

## Pre-application Report

Land at Brook Farm, Brooks Road, Raunds, Wellingborough, NN9 6NS.



The site is currently occupied by Brook Farm Animal Sanctuary (BFAS) an animal sanctuary farm and associated farm buildings clustered in the North-western corner of the site, adjacent to Brook Road. The site itself is located on the North-eastern edge of the Market Town of Raunds, approximately 1.5km from the A45, which connects Raunds to the surrounding settlements such as Rushden and Thrapston, as well as the A14 to the North.



## Planning Constraints on Site

- The site is currently used for an animal sanctuary and associated buildings, therefore making the land at the site transitional. Transitional land is between farmland and developed land usually on the edge of a settlement.
- The properties to the Northern edge of the site, Brook Farm and Poultry Farm, are separately owned to the farm and site discussed within this appraisal, which is a constraint to the site.
- The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is the flood zone with the lowest risk of flooding.
- None of the buildings on site are listed and the site is not located within the conservation area. The closest listed building to the site is Providence House, located approximately 200m to the West.
- The site retains an existing access within the North-eastern corner of the site which accesses Brooks Road directly, however this is the only access to the site which is a constraint.
- The site is located within the Special Protection Area 3km Buffer for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.
- The site is surrounded by development on 2, if not arguably 3 sides. There is a new development currently being built out in the triangular strip of land to the West. There is also housing being built either side of the access road entrance in the North-eastern corner of the site. There are also residential properties retained on the eastern side of the site of which one looks to retain the parcel of land adjacent to the site on the Eastern edge.



## Relevant Planning Policy

The relevant development plan documents in respect of the site comprise the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)
- North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy
- East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2

### **Relevant Policies within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2011-2031):**

- Policy 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy 8 - North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles
- Policy 11 - The Network of Urban and Rural Areas
- Policy 13 - Rural Exceptions
- Policy 28 - Housing Requirements
- Policy 29 - Distribution of New Homes
- Policy 30 - Housing Mix and Tenure

### **Relevant Policies from East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (ENLP P2):**

- EN1: Spatial development strategy
- EN2: Development Principles
- EN3: Development on the periphery of settlements and rural exceptions housing
- EN26: Housing mix and tenure to meet local need

### **Relevant Policies from Raunds Neighbourhood Plan (2018):**

- Policy R1 - Ensuring an appropriate range of sizes and types of houses
- Policy R2 - Promoting good design
- Policy R3 - Flexibility and adaptability in new housing design
- Policy R4 - Car parking in new housing development
- Policy R5 - Open space provision



- Policy R6 - Protected open spaces
- Policy R10 - Traffic and transport in Raunds
- Policy R16 - Built and natural environment
- Policy R19 - Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Policy R20 - Movement and connectivity

## Planning Assessment

Based on our assessment of the relevant planning policies for Raunds, there is considerable potential for residential development on this land. The local plans state that development needs of Raunds will be met through a combination of re-using suitable previously developed land, Sustainable Urban Extensions, other committed sites, and smaller greenfield developments as identified in Part 2 Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. Importantly, the Raunds Neighbourhood Plan does not include an explicit distinction between urban and rural areas, and there is no defined settlement boundary line. This provides greater flexibility in identifying and progressing potential development sites.

The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) sets out general criteria for defining the built-up areas of villages. The built-up area is defined to encompass locations that are more closely aligned, in both character and scale, with the cluster of buildings forming the settlement, rather than the surrounding countryside.

Policy 11 of the JCS permits small-scale infill development on suitable sites within market towns. This refers to the development of vacant or underused land within the main built up areas of the village, where the land is bounded by existing built curtilages on at least two sides, such as filling a small gap in an otherwise substantially developed frontage.



Policy EN2 of the East Northampton Local Plan further supports infill development within built-up areas or within defined settlement boundaries, provided the development is well-related to the principal form of the settlement, visually distinct from surrounding countryside, and not designated for other uses. The policy ensures that new development integrates with the local character and does not result in back land development, which extends away from highways. This site is adjoining the built-up settlement of Raunds and is surrounded by development on at least two, if not somewhat three, sides.

Policy 30 of the Joint Core Strategy does require that for developments comprising 15 or more dwellings, 30% of the total should be affordable housing.

Access to the site is a notable constraint, as it currently has only a single-entry point onto the main highway of Brooks Road, which will impact access for any future development. Furthermore, there is a 1m buffer along this access road, which could create challenges for the necessary widening and adoption of the road to meet development requirements. Another identified constraint is that the properties located to the North of the site are under separate ownership, which could further complicate access arrangements and restrict development potential.

This review of the local policies suggests that the site has a strong case for moving forward with a housing planning application.

With the appropriate steps, this land has significant potential for development, and we are available to provide further guidance and support throughout the process.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, we are of the opinion that this site holds potential for residential development, supported by local policies and favourable criteria for infill housing.

North Northamptonshire are in the process of developing a new local plan to extend the plan period to 2041, and a call for sites exercise took place in early 2022. There is a continuing need for infill housing within North Northamptonshire.