

NNDC Site Specific Proposals Examination Statement

Norwich Road, North Walsham

Day 6: North Walsham

Representor no: 148783

June 2010



Examination Statement: Representer No. 148783
Land at Norwich Road, North Walsham

BIDWELLS

Quality Assurance

Site name: Norwich Road, North Walsham

Client name: Hopkins Homes Ltd

Type of report: NNDC Examination of Site Specific Proposals: Examination Statement

Prepared by: Ray Houghton BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI



Signed

Date 30th June 2010

Reviewed by: Rebecca Rejzek BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI



Signed

Date 30th June 2010

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1 SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS

1.1 The Submitted DPD and accompanying update to the Proposals Map is considered sound against the PPS12 (para. 5.2) **JUSTIFIED** and **EFFECTIVE** soundness tests, expressed in the Inspector's Guidance Note for Participants as **Conformity, Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness** soundness test (section 5). The reasons for conformity are:

- Proposed allocations/designations at Norwich Road, North Walsham are in general conformity with the objectives of the Council's Core Strategy and vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy; and
- Proposed allocations/designations at Norwich Road, North Walsham are based on robust, up to date and credible evidence;
- Landowners are agreed to Hopkins Homes Ltd promoting this strategic site for the overall development proposed;
- The concept masterplan identifies all the requisite mix of uses throughout the development site as identified in Policy NW01, 04-07 and NW30 (paragraph 8.1.12) of the Site Specifics Proposals Draft Plan;
- A process of continual dialogue with North Norfolk District Council (NNDC), key stakeholders and landowners has cemented common interests and that these interests can now be represented as a unified solution in the form of the evolving concept masterplan;
- There are no known reasons why the mixed-use allocations on the site cannot be achieved within the plan period.

2 PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

- 2.1 This statement has been prepared in respect of the matters and issues raised by the Inspector at the Pre-examination Meeting held on 8th June 2010 into the North Norfolk District Council's Site Specific Proposals DPD, specifically referring to day 6 (North Walsham) of the draft examination programme.
- 2.2 This statement has been prepared by Bidwells LLP as agents of Hopkins Homes in addition to the representations made to the submission consultation in respect to the designation of land at Norwich Road, North Walsham namely NW01, NW04, NW05, NW06, NW07 and NW30 (the site).

3 RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S MATTERS

Are the individual housing, employment and open space allocations available, suitable and achievable? [Question IX]

- 3.1 Yes. The mix of land uses throughout the site will be delivered as part of a phased development with the expectation that Phase 1 will include the former HL Foods Canning site (NW01).
- 3.2 All the component land parcels are available and suitable for development. The factory buildings on NW01 have now been demolished and the site is currently being cleared in readiness for development. Sites NW04, NW05 and NW06 (east and west) are undeveloped and immediately available for development. Sites NW07 and NW30 together provide employment for 58 staff and these jobs will be safeguarded whether as part of retained and additional or replacement premises.
- 3.3 The site is well related to the town centre and other facilities including the town's railway station, local schools and the Victory leisure centre. The site is well located for the promotion of non-car based travel with access improvements anticipated for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.4 The North Norfolk Open Space and Recreation Study (Atkins, 2006) identifies a shortfall in open space provision in this part of the town. The 4 hectares proposed will address this shortfall and will be made accessible for residents of the surrounding area.

Is there reasonable prospect of the remaining allocations being developed within 15 years? [Question X]

- 3.5 Yes. The land is in several ownerships where there is consensus to deliver development as identified in the DPD. It is anticipated that an outline application for NW01 will be submitted as part of an approved masterplan by autumn 2010. The masterplan will identify the phasing of development throughout the site including key trigger points such as the construction of the proposed second vehicular access off Norwich Road and other infrastructure as the development progresses.
- 3.6 The O.S. base plan identifies the site as comprising 25 hectares (net) not the 20 hectare approximation originally identified by NNDC. There is therefore every reasonable prospect that the mix of uses including 5 hectares of serviced employment and 4 hectares of open space can be delivered with the 400 dwellings considered to be a minimum. Assuming a conservative build rate of 50 residential units being constructed per year it is reasonable to

assume that upwards of 500 dwellings could be developed within the next 10 to 15 years including the phased delivery of the other land use allocations.

Are there other allocations appropriate and deliverable and consistent with PPS4? If not, why not? [Question XI]

- 3.7 We do not consider the Norwich Road site to be in 'competition' with the other preferred sites. The quantum of development identified in the Core Strategy Policy SS10 (North Walsham) is achievable and deliverable across the range of sites identified as preferred locations. The employment allocation as part of the Norwich Road provision is consistent with PPS4 and therefore the SSP is sound in this regard.

Are the allocations 'sustainable'? [Question XII]

- 3.8 NNDC's own sustainability assessment identifies the site as highly sustainable in North Walsham for development. We would add further that since the appraisal was conducted the landowners have agreed to Hopkins Homes to bring forward the overall site for mixed-use development. This represents a significant advancement to the sustainable delivery of the site and its component mixed use allocation. Sites considered in isolation might have previously scored a lower rating, for example, edge of settlement connectivity than is now the case given that all component land parcels should be considered as one developable area.
- 3.9 The component sites achieve an average sustainability score of 7.8 with the highest being 11 and the lowest 6 and therefore compare very favourably to other sites.

Are any of the allocations subject to any demonstrable and over-riding infrastructure constraints which cannot be overcome by planning conditions and/or obligations [Question XIII]

- 3.10 There are no such constraints relating to NW01, Nw04-07 and NW30.
- 3.11 In March 2010 NNDC conducted a statutory stakeholder consultation to the proposed allocation of the site. No formal objection was raised by any stakeholder including those from Anglian Water (flood risk, foul water drainage, pollution control, water resources), National Grid, Natural England, Norfolk County Council (highways and archaeology), the Town Council and neighbouring Parish Councils, Health and Safety Executive or NNDC's own internal departments.

Are any of the allocations unsuitable by reason of any environmental or residential amenity issues/objections? [Question XIV]

- 3.12 None relating to NW01, NW04-07 and NW30. The proposed concept masterplan works within the existing landscape features and visually contains the development and so limits its visual and environmental impact. There are no amenity issues which cannot be resolved through the normal planning application process.

Are there any other good reasons ... why the draft allocations might be considered 'unsound'? [Question XV]

- 3.13 The Norwich Road is clearly the most preferable in North Walsham to deliver an appropriate mix and quantum of development. It is considered that the draft allocations accord with the test of soundness (section 5) in terms of **Conformity, Coherence, Consistency and Effectiveness**.

Is any 'unsoundness' overcome by the NNDC's schedules of Key Changes and Minor Modifications? [Question XVII]

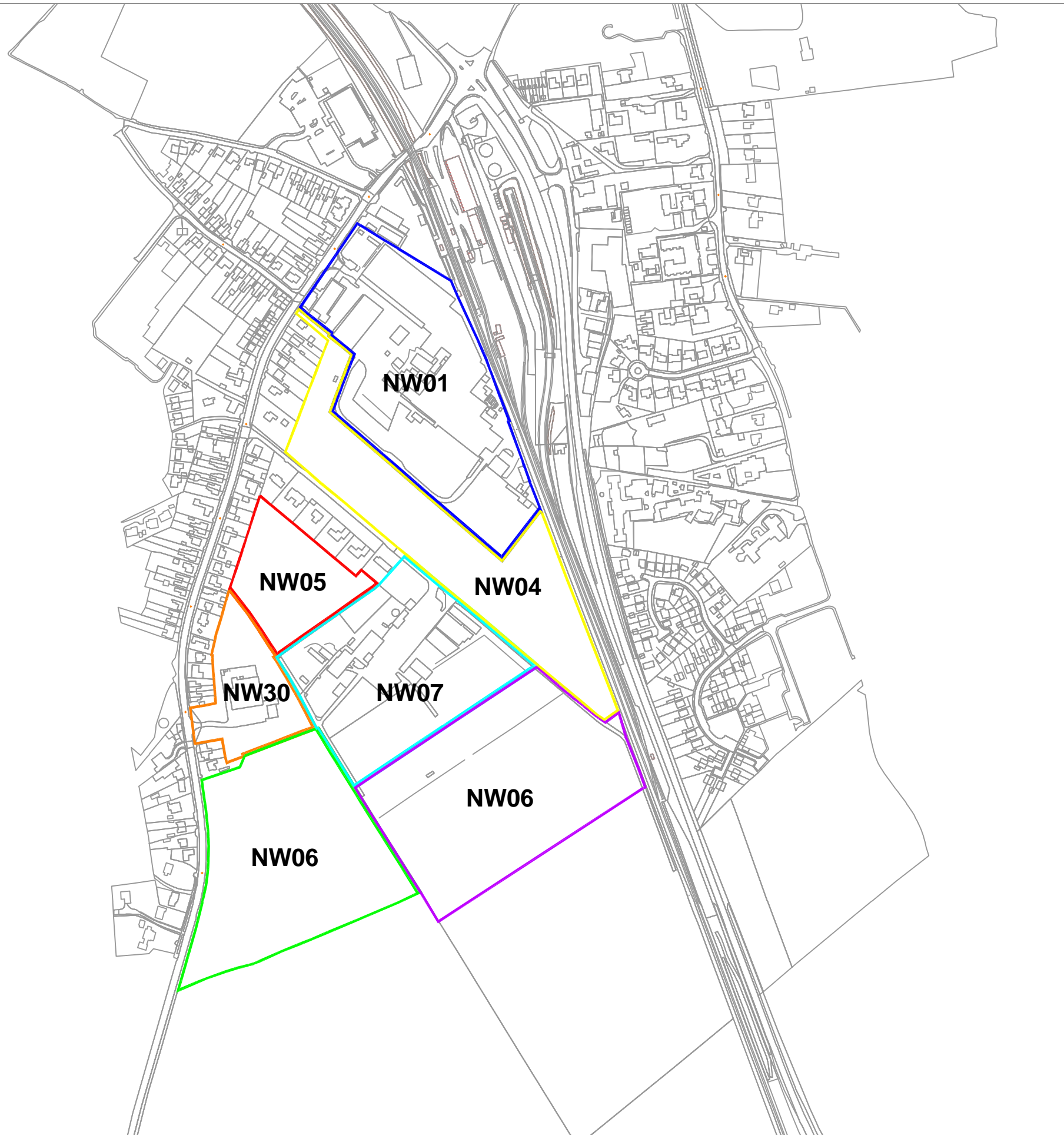
- 3.14 Generally the draft allocations, as modified, are considered acceptable. The Policy (8.1.12) requires 45% affordable housing provision and the wording to the policy is flexible in this regard. The target should be just that. It should reflect an assessment of the likely economic viability of the land for housing within the town taking into account factors such as decontamination and demolition costs, developer contributions and the reasonable expectation of local house prices. The wording "currently 45% *where viable*" would be more effective and realistic.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It can, therefore, be summarised that the submitted Draft DPD and Proposals Map continuing designation of the sites (NW01, NW04-07 and NW30) at Norwich Road, North Walsham is based on robust and credible evidence, is deliverable and reflect the Council's recent planning considerations and planning policy recommendations.
- 4.2 The landowners have agreed to Hopkins Homes Ltd promoting the site on their behalf.
- 4.3 There is a draft concept masterplan and this is currently the subject of further pre-application consultation with NNDC Officers, stakeholders and landowners.
- 4.4 The continued designation of the land as residential-led mixed use development in the DPD and Proposals Map is coherent and consistent with national and regional policy.
- 4.5 It has been acknowledged by Council Officers that the 'in principle' land uses on this site are appropriate and represent the most sustainable location in North Walsham for the delivery of mixed use development. The designation is therefore sound.
- 4.6 The proposed allocation will assist in the delivery of the stated objectives of North Norfolk District Council's Core Strategy.

Appendix 1

Landownership Plan



	Peal Estates	4.99 ha
	Randell	3.63 ha
	Smith / Wakering	1.48 ha
	Spinks	1.36 ha
	Tofts	4.42 ha
	Youngs	3.82 ha
	Le Grice	4.85 ha
	TOTAL	24.55 ha

Precise areas subject to measured survey.

Important Note: All boundaries are indicative only and may require to be fixed by undertaking an on-site survey. Please also refer to the appropriate Land Registry Plans and Title Deeds.

This plan is for illustrative purposes only and shows the approximate boundaries, which may be subject to change on confirmation of title registration.

M:\Landscape Architecture\Shared\Projects\S76800030 North Walsham\4 Bidwells Plans\S76800030-01BLand Ownership Plan.dwg

Appendix 2

Concept Masterplan

-  Proposed residential development
-  Proposed commercial development
-  Roads, squares & parking
-  Open space
-  Planting area for Garden Centre
-  Existing & proposed structural planting
-  Balancing pond

