

Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies – Issues and Options

General

Question 76: *Please identify any topics or issues, which you consider need to be covered by the LAPP which are not addressed elsewhere in this document.*

Aslockton is classed within the ‘other villages’ category of the Rushcliffe Local Plan, to which 1,980 new dwellings are allocated over the Plan period (2011-2028). However, at present there are no proposed allocations set in the Local Plan Core Strategy for development in any of the ‘other villages’.

Aslockton is the most significant and sustainable settlement in the class of ‘other villages’. The Greater Nottingham Sustainable Locations for Growth Study (Feb 2010 – Page 33) is part of the supporting evidence for the Local Plan. It states that Aslockton is the most sustainable settlement in east rural Rushcliffe outside of the green belt, with *“potential for a medium to low level of growth compared with other settlements in the Greater Nottingham sub region”*.

The Greater Nottingham Accessible Settlements Study (Feb 2010 – Page 20), also supporting evidence for the Local Plan, scores Aslockton as one of the most sustainable ‘other villages’ in Rushcliffe Borough in terms of accessibility to work, schools, health, leisure and shops. The greater total score of a settlement in this study signifies a greater level of access to these services. Aslockton has a designated total score of 186.2, whilst the ‘other villages’ surrounding Aslockton score significantly lower. Indeed, excluding the physically abutting settlement of Whatton, the next best settlement in this category scores little more than half Aslockton’s score.

Aslockton benefits from a range of local services and facilities, including a primary school, shop/post office, public house, hairdressers, church, substantial village hall and a variety of local club organisations.

Aslockton also benefits from a variety of sustainable transport modes, including an hourly rail service and bus services to Nottingham and Grantham. It is one of only four settlements within Rushcliffe to benefit from a railway station and also offers opportunities for park and ride at the railway station, cycling and car sharing. Aslockton is part of the Nottingham-Aslockton corridor with opportunities to concentrate growth and share infrastructure.

It is in close proximity to the employment, retail and leisure services in Bingham and growth in Aslockton would support the existing infrastructure capacity. This point is specifically referred to in: *Land at Abbey Lane, Aslockton - APP/P3040/A/14/2227522 – 14/00480/OUT – Appeal Decision (Dec 2015, Paragraph 68)* and *The Greater Nottingham Sustainable Locations for Growth Study (Feb 2010 – Page 33)*.

Rushcliffe Borough does not have a five-year land supply, with between only 4.72 and 4.8 years of land supply in a best-case scenario, recently outlined in Paragraph 29 of the Appeal Decision for *Land at Abbey Lane, Aslockton - APP/P3040/A/14/2227522 – 14/00480/OUT (Dec 2015)*.

This shortage in housing delivery has occurred because of delays in the development of the three Sustainable Urban Extensions in the Borough. There is an urgent need to allocate further sites for development. An ideal solution for raising the number of available plots is to provide a greater variety of opportunities and by this means “significantly boost housing land supply” as required by the NPPF (para. 47)

Substantially smaller housing sites than the SUEs should be allocated (say between 20 and 100 units). This type of site size is generally advantageous, particularly in terms of early/short-term housing delivery when situated in a variety of locations. This would greatly assist in resolving Rushcliffe’s five-year land supply issue.

Employment would also be provided through new dwelling construction and support would be given to local services, facilities and employers from future occupiers.

Elsewhere such a strategy has been advocated by Councils to achieve housing targets. A good recent example in the Midlands is in the Coventry and Warwickshire housing market area.

https://www.rugby.gov.uk/downloads/file/907/rugby_housing_delivery_study_-_report – Page 79 (December 2015).

Given these considerations, an appropriate and substantially sustainable site has been identified. The site is a 2.80 hectares/ 6.92 acre plot centred at Grid Reference SK 73851 40204 adjacent to and west of the village centre of Aslockton. It consists of part of an agricultural field, neighboured by current residential development along Abbey Lane to the south (where the site access is also located) in addition to residential development to the east and north. Farm buildings and an agricultural field border the site to the west. The Archbishop Cranmer C. of E. Primary Academy is located to the east of the site.

Davidsons Developments Ltd, a family run local house builder, has an interest in the site. The site is currently available, developable and deliverable, so it can make an early contribution to resolving the lack of sufficient housing land in the Borough.

The site is located close to the village centre, as well as Aslockton Railway Station, whilst the primary school neighbours the site.

A planning appeal for 65 houses on the site is due to be held at a public inquiry in October (*Land North of Abbey Lane, Aslockton – APP/P3040/W/16/3143126*).

75 houses were permitted on appeal in December 2015 following a Public Inquiry (*Land at Abbey Lane, Aslockton - APP/P3040/A/14/2227522*). This approval permits residential development further from the centre and services of Aslockton and further into the countryside, compared with the site promoted above of 1.87 hectares. In terms of sustainability and integration into the built form of Aslockton, the site now subject to an appeal (*Land North of Abbey Lane, Aslockton - APP/P3040/W/16/3143126*) must be considered a better location.

Therefore for all the reasons outlined above this site should be allocated for housing development in the Local Plan.

Please find attached the location plan for the site, taken from the supporting documents of the original application for *Land North of Abbey Lane, Aslockton – 15/01204/OUT*.

Peter Wilkinson.