Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Examination

Note on proposed modification to SCLP12.29: South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood

1. This note responds to the Inspector’s post hearings letter, dated 31 January 2020, within which it is suggested Policy SCLP12.29 South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood should be amended to ensure that land within the allocation to the east of the railway is allocated for open space/Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) only, and that the settlement boundary for Saxmundham should therefore be redrawn to exclude, from within the settlement boundary, the part of the allocation to the east of the railway.

2. Leading up to the examination hearing sessions, the Council responded to the Inspector’s initial matters, issues and questions through a number of hearing statements. The Matter 3 Hearing Statement (SCLP12.1 – SCLP12.33) detailed the Council’s response to question 3.37, regarding the location of the Saxmundham settlement boundary and its implications for Policy SCLP12.29. Within this the Council held the position that the inclusion of allocated land to the east of the railway within the Saxmundham settlement boundary enabled greater flexibility through the masterplanning process. However, having considered the Inspector’s suggestions the Council understands that redrawning the Saxmundham settlement boundary as suggested provides greater certainty for all interested parties. The site allocation boundary has also been clarified on the maps to show the bridge over the railway line at the northern edge of the site within the allocation boundary.

3. To reflect the aforementioned Inspector’s suggestions, the Council propose the following modifications to Paragraph 12.288, Paragraph 12.290, Policy SCLP12.29, Policy SCLP12.29 inset map, and Saxmundham policies map 61.

4. Modifications are shown in strikethrough for deleted text and in underline for additional text. The Council will include these revisions in the schedule of modifications that has been collated as part of the Examination. The newly proposed modifications are shown in grey highlight.

Modification to Paragraph 12.288:

“To reduce the impact of the development and alongside providing for sufficient SANG areas, significant green infrastructure provision and areas of natural green space for recreation should be integral to the layout of the Garden Neighbourhood. Reflecting the heritage sensitivities and requirements for SANG, the Policy sets out that any uses to be delivered on land to the east of the railway are to be open space/SANG provision only. However, provision of open space and enhancements related to provision of SANG do not need to be confined to land to the east of the
railway. Alongside this, the delivery of an integrated network of green infrastructure is expected to be provided throughout the Garden Neighbourhood.”

Split to form new paragraph:

“These areas will provide amenity value for the future community and, a variety of habitats for wildlife. Green areas will also reduce the perception of settlement coalescence between the built up areas of Benhall and Saxmundham. Ensuring the provision of appropriate green infrastructure is a fundamental part of the creation of a new community in this part of the District and will complement the existing areas of woodland, the public rights of way and the adjacent countryside. Particular attention will need to be paid to how movements will take place between the areas to the east and west of the railway. The northern part of the area to the west of the B1121 known as The Layers provides an open setting to Hurts Hall, and has the potential to be enhanced to provide a high quality area of open space which makes the most of its history and links with surrounding heritage as well as potentially contributing to SANGs requirements. Any enhancements in relation to the provision of open space in this area need to be sympathetic to the character and setting of this area and heritage assets. The southern part of this area There may be potential within the land to the east of the railway adjoining the B1121 could remain in its for existing uses to remain, and links could be retained between Benhall and the rest of the Garden Neighbourhood through existing footpaths.”

Modification to Paragraph 12.290:

“The indicative masterplan provides an indication of how the principles outlined above could be incorporated within the Garden Neighbourhood. The masterplan shows that the area to the east of the railway is expected to be characterised by the provision of informal and formal open space whilst the area to the west of the railway is expected to provide the focus for mixed use development linked to employment uses to the west of the A12.”

Modifications to Policy SCLP12.29, through inclusion of criterion v:

“(v) The area of land east of the railway is identified for the provision of open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), to be master planned and delivered as part of the garden neighbourhood. The retention of existing uses on land to the east of the railway would be supported where this complements the delivery of open space and SANG.”
Policy SCLP12.29 inset map, to replace inset map on page 272 of Final Draft Local Plan
Saxmundham Policies Map, to replace Policies Map on page 599 of Final Draft Local Plan