

3.48 PARAGRAPH 3.37 RURAL EXCEPTION - LOCAL NEEDS
HOUSING

The Objections

1484 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding proposed development at East Bergholt, land off Orvis Lane (Rep no 1478). It is envisaged that part of the land could be used for Affordable Housing.

**357 Redbourne Ltd/Earl and Lawrence;1754 Exors C
Easterbrook/Summers Wykes-Sneyd;1761 Lady
Bristol/ummers Wykes-Sneyd;1768 Tendring Hall
Estate/Summers Wykes-Sneyd**

The statement relating to Local Housing Needs is too restrictive and reduces the opportunities for well designed and viable solutions to the Local Housing Needs.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.48.1 This paragraph relates to local needs housing not the suitability of particular sites for development.
- 3.48.2 This is statement of principle based on government guidelines on "exception" sites. It is not clear to me from the objection how the statement in the supporting text would influence design as such. Optional viable solutions are not spelled out for me to consider their inclusion

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.49 PARAGRAPH 3.39 RURAL EXCEPTION - LOCAL NEEDS
HOUSING

The Objections

1173 Mr C A Reeve;1270 The Lavenham Society

This paragraph includes Lavenham as a larger centre but policies HS06, HS07 and HS08, do not specifically incorporate Lavenham needs.

1485 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding proposed development at East Bergholt, land off Orvis Lane (Rep no 1478). The site could comply with this paragraph as East Bergholt is identified as one of the villages for which there is 'local need'. Part of the site could be made available for such purposes.

2146 Mr J Peacock/Fenn Wright

Raydon should be included as one of the named villages in this paragraph for which there is "Local Need".

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.49.1 Paragraph 3.39 does not deal with the merits of individual sites, it merely identifies larger villages where certain forms of development may be acceptable. Local need will be identified throughout the Plan period by Housing Needs Surveys, the most recent being 2004.
- 3.49.2 Whether or not there is a particular local need to be met Raydon would not fall within the category of larger villages as defined in paragraph 3.9.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.50 PARAGRAPH 3.39a RURAL EXCEPTION - LOCAL NEEDS
HOUSING

12263 Mr I Miller

It has not been possible to determine either what The Objections to paragraph 3.37 - 3.40 are or how these are required to be changed. Further clarification will be sought.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.50.1 I do not see that this paragraph contains anything which is unclear, nor can I identify specific objections raised to paragraph 3.37 to 3.40.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to this objection

3.51 POLICY HS06 RURAL EXCEPTION - LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING

The Objections

379 Sproughton Parish Council

If Local Needs Housing is part of a larger development, it should be fully mixed with that larger development in order to fully integrate people within the community. The LNH should not take the form of a block of dwellings within it.

631 GO-East

Policies which repeat the provision of other policies and cross-references to other policies in the plan are not necessary. Also, it is not necessary to include phrases that are covered by regulation. The phrasing of policies should offer certainty and clarity. Some phrases introduce doubt as to whether planning permission will or will not be granted and should be avoided. Policies should not include phrases such as 'the District Council' since other authorities are also involved in the implementation thereof.

1486 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding proposed development at East Bergholt, land off Orvis Lane (Rep no 1478). The site complies with this policy, being one that abuts the built-up area. Part of it could be made available for local housing needs.

6330 Merchant Projects Ltd

Local Needs Housing can be provided by the private sector. Elderly persons occupying a large 4 bedroomed dwelling might be persuaded to down size to a 1 or 2 bedroomed bungalow designed for the elderly if it was available in the village and managed by the private or public sector. This would free up underused housing stock.

9075 Mrs J Fisher

The issue of providing affordable local housing in Cockfield is not dealt with in an adequate way. The main way to provide further housing for the village would be under the rural exceptions in policy HS06.

12256,12265 Mr I Miller

Housing problem of young local people in Babergh.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.51.1 This is a social housing policy not related to specific sites. However, as HS06 only deals with exception sites to meet a specific need for local affordable housing, no other forms of housing would be involved.

- 3.51.2 Although with the revisions I find the policy clear I do not consider it necessary to include the fifth bullet point as it deals with a range of matters which are covered by other policies in the plan.
- 3.51.3 This is an exception policy. As such it does not need to refer to specific sites which would be considered on their own merits.
- 3.51.4 Trading down to specially designed accommodation for the elderly is not a matter for a Local Plan policy.
- 3.51.5 As Cockfield is a non sustainable village under Policy HS03 the District Council would have to determine whether it is an appropriate location for affordable housing. I have concluded elsewhere that the village would not be an appropriate location for general needs housing, other than infilling.
- 3.51.6 The policy is specifically intended to deal with the need for local affordable housing, particularly in the larger villages.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Policy by deleting the fifth bullet point

3.52 POLICY HS07 RURAL EXCEPTION - LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING

The Objections

1488 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding proposed development at East Bergholt, land off Orvis Lane (Rep no 1478). Would support organisations seeking to provide local need housing for part of the site.

1911 Bellway Homes Ltd

The policy suggests that the District Council will test a proposal to ensure that it is economically viable. The Council is reminded of B13 and B17 of Annex B to Circular 1/97 which advise against 'blanket formulation' and the notion of a betterment levy (ie the removal of public subsidy)

The policy should be amended to take on board the above points.

2789 Suffolk Preservation Society

There should be a requirement on developers to prove a local need for their developments.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.52.1 This is a general policy dealing with exceptions. It should not relate to the suitability of specific sites.
- 3.52.2 I do not read the policy as requiring a share in profits or a "betterment levy" It seems to me the wording merely ensures that rural exception housing would be viable and meet local needs. I do, however, consider the policy could be shortened as the second part relating to management and agreements could more conveniently be located in the supporting text.
- 3.52.3 Policies HS08 and HS08a both impose a requirement on developers to provide affordable housing to meet local needs.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the plan by deleting from the policy the second, third and fourth sentences from "Where units..... to Section 106 Planning Obligation" and include in the supporting text at the end of paragraph 3.39.

3.53 PARAGRAPH 3.41 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

339 House Builders Federation

The definition of affordable housing provided in the text is contrary to advice in Circular 6/98 as it effectively excludes low cost market housing by reference to the provision of subsidy. It should be amended to comply and be included as policy.

935 Ralston Purina Northern Europe RPS Consultants

Since the 'housing needs survey' document is not currently available for public inspection it is not possible to decide whether to lodge an objection or not, as the basis for the local need housing policy can not be examined. A copy of the survey should be made available for public inspection prior to the Second Deposit Draft Stage.

1524 Whymark & Moulton

The policy does not appear to address the provision of affordable housing other than by new build on greenfield sites. Additionally, circular 6/98 advises:

- Affordable housing should be sought on development of 25 dwellings or more
- It is not a requirement of the circular that affordable housing be owned or managed by a registered social housing landlord in perpetuity.

8898 Ashwell Developments Limited/FPD Savills Conditional Withdrawal

Paragraph 3.41 of the Second Deposit Version of the Local Plan contains new text relating to affordable housing. We acknowledge that the Council has sought to avoid confusion in terms of affordability and accordingly use the term "subsidised affordable housing". The new text then states that this will "usually be housing for rent or shared ownership, managed by a Registered Social Landlord such as a housing association". On the basis that this new paragraph is supporting text to policies HS06 & HS07, we object to the implication that it is only a Registered Social Landlords who can manage rental housing or shared ownership housing. This restriction to a Registered Social Landlord is inconsistent with the new wording being suggested for policy HS06.

8899 Ashwell Developments Limited/FPD Savills Conditional Withdrawal

This restriction to a Registered Social Landlord in paragraph 3.41 is inconsistent with the new wording being suggested for policy HS06.

8900 Ashwell Developments Limited/FPD Savills

Our client has concerns about the narrow interpretation of affordable housing being adopted by the Council. The first sentence of paragraph 3.41 states that Babergh District Council does not accept that low cost market housing can be affordable. Where a property is sold at a discount to market value, and that discount can be retained in perpetuity, the outcome can be a dwelling which is equally affordable to that provided on a shared-ownership basis. To this end, it should not be excluded as an option for addressing housing need. As such this term should be included in any definition.

"...In practice this would usually be low cost market housing, shared ownership, or housing for rent managed by a Registered Social Landlord such as a Housing Association or other provider compliant with Circular 6/98"

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Paragraph 3.41 Pre-Inquiry Change 48

Amend as follows: 'Government guidance treats low cost market housing as "affordable" but it is clear that, in Babergh even the cheapest housing on the open market is beyond the means of many. For instance, of the 365 concealed households forming annually as identified in the Housing Needs Survey of 2000, 43% have an income below £17,500. The Halifax Price Survey 2000 reveals anyone in this group would struggle purchasing a dwelling in Babergh. For this reason and to avoid any confusion, the term "subsidised affordable housing" is used. For the purpose of the plan, affordable and social needs housing is defined as housing that is provided, with a subsidy for people who are unable to resolve their housing needs in the local private sector market because of the relationship between housing, costs and income. In practice this will usually be housing for rent or shared-ownership, managed by a registered social landlord **or other provider compliant with Circular 6/98** such as a housing association. '

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.53.1 Although paragraph 3.41 and later paragraphs form the supporting preamble to Policies HS08 and HS08a and low cost housing is dealt with later at Policy HS18, I consider that as suggested in the proposed change that paragraph 3.41 should recognise that providers other than social registered landlords are acceptable.
- 3.53.2 The Housing Needs Survey is available as a Core Document of this Inquiry (CD91)

RECOMMENDATION

Modify paragraph 3.41 in accordance with Pre Inquiry Change 48

3.54 PARAGRAPH 3.42 AFFORDABLE HOUSING (*text deleted*)

The Objections

936 Ralston Purina Northern Europe/RPS Consultants

Since the 'housing needs survey' document is not currently available for public inspection it is not possible to decide whether to lodge an objection or not, as the basis for the local need policy can

not be examined. A copy of the survey should be made available for public inspection prior to the Second Deposit Draft Stage.

1071 Hadleigh Town Council

Paragraph should include a clear expectation that the local parish or town council will play a pivotal role to ensure that special provision 'affordable housing' is managed for the benefit of the local community and so that these homes are not allowed to leak to outsiders over a period.

1489 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding proposed development at East Bergholt, land off Orvis Lane (Rep no 1478). Part of this site could be made available in accordance with this paragraph.

1525 Whymark & Moulton

The policy does not appear to address the provision of affordable housing other than by new build on greenfield sites. Additionally, circular 6/98 advises:

- Affordable housing should be sought on development of 25 dwellings or more
- It is not a requirement of the circular that affordable housing be owned or managed by a registered social housing landlord in perpetuity.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.54.1 Paragraph 3.42 was deleted at the 2nd Deposit Draft stage to meet objections. No action is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

None

- 3.55 PARAGRAPH 3.43 AFFORDABLE HOUSING (*text deleted*)

The Objections

340 House Builders Federation

The definition of affordable housing provided in the text is contrary to advice in Circular6/98 as it effectively excludes low cost market housing by reference to the provision of subsidy. It should be amended and be included as policy.

937 Ralston Purina Northern Europe/RPS Consultants

Since the 'housing needs survey' document is not currently available for public inspection it is not possible to decide whether to lodge an objection or not, as the basis for the local need policy can

not be examined. A copy of the survey should be made available for public inspection prior to the Second Deposit Draft Stage.

1526 Whymark & Moulton

The policy does not appear to address the provision of affordable housing other than by new build on greenfield sites. Additionally, circular 6/98 advises:

- Affordable housing should be sought on development of 25 dwellings or more
- It is not a requirement of the circular that affordable housing be owned or managed by a registered social housing landlord in perpetuity.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.55.1 Paragraph 3.43 was deleted at the 2nd Deposit Draft stage to meet objections. No action is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.56 PARAGRAPH 3.41b AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

7505 Hadleigh Town Council

Objecting against the wording. Objector would like it to be made clear that these homes are for local people and not outsiders.

7820 House Builders Federation

Paragraph discuss the findings and implications of the Council's Housing Needs Survey (2000). The HBF queries the accuracy of the findings of the study and may well wish to comment further in its evidence to the Local Plan Inquiry.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.56.1 This is basically a land use plan and it is not for a Local Plan policy to determine who is to occupy houses in the district. This is a matter for the Council as Housing Authority. Affordable Housing is a problem for the district as a whole and a number of locations would be unsustainable. Other more sustainable areas would have to meet those unmet needs. From the evidence at Inquiry it was clear that Parish Council's had an involvement in the housing surveys and did support

some parish proposals for affordable housing to meet local needs.

- 3.56.2 The findings of the Housing Needs Study were discussed at Inquiry. See the Introduction to this chapter.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.57 PARAGRAPH 3.41c AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

5018 Mr J F Tinworth

This paragraph is in complete contrast to the reason given for housing development in Sudbury. There is no land for subsidised affordable housing but there is for commercial development?

6331 Merchant Projects Ltd

Objecting against a "Registered Social Landlord." Objector would like the authority to seek to harness the resources of the private sector and work in partnership to provide the dwellings required.

7821 House Builders Federation

Paragraph discuss the findings and implications of the Council's Housing Needs Survey (2000). The HBF queries the accuracy of the findings of the study and may well wish to comment further in its evidence to the Local Plan Inquiry.

9118 Mr & Mrs F May/Fenn Wright

Paragraph 3.41c admits there is a demand for subsidised housing, which Chilton could provide.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.57.1 This paragraph merely lays out the scale of the problem. It is not just related to land availability but to public resources. Affordable Housing will be provided at Chilton, but as part of a mixed use development scheme, one of the main functions of which is to provide local employment to avoid outward commuting. Allocating more housing land and less employment generating land would not achieve this.
- 3.57.2 Pre Inquiry Change 48 to paragraph 3.41 accepts other than registered social landlords

- 3.57.3 The Housing Survey was discussed at Inquiry. See Introduction to this chapter.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.58 PARAGRAPH 3.41d AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

7822 House Builders Federation

Paragraph discuss the findings and implications of the Council's Housing Needs Survey (2000). The HBF queries the accuracy of the findings of the study and may well wish to comment further in its evidence to the Local Plan Inquiry.

9119 Mr & Mrs F May/Fenn Wright

Paragraph 3.41d admits there is a demand for subsidised housing, which Chilton could provide.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.58.1 See paragraph 3.41c above

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to this objection

3.59 PARAGRAPH 3.41e AFFORDABLE HOUSING

7504 Hadleigh Town Council

Objecting against the wording. Objector would like the text to make clear that the Town Council will have a pivotal role in ensuring development applications manage affordable units.

8902-8903 Ashwell Developments Limited/FPD Savills

The new text in paragraph 3.41e is part of a larger section of new wording contained within the Settlement Policy and Housing Chapter of the Local Plan concerning the provision of affordable housing. Paragraph 3.41e identifies the amount of new housing being sought as part of sites coming forward. However we consider that further clarification is needed within this particular paragraph to more fully explain which proportions of affordable housing are needed, and which proportions apply to which sites. For instance, the paragraph states that the objective is to secure at least 30% of

dwelling as subsidised affordable housing on new residential sites and on renewed planning applications in Sudbury, Great Cornard and Hadleigh where there is a clear identified housing need at this level. We understand that the Chilton development is intended to fall within this category.

The paragraph then refers to a figure of 20-35% on "other allocated sites". We are unclear as to why there is a difference in the amount of affordable housing being sought with the Local Plan since we have assumed that both categories are over the prescribed threshold for subsidised affordable housing. We believe a more even assessment with regard to the provision of affordable housing should be decided for all sites which are over and above the prescribed threshold - to artificially load certain sites with differing proportions of affordable housing seems unreasonable.

9064 Mr A Double

Paragraph doesn't take account for Circular 06/98 or PPG3 regarding threshold levels.

9069 Mr A Double

33% is an irrational figure in small settlements, compared to 20-35% in larger settlements.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.59.1 This paragraph is supplementary text leading up to Policies HS08 and HS08a. How individual development applications are considered and how affordable units are managed is a matter of detail and should not be included in the Local Plan.
- 3.59.2 Other paragraphs in the supporting text refer to the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance No. 3 and Circular 6/98. Both of these are core documents to the Inquiry (CD46 and CD69).
- 3.59.3 I have dealt with the level of provision when considering Policies HS08 and HS08a.
- 3.59.4 It is not clear to me from paragraph 3.41e why 30% is specifically mentioned because it appears to be qualified by "where there is a clear identified need at this level." Or does this mean that the level of provision has already been specifically identified at this level?. If it means the latter I can understand a figure being mentioned but otherwise the 30% is included within the range of figures of 20 to 35%. This needs to be clarified.

3.59.5 I have however recommended that the wording of the policy HS08 be amended to state **up to 35%**, rather than specify a range, and this should be reflected in the supporting text.

RECOMMENDATION

Clarify the meaning and amend the wording of paragraph 3.41e by deleting "20-35%" and substituting **up to 35%**.

3.60 PARAGRAPH 3.41f AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

9065 Mr A Double

Paragraph doesn't take account for Circular 06/98 or PPG3 regarding threshold levels.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.60.1 A number of paragraphs refer to both Planning Policy Guidance No. 3 and Circular 6/98,. I consider the appropriateness of thresholds at Policies HS08 and HS08a.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to this objection

3.61 PARAGRAPH 3.41g AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

8901 Ashwell Developments Limited/FPD Savills

Recorded as part of rep 8900

9066 Mr A Double

Paragraph doesn't take account for Circular 06/98 or PPG3 regarding threshold levels.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.61.1 I find paragraph 3.41g to be statement of fact which eventually leads to two policies. I have considered the merits of the level of provision when dealing with Policies HS08 and HS08a.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.62 PARAGRAPH 3.41h AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

9067 Mr A Double

Paragraph doesn't take account for Circular 06/98 or PPG3 regarding threshold levels.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.62.1 See my comments at 3.41g above.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to this objection

3.63 PARAGRAPH 3.41i AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

5300 GO-East Conditional Withdrawal

Para 3.41i advises to which settlements HS08 and HS08a apply. We consider that it might be preferable for HS08a to be amended to read "In settlements below 3,000 population.." and HS08 to be amended similarly.

7506 Hadleigh Town Council

Objecting against the wording. Objector would like it to be made clear that these homes are for local people and not outsiders.

7816 House Builders Federation

The HBF does not believe that Babergh District is experiencing exceptional local need as claimed in paragraph.

9068 Mr A Double

Paragraph doesn't take account for Circular 06/98 or PPG3 regarding threshold levels.

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Paragraph 3.41i Pre-Inquiry Change 49

Amend to read: 'To achieve a significant contribution to the community's needs for affordable housing, the District Council has

concluded that Babergh's exceptional local circumstances warrant the lowest thresholds advocated in Circular 6/98. ~~In settlements with a population of 3,000 or over where Local Plan allocations have been made, the threshold for applying Policy HS08 is developments involving 15 or more net new dwellings or sites of 0.5 hectares or larger. In the smaller settlements, the threshold for applying Policy HS08a will apply to developments of 3 or more net new dwellings or sites of 0.1 hectares or larger. '~~

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

Introduction

- 3.63.1 The wording of Policy HS08 has been amended by the Council to more closely follow guidance in Circular 6/98. Objectors remain concerned about site thresholds, housing needs and off site provision.
- 3.63.2 From the evidence at Inquiry and in writing the following background information was provided.
- 3.63.3 According to the 2004 Housing Needs Survey home ownership is beyond 96% of new concealed households and private rent is also beyond 67% of concealed households. The social stock is only 13.5% of total stock which provides for about 330 re-let units each year. The social housing stock is only 70% of national average.
- 3.63.4 The assessed total requirement for affordable housing is 562 a shortfall of some 230 units a year. There are over 1500 applicants on the housing register. This increasing demand is linked to a significant increase in house prices within the district. Council housing stock is being lost and this also results in a reducing turnover of stock for letting. There is an increase in the number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation. Affordable Housing has become a top priority for the Council. The Council is attempting to deliver up to 700 units of affordable housing over the next 5 years and even if they are delivered would not meet the identified need in the Housing Need Survey. Sudbury and Great

Cornard are the greatest areas of need, followed by Hadleigh.

- 3.63.5 The Council is active in conjunction with Parish Council's in the progression of rural housing schemes. The Council endeavours to seek 75% of affordable housing for rent and 25% for some other form of ownership to provide affordable housing in perpetuity. The ratio is not prescriptive. Shared ownership is low cost market housing. Subsidy is not a grant, a grant is one form of subsidy, the provision of land for affordable housing is another.
- 3.63.6 There has been an 110% average increase in prices over the past few years. A similar problem for the whole of the south east. Young people are being lost to Ipswich, but families are moving out from Ipswich. Nearly half of new forming households are going outside East Anglia and about 20% of existing households are going abroad. The retired population of the district is expected to increase by 39%, to 21% by 2021. Parents are helping children financially to get on housing ladder.
- 3.63.7 The Council has adopted current national guidance for settlements over 3000 population the minimum threshold set at 15 dwellings or .5 ha. In rural areas in settlements of 3000 population and below the Council is proposing 1 in 3 dwellings and .1 of a ha based on local need. Although the Council does not consider this would solve the affordable housing problem a lower threshold was not thought to be appropriate. The Housing Needs Survey supports the upper range.
- 3.63.8 Because of the selling off attractive Council houses in rural areas there is no opportunity in the smaller communities to obtain affordable housing. There is a strong demand from people with a local connection. Already the Council in conjunction with Housing Associations provide and manage dispersed social housing stock in rural areas, so managing additional small numbers of affordable housing is not a problem.
- 3.63.9 The provision of affordable units in the area has been limited and any adopted policy has to be achievable.

- 3.63.10 The Council has said that a 75%/25% split has been achieved but the Housing Corporation has culled Housing Associations by about 70% in the last 12 months and there is the demise of the LASHG. It was pointed out that virtually on the day that the Local Authority Social Housing Grant was removed the government stated that the planning system had to deliver more affordable housing. Housing Associations cannot provide rented tenure without subsidy, usually in the form of a grant. Allocation of grant comes with a right to acquire. Babergh has limited resources but it has a flexible approach to affordable housing depending upon the viability of the scheme. Housing Corporation subsidy goes towards priority areas.
- 3.63.11 I believe the revised wording of paragraph 3.41i by deleting the second part of the paragraph in accordance with Pre Inquiry Change 49 relates the supporting text to Circular 6/98. Other objections have been dealt with at HS08 below.
- 3.63.12 The occupants of affordable housing are a matter for the Council as Housing Authority and not for a local plan policy.
- 3.63.13 Whether Babergh has exceptional needs compared with other authorities in the south east I doubt. However, I am satisfied from the evidence that there is an unmet need to provide affordable housing during the Plan period.

RECOMMENDATION

See Policy HS08 and HS08a below

3.64 POLICY HS08 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

See Appendix 4 at the end of this chapter for detailed objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS08 Pre-Inquiry Change 50

Amend to read: 'On those allocated sites listed below, and others which come forward for residential development **with a population of 3,000 or more** and which are 0.5 hectares or more in size, capable of accommodating at least 15 dwellings, or on sites of similar size and capacity on which a renewal of planning permission is sought, the District Council will require 20-35% of dwellings to be provided in the form of affordable housing to meet identified local needs. Such properties will be required to be owned or managed by a registered social housing landlord, (or other providers compliant with circular 6/98) in perpetuity.

2nd bullet point

- ~~Brooklands Road, Brantham~~

5th bullet point

- ~~Broom Street/Head Lane, Great Cornard....'~~

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.64.1 The Housing Needs Surveys have clearly indicated a need for affordable housing in Hadleigh. It would not be appropriate to exclude the Grays Close site from a requirement to provide its share.
- 3.64.2 Under Policy HS08 affordable housing would be required as an integral part of the development. It is under Policy HS06 that they would not, as exception sites are only brought forward in accordance with government policy to provide for solely affordable housing needs.
- 3.64.3 I am of the view that advice about the desirability of pre application negotiation, if considered necessary at all as it is encouraged by government guidance, should form part of the supporting text, not the policy itself. Delete "and should be negotiated with the District Council before a planning application is submitted" and include in the supporting text if required.
- 3.64.4 All sites allocated have been subject to a sustainability appraisal. (CD10). However, when considering Policy HS02 and HS03 I have recommended that the categorisation of villages be simplified as the * system

is not clear and development in the smaller villages requires justification.

- 3.64.5 The sustainability development criteria against which all allocated sites have been assessed include archaeological impact through consultation with the appropriate authority.
- 3.64.6 The policy does recognise sites other than Church Farm, Whatfield. It lists a variety of sites and also refers to "others (sites) which come forward for residential development"
- 3.64.7 Omissions Sites at Brantham, East Bergholt, Raydon and elsewhere have been dealt with on their own merits throughout this chapter.
- 3.64.8 As the last paragraph of the policy makes it clear that the precise number of affordable homes will depend on a number of factors, I share the view of objectors that it would be more appropriate to require *up to 35%* rather than include an arbitrary range
- 3.64.9 Proposed Pre Inquiry Change 50 has complied with the objection from GO-East. However, I believe that for clarity additional wording is required in the second line of the Pre-Inquiry Change. The words **in a settlement** should be included after "residential development"

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan by

- a) deleting 20-35% from the policy and substituting **up to 35%**
- b) add the words **in a settlement** after "residential development"
- c) deleting "and should be negotiated with the District Council before a planning application is submitted"
- d) otherwise amending the wording in accordance with Pre-Inquiry Change 50

3.65 POLICY HS08A AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Objections

See Appendix 5 at the end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS08A Pre-Inquiry Change 51

Add text to read: **'In settlements with a population of less than 3,000** Proposals for development either on sites of 0.1 hectares or more in size or which propose 3 or more dwellings will be required to provide one in three of the new dwellings in the form of affordable housing to meet identified local needs. Such properties will be required to be owned or managed by a registered social landlord, or other providers compliant with Circular 6/98 and held in perpetuity...'

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.65.1 I am concerned about this policy. Government guidance in Circular 6/98 and Planning Policy Guidance No. 3 state that where there is a demonstrable lack of affordable housing to meet local needs – as assessed by up-to date surveys – local plans should include a policy for seeking affordable housing in *suitable* housing developments. Decisions on the amount and type of affordable housing should be a matter of agreement between the parties. The policy as written provides no such flexibility. Small sites in villages will vary in character and some might not be suitable for affordable housing at all. Even where they might be acceptable in terms of character an odd dwelling in a small village with limited facilities will not add significantly to affordable housing numbers or necessarily provide housing in a sustainable location. It could also involve for costly and fragmented management.
- 3.65.2 National guidance makes it clear that affordable housing provision sought should not make development unviable. I believe there are considerable risks of sites not coming forward as quickly as needed and I have grave doubts about the viability of a mixed housing development on a site of 0.1 hectares or only 3 dwellings.

- 3.65.3 I consider this policy as written should be deleted. If a policy is required for settlements with a population of less than 3000 it should reflect government guidance by taking into account the listed criteria in paragraph 10 of Circular 6/98 including size, suitability and economics of provision, proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport. The policy should be flexible enough to recognise the need to negotiate the amount of affordable housing on any suitable site.
- 3.65.4 There are a number of ways a policy could be worded. I merely suggest the following wording as one option

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan by deleting the first paragraph of the policy as written. Suggest the following wording as an alternative:

On windfall sites in settlements in rural areas with a population of 3000 or fewer, the Council will seek to negotiate on a site to site basis an element of affordable housing of up to 35% of the total provision, having regard to the up to date Housing Needs Survey, market and site considerations and the sustainability of the proposed development.

3.66 PARAGRAPH 3.44 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Objections

1449 Ralston Purina Northern Europe/RPS Consultants

Over the last 3 years Consultants (RPS) have been working with Officers regarding the future of the Cornard Mills site on behalf of the owners, Ralston Purina Northern Europe -RPNE. Various documents and information have been submitted to the District Council and the Council also holds copies of all the various correspondence. Having carried out all this work and having been informed in both October 2000 and January this year (2001) that the Local plan Working Group had accepted the principle of allocating the site for mixed-use redevelopment (primarily residential with a small element B1 employment use), RPS were surprised that the site had not been included for redevelopment in the First Deposit Draft Local Plan.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.66.1 I understand that planning permission has been granted for this development. No further action is required.

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.67 PARAGRAPHS 3.45 - 3.51 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Objections

1450-1456 Ralston Purina Northern Europe/RPS Consultants

Over the last 3 years Consultants (RPS) have been working with Officers regarding the future of the Cornard Mills site on behalf of the owners, Ralston Purina Northern Europe -RPNE. Various documents and information have been submitted to the District Council and the Council also holds copies of all the various correspondence. Having carried out all this work and having been informed in both October 2000 and January this year (2001) that the Local plan Working Group had accepted the principle of allocating the site for mixed-use redevelopment (primarily residential with a small element B1 employment use), RPS were surprised that the site had not been included for redevelopment in the First Deposit Draft Local Plan.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.67.1 I understand that planning permission has been granted for this development. No further action is required.

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.68 PARAGRAPH 3.48 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Objections

358 Redbourne Ltd/Earl and Lawrence

It is noted that a number of housing sites in villages were evaluated but no details have been published.

456 Mr M N Southgate/Fenn Wright

It is considered that Brantham is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the development of the land outlined, particularly with the employment opportunities at Cattawade, which

the Council is now proposing to support under policy EM14 and paragraph 4.42.

1475 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding land proposed for residential development at East Bergholt (Rep no 1472). It is considered that East Bergholt is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the development of the land proposed for development.

2162 Mr J Peacock/Fenn Wright

It is considered that Raydon is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the proposed development at the land at Raydon (Rep no 2142) particular with the land at Notley Enterprise Park, which the Council is now considering expanding.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.68.1 The Sustainability Appraisal process are documents before the Inquiry (CD9 and 10).
- 3.68.2 Paragraph 3.48 merely states what has been done in the way of appraisal. It is not intended to include the merits of specific sites. These are dealt with elsewhere in the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.69 PARAGRAPHS 3.49 - 3.50 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

457-458 Mr M N Southgate/Fenn Wright

It is considered that Brantham is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the development of the land outlined, particularly with the employment opportunities at Cattawade, which the Council is now proposing to support under policy EM14 and paragraph 4.42.

1476-1477 Mr A Gordon/Fenn Wright

Regarding land proposed for residential development at East Bergholt (Rep no 1472). It is considered that East Bergholt is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the development of the land proposed for development.

2163-2164 Mr J Peacock/Fenn Wright

Regarding the land at Raydon (Rep no 2142 and no 2143). It is considered that Raydon is a sustainable village with services and facilities that can support the development of the land at

Raydon particularly with the employment opportunities at Notley Enterprise Park, which the Council is now considering expanding.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.69.1 See my views at paragraph 3.48 above.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.70 PARAGRAPH 3.51 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

2114 ICI Corporate Real Estate/Boyer Planning Conditional Withdrawal

The objection is concerned with the suitability of the sites identified in the Local Plan for residential development compared to the suitability of land at Brantham as proposed by the objector (Rep no 2126). A total of 20 sites are allocated for predominantly residential use and the majority of these are within small villages except for the urban extension in Sudbury. Many of the proposed housing locations are unsustainable. The remote location often results in densities well below the guide range of 30-50 as advocated in PPG3.

8447 Wardle Storeys (Property) Limited/Boyer Planning Conditional Withdrawal

Policy HS09 allocates 375 (26%) new dwelling on previously-developed land, 890 (61%) on the urban edge and 195 (13%) on greenfield sites in villages. The majority of the urban edge sites (including the 700-unit allocation at Chilton) are not -previously developed or are greenfield, meaning that the vast majority of the new housing proposed in the Borough over the Plan period will not be on brownfield sites, contrary to the Government's strategy set out in PPG3.

9120 Mr & Mrs F May/Fenn Wright

Paragraph 3.51 offers an insufficient number of new houses. The allocation of only 700 houses is going to be insufficient.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.70.1 The Urban Capacity Study (CD41) identified the need for more housing provision and this need could not be met on brownfield sites. Table 2 on page 15 of the Housing Topic Paper (CD91) updated the total

allocation figure shown in paragraph 3.15 of the Plan –
Structure Plan Housing Provision.

- 3.70.2 I have considered the individual merits of allocated sites and omission sites throughout this chapter of the plan. These may marginally affect the analysis in paragraph 3.51.

RECOMMENDATION

See the Introduction to this chapter and my recommendations on allocated and omission sites throughout this chapter.

3.71 PARAGRAPH 3.52 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Objections

950 Shotley Parish Council

Object to the omission of the former HMS Ganges site in Shotley Gate from the list of brownfield sites. The site (16.125 ha) has been the subject of outline planning applications since the mid 1980s and the Parish Council feels that a policy should be promulgated concerning its eventual development.

1457 Ralston Purina Northern Europe/RPS Consultants

Object to the omission of the land at Cornard Mills, Great Cornard from the list of Brownfield sites.

2619 Mr P J Holbrook

Do not object to the principle of development but can't see reason in changing the Tawneys Ride access from the map in the issues report of January 1999. The new access will require the demolition of 7 garages currently in use. Access to Friends Field is shown via a very narrow cul-de-sac which is totally unsuitable as a through road. A more suitable access might be from the end of Eve's Orchard car park.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.71.1 Paragraph 3.52 was deleted at the "2nd Deposit Draft stage. It was unnecessary and I do not see that it has any relevance to the objections raised about individual sites

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.72 POLICY HS09 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Objections

See Appendix 6 at the end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.72.1 Policy HS09 lists allocated sites with criteria for their development. A number of the objections only have a tenuous relationship to Policy HS09 and have been dealt with by me elsewhere in the Introduction and throughout the chapter where I have considered various omission sites, suggested changes to Built Up Area Boundaries and the merits of allocated sites. I have therefore only briefly commented on some of the above objections.
- 3.72.2 See OM221 for my report on Hintlesham and Chattisham CEVCP School.
- 3.72.3 There are a number of housing allocations in the villages. These are biased towards the larger villages as such villages are more sustainable and have the facilities to support more housing.
- 3.72.4 It is not clear to me from the evidence how the Folly Lane site and Holly Cottage site relates to Policy HS09 as this policy lists larger allocated sites. Small sites in smaller villages would not be subject to allocation. If affordable housing is required to meet local needs these could be dealt with as an exception by the District Council. See also my report on omission sites in Copdock at 3.96.9.
- 3.72.5 I have dealt with the adequacy of land supply in the Introduction to this chapter of the plan.

RECOMMENDATION

See my recommendations on individual sites below.

3.73 POLICY HS09A(a) HOSPITAL SITE WALNUTTREE LANE
SUDBURY

The Objections

7084 Mrs K M Allen

Objecting because of the impact on wildlife.

9382 Environment Agency

The western boundary runs immediately parallel to the fluvial flood plain and in view of flood risk, as well as surface water run-off implications, we would recommend that a flood risk assessment (FRA) should be undertaken in accordance with PPG25. Appropriate wording regarding the requirement for a FRA should therefore be incorporated, possibly by way of a note, under this policy. We therefore object to the current wording. In the event of any proposed development taking place within 9 metres of Mill Race watercourse, please note that consent under Environment Agency bylaws will be required before such works commence.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.73.1 A small part of the site may be liable to flooding but I do not consider this would preclude development. There are already policies in the plan to protect the environment, particularly EN05, which clearly lays down criteria to be met in areas at risk from flooding. As the Plan is read as a whole this criteria does not need to be repeated for each allocated site.
- 3.73.2 The principle of developing this site was established in 1995 and in my view is an appropriate site for development. Biodiversity is protected by a number of policies in the Environment Chapter of the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.74 POLICY HS09A(b) HEAD LANE/BROOM STREET GREAT
CORNARD

The Objections

See Appendix 7 at end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09A(b) Pre-Inquiry Change 52 and Pre-Inquiry Change 63 to Inset Map 1 *(consistency with change to HS09a(b))*

~~'A(b) Head Lane/ Broom Street, Great Cornard~~

~~This site is about 1.65 hectares was identified in the Urban Capacity Study. It is located in an area that has been developed to a relatively high density, and could accommodate 50 dwellings. Approximately half of the site forms part of the under utilised Guilford Europe employment site. It is vital to retain this local business, but the disposal of any surplus land will allow the company to reinvest in upgrading and strengthening the existing business. Vehicular access into this site is not straightforward and early discussions with the Transport Authority are advised. Approximately 1.65 hectares of land at Head Lane/ Broom Street, Great Cornard are allocated for 50 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:~~

- ~~• a footpath/ cycle route through the site linking Broom Street to Head Lane;~~
- ~~• vehicular access to the site will be served from Head Lane with only a small number of properties served from Broom Street.~~

Approximately 0.6 hectares of land off Head Lane, Great Cornard are allocated for 50 dwellings. Proposals for development will be required to provide for vehicular access to the site from Head Lane. '

The Objections

13222 Great Cornard Parish Council

Object to access onto Head Lane. Wish to see area totally deleted from plan, this is privately owned without an obvious safe access.

13230 Mr A E B Moule

Object to present access proposes new acces from 69 Head Lane.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.74.1 This reduced area of the 0.6 hectare smallholding off Head Lane is the surplus part of an employment site in the midst of a residential area and in principle is suitable for housing development. A reasonably high density which would

reflect the existing densities of development in the area. The new development is not likely to be out of character as the Council has strict control over the form, layout and design of any scheme.

- 3.74.2 The site is sustainable with many facilities in the neighbourhood and links by train to London and other towns if required. Bus services are available locally.
- 3.74.3 Many of the objections raised are matters of detail which would be dealt with by the Council when a planning application is submitted and would not form part of a Local Plan allocation.
- 3.74.4 The contribution to affordable housing needs in the area, the provision of open space and investigation for site contamination, are already covered by other policies in the plan and do not have to be repeated here. The need for the additional provision of services and facilities to serve the development would be determined at the planning application stage and negotiated with the developer, by if necessary, a Section 106 agreement. With a reduction in the developable area of the site I do not consider the impact on wildlife would be significant.
- 3.74.5 Vehicular access would be from Head Lane in accordance with pre inquiry change 52. From my visit I consider that a technically acceptable form of access could be provided to the site. However, how this is done and what property would be involved would be a matter for the applicants, the highway authority and the Council to consider at the detailed planning application stage.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the policy in accordance with Pre Inquiry Changes 52 and 63 (Inset Map change 1 detailing the allocation change)

3.75 POLICY HS09A(c) WILLIAM ARMES FACTORY CORNARD ROAD
SUDBURY

The Objections

See Appendix 8 at the end of this chapter for detailed objections – early report issued in respect of this site

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.75.1 This factory site has been in existence for some 50 years and comprises mainly outdated industrial buildings, together with an area of mature woodland, which I am told predates the factory. There is a steep south-facing bank demarcating the boundary between woodland and factory.
- 3.75.2 There is agreement between the Council and the Company that the factory be relocated to custom-built premises in the town and that the Cornard Road site is suitable for housing development. It is the area of land which is allocated for that purpose, together with the requirement for a new sports centre which is under dispute. Also the company is concerned about the Council's policy in respect of the future maintenance of the woodland.
- 3.75.3 The allocation provides for a total of 80 houses on the site. 2.0ha of the site has been allocated for housing with 1ha reserved as a nature area.
- 3.75.4 The site has been an important employment use within the town, manufacturing and distributing quality carpets and floor coverings, and there have been objections to its loss to residential use. It is a previously developed site identified in the Urban Capacity Study. I accept from my visit that regardless of Policy SD11 of the Plan the site because of its location close to the busy town centre is in land use terms better suited to housing than employment. The buildings on site are outdated and would not be attractive to industrial occupiers. Redevelopment for industrial purposes would have to involve a far more intensive use than at present to be viable. As the site is close to residential properties and so close to the town centre, this combined with the disturbance from large commercial vehicles being brought into the town make it far from an ideal industrial location.
- 3.75.5 I accept that Policy EM15 of the Plan normally discourages the loss of employment land to other uses, because of a shortage of industrial land within the district. However, I am satisfied that alternative employment land allocated during the Plan period in

Sudbury would be far more attractive to potential users. The proposed Chilton Woods Mixed Use is intended to provide a significant allocation of employment land. At the time of the Employment Land Study (CD42) Sudbury was expected to account for 64% of employment allocations. Because of this imbalance identified in the Employment Land Study the Council has since proposed further allocations in other parts of the district.

- 3.75.6 Concern has been expressed about the relocation of the company being enforceable and this may prevent the site being developed. From the evidence it appeared that negotiations are at an advanced stage and that a planning application for the new site is expected shortly.

Biodiversity Area

- 3.75.7 1ha of the 3ha site has been recognised by the Council as a biodiversity asset and is excluded from the area allocated for housing. Both Epcad's survey and that of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust broadly agree with each other in terms of flora and fauna. It is the degree of importance given to them which is in dispute
- 3.75.8 The more detailed survey has been carried out by Epcad and as part of its assessment found that the main woodland block, dominated by sycamore. Is of only low to medium value at the local level. Other habitats were present, including small areas of grassland suitable for the slow worm and common lizard, and scrub and a pond. These were also considered by Epcad to be of limited value.
- 3.75.9 It seems to me that basking grassland rides suitable for the 2 species of reptiles found are small and provide limited habitat, and that the dense vegetation in the centre of the site is impenetrable by bats. This access could be improved by thinning.
- 3.75.10 The Suffolk Wildlife Trust places the wildlife area at Level 3 in the system of site ranking which refers to non statutory designations of local wildlife sites, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats, and or species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

According to the SWT the principle of designating Local Wildlife Sites has not been in operation in Babergh.

- 3.75.11 I am inclined to the view that the whole of the 1ha site does not have substantive nature conservation value, and that to describe it within Policy HS09A c) as of "high biodiversity value" gives it more ecological value than it warrants. On the basis of the ranking system it would be reasonable to assume that it has a medium conservation value. I do not agree with the objector that there would be no net loss to biodiversity and I consider the proposed extent of the development shown on illustrative drawing Plan EP2 would result in an excessive incursion into the woodland area which is an important amenity open space. The extent of the woodland that would remain would be confined to an inadequate margin around the edge of the site.
- 3.75.12 The proposed development boundary on drawing Plan EP2 takes as the boundary the important steep bank, whereas I believe this bank and the existing groups of trees shown on Drawing EP2 below the bank should be contained well within the retained area of vegetation.
- 3.75.13 I accept that the existing dense scrub, (to the north of that contained within the serpentine shape on Plan EP2 as "existing scrub and tree planting"), at present has little biodiversity value of itself. However, I found this to be an integral part of the natural area where I consider development would be an unacceptable intrusion. Although the dense scrub has limited biodiversity value now, with thinning it could have more, and it has considerable potential amenity value. I conclude that the bank forms a logical and defensible boundary between the housing allocation and the natural area, and the boundary shown on the Proposals Map should be retained.
- 3.75.14 It is important that the future of the biodiversity area is properly controlled. There are various ways of ensuring the future of the woodland area, one would be by agreement, another by an undertaking. Public ownership is another option. I do not consider it reasonable to arbitrarily require public ownership through a policy in the local plan, as some of the bodies which take an interest in managing nature sites are not

necessarily *public* bodies. It seems to me that all that is needed in the policy is a statement referring to a planning obligation to secure the future management of the biodiversity area. This statement would cover any form of ownership that might arise, with or without a commuted sum.

- 3.75.15 Regardless of how the site is developed the protection of wildlife would be needed both during and after construction. How this is done would be a matter for the planning application stage.

Sports Centre

- 3.75.16 Although the Council considers that the Yellow Dot Sports Centre provided a valuable asset for the town with few replacement facilities available, the centre has closed down because of a fall in membership and a debt crisis, after suffering considerable losses over a number of years. It is clear to me from the figures presented to Inquiry that even with an upgrade of facilities with the help of grant aid from the Council and lottery, if it had not been for write-off of losses by the company the sports centre would have closed before it did. Even on a rent-free basis since 1989 the club had major cash flow problems.
- 3.75.17 The centre provided 2 indoor tennis courts (1 sub standard) and 2 squash, facilities for indoor sports, archery, badminton and table tennis. These are within former industrial buildings with the minimum of conversion. From the record of usage the club operated with a limited number of customers and with the extensive write-offs did not run as a successful commercial venture. It appeared unable to compete with more modern facilities elsewhere in the town. The objectors had approached the Sudbury Sports Centre and been advised that both "squash and tennis bookings were slow but steady" especially in the evenings. There are 4 tennis courts located at the Sudbury Tennis Club about half a mile away. Since the closure the Tai Chi and Kung Fu clubs have moved to Assington village hall, and the beauty salon to Bures Road, Great Cornard.
- 3.75.18 Paragraph 8.11 of the Local Plan – Alteration No.2 Second Deposit Draft states that Babergh District has a

good range of formal sports provision and goes on to say that using the document Sport in the East – The Strategy - as a guide there do not appear to be any significant deficiencies in provision at present. This was in 1994 and with more housing in the area I accept there may well be increased demand, and housing on the allocation site will again increase that demand for indoor sports facilities. However, it is clearly stated in the Local Plan itself that there are no significant deficiencies and I had no detailed evidence at Inquiry to indicate otherwise.

- 3.75.19 Having regard to government guidance in Planning Policy Guidance No. 17 it is stated that recreational facilities can form an important component in housing developments and Structure Plan Policy REC1 safeguards the loss of an existing *public* sports facility. I presume this does not necessarily mean publicly owned, but merely a centre to which the public can have access through club membership.
- 3.75.20 I am inclined to agree with the Council that with the considerable increase in population envisaged in Sudbury that there is likely to be a greater demand for sport centre facilities in the future. However, Chilton Woods will have its own provision and from the evidence before me on the overall needs of the community it seems that although there would be an unfortunate loss of 2 *indoor* tennis courts (1 sub standard), 2 squash courts and other indoor facilities, that this loss would not be sufficient to justify the requirement for a new sports centre on the objection site.
- 3.75.21 Also having regard to the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance at page 14 on Standards (CD20) according to the evidence at Inquiry the guideline of 1 tennis court per 2000 population is already exceeded and there is no definitive standard shown for squash courts. However, when the Council gave a grant to upgrade the facilities in 1997 the need for indoor sports facilities in the area was presumably demonstrated.
- 3.75.22 Having regard to national guidance I do not consider the provision of a sports centre, either on the objection site or elsewhere would reasonably comply with the tests in

Circular 1/97 - Planning Obligations. This is because a sports centre would not be directly related to the proposed development or be fairly related in scale and kind to it. From the evidence the sports centre would not be necessary to make the development of the site for housing acceptable in land use planning terms.

- 3.75.23 As stated in paragraph B3 of the circular the benefits, or the part of those benefits, which go beyond what is necessary should not affect the outcome of a planning decision. Similarly, benefits that go beyond what is necessary should not be included in the local plan policy. If on the basis of more up to date evidence the Council believe a sports centre is required for the benefit of the community as a whole, it could not reasonably be linked to the limited amount of housing to be provided on this allocation site.
- 3.75.24 In my view, on the basis of the history of provision on the site, and on advice in Circular 1/97 at paragraphs B10 and B12, there could be a justification for payment towards alternative provision of tennis courts and squash courts elsewhere in the town. However, any such contribution towards recreational facilities would need to be related in scale to the proposed development.

Other Matters

- 3.75.25 The County Council as highway authority has raised no objection to the development. From my visit to the site I am satisfied that within the frontage available adequate access provision can be made from Cornard Road to serve the development. Details of the access and other traffic management measures can be determined at the planning application stage
- 3.75.26 The site is close to the town centre and well located for higher density housing development. In accordance with national guidance best use should be made of such brownfield sites and this would not be achieved with a low-density scheme.
- 3.75.27 As the present factory is underused redevelopment for any purpose would be likely to involve an increase in vehicular traffic. However, an increase in residential

traffic is less likely to cause noise and nuisance than commercial traffic if the site were redeveloped for more intensive industrial uses. Also as the site is sustainable, being close to the town centre and public transport, private cars are less likely to be used by residents for local journeys.

- 3.75.28 Land stability can only be assessed with appropriate engineering solutions at the detailed application stage.
- 3.75.29 Although the value of property is not a matter for a local plan it unlikely that well designed residential development in a predominantly residential area is likely to have a devaluating effect on existing housing.
- 3.75.30 If there were evidence of contaminated land Policy EN17 of the Local Plan would require a site-specific investigation and risk assessment.
- 3.75.31 Policy CN31 of the Plan addresses the issue of security. Solutions can only be determined at the detailed design stage.

RECOMMENDATION

That policy HS09A9(c) be modified as follows:

- a) delete 2nd bullet point and substitute **the continued protection of the biodiversity area of the site**
- b) delete the 3rd bullet point and substitute **contribution to sports provision in the town**
- c) delete the paragraph following the bullet points and substitute **A planning obligation will be sought to secure**
 - 1) **the management of the biodiversity area,**
 - 2) **a contribution towards additional sports facilities in the town, and**
 - 3) **the relocation of the business within Sudbury or Great Cornard.**

3.76 POLICY HS09A ATKINS FULFORD EDGWORTH ROAD SUDBURY
(Site deleted from plan planning permission granted)

The Objections

498 Mr and Mrs D R Fulford

Object to the designation of a footpath through our land which will not happen unless it is part of a negotiated scheme for the whole of the Atkins Fulford site at Edgworth Road, Sudbury which is currently under consideration by the Council. Also, object to the designation at this time as it is misleading to the general public who may expect its creation in any event. It is unreasonable to designate this site solely for elderly persons when it is obviously ideal for so many other types of residential development and flies in the face of current Government policy and common sense.

499 Miss J I Fulford

The alterations proposed ignore the extant industrial permission, recognised in the present Local Plan by reducing the land area for possible redevelopment. The alterations equally take no regard of the Suffolk Structure Plan aiming to maximise the use of sites such as this. The proposed land use contravenes the guidance issued in PPG3 by imposing specific housing types instead of socially mixed development.

1188 Atkins Fulford Ltd/Edward Gittins And Associates

The extent of the "wooded area to be retained and managed" is excessive along the Mayors Walk on the western edge of the proposed housing area and this buffer should be reduced bordering the enlarged footpath.

Furthermore, the definition of the southern boundary of the proposed housing area is an interface with the wooded area which is subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This may sterilize part of the development area. Furthermore, other land within the existing industrial area is earmarked for landscaping at the foot of the Valley Walk. Whilst this latter element is accepted as a contribution to enhancing the valley landscape and serving as a screen to future development, it further erodes the amount of land available for future housing.

It is requested that the Council reviews the boundary of the housing allocation to achieve a more suitable balance between the developed and undeveloped parts of the site.

1189 Atkins Fulford Ltd/Edward Gittins And Associates

The requirement that the Atkins Fulford site should be redeveloped only for sheltered housing raises concern as to the reasonableness and legality for such a prescriptive policy in the emerging Local Plan.

1935 Mr H B Fulford

Because of the problems with heavy goods vehicles in Station Road and Edgworth road, the site should be 'redesigned' from industrial to residential use, it is totally unreasonable to allocate the whole site for old peoples housing. This is a substantial and important site close to the town centre, and is too large to be used only for old

peoples accommodation. There is already an old peoples home close to the site and there is the danger of creating an old peoples ghetto in the area. A good residential development suitable for families and children would be both more attractive and practical, being as it is close to the sports facilities, public transport, supermarket and town centre facilities.

2580 Mr P A Brandt

Objection against the proposal to allocate site for Sheltered housing only and objection against the widening of Mayor's Walk by 1-2 meters. Also, objection against the proposal for off-site flood compensatory flood storage and against the proposed upgrading of the existing public footpath to a shared cycle lane.

2582 Mrs E M Brandt

Objection against the proposal to allocate site for Sheltered housing only and objection against the widening of Mayor's Walk by 1-2 meters. Also, objection against the proposal for off-site flood compensatory flood storage and against the proposed upgrading of the existing public footpath to a shared cycle lane.

2583 Mrs E M Brandt

Objection against the restriction of the developable site to the footprint of the existing industrial buildings on the basis of:
There is an extant planning permission for an additional industrial building between the existing footprint and the Mayor's walk;
One of the strategic aims of the Suffolk Structure Plan 1996/2016 is to maximise the development potential of vacant under-used and derelict land and buildings in towns- closely reflecting the advice in PPG3;
It would be a tragedy if full use were not made of this potentially exceptionally attractive housing site.

Map DD1/1 HS09A

The Objections

2584 Mr P A Brandt

Objection against the restriction of the developable site to the footprint of the existing industrial buildings on the basis of:
There is an extant planning permission for an additional industrial building between the existing footprint and the Mayor's Walk;
One of the strategic aims of the Suffolk Structure Plan 1996/2016 is to maximise the development potential of vacant under-used and derelict land and buildings in towns - closely reflecting the advice in PPG3;
It would be a tragedy if full use were not made of this potentially exceptionally attractive housing site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.76.1 This site has been deleted from the plan as planning permission has been granted for development.

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.77 POLICY HS09A(d) NEW QUEENS ROAD SUDBURY

The Objections

See Appendix 9 at end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09A(d) Pre-Inquiry Change 53 and Pre-Inquiry Change 64 to Inset Map 1
(consistency with change to HS09A(d))

Delete text:

~~'A(d) New Queens Road, Sudbury~~

~~This site was identified through the Urban Capacity Study. It is a site of approximately 0.4 hectares comprises rear gardens of properties fronting on to Melford Road, Sudbury. This site does have the potential to expand by taking up additional areas of back gardens.~~

~~A new vehicular access into this site would need to be created to be served off New Queens Road or Abbey Road. Early discussions with the Transport Authority are advised.~~

~~A(d) Approximately 0.4 hectares of land off New Queens Road, Sudbury are allocated for 12 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:~~

- ~~• a suitable vehicular access into this site to the satisfaction of the Transport Authority.'~~

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.77.1 This allocation has been deleted from the plan on the basis of the objections raised. I agree with the deletion.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.78 POLICY HS09A(e) BROOKLANDS ROAD BRANTHAM

The Objections

See Appendix 10 at end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09A(e) Pre-Inquiry Change 54 and Pre-Inquiry Change 67 to Inset Map 13
(consistency with change to HS09A(e))

Delete text:

~~'A(e) Brooklands Road, Brantham~~

~~This site was identified in the Urban Capacity Study. It is about 0.6 hectares and comprises rear gardens of properties fronting onto Brantham Hill and Brooklands Road. The key to this site is providing a suitable vehicle access which will need to be served from Brookland Road. Early discussions with the Transport Authority area advised.~~

~~**A(e) Approximately 0.6 hectares of land at Brooklands Road, Brantham are allocated for 18 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:**~~

- ~~• **A suitable vehicular access into this site from Brooklands Road, to the satisfaction of the Transport Authority; Retention of important trees within the site where practical.**~~

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.78.1 This site has been deleted from the Plan. The main objections have been met.

RECOMMENDATION

Delete in accordance with Pre Inquiry Changes 54 and 67.

3.79 POLICY HS09C BEESTON'S COACH DEPOT LONG BESSELS, HADLEIGH (*site deleted from Plan planning permission granted*)

The Objections

1252 Mrs M K Newman

The road system (George St & Angel St) feeding these houses cannot cope with traffic already using these roads. For any future development consideration must be given priority- before giving permission- to the impact on surrounding area (extra noise, light pollution, extra traffic & allied service. Hadleigh is gradually losing all the character it had.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.79.1 Site deleted as planning permission has been granted.

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.80 POLICY HS09E ELMSETT MILL MILL LANE ELMSETT (*site deleted from Plan planning permission granted*)

The Objections

29 Mr T D Gray

Request to make reference to the Elmsett Airfield in the Local Plan especially when referring to the housing development at Elmsett Mill. Reference should also be made of the consequences of an airfield in the area in order to prevent people from saying they were unaware of its existence when buying property.

9206 ICI Corporate Real Estate/Boyer Planning

It is regretted that the reason for removing the Elmsett site is that planning permission has been given, and which has therefore rather

prejudged the Local Plan process and an assessment of alternative sites.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.80.1 Deleted from plan as planning permission granted

RECOMMENDATION

None

3.81 POLICY HS09G HIGH BANK MELFORD ROAD SADBURY

The Objections

570 GO-East

Object to site on the grounds that the site area proposed for development is less than 30 dwellings per hectare net. If this is the most sustainable development location it is vital that the most efficient use of the site is made. The level of density should be increased or the Plan should set out the reasons why such low densities are felt appropriate.

905 Estate of the late Mrs L Feneck/Percival & Co

The proposed point of vehicular access shown on the plan should be in the same place as that proposed by the detailed planning application submitted by the developers on the land adjoining.

1007 Mr and Mrs G E Moore

Development at High Bank, Melford Road will contribute to an already busy junction, at the Tesco end on to Springland Road, becoming worse. The roundabout is already a busy junction with shopping and residential traffic trying to join Springland Road. Further consideration should be made to this area at the Tesco junction before any further development of the Chilton site takes place.

1515 Mr C J Flux/Whymark & Moulton

In formulating proposals for development of the site, the Council is requested to consider repositioning the access point into the site to be toward the south-east corner. This would allow connection with the existing green track which connects to Melford Road (which is in the ownership of Mr. Flux). This could then be used as a greenway/cycle track to link the development south of the eastern bypass to Melford Road. A plan is attached indicating this alternative (see Rep 1515).

There is significant boundary landscaping which could be improved and maintained.

1574 Mr N R E Willcocks *please note this representation is recorded under HS09G but refers to site adj to Highbank and is therefore dealt with as an omission site.*

The access shown (on the plan) does not tie in with the access provided for in the approved planning application for land to the North East. If such access is not repositioned it will effectively seal off the land at Highfield Mill from the development for all time as there is no other alternative access, the existing access arrangements onto Melford Road being unsuitable. Should the land be developed, then the land at Highfield Mill will be surrounded by housing and as such this land would then constitute in-fill land and should therefore be included in the plan. The land at Highfield Mill has no beneficial use save for rough horse grazing. It has poor and potentially dangerous access and should therefore be treated as a non conforming use. Development of the Highfield Mill land could tie in well with the approved scheme to the North East. It is already well screened from the adjoining dwellings and the Melford Road by mature hedging.

2257 Suffolk County Council

Forms part of Priory site. Absolutely no direct vehicular access to Melford Road. Footway/cycleway link to Melford Road required.

5327 Suffolk County Council

The restriction on housing numbers is not a Local Transport Authority requirement.

9011 Mr R Powell/Tim Harbord Associates

The proposed allocation excludes a part of the garden adjacent to its south-western boundary which could be included without compromising the setting of High Bank, which is not a listed building. The enlargement of the site to include this land would result in a site capable of accommodating at least 27 units.

9014 Mr R Powell/Tim Harbord Associates

Very strong concerns about the pedestrian access to Melford Road, given the existing situation. At the point where the proposed footpath would meet up with Melford Road there is no pavement on the east side of the road and on either side of this point there is a steep bank with several trees growing close to the edge of the road. As such, visibility in each direction is poor and the footpath on the east side of Melford Road does not start until one reaches the Chaucer Road junction.

The footpath on the west side of Melford Road is very narrow in certain parts and well below the standard that would be regarded as appropriate or safe next to a derestricted and very busy bus road. In addition the footpath and road are regularly used by horses, which creates obstruction and delay for drivers.

Inset Map 1 HS09G

The Objections

9012 Mr R Powell/Tim Harbord Associates

The proposed allocation excludes a part of the garden adjacent to its south-western boundary which could be included without compromising the setting of High Bank (HS09G), which is not a listed building. The enlargement of the site to include this land would result in a site capable of accommodating at least 27 units.

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09G Pre-Inquiry Change 55

Amend to read:

'G High Bank, Melford Road, Sudbury.

This site forms part of a large residential garden that abuts an allocated site identified in the 1995 Local Plan. The Transport Authority has made clear that vehicular access to the site must be from the adjoining residential land to the east and that it would not permit vehicular access onto Melford Road. However, the adjoining land will serve many houses off a single access, so the District Council has requested an upper limit on the numbers of houses unless a second access is found.

The site has several important mature trees, which are protected by the Tree Preservation Order. ~~Due to this, and the Transport Authority's restrictions on the number of dwellings permitted a slightly lower density of 28 dwellings permitted a slightly lower density of 28 dwellings per hectare.~~ **Due to this and the restriction of a single access point a density of 28 dwellings per hectare is proposed. ..'**

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.81.1 The pedestrian link to Melford Road is a requirement of the highway authority. Whether it can be provided and at the same time ensure pedestrian safety will be a matter for the planning application stage. As such a link is desirable, on balance the requirement should be retained. Details of vehicular access will also be a matter for the planning application stage but the revised

fourth bullet point defines its location. There would be no direct vehicular access to Melford Road.

- 3.81.2 From my visit I consider that the concrete area which was presumably an area of old tennis court could be included within the allocated site without unacceptable visual impact or detriment to the setting of High Bank. However, whether additional units would be acceptable on highway grounds seems unlikely unless a second vehicular access into the land can be found. It is not clear to me from the proposed change whether the highway authority has imposed a particular numerical limit (as appears to be the case from the second paragraph of the policy), as it states in the Pre Inquiry Change 55 that the "District Council has *requested* an upper limit" Requested of whom? Or does this mean "imposed"? . This should be clarified.
- 3.81.3 The highway authority assesses the overall impact of proposals in the area in coming to its conclusions on the acceptability or otherwise of a particular scheme.

Adjoining Omission Site, west of Highfield Mill

- 3.81.4 I have concluded in my assessment of housing provision that with the Council's allocations and my recommendations there will be an adequate supply of land to meet Structure Plan requirements during the Plan period. No further allocations are necessary.
- 3.81.5 Apart from the field immediately to the south west of the mill which forms an important part of its setting, I find the remainder of the site to be "a no mans land." It is a wedge of land located between previously developed housing and allocation HS09G. Although good quality agricultural land, because of its size and location it is of no farming significance. The site is just outside the settlement boundary and adjacent to the Stour Valley Special Landscape Area and I consider it to be an integral part of the town. The site is as convenient for local facilities as the allocated site adjoining.
- 3.81.6 If a satisfactory access could be found during the Plan period I consider it has potential for future development as a windfall site. I accept that care would need to be taken to ensure that trees and hedgerows are

substantially retained. These features and the shape of the site would restrict its development. However, I do not consider that there should be any greater impact on High Bank from the development of the omission site than there would be from allocation HS09G.

RECOMMENDATION

Clarify the wording of Pre Inquiry Change 55 –when clarified modify in accordance with it.

3.82 POLICY HS09G(a) PEOPLE'S PARK SUDBURY

The Objections

See Appendix 11 at the end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09G(a) Pre-Inquiry Change 56

Amend policy to read: 'Approximately 4.5 hectares (2.3 hectares net) of land at Waldingfield Road, Sudbury are allocated for 100 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide: -

New bullet point

- **the undertaking of flood risk, groundwater and land contamination assessments and the implementation of any resulting mitigating measures required prior to development;'**

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.82.1 This site is set within extensive areas of housing north of the town centre. Primary, middle and upper schools are in close proximity
- 3.82.2 In 1984 no objection was raised to a submission for the erection of a hospital and ancillary offices and car parking on the objection site. In 1993 30 dwellings and 8 flats were allowed on appeal on part of People's Park.

A later outline application in 1998 was submitted for the erection of a community hospital and provision of open space. It was resolved to grant permission subject to a legal agreement which was never completed, as an alternative site was identified for the community hospital.

- 3.82.3 Between the First and Second Deposit Draft versions of the emerging Plan it was confirmed that the community hospital would not be built on People's Park. The Plan was, therefore, revised by introducing a mixture of housing and open space on the site under Policy HS09Ga.
- 3.82.4 It seems to me that from the above history of the site the principle of developing the land while retaining some open space was established some years ago. From my visit I consider the site to be in a sustainable location for housing, well related to the Town Centre with good transport links.
- 3.82.5 Peoples Park is not at present public open space, although it has been used for informal recreation. I understand that since I sat at Inquiry an attempt has been made to register People's Park as common land under the Commons Registration Act 1965 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). Even if successful this does not alter my view that part of the site is suitable for housing, it may merely preclude its use for that purpose. Babergh Council has made it clear they are unable to secure the site for public open space.
- 3.82.6 The Suffolk Wildlife Trust carried out an ecological survey of the site and found it of low ecological value. This was confirmed by The Landscape Partnership which also considered its importance is heightened by its urban location. Although from my visit I saw a wide variety of plant growth, most of these are common species. With a suitable management plan wildlife and public access could reasonably co-exist. This management Plan could include a damp marginal habitat, shrub and tree cover on long grass and additional hedgerows.

- 3.82.7 Opportunity should also be taken to provide a Local Equipped Play Area and a Neighbourhood Equipped Play Area. These would require adequate buffer zones. The Council has a protocol of *suggested* minimum separation distances from houses but I consider the actual distance would depend upon the particular activities envisaged. It is stated that data held by the Council shows that there is a substantial under provision of sports outdoor play space relative to NPFA standard in the town. In my view the open space on the allocation site should not be "sports" orientated, it should consist of informal open space with more formal Local and Neighbourhood Play Areas to serve an identified deficiency.
- 3.82.8 The West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust argues that of the 4.5 hectares, some 2.7 should be allocated for housing with 1.8 hectares of open space instead of the 50/50 split proposed by the Council.
- 3.82.9 The arrangement on Figure 03b by The Landscape Partnership shows how the site could be laid out. I believe this concept to be acceptable, in that it provides a swathe of informal open space separating yet linking the two housing areas. This option 2 also provides a buffer zone alongside the road and a NEAP separated from existing and proposed housing.
- 3.82.10 Neither the Council nor the objector has carried out any assessment of informal open space as advised in Planning Policy Guidance No. 17 so there is no quantifiable evidence to substantiate either the 2.3 ha. proposed by the Council or the 1.8 ha suggested by the objector. However, as only 1.25 hectares were reserved for open space, until required for healthcare use, in the Adopted Local Plan it can only be assumed that the Council considered that area to be adequate at that time and this was the amount that those reading that Plan would have expected to be provided, temporarily at least. The Council now argues that 50% of the site is the *maximum* that can reasonably be sought for open space.
- 3.82.11 I find nothing magical in the 50% or 40% figures, particularly as neither was based on a detailed assessment of open space. However, in my view Figure 3b shows one way the site could be developed,

incorporating housing and Local and Neighbourhood Play Areas, and a swathe of open space. Whether it is the final solution or not it indicates that an arbitrary figure for housing or for open space has no particular planning merit. I would suggest deleting reference to "2.3 ha net" for housing in the policy and inserting a **minimum of 100 houses** and in the first bullet point requiring **not less than 1.8 ha of open space**. This will provide flexibility at the planning application stage dependent upon the merits of the layout proposed. There may be a gain in the number of houses accommodated on site.

- 3.82.12 I consider the wording of the second bullet point of the policy would be more accurately worded if it referred to the **north-east**. Otherwise I believe this second bullet point which requires the upgrading and integration of the adjacent open space is flexible enough to allow for the relocation of the LEAP or NEAP if required.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan by deleting

- a) reference to 2.3 hectares net from Policy HS09Ga and insert a **minimum of** before 100 houses.
- b) "2.3 hectares of open space" from the first bullet point and insert **not less than 1.8 ha of open space**
- c) deleting "east" and inserting **north-east** in second bullet of Policy HS09Ga and
- d) Modify in accordance with Pre Inquiry Change 56

3.83 POLICY HS09H GRAYS CLOSE HADLEIGH

See Appendix 12 at the end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.83.1 I have dealt with the proposed allocation of the Lady Lane site for both housing and employment use in this Chapter and also Chapter 4 - of the Plan as the two are part of a comprehensive scheme.
- 3.83.2 The allocation for housing and employment was included at the Second Deposit Stage of the Local Plan in 2001

following an employment study, which identified a shortage of employment land within the district during the plan period.

- 3.83.3 I am not repeating here my assessment of housing principles and policies for the district. These have been dealt with in my Introduction to this Chapter.
- 3.83.4 The Topic Paper on Economy and Employment (CD93) sets out the strategic context and the key findings in the Employment Land Study 2002 (CD42), updated and confirmed by Donaldsons in 2004. These show that the "district already suffers from serious shortages of the right levels and types of employment land in the right locations to meet existing let alone future demand". As there were no suitable brownfield sites in Hadleigh the Council then looked at an urban extension in accordance with advice in Planning Policy Guidance No. 3. The County Structure Plan in the context of sustainable development states that "most employment uses should continue to be located in or near towns which are the focus of labour supply, service provision and communication networks."
- 3.83.5 It is sufficient to add that the objection site is well located having regard to transport trips, transport modes, relationship with a thriving community and to the economic growth of Hadleigh, the second largest town in the district. I also understand that both the Hadleigh Primary and High Schools have to capacity sufficient to cope with the proposed housing development. The mixture of housing and employment will attempt to create a balanced community. Some employees will come from outside the town but if they do they will have direct access to the site from the A1071 off the new roundabout without the need to pass through the town or residential areas. The roundabout would also bring benefits by reducing the speed of traffic along this section of the A1071 and creating a safer junction.
- 3.83.6 Having regard to the topography of the area and the setting of Hadleigh I believe the site is the only large area of land which is well located for a mixed use development. The site is not prominent in the wider landscape. It would make effective use of land with good access to the A1071. I agree with the highway authority that regardless of a difference in view about its detailed location an engineering

solution to the provision of access into the site can be found, but this detail is not a matter for the Local Plan. All that is needed at this stage is for the roundabout to be shown diagrammatically as on the Inset Map.

- 3.83.7 The Lady Lane Consortium consists of four of the five owners of the Grays Close site. They accept the principle of the development but argue for an increase in the size of the housing allocation, as the various costs related to the development would make the scheme too small to be viable. The fifth owner is not involved but the land would need to be an integral part of the overall development scheme to enable it to be developed in the future.
- 3.83.8 The development of the site for housing and employment uses would involve a costly new roundabout off the A1071 together with other extensive development costs, perhaps including a water main booster station. From the illustrative sketch layouts only a short section of the new road would be dual purpose. It would then split to serve the housing and employment areas separately. Subject to the sections of the road being built to appropriate standards off the new roundabout this would be an acceptable access solution. A landscape assessment prepared for the Objectors indicates how the land could be laid out for the various uses, housing, employment, roads, open space and structural landscaping. This is shown on Fig 02 Masterplan prepared by The Landscape Partnership.
- 3.83.9 The Council accepts that the development of the Grays Lane site would involve provision of 20 to 35% affordable housing, the provision of open space and landscaping, a site within the employment area as a waste transfer station, and if necessary education contributions. These are in addition to the infrastructure costs identified above.
- 3.83.10 In my view the Masterplan indicates a practical form of development, making best use of the public footpath and wildlife corridors and providing a neighbourhood park and lagoons to improve drainage. The Council has accepted the importance of viability and the eastern boundary has been revised in accordance with the Masterplan to provide more housing. A revised Inset Map 10 Appendix 1A has been produced showing this and also a revision to the south western boundary. From my visit to the site I find no reason to disagree with the change to an arbitrary eastern

boundary, or the change to avoid structural planting along the route of a gas pipeline along the south western boundary. The original estimate of 90 houses on 3 ha, albeit perhaps a conservative estimate of the potential of the site, would on the same basis of calculation now deliver a minimum of 130 dwellings on 4.4 ha. Again this is a conservative figure. There remains a difference of view whether Area 3 of .69 ha on Figure 02 should be allocated for housing or employment.

- 3.83.11 I do not consider the 1.24 hectares of additional housing to be excessive, particularly having regard to Lady Lane being a sustainable site for both housing and employment in Hadleigh. I also believe from my site visit that development on Area 3 (.69 hectares) would have a better relationship with the adjoining neighbourhood park if it were smaller scale housing, rather than more dominant employment uses.
- 3.83.12 In coming to this conclusion I have also had regard to my consideration of housing supply in the Introduction to the Settlement Policy and Housing Chapter of the Plan, and my recommendations that certain allocated sites should be deleted from the Plan. Additional housing on this site would compensate for these losses in a more sustainable location. My introduction also deals with the need in this predominantly rural district to allocate greenfield sites to meet the housing supply requirements of the Structure Plan.
- 3.83.13 Both the Council and the Objectors have suggested revised wording of Policies HS09H and EM02b to clarify their intent. I am inclined to the view that the Council's second revision of Appendix 2 forms the basis of an acceptable policy. It includes a matter raised by Objectors that a network of pedestrian and cycleways be provided through the site linking Grays Close, Lady Lane and Tower Mill Lane.
- 3.83.14 I consider it reasonable to impose a limit on the number of dwellings served without the provision of the new roundabout. The highway authority did not mention in its evidence the criterion that no more than 20 dwellings are completed or occupied prior to the construction of the roundabout but if this is an agreed figure between the Council and the highway authority I would have no quarrel

with it. I also consider that with a comprehensive mixed-use development that any enabling infrastructure should be properly planned for and provided at appropriate stages in the development. The infrastructure requirements should be made clear in the Local Plan policies so that all those reading the plan are aware of what is expected. I understand a Development Brief for the site is already under consideration by the Council to supplement the policies in the Local Plan.

- 3.83.15 A major concern of residents is the potential for an increase in flooding experienced in the area of The Green part of the built up area to the south west of the proposed site. However, from the assessment carried out on water surface drainage and flooding, a sustainable drainage system with water balancing areas could be created which would also alleviate existing flooding problems. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust carried out ecological surveys and the conservation value of the site was assessed as being low. With additional lagoons for drainage the biodiversity of the Wilderness area would be enhanced. It would need to be managed as an urban nature reserve. The Environment Agency has not raised any objection to the proposed development subject to a Flood Risk Assessment to ensure that the surface run off can be controlled, ideally through a sustainable drainage scheme. I am satisfied that a SuDS solution can be found.
- 3.83.16 Greenfield land is only released to meet a specific identified need for employment and housing development in accordance with government guidelines. Its release would not create a precedent for the development of further land during the Plan period.
- 3.83.17 Surveys necessary to determine the location and extent of wildlife corridors and the impact of the development on badgers would be assessed at the development brief or planning application stage. The latest revised wording of Policy EM02b suggested by the Council requires the creation of landscaped areas and wildlife corridors.
- 3.83.18 The Environment Agency recommends that a flood risk assessment is carried out to ensure that surface water run-off can be controlled ideally through the use of sustainable drainage systems. A SuDs scheme is in fact proposed by

the consultants within a proposed Neighbourhood Park and The Wilderness for balanced wetland/flow control.

- 3.83.19 Specific reference to mitigation measures may need to be included in the final version of a development brief as the site is apparently within the 250 metre buffer zone of a landfill site.
- 3.83.20 The development of any site increases traffic. However, the employment site at Grays Close is not only well located for access by local residents but also for access to the main road. It is also part of mixed use development with a potential to provide some jobs for occupiers of the new houses. Hadleigh has been identified as one of districts most sustainable locations with sound provision for non car travel. In my view it is unlikely that the additional traffic from the employment site would have a noticeable impact on the town centre.
- 3.83.21 I consider that from the Masterplan presented at Inquiry that the amenities of adjoining residents will be protected, both by the form of the layout and the juxtaposition of uses, but also by structural landscaping. Although this is not a planning matter it is unlikely that devaluation of local housing would occur because of the relationship of housing to employment. Both fencing for amenity and security and boundary planting would be a matter to be considered at the planning application stage.
- 3.83.22 The site has been identified to sustain an appropriate level of growth in the local economy. The Lady Lane Industrial site has been extended with encouraging take up. A mixed use site is generally more successful than a single use site and there is no evidence to indicate that the employment site would not fulfil its function during the Plan period.
- 3.83.23 From the Masterplan there is no indication that the footpaths would need to be diverted to accommodate the development. I do not consider it necessary for a successful development but any proposal to divert would no doubt be dealt with on its own merits.
- 3.83.24 Conditions imposed on planning permissions in accordance with advice in Circular 11/95 are enforceable.

- 3.83.25 Although not a Local Plan matter as this site will be developed by the private sector I would not expect it to have an impact on Council staffing levels.
- 3.83.26 From the layout shown it is likely that the whole of the road would be in constant use. A mixed use development is generally more secure than a separate industrial site and is less likely to encourage crime.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Plan be modified by revising the wording of Policy HS09H and the eastern and south western boundary on Inset Map 10 (Appendix 1A)

H Approximately 16.4 hectares of land at Grays Close, Hadleigh, are allocated for a mixed-use development comprising housing, employment and open space. Approximately 4.4 hectares (excluding green/amenity/wildlife corridors) are allocated for 130 houses. Proposals for development will incorporate:

- retention and enhancement of the existing trees and hedgerows on the southern boundary of the site, as shown on the Proposals map;
- an area of 3.5 hectares of open space to be located at the south western end of the site including a sustainable drainage system for the development: and
- provision for substantial landscaping measures to create a new eastern boundary to the site, and green/amenity and wildlife corridors within the development, particularly along the route of footpath 24;
- a linked network of pedestrian and cycle ways through the site linking to Grays Close, Lady Lane and Tower Mill Lane;

providing that:

- No more than 5 dwellings are to be served off Grays Close. The remainder of the site to be served off a new access road from Lady Lane and a new roundabout off the Lady Lane/Hadleigh by pass junction; and
- No more than 20 dwellings shall be completed and occupied in advance of the new roundabout access off the Hadleigh by- pass being built.

Note: The wording of Policy EM02b has been revised in the Employment Chapter of the Plan.

3.84 POLICY HS09I GALLOWS HILL HADLEIGH

The Objections

572 GO-East

Object to site on the grounds that the site are proposed for development at less than 30 dwellings per ha net. If this are the most sustainable development location it is vital that the most efficient use of the site is made. The level of density should be increased or the Plan should set out the reasons why such low densities area felt appropriate.

1068 Hadleigh Town Council

Guidelines for residential developments: a net density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per ha with greater density where there is good public transport accessibility. Most new sites in Hadleigh should expect a density towards the upper end of the range (ie. Nearer to 50 dwellings per ha than 30). As a result more homes should be planned for the Coach Depots sites and the Grays Close site. If these extra allocations are made the site on Gallows Hill and any other infill-type development in the sensitive areas of the town would not be required for the life of this plan and could be held back for use next time. The District Council indicates to support increasing housing densities but does not seem to be applying this approach in Hadleigh.

1249 Mrs M K Newman

Any building on Gallows Hill will turn it into another Benton Street where cars are parked which are a nuisance.

1546 Mrs H Toth

The proposed site is unsuitable for residential development. The site is in a prominent elevated position at one of the main entrances to the town and is clearly visible when approaching from the east or the north. Any development here will be very intrusive and will change an attractive green landscape into yet another track of houses.

1814 Tarmac Southern Ltd/First City Ltd

The Plan identifies the site suitable for 10 dwellings but the figure is indicative and text should confirm that all figures are approximate and subject to confirmation at a later stage. A vehicular access at the northern end of the site off Gallows Hill is proposed. It may be the best location however rather than specify the point at which the site is to be accessed it would be best resolved when detailed proposals for the development are submitted. Disagree with the

assertion that the development of the site is likely to have an adverse impact upon the landscape. The Special Landscape designation pre-dates the construction of the bypass that has severed the site from the wider countryside and consequently has strong defensible boundaries on all sides and relates more to the built-up area than the wider landscape. In addition, the redevelopment of the former MOD site has established the principle of development inside the line of the bypass. The site would therefore not have an adverse impact on the landscape. The site area given in the plan (net developable area and proposed structural landscaping) is 0.85ha and not 1.33ha.

2799 Suffolk Preservation Society

Concern for intrusion onto the skyline.

3549 Tarmac Southern Limited/First City Limited

Single storey building not justified delete last bullet point.

5008 Mr and Mrs D M Simpson

Object to the Highbank along the Bypass.

6083 Mr R R Lichtensteiger-Keeble

The proposal suggest the construction of a substantial embankment to help mitigate the adverse visual effects of any new housing on this site. Policy CR05 sets out the intentions to protect the character of the SLA through the strict control of development. Therefore maintain this banking surrounding a residential development at this site is not acceptable because this scheme would intrude into this prominent setting to an undesirable degree.

6084 Mr R R Lichtensteiger-Keeble

Objector noted that according to CR05 the Gallows Hill site should only be developed for residential purposes if there is an overriding national or regional need and there are no alternative sites available. This proposal does not stem from a demand to satisfy national or regional interests. There remains the question of whether there are alternative sites available. The Government's policies for meeting new housing needs are based on the principles of focusing on existing towns and villages. It is however apparent that the Council has concluded meeting local demand cannot be met within Hadleigh and therefore the new Local Plan must to look at land outside the existing built up area boundary.

6624 Mr B J Plumb

Object to the loss of visual amenity. It is obvious that since the First Deposit Draft much consideration has been given to the visual impact of the proposed development. Also the impact that such development would have on the existing residents of this part of the Gallows Hill. The matter has been further aggravated by the introduction in the Second Deposit Draft with the construction of a substantial embankment with enhanced structural landscaping on the North East corner with the objective of minimising the visual

impact from the valley. No consideration has been given to the effect this will have on the view of the valley and beyond at present enjoyed by the residents and those who use the public footpaths/bridle paths in the Gallows hill area.

7501 Hadleigh Town Council

It is not convinced about the scale of the earth mounding proposed for the site. The mounding seems to be for protecting the views across the river valley to/from Aldham Mill hill (mainly). This view is no longer of any great merit as a result of the development on the former MOD site. A reduction in the extent of earth mounding offers more land for housing.

7503 Hadleigh Town Council

No explanation is given for the requirement for only single story homes. Well designed two storey small units are possible if the mounding is effective.

7827 House Builders Federation

It is stated that land is allocated for 10 houses. However the 2nd Deposit Draft includes a new requirement that development to be restricted to single storey dwellings. A correction is therefore required.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.84.1 Because of the rural nature of the district I have accepted elsewhere in my report that there will be a need to develop some greenfield sites to meet Structure Plan housing requirements during the Plan period. Hadleigh, being the second largest town in the district should accommodate some of that growth.
- 3.84.2 This is a prominent site where although I accept development in principle, the impact of development would need to be mitigated. I find it difficult to assess how far the 0.4 hectares of earth moulding will restrict the development of the remaining 0.6 hectares. The number of dwellings to be accommodated will need to be determined at the planning application stage. Again depending upon the form of the earth moulding and structural planting whether it will be necessary to limit all or some of the housing to single storey is difficult to determine. On balance I consider this should be left open.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan by

- a) substituting **dwelling**s for "houses" in the first paragraph of the policy.
 - b) deleting the last bullet point restricting the development to single storey dwellings.
-

3.85 POLICY HS09J SHAWLANDS AVENUE GREAT CORNARD

The Objections

See Appendix 13 at end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09J Pre-Inquiry Change 57

Amend text to read: 'The Transport Authority has reported that this site requires extensive measures to make this acceptable. These include providing:

- A right turn lane on Shawlands Avenue (requiring widening the east side of the carriage way);
- One additional central island
- Frontage footpath and pelican crossing;
- Footpath/cycleway links to Languidic Close.

~~The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has said that this site has a "high" ecological value. In 1999 this site was surveyed and found to have species diverse grassland which supports a good range of species found on chalky boulder clay soils including orchids, ladies bedstraw and field scabious amongst the more uncommon plants. Twelve species of butterfly and a good range of birds were also recorded. The site is known to support a thriving population of common lizard and slow worm which are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.~~ **The Suffolk Wildlife Trust surveyed the site in September 2003 and found to have medium conservation value. It is important that native Poplars on site are preserved in development and ecological connectivity through the site is retained. Further surveys for reptiles should be undertaken and mitigation measures incorporated within the development if appropriate. ...'**

The Objections

13223 Great Cornard Parish Council

Object to downgrading of ecological value of the site.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.85.1 This site is steeply sloping and would result in development intruding on the elevated setting of the village and into attractive landscape. The proposed development would encroach on to the upper slopes of the Stour Valley well beyond the existing settlement on to land that forms the backdrop to Great Cornard and the terracing effect would be detrimental to the area. The site has a poor relationship to the existing urban edge and I consider the visual impact would be unacceptable. Even the Council's own sustainability appraisal is not generally favourable. Not a sustainable site.
- 3.85.2 The site is well screened from the north, south and east and does not impact on distant views, but the distant views are not critical. The extension of the country park was given great weight but I do not consider this to be overriding
- 3.85.3 There would also be an unsatisfactory access through a children's play area. The site would be very expensive to develop because of necessary highway improvements which of themselves would result in an unacceptable degree of further urbanisation.
- 3.85.4 Part of the site appears to be nature habitat and development would have an unacceptable impact on an area of biodiversity which should be left undisturbed. Suffolk Wildlife Trust surveyed the site and found it of medium conservation value. The Council's own Environmental Appraisal assessment considered that the site was unacceptable for development.
- 3.85.5 I have concluded elsewhere in my report that the Carson Lane omission OM164 is preferable and have recommended accordingly. Site HS09J should be deleted from the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Delete allocation HS09J from the Plan

3.86 POLICY HS09K BURES ROAD GREAT CORNARD

The Objections

See Appendix 14 at end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.86.1 Great Cornard is identified as a town under Policy HS 01. It is a sustainable settlement where additional development can be accommodated.
- 3.86.2 The site has been part of the Local Plan for housing since 1992 when its allocation was approved by a previous Planning Inspector. The site was incorporated into the adopted 1995 Local Plan and was shown to accommodate 200 houses. Since then on the basis of government advice on minimum densities to make best use of land the number of dwellings was increased to 270. The Council later resolved to grant planning permission in 2004 for a development of 306 houses, construction of accesses and estate roads, new rugby club facilities and public open space.
- 3.86.3 The Secretary of State has now authorised a planning obligation to secure affordable housing, relocation of club facilities, open space and landscaping, which I understand is imminent.
- 3.86.4 As full planning permission has been granted for development, the highway, infrastructure, environmental and density considerations have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and are no longer matters for me to consider
- 3.86.5 At the time of adoption of the Plan, depending upon progress on site, the Council will need to determine whether it should remain an allocation or be categorised as a commitment.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.87 POLICY HS09L ROTHERHAM ROAD BILDESTON

The Objections

1003 Mr J D B Milner

The proposed route for the upgraded footpath and cycle link is inappropriate as it is of limited width and subject to vehicular access. The blind bend between the rear of the Post Office and Brook Cottage is an existing hazard. The County Highway Authority has resisted pressure from BDC to upgrade the route. BDC has not consulted neighbouring properties on this issue. Desirable in principle, but the proposed requirement would be impractical, unsafe and detrimental to good planning.

1228 Mrs B Jacobs/Neil Ward Associates

The site is generally more intrusive and less sustainable than the site propose for development at the northern end of Glemsford. The former site also fails to meet the requirements of Structure Plan Policy CS3(e). Furthermore, to allocate a site contrary to established development plan policies in order to achieve a planning gain for the community which is unrelated to the development proposed is contrary to Government advice.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.87.1 I presume that whatever detailed objections there were to the development have been overcome as from my inspection I saw that building works were being carried out on site

3.87.2 Bildeston is identified as a sustainable village under Policy HS03 where additional housing can be accommodated. I have considered the merits of Glemsford elsewhere in my report.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.88 POLICY HS09M FRIENDS FIELD/TAWNEYS RIDE BURES ST MARY

The Objections

See Appendix 15 at end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.88.1 Bures St Mary is identified in Policy HS03 as a sustainable village because it has a wide range of facilities.
- 3.88.2 The site is about 1.5ha and has development on three sides. It is allocated for 40 dwellings on 1.3ha with 0.2 remaining as open space. Improved cycling and pedestrian access are proposed to the village centre. The site is within the Conservation Area and Special Landscape Area.
- 3.88.3 The site was identified for development in the issues report in Jan 1999 at which time the Parish Council supported its use for housing. It was subsequently allocated for housing partially on the basis of that support and also because the District Council considered that there was a local need to provide some housing in rural locations in sustainable villages.
- 3.88.4 In my view a balance has to be struck between development in urban and rural areas, and in rural areas sustainable villages are the appropriate locations for some development. This site was previously rejected for development in the late 1980's but at that time the District Council had not identified a need for further local housing development. When it did identify such a need, this need was supported by the Parish Council, and the site included in the Local Plan.
- 3.88.5 The Objectors state that a village store has closed and there is now only a delicatessen and that facilities which were in place when the plan was first prepared are no longer in the village. I accept that shops, services and facilities change but an increase in population would help support existing facilities.
- 3.88.6 The site is within a Conservation Area and a Special Landscape Area. Its Conservation Area designation is not a matter for the local plan but from my visit I saw

no features on site which would preclude its development. The two site appraisals came up with differing results. It seems to me the reason for this is that it is only in the Commentary of the Site Appraisal that mitigation measures are listed, and merely referring to the Impact column is confusing.

- 3.88.7 The site is in an SLA but the Suffolk Wildlife Trust has carried out an ecological survey and determined that the site has limited conservation value. An important hedgerow would be retained as part of the development and the open space would include the oak trees at the Tawneys Ride end of the site.
- 3.88.8 The objectors are concerned about the impact on the village school. However, the education authority has raised no objection to the proposed allocation in the village and I understand that a number of out of catchment children are taught at the school.
- 3.88.9 Although I noted that there are some parking problems on both estates the new development will be self-contained and provide the parking necessary for the new housing. There would be increased traffic using existing roads but this would not involve large volumes of traffic. From my visit I consider that there are a number of access options and if necessary existing junctions within the estate could be subject to improved traffic management measures. The County Council as highway authority has not raised any objection in principle to the development of 40 dwellings on highway safety grounds.
- 3.88.10 The Parish Council accepts some development in the village but is concerned about the density proposed. The precise numbers of dwellings would need to be determined at the planning application stage. However, the proposed density is at the lower end of government guidelines and from my visit to the area I do not consider housing at such a density would be out of keeping with the character of the adjacent residential area.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.89 POLICY HS09N GOODLANDS FARM DAKING AVENUE BOXFORD

The Objections

See Appendix 16 at end of this chapter for details of objections

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09N Pre-Inquiry Change 58

Amend text and policy: 'Several roads in Boxford suffer traffic congestion. Swan Street, the feeder road into Daking Avenue is recognized as being congested by Suffolk County Council which, for transport reasons, stipulates an upper limit of 20 dwellings which is below the standard density range. A higher number would be unacceptable. The District Council accepts the restriction on the numbers of dwellings, and considers this a valid reason for the not complying with its density policy. The Transport Authority has also specified that the cul-de-sac on Daking Avenue will need extending. Several local people have raised concerns about the need to provide land for off street parking behind properties on Swan Street. The District Council would support this initiative if it was self financing as a residents shared car park or one owned and managed by the local community. A potential site has been marked on the Proposal Map. Approximately 0.7 hectares of land at Goodlands Farm, Boxford, are allocated for 20 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:

(1st bullet)

- vehicular access from Daking Avenue;

(5th Bullet)

- a small informal car park for visitors to the recreational area and overspill car parking for residents of Daking Avenue, as shown on the Proposals Map. '

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.89.1 Boxford is shown to be a reasonably sustainable settlement under Policy HS03 and is a large village with

enough facilities to accommodate growth. This is not merely to serve village needs but to provide a balance between urban and rural housing for the district to meet Structure Plan requirements during the Plan period.

- 3.89.2 The site which adjoins the conservation area is occupied by a range of derelict buildings. It is also untidy and contributes little to the visual appearance of the village. Its development would not have any impact on the ecological sensitive areas near the river, which in any event would be enhanced by the layout of an area of open space. As part of a comprehensive scheme a listed barn would also be refurbished and landscaping provided. Because of the low density any impact on the conservation area and adjoining residents could be readily safeguarded. Development should be a considerable visual improvement. I consider the site to be suitable for development.
- 3.89.3 All development creates some additional traffic but the allocation is restricted to 20 dwellings for highway reasons. Access would be from Daking Avenue but vehicles would feed into Swan Street.
- 3.89.4 This is a low density development having regard to government guidance. As the proposal also includes modest informal car parks for visitors and overspill car parking for residents I consider it most unlikely the development, of itself, would have an unacceptable impact on the highway network or the village roads, or on the countryside. However, it is not clear to me from the evidence or from my visits whether the decision to accept 20 dwellings was taken in the knowledge that other development at the upper end of Swan Street would take place. If such development of 15 affordable homes was foreseen and planned for when the 20 dwellings were agreed as part of the policy there is no change of circumstances. If they were not taken into account the numbers may need to be revisited.
- 3.89.5 Details of layout, access, vehicular, pedestrian and cycling will be a matter for the highway authority to consider at the planning applications stage.

3.89.6 There is a community car park proposed for the village under Policy TP22 and additional parking to serve the recreation area and residents.

3.89.7 I have dealt with the merits of Glemsford as a sustainable village elsewhere in my report.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to the highway authority being satisfied about the matter raised by me in paragraph 3.89.5 above modify the plan in accordance with Pre Inquiry Change 58

3.90 POLICY HS090 STATION ROAD LONG MELFORD (*site has been removed from the plan*)

The Objections

439 The Occupier

Building of extra houses will increase the water run-off resulting in flooding specifically the house no 20/21 Southgate Street. Recent heavy rains nearly caused flooding to various properties and any extra burden will result in homes being severely damaged.

1966 Barratt Eastern Counties/D L & P Consultants Ltd

Object to the provision of 10 houses. This appears to be a wasteful use of land given the gross site area of 0.67ha. Also, question whether development of the site would have an acceptable co-relationship with the adjacent county wildlife site. Therefore land should not be allocated for housing.

7109 Melford Place Farms/Whymark & Moulton

The site was allocated within the First Deposit Draft for a development of 10 houses.

The site has been omitted from the Second Deposit Draft for unexplained reasons.

Other sites less sustainable and in impractical situations have been allocated within the Second Deposit Draft. This site should be reallocated within the Local Plan.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.90.1 Although this site was put forward in the 1st Deposit Draft for 10 houses the site gained no beneficial scores in the Sustainability Appraisal. It seems to me that with the range of objections raised to its development, including inadequate access,

affect on biodiversity, impact on an ecological buffer zone and possible flooding, that it would not be appropriate to allocate the site for housing.

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.91 POLICY HS09P MALTINGS FARM WHATFIELD ROAD ELMSETT

The Objections

62 Winchester Homes Ltd/John Peacock Planning

The general policy of residential development as promoted by the Policy HS09 (Paragraph P) is fully supported.

However, the part of the policy which requires the "retaining and restoring of the pond" is an onerous and inappropriate requirement as the pond is within an entirely separate ownership and curtilage. It is not associated with the site for residential redevelopment. Therefore this part is objected.

With regards to the access arrangement, it should be centrally sited within the plot frontage and it doesn't allow for maximum visibility and this is unacceptable. Therefore this part of the policy is objected and the associated plan.

156 Mr N Monk

Do not object to development. However, the area should have a band of trees on the eastern boundary. Any housing development should be of a low density. Before demolition of agricultural buildings, a thorough rat disinfestation should be done. Also, special precautions should be taken during demolition of existing buildings which have extensive asbestos sheetings in the construction. The stream flowing on or near the northern boundary of the site should not be detrimentally affected by any new development.

577 GO-East

Object to site on the grounds that the site are proposed for development at less than 30 dwellings per ha net. If this is the most sustainable development location it is vital that the most efficient use of the site is made. The level of density should be increased or the Plan should set out the reasons why such low densities area felt appropriate.

896 Mr M W Stock

Development on both this site and Elmsett Mill would result in 25-30 houses. Assume 2 cars per household together with proposed 2

houses at the Old Garage site, it could result in an additional 60 cars using a quiet rural lane. These two sites fail on the Transport Efficiency criteria as they will increase car trips and have poor access to other transport modes. These two proposals will place strain on existing village infrastructure particularly at the school. On its own the Maltings Farm proposal may be acceptable however including both sites as prospective developments the overall impact on Whatfield and the village as a whole is unacceptable. There are few pavements in the village and the roads are narrow country lanes. The current level of traffic is unacceptable and increase would dramatically reduce the safety of users particularly walkers, cyclist and horse riders.

1234 Mrs B Jacobs/Neil Ward Associates

The site is generally more intrusive and less sustainable than the site propose for development at the northern end of Glemsford. The former site also fails to meet the requirements of Structure Plan Policy CS3(e). Furthermore, to allocate a site contrary to established development plan policies in order to achieve a planning gain for the community which is unrelated to the development proposed is contrary to Government advice.

1967 Barratt Eastern Counties/D L & P Consultants Ltd

Object to allocation of 1.33ha of land for the provision of 10 houses. Notwithstanding the requirement to convey 0.5ha village green. Consider that this allocation fails to meet the Council's own test of Policy HS11 in respect of density and we question whether the requirements to create a village green is justifiable in proportion to the developable area remaining. Also, object in principle to the allocation of further land at Elmsett. Consider the immediate needs of the settlement may be catered for by Site HS09E and that Elmsett is not a large village with a wide range of services capable of being considered as a rural service centre.

2116 ICI Corporate Real Estate/Boyer Planning

The village offers a limited range of services, and the land is poorly related in respect of access to employment and public transport. This is a low density settlement, and new housing will lead to significant increased car usage.

2848 Elmsett Parish Council

The development will place pressure on the village hall and community facilities. In addition, there is no mention of low cost housing or housing for rent. The environmental disbenefits are traffic and sustainability based. The junction of the site access to Whatfield Road is substandard and it will need careful siting. The transport shortcomings are recognised by the environmental assessment but the conclusion that a score of 9-2 means that the site has an excellent environmental assessment is flawed.

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09P Pre-Inquiry Change 59

Correction to policy:

'Approximately ~~1.2~~ ~~4.3~~ hectares (~~0.7~~ ~~hectares~~ ~~net~~) of land at Maltings Farm, Whatfield Road, Elmsett, are allocated for 10 houses. Proposals for development will be required to provide for:

(2nd bullet)

- ~~1.1~~ **0.5** hectares of village green to be conveyed into public ownership, as shown on the Proposals Map, which is accessible to the public for use as informal recreation and amenity purposes; ...'

The Objections

None

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Inset Map 11 (Policy HS09P) Corrected scale 1:2500 Pre-Inquiry Change 66

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.91.1 Elmsett is a small village of about 270 dwellings with few facilities. There is a shop/post office, a primary school, a public house and a hairdresser. Elmsett is classified as a village under Policy HS02, where new housing will take the form of infilling (1-3 houses)

3.91.2 The site consists of 1.2 ha of former agricultural land on the Whatfield Road. The northern part of the site is used for horse grazing and is to be retained for open space in the form of a village green. The existing pond on the site is to be retained and restored. The remainder of the site on which there are agricultural buildings is allocated for 10 houses.

3.91.3 Whatfield Road is a narrow country road with no footpaths, but with the density of housing proposed as I accept the comments of the Highway Authority that a satisfactory access could be provided, although this would have a considerable impact on the rural character of the road. Further to the west of the allocation site is the Mill site and

adjacent development, where permission has been granted for 25 dwellings. The allocation site would involve a further 10 dwellings.

3.91.4 It seems to me that the site was originally allocated on the understanding that the Parish Council was supportive of the principle of development, although objection was raised to the policy as written. Babergh Council have revised the wording in accordance with pre-inquiry change 59. The site is not listed under affordable housing policy HS08, but it is understood that this was an error, and the site should have been included

3.91.5 The Parish Council changed its mind about the allocated site and although not a valid objection, as it did not relate to a change made at the deposit draft stage, similar valid objections to the allocation on sustainability grounds were raised by other objectors.

3.91.6 In my view, by sequential assessment, this small village has no priority for an allocation. Although Babergh District Council supported the Parish Council in its attempt to increase the stock of starter homes, I believe the situation in the village has significantly changed.

3.91.7 With a recent planning permission for 25 dwellings nearby, I consider a further allocation for 10 dwellings would not be in scale with the village and more importantly neither would it be sustainable. This is after all a village within which only infilling would "normally" be acceptable under Policy HS02.

RECOMMENDATION

Delete allocation HS09P, Maltings Farm, Elmsett from the plan.

3.92 POLICY HS09Q FOLLY ROAD GREAT WALDINGFIELD

The Objections

578 GO-East

Object to site on the grounds that the site is proposed for development at less than 30 dwellings per hectare net. If this is the most sustainable development location it is vital that the most

efficient use of the site is made. The level of density should be increased or the Plan should set out the reasons why such low densities are felt appropriate.

883 Oliver (Farms) Limited/Whymark & Moulton

This site is considered suitable for residential development and will resolve the problems which occurred during its use as a pig farm. The area proposed for development amounts to 2.8 hectares (excluding the proposed village green) on which 40 houses are projected. This represents a density of only 14 dwellings per hectare, or 6 to the acre.

This very low density would not seem to be in accordance with the principles set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3.

A greater density would make better and more economic use of the land.

We would welcome an opportunity of discussing this matter with you prior to the preparation of the second deposit draft.

1230 Mrs B Jacobs/Neil Ward Associates

The site is generally more intrusive and less sustainable than the site proposed for development at the northern end of Glemsford. The former site also fails to meet the requirements of Structure Plan Policy CS3(e). Furthermore, to allocate a site contrary to established development plan policies in order to achieve a planning gain for the community which is unrelated to the development proposed is contrary to Government advice.

2117 ICI Corporate Real Estate/Boyer Planning

This village provides limited services and the land is poorly related to the existing village, with separation accentuated by the large area of open space. The site is poorly related to employment and services and will not encourage modal shift.

6927 Mr M Kiely

The proposed housing land at Folly Farm is outside the Built Up Area Boundary and should therefore not be built on.

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

3.92.1 Great Waldingfield is identified in Policy HS03 as a reasonably sustainable village. It meets the requirements of Structure Plan Policy CS3(e) village as it has a range of facilities, including school, shop, community facilities and good links to public transport.

3.92.2 It is a large enough settlement to be suitable for additional development. The allocated site is a former pig farm with a range of unsightly buildings. It is well related to the compact form of the village and is part brownfield. Any site providing significant housing gain

would involve encroachment on to land outside of the village but from my visits I consider this to be a reasonable site for the purpose.

- 3.92.3 Apart from the important trees and hedgerows, and a mention in the evidence of transport factors it is not clear to me from the wording of the policy why the density has been kept so low. If there is a reason this should be stated, otherwise the density should be increased in line with government guidance.
- 3.92.4 With regard to the comparison with a site at Glemsford see my report on Glemsford omission sites.

RECOMMENDATION

Council to consider an increase in density as mentioned in paragraph 3.92.3 above

3.93 POLICY HS09R CHURCH FARM WHATFIELD

The Objections

432 Mr A M Jowett

With the regard to the proposal for development on agricultural land opposite Church Barn, Naughton Road, Whatfield and the retention of adjacent meadow land as an open space I would comment as follows:

The pond and hedgerow across the front of the site are important features of the environment and reinforce the typical rural qualities of this end of the settlement.

To minimise the impact of development on this landscape I would suggest that the existing road to Furneaux Farm be adopted as the main access to the site thus reducing the number of junctions to Naughton Road and screening the entire development to reduce its visual impact.

The meadowland adjacent to the development site is an important open space and acts as buffer between the proposed development and the village with its ancient church. If the proposals proceed this meadowland needs permanent safeguards to prevent the possibility of encroachment at a later date.

Whatfield has no pub and no village shop and currently has a high level of ex Local and Local Authority property. The rest of village consists mainly of modest family houses and bungalows and there has been no identification that low cost starter homes are required

to meet the needs of the settlement. I would therefore support a low density of building on the site in line with the previous application for 4-5 dwellings.

By adopting a small group of dwellings the scale and character of the village will not be adversely affected.

The development would not extend much further than the existing frontage which avoids intruding unacceptably into the rural surroundings.

A small development would minimise extra car usage.

579 GO-East

Object to site on the grounds that the site are proposed for development at less than 30 dwellings per ha net. If this are the most sustainable development location it is vital that the most efficient use of the site is made. The level of density should be increased or the Plan should set out the reasons why such low densities area felt appropriate.

1231 Mrs B Jacobs/Neil Ward Associates

The site is more intrusive and less sustainable than the site proposed for development at the northern end of Glemsford. The former site also fails to meet the requirements of Structure Plan Policy CS3(e). Furthermore, to allocate a site contrary to established development plan policies in order to achieve a planning gain for the community which is unrelated to the development proposed is contrary to Government advice.

1969 Barratt Eastern Counties/D L & P Consultants Ltd

Whatfield is not a large village with a full range of local services and question whether development should be allocated in Whatfield in preference to more sustainable rural centres. Also, question whether the provision of 0.7ha of the site can be reasonably justified as the provision of open space for a development not more than 15 dwellings. The area proposed to be allocated is excessive in relation to the part of the site that has previously been occupied by farm buildings. Land should not be allocated.

2118 ICI Corporate Real Estate/Boyer Planning

The site is poorly related to this small village, which offers a very limited range of facilities and accessibility by non-car modes.

6109 Mr C Notcutt/Bidwells Conditional Withdrawal

This representation is incorporated within Representation Number 6110. Only one issue.

6110 Mr C Notcutt/Bidwells Conditional Withdrawal

Consider findings of the Sustainability Appraisal to under record the beneficial impacts of development at Church Farm, Whatfield and over record their adverse impacts.

6113 Mr C Notcutt/Bidwells Conditional Withdrawal

The calculation of net developable area is incorrect: it should be 0.737 hectares maximum, given references in policy to keeping

development at least 3 metres back from retained woodland and to protect the pond.

7842 Suffolk Wildlife Trust

The text regarding the Wildlife interest of this site refers to another site known as Wright's Meadow near Long Melford. This text should therefore be deleted.

7843 Suffolk Wildlife Trust

It is likely that Church Farm, Whatfield has a biodiversity so new text should be incorporated (see Rep 7842).

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Policy HS09R Pre-Inquiry Change 60

Amendment text and policy: ~~'The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has identified part of the site known as Wrights Meadow as having biodiversity value. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust considers that the site is likely to have biodiversity value.~~ The District Council will require prospective developers to undertake an ecological appraisal at the appropriate time of the year in order to quantify the value and put in place appropriate mitigation measures. A survey in 2000 showed that the site supports a good population of breeding birds in addition to Common Lizards, a protected species covered by schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The Transport Authority has requested the new footpath proposed along the front of the site be extended eastwards to connect with the existing right of way.

Approximately 1.7 hectares (~~0.4~~ **0.7** hectares net) of land at Church Farm, Whatfield, are allocated for 15 houses. Development proposals will be required to provide for: ...'

The Objections

None

B.D.C. is proposing a change to Inset Map 11 (Policy HS09R) Corrected scale 1:1250 Pre-Inquiry Change 66

The Objections

None

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.93.1 Whatfield is a small village with a limited range of facilities. It is not a village where development of any scale would generally be encouraged as it would not be sustainable. Although it has a primary school and some meeting and sports facilities it has no local shops and insignificant job opportunities. The village has limited public transport and residents rely primarily on the car. There are few facilities that can be accessed by walking or cycling.
- 3.93.2 Because of this it is not clear to me from the Council's evidence why it has been allocated. It could only be justified on the basis of some local need. According to the site appraisal affordable housing has not been identified as a local priority, although the objector has offered up to 30% to serve the parish over the next 10 to 15 years.
- 3.93.3 However, the site is brownfield and there are important features including ponds, trees and a meadow which would be protected and enhanced by permitting limited development. Part of the site has been identified for public open space and informal space which can be managed for biodiversity benefit.
- 3.93.4 The Council should justify the need for development in small villages as I have stated in the Introduction to this Chapter – Village Policy.
- 3.93.5 The 15 dwellings stated in the policy is not intended to be prescriptive. Also because of the changes I am recommending to the supporting text and Policy HS11 below, I do not consider it appropriate to specify a higher density as this may or may not be acceptable for this environmentally sensitive site. If a higher density is acceptable at the detailed planning application stage this would help support what limited local facilities there are and help with affordable housing provision, but as I have said above a particular need for housing in the village has not been identified in the appraisal.
- 3.93.6 The proposal would involve a package of measures of enhancement including the provision of public open space and the protection of biodiversity interests. I consider this to be a border line allocation but on balance I am not recommending its deletion.

- 3.93.7 I agree that Whatfield and Glemsford are not comparable in sustainability terms. I have dealt with the merits of the Glemsford site elsewhere in this chapter

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan in accordance with Pre Inquiry Changes 60 and 66 (Inset Map change 11 detailing the allocation change).

3.94 POLICY HS09S LAND OFF CHURCH LANE SPROUGHTON

The Objections

See Appendix 17 at end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.94.1 Sproughton has a range of facilities and services, reasonable public transport and is assessed as being a reasonably sustainable village. As such it is a settlement where the principle of additional development is acceptable.
- 3.94.2 This is an open site of 3.4 hectares of no particular rural character next to the school and opposite existing housing. Some 2.3 ha of the site would be open space. The allocation would normally specify a higher density in accordance with government guidance. However, the total has been kept to 30 houses as the development would lead to increased traffic in Church Lane and at its junction with Lower Street and the highway authority is concerned that this cul-de-sac is already serving 180 dwellings, a church and a school. According to a letter dated 21 September 2004 from the highway authority footway works and junction improvement would be required.
- 3.94.3 Acoustic Consultants have investigated noise levels and noise would not be a factor in refusing planning permission.
- 3.94.4 The issue of over capacity at the pumping station has not been raised by the utility company

- 3.94.5 Although some objectors consider there is excess provision of housing land over the plan period, from an assessment of the housing supply figures, and recommendations I have made I do not consider there would be a material over supply. This site should remain as an allocation.
- 3.94.6 The housing and open space are shown separately on Inset Map 14

RECOMMENDATION

Make no modification to the Plan in response to these objections

3.95 POLICY HS09T LAND OFF BOURNE HILL WHERSTEAD
(*removed from plan*)

The Objections

See Appendix 18 at end of this chapter for details of objections

Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

- 3.95.1 This site of about 2.7ha, located within the Ipswich Policy Area, was allocated in the First Deposit Draft for 60 houses, with the provision for a Country Park of 46.7 hectares, but both were deleted at the Second Deposit Stage.

Country Park

- 3.95.2 Babergh is supportive in principle of a country park at Wherstead and from my visit I consider part of the estate to be appropriate for the purpose. This site is a strategic location on the edge of Ipswich and it would be appropriate to make future provision for public open space in an area of expansion.
- 3.95.3 The Council has made it clear that it does not have the resources to acquire the site as a country park unless such provision were part of a package as envisaged in the First Deposit Draft in Policy HS09T.

3.95.4 However, in my view because of its location the Country Park would provide greater recreational benefits for Ipswich and its visitors than for Babergh. Even without HS09T, because the country park is of far more than local significance there may be opportunity for alternative public or private funding during the period up to 2016. As the site is well located not only to the major road network but also to a densely developed housing area of Ipswich, in my view, the country park allocation should be reinstated.

3.95.5 However, I find the extent of the park difficult to determine because the Council having deleted the designation did not provide detailed evidence about the location of the boundary in response to the objectors assessment of costings and revised proposal to provide 29.78 hectares instead of the 46.7 hectares shown on the 1st Deposit Draft. From my site visits and my recommendations below about the hotel I consider the revised park boundary to be a logical one, but it would be helpful if agreement could be reached about the exact boundaries between Babergh District Council and the landowners, prior to a final line being drawn again on the Proposals Map.

Hotel

3.95.6 The Council accepts that the Stevens site, proposed as the location for a hotel, is previously developed land within the AONB. The AONB designation occurred before the A14 Orwell Bridge was constructed. The site is within a natural dip in the landscape. A hotel would be visible from the footpath on the Orwell Bridge, and glimpsed from Bourne Hill. However, I consider that a well-designed hotel would be an insignificant intrusion into the open setting of the Orwell Bridge or Ipswich. I share the view of the Council that the detail of the development will be more important than the principle in determining acceptability. As pointed out by the East of England Tourist Board the site is close enough to Ipswich town centre to benefit from the identified high levels of business tourism found in the area, whilst retaining a pleasant country park location and easy access to the road network. This park location could lend itself to the provision of ancillary conference facilities.

- 3.95.7 Although the Council is concerned that a developable area has been defined, from my site visit I consider the area shown in yellow on Drg No B5808/1 attached to the evidence of Bidwells to be a reasonable location for a hotel. An alternative approach might be for the Council to denote the area by symbol, rather than a defined area, to provide greater flexibility but I do not feel strongly about this. Both the highway authority and the Council have commented that the access into the proposed hotel site would involve the loss of hedgerow and embankment. It would but I do not consider the embankment and hedgerow to be so inherently important in the landscape that they cannot be modified. Whether improvements would be required at the A137/B1456 junction would be a matter for the planning application stage when the scale of the overall development could be assessed.

Land off Bourne Hill, Wherstead (Residential)

- 3.95.8 Although there were a large number of objections to the development of the Bourne Hill site for housing, I am not surprised that the Council proposed it for allocation. Under regional planning guidance in RPG 6, Ipswich was identified as a focal point for new development in East Anglia and the Structure Plan accepts that housing and employment development will take place within the Ipswich Policy Area. Although Wherstead is in Babergh District, and is not identified as a village for development in Policy HS03, it is very close to facilities in Ipswich and is included within the Ipswich Policy Area. As such it is regarded as being contiguous to the built up area of the town in policy terms.
- 3.95.9 The more recent Draft RPG 14 in Policy HG3 states that of the 5200 additional dwellings required in Babergh by 2021, only a few years after the end of this plan, 600 will be included on the edge of Ipswich. Although this regional guidance has yet to be Publicly Examined and many of these dwellings could be provided on the basis of other commitments the trend is clear. Under Structure Plan Policy CS3 major housing development will take place in the Ipswich Policy Area. Such development is not meant to serve purely parochial or

local needs but to meet the Structure Plan requirements for housing in the county during the Plan period.

- 3.95.10 The site is located between a ribbon of houses fronting Bourne Hill, Bourne Terrace, Camp Yard and the Ski slope to the south and the A137 to the north west. Although objectors have stated that the development of the site would transform the character of the area from an essentially rural settlement to an urban settlement, from my visits I do not consider this area has the rural characteristics of a village.
- 3.95.11 The site is within walking distance of a newsagents and employment opportunities. There are also regular bus routes along The Strand and the A137. Although schools are not within the 400m recommended walking distance there are a wide range of facilities and services served by public transport. Because of the relative proximity of the town and neighbourhood services in my view this site although not within a defined sustainable village is more sustainable than a number of allocated sites proposed on the edge of settlements.
- 3.95.12 The land proposed for housing is a rolling field but has no particular visual importance and is not subject to any landscape designation. With adequate screening and landscaping I consider the site could be developed without undue visual impact on the area or on the amenities enjoyed by existing residents.
- 3.95.13 I agree with the objectors that on the basis of government advice in Circular 1/97 and subsequent guidance the proposal could not be agreed merely to provide a country park. The link would be too tenuous. The housing development would need to be acceptable in its own right.
- 3.95.14 Turning to other matters, an important policy consideration is that adequate provision has been made for development on the northern and eastern sides of Ipswich where the requirements for extra housing can be met in accordance with Policy H10 of the Local Plan. Development of the Bourne Hill site would be contrary to that policy.

- 3.95.15 I am told that there are severe restraints in terms of drainage both foul and surface water in the area. This is mentioned in paragraph 3.53 of the supporting text and is another of the reasons this area is precluded from development by Policy H10. A private sewage plant could be provided but main drainage would be preferable.
- 3.95.16 I am also concerned about the highway aspects of the development. At a density commensurate with national guidance on making best use of the land I accept the figure of 100 proposed by the objector. Although Bourne Hill could take traffic from housing of this scale, neither the junction of Bourne Hill with The Strand, nor the roundabout at The Strand/A137 junction is capable of accommodating such development without extensive highway improvements.
- 3.95.17 With the allocations made and my recommendations I am satisfied that adequate provision has been made for development to meet Structure Plan requirements during the Plan period and that additional allocations which would conflict with policies for the Ipswich Fringe Area are not required.
- 3.95.18 The above factors lead me to conclude that there is no good reason to override the policy considerations in Policy H10.
- 3.95.19 It will be a simple operation to include the two changes I am recommending on the Proposals Map but it will also be necessary to include a policy and supporting text for the Country Park and the hotel. Where this is inserted in the Plan is a matter for the Council but as I understand the Country Park would be related to the Greenways Project I suggest adapting paragraph 8.30 in the Recreation and Tourism Chapter to explain the background and inserting a new policy confirming the Country Park and Hotel designation.

RECOMMENDATION

Modify the Plan

- a) by designating the Country Park and Hotel on the Proposals Map. and**

- b) by adapting paragraph 8.30 to explain the background**
 - c) by inserting a new policy confirming the above designation.**
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