

**Response to questions 1, 2, 3, 4 & 107 of the South Norfolk Village Cluster
Housing Allocation Plan (Reg. 18 Draft)**

Respondent: [REDACTED]

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(Enclosed with this correspondence are two maps showing The Street, Rockland St Mary in 1880. The map showing the “iron foundry” and “post office” is the eastern end of the village the map showing the “old Hall” is the western end of the village. “The Street” continues from one map to the next but maps have to be offset to line this up.)

Question 1 Do you agree with the objectives of the village cluster plan? If you think the objective should be changed, please explain how why.

Yes, but not entirely, I believe there are inconsistencies &/or problems:

1) We have sites involving the construction of 12 to 50 dwellings going to meet the 1200 dwelling requirement in the GNLP, but smaller sites of less than 12 dwellings not counting towards this 1200 dwelling requirement. This seems inconsistent with SNVC Objective 3 in protecting the character of villages as larger sites of 12 to 50 dwellings by their very nature have far greater impact and yet apparently, they are the only way of fulfilling the 1200 dwelling requirement!

2) SNVC Objective 3 states: “*Ensure that the scale, location and density of housing is more related to the form and character of existing villages...*” The particular question here is what is actually meant by “*scale*” and how is it determined? Within the South Norfolk village cluster housing allocation plan there are essentially 1200 dwellings to be built and 48 village clusters in which to build them. This would average out at 25 dwellings per village cluster! I believe the issue of “scale” needs further consideration and clarification.

Question 2: Do you agree that the Village Cluster Plan should include a policy on “standard requirements”? If so, do you agree that the criteria suggested are appropriate, or should they be amended and/or should additional criteria be added.

Yes, but again with some reservation:

1) There would seem to be an assumption here that the number of dwellings in any proposed development would exceed twelve, but, suggested specific requirements include “Minimising the impact on the amenity of existing residents.” Again I believe more consideration should be given to smaller scale of less than 12 properties in developments and even the encouragement of building individual properties where appropriate (all counting towards the 1200 dwelling requirement).

While I appreciate building 12 or more properties on a single site gives economy of scale, Larger developments may easily act counter to protecting the character of the village and its setting.

Question 3: Do you agree that the Village Cluster Plan should include a policy on “Design”? If so do you agree that the criteria suggested are appropriate or should they be amended and/or should additional criteria be added

Yes, I agree, but I don't think this goes quite far enough:

1) I believe the development should particularly take into account adjacent &/or surrounding properties, not only from the point of view of design, density, layout etc. but also from the point of view of integration and accessibility. If possible existing residents should feel that any development has enhanced their own amenity.

Question 4: Do you agree that the village cluster plan should include a policy on “Housing Mix”? If so, do you agree that the criteria suggested are appropriate, or should they be amended and/or should additional criteria be added?

Yes, probably. However, I recognise that the provision, or otherwise, of affordable/subsidised/rented council property/etc housing is a political decision to be made by elected representatives. My own power to influence such decisions is at the ballot box.

Question 107: Do you support or object to the allocation of the preferred site? Please add additional comments to explain your response and please specify which site (s) you are referring to. If this site is allocated, do you think there are any specific requirements that should be set out in addition to the allocation policy?

This question refers **SN2064REV**. I do **OBJECT** to this proposed development as follows:

*1) Abstract: **Townscape**. Over the last 140 years building developments in the Rockland St Mary have been proportionate, maintaining the essential historic village structure. This proposal would not only in itself change historic village structure, but also set a precedent for further change, consequently having a **detrimental impact on the townscape which cannot be mitigated**. On these grounds alone should be **refused**.*

1) **Townscape**. I am in sympathy with the Senior Heritage & Design Officer when he writes: “There are two establish clusters to the east end and west end of the village – with this central area still very linear in its grain of development without back land development. Consequently, there are not that many accesses in the centre of the village and with gaps in housing retains a rural scale. Introducing a third central cluster area would create more of precedent for other background areas to be developed in the same vain, fundamentally changing the character of the village. I therefore have townscape concerns. Following on from the officer's comments I visited the reference section of Norwich central library to view early maps of Rockland St Mary village especially the 1880 (25 inch to

the mile) ordnance survey map. Photographs enclosed for your information only. I acknowledge the kind help and support of the reference section of Norfolk library service in providing this information. **Interestingly from the officer's description of the present village I have no difficulty in recognising the village of 141 years ago!** Over the last 140 years there has been building development in this village and we can see various architectural examples from different periods. However generally these have been proportionate & relatively small-scale developments maintaining the essential historic village structure. This present proposed development however, if adopted, would not only in itself change the historic village structure but also set a precedent for further such changes. Consequently, this proposed development **SN2064REV** would have a **detrimental impact on the townscape which cannot be mitigated** and, on this ground alone, should be refused.

*2) Abstract: **Biodiversity**. This proposal if built would significantly disrupt (or prevent) what is believed to be the only remaining migration route for deer passing across The Street at this end of the village*

2) Biodiversity. Bayfield House (Now 16 The Street and designated "47" on the 1880 map) is an old house. It's garden, arboreal in nature, has frontage on the street and also arches behind number 18 and number 20 the street. This proposed development, if built, would have just under half of its western boundary abutting the eastern back boundary of Bayfield House. The development would also protrude another 40 metres or so towards the south away from the southern boundary of the house. Bayfield is one of the few remaining properties with a hedgerow boundary to the fields behind (both South and East). This feature coupled with the access path from the street to the fields north of the street opposite the front garden of the house provides, I believe, the only remaining route for deer to migrate across The Street in this part of the village. The wooded nature of the garden also provides some refuge en route. SN2064REV would at best significantly disrupt this historic natural migration facility.

*3) Abstract: **Location & Density**. Contrary to the requirements of SNVC Objective 3 this proposed development seeks to implement a **housing density** incompatible with adjacent existing properties at this **location** & so should be **refused***

3) Location & Density. SNVC Objective 3 (Protecting the character of villages) seeks to "ensure that the scale, **location** and **density** of housing is well related to the form and character of existing villages". In the case of SN2064 REV the existing properties bordering the site have an average curtilage of more than 0.125 hectare with some properties being significantly higher than this (up to more than 0.6 hectare) Assuming 25% of the proposed site is used for infrastructure (roads, pavements, etc.) and 25 properties are erected on site the average curtilage per property will be 0.03 hectare. This in no way relates to the form & character of the adjacent existing village properties and so very significantly fails Objective 3 in this respect. Even if 12 properties were erected on the site, this would still be Double the density of adjacent existing properties and not compatible. **Consequently this development seeks to impose a housing density which is inappropriate at this location and so should be refused.**

4) Settlement Limits. I'm concerned that this proposed development is completely outside the existing settlement limit and in all but one case the surrounding property land abutting the site is also outside the settlement limit. Has sufficient consideration been given to existing residents?

*5) Abstract: **Scale**. In this case there are 1200 properties to be allocated to 48 village clusters. The Rockland St Mary cluster is one of the smallest (I calculate that it is in the lowest quartile) and yet it seems to have been allocated up to double (50*

*properties) the average (25) properties. Calculating the allocation of properties proportionately (to scale) in relation to the size (area) of each cluster I calculate that the RSM cluster should be allocated 15 or 16 properties. These properties could be accommodated elsewhere making **SM2064REV surplus to requirements***

5) Scale. SNVC Objective 3 seeks to “ensure that the **scale** location and density of housing is well related to the form and character of existing villages.” In this case there are 1200 properties to be allocated to 48 village clusters. The Rockland St Mary cluster is one of the smallest (I calculate that it is in the lowest quartile) and yet it seems to have been allocated up to double (50 properties) the average (25) properties. Above I suggest “scale” needs further consideration. I take scale to mean the total number of properties allocated to a particular village cluster and will consider this in relation to the area of each cluster. Allocating the 1200 properties proportionate to the size of each of the 48 individual village clusters. I assume the Rockland St Mary village cluster as one unit of area and assess each of the other 47 clusters according to observation of the “Extent of Village Cluster areas” map. For example, Alburgh & Denton is allocated the number 2 as it is approximately double the area of the Rockland St Mary cluster; Alington, Yelverton & Bergh Apton is allocated the number 1.5 as it is approximately one and a half times the area of the Rockland St Mary cluster; Keswick and Intwood is allocated the number 0.7 as it is approximately 7/10 the size of the Rockland St Mary cluster. I continue to assess all 48 village clusters in this way. By adding the results 48 clusters I am able to find the total area (78.9) of the 48 village clusters as a multiple of the size of the Rockland St Mary cluster. If I divide this number by 48 I find that the average (mean) area of a village cluster is 1.64 times the size of the Rockland St Mary cluster. Consequently, if property allocation is to be by area any cluster scoring 1.64 would expect to receive an average number of properties (i.e. 25 properties), anything above 1.64 would expect more than 25 properties, less than 1.64 would expect less than 25 properties. By making a further calculation ($25/1.64 = 15.2$) I ascertain that **making proportionate property allocation to village clusters based on the land area of each cluster Rockland St Mary, Hellington & Holveston should be allocated 15 or 16 properties**. Please check my calculations, but I believe this makes site **SN2064REV surplus to requirements**