

# **GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION**

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

## **Matter 9 – Residential based allocations**

### **Issue 1 - Anglia Square (Ref GNLP0506)**

#### **Inspector Question 1**

#### **Further Statement by The Norwich Society**

##### **Our Regulation 19 Response**

In relation to Anglia Square, the Norwich Society made the following comment in our response:

*"The Norwich Society welcomes the Plan's adoption of a substantially reduced quantum of housing for Anglia Square, compared to that proposed by Weston Homes and rejected by the Secretary of State.*

*Taken together with the other site proposals in the Plan, this amply demonstrates that it is possible to achieve sufficient housing supply, and thus a sound development plan for Greater Norwich as a whole, without recourse to the tower block and other harmful features of the Weston Homes scheme. It also demonstrates that such harms will be both unnecessary and avoidable in any future scheme that the developer brings forward.*

*We broadly agree with site-specific requirements proposed for this site. We feel that development "in the region of" 800 homes might prove to be possible, but this would need to be objectively tested for compatibility with other site-specific, development management and NPPF Policies, including viability.*

*The Society supported the Ash Sakula alternative development at the Anglia Square public inquiry and would still commend aspects of this approach to the City Council in its future negotiations with the developer”.*

### **Inspector Question**

**Is the proposed site allocation soundly based? In particular:**

- 1. Is an assumed site capacity of 800 dwellings justified? How does this relate to the recent refusal of planning permission by the Secretary of state for a higher density mixed use scheme (Ref APP/G2625/V/19/3225505)?**

We believe the assumed capacity is soundly based.

The ultimate capacity of the Anglia Square site will only be finally established through the development management process where the detailed impact of specific design approaches on issues such as heritage assets and residential amenity, can be fully judged.

At this stage the Norwich Society believes that development “in the region of” 800 homes is a reasonable starting assumption, given the scale of the site and the valuable experience gained from past development schemes.

A development which (inter alia) proposed up to 1250 homes was refused by the Secretary of State in 2020 for multiple reasons, including its heritage impacts and concerns about the quality of the residential environment that would arise.

Alternative proposals were put to the public inquiry by Historic England, based on a master plan prepared by Ash Sakula. These proposed a total of 595 homes. This scheme satisfactorily addressed the issues raised by the site, but its viability was challenged by the landowner / developer.

The Society is currently participating in pre-application consultations on a Weston Homes scheme which is seeking to achieve 1,100 homes at Anglia Square. It appears that Weston Homes is intent on submitting an application on that basis at the end of March, but there are clearly continuing concerns that have been raised by a range of parties about the

various impacts that this scale of development would cause. This matter will be resolved through the development management process.

As things stand, there are no grounds for concluding that Anglia Square should be set to deliver more than the contribution currently allocated to it in the GNLP. The Norwich Society therefore supports the stance which the GNLP has adopted.