4.0 ALTERNATIVES & DESIGN EVOLUTION

Introduction

4.1 Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations require an applicant to provide an outline of the main alternatives studied and an indication of the main reasons for the choices made, taking into account the environmental effects. This chapter therefore, reviews the principal land use and siting options explored and the reasoning for the selection of the current design for the Development which forms the subject of assessment within the ES. Four alternative options have been identified:

- The ‘do nothing’ alternative where the Development is not progressed;
- Alternative locations for the Development;
- Alternative uses for the Site; and
- Alternative design/layout for the Development in the context of the design evolution.

4.2 The form of the Development has been influenced by a range of factors, including location, surrounding uses and landscape character, environmental impact assessment and input from BDC, statutory consultees and stakeholders.

The ‘do nothing’ Alternative

4.3 Under the ‘do nothing scenario’ the Site would remain undeveloped and retain its open fields/agricultural use. The purpose of this planning application is to develop the Site for housing and therefore this option was not considered further.

Consideration of Alternative Locations and Uses

4.4 The Site forms part of the Growth Triangle designated within the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk and is specifically designated as part of allocation GT7 within the adopted GTAAP. The GT7 allocation targets 1,400 homes on land south of Salhouse Road as well as road and cycle links, primary school, sports pitches and children’s play space, community building, police beat base and informal open space. The Site, therefore, is considered to be an appropriate location for residential development and no other alternative locations were investigated.
Consideration of Alternative Designs

4.5 The Development submitted for approval is the result of a thorough analysis of environmental constraints and opportunities, access issues and market demand. Consultation with BDC, statutory consultees and the general public has been a key influence in design evolution.

Design Evolution through Consultation

4.6 A summary of the consultation process undertaken can be found in Chapter 2 EIA Methodology and a Statement of Community Involvement has been submitted in support of the planning application, which contains detailed information. A review of the comments received during and in response to the exhibition (to which approximately 140 people attended, with 44 response forms completed and returned) has identified the following general themes among the response:

- Overall amount and principle of development;
- Overall traffic impact on the local highway network;
- Bus access from Greenborough Road;
- Impact on Thorpe End Garden Village;
- Loss of open space and woodland; and
- Impact on existing community facilities (i.e. education/health).

4.7 Table 4.1 below sets out key environmental issues raised during the public consultation and how the design of the Development has evolved to address them and where these issues are addressed in the ES.

Table 4.1 Design Evolution through Consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>ES Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and Ecology</td>
<td>Loss of open space and woodland</td>
<td>Retention and protection of central block of woodland within the Site and implementation of a landscape buffer between existing woodland and proposed development.</td>
<td>Chapters 8 and 9, Landscape and Visual Assessment, and Ecology and Nature Conservation</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Retention and enhancement of County Wildlife Site woodland in the south-western corner of the Site.</td>
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<td>New native hedgerow boundary interspersed with hedgerow trees between Thorpe End and the eastern boundary of the Site.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Overall traffic impact on the local highway network</td>
<td>Creation of publicly accessible open spaces and areas of formal recreation, linked by foot and cycle paths.</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Transport and Access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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