

HORSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Council - J.R.Graves C.Eng. DMS M.I.E.E. M.C.M.I.

12/03/2020

Horsford Parish Council Response To the Draft Strategy of the Greater Norwich Local Plan

Please find our responses below:

Q6. Do you support or object to the vision and objectives for Greater Norwich?

This vision is flawed for outlying villages like Horsford. A strong argument for not allocating additional housing to Horsford is Paragraph 125 of the GNLP. It clearly states the need for “a radical shift away from the use of private car, with many people walking, cycling or using clean public transport”

With limited local employment, recent increased development within the village has meant more residents journeying to and from work. Any additional housing would just exacerbate this further. The geographical location of Horsford in relation to the Broadland Northway (A1270) means cycling along or crossing this major A Road, as only one of two exits out of the village, is highly dangerous. Horsford is also a considerable distance from Norwich, for most people to be able to walk to work, so this expectation is undeliverable for the village.

Q 13. Do you agree with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy and the proposed distribution of housing within the hierarchy?

It is proposed that Horsford falls into the remit of Village Clusters with regard to the Settlement Hierarchy.

Page 47 of the Final Draft Strategy states:

Table 7 Housing growth 2018 to 2038 (figures rounded)

	Homes 2018	Homes 2038 (and increase)	Increase	% of Total Housing Growth
Village Clusters	46100	50124 (+4024)	9%	9%

Horsford are accepting of the **one** site identified, Policy GNLP0264, as a preferred option providing 30-40 new homes in the cluster. However, we have concerns about the access road from this development onto Horsbeck Way, which just moves the Dog Lane access issues one road further along.

We are in agreement with the GNLP statement that **NO** other sites within Horsford should be considered for allocation. This is justified by the following statistics:

394 homes already with existing planning permission on various sites, plus the recent uplift of 45 homes on the Kingfisher Meadow Site passed for development on 8 January 2020 and the additional 40 on the new allocation Policy GNLP0264, Dog Lane, Horsford. These 479 homes equate to **11.9%** of the **9%** total housing growth. When

you consider there are 20 villages that fall within the proposed Village Cluster, Horsford have delivered a total quantity of homes way above and beyond what is expected of a service village, in comparison to other proposed cluster villages like Blofield Heath (107 dwellings) Gt & Little Plumstead (140 dwellings) and Coltishall, Horstead with Stanninghall and Belaugh (70 dwellings). GNLP states that “The Towards a Strategy document identifies 2,000 dwellings in total should be provided between all the “village clusters”.” Horsford have delivered a huge proportion 23.9% of this total, which is not that far from 1/3 of the expectation!

Paragraph 132 claims that new quality development will be located so loss of green-field land is minimised. Horsford Parish Council believe this can only be achieved by not allocating additional sites to Horsford or other “village clusters”. Also by clustering villages, will settlement boundaries be redefined around the perimeter of these clusters, which will mean that more green-field sites are vulnerable to further allocation. If this is the case, then Horsford Parish Council are against adopting this approach to the proposed distribution of housing within the hierarchy, as its green-field areas are then susceptible to development.

Q18. Do you support, object or have any comments relating to the preferred approach to sustainable communities including requirement for a sustainability statement?

Horsford Parish Council note that GNLP POLICY 2 - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES states, “Development must be high quality, contributing to delivering inclusive growth in mixed, resilient and sustainable communities and to mitigating and adapting to climate change, assisting in meeting national greenhouse gas emissions targets.

To achieve this, development proposals are required as appropriate to: 1. Ensure safe, convenient and sustainable access to on-site and local services and facilities including schools, health care, shops, leisure/community/faith facilities and libraries;”

The current predicament for Horsford is that the B1149 cannot cope with the amount of traffic now passing through and funnelled back and forth to the Broadland Northway. There are tailbacks and heavy congestion at peak times going out of the village from Brewery Lane Roundabout as far back into the village as Gordon Godfrey Way on Holt Road (approx. 3 miles) and equally in the evening traffic along Reephram Road from Hellesdon to Horsford. Whereas there was once a choice of four roads in and out of the village - Holt Road, Holly Lane, Drayton Lane and Church Street, there are now only two - Brewery Lane and Church Street. Further development would increase numbers of vehicles, exacerbate vehicle movements and increase environmental pollution, which conflicts with your statement GNLP Policy 2 regarding meeting national greenhouse gas emissions targets. Any additional housing developments should be located in or closer to Norwich, where there are far more realistic opportunities for people to walk or cycle to work.

This is also in conflict with Paragraph 6 in the introduction to the GNLP “The GNLP must also assist the move to a post-carbon economy and protect and enhance our many environmental assets”.

Horsford Parish Council also have concerns about the access road from Green Lane/Flag Cutters Way on to the Holt Road. The roundabout is not fit for purpose because it is offset and traffic coming out of Flag Cutters Way is obscured from traffic travelling South towards the roundabout. There have been occasions when HGV traffic

has ignored the roundabout and continued straight on avoiding the roundabout altogether. Damaged kerbstones and central grassed area of the roundabout, where vehicles have driven over the roundabout when negotiating it, confirms poor design. This needs to be rectified. Norfolk Highways Department have accepted there is a problem and have put in a temporary 20 mph speed limit in the area either side of the roundabout. Horsford Parish Council believe this roundabout should be at the centre line of the B1149 and want to see a proposal to move the roundabout to that central position.

Furthermore, there are only two pedestrian crossings in the village, one co-located with Mill Lane, which has a lollipop lady controlling it during the twice daily school runs, and the other co-located with the Primary School. The speed limit within the village is 30 mph but the residents feel strongly that this is often exceeded, which, coupled with the amount of large HGV traffic, makes the road more dangerous.

Another indicator, which Horsford Parish Council believe should definitely be considered a constraint on further development, is the lack of school places in the Primary school. This is supported in the Horsford Assessment Booklet Page 1, “current capacity at Horsford Church of England VA Primary School is rated as ‘amber’, consequently it is considered that the Horsford cluster could accommodate development in the region of 20-50 dwellings. Without expansion school capacity could be a possible constraint on further development”.

It should be noted that within the last 12 months, Horsford Medical Practice has also written to Broadland District Council in regard to increased population following further development numbers and the inability to register any more patients as they are at capacity, which is also in conflict with GNLP Policy 2 to ensure safe and convenient health care. Horsford Parish council believes that increased housing has already and will continue to put a strain on the services that exist in order to sustain the village.

For the sake of accuracy Horsford Parish Council would like to point out that the first paragraph in the Horsford Assessment Booklet refers to both a library and a public house in the village. However, there are no public houses in the village now and there has only ever been a mobile Library.

Jim Graves

Jim Graves – Clerk to the Council