

Proposed Residential Development Off Fells Way, Geldeston

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

Ref: PP20/027629

Site Ref: SN0437

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

Land off Fells Way, Geldeston (Site Ref: SN0437)

Introduction

1. The following comments are submitted in support of the proposed allocation of the land off Kells Way, at Geldeston. The site was initially promoted through the Call for Sites of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) in 2016, Additional representations were made in the previous Regulation 18 consultations in March 2018 and March 2020. The proposed site is effectively an extension to the existing allocation (GEL1) in the currently adopted Local Plan which has been developed.
2. The following representations are made to describe how this site could be developed and contribute to the Village Clusters Plan in delivering growth to the villages in South Norfolk.

Background to South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan

3. 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').
4. 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 amongst others.
5. The Village Clusters plan should be read alongside the Emerging Draft Local Plan which states that, for those sites that make the best use of the site available and are able to offer additional benefits, a larger number of units will be considered. Whilst the majority of sites will be in the 12 -25 units' range on sites of up to 1 hectare, there will be circumstances where a larger site may be the most appropriate option, including where the site clearly makes the best use of the site available.
6. Geldeston is identified as forming part of the village cluster that includes Gillingham and Stockton. The cluster is identified as having a range of social and community facilities comprising a primary school, village hall, pub, shop, and recreational facilities. There is a petrol filling station and fast-food restaurant to the east at Gillingham.
7. We are supportive of the preferred site allocation of this site for up to 20 dwellings on a site of 0.83 hectares. The draft Plan states as a reasoned justification the following:
The site has a good relationship with the existing built form of the settlement and would benefit from good connectivity. The site is located to the north of an existing residential development, recently approved, and developed. Development of the site would be subject to an access through this recent development as no other access is suitable (Old Yarmouth Road to the north is not viable). Whilst the site adjoins the Conservation Area, any impacts could be mitigated against through careful design and layout. It has been acknowledged that this site has a better relationship with the Valley setting due to existing boundaries.
8. From the initial Call for Sites the proposals have been amended to increase the number of properties to 20 dwellings. We believe the site is capable of providing a range of house types including smaller two and three bedroomed properties and bungalows. Provided the layout is appropriately designed, the total number of dwellings could flex according to local housing demand

and need. The site would also appear as a natural extension to the recently developed site to the south and sit neatly into an extended settlement boundary for the village.

Highway access

9. Vehicular access is provided directly off an extension to Kells Way. As identified in the 2016 reps, the access would be via an adopted highway and through the recently completed housing development to the south. The proposed access would be constructed to an adoptable standard which can be easily accommodated as part of the development. We don't believe that there is any technical objection to form an access to the intended site.

Utilities

10. We do not believe that there are any constraints to the provision of utilities to the site. The owner has services connection rights from the initial site that has already been developed. There are no capacity issues as they have been upgraded as part of the initial development to the south. There is, therefore, no technical objection to this site coming forward in terms of the provision of utilities.

Benefits/Impact

Access to services/Facilities

11. Geldeston is described in the current Local Plan as a Service Village in the rural area. It benefits from range of social and community facilities including a farm shop, village hall, and pub.

12. There are frequent bus services running from Rectory Road, Stockton to Norwich City Centre, and Bungay (FirstBus Service X21, X22 and X2 every 30 mins and Borderbus 146 every 2 hrs).

13. Geldeston is located 22.4 km (13.9mls) from Norwich to the north, and approximately 4km (2.5 mls)'of the market town of Bungay, which provides a range of higher order services including retail, leisure and social facilities, as well as employment.

14. 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.

Heritage assets

15. There are no heritage assets that are affected by these proposals. The nearest listed building is The Old House on The Street approximately 0.5km to the east and, in our view, the setting of this listed building will not be affected by these proposals.

Landscape/Local Character

16. The landscape generally consists of large open arable fields defined by countryside hedging with belts and areas of woodland. There are mature individual trees along the boundaries of the site which will be retained as part of the proposed development.

Flooding

17. The site falls entirely within Flood Risk Zone 1. As such, the site is at the lowest risk of flooding. However, further technical work, including a site-specific flood risk assessment, would be commissioned with any forthcoming planning application to demonstrate that the proposed development would not be at risk of flooding or be likely to result in an increased flood risk elsewhere in the locality. The attached supplementary information demonstrates the site's minimal risk of flooding.

Delivery of development

18. As already noted, no significant 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 with agreement from the adjacent landowner to provide access, 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.

19. There are two developers who potentially could develop the site and they are currently in discussions as to how they would be able to deliver their expertise on this site.

20. 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, 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.