



# **MATTER 1 HEARING STATEMENT**

## **North Norfolk Local Plan Examination**

On behalf of:  
**D L Ritchie Will Trust**

Date:  
**January 2024**

Document Reference:  
**GA/DJ/01320/S0001**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of our client, D L Ritchie Will Trust, in response to the Matters, Issues and Questions for the North Norfolk Local Plan Examination. It is intended to assist the Inspector's consideration of the soundness of the Plan and will form the basis of our points for discussion at the examination hearing session. We have responded to question 1.12 on the plan period.

## 2.0 MATTER 1. PLAN PERIOD

### Question 1.12

**With adoption hopefully sometime during 2024, does the plan look ahead for a minimum 15-year period from adoption? (NPPF paragraph 22). If not, should the plan period be extended to 2039 or 2040? The implications of this would be discussed under other matters as appropriate. If so, should the base date of the plan be moved forward to 2019 or 2020 to give a 20 year plan period?**

- 2.1 In our representations to the Regulation 19 consultation we highlighted the issue that the plan would not look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption. At this time it was forecast that the plan would be adopted in mid-2023 and we therefore suggested that the plan period should be extended to at least 2038 (i.e. 15 years from 2023). It is now likely that the plan will not be adopted till late 2024 at the earliest and potentially in 2025. The best case scenario is therefore that the plan looks ahead for 11-12 years from the date of adoption. This would not accord with NPPF paragraph 22 and we consider that the plan is unsound as a result.
- 2.2 In order to make the plan sound **we consider that the plan period should be extended to 2040**. There is a risk that the plan will not be adopted until 2025 (given likely timescales for main modifications consultation, preparation of additional evidence, etc...) and if the plan period is only extended to 2039 there would therefore be a risk that the plan would still be contrary to NPPF paragraph 22. A 2040 end date would provide suitable flexibility to ensure that the plan can be found sound.
- 2.3 We didn't comment on the start date of the plan period in our Regulation 19 representations, but on reflection **we consider that moving the start date forward to 2020 would be appropriate**.