

Executive Summary: Proposed Development Sites in Shabbington are unsuitable for development

This report details the significant sustainability, infrastructure and environmental constraints that render Shabbington unsuitable for the proposed housing developments at Site 3353 (Rookery Farm Stables), Site 3351 (Rookery Farm Paddocks) Site 333 (Crendon Road), and Site 36334 (Franklins Farm).

Sustainability and Infrastructure Challenges

Shabbington is a small village with a population of 538 (Census 2021) and approximately 220–230 dwellings. It has a church, pub, village hall, playing field and playground, but lacks essential services such as schools and shops. Its bus service is infrequent. An increase of 51 houses would overwhelm the location, causing irreparable harm to its character and the environment

- **Flooding:** Large areas of the parish are in flood zones. Historical data shows the village is surrounded by flood water during winter months. This is worsening due to climate change. Three of the proposed development sites are very close to existing flood zones
- **Drainage :** The local ground consists of Kimmeridge clay, an impermeable soil that prevents seepage and causes holding tanks to overflow. As a result, fields not in designated flood zones are permanently waterlogged in Winter
- **Sewage Infrastructure:** The Sewage Treatment Works (STW) were upgraded in February 2026, to a PE (Population Equivalent) of 530, below the current population of 538. In February 2026 raw sewage contaminated local roads and the children's playground for over thirty four hours
- **Access:** all four sites have access issues that for all practical purposes appear, unsurmountable. They have line of sight limitations that would require widening of existing tracks, moving speed limits and providing pavements to meet legal and safety standards
- **Transport:** Public transport is infrequent, resulting in an almost 100% reliance on private cars. The road system is in poor condition, exacerbated by regularly flooding (In 2024 Mill Road was closed for sixty six days) and increasing volumes of traffic
- **Education:** There are no schools in Shabbington and limited capacity in the catchment area. Local nurseries have two-year waiting lists, primary schools and secondary schools are oversubscribed. Further development would exacerbate an already difficult situation

Site-Specific Constraints

Site 3353 (Rookery Farm Stables), Site B 3351 (Rookery Farm Paddocks)

- **Proximity to Flood Zones:** Both sites are within metres of flood zones and are permanently waterlogged in Winter
- **Surface Water Overflow and Drainage:** Surface water from both proposed sites drain into

a culvert running directly under or behind numbers 15 – 29 on Marsh Road. Any development would overwhelm the capacity of existing ditches. The lower part of Marsh Road and the childrens' playground already experience overflow from the sewage works during heavy rainfall.

- **Impermeable Soil:** Geotechnical investigations confirm the ground in all four sites is Kimmeridge clay to a depth of at least 5 meters. This soil is entirely impermeable, meaning any sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) or holding tanks would quickly overflow, exacerbating the waterlogged conditions already experienced in fields, roads and gardens
- **Access & Sight Lines:** The access road via Marsh Road is 4.45m wide (below the legal requirement of 4.5m) with no pavement. The sightlines are restricted by surrounding properties. Sight lines at the Ickford Road junction are limited to 12m, which is below the 160m required for safety in a 50mph zone.

Site 333 (Crendon Road)

- **Traffic Congestion:** Extensive on-street parking frequently reduces Crendon Road to a single track, making new access points hazardous.
- **Traffic Volume:** as the only road in and out of the village not affected by flooding, the volume of traffic is high making it a hazardous for pedestrians
- **Safety Risks:** The 50m stretch of road included in the site plan has no pavement, forcing people to walk on a narrow, congested country road to reach the bus stop.
- **Precedent:** Planning applications (APP/J0405/W/17/3191577) were refused because the environmental harm and lack of sustainable transport outweighed any modest social or economic benefits.

Site 36334 : Franklin's Farm

- **Legal & Access Issues:** Proposed access is via Stag Row, a private road not built to accommodate high traffic volumes. Residents oppose this usage. The road cannot be adopted by the local authority.
 - **Infrastructure Risk:** Development would require removing the existing drainage swale, which is essential for managing surface water. This poses a direct flood risk to the eight existing homes that already experience waterlogged gardens.
 - **Environmental Impact:** The presence of protected **Great Crested Newts** has been identified on this site (Ref: 25/02137/AP), posing a further barrier to development.
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