

Balsall and Berkswell Neighbourhood Development Plan

**Report from Site Exhibition
of potential new housing
sites held for Balsall and
Berkswell Parish residents.**

Saturday 20th August 2016



Executive Summary of Key Findings:

A significant majority of residents feel it is **most important** to protect the Green Belt and to only develop housing under **very special** circumstances giving preference to previously developed land and **protecting** the rural landscape.

Releasing of land within the existing Green Belt for housing should only be in **very special** circumstances and because there are no alternative suitable sites available.

A high proportion of residents feel it is **most important** to protect the character of the village and the rural setting of Balsall Common which is reflected in the design principles in the Balsall Common Village Plan 2010.

A high proportion of residents consider compromising dark sky **least important**.

A large group of residents have selected locating sites for housing near public transport (station/bus stops) or fresh food shops, or primary schools or where noise is an issue as **least important**.

It should be noted that there is **no** high frequency public transport serving Balsall Common and Berkswell. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) research indicates that car ownership in the “rural east” is 1.72 per household and 70% of trips are made by car. This may explain why proximity to facilities is considered of least importance. Moreover, for every new house built there will be a significant increase in car use for trips to school, work, shopping, entertainment and leisure.

Background:

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) planning department approached the Parish Councils of Balsall and Berkswell to consider how the work of the Balsall and Berkswell Neighbourhood Development Plan (BBNDP) could contribute to the review of the Local Plan, in respect of Provision of Housing, given that the emerging NDP will not be completed until after the Local Plan has been adopted. In response to this request, the BBNDP committee decided to consult with residents of both parishes to facilitate a constructive input to both the process of the assessment of sites SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment), which had come forward as part of the “call for sites” earlier in 2016, and also the allocation of sites in the draft Local Plan. To this end, it was decided to hold a site exhibition in August, to deliver timely feedback to SMBC to meet the imposed deadline.

Purpose:

Recognising that the assessment and allocation of sites is a “balanced judgement” based on both planning policies from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and, in turn, SMBC, the BBNDP committee wished to ensure that this judgement reflected the priorities of the parish communities. To this end, the main purpose of the site exhibition was to request that residents identified their most important and least important site selection criteria, these being derived from the NPPF; SMBC Local Plan; Balsall Common Village Plan (2010) and also issues arising through BBNDP community engagement events to date.

Rationale:

The justification for our approach was that:

- It provides for an objective approach which is not site specific
- It provides empirical data from which sound conclusions can be drawn
- The criteria by which sites are assessed and allocated are fundamental to the drafting of the Local Plan and therefore the outcome from the BBNDP site exhibition will input directly into the front end of the overall SMBC process
- Consistency is assured across the assessment of all sites under consideration
- Being derived primarily from existing planning policies, it respects that decisions will be made on the basis of such policies

The alternative approach of inviting residents to choose sites for development was discounted, especially without been given housing numbers by SMBC, but also as this was thought not to be as objective, being potentially emotive and open to “the Nimby effect”. Neither would this approach provide for reliable empirical data which could usefully feed into the balanced judgements to be made by SMBC in assessing sites. This was discussed with SMBC in a meeting with Gary Palmer and Ismail Mohammed on 11th July 2016.

Methodology:

In order to determine the criteria which residents would be asked to assess, planning policies relevant to the assessment and allocation of strategic land sites were identified from both SMBC Local Plan and also NPPF, specifically in respect of greenbelt. Also, principles identified in the Balsall Common Village plan and through BBNDP community engagement. The cascade resulting from this analysis is presented in Appendix I.

Although the main objective was for residents to prioritise the selection criteria, a secondary objective was to validate criteria derived from either the Balsall Common Village Plan or the BBNDP community engagement.

In defining the criteria, the following guiding principles were established to ensure both the reliability and validity of the result.

- Wherever possible, the original wording from the NPPF / SMBC Local Plan to be retained to facilitate ratification by SMBC
- Criteria to be self-explanatory as far as possible and not ambiguous
- Only include criteria which relate to either the allocation of land or the potential number of houses a site could yield
- Test only one aspect within each criteria
- Avoid duplication to optimise the number of criteria
- Criteria originating from Village Plan or Community Engagement all to be included (ie not discounted by the BBNDP committee)

The data collection process was designed such that each resident was to be provided with 5 green and 5 red sticky dots and invited to place no more than one green dot against each criterion which they selected as being most important and one red dot against each criterion which they selected as being of least importance. Effectively residents were requested to prioritise their five most important and five least important criteria and to leave the remaining thirteen site selection criteria blank with no strong view either way.

Delivery of Site Exhibition:

The communication for the site exhibition was managed as follows:

1) All developers / promoters listed in the SMBC Schedule of “Call for Sites” submission were contacted by phone to explain about the holding and purpose of the site exhibition and to request their attendance. This was then confirmed in writing, together with a copy of the Site Assessment Feedback Form and additional information. The BBNDP advised that the expectation would be to later provide developers / landowners with the prioritised criteria and key findings from the exhibition.

2) Letters were sent to all landowners listed in the SMBC Schedule of “Call for Sites” detailing the holding and purpose of the site exhibition and to request their attendance.

Appendix II details the developers and landowners that presented exhibits on the day.

3) Arrangements were made to deliver a flyer door to door to all households across the two parishes detailing the exhibition. In addition, posters were put up across Balsall Common and in Berkswell village. Additional electronic communications were sent out to distribution lists by Balsall Common Village Residents Association Communicator, Berkswell Society and by the largest society in the area, the U3A.

The site exhibition itself was facilitated as follows:

1) On arrival, residents were asked for their street location which was recorded. Each individual was issued with the Site Assessment Criteria form, 5 green dots and 5 red dots and their postcode was added to the form.

2) The resident was then invited to visit the individual developer stands and an information centre, staffed by volunteers, provided for any queries. Specifically, an explanation sheet relating to the criteria was available to ensure consistency of response to any questions relating to the criteria (Appendix III)

3) The Site Assessment Criteria form was completed by the resident before leaving the exhibition and the completed form was deposited into a secure ballot box. No form was accepted without having attended the exhibition.

Nearly 700 residents attended the site exhibition of which 93% live in Balsall Common. The vast majority completed Site Assessment Criteria forms.

Post-exhibition:

- 1) All the forms were checked both for completed postcode and correct application of the dots. Any incomplete or spoilt forms such as more than 5 dots of either colour were removed from the analysis.
- 2) Forms were batched into piles of 100 and the dots were counted.
- 3) Forms were entered individually into a spreadsheet and totals by criteria were cross-checked.
- 4) Forms were re-counted to check final numbers.
- 5) Totals for each criteria of green and red were recorded as a percentage of the completed correct forms for the most important and least important criteria.

Results: Feedback from Site Exhibition 20th August 2016

589 correctly completed forms – 70% Balsall Parish residents 30% Berkswell Parish residents

Selection Criteria	Most important 	Least important 
A “Respecting the needs of residents”		
1) Where there is a locally defined need, housing should be provided	15%	16%
2) Density of new development must maintain the character of nearby existing housing	29%	11%
3) Locate sites only where amenity* of existing and new residents is respected	23%	4%
4) Preference to be given to sites which provide community green space (eg woodland) to screen existing residents from new development	26%	4%
5) Locate houses where the access is safe for existing and new users (by foot, bicycle, car or public transport)	31%	3%
6) Avoid locating development which will result in delays for pedestrians, cyclists or drivers	19%	11%
7) Do not locate sites where noise is an issue	6%	26%
B “Protection of our rural context”		
8) Maintain rural gaps between settlements	30%	4%
9) Preserve the character of the rural approaches	9%	6%
10) Encourage re-use of land which has been previously developed (brownfield)	58%	4%
11) Development in greenbelt should not be permitted except in very special circumstances	54%	6%
12) Preference to be given to sites that have defensible boundaries which prevent encroachment into the greenbelt such as railways, roads and water courses	19%	9%
13) Preference to be given to sites which protect the greenbelt by including community green space (eg woodland) between new development and fields	27%	4%
14) Loss of existing facilities will not be permitted where of value to the community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation, contribution to quality of environment or green infrastructure network, unless deemed to be surplus	22%	4%
C “Protecting the natural environment”		
15) Development must not cause harm to the landscape: Hedgerows; Woodland; Priority habitats; Nature reserves	38%	4%
16) Sites with the potential to positively impact the natural environment to be viewed more favourably	12%	6%
17) Do not locate sites where the dark sky would be compromised	6%	45%
D “Access to facilities”		
18) Preference to be given to sites which provide facilities and green space for the community	24%	7%
19) Locate houses within 800m of primary school (~15 mins walk)	8%	30%
20) Locate houses within 800m of Medical Centre(~15 mins walk)	7%	22%
21) Locate houses within 800m of Fresh food shop(~15 mins walk)	3%	33%
22) Locate houses within 800m of Railway station(~15 mins walk)	6%	34%
23) Locate houses within 400m of bus stop (~8 mins walk)	3%	31%

Key Findings:

A Significant majority of residents prioritised **most important** to protect the Green Belt and to only develop housing under **very special** circumstances giving preference to previously developed land and **protecting** the rural landscape.

- 58% of respondents selected **most important** to encourage the re-use of land which has been previously developed.
- 54% of respondents selected **most important** that development in the Green Belt should **not** be permitted except in **very special** circumstances.
- 38% of respondents selected **most important** that development must not cause harm to landscape: Hedgerows; Woodland; Priority Habitats; Nature Reserves.

Releasing of land within the existing Green Belt for housing should only be in **very special** circumstances and because there are no alternative suitable sites available.

A High proportion of residents prioritised **most important** to protect the character of the village and the rural setting of Balsall Common which is reflected in the design principles in the Balsall Common Village Plan 2010.*

- 31% of respondents selected **most important** to locate houses where access is safe for existing and new users (by foot, bicycle, car or public transport)
- 30% of respondents selected **most important** to maintain the rural gaps between settlements.*
- 29% of respondents selected **most important** that the density of new housing must maintain the character of existing housing nearby.
- 27% of respondents selected **most important** that preference is given to sites which protect the Green Belt by including Community Green Space.*
- 26% of respondents selected **most important** that preference is given to sites which provide Community Green Space (Woodland) to screen existing residents from new development.*
- 24% of respondents selected **most important** that preference is to be given to sites which provide facilities and green space for the community.*

At the public meeting held on 11th January in Balsall Common to discuss strategic options for housing across the borough, and at Balsall and Berkswell Parish Annual Assemblies a strong view was expressed that there is a perceived serious lack of infrastructure within and around the village of Balsall Common currently and further infrastructure will be needed to sustain more housing. Indeed this was reinforced by unsolicited hand written comments from residents on the feedback forms.

A High proportion of residents consider compromising dark sky **least important**.

- 45% of respondents selected **least important** to not locate sites where dark sky would be compromised.

A large number of residents selected locating sites for housing near public transport (station/bus stops) or fresh food shops, or primary schools or where noise is an issue as being **least important**.

- 34% of respondents selected **least important** to locate houses within 800m of the railway station.
- 33% of respondents selected **least important** to locate houses within 800m of a fresh food shop.
- 31% of respondents selected **least important** to locate houses within 400m of a bus stop.
- 30% of respondents selected **least important** to locate houses within 800m of primary school.
- 26% of respondents selected **least important** to not locate sites where noise is an issue.

A probable explanation for this result is that there is **no** high frequency public transport serving this area and therefore most journeys are habitually made by car. Indeed Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) research indicates that car ownership in the “rural east” is at least 1.72 per household and 70% of trips are made by car. Moreover, for every new house built there will be a significant increase in car use for trips to school, work, shopping, entertainment and leisure.


Signatories :

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Tattum', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Cllr Mark Tattum MBA MA MA

Member of the BBNDP

Chairman Balsall Parish Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Drake', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Cllr Richard Drake

Member of the BBNDP

Vice Chair Berkswell Parish Council

Appendices

I Cascade of Planning policies to Site Selection Criteria (included as a separate 4 page document)

II List of Developers and Landowners at the site exhibition.

III Explanatory notes to Site Selection Criteria

Appendix I Cascade of Planning policies to Site Selection Criteria relevant to Balsall and Berkswell Designated Neighbourhood Area

Policy area	NPPF	SMBC	BC Village Plan	BBNDP	Summary Statement for Site exhibition
P4 Meeting Housing Needs		<p>a) Affordable Housing provision (40%) will take into account:</p> <p>ii) Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport</p> <p>b) Rural exception sites:</p> <p>i) Development proposal is consistent with Village, Parish or Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>ii) Local connection to Parish.</p> <p>Evidenced need. Site supported by Parish Council.</p>		Community request for housing to meet the needs of the local community	1) Where there is a locally defined need, housing should be provided
P5 Provision of Land for Housing		<p>Unless exceptional circumstances, new housing will NOT be permitted in locations where accessibility to employment, centres and a range of services and facilities is poor</p> <p>The density of new housing will make the most efficient use of land whilst providing an appropriate mix and maintaining character and local distinctiveness</p>	<p>G. Ensure new housing development is integrated with the village (BC) and not isolated from the centre and amenities</p> <p>Avoid encircling village with new housing pockets isolated from village centre</p>	<p>Encourage appropriate development to promote sustainability of rural settlements</p> <p>Avoid isolated ribbon development</p>	2) Density of new development must maintain the character of nearby existing housing
P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access		<p>ai) Housing expected to be within 800m of primary school, doctors surgery and fresh food shop</p> <p>aiii) Proposed education, health and other public service facilities should be located where they are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and bus</p>		<p>Housing expected to be within 800m rail station and 400m bus stop</p> <p>Safe walk and</p>	<p>19) Locate houses within 800m of primary school (~15 mins walk)</p> <p>20) Locate houses within 800m of Medical Centre (~15 mins walk)</p> <p>21) Locate houses within</p>

		<p>by the local community they serve</p> <p>b) Access to development from core walking, cycling, public transport and road networks will be expected to be:</p> <p>i) Safe, overlooked and direct (walk, cycle, public transport)</p> <p>ii) Safe (vehicles)</p>		<p>cycle routes to primary school, doctors surgery and fresh food</p>	<p>800m of Fresh food shop(~15 mins walk)</p> <p>22) Locate houses within 800m of Railway station(~15 mins walk)</p> <p>23) Locate houses within 400m of bus stop (~8 mins walk)</p> <p>5) Locate houses where the access is safe for existing and new users (by foot, bicycle, car or public transport)</p>
P8 Managing demand for travel and reducing congestion		<p>ai) Development not permitted which results in significant increase in delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists or reduction in safety for users of highway or other transport network</p> <p>aii) Travel demands from development should minimise detrimental impact on efficiency of highway network</p> <p>aiii) New development should reduce the need to travel</p> <p>biii) Ensure routes to services and public transport stops are good quality, direct and attractive</p>		<p>Ease of access from site onto road network</p> <p>Will not adversely impact existing residents accessing the road network</p>	<p>6) Avoid locating development which will result in delays for pedestrians, cyclists or drivers</p>
P10 Natural Environment		<p>Protect, enhance and restore the diverse landscape features.</p> <p>Halt the degrading of Arden landscape and promote local distinctiveness.</p>			<p>15) Development must not cause harm to the landscape: Hedgerows; Woodland; Priority habitats; Nature reserves</p>

		<p>Conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity <i>and protect the same where of national and local importance</i></p> <p>Create new native woodlands and other habitats.</p> <p>Protect, restore and enhance ancient woodland and green infrastructure assets</p> <p>Protect ancient woodlands and priority habitats.</p> <p>Establishment of buffers to new sites.</p> <p>Development should seek to enhance accessibility to natural environment.</p> <p>Sites having an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest are subject to special scrutiny.</p> <p><i>Adverse effects on Local Nature Reserve or Local Wildlife or Geological Site will have to be mitigated</i></p> <p><i>Where the natural environment will be significantly harmed, developers must demonstrate that all alternatives have been considered</i></p>			<p>16) Sites with the potential to positively impact the natural environment to be viewed more favourably</p>
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P11 Water Management		New development will not normally be permitted within areas at risk of flooding			
P14 Amenity		<p>Amenity of existing and potential residents to be protected and enhanced:</p> <p><i>i) Development only permitted if amenity of existing and proposed occupiers is respected and would be a good neighbour</i></p> <p><i>ii) Minimise impact on visual and other amenities of power lines and substations</i></p> <p>iv) Safeguard important trees, hedgerows and woodland and encourage new planting. Prioritise locations where green infrastructure network enhanced</p> <p><i>v) Development not permitted which negatively impacts on achievement of air quality objectives</i></p> <p><i>vii) Noise sensitive development only permitted if located away from existing sources of significant noise or if no suitable alternatives exist, effective mitigation measures in place</i></p> <p>ix) Protect dark sky from light pollution</p> <p><i>x) Protect the tranquil and locally distinctive areas from noise creating</i></p>		<p>Ensure provision of designated green space to protect amenity of existing residents</p> <p>Potential for site to provide amenity for the community (ref Village Plan)</p>	<p>3) Locate sites only where amenity of existing and new residents is respected</p> <p>7) Do not locate sites where noise is an issue</p> <p>17) Do not locate sites where the dark sky would be compromised</p> <p>4) Preference to be given to sites which provide community green space (eg woodland) to screen existing residents from new development</p>

		<i>development (incl. from transport)</i>			
P16 Conservation of heritage assets and local distinctiveness		<p>Developments must conserve the characteristics of:</p> <p>ii) Historical development and variety of architectural styles of Balsall Common</p> <p>iii) Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinctive medieval core of Berkswell and Temple Balsall</p> <p>iv) Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation</p> <p><i>Development will be expected to preserve or enhance heritage assets as appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness and create or sustain a sense of place</i></p>	<p>A. Maintain rural gaps between neighbouring villages / towns</p> <p>C. Preserve the character of rural approaches (to BC) Keep the approaches that still have a rural feel and maintain current hedges, trees and grass verges</p> <p>D. Preserve the rural character of roads within the village Avoid urbanisation where possible – keep existing hedges, trees and grass verges along older through routes</p>		<p>8) Maintain rural gaps between settlements</p> <p>9) Preserve the character of the rural approaches</p>

<p>P17 Countryside and Greenbelt</p>	<p>79 The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence 80 Green Belt serves five purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas • To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another • To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment • To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land <p>83 Authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period 84 When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset</p>	<p>The Council will not permit inappropriate development in green belt except in VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.</p>	<p>B. Preserve the greenbelt around BC Include parkland as a green barrier between housing and fields with new trees planted, for any major development</p>		<p>10) Encourage re-use of land which has been previously developed (brownfield)</p> <p>11) Development in greenbelt should not be permitted except in very special circumstances</p> <p>12) Preference to be given to sites that have defensible boundaries which prevent encroachment into the greenbelt such as railways, roads and water courses</p> <p>13) Preference to be given to sites which protect the greenbelt by including community green space (eg woodland) between new development and fields</p>
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	<p>within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary</p> <p>85 Local Authorities should define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent</p> <p><i>89 Construction of new buildings in the green belt should be regarded as inappropriate with the following exceptions:</i></p> <p>Partial or complete redevelopment of PDL sites (brownfield), whether redundant or in continuing use, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the green belt ... Than the existing development.</p> <p>111 Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield)</p>				
<p>P19 Range and Quality of Local Services</p>		<p>a) As a Local Centre, BC needs to be developed in a way which ensures its continued sustainability and economic success</p>			
<p>P20 Provision for open space, children’s play, sport, recreation and leisure</p>		<p>Loss of existing facilities will not be permitted where of value to community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation, contribution to quality of environment or green infrastructure network, unless deemed to be surplus</p>	<p>I. Maintain green space within the development of BC Greenspaces and paths for leisure use and to</p>		<p>14) Loss of existing facilities will not be permitted where of value to the community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation, contribution to quality of environment or</p>

			encourage sustainability and biodiversity		green infrastructure network, unless deemed to be surplus 18) Preference to be given to sites which provide facilities and green space for the community
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Appendix II Developer and landowner exhibitors

Site 238	Landowner
Site 240	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 1	Landowner
Site 33	Pegasus Group
Site 101	Spitfire Properties
Site 169	Green Light Developments
Site 170	Landowner
Site 75	Richborough Estates
Site 138	Catesby Estates
Site 142	Bilfinger GVA
Site 158	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 159	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 160	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 161	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 162	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 172	Tyler-Parkes partnership
Site 183	Landowner
Site 201	Landowner
Site 204	Spitfire Properties
Site 233	Gallagher Estates
Site 236	Green Light Developments

Appendix III Explanatory notes for Site Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria	Explanatory note
A “Respecting the needs of residents”	
1) Where there is a locally defined need, housing should be provided	For example, if the residents of a settlement request that houses be built in order to sustain the settlement, then these should be provided. “Local” does NOT refer to Solihull’s defined housing need. NB This criterion does not encompass “housing mix” at this stage
2) Density of new development must maintain the character of nearby existing housing	For example, the ratio of house footprint to garden size for existing housing must be recognised in any new nearby development. (NB There is a risk that this could require more land to be released for new houses).
3) Locate sites only where amenity* of existing and new residents is respected	In other words sites should not be located where an existing feature or facility would be negatively impacted which current residents find useful or pleasant. Similarly the amenity of new residents must be respected when locating new sites
4) Preference to be given to sites which provide community green space (eg woodland) to screen existing residents from new development	The planting of trees between current residences and new development will provide a “soft screen”. As with density, this may reduce the number of housing units which can be built on a site.
5) Locate houses where the access is safe for existing and new users (by foot, bicycle, car or public transport)	This is to avoid building new houses where the main access would be onto already busy roads such that current and new users may find it difficult to safely join / leave / cross the highway/cycleways / footpaths
6) Avoid locating development which will result in delays for pedestrians, cyclists or drivers	As with A5 (above), but from a perspective of creating or adding to delays either in joining, leaving, crossing or travelling along the highway/cycleways/footpaths
7) Do not locate sites where noise is an issue	In other words, sites are not located where there are current or future intrusive noise issues eg traffic; trains; planes
B “Protection of our rural context”	
8) Maintain rural gaps between settlements	This is particularly with the Meriden Gap in mind. Is it important that the greenbelt, which exists to avoid urbanisation and the coalescence of settlements, is preserved?
9) Preserve the character of the rural approaches	Many of the approaches to our villages are characterised by grass verges, hedgerows and trees. Is it important that these are preserved or is it acceptable for houses or housing developments to “front” on to the incoming routes?
10) Encourage re-use of land which has been previously developed (brownfield)	Refer to NPPF Glossary of Terms*
11) Development in greenbelt should not be permitted except in very special circumstances	The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) deems that ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
12) Preference to be given to sites that have defensible boundaries which prevent encroachment into the greenbelt such as railways, roads and water courses	A defensible boundary is a physical feature which is readily recognisable and likely to be permanent and hence forms a very robust defence against further erosion of the greenbelt

13) Preference to be given to sites which protect the greenbelt by including community green space (eg woodland) between new development and fields	This is particularly relevant where a defensible boundary (see B12 above) does not exist in that the woodland forms a natural defence against further erosion of the greenbelt, albeit this may not be regarded as “permanent”. NB Community space is land which is not owned by the developer / landowner
14) Loss of existing facilities will not be permitted where of value to the community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation, contribution to quality of environment or green infrastructure network, unless deemed to be surplus	In other words sites which would result in the loss of these facilities, which are not easily available to existing residents elsewhere (ie they are not “surplus to requirement”), will not be permitted eg games fields, parks, sports facilities, nature reserves etc
C “Protecting the natural environment”	
15) Development must not cause harm to the landscape: Hedgerows; Woodland; Priority habitats; Nature reserves	In other words, preference to be given to sites which will not cause harm to the landscape in terms of having to remove hedgerows; trees or negatively impact priority habitats or nature reserves
16) Sites with the potential to positively impact the natural environment to be viewed more favourably	In contrast to C15 (above), sites which include measures to add to the natural environment to be viewed more favourably
17) Do not locate sites where the dark sky would be compromised	This recognises the value which can be attached to being able to have a clear view of the night sky without the effects of light pollution
D “Access to facilities”	
18) Preference to be given to sites which provide facilities and green space for the community	This could include parkland; play areas and green space made available to the community within a development
19) Locate houses within 800m of primary school (~15 mins walk)	
20) Locate houses within 800m of Medical Centre(~15 mins walk)	
21) Locate houses within 800m of Fresh food shop(~15 mins walk)	
22) Locate houses within 800m of Railway station(~15 mins walk)	SMBC prefer that houses are sited within 800m of a high frequency (3 trains/hour) rail station. Berkswell station only operates 2 trains per hour in either direction. Do you think it is important that sites should ideally be within 800m of this station?
23) Locate houses within 400m of bus stop (~8 mins walk)	Again, SMBC prefer that houses are within 400m of a high frequency (every 15’) bus stop. We do not have any bus services operating at this level of frequency. Do you think it is nevertheless important to site houses within 400m of a bus stop?

*Previously developed land:

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.