

## **Wixams Sites Summary**

Following the call for sites, 3 sites were submitted for the Wixams area.

Wixams is a new planned settlement which straddles the boundary of Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough. Although the part of the Wixams falling in Central Bedfordshire lies within the Parish of Houghton Conquest due to the number of new homes and level of facilities expected to be provided in the next 20 years, the settlement itself is designated a Major Service Centre. Given the expected long term delivery of development it is unlikely that additional large-scale development over that presently permitted could be delivered before 2021. However, beyond this period, the expansion areas as identified in the Development Brief for a mix of uses could be accommodated. Submitted site H278 which includes land south of the Wixams is already identified in the Development Brief as an expansion area for the Wixams.

The Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) recommends that an employment allocation in the Northern Marston Vale should be directed to site E09 in Marston Moretaine. However, the 5ha of employment land identified at the Wixams is likely to comprise smaller employment uses masterplanned into the residential development that will provide local employment for new residents. The housing assessment has concluded that the site is an extension to a planned new settlement being built and which the Council is committed to be taken forward.

For the above reasons the Council has allocated this site in the Site Allocations DPD under policy MA3 for a mixed-use development of around 1,000 dwellings, a minimum of 5 hectares of employment land and other land uses that will be identified in the Masterplan, including a Country Park. Commencement of development is only required after 2021.

Both sites H308 and E16 are for proposals which already have extant planning permissions, but have not already been taken account of in existing commitments so are included in the Site Allocations DPD. Policy HA6 allocates site H308 for a residential development of 70 dwellings. Policy EA8 allocates site E16 for a facility for the National Institute for Research into Aquatic Habitats (NIRAH) project. The planning permission specifies the following types of uses - a tropical biotope, a water adventure park, spa, 3 hotels and conference and exhibition centre, cinema and other associated ancillary uses as well as a science research park.

H278/E14 - Housing Land South of The Wixams							
Size (ha)	127.73						
Proposal	<del>Around Mixed use site providing around 1,950 dwellings, with mixed use</del>						
Description	The site is currently used for agricultural purposes, split into five fields. There are two farmhouses within the site.						
Issue & Options Consultations							
Consultation Responses	Yes	4%	No	90%	Maybe	6%	
Consultation Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development will lead to a coalescence between Houghton Conquest and Wixams</li> <li>• Proposed development will overload existing road networks and infrastructure</li> <li>• Site is of natural habitat which is of great use to the local community</li> </ul>						
Stage 1							
Green Belt	No	Less Than Four Dwellings	No	Minerals & Waste Site	No	Wholly Flood Zone 2/3	No
Archaeological Site/ SAM	No	Important Countryside Gap	No	Biological or Geological Importance			No
Conclusion	<p>The Stage 1 assessment has not identified any discounting factors. Therefore, the site has progressed to Stage 2.</p> <p><u>As the site has been submitted as a mixed use proposal, the site has been assessed separately for housing and employment purposes.</u></p>						
Stage 2							
Score	-5						
Rank	<p>1st ranked in the settlement out of 1. This site is an extension to a planned new settlement being built and which the Council is committed to be taken forward. Part of it already has planning permission for about 4,500 dwellings. <u>The Stage 2 scoring does not reflect the sites sustainability once developed. The assessment process does not take into account proposed services that will be delivered through the Wixams.</u></p>						
Conclusion	Nothing to prevent this site from progressing to Stage 3.						
Stage 3							
Highways Authority	<del>none</del> <u>No comments made</u>						
Highways Agency	<u>Wixam town-wide assessment required to identify potential cumulative impacts on the A421 trunk road</u>						
Environment Agency	<u>No site specific comments made</u>						
Archaeology	<u>No comments made</u>						
Built Conservation	<del>none</del> <u>No comments made</u>						
Contaminated Land	<del>none</del> <u>No comments made</u>						
Internal Drainage Board	Must comply with the strategic solution agreed for the Wixams development						
Environmental Health	RAG rating is green						
English Heritage	<del>none</del> <u>No comments made</u>						

Landscape	<del>none</del> No comments made
Natural England	<del>none</del> No comments made
Anglian Water	RAG rating is red – Cordon <del>S</del> sanitare for sewage treatment works and sewer crossing site
Conclusion	<del>Nothing to prevent this site from being allocated. Although a major issue has been raised at Stage 3, it is considered that this can be overcome through the Masterplanning process.</del>

#### Final Decision

There have been no ~~exceptional~~ issues identified within the three stages of Assessment ~~that prevent the allocation of this site. This site is an extension to a planned new settlement being built and which the Council is committed to be taken forward. The Stage 3 Employment Land Review recommends that an employment allocation in the Northern Marston Vale should be directed to site E09 in Marston Moretaine. However, the 5ha of employment land identified at the Wixams is likely to comprise smaller employment uses masterplanned into the residential development that will provide local employment for new residents. †For these reasons the Council has included this site~~ allocated this site for a mixed-use development comprising around 1000 dwellings, 5ha of employment land and other uses that will be identified in the Masterplan.  ~~within the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.~~

<b>H278/E14 - Housing Land South of The Wixams</b>							
Size (ha)	<u>127.73</u>						
Proposal	<u>Mixed use site providing around 1,950 dwellings</u>						
Description	<u>The site is currently used for agricultural purposes, split into five fields. There are two farmhouses within the site.</u>						
<b>Issue &amp; Options Consultations</b>							
Consultation Responses	Yes	<u>4%</u>	No	<u>90%</u>	Maybe	<u>6%</u>	
Consultation Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Development will lead to a coalescence between Houghton Conquest and Wixams</u></li> <li><u>Proposed development will overload existing road networks and infrastructure</u></li> <li><u>Site is of natural habitat which is of great use to the local community</u></li> </ul>						
<b>ELR Stage 1</b>							
Green Belt	<u>No</u>	Contrary to the aims of the Core Strategy	<u>No</u>	Identified in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan or emerging LDF for other uses	<u>No</u>	Wholly or predominantly Flood Zone 3	<u>No</u>
Less than 0.25 ha in size or promoted for less than 500m <sup>2</sup> of employment floor space	<u>No</u>	Detrimental effect upon a site of national or international biological or geological importance	<u>No</u>				
Conclusion	<u>The Stage 1 assessment has not identified any discounting factors. Therefore, the site has progressed to Stage 2. As the site has been submitted as a mixed use proposal, the site has been assessed separately for housing and employment purposes.</u>						
<b>ELR Stage 2</b>							
PDL	<u>95% Greenfield, 5% farm buildings – Red</u>						
Accessibility to Housing	<u>0.4km from Houghton Conquest – Red</u>						
Road Access	<u>0.5km from A6 but no direct access – Amber</u>						
Availability	<u>No constraints indicated – Green</u>						
AGLV/Gap	<u>N/N</u>	Flood Zone	<u>1</u>	Important Open Space			<u>N</u>
Other Important Land Uses	<u>Part of the Marston Vale Community Forest – Amber</u>						
Number of 'Reds'	<u>2</u>			Number of 'Ambers'	<u>2</u>		
Rank	<u>58</u>						
Conclusion	<u>As the site scored fewer than four 'reds' the site was deemed acceptable to progress to the next assessment stage.</u>						
<b>ELR Stage 3</b>							
Score	<u>22</u>						

Rank	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> out of 5 in the Northern Marston Vale</u>
Conclusion	<u>The site forms a large area earmarked as an extension to the new settlement. Development is likely to comprise smaller employment uses masterplanned into the residential development. The main issue as an employment location is poor strategic road access.</u>
<b>Stage 4</b>	
Highways Authority	<u>No comments made</u>
Highways Agency	<u>Wixam town-wide assessment required to identify potential cumulative impacts on the A421 trunk road</u>
Environment Agency	<u>No site specific comments made</u>
Archaeology	<u>No comments made</u>
Built Conservation	<u>No comments made</u>
Contaminated Land	<u>No comments made</u>
Internal Drainage Board	<u>Must comply with the strategic solution agreed for the Wixams development</u>
Environmental Health	<u>RAG rating is green</u>
English Heritage	<u>RAG rating is green</u>
Landscape	<u>RAG rating is green</u>
Natural England	<u>RAG rating is green</u>
Anglian Water	<u>RAG rating is red – Cordon Sanitare for sewage treatment works and sewer crossing site</u>
Conclusion	<u>Although a major issue has been raised at Stage 3, it is considered that this can be overcome through the Masterplanning process.</u>
<b>Final Decision</b>	
<u>There have been no issues identified within the four stages of Assessment that prevent the allocation of this site. The Stage 3 Employment Land Review recommends that an employment allocation in the Northern Marston Vale should be directed to site E09 in Marston Moretaine. However, the 5ha of employment land identified at the Wixams is likely to comprise smaller employment uses masterplanned into the residential development that will provide local employment for new residents. The housing assessment concludes that the site is an extension to a planned new settlement being built and which the Council is committed to be taken forward. For these reasons the Council has allocated this site for a mixed-use development comprising around 1000 dwellings, 5ha of employment land and other uses that will be identified in the Masterplan.</u>	

H308 - Former Hostel Site, Bedford Road, Houghton Conquest							
Size (ha)	4.48						
Proposal	155 dwellings						
Description	Hostel site						
Issue & Options Consultations							
Consultation Responses	Yes	0%	No	91%	Maybe	9%	
Consultation Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is on a floodplain</li> <li>Increase in road congestion</li> <li>Existing services would be put under pressure</li> </ul>						
Stage 1							
Green Belt	No	Less Than Four Dwellings	No	Minerals & Waste Site	No	Wholly Flood Zone 2/3	No
Archaeological Site/ SAM	No	Important Countryside Gap	No	Biological or Geological Importance			No
Conclusion	The Stage 1 assessment has not identified any discounting factors. Therefore, the site has progressed to Stage 2.						
Stage 2							
Score	-24						
Rank	940th ranked score in settlement out of 940						
Conclusion	Site already granted planning permission						
Stage 3							
Highways	Not applicable						
Conservation	Not applicable						
Contaminated Land	Not applicable						
Internal Drainage Board	Not applicable						
Environmental Health	Not applicable						
English Heritage	Not applicable						
Landscape	Not applicable						
Natural England	Not applicable						
Anglian Water	Not applicable						
Conclusion	Not applicable						
Final Decision							
Site granted planning permission and therefore allocated as part of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.							

<b>E16 - Quest Pit 'Nirah' site, Stewartby</b>						
Size (ha)	<u>58.55</u>					
Proposal	<u>A1 (Shops), A3 (Restaurants/Cafes), A5 (Hot Food Takeaways), B1 (Offices, Research and Development), C1 (Hotels), D1 (Non-Residential Institutions), D2 (Assembly and Leisure); 2,200 jobs</u>					
Description	<u>Located to the west of Houghton Conquest and the east of the railway line. The site is currently used for agriculture</u>					
<b>Issue &amp; Options Consultations</b>						
Consultation Responses	Yes	<u>40%</u>	No	<u>44%</u>	Maybe	<u>16%</u>
Consultation Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Increase in road congestion</u></li> <li><u>Site will create local jobs</u></li> </ul>					
<b>ELR Stage 1</b>						
Green Belt	<u>No</u>	Contrary to the aims of the Core Strategy	<u>No</u>	Identified in the Minerals & Waste Local Plan or emerging LDF for other uses	<u>No</u>	Wholly or predominantly Flood Zone 3
Less than 0.25 ha in size or promoted for less than 500m <sup>2</sup> of employment floor space	<u>No</u>	<u>Detrimental effect upon a site of national or international biological or geological importance identified in the Minerals &amp; Waste Local Plan or emerging LDF for other uses</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Detrimental effect upon a site of national or international biological or geological importance</u>		
Conclusion	<u>The Stage 1 assessment has not identified any discounting factors. Therefore, the site has progressed to Stage 2.</u>					
<b>ELR Stage 2</b>						
PDL	<u>Site is cleared - Amber</u>					
Accessibility to Housing	<u>Adjacent to Stewartby - Amber</u>					
Road Access	<u>Adjacent B530 but some 3.7km from A6 - Red</u>					
Availability	<u>No constraints indicated - Green</u>					
AGLV/Gap	<u>N/N</u>	Flood Zone	<u>1 (approx a third in Zone 3) - Amber</u>	Important Open Space		<u>N</u>
Other Important Land Uses	<u>Part of Marston Vale Community Forest - Green</u>					
Number of 'Reds'	<u>1</u>			Number of 'Ambers'		<u>2</u>
Rank	<u>24<sup>th</sup></u>					

Conclusion	<u>As the site scored fewer than four 'reds' the site was deemed acceptable to progress to the next assessment stage.</u>
<b>ELR Stage 3</b>	
Score	<u>19</u>
Rank	<u>Joint 3<sup>rd</sup> rank out of 5 in the Northern Marston Vale</u>
Conclusion	<u>The site has been granted planning permission for the National Institute for Research into Aquatic Habitats (NIRAH) Project. A stage 4 assessment is not necessary as the principle of development has been tested through the planning application process.</u>
<b>Stage 4</b>	
Highways Authority	<u>Not applicable</u>
Highways Agency	<u>Not applicable</u>
Environment Agency	<u>Not applicable</u>
Archaeology	<u>Not applicable</u>
Built Conservation	<u>Not applicable</u>
Contaminated Land	<u>Not applicable</u>
Internal Drainage Board	<u>Not applicable</u>
Environmental Health	<u>Not applicable</u>
English Heritage	<u>Not applicable</u>
Landscape	<u>Not applicable</u>
Natural England	<u>Not applicable</u>
Anglian Water	<u>Not applicable</u>
Conclusion	<u>Not applicable</u>
<b>Final Decision</b>	
<u>The site has already been granted planning permission for the National Institute for Research into Aquatic Habitats (NIRAH) Project. The site is therefore allocated as part of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document for development in accordance with its planning permission.</u>	