

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan

Site Options and Assessment

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Quality information

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Abbreviations used in the report

Abbreviation

CCC	Chelmsford City Council
DEFRA	Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DNP	Danbury Neighbourhood Plan
DPC	Danbury Parish Council
DPD	Development Plan Document
Ha	Hectare
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NA	Neighbourhood Area
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PDL	Previously Developed Land
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance (MHCLG)
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Executive Summary

AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent site appraisal for the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Danbury Parish Council; this is being achieved through the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which is a Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee of Danbury Parish Council. The work undertaken was agreed with the Group and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in October 2018.

The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Chelmsford City Council new Local Plan which is currently under Examination, with adoption anticipated in 2019. The new Local Plan outlines the strategic priorities and long-term vision for Chelmsford and identifies locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community and transport development. 21,893 homes are being planned for and being directed to the most sustainable locations for the Plan period and a Spatial Strategy to deliver this vision is set out. Danbury has been allocated around 100 homes to be allocated by the Neighbourhood Plan within or adjacent to the Danbury Settlement Boundary.

The 2018 Chelmsford Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment considered 20 sites in Danbury. A Call for Sites exercise undertaken by Danbury Parish Council concluded in September 2017 with 18 sites put forward for assessment and potential allocation. Of the 18 sites submitted, 11 were already known (submitted to Chelmsford City Council).

Chelmsford City Council's new Local Plan Policy Strategic Growth Site 9 – Danbury allocates around 100 homes to be delivered *within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Danbury*. Given this very clear policy position an initial sift was undertaken to remove any sites clearly contrary to this planning policy; this is on the basis that such sites would not be in general conformity with the strategic policies in Chelmsford City Council's new Local Plan.

At this stage, six sites were discounted: D1, D2, D16, D17, D18 and D19.

Subsequently each of the remaining sites was assessed using the site assessment pro-forma which was corroborated following a site visit. Pursuant to this work, it became apparent that Danbury presents a particularly challenging environment to plan for residential growth within due to the significant constraints that exist within the Neighbourhood Area. It is considered that the key constraints impacting the suitability of sites within the Neighbourhood Area are highways, landscape and ecology (namely the potential impact on nearby Sites of Special Scientific Interest).

This report concludes that there are four sites which are unsuitable for allocation for residential development given one or more of the key constraints, these are D4, D7, D8 and D20. There may be potential to change the conclusions of one or more of these sites from unsuitable to potentially suitable if the site boundary were amended to respond to the findings of this report.

This report also concludes that there are nine sites which are potentially suitable for allocation for residential development, subject to the mitigation of constraints: D5, D9, D10, D11, D12, D14, D15 and D21. The potential capacity of these sites has been calculated as 240 dwellings which is based on net developable area and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare; although it is noted that some of these potential capacities may be too high (D14 and D21) and do not reflect what is understood to be the landowner's intention for the site.

D15 is considered to be the least constrained of the potential suitable sites. However, it is worth noting that this site is currently a commercial site, providing local employment and economic activity but is not an allocated employment area according to the Chelmsford adopted or emerging development plan documents. The Group should consider whether it would be positive for the Neighbourhood Area to lose this commercial site.

To conclude Danbury has an allocation of around 100 homes to be allocated by the Neighbourhood Plan within or adjacent to the Danbury Settlement Boundary; this assessment concludes that there are sufficient potentially suitable sites within the Neighbourhood Area to accommodate this level of growth. However, there are no sites within the Neighbourhood Area which are totally constraint-free.

This report can be used by Danbury Parish Council to guide decision making on site selection and to use as evidence to support site allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan if they choose to do so. It is strongly advised that Danbury Parish Council discuss potential site allocations with Chelmsford City Council, the Local Highways Authority and Natural England to establish whether proposed site(s) would be acceptable. It is also advised that the Group speak with Chelmsford City Council to establish whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and/or Appropriate Assessment will be required to support the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent site appraisal for the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan (NP) on behalf of Danbury Parish Council (DPC). The work undertaken was agreed with the Group and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in October 2018.
- 1.2 DPC is in the process of preparing an NP for the village of Danbury which falls within the administrative area of Chelmsford City Council (CCC). The Qualifying Body for the purposes of producing the Danbury NP is DPC and this is being achieved through the Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which is a Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee of DPC. The boundary of the NP area, and DPC as the Qualifying Body, were designated by CCC in March 2017; see Figure 1 for the extent of the NP area.
- 1.3 Danbury is a village situated east of the City of Chelmsford, in the county of Essex, England. The parish extends over 1190ha with a total population of 5,087 as of 2011¹. The area lies approximately 8km east of Chelmsford City Centre.
- 1.4 Danbury is a large village with a good range of community facilities. The built-up area is irregular in shape and interspersed with stretches of open countryside. The Danbury Settlement Boundary is drawn in three sections to reflect this irregular pattern of development. It is situated on Danbury Ridge, one of the most attractive areas of Essex with extensive views. The Ridge is important for nature conservation and there are several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Many houses are set in large grounds with mature landscaping and are very important elements contributing to the special character of the settlement.
- 1.5 The NP is being prepared in the context of the CCC new Local Plan which is currently under Examination, with adoption anticipated in 2019. The new Local Plan outlines the strategic priorities and long-term vision for Chelmsford and identifies locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community and transport development. 21,893 homes are being planned for and being directed to the most sustainable locations for the Plan period and a Spatial Strategy to deliver this vision is set out.
- 1.6 The CCC new Local Plan allocates around 100 homes to be allocated by the NP within or adjacent to the Danbury Settlement Boundary.
- 1.7 DPC undertook a 'call for sites' exercise which concluded on the 11th September 2017; 18 sites were submitted to DPC and a further three sites are included within CCC's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).
- 1.8 In this context, DPC has asked AECOM to undertake an independent and objective review of the known sites.
- 1.9 The purpose of this site appraisal is to produce a clear assessment of whether the identified sites are appropriate for the allocation of housing in the NP, in particular, whether they comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the strategic policies of adopted development plan, as well as the direction of travel of the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.10 It is anticipated that the neighbourhood planning site selection process, aided by this report, will be robust enough to meet the Basic Conditions considered by the Independent Examiner, as well as any potential legal challenges by developers and other interested parties.

¹Available at: <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/uk-parishes-eastofengland.php?adm2id=E04003954>

DANBURY PARISH BOUNDARY

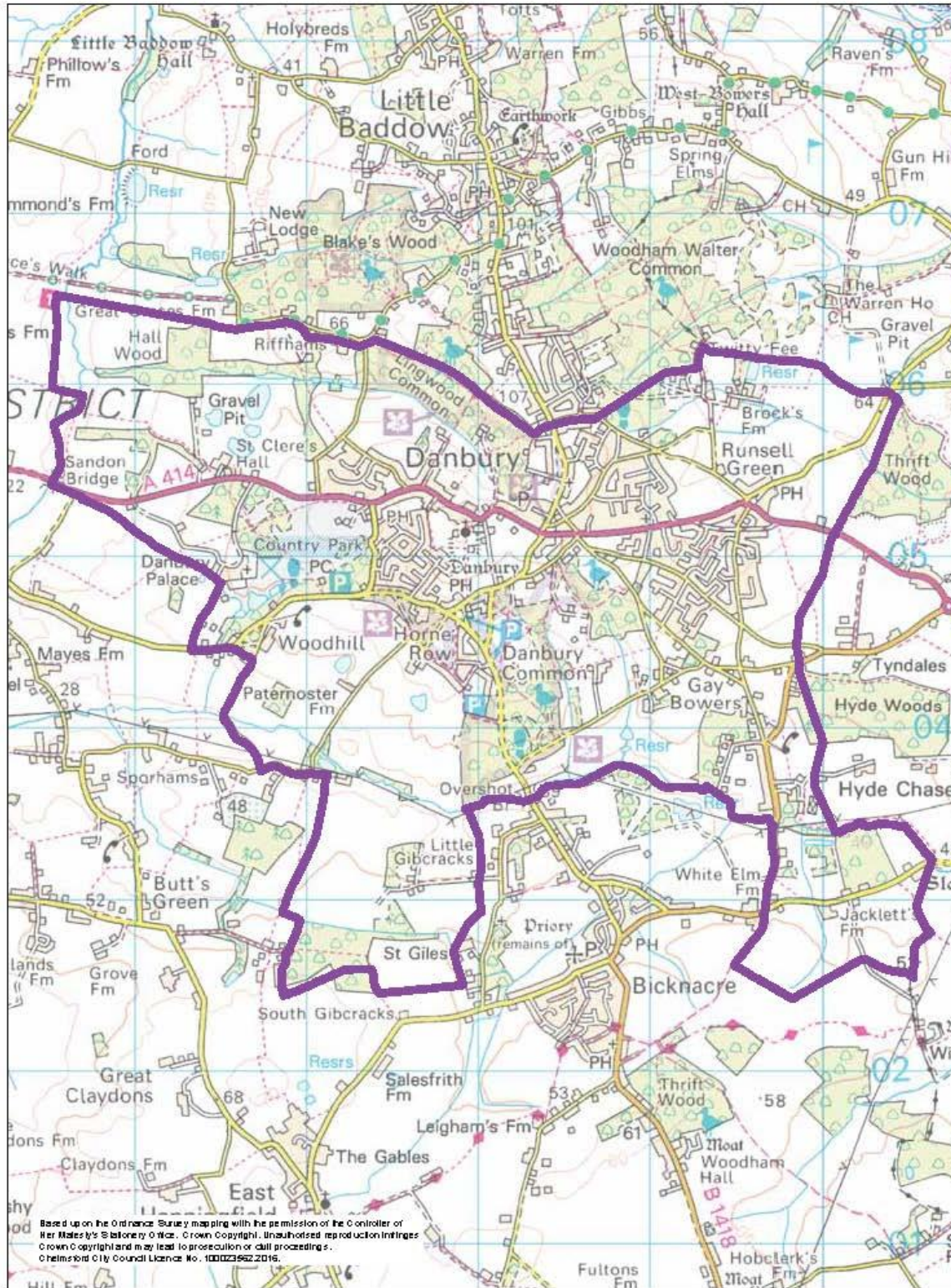


Figure 1. Danbury Neighbourhood Area (Source: Chelmsford City Council, 2018)

2. Policy Context

Planning Policy

- 2.1 The NP policies and allocations must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan, and consistent with the direction of travel of the emerging development plan.
- 2.2 The key documents making up the adopted statutory development plan (Chelmsford Local Development Framework 2001-2021) for Danbury are:
 - [Core Strategy and Development Control Policies \(February 2008\)](#);
 - [Site Allocations Development Plan Document \(February 2012\)](#); and
 - [Focused Review – Core Strategy and Development Control Policies \(December 2013\)](#).
- 2.3 In addition, CCC is in the process of preparing a single Local Plan covering the whole of the City Council's area. This will replace, when adopted, all the existing development plan documents listed above and will cover the period to 2036. The new Local Plan is currently subject to Examination in Public by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State; adoption is anticipated in 2019. The most recent iteration of the new Local Plan is listed below:
 - [Chelmsford Draft Local Plan Pre-Submission Document \(Regulation 19 – Public Draft\) \(January 2018\)](#).
- 2.4 The relevant policies of the above documents are highlighted below.

Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (2008)

- 2.5 The policies of relevance to development in Danbury include:

Policy CP9 – Protecting Areas of Natural and Built Heritage and Archaeological Importance

- 2.6 The Borough Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the Borough's important natural and historic environment. The Borough Council will therefore seek to sustain biodiversity, historic landscape character, archaeological and geological conservation by ensuring sites of international, national, regional and local importance are protected and enhanced.
- 2.7 The Borough Council will designate and keep under review Conservation Areas in order to protect or enhance their special architectural or historic interest and will seek to protect the character and setting of Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and Protected Lanes.

Policy CP15 – Meeting the Housing Needs of our Community

- 2.8 The Borough Council will require a mix of dwelling types, sizes and accommodation, to accommodate a balance of different household types and lifestyle choices to contribute to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities. In new residential development the Borough Council will expect a proportion of homes to be affordable on threshold sites and may allocate rural 'exception' sites adjacent to Defined Settlements for 100% affordable housing for local needs providing they comply with the criteria set out in Policies DC31 and DC32. In exceptional circumstances, sites for 100% affordable housing may also be allocated within Defined Settlement boundaries.

Policy DC3 – Managing Development Density in Different Locations

- 2.9 Proposals for residential development shall optimise the capacity of the site in a manner that is compatible with the use, intensity, scale, character and grain of the surrounding area and the size of the site. The precise density for any individual site will be determined by its immediate context, on-site constraints, the type of development proposed and the need to provide an appropriate mix of house types and sizes to meet the community's needs.
- 2.10 Within the Danbury settlement boundary densities above 30 dwellings per hectare but not exceeding 60 dwellings per hectare will be sought subject to the site's general accessibility and context.

Site Allocation: Chelmsford Borough Local Development Framework 2001 – 2021 (2012)

- 2.11 The SADPD sets out how Chelmsford Borough Council will manage development growth for the bulk of the Borough (excluding the areas covered by Area Action Plans) up to 2021, and then beyond. The SADPD implements in detail the Spatial Strategy contained within the Borough Council's adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD, which sets out the overall amount of new development and their broad locations.
- 2.12 There are no site allocations within the SAPD which relate to Danbury.

Topic 7 – Protected Lanes

- 2.13 Protected Lanes are country lanes with considerable historic and landscape value that contribute to rural character. These routes often originate from pre-historic trackways through the forest, and later lanes used during Saxon and Medieval periods. Protected lanes within Danbury are as follows:
- Capons Lane (I);
 - Gay Bowers Road (I);
 - Gay Bowers Lane;
 - Mill Lane (II);
 - Riffhams Lane;
 - Sporhams Lane;
 - Twitty Fee; and
 - Slough Road.

Topic 12 – Employment Areas

- 2.14 Employment areas include sites with offices, research and development, industry and warehousing. The Adopted Core Strategy sets out the overall employment strategy for the Borough. This approach is focused on providing for a portfolio of sites to enable economic growth, across a variety of sectors, on a variety of sites in the period to 2021.
- 2.15 The Royal British Legion Trading Estate, Maldon Road, Danbury has been designated as an existing Employment Area to be protected in accordance with the Core Strategy Policies DC50-DC52. This site has recently been renamed Danbury Business Park.

Topic 13 – Neighbourhood Centres

- 2.16 Neighbourhood Centres are an important part of community life and can provide a range of uses and services including shops, post office, public house, hairdresser and places of worship.
- 2.17 The Danbury village centre is focused around the village green. The centre includes tea rooms, a chemist and a hairdresser. Along the busier main road there is a larger food store and convenience newsagents/off licence. These shops aim to serve the local community and not attract visitors. There is a lack of car parking available as most shops surround the green or are by the roadside. However, there is good public transport access.

Topic 15 – Minerals and Waste

- 2.18 The Proposals Map identifies the preferred landfill sites for inert waste within Danbury is Danbury – St Cleres and Royal Oak.

Focused Review: Chelmsford Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (2013)

- 2.19 The policies of relevance to development in Danbury include:

Policy CPI – Securing Sustainable Development

- 2.20 The City Council will promote and secure sustainable development. This means linking housing and employment needs and directing development to locations supported by effective transport provision,

leisure, community and other essential services, whilst minimising damage to the environment and actively securing environmental enhancements.

Policy CP5 – Containing Urban Growth

2.21 This policy seeks to prevent the erosion of the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside from inappropriate forms of development. Much of the City Council's area falls outside the Urban Areas and Defined Settlements.

Policy CP15 – Meeting the Housing Needs of our Communities

2.22 The City Council will require a mix of dwelling types, sizes and accommodation, to accommodate a balance of different household types and lifestyle choices to contribute to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities.

2.23 In new residential development the City Council will expect a proportion of new homes to be affordable on threshold sites and has allocated rural 'exception' sites adjacent to Defined Settlements for affordable housing for local needs in accordance with the criteria set out in Policies DC31 and DC32.

Policy DC2 – Managing Development in the Countryside Beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt

2.24 The countryside within the Rural Area beyond the Metropolitan Green Belt as identified on the Proposals Map will be protected for its intrinsic character and beauty.

Policy DC12 – Infilling in the Countryside

2.25 Planning permission will be granted for residential infilling outside the Urban Areas or Defined Settlement provided that:

- The site is a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage;
- The development does not detract from the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside; and
- The proposal does not consolidate existing development in remote areas or served by unsatisfactory roads.

2.26 For the purposes of this policy a gap is normally regarded as 'small' if it can accommodate no more than one property.

Policy DC31 – The provision of Affordable Housing

2.27 The City Council will require the provision of 35% of the total number of residential units to be provided and maintained as affordable housing within all new residential development sites which:

- Have a capacity of 15 or more dwellings; or
- Comprise an area of 0.5ha or larger; or
- Lie within a small rural Defined Settlement and have a capacity for 5 or more dwellings.

Chelmsford Draft Local Plan (2018)

2.28 The policies of relevance to development in Danbury are listed below:

Strategic Policy S1 – Spatial Principles

2.29 The Local Plan focusses growth in the most sustainable locations; a settlement hierarchy is set out in Policy S9, see below.

Strategic Policy S2 – Securing Sustainable Development

2.30 The Council will take a positive approach when considering development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Strategic Policy S5 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

2.31 There will be a presumption in favour of the preservation and enhancement of designated heritage assets and their setting.

2.32 The Council will seek to protect the significance of non-designated heritage assets, including buildings, structures, features, gardens of local interest, protected lanes and archaeological sites.

Strategic Policy S6 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

2.33 The Council is committed to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment through the protection of designated sites and species, whilst planning positively for biodiversity networks and minimising pollution.

Strategic Policy S8 – Housing and Employment Requirements

2.34 The Local Plan provides for a total of 21,893 new homes for the period until 2036.

Strategic Policy S9 – the Spatial Strategy

2.35 The Spatial Strategy applies the Spatial Principles to focus new housing and employment growth to the most sustainable locations by making the best use of previously developed land in Chelmsford Urban Area; sustainable urban extensions around Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers; and development around Key Service Settlements outside the Green Belt in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy.

2.36 Danbury is identified as a “Key Service Settlement - Outside the Green Belt” in the Settlement Hierarchy. Danbury is within Growth Area 3 – South and East Chelmsford and is allocated 100 new homes over the Plan period.

Growth Area 3

2.37 This Growth Area will deliver sustainable new development for the existing town of South Woodham Ferrers which has a good range of services and facilities, and at the Key Service Settlements of Danbury and Bicknacre, both of which have a good level of services including primary schools, early years and childcare provision, convenience shopping facilities and primary healthcare facilities. These developments will provide opportunities to contribute to and enhance existing facilities and services. They will also offer wider benefits to the community by helping to deliver road improvements including to the A132/B1012 to the Rettendon Turnpike Junction.

Strategic Growth Site 9 – Danbury

2.38 A housing requirement of 100 new homes is to be delivered within or adjoining the Key Service Settlement of Danbury. The site(s) to accommodate this allocation will be identified and consulted upon through the emerging Danbury Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Site Assessment Method

- 3.1 The approach undertaken in the site appraisal is based primarily on the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (Assessment of Land Availability) published in 2014 with ongoing updates, which contains guidance on the assessment of land availability and the production of a SHELAA as part of a local authority's evidence base for a Local Plan.
- 3.2 Although an NP is at a smaller scale than a Local Plan, the criteria for assessing the suitability of sites for housing are still appropriate. This includes an assessment of whether a site is suitable, available and achievable.
- 3.3 In this context, the methodology for carrying out the site appraisal is presented below.

Task 1: Identify Sites to be included in the Assessment

- 3.4 The first task is to identify which sites should be considered as part of the assessment. DPC undertook a 'call for sites' exercise which concluded on the 11th September 2017; 18 sites were submitted to DPC and a further three sites are included in CCC's SHELAA. As a point of clarity CCC have renamed their Strategic Land Available Assessment (SLAA) to Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) to ensure the name accurately reflects the purpose of the assessment.
- 3.5 All sites included in the assessment are shown in Table 3. below.

Task 2: Site Appraisal Pro-Forma

- 3.6 A site appraisal pro-forma has been developed by AECOM to assess potential sites for allocation in the NP. It has been developed based on the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, the Site Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: A Toolkit for Neighbourhood Planners (Locality, 2015) and the knowledge and experience gained through previous neighbourhood planning site assessments. The purpose of the pro-forma is to enable a consistent evaluation of each site against an objective set of criteria.
- 3.7 The pro-forma utilised for the assessment enabled a range of information to be recorded, including the following:
 - General information:
 - Site location and use; and
 - Site context and planning history.
 - Context:
 - Type of site (greenfield, brownfield etc.); and
 - Planning history.
 - Suitability:
 - Site characteristics;
 - Environmental considerations;
 - Heritage considerations;
 - Community facilities and services; and
 - Other key considerations (e.g. flood risk, agricultural land, tree preservation orders).
 - Availability
- 3.8 One pro-forma was completed for each site considered through this site assessment and is included in Appendix A.

- 3.9 The pro-formas were completed following a desk top assessment which draws upon a range of sources of information including Google Maps² and Google Earth³, Defra's MAGIC map⁴, Historic England mapping⁵ and the EA's Flood Map for Planning⁶. The desktop assessment was corroborated and verified following a site visit which allowed the team to consider aspects of the site assessment that could only be done visually. It was also an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the context and nature of the NA.

Task 3: Consolidation of Results

- 3.10 Following the site visit, the desktop assessments were revisited to finalise the assessments and compare the sites to judge which were the most suitable to meet the housing requirement.
- 3.11 A 'traffic light' rating of all sites has been given based on whether the site is an appropriate candidate to be considered for allocation in the NP. The traffic light rating indicates 'green' for sites that show no constraints and are appropriate as site allocations, 'amber' for sites which are potentially appropriate if issues can be resolved and 'red' for sites which are not currently suitable, available and/or achievable. The judgement on each site is based on the three 'tests' of whether a site is appropriate for allocation – i.e. the site is suitable, available and achievable.
- 3.12 The conclusions of the SHELAA were revisited to consider whether the conclusions would change because of the local criteria.

Indicative Housing Capacity

- 3.13 This report includes a capacity analysis of each site where no information was provided by the site promoter. The capacity analysis is based on net housing densities and developable site area; the assumptions are detailed in Table 1 below. Policy DC3 of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD (2008) sets out a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare and a maximum density of 60 dwellings per hectare; the sites have therefore been assessed based on 30 dwellings per hectare given the rural nature of the NA.
- 3.14 The indicative housing capacities have been calculated so that the sites can be compared and because it is useful to have an idea of capacity when planning to meet an identified requirement (in this case around 100 homes).

Table 1 AECOM Net Housing Density

Area	Gross to net ratio standards	Net Housing Density
Up to 0.4 ha	90%	30
0.4 ha to 2 ha	80%	30
2 ha to 10 ha	75%	30
Over 10 ha	50%	30

- 3.15 If landowners/developers have identified a housing figure this has been stated.
- 3.16 Different densities than suggested in this report may be appropriate to apply to the sites in the NP (resulting in different capacities) given site specific circumstances. It is recommended that number of houses allocated per site is consistent with the existing density of the village's built up area and appropriate for the context and setting of the site, considering the site-specific characteristic and constraints. The site capacities, which are based on the gross to net ratios above, stated are for illustrative purposes only.

² Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>

³ Available at: <https://earth.google.com/web/>

⁴ Available at: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

⁵ Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/map-search?clearresults=True>

⁶ Available at: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

- 3.17 Some of the sites have indicative capacities which are in excess of DPC's identified housing need. Based on the conclusions of this report, and considering all other considerations, if it is decided that these site(s) should be allocated, DPC can either allocate the whole site for a set number of units or could allocate a smaller part of the site. This process could be undertaken in discussion with the relevant landowner(s).

4. Site Assessment

Known Sites

4.1 The sites to be considered through this site appraisal have been identified through:

- The call for sites exercise undertaken by DPC; and
- A review of CCC's SHELAA.

4.2 The sites identified are set out in the tables below.

Chelmsford SHELAA

4.3 The 2018 Chelmsford SHELAA considered 20 sites in Danbury (17SLAA10 features in numerous sites but has only been included in this Table once – therefore, the Table has 18 rows); please see Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 2. Summary of CCC SHELAA

Site Name/Address	SHELAA Reference	SHELAA Conclusion
Hammonds Farm	CFS83	Site faces some suitability constraints Site performs well against availability and achievability criteria
Land West of Cleres Hall, Main Road	CFS39	Site faces some suitability constraints Site performs well against availability and achievability criteria
Land off Runsell Lane	CFS58 / 15SLAA49	Site faces some suitability constraints Site performs well against availability and achievability criteria
Land at Tyndales Farm West	CFS56	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land at Tyndales Farm West	CFS56 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land at Tyndales Farm West	CFS57 / 15/SLAA45	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land at Tyndales Farm East	CFS21 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land at Millfields / Mill Lane	CFS116 / CFS190	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Field South of Jubilee Rise	CFS159	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Play Area, Jubilee Rise	CFS243	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Danecroft, Woodhill Road	CFS188	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Well Lane Industrial Area	CFS274	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land North of White Elm Cottage, Hyde Lane	CFS18	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land at Old Chase Farm	15SLAA46 / 17SLAA10	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Storage Land Old Chase Farm	17SLAA10	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Land North of Elm Green Lane	18SLAA4	Site faces some suitability constraints Site performs well against availability and achievability criteria

Site Name/Address	SHELAA Reference	SHLAA Conclusion
Site at 20 Little Baddow Road Danbury Chelmsford Essex	CFS15	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria
Bay Meadow, Land adjacent to the Medical Centre	CFS173	Site performs well against suitability, availability and achievability criteria.

Source: Chelmsford City Council (2018)

FINAL SLAA MAPPING 2018
SITES BY PARISH AND UNPARISHED AREAS OF CHELMSFORD
DANBURY

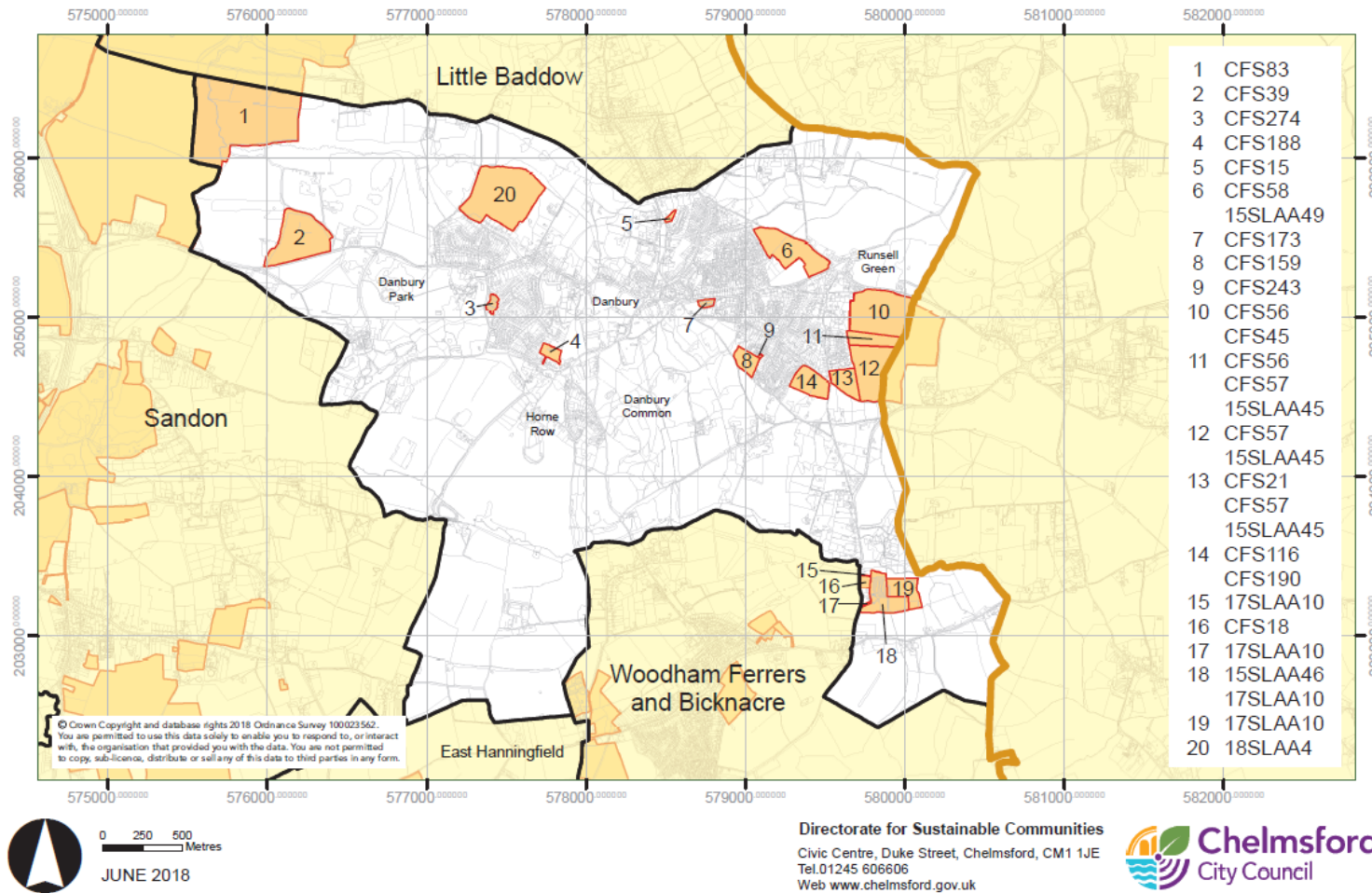


Figure 2. SHELAA Map - Danbury (Source: Chelmsford City Council, 2018)

Danbury Call for Sites

- 4.4 A Call for Sites exercise undertaken by DPC concluded in September 2017 with 18 sites put forward for assessment and potential allocation (12 to CCC and 6 to the Danbury NP Steering Group), as outlined in Table 3 below. Of the 18 sites submitted, 11 were already known (submitted to the SLAA / SHELAA). Site D7 was submitted with a boundary that encompasses part of three separate SHELAA sites.
- 4.5 The gross site areas stated are based on the information provided by the site promoters during the 'call for sites' consultation. For the six sites not submitted during the 'call for sites' consultation, but included within this report, measurements have been taken from Google Earth based on the red line boundary detailed in the SLAA/SHELAA.

Table 3 Sites Identified in the Danbury Call for Sites

Reference	Site Name/Address	SHELAA Reference	Gross Site Area (ha)
D1	Hammonds Farm	CFS83	32.4
D2	Land West of Cleres Hall, Main Road	CFS39	9.8
D3	Land North of 80 Main Road	- Not submitted to CCC	3.6
D4	Land off Runsell Lane	CFS58	6.7
D5	Sandpit Field, East of Little Fields	- Not submitted to CCC	2.3
D6	Land at Twitty Fee	- Not submitted to CCC	0.5
D7	Land at Tyndales Farm West	CFS56 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	9.0
D8	Land at Tyndales Farm East	CFS21 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	2.5
D9	Land at Millfields / Mill Lane	CFS116 / CFS190	3.4
D12	Bay Meadow, Land adjacent to the Medical Centre	CFS173	0.7
D14	Danecroft, Woodhill Road	CFS188	1.0
D16	Land on Woodhill Road adjacent to Danbury Park	- Not submitted to CCC	0.6
D17	Land North of White Elm Cottage, Hyde Lane	CFS18	0.6
D18	Land at Old Chase Farm	15SLAA46	3.9
D19	Land at Old Chase Farm	17SLAA10	2.3
D20	Land North of Elm Green Lane	18SLAA4	12.0
D21	Land at Copt Hill / Mayes Lane	- Not submitted to CCC	0.9
D22	Land at Frettons	- Not submitted to CCC	3.8

Sites Considered through the Site Appraisal

4.6 By combining the list of sites in Table 2 and Table 3 there are 21 sites in total to be included in this site assessment. Table 4 and Figure 3 identifies this list.

Table 4. Sites to be considered in the Site Appraisal

Reference	Site Name/Address	SHELAA Reference	Gross Site Area (ha)
D1	Hammonds Farm	CFS83	32.4
D2	Land West of Cleres Hall, Main Road	CFS39	9.8
D3	Land North of 80 Main Road	- Not submitted to CCC	3.6
D4	Land off Runsell Lane	CFS58	6.7
D5	Sandpit Field, East of Little Fields	- Not submitted to CCC	2.3
D6	Land at Twitty Fee	- Not submitted to CCC	0.5
D7	Land at Tyndales Farm West	CFS56 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	9.0
D8	Land at Tyndales Farm East	CFS21 / CFS57 / 15SLAA45	2.5
D9	Land at Millfields / Mill Lane	CFS116 / CFS190	3.4
D10	Field South of Jubilee Rise	CFS159	1.6
D11	Play Area, Jubilee Rise	CFS243	0.02
D12	Bay Meadow, Land adjacent to the Medical Centre	CFS173	0.7
D14	Danecroft, Woodhill Road	CFS188	1.0
D15	Well Lane Industrial Area	CFS274	0.5
D16	Land on Woodhill Road adjacent to Danbury Park	- Not submitted to CCC	0.6
D17	Land North of White Elm Cottage, Hyde Lane	CFS18	0.6
D18	Land at Old Chase Farm	15SLAA46	3.9
D19	Land at Old Chase Farm	17SLAA10	2.3
D20	Land North of Elm Green Lane	18SLAA4	12.0
D21	Land at Copt Hill / Mayes Lane	- Not submitted to CCC	0.9
D22	Land at Frettons	- Not submitted to CCC	3.8

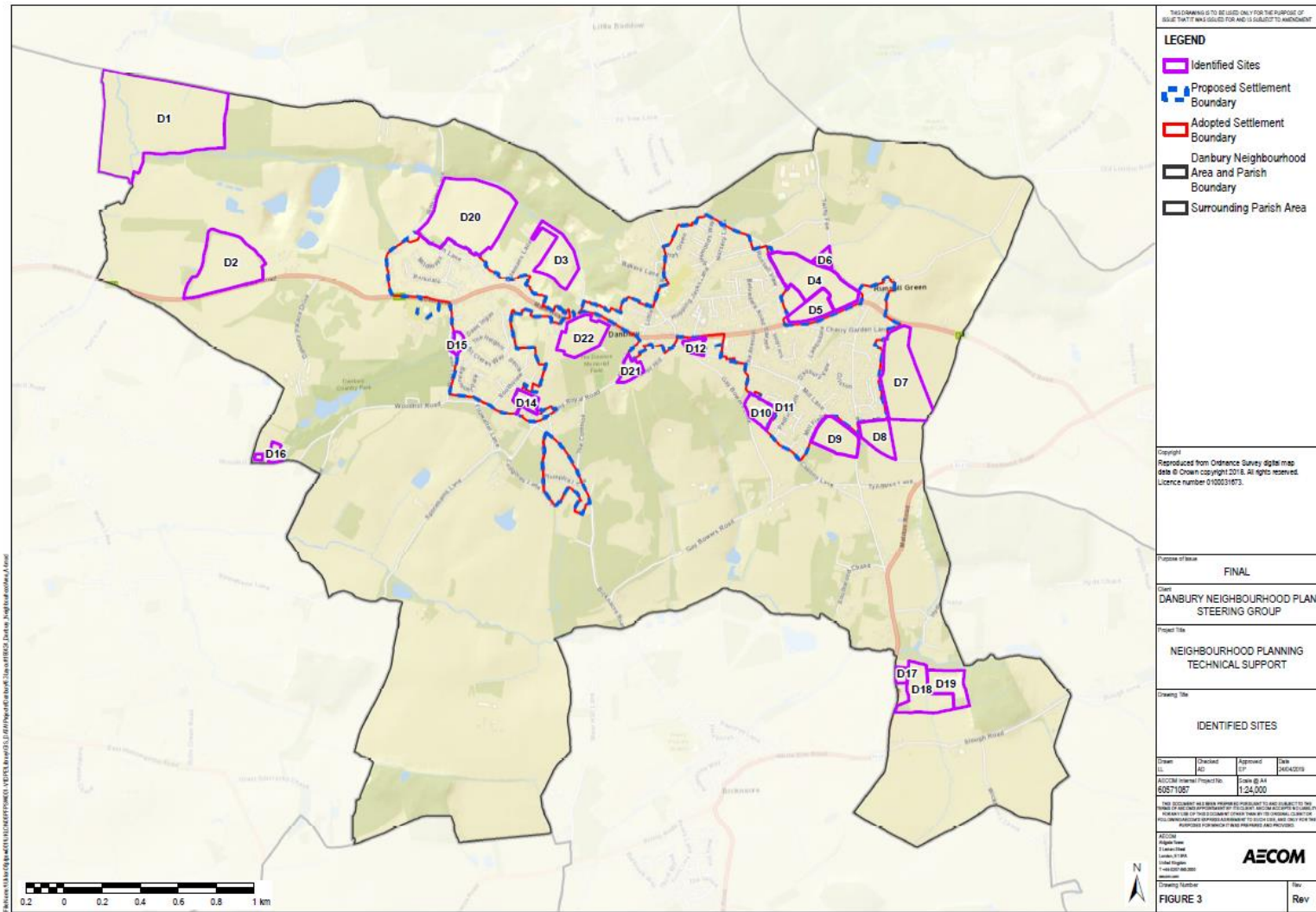


Figure 3. Sites to be considered in the Site Appraisal

Initial Site Sift

- 4.7 CCC's new Local Plan Policy Strategic Growth Site 9 – Danbury allocates around 100 homes to be delivered within or adjacent to the settlement boundary of Danbury. Given this very clear policy position an initial sift has been undertaken to remove any sites which are contrary to this planning policy. This is on the basis that such sites would not be in general conformity with the strategic policies in CCC's emerging new Local Plan. Sites which are within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury and can, therefore, progress to the detailed site assessment stage, are set out within Table 5 below.
- 4.8 CCC has provided guidance on the interpretation of whether a site is within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury.
- 4.9 *“The boundaries of Defined Settlement Boundaries are drawn tightly around consolidated built-up areas, where buildings which are of a similar density and character to the local settlement or built-up area.*
- 4.10 *CCC considers that land is adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary where development would form a continuation of existing development, such as where buildings abut the side or rear boundary of properties within the Defined Settlement Boundary, However, land is not considered to be adjacent where it is on the opposite side of a road, which creates a division from the Defined Settlement Boundary. This is often a wide gap comprising a road, footway and grass verge. The character may therefore be different to the area within a Defined Settlement Boundary. This is applied consistently to all areas to avoid taking a different approach to different Defined Settlement Boundaries”.*
- 4.11 The above has been applied to the known sites based on the proposed Defined Settlement Boundaries for Danbury as detailed on the Policies Map associated with the new Local Plan, with a Plan period to 2036. It is understood that the Danbury NP is not seeking to amend the Defined Settlement Boundaries for Danbury.

Table 5. Known Sites within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury

Reference	Site Name/Address	Site within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury?
D4	Land off Runsell Lane	Yes
D5	Sandpit Field, East of Little Fields	Yes
D7	Land at Tyndales Farm West	Yes
D8	Land at Tyndales Farm East	Yes
D9	Land at Millfields / Mill Lane	Yes
D10	Field South of Jubilee Rise	Yes
D11	Play Area, Jubilee Rise	Yes
D12	Bay Meadow, Land adjacent to the Medical Centre	Yes
D14	Danecroft, Woodhill Road	Yes
D15	Well Lane Industrial Area	Yes
D20	Land North of Elm Green Lane	Yes
D21	Land at Copt Hill / Mayes Lane	Yes

4.12 Table 6 sets out the sites which are contrary to CCC's new Local Plan Policy Strategic Growth Site 9 – Danbury and have been discounted from further site appraisal.

Table 6. Known Sites remote from the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury

Reference	Site Name/Address	Reason for discounting
D1	Hammonds Farm	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D2	Land West of Cleres Hall, Main Road	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D3	Land North of 80 Main Road	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D6	Land at Twitty Fee	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D16	Land on Woodhill Road adjacent to Danbury Park	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D17	Land North of White Elm Cottage, Hyde Lane	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D18	Land at Old Chase Farm	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D19	Land at Old Chase Farm	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury
D22	Land at Frettons	Site is not within or adjacent to the Defined Settlement Boundary of Danbury

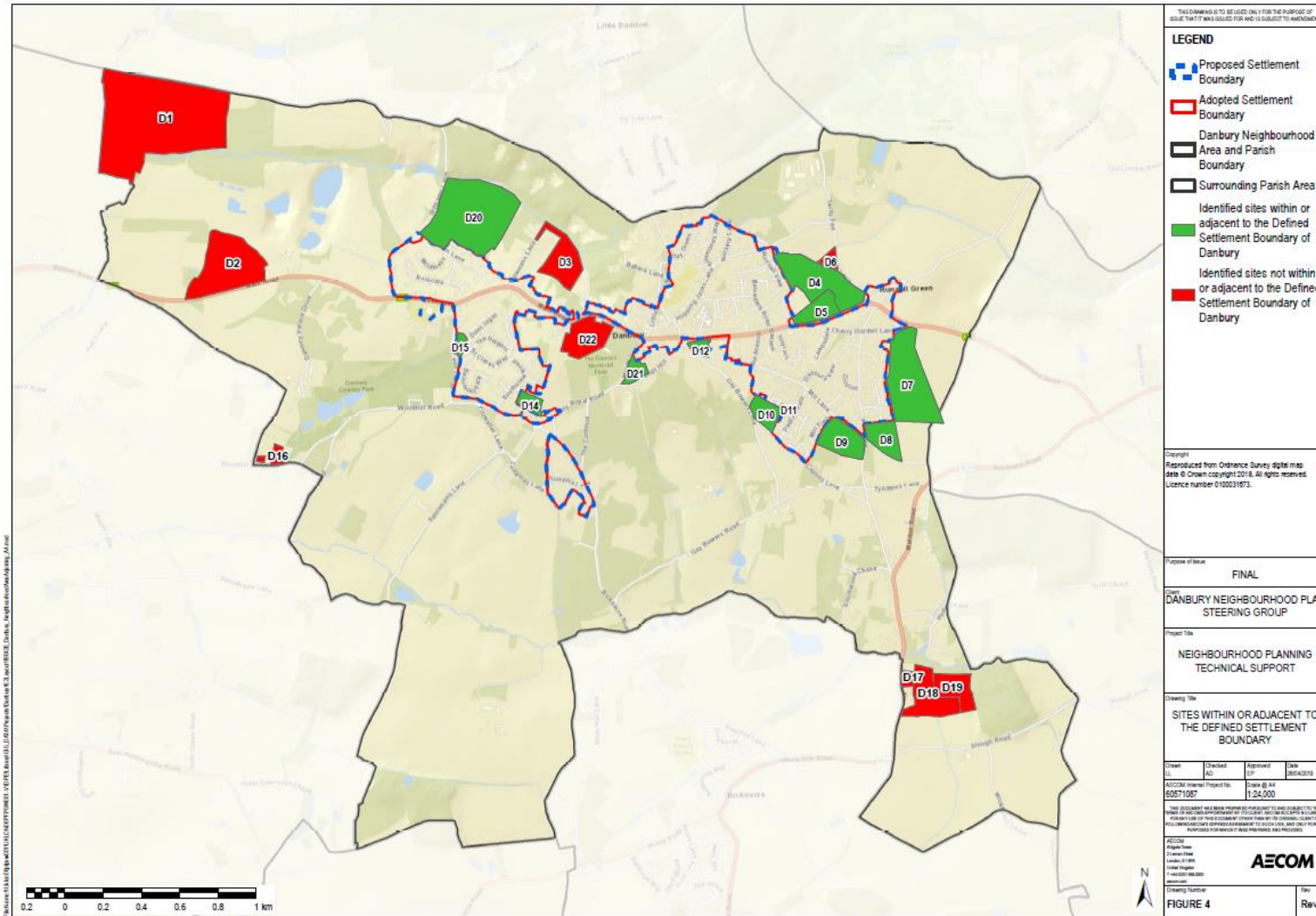


Figure 4. Initial Sift Output

Summary of Key constraints

- 4.13 Through the completion of the pro-formas, and pursuant to the site visits, it became apparent that Danbury presents a particularly challenging environment to plan for residential growth within due to the significant constraints that exist within the NA. It is considered that the key constraints impacting the suitability of sites within the neighbourhood area are highways, landscape and ecology (impact on nearby Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)). There is also the recent declaration of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Each of the sites have been assessed against these constraints with the conclusions presented below.
- 4.14 These constraints are not the only constraints affecting the sites but are considered the most significant and are potential 'showstoppers' precluding development, and therefore have a greater weighting in the site assessment process. These conclusions should be read in conjunction with the individual site pro-formas included in Appendix A which contain further details about the sites.

Air Quality Management Area

- 4.15 The Local Air Quality Management statutory process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. Where an exceedance is considered likely the local authority must declare an AQMA and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).
- 4.16 Whilst conducting the Local Air Quality Management process, CCC have identified high concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide on the A414 Maldon Road, Danbury to an extent that an exceedance of the annual mean Air Quality Objectives has taken place. Accordingly, on the 8th October 2018 an AQMA was declared for a section of the A414 Maldon Road, Danbury (see Figure 5 below for extent of the AQMA) and CCC are currently in the process of developing an AQAP for this AQMA (anticipated September 2019).
- 4.17 CCC have advised that the declaration of the AQMA does not preclude development. For sites near to the AQMA on-site mitigation measures such as sealed windows and ventilation systems may be required. Small-scale developments are unlikely to significantly impact the AQMA and for larger developments CCC would seek measures to encourage the use alternative/cleaner modes of transport (travel plans, provision of/contribution to sustainable transport measures, electric charging points for cars); all of these factors would be considered and secured at planning application stage and do not have a bearing on the suitability of a site for allocation for housing. However, it is acknowledged that sites which have dedicated pedestrian/cycle links to local services and facilities have the potential to have less of an impact on the AQMA compared to sites without these connections.
- 4.18 The A414 Maldon Road is a busy road that connects Maldon and the Dengie area with the A12 and Chelmsford.
- 4.19 The road has a slight gradient. When vehicles travel up inclines, engines are required to work harder to overcome gravity and emissions are significantly higher. The opposite occurs for vehicles travelling downhill however combined, a general increase in emissions occurs when compared with flat roads.
- 4.20 Areas of the road are flanked by buildings on one or both sides. Street canyons and facades built close to the kerbside significantly reduce the dispersal of pollution. The footway is less than 1 metre wide meaning that relevant exposure is within 1 metre of the kerb.
- 4.21 The Danbury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are concerned about stationary traffic throughout the village at peak times.
- 4.22 Site D12 (with an indicative capacity of 17) is the closest site to the AQMA.
- 4.23 Site D21 (landowner has indicated aspirations to deliver a small number of homes on the site and retain the existing dwelling) is also near the AQMA.

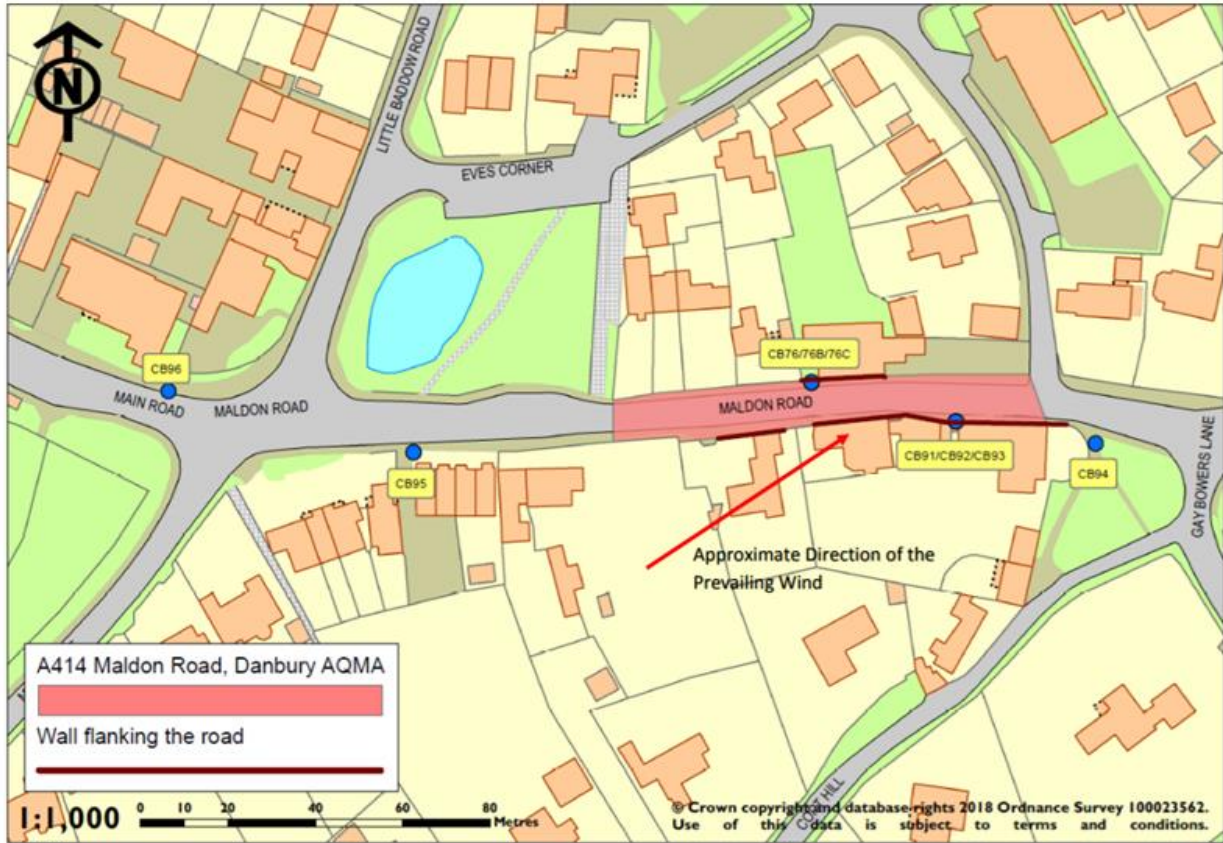


Figure 5. A414, Maldon Road, Danbury AQMA

Highways

4.24 For sites to be considered suitable they should either have an adequate vehicular access for the proposed use or potential to provide one. With respect to pedestrian access, in accordance with the thrust of the NPPF and particularly given the local air quality issues highlighted previously, sites with good pedestrian access to local services and facilities are preferable to sites which are remote from local services and facilities with poor or no provision for pedestrian/cycle links. Pedestrian and cycle access are also important for helping to reduce the need to travel via motorised vehicle, a key cause of poor air quality in Danbury.

4.25 Table 7 provides an assessment of vehicular access to each site and pedestrian connectivity from the site to local services and facilities.

Table 7. Assessment of vehicle access and pedestrian connectivity of known sites

Site reference	Access on to road	Pedestrian/cycle links	Highways performance
D4	Access on to Maldon Road (adopted, A or B road) a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction) or Runsell Lane (adopted, unclassified) a narrow country lane.	Maldon Road has footways and streetlighting connecting the site to local services and facilities. Runsell Lane has no footway or streetlighting.	Potential to provide an acceptable access to the site from Maldon Road and the site is well connected to the local services and facilities.
D5	Access on to Maldon Road (adopted, A or B road) a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction).	Maldon Road has footways and streetlighting connecting the site to local services and facilities.	Potential to provide an acceptable access to the site from Maldon Road and the site is well connected to the local services and facilities.
D7	Access on to Maldon Road (adopted, A or B road), a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction).	Maldon Road has footways and streetlighting connecting the site to local services and facilities.	Potential to provide an acceptable access to the site from Maldon Road and the site is well connected to

Site reference	Access on to road	Pedestrian/cycle links	Highways performance
		Previous planning history demonstrates a suitable access could be provided, but additional evidence is required to demonstrate the development would not have an adverse impact on the wider highway network.	the local services and facilities.
D8	Access on to Hyde Lane (adopted, unclassified) or Mill Lane (adopted, unclassified); both narrow, country lanes.	Neither Hyde Lane or Mill Lane have footways or streetlighting that would connect the site to local services and facilities.	Site would require access onto narrow country lanes and is not connected by pedestrian routes to local services and facilities
D9	Access on to Hyde Lane (adopted, unclassified) or Mill Lane (adopted, unclassified); both narrow, country lanes.	Hyde Lane does not have footways or streetlighting to connect the site to local services and facilities. However, there is an unlit footway on the northern side of Mill Lane at the western end of the site that would connect the site to local services and facilities.	Access can be provided onto Mill Lane which is a narrow country lane but widens into a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction) just west of the site. There is a pedestrian link (unlit footways) from the site to local services and facilities.
D10	Access likely to be on to Jubilee Rise (adopted, unclassified), a two-lane cul-de-sac (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). Could have an impact on existing parking arrangements. Alternative potential access onto Capon Lane, but this is a narrow country lane (adopted, unclassified) which is also a Protected Lane.	Jubilee Rise has footways and streetlighting to connect the site to local services and facilities. However, it is noted that the presence of streetlighting is intermittent between the site and the local facilities.	Access can be provided onto Jubilee Rise which is a two-lane cul-de-sac (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). Could have an impact on existing parking arrangements within Jubilee Rise. The site is also linked to local services and facilities by footways and streetlighting (although the latter is intermittent).
D11	Access likely to be on to Jubilee Rise (adopted, unclassified), a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). Could have an impact on existing parking arrangements.	Jubilee Rise has footways and streetlighting to connect the site to local services and facilities. However, it is noted that the presence of streetlighting is intermittent between the site and the local facilities.	Access can be provided onto Jubilee Rise which is a two-lane cul-de-sac (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). Could have an impact on existing parking arrangements within Jubilee Rise. The site is also linked to local services and facilities by footways and streetlighting (although the latter is intermittent).
D12	Access on to Maldon Road (adopted, A or B road), a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction), or Gay Bowers Lane (adopted, unclassified) or Mill Lane (adopted, unclassified); both of which are narrow country lanes.	Maldon Road has footways and streetlighting connecting the site to local services and facilities Gay Bowers Lane has an unlit footway almost to the junction with Mill Lane; Mill Lane has no footways or streetlighting.	Potential to provide an acceptable access to the site from Maldon Road and where there is pedestrian link to the local services and facilities. Mill Lane has no pedestrian connection from the site to the local services and facilities.
D14	Access on to Woodhill Road (adopted, either Class III or unclassified), a two-lane road (one	Woodhill Road has an unlit footway which connects the site to local services and facilities.	Access can be provided onto Woodhill Road which is a two-lane road (one lane

Site reference	Access on to road	Pedestrian/cycle links	Highways performance
	lane for traffic to travel in either direction).		for traffic to travel in either direction). There is an extant planning permission for a suitable access to the site. The site is also linked to local services and facilities by footways.
D15	Access on to Well Lane (adopted, Class III) a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction).	Well Lane has an unlit footway which connects the site to local services and facilities.	Access can be provided onto Well Lane which is a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). The site is also linked to local services and facilities by footways.
D20	Access on to Riffhams Lane (adopted, unclassified) or Elm Green Lane (adopted, unclassified); both of which are narrow, country lanes.	Neither Riffhams Lane nor Elm Green Lane have footways or streetlighting that would connect the site to local services and facilities. It is acknowledged that there is a footway on Elm Green Lane from south of the junction with Mildmays (to the southeast of the site) but it does not appear to connect to local services or facilities.	Site would require access onto narrow, country lanes and is not connected by pedestrian routes to local services and facilities
D21	Access on to Mayes Lane (adopted, Class III) or Copt Hill (adopted, unclassified). Mayes Lane is a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). Copt Hill is a narrow, country lane.	Mayes Lane has an unlit footway that connects the site to local services and facilities. Copt Hill has no footways or streetlighting.	Access can be provided onto Mayes Lane which is a two-lane road (one lane for traffic to travel in either direction). The site is also linked to local services and facilities by footways.

Protected Lanes

- 4.26 The greater part of the road network in the Essex countryside derives from at least as far back as the medieval period. Much of it undoubtedly existed in Saxon times and it is likely that many roads and lanes were formed long before that. These lanes are part of what was once an immense mileage of minor roads and track-ways connecting villages, hamlets and scattered farms and cottages.
- 4.27 Sites D4, D10, D11 and D12 are adjacent to protected lanes (Capons Lane, Riffhams Lane, Twitty Fee, Gay Bowers Lane and Mill Lane) but it is unlikely that these protected lanes would provide access to any of the sites.

Landscape

4.28 An assessment of the landscape capacity of each site has been undertaken. This assessment which has been informed by CCC’s evidence base:

- [Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment \(2006\)](#);
- [Chelmsford City Council Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment \(2017\)](#); and
- [Chelmsford Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project](#).

4.29 Landscape capacity is calculated by understanding the landscape value as well as the landscape sensitivity. Where a site has been considered within the existing evidence the findings have been included within this report (see source column).

4.30 Where a site or area has not been assessed in the above evidence base studies AECOM have undertaken a high-level assessment; this has been undertaken by town planners as opposed to landscape architects. The methodology employed in this study is broadly comparable to that employed by Amec Foster Wheeler in the Chelmsford City Council Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2017) and is considered to be proportionate and robust for the purpose of the assessment of suitability of sites for development. Should the Steering Group require additional support with respect to the landscape suitability of sites they could approach Chelmsford City Council or Amec Foster Wheeler to produce an Addendum or Note that considers, in greater detail, the sites not previously included within the Chelmsford City Council Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (2017).

4.31 All the sites and areas have been visited by AECOM to enable a fair comparison between previously assessed sites and new sites.

Table 8. Assessment of landscape value, sensitivity and capacity of known sites

Site reference	Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Capacity	Source
D4	This land parcel is judged to be of moderate value. It is an area of ordinary, non-designated landscape and whilst it has a recognisable and intact character, there are few nature conservation interests (associated with hedgerows and ditches) and it is showing evidence of decline as a result of the removal and under management of hedgerows. Whilst there is no public access, the area is viewed from Runsell Lane that skirts the edge of the settlement. However, the land has a moderate or ordinary aesthetic appeal (with attractive views towards woodland and across open countryside to the north and east) with some detracting features (associated with residential properties on the settlement edge).	The area shares elements and features in common with the typical character. Whilst the presence of adjoining modern residential development (fencing, walls and buildings) exerts a strong detracting influence across the area. The sloping hillside landform and relatively open arable farmland that fringe the outer patches of woodland are representative of character. Overall, the area retains a recognisable and intact character, with evidence of decline with hedgerows. In some places the hedgerows are fragmented, unmanaged or have been removed leaving occasional remnant hedgerow trees. Ditches, hedgerows and remnant hedgerow trees are the only semi natural habitats within the area. In addition, the combination of field enclosure, hedgerow patterns, ditches, as well as the winding and narrow Runsell Lane and its isolated residential properties, provide some sense of time-depth. Overall the land parcel is judged to be of moderate landscape character sensitivity.	Sub-area DLP1b is judged to have a low to medium landscape capacity. Here development would be less appropriate/ more difficult to accommodate due to its more open character and contribution to the setting of the settlement.	CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment

Site reference	Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Capacity	Source
D5	<p>This land parcel is judged to be of moderate value. It is an area of ordinary non-designated landscape and whilst it has a recognisable and intact character, there are few nature conservation interests (associated with hedgerows and ditches) and it is showing evidence of decline because of the removal and under management of hedgerows. Whilst there is no public access, the area is viewed from Runsell Lane that skirts the edge of the settlement. However, the land has a moderate or ordinary aesthetic appeal (with attractive views towards woodland and across open countryside to the north and east) with some detracting features (associated with residential properties on the settlement edge).</p>	<p>The area shares elements and features in common with the typical character. Whilst the presence of adjoining modern residential development (fencing, walls and buildings) exerts a strong detracting influence across the area. Overall, the area retains a recognisable and intact character. Ditches, hedgerows and remnant hedgerow trees are the only semi natural habitats within the area. In addition, the combination of field enclosure, hedgerow patterns, ditches, as well as the winding and narrow Runsell Lane and its isolated residential properties, provide some sense of time-depth. Overall the land parcel is judged to be of moderate landscape character sensitivity.</p>	<p>Sub-area DLP1a is judged to have a medium landscape capacity reflecting its relatively well enclosed character combined with its existing relationship with the existing settlement edge. Here capacity is subject to careful siting/ design of development, the retention/ implementation/ enhancement of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and implementation of small copses, in keeping with the character of the landscape. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded, recommendations for mitigation and guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgerows – retain and strengthen existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees within new development. • Residential properties off the adjoining settlement edge (to the west and south) – implement physical and green buffers to minimise impact on views. • Provide positive new settlement edge (softened and well-integrated into the countryside). 	<p>CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment</p>
D7	<p>The land parcel is considered to be of moderate value. Whilst the landscape is weakening with many elements in poor and declining condition and little nature conservation value or sense of time-depth. Its character is still recognisable and intact, the area has moderate recreational value with PROWs both within and adjoining and is it has moderate aesthetic appeal with reasonably attractive far reaching views across open countryside.</p>	<p>As noted above, the area consists of a single very large scale arable field with very few landscape elements/ features or semi-natural habitats (hedgerows and hedgerow trees). Whilst it shares some characteristics with the typical character (its hillside landform and relatively open arable farmland) and has a recognisable rural character. This has been weakened by the declining condition of its hedgerows which are predominantly fragmented, unmanaged or have been removed through agricultural intensification. As a result, there is little sense of time-depth. Whilst this landscape contains few elements or features and immediately adjoins the settlement edge. The settlement is well integrated with a high presence of tall and dense boundary hedgerows/tree cover providing a predominantly softened edge with only occasional detractive features associated with modern residential development (fences and buildings). The land parcel is judged to be of low to moderate landscape character sensitivity.</p>	<p>Whilst judged to be of low to moderate landscape character sensitivity and moderate value. The area is judged to be of high visual sensitivity and low to medium landscape capacity due to its more open character and contribution to the setting of the settlement.</p>	<p>CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment</p>
D8	<p>The land parcel is considered to be of moderate value. Whilst the landscape is weakening with many elements in poor and declining condition and little nature conservation value or sense of time-depth. Its character is still recognisable and intact, the area has moderate recreational value with PROWs both within and adjoining and is it has moderate aesthetic appeal with reasonably attractive far reaching views across open countryside.</p>	<p>The area consists of a single very large scale arable field with very few landscape elements/ features or semi-natural habitats (hedgerows and hedgerow trees). Whilst it shares some characteristics with the typical character (its hillside landform and relatively open arable farmland) and has a recognisable rural character. This has been weakened by the declining condition of its hedgerows which are predominantly fragmented, unmanaged or have been removed through agricultural intensification. As a result, there is little sense of time-depth. Whilst this landscape contains few elements or features and immediately adjoins</p>	<p>Whilst judged to be of low to moderate landscape character sensitivity and moderate value. The area is judged to be of high visual sensitivity and low to medium landscape capacity due to its more open character and contribution to the setting of the settlement.</p>	<p>CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment</p>

Site reference	Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Capacity	Source
		the settlement edge. The settlement is well integrated with a high presence of tall and dense boundary hedgerows/tree cover providing a predominantly softened edge with only occasional detractive features associated with modern residential development (fences and buildings). The land parcel is judged to be of low to moderate landscape character sensitivity.		
D9	The parcel is considered to be of moderate value. This is an area of ordinary non-designated landscape with an intact and recognisable character and moderate or ordinary aesthetic appeal (with attractive views towards woodland/tree cover). However, there are few nature conservation interests (associated with hedgerows), limited sense of time-depth and no public access.	The area has a limited number of elements/ features in common with typical character. Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees form the only semi-natural habitats within the area and these are in moderate to good condition. Together with the adjoining rural lanes and adjoining Gay Bowers House and grounds, these provide some sense of time-depth. Tall and dense hedgerows/hedgerow trees provide a softened edge to the settlement to the north. However, there is an absence of vegetation along the western edge resulting in an inconsistent boundary feature and modern housing forms a detractive feature within the eastern half of the area. The land parcel has a recognisable and intact character and is judged to be of moderate landscape character sensitivity.	The area is judged to be of moderate overall landscape sensitivity and moderate value with a medium landscape capacity to accommodate low rise residential and employment development due to its relatively enclosed character and its relationship with the settlement edge. Here capacity is subject to careful siting/ design of development and the retention/ implementation/ enhancement of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland in keeping with the character of the landscape. Key characteristics/ qualities to be safeguarded, recommendations for mitigation and guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and strengthen existing boundary hedgerows with new hedgerow and tree planting (hedgerow trees/ copses) to form new settlement edge. • Residential properties on the settlement edge (Millfields and Mill Lane) and Gay Bowers House – implement physical and green buffers to minimise impact on views. 	CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment
D10	The parcel is considered to be of low value. It is a non-designated or ordinary landscape where the hard built edges of the settlement (fencing, walls and buildings) have become strong detractive influences. It has few nature conservation features, limited sense of time-depth, no recreational value and there is a sense of abandonment.	Whilst the land shares some elements and features that are typical of character; its character is indistinct and typical of many urban fringe landscapes. Semi-natural habitats are limited to boundary hedgerows and the field is now under used/ neglected. There is limited sense of time-depth having undergone recent change with modern residential development associated with the settlement edge to the north and east (buildings, fencing and walls). These exert a strong detractive influence across the area. This parcel is judged to be of low landscape character sensitivity.	The area is judged to be of moderate overall landscape sensitivity and low value with a medium landscape capacity to accommodate low rise residential and employment development due to its relatively enclosed character and its relationship with the settlement edge. Here capacity is subject to careful siting/ design of development and the retention/ implementation/ enhancement of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland in keeping with the character of the landscape. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded, recommendations for mitigation and guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and strengthen existing boundary hedgerows with new hedgerow and tree planting (hedgerow trees / copses). • Residential properties on the settlement edge – implement physical and green buffers to minimise impact on views. 	CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment

Site reference	Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Capacity	Source
D11	The parcel is considered to be of low value. It is within the defined settlement of Danbury and is occupied by hardstanding.	The land does not share the elements or features that are typical of character and is judged to be of low landscape character sensitivity.	The site is judged to have high landscape capacity. Here development would be appropriate and easier to accommodate. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded and mitigation measures should be discussed with CCC.	AECOM Assessment
D12	The parcel is considered to be of moderate value. It is an area of ordinary non-designated landscape with an intact and recognisable character and moderate or ordinary aesthetic appeal although the hard-built edges of the settlement (fencing, walls and hardstanding to the west) have become detractive influences. There are few nature conservation interests (associated with hedgerows), limited sense of time-depth and no public access.	The site has a limited number of elements/ features in common with typical character. Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees form the only semi-natural habitats within the area and these are in moderate to good condition. The adjoining rural lanes (Gay Bowers Lane and Mill Lane) and neighbouring Hill House provide some sense of time-depth. There is an absence of vegetation along the eastern edge resulting in an inconsistent boundary feature and modern development forms a detractive feature to the east. The land parcel has a recognisable and intact character and is judged to be of moderate landscape character sensitivity.	The area is judged to be of moderate overall landscape sensitivity and moderate value with a medium landscape capacity to accommodate low rise residential and employment development due to its relatively enclosed character and its relationship with the settlement edge. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded and mitigation measures should be discussed with CCC.	CCC Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment
D14	The parcel is considered to be of low to moderate value. It is a non-designated or ordinary landscape where the hard-built edges of the settlement (fencing, walls and buildings) have become strong detractive influences particularly for the western end of the site. To the east is the Danbury Conservation Area but views to and from the Conservation Area are well screened given mature vegetation at the eastern boundary of the site. The site has some nature conservation features, limited sense of time-depth and no recreational value.	Whilst the land shares some elements and features that are typical of character; its character is indistinct and typical of many urban fringe landscapes. Semi-natural habitats are limited to boundary hedgerows and the site is used for domestic purposes. There is limited sense of time-depth having undergone recent change with modern residential development associated with the settlement edge to the north and east (buildings, fencing and walls) as well as within the site itself. These exert a strong detractive influence across the area. This parcel is judged to be of low landscape character sensitivity.	The area is judged to be of moderate overall landscape sensitivity and low value with medium landscape capacity to accommodate residential development due to its relatively enclosed character and its relationship with the settlement edge. The western end of the site has greater capacity to accommodate change due to its affinity with the existing settlement. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded and mitigation measures should be discussed with CCC.	AECOM Assessment
D15	The parcel is considered to be of low value. It is within the defined settlement of Danbury and is occupied by commercial buildings.	The land does not share the elements or features that are typical of character and is judged to be of low landscape character sensitivity.	The site is judged to have high landscape capacity. Here development would be appropriate and easier to accommodate. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded and mitigation measures should be discussed with CCC.	AECOM Assessment
D20	This land parcel is judged to be of moderate value. It is an area of ordinary, non-designated landscape and it has a recognisable and intact character, with some nature conservation interests (associated with hedgerows and ditches) and it is showing evidence of decline as a result of the removal and under management of hedgerows. Whilst there is no public access, the area is viewed from Riffhams Lane that skirts the edge of the settlement. However, the land has a moderate or ordinary aesthetic appeal (with attractive views towards woodland and across open countryside to the north and west) with some	The area shares elements and features in common with the typical character. Whilst the presence of adjoining modern residential development (fencing, walls and buildings) exerts a strong detracting influence across the area. The sloping hillside landform and relatively open arable farmland that fringe the outer patches of woodland are representative of character. Overall, the area retains a recognisable and intact character, with evidence of decline with hedgerows. In addition, the combination of field enclosure, hedgerow patterns, ditches, as well as the winding and narrow Riffhams Lane and its isolated residential properties, provide some sense of time-depth. Overall the land parcel is judged to be of moderate landscape character sensitivity.	The site is judged to have a low to medium landscape capacity. Here development would be less appropriate/ more difficult to accommodate due to its more open character and contribution to the setting of the settlement.	AECOM Assessment

Site reference	Landscape Value	Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Capacity	Source
	detracting features (associated with residential properties on the settlement edge).			
D21	The parcel is considered to be of low value. The site is occupied by a domestic dwelling and associated paraphernalia. The hard-built edges of the settlement (fencing, walls and buildings) have become strong detractive influences. The site has some nature conservation features, limited sense of time-depth and no recreational value.	Whilst the land shares some elements and features that are typical of character; its character is indistinct and typical of many urban fringe landscapes. Semi-natural habitats are limited to boundary hedgerows and the site is used for domestic purposes. There is limited sense of time-depth having undergone recent change with modern residential development associated with the settlement edge to the north (buildings, fencing and walls). These exert a strong detractive influence across the area. This parcel is judged to be of low landscape character sensitivity.	The area is judged to be of moderate overall landscape sensitivity and low value with a low to moderate landscape capacity to accommodate residential development due to its relatively enclosed character and its relationship with the settlement edge. Key characteristics / qualities to be safeguarded and mitigation measures should be discussed with CCC.	AECOM Assessment

Ecology

- 4.32 The NPPF (2019), in paragraph 175 sets out that development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs. Whilst this paragraph relates specifically to the determination of planning applications, the principle is relevant when assessing sites for their suitability for housing development.
- 4.33 There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) surrounding Danbury, see Figure 6 below. Given this, AECOM Ecologists have provided the following advice.
- 4.34 Firstly, a summary of the main features of these three nationally designated sites is presented below, including their condition.

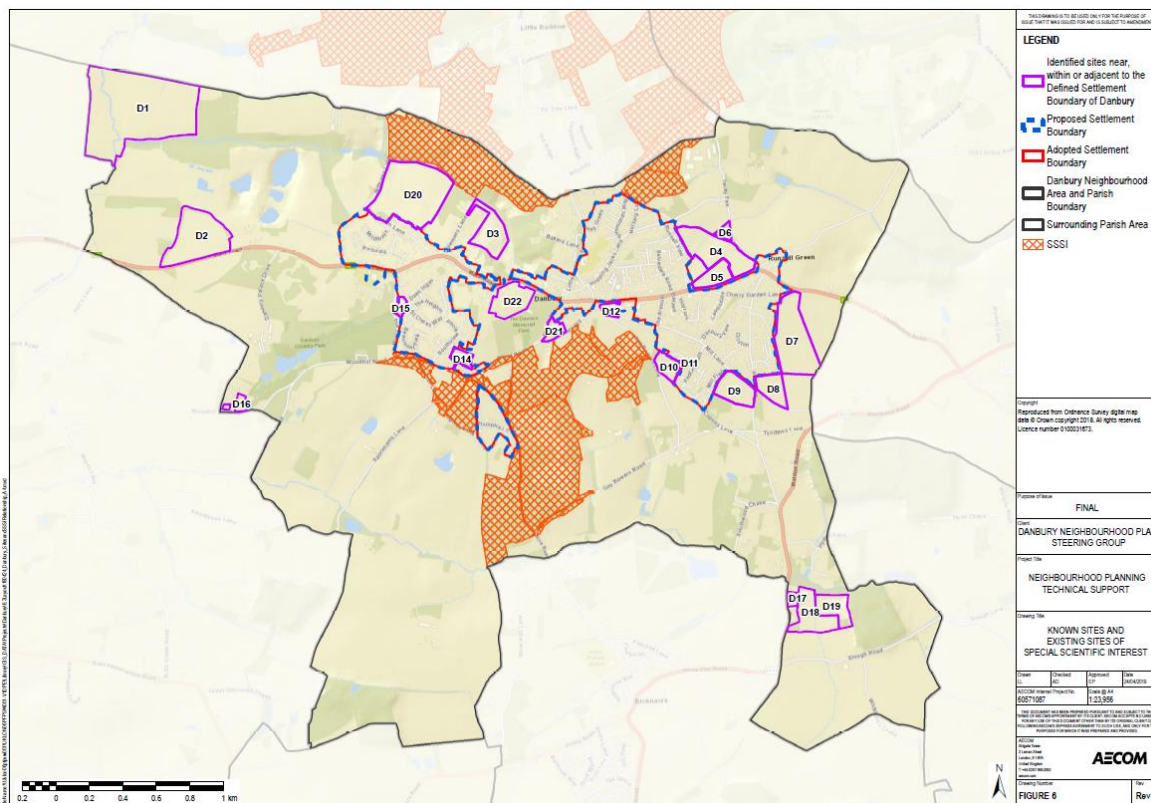


Figure 6. Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the Danbury Neighbourhood Area

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Danbury Common SSSI

- 4.35 Danbury Common SSSI is a nationally designated site of 70.2 ha. It is located to the south of Danbury and it has public access.
- 4.36 Almost 50% of the site is assessed to be in a favourable condition (comprising the northern units of dwarf shrub heath and acid grassland), the remainder of the site is assessed to be in an unfavourable but recovering condition (broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland unit and a unit of dwarf shrub heath). Danbury Common is one of the largest areas of heathland remaining in Essex and shows various stages in the succession from open heath, through bracken and gorse scrub, to birch and oak woodland.
- 4.37 Unimproved meadows adjacent to the Common support a rich grassland flora including a number of uncommon species. The grassland types vary from species-rich plant communities on neutral soils to acidic pastures with heathy areas.
- 4.38 Danbury Ridge is the sole Essex locality for the Rosy Marbled Moth *Elaphria venustula*; the Common is its principal British stronghold.

- 4.39 Management through grazing and cutting at different heights keeps the Common open for the development of heathland.

Blake's Wood and Lingwood Common SSSI

- 4.40 Blake's Wood & Lingwood Common SSSI is a nationally designated site of 93.2 ha located to the north-west of Danbury. It is assessed to be in a favourable condition. It is open to the public.
- 4.41 Blake's Wood & Lingwood Common SSSI comprises a mosaic of woodland, heath and bog habitats. The woodlands support a large variety of birds, including hawfinch and nightingale.
- 4.42 The south dwarf shrub heath unit, the closest to the proposed sites, is characterised by oak, ash and birch woodland with sweet chestnut, hornbeam and mature ash coppice. Heathland species are occasionally present in the understorey. The higher ground comprises mature sessile oak trees and mature hornbeam coppice. The north central area has been cleared to allow heathland regeneration with birch saplings scattered throughout with some oak pollards around perimeter.

Woodham Walter Common SSSI

- 4.43 Woodham Walter Common SSSI is a nationally designated site of 80 h located to the north-east of Danbury. It is assessed to be in a favourable condition. It has public access.
- 4.44 Woodham Walter Common SSSI comprises several areas of ancient Pedunculate Oak – Hornbeam woodland which cover the lower slopes of a north-eastern spur of the Danbury Ridge. The ground rises to a plateau over which Sessile Oak woodland has developed on former heathland. Along the two dissecting stream valleys, botanically rich flushes are found. This range of habitats supports a diverse flora and fauna, including a number of uncommon species.
- 4.45 Many uncommon plants of restricted distribution in Essex are confined to the wet flushes; there are at least three species of *Sphagnum* moss, together with Marsh Fern *Thelypteris thelypteroides*, Hard Fern *Blechnum spicant*, Lesser Skull-cap *Scutellaria minor*, Star Sedge *Carex echinata* and Smooth-stalked Sedge *C. laevigata*.
- 4.46 Additional interest is provided by the diverse fauna. Badgers are present, and the interesting bird fauna includes Nightingale, Hawfinch and Sparrowhawk.

Likely impacts of development sites on SSSIs

- 4.47 Housing development can have significant impacts on SSSIs which are near. Housing development can result in an increase of pollutants and noise during the construction phase and an increase in recreational pressure during the occupational phase. Furthermore, an indirect impact of the occupational phase of housing development includes cat predation within SSSIs. Each of these impacts are discussed in turn below.

Increase of Pollutants and Noise

- 4.48 During the construction phase of residential development an overall increase of pollutants and noise will affect the SSSI; this effect usually only arises when development sites are adjacent to SSSIs. It is a temporary impact that will finish once the site is developed. Pollutants impact plants, reducing their capacity to capture light and consequently their growth. Noise disturbs fauna within the SSSI which can cause a displacement to more distant, suitable areas and reduces the extent of habitat that can be used.
- 4.49 Indirect effects include air pollution and disturbance because of increased traffic along routes immediately adjacent to SSSIs, this can be remote from the development site.

Increased Recreational Pressure

- 4.50 The closer a development site is to a SSSI the more likely it is to result in recreational pressure on the SSSI as residents can visit the designated site easily by walking short distances. The pressure associated with residential development on a SSSI may reduce when residents needs to drive to the SSSI. However, this may not be true of SSSIs which have parking and where dogs can be let off the lead. The number of dwellings/increases in the human population is related to the pressure on a SSSI.
- 4.51 The increase of visitors to SSSI sites could result in direct or indirect impacts on vegetation:
- compaction of soil, e.g. due to walking off signposted paths and parking off-road;
 - direct damage to vegetation because of visitors picking flowering plants and walking off paths;

- disturbance to wildlife, and birds in particular, due to human activity and dogs especially if let off the lead; and
- changes in soil condition due to dogs through urine and faeces.

Cat predation

- 4.52 The location of housing development may increase the presence of cats close to or within SSSIs. Cats commonly roam freely around their home and environs; this can result in disturbance to birds living in SSSIs who may recognise a cat as a predator and relocate or be less inclined to nest and/or breed. Cats may also enter SSSIs near to their home and hunt birds and/or small mammals.
- 4.53 Evidence from other sites supporting ground nesting bird species indicates that the density of birds is likely to decrease where residential development is within a 400m zone of the designated site. Natural England, therefore, advises that any medium/large housing development within this zone requires an assessment, as a significant effect cannot be ruled out. This is partly since it is unlikely that any mitigation will fully address issues that arise during the operational phase of the site in such a location.

Summary

- 4.54 Any development near a SSSI could result a negative impact on it. The level of impact will depend on the size of the development, the distance to the SSSI(s) and the SSSI's accessibility to the public as well as their dogs and cats.
- 4.55 In order to assess, at a high level, the impact of each identified site on the SSSIs surrounding Danbury, each site has been given a score reflecting the potential size of the development (assumption being the larger the potential development, the greater the potential impact on the SSSI) and its distance to each SSSI (the closer the development, the greater the potential impact). At this stage the size of the development has been estimated based on the area of each site because details of the potential future scheme are not known at the current time (it is assumed that there is a direct relationship between site area and the future number of residents living there). The distance from a development to each SSSI is assumed to be proportionate to the impact from an increased number of visitors and all three SSSIs are accessible to the public. This scoring methodology was defined by an AECOM Ecologist based on Natural England guidance.

Table 9. Score assignment

Score	1 (more negative)	2	3	4 (less negative)
Distance to a SSSI	0-200m	200-500m	500-1000m	>1000m
Size (area)	Large	Medium	Small	Very small

Table 10. Score for each development site

	Danbury Common	Blake's Wood & Lingwood Common	Woodham Walter Common	Size of the housing development	Total Score
D4	3	3	2	Large	9
D5	2	3	2	Medium	9
D7	3	4	3	Large	11
D8	3	4	4	Medium	13
D9	2	4	4	Medium	12
D10	1	4	3	Small	11
D11	1	4	3	Small	11
D12	1	3	3	Small	10
D14	1	3	4	Small	11
D15	2	3	4	Small	12
D20	3	1	4	Large	9
D21	1	3	3	Small	10

Ecology Conclusions

- 4.56 Table 10 shows that sites D8, D9 and D15 are likely to have the smallest impact on SSSI sites due to their potentially small/medium development sizes and distance (>200m) to any SSSI sites. At the other end of the spectrum, sites D4, D5 and D20 are likely to have the greatest potential impact on SSSI sites due to their proximity with one or more SSSI sites and their potentially medium/large development size.
- 4.57 The above reflects a preliminary assessment of each site's potential impact on nearby SSSI sites. A more complete assessment should be carried out for any housing development at an early stage to ensure its feasibility. Natural England should also be consulted for developments that could produce impacts on SSSI sites according to its location with regards the established Impact Risk Zone for each SSSI.
- 4.58 In terms of the overall Red/Amber/Green rating for each site it has been assumed that none of the sites would result in an impact on the SSSIs that would be so negative that it would justify a red rating (i.e. representing a completely insurmountable constraint). This is because of the potential size of the developments and the potential for mitigation measures to be implemented.

Key Constraints Summary

- 4.59 The red/amber/green rating for each of the sites and each of the key constraints has been set out in Table 11 below.
- 4.60 Red represents an insurmountable constraint which would render the site unsuitable for development. Amber represents a level of constraint that requires resolution prior to the site being suitable for development. Green represents no or minor constraint.

Table 11. Summary of key constraints

Site reference	Highways	Landscape	Ecology
D4	Green	Red	Amber
D5	Green	Amber	Amber
D7	Green	Red	Amber
D8	Red	Red	Green
D9	Amber	Amber	Green
D10	Amber	Amber	Amber
D11	Amber	Green	Amber
D12	Green	Amber	Amber
D14	Green	Amber	Amber
D15	Green	Green	Green
D20	Red	Red	Amber
D21	Green	Amber	Amber

Summary of Site Assessment

- 4.61 Table 12 sets out the conclusions for each site with respect to their potential suitability for allocation for housing within the Danbury NP.
- 4.62 The final column is a 'traffic light' rating for each site, indicating whether or not the site is appropriate for allocation; these conclusions have been informed by the above analysis as well as the pro-formas.
- 4.63 Red indicates the site is not appropriate for allocation within the NP. Amber indicates that the site is potentially suitable for allocation within the NP subject to the mitigation of constraints. Green indicates the site is appropriate for allocation within the NP without constraint.
- 4.64 All sites are considered to be available for development, as they were submitted through the Call for Sites or assessed as available in the SHLAA.
- 4.65 Table 12 should be read alongside the completed pro-formas presented in Appendix A.

Table 12. Summary of Site Assessment

Site Reference	Suitable		Available	RAG Rating	Conclusions
	Major Constraints	Minor Constraints			
D4	No		Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably located in respect of local services and facilities • Existing access will need upgrading but this is likely to be achievable • Site is of high landscape sensitivity • Site has low potential for protected species • Site is adjacent to a designated heritage asset • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Planning appeal (decision issued on 5th March 2018): appeal dismissed on the following grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - failure to accord with the spatial strategy of the development plan, - adverse impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, - harm to a heritage asset (Garlands Farmhouse, Grade II listed building) which outweighed the benefits of the scheme, and - adverse impact on nearby SSSIs which outweighed the benefits of the scheme.
D5	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably located in respect of local services and facilities • Existing access will need upgrading but this is likely to be achievable • Site is of medium landscape sensitivity

Site Reference	Suitable		Available	RAG Rating	Conclusions
	Major Constraints	Minor Constraints			
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site has low-medium potential for protected species Site is 150m from the nearest designated heritage asset Site is in Flood Zone 1
D7	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably located in respect of local services and facilities A new access on to Maldon Road is required and likely to be achievable Site is of medium landscape sensitivity, mitigation (whilst extensive) is likely to be possible Site is not located near any designated heritage assets Site is in Flood Zone 1 11,000 volt powerlines are near the site (within or adjacent to the boundary)
D8	No		Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and poorly connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective New access would be required to the site, but it is considered unlikely that a suitable access could be created Site is of high landscape sensitivity Site has low potential for protected species Site is not located near any designated heritage assets Site is in Flood Zone 1 Site is located within 750m of a SSSI
D9	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective New accesses would be required but it is considered this could be provided Site is of medium landscape sensitivity Site has medium potential for protected species Site is not located near any designated heritage assets Site is in Flood Zone 1 Site is located within 500m of a SSSI
D10	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is a greenfield, agricultural site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective New access would be required which is likely to be achievable Site is of medium landscape sensitivity

Site Reference	Suitable		Available	RAG Rating	Conclusions
	Major Constraints	Minor Constraints			
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site has medium potential for protected species • Site is not located near any designated heritage assets • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Site is located within 500m of a SSSI
D11	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a brownfield site within the settlement boundary and reasonably connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective • New access would be required which is likely to be achievable • Site is of low landscape sensitivity • Site has low potential for protected species • Site is not located near any designated heritage assets • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Site is located within 500m of a SSSI
D12	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a greenfield site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and well connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective • New access would be required which is likely to be achievable • Site is of medium landscape sensitivity • Site has high potential for protected species • Site is located to designated heritage assets (and is within a Conservation Area) • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Site is located within 500m of a SSSI
D14	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a brownfield site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective • Planning permission has been granted for an upgraded access • Site is of medium landscape sensitivity • Site has medium potential for protected species • Site is located to close designated heritage assets • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Site is located within 500m of a SSSI
D15	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a brownfield site within the settlement boundary and reasonably located in respect of local services and facilities

Site Reference	Suitable Major Constraints	Minor Constraints	Available	RAG Rating	Conclusions
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of this site for housing would result in the loss of employment floorspace • Existing access may need upgrading and this is likely to be achievable • Site is of low landscape sensitivity • Site has low potential for protected species • Site is adjacent to a designated heritage asset • Site is in Flood Zone 1 • Site is within 500m of Danbury Common SSSI
D20	No		Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a greenfield, agricultural site outside of and adjacent to the settlement boundary and poorly connected to local services and facilities • New access would be required to the site, but it is considered unlikely that a suitable access could be created • Site is of high landscape sensitivity • Site has high potential for protected species • Site is 50m from a designated heritage asset • Site is in Flood Zone 1
D21	Yes	Yes	Yes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site is a brownfield site, outside of but adjacent to the settlement boundary and reasonably connected to local services and facilities from a pedestrian perspective • Site is of medium landscape sensitivity • Site has medium potential for protected species • Site is located to close designated heritage assets • Site is in Flood Zone 1

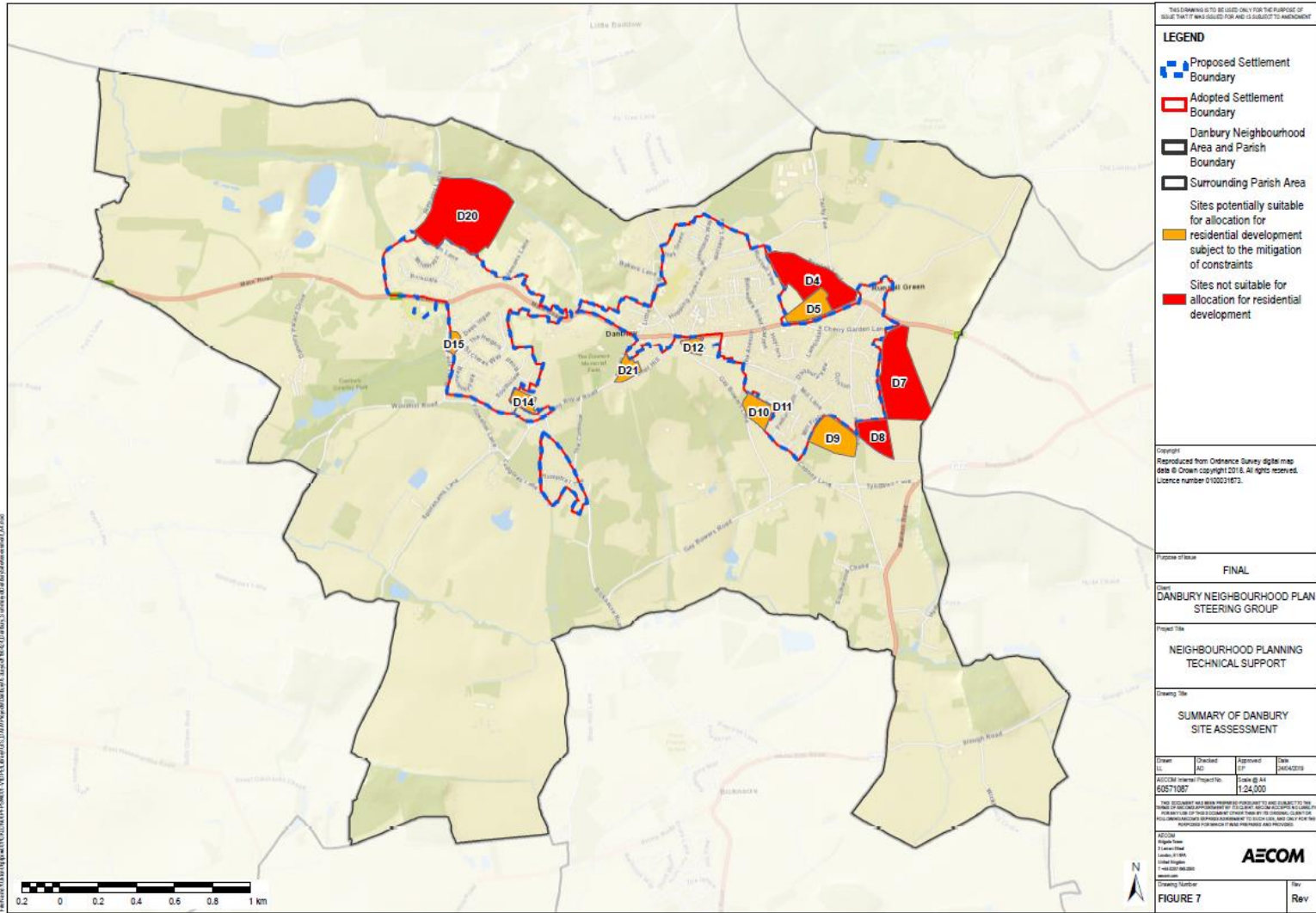


Figure 7. Summary of Site Assessment

- 4.66 Table 12 concludes that there are four sites which are unsuitable for allocation for residential development given one or more of the key constraints, these are D4, D7, D8 and D20. There may be potential to change the conclusions of one or more of these sites from unsuitable to potentially suitable if the site boundary were amended to respond to the findings of this report.
- 4.67 Table 12 concludes that there are nine sites which are potentially suitable for allocation for residential development, subject to the mitigation of constraints: D5, D9, D10, D11, D12, D14, D15 and D21. The potential capacity of these sites has been calculated as 240 dwellings which is based on net developable area and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare; although it is noted that some of these potential capacities may be too high (D14 and D21) and do not reflect what is understood to be the landowner's intention for the site.
- 4.68 D15 is considered to be the least constrained of the potential suitable sites. However, it is worth noting that this site is currently a commercial site, providing local employment and economic activity but is not an allocated employment area according to the Chelmsford adopted or emerging development plan documents. The Group should consider whether it would be positive for the Neighbourhood Area to lose this commercial site.
- 4.69 Each pro-forma reflects these findings and assesses other indicators of suitability including, for example, heritage, potential for ground contamination and site characteristics. However, in the context of Danbury these constraints are considered to have less-fundamental implications (and greater potential for mitigation) for each site being considered.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Danbury has been allocated around 100 homes in CCC's new Local Plan (2036); this assessment concludes that there are sufficient potentially suitable sites within the NP area to accommodate this level of growth. However, there are no sites within the NP area which are totally constraint-free.

Viability

- 5.2 As part of the site selection process, it is recommended that the Steering Group discusses site viability with CCC. Viability appraisals for individual sites may already exist. If not, it is possible to use the Council's existing viability evidence (such as an "Affordable Housing Viability Assessment" or "Whole Plan Viability Study") to test the viability of sites proposed for allocation in the NP. This can be done by 'matching' site typologies used in existing reports, with sites proposed by the Steering Group to give an indication of whether a site is viable for development and therefore likely to be delivered. In addition, any landowner or developer promoting a site for development should be contacted to request evidence of viability.
- 5.3 This is particularly important in light of the key constraints relevant to the NA.

Next Steps

- 5.4 This report can be used by DPC to guide decision making on site selection and to use as evidence to support site allocations in the NP if they choose to do so. It is strongly advised that DPC discuss potential site allocations with CCC; the Local Highways Authority and Natural England in order to establish whether proposed site(s) would be acceptable. It is also advised that the Group speak with CCC to establish whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment and/or Appropriate Assessment will be required to support the NP.

