

GNLP Regulation 18 Consultation Response

GNLP0311 – Land to the south of Burgh Road, Aylsham

On behalf of Kier Living Eastern, we strongly recommend that site GNLP0311, Land to the south of Burgh Road, Aylsham, should be allocated for residential development, comprising approximately 250 homes with associated infrastructure, open space and landscaping. The site is considered to be entirely deliverable, and capable of making a significant contribution towards satisfying the Councils' housing needs during the period to 2036.

Growth within the Main Towns will occur, albeit at differing scales, under all of the six potential Growth Options, as these are the most sustainable locations for further growth outside Norwich. Given that there is currently no preferred direction in terms of the Growth Options, it is considered that the key focus for the GNLP should be to identify sites that are deliverable, and represent the most sustainable form of development. This exercise will in itself identify the most appropriate strategy for Growth, which is likely to be a hybrid of the six options currently identified.

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) definition of 'deliverable', set out in footnote 11 to paragraph 47, Site GNLP0311 represents a suitable location for development now, is available immediately, is achievable with a realistic prospect of housing being delivered on the site, and is viable. These points are addressed in further detail below. A Concept Masterplan has been prepared by CSA environmental in support of this Representation, which demonstrates how development could come forward. In addition, technical evidence in relation to access, drainage, utilities, ground conditions, ecology and archaeology has been prepared, and is also submitted alongside this Representation.

Assessment of Deliverability

Suitable

The site is located on the south-eastern edge of Aylsham, one of the four Main Towns within the Greater Norwich area. It is recognised within the current Joint Core Strategy as a highly sustainable location, with the fourth highest level of shops and services outside Norwich, and good public transport links to Norwich. It has experienced significant housing growth since 2008, and the Site Proposals Document recognises that there is continuing strong market interest. Historically, waste water disposal issues have been seen as a potential constraint to further development, but progress has been made on this issue, and as set out below, a suitable strategy to deal with additional foul water flows has been identified for the site. Consequently, it is considered that Aylsham should be a key focus for additional growth in the period to 2036. As one of the Main Towns, a proportion of the planned growth will need to be accommodated here, regardless of which Growth Option is ultimately selected.

The site is located adjacent to residential uses on its northern, western and southern boundaries, and represents the most logical extension to the town. It provides an opportunity to reinforce the existing boundary vegetation along the southern and eastern boundaries, providing a clear and defensible boundary to the town, within the natural boundary created by the A140 bypass. It is located within easy walking distance of the wide range of services and facilities on offer in the town centre, as well as public transport links and employment opportunities.

In terms of more detailed site-specific considerations, the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) identifies the site as a suitable location for residential development. It confirms through a 'Green' rating, that there are no constraints or impacts anticipated in relation to accessibility to services, utilities infrastructure, contamination and ground stability, market attractiveness, significant landscapes, townscapes, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic environment, open space and green infrastructure or compatibility with neighbouring uses. Issues which are given an 'Amber' rating, or specifically referred to within the text of the Site Proposals consultation document, including access, utilities capacity, flood risk and transport and roads are addressed in more detail below.

Access, Transport and Roads

A Transport Note has been prepared by Rossi Long Consulting, and is submitted in support of this Representation. This identifies that the most suitable location for access to the site would be directly onto Burgh Road, as shown on the Concept Masterplan. Rossi Long Consulting's Note confirms that adequate visibility is available and a detailed sketch is provided. Junction capacity assessments undertaken for the development on Buckenham Road indicate that a priority T-junction would be appropriate in terms of capacity in this location.

There is existing footpath provision on Burgh Road, which any development could link in to, as well as providing pedestrian/cycle links through to Rippingall Road to the west and the Bure Valley Walk to the south which would provide a direct route for non-motorised users to the Tesco superstore and the town centre facilities beyond.

In terms of the wider road network, a roundabout has recently been installed at the Burgh Road/A140 junction. This was designed and implemented to accommodate the development traffic associated with the residential dwellings under construction to the north of Burgh Road, as well as Broadland District Council's requirements for housing in Aylsham and the wider area. Consequently, it is considered that the HELAA conclusions regarding this junction are now out of date.

Utilities Capacity

Utilities records have been sought from all providers, and demonstrate that a full range of utilities are available in the locality, including electricity, gas, potable water and telecommunications.

The text of the Site Proposals Document, specifically para 4.123, indicates that the main concern in relation to utilities capacity is regarding waste water disposal. A Drainage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Anglian Water Services, which provides a recommendation for mitigation to ensure that development would not cause detriment to the capacity of the sewer system nor result in increased flood risk downstream. This would comprise installation of 194m³ of off-line storage at the proposed connection location in Burgh Road. This would, in part, be financed by developer contributions. Consequently, it is clear that waste water capacity should no longer be considered a constraint to further development in Aylsham and a deliverable solution exists which mitigates the impact of the development.

Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Screening Report has been prepared by Rossi Long Consulting and is submitted in support of this Representation. The Report confirms that the site is located within Flood Zone 1, and is therefore at low risk from fluvial flooding. However, a small part of the site is at high risk of surface water flooding, to a depth in excess of 900mm. This risk can be managed through appropriate masterplanning, ensuring that no dwellings are located within these areas, as demonstrated on the Concept Masterplan. There are, therefore, no flood risk related reasons why the site could not be delivered.

Other Matters

As outlined above, the HELAA gives a 'Green' rating to all other potential impacts/constraints. Further technical evidence has been obtained on a number of these points, which confirms the HELAA conclusion, and feeds into the Masterplan.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken by CSA environmental, which confirms that there are no overriding ecological constraints and, indeed, the development of the site would enable a range of ecological enhancement measures to be delivered which would be of benefit to local wildlife. The site is within 10km of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, but the Appraisal confirms that given the distance of the site from the SAC, development is very unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the qualifying features of the designation through water abstraction or any other means. Similarly, impacts on the nearby County Wildlife Site (Marriott's Way) can be minimised, through the provision of on-site public open space.

An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been prepared by CgMs, which confirms that there are no designated heritage assets within the site. There will be no adverse impact on the nearby Grade II Listed Building of Bure Valley Farmhouse, due to the screening provided by intervening shelter planting and the lack of any associative link between the Listed Building and the site itself. Small numbers of prehistoric, Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval finds are recorded as being found on the site. The finds are not indicative of any archaeological non-designated heritage asset within the site and the limited archaeological potential of the site does not suggest any reason to prohibit or constrain its allocation for residential development within the emerging GNLP.

A Desk Study Summary Investigation relating to ground conditions has been prepared by Rossi Long Consulting, which advises that the site does not have any clearly identifiable significant former industrial use and there are no related key contaminants. There are only limited plausible sources of low level contamination on site and no identified significant sources of contamination off-site. There are no concerns raised regarding ground stability.

In conclusion, therefore, it is clear from the above that the site is entirely suitable for residential and associated development. The Concept Masterplan demonstrates that the site could be developed to accommodate approximately 250 dwellings, together with open space. The technical evidence, outlined above and submitted alongside this Representation, demonstrates that there are no constraints to the delivery of the site.

Available

The site is available for development immediately, and is currently under option to Kier Living Ltd. It is anticipated that it would take up to 5 years to complete the proposed development.

Achievable

It is considered that residential development of the site in the short-term is entirely achievable. As detailed above, the site is currently under option to Kier Living Ltd, and an outline planning application could be brought forward quickly. As detailed above, there are no known constraints to delivery of the site, and, as detailed below, residential development of approximately 250 dwellings is considered viable at this stage.

Viable

Development of the site for residential purposes is considered viable, taking into consideration the various policy requirements in relation to matters such as affordable housing provision and CIL contributions. There are no known abnormal costs that would prejudice the viability of the site.

Summary

As outlined above, the site is suitable, available, achievable and viable, and is therefore deliverable within the plan period. Development in this location would represent sustainable development, as defined within the National Planning Policy Framework. Aylsham, as a Main Town, with the fourth highest level of shops and services outside Norwich, is already acknowledged as a highly sustainable location for residential

growth, as evidenced through the significant quantum of development that has been approved in the last decade, and the foregoing text demonstrates that this specific site is a suitable location for further development in all respects.

Economically, residential development here in the plan period would help sustain and enhance local services and facilities, and would also provide employment opportunities during the construction period.

Socially, the scale of development envisaged is such that it will enable the creation of a strong, vibrant and healthy community, with easy access to existing and planned local services and facilities, as well as on-site open space. A wide mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures will be provided to meet local needs, and CIL payments will ensure the provision of the necessary health and cultural facilities. The site is located in close proximity to established communities in Aylsham, which should assist in achieving social integration between the existing and new residents.

Environmentally, the site is located close to a range of services and facilities, and enjoys good access to sustainable transport options providing access to the extensive array of facilities and services available within Norwich and further afield. Residents will be able to meet their day-to-day needs easily and without the need to use their car, assisting in reducing pollution and minimising the contribution to climate change.

On this basis, the site should be taken forward as an allocation, and is capable of making an important contribution to the planned growth of the Greater Norwich Area in the period to 2036.