

29 February 2024

Mr David Reed
Planning Inspector
c/o Mrs Annette Feeney
North Norfolk Local Plan Examination Programme Officer
Sent via email

Dear Mr Reed,

NORTH NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION: ALLOCATION WEST OF NORTH WALSHAM

I refer to your letter of 19th February 2024 seeking confirmation and clarification with regard to various points relating to the allocation at Land West of North Walsham.

Through discussion with Bidwells, as lead agent for the Developer Consortium, the Council has provided a response below against each point raised:

1. ***'Bidwell's for the Consortium advised that the intention was for an outline application with supporting material to be submitted in summer 2024 with a prospective 18 month period for determination (end 2025) facilitated by a planning performance agreement with the Council. Please confirm.'***

Bidwells confirm that the consortium's intention remains to submit an outline planning application in summer 2024. An 18-month period has been assumed for the determination of the application i.e. the application will be determined by the end of 2025.

The Consortium and NNDC are currently in discussions in respect of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). It is agreed that an 18-month period for determination is reasonable.

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2. ***'Savills for the Consortium advised that a Financial Viability Assessment (FVA) had been prepared to demonstrate the viability and deliverability of the allocation and that the assumptions and conclusions made had been endorsed as realistic by the Council's consultant SMB Property Consultancy Ltd.'***

This is correct. The Council's viability consultant endorses the assumptions and conclusions of the Financial Viability Assessment and its overall conclusion that the allocation proposals are viable.

3. ***'The FVA assessed viability on a discounted cash flow basis with build costs and sales values as at 1 February 2024 on the premise that the scheme became live and definite on that date, i.e. outline permission was granted and development could then proceed. Mobilisation, preliminary works and opening up the site would then take two years with the first house completions nine months later. Please confirm.'***

The FVA does not allow for lead-in times for purchase and obtaining Outline and Reserved Matters approval. The assumed start date on site for the purposes of the FVA is therefore February 2024.

The FVA allows for a 26-month mobilisation period, because this is the period needed to deliver the Anglian Water Rising Main (26 months covers the full design and construction period). Work on the Rising Main is programmed to begin on receipt of the Outline Planning Permission (end 2025) with it expected to be fully delivered by early 2028, but this will not delay delivery of the first units on the site as recent discussions with Anglian Water have confirmed that it will be acceptable to deliver 420 dwellings on the site before the Rising Main needs to be in place. At the time that the FVA was prepared, Anglian Water's position had not been confirmed, so a 2-year mobilisation period was factored in for robustness.

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4. ***'It follows that with outline permission in place at end 2025, the two year set up period would run until end 2027 with first completions towards the end of 2028. The FVA then assumes completions at 72 pa (2 outlets with 3 completions pcm each). Please confirm.'***

As detailed above, whilst the FVA assumes a two-year lead-in period to deliver the Rising Main, this will not be necessary as there is capacity to accommodate 420 dwellings before the Rising Main is completed.

As set out in the Consortium's Hearing Statement (Response to Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions - [Examination Library](#) document **EH011 (e)(i)**), assuming outline planning permission is granted at the end of 2025, the intention would be to submit the first Reserved Matters (RM) application in early 2026; the application being worked up in parallel with the determination of the outline planning application. On the basis that the RM application and associated technical approvals are agreed by the end of 2026, it would enable work to start immediately thereafter. This would facilitate delivery of the first units in 2027.

The FVA assumes 3 completions per calendar month, across two outlets, per phase. Due to the varying size of the phases, there will be some months when more than two phases are active, and it is not therefore the case that this always equates to 6 completions per month and 72 dwellings per annum. The FVA assumes that 1807 dwellings, excluding specialist housing, will be delivered across a period of 18.5 years, an average of 98 dwellings per annum. In reality, the trajectory is not likely to be flat; there will be peaks and troughs in delivery rates, and the affordable housing is likely to be completed and handed over in tranches to a Housing Association at various intervals during the construction period. However, as set out in the Consortium's Hearing Statement, NNDC's assumption of 100 dwellings per year is considered to be a reasonable average.

'When are the elderly accommodation schemes assumed to be delivered?'

For the specialist housing, the FVA assumes that this will be delivered in serviced parcels and sold at the start, middle and end of the scheme, so within phases 1, 9 and 4. This differs from the trajectory approach, which is that 60 dwelling-equivalents will be delivered every third year. In reality, the nature of the specialist housing, together with its rate of delivery, will be determined by market and operator demand at the time. Although the Housing Trajectory differs slightly from the approach adopted in the FVA, it is considered a generally reasonable approach, as set out in the Consortium's Hearing Statement.

5. ***'The Western Link Road would be fully open to traffic when there are between about 440 to 600 dwelling completions, the precise trigger point to be agreed when detailed traffic modelling is available. Please confirm.'***

The precise trigger point will need to be agreed but is expected to be between around 440 to 600 units. This is factored into the FVA.

6. ***'About 2.5 ha of serviced land in an agreed location will be provided for a 2-form entry primary school when there are about 450 dwelling completions on the site, the precise trigger point to be agreed by the local education authority. Please confirm.'***

Agreed. The letter from Norfolk County Council (NCC) dated 27th February (see **Appendix 2** to this letter response) confirms that land for the primary school will be required at around 450 completions.

The letter also confirms that the Council will require land for a serviced site, as well as contributions towards education, including contributions towards the construction of the new primary school.

The FVA prepared by Savills makes allowance for both the provision of a service site, as well as financial contributions.

The exact requirement for financial contributions will be determined at the planning application stage, having regard to a range of factors, notably capacity within local schools at the time of the application.

'Please also provide a copy of the indicative Gantt chart referred to in Savills FVA summary letter dated 1 February 2024 to illustrate the assumed timetable.'

This is included as **Appendix 1** to this letter response.

'Please also confirm that the phasing plan referred to is that in Appendix C – AECOM North Walsham SUE – Indicative Transport Phasing Strategy dated December 2023.'

The consortium has confirmed that the phasing plan referred to is Appendix C, as detailed above.

'As also requested at the hearing, please submit when available a statement from the local education authority setting out the requirement for the development to make available a serviced area of land for use as a primary school, the approximate timing of this requirement in terms of phases or house

completions and confirmation as to whether or not a financial contribution towards construction costs will also be required.'

Please see **Appendix 2** to this letter response from the local education authority.

We trust that this response is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Mark Ashwell

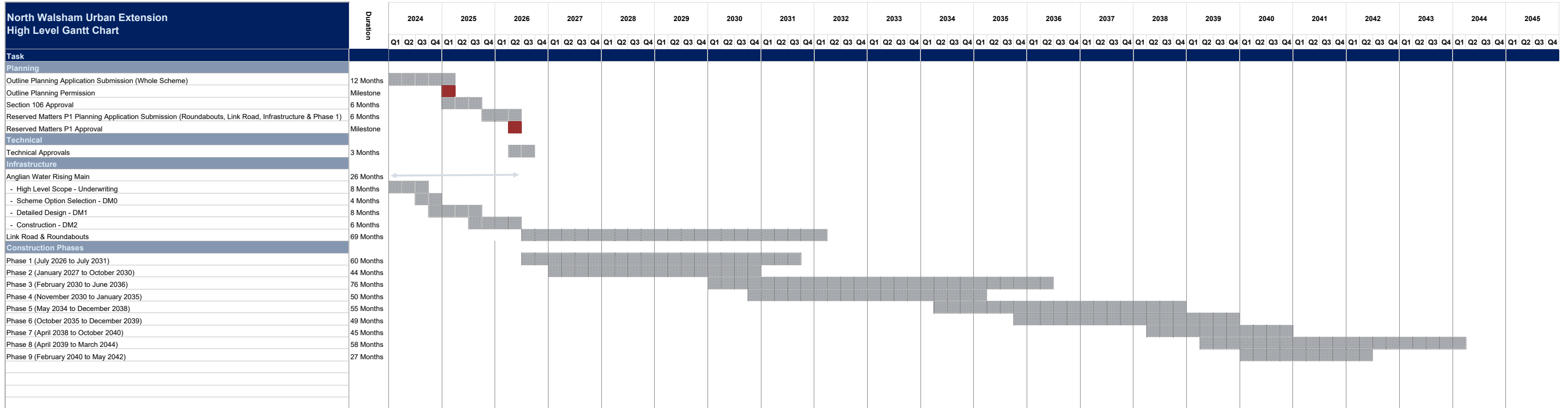
Planning Policy Manager

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Enclosures:

Appendix 1 - North Walsham Urban Extension High Level Gantt Chart

Appendix 2 - Norfolk County Council Children's Services response





Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council Children's Services response to NNDC Local Plan Inspectors Questions (dated 19 February 2024) 27 February 2024

Response to the Inspectors question point 6:

- 1.1. As per discussions with the consortium and North Norfolk District Council the land for the primary school has been discussed to be triggered at 450 completions, and this will need to be secured in a Section 106 (S106) Agreement.

Children's Services Statement regarding the requirement for land and contributions required as a result of North Walsham West

- 1.2. The County Council requires a serviced site for the primary school in a location agreed by the County Council in discussion with the consortium, the transfer of this land will need to be agreed in an S106 agreement.
- 1.3. The County Council has consistently set out that land for the primary school and contributions would be expected due to the number of children generated from this development, see appendices A and B for the responses to the 2021 North Walsham West Initial Consultation and the response to the 2023 Development Brief.
- 1.4. As per the County Councils [Planning Obligation Standards](#) contributions are likely to be sought to support the early education, secondary, special educational needs and disability, and contributions towards the construction of the primary school within this development.

North Walsham West – Initial Consultation (June 2021)

Norfolk County Council Response

21 June 2021

1. Introduction and over-arching strategic comments

- 1.1. The County Council (CC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Initial Consultation relating to the preparation of a Development Brief for the above Site. The officer-level comments below are made on a without prejudice basis and the County Council reserves the right to make further additional comments on any subsequent stages of the Development Brief and/or any application/s on the above site/s.
- 1.2. The County Council welcomes the draft Vision for North Walsham West, which is considered to be sustainable providing not just homes, but also: employment opportunities; open space; and the necessary supporting infrastructure and services. However, it is felt that the vision should also refer to the health benefits arising from good sustainable design and open space (see health comments below – Section 3).
- 1.3. The remainder of this note sets out more detailed comments in relation to the County Council's statutory roles and responsibilities:

2. Community Facilities and Infrastructure Delivery

- 2.1. The County welcomes the draft aims set out in the above consultation document. In particular there is support for the need for a new primary sector school accompanying the proposed development of 1,800 dwellings. This scale of growth cannot be accommodated within the existing primary sector schools in the town; and as such a new school will be required. Land will be needed for a new school for capacity of at least 2 forms of entry (420 places). This will require identifying a new school site in any Masterplan / Development Brief of around 2.5 ha. The site location will need to be agreed by the local education authority; and be fully serviced and accessible when transferred to the County Council ((trigger for transfer of the school site to the County Council to be agreed). The funding of the school will be expected to be made by the developer and secured through a S106 agreement; and this will include the free transfer of land for the school to the County Council.
- 2.2. In addition other community infrastructure will be required including improvements to the existing library facility. As with education provision this will need to be developer funded and secured through a S106 agreement.
- 2.3. Any developer contributions and/or planning conditions will need to accord with the County Council's most up to date Planning Obligations Standards (see link <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/planning-applications/planning-obligations>)
- 2.4. Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Stephen Faulkner (Principal Planner) stephen.faulkner@norfolk.gov.uk



Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council Comments on the: North Walsham West Draft Development Brief 27 October 2023

1. **Introduction and over-arching strategic comments**
 - 1.1. Norfolk County Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Initial Consultation relating to the preparation of a Development Brief for the above Site. The officer-level comments below are made on a without prejudice basis and the County Council reserves the right to make further additional comments on any subsequent stages of the Development Brief and/or any planning application/s on the above site.
 - 1.2. The County Council welcomes the draft Vision for North Walsham West, which is considered to be sustainable providing not just homes, but also employment opportunities, open space, the necessary supporting infrastructure, and services.
2. **Community Facilities and Infrastructure Delivery**
 - 2.1. The County welcomes the draft aims set out in the above consultation document. In particular there is support for the need for a new primary sector school accompanying the proposed development of 1,800 dwellings. This scale of growth cannot be accommodated within the existing primary sector schools in the town; and as such a new school will be required. Land will be needed for a new school for capacity of at least 2 forms of entry (2FE) (420 places). The County Council supports the proposal of a 2FE primary school within this site. The site location will need to be agreed by the local education authority; and be fully serviced and accessible when transferred to the County Council (trigger for transfer of the school site to the County Council to be agreed). The funding of the school will be expected from the developer and will be secured through a S106 agreement; and this will include the free transfer of land for the school to the County Council.
 - 2.2. In addition, other community infrastructure will be required including improvements to the existing library facility. As with education provision this will need to be developer funded and secured through a S106 agreement.
 - 2.3. Any developer contributions and/or planning conditions will need to accord with the County Council's [Planning Obligations Standards](#).
 - 2.4. Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Naomi Chamberlain (Senior Planner) at naomi.chamberlain@norfolk.gov.uk or call 01603 638422.