission – 3/17/0274FUL (6)								N/A
30b West of Hoddesdon Road	Planning permission – 3/18/1407/FUL (2)								N/A
31 Chapelfields / Woodcroft	Removed due to site dimensions								No
32 Chapelfields - garages		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
33 Chapelfields - garages		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
34 Chapelfields / Woodcroft	Removed due to access to playground & trees								No
35 Amwell Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
36 Hillside Crescent	Planning permission – 3/14/1511/FP (1)* BUILT – check date								N/A
37 French's Close	Planning permission – 3/15/1459/FP (1)* BUILT – check date								N/A
38 French's Close	Planning permission – 3/18/2413/FP (1)								N/A
<b>Sites identified at Consultation</b>									
A Folly View - woodland	Nature Conservation Site per NP / Woodland								No
B Not used									No
C Recreation ground	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
D Amwell View School	Play area for school and woodland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
E Land south of Maltings	Edge of Nature Conservation Site per DP	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
F Malting car park / green space		Part	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
G Maltings	Employment area in District Plan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
H South of Maltings	Nature Conservation Site per DP	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Unknown	No
J South of Marsh Lane	Edge of Nature Conservation Site per DP	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Unknown	No
K Netherfield Lane	Pending planning application								N/A
L Netherfield Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
M Netherfield Lane - adj Nursery		Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	No
N Not used									No
O Not used									No
P School recreation ground	Open Space per District Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Q Cappell Lane		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unknown	Yes
R Not used									No
S south of Marsh Lane	Nature Conservation Site per DP	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

## Site Assessment Map 1



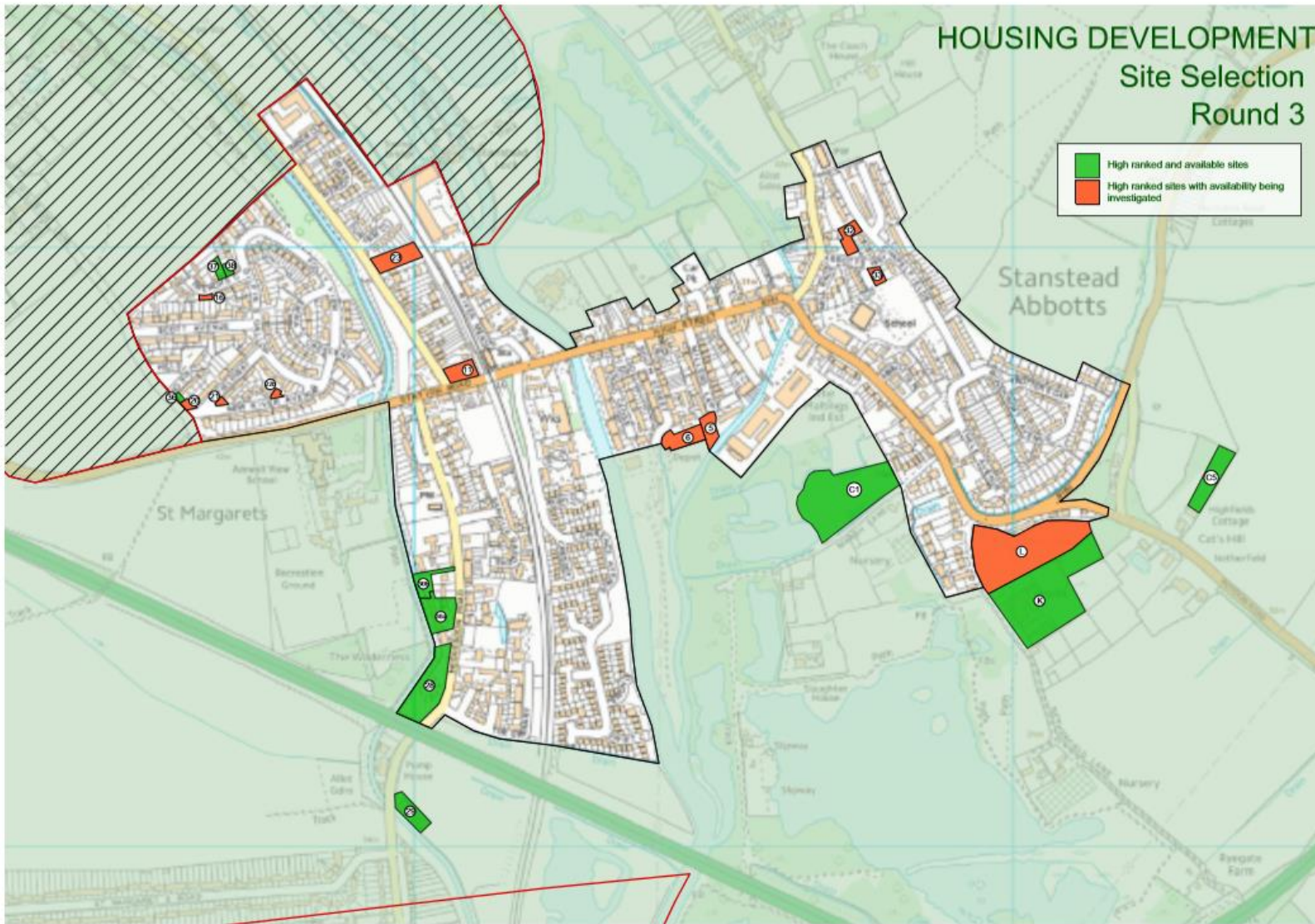


## Site Assessment Map 2





## Site Assessment Map 3





## Site Assessment Spreadsheet MRD updated

Stanstead St Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan: SITE ASSESSMENTS																																								
Date: 2nd October 2019 Completed by: Julia Davies, Mike Dorman, Sarah Chapman, Ross Workhouse, Andrew Cleodre, Sharon Strall, Tam Fox, Jennifer Vreder NOTE: To be read in conjunction with Site Assessment Map 2 and Site Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrix																																								
	Cull For Sites					Sites Identified by Steering Committee																																Sites through consultation		
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	K	L	Q	
2	Suitability																																							
2.1	Will the development of the site produce any ribbon development?	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2		
2.2	Will the development of the site produce an isolated building or an addition to an isolated group of buildings?	3	2	2	3	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	3	0		
2.3	Are there any significant infrastructure requirements needed to enable development (e.g. access to the site)?	3	4	1	4	3	2	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4		
2.4	Are there any public rights of way crossing through the site?	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		
2.5	Will the development of the site result in loss of open space?	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	4	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0	0		
2.6	Will the development of the site fill in a gap between buildings? (affill)	0	0	0	0	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	0			
2.7	Does the site have any potential to be a protected area or status as identified in the MRD?	4	0	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2			
2.8	Does the site relate well to the village facilities in terms of location and accessibility?	3	3	0	2	1	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3				
2.9	In the view of the site development proposed sufficient to deliver affordable homes and a mix of types and sizes?	3	4	4	4	1	0	0	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	4	4	3								
2.10	Does the site have potential to provide community?	3	4	4	3	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4	4	1						
2.11	What is the flood risk associated with the developable area of the site?	2	4	4	4	4	2	0	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	4	4	2	2	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0					
2.12	Has the site been identified as one that should be protected by outside bodies or as identified within the neighbourhood plan?	2	2	4	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2					
2.13	In the view of the site development proposed sufficient to deliver affordable homes and a mix of types and sizes?	0	0	0	2	4	2	4	4	2	2	4	2	2	2	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	1	0					
2.14	Could development potentially affect listed buildings, assets, or non-designated heritage assets as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan?	4	0	4	4	4	4	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4				
2.15	Has the land been identified as suitable for development according to Green Belt policy and as identified by East Herts Council Green Belt Review?	4	1	0	1	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	1	4				
3	Feasibility																																							
3.1	What is the site available?	3	3	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	4	4	0	0	0	4	4	3	3	0		
4	Deliverability																																							
4.1	In the view of the site under single or multiple ownership/tenure?	4	4	4	2	4	0	0	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	0			
4.2	Landowner's view of evidence to develop?	3	3	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	4	4	4	4	2	0					
5	Community View																																							
5.1	Has the community expressed a view on the potential development?	3	2	0	3	3	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	2							
TOTAL		50	43	39	41	48	49	39	57	57	56	46	52	47	47	50	51	48	62	55	64	63	58	58	55	62	62	64	52	32										
Ranking																																								
MRD																																								
Estimated potential housing units		15	18	17	18	5	4	2	8	12	8	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	18	5	8	4	6	5	6	4	12	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					

## Site Assessment Ranking

Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan: SITE RANKING

Site No. (refer to Map 2)	Site Name / Location	Score	Approximate Size of Site (hectares)	No of Dwellings based on gross site area at 30dph	No of Dwellings as proposed (planning application or architects drawings)	Land Owner	Availability (Green = available, Amber = In discussions, Yellow = unknown)	
K	Netherfield Lane	64	1.5	45	30 (20dph)	Webster	pending plng	30
30a	West of Hoddesdon Road	64	0.28	8	6(21dph)		Started on Site	6
30b	West of Hoddesdon Road	63	0.13	4	2(15dph)			2
36	Hillside Crescent	62	0.02	1	1		COMPLETED	1
37	French's Close	62	0.04	1	1		COMPLETED	1
38	French's Close	62	0.03	1	1		COMPLETED	1
28	North of Hoddesdon Road	62	0.53	16	8(15dph)		pending plng	8
32	Chapelfields - garages	58	0.12	4		Network Homes		4
33	Chapelfields - garages	58	0.06	2		Network Homes		2
5	Millers Lane	57	0.12	4		Lee Valley		4
6	South Street	57	0.18	5		Lee Valley		5
11	North Station Road	56	0.14	4		BT		4
35	Amwell Lane	55	0.4	12		Thames Water		
29	East of Hoddesdon Road	55	0.18	5	4(22dph)		Started on Site	4
26	The Granary - green space	52	0.41	12				
L	Field behind almshouses	52	1.38	41				20
16	French's Close	52	0.02	1		Network Homes		2
23	Amwell Lane - garages	51	0.22	7		East Herts		7
C1	Marsh Lane	50	1.27	38	18 (14 dph)	David Jupp		18
22b	New River Ave - garages	50	0.02	1			too small	
3	South of High Street	49	0.05	2				
27	The Granary - green / railway	48	0.32	10				
C5	Roydon Road	48	0.31	9	4 (12dph) to 13 (41dph)	Peter Bridgman		9
20	Hillside Lane/Fieldway	47	0.03	1			too small	
21	Fieldway / New River Ave	47	0.02	1			too small	
C2	Land south of Station Road	46	10	300		Nick Collingridge		
14	Folly View	46	0.1	3				
C4	St Margaretsbury Recreation	41	0.87	26		St Margaretsbury		
C3	Roydon Rd / Hunsdon Road	39	3.8	114	77 (20 dph)	Peter Bridgman		
4	North of High Street	39	0.07	2				
Q	Cappell Lane	32	0.4	12				

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## Appendix B – Additional SHLAA Sites





