

Proposed Residential Development On land at Wymondham Road, Wreningham

Submission of Representations relating to South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (Reg 18 Draft)

on behalf of D and E Grady

Ref: 035072

GNDP Site ref: SN2183

REPRESENTATIONS TO SOUTH NORFOLK VILLAGE CLUSTERS HOUSING ALLOCATIONS PLAN (REG 18 DRAFT) AUGUST 2021

Land at Wymondham Road, Wreningham (Ref: SN2183)

Introduction

1. The following comments are submitted in support of the allocation of the land at Wymondham Road, Wreningham (Ref: SN2183) for housing.
2. Representations for this site were submitted to the Greater Norwich Draft Local Plan Call for Sites in 2016.
3. The following Representations both reiterate information already submitted in support of the site, as well as comments on the status of the site in light of the current consultation.

Comments on Draft Village Clusters Document

4. The main aim of the 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 in order to provide at least 1,200 new homes in accordance with the requirements of Draft Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 7.4. The intention is to distribute development across the District in order to support the sustainability of rural settlements and address the needs of small and medium developers, in line with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (hereinafter 'NPPF').
5. The Plan has sought to assess parishes, in unison and individually, in terms of their provision of local services and facilities. In line with the approach as set out within the Greater Norwich Local Plan (hereinafter 'GNLP') each of the 'Clusters' are centred around the local primary school, with the associated catchment areas serving as a proxy for social sustainability. The availability of other services and facilities has also been considered, and has informed the site assessment process. The assessment has been informed by the Norfolk-wide Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Methodology (2016), site visit, planning history, and Landscape Character Assessment among others.
6. Wreningham is identified as forming part of the village cluster that includes Wreningham, Ashwellthorpe and Fundenhall. The cluster is identified as having a preschool, primary school, village hall, recreation facilities and pub.
7. The site at Wymondham Road has been allocated in the Draft Village Clusters Document for 25 units. We agree with this allocation and would make the following comments in support of the site's allocation.

Layout

8. The layout submitted shows a proposed scheme of approximately 25 units over 1.1 hectares. The scheme would include a range of dwelling sizes and types proposed, including affordable housing, vehicular and pedestrian access, open space and a wetland area, which serves as drainage to alleviate the surface water issues in the village. This would also present an opportunity to increase biodiversity, as discussed below.
9. Whilst only an indicative layout, the plan shows how the properties could be developed in such a way as to ensure minimal impact on amenity of both existing and proposed residents. The houses would be well set out in good sized plots and would be in keeping with properties on the opposite side of Wymondham Road. The wetland area would be to the south of the site and would comprise an area of just under 1 hectare. This would serve as a solution to the surface water situation both on this part of the site and in the village generally.



Figure 1: Indicative layout

Highway access

10. Vehicular access would be provided directly off Wymondham Road. There is provision already in place for pedestrian movement along Wymondham Road. The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit and is constructed to a good standard, providing for two way traffic.

11. Good visibility would be available from the proposed access in both directions. A grass verge is present for the majority of the road towards Ashwelthorpe Road, and on to the primary school. The speed limit reduces to 30mph and leads directly to the village centre. A 20mph zone around the school could be incorporated as part of development scheme to further improve safety in this area.

12. A transport assessment and access strategy would be submitted in due course and as part of any forthcoming planning application.

Benefits/Impact

Access to services/Facilities

13. Wreningham benefits from a pub, church, village hall, primary school and playing field. The site lies in very close proximity to the primary school and is within easy walking distance, with a safe walking route from the site to the school. The village's pub lies around 500m from the site and would be readily accessible from it on foot or by bicycle.

14. Wreningham also benefits from a large builders merchant. The site is also within 1km of Ashwelthorpe Industrial Estate and within 1.5km of Lotus Cars, Hethel Engineering Centre and the Hethel and Turing Park Industrial Estates. It is the nearest proposed site to these substantial

employment centres and within easy walking and cycling distance. Lotus Cars have invested over £100m in their manufacturing facilities at Hethel in recent years and have recently announced the creation of 250 jobs in addition to 670 jobs created since September 2017. Hethel Engineering Centre has created over 1000 jobs and facilitated the start up of over 200 businesses in the last 14 years. Ashwellthorpe, Hethel and Turing Park industrial estates are home to numerous small and medium size local businesses. This is the nearest proposed site to these major centres and the only proposed site within walking distance of these centres or a short 10 minute cycle ride.

15. There are frequent bus services running from the village to Norwich City Centre (Bus route 10A) and Wymondham (37A and 805)), with some services running on Sunday. The nearest bus stop to the site is located outside the Bird in hand pub, approximately 500m from the site. Norwich train station is located approximately 10 miles, away, offering services operating to London.

16. The B1113 provides a direct link to Norwich and to the A11 to Wymondham. Wreningham is located a short distance to the market town of Wymondham, which provides a range of higher order services including retail, leisure and social facilities, as well as employment. Wymondham is approximately 5 miles away from the proposed site.

17. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal development would benefit from good access to local services, and would accord with local and national planning policies which indicate that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Given their accessibility, existing local businesses and services would be likely to derive support from the development due to the addition to the local economy of the spending power of new residents. In these respects, the proposal would support the social and economic dimensions of sustainability as defined in the NPPF.

18. The proposed development would deliver a range of housing including affordable, a wetland area, which provides a sustainable drainage solution to directly contribute to the surface water arrangements in the village, as well as increasing the biodiversity of the site by providing significant opportunity for wildlife. A larger scale scheme such as this, compared to a smaller infill scheme, would generate affordable housing, as well as providing funds for local services through CIL and through S 106 contributions.

19. This scheme therefore brings about benefits for the village, as well as providing a well-designed, sustainable housing scheme that makes the best possible use of the available site. The scheme is capable of bringing forward sufficient housing numbers within a single site to meet the requirements and expectations for the Wreningham cluster.

Heritage assets

20. There are two listed buildings in the vicinity of the site, The Grade 11* Listed Poplars, which is located to the south of the proposal site and Grade 11 Listed Poplars Barn. The significance of these properties appears to derive principally from their architectural form/details and historic fabric, together with their setting in grounds to the centre of the village. Given the separation of these listed buildings from the site and the screening effects of intervening vegetation and wetland area, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a material impact on the setting of either of the listed buildings.

Landscape/Local Character

21. The land proposed for development comprises an open field located off Wymondham Road in the centre of the village. The proposed development would be located slightly to the east opposite existing residential development, so would not appear out of place. From Wymondham Road, views of the proposed houses would be limited as the site will be screened by a series of both established hedgerows and trees, as well as new planting as part of the proposed development. Consequently,

whilst the proposal would inevitably result in a loss of openness, its impact on the landscape setting of the village and the character of the area generally would be limited.

22. The established pattern of development in the vicinity is mixed, however is made up predominantly of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows set in good sized plots. The village has a predominantly nucleated settlement pattern based around Wymondham Road, Ashwelthorpe Road and Church Road. Some limited estate scale development has taken place in the village. The proposal would not appear out of place with this pattern of existing development, whilst at the same time would have its own character. The development would be well screened.

Utilities Infrastructure

23. It is not considered that there is any fundamental impediment to the delivery of the site through any constraints relating to utilities infrastructure. The increase in capacity can be built into the new development.

Flooding

24. The site falls entirely within Flood Risk Zone 1. As such, the site is at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. Preliminary technical reports are however looking at solutions to the surface water issues on the site and in the village. As discussed above, a proposed wetland area would be an integral part of the development scheme, that would deal with the surface water issues. This solution could actually improve surface water flood risk in the village, with careful design. This background technical work is ongoing, in order to achieve a solution in advance of any future planning application. A preliminary report is attached as part of these Representations.

Delivery of development

25. As already noted, no significant infrastructure constraints have been identified to date which would be likely to delay or impede the development of the site for housing. The site is in a single ownership and no further land is needed to enable the land to be brought forward for development. The land is currently available for development and so, subject to approval being given, could deliver housing in the short term.

26. The applicants own the land and are also the owners of an established house building company. As such, they would develop the site themselves. This adds a greater level of certainty in terms of the delivery of the development. It also provides an opportunity to provide a more bespoke development, that accords with the character of the village.

27. The proposed development would make a positive contribution to the supply of high quality housing in the area and could facilitate improvements to the local utilities capacity. The proposal would also add to the range of housing sites available in the locality, providing flexibility and a wider choice of development opportunities to the market, including much needed affordable housing and thus strengthening the local supply of housing land. By providing sufficient land of the right type in the right place to support growth, the development would address the economic dimension of sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF.