

**PART FIVE-B
SOUNDNESS OF
SITE ALLOCATIONS
WEEDON HILL**

**SITE REVIEW
AYL06 LAND N OF MARTIN DALBY WAY**

PART FIVE-B SOUNDNESS – AYL06 LAND N OF MARTIN DALBY WAY

SUMMARY OF WEEDON PARISH COUNCIL'S OBJECTIONS

Our ref	Issue	Test relied upon	Objections and Modifications Sought
PART FIVE - SOUNDNESS – Northern Aylesbury Site allocations affecting Weedon Hill hamlet			
SWH1	Site Allocation Review – Weedon Hill NESS03 Aylesbury development extent surrounding Weedon Hill hamlet	Soundness – Positively Prepared / Justified	The published Concept Framework Plan extends the proposed development without having proper re-assessment. The previous iterations of the NESS Study assess a significantly different layout and extent for NESS003. Completely reassess NESS003 for the proposed masterplan or revise the masterplan again to properly reflect impact on Weedon Hill Hamlet and other nearby settlements.
SWH2	Site Allocation Review – Weedon Hill AYL06 Land N of Martin Dalby Way	Soundness – Justified / Positively Prepared	The published proposals, with no mapping detail, increase the density and number of homes on the same 79-hectare site from 1,891 in February 26 to 3,150 now – a 66% increase. Allocation AYL06 should be re-assessed, particularly in respect of its size, housing density, impact on landscape and neighbouring settlements and deliverability. Cumulative impact for the area, and Weedon Hill Hamlet particularly, must be given the highest priority.

Comment on

Draft Local Plan Chapter 6 – Site Allocations – Housing Allocations over two hundred dwellings (including mixed use sites) AYL06 Land to the north of Martin Dalby Way

Weedon Parish Council considers that AYL06 Land N of Martin Dalby Way does not meet the soundness tests of being positively prepared, justified or effective.

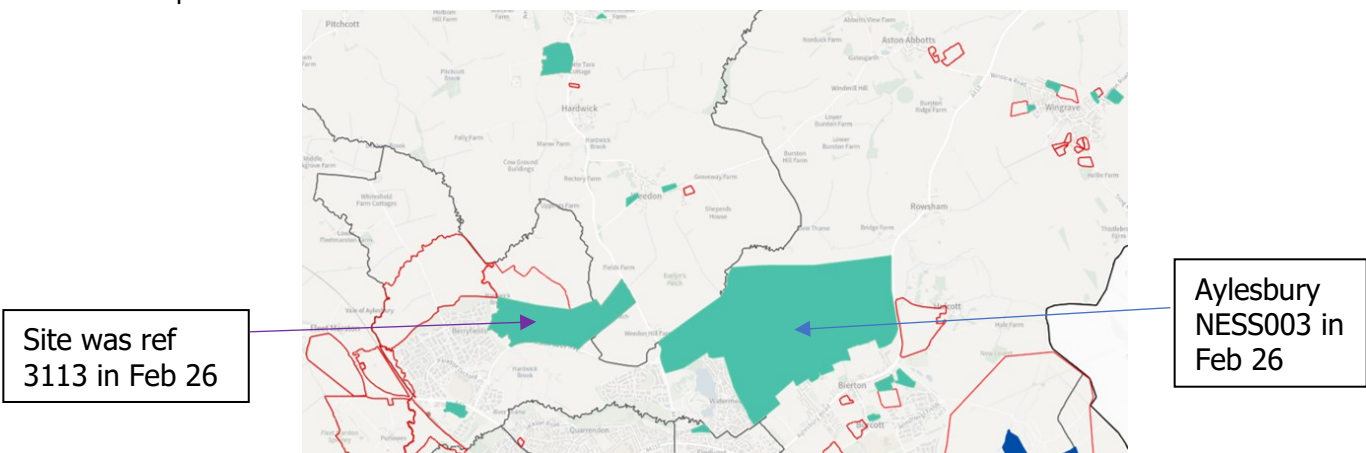
SOUNDNESS

SWH2 – Site Allocation Review AYL06 Land N of Martin Dalby Way

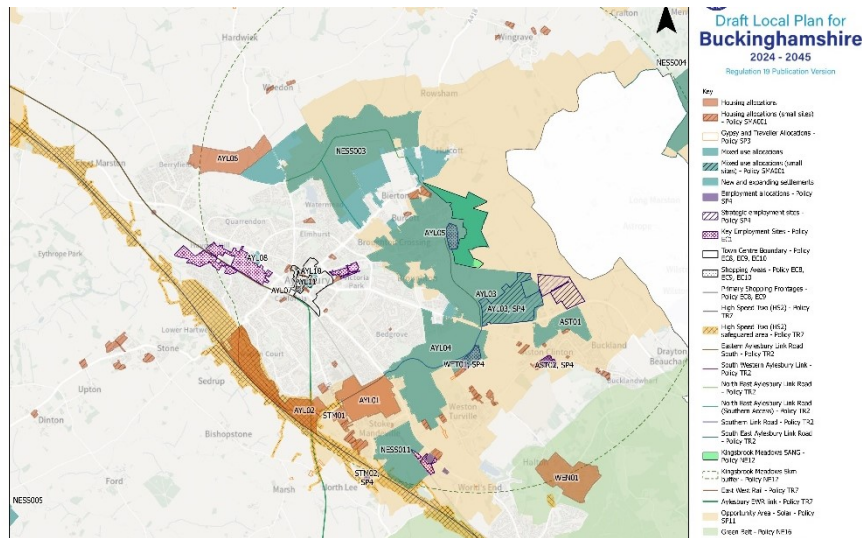
1. The Parish Council is particularly concerned that Weedon Hill is affected by the scale and location of proposed Northern Aylesbury growth. Objections are directed not simply at individual site boundaries for AYL06 but at the cumulative consequences of the overall development strategy in this area, particularly from NESS0003.
2. In addition to the identified significant change in the proposed new extent of the Aylesbury NESS003, Weedon Parish Council, Weedon village residents, and particularly residents of Weedon Hill, were amazed to see an ADDITIONAL “strategic site” AYL06 being allocated on land between Weedon Hill and Berryfields.
3. In February 2026, in the Regulation 18 documents, the site with reference 3113 was shown at a similar overall extent, but as being only “Part Suitable” for development, and with a total housing number of 1,891.
4. AYL06 has undergone a very substantial change between the Regulation 18 evidence and the Regulation 19 proposals. This is now shown as the same 79 hectare site, but apparently suitable for 3,150 homes and associated infrastructure, but without any detailed plan, an increase of approximately **66%**. The narrative in the Local Plan is on pages 194-197.
5. The HELAA described the site as follows in February 2026:

OPUS Reference	Site Name/Location	Post Code	Parish	Type of Site	Promoted for	Site Area (ha)	Housing density per ha	G&T Pitches	Potential capacity	Employment Type	Employment ha	Gren Belt?	Grey Belt	Provisional Grey Belt	Policy decision on Site	Use of site to be taken fwd	Conclusion Category
3113	Land to the North of Martin Dalby Way, Aylesbury	HP19 9DE	Berryfields & Weedon	Greenfield	Residential	78.78	30		1891			No	No	No	Part Suitable	Housing	Part Suitable

The site area, with no detail, was shown on the Interactive map at the time of the Site Feedback Request Consultation as follows:



6. The only current plan we can find for the site is a broad outline in the Policies Map. It is the same extent, but still with no detailed layout or masterplan.



SITE ALLOCATION REVIEW AYL06

Land N of Martin Dalby Way, Aylesbury

This is not simply an adjustment of numbers. An increase of this magnitude materially changes the scale, density, infrastructure requirements, traffic generation, landscape effects, environmental consequences and deliverability of this proposal.

Buckinghamshire Council has not provided sufficient evidence demonstrating how a site previously assessed as “Part Suitable” for 1,891 houses can reasonably be relied on for 3,150 houses as a strategic location. The increase represents a materially different proposition and therefore requires corresponding evidence as well as an explanation as to why the previous conclusion that the site was “Part Suitable” is no longer applicable.

Deliverability

- We have no information on the deliverability of the site in terms of ownership.
- The deliverability in terms of wider risks is questionable. The location has the potential to compete with other strategic sites, very notably the NESS003.
- As this is a completely undeveloped greenfield site, in an “open and elevated position”, the topography could be challenging.
- Flood infrastructure would need to be assessed by hydraulic modelling in the region of the Hardwick Brook and Weedon Ditch, and some of the site is within Flood Zone 3b, which cannot be built on.
- Significant investment would be needed in energy infrastructure and water and waste-water provision.

- Highways would need to be assessed and impacts mitigated, as the site is very constrained. The vehicular access points from the northern side of Martin Dalby Way and the farm track on to the A413 seem inadequate for a mixed use site with this proposed number of houses.

Scale of development

- The total site area comprises 79 hectares.
- As noted above, the original number of houses for the site (ref 3113 in the HELAA in February 26) was 1,891 on “part” of the site. Now there are proposed to be 3,150 houses. The Local Plan does not give a sufficiently developed Concept Framework Plan to enable the implications to be properly assessed.
- The “Green Infrastructure and Open Space” item (a) on page 194 specifies that there will be:

“Green Infrastructure and Open Space:

a) Multi-functional green infrastructure comprising at least 50% of the gross site area ...”

If there is 50% green/open space, that implies that 50% of the site area will be built on ie. 40 hectares.

Even if all the non-greenspace area were to be housing – which it cannot be, as a local centre, a primary school, a community hall and equipped play facilities are proposed – this implies a very substantial development density on the developable portion of the site.

The density is proposed to be:

“... a density that responds positively to the character and identity of adjoining communities and accords with the principles of Aylesbury Garden Town.”

Buckinghamshire Council should therefore provide a clear density plan showing how 3,150 houses can be accommodated whilst simultaneously achieving the stated requirement for a landscape-led development in line with the above-stated principles. We discuss the landscape issues below.

Landscape character

We will refer here to the given “HELAA Conclusion Categories” listed by Buckinghamshire Council on proposed sites, to indicate some of the severe barriers and challenges to development.

- The site forms part of the open countryside separating Aylesbury from surrounding rural settlements and is characterised by a series of agricultural fields, grassland and hedgerows.
- The site is bounded by Hardwick Brook to the west, Berryfields to the south-west, Martin Dalby Way to the south and open countryside to the north and east.
- The site occupies an elevated and open position, resulting in extensive views from the surrounding area and towards the site.

It is stated on page 195 that consideration will be given to the views from the Quanton-Wingrave ridge to the north, the Chilterns National Landscape to the southeast, as well as of potential landscape visual impact from the National Landscape. This is a fundamental issue, not a minor design consideration.

- The land on which the existing wind turbine is located is apparently excluded from the allocation.

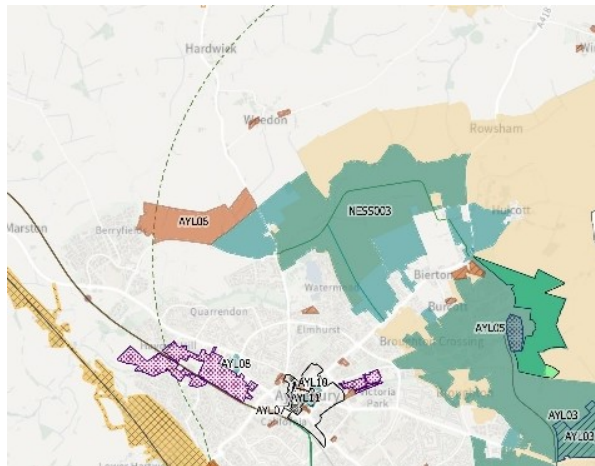
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- A landscape-led design approach would apparently be used to minimise visual impacts and integrate development into the wider landscape. It is seriously difficult to imagine this being achievable.

The relevance of the judgement in the 2011 Public Inquiry for Land at Quarrendon Fields

Attention is drawn to a Planning Appeal decision in 2012, dismissing a plan for a major development area known as “Land at Quarrendon Fields”, planning application reference 10/00135/AOP, and concluding that such development would cause significant adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. The land at issue was part of what is now being considered for site AYL06.



The appeal dismissal was confirmed by the Secretary of State. A major consideration was the impact on landscape and heritage assets. We quote from the Secretary of State’s letter:

“(The proposal would result in) ... a significant adverse impact on landscape character (IR344) and visual intrusion into the wider vale landscape (IR347), and would therefore be unduly harmful to the landscape (IR352).”

This decision, whilst it cannot determine the outcome of this Local Plan allocation, is highly relevant evidence concerning the landscape sensitivity and visual impact of development in this location. Buckinghamshire Council should explain how matters identified in that decision have been addressed in its current evidence base for this site and why the conclusions reached then should no longer apply to the much larger development now proposed.

In accordance with Buckinghamshire Council’s own HELAA conclusion categories, the Parish Council also submits that such development would be:

“Out of character”

with **“Unacceptable harm on Landscape”**

and an **“Unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside”**

Heritage

- Another key reason for the appeal judgement on Land at Quarrendon Fields was the impact on the nationally important Quarrendon Scheduled Monument.

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- While it is not proposed to build on the site of the monument in this proposal, as it is south of Martin Dalby Way, it is still relevant to consider the setting of the monument and its management.
- The Secretary of State's letter quoted above went on to say:

"(The proposal would) ... obliterate the principal remaining visual link with the historic rural agricultural setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) (AR11) and would damage regionally important below ground remains (AR20)."

- Heritage in the built and the natural environment can never be regained once new building has taken place. It is essential to protect them, as laid down in the NPPF.
- The setting of the historic Weedon Hill hamlet would also be affected by this proposal, as the site wraps around the top of the settlement.

Developing this site in the way proposed would therefore be contrary to national planning policy, and Buckinghamshire Council's own HELAA conclusion category of:

"Unacceptable harm on Heritage"

Buckinghamshire Council should therefore demonstrate, through an up to date heritage assessment, that the enlarged AYL06 allocation would preserve the significance of the Scheduled Monument and any other affected heritage assets, including their settings.

Environment

- Very little mention is made in the descriptions of the site proposals on ecology and natural environmental aspects, apart from the black poplar population south of Martin Dalby Way. We would call for substantial ecological assessments to be carried out.

Only then can it be judged whether the development would cause **"Unacceptable harm on Ecology"** – another of the HELAA negative conclusion categories.

- The loss of mature hedgerows and trees on open countryside is usually proposed in these circumstances to be mitigated by biodiversity net gain measures.

While it is better to do something rather than nothing, we stress again the fact that a historic environment – whether built or natural – can never be regained once destroyed.

Highways and Traffic, including Public Transport

- The site is being proposed as a Strategic Site and Major Development Area (MDA). Therefore, any development would need to bring with it new schools, GP surgery, green spaces, play provision, community centre, and crucially, traffic, transport and access improvements.
- We refer again to the "Land at Quarrendon Fields" appeal dismissal on the matter of traffic:

"The proposal is likely to result in traffic generation that would add to existing problems of congestion and result in harm to the safety and free flow of traffic on the highway network (IR370)."

- While the road network to the north and west of Aylesbury has been improved somewhat by the building of Martin Dalby Way, all the new building at Berryfields and Broughton has brought significantly more traffic to this area. The traffic runs freely along Martin Dalby Way itself, but there is huge congestion at both ends in rush hour periods at the junctions with the A413 and A41.

The fact that highway improvements are proposed does not, in itself, demonstrate that an allocation is effective. Buckinghamshire Council should provide evidence of the capacity of the existing road network, additional traffic generated by 3,150 houses, the effect on junctions and, critically, the funding and delivery timetable and any proposed traffic mitigation measures.

- The bus routes along the A41 and the A413 would be at a significant distance from the site. Significant investment would need to be made to provide new bus routes.

Without that, the use of public transport by residents is likely to be an aspiration, rather than a reality. People will still have to use their private cars to a substantial degree.

Infrastructure, including Flood Infrastructure

- The topography of the site appears to be challenging in terms of the potential flood risk, requiring substantial investigation into possible mitigation.
- As a new greenfield development, substantial investment in new infrastructure would be required.
- This should be looked at in conjunction with the wider Northern Aylesbury development.

Cumulative effects of development with Aylesbury NESS003 on existing settlements

- If both the Aylesbury NESS003 and this strategic site go forward in their currently proposed form and extent, there would be a huge band of new development around the north of Aylesbury covering land forming part of the rural setting north of Aylesbury and would materially alter the relationship between Weedon Hill, Watermead, Buckingham Park, Berryfields and surrounding rural settlements.

This may be a completely unsustainable amount of new development and Buckinghamshire Council has not demonstrated that this cumulative scale of development has been adequately assessed in respect of landscape character, settlement separation, traffic, drainage, biodiversity, infrastructure capacity or the setting of existing settlements.

Weedon Parish Council's position and modification sought

Site Allocation AYL06 should be re-assessed, particularly in respect of its size, housing density, landscape impact, impact on neighbouring settlements and deliverability. Buckinghamshire Council must demonstrate why the proposed scale of development is justified and why reasonable alternative sites, a smaller allocation or different configuration would not provide a better strategy. The cumulative impact, particularly on the Weedon Hill Hamlet should be given the highest priority.

Evidence relied upon

1. HELAA
2. Landscape Assessments from previous Local Plans
3. Appeal Judgement for Land at Quarrendon Fields 19 March 2012
Refs: APP/J0405/A/11/2155042 and APP/J0405/A/11/2155043
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (SECTION 78) APPEALS BY ARNOLD WHITE ESTATES LTD AND OXFORD DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE. APPLICATION REFS: 10/00135/AOP (Appeal A) & 10/00136/APP (Appeal B), LAND AT QUARRENDON FIELDS, AYLESBURY, BUCKS.