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Dear Sir/Madam:

**Bedford Borough Local Plan Review : Call for Sites (August 2020).**

**Respondent: Newton Homes Ltd.**

**Site: Land at High Street, Sharnbrook, Bedfordshire.**

On behalf of our clients Newton Homes Ltd we write in regard to the recently published Call for Sites invitation published by Bedford Borough Council ('BBC') to assist in the imminent review of the Local Plan 2030 ('LP2030') for the Borough which was adopted as policy for the Borough in January 2020.

It is acknowledged by the client that the Council's current list of sites which were submitted to the LP2030 process are now over 5-years old and that there is a pertinent need to update the Council's dataset to enable a thorough sound review of the recently adopted local plan.

To this end, the client has sought to update the information previously submitted to the Council in respect of their land holding at High Street in Sharnbrook and it is requested that their holding be assessed through the Call for Sites and Strategic Land Availability Assessment which the Council are due to embark upon.

For information, the site has already been assigned a reference by the Council (Site 516, Sharnbrook) and an extract the enclosed site location plan, which delineates our client's ownership, is set out at Plate 1 below.

In addition to the aforementioned site location plan, this submission is also supplemented by the following documents which will serve to assist the Council in their future assessment of the site;

- Bedford Borough Council Local Plan Call for Sites Submission Form
- Site Location Plan
- Correspondence Acstro Highways and Transportation Consultants (Ref: 0933, Dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 2016)
- Correspondence Newton Homes (Dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016)

Therefore, the following correspondence is framed against the backdrop of our previous submissions to Bedford Borough Council's ('BBC') plan making process and their efforts to adopt the LP2030.

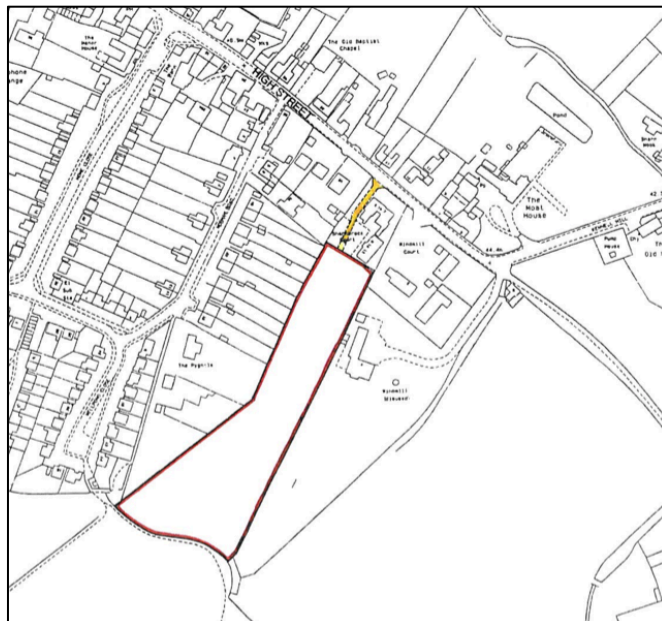
In addition to the clients continued engagement in the production of the LP2030, they have also liaised, on a regular basis, with Sharnbrook Parish Council ('PC') in their efforts to produce a neighbourhood development plan for the parish. The most recent engagement in this respect was a meeting with the PC's Steering Committee for the Neighbourhood Plan on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

### The Site

The client's land holding covers a site area of circa 1.3 hectares to the south of High Street in Sharnbrook and is accessible on its northern boundary via an existing access from High Street itself.

The site itself lies outside of but directly adjacent to the village boundary on its northern eastern and western boundaries, ensuring that any future development at the site is closely related to the existing settlement. The land is adjoined by residential development on its northern and western boundaries. To the north east lies residential development and to the remainder of its eastern and southern boundaries lies open countryside.

**Plate 1: Site Location Plan (Extract)**



On the basis of a 25 dwellings per hectare calculation, the site could accommodate a 33-dwelling proposal. However, with an appreciation of context and in consideration of assessment of the site's constraints and opportunities the client has sought to prepare a very initial indicative masterplan which would see the site developed for 5 no. dwellings. Whilst this plan is not enclosed, an extract is set out at Plate 2 below which demonstrates how such a proposal could potentially be delivered at the site.

For information, this plan has also been tabled and discussed with the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

### **Plate 2: Indicative Site Plan (Extract)**



It must be stressed that the above is an extract from a very initial testing layout to understand how dwellings could be arranged on the site and is in no way an indication of the content of any future planning application. As stated, the client has not enclosed this plan due to its ever-changing nature and the potential for it to cause confusion over the longer term.

However, whilst indicative, it is a clear demonstration of how the site could be suitably but modestly developed for a minor proposal comprising of 5 open market or self-build homes which would respond to the character of the locale and provide an attractive offer to the market within Sharnbrook and the wider housing market area.

In terms of assessing the site against the criteria within the National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG');

The site is considered suitable for development, the adopted LP2030 defines Sharnbrook as a Key Service Centre ('KSC'). A KSC is defined within the DPD as having a good level of services and it is considered that any future assessment of the

settlement would confirm that Sharnbrook remains one of the most sustainable settlements within the rural area of the Borough. The site is therefore already confirmed as having a good range of services and is well connected to larger town centres with good and regular public transport services. To this end, the development site will assist in bolstering the strong service role which Sharnbrook offers to both its own residents and for the local community in the surrounding area.

In terms of availability, it can be confirmed herein that the site is immediately available for a residential development to meet the current and future housing needs within the Borough. There are no legal or ownership impediments and the site can be developed within the first five years of the plan. Newton Homes Ltd are a pro-active developer who have consistently sought to bring properties to the market in the short term.

In respect of achievability, it is considered reasonable to conclude that the proposed residential development at the site can be developed on the site in the near term. There are no technical or legal constraints to development and whilst feasibility work is ongoing, it is reasonable to conclude at this stage that the site is economically viable for a modest residential development.

If you require clarification on any of those points raised above or have any questions, then please do not hesitate to contact me. Furthermore, our Client would be more than happy to meet with Bedford Borough Council, the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to discuss their land interest and its future development to meet the emerging strategic development requirements for Sharnbrook and the wider Borough.

Finally, if you could confirm receipt of this letter by return it would be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

**Ross Middleton BA(Hons) M.A. MRTPI  
Associate.**