
Breckland Local Plan Examination

Local Plan Examination
Hearing Statement – Matter 13

On behalf of
Abel Homes Ltd



Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Matter 13 – Housing: the basis for the housing allocations and the settlement boundaries	2



1. Introduction

1.1. This Hearing Statement has been prepared by Savills (UK) Ltd on behalf of Abel Homes Ltd.

1.2. Abel Homes is a family run local housebuilder based in Watton, Norfolk. The award winning company is known for its high quality homes. Abel Homes has built homes across Breckland and is committed to the continued delivery of new homes at their sites across the District.

1.3. Abel Homes has actively participated in the preparation of the Local Plan for Breckland for a number of years. Savills will attend the Hearing sessions on Matter 13 to expand on the representations made to the Regulation 19 consultation and the content of this Statement.

2. Matter 13 – Housing: the basis for the housing allocations and the settlement boundaries

2.1. With regard to this matter, Savills will reference the representations submitted to the Regulation 19 consultation. In addition, Savills make the following comments.

Question 13.1: Have all sites put forward for allocation been considered through the SA, along with all reasonable alternatives? Is the SA based on appropriate criteria and is it a robust?

Swaffham Allocation 3

2.2. Swaffham Allocation 3 (LP[097]009) has been assessed within the Sustainability Appraisal for the Breckland Local Plan Pre-Submission (page 427).

2.3. The site scores positively (+) in respect of 5, 6, 9, 10 11, 14, and 16.

2.4. The site scores negatively (-) in respect of 1, 2, 3, and 17.

2.5. The summary comments notes that "*Development options in Swaffham tend to be on Greenfield sites and so do not have positive outcomes with regards to the first three SA objectives, relating to land, water and soil resources.*"

2.6. Criteria 17, relates to economic activity specifically the objective to "*increase the vitality and viability of existing town centres*". It is considered as a result of the increase in population associated with the proposal there will be increased opportunity for spending within the town centre. Page 415 of the sustainability appraisal states "*Allocating the majority of development to the towns will help to increased the vitality and viability of those town centres.*"

Watton Allocation 2

2.7. Watton Housing Allocation 2 (LP[104]015) has been assessed within the Sustainability Appraisal for the Breckland Local Plan Pre-Submission (page 432).

2.8. The site scores positively (+) in respect of 6, 9, 10 11, 13, 14, and 16.

2.9. The site scores negatively (-) in respect of 2, 3, and 17.

2.10. The Sustainability Appraisal states "*Although the site scores neutrally against criteria 5 the site is distant from some key services and facilities. The site scores positively against the criteria 16, which ensures all groups have access to appropriate housing to meet their needs, due to the proposed use of a care home.*"

2.11. Criteria 17, relates to economic activity specifically the objective to “*increase the vitality and viability of existing town centres*”. It is considered as a result of the increase in population associated with the proposal there will be increased opportunity for spending within the town centre. Page 415 of the sustainability appraisal states “*Allocating the majority of development to the towns will help to increased the vitality and viability of those town centres.*”

Question 13.3: Overall, do the proposed allocations reflect the outcomes of the SA and testing of reasonable alternatives through the site selection methodology?

2.1. In respect of the assessments for Swaffham and Watton, the Sustainability Appraisal identifies Swaffham Allocation 3 and Watton Housing Allocation 2 score relatively positively when compared to the reasonable alternative sites considered.

2.12. In respect of Swaffham Allocation 3, page 70 of ‘Approach to the Selection of Sites’ (August 2017) states that:

“The site scores neutrally when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal criteria. It is distant from the town centre and employment areas however is close to two schools. As the site is bordered on three sides by residential development it is unlikely to impact upon the landscape. The site is included within the Clarence Hills Open Tributary Farmland character area, as defined in the Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment, which is of moderate sensitivity to change.

Norfolk County Council Highways have not provided any objections to the site.

The Historic Characterisation Study stated that the site must respect the landscape character sensitivity of the area and have regard to nearby form and character.

The Sequential Test Report states that the site is within Flood Zone 1 which is acceptable for this proposed development.

The site currently has a planning application which has a decision to grant subject to a S.106 agreement for 175 dwellings.”

2.13. In respect of Watton Allocation 2, page 84 of the ‘Approach to the Selection of Sites’ (August 2017) states that:

“The site scores fairly neutrally in the SA but scores positively in relation to ensuring all groups have appropriate housing to meet their needs due to the proposed use of a care home. The site is adjacent to the Norwich Road general employment area providing employment opportunities to potential residents. It does mean some noise attenuation measures may be required if this site is developed. It is distant from some key services and facilities meaning there may be an increase in cars in the area. To the west of the site is residential development and there is significant screening surrounding the site so there will be limited impacts to the landscapes character and on the two Grade II listed buildings nearby. It is located within the Watton Brook Tributary Farmland character area in the Breckland District Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment which has a moderate to high sensitivity to change. Norfolk County Council Highways have raised no concerns with this site.



“The site is considered suitable for allocation as it is easily accessible, close to local services and would form infill development between established residential and employment areas.”

2.14. It is considered that allocations Swaffham Allocation 3 and Watton Housing Allocation 2 are suitable for the development proposed via allocation.

