



HEARING STATEMENT

Examination of the Greater Norwich Local Plan

On behalf of:
Orbit Homes

In respect of:
Matter 3 – Strategy for the Areas of Growth
Issue 4 – Village Clusters

Date:
January 2022

Document Reference:
GA/DJ/00320/S0003

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client Orbit Homes in respect of **Issue 4 – Village Clusters** of **Matter 3 – Strategy for the Areas of Growth** of the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions (Part 1) for the Examination of the Greater Norwich Local Plan (the 'GNLP').
- 1.2 The Statement is intended to assist the Inspector's consideration of the soundness of the Plan and will form the basis of our points for discussion at the Examination Hearing session on 3rd February 2021.

2.0 Questions

Question 4

Would Policy 7.4 encourage new dwellings to be constructed in locations that are poorly served by public transport, services and facilities? Would it be consistent with national policy in this regard?

- 2.1 The rural nature of the village clusters and the high number of allocations proposed means that the policy would encourage new dwellings to be constructed in locations that are poorly served by public transport, services and facilities. We do not consider this to be consistent with national policy, as whilst NPPF paragraph 79 encourages housing growth in rural areas where it is needed to support local services, we consider the scale of growth proposed in the village clusters to go beyond what is necessary in this regard. This is demonstrated by the Topic Paper on Policy 7.14 (Ref: D3.12) which clearly sets out that the ability of local schools to grow has been a key consideration in setting the level of growth in these settlements (paragraph 32). If a school were struggling for numbers and threatened with closure it would make sense to direct growth to its village cluster, but if it would have to grow to accommodate the proposed growth, this clearly indicates that the level of growth is above what is necessary and therefore contrary to national policy.
- 2.2 **Recommendation:** Reduce the level of growth proposed in the village clusters and allocate additional sites to the main towns where it can be sustainably accommodated and where a comparatively low proportion of growth is proposed.

Question 7.

Is Policy 7.4 otherwise justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

- 2.3 No. See previous representations.