

Greater Norwich Local Plan – Regulation 18 consultation

Land at Station Road, Pulham St Mary

representations on behalf of Mr & Mrs J Burridge

March 2018

Background

1. Brown & Co act for the landowners, Mr & Mrs J Burrige, in relation to land at Station Road, Pulham St Mary.
2. The following comments are submitted in support of the suggested allocation of the land at Station Road (ref GNDP0430) for housing.
3. It is noted that the site is classified as being suitable for housing development in the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) 2017. However, a number of technical issues are identified as potential constraints on development, and these issues are addressed below.

Access to services

4. Pulham St Mary is identified in the current Joint Core Strategy as a Service Village. It benefits from a post office and shop, community centre, church and children's play area (see below). In addition to providing a community venue, the Pennoyer Centre provides a café, business meeting space, training courses and social events. The village centre is approximately 380 metres from the proposed development site, and would be readily accessible from it on foot or by bicycle.



5. A number of bus services operate on weekdays and Saturdays through the village, providing links to Norwich, Diss, Pulham Market, Long Stratton and Harleston (Konectbus service 83, Semmence & Co service 584 and Simonds service 40). The nearest bus stops to the site are located around 400 metres away in the village centre.
6. Pulham Market is located a short distance to the west of Pulham St Mary and provides a range of other local services, including a primary school, doctors surgery, public houses, shops and church. A dedicated footway/cycleway along Norwich Road provides a safe link between the two villages. Pulham Market Primary School is around 1.7km away from the proposed site, within the maximum recommended walking distance of 2km.
7. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal development would benefit from good access to local services, and would accord with local and national planning policies which indicate that to

promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Given their accessibility, existing local businesses and services would be likely to derive support from the development due to the addition to the local economy of the spending power of new residents. In these respects, the proposal would support the social and economic dimensions of sustainability as defined in the NPPF.

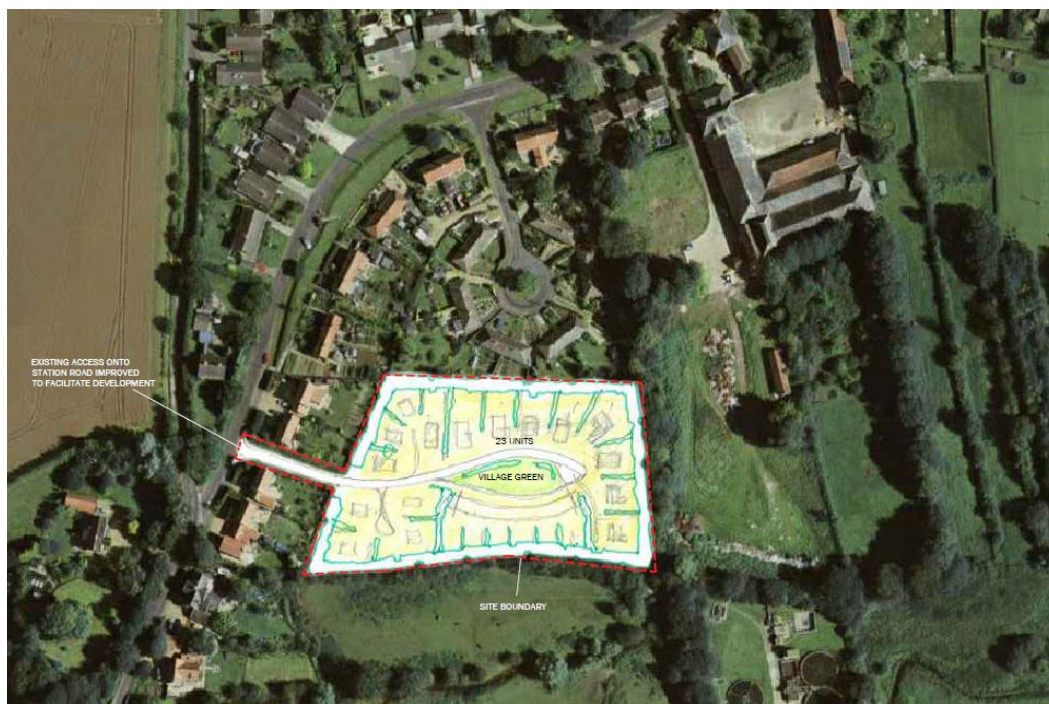
8. It is acknowledged that due to the site's rural location, residents of the proposed development would be reliant to a degree on car travel for their main shopping and leisure trips. However, a number of sustainable transport options would nonetheless be available to access local services, including walking, cycling and public transport.

Local character

9. The land proposed for development comprises an open field located on the southern edge of the village, but is well-contained visually by existing housing to the north and west and by established boundary hedges and trees elsewhere. From Station Road, views of the proposed houses would be limited to glimpsed views along the new access, whilst from Dirty Lane to the south, the site would be screened from view by a series of established hedgerows. Consequently, whilst the proposal would inevitably result in a loss of openness, its impact on the landscape setting of the village and the character of the area generally would be limited.

10. The established pattern of development in the vicinity is mixed, but is made up predominantly of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows set in good sizes plots. Historically, development has extended south-westwards from the village centre along Station Road in a broadly linear form. However, this pattern of development of building has been consolidated by development in depth behind frontage properties in a several places, including immediately to the north of the site where bungalows are arranged in circular fashion in a short cul-de-sac, and at the Old Maltings just to the north-east.

11. As demonstrated by the submitted concept layout (see below), the site could be developed in a way that would be consistent with the surrounding pattern of development and so would not appear out of place. The density of development envisaged of around 25DPH would also be compatible with its surroundings and would enable the relatively spacious character of the area to be maintained.



Highway safety

12. Access to the site is available directly off Station Road between existing houses (Rosedial House and The Hawthorns). It is proposed that a new access road would be constructed here in accordance with relevant highway standards. Suitable provision would also be made for pedestrian movement along Station Road. Highway consultants are being instructed to design appropriate an appropriate access, and further technical information to support the proposal will be provided as soon as it is available.

13. In the meantime, it is noted that Station Road provides a direct link to the village centre and is constructed to a good standard, providing for two-way traffic and benefitting from street lighting. The road is subject to 30mph speed limit. Good visibility would be available from the proposed access onto Station Road in both directions. Existing footways stop short of the proposed site entrance, but there are wide highway verges along this section of Station Road. These verges currently provide safe refuge for pedestrians and would in the future facilitate the construction of any necessary new footway links to serve the proposed development.

Heritage assets

14. The southern and eastern boundaries of the site proposed for development adjoin the Pulham St Mary Conservation Area. The Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the village, together with a broad swathe of farmland on its southern fringe. Only limited views of the development would be available from the Conservation Area due to the screening effects of boundary hedges and hedges. It is also envisaged that the proposed houses would be well back from these boundaries, which would diminish their visual impact. Where visible the proposed development would be seen against the backdrop of existing housing to the north and west, and would appear as a natural rounding-off of this part of the village .

15. There is only one listed building in the vicinity of the site, The White House, which is located around 100 metres away to the south-west on the opposite side of Station Road. The significance of this Grade II listed timber framed house appears to derive principally from its architectural form/details and historic fabric, together with its setting in grounds on the edge of the village. Given its separation from the site and the screening effects of intervening houses and vegetation, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a material impact on the setting of this listed building.

Flooding

16. Whilst a small area of the site adjacent to the southern boundary is at risk of fluvial and surface water flooding, the majority of the site falls with Flood Risk Zone 1 (low risk). The proposed development would be located on higher ground away from any flood risk areas. Further technical work, including a site-specific flood risk assessment, is being commissioned to demonstrate that the proposed development would not be a risk of flooding or be likely to result in an increased flood risk elsewhere in the locality. This will submitted in support of the proposed development as soon as possible.

Proximity to sewage works

17. It is noted that a sewage treatment works (STW) is located to the south-east of the site on land off Dirty Lane. To address this issue an Odour Assessment is being commissioned to inform the form and layout of the proposed development. Appropriate separation distances will be provided between proposed houses and the STW to ensure that future residents enjoy a good standard of amenity.

Ecology

18. An Ecological Assessment¹ of the site has been carried out (copy attached), which found that the development of the site would be unlikely to impact on any designated sites, and that the development site itself lacks any features of note, with the exception of boundary hedgerows which would be retained. For the protected species scoped-in as potentially present (including breeding birds, hedgehogs and invertebrates), it was concluded that, due to the lack of scarce or specialist resources within the site, any individuals present would be part of a larger local population.

Delivery of development

19. No significant infrastructure constraints have been identified to date which would be likely to delay or impede the development of the site for housing. The site is in a single ownership and no further land is needed to enable the land to be brought forward for development. The land is currently available for development and so, subject to approval being given, could delivery housing in the short term.

Benefits of development

20. The proposed development would make a positive contribution to the supply of housing in the area. The proposal would also add to the range of housing sites available in the locality, providing flexibility and a wider choice of development opportunities to the market, and thus strengthening the local supply of housing land.

21. Existing local businesses and services would be likely to derive support from the development due to the addition to the local economy of the spending power of new residents, given their accessibility from the site. The construction of the development would also provide some economic benefits, albeit temporary. New residents would also add to the vitality of the local community.

22. Additionally it is considered that Pulham St Mary would represent a sustainable location for development of the modest scale envisaged, given the range of local services available and the range of sustainable transport options available. The proposal would also be consistent with the pattern and character of development in the area.

23. In these respects, the proposal would support the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability, as defined in the NPPF. It would also be consistent with the various growth options proposed in the draft Local Plan, including dispersal, dispersal plus settlement and dispersal plus urban growth.

¹ Ecological Assessment, Hopkins Ecology, March 2018.