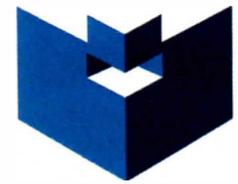


Our Ref: AP/sp/067-01
Your Ref:
Tel:
Mob:
Email:
Date: alan@cornerstone-planning.co.
uk 27 June 2017



CORNERSTONE
P l a n n i n g
L i m i t e d

www.cornerstone-planning.co.uk

Greenlands
7 Nelson Road
Sheringham
Norfolk
NR26 8BU

Director: A. Presslee

South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE

Dear

Greater Norwich Local Plan Call for Sites - Barnham Broom Golf & Country Club (refs. GNLPO474 - 0476)

Further to our meeting in April of this year, I have set out below – as recommended – some supplementary, supporting information. This is intended to support our Call for Sites representation submitted in July 2016.

You will appreciate that my client has not at this stage formulated detailed proposals or plans, but we have endeavoured below to explain in a little more detail the concepts and rationale behind the broad proposals, and explain my client's vision in relation thereto.

Our original Call for Sites representations can be elaborated upon as follows:

- Site GNLPO476: close to the existing Barnham Broom Golf & Country Club (BBCC) complex for a combination of:
 - independent/active/keep healthy, retirement living for the Over 55s market, providing on and off site support: i.e. housekeeping, security, gardening, maintenance, repairs, laundry services, transport arrangements, shopping service, visitors' (friends and family) accommodation, etc., and a 'residents' social club' which could be extended to others who live in the parishes of Barnham Broom and Colton, combined with;
 - second/holiday home ownership (i.e. offering all of the above, plus lettings, a range of ownership options, together with holiday bookings and guest management/services, etc.), and;
 - limited general market housing, where viability dictates;
- Site GNLPO475 abutting Colton for a mixture of staff accommodation, starter/affordable homes and general market housing;
- Site GNLPO474 for a development of second/holiday homes and general market housing provided in a secure parkland development of contemporary 'rural retreats'.

We are of course aware of your broader concerns about elements of the locational (and thereby sustainability) aspects of these proposals but consider that the merits - as follows – can address such concerns for the benefit of the local communities:

- Job security and creation;
- Addressing an under-met and growing need for accommodation suited to the growing demands of the 55+ ageing demographic, as well as for in-bound tourism and those seeking to settle and move to the Norfolk/Norwich area, as it continues to become an increasingly popular destination and desirable place to live;
- Provide Norwich/Norfolk with something novel, differentiated by its quality and by its environmentally appealing nature, of potentially greater value and capable of being a stronger attraction than anything else on offer in the locality;
- The recreational and leisure facilities at BBCC were established and developed in the 1970s and 1980s. After a period of sustained success and benefit to local communities the current footprint of the complex has not expanded since 1990 but has established a 'core site' around which further sustainable development can be undertaken to address needs for an integrated development designed to meet the needs of the retirement and second/holiday home markets;
- The new housing accommodation would offer a range of specialist, high quality and desirable accommodation that – currently - is not available elsewhere in the locality and region; to offer:
 - a. 'retirement' housing as a next step dwelling for older people with decreasing family accommodation requirements and professional careers, increasing recreation time; and who, over time, will develop additional supported living needs; to be combined with
 - b. a destination offering of housing to accommodate visitors (to the retirement community residents), holidaymakers and those seeking a non- principal residence (second home) as a rural retreat;
 - c. A village development of starter homes for rent, lease or purchase that could offer younger persons or those moving into the region with employment at BBCC or at other local enterprises (the Food Hub in Colton Village, Longwater Retail Park) or at organisations (UEA, NRP and N&NHT) located nearby.
- Each of the different development areas and phases is located in an area which will be discreetly developed: with minimal visual impact for existing local residents, as none of the sites are overlooked and secondary planting will enhance the integration of buildings into the landscape over the longer term.

The combination of a mixed development would create a secure and sustainable 'community' and would also release housing stock in existing urban, and suburban environments, as well as in existing villages and rural communities in the surrounding locality, better suited for younger dwellers and growing families with children.

My client is looking at a scheme based fundamentally around a mix of high quality design 1, 2 and 3 bedroom (+ some space for guests as well as a carer) retirement homes for active couples/persons in their 50s/60s/70s, wishing to move into smaller partly or wholly serviced accommodation, with easy access to a range of physical and social activities. There is also the potential to develop some longer term residential care on a nearby site, focussed on when this cohort's emotional (caused through bereavement/loneliness) or physical needs develop, at a time when moving to a different location can cause significant distress and isolation. This could also be considered alongside some associated second/holiday homes (with the link being for visiting families and friends related to the retirees, as well as those simply seeing Barnham Broom as a location with good access to Norwich, as a preferred destination). Offered on a serviced accommodation basis we expect that each 40 houses in the retirement/second home development would create 8-10 permanent jobs – so a scheme with 200 units would deliver up to 50 permanent new jobs.

BBCC would further develop and offer a community hub and seek to redefine its initial objective of being a 'Country Club' for local residents. It would offer to satisfy the needs of different categories of residents and existing local inhabitants with an extensive range of leisure/exercise and enjoyment facilities accommodated 'on site', so reducing the need for extensive travelling to use facilities for golf, tennis, squash, gym, swimming, therapy and treatment spa, hairdressing (not yet on site but planned), social events, business meetings, general relaxation as well as restaurant, pub and bar facilities, etc.

A range of additional services could also reduce both the carbon footprint and meet the demands and desires of the occupants through providing facilities such as – internal electric buggy transport, central laundry (to be located in Colton village), grounds maintenance, electrician, plumber and building maintenance back-up, 24-hour security and community transport services, etc. Such services would be delivered by and compliment the needs of the Country Club complex.

There is an extant permission to extend the existing BBGC facility to provide an additional 52 bedroom, parking, etc. (ref. 2012/0185/F). This would increase the bedroom count at BBGC from 46 up to 98 hotel rooms and enhance the overall site. There is further scope to deliver what is considered to be the site capacity of more than 150 bedrooms, as a final follow-on phase (estimated to generate an additional 100 permanent new jobs).

Sprowston Hall (96 bedrooms) situated north of Norwich and Dunston Hall south of Norwich (169 bedrooms), have both demonstrated their ability to succeed sustainably as they have been expanded over recent years, but can only offer limited golfing facilities. BBCC can become the leading resort destination on the western side of Norwich benefitting from its proximity to and the improvements that are planned for the A47, the NDR, western city by-pass and A11 trunk roads.

This could enable BBCC, with its extensive golf facilities and championship standard courses, to attract Regional/National/European and even International Golf Tour events to Norfolk – i.e. juniors, Ladies, Seniors/Veterans, etc. Norfolk currently does not have a venue that hosts such events. This could also help to support other venues and showcase Norfolk as a leading UK destination.

BBCC already offers high quality standards, which would be enhanced further with the additional hotel and holiday housing capacity to provide greater viability and a way for Norfolk/Norwich to benefit more generally. On a larger scale BBCC expects to host other important national/international events and conferences, in addition to golf, through raising its profile as a prestigious and recognised venue in Norfolk. This in turn would generate a range of benefits both for those living in, as well as visiting, the region.

With the proposed integrated retirement, second home/holiday village combined with some general market housing, developed adjacent to the Golf Course there are parallel proposals for a development of a 'starter' home and affordable housing scheme, in Colton village. This can help to cater for the additional employment that is created and housing needs of younger persons and single home dwellers in the immediate area.

There is also scope to consider adding a high quality residential specialist care development on another site (for up to 50 residents), adjacent to the Golf Course, that should also add >50 additional permanent new FTE jobs and provide a further unique facility not readily available or comparable elsewhere in the vicinity.

Viewed as a whole, more than 200 new FTE jobs with some available local housing could be provided. We understand the local employment spin-off / multiplier is >3x, so this amounts to a stimulus that could provide between 800 and 1000 jobs and add more than £30m p.a. to the local economy to generate a meaningful contribution economically as well as socially.

Presently, there are challenges with staff recruitment and retention due to near 'full' employment and also increasing demand from other growing activities close by – such as the N&N hospital, UEA University, retail parks, etc. - competing for lower income earning employees. The demand for affordable housing is likely to continue growing as it outstrips supply across rural areas or those areas in close proximity to and on the western side of Norwich. We see the 7 acre Colton village site, situated adjacent to the Public House, as being key in this regard (there is another 1 acre site between the Colton Church and a cottage on Church Lane that could similarly be used to provide a few units of high density affordable homes). We would look to build and offer these for a variety of short-term rent, annual letting and rent to purchase schemes, rather than release into the open market. We could also look to provide a community centre and/or open space for the other village residents and families to be able to access and enjoy to enhance activities within the village and parish (subject to further consultation with the Parish Council).

You suggested at our meeting that we refer to Local Plan (DMP) Policy DM2.9 in the context of our Call for Sites representation. It appears that this policy focusses specifically upon new and expanded recreational and leisure destination attractions in the countryside. There is a strong element of this with what my client has in mind overall, although it is principally the provision of designated housing rather than what that policy addresses.

You indicated consent for general market housing was unlikely because of sustainability issues. However, although it appears you remain to be convinced of the need and suitability of a retirement development we believe this can contribute an increasingly important element of future housing needs in the area. We understood you felt it was conceivable a case could be made for holiday accommodation. You also informed that the Greater Norwich settlement policy had yet to be developed (or at least put to Councillors/public consultation).

I anticipate that this may be developed along the lines of where Council planners believe people should live rather than addressing the demand for quality and sustainable locations. We would question why the established and diverse Country Club (in terms of services/facilities) - just 1 mile from 2 villages and 10 miles from the centre of Norwich – should be regarded as an unsustainable location/site. Having been developed in an open rural environment with more limited local infrastructure over the past 40 years - than exists today and is planned to be further developed in the near future - the expansion of BBCC should be considered to offer a high probability of being successful as well as sustainable in the long term.

We understand some golf courses will cease to be financially viable as the demands in the commercial market place change and so there will be increased pressure for redevelopment and changes of use over time. BBCC is different in that as well as health and fitness and all the other facilities associated with the hotel complex, it has the capability of not only being sustained, but has the scope to expand and create a development with added socio-economic value to the local area. Where there is associated development around and linked to BBCC this can meet the needs of families with an ageing demographic. Increasingly, those entering retirement are now seeking to extend and maximise their ability to remain independent, to conduct vibrant/active social lives and also to provide additional support and leadership in their local communities. In this way, those who manage to achieve this remain active voluntary contributors to their local communities for longer and avoid hastening the process of becoming dependant, which burdens families and local authorities.

I suggest therefore that a fresher and evolutionary perspective can be applied to the kind of 'sustainability' - and the benefits this will bring to the local communities - in the context of what we are proposing around and near to BBCC.

You appeared to be more favourably disposed towards development for holiday accommodation, but what does this really mean in practise? Having seen a number of different developments promoted/approved in what are far more remote and less sustainable locations, one could argue that these are tantamount to being second homes, as distinct from primary homes. We would also like to distinguish between 'holiday accommodation' (to mean 'self-catering holiday lodges, parks and apartments), which is something that already exists at other locations across the County, and 'non principal residence' accommodation, which could provide housing accommodation to those seeking longer lets – several months rather than weeks, possibly used by owners via a multiple ownership scheme, or by those looking to settle in the region more permanently and needing an initial 'transition home'. In such cases the nature of the semi permanence and regular return visits mean the residents are more integrated with but are not imposed upon the rest of the permanent community as compared to the seasonal and weekend patterns of holidaymakers.

As you know, the NPPF requires Councils to have a clear understanding of the housing needs in its area, including those for older people, and that the Housing White Paper has pledged to require LPAs to better address older people's housing needs.

The published Central Norfolk SHMA, part 2 (chapter 8 of which addresses Housing for Older people) highlights that there is a structural inadequacy in suitable housing for the 'retirement+' market, with demand in 20 years expected to be as much as 5x the current provision. There is also the added caveat that much of the current provision will cease to be fit for purpose. In essence, there is a need for 30,000+ retirement homes to be provided across mid Norfolk with 6,500 of those in South Norfolk and 7,000 in Breckland, over the next 20 years - although this includes specialist care homes for those in palliative care, the growth is for those at a much earlier stage of their lives, albeit one where their family size and needs has diminished.

There are many examples abroad of the kind of development my client is exploring but few in the UK, and in our understanding almost none in Norfolk or in the Norwich area. They are thinking of Barnham Broom becoming Norfolk's own and different development which can draw on some of the existing examples of retirement and holiday home developments, such as:

- Pebble Ridge (Devon): <http://www.pebble-ridge.com/Buying-your-Home.aspx> or <http://www.royalnorthdevongolfclub.co.uk/news.php?newsitem=897>;
- Wiltshire Leisure Village (formerly Wooton Bassett GC): <http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/property/604711/Wiltshire-Leisure-Village-Eddy-Shah-retirement-village-homes> and <http://the-wiltshire.co.uk>.
- Archerfield near Edinburgh: <http://www.kingscairnatacherfield.com/about-kings-cairn>;
- Celtic Manor in South Wales (<http://www.celtic-manor.com/hunter-lodges>);
-
- Maudsley Park in Warwickshire (<http://www.maudslaypark.co.uk/the-village>)
- Birchwood Lakes in Devon (<http://lowermillestate.com/birchwood-lakes-north-devon>)

With the added dimension to help pioneer the development of the 'retirement village concept' which is now acknowledged to be a successful and integral part of meeting modern housing needs.

Finally, I will follow up this letter with an indicative masterplan, which will give you a clearer understanding of the form/extent of development we are promoting, and how it relates to existing and extant development, and the landscape setting.

Please let me know if you require any further information or clarification.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, located in the upper left quadrant.

Handwritten text, possibly a date or a short note, located below the first line of text.