

3 BACKGROUND

Why is the site available for development?

- The land has been promoted by the landowner for residential development through the Council's emerging Local Plan review.
- The site is private land with no public access and is therefore available for development.
- The site has been assessed as part of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment for the new Local Plan which considered the site to be suitable for development.
- The site is contained and is contiguous with the village, close to the local amenities within Widdington and therefore considered a suitable location for development.
- Stonebond Properties have identified this site as suitable to deliver housing over the next 24 months.

What does Planning Policy say about the development of the Site?

- The site is located outside of the village boundary and within the countryside. However, the District Council recognises a shortage of dwellings within its five year supply of housing and is proactively seeking to address this shortfall, which will require greenfield sites like this site to increase the supply of housing.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's expectations for the delivery of housing among other planning policies, sets out a presumption in favour of granting planning permission in circumstances of a shortfall in the five year supply of housing unless there are adverse impacts, which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The local planning authority will be required to demonstrate this process has been followed should it decide to grant planning permission.

- The NPPF also supports housing in rural areas, such as Widdington, where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities i.e. support existing or new services, such as public transport.
- The Widdington Village Design Statement 2009 (VDS) identifies that villagers support low density development that is compatible with the appearance of the existing village and recognises that there is scope for development to the east of the village along Cornells Lane.
- The proposed development represents 'sustainable development' in the context of the NPPF and therefore there is a tilted balance in its favour that is engaged in national policy because relevant policies for the supply of housing are out of date.

Has a planning application been submitted?

- No, not yet but it is proposed to be submitted this Spring following further detailed consideration of the proposals and the responses received as part of this public consultation event.
- The Council has received a pre-application proposal for 20 dwellings, shown in this exhibition this evening and have responded favourably.

What consultation has taken place thus far?

- Pre-application consultation with the District Council; and
- This consultation event.