

2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021

To. GNLP Joint Planning Policy Team

Representation on behalf of  
Mr Paul Battle  
1 Fortune Green  
Alpington  
Norwich  
NR14 7NN

**RE: Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan: Regulation 18 Public Consultation**

**QUESTION 11: Do you think that any of the shortlisted or rejected sites should be allocated instead of, or in addition to, the preferred site? Please explain your response and please specify which site(s) you are referring to.**

**Site REF: SN1012 - Mill Field, Mill Road**

Mill Field site is outside but adjacent to the current settlement boundary to the south. The site also adjoins a number of residential properties to the north fronting mill road.

The site is not chosen as a preferred site to form part of the settlement in the Village Clusters Housing Allocation Plan. The summary of the officer assessment stated 3 reasons for rejecting:

*"Mill Road is separate from the main settlement and the surrounding highway network is substandard with no safe walking route to the school and poor access at each junction end. The site extends behind the existing linear pattern of frontage development and would encroach further north which is out of character. In addition, there are significant existing trees and hedging along the frontage which would be lost with a negative impact on the landscape character."*

However, we believe the assessment has failed to take into account a number of critical factors and this site should be included in the extended settlement boundary with below reasoned justifications:

1. Whilst we welcome the statement in the introduction: "There is also a significant area of development at Mill Road, Alpington." as it is a substantial part of the village, it is felt that not sufficient consideration has been given to the benefit of extending the northern side of the Mill Road settlement. NPPF Policy 79 states that "*Planning policies should identify*

*opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.”*

2. The site is within walking distance of the Village shop, garden centre, café and post office at the end of Mill Road (Green Pastures). It is also within walking distance (0.4 miles) of a bus stop for a regular bus service at the junction of A146 and Mill Road. These amenities are all located on the northern side of the Mill Road.
3. The officers’ statement “surrounding highway network is substandard with no safe walking route to the school and poor access at each junction end” is insufficiently and inaccurate. The assessment has failed to take into account below:
  - there is a public footpath adjoining the site which crosses farmland meaning the school can be reached without walking on roads and without pavement;
  - the roads are by their own admission class c roads with 30mph speed limits throughout;
  - there are other preferred sites chosen are subject to the same roads without a pavement, but the Mill Field site enjoys a good walking distance to school, which is only 0.6 miles.
4. Regarding access at each junction end, there is no evidence to suggest any junction is more dangerous than other junctions leading to the village, they are more or less the same throughout the cluster of settlements in Alington, Yelverton and Bergh Apton.
5. Regarding the character of Mill Road, the linear development frontage carries further north of the Mill Field site. It presents an opportunity to bridge and enhance the built environment and transitional character of Mill Road. The officer’s comment “The site extends behind the existing linear pattern of frontage development” is not factually correct. In fact, a substantial part of the site is with road frontage and a good opportunity exist to include at least southern part of the site fronting Mill Road.

## **Conclusion:**

In summary, we believe Site SN1012 - Mill Field should be included in the settlement boundary extension so as to benefit from the amenities that are located on the northern side of Mill Road. If the officer feels the entire site does not follow the existing linear pattern, at least the southern half of the site fronting Mill Road should be included in the proposed settlement boundary. It presents an ideal opportunity to make it conform to NPPF Policy 79 – supporting local services.