

# Report on Great Alne parish site investigations – July 2024

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## Background

In 2023 Great Alne Parish Council asked WRCC to undertake a housing needs survey across the parish. The Housing Needs Survey Report, dated March 2023, identified a need in for sixteen homes for households with a local connection. The report also referred to sixteen households with a Great Alne address registered on the local authority housing waiting list wanting an alternative home to rent.

Local connection criteria are set within the local authority policy and tenants for homes to rent are drawn from the local housing waiting list (with those in greatest need having the highest priority).

In response to the 2023 report Great Alne Parish Council (GAPC) instructed WRCC to investigate potential sites. Initial investigations concentrated on sites previously identified in 2012 and sites proposed to GAPC by land agents. WRCC provided comments concerning site suitability to GAPC in August 2023 and GAPC asked the Rural Housing Enabler to undertake further investigation. The Rural Housing Enabler met with several landowners and five sites were identified where the landowner expressed 'in principle' willingness to work with the community for the provision of Local Needs affordable homes.

Local Needs schemes must:

- Meet identified local housing need
- Have the support of the parish council
- Be small scale

## Community Action Day March 2024

The general location of these five sites was put to the community at a Community Action Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. Attendees were invited to vote on the five sites, indicating their 'most preferred' to 'least preferred' site, and also leave comments if they so wished. It was made clear that these were just general locations, that no specifics had been discussed with either the parish council or landowners and that, at this stage, it is not known how many homes or what mix of homes may be brought forward or how much land may be required.

For ease of reference on the day the sites were numbered one to five, which did not match the numbers attributed to the original sites that were investigated.

GAPC subsequently decided to extend the consultation period to Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024. A dedicated page was added to the GAPC website and information was hand-delivered to each household across the village, encouraging residents to vote and comment.

## **Additional sites**

As part of the community response the Rural Housing Enabler received an email with a map, and comments, suggesting eight sites that should be investigated. These sites are dealt with at Section A below and the map can be seen at Appendix A.

The Rural Housing Enabler was also approached directly by a landowner with a site not previously explored. This site is dealt with at Section B below and can be seen on the map at Appendix B.

### ***Section A – map of eight sites***

Four of the eight alternative proposed sites have previously been identified & investigated:

Site opposite Nightingale Close - this site has already been discounted as the landowner does not wish to make the site available (site no.3 in original investigations).

Site next to Flaxfields and opposite cricket club - this site has already been discounted as the landowner does not wish to make the site available (site no.5 in original investigations).

Site to south of B4089 Henley Road, next to The White House - this was one of the five sites put to the community at the Community Action Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 (site no.8 in original investigations and site no.4 at March consultation)

Goat field to north of B4089 Henley Road - this was one of the five sites put to the community at the Community Action Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 (site no.6 in original investigations and site no.5 at March consultation)

Evaluation of the remaining four sites took place in July 2024. Site numbers have been added to the map to make it easier to identify the sites and run concurrently with the sites previously identified and investigated.

#### **Site 12 - North side of B4089, next to 76 School Road**

The boundary of the site consists of a large tree and dense native hedgerow to the front including a low fence within it. There are hedgerows to the left-hand side of the land and houses to the right-hand side as you look from the road. There are overhead cables on the site. There is currently single-vehicle and pedestrian access at the far end of the site furthest away from the village and near a bend in the road. There is a speed change from 50mph to 30mph at the front of the site. There is a pavement running along the front of the site. The site is flat and is currently used for crop growing. There are no obvious problems caused by noise or smells from neighbouring sites and no obvious existing visible services or structures on the site.

Recommendation: Discount unless there are no other viable options

**Site 13** - South side of B4089 to side of Great Alne Primary School

The boundaries of the site consist of dense native hedgerow to the front, smaller hedgerow to either side, and several trees along the rear. A driveway/private access road to the left hand side of the land as you look from the road separates the land from the school and leads to Alne Farm Barn where construction work is currently underway. There are no other fences or walls present. Potential access would be in close proximity to a bend in the road (restricting visibility) and there is a slight incline leading towards the front of the school. There is no pavement on that side of the road. The road in front of the site may need widening to include a pedestrian refuge. The site is within the existing 30mph zone. The site itself appears flat, level and free of any existing buildings or structures and has no obvious current or previous use. There are overhead cables running along the front of the site. There are no obvious problems caused by noise or smells from neighbouring sites and no obvious existing visible services or structures on the site.

Recommendation: Discount unless there are no other viable options

**Site 14** - Top end of Park Lane, just past Whitts End (private residence)

The boundary of the site consists of dense native hedgerow, low level hedgerow, fencing and trees with single-lane public road to two sides. Access to the site is via a gate at the corner of the site that would prove difficult to use being on a bend and subject to differing land levels. Park Lane starts as double-width but gradually narrows to single-width with no option to widen. There are no pavements on the approach to the site or on the two lanes that run along the sides. The site itself appears flat, level and free of any existing buildings or structures although there is what looks like a storage container to one side, partly covered by trees. The site has no obvious current or previous use. There are no overhead cables running across the site. Whitts End is the only property nearby, which is opposite the entrance to the site. There are no obvious problems caused by noise or smells from neighbouring sites and no obvious existing visible services or structures on the site.

Recommendation: Discount – access road too narrow

**Site 15** - Mill Lane, near the junction of Henley Road

The boundary of the site consists of dense native hedgerow, fencing and trees. Mill Lane is a single-width lane with no option to widen and has no pavement. The site itself appears flat, clear and free of any existing structures and not currently in use. There is no current access to the site from the road. There are no overhead cables or services visible on the site.

Recommendation: Discount – access road too narrow

***Section B – field opposite Station House/village hall & extending behind school***

**Site 16** – field extending from junction of Henley Road with Pelham Lane, behind properties to south of B4089 and to rear of school

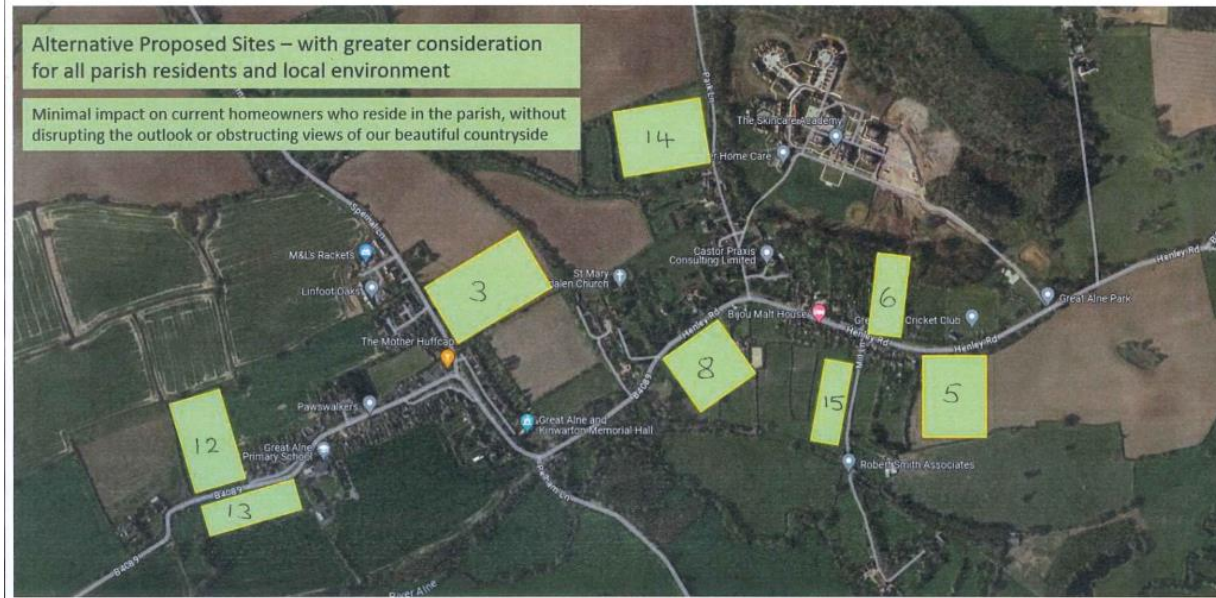
The boundary along Henley Road and Pelham Lane is mostly dense native hedgerow. The other boundaries are hedgerow and trees.

There is no pavement on the roads and no natural entrance to the site. Creating an access to the site would prove difficult due to a bend in the road (Henley Road) and the only obvious access point being immediately adjacent to the junction.

The site itself is on a slight incline and free of any existing buildings or structures. It is surrounded by open fields and appears to have no current or previous use. The only obvious services around the site are STW access points in the road near the junction.

Recommendation: Discount – unable to achieve access

# Appendix A – map showing alternative proposed sites (Section A above)



**Appendix B – field opposite Station House/village hall and extending behind school  
(Section B / site 16 above)**



# Appendix C – general location of sites, subject of March 2024 consultation

