

# Reg. 18 VCHAP Consultation - Supporting Statement

Land south of  
Hackford Road,  
Wicklewood  
(SN4045SL)



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**Prepared for Client:**  
Orchard Homes



**PREPARED BY:** Magnus Magnusson, MRTPI.

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<b>Date of Submission</b>	June 2021
<b>Consultation</b>	Regulation 18 Stage South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP)
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	South Norfolk District Council
<b>Client</b>	Orchard Homes
<b>Our Reference</b>	2956
<b>Report Revision</b>	V1.0

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP) aims to deliver sustainable growth within the villages of South Norfolk. The Village Clusters Plan is being developed alongside the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and in accordance with the Government's national planning policies and guidance.
- 1.2 The main aim of the Local Plan is to allocate a series of smaller sites, typically within the range of 12 to 50 homes, across the 48 Village Clusters in South Norfolk, to accommodate at least 1,200 new homes in total. The Plan also defines the Settlement Limits for the villages within these clusters, making provision for further smaller sites and incorporating revisions to reflect development that has occurred, or has been permitted since the boundaries were last updated.
- 1.3 The Council has assessed almost 450 sites for possible inclusion in the VCHAP and, following that assessment, the consultation categorises them as 'Preferred', 'Shortlisted' (or 'Reasonable Alternative') or 'Rejected' (or 'Unreasonable Alternative'). The Council are seeking views on all sites featured within the plan and is making a call for additional sites that have yet to be considered and may be 'suitable' for inclusion within the Local Plan moving forward.

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## **2.0 Site Status in Emerging Local Plan**

2.1 My client's site, south of Hackford Road, Wicklewood (Council ref. SN4045SL), has been identified as a 'Preferred Site' within the context of the emerging VCHAP for up-to 12 dwellings. Specifically, and in respect of my client's site, the consultation draft Local Plan justifies this status on the following grounds:

*The site relates well to the existing form of development and could accommodate a small allocation. Highways access to the site is likely to be acceptable.....*

2.2 Whilst in full agreement with the status and justification provided (above), the intention of this statement is to affirm the suitability, availability and achievability of my client's site as an allocation for up-to 12 dwellings within the context of the VCHAP.

2.3 It is not the intention of this Statement to provide contextual information that has been submitted at previous stages in the Local Plan preparation process, including the content of our submissions to the GNLP Regulation 18 Stage consultation in March 2020.

2.4 This consultation response considers all relevant aspects of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that has informed South Norfolk DC's approach to preparing the VCHAP. All plan-making bodies are expected to have regard to the provisions of both the PPG and NPPF in the requisite Local Plan preparatory stages.

2.5 We can confirm that, for the reasons outlined within this statement, our client's site is **suitable, available** for development now and **achievable** and would be appropriate for a residential allocation (up-to 12 dwellings). Furthermore, our client can confirm that delivery of their site is economically viable.

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### **3.0 Site Assessment - Suitability, Availability, Achievability (including viability)**

#### **Suitability**

- 3.1 Wicklewood is defined as a 'Village Cluster' in respect of the consultation draft VCHAP. My client's site is found in the 'heart' of the village.
- 3.2 The Village Clusters, including Wicklewood, are considered to be 'suitable' or 'sustainable' locations for new residential development to meet a proportionate element of the housing need of the Greater Norwich sub-region, and South Norfolk specifically, in the Local Plan period. Consequently, the overarching strategic planning document, the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), provides for 1,200 new homes to be allocated across all of the *Village Clusters* up to 2038.
- 3.3 Wicklewood itself has a good range of facilities including a preschool, primary school, village hall, pub, and recreation areas. The village is extremely well connected to 'higher-order' settlements via regular bus services/routes including 806 (Bawburgh – Wymondham), 6 (Norwich – Watton) & 13 (Shipdham – Easton). There is an existing bus stop in very close proximity of my client's site (within 50m).
- 3.4 Following appropriate assessment of sites within the context of (among other) the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) and SA processes, two sites (including my client's site) have been identified as 'preferred' sites or allocations for inclusion in the VCHAP. In addition to my client's site (for up-to 12 dwellings), land to the south of Wicklewood Primary School (ref. SN0577REVA and REVB) is proposed as an allocation for up-to 30 dwellings).
- 3.5 It is the HELAA and SA process that should determine the most suitable sites(s) for allocation. My client's site performs very well when assessed within the context of both the HELAA (appendix B) and SA (table 1.1 below).
- 3.6 The interim VCHAP Sustainability Appraisal (SA), finds that, in terms of accessibility, my client's site is 'exceptionally' well placed for primary school

access (p. 97). The school lies immediately to the south of the site. The Cheery Tree PH lies just 450m to the east. Both the school and PH are accessible from the site via a continuous public footpath.

- 3.7 The site sits in the centre of Wicklewood and within an enclave of existing development. As such, there would be no encroachment into the 'open' countryside consequent to development.
- 3.8 The SA finds my client's site around 100m from the Grade I-listed Church of All Saints. However, it also finds that direct sightlines *are filtered by planted screening and by existing buildings* (p. 102) that would mitigate any impact on the listed building itself or its setting.
- 3.9 In terms of Wicklewood itself, the interim SA finds the settlement is notable for its good public transport links with higher tier services (p.98). Furthermore, the SA finds my client's site one of the 'best placed' to access employment allocations via fast and frequent bus services (p.101).

Ref.	Name	Village	Area (Ha)	Agricultural land	SPA	SAC	SSSI	CWS	GP	Primary school	Secondary school	Town or village centre	Settlement Limit	Flood zone 2	Surface water flood risk	Conservation area	G1 listed building	G2* listed building	G2 listed building	River Valley	NSB Landscape Protection Zone	Viewing Cone
SN4001	Milestone Lane	Wicklewood	0.9																			
SN4064	Land At Wicklewood Nurseries, High Str	Wicklewood	0.7																			
SN2179REVA	High Street	Wicklewood	0.6																			
SN0232REV	Land South Of Low Street	Wicklewood	0.6																			
SN4045SL	Land Off Hackford Road	Wicklewood	0.5																			

Table 1.1 – VCHAP Interim SA Report, Appendices, p.73.

## **Availability**

- 3.10 A site will normally be considered available by the Council if it is in the ownership of a developer or landowner who has expressed an intention to develop or sell the land for development. Site SN4045SL is under the control of Orchard Homes who are actively promoting the site for development within the emerging VCHAP process.



**Achievability (including viability)**

- 3.11 A site will be considered achievable within the context of the HELAA/Local Plan where there is a reasonable prospect that development will occur on the site at a point in time. A key determinant of this will be economic viability of the site. This will be influenced by the market attractiveness of a site, its location in respect of property markets and any abnormal constraints on the site.
- 3.12 It is considered that delivery of development on this site would be viable, being in an area with considerable demand for both market and affordable dwellings. Indeed, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is applied to new developments in 'Wicklewood' which in itself proves that development must be viable.
- 3.13 Furthermore, there are no abnormal constraints pertaining to the site, i.e., 'reds' in the context of the RAG assessment – undertaken as part of the HELAA – see appendix B. My client can confirm that they can connect directly onto the public sewer and other utilities infrastructure is readily available to service the development.

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## **4.0 Concluding Remarks**

- 4.1 For the reasons outlined within this Statement, my client's site (SN4045SL) is considered *suitable, available* and *achievable* for allocation for the reasons outlined within the Statement in addition to the evidence base documents that have informed preparation of the VCHAP, including the HELAA and SA.
- 4.2 Parker Planning Services would like to be kept up to date with the progress of the VCHAP. For further information, or to discuss, please contact Magnus Magnusson on 01284 336119 or [magnus@parkerplanningservices.co.uk](mailto:magnus@parkerplanningservices.co.uk).

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## **Appendix A – Response to Questions posed in Consultation Document.**

**QUESTION 157: Do you support or object to the allocation of the preferred site(s)? Please add additional comments to explain your response and please specify which site(s) you are referring to. If the site is allocated do you think there are any specific requirements that should be set out in the allocation policy?**

*My client (Orchard Homes) support the allocation of site SN4045SL within the context of the VCHAP. The site is suitable, available and achievable for the reasons outlined within this supporting statement in addition to the evidence base documents that have informed the preparation of the Reg. 18 consultation draft VCHAP.*

*My client is willing to work with Officers of the Council in developing an appropriate policy for the site as part of the VCHAP process moving forward to adoption and in the form of a 'statement of Common Ground' or similar.*

**QUESTION 158: Do you think that any of the shortlisted or rejected sites should be allocated instead of, or in addition to, the preferred site?**

*No, site SN4045SL is suitable, available and achievable. The evidence base documents that have informed the preparation of the VCHAP have correctly identified my client's site as being one of the 2 most suitable ('sustainable') options for allocation within the settlement of Wicklewood. My client sees no reason why any alternative site should be selected for allocation ahead of theirs.*

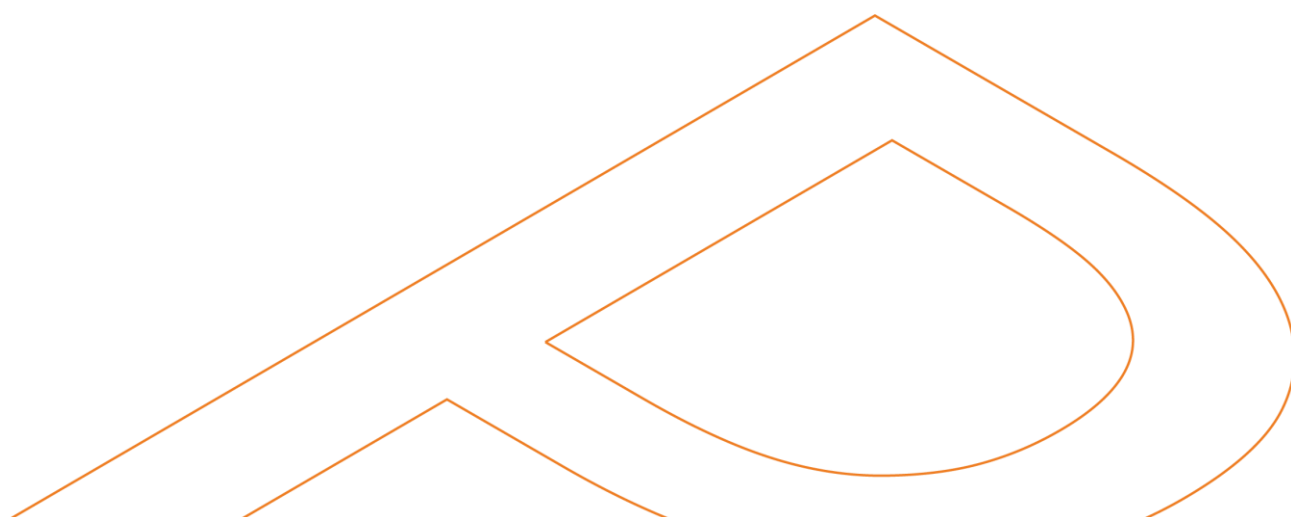
## Appendix B – HELAA Suitability Assessment

SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT			
Constraint	HELAA Score (R/ A/ G)	Comments	Site Score (R/ A/ G)
Access to the site	Amber	Access would be from Hackford Road on inside of bend  NCC HIGHWAYS – Amber. Subject to satisfactory access and provision of 2.0m wide continuous footway at south side of Hackford Rd and to school. (HIGHWAYS MEETING - OK, subject to a footway to the school)	Amber
Accessibility to local services and facilities  Part 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary School</li> <li>Secondary school</li> <li>Local healthcare services</li> <li>Retail services</li> <li>Local employment opportunities</li> <li>Peak-time public transport</li> </ul>	Green	Adjacent to Wicklewood Primary School  Distance to bus service 500 metres  Local employment 800 metres away	

Part 2: Part 1 facilities, plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Village/ community hall</li> <li>Public house/ cafe</li> <li>Preschool facilities</li> <li>Formal sports/ recreation facilities</li> </ul>		Distance to Wicklewood village hall and recreation area 800 metres  Distance to The Cherry Tree public house 500 metres	Green
Utilities Capacity	Amber	Wastewater capacity to be confirmed	Amber
Utilities Infrastructure	Amber	Confirmation needed that mains water, sewerage and electricity are all available	Amber
Better Broadband for Norfolk		Site within an area already served by fibre technology	Green
Identified ORSTED Cable Route		Not within identified cable route or substation location	Green
Contamination & ground stability	Green	No known contamination or ground stability issues	Green
Flood Risk	Green	No identified flood risk  LLFA – Green. Few or no constraints. Standard information required.	Green
Impact	HELAA Score (R/ A/ G)	Comments	Site Score (R/ A/ G)
SN Landscape Type (Land Use Consultants 2001)		Rural River Valley	
		Tributary Farmland	x
		Tributary Farmland with Parkland	
		Settled Plateau Farmland	
		Plateau Farmland	
		Valley Urban Fringe	
		Fringe Farmland	
SN Landscape Character Area (Land Use Consultants 2001)		E3 Hingham – Mattishall Plateau Farmland	

Overall Landscape Assessment	Green	Site is contained within existing development in the settlement. No loss of high grade agricultural land.  <b>SNC LANDSCAPE OFFICER</b> - There is a 'good' hedgerow along the site frontage which would need to be assessed against Policy DM4.8. Views of the Church across this site would also need to be considered	Amber
Townscape	Green	Site is contained within the existing pattern of development.	Green
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Green	No protected sites in close proximity  <b>NCC ECOLOGY</b> – Green. SSSI IRZ. Potential for protected species/habitats and Biodiversity Net Gain	Green
Historic Environment	Amber	Grade I listed church and Grade II listed war memorial to north-west of site  <b>SNC SENIOR HERITAGE &amp; DESIGN OFFICER</b> – Amber. Grade I listed church to north and war memorial. This would be within wider setting. However there is some existing landscaping affecting intervisibility. The main views of the church tower appear to be to the west across the landscape to the west. There are some views of the tower approaching from the south along Hackford Road and these would need to be taken into account in setting out layout etc.  <b>HES</b> – Amber	Amber

Open Space	Green	No loss of public open space	Green
Transport and Roads	Green	Hackford Road has reasonable capacity and footway  <b>NCC HIGHWAYS</b> – Amber. Subject to satisfactory access and provision of 2.0m wide continuous footway at south side of Hackford Rd and to school. <b>(HIGHWAYS MEETING</b> - OK, subject to a footway to the school)	Amber
Neighbouring Land Uses	Green	School and residential	Green



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Thanks for your valued business.

