

South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan Examination

Agenda Tuesday 13 January 2026 10am

Inspector's Introductory Remarks

Statement from the Council

Matter A - Duty to co-operate and other legal requirements

Issue: Whether the Council has complied with the duty to co-operate and other legal requirements.

1. Duty to Co-operate (Document A.6.1)

Strategic Matters: Nutrient Neutrality, Recreational Impact, Highways, Schools, Flooding, Historic Heritage, Water Supply & Disposal, Health, The Broads

2. Community Involvement (A.11.1)

3. Have the likely environmental, social and economic effects of the plan been adequately addressed in the Sustainability Appraisal (A.3.1)? Does the appraisal test the plan against reasonable alternatives for the distribution of housing allocations amongst the clusters? How have the reasonable alternatives been identified and their merits assessed?

4. Does the Habitats Regulations Assessment (A.4.1) identify the likely significant effects of the plan on the various European nature conservation sites and carry out the necessary appropriate assessment? In relation to nutrient neutrality and recreational impacts, are suitable and effective mitigation measures in place? Does Natural England agree with the HRA findings?

Matter B: Consistency with the requirements of the GNLP, the process and criteria for allocating sites between and within clusters, and the criteria for defining settlement limits

Issue: Whether the plan is consistent with the requirements of the GNLP, whether the process and criteria for allocating sites between and within clusters are justified in relation to the evidence, whether the plan would deliver the necessary 1,200 dwellings on allocated sites, and whether the criteria for defining settlement limits are justified and have been consistently applied.

(General discussion only, site specific matters are dealt with under Matter C)

1. In general terms, does the submitted SNVCP fulfil the task envisaged by the provisions of GNLP Policy 7.4?

2. Given the amalgamation of the previous 2014 Joint Core Strategy hierarchy for rural settlements of Service Villages, Other Villages and Smaller Rural Communities and the Countryside into a single category, Village Clusters, is the plan's approach to the distribution of development justified? How does the approach ensure the most suitable sites are selected?
3. How does the classification of the rural parts of the district into 48 clusters based on primary school catchments affect the proposed distribution of development and is this justified? Has the capacity of the primary school been taken into account? If so, how?
4. Allocating a minimum of 1,200 dwellings over 48 clusters would suggest an average of at least 25 each. There are no allocations proposed in 11 clusters. Is this justified? Are some clusters more sustainable locations for development than others, and if so which ones, and why? Document B.11.2 states that during the GNLP process clusters were classified into red, amber and green capable of accommodating 12-20, 20-50 and 50-60 dwellings respectively. Has this classification been published and how does it compare with the allocations proposed in each cluster?
5. How have sites *within* each cluster been selected in general terms? Are the selections justified by the evidence? Have the largest settlements in the cluster been prioritised? How has proximity to services and facilities eg primary schools, convenience shops and other facilities been taken into account?
6. The relationship of the plan to Neighbourhood Plans:
 - a) The Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan 2023 allocates two sites in Scole (Land east of Norwich Road for 50 dwellings and Flowerdew Meadow, Norwich Road for a net increase of 10 dwellings), Roydon (Land south of Primary School for 25 dwellings) and Burston (Land west of Gissing Road for 25 dwellings). Do these sites contribute towards the 1,200?
 - b) The Dickleburgh and Rushall Neighbourhood Plan. Latest position re proposed allocation.
 - c) Future Neighbourhood Plans?
7. Does the Viability Appraisal (Document B.6.1) properly assess the economic viability of the types of development proposed in the plan to demonstrate that the plan is deliverable over the plan period? How much affordable housing is anticipated on the plan's housing allocations, and is this being delivered?
8. Overall, subject to the outcome of the site-by-site discussion, does the plan satisfy the GNLP Policy 7.4 requirement to allocate sites for a minimum of 1,200 dwellings? Should further sites be allocated to allow for non-delivery, or does the GNLP already include sufficient flexibility in this respect?
9. Should it be concluded, following the site-by-site discussion, that the plan fails to allocate suitable sites for 1,200 dwellings, how should the shortfall be addressed?

Settlement Limits

1. What criteria have been used to define the settlement limits in the plan? If unclear, should these be drawn up and published to ensure consistency across the district?
2. What criteria have been used to determine the size or type of settlements which have settlement limits? Is there a guideline figure for the minimum number of dwellings in a contiguous group to qualify for a settlement limit, and if not, should there be?
3. As a matter of principle, are there any additional settlements significant enough to justify settlement limits? (General discussion only, individual cases will be dealt with under Matter C)

Matter C: Allocations & 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 Agenda for each allocation:

- a) Has the site been allocated previously or is it a new allocation?
- b) If a previous allocation, why has the site not been fully developed to date?
- c) Planning history and any current applications.
- d) What form would development take?
- e) Current use of land, ownership & site promotion.
- f) Location of nearest services and facilities & their accessibility.
- g) Landscape and other physical impacts of development. Any other constraints.
- h) Highway access? Accessibility by public transport, cycling & walking?
- i) Site capacity
- j) Site-specific requirements for development
- k) Viability, including the delivery of affordable housing.
- l) Availability of alternative or better sites in the cluster?
- m) Overall deliverability & timescale of development

Standard Questions for Settlement Limits

- a) Are the settlement limits proposed suitable and justified?
- b) Where changes to settlement limits are proposed, are these:
 - (i) Justified by development on the ground? or
 - (ii) Where potentially allowing further development, that development would be in a suitable location relative to services and facilities, would not harm the character and appearance of the area and would not have any other adverse planning effect?
- c) Should any other settlement limits be included in the plan to reflect other hamlets or existing areas of development in the cluster?

Cluster 4: Barford, Marlingford, Colton & Wramplingham

Characteristics of cluster & scope for housing development generally

Removal of previous allocation at Church Lane Barford

Need for footway?

Still in Settlement Limit?

Allocation BAR1: Land at Cock Street & Watton Road (20 dwellings)

Loss of employment use?

Conflict with Policy DM2.2?

Contamination?

Allocation BAR2: Land at Chapel Street (40)

Emergence & development of the scheme since Reg 18 consultation in May 2021

Are there detailed drawings?

Effect on the recreation ground. Conflict with Policy DM3.15 or NPPF para 104?

Qualitative need & level of support for new village hall

Leasehold arrangements & potential referendum

Plans & costing for new village hall

Financial appraisal, viability & deliverability of scheme

Settlement Limits

Should Wramplingham have settlement limits?

Should the settlement limits at Colton be extended to the south?

Not Before 2pm:

Cluster 5: Barnham Broom, Kimberley, Carleton Forehoe, Runhall & Brandon Parva

Characteristics of cluster & scope for housing development generally

Allocation BB1: Corner of Norwich Road & Bell Road (40)

Are there detailed drawings?

Need for staggered junction at Bell Road/Norwich Road. Accident record?

Is there a drawing of the new junction? Cost?

Benefits of 'new area of focal open space' at road junction. How large?

Financial appraisal, viability & deliverability of scheme

Merits of alternative sites – eg West of Mill View/Bankside Way

Settlement Limit change south of Norwich Road, Barnham Broom

Part of field, undeveloped opposite?

Encroachment into green gap between parts of village?

Settlement Limit change north of Norwich Road, Barnham Broom

Part of field, undeveloped opposite?

Further elongation of village?

Settlement Limits

Should Welborne have settlement limits?

Cluster 34: Spooner Row and Suton

Characteristics of cluster & scope for housing development generally

Allocation SPO1REV: Land west of Bunwell Road (35)

Use of remainder of field to northeast? Should the allocation include it & policy refer to it?
Number of dwellings? Planning application for 45.

Allocation SPO2: South of Station Road (25)

Part of a large field. Could allocation be larger?

Allocation SPO3: Land at School Lane (existing allocation for 7, increase of 2)

Highway improvements now agreed?

Construction underway?

Allocation SPO4: Land at Chapel Road (existing allocation for 14)

Current position re development. Affordable housing? Planning application for 13 dwellings?

Settlement Limits

Should The Ridings be included?

Should Suton have settlement limits?