

## Thursday 3 Feb – Matter 3: Strategy for the Areas of Growth

### Issue 5: Small scale windfall housing development

#### 6. Is the assumed contribution of 800 dwellings from this source justified?

##### ***Green Party response:***

Doing the sums, it seems the figure of 800 dwellings from small scale windfall development has assumed that all the parishes will fulfil the maximum number of houses for small parishes (3 houses each) and larger parishes (5 houses each) in both Broadland and South Norfolk:

53 small parishes x 3 = 159 dwellings

128 larger parishes x 5 = 640 dwellings

Total: 799 dwellings

It seems unlikely there will be such an even distribution of developments across parishes which will fulfil the expected allocation of housing within the lifetime of the plan. What is not clear from the plan is the type of housing to be encouraged in the parishes, apart from a small number of self and custom build.

The key question is what housing is really needed in the more rural parishes?

What is clear from parish council meetings and evidence in the plan regarding the numbers of young people in shared accommodation, often living with parents, is that social housing and affordable accommodation is desperately needed for young families wishing to remain in the communities in which they have grown up and have family ties. This is about respecting and retaining viable local community and family links.

The drawbacks of creeping numbers of second homes in Norfolk, especially in neighbouring North Norfolk, is now well-known. Purchased by absent owners, second homes are often empty during the winter and only occupied during the weekends, if that, and summer holiday periods. Purchasers of second homes price out local people who have to look elsewhere for rented accommodation fracturing rural communities contributing to social breakdown.

To add to this totally unsatisfactory situation, Covid-related urban flight to the countryside results in further rural housing being snapped up by home workers seeking a rural location. Local residents cannot compete with the resulting upward pressure on house prices.

[The Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2020-25](#) already states meeting the delivery target for affordable homes will remain a challenge. **“It has proved necessary to reduce the level of affordable housing secured on some sites to ensure developments are viable”**. Viability assessments submitted by developers are scrutinised to ensure that development meets the affordable housing target **“as far as possible”**. The strategy comments “the GNLP will allocate sites to deliver the

required housing numbers, and will have an affordable housing requirement; however, **there will be a delay before the affordable homes are completed.**”

It appears there are real fears that affordable housing cannot be delivered in sufficient numbers at exactly the time they are desperately needed.

The plan, therefore, needs to address the issue of the lack of social rented housing and affordable homes in rural villages to support social cohesion and maintain viable rural communities. Allied to this is the wider complementary issue of ensuring adequate and sufficient public transport is available for rural villages to allow viable sustainable communities.

We contend, therefore, small scale windfall development of community-led affordable housing in the numbers planned is justifiable and should be more pro-actively encouraged by adding to the bullet points in Policy 7.5 as follows:

Small scale residential development will be permitted adjacent to a development boundary or on sites within or adjacent to a recognisable group of dwellings where:

- The proposal supports the provision of a mix of community-led affordable housing for rental and home ownership.