

Draft Policy – Knights Hill & E4.1 Knights Hill Policy

Link to draft policy and comments in full received from the draft consultation stage:

<https://west-norfolk.objective.co.uk/portal/lpr2019/lpr2019?pointId=s1542882759455#section-s1542882759455>

&

<https://west-norfolk.objective.co.uk/portal/lpr2019/lpr2019?pointId=s1545127458184#section-s1545127458184>

Summary of Comments & Suggested Response:

Consultee	Nature of Response	Summary	Consultee Suggested Modification	Officer Response / Proposed Action
Mr Michael Rayner CPRE	Object	It is clear from the refusal of application 16/02231/OM by members on 13th March 2019 that site E4.1 is not suitable for large-scale housing development	Removal of this allocation	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mr S Fidgett Union 4 Planning on behalf of Castle Rising Parish Council	Object	The Knights Hill allocation is carried forward in the Draft Local Plan Review from the SADMP and includes parts of the parishes of South Wootton and Castle Rising. A small part of the allocation has already been permitted and should therefore, be noted as a commitment and deleted from the allocation. Development of the major part of the site has however, been found to be unacceptable and contrary to policies of the SADMP relating to transport and heritage. In the light therefore, of the unanimous decision by the Council to refuse planning permission for development of the proposed allocation, the allocation should be deleted. In light of the comments in these representations and the evidence set out in the application, consultee comments and the decision, it is concluded that the continued allocation of Knights Hill would be contrary to the policies of the Local Plan Review including LP04,LP05, LP06, and LP10, LP16, LP17 and LP18 and is unnecessary and inappropriate on any reasonable assessment of	Remove the Knights Hill Allocation from the Plan	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions

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		<p>the real need for housing in LP01 and spatial strategy LP02 and sustainable development LP03. The application followed from several years where the applicant sought to develop their proposals for the site. it has failed to deliver within a reasonable period and should no longer form part of the housing trajectory. The inability of the owner to bring forward a form of development that was acceptable to the Council and to local people within this period, is a clear indication of the fact that development cannot be accommodated within the site, while safeguarding the relevant environmental and other constraints as required by the policies of the development plan and NPPF. The Local Plan Review should end the uncertainty that has occupied the lives of the community and delete the allocation. It is considered that as a result of its unsustainable location and the presence of nationally important constraints and its location on the strategic road network, development of the proposed allocation would lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unacceptable impact on Highways Capacity, congestion and safety and lack of sustainable transport measures; • serious Impact on Nationally Important Heritage Assets including scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings of national importance, including Castle Rising and Knights Hill; • lack a viable drainage strategy and is likely to further exacerbate flood risk in the drainage system serving the wider area • has an unacceptable adverse impact on views and the historic landscape of Knights Hill, Castle Rising, St James Chapel and the AONB. Historic England have made clear they have no objection 'in principle' but have serious concerns over the impact of the development on the setting of nationally important heritage assets and that this must be given substantial weight in the planning balance. The landscape setting of Castle Rising and Knights Hill is one of an open agricultural landscape beyond the Park Pale with woodland and heath. This 		

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		<p>predominantly open landscape still exists across the site, particularly as the ground rises up the hill towards Knights Hill. The introduction of inappropriate landscaping along the road corridor and to seek to screen development is at odds with the open landscape that is part of this setting. Buildings would also still be visible from Castle Rising and exert a negative influence on its relationship with Knights Hill and Kings Lynn. The northern boundary is particularly sensitive and is inappropriate for what the proposed policy envisages as higher density development. Although the application proposals indicated that there would not be street lighting on the new roundabout junction on the A148, this is at odds with highways safety. Any new major junction on the strategic road network is normally accompanied by street lights in order to ensure pedestrian and highway safety. In this case there is a complex new junction with changed priorities, pedestrian crossing points and private slipways. It is the sole access that was set out in the Local SADMP. Yet the introduction of street lights on the A148 Grimston Road would have a further significant adverse landscape and visual impact and significantly impact the setting of Castle Rising. While the officer report for the application noted the conclusions of the Transport Assessment (TA) and says that the application 'provides mitigation' against the impact of the development, this does not make clear the adverse impact that would arise. In fact, there are significant elements of the development that cannot be fully mitigated and have significant adverse transport impacts. The TA Addendum makes clear that the measures proposed will not mitigate the impact of the Low Road / Wootton Road / Grimston Road / Castle Rising Road junction and that its 'capacity will be exceeded by 2026 and with the addition of the Knights Hill development traffic the delays and queues would increase. 'While MOVA system (microprocessor controlled vehicle</p>		

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		<p>actuation traffic lights) is proposed for the junction, as the junction is already at capacity and will be over capacity in any scenario involving development at the site, the cumulative impact will still add to existing congestion and we believe will lead to increase instances of 'gridlock'. It is essentially only a system to respond to the volume of traffic in each direction, but if the capacity is exceeded, its ability to optimise flows is very limited. The TA Addendum further concluded that because the capacity is exceeded, implementing a MOVA control system at this junction will increase throughput at the junction, but is unlikely to bring the junction within capacity and hence delays will increase. It was also clear that the assessments were undertaken outside the peak season, which for Kings Lynn is over the summer months, when there is a significant increase in visitors to the area. During the summer, the capacity of the network will be further exceeded leading to additional disruption to journeys on the local and strategic road network. Given the proximity of the hospital and town centre, this is a serious absolute constraint. The impact on other junctions on the main road network will be close to capacity, requiring only small variations to provoke greater congestion. The tendency for these routes to come under particular strain in the summer months was noted at committee. There is no ability to require the provision of enhanced bus services and indeed these cannot be guaranteed in the long term. yet these are essential if the site is to be considered sustainable. In reality, this is a site that is distant from the town centre and is in an unsustainable location. In addition, the impact of development in this location, being largely dependent upon car borne trips, would exacerbate the reduction in air quality in Kings Lynn AQMA. In the absence of a detailed drainage strategy that considers the extent on impermeable areas, it is not clear that the site can be self-sufficient</p>		

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		and would not have an adverse off-site impact on drainage and flood risk in the surrounding area.		
Mrs Helen Russell-Johnson King's Lynn Civic Society	Mixed both Support & Object	Other sites around Lynn: The Knights Hill proposals were recently refused by the planning committee, even though this was an agreed, allocated site and an important part of the planned five-year housing supply. Ironically, we felt it was also one of the more thoughtfully planned schemes we have seen come forward in West Norfolk. However, the concerns about traffic impact were legitimate – especially in the context of other large developments proposed around the town. Concerns about the impact of the West Winch Growth Area are equally valid – especially when one takes into account the growing settlements out of the district that will also impact on the A10 and A47.		Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Debbie Mack Historic England	Support	Support - Whilst there are no designated heritage assets with the site, there is a grade II listed as part of the Hotel complex at Knights Hill to east. In addition, Castle Rising (scheduled monument and grade I listed building, and the church of St Lawrence, Castle Rising, also grade I listed) to the north and the remains of the Church of St James (scheduled monument and grade I listed) and a Saxon and Medieval settlement (scheduled monument) to the south. Any development of the site has the potential to impact on the setting of these heritage assets. While there is scope for development on this site, we are keen to ensure that proposals are sympathetic to the historic environment and specific heritage assets. As paragraph 9.6.3 notes there are several heritage assets in the surrounding area, and there may also be on-site archaeology. We welcome the requirement for a heritage assessment and part A (f) of the policy and the requirements for landscape planting along the east and north of the development. Care will need to be taken to ensure that development is not overly prominent along the north and east boundaries in order to		Please see consideration of issues / conclusions

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		lessen impact on nearby heritage assets.		
Norfolk Coast Partnership		Policy E41 Knights Hill –this is a gateway to the AONB and therefore building height, massing, design and scale can have an adverse visual impact if not carefully considered		Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mr & Mrs W Border	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan.	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
G M Hadfield	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mrs Pam Sheppard Castle Rising Parish Council	Object	Please see Mr S Fidgett's (Union 4 Planning) comments on behalf of Castle Rising Parish Council	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Lord Howard of Rising	Object	Please see Mr S Fidgett's (Union 4 Planning) comments on behalf of Castle Rising Parish Council	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mrs Marion White	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions

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R.J.R Shipp Vice-Castle Rising Parish Council	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mr Eric Robinson	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mrs Mary Robinson	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Claire Smith	Object	Deeply concerned that the allocation remains in the plan given the recent unanimous rejection of proposals by the planning committee. Any development of the site would contravene many policies within the Local Plan. With reliance on car transport this development would bring considerable increase in pollution, reducing air quality, and would add further disruption to already over-congested roads. This policy should be deleted from the plan	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions
Mrs Jane Black	Object	As a resident of South Wootton for many years and having strongly objected to the proposed Camland Development at Knights Hill, I would like to reiterate that this development should be completely	Removal of Knights Hill Development	Please see consideration of issues / conclusions

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		<p>rejected and South Wootton should have no more development. At the meeting on 13 March 2019 at Kings Lynn Town Hall this development was unanimously rejected by all Councillors. The infrastructure, highways, hospital, schools, doctors and surgeries cannot cope. The congestion on the A149 and the A148 is already at capacity and any minor accident causes gridlock on these roads. It is also known that air quality targets are unlikely to be met, air pollution is another reason for development to take place in the town centre, thus is a priority as these properties are unlikely to have to rely on a car for transport. The Borough Council brown field register shows there are 51 sites with potential for 2,085 homes which is more than the 1,376 needing to be allocated during the local plan review process. These sites must be used first. With 650 houses already planned for South Wootton the extra suggested development at Knights Hill should be rejected. Our ancient monuments and special landscaped areas need protection and should not be faced with vast inappropriate development.</p>		
<p>Mr Paul Belton Carter Jonas. On behalf of Camland & Reffley Wood Limited (site promoter). Mr De Grey (Landowner)</p>	<p>Support</p>	<p>Camland and Whistle Wood and Reffley Wood Limited (the site promoter) and Mr De Grey Osborn (landowner) both support the draft allocation E4.1. The draft allocation is an almost identical repeat of the already adopted site allocation for Knight's Hill (allocation E4.1) which is included within the Adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document of 2016. It is noted that only very minor text changes have been made and both the policy and its supporting text remain consistent with the adopted allocation. This "site history" is clearly very important, and relevant, as the sustainability and suitability of land at Knight's Hill has been the subject of extensive consideration during the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD Examinations. Our key observations in this regard are as follows; ☐</p>	<p>Points (3) and (9) both refer to the provision of a doctor's surgery within or close to the site. This was debated at length during the consideration of the recent planning application. The NHS has confirmed that rather than a new doctor's surgery being provided on or close to the site, the site would</p>	<p>Please see consideration of issues / conclusions</p>

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		<p>The site is well related to the built up area of South Wootton and in turn the Sub-regional Centre of King’s Lynn. Both the adopted Development Plan and this emerging replacement Local Plan clearly set out the strategic importance of concentrating growth within and close to King’s Lynn. King’ Lynn is the most sustainable location for growth within the Borough and the clear commitment to concentrate growth in and around the town is fully supported. ☐ King’s Lynn does however suffer from extensive areas of land that is at a high flood risk. In light of this significant constraint, sufficient land is simply not available to accommodate the future development needs of the town within the existing built up area. ☐ While some development continues to be directed to central parts of the town (in spite of the flood risk constraint), this is being done because of the need to encourage urban regeneration in key locations. Identifying suitable land on the edge of King’s Lynn that is capable of meeting the development needs of the area but which is not at risk from flooding is essential if the Spatial Strategy for the Borough is to be “Sound”. ☐Knight’s Hill is located within a low flood risk area (Flood Zone 1), is well connected to the existing built up area, enjoys pedestrian and cycle links into the built up area (including to shops, schools and other services) and is in close proximity to existing bus routes. ☐As set out in paragraph E4.5 of the Adopted Core Strategy, the independent Inspector who examined the Core Strategy explicitly stated that, compared to the potential alternatives, the expansion areas identified (and Knights Hill was one of these) were preferable to the alternatives. This remains the case. The continued identification of Knight’s Hill as an allocation is therefore fully supported. As well as being suitable for development (and a sustainable location for development) the site also remains available for development. The site has indeed been the subject of a recent planning application, reference</p>	<p>instead be served by a new/enhanced facility off Edward Benefer Way. On this basis it is requested that point (3) be amended to remove reference to a doctor’s surgery and that point (9) be deleted</p>	

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		<p>16/02231/OM. This application was supported by the Local Highways Authority and Historic England, as well as all other statutory consultees. It was therefore presented to Planning Committee with a recommendation of approval. Despite this recommendation, the Planning Committee resolved to refuse permission on the basis of highway impact and the impacts on Castle Rising Castle. This refusal is to be the subject of a planning appeal. While this is clearly a very separate process to the continued preparation of this replacement Local Plan, it is important to note that neither of the reasons for refusal bring into question the soundness of this draft allocation. The heritage impact of development at Knight's Hill has been the subject of extensive debate (supported by substantial submissions/evidence) throughout the preparation and examination of both the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD. No "new" information has been submitted which brings into questions the Inspector's earlier confirmation of the soundness of this site as a housing allocation. During the examination of the Site Allocation DPD the matter of the site's visibility and the impact on heritage assets was debated at length. In commenting on the then draft allocation, Historic England advised that care will need to be taken to ensure that development is not "overly prominent along the north and east boundaries" in order to "lessen the impact on nearby heritage assets". The inspector concurred with this view and through the Main Modifications, amended the wording of Policy E4.1 (the allocation for Knight's Hill). Criteria 5 of the policy was amended by the Inspector to read as follows (text inserted by the inspector is underlined): "Suitable landscape planting to the east and north of the development to provide a degree of screening or other design approach for the development and to protect the setting of heritage assets including the Knights Hill</p>		

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		<p>complex, Castle Rising Castle and the remains of the Church of St James and surrounding Saxon/medieval settlement.” A clear policy framework has therefore already been established to ensure an acceptable impact on nearby Heritage Assets can be secured. Whether or not the details set out in the recent planning application are successful in this regard will be tested through the Planning Appeals process. We would maintain that they are. In plan making terms however, the wording of the draft policy, which is a repeat of the adopted policy text that has been fully endorsed by the recent Inspector’s report, is found to be sound. It provides a clear policy framework that allows planning applications to be brought forward in a manner that has regard to and responds positively to the heritage assets that are present in the local area. In terms of highway impact, the Local Highway Authority was clear in its consultation response to the planning application that subject to the implementation of agreed mitigation measures, the impact of at least 600 dwellings at Knight’s Hill would be acceptable and appropriate (not resulting in a severe highway impact). Other developments in the local area (namely at Hall Lane) have recently been approved by the Council. These applications were the subject of their own “cumulative” highway impact assessment that considered (and factored in) the predicted traffic flows from Knight’s Hill. In approving these applications the cumulative highway impacts have been accepted by the Council. Indeed the agreed mitigation measures for these nearby developments are reliant on development being delivered at Knight’s Hill. The Knight’s Hill development is therefore part of the planned highway solution for the area. Despite the refusal of the recent outline planning application we would agree with the Council that allocation E4.1 remains sound and deliverable. The delivery of housing at Knight’s Hill is key to the Council’s Spatial Strategy and</p>		

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		<p>to its housing trajectory, it been a site that can deliver market and affordable housing early in the plan period. The draft allocation is therefore supported. Notwithstanding the above support for allocation E4.1, we do have the following comment and request for a change to the draft wording of the policy. Points (3) and (9) both refer to the provision of a doctor's surgery within or close to the site. This was debated at length during the consideration of the recent planning application. The NHS has confirmed that rather than a new doctor's surgery being provided on or close to the site, the site would instead be served by a new/enhanced facility off Edward Benefer Way. On this basis it is requested that point (3) be amended to remove reference to a doctor's surgery and that point (9) be deleted.</p>		

Consideration of Issues:

Knights Hill has long been established as part of the Borough Council's Local Plan, having been identified as a growth area for King's Lynn in the Core Strategy, adopted in 2011. The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP), adopted in 2016, provided further detail by defining the site and providing a policy designed to shape future development proposals.

A small portion of the allocated site came forward with a planning proposal for approximately 50 new homes (15/01782/OM). This was granted permission by the Brough Council Planning Committee in November 2018.

The draft Local Plan review was published for consultation in February 2019 for an 8 week period and simply carried forward the Knights Hill allocation, as detailed by the currently adopted Local Plan. The remainder (majority) of site came forward with a proposal for approx. 600 new homes (16/02231/OM), which, was recommend for approval by Planning Officers, however this refused by the Brough Council Planning Committee in March 2019. The reasons for refusal are stated (summarised) 1. The proposed development would adversely affect the setting of Castle Rising Castle, harming the significance of this Scheduled Monument and Grade 1 Listed Building. 2. Unacceptable and severe impact upon the local road network.

The appellants subsequently appealed, and following the appeal, outline planning permission was granted by the SoS in accordance with the recommendation from the Inspector (14/07/2020).

There were 17 comments received to the draft Local Plan review consultation on the Knights Hill Chapter. Support for the policy is offered from the agent representing the landowner and site promoter. Historic England too supports the policy and the elements which relate to offering protection and enhancement to the historic environment. However, the majority of respondents object to the site being allocated, their reasoning can be summarised as follows:

- Pointing to the fact that the Borough Council Planning Committee unanimously rejected the site
- Impact upon the local road network – capacity, congestion, safety, over reliance upon cars
- Unacceptable impact upon the historic environment
- Potential conflict with other policies within the Local Plan and the NPPF
- Drainage issues
- Landscape impact
- Air Quality/ pollution issues
- Potential impact upon on other strategic sites

It should also be taken into consideration that the planning application raised significant objection on the similar themes. A petition signed by 948 people and 439 comments following two rounds of public consultation all objected to site. In addition the Parish Councils of South Wootton, Castle Rising and North Wootton objected, as did the Borough’s Mayor and local MP.

Sustainability Appraisal:

Site Ref	Site Sustainability Factor										
	Access to Services	Community & Social	Economy A Business	Economy B Food Production	Flood Risk	Heritage	Highways & Transport	Landscape & Amenity	Natural Environment	Infrastructure, Pollution & Waste	Climate Change
LPr E4.1 Knights Hill	+	x	O	O	+	#	+	#	#	#	+/#
SADMP E4.1 Knights Hill	+	+	O	O	+	O	+	#	#	#	N/A

KEY: ++ very positive; + positive; x negative; xx very negative; ~ negligible; o none; # depending on implementation; ? uncertain

The sustainability appraisal matrix above provides the scoring for Knights Hill as was in the adopted SADMP Sustainability Appraisal. This is presented for comparison purposes, please note that the climate change indicator did not exist at this time. The changes between the two clearly relate to the ‘Community & Social’ factor with a not insignificant number of members of the public, the relevant parish councils, Members, and the local MP as well as the Borough’s Mayor objecting to the development of the site, culminating in the Borough Council Planning Committee refusing permission unanimously.

The scoring for ‘heritage’ has been updated from no impact to depends upon implementation, this recognises the position of Historic England, The Planning Inspector, and the SoS on the matter as detailed by information submitted to the planning application and contained within the Inspector’s recordation and SoS’s Decision. The score for ‘climate change’ is ‘+/#’ as the location is clearly sustainable having been identified as such in both the Borough Council’s Core Strategy (2011) and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016). The site would act as strategic allocation at the edge of King’s

Lynn, with a variety of services and facilities within close proximity and the Town itself a short distance away. This would include, shops, schools, bus services, and the train station. As site is allocated by the Local Plan and benefits from outline planning permission, the exact detailed design of the scheme and individual homes is not 100% confirmed so there is still room for improvement deepening upon this with regards to this factor.

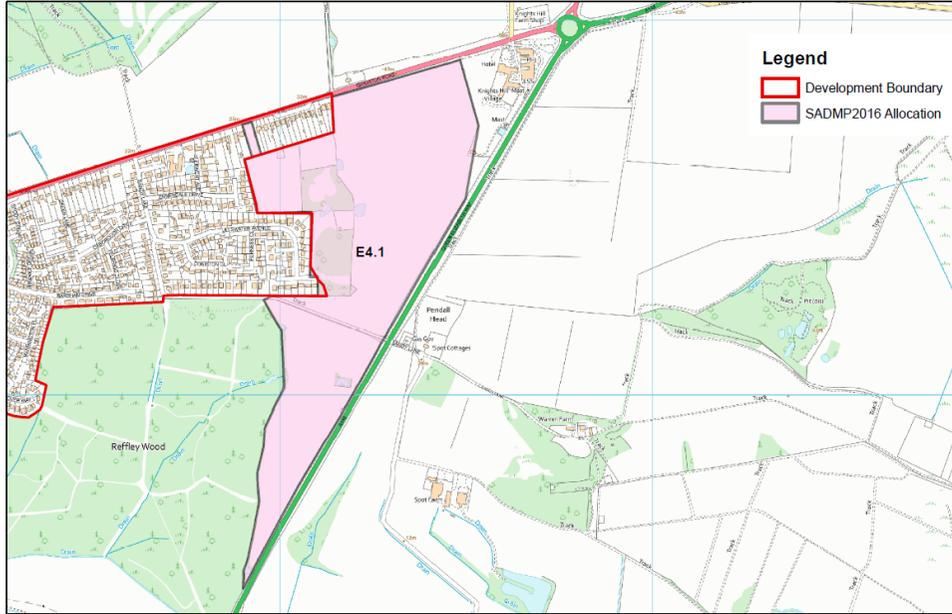
Conclusions:

- Knights Hill has long been established as a location for future Growth and is included as an Allocation within the Borough Council's Local Plan (Core Strategy 2011 & Site Allocations & development Management Policies Plan 2016) for 'at least 600' new homes.
- A small portion of the site came forward and gained outline planning permission for approximately 50 new homes
- The remainder and majority site come forward with an outline planning application for some 600 new homes. This was recommended for approval by Officers and turned down by Members of the Borough Council Planning Committee. Following an appeal outline permission was granted by the SoS in agreement with the recommendation made by the Planning Inspector
- Not insignificant opposition to the site remains from some of the local population, relevant parish councils, local MP, Mayor, and Members.
- Planning officers may still support the site. As would the Sustainability Appraisal
- However, Members may have through the Borough Council's Local Plan, it is clear that they no longer do.
- The Site is allocated in the Borough Council's Local Plan and now benefits from Outline Planning Permission. This would indicate that regardless of if the site is carried forward in the Local Plan or not it will most likely come forward be built out and contribute new homes within the Borough.
- Given this rather unique situation it is recommended:

A: that if Members still support the site through the Local Plan process that the site is carried forward in the Local Plan review

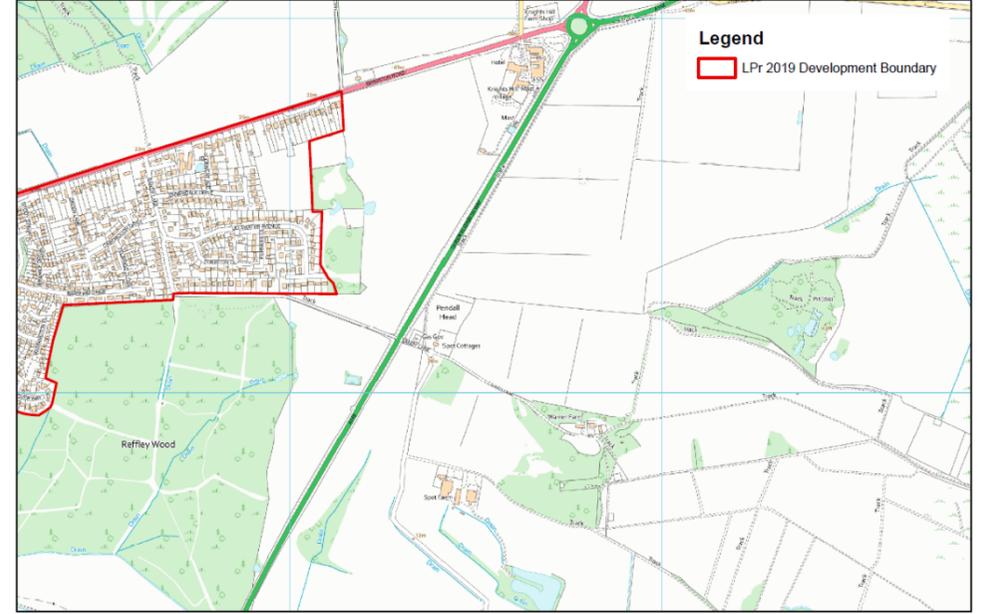
However:

B: if Members are minded not to continue to support the site through the Local Plan process then based upon the above Policy E4.1 – Knights Hill should be removed from the Local Plan review and the portion of the site which has outline planning permission for 52 homes (15/01782/OM) be considered as a commitment and included within the development boundary. Note that this isn't usually the position taken. Allocated sites are normally only included within the development boundary once they have been built out / completed. This is to retain an element of control over the site ensuring it comes forward for the purpose it has been allocated and in a timely fashion. However, given this is a rather unusual situation, this could be seen as an appropriate solution. It is also recognised that the larger site will contribute 600 new homes over the lifetime of the Local Plan review as a large windfall site as it benefits from outline planning permission and would no longer be allocated within the Local Plan.



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SADMP Knights Hill Area



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