

4.13. The site is located north of the B1108 between Cock Street to the east and Back Lane to the west. The eastern section of the site is a brownfield site that lies within the existing development boundary whilst the western section of the site extends into the open countryside. The existing commercial garage and the dwelling in the north area of the site will be demolished as part of the redevelopment of the site. The site is well connected by pedestrian access to the existing facilities in the village, including the village school on Chapel Street, and a regular bus service that runs between Norwich and Watton.

Legal compliance and duty to co-operate: This proposal directly contravenes adopted Policy DM2.2:

“Policy DM 2.2 Protection of employment sites

- 1) *The Council will safeguard sites and buildings allocated for Business Class and other Employment Uses. Proposals leading to the loss of sites and buildings to another use will be permitted where the new use continues to provide employment and is supportive to that particular employment area.*
- 2) *The Council will safeguard all other land and buildings currently in or last used for an Employment Use (both inside and outside Development Boundaries). Proposals leading to the loss of such sites and buildings will be permitted where:*
 - a) *The possibility of re-using or redeveloping the site / premises for a range of alternative business purposes has been fully explored and it can be demonstrated that the site or premises is no longer economically viable or practical to retain for an Employment Use;*

Or

b) There would be an overriding economic, environmental or community benefit from redevelopment or change to another use which outweighs the benefit of the current lawful use continuing.”

Legal compliance and duty to co-operate: This proposal directly contravenes Clauses 81-85 of the NPPF:

“Clause 81: “Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.”

Clause 84: Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;”

Lack of soundness (as defined in the NPPF) – the proposed VCBAR1 development is in contravention of the stated aims of the JCS, specifically Policy 15: Service Villages:

“Small-scale employment or service development appropriate to the scale and needs of the village and its immediate surroundings will be encouraged. Existing local shops and services will be protected.”

Currently, three businesses operating out of the garage including a car maintenance and repair shop, a used car sales (well stocked) and a business in the offices upstairs. Historically, there has long been a business of this type in this location. Loss of this local employment goes against the delivery of sustainable development. There is no overriding economic, environmental or community benefit from redevelopment or change to another use which outweighs the benefit of the current lawful use continuing.

The businesses are well-supported by the local residents of Barford and Wramplingham.

The site VCBAR1 is not available for development .

The owner of the VCBAR1 site has stated:

(a) he has no intention of developing the site at this time,

(b) he is not aware of being contacted by the planning office (contrary to the claim in the Cluster Site Assessment Forms (December 2022), and

(c) he has recently granted a five-year lease to one of the businesses.

Barford and Wramplingham Parish Council request clarification on why this site has been chosen given that:

- (i) The owner of the site has not been contacted; and
- (ii) The proposal is quite clearly contrary to the local and national policies stated above.
- (iii) The site extends into the open countryside beyond the existing development boundary.