

**HARROGATE DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK**

**COMMUNITY SPORTS REGENERATION
AREA ACTION PLAN**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT
DRAFT SUPPLEMENT**

February 2008

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Harrogate Borough Council is preparing a new Local Development Framework (LDF) comprising a number of planning documents to guide new development within the District to 2021 and beyond. The Council is preparing a Development Plan Document entitled Community Sports Regeneration Area Action Plan centred around the Claro Road/Kingsley Drive Area of Harrogate.
- 1.2 An integral part of the process of preparing the Harrogate District Local Development Framework is a Sustainability Appraisal to assess the environmental, economic and social impact of the strategies and policies contained within it to ensure the Local Development Framework contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Alongside this is the requirement to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the SEA Directive.
- 1.3 This report forms a supplement to the Sustainability Appraisal produced by Harrogate Borough Council in January 2008 in support of the Community Sports Regeneration Area Action Plan: Preferred Options Consultation document. The purpose of this report is to consider a new site option for the re-location of the rugby club recently brought forward by the Harrogate Rugby Union Football Club (HRUFC) as a planning application.
- 1.4 The site lies to the south of Thistle Hill Farm and Knaresborough. It covers 9.68 hectares of land currently in agricultural use and within the Green Belt. Within the Green Belt, there is a presumption against inappropriate development and such development should not be approved, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The relocation of the rugby club, its associated built form, car parking and floodlighting represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt. For this reason, no appraisals were undertaken of the site options within the Green Belt in the original Sustainability Appraisal report.
- 1.5 However, now this site option is the subject of a planning application and has not been put forward before, a sustainability appraisal of the Thistle Hill site has been undertaken. The planning application for the rugby club development on this site was validated by the Council on 17 January 2008 (application reference number 07/06055/FULMAJ). The application involves the erection of a clubhouse, formation of 7 rugby pitches and two vehicular accesses with associated car and coach parking and soft landscaping. One of the pitches would be lit when necessary for training purposes by dismountable floodlighting. A sustainability appraisal of this site will assist with both its consideration in respect of the Community Sports Regeneration Area Action Plan and in the Council's determination of the planning application.
- 1.6 The appraisal of this site has been undertaken using the same methodology and sustainability objectives as those site options considered in the original Sustainability Appraisal. This allows us to see how the site compares in sustainability terms against the other alternatives.

2.0 Comparison of social, environmental and economic effects of the options

2.1 Table 2.1 below is based on the Table 5.1 of the original Sustainability Appraisal report and sets out the options considered and summarises how the options compare in sustainability terms. The table has been amended to include a consideration of how the new site option fits into the overall comparison of sites. Additional text relating to the new site option is highlighted in ***emboldened italics***

Table 2.1

Suggested sites for Sports provision	Soc	Env	Econ
AAP2/AAP3: Land at Uniake Barracks and Penny Pot Lane	+	-	0
AAP4: Land south of Penny Pot Lane	+	--	0
AAP5: Land north of Penny Pot Lane	+	--	0
AAP6: Land west of Oaker Bank	+	--	0
AAP8/APP11: Land north of Skipton Road and Grange Farm	++	+/-	0
AAP10: Land east of Otley Road, Killinghall	+	--	0
AAP14: Land south west of Cornwall Road	+	--	0
AAP15: Land north of Otley Road, Harrogate	+	--	0
AAP16: Land at Cardale Park West	+	--	0
AAP18: Land at Daw Cross	+	--	0
AAP20: Land east of Leeds Road	+	--	0
AAP25/AAP27: North of Granby Farm/Land at Claro Road and Land at Kingsley Drive	++	+/-	0
AAP26: North of Kingsley Farm	++	--	0
AAP29: Bilton Triangle west of Longlands Farm	++	+/-	0
AAP34: Land south east of Showground	+	--	0
AAP39: Playing Fields, High Harrogate School	++	--	0
AAP43: Manse Farm, Knaresborough	++	-	0
AAP44: Land west of A6055, north of Knaresborough	+	--	0
<i>AAP47: Land south of Thistle Hill Farm, Knaresborough</i>	<i>+</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>0</i>
<p>Commentary</p> <p>For all of the sites the overall impact against the economic objectives is considered to be neutral. However, it should be noted that provision of sporting facilities may bring with it some employment opportunities and support local businesses and the voluntary sector.</p> <p>All of the sites register a positive score against the social objectives. A number of the sites perform more positively. In some cases this is because development of sporting facilities in such locations meet the accessibility criteria set out in the appraisal (Sites AAP8/AAP11, AAP29, AAP43). The following sites also perform better, not due to accessibility but because the sites lie within the wards of either Granby or Woodfield. These two wards experience relatively poorer levels of health, crime, educational performance and/or income (AAP25/AAP27, AAP26, AAP28, AAP39). The judgement made here is that the provision of sports facilities within these wards would have a more beneficial impact on key indicators of social deprivation than elsewhere. AAP29 offers the added advantage of a good level of accessibility when assessed against the criteria.</p> <p>Over half of the sites perform very negatively against the environmental objectives (AAP4, AAP5, AAP6, AAP10, AAP14, AAP15, AAP16, AAP18, AAP20, AAP26, AAP34, AAP39, AAP44, <i>AAP47</i>). All of these sites perform poorly in accessibility terms and are seen as separate to the existing built up area and do not benefit from proximity to town or district centres. In addition sites AAP4, AAP14, AAP15, AAP16, AAP18, AAP20, AAP34 lie wholly or partially within the protected designation of Special Landscape Area. AAP26, AAP39 lie partially or wholly within the Bilton Triangle Green Wedge. Predominantly 'open' sporting uses in the Green Wedge are appropriate land uses, but spectator stands, large car parks, and clubhouses would not be appropriate within the Green Wedge designation. <i>AAP47 lies within the Green Belt, development of which for the relocation of the rugby club would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt</i></p> <p>Three of the sites offer a range of positive and negative benefits against the environmental objectives (AAP8/AAP11, AAP25/AAP27, AAP29). AAP8/AAP11 and AAP29 meet the accessibility criteria and lie wholly within Flood Zone 1. However, both these sites are seen as separate to the existing built up area and AAP8/AAP11 lies within Special Landscape Area while the majority of AAP29 is within the Bilton Triangle Green Wedge.</p>			

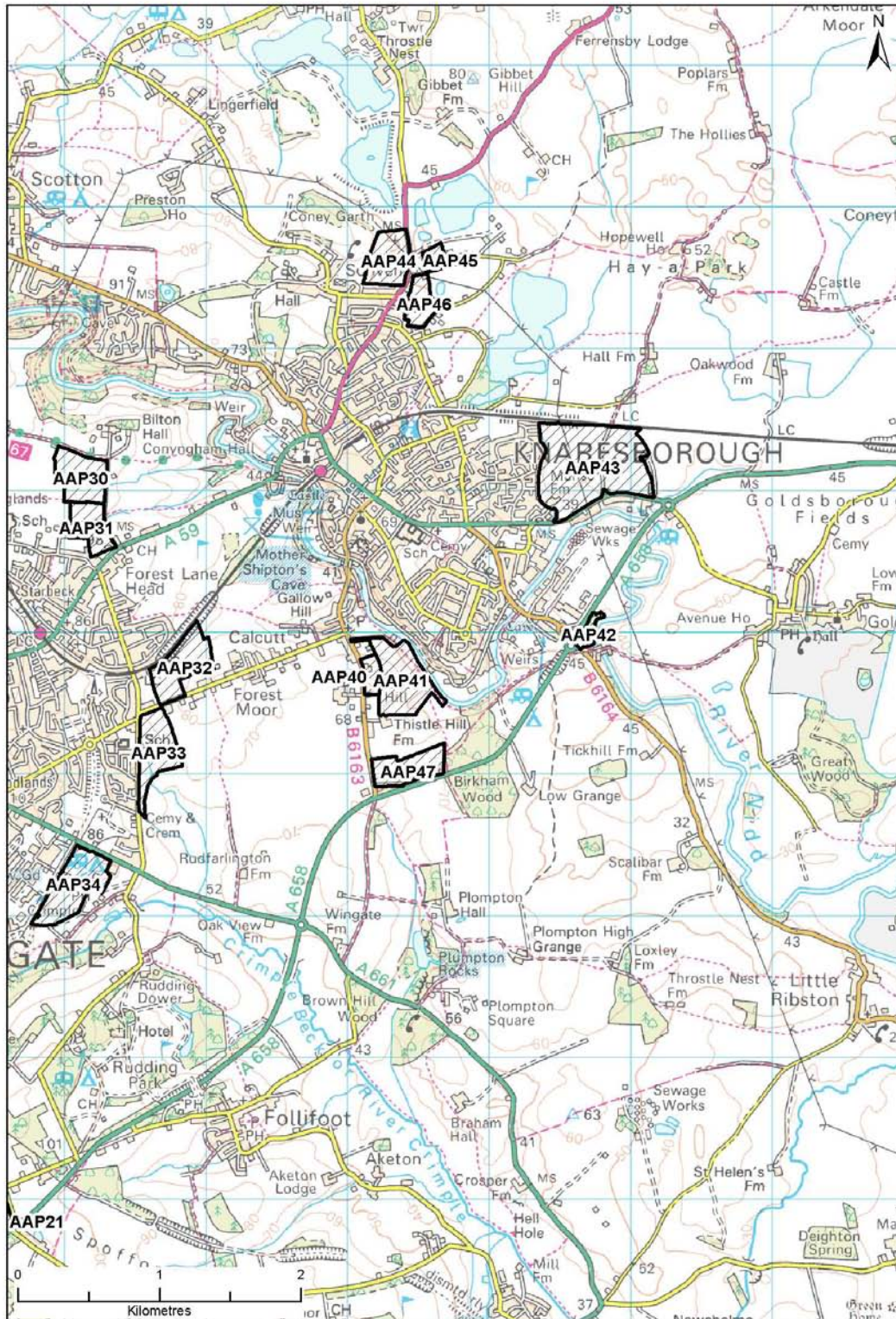
AAP25/AAP27 does not meet the accessibility criteria being located further than 400m from a bus stop that meets the accessibility criteria. The bus service in question does, however offer the frequency of service required to meet the accessibility criteria. The western portion of the site is located adjoining an existing district centre and is nearby services and facilities and this part of the site is seen as part of the existing built up area. The eastern part of the site is more remote from existing facilities and is seen as separate from the existing built up area. Part of the site lies within the Bilton Triangle Green Wedge.

Concluding Remarks

Three sites perform better against the sustainability objectives than the others. These are AAP8/AAP11, AAP25/AAP27 and AAP29. Whilst AAP29 meets the accessibility criteria the site currently has no direct access from the surrounding road network, and the site itself forms part of the green wedge. Furthermore, the nearby residential road network would not be suitable for the intensity of traffic associated with first team rugby or football matches for HRUFC or Harrogate Town FC. It would also result in the loss of good quality agricultural land. AAP25/AAP27 as noted above does not meet the accessibility criteria by virtue of being beyond the 400m threshold of a bus stop but the bus service does provide a good level of frequency and there may be opportunities to improve access to an appropriate bus stop. AAP8/AAP11 meets the accessibility criteria. However the site lies within the Special Landscape Area (SLA) important to the setting of the town. The SLA is being reviewed and the land occupied by AAP8/AAP11 is subject to consideration for deletion from the SLA. Notwithstanding the SLA review, this land provides an attractive and distinct rural contrast to the existing built form, is highly visible and contributes significantly to local amenity.

3.0 Supplement to Appendix 5 - Sustainability Appraisal of alternative site option

SITEREF	DESCRIPTION	AREA
AAP47	Land south of Thistle Hill Farm, Knaresborough	9.68 ha



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ASSESSMENT OF SITE OPTION AAP47: Land South of Thistle Hill Farm

Site Ref: AAP47 Land south of Thistle Hill Farm (Ribston Ward)		
SA Objective	Performance	Commentary
1. Quality housing available to everyone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it make housing available to people in need? 	0	
2. Conditions and services to engender good health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide health benefits in a ward with poorer health conditions? 	0	Site lies in a ward which is rated as being within the 25% least deprived of England's population
3. Safety and security for people and property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it provide sport, leisure and recreation in an area with relatively high levels of crime 	0	Site lies in a ward of which has low levels of crime
4. Vibrant communities which participate in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it improve and increase community facilities? • Will it reduce the potential for social isolation with particular regard to disadvantaged groups? 	+	Provision of community facilities will contribute to creating mixed, well balanced communities thereby helping to reduce social isolation.
5. Culture, leisure and recreation activities available to all <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase availability and accessibility of culture/leisure/recreation activities/venues? 	0	Education qualification attainment levels suggest no deprivation. Income estimates suggest no deprivation.
6. Local needs met locally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it support the vibrancy of town and village centres? 	-	Nearest bus stop offering at least a 30 minute frequency service to Harrogate Bus/Rail Station on Monday-Saturday up to 10.30pm and 30 minute frequency up to 6pm on a Sunday is over 400m from the site. Amount of resident population within 800m (walking distance) radii of site < 4,000
7. Education and training opportunities which build on the skills and capacity of the population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote life long learning and widening participation in lifelong learning activities? 	0	Site is not located within or adjoining an existing shopping centre &/or district centre & is remote from existing services and facilities.
8. Bio-diverse and attractive natural environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and enhance existing priority habitats and species and provide for long term management of wildlife habitats? • Will it protect and enhance the region's rivers, estuary and coastal waters to achieve good ecological status? • Will it contribute to local distinctiveness and countryside character? 	+	It will not cause the loss of any Local Nature Reserve or SINCR. The site is adjacent to the Birkham Wood SSSI. Site is open countryside. Tree Preservation Orders adjoin the site.
9. Minimal pollution levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it clean up contaminated land? • Will it maintain and where possible improve soil quality and minimise the loss of soil to development? • Will it prevent unacceptable levels of noise and light pollution? 	0	Site lies adjacent to Birkham Wood SSSI and Special Landscape Area. Site is within the Green Belt.
10. A transport network which maximises access whilst minimising detrimental impacts	-	No known problems. It will result in the loss of high quality agricultural land (a large part of the site is either Grade 2 or 3a classified land). Site is seen as separate to the existing built up area.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it increase access by means other than the car • Will it improve existing provision of cycleways and footpaths? 	-	Nearest bus stop offering at least a 30 minute frequency service to Harrogate Bus/Rail Station on Monday-Saturday up to 10:30pm and 30 minute frequency up to 6pm on a Sunday is over 400m from the site.
<p>11. Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and a managed response to climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions? • Will it reduce the risk of flooding? 	- +	Nearest bus stop offering at least a 30 minute frequency service to Harrogate Bus/Rail Station on Monday-Saturday up to 10:30pm and 30 minute frequency up to 6pm on a Sunday is over 400m from the site. Flood zone 1. There are no significant differences between the sites.
<p>12. Prudent and efficient use of energy and natural resource with minimal production of waste</p>	0	
<p>13. Protect and enhance the historic environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enhance features and areas of historical/cultural value? • Will it conserve the character of historic settlements and conservation areas? • Will it preserve and where appropriate enhance features of archaeological importance? 	0 0 0	It will not adversely affect the setting of any listed buildings. It will not adversely affect the setting of a conservation area. It will not adversely affect any site of archaeological interest.
<p>14. A quality built environment and efficient land use patterns, that make good use of derelict sites, minimise travel and promote balanced development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it promote the development of communities with accessible services, employment, shops and leisure facilities? • Will it result in the regeneration of derelict or visually unattractive land? • Will it ensure high design quality which supports local distinctiveness? 	- 0	Site is not located within or adjoining an existing shopping centre &/or district centre and consequently there is not a good mix of uses in the area around the site.
<p>15. Good quality employment opportunities available to all</p>	0	There are no significant differences between the sites.
<p>16. Conditions for business success, economic growth and investment</p>	0	There are no significant differences between the sites.