

## APPENDIX A

**HERNHILL – LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING SITE SELECTION PROCESS**

Following the housing needs survey undertaken in 2015 in the parish of Hernhill, which identified a need for affordable housing for local people, the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) worked with the Parish Council, supported by Swale Borough Council, to establish a project to find a suitable site for a local needs housing development

On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017, the RHE undertook a desk-top site search with Parish Councillors; 8 sites were identified. The list of sites was sent to Swale Borough Council's (SBC) planning department and on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2017, SBC Planning Officers, Parish Councillors and the RHE walked around the village to view the sites, after which Planning Officers made comments on suitability.

The total of eight sites were –

**Site 1. Land opposite Cairo Lodge** – the site was not recommended for development by SBC Planners as it would have an adverse effect on countryside in an unsustainable and isolated position.

**Site 2. Land at Church Farm off Kays Lane** – the site was considered as possibly acceptable for development by SBC Planners; sitting on the fringe of the core of the village, it would not appear incongruous or isolated. RHE enquiries to the landowner established that they did not wish to sell this site.

**Site 3. Land opposite Three Horseshoes** – the site was considered as possibly acceptable for development by SBC Planners; the loss of the field would be acceptable visually. RHE enquiries to the landowner resulted in a meeting with the landowner, RHE and the Development Manager of English Rural Housing Association. The landowner agreed to sell.

**Site 4. Land off Church Hill** - the site was considered as possibly acceptable for development by SBC Planners; in a village centre location with residential use around it. However, the site would only accommodate three or four houses so was not pursued.

**Site 5. Cherry orchard, Staplestreet** – the site was considered as possibly acceptable for development by SBC Planners; on the edge of settlement location, development would not appear isolated or particularly intrusive. RHE enquiries to the landowner resulted in a meeting with the landowner, RHE and the Development Manager of English Rural Housing Association. The landowner agreed to sell.

**Site 6. Land opposite village hall** – the site was considered as possibly acceptable for development by SBC Planners; close to the school and village hall in a sustainable location, the site is visually prominent due to its location on a hill, requiring careful design so as not to have a jarring impact on the upon the landscape. Subsequent RHE enquiries to the landowner at first appeared positive and were followed by communication between the landowner and the Development Manger from English Rural Housing Association, but they ultimately did not agree to sell.

**Site 7. Land off Crockham Lane** – SBC Planners considered the site to possibly have potential for development but less favoured than others previously studied. The site is visually prominent, due to its position on a hill, especially when viewed from further down Crockham Lane. This site was not pursued as more favourable sites were found to be available following enquiries to landowners.

**APPENDIX A**

Site 8. Land near Black Oast, Butlers Hill – this site was not recommended for development by SBC Planners; a visually prominent site that would have an adverse effect on the countryside in an unsustainable, isolated position.

After assessing the suitability and/or availability of the sites, Sites 3 and 5 were both acceptable. Neither SBC Planners or the Parish Council had a preference over which of these sites should be developed. English Rural carried out a development viability appraisal on both sites. Site 3 has a water well located in the corner of the site and overhead electricity cable crossing the site. It was also considered developing this site would have a greater impact on the landscape. It was therefore agreed to progress with site 5.

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