

Nick Timothy, Member of Parliament for West Suffolk



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON, SW1A 0AA

7 October 2025

Dear Mr Nettleton

I want to thank Bromford Flagship and Levitt Bernstein for their presentation of the Rowley Drive Masterplan in Newmarket on 26 September 2025. I am writing to ask about the content and status of the Masterplan, as I said I would, and repeat my concerns about the way in which consultation has been carried out so far.

During the presentation, Councillor Rachel Hood and I were told that the document under discussion was a ‘concept masterplan’ or ‘development brief’. It was said this was intended to give an ‘illustration’ and provide a point for discussion. But one of the representatives of the project at the meeting said the Masterplan would be adopted as a supplementary planning document, have ‘a degree of weight’ and be a ‘material consideration’ in the planning process.

In the *Newmarket Journal* a Flagship spokesman called the plan a **“flexible framework”**, while the Bromford Flagship website says: **“This is very much a flexible, visionary document. What actually happens will be shaped by what the community wants. The masterplan sets out possibilities, not certainties, and residents will help shape what comes next.”**

These are all very different descriptions of what exactly the plan is, and what it will mean for residents and the wider town.

I am afraid it is not good enough to offer the community the chance to **‘help shape’** what comes next.

And it is not clear how a plan can be ‘illustrative’ when fundamental assumptions are built-in to it, such as the number and density of new homes.

For instance, the Masterplan indicates a significant uplift in the density of the estate from 74 dwellings per hectare to 123 dwellings per hectare, alongside an increase in the number of dwellings from 263 to 440.

So can you please answer, in writing and clearly, the following questions:

- Why — if a “masterplan” doesn’t need detailed proposals — have you produced them?
- Can you confirm the status of the Masterplan? Is it a “flexible framework”, merely “illustrative” or something else? Please use precise definitions in your answer.
- Given the scale of opposition to your Masterplan, will you commit to restarting the design process with residents, those living in the wider town and the elected representatives of the town able to influence the design from the very beginning?
- Will you provide local councillors and me with estimates and documents detailing how many new homes will be needed to make the redevelopment financially viable, and the density of each model considered?

As Cllr Hood said during our meeting, Newmarket has had a bad experience of masterplans being introduced for previous significant development areas which people and elected representatives in the town did not feel they were given an adequate chance to influence. I am determined that this must not happen in this case.

Bromford Flagship also says on the website that this brief was produced ‘following extensive consultation with residents, local schools, West Suffolk Council and the Jockey Club’. However, Bromford Flagship made no attempt to consult with me as the local Member of Parliament before the proposals were published in the press, and released to others, in early September. And as you are aware, the town’s councillors are very concerned by the Masterplan.

If you wish to proceed with redeveloping this site, then it will be crucial that you have community confidence.

So I am asking for your clear commitment that the Masterplan that has been produced will not in any way form part of the material consideration for the eventual application and that you will only develop the vision for this site in step consultation with the town and its representatives — including the town, district and county councillors and me, as Newmarket’s MP.

My view is that the final plan must have a good number of homes with a density that is sensible for a town of Newmarket’s size. Residents must also have their own space and gardens, and there must be a clear delineation between public and private space.

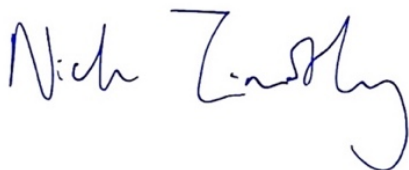
I do not believe the Masterplan is at all a viable starting point for the discussion about what this site should look like, the density, look and feel of the homes or the numbers of people who will eventually live there.

In short, the look, scale and design of the estate all need to be totally re-examined from first principles, and in coordination with the public.

As I said at our meeting, my strong concern is that the Masterplan as it stands will repeat the mistakes of the past, creating an environment in which crime and anti-social behaviour will flourish, rather than building the sense of community everyone wants.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Timothy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk