

GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION HEARING STATEMENT

Quality Assurance

Site name:	Greater Norwich Local Plan Examination Horsham St Faith
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: 24096) 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:
- q. Land to the west of West Lane, Horsham St Faith (GNLP0125R)

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 to the west of West Lane, Horsham St Faith (GNLP0125R) is considered to be fully justified and supported by evidence.
- 1.4 As demonstrated in the Village Clusters – Broadland Assessment Booklets (Horsham St Faith 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:24096), the site is located on the edge of Horsham St Faith, which is identified in the draft Greater Norwich Local Plan as a sustainable location for development. Furthermore, based on the evidence provided within the representations, the proposed allocation is clearly suitable, available, achievable and viable, and is deliverable within the first five years of the plan period.
- 1.6 The Village Clusters – Broadland Assessment Booklets (Horsham St Faith 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 Village Clusters – Broadland Assessment Booklets (Horsham St Faith), 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 within The Village Clusters – Broadland Assessment Booklets (Horsham St Faith 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:24096) 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 GNLP0125R. More specifically, the representations are supported by an Indicative Masterplan which demonstrates that the site can be developed to provide at least 50 dwellings, having regard to a range of issues, heritage assets, access requirements, including safe pedestrian access to the school, and flood risk and surface water drainage.
- 1.10 In terms of safe pedestrian access to the site, representations submitted to the Regulation 19 Publication clearly demonstrate that it is possible to provide a safe pedestrian route between the site and the primary school. The works would comprise a minor decrease in the radius of junctions between West Lane and Church Street and Church Street and Back Street, as well as the provision of tactile paving at various crossing points
- 1.11 On this basis, it is evident that 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?

- 1.12 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 (D2.129), which confirms that having regard to the requirements of Policy GNLP0125R and other plan policies, the site is available, viable and deliverable.
- 1.13 It is the intention of Abel Homes Ltd to submit a Planning Application for the site as soon as possible following the adoption of the GNLP.
- 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 and within Document 3.2C.

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

- 1.16 Abel Homes fully support the allocation of the site under Policy GNLP0125R for residential development. As referenced above, the representations submitted to the Regulation 19

Publication on behalf of Abel Homes Ltd (ID: 24096) are supported by an Indicative Masterplan which demonstrates that the site can be developed in accordance with the detailed requirements of Policy GNLP0125R.

- 1.17 However, to ensure that the policy is both justified and effective, minor alterations are proposed to the wording of policy.
- 1.18 To ensure the policy is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan, it is recommended that rather than approximately 50 homes, the policy refers to at least 50 homes. Based on 50 dwellings and the preferred allocation's site area of 2.31 ha, the density of the development equates to 25 dwellings per hectare.
- 1.19 Criterion 1 of the policy requires the provision of frontage footways and carriageway widening. Based on the work undertaken to inform the representations submitted to the Regulation 19 Publication it may not be possible to provide a frontage footway that meets highway standards without resulting in the loss of trees; a position recognised by NCC Highways. Accordingly, as per the suggestion from NCC Highways (see Appendix 3 of Regulation 19 Publication representation), it is proposed that Criterion 1 of the policy is revised to state that frontage footways will be required, unless it can demonstrated that it is neither practical or feasible.
- 1.20 From reviewing Appendix 11b Reg 19 Sites reps summaries & responses (A8.20), it is evident that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership have no objection to these proposed changes.
- 1.21 It is noted from the above referenced document that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership have recognised following discussions with Norfolk County Council that the requirement within the policy to provide two points of access was added in error and can be removed.

Suggested Revisions / Modifications

Policy GNLP0125R

Land to the west of West Lane, Horsham St Faith (approx. 2.31ha) is allocated for residential development. The site is likely to accommodate ~~approximately~~ at least 50 homes.

More homes may be accommodated, subject to an acceptable design and layout, as well as infrastructure constraints.

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

1. Provision of frontage footways ~~and carriageway widening~~ **unless it can be demonstrated it is not practical or feasible.**
2. Implementation of any improvements required to the walking route to school, particularly at junctions en-route.
- ~~3. Provision of two vehicular point of access.~~
3. Any development must conserve and enhance the significance of the grade I listed Church of St Mary and St Andrew, the scheduled monument St Faith Priory and the conservation area, including any contribution made to that significance by setting. This includes but is not limited to a sensitive design and layout. Due to the sensitivities of this site a Heritage Impact Assessment will be required.

Key

Red text – Proposed Amendments

Strikethrough – Proposed Text to be RemovedSECTION BREAK – DO NOT DELETE

