

BHDG Site Meeting Assessments July 2020

Site Reference	HELLA Ref	SNC HELAA Rating	BHDG HELAA Rating	BHDG comment
GNL0009 Church Lane 6 hectares	UTILITIES CAPACITY			There is no mention of the major effluent/sewerage issues for such a large site under consideration in Bunwell. No adjacent main sewer and Greenways and Harvey's Farm have been diverted to Forncett to ease load on the existing system at the village centre. Note attachment (SNDC Environmental Quality Team) re the small 8 house T/Pike development
	TOWNSCAPE AND SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPES			Quote SNC Settlement Summary: 'Is the largest site and development of the entire site would be of a scale to risk dominating the existing village (part of the site has been allocated at a scale which compliments the existing village)'. Grade II listed building is on the site with views to and from the Grade I church to be considered.

Site Conclusions

Development of this site would dominate the existing village and the entrance to the village from the Norwich direction. Entry and exit from two of the three sides of the site has issues, these being the narrow Church Lane and the busy B1113 Turnpike. In 2012 the village opposed the parish council plans to develop this site on a large scale with 102 against and only 11 in favour, this following the parish council's proposal for at least 80 new homes, many concentrated on the Turnpike site. Instead the village backed the SNDC plan for between 15 - 20 new homes for the village at different sites – See attachment. Bunwell is a linear villages of hamlets and such large single site development is completely out of character and would risk (quote SNDC) 'coalescing separate parts of Bunwell'.

When site BUN 2 was approved by SNDC, the sewerage issues had not been considered and arose later. The BHDG considers the 8 houses now being built to the building line of the opposite side of the Turnpike is sufficient for this site.

'Site's remoteness could lead to increased car dependency'.



GNLPO224 Land at Little Green 2.5 hectares Light Industrial	UTILITIES CAPACITY			We are OK with AMBER but we have major concerns with sewerage disposal which is mentioned in the HELAA report. Not close to main sewer. Refer to identical issues on adjacent Church Lane site and attachment 1. It's a remote site. Given the size of this site, sewerage must be a major consideration at this early stage.
	TOWNSCAPE AND SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPES			This site sits in a pleasant setting. Quote HELAA 'There are several nearby listed buildings, including the Grade 1 Church of St Michael. Very careful consideration of development would be necessary to respect (in particular) the longer views towards the church'. Such a large light industrial site would not be in keeping with the village character and setting and the group are unanimous in the view that it would be unacceptable to the village. Similar large commercial sites are available to rent or purchase in Wymondham directly adjacent to the A11 and in Norwich/ South Norwich.
	FLOOD RISK			We are unclear why this site has been given an Amber. The adjacent site is very low risk, quote 'Surface Water Risk – Very low risk' - Source Gov long term flood risk assessment.

Site Conclusions

This site is considered to be unsuitable in Bunwell for Light Industrial use given its size. Many other issues also arise not least of all that it is out of character with the village. Bunwell is a small village of 450 houses and 1100 residents. This site is on the edge of the village in a pleasant rural location with views across fields to beyond from the Church and the Grade II listed thatched cottage on the adjacent site. In addition and of equal concern:

1. Currently there is light pollution from the adjacent Frank Dale (now Finedale) factory where security lights are on all night. This would be a major issue for this significantly larger site where there may be 24 hour operations.
2. Noise and vehicle pollution from movements on and off site.
3. Heavy transport movement through the village to the A11. This is the main primary school route. The B1113 Turnpike option is often avoided by HGVs due to the hazardous tight bends and street parking at New Buckenham.
4. Low unemployment in the village would demand employees, drivers etc travelling in.
5. Wrong location for what could be a small industrial estate given its size, surrounded by agricultural land where future growth may well be intended. There are plenty of such light industrial opportunities in more suitable locations such as Wymondham directly adjacent to the A11.
6. Access issues - narrow road for heavy trucks, farm machinery and artics.

Site when view from B1113 Direction



Site to left behind trees when leaving village



Site to right when entering village from the B1113



GNLP0537 North of Bunwell Street opposite Greenways 1.03 hectares	ACCESS			We question why rated an Amber? Slight rise but certainly not seen as an issue with a broad frontage giving good visibility both ways. The directly adjacent site BUN 1 has already been allocated (2016 – 2026 Plan). Amber should be changed to Green
	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			AMBER is challenged given the proposed development does not exceed building line of Greenways opposite and significant open break retained to adjacent farmhouse and Grade I Listed Church. Should be Green

Site Conclusions

This site is directly adjacent to BUN 1 site, already approved and allocated. This site extends to the building line of Greenways opposite and preserves the open break both sides of Bunwell Street.

One concern of the group is the depth of this site. The site should extend no further than a line extended from the rear of BUN1. This site also runs directly adjacent to an official footpath which was in surprisingly significant usage by ramblers, dog walkers and joggers at the time of our site visit. It must be one of, if not the most popular village walk given it offers the open views across countryside so near to the village centre. Without doubt, the location currently offers great well-being benefits to the village. By limiting the depth of this site it would give good proportion with the adjacent site, BUNN 1, balance better the housing scene on both sides of the road when entering the centre of the village and reduce the impact on the footpath walk. This is a suitable development site but serious consideration must be given to the recommendation made about its size. Good access and walking distance to the primary school.

This site should only be for Residential Development and not include light industrial.



GNLP0538 Opposite Lilac Farm 1.63 hectares	ACCESS			The Group question this rating. It has a broad frontage with clear views both ways to a generous width road. Should be Green
	FLOOD RISK			<p>We question why rated as Amber as no Gov rating appears to specify this site. Lilac Farm directly opposite allocated 'Very low risk' for surface water, rivers and sea flooding by Gov. Low risk and Medium risk for surface flooding given to 109 and 132 respectively, both directly adjacent. 'No Risk' of Groundwater flooding' in the location and adjacent houses.</p> <p>Anglian Water have just completed extensive work to the main sewer system to include the vacuum valve system and some areas where surface water collected in heavy rain. The official Gov website map shows the degree of surface flooding prior to the work. This is extremely limited at this section of Bunwell street.</p>
	COMPATIBLE WITH NEIGHBOURING USES			Question Amber rating. Housing is both sides of the current gap. Opposite is a Grade II farm house, set back and between/opposite housing, not uncommon to Bunwell Street. A pair of asbestos barns also opposite with a large frontage and side. This Amber rating is considered harsh as any development or partial development would not look out of place with the surroundings. Comment has been made to preserve the open break but not everyone shares that view given its close proximity to the village centre and primary school.

Site Conclusions

The HELAA report Site Suitability Conclusions state this is a 6 hectare site yet the 'Site Area' on the same page quotes 1.63 hectares. The latter is more accurate. Given the HELAA conclusions we question both 'ACCESS' and 'Appropriate footway provision' and ask, has this been assessed based upon 6 hectares?

A road is to be built next to the existing affordable housing to provide access to the new additional affordable houses to be built behind. The group has no significant objections to this site, however, it is seen to be of a large scale given its position so close to the village centre. SNDC have also commented that this site and the site opposite, the Grade II listed farmhouse 'provide a break in development which contributes to the character of the village and provides an open setting for the listed farmhouse'. Not everyone would agree with that statement and in particular the asbestos barn which has seen better days. The BHDG view is that perhaps the preferred way forward is to have a smaller development adjacent to the affordable housing which would retain an open break and give continued access to the agricultural site. Lilac Farm is well set back and is like other such buildings in the village centre, so we question why a development should not occur opposite, perhaps on the suggested reduced scale. The site location is ideal being so close to the village centre and is therefore very worthy of serious consideration. Good access and walking distance to the primary school.

Currently this site offers a pleasing break across the fields and to Bunwell Manor but we feel compromise is worthwhile here given its location.



GNLP0538 Opposite Lilac Farm (Continued)



Photos 1 – 3 General views of site and frontage.

Photo 4 Where road behind current affordable housing is planned for.

GBLP0539 Lilac Farm 0.78 hectares	ACCESS			<p>We challenge the Amber rating. There is a significant existing broad frontage for access with deep open space. Good visibility to the road both ways and a generously wide road. The site is used on a daily basis by heavy transport and farm machinery. Should be Green rated.</p>
	FLOOD RISK			<p>We challenge the HELAA Amber assessment. The Gov website quotes 'Surface water risk' at 'Very Low Risk' for Lilac Farm with 'Very low risk' for River and Sea and 'No risk' for reservoir and groundwater. No basis for Amber.</p>
	TOWNSCAPE			<p>Difficult to understand the Amber other than the close proximity to a Grade II listed building. However, the listed building is in its own pleasant setting of significant lawns and with a sympathetic housing development set back to or behind the front line of the barns it should not detract from the house and its surroundings. The barns are not historic and some consider them unsightly. The boundaries of this site are not clear in as much as how far it will go back. Owner said the barns would go.</p>

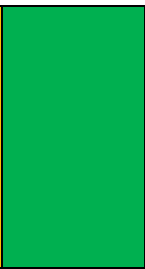
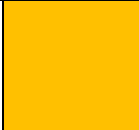

Site Conclusions

This site with a setback building line and sympathetic design could be an attractive housing feature adjacent to the centre of the village and within required walking distance of the primary school. Access is good and with a large, open frontage should offset any concerns about the Grade II listed building. Currently working farm barns with a small repair garage within, the village has two garages, the other providing repair facilities, MOT Testing, and fuel.

Flood Risk is not seen as an issue for the reasons quoted.

The Group see this as a very good site for housing development and removal of the barns would permit an attractive development in keeping with surroundings with a broad open green space at the front, giving pleasing views to and for the listed farm house.



GNLP2126 Adjoining The Laurels 0.52 Hectares	MARKET ATTRACTIVENESS			Amber challenge. A small development of 0.52 hectares, is an attractive proposition to a purchaser in a pleasant centre village setting, close to the village store and within walking distance of the primary school. Number of houses should be sympathetic to the setting but plenty of opportunity evident. Should be Green HELAA.
	TOWNSCAPE			Amber challenge. This site has a good frontage to Bunwell Street and with houses appropriately set back, this is seen as an ideal site with no obvious adverse features. Should be Green

Site Conclusions

This site is seen as an ideal site for development near the centre of the village. Good access with a broad frontage and a balance with the housing opposite. Within the acceptable walking distance to the primary school using a safe route.



GNLPSL2004 Opposite Church 0.25 Hectare	Not rated	Not rated	Not rated	
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Very little information is available currently about this site which is considered by the group as unsuitable for development.

Site Conclusions

This site is an unspoiled woodland directly opposite the Grade I listed church and the primary school which is around 140 years old. The school and church are in what is probably the most peaceful and picturesque part of Bunwell and woodland views from the church and school would sadly be lost forever. The road would be better described as a lane at narrow points in front of the school, with dwellings and buildings beyond on one side only.

Parking is extremely restricted but well managed by the school with bollards and early arrivals by staff. The village hall car park is also used for parents parking but a significant number walk to school in fair weather.

It is correct to say that the vast majority of the village would object to any development of this site, particularly given the number of more suitable sites available. As the school advises, even when the children arrive and depart, the environment has a calming effect, essential for children going to and entering school before lesson time.


In addition it would prove to be a school day traffic hazard and present parking challenges for regular church services and significant church events. In addition the Old Queens Head public house, Grade II Listed (built circa 18th century), now no longer a pub, is the entrance to this setting.

Comment re the application:

1. Re 8a - Despite the application saying so, there is no mains sewer at this location.
2. Re 5d - It is not considered the development would enhance the area and would not be a 'contribution to the local community'.
3. The road name is not 'Church lane', its The Old Turnpike.
5. Re 4a. The plot was originally an orchard according to a very senior resident of Bunwell who was born here. Her uncle rented the orchard at the time. She has no recollection of a garage and it may have been either a very early small private garage or outbuilding if there are remains. None appear visible.
5. 7g – Heritage Sites. Are there any listed buildings on site or nearby? *Answer: 'No Known Issues'.* There are many.

We suspect this site could only be considered as a Windfall Site due to its small size although we are not sure. If it is this will remain on our radar should it be presented separately We understand planning permission has previously been refused.



GNLPSL001 Chapel Road Small site maybe 2/3 houses?	No HELAA			
<p>The site is hidden from the road by mature bushes/small trees. Narrow road/lane with issues on access. Houses opposite. Frontage clearance would be necessary and the land rises circa 18 inches above road level. This could only apply for Windfall consideration and we would need to look again if planning was pursued. On the radar. Open mind at present.</p>				
				

Development Site Final Ratings Overall by the BHDG

Sites	Ratings out of 5 Not recommended Significant Issues Possible - concerns Minor points Highly recommended	House number potential
GNLP0009 Church Lane	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	125 potential
GNLP0224 Adj Frank Dale (now Finedale)	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	Light Industrial - Significant
GNLP0537 Opp Greenways	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 3 star rated but only on the basis of residential development not including any light industrial development, which is unsuitable for this site and location.	15
GNLP0538 Opp Lilac Farm	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	20
GNLP0539 Lilac Farm	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	12 - 14
GNLP2126 Adj The Laurels	★ ★ ★ ★ ★	8-10
GNLP2004 Opp Church	★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★	?
GNLPSL001 Chapel Road	Further details required	?