

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



**Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's  
Response to  
the Issues and Questions raised by Inspector David  
Hogger  
in relation to the  
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan:  
Site Allocations and Development Management  
Policies**

**Issue 46: Thornham G.95**

**Examination  
November 2015**

## Table of abbreviations used with the Council's Statements

Abbreviation	Full Wording
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BCKLWN	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
BDC	Breckland District Council
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
CS	Core Strategy
DM	Development Management
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
FDC	Fenland District Council
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GI	Green Infrastructure
GTANA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment
ha	Hectare
HELAA	Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
HRA	Habitats Regulation Assessment
HSEHA	Health and Safety Executive Hazard Areas
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
KRSC	Key Rural Service Centres
KLATS	King's Lynn Area Transportation Strategy
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LPSO	Local Plan Sustainability Objectives
NCC	Norfolk County Council
NE	Natural England
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NORA	The Nar Ouse Regeneration Area
NWT	Norfolk Wildlife Trust
OAN	Objectively Assessed Need
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPTS	Planning Policy for Traveller Sites
RV	Rural Village
RAF	Royal Air Force
RLA	Residential Land Assessment
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SADMP	Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSF	Site Sustainability Factors
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuD	Sustainable Drainage systems
SVAH	Smaller Villages and Hamlets
SWMP	Surface Water Management Plan
THI	Townscape Heritage Initiative
UPC	Un-attributable Population Change

**28.1:**

**Is there evidence that the Council's restrictive approach to development at Thornham is not justified? If such evidence exists what alternatives are available and have they been satisfactorily considered by the Council?**

*1. Introduction*

1.1. The Council originally sought to allocate five dwellings in Thornham in the SADMP document. Three sites were submitted for consideration in the settlement and site THM1 was selected and proposed for allocation at Preferred Options stage. The Pre-Submission document made no allocations in Thornham as all sites had identified constraints to development. Further representation from Fleur Developments and Hayes + Storr Solicitors on behalf of Thornham Estate (landowner of site THM1) disputes the reasons for not allocating site THM1. This statement addresses the question 28.1 and justifies the Council's decision not to allocate in Thornham.

*2. Site Specific Issues*

2.1. The SADMP<sup>1</sup> states that all sites previously considered received objections from Norfolk County Council (highways authority), Natural England, English Heritage and the Norfolk Coast (AONB) Partnership. Unfortunately this wording could be interpreted as all sites received objections from all four bodies which is not the case. All sites received objections from at least one of the aforementioned public bodies. The council would be open to making a modification to the text to provide clarification if considered necessary. However, the point remains that all sites were considered to have serious constraints which precluded any being allocated.

*3. Comparison of alternative options*

3.1. The Sustainability Appraisal provides a detailed assessment of the options submitted for development in Thornham. All sites score negatively against two or more criterion and this is explained in detail in the SA discussion. To address the representations in support of site THM1 it is necessary to elaborate the reasons for not allocating this site.

*4. Impact on the landscape character*

4.1. In identifying the site as a preferred option, the Council had considered the wider impact on the landscape and on the setting of the Conservation Area by undertaking site visits to assess public views into, and out of the site. Whilst officers originally considered that the site would not be visually intrusive into the countryside and undeveloped coastline, expert opinions remain divided regarding the impact on the landscape character. In response to the pre-submission consultation the Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP) state allocation of THM1 would effectively remove the visual link between the open area in the village and the marshes to the north, which is an important part of the village's character and sought no allocations in Thornham. In response to the past two consultations on the SADMP, Fleur Developments submitted a detailed Landscape Statement produced by JBA Consultancy Services Ltd. (September 2013) which was supplemented by further information in February 2015. The updated Landscape Statement concludes that subject to detailed consideration of

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<sup>1</sup> SADMP Thornham page, 347, paragraph G.95.4

the layout, design and landscape the landscape and townscape character and visual amenity of Thornham will not be affected [by residential development on site THM1].

- 4.2. In considering these two opposing viewpoints, the Council chose to take a precautionary approach. The National Planning Policy Framework states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council did not wish to pursue an allocation in light of an objection from the Norfolk Coast Partnership where it was not strategically significant to the delivery of the plan, especially in the light of further objections from the Highways Authority.

#### *Impact on highways*

- 4.3. The Highways Agency had objected to site THM1 at the earliest stages of consultation but the Council identified THM1 in the Preferred Options document stating 'it is considered the addition of five dwellings will not cause a significant adverse strain on the surrounding highway network and hope to work with Norfolk County Council to resolve this issue'<sup>2</sup> Norfolk County Council continued to object to site THM1 and stated as a response to the Preferred Options consultation 'the junction between Green Lane and the A149 and Green Lane itself is very narrow and is not suitable for additional vehicles and there is no realistic ability to achieve adequate footway links. The Highway Authority would object if this site were included in the plan'. The Council concluded that it was not possible to resolve the issue with Norfolk County Council (NCC) Highways Authority, particularly in respect to the inadequate footpath links and this was one of the key reasons that the Council did not pursue allocation of THM1 in the pre-submission document.
- 4.4. Fleur Developments have subsequently submitted a transport note regarding proposed A149/Green Lane Junction Improvement Proposal to address the issues identified by Norfolk County Council. They have also submitted correspondence received from Darren Mortimer, Highways Development Management Officer for Norfolk County Council which suggests that improvements to the junction can be achieved.

#### *5. Restrictive approach to development*

- 5.1. Section D of the SADMP document explains the Council's method of distributing development and states in paragraph D.1.15 that this general approach is not rigidly applied and that some settlements are more constrained than others. Whilst the Council would prefer to allocate 5 dwellings in Thornham, this is not a strategically significant allocation in terms of housing delivery. It is not considered that the lack of an allocation in Thornham village would cause the plan to be unsound, or that the Council have been unnecessarily restrictive in this case.

#### *6. Conclusion*

- 6.1. The Council originally identified THM1 as a preferred option for 5 dwellings and this statement explains the reasons why it was not pursued as an allocation at pre-submission stage. A significant objection remains to the allocation of THM1. The Council do not consider the approach to development in Thornham to be overly restrictive. The Council sought to allocate 5 dwellings in Thornham but did not present an allocation in the SADMP because all submitted sites were identified as constrained and had received objections from one or more public bodies. Representations received on behalf of site THM1 provide additional

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<sup>2</sup> BCKLWN, Preferred Options for a Detailed Policies and Sites Plan (July 2013) Thornham page 518, para 7.94.4

The King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council's response to the Issues and Questions paper from  
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information to overcome identified objections detailed in the Sustainability Appraisal. The Council considers that the submitted plan is sound, and that an allocation of 5 dwellings is not a strategically significant allocation in terms of housing delivery.