



Historic England

Examination of South Norfolk Village Clusters Local Plan

Matter C: Allocations & Settlement Limits

Historic England, Hearing Statement

November 2025

Historic England is the principal Government adviser on the historic environment, advising it on planning and listed building consent applications, appeals and other matters generally affecting the historic environment. Historic England is consulted on Local Development Plans under the provisions of the duty to co-operate and provides advice to ensure that legislation and national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework are thereby reflected in local planning policy and practice.

The tests of soundness require that Local Development Plans should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. Historic England's representations on the Publication Draft Local Plan are made in the context of the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") in relation to the historic environment as a component of sustainable development.

Historic England Hearing Statement

Introduction

- 1.1 This statement addresses the Inspector's questions with regards Matter C – Allocations and Settlement Limits.
- 1.2 This hearing statement should be read alongside Historic England's comments submitted at previous consultation stages of the Local Plan, and the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) in the [Duty to Co-operate Statement](#) (A.6.1) and SOCG Addendum between Historic England and South Norfolk District Council (A.6.3).
- 1.3 Historic England (HE) and South Norfolk District Council prepared a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) in mid-2025 which is included in the [Duty to Co-operate Statement](#) (A.6.1). There remained a number of outstanding matters between HE and the Council. The SOCG set out a number of **changes** as well as a series of **potential changes** to the Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan (VCHAP).
- 1.4 On 10th November HE and the Council met to discuss these potential changes and sought to resolve these outstanding issues.
- 1.5 These potential changes have now been agreed between both parties. This is set out in the Addendum to the SOCG (A.6.3). In that document, the Council requested that the Inspector treat these changes as **main modifications** to the VCHAP.
- 1.6 Subject to the inclusion of the changes set out in the SOCG and the Addendum to the SOCG, there are now **no outstanding substantive matters between HE and the Council** in relation to the Plan.
- 1.7 This hearing statement summarises those changes.

Matter C: Allocations and Settlement Limits

Issue: Whether the housing allocations, their associated policies and the settlement limits proposed in the plan are justified, consistent with national policy and effective.

Standard Questions for each allocation:

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

i) Archaeology criterion in site specific policies.

- 2.1 HE had raised concerns about the policy wording for the archaeology criterion in a number of site-specific policies. HE requested some changes to the policy wording to ensure that it was consistent with national policy and effective. HE and the Council have now agreed revised policy wording for this criterion as set out in the SOCG Addendum (A.6.3).
- 2.2 The change applies to the following sites: **VC BAR2, VC BAW1REV, VC BRA1, VC BRE1, VC BRM1, VC BRO1, VC DIT1REV, VC EAR1, VC EAR2, VC GEL1, VC GIL1, VC HAD1, VC HAL1, VC HEM1, VC LM1, VC NEE1, VC ROC1, VC SPO1REV, VC SWA1, VC SWA2REV, VC TAC2, VC THU1, VC WOR2**
- 2.3 The inclusion of this change will ensure that the policy wording is effective and consistent with national policy.

ii) Site Specific Policy wording

- 2.4 HE had suggested a number of changes to policy wording for several site-specific policies. HE requested these changes to the policy wording for a variety of reasons; to reflect the evidence from the heritage impact assessments, to ensure that policy is consistent with national policy and to ensure that it is effective. In addition to the policy wording agreed in our SOCG which is included in the [Duty to Co-operate Statement](#) (A.6.1) HE and the Council have now agreed revised policy wording for the following sites as set out in the SOCG Addendum (A.6.3).
 - **Barford – VC BAR 1**
 - **Bressingham – VC BRE1**
 - **Bunwell – VC BUN2**

- **Carleton Rode – VC CAR1**
- **Hales – VC HAL1**
- **Little Melton – VC LM1**
- **Wortwell – VC WOR 2**
- **Wicklewood – VC WIC2**
- **Wicklewood – VC WIC3**
- **Winfarthing – VC WIN 2**
- **Spooner Row VC SPO1 REV**
- **Tasburgh – VC TAS1 REV**

2.5 The inclusion of these changes will ensure that the policy wording is effective and consistent with national policy.

Standard Questions for Settlement Limits

a) Are the settlement limits proposed suitable and justified given their policy function?

2.6 HE had raised concerns about the settlement limits. Our concerns related to the fact that some settlement limits were being revised but there was no reference within the Plan to the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) that had been undertaken to inform that process. In addition, we were concerned that there was no reference in the Plan to the need for regard to be given to the HIA when determining a planning application for development that affects the extended settlement boundary.

2.7 The Council has now agreed to include some text within the Plan to include reference to the preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment as part of the evidence base for the update to the settlement limit boundaries. The additional wording will require regard to be given to the HIA when determining a planning application for development that affects the extended settlement boundary (see SOCG Addendum A.6.3).

2.8 The inclusion of these changes will ensure that the policy wording is effective and consistent with national policy.

Summary

2.9 There are now no outstanding substantive matters between HE and the Council in relation to the Plan.