GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN (GNLP) SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION STATEMENT PREPARED BY CODE DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS LTD ON BEHALF OF BEN BURGESS 17 JANUARY 2022



Matter 2 Vision, objectives and the spatial strategy Issue 3 Economy

1 Update

- 1.1 Subsequent to submission of representations on behalf of Ben Burgess to the Regulation 19 consultation of the GNLP, planning application 2018/2631 for the development of a new headquarters for Ben Burgess to include areas for the supply, maintenance, repair and hire of agricultural, horticultural, construction and grounds care machinery and equipment, offices, education hub, trade counter, sales and display areas, associated internal and external storage, and associated infrastructure at land west of the Ipswich Road (A140), Swainsthorpe (site reference GNLP0604R) has been withdrawn. Planning officers of South Norfolk Council (SNC) concluded that there were insufficient policy support and positive material considerations compared with policy objections to overcome the proposed development on an unallocated site.
- 1.2 Ben Burgess' representations to the Regulation 19 consultation of the GNLP (rep ID 24390) suggested that one possible remedy to the GNLP's failure to "recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors" (paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) would be to allocate site GNLP0604R. However, as a consequence of the planning application process, Ben Burgess acknowledges that an alternative site needs to be identified and requests that the GNLP examination process focusses on considering whether the GNLP provides employment sites which satisfy the requirements of the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (refer to paragraph 2.2 of Ben Burgess' representations to the Regulation 19 consultation of the GNLP (dated 22 March 2021 (representation ID 24390)).
- 1.3 The GNLP team's response the representation ID 24390 states, "The Plan allocates more than sufficient land to accommodate normal quantitative and qualitative needs including for the scale and type of business proposed. It is not appropriate to allocate a relatively remote rural site to meet the constrained business model of a single business." This fails to address the evidence provided by Ben Burgess and fails to take seriously the contractual franchise requirements between John Deere and Ben Burgess (section 6 of "Ben Burgess Background and context to need for relocation, July 2020"). The GNLP team rather miss the point that site GNLP0604R was proposed by Ben Burgess in the absence of suitable allocated sites and/or emerging allocations identified through the GNLP.
- 1.4 Following the planning application process Ben Burgess accepts that site GNLP0409R is not going to be allocated in the GNLP even if main modifications were made to the plan following additional work. However, Ben Burgess needs the GNLP process to identify a suitable site for its relocation and



expansion. Ben Burgess is therefore continuing its search for a suitable site and its representatives continue to engage with officers of SNC in this pursuit.

- 2 Q3: Do the key strategic employment locations set out in Policy 7.1 and Policy 6, together support the vision and objectives of the Plan?
- 2.1 Section 3 The Vision and Objectives for Greater Norwich as set out in the GNLP states at paragraph 127 under 'Economy' that, "Generating the right levels of growth in the right places will help our local economy by stimulating [inter alia] economic investment and new technologies." The plan's objective for 'Economy' set out on page 38 of the GNLP states that the objective is to support and promote clean growth as "part of a wider entrepreneurial, enterprising, creative and broad-based economy with high productivity and a skilled workforce." The 'Delivery Statement' on page 39 of the GNLP set out how the GNLP prioritises the delivery of development to meet its objectives. It states under the heading 'Economic Development' that, "To promote delivery of jobs, this plan provides choice and flexibility by providing for a wide range and type and size of employment sites." The evidence submitted by Ben Burgess demonstrates that this is not the case.
- 2.2 Section 5 The Strategy within the GNLP at paragraph 169 b states, "growth potential is greatest in five high impact sectors identified in the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy: [inter alia] agri-tech" Ben Burgess' contribution to the agri-tech/agri-food sector was acknowledged through consultee responses to planning application 2018/2631. Notably that "Ben Burgess is a key player in the agri-food sector and wider rural economy, and so are represented on the Board of the New Anglia Agri-Food Industry Council, which oversees delivery of actions to grow and develop the sector" (consultation response letter dated 2 June 2021 from Director of Growth and Economic Development, Norfolk County Council).
- 2.3 Paragraph 169 c goes on to state, "the total amount of allocated and permitted employment land in 2018 is more than enough to provide for expected and promoted growth, so the policy does not make significant additional allocations of employment land beyond those already identified in existing local plan documents." However, Ben Burgess contends that the evidence base for the GNLP does not demonstrate a review of the existing allocations to ensure they meet the needs of the agri-tech/agri-food sector. The 'Delivery Statement' on page 39 of the GNLP also states, "Most key strategic sites are extensions of already successful developments." The evidence base for the GNLP lacks the rigor to satisfy paragraph 83 of the NPPF and the associated guidance in the NPPG.
- 2.4 Ben Burgess contends that the key strategic employment locations set out in Policy 7.1 (Norwich Urban Area including the fringe parishes) and Policy 6 (Norwich city centre; the Norwich Airport area; Browick Interchange, Wymondham; Longwater; Rackheath; Broadland Business Park; Broadland Gate; Norwich Research Park; Hethel; and the Food Enterprise Park at Easton/Honingham) do not support the vision and objectives of the GNLP. The sufficiency, choice and range of sites that these policies state is

Ben Burgess GNLP examination Matter 2 Issue 3 17 January 2022 Page 3 of 8

achieved through the GNLP have been demonstrated, through evidence provided by Ben Burgess, to be incorrect.

- 2.5 Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states, "Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt." A business stated as being a key player in the agrifood/agri-tech sector, currently employing 95 staff¹ (of which nine are engineering apprenticeships) based at its existing Europa Way, Norwich site, Ben Burgess has been seeking to find a site to relocate its headquarters to, since at least 2013. Relocation to expanded premises would enable the expansion of the number of staff employed at the headquarters to 122 following relocation and predicted to grow to 130 in the following five years. New premises would also enable Ben Burgess to remain at the forefront of training both of its staff and of its customers in a technological advancing industry.
- 2.6 Table 2.0 below updates previous information and assessment of sites allocated or proposed for allocation to explain why they do not address the requirements of Ben Burgess and the John Deere franchise. It provides a further addendum to and should be read in conjunction with the Assessment of Alternative Sites, Part 1, January 2019; Assessment of Alternative Sites, Part 2, November 2018; Addendum to Assessment of Alternative Sites, July 2020 and Ben Burgess Background and Context to Need for Relocation, July 2020.
- 2.7 The assessment continues to demonstrate that there are no sites allocated or proposed for allocation through the GNLP that meet Ben Burgess' requirements. The requirements are predicated on a contractual basis and thus without satisfying the requirements Ben Burgess would breach its obligations to John Deere and lose its franchise. It is therefore commercially naive and fails to grasp the economic objective of sustainable development set out in paragraph 8a of the NPPF "ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity" for officers of the GNLP team to state in relation to a number of sites that they "would be suitable for the type and scale of operation proposed, subject to greater relaxation of the business model."
- 2.8 Table 2.0 provides the overriding reason(s) each site does not meet criteria and is not considered as a suitable site for relocation based on the evidence contained in the document "Ben Burgess Background and Context to Need for Relocation, July 2020". For ease of reference the criteria are set out in Table 1.0.

¹ Figures updated as at January 2022



Table	e 1.0: Criteria Extracted from Section 6: Site Requirements
i.	The developable site area must be between 6-12ha dependent on site specific considerations.
iii.	Site must cover and support areas forming part of the John Deere franchise areas agreement.
iv.	Site must conform to the target that John Deere has set which requires customers to reach a
	dealership within 30 minutes, known as the 30-minute drive time. This means that the depots
	should be located to enable them to cover and support areas located on the east coast including
	Sandringham, Hunstanton, Cromer, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, etc and locations south of
	Norwich including Beccles, Diss and Thetford as part of the John Deere franchise areas
	agreement.
٧.	Site must be located far enough from existing Ben Burgess dealership sites at Aylsham and
	Beeston to reduce overlap of catchment areas.
vi.	The site must allow for the continuation of their legacy in supplying South Norfolk.
vii.	To create a guideline for the proposed site search based on the above criteria (section iii, iv, v
	and vi) the site should be four miles from the A47 Trowse junction to ensure the geographical
	coverage in relation to its customer base is optimised in consideration of proximity to other Ben
	Burgess dealerships and to offer the 30 minute drive time required by John Deere. Additionally,
	the depot will remain central within its franchise market.
ix.	The site must be accessibly located and visible from a main arterial route to allow commercial
	exposure, promote the agricultural sector and attract new talent.
xi.	The site must be viable in terms of land acquisition (cost and willingness to sell).
NB:	criteria ii, viii and x are desirable rather than essential and have therefore be omitted from the
asse	ssment in Table 2.0.

Ben Burgess GNLP examination Matter 2 Issue 3 17 January 2022 Page 5 of 8



Table 2.0 Summary Assessment of Potential Site

The following assessment is provided by K Garnham Design on behalf of Ben Burgess. Each site is assessed against the criteria in Table 1.0 with consideration to how well it meets the parameters defined within the assessment methodology. Each site can achieve a green, amber or red indication based on its ability to meet each of the criterion.

Green	Amber Red									
Site name	Size (ha)	South Norfolk	Proximity to Trowse / A47 junction (miles)	Visible from main road	Access to strategic route	Proximity to existing Ben Burgess depot (minutes drive)	Demonstration space	Freehold (timescale / figure)	Suggested by	Overriding (s) reason site does not meet criteria and is not considered as a suitable site for relocation.
Brooke (GNLP Policy BKE3: Brooke	0.5ha	S ⊆ Yes	4.3 Miles	Yes	No stra	25-35	No De	Not Aware	SNC	Criteria i.
Industrial Estate)	Opportunities. Existing employment site. Constraints. Poor access; contamination. Following planning applications 2016/1420/FUL and 2017/1560/DOC it would appear the whole allocation is in commercial use for external storage, albeit not developed with physical buildings.									
Costessey (GNLP Policy COS3: Longwater employment area) (GNLPSL2008)										Criteria iii, iv, v.
Easton/Honingham Thorpe (GNLP Policy EAS1) (Easton Food Hub)	54.78ha Opportunities Constraints. F water flooding	Yes There is								Criteria iii, iv, v.



Long Stratton Area Action Plan,	1.8ha	Yes	10.6 Miles	No	No	< or > 25- 30 mins	No	No	BB	Criteria i.
May 2016 (Policy LNGS2: Land west of Tharston Industrial Estate)	Opportunities. Existing employment site. Constraints. A recent planning approval for extensions to existing buildings and curtilage has been implemented therefore the site is assumed unavailable. Access restrictions across third-party land.									
Wymondham Area Action Plan, October 2015 (Policy	22ha (2 sites)	Yes	10 Miles	Yes	Yes	< or > 25- 30 mins	No	Available	BB	Criteria iii, iv, v.
WYM5: Land at Browick Road)	Opportunities. Existing allocation within Wymondham AAP with no planning applications or extant permissions within last five years so is assumed to be available. Constraints. Impact on setting of Wymondham Abbey, landscape considerations, environmental sensitivities, water main crossing site.									
Hethel Technology Park (GNLP Policy HETHEL2	20ha	Yes	8.8 Miles	No	No	< or > 25- 30 mins	No	Available	BB	Criteria iii, iv, v.
(GNLP2109))	Opportunities. Allocated land. Constraints. Policy for B1 uses associated with or supporting advance engineering/manufacturing sectors.									
Land West of Ipswich Road, Keswick (GNLP	E - 3.1ha W - 2.5ha	Yes	2.8 Miles	Yes	Yes	25-35 mins	Yes	Not Available	SNC	Criteria i, xi.
Policy KES2 (GNLP0497))	Opportunities. Access off link road. Constraints. Levels rising from approximately 11 AOD to 25 AOD ie a level difference of 14 metres; landscaping and visual impact; land ownership, permission for of B1, B2 and B8, maximum building heights.									
Broadland Business Park North (refer to right hand column for Growth Triangle AAP	Site of 5.19ha allowing for constraints	No	3.8 Miles	No	Yes	25-35 mins	No	Part Under offer	GNDP	Criteria i, iv. Note: As part of this we also reviewed Broadlan District Site Allocations DPD, May 2016 sit
site references)	Opportunities. Access off road network. Constraints. Removal of several mature trees, relocation of proposed footpath between Brook Road and Green Lane and removal of strategic landscaping enhancements. Would not be visible from a main road. Phasing of Link Road. Levels across the total site drop from the north to the south from approximately 24 AOD to 17.5 AOD ie a level difference of 6.5 metres, site shape, abuts housing development requiring screening and thus reducing actual site area.								reference TSA1 – Broadland Business Park and Growth Triangle Area Action Plan, July 2016 site references GT9 – Broadland Business Park (North Site); GT11 – Land east of Broadland Business Park; and GT21 – Land east of Broadland Business Park (North Site).	

Ben Burgess GNLP examination Matter 2 Issue 3 17 January 2022 Page 7 of 8



Broadland Gate (refer to right hand column for Growth Triangle AAP site references)	1.7ha (2 sites) Opportunities. Constraints. L			Criteria i. Note: Growth Triangle Area Action Plan, July 2016 site reference GT10.						
Long Stratton Area Action Pan, May 2016 site reference LNGS1. Further detailed in 2018/0111 which is currently awaiting determination.	E1 - 1.5ha E2 - 1.0ha E3 - 10.0ha Opportunities. Constraints. L bypass.					< or > 25- 30 mins hape and pos	Off site	Not Aware Timeframe for Bypass Unknown.	GNDP me of	Criteria iii, iv, v.
East of the A140/north of Norwich International Airport GNLP0466R/HNF2	35ha No 11.4 Yes Yes < or > 25- No Not Aware GNDP Opportunities. Existing employment site. Constraints. Tree belts and landscaping, airport protection zone, levels, adjacent uses.								GNDP ses.	Criteria iii, iv, v.
Land north of Norwich International Airport GNLP1061	46.50ha Opportunities Constraints. A				Yes	< or > 25- 30 mins	No	Not Aware	GNDP	Criteria iii, iv, v.
Former May Gurney site (part of GNLP Policy GNLP0360/3053/R10 East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area)	2.67ha Yes 1.3 Miles No Yes 25-35 No Available BB Opportunities. Previous planning approvals (residential and commercial); retention of current Ben Burgess site; Constraints. Access into Deal Ground and Utilities Site; East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area.									Note: Due to proximity, the current Ben Burgess site can be retained allowing for a smaller site size. Not favoured by GNLP team as would not accord with regeneration of the wider East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area.

Ben Burgess GNLP examination Matter 2 Issue 3 17 January 2022 Page 8 of 8



2.9 In relation to Table 2.0 it should be noted that relocation to Broadland Business Park, Broadland Gate, Longwater employment area, Easton/Honingham Thorpe, Long Stratton or Browick Road, Wymondham would require the relocation of the Beeston and Aylsham depots to completely new locations. A business restructure on this scale is not viable and even following this, customers in the prime agricultural land to the east, south and west of Norwich would no longer be served. John Deere is insistent that these areas be covered as they form part of the franchise area. Sites north of Norwich International Airport would not serve the south Norfolk market.

3 Modifications required to the GNLP

- 3.1 Ben Burgess is seeking changes to the plan which allocate a range of sites which address the specific locational requirements of the agri-tech/agri-food section, "specific requirement in the local market which affect the types and land needed" (NPPG paragraph 032 reference ID: 2a-032-2190722, revision date 22 07 2019). and ensure that significant weight be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity (business such as Ben Burgess are integral to the efficient and sustainable production of food in the assistance it provides to its farming customers), taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development (NPPF paragraph 81). The specific requirements are evidenced in the documents that form part of representation ID 24390. Table 2.0 in this statement updates information on sites allocated or proposed for allocation and should be read in conjunction with the four documents listed above.
- 3.2 Alternatively, wording inserted into Policy 6 The Economy might provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate needs not catered for by the allocations in the GNLP.
 - 3. Larger scale needs are addressed through the allocation of sufficient land to provide a choice and range of sites, including key strategic sites targeted at specific sectors. Due to the rural nature of the source of the agri-tech/agri-food sector, where specific requirements of businesses (regardless of size) operating in the sector are supported by evidence, these requirements will be given greater weight in the determination of planning applications. Investment strategies will ensure that a