North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan Update

February 2021

In 2017 the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan (NCNP) Steering Group (SG) undertook a survey of residents to establish their views on housing development in the village. It was clear from the results that most people felt that in order to be sustainable into the future, the village needed to grow over time and the needs of young families must feature strongly in the plans. Whilst the first Neighbourhood Plan failed to get support, these two factors, growth, and family homes, are still left unaddressed. Members of the NCNP Steering Group have been working hard over the last 14 months to identify sites for housing in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Our task has been severely hampered with the restrictions caused by the pandemic with no public meetings allowed and most of the meetings taking place on video. Despite this we have made progress and we would like to share the current situation with you via this pamphlet.

Choosing sites for housing development is challenging, especially in a small village. Whilst complying with many and varied local and national planning rules, we have to balance the need for building sustainable dwellings with the need to protect the historical and rural character of our surroundings. These objectives are very often at odds. It is also challenging for a group of local people to be fully and consistently objective when making decisions about the best places for new houses to be built. It is for these reasons that, as well as visiting, assessing, and discussing each site for ourselves, we commissioned an independent planning consultancy to carry out an assessment of every site carried forward from the initial sift of sites. This has ensured that we have conclusions based on objective evidence and fully compliant with current local and national planning policy.

The Steering Group (SG) must ensure when putting forward sites for housing development that these sites are:

- **Suitable** – based on: site characteristics; environmental/landscape considerations; heritage considerations; community facilities and services; flood risk; type of agricultural land; existence of tree preservation orders;

- **Available** – the landowner must be willing to put their land forward for development;

- **Achievable** – the sites must be viable and compliant with national and local planning policies and regulations.

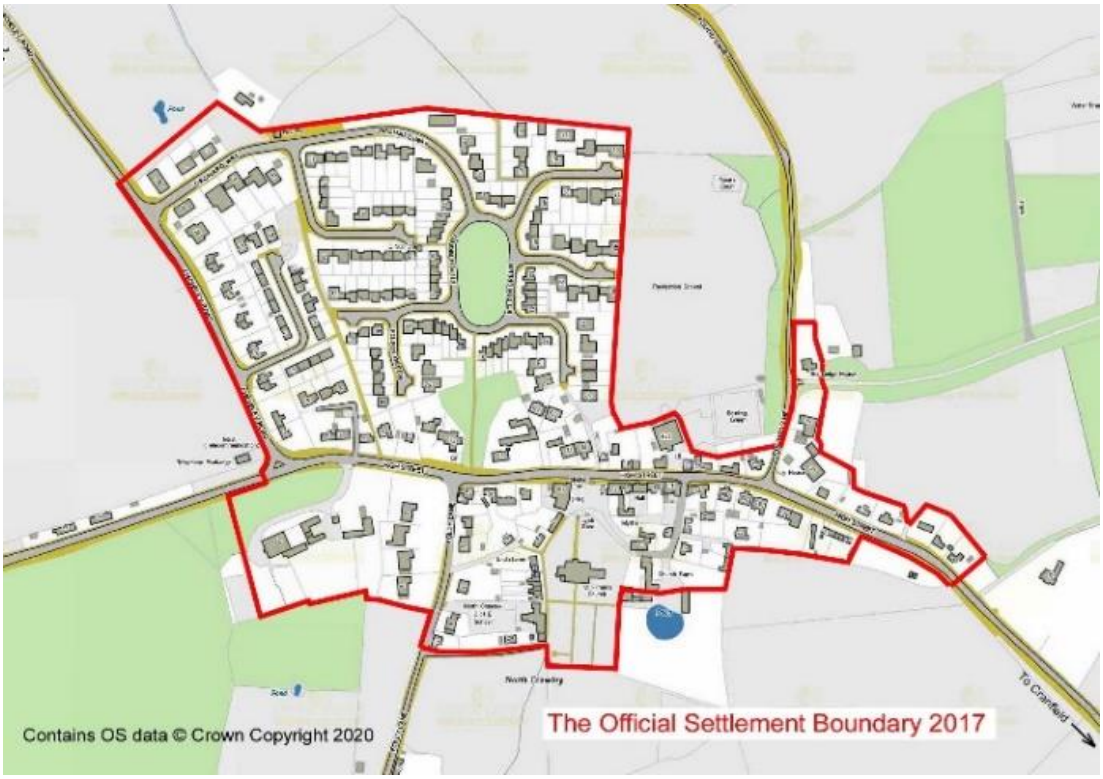
There isn't room in this pamphlet to detail all of the relevant planning policies that are shaping the NCNP (see page 16 for further reading). However, the most relevant factors that the SG has had to consider include:

- Housing developments should reflect local needs. The results of the North Crawley housing needs assessment carried out in 2018 indicate that there is a need for low-cost housing suitable for young people buying their first home and for young families wishing to remain in or move into the village.
- New development should be sustainable and enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. There was a strong message coming from the questionnaire carried out in 2017; residents of North Crawley want to see their village grow and thrive into the future, while retaining its rural character and sense of community.

- New development will occur at locations identified in made neighbourhood plans and within defined settlement boundaries.
- In rural settlements, neighbourhood plans should identify small to medium scale development appropriate to the size, function, and role of each settlement. Milton Keynes Council has agreed that development of about 30 to 35 new dwellings is appropriate for North Crawley.

The settlement boundary is a key factor when deciding where suitable development sites can be found. Fig 1. is a map of North Crawley showing the current position of the settlement boundary. As you can see, there is little, if any opportunity to build any new homes within the existing settlement boundary – let alone the 30 to 35 new homes that we are aiming for. This means that the settlement boundary must move in order to incorporate enough land to build the required number of dwellings.

Fig 1.



Sites must generally be located close to the existing settlement boundary. This is so that, when it is redrawn to incorporate the new development sites, the boundary will not enclose more open space than is required and risk unwanted future development through large-scale infill. In redrawing the settlement boundary, we must ensure that we also protect the open countryside outside of it.

It is also important to consider the shape of the land. The village should be encouraged to grow sympathetically with the natural landscape in order to retain the rural characteristics of the area. This also reduces the risk of wider development spreading into the open countryside.

What has the Steering Group been doing?

Throughout December 2019, the SG considered all of the land within the Parish and ruled out sites that were too far from the settlement boundary to be considered viable. In February 2020, the SG wrote to landowners of sites that were considered to be potentially suitable for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan, based on their proximity to the settlement boundary. In response to these letters, 13 sites came forward for the SG to consider. In July 2020, the SG bid successfully for professional technical support to assist with the process of assessing these sites. In August 2020, the SG engaged with Milton Keynes Council's Highways Department regarding suitability of vehicle and pedestrian access to the sites. In September 2020, the SG and the independent technical support team carried out assessments of the sites. Two of the larger sites were split into two, smaller sections in order to make the assessments as specific as possible and so, in total, 15 sites were assessed. In January 2021, the SG examined all of the evidence in discussion with Milton Keynes Council's Planning Department to agree which of the sites were suitable, available, and achievable.

We can now share with you the results of the site assessment process. Fig 2. shows the 15 sites that have been assessed and in the following pages there is a summary of the assessment findings and an explanation of how the SG has arrived at the final decisions. The full site assessment document can be viewed on the Parish Council Website; follow the link to the North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan from the home page www.northcrawley-pc.gov.uk. The SG will endeavour to assist anyone who has difficulty accessing the full report.

The decision-making process has involved Milton Keynes Council Planning Department, Milton Keynes Council Highways Department, and independent planning advisers from AECOM Infrastructure Consulting Firm, appointed by Locality.

Please see page 15 for details of how you can provide your feedback.

Fig 2. Sites put forward for assessment

MKC have made it clear that sites not adjacent to the boundary are likely to score less well against the assessment criteria.

Site 1 – Field at Moat Farm

The SG recognises that there is concern about development on this site, as 2 planning applications have been refused in the past. The SG reduced significantly the size of the site available for development to the southeast corner, labelled 1R, which could accommodate about 12 dwellings. The assessment has taken into account the reduced development area and its impact on the wider landscape.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is a greenfield situated in an elevated position of a wider arable field of rural character with no defensible boundary to the west.

The site comprises land designated as 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. While this policy constraint could be potentially overcome through an allocation in the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, development of the site will extend projection of the settlement beyond the current defined edges at Chicheley Road, with risks of leading to further growth into the open countryside, altering the structure of the settlement. When viewed from the northwest and southwest, development of the site will also have an urbanising effect on the open countryside and impact panoramic views which forms a key feature of this landscape character area. Development of the site would therefore be contrary to Policy NE5 of Plan:MK which requires development in the Open Countryside (where acceptable in principle under other policies in Plan:MK) to conserve and where possible enhance the above aspects of landscape character.

Partial development of the site along Brook End (southern part of the site) will not be suitable as this location is the most prominent across the whole site.

Partial development of the site along Chicheley Road is also unlikely to overcome the above landscape constraints, although when compared to a full development it will relate better to the existing built edge of the settlement at the eastern side of Chicheley Road.

In conclusion, the site is not currently suitable for development due to potential harm to the landscape and settlement character of North Crawley and risks of further growth into the open countryside.

Site 2a & 2b – Upper and Lower Croft, Chicheley Road

This site has been assessed in 2 parts, Site 2a (the southern part adjacent to the rear of Orchard Way) and 2b (opposite Moat Farm). It is proposed that this site could accommodate about 15 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion - Site 2a is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood plan. Site 2b is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing built-up area and settlement boundary.

The site is located between North Crawley and Little Crawley. Full development of the site will significantly reduce the gap between the settlements and lead to coalescence. Full or partial development at the northern section (2b) would be unsuitable. However, partial development at the southern part of the site (2a) might be potentially suitable subject to other identified constraints being mitigated, given that land at the northern section (2b) will be retained as a settlement gap.

Suitable vehicular access could be potentially created to serve development of the site off Chicheley Road. Existing footways along Chicheley Road and Orchard Way could also potentially be extended to support pedestrian and cycle access to the site. A PRoW runs across the site (North Crawley FP025) and should be maintained and enhanced where possible.

Most sites considered in this site assessment, including this site NC2, are greenfield. Policy NE7 of Plan:MK (and Paragraph 171 and Footnote 53 of the NPPF) requires greenfield developments to steer away from higher quality agricultural land. The site is Grade 4 Poor Quality Agricultural Land and therefore is not contrary to the principle of Policy NE7 of Plan:MK.

The site is mostly enclosed by boundary hedgerows and some existing young and semi-mature trees but has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscapes and Old Moat Farm, particularly when viewed from the open countryside to the east. However, sensitive, and partial development of the site at the southern section might be potentially suitable to minimise potential visual and landscape impacts.

Existing vegetation should also be retained and reinforced to enhance the site's landscape character and mitigate potential visual impacts.

The site is within the defined 'Open Countryside' as it is currently outside of the settlement boundary. This could be potentially overcome by an allocation of the site and modification of the settlement boundary in the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, given that the site is adequately screened and that the existing landscape features are enhanced.

In summary, the site is potentially suitable for partial development of approximately 30 dwellings south of the existing hedge running east-west (approx. 1.20 Ha) subject to major heritage and archaeology, surface water flooding, biodiversity and landscape constraints being mitigated *(the SG is mindful of the results of the questionnaire carried out in 2017 that indicated that residents would prefer smaller developments rather than one big*

development and so a figure of about 15 dwellings is being proposed for this site).

Site 3 – Maslin land on Orchard Way

This site has existing outline planning approval for 2 bungalows. The landowner would like to develop it further, with about 5 dwellings but part of the site currently lies outside the settlement boundary, in open countryside. It is proposed that this site is suitable for about 3 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is partly within the settlement boundary connected to the built-up area.

The site is previously developed land, effective use of which is encouraged under Paragraph 117 of the NPPF. The site contains no identifiable landscape features and is less susceptible to development owing to its previously developed nature.

The site fronts onto Orchard Way and is served by an existing footway. Suitable vehicular and cycle access could also be created. The site is largely contained to the north but overlooked by neighbouring properties to the south and west. Development of the site will need to respect the surrounding residential character and built form.

The site is partly within the 'Open Countryside' as defined by Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. As the sensitive development of the site is unlikely to have significant impacts to the landscape character of the area, this constraint could be potentially overcome by an allocation and amendment to the settlement boundary in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

A PRoW runs across the site (north-south) and should be maintained and enhanced where possible.

Over 15% of the site is subject to medium risk of surface water flooding, which would need to be mitigated through sustainable drainage strategies.

Site 4 – Orchard Way

This site was one of the more contentious sites in the previous Neighbourhood Plan. The increase in size of this site from the first draft to the referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan in order to incorporate about 15 dwellings was cited as one of the reasons that the previous plan was rejected. The proposed site is reduced in size and it is proposed that it should accommodate about 5 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is adjacent to and connected to the existing settlement boundary and built-up area.

At present it is not clear whether the site has suitable access. Based on the submitted site boundary (for this site assessment), the site fronts onto a line of semi-mature trees and Orchard Way at present but does not have access onto Orchard Way. It is separated from Orchard Way by a strip of land in public ownership, where a line of semi-mature trees is present and identified as an asset of community value. However, a potential access point has been indicated in the withdrawn planning application, in which the Highways Office has found it to be suitable subject to widening of visibility splays and modification of the site boundary to include the widened visibility splays (*The SG is aware that this verge is an asset of community value and that access to site 4 across it has proved contentious, so the SG is also exploring alternative means of access to site 4)*. The site is along an existing footway along Orchard Way and suitable cycle access could also be potentially created.

The site does not contain any valued landscape features but is exposed to the open countryside to the northeast and east. The site could potentially accommodate some changes with appropriate screening along its eastern boundary.

The site is Grade 4 Poor Agricultural Land. Its development is consistent with the principles of Paragraph 171 and Footnote 53 of the NPPF and Policy NE7 of Plan:MK, which seeks to steer development away from agricultural land of high quality.

The site is adjacent to some semi-mature trees to its northwest and south. These should be preserved and where possible enhanced subject to further arboricultural assessments.

In summary, the site is potentially suitable for development of 5 dwellings subject to confirmation of land ownership in relation to access and mitigation of utilities, ecology, and landscape constraints.

Site 5 – Pound Lane

The proposal from the landowner is that this site could be developed to provide about 9 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site has agricultural access onto Pound Lane. However, owing to the narrow and rural nature of Pound Lane, the Milton Keynes Council Traffic and Development Officer has confirmed that Pound Lane is unsuitable to support

further development and that safe pedestrian access could be not created. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK.
The site is currently outside of the adopted settlement boundary of North Crawley and is therefore within the defined 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. It is adjacent to but appears to be removed from the built-up area, particularly due to its access from Pound Lane. It is exposed to the Open Countryside from the northwest. Development of the site would elongate the village to the northeast, depart from the nucleated historic settlement pattern of the village. Development of the site is likely to change the landscape character of this area and will be contrary to Policy NE5 of Plan:MK.

Site 6 – High Street

This site was included in the previous Neighbourhood Plan, with sensitivities similar to those described above for Site 4. Again, the proposed site is reduced in size and it is proposed that about 3 dwellings could be developed on this site. The site lies within the conservation area and so any new development will be designed in this context.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is within the existing built-up area and is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of North Crawley.
There are existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses to the site. Suitable cycle access can also be created. However, the site is in close proximity to a bend whereby consultation with the relevant Highways Authority would be required for additional vehicular accesses onto High Street.
The site is within the North Crawley Conservation Area and is in close proximity to a Grade II listed building. It is also observable in views from the High Street towards the tower of the Grade I listed Church of St Firmin. The existing row of terraces on site proposed for retention is identified as a collection of buildings which have a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Land to the east of the terraces is identified as 'Parkland and Green Space', one of the principal features of the North Crawley Conservation Area, in the draft Conservation Area Appraisal. Residential intensification of the site will need to respect and where possible enhance the significance of these heritage assets, through the use of positive and appropriate architectural styles, built form and landscaping. New buildings should be complementary to the street frontage. Further heritage assessments may be required.

The site is mostly enclosed by boundary hedges and does not contain any identifiable landscape features. Part of the site is identified as 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. This constraint could be overcome through an allocation and amendment to the settlement boundary in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan given that development of the site will conserve the natural and man-made features that contribute towards the landscape character of North Crawley, the historic setting and structure of the village and maintain/enhance important views to the tower of the Grade I listed Church of St Firmin.

Site 7 – Church Farm Field - Cranfield Road

The site is at the northeastern corner of the field, adjacent to Cranfield Road and the northern edge of the field, with the potential for about 15 houses being considered. The assessment has taken into account the smaller development area and its impact on the wider landscape.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is located outside and not connected to the existing settlement boundary. Development of the whole site would depart from the built form of the village and potentially be a scale that would change the character of the village. Partial development of the site near the road frontage of High Street as proposed would elongate the village to the east not contiguous with the built-up area of the village. The site is poorly related to the existing pattern of development.

The site comprises land designated as 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. While this policy constraint could be potentially overcome through an allocation in the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, development of the site will significantly extend into the open countryside and would have an urbanising effect on the tranquil open countryside. The site does not have a defensible boundary to the south and west.

The site is mostly exposed to the open countryside apart from its western boundary which is partly bordered by tall hedgerows. Full development of the site is likely to be visible from the Conservation Area. Development of the site along the High Street will also impact surrounding views to the Tower of the Grade I listed St Firmin's Church, although it is not a recognised view. The site has no identified value features.

Development of the site would be contrary to Policy NE5 of Plan:MK which requires development in the Open Countryside (where acceptable in principle under other policies in Plan:MK) to conserve and where possible enhance the above aspects of landscape character.

Full development of the site might impact the setting of the Conservation Area and harm existing views across attractive garden spaces in the Conservation Area south to the open countryside. It may also impact the rural farm setting of which the Grade I listed Church of St Firmin is experienced. Further heritage assessments may be required.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land, although it is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.

Site 8 – Field south of Church Walk - Folly Lane
The assessment has taken into account the potential for a small development in the northwest corner of the field, adjacent to Church Walk, and considered its impact on the wider landscape.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan
The site currently has agricultural access to Church Walk, however Church Walk is a single vehicle lane where access from the site would be unsuitable subject to further consultation with the Highways Authority. The site has no vehicular access onto Folly Lane and the creation of suitable access would require extensive removal of existing hedgerows.
There are no safe footways along Church Walk and this part of Folly Lane at present. While there may be potential that a footway could be constructed by cutting back the existing earth bank along Folly Lane, this may impact the existing hedgerow along Folly Lane and would need to be consulted with the Highways Authority. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable at present and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK.
The site is currently outside of the adopted settlement boundary of North Crawley and is therefore within the defined 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. The site is exposed to the open countryside to the south and east although it is enclosed by tall hedgerows along its northern and western boundaries. Development may dilute the agricultural character of this area. In addition, the site is adjacent to the Conservation Area and the curtilage of the Grade I listed Church of St Firmin. Development of the site may impact views from the Grade I listed Church of St Firmin and from the Conservation Area. Therefore, full development of the site will be contrary to Policy NE5 of Plan:MK.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land. It is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.
Powerlines across the northern edge of the site from west to east will reduce the developable area of the site.

Partial development of the site limited to one dwelling at the north western corner, comparing to full development of the site, is likely to reduce development impacts on the open countryside and may be able to use the existing agricultural access to Church Walk as the primary vehicular access. However, development of the site will remain unsustainable due to the lack of safe pedestrian access to the site.

Site 9 – Folly Lane

The SG has discussed development on Folly Lane with the Highways Department at MKC. In general, it is considered that Folly Lane is unsuitable for other than small scale development and only where there is the potential for creating pedestrian and vehicle access. Site 9 is considered marginally suitable by the independent consultants, subject to the creation of appropriate vehicle access. This site has the potential to accommodate about 7 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan

The site is adjacent to the built-up area of North Crawley village and a row of ribbon development outside the village on Folly Lane.

The site has agricultural access onto a track off Folly Lane however this access is not suitable for upgrade to two-way vehicular access. Vehicular accesses off Folly Lane may be potentially created subject to further consultation with the Highways Authority, however this would require removal of some existing hedgerows. Folly Lane is also narrow and potentially not suitable for the scale of the additional housing the site can accommodate, even though the western side of the Lane has footpath provision. If Folly Lane is considered to be suitable to support the proposed number of dwellings, it is very likely that the site would need to be developed in isolation (subject to other identified constraints being mitigated) unless Folly Lane has been significantly upgraded.

The site contains two sycamore trees protected under the Tree Preservation Order along its eastern boundary, which would need to be preserved.

The site slopes from north to south and is highly visible on approach when travelling northwards on Folly lane towards North Crawley. The row of homes to the south of the site act like a gateway to the village, of which the site forms a rural backdrop to the setting of the village. The site is also overlooked by neighbouring properties currently in the Conservation Area. Development of the site will need to respect the setting of the Conservation Area and the historic structure of the settlement.

The site is currently outside of the adopted settlement boundary of North Crawley and is therefore within the defined 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. Considering that the existing hedgerow along the site's western boundary could be reinforced to provide enclosure to the development, this policy constraint could be overcome by an allocation in the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan given that the development respects its surrounding landscape and historic character.
The site is identified as a potential archaeological site. Allocation of the site would need to review the Historic Environment Record maintained by the local authority archaeological advisory service and demonstrate how it has been taken into account in preparing a proposal. An archaeological assessment may be required.
The site contains telephone poles which would need to be relocated. This would impact viability of the site.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land. It is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.

Site 10 – Rectory Field - Folly Lane
The assessment has taken into account the potential for a small development in the lower, southeast corner of the field, and considered its impact on the wider landscape.

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan
The site is removed from the settlement boundary of North Crawley village. While the site is opposite the ribbon development at Folly Lane, its development will depart from the current development pattern at Folly Lane and of the village.
The site is currently outside of the adopted settlement boundary of North Crawley and is therefore within the defined 'Open Countryside' under Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. The site forms part of a wider parkland landscape that contributes positively to the landscape character of North Crawley. While the site is largely contained from view from Folly Lane, it is exposed to the parkland and open countryside from the west.
Due to the above reasons, development of the site would fail to conserve or enhance the landscape character and historic structure of the village, and would be contrary to Policy DS5 and NE5 of Plan:MK.
In addition, while the site has agricultural access onto a track off Folly Lane, this access is not suitable for upgrade to two-way vehicular access to support development in this location due to its location close to Folly Lane, its narrow width, and the need to remove extensive hedgerows to allow adequate

visibility splays. There are also limited opportunities to provide safe footway. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable at present and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land. It is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.
In summary, the site is not currently suitable for development as the site is not contiguous with the settlement and has significant access constraints, whereby development of the site would depart from the built form of the village.

Site 11 – adjacent to public right of way on Folly Lane
This is a very small site with the potential to accommodate 1 dwelling

Site Assessment Conclusion – this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan
The site is removed from the settlement boundary however it is adjacent to the built-up area of Folly Lane. Development of the site would elongate ribbon development on the eastern side of Folly Lane away from the village.
The site mostly consists of hedgerows and trees protected under a group Tree Preservation Order. Development of the site for one dwelling is likely to require the removal of most trees within the site. Development at this location may be contrary to Policy NE2 and NE3 of Plan:MK.
The site is in the open countryside as defined in Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. Development of the site would require significant removal of protected trees which contributes to the rural landscape character and would be contrary to the requirements set out in Policy NE5 of Plan:MK.
The site fronts onto Folly Lane but it is likely that access cannot be created without removing trees protected under the Tree Preservation Order. In addition, access is constrained in this location due to the narrow width of Folly Lane and the proximity of a bend near the site. The site is not currently served by safe footway. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable at present and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK.
The site can be seen from the Conservation Area and Grade I listed Church of St Firmin in North Crawley. Development of the site may have some impacts to the setting of the Conservation Area. Further heritage assessments might be required. Any development proposals should sustain and where possible enhance the significance of these heritage assets.

Site 12 – Field behind houses at bottom of Folly Lane
This site has the potential to accommodate about 20 dwellings.

Site Assessment Conclusion - this site is not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan
The site is removed from the settlement boundary however it is adjacent to the built-up area of Folly Lane.
The site's agricultural access is not suitable for upgrade to two-way vehicular access to support development in this location due to its location close to Folly Lane, its narrow width, and the need to remove extensive hedgerows to allow adequate visibility splays. There are also limited opportunities to provide safe footway. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable at present and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK.
The site is in the 'Open Countryside' as defined in Policy DS5 of Plan:MK. Its development will dilute the rural parkland character of this part of the settlement, which would be contrary to the principles of Policy DS5 and NE5 in conserving the landscape character of the open countryside.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land. It is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.

Site 13a & 13b – Old Rectory Pasture
This large field was assessed in two smaller parts, site 13a runs below the Old Rectory with access along Brook End, site 13b sits below the houses at the bottom of Folly Lane and would be accessed from Folly Lane.

Site Assessment Conclusion – Sites 13a and 13b are not suitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan
The site is a large agricultural field with scattered fenced trees in a parkland landscape adjacent to the built-up area of the village.
The site contains multiple mature trees dotted throughout the site and has an open countryside parkland setting. The site feels removed from the village due to the tree cover around the western edge of the village and its open countryside parkland setting. Development of the site is likely to significantly dilute the parkland character of the site, which is an identified feature that contributes positively to the landscape character of North Crawley. Development of the whole site would also be at a scale that would significantly change the setting of the village and significantly increase the visibility of the settlement from the open countryside to the south and west.
Due to the above reasons, development of the site will fail to conserve the parkland landscape which is identified to have positive contributions towards the landscape character of North Crawley, significantly change the nucleated

historic structure of the village and dilute the tranquillity of the open countryside, contrary to the Policy NE5 of Plan:MK.
In addition, full development of the site is likely to have adverse impacts on the setting of the Conservation Area and the listed building due to loss of the parkland landscape and significant changes to the historic pattern of the settlement. Part development of the site along High Street / Brook End is also likely to have some impacts on the Conservation Area, the setting of the village and the listed building.
Partial development at the north eastern corner of the site is unsuitable as this section of the site feels removed from the settlement due to the tree cover around the western edge of the village and its open countryside parkland setting. It may also impact on the Conservation Area, the setting of the village and the Grade II listed building.
Partial development of the site at the south eastern tip of the site is also currently unsuitable. Although it is adjacent to the built-up area at Folly Lane, there is limited potential for the creation of suitable vehicular access as this section of Folly Lane is particularly narrow. The eastern boundary of this section of the site is also bordered by continuous hedgerows which would need to be removed extensively to create suitable access. It is also unlikely that adequate visibility splays could be achieved within the site boundary although this is subject to further consultation with the Highways Authority. The site is also not served by an existing footway and extensive works on third party land would be required to create a continuous footway from the site to the main built-up area of North Crawley. Development at this location is therefore unsustainable and would be contrary to Policy CT2 and CT3 of Plan:MK, in addition to the above landscape constraints mentioned.
The site is Grade 3 Very Good Agricultural Land. It is not known whether the site is Grade 3a or Grade 3b Agricultural Land.
The site contains mature trees and trees protected under the Tree Preservation Order, which would need to be preserved for their landscape character and ecological contributions.

What happens next?

It is important to make clear that at this stage, of the 5 sites that have been identified as suitable for development, no site is preferred over any other for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The steering group is consulting with landowners and would like you to consider the information in this leaflet and let us know your views by 28th February 2021.

We would of course like to have an open day in the village institute for everyone to come along and view the plans and have the chance to speak to members of the Steering Group. Unfortunately, as I am sure you can appreciate, we are currently unable to do this, and so communication will have to be in written form.

If you would like to share your views, please email the Neighbourhood Plan email address - northcrawleynp@gmail.com and a member of the Steering group will respond. Alternatively, you can write to Helen Beauchamp, Chairwoman NCNP, c/o Clerk to North Crawley Parish Council, 3 Folly Lane, North Crawley, NEWPORT PAGNELL, Bucks, MK16 9LN

What happens after that?

We will be considering all of the representations received prior to delivering another leaflet to you with more detail about the shortlisted sites. This is planned for the month of March. You will also receive a voting slip for each adult in your household to rank, in order of preference, each of the 5 suitable sites. The SG will then collate all of the information to help us to arrive at a decision about which sites will be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan. A key factor in the decision-making process is that the final sites must allow for development of about 30-35 dwellings.

We are due to begin work with the landowners of the proposed sites and the AECOM technical support team to develop design codes for each of the sites, including potential design plans for the proposed developments. This will provide more information for how each site might be developed. Once we have agreed the sites to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, these design codes will be written into draft policies and a first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan document will be produced. We intend to deliver a copy of this to each household for the first stage of the consultation process.

The SG is hopeful that we will have a completed Neighbourhood Plan to be presented to Milton Keynes Council by August 2021. Milton Keynes Council will check that the Plan is compliant with local and national policies and, if approved, a second round of consultation with residents will then take place. After this second consultation, the Plan will be assessed by an Independent Examiner. Once the examiner is satisfied that the plan is fit for purpose, Milton Keynes Council will arrange for the referendum to take place.

Further Reading:

National Planning Policy Framework 2019
www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

Milton Keynes Local Plan – Plan:MK 2016 – 2031
https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/plan-mk

Landscape Sensitivity Study to Residential Development in the Borough of Milton Keynes and Adjoining Areas (October 2016)
file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/OX5198%20MK%20Landscape%20Sensitivity%20Study%20FINAL%20LR%20161012.pdf

North Crawley Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment – January 2021
https://www.northcrawley-pc.gov.uk/ follow the link to the Neighbourhood Plan page

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