

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



**Follow up work in relation to the Examination
into the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local
Plan: Site Allocations and Development
Management Policies**

Wisbech

November 2015

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1. Issue

- a) Provide a note for the Inspector giving more information on the content of the proposed Master Plan for the allocation (and the FDC part also), regarding community facilities / local centre.
 - Add paragraph / policy clause / suitably worded?
 - Agree with FDC
- b) Consider additional text to Policy clause 1 C) noting 'whether or not' it would be possible to retain the mature orchards.
 - In para F3.7 Infrastructure - explain circumstances of orchards and management considerations etc.
 - Make clear that it is a 'consideration'
- c) What weight was attached to the brownfield nature of the site in considering it's suitability as an allocation? (Include consideration in the note to be prepared on the Council's approach to Brownfield Sites).
- d) Can the Council give a clearer indication of its long term approach to the risk of the joint site not progressing, what is the fall-back position, or 'signposting' that can be given?

2. Responses:

a) Note on Masterplan for Wisbech allocation, specifically regarding the local centre/ community facilities.

2.1 The East Wisbech allocation is a joint allocation with FDC, however it is important to emphasise that these sites should be viewed as one larger allocation. Therefore as the masterplan develops and is drawn up it may be more appropriate that the community facilities, or open space for example, fall entirely within one local authority boundary or the other. FDC Local Plan policy LP7 Urban Extensions parts e and f refer to community and health facilities, open space, schools etc. FDC is also currently consulting on the Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan which sets out the key infrastructure requirements needed or desired to support growth in Fenland.

2.2 The precise locations of any community requirements will not be confirmed until the masterplan has been agreed. Both authorities are confident however that the wider area is capable of accommodating 1450 houses in total, along with the necessary associated infrastructure.

2.3 In the Council's Issue Statement (Issue 11 East Wisbech) is a proposed amendment to policy F3.1. This is, as explained in the text, a request from FDC to include a reference to the potential need for a local centre. It does not specify the size/ nature of uses to be included. FDC made reference to this within their LP7 of their adopted Plan, but not within LP8 Wisbech policy, and saw it as an opportunity for us to make reference to it within our allocation policy.

2.4 Issue Statement CD14 (in section 5) proposes a modification to policy F3.1. Following discussion at the Hearing Session it would seem appropriate to delete this modification, and replace it with the revised modification detailed below.

Proposed modifications to Plan

2.5 Insert new bullet point F3.8. 'In considering the total allocation (for 1450 dwellings) there is a necessity for a community focus / neighbourhood centre. A suitable site should be identified for provision within this site, or as part of the wider allocation, depending on locational imperatives.'

2.6 Policy amendment Page 167- k. the provision of a site (either within KLWN or FDC allocations) for a new local centre/ community focus to serve the wider allocation, at a location to be determined in the masterplan.

b) Consider approach to Mature Orchards within policy and/ or text.

2.7 Policy F3.1 part (c) of the SADMP requires 'a landscape assessment to determine whether existing areas of mature orchards, could be retained and enhanced to serve as multi-functional public open space areas with amenity and biodiversity value.'

2.8 FDC Local Plan policy LP8 Wisbech states 'existing areas of high quality woodland, including some mature orchards...should be retained and enhanced to serve as multifunctional public open space areas...'

2.9 REP 11-01 highlighted the issue of retaining and managing orchards as areas of open space. The Council has given further consideration to the wording of policy F3.1 and considers it would be useful to clarify the text as set out below. It is important that a planning application takes into account the value and role of the

mature trees (orchard and woodland) in the wider landscape, and for their contribution to local open space.

Proposed modifications to Plan

2.10 Policy F3.1 part 1c should be amended to read ‘a landscape assessment to determine whether or not existing areas....’

2.11 Paragraph 3.7 of the SADMP should be amended to read ‘Green Infrastructure– There is capacity to create new publicly accessible green space, with reference to existing local features, and this may include the retention of a small area of mature orchards, given their historical role in the local landscape character. However the circumstances and management of any retained orchards should be carefully considered. Suitable linkages off site are also required as appropriate.

c) Weight given to brownfield nature of part of a site not allocated.

2.12 Please refer to the follow up work ‘The Approach to Brownfield Sites’, specifically Section 5.

d) The Council’s long-term approach to delivery of the site, and what is the fall-back position?

2.13 Issue Statement CD14 sets out the Council’s approach to the delivery of site F3.1, working alongside FDC and other landowners. The intention is that the Masterplan is delivered in Autumn 2016.

2.14 Once approved/ adopted by both local planning authorities the Masterplan will enable development to come forward on the site. The scale/ form of applications will vary, and the Council considers that this is an acceptable way of securing the delivery of the total number of homes allocated. This is providing that all applications are in line with the layout and requirements of the Local Plan policies and the Masterplan.

- 2.15 This approach will enable development to come forward in a phased way and should ensure a timely delivery rather than if the site was developed as one large application/ scheme. Therefore reducing the risks of non-delivery or delay.
- 2.16 From the FDC perspective the Wisbech East allocation is the only 'strategic allocation' for the town, other growth is notated as 'broad areas of growth' which recognises FDC commitment to securing timely development on this site.
- 2.17 The Council is confident that the site will come forward within the Plan period. However if there were any unforeseen issues, the Council has produced a separate paper on flexibility within the Plan. CD30 'Council's response to Inspectors note dated 9 July – Fall back position' sets out the general flexibility within the Plan generally, and the fall back position if allocations were not delivered. The Council has also committed to an early review of the Plan which will enable us to look again at sites in the Wisbech Fringe for potential allocation. This would co-incide with the preparation of a final masterplan and offers us an early opportunity to review progress/ timescales and developer interest.