

Barcombe Neighbourhood Plan 2017:

Draft: Evidence and site specific policy development for sites:

3BA / 5BA / 7BA / 8BA (ref; LDC SHLEAA 2015) / 'Hillside'

Reflection on evidence gathered of site and character:

Several adjacent sites have been identified in the LDC Strategic Housing and Land Economic Availability Assessment (LDC SHLEAA 2015) as potentially available for housing development. These are sites referenced 3BA / 5BA / 7BA / 8BA. As these sites adjoin each other at the visually important south west entry to the village, they are referred to in this Neighbourhood Plan collectively as "Hillside" (HS).

The Hillside site offers good proximity to village amenities such as the school and recreation ground, allotments and 'Wild About Barcombe', and potential for a safe route (ref) to school and recreational opportunities avoiding use of the road, as well as potential to promote a reduction in vehicle movements.

Its development in whole or part for housing could contribute to the achievement of the allocation of at least 30 new housing units as set out in the LDC Local Pla Part 1 policy X while supporting the needs of the local community for housing for families, young people and downsizing accommodation for older generation (ref). ,

Hillside typifies the character of Barcombe Cross as a 'hilltop' village (ref). It is a prominent and important element of the visual character of the village and provides a sense of arrival to the village and greeting when entering from the north-westerly direction. It is adjacent to the conservation area and overall it consists of a mix of current dwellings, some of are of particular character and architectural interest, as well as landscape and natural features of significance (ref conservation and dedication map).

Due to the visual importance and physical relationship of these sites at the entry to the built up area of Barcombe Cross, as well as their relationship to the conservation area, it is considered important that they are considered as a whole so that the future development of any part of the site relates positively not only to the rest of the site, but also to the physical character of Barcombe Cross and needs of the community as set out in this Neighbourhood Plan. Policy is intended to guide development at Hillside.

The objectives of policy for Hillside include, but are not limited to:

- Providing a variety of house type and size across Hillside, regardless of current boundaries that reflects local demography and the needs outlined in the 2015 Barcombe housing survey.
- Ensuring that affordable housing is provided in line with LDC Local Plan Part 1 policy XX or through other mechanisms in support of local housing needs as

evidenced by the village housing survey and any additional local and LDC evidence.

- Enabling shared responsibility for affordable housing in proportion to each individual site and proportionate size to achieve desired affordability whilst sharing the affordability burden and in support of overall viability.
- To promote collective responsibility for coherent design and reference to policies regardless of current ownership boundaries.

Site Analysis of Hillside

As detailed in Appendix X, the Hillside site is located at the southern entrance to Barcombe Cross village and together with a number of buildings and other physical and natural features forms a “welcoming” view to the High Street. “Old Station House”, along with nearby “The Willows” and “Bridge Cottage”, are properties of considerable historic importance to the village. To the west of the site lies “Hillside”, another building of historic merit. Modern houses flank the northern and southern boundaries of the site. The Victorian former railway bridge together with trees next to the old railway line form both a gateway to and screen for the main body of the village. The site has close proximity to village facilities, e.g. school, shop, recreation ground and has the potential to provide a safe route to both school and recreational facilities. Hillside and adjacent land provide wild life and biodiversity amenity and are close to informal wildlife designated areas.

Resulting proposed policies:

Policy 1. If developed for housing, the sites collectively known as Hillside shall either be developed comprehensively as a whole, or as individual parcels, in line with plan Z and policies X to Y so that the character of the village is maintained and enhanced

Policy 2. Seek to prevent extension of the village boundary and development beyond the railway bridge and use the tree screening as a natural border to Barcombe Cross. *[Consider separate policy re village boundaries and show on a map along with other corners of existing boundary which might require tidying up ? Consider seeking TPO for tree screen and as part of Management Plan in NP ?]*

Policy 3. Trees subject to TPO and important elements of trees and habitats as shown on plan Z shall be retained. Additional landscaping shall be included as shown.

Policy 4. The Hillside site should deliver at least one alternate route to local amenities such as the school and recreation ground, allotments and ‘Wild About Barcombe’ through the site and avoiding need to use the road.

Policy 5. Any development immediately facing the current Bridgelands dwellings should reflect their size and proportion in form and make a consistent reference to the design code developed in relation to the site (ref).

Policy 6. Any development on Hillside should adopt, **authentic design and building features and approach** that actively promote biodiversity to help counteract the loss of natural amenity. This should be evidence-able in both buildings and landscaping (also Ref Design Code). The use of green roofs should be specified on buildings that present to the existing south-west and south-east entrance and exiting views from the High St to reflect the current hillside / grassland meadow. **Retention of pond??**
[Confirm in design code and show on plan as constraint to retain "green" entrance to village ?]

Appendix X

Evidence and site specific policy development for sites:

3BA / 5BA / 7BA / 8BA (ref; LDC SHLEAA 2015) / 'Hillside'

Site Analysis of Hillside

The approach to hillside from Southwest entrance to the village recognises the treeline adjacent to the old railway line, which presents itself as a visual village gateway, screen and border to the main development of Barcombe Cross **(Policy 2)**.

The bridge over the former railway line is narrow and has a weight limit and needs considering in terms of its capacity *[Weight, category of vehicle ?]*. This entrance is noted as providing a 'welcoming' view to the High St that emerges as you continue towards the centre of Barcombe Cross.

The Old Station house was built in 1882 for the Lewes to East Grinstead railway line (also known as the Bluebell line). The line was closed in 1953, the tracks were lifted and the house was sold privately. The building is not listed, but is of high historic importance to the village and the railway line. It is a classic Victorian gothic design, with some elements of Arts and Crafts decoration such as the stucco relief panels in the eaves. The building has decorative vertical hung tiles referencing the vernacular of Sussex and Kent buildings from the late 17th century onwards. The style for shaped lower edges on the tiles was very popular in the 19th and 20th centuries, and many of the older buildings in Barcombe Cross have these tile designs. The building has tall, brick corbelled chimneys, painted stone window dressings and mullions, decorative ridge tiles and painted structural timber-work. *[NP to identify house as non-designated heritage asset ?]*

There are two historic buildings on the main road, opposite each other at the entrance to Bridgelands on the East side of the railway bridge. They are also the first buildings that appear after the Barcombe village sign. Both sit quite low to the road level, due to the formation of the bridge. They have slate roofs, which is a vernacular style from Lewes (not due to geology, but trade via boat with Devon and the West Country). The natural slate is also combined with dark grey ridge tiles to give a uniform tone to the roofs. The Willows (that sits at the base of the Hillside field) is timber clad, painted white with sash windows. It is single storey, which allows a view behind to the sloping field. Bridge Cottage is a symmetrical house with painted render (ashlar-struck to give the appearance of stonework), sash windows and 2 brick chimneys. This particular rendered finish is not common to the area, being mostly used on town houses especially in areas without a history of brick.

The Victorian railway bridge is constructed in red brick with inset panels. The large wall-capping bricks are bullnosed and made of a hard blue/grey fired clay from Staffordshire.

The large historic, brick house called Hillside is to the North of the Hillside field. It is visible from Bridgelands and the field, but not the main road. It is similar to the Old Station house with vertical hung-tile, large corbelled chimneys and painted woodwork.

The modern houses visible from Hillside mostly appear as brick and tile-hung reproductions of historic styles. There is also now a recently completed conversion (Vine Slead) at the top of Hillside field that references the slate roofs, but has new, machined, horizontal cedar cladding with dark window frames.

The 'Willows' house is recognisable as a property of significance (ref) that is single storey and situated at a low level that helps to enable a view of the grass covered hill. This property has distinctive, original slate roof (as does house on opposite side of road ref). **(Policy 6)**.

The view from the entrance to village, of properties on the hillside beyond the paddock and facing the High St is not considered to be of amenity and sensitive development and design could enhance both aspects. However there is an opportunity to retain a 'green' sightline at the front of the paddock. Building heights can be determined via a projecting line from Willows cottage to the buildings adjacent to the access track which form the highest rooflines in area – thus heights would not exceed the natural sightline and current building precedent **(Policy 6)**.

The site benefits from mature and feature trees (ref map). One is protected by formal tree protection order status (ref) but the BP sees the trees on the south-west side of the site as providing a natural border and visual amenity to village gateway and proximity to Old Station conservation area. **(Policy 3)**

The housing survey (BHS 2015) provides evidence of need for housing for families, young people and downsizing accommodation for older generation (ref). The Hillside site offers good proximity to village amenities such as the school and recreation ground, allotments and 'Wild About Barcombe' and potential for a safe route (ref) to school and recreational opportunities avoiding use of the road and potential to promote a reduction in vehicle movements. **(Policy 4)**.

Hillside and adjacent land currently provide wildlife and biodiversity amenity (ref survey) and the site further benefits from proximity to current, informal wildlife designated areas (ref Wild About Barcombe and old railway track). This should be reflected in any development as a means to retain natural amenity and to support overall sustainability referencing the plan vision statement (Ref). **(Policy 6)**

The hillside gradient provides natural flow to Southern Water pond and drainage ditch, and foul water to mains sewer connections in Bridgelands. The hillside boundary drainage should also provide protection against excess surface water affecting properties in Bridgelands