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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

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By email & post

Dear Sirs

St Edmundsbury Local Development Framework: Consultation on Site Allocations: Issues and Options Document – Representations on behalf of Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

On behalf of our client the Suffolk Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (the Trust), we write to set out our representations on the St Edmundsbury Borough LDF Site allocations Issues and Options Document (August 2009).

Background

1. The Trust has a statutory responsibility for providing mental health care and learning disability services and facilities across Suffolk including St Edmundsbury Borough (the Borough) and is currently in the process of implementing a Service Development Strategy which includes the Modernisation of Mental Health Inpatient Services across the County, in line with the delivery of NHS Policy.
2. The Service Development Strategy includes an investment of circa £26 million in mental health inpatient services in Suffolk, part of which is being channelled to sites and services within the Borough, to provide appropriate modern fit for purpose inpatient facilities. In this regard, the Trust is programming the refurbishment and extension to the Wedgwood Unit located within West Suffolk Hospital in Bury St Edmunds. This development will provide an upgraded 17 bed functional/dementia assessment ward. Further investment at the Wedgwood Unit included the provision of a purpose designed 'Section 136 Suite' which was also granted planning permission in 2008 and is now operational.
3. Hand in hand with the implementation of the Trust's Modernisation Programme is the parallel process of the Trust's Suffolk wide Estate Strategy Review. This review is an ongoing process and to date has identified potentially surplus sites within the built up areas of Kedington and Bury St Edmunds as well as other locations across the county. The Bury St Edmunds sites will be promoted through the Area Action Plan for the Town, whilst the

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Stourmead complex at Kedington, which has been the subject of discussions with the Council, is referred to in response to the Site Allocations Issues and Options Document.

4. Consequently, the land use planning implications of the Trust's overall Integrated Business Plan (IBP) include the need for:
 - A realistic and flexible policy approach to sustainable development policies including energy efficiency initiatives (Core Strategy Policy CS2)
 - Acknowledgement of key worker accommodation as an important component of affordable housing
 - The recognition of the Trust's Integrated Business Plan (IBP) within the supporting text to the provision of Community Services including the need for further flexibility to policy wording to enable surplus assets to be promoted for redevelopment where appropriate (Development Management Policies SD2, SD3 & TV10) and
 - Acknowledgement that the Stourmead learning disability site in Kedington is likely to become surplus to health care purposes and is also likely to be redeveloped in part or whole for residential development during the plan period (Site Allocations Document Settlement No. 26).
5. Therefore, with the above background information in mind, the Trust is seeking to secure a suitable planning policy basis to enable future related operational development to take place as well as facilitating suitable alternative development on potentially surplus previously developed land.
6. The following specific representations have been made for clarity and in the interest of delivering the Trust's Integrated Business Plan (IBP) objectives and development requirements.

Site Allocations and Policies Issues & Options Document

Settlement No. 26 – Kedington

7. We note that the Core Strategy designates Kedington as a Key Service Centre capable of accommodating a level of housing growth commensurate with the degree of supporting facilities within the village. We also note that two green field areas have been identified by third parties as potential housing sites.
8. The Trust additionally wishes to draw attention to the Stourmead complex located to the north of the village within the settlement boundary (see attached plan). In line with the strategic plan for services for people with learning disabilities, the current site does not meet the service needs both physically and geographically. The site which comprises dwellings and an administrative block is likely to be declared surplus for health care purposes during the early part of the plan period when relocation and more appropriate accommodation is provided over the next 12-24 months. Therefore, the Trust wishes to pursue the 2.2 hectare area of previously developed land as a potential housing development site.



9. A number of development options are being considered for Stourmead, including the redevelopment of the majority of the site for approximately 65 new dwellings at a density of 30units/hectare as well as the reuse and conversion of the existing accommodation to open market dwellings. These options have been the subject of recent discussion with officers at the Council. Therefore, it is requested that the likely redevelopment/reuse of the Stourmead site is recognised in the Plan through a site specific residential allocation/designation.

We trust that the above content and representations are clear and that the Council will give due consideration to the Trust's proposals, which may be reflected in the subsequent versions of the LDF.

In the meantime, please contact John Lawson on the above telephone number if you require further clarification at this stage.

Yours sincerely

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Lawson Planning Partnership

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