

1 Grosvenor Holdings, Land off the High Street, Great Barford, Bedfordshire

Call for sites study

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Client



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01.00

Introduction

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01.01 Executive Summary



This site represents a great opportunity to propose a development that will make a positive contribution to the village by:

- Adding to the local character and quality of the village
- Bettering the aspect of neighbouring properties
- Improving the village open space
- Providing off road parking for residents and visitors
- Offering some additional parking along the High Street

- Building a covered bus shelter for the local community
- Supplementing the village housing stock with 4 new units helping to meet target housing numbers

Planning opportunities and constraints are as follows:
The site sits outside the village settlement area and the front of the site is designated Village Open Space. These designations trigger a number of hurdles that must be successfully addressed for development to be permitted. These

restrictions are described in more detail in section 02.03 and in the WSP Call for sites document.

It must be noted that the multi-unit developments permitted in the last 40 years have not made a positive contribution to the village other than satisfying the need for more and more housing. A sensitive approach to development is desperately needed if character of the village is not going to be further diluted.

02.00

Site Context

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02.01 Site Context



Great Barford is a village and civil parish in Bedfordshire a few miles north-east of Bedford. It lies on the River Great Ouse and is twinned with Wöllstein in Germany. The village is bypassed by the busy A421 road on the way between Bedford and St Neots in Cambridgeshire. The village is known for its All Saints Church, with a 15th-century tower, and its historic 15th C bridge.

The village itself is large and scattered but most of the houses are in the south-east of the parish. Throughout the village there is a large variety of houses some dating back to the 17th century. There are several listed buildings in the proximity of the site. These include four Grade II listed buildings north of site on the High Street and a cluster of six Grade II and one Grade II* listed buildings

circa 122m to the south-east. In addition, the Grade I listed Barford Bridge, which is also a Scheduled Monument, is circa 0.25km to south-east. The northern half of the site is located within the Great Barford Conservation Area and is designated as Village Open Space. There is also a public right of way located to the west of the site.

02.02 Site Context: Village Character



High Street: Post war housing



View across the site



High Street: Post war housing



High Street: Post war housing



Some original character remains



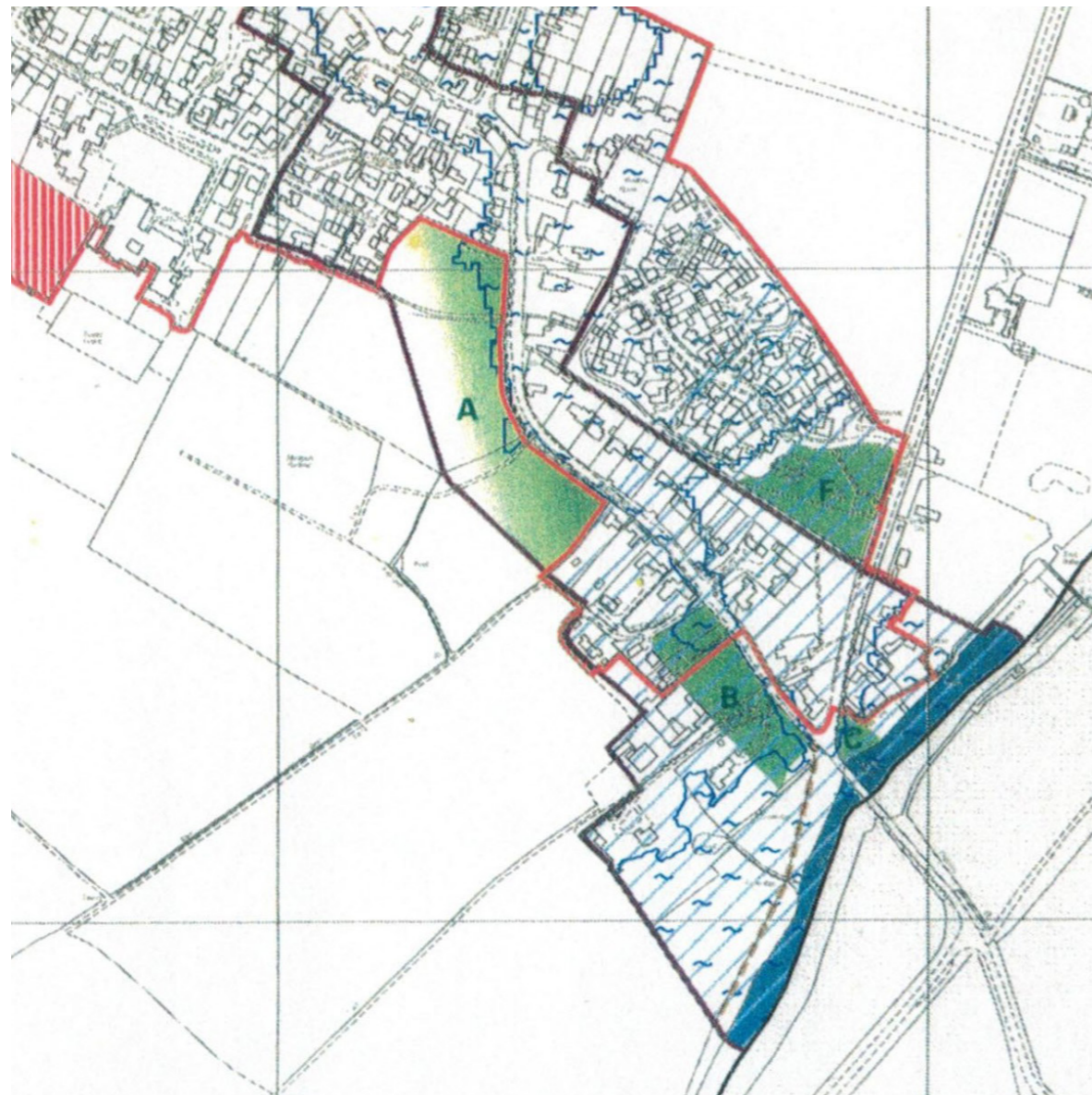
The Anchor

Great Barford has developed dramatically since the second world war. The historic village to the southern end of the High Street has to some extent been subsumed by anonymous post-war housing developments of variable quality. Along the main thoroughfare there are several older buildings that front onto

the street. The character of the village is held together by the relationship of these frontages and buildings together with their gardens and walls along the High Street. Most of the post war housing has very little visual and aesthetic merit, and very little effort has been made to adopt a local vernacular or employ

local materials. This makes a site like this especially important, as it provides an opportunity make a positive contribution to the look and feel of the village.

02.03 Planning Context



Recent History:

While the site has no significant recent planning history, an application submitted in 1988 was refused. Application (LPA ref) B/TP/88/205 was submitted for outline consent. This application was refused at appeal in October 1988, with the effect on the appearance and character of the village and landscape, along with hazards caused by traffic cited as reasons for refusal.

Since this application was refused, there has been significant additional development within the village of Great Barford, and the character of the village has altered. Owing to this, circumstances with regards to development in Great Barford have changed since this application was refused.

Adopted Policy:

Bedford Borough Council's (BBC) adopted development plan comprises the Local Plan 2030 which was adopted in January 2020. The development plan also includes the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (adopted in July 2013), which allocates sites for development.

Local Plan 2030:

The local Plan states that Great Barford will require 500 new dwellings in the plan period. Sites will be allocated in the relevant Neighbourhood Plans (if applicable), but if they are not allocated by January 2021, the BBC will allocate the sites.

The site abuts the Great Barford settlement boundary and therefore falls outside the Settlement Policy Area as allocated in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan, and therefore is considered countryside.



02.04 Village Context



- Site
- River Great Ouse
- Roads
- 1. Great Barford Village Hall
- 2. Methodist Church
- 3. All Saints Church
- 4. Bus Stop
- 5. Great Barford Primary Academy
- 6. Great Barford Surgery
- 7. Great Barford Post Office
- 8. Great Barford Bowls & Petanque Club
- 9. Great Barford Bridge



01 Great Barford Village Hall



02 Methodist Church



03 All Saints Church



06 Great Barford Surgery



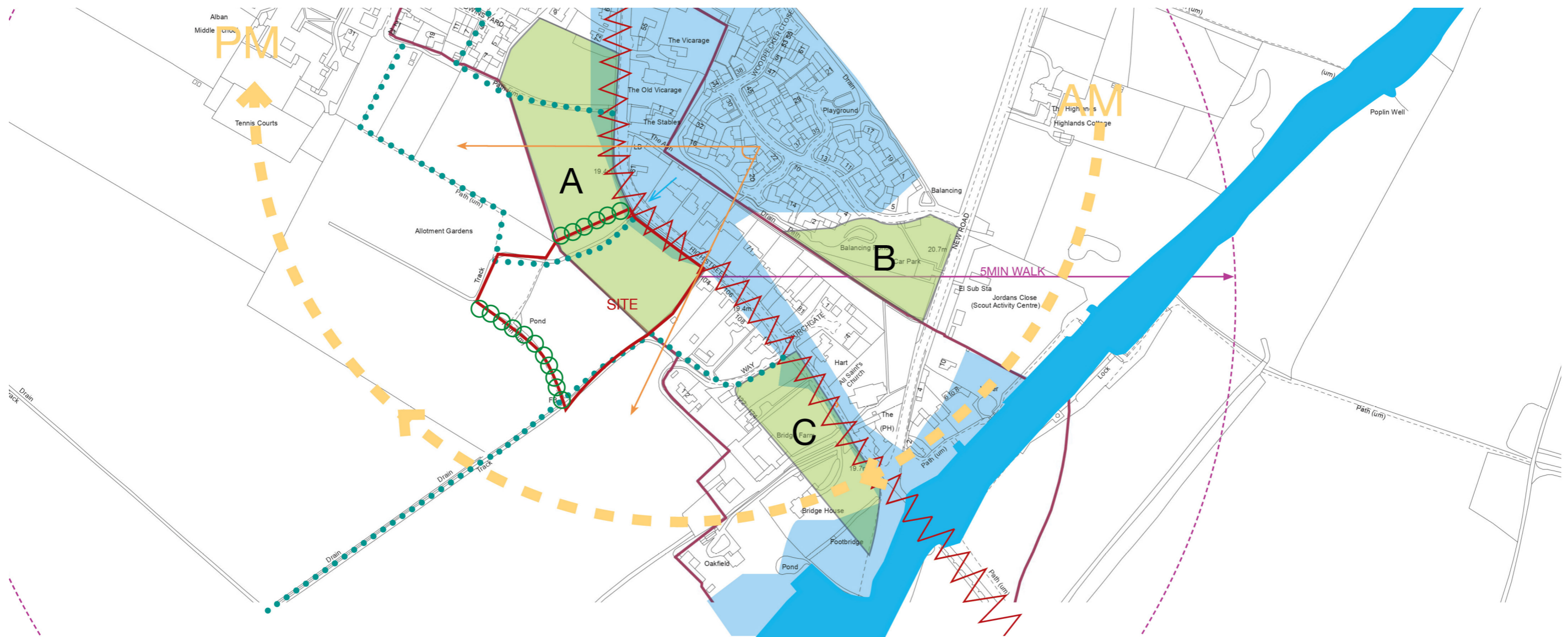
07 Great Barford Post Office



09 Great Barford Bridge

Great Barford is a linear village with High Street running from the Barford Bridge to Green End. However the High Street does not provide the concentration of amenities that one might expect in a village of this size. What few amenities exist are accessed off the High Street. The main village crossroads with Bedford Road is marked only by The Golders Cross pub on one corner. The southern gateway is defined by the bridge and The Anchor pub, with All Saints Church sitting behind.

02.05 Constraints and Opportunities Diagram



-  Street Noise
-  Sun Path
-  River Great Ouse
-  Village Open Space
-  Footpath
-  Site Access
-  Views to open countryside
-  Flood Zone

The site is circa 1.3ha and located south of the Great Barford High Street. It comprises open field and is bound by agricultural land to the north-west, west and south and residential development to the north and east. The site abuts the Great Barford Settlement boundary and is designated as Village Open Space towards the road.

The site rises gently from the road presenting an open aspect to the High Street. The site is theoretically publicly accessible and is bounded by two publicly

accessible footpaths. In reality, the site is fenced and gated, and we would suggest is rarely accessed by villagers or the wider public. The site enjoys vehicular access to the NE corner which is gated. The site is not subject to any environmental designations, such as greenbelt, special areas of conservation or sites of special scientific interest. The site is located largely in Flood Zone 1, which is the flood zone most suited to development. However, the site is bound by Flood Zone 2 to the north and a small section of the north-west corner of the site (circa 150m²) is in Flood Zone 2.









03.00

Design

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03.01 Strategic approach to the site









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|---|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | Open views |  | Development land |
|  | Site boundaries |  | Vehicular Access |
|  | Wild grass meadow |  | Parking |
|  | Village Open Space |  | Changes to road for buses and parking |

- Maintain public rights of way through the site
- Lightly landscape the Village Open Space to the front of the site and maintain public accessibility
- Provide several publicly accessible parking spaces to the front of the site for visitors
- Build a covered bus stop for the local community

- Develop a maximum of four houses to the rear of the site, allowing views between the buildings onto the fields beyond
- Provide vehicular access to the houses through the existing gated track
- Ensure that the both the housing and landscaping are of sufficient quality to make a positive contribution to the village.

03.02 Initial site plan



- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|------------------|
|  | Site boundaries |  | Houses |
|  | Wild grass meadow |  | Vehicular Access |
|  | Village Open Space |  | Trees |

- The framework plan shows the rear of the site divided into four plots
- Each plot will accommodate a single dwelling of no more than 250m²
- The space between houses will be left open maintaining views across the fields
- Covered parking will be provided adjacent to the access track to avoid garages swelling the width of each house

- Access to the front of the site will be set back to improve view lines, enable the provision of some parking spaces and allow the relocation of the field gate. A secondary gated access is proposed to the rear of the site to reduce dependence on the High Street Access
- A new covered bus stop in keeping with the character of the village will be provided along the High Street frontage.

03.03 Typologies: Relevant landscape precedents



- The open nature of the field will be maintained. The field will be seeded as a wildflower meadow to increase biodiversity and provide an improved aspect from the High Street
- An open aspect will be maintained between houses.

03.04 Typologies: Relevant housing precedents



- Houses will be designed specifically for the site and context
- External finishes of the buildings will be selected from the palette of the old village (brick, stone, render, timber and tile)
- The houses will be a fusion of modern design and traditional craftsmanship.