

Land at Common Lane, Kenilworth

Background Document



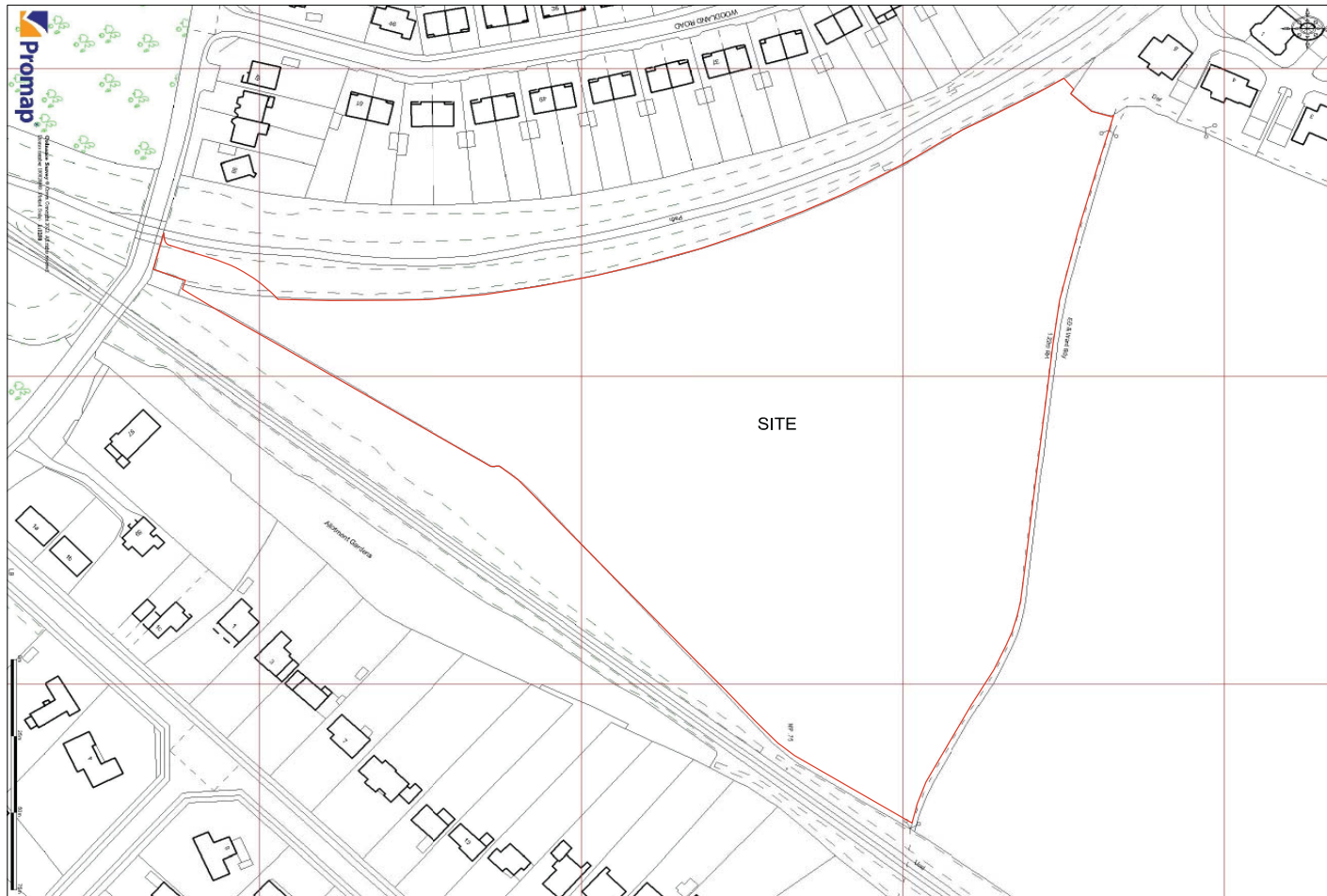


A Sustainable location for future growth



Preface

- This document has been produced by Pegasus Planning Group on behalf of Bluemark Projects (Kenilworth) Ltd as information to contribute towards the preparation of the new Local Plan for Warwick District. The local Plan 'Preferred Options' document published by the Council sets out the preferred approach to development and growth for the District over the next 15 years.
- This Background Document is submitted in response to the consultation on the Preferred Options for the Local Plan. The consultation requests that landowners, developers, the public and other interested parties comment on the Preferred Options for the Local Plan. This document accompanies detailed representations and provides an overview of the national planning policy context and Warwick District's future requirements for housing.
- This document illustrates how the sustainable development of land at Common Lane, Kenilworth, outside the Green Belt, for housing can meet the needs and aspirations of the population in Kenilworth without harm to its surroundings, and demonstrates the site is available, suitable, and achievable.



Site Location Plan

Background

National planning policy

Warwick District Council is now proceeding with a new Local Plan. At the national level the preparation of such strategic documents is against the backdrop of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published at the end of March 2012. As the NPPF has now replaced all former national planning policy statements and guidance notes, it is this document that will provide the overarching planning policy context for the emerging Local Plan. The Local Plan will need to apply the Government's vision of sustainable development at the local level.

The NPPF has a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which as Paragraph 14 makes clear, is the golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. Paragraph 14 continues:

"For plan-making this means that:

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

In respect of plan making, therefore, the NPPF notes that local planning authorities should ensure that local plans are based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence. They also need to ensure that their assessment of, and strategies for, housing, employment and other uses are integrated and take full account of relevant market and economic signals. Importantly, the Framework is clear that local plans should be aspirational but realistic.

Local planning authorities need to have a clear understanding of housing and business needs across their area; assess the quality and capacity of their infrastructure; have up-to-date information about the natural and historic environments; and understand, and take account of, the health status and needs of the local population, including for sports and recreation.

Local Plan Preferred Options, May 2012

The document sets out the preferred option for housing growth between the base year of the Plan 2011 and 2029, in paragraph 5.5. This is a total of 10,800 dwellings for the district as a whole, averaging at 600 new homes per year. The level of housing growth is between scenarios 2 (500 homes per year) and 3 (800 homes per year) that were consulted on as potential growth options in March 2011.

Preferred Option Policy PO3: Broad Location of Growth states that the strategy will be to:

- concentrate growth within, and on the edge of, the existing urban areas
- avoid development that could potentially lead to the coalescence of settlements
- distribute growth across the District, including within and/or on the edge of some villages
- allow for a hierarchy of growth in the rural area to include:
 - a higher level of growth in those villages with a broad range of services and public transport to the towns, and
 - a lower level of growth in some smaller villages in order to meet local need and help support existing services

We support the efforts of Warwick District Council to try and meet the future development needs of the District and therefore to take the difficult decisions necessary to allocate sufficient land for new housing. We disagree, however, with the scale of the needs that the Council should be planning to meet as it is our contention that the preferred options dwelling requirement very significantly under-estimates the need for new homes arising in the District. In this regard it is not in accordance with the NPPF.

The sites proposed as allocations in Preferred Option Policy PO4: Distribution of Sites for Housing, to meet the needs of the District, do not include land at Common Lane in Kenilworth. The site our client wishes to bring forward for development is illustrated at Plan 1. It is a greenfield site, but is not in the Green Belt and its northern boundary is formed by a strong, well defined hedgerow being a very old parish boundary. The site being promoted does not extend beyond this northern boundary into the Green Belt.

The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has previously assessed a wider area of land, extending northward beyond the boundary of the site being promoted in this document, into the Green Belt. It is important to stress that the site being promoted in this document lies south of the Green Belt and is not the same site that has been assessed previously.

Why Land at Common Lane?

Kenilworth is one of three primary centres in Warwick District, along with Warwick and Royal Leamington Spa. In the Preferred Options Local Plan document, the Local Planning Authority has examined and allocated the potential sites that are considered will deliver the necessary housing growth for the District up to 2029. As detailed in Preferred Options Policy PO3 earlier, the focus areas for such growth are the edge of urban areas, whilst avoiding development that could potentially lead to the coalescence of settlements.

This section details why land at Common Lane is considered as a suitable site for housing development that supports the growth strategy for urban areas, fully in accordance with the emerging broad location for growth in PO3.

The Common Lane site has the advantage of being located on the edge of the urban area of Kenilworth but outside the Green Belt and has potential to accommodate approximately 65 dwellings as an allocated housing site. A draft Indicative Layout, Plan 2, demonstrates how the site could be developed.

A sustainable location for growth

It is our view, set out in the formal representations we have also submitted, that the Local Plan Preferred Options document does not make provision for sufficient new dwellings to meet objectively assessed needs arising in the District. Accordingly, the allocation of the land at Common Lane will help address this deficiency in housing land supply.

The site at Common Lane is an appropriate location for future development which can contribute to the requirements in the emerging Local Plan in the short to medium term.



- The site provides a clear and logical location for sustainable growth, on the edge of the Kenilworth urban area but outside the Green Belt. It does not represent an extension of the settlement beyond the extent of the urban area already defined by existing residential development on Highland Road, Redthorne Grove and the newly constructed Laneham Place in proximity to it.
- The northern boundary of the site is defined by a well established hedgerow on very old parish and Town boundaries, and because of the proximity of existing residential development to the east and to the north-west, will not close the gap north of Kenilworth with Coventry.
- The site would not represent a risk to the potential coalescence of Kenilworth with the urban edge of Coventry, in accordance with draft policy PO3.
- The site is very well visually contained on all three sides (see photos) by mature vegetation. Its development would not be viewed as encroachment into the countryside when viewed from the north.
- The visual containment of the site by virtue of the mature vegetation on its boundaries, and the separation afforded by the existing and former railway lines, means the site will not appear visually intrusive when viewed from the adjoining urban areas.
- A means of access from the site to the highway network on Common Lane can be provided, giving a choice of routes into and out of Kenilworth. The access design contained in Appendix A will actually improve traffic flows on the narrow and busy Common Lane by the inclusion of traffic signals which will regulate vehicle movements through the narrowest section of the existing road.
- The site provides the opportunity for a connection between the Greenway along former railway line on the western boundary through the site to Common Lane without involving steps or a steep climb.
- The site is readily available and could deliver a range of homes within a five year timeframe. This will contribute to meeting challenging housing targets, in a sustainable location.
- The site is accessible to and from the town centre with a range of facilities that can be found within 2 km, and is well located to walking routes and public open space at Kenilworth Common.

It is proposed that the development of the site could include:

- Up to 65 family dwellings including market housing and a proportion of affordable housing.
- Energy efficient design in line with national and local standards.
- On-site public open space.
- An efficient layout which provides excellent residential amenity, easy access onto the highway network and to walking/cycling routes to Kenilworth Common.
- A draft Indicative Layout, Plan 2, has been produced which illustrates how the site could be developed.



Northern Boundary of the Site



Plan 2

Development Impacts and Assessment

Our client and their consultant team will undertake a full range of assessments of the potential development impacts of the proposal. The development masterplan will evolve as the assessment of the site takes place.

- Sustainability appraisal including environmental, accessibility and construction issues.
- Transport assessment of the site and surrounding area
- Hydrology and flood risk assessments
- Archaeological assessment
- Full ecological assessment – preliminary study already undertaken
- Noise and air quality assessments

Public Consultation

It is intended to undertake public consultation so as to provide information, generate feedback and respond accordingly with any changes to the masterplan. As part of this process of public consultation it is intended to discuss the emerging proposals with the Town Council and other local groups.

Potential timescales for development

Land at Common Lane is an available, suitable and achievable development site which can provide for the delivery of housing, including affordable housing, to provide for local need and contribute towards housing targets in the short to medium term.



Northern boundary of Site



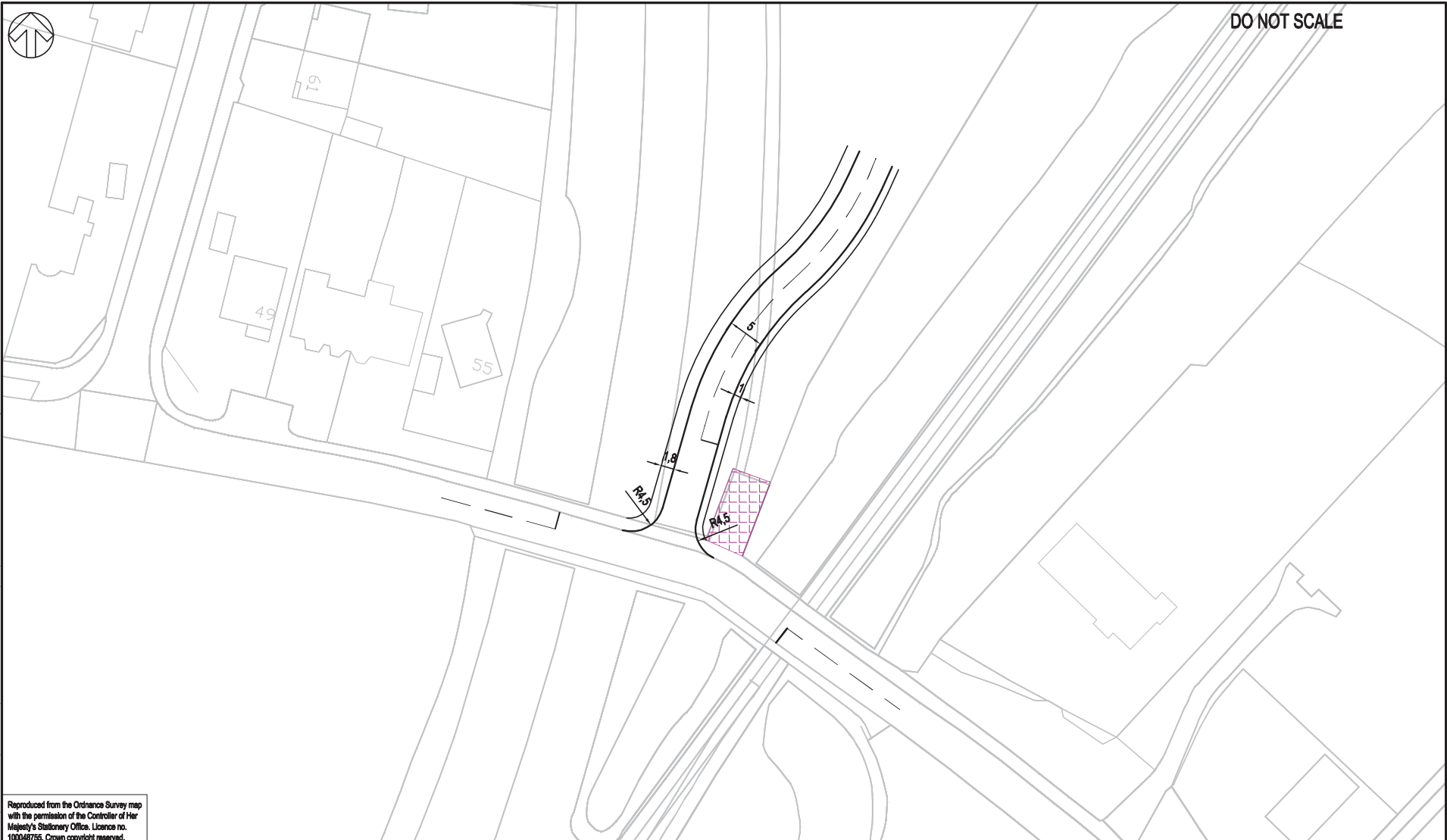
Conclusion

Land at Common Lane is a suitable greenfield site, outside the Green Belt, for housing development that should be identified within the emerging Local Plan for Warwick District as a specific allocated site. It has the potential to provide a sustainable housing development in line with the growth strategy on the edge of Kenilworth urban area. The site will allow flexibility and more certainty in the ability of the Local Authority to meet its housing needs in the near future.

Land at Common Lane is a smaller site (c. 65 dwellings) than that which was discounted in the SHLAA. The site proposed will not increase the risk of coalescence between the urban area and the urban edge of Coventry. Development would utilise a suitable site where the built form would extend no further than the established edge of the built up area of north-east Kenilworth.

Bluemark Projects request that the site is allocated as a suitable, available and achievable housing site in the Submission version of the new Local Plan for Warwick District.

Appendix A



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Licence no. 100048765. Crown copyright reserved.

REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APD
D	15/02/12	KN	EXTENDED ACCESS ROAD	PT	PT
C	09/02/12	KN	REVISED DIMENSIONS AS PER WCC COMMENTS	PT	PT
B	04/11/11	KN	REVISED ACCESS POSITION	PT	PT
A	07/06/11	KN	ISSUED	PT	PT

DRAWING STATUS: FOR INFORMATION ONLY



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CLIENT:

PROJECT:
PROPOSED SITE ACCESS - SKETCH LAYOUT

ARCHITECT:

TITLE:
COMMON LANE, KENILWORTH

SCALE @ A3:
1:500

CHECKED:
 PT

APPROVED:
 PT

CAD FILE:
 SK001 REV D

DESIGN/DRAWN:
 KN

DATE:
 February 2012

PROJECT No:
11051055

DRAWING No:
SK001

REV:
D

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