

Proposed Residential Development Land north of Kell's Way, Geldeston

Response to South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan – Matters, Issues and Questions to be addressed during Examination

**on behalf of Woodton United Charities and Saffron Housing
Trust**

Site ref: VC GEL1

November 2025

Introduction

1.1 Brown & Co are instructed on behalf of Woodton United Charities and Saffron Housing Trust to respond to the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (hereinafter 'VCHAP') '*List of Matters, Issues and Questions to be addressed during the Examination*' issued on the 10th October, insofar as relates to the land north of Kell's Way, Geldeston which they are promoting for development.

1.2 This response is written to specifically address Matter C: Allocations and Settlement Limits, which concerns "[w]hether the housing allocations, their associated policies and the settlement limits proposed in the plan are justified, consistent with national policy and effective". The following sections respond to the various questions posed in relation to this.

a) Has the site been allocated previously or is it a new allocation?

The site has not been previously allocated for development of any kind.

b) Does the site have planning permission and/or are there current applications under consideration?

The site does not benefit from planning permission, nor are there any applications currently under consideration.

c) What is the land currently used for, what is the ownership position and is the site currently being promoted by a developer? Are there any site occupiers/leaseholders who would be affected, if so how?

The site is currently redundant, having formerly been part of a wider arable field, the southern parcel of which has been redeveloped to provide a residential development of 13 dwellings.

Woodton United Charities own the site, however Saffron Housing Trust are in the process of acquiring it, following the agreement of Heads of Terms. Saffron have undertaken pre-application engagement with South Norfolk District Council and Geldeston Parish Council, and have commissioned a number of technical surveys.

There would be no leaseholders or site occupiers who would be affected by the development of the site.

d) Is the site sustainably located in relation to village services and facilities? Where is the nearest (a) primary school (b) convenience shop (c) village hall (d) recreation ground (e) other key facilities? How accessible are these for walkers and cyclists, in the case of walkers for example by continuous footways?

Geldeston has a range of village service and facilities, including a village hall, recreation ground, two public houses, allotments, and farm shop and café. There is also a regular bus service to Beccles and Diss, a daily service between Southwold and Halesworth, and a Sixth Form/ College service.

The recreation ground is located immediately adjacent the site, and it is anticipated that a direct pedestrian connection would be provided as part of the development. Continuous footpaths would connect the site to the public house, village hall and bus stops in the centre of the village.

The settlement also lies in close proximity to the village of Gillingham (circa. 1.8 kilometres to the east) where there is a primary school, and a range of convenience and fast-food facilities at the services. The town of Beccles is located a short distance beyond that (circa. 4 kilometres to the south-east), providing a range of higher order services, including supermarkets, doctors' surgery, secondary school, employment opportunities and rail connections between Lowestoft and Ipswich.

e) Would the landscape and other physical impacts of the housing allocation be acceptable? Would it be acceptable in relation to the character and appearance of the area? How does it relate to the existing built-up area of the settlement? Are there any other significant constraints?

The site is closely related to main built form of Geldeston, immediately adjacent residential development to the south and west. Development in this location would, therefore, appear as infill opposed to an encroachment into the open countryside. It is located immediately adjacent Geldeston Conservation Area, and a short distance north-west of the Broads.

The topography rises from the southern boundary to the north, careful consideration would be given to the layout and scale of dwellings in this location so as to prevent them from appearing prominent or dominant within the streetscene, or wider landscape views. The use of vernacular materials and design details would ensure that dwellings would appear in keeping with the area, and conserve the setting and significance of the conservation area.

The site is well bound by mature hedging and trees, albeit that the eastern boundary with the recreation ground is more open. The existing landscaping would largely be retained, and new mixed native species planting introduced. As such, development in this location would assimilate well with the immediate area and wider rural landscape.

The Historic Environment Record indicates the presence of heritage assets within the site, however during pre-application engagement they have stated that no further investigation is required. There are no other known significant constraints to the proposed development.

It is therefore considered that development could be appropriately designed to respect the varied topography and consequently protect the amenity of neighbouring dwellings, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the wider landscape setting; particularly that of the Broads to the south.

f) Is the access and site acceptable in highway terms?

Safe and suitable access to the site could be appropriately secured, with a continuation of the road and footways present through the development to the south. Parking would be provided in accordance with the relevant Highways Authority standards.

g) Is the estimate of site capacity justified?

The VCHAP has allocated the site for up to 20 dwellings. This is considered justified on the basis of the site area and the character of development within Geldeston. There is suitable space within the site to accommodate the dwellings, and appropriate areas for highways infrastructure, drainage features, open space and landscaping.

h) Are the site-specific requirements for development of the site justified, consistent with national policy and would they be effective?

The site-specific requirements as set out within the draft policy are considered to be justified and consistent with national planning policies. They would be effective in controlling the development so as to prevent significant adverse highways, landscape, heritage, and amenity impacts arising.

i) Would development of the site be viable, including the delivery of policy compliant affordable housing?

Development of the site would be viable, and a policy compliant level of affordable housing would be delivered as a minimum.

j) Overall, is the site deliverable within the plan period? When is development likely to commence? Has the landowner/developer confirmed this?

The site is available now, suitable for the type and scale of development proposed and deliverable in accordance with local and national planning policy requirements.

We expect submission of a planning application by Saffron in Q1 of 2026, with a start on site by Q2 2027 and completion of the development by Q4 of 2028.