

GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION HEARING STATEMENT

Quality Assurance

Site name:	Greater Norwich Local Plan Examination Taverham, Land off Beech Avenue
Client name:	Abel Homes Ltd
Type of report:	Hearing Statement
Prepared by:	Iain Hill MSc DipTP MRPI
Signed	
Date	10 th February 2022
Reviewed by:	Sarah Hornbrook MA(Cantab) MSc MRTPI
Signed	
Date	10 th February 2022



Background

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared by Bidwells LLP on behalf of Abel Homes Ltd (ID:24097) in support of representations made to the Greater Norwich Local Plan.
- 1.2 This Statement seeks to address Matter 10 Housing and mixed-use allocations - new sites without planning permission that are allocated for less than 500 dwellings, with specific regard to the following site which is being promoted by Abel Homes Ltd:
- e. Land off Beech Avenue, Taverham (GNLP0159R);

Response to Inspector's Questions

Matter 10 asks are the proposed allocations listed below soundly based. In particular:

Is the allocation justified and is it supported by the evidence?

- 1.3 The allocation of land at Beech Avenue, Taverham (GNLP0159R) is considered to be fully justified and supported by evidence.
- 1.4 As demonstrated in the Norwich & Urban Fringe Assessments (Taverham & Ringland Booklet), the site has been selected as a suitable site following a rigorous and robust assessment, which includes an assessment of reasonable alternatives.
- 1.5 As detailed in the representations submitted to the Regulation 19 Publication on behalf of Abel Homes Ltd (ID:24097), the site is located on the edge of Taverham, which is identified in the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan as a sustainable location for development, and immediately adjacent to a development site known as Taursham Park, currently being developed by Abel Homes Ltd. Furthermore, based on the evidence provided within the representations, the proposed allocation is, subject to alterations to the red line boundary, clearly suitable, available, achievable and viable, and is deliverable within the first five years of the plan period.
- 1.6 The Norwich & Urban Fringe Assessments (Taverham & Ringland Booklet), and aforementioned representation demonstrate that there are no constraints that would affect the suitability of the site for residential development that cannot be addressed by appropriate mitigation and, therefore, that the allocation is appropriate and supported by evidence.

Have the environmental and other constraints to development and the implications for infrastructure been properly assessed and, where necessary, can appropriate mitigation be achieved?

- 1.7 The Norwich & Urban Fringe Assessments (Taverham & Ringland Booklet) which includes a summary of the HELAA, details how a range of potential environmental and other constraints, including flood risk, heritage and landscape and highways, were initially considered in order to identify 'reasonable alternative' sites.
- 1.8 The Sustainability Assessment referenced in the Norwich & Urban Fringe Assessments (Taverham & Ringland Booklet) has adopted a scoring system and assessment narrative to assess the performance of each reasonable alternative site and, where appropriate, identify

appropriate mitigation. As part of this process, discussions have been held with key consultees, notably the highway authority, children's services, the LLFA and the Council's Development Management Team. As a result of this considered assessment process, Preferred Sites have been identified and sites allocated.

1.9 In addition, the representations submitted to the Regulation 19 Publication on behalf of Abel Homes Ltd (ID:24097) are informed by a substantial amount of technical evidence demonstrating the suitability of the site, having regard to both potential constraints and the ability to implement mitigation required by draft Policy GNLP0159R. More specifically, the representations are supported by an Indicative Masterplan which demonstrates that the site can be developed to provide 25 dwellings (based on the proposed increase in the site area), having regard to issues, including ecology and trees, and flood risk and surface water drainage.

1.10 On this basis, it is evident the potential constraints to development on the site have been fully considered and that mitigation required by Policy GNLP0125R can be achieved.

Has the availability, viability and deliverability of the site been robustly assessed?

1.11 Abel Homes have a proven track record of delivering high quality residential schemes in Norfolk. Abel Homes have signed a Statement of Common Ground with the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (D2.75), which confirms that having regard to the requirements of Policy GNLP0125R, the site is available, viable and deliverable.

1.12 Abel Homes have submitted an application for the development of the site to provide 25 dwellings (Broadland Council Ref: 20211698). No issues have been raised during the determination of the planning application that are considered to impact the availability, viability and deliverability of the site.

1.13 As the adjoining development, Taursham Park, is nearing completion it is the strong desire of Abel Homes Ltd to develop the allocated site at the earliest possible opportunity in order to ensure continuity between the two sites and minimise any impact of development on residents for as short a period as possible.

1.14 Accordingly, the availability, viability and deliverability of the site is considered to have been robustly assessed.

Does the evidence support the delivery of the housing units on the expected trajectory? (Document 3.2C).

1.15 The Statement of Common Ground between the Greater Norwich Development Partnership and Abel Homes (D2.129), includes commentary on the expected delivery of the site, which is consistent with Document 3.2C. Abel Homes remain committed to the delivery of the site in accordance with the commentary contained within the Statement of Common Ground. In accordance with the commentary provided in the Statement of Common Ground, Abel Homes have submitted a planning application and are confident the application will be determined in the near future.

Are the detailed policy requirements that would apply to the allocation justified and effective?

- 1.16 Abel Homes fully support the principle of the allocation of the site under Policy GNLP0125R for residential development. However, to ensure that the policy is both justified and effective alterations are proposed to the wording of the policy to reflect that the site can accommodate 25 dwellings.
- 1.17 Based on the identified site area of 0.97ha, the proposed density of development would equate to 12 dwellings per hectare. A figure that is substantially lower than the indicative minimum density set out in Policy 2, which seeks a minimum net density of 25 dwellings per hectare to make efficient use of land.
- 1.18 An Indicative Masterplan has been submitted as part of the representations to the Regulation 19 Publication. In addition, as referenced above, a planning application for the development of 25 dwellings is pending determination. The Indicative Masterplan and planning application has been informed by technical evidence, relating to ecology, trees, highways and surface water drainage.
- 1.19 To accommodate this increase in numbers, the area of the proposed allocation needs to be revised as detailed on the Indicative Masterplan / application that is pending determination. The increased area, which is the same ownership, would in the main be used to provide informal open space, as well as a link to the adjacent development in the form of a woodland walk, increasing the size of the wooded area being provided as part of the onsite open space.
- 1.20 By increasing the area of the proposed allocation, not only are significant community benefits provided, but it also avoids the creation of an area of “no-man’s” land between the proposed development and the neighbouring properties which would serve no benefit to the land owner or the community as a whole.
- 1.21 The revised area would result in a site area of approximately 2 hectares. This would give a net density of 18.72 dwellings per hectare

Suggested Revisions / Modifications

Policy GNLP0159R

Land off Beech Avenue, Taverham (2.00 ha) is allocated for residential development. The site will accommodate up to approximately 42 25 dwellings.

The development will be expected to address the following specific matters:

1. Vehicular and pedestrian access through the site to the east
2. Mitigation for impact on trees and woodland (established through an Arboricultural Impact Assessment)
3. Submission of ecological assessment to identify key ecological networks and habitats to be preserved and enhanced through the development
4. Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS16 applies, as this site is underlain by safeguarded minerals resources. The benefits of extracting the minerals, if feasible, will be taken into consideration

Key

Red text – Proposed Amendments

Strikethrough – Proposed Text to be Removed

