



Supplementary Written Statement to the South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP) Examination

Submitted by: George Freeman MP, Member of Parliament for Mid Norfolk

Date: 12th January 2026

In Support of Previous Submission Made: November 2025

Introduction

This statement is provided as supplementary evidence in support of my written submission to the VCHAP Examination submitted in November 2025. I remain deeply concerned that the current proposals for Wicklewood, Barford, and Barnham Broom do not meet the tests of proportionality, sustainability, deliverability, or community support. The following reiterates and strengthens the key issues previously raised, in light of ongoing community feedback and continuing uncertainty around the deliverability and impact of the proposed allocations.

1. Continued Concerns About Infrastructure Capacity

- Local schools in all three villages remain at or near capacity, with no confirmed investment to accommodate additional demand from the proposed developments.
- Rural road networks, particularly in and around Wicklewood and Barnham Broom, are unsuitable for substantial traffic increases—raising persistent concerns about congestion, road safety, and public transport limitations.
- Essential services—drainage, utilities, and local healthcare—still lack clear, funded, and deliverable upgrade plans. This creates significant risk that new development would outpace critical infrastructure capability.

2. Barford (BAR2): Recreation Ground, Legal Concerns, and Flooding

- The proposed loss of the village recreation ground remains a key issue. This green space is a vital asset for sports, wellbeing, and community cohesion.
- Significant legal uncertainties regarding ownership, covenants, and the lawful process for changing the land's use remain unresolved, raising serious doubts over deliverability.
- Long-standing flooding issues continue to affect parts of Barford. Evidence suggests that additional development at BAR2 risks exacerbating surface-water problems unless robust mitigation is guaranteed.

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3. Wicklewood: Land South of Hackford Road

- The proposed allocation would lead to irreversible harm to a prominent and much-valued piece of open countryside central to Wicklewood's character.
- The required expansion of the settlement boundary sets a concerning precedent for further encroachment into rural landscape.
- The development threatens the visual amenity and distinctive rural views that contribute to the village's identity and appeal.

4. Barnham Broom (BB1): Loss of Meadow and High-Density Development

- The meadow at Bell Road remains an essential green space and is central to the village's rural character.
- Community opposition remains exceptionally strong, with over 600 residents petitioning against the BB1 proposal.
- Once required green space, road realignment, and infrastructure needs are factored in, the scheme would result in urban-level housing densities entirely inappropriate for a rural Norfolk village.
- Local infrastructure, including roads and drainage, is not capable of supporting a development of this scale and density.

5. Neighbourhood Planning

- Neighbourhood planning in Barford and Barnham Broom continues to progress and demonstrates a strong appetite for community-led development.
- These plans represent a more sustainable and democratic framework for future growth and should be prioritised and supported over top-down allocations that lack local backing.

Conclusion

This supplementary statement reinforces the concerns raised in my November 2025 submission. The VCHAP must ensure that the final allocations reflect the principles of proportionate and sustainable development, robust infrastructure planning, environmental and

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landscape protection, and meaningful community engagement and consent.

I respectfully request that the Examination gives full weight to these issues and the strong views expressed by residents across the affected villages. Our rural communities in Mid Norfolk deserve careful stewardship and development that enhances, rather than undermines, the character and quality of village life.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "George" on the left and "Freeman" on the right, connected by a diagonal line.

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