



Local Plan 2035

Planning for the future

NEW SETTLEMENTS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY AND INITIAL SITE ASSESSMENT

APRIL 2017



Your Borough: Planning for the future

New Settlements Assessment Framework Methodology and Initial Site Assessment April 2017

Background

- 1.1 As part of the local plan process, an Issues and Options consultation and first 'call for sites' was published in 2014. 350 site submissions were received on sites across the Borough. A second consultation and 'call for sites' was issued late in October 2015 giving a further opportunity for potential sites to be submitted due to the time that had elapsed since the first opportunity and to potentially widen the choice of site. This specifically invited new settlement submissions
- 1.2 A large number of additional sites were submitted, bringing the total to 640, and several of these involved large-scale proposals that could potentially form new settlements. Clearly the merits of a new settlement as part of a development strategy required investigation as the National Planning Policy Framework para 52 suggests that the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or extension to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities.
- 1.3 Smaller scale new settlements perform less well against sustainability objectives than a larger scale new settlements option as larger scale new settlements are more likely to enable a degree of self-containment by supporting convenience shops, services and community facilities (including secondary schools). Also larger scale new settlements provide greater amounts of housing and are more likely to be able to support affordable and specialised older people's housing. This guided the council's approach to the size of new settlement considered appropriate. (See Second addendum to Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal)
- 1.4 The council appraised the 640 sites submitted to determine which had potential to be new settlements. Four sites were considered to have the potential to form new settlements of 4,000+ new homes, forming a new focus for growth (see Appendix 1 of this methodology document). Much of the information submitted however was patchy and insufficient to enable the council to assess and compare the four sites and the prospects of achieving a quality garden village and also housing delivery of the scale required during the plan period. This was considered particularly important as the new settlement would be a significant proportion of the dwelling requirements to 2035 and delivery rates at Wixams, the council's

existing new settlement, had been significantly lower than expected at the time of allocation. The site promoters were contacted in March 2016 and given the option of providing further information by the end of June 2016 to facilitate assessment (see letter in Appendix 2 of this methodology document).

- 1.5 As a result of receiving these submissions, the timetable for the preparation of the local plan has been revised to provide sufficient time for their evaluation.

Approach to Assessment

- 1.6 The council has considered how to approach the assessment of new settlements that have the potential to follow the principles of garden cities. These larger sites need to be assessed separately from the 600+ other sites due to the scale and nature of the areas they encompass. Whilst the majority of the assessment criteria will be similar for all sites, there are additional criteria specifically appropriate to the assessment of new settlements that also need to be included. These additional criteria have been developed by looking at National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles, and other principles included in the DCLG Locally Led Garden Towns and Villages Prospectus March 2016 (those relating to DCLG's own criteria for selecting authorities to support are omitted). At this initial assessment stage the proposals do not give sufficient information to judge whether all of the Garden City principles can be met, (e.g. there is no information at present on long term stewardship/maintenance, and minimal information on design or landscape quality) but wherever appropriate the principles form part of the assessment criteria.
- 1.7 The criteria proposed are set out below-

Bedford Borough Site Selection Criteria based on the advice set out in the National Planning Policy Framework that are part of the Borough's site selection criteria for all sites, including new settlements.

1. Deliverability including viability.
2. Physical Limitations – absence of insurmountable problems (e.g. ground conditions, flood risk, hazardous risks, pollution, contamination, source protection zone, other such as air quality or noise, minerals and waste safeguarding all included in Site Selection criteria).

3. Physical Impacts – acceptable impacts on high quality agricultural land, important landscape features, townscape features, sites of nature conservation interest and heritage assets – all included in Site Selection criteria.
4. Effect on existing rights of way.
5. Adequacy of highways access proposed and mitigation proposals.

Criteria specific to new settlements based on TCPA Garden City Principles and Locally Led Garden Towns and Villages prospectus March 2016

	TCPA Garden City Principles	Draft assessment criteria
	Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.	Essential to develop successful and robust new communities. (Not considered at the initial assessment stage)
	Land value capture for the benefit of the community.	The council recognises and fully supports the need to ensure strategic growth is accompanied by investment in infrastructure, services and facilities, and will be seeking to evolve mechanisms to ensure an equitable approach in relation to value capture for reasonable and legitimate purposes. (Not considered at the initial assessment stage)
	Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.	Strategic growth and place making must be accompanied by strong community capacity building and empowerment. Ownership of assets and direct community involvement in the place making process will be key. Funding of the long term maintenance of open space and facilities needs to be an integral part of the proposals. (Not considered at the initial assessment stage)
	Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people.	The council will be seeking strategic sites to contain a full mix of housing to ensure they cater for the needs of the whole community. This will include full consideration of potential tenure types including starter homes, custom/self-build and scope for modern manufacturing techniques. (Not considered at the initial assessment stage)
	Beautifully and imaginatively	Proposals should demonstrate that high quality design and place making

	designed homes with gardens in healthy communities.	<p>will underpin the approach, building upon the strong ethos of design and masterplan led development.</p> <p>(Not considered at the initial assessment stage)</p>
	A strong local jobs offer in the new Garden City itself and within easy commuting distance of homes.	<p>The need to generate economic growth and support the regeneration of Bedford is a key underpinning principle. Strategic sites will be well located to local jobs, and will contain a range of on-site employment opportunities ranging from new jobs in on site services and facilities, as well as the provision of strategic employment in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Proposals should give net employment benefits with a good jobs offer. The scale of provision for B class jobs and also proximity of existing employment opportunities are relevant.</p>
	Opportunities for residents to grow their own food, including allotments.	<p>A strong Green Infrastructure network will underpin the place making approach and will include provision for a broad range of open space forms and functions, including allotments. Provision for allotments within greenspace could be conditioned. Adequacy of greenspace included below.</p> <p>(Not considered at the initial assessment stage)</p>
	Generous green space, including: a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl; well-connected and biodiversity-rich public parks; high-quality gardens; tree-lined streets; and open spaces.	<p>Due to the rural nature of the countryside north of Bedford, green infrastructure will form a key underpinning design principle, based on a network of Country Parks and green/wildlife corridors through new Garden Villages. The approach will focus on opening up access for the benefit of both new and existing communities, enhancing open space provision for all.</p> <p>Proposals should more than meet Borough Open Space Standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess land area proposed for open space and sports provision compared with dwelling numbers for each option. • Assess potential for facilities to serve the wider borough. • Presence of green ways etc. linking to existing rural area will assist biodiversity.
	Strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable	The scale of new development will require the creation of vibrant, active and inclusive new communities all of which contain a full range of services and

	neighbourhoods.	<p>facilities to address their day to day needs. The design approach should maximise non-car transport, whilst making maximum provision for the creation of a healthy places and active lifestyles.</p> <p>An appropriate range of facilities should be proposed – including location and timing of schools.</p>
	Integrated and accessible transport systems.	<p>New settlements will need to provide for a step change in sustainable transport provision, minimise use of the private car and be fully integrated into the local public transport network.</p> <p>This could include rapid transit to connect new settlements to existing centres of activity, such as utilising rail corridors, the possibility of capitalising on East West Rail and/or segregated mass rapid transit corridors along existing highways.</p> <p>Proposals must provide convenient and viable bus /rail services. Good provision must be made for pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
	Other principles included in Locally Led Garden Towns and Villages prospectus March 2016	
	Discrete settlement not an extension of an existing town or village.	<p>The proposal should be sufficiently separate to have its own identity and to create a new focus for growth. Settlement should / must be designed to prevent coalescence, with landscaping to maintaining adequate separation/secure identity of new settlement as well as providing a landscape framework for the new settlement.</p>
	Maximise use of brownfield land	<p>Measure the proportion of brownfield or previously developed land (pdl) compared with area of whole settlement. Measure proportion of pdl compared with built up areas of proposed new settlement.</p>
	New community that works as self-sustaining place not dormitory	<p>The proposal must have the potential to become a stand-alone settlement. Benchmark 4,500 dwellings – capable of not relying on existing settlements</p>

	suburb	<p>for its services. A full range of supporting uses will be required e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foodstore proposed on site or existing locally. • Other community facilities. • Proposals should include provision for a range of B employment as well as non B jobs and indicate phasing for these. (see criterion 6)
	Part of strategy to secure delivery of homes to meet assessed need.	<p>The proposal should be well placed to meet Bedford Borough's housing needs. Proximity and linkages to Bedford where the Borough's housing needs are focussed and Bedford's employment areas are located are relevant.</p>
	Strong prospect of quantified early housing delivery	<p>Promoters should give clear details of land ownership and demonstrate their ability to deliver a programme of housing and other development.</p>
	Proposals demonstrate how the new settlement including the necessary infrastructure will be delivered.	<p>Proposal should give information on the availability of infrastructure/utilities and timing and likely costs of any necessary upgrades and/or new provision.</p>

1.8 In summary the proposals range from between 4,000 dwellings to 6,000 dwellings each. All include an element of employment provision ranging between 8ha and 48ha. All propose a range of uses including primary and secondary schools, open spaces, community facilities and provide information to differing extents about highway and other infrastructure requirements.

1.9 The promoters of all four new settlement proposals took the opportunity offered to provide further information by 30th June 2016. This enabled the council to begin the initial assessment of the strengths and weaknesses and identification of issues that require further investigation. As new information is provided by the site promoters it has been added to the council's web site so that local residents and other interested parties can view it. Direct links to the individual folders for the four sites are given on the borough council's main Local Plan 2035 web page (www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2035)

- 1.10 The council commissioned Consultants JMP (Systra) to appraise the adequacy of highway access arrangements and mitigation, and sustainable transport provision for the new settlement appraisal. Views were sought on various aspects of the proposals such as heritage impact on designated and non designated assets and noise impact. These supported officer's analysis of the schemes. A number of issues came to light that required investigation broadly relate to the following: further information required on highway infrastructure and utilities, noise issues (Santa Pod / Sharnbrook), major heritage constraints (Sharnbrook archaeology; Wyboston scheduled ancient monuments); major gas pipeline constraint (Wyboston), need for further landscape work (Sharnbrook and Wyboston).
- 1.11 The results of the highways appraisal, the heritage appraisal and the initial appraisal for each site against the criteria in para 1.7 has been shared with the promoter of that site so that they may continue to work on aspects of their schemes.
- 1.12 Appendix 3 sets out the initial appraisal position on 31.03.2017. It should be stressed that this appraisal is work in progress and it is intended to show the methodology and to indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the schemes to inform views when responding to the 2017 consultation in relation to:-
- the principle of including a new settlement or settlements in the Local Plan as part of the borough's preferred development strategy creating a new focus for strategic growth, and
 - the individual proposals themselves.
- 1.13 The site promoters were passed the initial appraisal of their submission based on available information at the end of November 2016 to give them the opportunity to address issues raised. Additional information submitted in response is included on the website information available for the 2017 consultation but there has been insufficient time since 31 March for the information to be appraised and the initial appraisal text amended.
- 1.14 The consultation seeks views as follows:-
- Q1 *Do you agree that one or more of the four new settlement proposals should form part of the development strategy? If not, the 2,200 dwellings identified for new settlement(s) as part of the preferred strategy will need to be provided elsewhere: where should the development go instead?*

Q.12 Specifically in relation to the new settlement proposals, do you have any comments on our initial appraisal of the sites that have been put forward, set out in the study “New Settlements Assessment Framework Methodology and Initial Site Assessment”? Having read the initial appraisal do you have a preference for which settlement(s) the Council should investigate further with a view to allocation.

- 1.15 At the present time no decision to include one or more of the new settlement options has been made. The evaluation is still very much work in progress and will be added to as proposals evolve and the further information provided is appraised. The plan’s development strategy will not be finalised until after the consultation has closed and comments have been evaluated.
- 1.16 If there is general support for including a new settlement(s) or no real alternatives have been put forward for accommodating the required amount of growth in the borough, then more detailed analysis of the new settlement proposals against the criteria, and their potential to incorporate the principles of garden cities, in the light of information provided and comments raised will continue.

Next steps in the process

- 2.1 It is intended that to aid comparative assessment each of the elements appraised for the 4 proposals will be scored within the following range 1-5 which in general terms will be interpreted as follows:-

- 5 = Excellent,
- 4 = Good,
- 3 = Satisfactory,
- 2 = Poor,
- 1 = Unacceptable

The proposed basis for the scoring is set out on the left column of Appendix 3. It is acknowledged that it is unlikely to be clear whether issues can be addressed or not except where the issue is straightforward i.e. flood zone, as it generally requires a level of detail and evidence that is unlikely to be achievable at this stage in the planning process. The appraisal can only be based on the information submitted and to some extent is a worst case scenario as where there is no proof that concerns can and will be addressed the council has to assume there is an issue.

- 2.2 This proposed basis for scoring is a rather simplistic approach and as explained below it is considered that not all criteria should be given equal weight as some factors are viewed as more important in the creation of a sustainable new settlement. In moving forward with the evaluation these factors need to be taken into account in addition to the level of support or objection to a specific new settlement proposal expressed through the consultation process.
- 2.3 The council may come to the conclusion in the appraisal process that for one or more of the sites that there is a “show stopper”. A show stopper is an obstacle to being considered further in the Local Plan 2035 plan process due to an issue that affects the majority or whole of a proposed site that the council considers cannot be over-come or overcome to the council’s satisfaction. In this situation the council would consider that further work and appraisal would be abortive as the site could not be allocated at this time. The context for considering what is a “show stopper” is the National Planning Policy Framework guidance para 47 for sites expected to be developed beyond the first 5 years. To be considered developable sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed. The key questions in identifying show stoppers are:-
- Are there any serious site wide issues that would make the location of the site undesirable for development that cannot be successfully mitigated?
 - Is there no reasonable prospect that the site could be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged in the Plan?

The council will be relying on the housing delivery from new settlements and before including an allocation in the Draft Submission Plan needs to be clear the development meets these tests. The council needs to be confident, if a new settlement is to form part of the development strategy, that the proposals will be able to deliver a settlement based on garden city principles and that there is a reasonable prospect that the housing numbers assumed to be delivered within the plan period from the chosen allocation(s) can and will be achieved. If the council considers, for any new settlement option, that there is a “show stopper”, then then the site promoter will be informed and appraisal of that proposal will not be progressed further for this Plan by the council. The opportunity will remain for the applicant to continue to promote the site making representations at the next stage in the Plan process or through a planning application.

2.4 The more detailed comparative assessment will be progressed for those new settlement proposals with the best prospects for delivery of a sustainable new community and greater certainty of sustained housing delivery within the plan period across a range of housing tenures whilst embracing garden city principles. The next stages in the assessment will include consideration of these elements:-

- whether the consultation or further information from the site promoters indicate that there are additional criteria that need to be added, or any that of the existing criteria should preferably be broken down into sub criteria to enable more objective appraisal.
- which criteria should be given the greatest weight as some factors will be more important to the overall judgement on sustainability than others. This could include environmental factors as well as accessibility.
- identifying the key criteria which would indicate improved prospects of delivery of a sustainable new settlement with sustained housing delivery.

2.5 Our initial thoughts on the key criteria to be weighted is that they should reflect the elements that are to be considered to be the most important in the Bedford context. These include:-

	Suggested weighting
Brownfield first. This is emphasised in the NPPF, but also in the responses to the 2015 consultation	X2
Environmental issues that could potentially affect wide areas of the site if the issue cannot be mitigated both externally and internally and would affect enjoyment of private gardens and public spaces e.g noise, and if raised by consultees odour if mitigation prospects are poor.	X3
Potential to deliver good public transport services to and from the site to towns and employment areas using existing or proposed infrastructure (public transport external)	X2
Potential for good walking and cycling linkages to and from the site to the nearest villages/towns (walking and cycling external)	X2

2.6 The prospects for early delivery of the housing and supporting community facilities is of key importance. The factors which the council consider particularly contribute to this are:-

- Land ownership/ a formal agreement between the owners of the land necessary to deliver the scheme
- Viability of the scheme demonstrated through a high level appraisal (development costs including costs of infrastructure and utilities)
- Willingness to enter into delivery agreement/local delivery vehicle

If robust structures are put in place to secure delivery of a scheme in an agreed programme, more weight can be given to deliverability of that scheme in the assessment of alternative site options. In the case of a new settlement, where the delivery of a complex mix of infrastructure and services is likely to be critical to the realisation of a settlement based on ‘Garden City’ principles, the willingness of the land owners to enter into delivery agreements such as a local delivery vehicle or alternative mechanism should carry particular weight in the appraisal. This would aim to prevent the situation that has arisen at Wixams new settlement where, whilst 300 dwellings/annum were envisaged, an average of fewer than 100 dwellings/annum have been delivered over the last 10 years and there have been delays in releasing further tranches of land for sale. Willingness of owners to enter into delivery agreements is therefore proposed to be added as an additional weighted criterion.

	Suggested weighting
Ownership/ land owners agreement	X2
Viability of scheme demonstrated	X2
Willingness of owners to enter into delivery agreement	X3

2.7 As we move forward to the next stage of assessment there are further garden village principles that that the council wish to consider where there is currently little information provided, including whether the site promoters can satisfy the council that they can deliver the concept of a garden village including

- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Land value capture for the benefit of the community (e.g. provision of social and community infrastructure).
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people

(including a significant proportion of affordable rented dwellings.

- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens in healthy communities.

- 2.8 The council will also have to consider the benefits and dis-benefits of pursuing a strategy with more than one new settlement and appraise the different combinations of potential new settlements, in a similar way that the individual appraisal was made. In this scenario cumulative impact on infrastructure and utilities and services may require investigation.
- 2.9 If an option including one or more new settlements is chosen it will be necessary to agree and set out in the Plan as key principles relating to the allocation(s) a clear timetable for delivery with agreed dates for the submission of a detailed masterplan and land budget, the submission of planning applications, the phased delivery of infrastructure and services and the delivery of homes and employment.
- 2.10 The outcome of the assessment of the four new settlement proposals will be published as evidence in support of the council's Plan for Submission.

Appendix 1

Local Plan Review – large site assessment (March 2016)

The council has received submissions for 11 sites of 1,000 dwellings or greater.

Site	Number of dwellings
Wyboston 659	4,000
Twinwoods, Milton Ernest 608	6,000
Thurleigh Airfield 630	Up to 1,000.
Lee Farm Sharnbrook 622	2,500
Broadmead, Kempston Hardwick. 607	1,100
Land at Green End Great Barford 670	2,200
Stewartby Brickworks west/east 569/570	Put forward for mixed scheme predominantly residential. East side has heritage constraints, Capacity to be determined following masterplan. West side 29ha @ 40 dph = 1160
Land west of Wilstead Rd, Elstow 585	1,000
Manor Farm Cotton End 601	1,500 – 1,800
North of Bromham 413	1,000
Land at Ford End Road 566	1,000

In order to determine which of the sites are most suitable for further consideration in testing whether the new settlement option can be pursued it is necessary to define which sites can be considered as new settlement locations for the purpose of further analysis and to collect evidence as to whether these development alternatives perform better (in sustainability appraisal terms) than other options for meeting strategic development needs.

Criteria to assess whether strategic proposals submitted have the potential (subject to the submission of further information) to provide a location for a new settlement.

1. The site must have the potential to provide a location for a stand-alone new settlement i.e. a proposal which is not related to established existing settlements with a defined settlement policy area boundaries to provide an additional focus for growth.
2. The location should have the potential to deliver a strategic level of growth, of a scale to provide a sustainable new settlement. The benchmark is Wixams (4,500 dwellings, employment plus environmental and community infrastructure). Smaller scale new settlements perform less well against sustainability objectives than a larger scale new settlements option as larger scale new settlements are more likely to enable a degree of self-containment by supporting shops, services and community facilities (including secondary schools).

Information to be collected via the letter to enable the comparative assessment of the proposals against each other and against other alternatives for meeting growth.

3. The site should be in a location that is **suitable** for development in terms of
 - No overriding physical constraints
 - Has the potential to provide appropriate access by sustainable modes to employment and strategic services
4. The site (and any additional land necessary to achieve a strategic proposal) should be **available** i.e. there should be evidence that there are no land ownership issues and that there is a willing developer.
5. Sites should be capable of **achieving** delivery a specified number of dwellings at a stated point in time i.e. should be accompanied by a trajectory showing the development programme and capacity in the plan period.
6. Sites should demonstrate that they perform better (or at least no worse) than **other alternatives** for meeting housing need.

	Number of dwellings in the Call for Sites proposal	Does the proposal have the potential be a free standing location for Wixams scale development?	Is the site related or capable of being related to a group 1 village	Comments
Wyboston (659)	4,000	Y	N	The existing settlement at Wyboston has no SPA. Just about large enough for strategic dwelling numbers. Need more info on employment.
Twinwoods (608)	6,000	Y	N	Freestanding location, potentially of a size to provide strategic development
Lee Farm, Colworth Park, Sharnbrook (622)	2,500	?	Y	Clarification is required to ascertain whether this is a free standing proposal or an extension of Sharnbrook. Need info as to whether further land is available to achieve size of site needed to achieve strategic growth
Thurleigh Airfield (630)	Up to 1,000	?	N	Free standing but more info needed to ascertain whether land is available to achieve strategic scale growth.
Land at Green End (670)	2,250	N	Y	Site is too confined to achieve strategic scale growth separate from Great Barford. Could be considered as part of growth point proposal centred on Great Barford.
Manor Farm Cotton End (601)	1,500-1,800	N	In conjunction with 98 and 565?	Adjoins group 1 village
North of Bromham (413)	1,000	N	Y	Adjoins group 1 village
Broadmead (607)		N	N	Not related to a village and no scope to develop as a free standing strategic proposal
Stewartby Brickworks		N	Y	570, east side adjoins group 2 village

(569/570)				
Land west Wilstead Road (585)	1,000	N	Y (Wixams)	Adjoins Wixams
Land at Ford End Road (566)	1,000	N	N	urban brownfield site

The following submissions are therefore selected for invitation to submit further information re their potential to function as free standing new settlements.

- Wyboston Garden Village (659)
- Land at Twinwoods (608)
- Lee Farm, near Sharnbrook (622)
- Thurleigh Airfield (630)

Appendix 2

Letter sent 22 March 2016 to four site promoters requesting further information.

Bedford Borough Local Plan – New Settlement Proposals

I am writing to you in regard to the proposal that you have submitted to the Council's call for sites. As you are aware the Council made known at the beginning of the 2015 Local Plan 2032 consultation that it was interested in receiving proposals for new settlements of a size sufficient to enable the creation of a sustainable new community that, if included in the plan, would deliver growth later in the plan period and beyond. Whilst the consultation was not prescriptive about the nature of proposals which might be submitted, the Council's own experience of new settlement planning suggests that credible proposals would need to offer development of a similar scope and scale to Wixams which has permission for 4,500 homes, employment land and the provision of environmental and community infrastructure. In sustainability terms any new settlement location will need to perform well in comparison to other alternative approaches to meeting strategic development needs.

The Council has received four strategic proposals (ranging from 1000 to 6,000 dwellings) which, subject to the receipt of further information may have the potential to provide locations for "stand alone" new settlements not reliant upon established existing settlements with defined Settlement Policy Area boundaries. These proposals will need to be evaluated against other potential options for meeting strategic growth such as strategic extensions to the existing urban area and group 1 villages.

The four proposals are:

- Wyboston Garden village (659)
- Land at Twinwoods (608)
- Lee Farm Sharnbrook (622)
- Thurleigh Airfield (630)

Following the 2015 consultation and the submission of these sites, as well as a substantial number of other proposals (approximately 640 in total) further thought is being given to the strategic direction to be taken over the forthcoming plan period. This includes testing whether a development strategy including one or more new settlements could be a potential strategic option.

However the Council can only include such proposals in the emerging plan if we are convinced that they would withstand scrutiny and they clearly demonstrate that they would meet the planning guidance requirement tests of sustainability, availability and achievability/deliverability within the plan period. To avoid undue delay in the local plan process we need to be in the position in the next few months to decide which if any, of the proposals to take forward.

The submissions have not all included the same level or range of supporting information and I am therefore writing to invite you to consider preparing further material to support your submission. I appreciate that the costs are significant and in the absence of any comfort from me at this stage to the contrary, such investment is completely at risk. I shall therefore understand should you decide for commercial reasons to disengage from the process and withdraw your submission at this point. Where information is scant, sites are likely to be disadvantaged when we seek advice from consultees such as Highways England, other service providers, heritage and other bodies and in the Council's assessment process.

For the assessment we will be looking at a range of factors and we suggest you consider submitting further information on the following:-

Master Plan and design considerations

- An indicative Master Plan showing the general areas within the site proposed for residential development, community facilities, open space/sports pitches and a matching draft land use budget indicating the different land uses proposed in hectares and type and scale of development envisaged. In all cases it would be useful to know if there is scope for further growth beyond the site proposal boundaries. In respect of the proposals at Sharnbrook and Thurleigh Airfield it is essential as the Council's initial view is that as submitted these proposals are unlikely to be of a scale to function as stand-alone new settlements.
- A plan identifying key physical, environmental, heritage and other constraints and opportunities. This should include consideration of the landscape context and impacts.
- A plan identifying the location of services and utilities to serve the site and noting any improvements needed.

Infrastructure requirements

- Information on the scope of community facilities proposed and timing - schools, health facilities, playing pitches, shops etc.
- Information on highway impact of the proposals and identification of any highways improvements needed to provide access or elsewhere on the road network. This should include information on whether the land needed for highway improvements is within the highway boundary or on land in the promoter's control. To demonstrate the viability of the development information on the likely cost of any significant improvements based on evidenced engagement with the relevant highway authorities is needed.

- Information on other infrastructure available or needed, including services and utilities (electricity, gas, mains sewerage, mains water, drainage) and, if significant, the likely cost of sub stations and other improvements.
- Information on how the development will be designed as a sustainable new settlement providing for alternative modes of transport to the car. This should include information on pedestrian and cycle routes and how new bus services can be provided/funded to the site from nearest higher order centre, employment areas etc.
- The intended phasing of development and information on the infrastructure that will need to be provided to support the development of each phase. This should include information on what will be provided in each phase, by whom – including information on funding and viability.

Information on the development proposals

- The timing of the first phase of development i.e. a realistic estimate of when the development of dwellings on the site may begin and a year by year (in financial years) trajectory showing how many dwellings will be delivered in the plan period and beyond.
- Net employment benefits. The scale and type of employment land to be provided and proposals for bringing it forward, and information on employment /jobs lost.
- Information on any abnormal costs not included in infrastructure costs e.g. contamination.

General

- Information on each of the landowners whose land is affected by the development and any relevant land beyond and whether there is currently a land owner's agreement in place.
- Information on the quality of agricultural land affected, distinguishing between grade 3a and 3b.
- If the site is partially brownfield, the number of hectares of land and percentage of the site being developed that is previously developed land and the number of hectares of land and percentage that is greenfield.

Please note that the above is not a definitive list of information requirements. If you consider it necessary, please submit any additional information needed to enable your site proposal to be assessed.

For the information to be taken into account in the assessment process we need the information by the end of June. Information received after 30th June is unlikely to be able to be taken into account.

It is possible that there will be further requests for information/clarification as the local process continues.

If you have any queries please contact Alison Stringfellow (01234 228089) or Kim Wilson (01234 228484).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gill Cowie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Gill Cowie
Service Manager Planning Policy and Housing Strategy

Part 2

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
Proposed basis for scoring	4,500 homes	5,250 homes	6,000 homes	4,000 homes
Deliverability				
Ownership - Highest points for the smallest number of land owners and all land (including highway access) secured under a formal land agreement. Lowest points if there is no indication of any discussion with land owners. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter	Wrenbridge & Unilever own the site, but the provision of the essential new southern route and northern route to the A6 will affect land parcels within multiple ownerships. Promoters advise there has been initial contact with respective land owners but no formal agreement is in place. Land ownership details submitted 28/02/2017 to be appraised	St Modwen & MSV Group own the site. There is need for land ownership details/ agreements to facilitate the improvements/dualling to the access road, and Thurleigh Rd to the A6 and A6 junction. Timing of this is not clear, initial highways work suggest not until 2,500 dwellings. Land for the Milton Ernest bypass not in the site promoters ownership may also be needed longer term.	Marcol, Bedfordia, Highway Authority are the land owners. Initial BBC check confirms this.	90% owned by EF Wootton & Son, John Sheard Farms Ltd and Bates Bros Farms Ltd. However, there are 5 other landowners and no formal agreement or agreement in principle has been provided. There is no evidence of discussions taking place with all the landowners and the site promoter. The list of land owners may not be exhaustive.
Viability -Highest points awarded for the submission of a viability report demonstrating the viability of the development with all policy requirements (i.e. affordable housing & infrastructure accounted for). Lowest score for absence of viability report and infrastructure costings. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter	High level viability information received Feb 2017, to be appraised.	High level viability information received 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	Updated high level viability information received 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	High level viability information received 31/03/2017 to be appraised.
Key factors as potential barrier to development - Highest points awarded for a reasonable demonstration of how possible development impediments (be it infrastructure cost, or site constraints) will be addressed. Sites in which constraints can be overcome financially will score higher than those where there is no such recourse. Lowest points awarded to sites that do not evaluate potential development impediments. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and officer verification with consultees.	Technical - Long new access road to A6 unconstrained by light controls at railway crossing needed before any development. Extent of Noise issue from Santa Pod not yet clarified and that could constrain development over large area of site. Also need to establish if other A6 improvements are required. Archaeology could be another limiting factor. Financial/legal -Upfront cost of access road and land ownership to provide both links to A6. Financial/technical - High upfront cost of providing electricity supply	Financial/ Technical - High upfront financial cost of providing electricity supply to site before first dwelling. Extent to which proposal relies on A6 improvements towards Bedford needs clarifying.	Financial - Cost of Milton Ernest bypass, but some development may be able to proceed without, and high level financial appraisal has been prepared to support proposal. Financial/ Technical - High upfront cost of electricity feed needed before the first dwelling based on UKPN advice, actual position needs clarifying.	Technical - Timing of route, design and implementation of Highways England scheme Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet - without which cannot address potential capacity/safety issues to confirm if scheme acceptable on highway grounds. Master plan likely to be constrained by high pressure gas pipeline and impact on scheduled monument and archaeology. Financial/ Technical - High upfront cost of electricity feed needed before the first dwelling. Timing and route of A1 improvements may also be an issue.
Physical limitations				
Flood risk - Highest points awarded to Flood zone 1 given minimal risk whilst the Flood zone 3 would score lowest. Assessment based on Strategic flood Risk Assessment information from URS consultants.	Flood Zone 1 - minimal risk	Flood Zone 1 - minimal risk	Flood Zone 1	Mostly Flood Zone 1 but two small areas of flood zone 3a
Contamination/ground condition - Highest points awarded to sites that have carried out an assessment and confirmed that the site is not subject to ground contamination. Lowest points awarded for sites that are subject to contamination and have not submitted a contamination report and mitigation strategy. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoters and BBC GIS constraint information.	Phase 1 Ground Condition Report submitted. The report advises that there is a 5 % worst case moderate risk	No details provided	No details provided but there is a potential need for decontamination in some areas of the site e.g. within the business park. Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	Former landfill site within site boundary, however housing located away from the area of contamination

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
Noise - Highest points awarded to sites where noise impact from existing uses on proposed residential development is not likely to be an issue. Lowest points awarded to sites where the noise environment for houses and gardens may be unsatisfactory and promoters have not provided a sound mitigation strategy. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice received from the Council's Environmental Health team.	Santa Pod noise - The Council's EHO advises this is a major issue that could be very difficult to mitigate. Potential mitigation proposals suggested but on land outside promoters control. Further information has been received in Feb 2017 (Environmental sound survey and noise impact assessment) from the promoter based on survey information of actual noise levels and is being appraised. Unless the council can be satisfied that satisfactory internal and external noise environments can be achieved this must be regarded as serious issue.	It has been confirmed that the autodrome is to be closed to facilitate the development so limited noise impacts are therefore anticipated.	Noise from Redbull wind tunnel may have localised impact. This will need to be assessed before detailed Master Plan prepared. Existing uses on the business park will largely relocate. Acoustic report received 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	No known issues so limited noise impacts
Minerals and waste - Highest points awarded to sites where there is no minerals and waste impact. Lower points for sites affected by sand and gravel safeguarding or existing mineral workings and waste disposal. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter as well as advice from the Minerals and Waste team shared service.	No issues of concern identified	The site is within 300 metres of an active aggregate recycling facility. It is however considered that the impact on any the new settlement is likely to be limited.	The IDC, Red Bull and Twinwoods Heat and Power sites are to be retained. But some current waste facilities within the Business Park are likely to be lost. In terms of pollution and the potential effect on future residential amenity, the uses that are likely to remain are clean with no pollution issues Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	North east area of the site within Minerals Safeguarding Area. Adopted policy requires a Minerals Resource Assessment to be provided to assess the importance of this MSP11, MSP12
Source Protection zone (protection groundwater) - Highest points awarded on the sites that are not within a Source Protection Zone (SPZ). Assessment based on BBC GIS constraint information.	Not within SPZ	Not within SPZ	Not within SPZ	Not within SPZ
Any other constraints	None identified at this stage.	None identified at this stage.	Potential issue odour from anaerobic digestion plant, but intention to mitigate mentioned by promoter. Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	Potential odour issue Chawston Tythe Farm water recycling centre needs clarifying
Physical impacts				
Agricultural Land value - Highest points awarded to sites likely to have the least impact on best and most versatile agricultural land (classified as Grade 1, 2 and 3a) either due to the significant level of non agricultural or previously developed land or the extent of the higher Agricultural Land Classification values(ALC) within the site. Lowest scores awarded to sites with higher proportion of ACL Grades 1, 2 and 3a. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter as well as ALC map on BBC GIS constraint information. No promoters provided detailed information.	Agricultural Land Classification map (ALC) Grade 3 - no detailed information beyond this has been provided.	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) map shows that 90% of the site is non agricultural. The small remainder is an ALC Grade 2 but this is a very small proportion of the whole.	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) shows about 75% of the site in Grade 2 (including the business park site) and 25% former runways non agricultural. Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) map shows vast majority grade 2, very small areas towards east grade 1. Promoter submitted preliminary assessment of Agricultural Land classification, which points out that local testing has shown variations from ALC map, and that any development north of Bedford is likely to affect best and most versatile land.
Nature Conservation, including areas of special value. Highest points awarded to sites that do not contain or adjoin a County Wildlife Site (CWS). Equally high points can be awarded to sites that have strategically incorporated the CWS into the illustrative masterplan allowing for a greater public benefit. Lowest points awarded to sites that include or adjoin a CWS that would suffer significant detriment as a result of the proposal. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter as well as BBC GIS information and Wildlife Trust advice.	County Wildlife sites are shown as woodland or nature reserve on the Master Plan. The 'Vision' document makes reference to important ecological features present which include the ancient/semi-natural woodland, Local Wildlife Sites, localised areas of unimproved grassland; animal species including great crested newts, dormice, as well as roosting and foraging bats. The site is considered to have predominantly intensive farmed arable land but, in addition to the ancient woods, there are hedges, verges, headlands, tracks and more modern plantations. There may also be species protected by law and NERC S41 species of principle importance that all contribute to the biodiversity value of the area and would need to be considered in more detail and protected.	Galsey Wood County Wildlife Site is located to the north west part of the site. Galsey Wood will be protected from development and a buffer will be provided between the CWS and any built development. The ecological appraisal submitted identified that the site provides a habitat for a number of protected species and recommends retaining the parcel of land to the east of the site comprising approximately 50 hectares as open grassland (as shown on masterplan).	There are 2 County Wildlife Sites, Yarl's Wood County Wildlife Site and Oakley Wood County Wildlife Site. Both will be retained with a landscape buffer on site boundaries. The Wildlife Trust advise that there are minor areas of habitat overall and therefore limited wildlife constraints within the rest of the wider site	No wildlife constraints identified by the Wildlife Trust

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Landscape and character context - Highest score would be awarded for master plans that include a detailed landscape evaluation and strategy. High scores awarded to master plans that reflect the established landscape features of the wider locale. Low points for a landscape evaluation and master plan that does not respect the wider context, or the absence of a landscape evaluation altogether. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>The landscape supporting document provides context rather than site specific information. The layout of development is irregular with ecological corridors and areas of attenuation providing visual relief to the areas of development. Conscious linkage to Colworth Science Park</p>	<p>A Landscape and Visual Appraisal report has been submitted but it is not clear how it has informed the Master Plan or the integration of the settlement in the landscape. The site is distinctly separate from the Thurleigh Village and is on a plateau. Its layout is derived from the airfield with the existing runway to serve as a principal route through the site. Green spaces are largely concentrated to the site's edges rather than within the core areas, which makes for a hard urban landscape within the rural setting.</p>	<p>The masterplan has been prepared with the benefit of a strategic landscape visual appraisal to examine visual sensitivity for absorbing development. The Master Plan shows green links (although these are concentrated to the south of the site), areas of existing and proposed woodland, along with neighbourhood greens which separate the different clusters of development.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>A revised masterplan has been submitted as a consequence of the pipeline that runs through the site. No landscape and visual appraisal appears to have been carried out to inform the Master Plan. The proposed masterplan has a fairly 'grid-like' appearance with the informal open space created as a consequence to serve as a buffer zone for the pipeline rigidly running through the middle of the site. A modest landscape buffer has been retained to most boundaries but it does not provide enough of a separation. The new settlement would have the appearance of an awkward extension to Wyboston parts of which currently have an attractive low density character due to the Land Settlement Association areas, and rural context.</p>
<p>Designated Heritage Assets - Higher points awarded to sites that have submitted a full heritage statement that demonstrates that the heritage asset would be enhanced or would be likely to have minor/less than substantial harm. Lowest points awarded to sites within which the impact to designated heritage assets has not been adequately addressed and where the level of harm could be medium to high less than substantial harm or substantial harm. Assessment based on information provided by site promoters and advice provided by BBC's Heritage team. Impact on designated heritage assets is viewed as more serious than on non designated heritage assets given that designated heritage assets include sites such as Grade I, Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings as well as scheduled monuments.</p>	<p>Site promoters preliminary review identified assets within the site only. There are 3 Grade II listed buildings located within the site, Colworth House Grade II*, Antonie Farmhouse Grade II (and New Farmhouse). The Council's Heritage team advises that the impact on these buildings and their settings will depend on the detailed design of the proposal. The development has the potential to impact a number of scheduled monuments within a 4km radius of the development boundary. Chellington scheduled Deserted Medieval Village, is c.3km away and from there the proposed housing will be noticeably visible on the slope down from the plateau on which Colworth Science Park sits. This view will also place the housing in the same view as two medieval churches, (Grade I listed All Saints, Odell & Grade I listed St. Nicholas' Church, Chellington). Changes to the masterplan should be considered. A Heritage Assessment will need to be carried out of all heritage assets on or off site that may be affected by the development to ensure all heritage issues can be addressed.</p>	<p>Archaeological and cultural heritage report prepared looking at assets within 1 km of site, and concluded few impacts of significance. The Council's Heritage team advises the existing uses and buildings have a negative impact on heritage assets, particularly where the larger industrial buildings are visible within the setting. The development has the potential to impact on a number of off site listed buildings, 3 Conservation Areas (Bletsoe, Riseley and Thurleigh) and 4 Scheduled Monuments. One potential area of concern is the impact on the setting of the grade I listed St Mary the Virgin Church, at Keysoe. This is evident in a number of views and acts as a focal point within the wider landscape. The scale, bulk, mass, density etc. of development proposed will affect the level of impact. A Heritage Assessment will need to be carried out of all heritage assets on or off site that may be affected by the development to ensure all heritage issues can be addressed.</p>	<p>Site promoters mention 3 scheduled monuments within the site but no specific consideration of them or surrounding area. The Yarl's Wood hermitage and moated site would be retained and is located within the site but the Council's Heritage team suggest the potential opening-up of access to the site as a community/amenity asset should be considered, potentially relocating the proposed sports pitches to improve the setting. There are other scheduled monuments in the vicinity, impacts are not likely to be significant but a Heritage Assessment will need to be carried out of all heritage assets on or off site that may be affected by the development to ensure all heritage issues are addressed.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Only limited references to heritage by site promoters. There are a number of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments within and in the vicinity of the site. Council's Heritage team advises the majority of the heritage assets derive interest from their rural setting that would be lost due to the development and associated traffic. In the majority of cases the proposed development would result in some degree of harm. With regards to listed buildings/conservation areas it has been concluded that where harm does occur this is within the less than substantial bracket (substantial harm is usually akin to demolition/loss of an asset) and to varying degrees, but the impact in several cases is at least a moderate degree of harm. Due to the invasive nature of the development across the Scheduled Monument of the moated enclosure and building platforms along The Lane, the current proposal would result in "substantial harm" to the monument due to the proposed housing and additional traffic. This potential level of harm is a serious concern that needs to be addressed. A Heritage Assessment will need to be carried out of all heritage assets on or off site that may be affected by the development to ensure all heritage issues can be addressed.</p>
<p>Non Designated Heritage Assets - Highest points awarded to a site that has no known non-designated heritage assets. Higher points also awarded to sites that are able to demonstrate a neutral to very low level of harm to non designated heritage assets. Low points for sites that are not accompanied by heritage statements or where potentially there is likely to be a higher level of harm. Assessment based on information provided by site promoters and advice provided by BBC's Heritage team.</p>	<p>Site promoters preliminary review recognised high archaeological potential require investigation with associated cost and risk. The Council's heritage team advise that there are a number of heritage assets of archaeological interest within the site (841 in total). The most significant that may require preservation in situ/or retention and potentially require either significant amendments to the masterplan are mentioned as follows. The remains of a medieval moat lie in the area of the proposed sports pitches, and allotments, and the creation of these would potentially have a significant impact upon these remains. The remains of a Roman villa lie in the field to the northeast of the moat and this appears to be in the area of proposed housing and employment. Archaeological trenching work in 2008 revealed remains of a stone building, as well as part of an Iron Age roundhouse in the neighbouring field, and there cropmarks. There are also crop marks adjacent to Forty Foot Lane. The proposed development site will require in the first instance, intrusive evaluation to assess further determine archaeological potential, essential before planning application stage, potentially followed by extensive excavation. The costs for undertaking the archaeological works should be taken into account when considering the viability of the proposals.</p>	<p>The site promoters appraisal recognises there may be undesignated assets within the former airfield site. The Council's heritage team advise that the archaeological potential of the site is unknown and an archaeological evaluation would be required. Longer term highway proposals east of Milton Ernest would affect scheduled monuments and listed buildings.</p>	<p>Little information from site promoters. The Council's Heritage team advises that whilst there are a number of non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest within the proposed development site (30 recorded on the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record in total), none are considered complex and requiring preservation in situ or significant amendments to the masterplan, although many of these are cropmark sites and will require archaeological evaluation, and potentially mitigation, prior to development.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>No information from site promoters. The Council's Heritage team advises that there is evidence of cropmarks (probably pre-historic and Roman) on the site which suggests that there may be a need for extensive archaeological evaluation. Anglo-Saxon and Medieval remains associated with the settlements along both Colesden Road and The Lane are also likely to be impacted on by the proposed works. Trial trench evaluation of much of the proposed new settlement (if not all) will be required ahead of the determination of any forthcoming planning application, followed by extensive areas of open area excavation. The evaluation may identify areas within the site where remains of national significance survive which require preservation in situ. The costs for undertaking the archaeological works should be taken into account when considering the viability of the proposals.</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Impact on Existing Rights of Way (footpaths/cycle ways) - Highest points awarded to a masterplan reflecting integration of land uses with walking and cycling routes. As such if existing right of way is retained and enhances connectivity then a high score is awarded. Lowest points awarded to the loss of existing rights of way. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter compared with the Borough's rights of way network .</p>	<p>Master Plan layout takes into account the extensive network of public rights of way, including the Forty Foot Lane and Three Shires Way on northern border.</p>	<p>There are no rights of way crossing the site currently. Routes skirt the former airfield.</p>	<p>The Master plan provides for the retention and enhancement of existing rights of way.</p>	<p>The Master Plan does not indicate how existing footpaths are accommodated in the development. The proposed main access route to the settlement coincides with the long distance footpath shown on the OS map and the route of the National Cycle Network.</p>
<p>Adequacy of highway access proposals</p>				
<p>Access -Highest points awarded to sites whose access land is available, satisfactory geometry, levels, costs and no other significant challenge. Lowest points for inadequate details. Based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants</p>	<p>Access strategy appears to be reasonable in principle considering highway capacity. However there are concerns regarding the land availability, geometric and level constraints on the existing Sharnbrook Road railway bridge and the potentially high costs for the extent of highway works and possible new bridge over railway. Railway possession likely to be required for new bridge.</p>	<p>Primary access junction to Thurleigh Road considered to be able to accommodate the development traffic as is, although the secondary accesses are not ideal and would be significantly difficult to achieve suitable standard for any significant traffic. Reliance on single access point may create issues in relation to focused traffic impact and highway safety and emergency access to the site.</p> <p>Further information received 20/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Extensive access proposals focused on new Milton Ernest bypass. All within control of the site promoter, but expensive and significant land take. The junctions onto the A6 look feasible in principle, although some technical constraints to overcome.</p> <p>Further information received 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Use of existing lanes and rural roads for access, but there is limited scope for improving these from the existing situation. Existing road widths, visibility and constraints are considered to be inappropriate for the proposed development. Significant changes could be required to the location of junctions. Access to the A1 via rural roads in currently considered to be inadequate and unacceptable, with no proposals for improvement included.</p>
<p>Improvements/mitigation - Highest points awarded to submissions that show potential highway improvements that could be made, and they are geometrically sound, and would be to satisfactory levels with no prohibitive cost. Lowest points for the absence of adequate details. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants</p>	<p>No other highway mitigation measures are set out, but it would be expected to consider the impact and mitigation within Sharnbrook and the A6 and junctions approaching Bedford including mitigation for traffic impact through Milton Ernest. Additional information submitted 22/02/17 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Whilst there are no concerns about the principal of a dual carriageway along Thurleigh Road as the development progresses, the land ownership and access issues for other properties and land parcels and uses could be a large constraint. This is also the case for the proposed Milton Ernest bypass. The traffic impact will also be concentrated on the Sharnbrook Turn or in the centre of Milton Ernest, with no impact or mitigation identified. No mitigation of other secondary accesses suggested</p> <p>Further information received 20/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Dual carriageway as part of later phases appears to be sound in principle, but there are a few years when complete by-pass will not be in place and traffic may need to be routed through Milton Ernest. No consideration to wider impact on A6 and Bedford.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Little to no information regarding the proposals for the necessary road widening and improvements. Whilst information provided on the proposed improvements is good, there are some issues with visibility, manoeuvrability and land availability, especially at the larger junctions. No alternative mitigation proposed for the A1 junctions or the Black Cat roundabout if the Highways England investment/improvements do not come forward within the development timescales.</p>
<p>Costs - Highest points awarded to limited highway infrastructure improvements required as this suggests limited costs. Lowest points for high costs as a result of the need for extensive highway improvements. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>No costs have been given within the submission. However, the new roads required, bridge improvements and a new bridge is estimated to cost at least £25million combined. Relatively costly infrastructure. Any new rail station is also costly and cannot be depended upon at this stage. Further improvements may be required at Milton Ernest and other junctions / links towards Bedford. Additional information submitted to be appraised.</p>	<p>Whilst the access costs are not considered to be an issue for site financial viability, there will be a considerable cost in the region of £11-14million for the new dual carriageway when taking into account the additional junctions which would have to be upgraded.</p>	<p>The dual carriageway, taking into consideration the new road intersections is estimated to cost between £9million and £11million. This is a substantial question over feasibility. This does not include the roundabouts required for access off the A6.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Have provided some indication of costs – which appear to be reasonable in terms of financial viability. However large the number of junctions which would require some form of improvement or upgrade for suitable access could compromise this.</p>
<p>Phasing - Highest points awarded for the sites that would not need immediate highway infrastructure for the first phase. Lowest points for the sites that need highway infrastructure before development commences. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants</p>	<p>Consideration of development phasing in relation to highway access and improvements is very broad and does not satisfactorily address when access to the A6 will need to be provided to limit impact on Sharnbrook.</p>	<p>The development phasing is provided within the Vision Document. However there is no indication of when the highway access/mitigation measures will be implemented although in general this appears to be feasible. Early provision of the by-pass would ensure that Milton Ernest does not receive 4000 dwellings worth of vehicles</p>	<p>Good level of detail provided on the phasing in terms of access and highway improvements. These appear to be suitable for the level of development and should work well. (Milton Ernest By-pass provided at 750 homes as opposed to 4000 for Thurleigh) However, there are concerns raised over the development of the employment and secondary school fairly late in the development phasing. The lack of employment at an early stage will increase the number of trips external to the site, and increase traffic impact.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>The phasing has situated some junction improvements, including Honeydon Road / Staploe Road and Bushmead Road / Honeydon Road late within the phasing which could have an impact on local traffic movements and highway capacity considering the number of houses already developed. Similarly, the Roxton Road / Chawston Lane / Colesden Road junction should be assessed and improved much earlier in the phasing as this is the main access.</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Traffic generation - Highest points awarded for the sites that have provided a methodology for trip generation and the level of impact on the highway network is minimal. Lowest points awarded to sites where no methodology has been provided and the impact on highway network would be significant. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants</p>	<p>Whilst there is an anticipated traffic impact of 600 additional vehicles on already congested routes into Bedford Town, the level appears to be reasonable for a development of this size and nature. Approach and methodology for Trip Generation, Distribution and impact assessment is considered to be good.</p>	<p>Some calculations have been presented, but key evidence is omitted from the submission relating to the TRICS assessment and internalisation figures. Clarification required over the use of existing employment trip rates, considering the land use which is not necessarily labour intensive. Expect to see an additional 1000 vehicles on already congested routes in Bedford Town centre. This is considered to be a significant impact.</p> <p>Further information received 20/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Although the submission has suggested that a Traffic Generation and Distribution exercise has been undertaken, we have not found any of the data reported or included in the appendices. As the actual traffic impact in the wider area, including Bedford town cannot be checked or calculated, we provide a level of suitability – hence the low scoring.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised</p>	<p>Reasonable level of assessment. A large impact considered through the village of Great Barford, and also some additional trips on the A4280 'St Neots Rd' with no mitigation proposed. However there is a case to be made that the impact on the A4280 is reasonable considering the size of development at this location. Traffic distribution to Chawston Lane and The Lane is also appears to be very low considering the attractiveness of this route to the A1.</p>
<p>Junction capacity - Highest points awarded to sites that have undertaken an assessment of the potential impact of the development on highway junctions and can demonstrate minimal impact. Lowest points awarded to sites where no assessment has been undertaken and the impact is considered significant. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>Submission has only provided evidence of a capacity assessment of the proposed new access roundabout at Forty Foot Lane, which would be expected to show high levels of capacity anyway. We would expect there to be capacity assessments of the: A6 / A141 / Mill Rd roundabout, as this is a roundabout we have reason to believe is already at capacity and would receive a large amount (up to 1000 vehicles) of development traffic close to the development site. A6 / A5141 / Manton Lane, as this junction is on the A6 route into Bedford Town Centre for which up to 600 additional vehicles are proposed to use and we have reason to believe that this roundabout currently experiences. Additional information submitted to be appraised.</p>	<p>No junction capacity assessments have been included within the submission, also no evidence which is questionable considering that it is suggested that the access junction is within capacity. Nevertheless our site audit assessment has suggested this would be the case. We would have hoped to see an assessment of the: A6 / A141 / Mill Rd roundabout, as this is a roundabout we have reason to believe is already at capacity and would receive a large amount (up to 1000 vehicles) of development traffic close to the development site. A6 / A5141 / Manton Lane, as this junction is on the A6 route into Bedford Town Centre for which up to 1000 additional vehicles are proposed to use and we have reason to believe that this roundabout currently experiences congestion in the AM/PM peaks.</p> <p>Further information received 20/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Whilst no junction capacity assessments have been undertaken for the surrounding area, the construction of a new road does mean many will be bypassed, and it is assumed that all new junctions, including the existing roads which have been intersected will be designed to accommodate all required traffic. We would still have liked to see an assessment on the A6 / A5141 / Manton Lane, as this junction is on the A6 route into Bedford Town Centre for which development traffic will use and we have reason to believe that this roundabout currently experiences congestion in the AM/PM peaks.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>The submission has provided analysis of several key junctions which have been shown to be over capacity and appropriate mitigations (i.e. signalling) proposed. However, no assessment of the Black Cat roundabout at this stage, although this scheme is not guaranteed within the development timescales. Furthermore, assessments have not been undertaken on Great North Rd / Bushmead Rd junction, nor the Roxton Rd / Chawston Lane / Colesden Rd junction, which is considered to be the main access to the site. Concern over level of traffic modelled at A1 junctions to east of site. We would also expect some consideration of key, and approaching capacity junctions within Bedford Town centre.</p>
<p>Highway safety - Highest points awarded to sites that have undertaken an assessment of collision data and highway safety and demonstrated minimal risk. Lowest points for sites that have not undertaken such an assessment. Assessment based on information submitted by site promoter and advice from the Council's highway consultants</p>	<p>Information on highway safety received 22/02/17, currently being assessed.</p>	<p>No analysis of collision data or highway safety in the submission. However our analysis indicates that there are a number of collisions on Thurleigh Rd and the Sharnbrook Turn roundabout, which cannot be completely assumed to be mitigated by the proposed dualling but may help. Collisions on the A6, which are not improved with this development, could however be an issue.</p> <p>Further information received 20/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>No analysis of collision data or highway safety in the submission. However our analysis indicates that the proposed new road would reduce the level of risk posed by historic collision sites, which included the fatal accident on the A6.</p> <p>Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>No analysis of collision data or highway safety in the submission. However our analysis indicates that there are a number of collisions on the A1 and the A428 as well as the Black Cat roundabout. Whilst this is considered to be improved with the Highways England improvements to the area, the average of 13 collisions per year, so close to the development site is a concern, especially as these road would almost certainly be used frequently by residents. These have not been mitigated.</p>
<p>Garden City Criteria -TCPA and DCLG March 2016 prospectus.</p>				
<p>A strong local jobs offer - Highest points awarded to strong local jobs offer in the proposed development itself and within easy commuting distance of homes, particularly B Class uses. Lowest points awarded to sites whose employment offer is low and does not provide for a range of B class uses. Assessment based on the information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Employment (E) - 7.25 Ha (in addition to existing proposals on the adjacent Colworth Science Park). An important garden city criteria is the provision of B class jobs. This percentage has not been specified. It is however considered that the close proximity of Colworth Business Park is an important benefit given the employment opportunities present.</p>	<p>4,600 jobs proposed (6,400 construction jobs). Although approximately 48 ha will be retained for commercial use with intensification of the existing employment uses and the provision of new employment, it is not clear what percentage of this will be in B class use, and how many are additional jobs.</p>	<p>IDC, Red Bull facility shown as retained and the Biomass facility could be retained. No relocation strategy but remaining tenants could potentially be relocated within the site onto the proposed employment area which is adjacent to the proposed Milton Ernest bypass/A6. Promoter advises Twinwoods will allow for the delivery of a mixed use employment area (retail, community, offices) giving new employment opportunities (up to 2,000 jobs) . Provision of mixed use area is between phase 1 and 2 (Years 0-6 and 7-12).Further information on economic benefits and scale of employment benefits provided 31/03/17</p>	<p>The scheme includes 20 ha of employment land, B1, B2 and B8 at the south western area of the development, accessed from Roxton Rd. This is indicated as being provided in phase 3, some 6-11 years from the start of housing development. The focus is proposed to be agricultural science – research and development following discussions with Bedford College who are reportedly interested in linking secondary vocational education with agricultural and science employment. Not clear how many new jobs created from 20 ha area . Employment site not adjacent to strategic road network or any existing employment area which raises doubts about the prospects of it proceeding.</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Green space provision - Highest points awarded to sites with generous green space provision including a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent sprawl; good connections and biodiversity-rich public parks; high-quality gardens; tree-lined streets; and open spaces. . Lowest points awarded to sites with basic green space provision, poorly connected to all the dwellings and not central to all the housing. Assessment based on the information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Borough open space standards met. Green space provision is ample within the site with pockets of green space and wooded areas evident at random intervals. Site boundaries appear to benefit from a significant landscape buffer separating the settlement from the wider areas beyond. A total of 158.1 ha to be occupied by dwellings and 240 ha in total for open space, sports provision and woodland. There are a series of pedestrian greenways/ trails within the site which would aid bio-diversity</p>	<p>Borough open space standards met. Green space provision is mostly concentrated around the edges of the site. The 'central park' is not central with some of the future occupants of houses having to walk a significant distance through the new settlement to access it. The sites of nature conservation are not necessarily closely located to all the housing either. A total of 172 ha will be occupied by dwellings and 200 ha of open space, sports provision, woodland would be provided. The open space provision is to be located on the outskirts of the new settlement. There are some green neighbourhood links proposed, as set out within the landscape strategy. The green links would mostly provide north to south connectivity.</p>	<p>Borough open space standards met. The site boundaries are characterised by a generous buffer and there are various pockets of green space (formal and informal) within the site. The green links are also an important feature of the masterplan. A total of 165 ha to be occupied by dwellings and 200 ha of open space, sports provision, woodland integrated into the layout. There is extensive evidence of good green links and ecological corridors on the master plan along with woodland buffers</p>	<p>Borough open space standards met. The site buffers are characterised by a landscape belt but it is very linear/ formalised. The informal and formal green spaces are located centrally within the site with small pockets of other green spaces within the rest of the site. A total of 134 ha occupied by dwellings and 81 ha of open space, green space, fishing village and outdoor sports fields. No indication of greenways or other walk ways or similar facilities to aid biodiversity biodiversity</p>
<p>Potential for open space facilities to serve the wider borough - Highest points for sites that would provide recreational areas that would potentially attract wider usage in borough. Lowest points for sites where the offer is likely to be of limited benefit for the wider borough. Assessment based on the information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Existing woodland to provide a network of nature trails and potential environment education. Also, natural linkages to Colworth Science Park and facilities envisaged</p>	<p>The facilities to be provided would mostly serve the new settlement. There is little evidence that there would be a significant draw to the facilities provided beyond the residents of the new settlement.</p>	<p>The facilities proposed include a country park, a 10 km leisure route, a country spa retreat and a significant level of footpath connections which could appeal to the wider borough's recreational pursuits</p>	<p>The facilities to be provided would mostly serve the new settlement, and there is little evidence that there would be a significant draw to these facilities beyond the new housing</p>
<p>Strong local centre - Highest points awarded to sites whose master plan reflects a wide range of cultural, recreational, and retail facilities within walkable distance of the neighbourhoods. Lowest points for sites that have no clear aspiration for the function of the local centre as reflected by limited master plan details. Assessment based on the information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Local district centre: The new settlement proposes a local/district centre which features 3 local centres within a 10 minute walk from the furthest housing. Mixed uses (A1-5, B1, D1 uses) include community hall and main convenience store, associated open space/ green infrastructure and provision of all of the 6ha of B1 employment land. Not clear if each local centre will have a village hall, but there is an indication of open space and green infrastructure provision for each. There is no indication of when the schools would be provided except that first primary school is shown as being delivered during the first phase. A development of this size would need to be self-contained in relation to primary school and early years provision early in the development as there would not be any option for mitigating development of this size within existing schools. Timing and delivery of education, medical centres etc. will need to be considered further.</p>	<p>Local/District Centre: 4 local centres are provided. However there is no indication of what the range of uses would be. Although 4 primary schools and a secondary school are proposed it is not clear when they will be delivered in terms of phasing. A development of this size would need to be self-contained in relation to primary school and early years provision early in the development. There would not be any option for mitigating development of this size within existing schools. Timing and delivery of education, medical centres etc. will need to be considered further.</p>	<p>Local district/centre features: 3 local centres each with a primary school, community centre, open space, and retail. 1 mixed used centre with food store, dentist, primary and secondary school, post office, medical centre, gym, nursery. The first primary school to be delivered by year 3, community centre and medical centre established by year 4. Second primary school to be delivered between year 7 to 12 along with secondary school, third primary school to be provided by year 13 to 18 and fourth primary school to be provided between year 19 to 24. A development of this size would need to be self-contained in relation to primary school and early years provision early in the development. There would not be any option for mitigating development of this size within existing schools. Timing and delivery of education, medical centres etc. will need to be considered further.</p>	<p>Local District Centre: 1 district centre and 2 local centres are proposed. There is reference to retail and leisure services provided within the village centre. Although 2 primary schools and 1 secondary school are to be provided, it is not clear at what stage this will be. A development of this size would need to be self-contained in relation to primary school and early years provision early in the development. There is currently no primary school provision in Wyboston. Timing and delivery of education, medical centres etc. will need to be considered further.</p>
<p>Integrated and accessible transport systems. Proposals must provide convenient and viable bus /rail services. Good provision must be made for pedestrians and cyclists. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>see below</p>	<p>see below</p>	<p>see below</p>	<p>see below</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Public transport external - Highest points for the development with good public transport links, existing or potential. Higher points awarded where information in respect of routes has been provided. Low scores for a development with very poor public transport links and no evidence of potential route assessment. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>The fact that this site could potentially provide a railway station on-site for trips to key employment areas is a large advantage, however there is no guarantee that this could be delivered with the site, and no examination of the possibility has been presented in the submission. It is therefore not something to be relied upon. However, this is proposed to be assisted by a designated new service to Bedford, but no indication of costs or how this relates to the phasing is provided to confirm suitability. No indication for how congestion on the A6 approaching Bedford has been considered in terms of public transport delay.</p>	<p>There is little to no useful local service to extent, therefore the creation of a new bus route may be possible. However no evidence has been provided on the possible operation of this service, where it would go, how much it would cost, how much revenue etc. Although linking with the Park and Ride scheme at Clapham would be a way to increase viability, we believe that the additional bus change, short journey and the fact that the P&R operator may not allow other services to use the facility, this would still require car use to arrive at the P&R. We would propose that a cycling route to the P&R is used instead (assuming it is constructed) Overall the Public Transport Strategy is lacking. No indication for how congestion on the A6 approaching Bedford has been considered in terms of public transport delay</p>	<p>There is a good level of bus services in the vicinity of the site already, although these are currently inaccessible. The proposals for a new route are commendable, but considering that the existing provision is good we would suggest that this option may be more feasible in the long term. Little to no information is given on the proposed routes, costs or revenues etc. of the proposed new route. No indication for how congestion on the A6 approaching Bedford has been considered in terms of public transport delay. Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised, includes reference to public transport links to Bedford.</p>	<p>Existing bus services are mainly associated with St Neots, which are hard to access from the site. The proposals to extend existing service(s) is welcome, although relying on one service for a long term aspirational development is risky. The option 2 for the extension of the X5 is preferred as this effectively links to the employment areas in Eaton Socon. The extension of the X5 route is commendable, especially as this is a high-quality service evidently designed for commuting Extension of the 61 service is also welcome. The bus services are seen to be profitable in the long term for the development. There could also be the possibility of linking the development to Sandy which could possibly be a stop on the new Oxford-Cambridge line currently in development. Overall, the public transport proposals are good.</p>
<p>Public transport internal - Highest points awarded to sites where internal bus routes and bus stops have been identified. Lowest points for sites in which bus routes and public transport linkages have not been considered in any detail. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>No clear route has been presented within the submission for the internal bus strategy, and the fact that buses are required to use bridges over the railway line to access the site, there could be constraints. No indication of where bus stops would be considering the typical maximum 400m walking distance. The masterplan doesn't appear conducive for efficient bus services.</p>	<p>Linear design of the masterplan makes internal circulation of the development difficult for any new or existing bus service. No indication of where bus stops/infrastructure would be located.</p>	<p>An internal loop is provided within the site which is good. Infrastructure will be provided within 400m of all homes. There could be potential to allow access to the 28 service to the east which would benefit the site.</p>	<p>No information referenced to the 112 services which currently stops within the development site boundary. Assumed to continue. Also limited information about the internal loop of the services and where local bus stops will be.</p>
<p>Walking and cycling external -Highest points awarded for sites that have extensive rights of way, cycle routes and footpaths linking into other villages, and well connected to the residential dwellings. Lowest points awarded to sites with poor linkages walking and cycling linkages. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>No information has been provided on the existing walking or cycling routes to the wider area. However, it is proposed to provide up to six walking and cycling accesses to the wider area around the site, in order to facilitate non-motorised travel to Sharnbrook village and Upper School. The pedestrian/cycle route main access will be via the existing access to the Colworth Science park. Although not mentioned in the submission we would expect these routes to be upgraded and lit for pedestrian and cycle safety. It would be useful if more detailed plans were available for the pedestrian/access strategy.</p>	<p>No information is provided within the submission about existing or proposed walking and cycling facilities for this site. Furthermore the provision of a dual carriageway on Thurleigh Road will be very undesirable for pedestrians, even if pedestrian facilities to exit the site were provided. There has been no consideration for pedestrian or cycle links to the wider area.</p>	<p>Limited information is provided about the existing pedestrian and cycle facilities, however it is proposed to selectively enhance these for the development. Whilst it would be good to know what will be enhanced, this is, as well as the provision of a hard surfaced pedestrian/cycle route to Bedford, welcome. Whilst for pedestrians this will only realistically provide access to a housing estate – this is a viable route to Bedford by cycling. Limited pedestrian access to the major roads connecting to the development but good access to wider cycle network.</p>	<p>The existing walking and cycling is a good provision. However, some of the surrounding areas would need improvement including the subway under Northfield road and the footbridge over the A1. Furthermore, although a shared cycle-footway is proposed alongside Bushmead Road does improve NMU access and safety, the National Cycle Network along Roxton Road is compromised by the access strategy.</p>
<p>Walking and cycling internal - Highest points awarded to sites where there are internal pedestrian linkages e.g. from schools/ shopping centres/open spaces to homes. Lowest points for poor internal pedestrian links and motor car reliant developments. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>It is proposed to include "an extensive walking and cycling network" internal to the development site. This is encouraging, although little to no information about what this will look like has been provided. It would be useful if more information about the internal walking and cycling routes were provided in the submission, and the street character types, as per Manual for Streets was distinguishable. Although the woodland trails indicated on the masterplan will provide a degree of pedestrian permeability to the site, we would question the safety of these areas. The masterplan also raises concerns over the disconnected nature of some of the dwellings and a large number of cul-de-sacs, which seems to sever them from the rest of the development through limited pedestrian/cycle permeability.</p>	<p>No information is provided about the internal layout of walking or cycling provisions, although it is assumed that there will be some element of street design for this development. However, the site is shown on the masterplan to be car-orientated due to the long straight distributor road which will be a barrier for pedestrian movement and detriment to pedestrians and cyclists. Cul-de-sac have been provided which offer no additional pedestrian permeability is gained. The open areas are not easily accessed at all. No dedicated walking or cycling, provided.</p>	<p>The site seems to suggest that a well-connected and integrated pedestrian and cycling network will be available within the site. This included a 10km leisure route, and a segregated cycle route around the internal loop, although the provision of busses here may be a deterrent this is not a major concern. Very encouraging level of thought and detail for non-motorised users.</p>	<p>A reasonable level of pedestrian and cycle facilities are proposed within the site boundary – with the compact nature of the development assisting with the access across the site by pedestrians and cyclists. Footways are to be provided along key corridors, with shared ways separated. Shared spaces will also be provided to create more walkable and play spaces</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Opportunities for modal shift -Highest points for developments whose master plan and transport strategy reflects less reliance on the use of motor vehicles but more emphasis on the use of public transport, cycling facilities and pedestrian linkages. Lowest points for developments whose master plans show a reliance on vehicles. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and advice provided by the Council's highway consultants.</p>	<p>As per the design of a garden village, the mixed land uses including schools and employment within the development will assist with the reduction in car use, but the layout does not appear to be attractive to pedestrians and cyclists and even within the site this may result in car journeys from one side to the other.</p>	<p>Limited walking opportunities to the employment and leisure provided on-site, due to poor layout and severance by the main distributor road. Not known how pedestrian/cycle access to employment is gained, although assumed to be shared with vehicles this is not ideal.</p>	<p>The internal loop road provides good access to the various land-uses and provisions at the site. This is good to see. However, some of the key employment will not be constructed until further into the phasing, which does limit mode-shift change for up to seven years – well after the residents have moved in and have employment elsewhere.</p>	<p>Reasonable level of accessible locations achievable to sites internal to the development, and assuming the improvements to the subway and footbridge are carried out – also external to the site at Eaton Socon. However, it is located in a relatively convenient location for vehicle journeys on the strategic road network.</p>
<p>Discrete settlement - Highest points for new settlements sufficiently separate to have own identity and to create a new focus for growth. The settlement should be designed to prevent coalescence, with landscaping to maintaining adequate separation/secure identity as well as providing a landscape framework for development. Low points for proposals that appear to merge into existing/neighbouring settlements. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Lee Farm is within 600 m of Sharnbrook but some distance (1.5 km) from the A6 which reduces its potential as a growth point. The masterplan shows a buffer zone separating the new settlement from Sharnbrook Village with Colworth Park between the two.</p>	<p>Thurleigh Airfield is approximately 1.4 km outside the village of Thurleigh, with countryside separating the two. It is 2 km from the A6 and therefore capable of being a new focus for growth around existing employment.</p>	<p>Twinwoods new settlement would be within 600 metres of Milton Ernest, but separated by countryside and the proposed Milton Ernest bypass. It is about 1km from the A6. Capable of being new focus for growth.</p>	<p>There is no discernible village centre in Wyboston; however the proposed new settlement would be close to existing ribbon development in Rookery Road and The Lane in Wyboston with minimal separation planned between that development and the new settlement. With the proximity of St Neots, it is difficult to predict whether it will be a new focus for growth or effectively be part of the growth of St Neots - and there is insufficient information on the Master Plan to see how a separate identity/character could be provided.</p>
<p>Maximise use of brownfield land - Highest points awarded to the site that comprise the largest proportion of brownfield land. The proportion of brownfield or previously developed land compared with area of whole settlement, including open space and proportion compared with built up areas of proposed new settlement are both relevant. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>445 ha, predominantly greenfield.</p>	<p>472 ha, predominantly brownfield</p>	<p>490 ha, a proportion of the site is classified as previously developed land and includes the part vacant Twinwoods Business Park, the Yarl's Wood Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) and Redbull Racing , however the IDC and Redbull racing remain so that only some 42 ha of brownfield land will be reused for residential development.</p>	<p>293 ha, predominantly greenfield</p>
<p>Potential for a self sustaining community - Highest points awarded to sites that are of a significant scale – and over the benchmark of 4500 dwellings, along with a master plan that allows for a wide range of services. Lowest points for sites that are below the threshold of 4,500 dwellings and have a limited offer in terms of services. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposed new settlement could be self sustaining given the range of infrastructure and services to serve the 4,500 residential units. However noise information not yet provided may affect developable area/number of units. Housing number may need to be lower to limit noise impact on future occupiers</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposed new settlement with its facilities and adjacent employment area could be self sustaining given the range of services on offer to serve the 5,250 residential units</p>	<p>It is considered that the range of infrastructure and services indicated could serve the development of up to 6,000 dwellings proposed. A good employment offer would support its role as a sustainable settlement.</p>	<p>The range of services and infrastructure proposed should adequately serve the proposed dwellings. However, there is little information and the dwelling number of 4,000 falls below the desired threshold of 4,500.</p>
<p>Food store proposed on site - Highest points awarded to sites that clearly intend to provide a food store within the development. Lowest points for sites that do not clearly define the retail offer. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>Reference to a small supermarket within each neighbourhood centre within a 10 minute walk.</p>	<p>There is reference of a district centre and shops but no specific mention of a supermarket.</p>	<p>There is reference to provision for retail services in the settlement core and an anchor food retail use and specialist food retail store. The food store is to be within 1.5 km of dwellings.</p>	<p>A supermarket is to be provided in the village centre. No further details have been provided.</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Nearest convenience store and supermarket locally</p> <p>- To assess services for dwellings built early on in the development, the highest points awarded to sites that are most accessible to existing supermarkets and convenience stores. Lowest points awarded to sites where the supermarkets and convenience stores are a significant distance away and not easily accessible. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>The nearest convenience store is located in Sharnbrook Co-op 1.5 miles away (22 min walk). The nearest supermarket is Rushden Lidl 6.9 miles away and a 14 minute drive.</p>	<p>The nearest convenience store is Sharnbrook Co-op 3.1 miles away 59 minute walk). The nearest supermarket is Sainsbury's Clapham Road 7.2 miles away and a 14 minute drive.</p>	<p>The nearest offsite convenience store is Clapham Tesco Express, 3.1 miles away (58 minute walk). The nearest supermarket is Sainsbury's, Clapham Road a 4.4 mile distance away, a 10 minute drive.</p>	<p>The nearest convenience store is Londis at Wyboston Service Station 1 mile away and a 21 minute walk. The nearest supermarket would be Tesco Extra Barford Road 3.3 miles away and a 6 minute drive.</p>
<p>Meeting Bedford's housing need - Sites that are located closer and link well to Bedford which is the focus of the borough's housing needs and where the borough's major employment areas are located will score highly and sites that are some distance away (looking towards other towns for employment and services) will score lower. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>4,500 homes proposed. Sharnbrook is located on the A6 , is 10.5 miles from Bedford Town Centre, 6.5 miles from Rushden. Sharnbrook looks towards both Bedford and Rushden for services, and employment opportunities and this is reflected in the public transport links - the service runs from Bedford to Rushden</p>	<p>5,250 homes proposed. Thurleigh is located some 9 miles from the centre of Bedford Town Centre. It is reasonably close to the A6 and as such is likely to be more Bedford centric.</p>	<p>Up to 6,000 homes proposed. The proposals recognise the need for a range of housing tenures and types. Twinwoods is located on the A6 close to Bedford, its services and its employment areas, some 7 miles from Bedford Town Centre. It is Bedford centric and is therefore well placed to help address Bedford's housing needs.</p>	<p>4,000 homes proposed. Wyboston is located on the A1, some 11 miles from Bedford town centre and close to Eacon Socon and St Neots services and employment areas. It is closer to St Neots than Bedford and looks towards this town rather than Bedford for services etc.</p>
<p>Strong prospect of quantified early housing delivery - Sites that have undertaken detailed background work including viability and infrastructure assessments and indicate the earliest delivery prospects will score highest. Sites that provide delivery dates with no detailed evidence as to how this would be achieved score lowest. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>No specific start date provided but build out period is 25 years. However the first phase would comprise some 2,500 dwellings, 2 x 2FE primary schools, secondary school (pending timing requirements of the Council), a mixed use local centre (A1-5, B1, D1 uses) including community hall and an appropriately sized main convenience store, associated open space/green infrastructure and provision of all of the 6ha of B1 employment land. Second phase would comprise the remainder of the dwelling provision, 1 x 3FE and 1x 2FE primary schools, mixed use local centres as before, associated open space/ green infrastructure, villages 2 and 3. The promoters have not demonstrated their ability to deliver due to the lack of viability information and potential cost and ownership provision of new access to A6 before development on which the scheme depends.</p>	<p>To commence phase 1 in 2021, with completions in 2022. 300 dwellings completed within 5 years of allocation, 200 dwellings achieved by 2025. It is not clear when the employment, education and leisure uses will be delivered. The delivery of the dualled Thurleigh Road will only be carried out after 2500 homes - presenting some potential traffic impact issues up to this point. The promoters have not demonstrated their ability to deliver due to lack of viability information and dependence on provision of new electricity supply before any housing development takes place - and land outside the ownership of the site promoters for the highway works needed for the development to grow to its intended size.</p>	<p>To commence development in 2021 with 950 houses constructed within the first 6 years. Between 2028 and 2033 an incremental build out is proposed. There is a highway concern about the relatively late construction of the full bypass relative to the amount of housing with potential that development traffic could use Thurleigh Road through Milton Ernest to access the A6 between year 3 to year 6. However the delivery programme is supported by viability information that supports a reasonable prospect of delivery.</p>	<p>First dwellings might be occupied in 2021(considered ambitious by officers) with a build out rate of 200 dwellings per year with expected completion in 2041. 600 in 2021-2024, 600 in 2024-2027, 1200 over period 2027-2033, 800 2033-2037, 800 in period 2037-2041. There is a major issue with road access due to potential capacity issues at the Black Cat roundabout A421/A1 junction and uncertainties of timing of improvement works . In addition assessment of the Roxton Road / Chawston Lane / Colesden Road staggered crossroad has not been assessed with the proposed development traffic. This is unacceptable even at this stage in strategic allocation. The finalisation of the improvements for Roxton Road should be provided much earlier within the development phasing than indicated in the submission. The promoters have not demonstrated their ability to deliver due to dependence on A1 improvements, and lack of viability information.</p>

Initial appraisal - position at 10.04.17	Colworth, Sharnbrook	Thurleigh Airfield	Twinwoods	Wyboston Garden Village
<p>Detailed delivery information for the new settlements - Proposals that demonstrate how the new settlement will be delivered (including the necessary infrastructure) score higher, particularly if including information on the availability of infrastructure/utilities and timing and likely costs of any necessary upgrades and/or new provision. Lowest scoring are those whose delivery information is not supported by evidence and is not considered to be sound having checked it with suppliers etc. Assessment based on information provided by site promoter and BBC analysis.</p>	<p>The information submitted is not clear on timing of the A6 link or costs. From highways consultants' information the new access is required before any development. The upfront cost is in the region of £8.75M to include the provision of a new road and the realignment of the railway bridge so that the light controls can be removed. Further costs Forty Foot Lane access route. Information has been provided confirming the presence of utilities on site. Western Power Distribution (WPD) have provided a budget quote of £10.2 million for electricity supply capacity for 4500 new residential dwellings. The overall cost to supply potable water to the development is £3.7 million. However there is no total estimate of costs provided for main gas supply, or foul water drainage. The lack of comprehensive information presents an uncertain picture in respect of viability. Further investigation is needed</p>	<p>Initially use existing access road. No information on costs of any road upgrades needed provided. Utilities - Electricity £10.5 - £11m before first dwelling including substation, Main gas technically feasible, potable water £8,832,512 required (£3.6 onsite), Foul water - no cost provided if need to address capacity at pumping station (may support early development), use of SuDs £2M given high drainage cost. Officer conclusion is that extremely high infrastructure costs (particularly electricity) before 1st dwelling as well as high water costs and SUDs could give rise to significant viability concerns and further investigation is needed.</p>	<p>Timing and cost of bypass assessed. Utilities -Electricity £20 M on/off site (according to latest estimate from UKPN, solution needed before first dwelling). Main gas £4.1 M but no cost included for off site works although extensive re-enforcement needed, potable water £4.7M, but developer contribution to this will be less. Foul water drainage - no cost included, surface water drainage £5.3M for SuDs. Overall infrastructure costs high. Whilst promoters advise costs have been fed into viability work this is high level appraisal only and does not reflect likely timing of costs. Officer conclusion is that high infrastructure costs (particularly electricity) before 1st dwelling as well as high water costs and SUDs could give rise to significant viability concerns and further investigation is needed. Further information submitted 31/03/2017 to be appraised.</p>	<p>Cost of highway improvements given - but ignores issue of A1/A428 junction and cost involved. Utilities -Electricity onsite £70K, off site £13.33M, Main gas - no information, potable water developer contribution about £1.2 m, foul water - no cost included need more capacity at Chawston Tythe Farm WRC. Electricity costs are significant and presents an uncertain picture in respect of viability. There is no information on gas costs so difficult to gauge full picture. Further investigation is needed</p>