



Breckland
COUNCIL

Draft Local Plan

Full Update

Preferred Options

June 2024



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has prepared this Draft Local Plan to set out a strategy, vision, and planning framework for the future development of Breckland. In doing so, it is based on a robust evidence base that takes account of the projected population change for the area and assesses the level of development that will be required to support the needs of this population.
- 1.2 The Draft Local Plan also takes account of the Council's other plans and strategies to ensure they can be supported by the planning framework. That economic development and growth are not constrained through the planning system, and that there is enough land available to meet all of the District's needs and aspirations whilst protecting the intrinsic attractiveness and quality of Breckland's rural areas, market towns and villages.
- 1.3 The emerging Breckland Local Plan aims to establish requirements for growth and development in the district for the period 2021 to 2046. This 25-year time frame enables the Council to shape and guide development in the District and;
- Set a spatial vision and strategy for the district, with clear economic, social, and environmental objectives.
 - Meet the needs and aspirations of Breckland's residents.
- 1.4 The draft Local Plan contains the following elements:
- A Spatial Portrait setting out the conditions that exist in Breckland and highlighting issues to be addressed within the document.
 - A Strategic Vision highlighting how Breckland will be at the end of the plan period in 2046, and how this will be achieved.
 - Spatial Objectives which all new development will be required to meet to implement the Local Plan.
 - Strategic Policies and Development Management Policies which will guide development to ensure the delivery of the strategic vision and objectives for the area.

- Site allocations, establishing new locations where the principle of new development to meet the needs for growth in Breckland is confirmed.
- The Local Plan Policies Map which can be found here [Have Your Say Today - Breckland Local Plan - Commonplace](#)

The adopted Local Plan

- 1.5 This draft Local Plan is part of the process of preparing a new Local Plan for Breckland. Until it is adopted the development plan for Breckland remains:
- Breckland Local Plan 2019 (as updated 2023),
 - Made Neighbourhood Plans,
 - Saved policies within the Thetford Area Action Plan 2012 and Site-Specific Policies and Proposals Plan 2012.

Communities and Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.6 Parish and Town Councils are an integral part of maintaining vibrant and successful communities. There are multiple ways in which they support and release the potential of their places with the role to inform and influence place shaping through Neighbourhood Planning and responding to development proposals. Parish and Town Councils bring a close knowledge of the needs of their community and the ability to coordinate activity to address local priorities. The Localism Act 2011, created a power of general competence for parish and town councils, created the concept of neighbourhood planning and rights for communities to bid to take on responsibility for assets and services.
- 1.7 Parish and Town Councils are a statutory consultee within the planning process and have the opportunity to respond to planning matters. This is done by providing local knowledge, raising areas of priority, informing, and adding value to process. The Local Planning Authority must take into account the representations received by the town or parish council and these will be considered as part of the decision-making process.

The role of neighbourhood plans

- 1.8 Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, local communities now have the opportunity to prepare their own neighbourhood plans. These plans set out policies and proposals to manage development and change in small areas. This would be supported by powers for communities to grant planning permission for new development directly through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. Neighbourhood plans, like the statutory area-wide local plans, which planning authorities must prepare, are subject to a process of independent examination and adoption, with the additional requirement for a local referendum.
- 1.9 In Breckland, neighbourhood plans are generally prepared by town or parish councils. A number of Neighbourhood Plans have been, or are being, prepared by communities within the District, and once approved by the Council each Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan. As the new Local Plan progresses and gains weight, any made Neighbourhood Plans, or those currently being prepared, should be reviewed by the qualifying bodies that prepared the Neighbourhood Plans, to ensure they remain consistent with the new Local Plan.
- 1.10 Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping their areas and in supporting new development proposals. A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the local plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the local plan, the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations. Planning applications are decided in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is for the decision maker in each case to determine what is a material consideration and what weight to give to it.
- 1.11 The Local Plan establishes how much housing, employment and retail development is needed to meet the anticipated needs of the District over the plan period. The Local Plan also allocates suitable sites to meet the

needs identified in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans which are being prepared or reviewed after the Local Plan is adopted, can look to allocate additional sites for development within their designated area and could propose settlement boundaries. However, they cannot propose less development than that set out in this Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet the basic conditions as set out in legislation. One element of this is that a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the Local Plan. This means that they should not conflict with the agreed spatial planning objectives for Breckland as set out in this Plan.

1.12

NP1: Neighbourhood Planning

The Council will support the production of neighbourhood plans that are in general conformity with the principles set out in this Policy and the following strategic policies:

- a. All policies in Breckland Vision and Objectives and Sustainable Development Principles.
- b. Strategic policies directing the provision of affordable housing, design standards and infrastructure delivery.

Housing and Economic development

The District's Housing and Economic Development requirements will be met through a combination of completions since the base date of the Local Plan (2021), existing sites with planning permission that will be built during the plan period and through allocation of sites for development as part of the spatial development strategy. As such there is no requirement for housing or economic development sites to be allocated in neighbourhood plans to meet identified district level requirements.

The Council will expect communities preparing neighbourhood plans to identify local development requirements, and to address them in their plans where possible,

reflecting the overall strategy set out in this plan for the pattern and scale of development and any allocations.

For neighbourhood plans to progress to referendum they are required to meet the Basic Conditions, which include being in conformity with the strategic policies of this plan.

At April 2024 Neighbourhood areas currently designated are:

Attleborough, Croxton, Brettenham, Kilverstone, Dereham, Kenninghall, Mattishall, Necton, New Buckenham, Rocklands, Saham Toney, Sporle and Palgrave, Swaffham, Swanton Morley, Watton and Yaxham

The Role of Town and Parish Councils

- 1.13 If requested by a town or parish council, Article 13 of the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015 requires the local planning authority to inform the relevant town and parish council of planning applications.
- 1.14 The Local Planning Authority must take into account the representations received by the town or parish council. However, that does not mean that the local planning authority will necessarily decide an application as the Parish Council have indicated they feel it should be decided. This is for several reasons:
1. The local planning authority is only entitled to take into account planning related matters. The comments of town and parish councils are sometimes not related to planning issues.
 2. The local planning authority will receive advice from their professional officers on how the application should be dealt with. A town or parish council may not usually receive such professional advice.
 3. The local planning authority must take into account the representations of others apart from the town and parish council,

especially the observations of other consultees, both the statutory/non-statutory consultees, as well as the neighbours of the developments, and the applicant, etc.

- 1.15 Whilst the representations of the town and parish councils are important, they are not necessarily entitled to any more weight than any other representations e.g. neighbours and statutory consultees. For example, a consultation response from the highways officer on an application may not have any adverse comment on the proposed access for a particular development affecting a highway. The town and parish council may take the view that the access is dangerous. Members of the planning authority may question their officers about such a difference in opinion, but the highway authority's view should normally stand, because if there is an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, the Council must be able to support the reasons for refusal in its decision.
- 1.16 This does not mean that the local planning authority do not take into account town and parish council representations. However, they must balance the comments with all the other representations received, and they have restrictions on the way in which they entitled by law to deal with applications because they must not take into account non-planning related matters.

Call for Sites

- 1.17 Preparation of this draft Local Plan commenced in 2022 with a call for sites, seeking input from residents, landowners, developers, and other stakeholders regarding areas of land that they may consider suitable for housing or economic development or that may be suitable to designate as areas of Local Green Space.

Housing

- 1.18 An initial Phase 1 assessment of the Call for Sites in relation to potential housing development was published in January 2024. This draft Local Plan is supported by a Phase 2 Assessment further outlining the assessment and

site selection process that has resulted in identification for consultation, the Preferred Housing Allocations within this draft Plan.

Employment and economic development

- 1.19 The Housing and Economic Development Assessment (HEDNA) 2024, prepared to inform the Local Plan, has included a site assessment of existing and proposed areas of land for employment and economic development. The initial conclusions of this work and site assessments which consider the likely market attractiveness, suitability, and potential role of sites for employment development has been undertaken. This has resulted in identification within this Plan of Employment Site Options that will require further analysis and review to establish a confirmed portfolio of employment land capable of addressing the Districts needs for economic growth over the Plan period.

What you have told us so far

- 1.20 Preparation of this draft Local Plan has been informed by a number of phases of consultation and engagement on issues and options in Breckland. This has included:
- Issues and Options Consultation Paper, March 2023
 - Further engagement on Issues and Options, Summer/Autumn 2023
 - Alternative Development Options, Settlements and Initial Site Findings, January 2024.
- 1.21 The Council launched its first informal stage of consultation on the emerging Local Plan Full Update with publication of an Issues and Options consultation document in March 2023. This consultation document set out for discussion the key opportunities and challenges for growth and development in Breckland and posed questions about the direction the District may take in relation to issues including:
- Changes to the Vision and Objectives
 - Housing development amount and location

- Providing the right type of homes
 - The economy
 - The built environment
 - The natural environment
 - Climate change
 - Transport
 - Infrastructure
- 1.22 Throughout each stage of engagement, opportunities to respond both online and in writing to the Council have generated significant responses. The engagement undertaken through 2023 has also enabled a conversation to progress with Breckland’s residents, stakeholders and Parish and Town Council representatives about the future direction for Breckland.
- 1.23 Feedback has highlighted the importance of avoiding major loss of greenfield land in the countryside to support large new settlements and a preference for what growth may be required being directed to the locations and settlements best served by existing infrastructure and services or opportunities for enhancement to address expanded requirements of growth. The existing character and attractiveness of Breckland’s towns and villages is highly valued, although existing issues such as traffic congestion are noted. Whilst locally many respondents consider their settlement faces shortfalls in infrastructure such as GPs or Bus Services to enable growth, there is also a widely recognised understanding of the need for new and affordable quality housing in Breckland to meet residents’ needs.
- 1.24 A summary and officer response to the comments and feedback received is outlined within the Breckland Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Report May 2024.

Integrated Assessment

- 1.25 Integrated Assessment (incorporating Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Impact and Health Impact) is a key component of the Local Plan process. The preparation of this document has been informed by an Integrated Assessment (IA) report that assesses the

social, economic, and environmental impacts of policies and proposals. An initial IA Report was prepared to accompany the publication which draws together an assessment of these conditions and their effects and identifies key spatial issues that the Local Plan needs to address.

Next steps

- 1.26 The programme for preparation of this Local Plan is included in the latest Local Development Scheme¹, approved in November 2023.
- 1.27 This Draft Local Plan is part of Regulation 182 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended, an informal stage of engagement and consultation on preparation of the Local Plan. Comments received at this stage will be reviewed and responded to and will inform a final publication or Pre-submission Draft Local Plan that will be published early in 2025. Before the Local Plan is adopted by the Council, the draft Local Plan will be submitted to the Government and the Secretary of State will appoint an independent Inspector who will undertake an Examination of the soundness of the proposed Local Plan. This is expected in late 2025 / 2026 before final adoption of the Local Plan by the Council in 2026.
- 1.28 Responses are sought on the draft policy and proposals included in this draft Local Plan with six weeks of its publication **by 5pm on 15th July 2024**.
- 1.29 Comments must be made in writing and can be submitted:
- 1.30 Online at: <https://Brecklandlocalplan.commonplace.is>
- 1.31 Email: LocalPlan@breckland.gov.uk
- 1.32 Post: Planning Policy Team,
Breckland District Council,

1.1

¹ Local Development Scheme, 2023 https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/20221/Local-Development-Scheme-revised-November-2023/pdf/Local-Development-Scheme-revised_November_2023.pdf?m=1702395517870

² The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents>

Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham,
Norfolk,
NR19 1EE

2 A Spatial Portrait for Breckland

- 2.1 Over the Local Plan period the population is set to grow from 142,164 in 2021 to 171,243 by 2046 (ONS 2014 based sub-national population projections and Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2024). In Breckland, quality of life is good, with official crime rates being low and generally decreasing. However, there are pockets of health and disability related deprivation, notably in some of the Thetford wards. The average age of Breckland residents is increasing and this raises issues for health and the level and distribution of appropriate service provision, as well as the economy and housing market.
- 2.2 Thetford and Attleborough are major towns and key areas for growth, with significant urban extensions already committed through the current Local Plan and other planning permissions. Dereham is a medium sized town but has an important administrative, employment and retail function and is well positioned to accommodate additional growth if current challenges regarding transport and congestion are addressed. Swaffham and Watton are medium sized towns, which serve as administration and service centres, but are also a focus for retail where they provide a good range of services for day-to-day needs of local residents, and the rural hinterlands, as well as employment. There are a number of larger villages in the District which have a range of services. However, there are a number of rural parishes with very few or no services, including some wards which are amongst the most deprived in Norfolk in terms of accessibility..
- 2.3 The regional centre of Norwich exerts a sphere of influence over much of the District. To a lesser extent the sub-regional centres of King's Lynn and Bury St. Edmunds have a relationship with parts of the west and south of the District respectively. Communities in Breckland look primarily towards the Norwich area for employment, higher order retail, transport, and service provision, such as hospitals. Increasingly, the south of the District, along with settlements along the A11 corridor, which traverses the District connecting Thetford to Attleborough and onwards to Norwich, looks for investment

emanating from the growth of Norwich and other regional centres, such as Cambridge and the M11 Corridor. Thetford and Attleborough are key areas for future housing and business growth. Agriculture, advanced engineering, and manufacturing logistics along with forestry are the dominant business sectors with professional, scientific, and technical and food processing not far behind. At 2021, Manufacturing employment provided around 15% of all employment in the District, and whilst not growing as quickly as other sectors, the HEDNA 2024 indicates it will continue to support 14% of employment in 2026. Other important sectors of employment in Breckland include Wholesale and retail providing over 15% of total employment in the District, Administration and Support (9%) and Healthcare (9%).

- 2.4 Given the rural nature and dispersed pattern of settlement, movement in the District is primarily by private car. With a high level of interdependency on higher order centres Breckland, like many other rural authorities, has a high rate of commuting to work. Two trunk road routes run across the District and Breckland's strategic position is emphasised by good road connections offered by the A47 and A11. The A47 links Dereham and Swaffham with Norwich in the east and King's Lynn in the west and further afield to Peterborough and the A1(M), while the A11 links Attleborough and Thetford with Norwich and the Norwich Research Park to the north-east and Newmarket, Cambridge and the M11 in the south-west. Major infrastructure improvements and improved transport links such as the completion of the A11 dualling are attracting new businesses, as well as enabling existing ones to flourish through increased connectivity. Further improvements are planned for the A47 trunk road, this work is expected to be completed by 2025/26 and will complete the dualling of the route between Dereham and Norwich.
- 2.5 The remaining parts of Breckland are served by a network of non-trunk "A" category, secondary and minor roads. Rail investment is a regional commitment. Thetford and Attleborough are connected to the national rail network with regular services to Norwich and Cambridge, and beyond to London, the Midlands and north of England. Public transport services in the

District are principally provided by bus and focus on linking the District's market towns with shopping and employment destinations at Norwich, King's Lynn, and Bury St. Edmunds. There are more infrequent services in the rural areas, linking villages with their local town, principally on market days.

- 2.6 Wages are relatively low in comparison with the national and regional averages. This is reflected through the lower level of qualifications of people in the District and the lower level of skills required by many of the available jobs. Although there is a high proportion of people living and working in the District, many higher qualified workers are travelling out of the District to access higher paid and higher skilled work. 75.7% of the working age population are in employment, compared to 77.8% across the East of England and an average of 75.8% Great Britain. Unemployment in the District is very low and has been consistently below both the national and county figures. Breckland recorded 57,000 workforce jobs in 2021 (Breckland HEDNA 2024), representing an increase of 10% over the ten years since 2011. Baseline economic forecasts (Oxford Economic, HEDNA 2024) suggest employment growth may slow over the plan period relative to the past. However, further alternative forecasts developed in the HEDNA indicate that growth of at least 14% over the Plan period to 2046 is feasible.
- 2.7 The functional linkages between where people live and work help to define the housing market for Breckland, which cuts across various local planning authority administrative boundaries. The 2024 HEDNA has reviewed and confirmed that Breckland remains part of the Central Norfolk Housing Market Area (HMA) focused upon Norwich as the key regional hub. However, greatest migration flows for Breckland are shown within the 2024 HEDNA to be with South Norfolk, with the second highest flows with Norwich. Kings Lynn, West Norfolk, and West Suffolk all establish important migration relationships with Breckland.
- 2.8 Breckland is a diverse District for biodiversity, landscape, and heritage. It takes its name from The Brecks, which is a nationally unique landscape and habitat of sandy heath, forest and arable farmland found in the west and south of the District. This habitat contains a number of nationally important

bird species such as Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar and large swathes of The Brecks are protected by National and European designations. Elsewhere the character of Breckland is clay farmland, punctuated with woodland, occasional river valleys and dispersed settlement. The historic character of Breckland's settlements is recognised by 50 separate Conservation Areas and over 1,500 Listed Buildings.

- 2.9 Breckland also has an interesting geodiversity; it is an area of lowland glacial landscape overlying chalk bedrock. Its special landforms include pingos, patterned ground and fluctuating meres. Many of these features are recognised as being of regional and national importance.
- 2.10 The District is one of the driest areas of the country and availability of water resources is an issue with the increasing pressure for development. Climate change remains a significant challenge over the longer term, with the expectation of warmer, wetter winters and drier, hotter summers, reduced water resources and more extreme weather events. The release of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, is the main contributing factor towards climate change. Human activity is a direct cause with road traffic a significant source of carbon dioxide.
- 2.11 Breckland's location means that it is not vulnerable to sea level changes. However, many parts of the District have a high clay content and consequently inadequate drainage, which can lead to localised problems of flash flooding.

3 Breckland's Spatial Vision and Objectives

3.1 National guidance promotes a Local Plan which reflects a collective vision, incorporating priorities from neighbourhoods, businesses and local organisations which should reflect the strategic priorities for the area. It is important that the vision for Breckland sets out the Council's aspirations for the future of the District and is one that will guide how the District will look in the future.

3.2 It is the Council's aim that the vision for Breckland should:

- Reflect local circumstances and that the Local Plan is prepared with the objective of achieving sustainable development in the context of Breckland's rural nature reflecting the aspirations of local communities, and
- Align with other key strategies and plans, produced by the Council, key partners, and the wider community.
- To support a vision, it is also important that the Local Plan sets out the strategic objectives for the District. The strategic objectives facilitate delivery of the District's strategic priorities which reflect the requirements of the NPPF as well as local aspirations.

3.3 The Local Plan presents an opportunity to develop a high-level vision that encompasses all the elements that should now act as key drivers for the growth and continued success of the District. It also offers the opportunity to detail a plan that is unique to Breckland, seeks to address the specific rural nature, but at the same time aligns with the requirements of national policy. It is the long-term spatial vision that will create the framework for the development of policies and proposals to be included in the Local Plan. This vision emphasises local distinctiveness, with a focus upon delivery, in line with the context of positive growth that is put forward in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), wherein it is highlighted that sustainable development is about making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. It gives expression to other

strategies and programmes, including economic development, education, housing, health, environmental protection, and culture.

- 3.4 The vision has been derived from the challenges, issues, opportunities, and aspirations expressed by neighbourhoods, businesses, and local organisations through stakeholder consultation, reflecting and supporting the priorities established in Breckland Council’s Corporate Plan.
- 3.5 The Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 sets out three overarching themes

1. Inspiring Communities

Enabling everyone to lead happy, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

2. Thriving Places

Creating opportunities for skilled jobs and economic growth.

3. Working Smarter 2035

Protecting our environment – now and for future generations; and putting customers first by delivering quality, value-for-money services that meet their needs.

- 3.6 Within this, a number of key outcomes and strategic priorities are relevant to and inform the Local Plan’s approach including ambitions to;
- Reduce the District’s carbon footprint and enable residents to take action themselves.
 - Protect and enhance our outstanding local environment.
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of Breckland’s residents with provision to leisure facilities and wellbeing activities.
 - Ensure our residents have suitable, safe, and secure homes and improve housing supply in Breckland.
 - Ensure our towns and villages are truly sustainable, meeting changing needs of local populations and catering to a new model for leisure and retail.
 - Secure and attract investment and make the district an attractive place for new and growing businesses.

- 3.7 The Strategic Vision for Breckland aims to articulate where the Council wishes to be by the end of the plan period in 2046.

Breckland's Strategic Vision

Breckland's settlements and its wider rural area will have developed in a sustainable manner appropriate for the rural nature of the District, in alignment with any future partnership working with nature, biodiversity and green infrastructure strategies. Building on its achievements and strengths to deliver and improve quality of life for the next generation of residents, as well as an improved experience for visitors, it will be better placed to attract investment and jobs into the District.

Breckland's communities will be more sustainable, inclusive, prosperous, safe, healthy, and vibrant. The economy will be diversified and well connected, with a growing number of skilled workforce and population. New growth will be holistically balanced between improved high-quality development, and protection of the built and natural environment, ensuring that the District adapts to, and mitigates against the impacts of climate change and facilitates carbon neutrality.

New development will be directed to locations that are co-ordinated with transport provision, have good access to support existing services, community facilities and open space. Outside the strategic growth locations of Attleborough, Thetford and Dereham, a balanced approach to housing development and delivery of affordable housing in rural and urban areas will improve housing land supply that addresses the affordability challenge and provides for all types of housing need, whilst delivering planned growth and the infrastructure required to support development so that communities can grow in a sustainable and cohesive manner.

New employment will not only be located to take advantage of the improved transport links offered by the A11 and A47 corridors and partnership work with adjacent local authorities but be directed to the most sustainable locations where they assist in providing the right balance between the local rural economy and that of the wider District and of Greater Norwich. Local distinctiveness will be reflected through positive approaches towards the rural economy where appropriate development will be helping to sustain and enhance local services and identities, allowing them to grow and assist in helping rural communities adapt and thrive.

Services and facilities will be supported and prized in rural villages. A sense of local community and belonging will be maintained and reinforced, with decisions made at community level reflected in development proposals through the consideration of Neighbourhood Planning.

Breckland will continue to cherish the natural, built, and historic environment which make the district unique, and will protect them not only for their own sake, but also as a means of attracting investment and visitors to the area. Breckland's towns and villages will have retained the features that provide their character. Breckland's most sensitive landscapes and habitats will be protected from harm and enhanced with successful measures to ensure important watercourses are protected from nutrient pollution and biodiversity net gain is driving forwards nature recovery.

Through working with stakeholders and partners, strong working relationships will be delivering improved health care and wellbeing to meet the needs of the communities.

Strategic Objectives

Development in the Right Place

1. Contribute to sustainable development through the reflection of the vision and aspirations of the local communities for Breckland.
2. Assist in the creation and maintenance of inclusive, environmentally sustainable communities making the best and most efficient use of already developed land, buildings, and natural resources.
3. Make sure the majority of development is focused into areas where services are available, and where facilities can be supported.
4. To adapt and mitigate against the impacts of climate change.

Meeting Housing Need

5. Deliver housing that meets the needs of the community and local economy through the concentration of development in the Strategic Urban Extensions of Attleborough and Thetford and where services and facilities can be supported within or adjacent to the market

towns of Dereham, Swaffham and Watton and the local service centres, whilst giving recognition to the need for small scale and appropriate development in rural areas to support rural communities and services.

6. Support the development and maintenance of a balanced housing market and a variety of decent housing types, improving the supply of affordable housing and housing delivery that meets the needs of all local people and supports economic and community development;
7. To encourage high quality, sustainable and safe design for places and spaces, in both the private and public realm, which respects the character and local distinctiveness of Breckland's communities and align with the objectives of the Breckland Design Guide 2024.

A Strong Economy

8. Promote and support economic growth in sustainable and accessible locations in a flexible manner, diversifying the urban and rural economic base of the District to enable a prosperous mix where investment is encouraged, skills are developed and retained, and new and existing businesses are supported;
9. Enable the full potential of the A11 gateway and A47 corridor to contribute to economic growth of the District through investment, partnership work with neighbouring authorities and inward investment.
10. Develop the local economy and meet local employment needs by providing a sufficient number and variety of employment locations and opportunities, at the same time ensuring the specific qualities of the local environment are not damaged.
11. Promote the vitality and viability of town centres, including the nighttime economy and support the retention of existing rural services;

12. Provide for improved broadband connections, especially in rural areas.

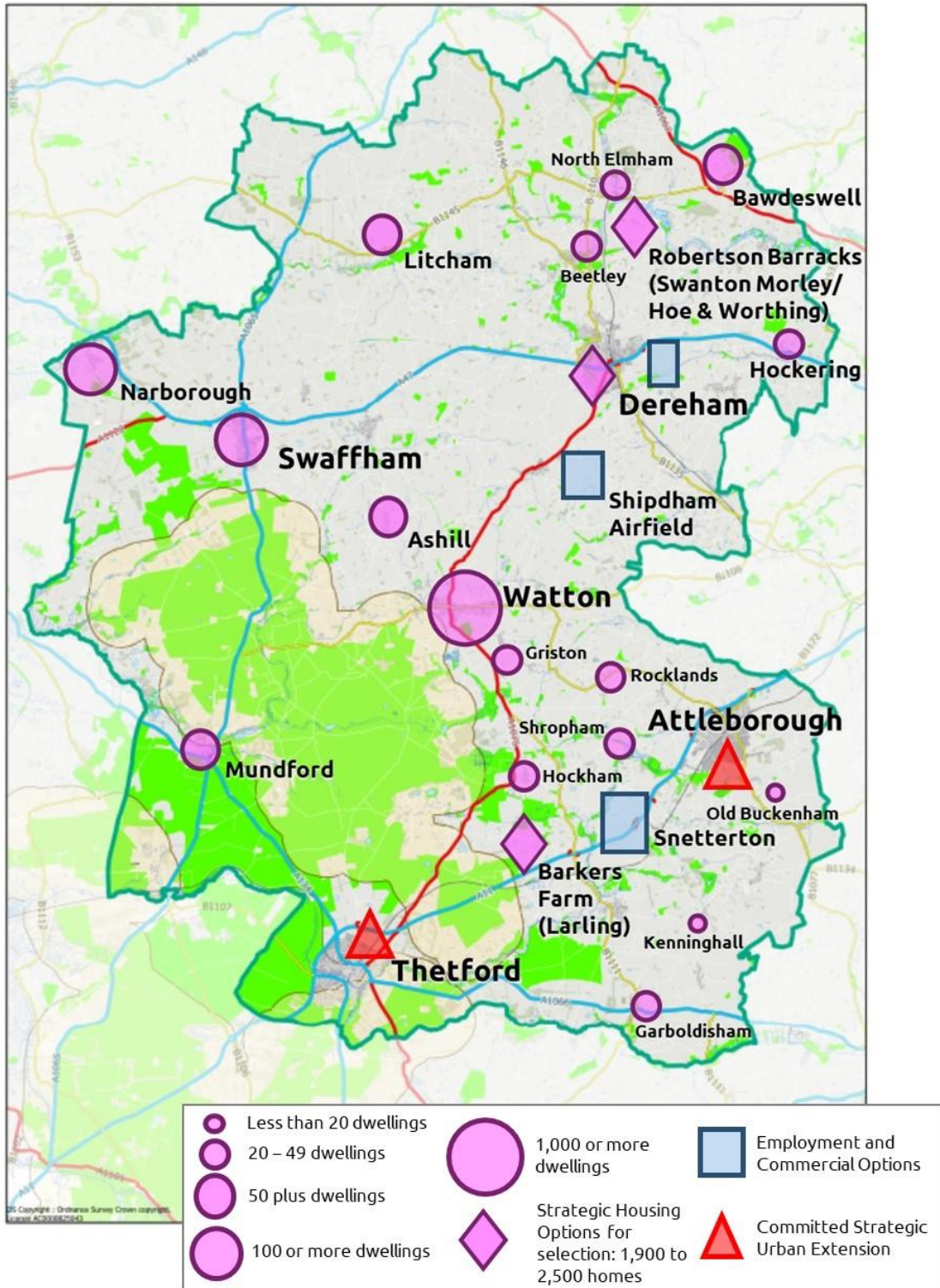
A Rich Environment

13. Contribute to the positive management of change in the historic environment, protecting, enhancing, and maintaining the unique qualities and character of Breckland, the wider landscape and setting, and its designated and non-designated heritage assets for the future.
14. Promote a safe and healthy environment, and high-quality design minimising the impacts of development and ensuring quality of life and sense of place.
15. Protect, conserve, and enhance the natural environment, valuing green infrastructure for the many functions it performs.
16. Ensure the ongoing protection of key habitats for protected species, achieve biodiversity net gain and secure nutrient neutrality.

Thriving Communities

17. To improve the health and well-being of our communities by reducing health inequalities, promoting healthy living, and supporting locally accessible, high-quality health care;
18. To protect and enhance community facilities and services and maximise accessibility to them; and
19. To encourage and facilitate a sense of community and belonging, and make sure decisions are made at community level as far as possible (through implementation of this plan and through Neighbourhood Planning).

Breckland Draft Local Plan: Key Diagram



4 Sustainable Development Principles

General Site Development and Design Principles

- 4.1 At the heart of the NPPF for both plan-making and decision-taking there is a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". This means that Local Authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their Districts. National Policy (NPPF paragraph 7) advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development, and that through the planning system gains should be sought jointly through the three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. Sustainable development is about facilitating the creation of jobs and homes, improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure, creating the conditions for better design and achieving gains in nature.
- 4.2 This involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural, and historic environment as well as in people's quality of life. In developing the Local Plan, it is important not only to have regard to national policy, but also to reflect and interpret policy with regard to the rural nature of the District and the aspirations of the local community. Local Plans should meet objective needs based on robust evidence, and they should be able to be applied in a flexible manner to adapt to rapid change, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits, or specific policies indicate development should be restricted. They should also reflect local distinctiveness.
- 4.3 The presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits.
- 4.4 Plans must be prepared with the objective of achieving sustainable development that reflects the vision and aspirations of local communities,

reflecting local circumstances. As a predominantly rural, sparsely populated District, the dispersed nature of its population presents many challenges both for residents and for the delivery and provision of services. Difficulty in accessing services, limited communications network (including broadband), reliance on the private car, the potential of social isolation and increased household costs are issues that whilst not exclusively rural, can be exacerbated by Breckland's rural characteristics.

- 4.5 Whilst planning cannot overcome market forces and personal behaviour, it can help to ensure that rural communities and settlements do not stagnate and decline but instead meet the needs of all generations of their communities; particularly the needs of younger households and those on lower wages. It can also assist in improving the appropriate provision of services and facilities, as well as helping to strengthen community cohesion, parish, and family ties.
- 4.6 The NPPF advises that to boost the supply of housing, local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. With regard specifically to rural areas, the NPPF advises that authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs in a sustainable manner. Paragraphs 83 and 84 clearly set out that to promote positive development 'housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities' and 'should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances'. However, it should be recognised that travel by car will still be an essential option for many people living in remote rural areas.
- 4.7 In order to deliver the vision of the Local Plan there are a number of principles that development will be tested against. Policy GEN 01 Development Principles sets the context for key considerations that will form the basis within this plan and future decision making. Design covers a range of different factors that shape our interaction with the environment.

- 4.8 'Good Design' is about creating visually attractive and successful places that work well and are functional. Design is a key component of achieving healthy places and is an integral part of the NPPF. Key considerations for the Plan include:

Setting and coalescence

- 4.9 The spaces between buildings, groupings and settlements are an integral part of the character of Breckland and are often of great importance to local communities. Determining where coalescence of settlements or places may give rise to problems will vary between different locations based on the character of the area and its landscape. For example, the village of Saham Toney is distinct from the nearby town of Watton despite their relative proximity and development that encroached on that distinctiveness could prove harmful to local character and identity.
- 4.10 These general Site Development Principles are designed to be read in conjunction with other policies of the plan and must be considered when assessing development proposals that could lead to harmful coalescence. In considering land which is considered to be of local importance to communities, reference will be made to Conservation Area Appraisals, Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

Materials and design

- 4.11 The adopted Breckland Design Guide and design policy within this Local Plan must be considered and referred to when proposing development in Breckland. Proposals are expected to demonstrate a strong design ethos and an understanding of their context. For larger sites and developments, the Council will require the submission of detailed masterplans and evidence of the design influences that have been integrated into the proposals.

Accessibility

- 4.12 Accessibility is a key principle of good design and sustainable development. At the highest level, development proposals should be located within easy reach of a range of services (via walking, cycling and public transport).

Environment

4.13 The built and natural environment is valued by many that choose to live, work, and invest within Breckland. Policies within this Plan detail how these valued assets will be protected and utilised in the delivery of sustainable development.

Brownfield land

4.14 To minimise the loss of greenfield land, and in accordance with the NPPF, the best use should be made of previously developed land, vacant sites, derelict sites and buildings. The Council maintains a brownfield register of sites that could be suitable for redevelopment and has sought to prioritise potential brownfield allocations in this Plan.

Pollution

4.15 Developments should aim to minimise their impact on the environment and neighbouring properties and will be expected to avoid potentially conflicting uses. This includes those that are likely to give rise to noise, dust, light, vibration, or other pollutants.

4.16 Air quality is a particular issue in some areas of the District. Whilst on the whole the District has low levels of air pollution, there are some areas such as Swaffham where levels of pollution have historically exceeded recommended limits and have been designated as “Air Quality Management Areas”.

Water efficiency

4.17 Breckland like many parts of Norfolk and wider East Anglia, experiences low levels of rainfall and is defined by the Environment Agency as an area of water stress. Anglian Water seeks the continuation of demand management and water efficiency techniques through Local Plan policies requiring new homes to meet or exceed the tighter water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day as described the current Building Regulations. It is therefore considered that optional higher water efficiency standards are crucial for development in Breckland. In an area of serious water stress,

incorporating water demand management into development from the start promotes water efficiency and resilience, along with the protection of water quality and protection of areas of environmental importance within and adjacent to Breckland. Water reuse and recycling alongside other suitable measures should be incorporated wherever feasible to reduce demand on mains water supply. Developments are expected to aspire beyond these ratings where possible to do so. Applications should include sufficient detail as to intended standard and set out the measures to be incorporated to enable compliance.

Flood Risk

- 4.18 The NPPF requires a flood risk assessment for sites of 1 hectare or more. As of April 2015, all major planning applications have to demonstrate the use of sustainable drainage as part of their development and the Lead Local Flood Authority is a statutory consultee on such applications.

Crime prevention

- 4.19 Well-designed places should promote a sense of security. It is important that crime or the fear of crime does not undermine our quality of life or community cohesion. Design can contribute to increased surveillance, access and control and has important roles in potentially crowded areas in incorporating counter terrorism measures.

Health and wellbeing

- 4.20 The design of new developments can have a major influence on community health and wellbeing. Good design can:
1. Encourage physical activity.
 2. Support social interaction.
 3. Incorporate green infrastructure such as parks, play areas and places for wildlife.
 4. Safe, accessible streets and public spaces.
 5. Quality, affordable, and adaptable homes.

6. Support movement and access through walking and cycling.
7. Provide access to healthy food choices.
8. Provide access to employment opportunities and economic development.
9. Support social infrastructure including health care facilities.
10. Ensure hazards to health or wellbeing are removed or minimised.

4.21 Health Impact Assessments (HIA) enables the identification and assessment that the likely effects of a proposed development will have on the health and wellbeing of the community. Where HIA identifies a potential health impact, actions taken to address and improve health outcomes are identified.

High pressure fuel pipelines

4.22 High pressure fuel pipelines cross areas of Breckland. High pressure onshore pipelines are classified by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as a major hazard and as a result, the Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty to notify the HSE as a consultee for any planning proposals. Through pre-application discussions, developers should give consideration to whether development would impinge on any long-distance pipeline safeguarding areas or easements.

GEN 01: General development principles

Proposals for development will be approved where it can be demonstrated that they would accord with the policies of this Plan and the Breckland Design Guide, and applications are able to demonstrate they would:

- a. Maintain the individual identity of towns and villages and their distinct parts, does not result in physical coalescence that would harm this identity and does not result in the unacceptable loss of undeveloped land, open spaces, and locally important views of particular significance to the form and character of a settlement; and,

- b. Apply a design-led approach to demonstrate compatibility and integration with its surroundings and the distinctive local character of the area in terms of type, scale, massing, siting, form, design, materials, and details; and,
- c. Be designed to provide an accessible, safe, and inclusive environment that maximises opportunities to increase personal safety and security through prevention or mitigation; and,
- d. Contribute to mitigation of the likely effects of climate change and appropriate adaptations to the risk of climate change, taking full account of flood risk and minimises the impact on water resources; and,
- e. Be acceptable in terms of their impact upon local amenity for new or existing residents and businesses, adjoining premises, and land uses; and,
- f. Make the most effective and efficient use of available land, prioritising development of brownfield land; and,
- g. Have regard to and address any identified impacts of a proposal upon the District's heritage assets, built and natural environment; and,
- h. Be accommodated by, and make best use of, existing facilities and infrastructure, particularly in encouraging accessibility and walking, cycling and public transport, whilst making appropriate provision for new or additional infrastructure requirements.
- i. Contributes to the creation of a healthy community and, in the case or major development of 10 dwellings or 1,000 square metres is accompanied by a rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to assess whether a full HIA is required. Applications for 500 dwellings or more must be accompanied by a full HIA.

All development proposals should minimise, and where possible, reduce all emissions and other forms of pollution, including light and noise pollution, and ensure no deterioration in air and water quality. Proposals will be refused where, individually, or cumulatively, there are unacceptable impacts arising from the development on:

- j. The natural environment, general amenity, and the tranquillity of the wider rural area, including noise and light pollution.
- k. Health and safety of the public.
- l. Air quality.
- m. Surface and groundwater quality.

Spatial development Strategy

Criteria Based Policy

- 4.23 National Planning Policies set out principles which define an overall framework which local planning authorities should use to define where best to focus growth. It is the role of the Local Plan to use these principles to outline what is the most appropriate means to plan for the area and set this out in a spatial strategy. This strategy broadly defines where most development will be focused and what scale of development is appropriate in identified parts of the area.
- 4.24 In Breckland new development will be directed to locations that are co-ordinated with transport provision, have good access to support existing services, community facilities and open space. A balanced approach to housing is proposed with a range of delivery on strategic sites, local service centres and villages which will assist the delivery of affordable housing in both rural and urban areas. By planning for growth across all the district the plan aims to improve housing land supply that addresses the affordability challenge, provides for all types of housing need, whilst delivering planned growth and the infrastructure required to support development so that communities can grow in a sustainable and cohesive manner.
- 4.25 National policy and planning guidance provide advice and set the principles for development in a rural area that can inform the Council's approach to Plan making. However, it is largely silent on the principle and use of settlement boundaries.

- 4.26 The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) encourages opportunities for housing and jobs that meets rural needs and is directed to locations that will maintain and enhance rural communities. The PPG advises that development appropriate to helping to meet the needs of sustainable rural communities should be enabled and cautions against blanket restrictions on development in specific types of settlement.
- 4.27 National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 through paragraphs 82-84 and 88-89 addresses housing and economic development in rural areas. Paragraph 83 states “Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services”. This establishes that opportunities for housing development to meet rural needs should be enabled whilst new housing development should be directed to locations that will enhance or maintain the viability of rural communities and avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside. Meanwhile, appropriate economic development is encouraged across the rural area and suggest Local Plans should recognise and enable appropriate opportunities for economic growth in locations that may be adjacent to or beyond existing settlements.
- 4.28 Proposals for new development will be directed towards the most sustainable locations in accordance with the district’s settlement hierarchy. This is set out in Policy GEN 02 Settlement hierarchy and spatial development strategy. In this policy where the previous Local Plan references Villages with Boundaries these will be known as Secondary Villages within this draft plan.
- 4.29 The Council is proposing the adoption of a criteria-based approach that it considers has the potential to protect the character of settlements and the countryside whilst enabling sustainable development. A criteria-based approach has been implemented in Local Plans across the country and is an effective and flexible decision-making tool that can achieve enhanced outcomes for protecting both the character of settlements and the countryside. Neighbourhood Plan updates could if desired implement local

Settlement Boundaries informed by the strategy and criteria for growth established in the Local Plan.

- 4.30 Whilst a criteria-based approach is less familiar, a well developed and implemented policy would provide the potential to protect the character of settlements and the countryside whilst enabling development necessary to meet the area's locally identified needs for example the delivery of elderly or special needs accommodation, self and custom build, extra care or sheltered housing, housing for rent, or for veterans.

GEN 02: Settlement hierarchy and spatial development strategy

The following settlement hierarchy outlines all towns and villages in Breckland considered appropriate to define as a Market Town, Local Service Centre, or Secondary Village. All other settlements in Breckland not included in this policy are to be considered as Smaller Villages.

Market towns:

Most new development and approximately 75% of new housing development is directed to the following market towns.

Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford, Watton.

Local Service Centres:

Development appropriate to the scale and role of service centres is supported and approximately 14% of new housing development is directed to the following local service centres.

Ashill, Banham, Bawdeswell, Beetley, Garboldisham, Great Ellingham, Harling, Hockering, Kenninghall, Mattishall, Mundford, Narborough, Necton, North Elmham, Old Buckenham, Rockland All Saints, Shipdham, Sporle, Swanton Morley, Weeting.

Secondary Villages:

Generally, only minor development will be appropriate in Secondary Villages and approximately 8% of new housing development is directed to the following Secondary Villages.

Beeston, Carbooke, Caston, Gressenhall, Griston, Hockham, Litcham, Lyng, North Lopham, Quidenham, Saham Toney, Shropham, Thompson, Yaxham and Clint Green (Yaxham Parish)

Smaller Villages:

All the remaining settlements not named above are 'Smaller Villages'. Such settlements are included within the definition of open countryside where proposals for development will not be considered appropriate. However, minor proposals for new housing that address local need may be considered acceptable. In total capacity in smaller villages could provide 5% of new housing development.

Strategic housing and mixed-use sites:

A number of key locations provide key strategic opportunities for growth and investment in Breckland.

- Thetford Strategic Urban Extension, north of Thetford.
- Attleborough Strategic Urban Extension, southwest of Attleborough.

Strategic Development Site Opportunities

Housing, employment, and commercial development sites for which the Council will continue to develop an evidence base to determine suitability and deliverability ahead of selecting a final range of allocations.

Housing

- Barkers Farm (Larling)
- Robertson Barracks (Swanton Morley Hoe and Worthing parishes)
- Dereham

Employment and commercial development:

Maximising the potential of the district for economic growth strategic employment opportunities are identified in relation to the A11 and A47 road corridors, as well as within the core of Breckland, including.

- Snetterton
- Shipdham Airfield
- Moorfields, Dereham

GEN 03: Built Form

Built Form is defined as the closely grouped and visually well related residential, community, retail, and employment buildings of the main part of the settlement and land closely associated with them. The built form excludes:

- a. any individual building or group of dispersed buildings or ribbon developments which are clearly detached from the main part of the settlement;
- b. any ribbon development attached to the main part of the settlement where the buildings relate more to the surrounding countryside than to the main part of the settlement;
- c. existing commitments for residential, community, retail and employment use on sites which are physically/functionally related to the settlement;
- d. gardens, paddocks, and other undeveloped land on the edge of the settlement where this land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the main part of the settlement;
- e. Agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form or sections of large residential curtilages where the character of the land primarily relates to the countryside;
- e. Farmyards and associated agricultural buildings on the edge of the settlement;

- f. Open space, outdoor sports, and recreational spaces on the edge of the settlement.

GEN 04: Development and the Built Form

Within the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Secondary Villages, as defined in this Plan, development will be permitted where it accords with other applicable policies in the development plan.

All land outside of the built form is designated as open countryside.

Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled, having regard to the need to protect the countryside and the setting of towns and villages. Development will be restricted to the main categories listed below, and may be permitted as an exception, providing there is no significant adverse impact on the character of the countryside and that other Local Plan policies are satisfied:

- a. Residential development in smaller villages (HOU 06)
 - b. Affordable housing exception sites (HOU 07)
 - c. Community-led development for housing (HOU 08)
 - d. First homes and single plot exception sites (HOU 09)
 - e. Residential replacement, extension, and alteration (HOU 10)
 - f. Conversion of buildings in the countryside (HOU 11)
 - g. Rural workers dwellings (HOU 12)
 - h. Self and custom build homes (HOU 13)
 - i. Specialist housing and accommodation needs (HOU 14)
 - j. Residential and nursing (HOU 15)
- Gypsy and Traveller And Travelling Showpeople sites (HOU 25)

Economic development

New employment development outside designated sites (EMP 08)

Farm diversification (EC 06)

Tourism related facilities and attractions (EC 07)

Tourist accommodation – camping, caravanning and holiday lets (EC 08)

Renewable energy development (INF 04)

5 Housing

Development Requirements

- 5.1 A key purpose of the Local Plan is to set out the required number of new homes that will be provided to meet the identified need. Local Authorities are required by the NPPF to objectively assess the development needs for their area and plan to meet these needs in full.
- 5.2 This is both a technical and a policy issue, with important considerations for the District in terms of what it seeks to achieve from housing delivery in addressing the substantial affordability challenge, addressing the viability and sustainability of smaller settlements, enabling regeneration and investment, and supporting the District's wider ambitions for economic growth and employment.
- 5.3 The additional homes figure for Breckland District over the plan period is a strategic decision reached having taken account of different demographic, economic and housing need considerations together with the assumptions that underlie them.
- 5.4 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF sets out the expectations upon Local Authorities in developing strategic policies for housing growth, establishing requirements for housing development should be informed by a local housing need (LHN) assessment. In all but exceptional circumstances, this assessment of LHN should be based on the government's own standard methodology. Paragraph 67 of the NPPF sets out that strategic policy making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area. This need may be higher than the identified LHN, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas, or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. Paragraph 63 of the NPPF states that when establishing need, the size, type, and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

- 5.5 In 2023, the Council commissioned a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) for Breckland District to help inform the Local Plan. In context of preparation of a new Local Plan, the HEDNA provides updated evidence on:
- The overall need for homes - taking account of demographics, national policy, economic growth.
 - The need for affordable and other types of housing – including specialist housing needs.
 - The quantity and quality of employment land available; and suitability of existing sites.
 - Future employment land needs, and if need for any new land allocations.
- 5.6 In accordance with the NPPF the HEDNA uses the standard method as the starting point for establishing a housing requirement for the District. For Breckland this figure is 661 dwellings per annum. Across the Plan Period (2021 – 2046) this is the equivalent of 16,525 homes.
- 5.7 Paragraph 75 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies. The Council considers that it would be prudent to include a buffer of about 8% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land and to allow for longer lead in times for the large strategic sites to come forward. Therefore, allocations for 15,473 dwellings (with further allocations of between 1,900 to 2,500 dwellings to follow depending on which Strategic Development Option is selected) are made in the Plan.. For monitoring purposes, the standard requirement figure of 661 dwellings per year will be adopted.

Housing supply

5.8 It is important to note that the Plan period is 2021 – 2046. Therefore, dwellings completed between 2021 and 2023, sites with an existing planning permission for housing or housing allocations in the current Local Plan where the Council remains confident that development will come forward within the new plan period will be taken into account as part of the overall housing need, as will sites allocated in the current Breckland Local Plan without permission where delivery can be confirmed.

Completions and commitments

- Between 2021 and 2023 a total of 1,862 dwellings were completed. Of these 247 were affordable.
- At April 2023 there were 8,348 dwellings on sites with planning permission that are deliverable by 2046.
- At April 2023 627 dwellings are on allocations in the current Local Plan that are saved and carried forward into this Plan
- At April 2023 186 dwellings are on allocations in Neighbourhood Plans
- Totalling 11,023 dwellings

Windfall development

5.9 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF also allows the Plan to include an allowance for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, where there is compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Breckland is a largely rural District with many small villages which have grown slowly and incrementally over hundreds of years. This pattern of slow change has continued, and a number of new homes are created each year by the development and redevelopment of small sites as “windfall development”.

5.10 Many of the villages in Breckland are not considered suitable for medium – large scale planned development which would be allocated in the Local Plan. Development in those areas identified as countryside is restricted, but national policy generally allows for small site and infill plots to come forward within most settlements.

- 5.11 There is strong evidence to show that small site windfall development will continue to form an important part of the overall housing supply in the District over the coming years. The 5-year Housing Land Supply Report shows that Breckland has a strong track record of windfall delivery. Over the last 12 years, the average annual windfall development on minor sites is 193 units. New allocations set out in the Plan, as well as the strategy that allows for small scale development in smaller villages, may reduce the number of windfalls but they will remain a significant source of supply in the large predominantly rural District. Therefore, the Council is adopting a precautionary approach to expected delivery from windfall sites of 75 dwellings per year. This equates to 1,725 additional homes from 2024.

Attleborough Sustainable Urban Extension

- 5.12 Outline planning permission for the Attleborough Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) was granted in March 2020 for 4,000 homes, a link road and other infrastructure (such as a wastewater treatment works), two primary schools, local and neighbourhood centres, community facilities and public open space. Since then, Homes England, the UK Government's housing, and regeneration agency, has purchased the first parcel of land. Homes England is working with Breckland District Council and local stakeholders to turn these plans into reality.

Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension

- 5.13 The Thetford Urban Extension is a major mixed-use development site on the northern side of Thetford, adjacent to the A11. The town's railway station, with connections to Norwich, Cambridge, and London, is also close by. The housing site element totals a planned 5,000 home development. The scheme is planned to be delivered in five phases over a 20-25 year period. Set within an attractive mixed development, including housing, local retail, allotments, playing fields and publicly accessible parkland, this development will be attractive to companies looking for a new build, in an affordable, well-serviced location with good transport links. The development is under construction with 3 outlets (Sub-Phase 1a (Hopkins Homes and Tilia Homes) and Sub-Phase 1b (Taylor Wimpey)).

Sites previously allocated in the 2019 Breckland Local Plan

5.14 At April 2023 there were 873 dwellings on sites allocated for housing in the existing Local Plan. Delivery of these sites has been confirmed by the landowner / agent and as the sites are still considered to represent a sustainable form of development they are carried forward into this Plan. These are set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Sites with allocations in Breckland Local Plan (2019) or Neighbourhood Plans (April 2023)

Reference	Town / Parish	Site name	Dwellings
(LP[025]011)	Dereham Allocation 2	Land to the west of Shipdham Road	130
(LP[025]029)	Dereham Allocation 4	Land to the rear of Dereham Hospital	603
(LP[097]006)	Swaffham Housing Allocation 14	Land off New Sporle Road (South)	51
(LP[097]008)	Swaffham Allocation 2	Land off New Sporle Road (North)	75
(LP[104]008 & LP[104]019)	Watton Allocation 1	Land off Saham Road	160
(LP[001]009)	Ashill	Land between Church Street and Hale Road	20
(LP[003]003, LP[003]009 & LP[003]012)	Banham 5	Land adjacent to Gaymer Close and to the south of Greyhound Lane	42
(LP[031]004 and LP[031]005)	Garboldisham 6	Land to the west of Hopton Road	28

1.1

³ (LP[025]029) Existing allocation for 60 dwellings proposed to be replaced by new allocation for 90 dwellings. Therefore, supply from this current allocation is not included in committed supply to avoid double counting.

⁴ 3PL/2023/0154/F: Undetermined: 51 dwellings

⁵ 3PL/2022/0247/F: Undetermined: 42 dwellings

⁶ 3PL/2022/0249/F: Approved: 7 dwellings: This leaves 28 dwellings with no permission at April 2023. 3PL/2022/0249/F: Approved June 2023. 24 dwellings:

Reference	Town / Parish	Site name	Dwellings
(LP[044]005)	Hockering ⁷	Residential Allocation - Land to the east of Heath Road	13
(LP[051]003)	Kenninghall	Land off Powell Close	15
(LP[067]011)	Necton	Land between North Pickenham Road and Masons Drive	15
(LP[085]0 02)	Shipdham Allocation 1	Old Nursery, Land behind Old Post Office Street	23
(LP[085]006)	Shipdham Allocation 2	Land west of Brick Kiln Lane	55
Total			627
Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan			66
Swanton Morley Neighbourhood Plan			120
Totals			873

5.15 Table 5.2 sets out a summary of the housing supply position at April 2023.

Table 5.2 Summary of Breckland's housing land supply at April 2023

Settlement	Completions	Commitments	Remaining Allocations	Total	Delivery 2021 – 2046
Attleborough	253	579	0	832	832
Attleborough SUE	0	4000	0	4000	2700 ⁸
Dereham	168	356	130	654	654
Swaffham	269	257	126	652	652
Thetford	28	73	0	101	101
Thetford SUE	332	4,668	0	5,000	2,732 ⁹
Watton	162	266	160	588	588
Urban Totals	1212	10,199	416	11,827	8,259
Local Service Centres	366	1,156	331	1,853	1,835
Secondary Villages	159	366	66	591	591
Other parishes	125	195	0	320	320
Rural Totals	650	1,717	397	2,764	2,746
Grand Total	1,862	11,916	813	14,591	11,023

1.1

⁷ 3PL/2021/1009/O: Undetermined: 18 dwellings. 3PL/2016/1262/O: Approved: 12 dwellings. This leaves 13 dwellings with no permission at April 2023. 3PL/2021/1269/D RM for 12 dwellings 3PL/2016/1262/O): Undetermined: 12 dwellings

⁸ Based on Developer provided Trajectory

⁹ Based on Developer provided Trajectory

HOU 01: Breckland's housing requirement

To enable the District to meet future housing needs the Local Plan sets a minimum requirement for delivery of at least 16,525 new homes between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2046, to ensure an average minimum provision of 661 dwellings per annum.

Housing development strategy

- 5.16 A key purpose of the Local Plan is to set out the strategic distribution of development. The distribution of housing is one of the most significant issues that the Local Plan must address through the allocation of land and the setting of policies to guide development. The future direction of growth is required to follow the settlement hierarchy outlined within the policies in this Local Plan. Determining how much, and where development is allocated is essential in delivering sustainable development and essential community infrastructure. The locational strategy sets out the broad approach to development within the District.
- 5.17 Paragraphs 69 and 70 of the NPPF state that strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area and identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability.
- 5.18 A suitable supply of housing sites is required based on ensuring specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption; and specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.
- 5.19 NPPF additionally directs that at least 10% of housing requirements should be met on sites no larger than one hectare unless there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved. Measure to support small site, community-led development, self-build and custom-build housing are required.
- 5.20 Paragraphs 82 and 83 of NPPF further establish that in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and

support housing developments that reflect local needs. This includes supporting opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs.

- 5.21 Overall, NPPF therefore established that the Local Plan must provide sufficient homes across the District to enable sustainable development, meet the needs of residents and the support the viability and sustainability of communities.
- 5.22 Within Breckland, identifying a strategy for housing development to achieve these aims is heavily shaped by a number of key considerations:
- The settlement hierarchy and relative capacity of each settlement to accommodate growth.
 - The Brecks Special Protection Area.
 - Brownfield land

The settlement hierarchy

- 5.23 The Local Plan identifies at Policy GEN 02, Market Towns, Local Service Centres where they satisfy all of the following 5 qualifying criteria, with Secondary villages identified as having 3 of the 5 criteria:
1. Public Transport – An assessment of the level of public transport access within the village. This included consideration of the frequency of services and whether it is possible to reach the destination during normal working hours.
 2. Community Facility - This can include a number of different facilities such as a village hall, public house, restaurant or café.
 3. Employment – The assessment has considered the level of employment available within the village including whether there is a business park and also the size of the businesses within the settlement.
 4. Shop/Post Office
 5. School

- 5.24 The assessment has had regard to the distance of services and facilities from the village core – and should only be considered to be available where they are within a recognised acceptable walking distance. Based on these criteria, an assessment has been made as to the availability of services within each village.

The Brecks Special Protection Area

- 5.25 The Breckland Special Protection area (SPA) covers over 39,434 ha of heathland, forest and arable farmland covering the districts of Breckland, West Suffolk and a small part of West Norfolk. The Brecks is of European value to birdlife and was designated in 2006 as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Council’s Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. The Brecks habitat is important for a range of ground – nesting birds including the Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar.
- 5.26 The National Planning Policy Framework gives further guidance. Paragraph 188 states that the “presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site”.
- 5.27 This is a key consideration in the determination of the Development Strategy and the Plan does not allocate land for development within the affected area. The large geographical area of Breckland means that development can be accommodated in unaffected parts of the District in a sustainable way. The affected areas are identified on the Policies Map. in accordance with the Guidance from Natural England (adopted as a material consideration by Breckland Council in September 2023 and set out in Policy ENV 09 of this Plan) no new-build housing is likely to be permitted within the parish on land outside settlement boundaries (as defined by the 2019 Local Plan). Conversions and changes of use to form a new dwelling may be acceptable if they accord with the relevant policies in this Plan. Some parishes are only partially covered by the Buffer. Within these parishes, if

the main settlement lies within the buffer, then it is excluded from allocations for development and if the main settlement is outside the buffer, then new-build development may be possible, and it is included.

Prioritising Brownfield Land

Abbey Estate

- 5.28 In the late 1960's the Abbey Estate was constructed comprising 1,100 houses, public open spaces, and footpaths. The Estate was planned in line with Radburn layout principles – notably employing cul-de-sacs and typified by the fronts of homes facing one another, over common yards rather than the street. Radburn layouts have been criticised for resulting in an absence of properly overlooked streets and encouraging crime and anti-social behaviour. The urban principles of the Radburn System are accused of contributing to places that lack prosperity, pride, or opportunities for healthy and happy lifestyles. The current Radburn layout encourages private vehicle use for short journeys and 'hides' neighbourhood facilities and the retail and community centre of the estate. The Abbey Estate today ranks in the top 7% of most deprived areas in England and despite strong community cohesion, the community struggle with health and wellbeing issues together with challenges associated with fly tipping, anti-social behaviour, and poor connections both across the estate and to local assets including the Little Ouse River, Thetford Forest, and Thetford town centre. There is an opportunity to regenerate the estate that includes the addition of new housing (460 dwellings) as well as varying degrees of re-development of the existing housing stock, environment, and landscaping.
- 5.29 The site lies within the built-up area of Thetford and as such the principle of residential development on the site is acceptable and any future planning application will be considered against the planning policies in place at the time of determination.

Strategic Growth options

5.30 The Plan clearly sets out the need to deliver a minimum of 16,525 new homes during the plan period 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2046, to ensure an average minimum provision of 661 dwellings per annum. To achieve this housing delivery will require a large strategic allocation. Through the Call for Sites consultation three options, that the Council considers may be suitable and deliverable, have been identified as proposed opportunities to deliver strategic growth, these are:

- Barkers Farm (Larling)
- Dereham
- Roberston Barracks

5.31 Two of these options (Barkers Farm, Larling and Roberston Barracks) are large scale individual locations and one option (Dereham) is a coordinated group of identified sites. The options set out in the plan will be evaluated and assessed further to determine which option(s) should be taken forward to the next stage of Local Plan development. In the event, at the next stage of Local Plan development it is felt that none of the three strategic growth options can be delivered within necessary time period a review will be undertaken as to how the associated housing numbers can be redistributed across the settlement hierarchy.

5.32 It is acknowledged that ensuring strategic growth and its supporting infrastructure is properly planned, designed, and resourced takes time. Site promoters also need the confidence to invest in evidence and master-planning. The authority therefore concludes that it is vital to commit in this Local Plan cycle to explore the suitability and deliverability of a range of strategic growth options.

Strategic Development Option 1: Barkers Farm

5.33 This 66ha. greenfield site lies on the B1111 to the north of the A11 trunk road near the hamlet of Larling. The site presents an opportunity for a new mixed-use development close to the Trunk Road network that could serve

the Snetterton employment areas that is earmarked in this Plan for expansion. The site also lies within relatively close proximity to the Harling Road Railway Station. Although this station currently has a very limited service, opportunities for this to be increased could be explored.

- 5.34 The site has been promoted under the Call for Sites and is included as potential strategic growth option. However, the Council is aware that a significant amount of work needs to be undertaken to evidence that the draft proposals. The Council is committed to working with the promoters of the sites and relevant statutory stakeholders to gather evidence to determine the proposed scale and location of development can deliver growth with the necessary infrastructure required.
- 5.35 Policy SDP 01 identifies the site as a strategic growth opportunity for mixed use development comprising of approximately 1,900 new dwellings alongside local employment and community uses and sets out the main planning issues that need to be completed to ensure that the site is available, suitable, and deliverable.

SDP 01: Strategic Development Policy Option - Barkers Farm Larling

The Council will work with the promoters of the site and key statutory undertakers to undertake a feasibility assessment exploring potential future opportunities and uses appropriate to the site, having regard to the site's opportunities and constraints and wider impacts of the proposal will be carried out.

To be deliverable the site will need to show an exemplar design approach that:

- a. Establishes a deliverable integrated access and transportation strategy which emphasises sustainable accessibility and traffic restraint and allows for the effective management and mitigation of any the impact of vehicular traffic from the site on the local highway network (B1111) as well as connectivity and permeability within and between the site and beyond, including links to the A11, Harling Road Railway Station and Snetterton employment areas.

- b. Provides for safe walking and cycling routes to Harling Railway Station and Snetterton employment areas. An enhanced railway service for Harling Road should be explored with the operators and Network Rail.
- c. Creates an inclusive, resilient, and safe community in which people of all ages have good access to high quality homes that meet housing needs the provision of area wide economic and social infrastructure and services, including (but not limited to) including local employment opportunities, local shops and community uses, education, primary health care, water supply, Broadband and power supply.
- d. Protects and enhances green infrastructure assets, corridors, and open spaces.
- e. Achieves high quality, locally distinctive, energy efficient and flood resilient design which addresses identified risks from all sources of flooding and mitigates against potential sources of noise and air pollution.
- f. Demonstrates measures to include required Biodiversity Net Gain.

This evidence would then inform the next iteration of this Local Plan and/ or the next local plan review, and/or a masterplan, for the site to be prepared and a proposal to be submitted and considered in accordance with policies in this local plan.

A masterplan should be prepared in accordance with the statement of community involvement and shall have been through the agreed process of consultation and approved prior to the determination of any related planning application.

- 5.36 The Council is committed to working with the promoters of the site and relevant statutory stakeholders to gather evidence to determine the proposed scale and location of development can deliver growth with the necessary infrastructure required. If, following this exercise, this approach is not considered suitable then the site may not be allocated in the next version of the Local Plan.

Strategic Development Option 2: Dereham

- 5.37 Dereham is situated in the heart of Norfolk within the Planning Authority of Breckland Council. Dereham is 15 miles west of Norwich and 25 miles to the east of King's Lynn. The town lies on the A47 trunk road providing good road links to Norwich, the Norfolk Coast, the Broads, and the Midlands. In 1978 the town was bypassed to the south with an extension further eastward in 1992. The A47 is a major route connecting Norfolk, and its coast to the Midlands and has been subject to numerous improvements with an overall ambition for complete dualling, with the North-Tuddenham to Easton phase having started. Road links in other directions are relatively poor, the A1075 provides a route to Watton and Thetford to the south but links to the north are poor.
- 5.38 It is one of the key centres identified for sustainable growth in the existing Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan. It has a population of over 18,000 serving a large rural hinterland of Breckland and is also an origin of commuter trips into Norwich due to the good connections provided by its proximity to the A47 Trunk Road.
- 5.39 To date, the committed developments that already have planning permission have provided site-specific highway improvements, but no assessment has been made of the need to provide improvements that address the cumulative needs of the proposed group of development sites. Concern has been expressed by elected members, Dereham Town Council, and local residents that the highway network does not have the capacity to cope with the cumulative impacts of the currently proposed and committed developments in the town.
- 5.40 The new Local Plan presents an opportunity to consider a strategic vision and approach to addressing some of the key transport related issues facing the town outlined in the Dereham Network Improvement Strategy (March 2019). As such the town has been identified as a potential strategic growth area in this Local Plan with an identified group of coordinated sites. However, the Council is aware that a significant amount of work needs to be

undertaken to evidence that the draft proposals will be able to fulfil the objectives both in terms of their location and scale with the priority for timely delivery of infrastructure.

5.41 The Option would allocate one or more of the following sites in the Plan:

- 079: Land at Dereham Hospital 90 dwellings
- 032: Land at Norwich Road 120 dwellings
- 144: Land at Dumpling Green 305 dwellings
- 164: North of Dereham Road, Scarning 100 dwellings
- 174: Southwest Urban Extension 1,400 dwellings
- 368: East of Draytonhall Road 500 dwellings

5.42 In addition to the above new sites Land to the west of Shipdham Road (LP[025]011:130 will be brought forward as a saved allocation.

5.43 The Council is committed to working with the promoters of the sites and relevant statutory stakeholders to gather evidence (including a new Transport Assessment) to determine the proposed scale and location of development can deliver growth with the necessary infrastructure required. If, following this exercise, this approach is not considered suitable then growth at Dereham will be restricted to existing commitments and the saved Proposals brought forward for the current Local Plan.

SDP 02: Strategic Development Policy Option 2 - Dereham

The Council will work with the promoters of the following site options within Dereham, alongside and stakeholders and consultees, to undertake a feasibility assessment exploring potential future opportunities and uses appropriate to the sites. The assessment will have regard to opportunities, constraints, and wider impacts upon Dereham of development of the potential sites.

079: Land at Dereham Hospital	90
032: Land at Norwich Road	120
144: Land at Dumpling Green	305
164: North of Dereham Road, Scarning	100
174: Southwest Urban Extension	1,400

368: East of Draytonhall Road

500

A Transport Assessment to be undertaken will comprise a full technical assessment of cumulative impact of the site options up to 2046. The purpose of the Assessment will be to assist the Council in developing one or more preferred allocation scenarios for the next stage of the Plan making process.

The Assessment will emphasise sustainable accessibility and traffic restraint, and allow for the effective management and mitigation of any the impact of vehicular traffic from each site on the local highway network as well as connectivity and permeability within and between each site and beyond, including:

- a. Direct links to the A47, via an improved junction with Drayton Hall Lane.
- b. The provision of a link road within sites to the south of the town.
- c. The implications of any future development at the Robertson Barracks site, improvements to the Tavern Lane Junction in the town and improved cycling and walking opportunities linking the sites to the town centre and key facilities.

To be considered for allocation in the Plan, each site will need to show an exemplar design approach that: establishes how it will contribute to an integrated access and transportation strategy, that is deliverable prior to the commencement of development, which emphasises sustainable accessibility and traffic restraint, and allows for the effective management and mitigation of any the impact of vehicular traffic from each site on the local highway network as well as connectivity and permeability within and between each site and beyond,

The allocation of sites will be considered on an individual basis, but this will need to be justified with evidence on how the development will contribute to the overall transport planning for Dereham and in particular the key issues identified in this Policy as well as demonstrating how any highway issues arising from the individual site can be mitigated.

Allocated sites must also:

- d. Contribute to open space / sport / cycle routes / and necessary infrastructure with reference to the other allocations in the Plan (schools, health etc).
- e. Create an inclusive, resilient, and safe community in which people of all ages have good access to high quality homes that meet housing needs the provision of area wide economic and social infrastructure and services, including (but not limited to) including local employment opportunities, local shops and community uses, education, primary health care, water, Broadband and power supply.
- f. Protect and enhance green infrastructure assets, corridors, and open spaces.
- g. Achieves high quality, locally distinctive, energy efficient and flood resilient design which addresses identified risks from all sources of flooding and mitigates against potential sources of noise and air pollution.
- h. Demonstrates measures to address Nutrient Neutrality and Biodiversity Net Gain.

This evidence would then inform the next iteration of this Local Plan and/or the next local plan review, and/or masterplans, for the sites to be prepared and proposals to be submitted and considered in accordance with policies in this local plan.

Masterplans should be prepared in accordance with the statement of community involvement and shall have been through the agreed process of consultation and approved prior to the determination of any related planning applications.

Strategic Development Policy Option 3: Robertson Barracks

- 5.44 The Barracks has been identified as surplus to requirements and is expected to close in 2031. The site contains residential accommodation as well as commercial and recreation facilities.
- 5.45 The purpose of the policy is to recognise the presence of an existing operational crown land use in the district. This is the Robertson Barracks in near Swanton Morley and Hoe / Worthing.

- 5.46 The Barracks has been identified as surplus to requirements and is expected to close in 2031. The previously developed site contains residential accommodation as well as commercial and recreation facilities. Policy SDP 03 identifies the site as a possible future development strategic growth opportunity for mixed use development comprising housing, employment and community uses. The council is working with the MOD in relation to the future use of this site. The policy sets out the approach to planning for the future of the site in the event MOD land and assets become available for redevelopment or change of use during the plan period.

SDP 03: Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley and Hoe/Worthing

In the event that the Barracks becomes available for redevelopment or change of use, or are known to shortly become surplus to requirements, whether for the whole or part of the landholding in that area, the council will work with the promoters of the site and key statutory undertakers to undertake a feasibility assessment exploring potential future opportunities and uses appropriate to the site, having regard to the site's opportunities and constraints and wider impacts of the proposal will be carried out.

To be deliverable the site will need to show an exemplar design approach that:

- a. Establishes a deliverable integrated access and transportation strategy which emphasises sustainable accessibility and traffic restraint and allows for the effective management and mitigation of any the impact of vehicular traffic from the site on the local highway network as well as connectivity and permeability within and between the site and beyond, including north-south links with Swanton Morley, Dereham and the A47 and east to Norwich.
- b. Creates an inclusive, resilient, and safe community in which people of all ages have good access to high quality homes that meet housing needs the provision of area wide economic and social infrastructure and services, including (but not limited to) including local employment opportunities, local shops and community uses, education, primary health care, water supply, Broadband and power Supply.
- c. Protects and enhances green infrastructure assets, corridors, and open spaces.

d. Achieves high quality, locally distinctive, energy efficient and flood resilient design which addresses identified risks from all sources of flooding and mitigates against potential sources of noise and air pollution.

e. Demonstrates measures to address Nutrient Neutrality and Biodiversity Net Gain.

This evidence would then inform the next iteration of this Local Plan and/ or the next local plan review, and/or a masterplan, for the site to be prepared and a proposal to be submitted and considered in accordance with policies in this local plan.

A masterplan should be prepared in accordance with the statement of community involvement and shall have been through the agreed process of consultation and approved prior to the determination of any related planning application.

The Housing Development Strategy

5.47 The Council considers the existing strategy of identifying growth at the 5 Market towns within Breckland represents the most sustainable form of development and the emerging Development Strategy is based on the same principle. However, it is also important to adopt a strategy that allows for some limited growth across the whole District to help meet the housing and economic needs of the population and support the sustainability of the Districts smaller settlements.

5.48 Thetford lies within the Brecks Special Protection Area (SPA) Buffer. The Policy framework in place to protect the SPA allows for development within the existing built up area or built form with an additional 50 dwellings permissible. The designation does not allow for new allocations on land outside the 2019 Settlement Boundary (as designated in the 2019 Local Plan). For this reason, and due to the scale of development already committed in the area through the Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE); Thetford is not considered appropriate for new allocations in this Plan. The SUE is unaffected by the designation and will remain a key source of housing delivery through the Plan period and beyond.

- 5.49 Attleborough has a large sustainable urban extension for 4,000 dwellings that is expected to commence in the next 12 months and deliver over 2,700 new homes within the Plan period and will be the key source of housing delivery through the Plan period and beyond. For this reason the town is not considered appropriate for new allocations in this Plan.
- 5.50 In a predominantly rural District, it is also important to enable development in the villages away from the market towns. It is considered that the Plan should enable some development in the rural areas, away from the market towns, namely at the Local Service Centres (LSC) and Secondary Villages (SV).
- 5.51 The Council also considers that some limited development should be enabled in settlements not identified as market towns, Local Service Centres or Secondary Villages. Together the number of town and villages that are designated as towns, LSC or SV is 34. This leaves a further 88 parishes containing smaller villages or Hamlets with no housing allocations and very restrictive policies.
- 5.52 This Plan aims to identify potential site allocations to enable new housing, but this is an inappropriate approach for the more rural locations due to lack of services and facilities, poorer transport connections and the potential negative impact on the countryside. However, the Council considers that there is a potential need for a modest amount of development in these smaller settlements to allow the settlements to adapt to changing needs and to help deliver the National Planning Policy Framework's aim of significantly boosting the supply of housing. The Council considers that a modest level of development in these parishes could help meet local needs and help maintain the vitality of these smaller communities, where this can be achieved in a sustainable manner.
- 5.53 However, this does need to take place within the overall thrust of the Plan, which, in the interests of sustainability, focuses most growth in and around the Market towns and more sustainable villages where it can benefit from and support rural services and facilities.

- 5.54 Therefore, very modest housing growth for the Smaller Villages and Hamlets will be permitted in the form of limited infill development and rural exception sites which provide affordable housing for local people.
- 5.55 It is important to state that the Development Strategy applies to settlements and is not Parish Based. Development will be considered for the main village within the Parish (as named in Policy HOU 02). Development on land that is not allocated for development or that is not within or adjacent to the built-up areas of the towns, Local Service Centres or Secondary Villages will be considered as open countryside and proposals will be considered against other relevant policies in the Development Plan.

HOU 02: Distribution of housing development

The following policy outlines the spatial distribution of development over the period 2021/22 to 2045/46 across Breckland to each settlement and strategic site. To meet the local housing requirements sites are allocated in this Plan to give an overall supply of 15,480 dwellings. Between 1,900 – 2,500 further dwellings are expected to be allocated following the completion of work to assess the three development options identified in this Plan. A total of 11,031 dwellings have been built or benefit from planning permission and considered in principle as appropriate locations for housing development.

Settlement	Built/Committed	New Allocation	Total (2021-2023)
Market Towns	8,259	1,638	9,897
Attleborough	832	0	832
Attleborough SUE	2,700	0	2,700
Dereham	654	0	654
Swaffham	652	430	1,082
Thetford	101	0	101
Thetford SUE	2,732	0	2,732
Watton	588	1,208	1,888
Local Service Centres	1,853	464	2,317
Ashill	114	65	179

Banham	101	0	101
Beetley	16	44	60
Bawdeswell	2	65	67
Garboldisham	45	0	45
Great Ellingham	415	0	415
Harling	105	0	105
Hockering	55	50	105
Kenninghall	24	15	39
Mattishall	103	0	103
Mundford	3	50	53
Narborough	55	100	155
Necton	128	0	128
North Elmham	36	40	76
Old Buckenham	20	12	32
Rocklands	20	23	43
Shipdham	233	0	233
Sporle	82	0	82
Swanton Morley	263	0	263
Weeting	33	0	33
Secondary Villages	607	192	799
Beeston	17	33	50
Beetley	16	44	60
Carbrooke	16	0	16
Caston	12	0	12
Gressenhall	6	0	6
Griston	61	20	81
Hockham	164	25	189
Litcham	16	50	66
Lyng	6	0	6
North Lopham	33	0	33
Quidenham	27	0	27
Saham Toney	102	0	102
Shropham	27	20	47
Thompson	10	0	10

Yaxham	94	0	94
Other settlements	312	430	742
Windfall allowance	0	1,725	1,725

The Lead Local Flood Authority has (LLFA) has identified the following settlements as having particular concerns around flooding. All new development in these areas will be required to demonstrate that pre application discussions have taken place with the LLFA and that that appropriate mitigation measures are agreed and in place:

Banham, Besthorpe, Caston, Griston, Little Ellingham, Kenninghall, Mattishall, Rocklands All Saints, Saham Toney, Swanton Morley and Thompson

Housing allocations

- 5.56 To secure the delivery of housing in the most appropriate locations the Council has considered a wide range of potential sites for development. Over 400 separate housing sites have been promoted to the Council as locations where housing or mixed-use development is sought by developers. This supply greatly exceeds the requirements of Breckland, and work to consider the most appropriate strategy for growth and analysis of the characteristics of each site has been undertaken to inform a range of preferred housing site allocations. Further information about the site selection process and assessment of each site is available within the Breckland Site Selection Paper to be published alongside this Draft Local Plan.
- 5.57 Policy HOU 03 below formally identifies as ongoing strategic options the three locations of Robertson Barracks, sites at Dereham and Barkers Farm. Further detail and policy regarding the process the Council will undertake in relation to these development options is set out in policies SDP 01 to SDP 03 above.

HOU 03: Strategic housing options

The Council will continue to review and develop evidence regarding deliverability of a major strategic allocation at the following locations:

Swanton Morley, Hoe and Worthing

SMH1 (010)	Robertson Barracks	2,000
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Dereham

DER 1 (079)	Land at Dereham Hospital	90
DER 2 (032)	Land at Norwich Road	120
DER 3 (144)	Land at Dumpling Green	305
DER 4 (164)	North of Dereham Road, Scarning	100
DER 5 (174)	Southwest Urban Extension	1,400
DER 6 (368)	East of Draytonhall Road	500

Larling

LAR1 (388)	Barkers Farm	1,900
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HOU 04: Preferred housing allocations

In accordance with the distribution of housing development established the following sites are identified as preferred locations for housing development:

Site (C4S Ref)	Site name	Capacity to 2046
Swaffham		
SWA 1 (178)	West of New Sporle Road	130
SWA 2 (179)	East of Sporle Road	180
SWA 3 (195)	South of Sporle Road	120
Watton (sites in Carbrooke Parish)		
WAT 1 (225)	Land North and East of Shrublands	1,000
WAT 2 (224)	Land at Southmoor Farm	200
WAT 3 (086)	Land to rear of Shrublands	8
Ashill		
ASH 1 (320)	The Willows	20
ASH 2 (319)	Greenacre Close	45
Bawdeswell		
BAW 1 (231)	Reepham Road	40

BAW 2 (123)	The Street	25
Beeston		
BEES 1 (028)	Back Lane	9
BEES 2 (058)	Beeston Playing Field And Dereham Road	5
BEES 3 (204)	School Farm Paddock	5
BEES 4 (059)	Rose Cottage Syers Lane	5
BEE 5 (203)	Back Lane	8
Hockering		
HOC 1 (400)	The Street	50
Kenninghall		
KEN 1 (167)	Powell Close	15
Mundford		
MUN 1 (361)	West Hall Drive	30
MUN 2 (360)	Bracken Rise	20
Narborough		
NAR 1 (105)	Chalk Lane	70
NAR 2 (103)	Chalk Lane (2)	30
North Elmham		
NEL 1 (206)	Back Lane	10
NEL 2 (205)	Land South of Eastgate Street	30
Old Buckenham		
OLD 1 (111)	Hargram Road	8
OLD 2 (209)	Attleborough Lane	4
Rocklands		
ROC 1 (065)	The Street	7
ROC 2 (064)	South of Bell Road (Southlands)	15
Beetley		
BEET 1 (284)	Shrublands	25
BEET 2 (134)	Fakenham Road	19
Griston		
GRI 1 (347)	Caston Road	20
Hockham		
HOC 1 (109)	West of Watton Road	20
HOC 2 (226)	Land south of Dawneal	5

Litcham

LIT 1 (257)	Lexham Road	50
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Shropham

SHR 1 (142)	East of Rocklands Road	20
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*Saved allocations from the Breckland 2019 Local Plan

Large scale housing development principles

5.58 A number of the sites identified as potential housing allocations, and other potential proposed development sites over the Plan period to 2046 are of a large scale (i.e. greater than 100 dwellings). Such sites are considered to potentially generate and require additional consideration in terms of their environmental and visual impact and the requirement for new or enhanced infrastructure.

HOU 05: Large housing site development principles

The following site development principles apply to all applications for development that would either in whole, or in part, lead to the delivery of over 100 dwellings on a single site.

Development must be planned and implemented in a coordinated way, through an agreed Masterplan that as a minimum establishes a broad concept plan for the site’s development and the timely delivery of key infrastructure. With the exception of inconsequential development, proposals for development within the identified extensions which come forward prior to the production of, and agreement on, a broad Masterplan will be refused.

Development must also be drawn together and guided by a design code, consistent with the Breckland Design Guide and associated guidance.

The Masterplan and Design code should clearly evidence the support of all significant landowners and be submitted alongside an outline application for the proposed development.

Whilst phasing may be agreed, the local planning authority will need to be satisfied that the key aspects of the concept plan will be delivered. Therefore, to prevent the provision of appropriate infrastructure being either delayed or never materialising, appropriate safeguards will be put in place, through a Section 106 agreement, which ensure that specific aspects of the scheme are delivered when an appropriate trigger point is reached.

All major housing development (that would either in whole, or in part, lead to the delivery of over 100 dwellings on a single site) should have regard to and provide a range and type of homes appropriate to address Breckland's latest assessment of housing needs. Large scale sites are required to ensure that:

- a. 5% of dwellings should be marketed as Custom and Self Build units.
- b. 5% of dwellings should be bungalows.

Housing development and protection of the countryside

5.59 To ensure development is directed to the most sustainable locations and the intrinsic beauty and rural character of the district is protected in accordance with paragraph 180(b) of the NPPF, housing development in the countryside (i.e. outside identified settlements) will be restricted. However, there may be specific circumstances where sustainable development, on sites adjacent to settlements will be allowed to meet specific local housing needs. Such needs, as outlined in Paragraph 63 of the NPPF include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care, and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

5.60 The Local Plan supports the delivery of housing where it is adjacent to identified settlements where it would comply with the following policies and other appropriate policies in the Plan:

- HOU 08: Affordable Housing Exception Sites

- HOU 09: Community Led Development
- HOU 10: First Homes
- HOU 11: Single plot exception sites
- HOU 12: Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs (2 or more dwellings).
- HOU 13: Self and Custom Built Homes
- HOU 14: Residential And Nursing Care
- HOU 15: Replacement Dwellings
- HOU 16: Dwelling annexes and alterations
- HOU 17: Single Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Conversion of Buildings in the Open Countryside
- HOU 18: Build To Rent
- HOU 19: Rural Workers Dwellings

Windfall New Housing Development

5.61 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to proposals for housing development for land that is not specifically allocated for development that comes forward during the plan period, often referred to as 'windfall' sites.

HOU 06: Windfall Housing Development

A proposal for housing development within the main built form (defined in policy GEN 03) of a defined settlement (see policy GEN 02) will be supported where the site is not protected for its environmental, historic, community or other value, or allocated, designated, or otherwise safeguarded for another type of development.

Adjacent to the built form of Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Secondary Villages

A proposal to build appropriate scale housing development, on a site adjacent to the built form of a defined village will be supported where the proposal demonstrates that:

- a. A sequential approach to site selection has been taken where the re-use of previously developed land will come first before greenfield.
- b. It will provide a reliable source of supply. Applicants will be expected to provide evidence of the site's deliverability, especially in those villages where development has been completed within the plan period and there are existing outstanding commitments; and
- c. It will provide a housing mix in terms of size, type, and tenure to meet locally identified need, in accordance with the Council's Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). All proposals will individually or cumulatively.
- d. Represents incremental and organic growth of the village by virtue of its location, scale, and nature.
- e. Does not result in the loss of open space that is important to the historic form and layout of the village or is an important social and community space; and
- f. Has no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the village including its morphological character type as outlined in the Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, surrounding area and countryside or result in the loss of countryside that makes a significant contribution to the character or setting of that part of the village.

Within or adjacent to the built form of Smaller Villages

In addition to meeting the above criteria any new Windfall Housing Development in Smaller Villages (as defined in Policy HOU 07) will need to demonstrate it is within or adjacent to the built-up area and will be limited to proposals that clearly meet an identified local need in accordance with the following policies:

- a. Affordable housing exception sites (HOU 08)
- b. Community-led development for housing (HOU 09)
- c. First Homes (HOU 09)

d. Single plot exception sites to meet Specialist Needs (HOU 11)

e. Self and custom build homes (HOU 13)

Development in the open countryside will only be permitted where the proposal accords with the following policies:

f. Single dwellings and conversion of buildings in the countryside (HOU 17)

g. Rural workers dwellings (HOU 19)

Small scale housing development in Smaller Villages

5.62 This policy applies to all proposals within or adjacent to a recognisable group of dwellings that forms a recognisable settlement not identified as a Market Town, Local Service Centre, or Secondary Village. Its purpose is to allow for a limited number of additional dwellings in each Settlement beyond those designated as Market Towns, Local Service Centres, or Secondary Villages.

5.63 The policy limits the number of homes on small scale windfall sites to 5 in each smaller settlement and 10 in each medium settlement and 15 in the larger settlements to prevent over development in rural areas. For the purposes of this policy, the number of dwellings allowed relates to permissions granted after adoption of the plan. The only circumstances where this limit could be exceeded is in the event that a proposed affordable housing exception site is proposed that is fully supported by a local housing needs study in accordance with Policy HOU 08.

5.64 This Policy will help meet the requirements of the NPPF (para 70) that requires the Plan to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare.

5.65 Additional requirements applying to all sites through the Local Plan policy will be applied to these sites, though with greater flexibility in relation to access to services due to the very limited scale of development supported by the policy.

5.66 It is anticipated that this policy will lead to the delivery of around 430 homes during the plan period. These homes form part of the housing supply for the District.

HOU 07: Small Scale Housing Development In Smaller Villages

Small scale residential development will be permitted on sites within or adjacent to a recognisable group of dwellings in the following settlements

Smaller Settlements (100 – 199 dwellings)

From the date that this Plan is adopted, cumulative development permitted under this policy will be no more than 5 dwellings .

Billingford, Croxton, Elsing, Guist, Horningtoft, Larling, Lexham, little Dunham, Little Ellingham, Little Fransham, Longham, Ovington, Riddlesworth, Scarning, Scoulton, Stanfield, Wendling, Westfield, Winburgh

Larger Settlements (200 - 399 dwellings)

From the date that this Plan is adopted, cumulative development permitted under this policy will be no more than 10 dwellings;

Beachamwell, Bintree, Blo Norton, Brigham, Brisley, Cranworth, East Tuddenham, Foulden, Foxley, Great Dunham, Hardingham, Hoe, Holme Hale, Little Dunham, New Buckenham, North Pickenham, North Tuddenham, Oxborough, Roudham, Snetterton, South Lopham, Sparham, Stow Bedon, Tittleshall, Weasenham, Whissonsett, Wretham

Larger Settlements (over 400 dwellings)

From the date that this Plan is adopted, cumulative development permitted under this policy will be no more than 15 dwellings:

Besthorpe, Bradenham, Colkirk Garvestone (with Reymerston and & Thuxton,)
Mileham,

These development limits are in addition to schemes that may come forward under Policy HOU: Affordable housing exception sites.

In all cases proposals must respect the form and character of the settlement; and result in no adverse impact on the landscape and natural environment; and provide housing to meet identified local needs as set out under policies:

HOU 08: Affordable Housing Exception Sites

HOU 09 Community-led development for housing

HOU 10: First Homes

HOU 11: Single Plot Exception Sites

HOU 13: Self and custom build homes (Single Plot)

The following Settlements lie within the Brecks Special Protection Area Buffer where no new build residential development is permitted:

Brettenham, Cockley Cley, Gooderstone, Great Cressingham, Hilborough, Ickburgh, Little Cressingham, West Tofts (in Lynford parish)

The following parishes do not contain a recognisable group of dwellings of sufficient scale or massing to warrant any further residential development

Bylaugh, Cranwich, Diddington, Gateley Kempstone, Little Cressingham, Merton, Narford, Newton, Rougham, South Pickenham, Stanford, South Acre, Sturston, Tottingham, Twyford and Wellingham

Affordable Housing Exception Sites

- 5.67 In rural areas national planning policy states that local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan to reflect local needs, particularly affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Para 82 of the NPPF allows an element of market housing on rural exception sites to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.
- 5.68 The Council proposes to maintain a rural exceptions policy to help address local housing needs and ensure sufficient provision of affordable housing in the District.

- 5.69 This Policy will enable affordable housing to come forward where a proven affordable housing need is identified. It is expected that rural exception sites will come forward on agricultural land value and in the most suitable locations identified following a sequential approach.
- 5.70 To assist in the justification of such development from the locational strategy and assessment of suitability for applications with regard to the above policy, applicants must provide supporting justification. This includes a supporting statement around how the proposal as set out would justify the departure from the settlement hierarchy and supports sustainable development.
- 5.71 Criteria as set out in the policy above is not an exhaustive list and may be updated in line with Planning Committee requirements. The statement should also provide reasoned argument of how the proposal as set out is: the most suitable location; well related to the settlement and follows a sequential approach.
- 5.72 Proposals must be of a size, design and scale that seek to meet the identified local affordable housing need and the setting. Careful siting, massing, use of surrounding landscape features and screening are important as are the enhancement of existing local characteristics. The statement should also demonstrate how the site is connected to the surrounding settlement; in areas of greater landscape visibility, sensitive design and landscaping are particularly important. The Council's development management service will be able to provide further guidance and comment on emerging schemes.
- 5.73 Local need is based on the geographical areas and is defined in this case as that in the parish and surrounding parishes. An application would be expected to be supported by an assessment appraisal which clearly demonstrates that there is a local housing need.
- 5.74 Affordable housing is defined through national policy and includes homes for rent and shared ownership across a range of delivery models and products. All such homes are expected to be for those households who are

unable to obtain accommodation on the open market (as defined in the definition of affordable housing in the NPPF and Breckland District Council's Housing Allocations Policy). Presently the NPPF (Annex 2) includes 'First Homes' as a type of affordable housing. These sites should be:

- New dwellings, and
- Available for purchase by 'qualifying first-time buyers' only; these are defined as people who don't already own a home and who are aged 23-40, and
- Be sold at a discount of at least 20% of their market value, and always for less than the price cap (currently set at £250,000)

5.75 Affordable housing is secured through s106 agreements that secure the commitment to delivery of affordable housing and other commitments including a local connection criteria. Such provision is expected by most schemes that deliver affordable housing, but exceptions may exist where development is led specifically by the Council or a Registered Provider, and it is established that Affordable Housing grant has been secured from Homes England.

HOU 08: Affordable Housing Exception Sites

On sites outside but adjacent to defined settlements where residential development would not normally be appropriate, the Council will support affordable led housing exception sites

In the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Secondary Villages exception sites will be supported where they meet identified affordable housing needs across the whole of Breckland District.

In Smaller Villages exception sites, that are adjacent to the built up area will be supported where they meet identified affordable housing needs for that particular Parish or an immediately adjoining parish that does not contain a higher level settlement

In all cases, applications for development will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- a. The proposal delivers affordable housing (as defined in National Policy and including social and affordable rented housing, first homes, intermediate and shared ownership housing), to meet the needs of local people* and
- b. The proposal is of good design quality utilising the Breckland design guide appropriate to its immediate surroundings and of a scale proportionate to existing development.

An element of market led housing will be permitted as a supplementary component of such schemes, where it is clearly demonstrated that:

- c. Appropriate evidence of the economic viability of a scheme is submitted and subject to independent evaluation, for which the applicant will bear the cost and confirmation that no alternative funding sources exist prior, to the Council's agreement that a 100% affordable housing scheme would not be viable; and,
- d. It is demonstrated that a local housing need would otherwise go unmet without delivery of the scheme; and,
- e. Development of a market housing element is the minimum necessary to bring forward affordable housing development and the principal use of the site would remain an affordable housing scheme; and,
- f. the development remains a comprehensive scheme brought forward as a whole.

The Council will in particular support and assist in the delivery of proposals for affordable housing that are brought forward by a legitimate community group such as a Parish Council or Community Land Trust and the scheme has general community support, with evidence of meaningful public engagement.

Where there is an identified need for specialist housing, schemes will be encouraged to provide an element of specialist housing with the proposal.

* Local need in a Market Town, Local Service Centre or Secondary Village is defined as a need for affordable housing identified within Breckland District. Local need in a Smaller Village is defined as a need for affordable housing arising from current residents within the parish and adjoining parishes, those who have an existing family

or employment connections, or those who have had to leave the parish due to a lack of suitable affordable housing.

Community Led Development

- 5.76 Paragraph 82 of NPPF is supportive of the delivery of community led housing in rural areas and the Local Plan supports the development of Community Land Trusts (CLTs), Neighbourhood Plans and other Community Led Affordable Housing vehicles for the delivery of affordable housing. These can be promoted through Neighbourhood Plans or where they accord with this Local Plan.
- 5.77 Giving communities greater say and control of their localities is a central theme of Government policy. Community-led schemes are those that are driven by local communities, rather than local authorities or private developers. They can help communities to tackle local issues such as a shortage of affordable homes or jobs and can generate income to provide financial security and help fund further investment in the local area.
- 5.78 Small-scale community-led schemes which meet a need identified by a local community will be encouraged on appropriate sites in all settlements and assessed against the policy below.
- 5.79 One mechanism for delivering community led development is a Community Land Trust (CLT¹⁰). CLTs are not for profit organisations based in and run by the community, that seek to develop key community assets to help communities become stronger and more independent. The usual starting point for CLTs is the provision of affordable housing but other benefits such as community shops, pubs, allotments, gardens, play areas, orchards, workspace, and renewable energy can also be provided.
- 5.80 Many community-led schemes are likely to be located outside settlements where open market housing is not normally permitted. However, in certain

1.1 _____

¹⁰ A legal definition is provided in Section 79 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

circumstances it may be appropriate for an element of open market housing to be provided as part of a community-led scheme where the applicant can demonstrate through a financial appraisal that the inclusion of the open market housing is required to enable the delivery of affordable housing or other community assets, with significant benefits accruing directly to the community organisation through cross-subsidy. In addition, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the community benefits of such a scheme (such as the level of affordable housing or open space) are significantly greater than would be delivered on an equivalent open market housing site. The area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.

HOU 09: Community Led Development

The District Council is generally supportive of community-led development. This may include schemes involving affordable housing, small business units, renewable energy generation and other appropriate uses. Schemes will be considered for sites adjoining the built form of Market Towns, Local Service Centres, Secondary Villages and Smaller Villages.

The non-housing elements of schemes will be assessed against other relevant Local Plan policies. However, the District Council will also expect schemes to accord with the applicable criteria in this Policy.

The affordable housing elements may be permitted on sites adjacent to the built form of a settlement as an exception to the normal policies of control where:

- a. The site is adjacent to a settlement which offers a range of services and facilities, and there is good accessibility by foot/cycle to those facilities.
- b. No significant harm would be caused to the character or setting of the settlement and the surrounding countryside.
- c. The scale of the scheme is appropriate to the location and the level of identified local affordable housing need.

- d. The scheme incorporates a range of dwelling sizes, types, and tenures appropriate to identified local need.
- e. The District Council is satisfied that (i) the scheme was initiated by, and is being led by, a legitimate local community group such as a Parish Council or Community Land Trust and (ii) the scheme has general community support, with evidence of meaningful public engagement.
- f. It can be demonstrated that the scheme will be well managed and financially viable over the long-term and that any benefits provided by the scheme can be retained by the local community in perpetuity; and
- g. The scheme accords with all other policies of the Local Plan.

An element of open market housing on the site will only be acceptable where: It is demonstrated through a financial appraisal that this is essential to enable the delivery of affordable housing or other community benefits on-site; and The community benefits of the scheme (such as the level of affordable housing or open space) are significantly greater than would be delivered on an equivalent open market site.

First Homes

5.81 First Homes are a discounted market tenure for first time buyers, announced in a Ministerial Statement on 24th May 2021 accompanied by updated Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). The PPG sets out that First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes.

Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below);
- are physically indistinguishable from the equivalent market homes in terms of quality and size;

- 5.82 On their first sale First Homes will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £130,000 in Breckland.
- 5.83 Where provided First Homes should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. There is a separate national policy requirement that on major developments (of 10 or more homes), at least 10% of the total number of homes should be available for affordable home ownership. The provision of First Homes may help to meet this requirement in whole or part.
- 5.84 The PPG defines first-time buyers eligible to purchase a First Home. This eligibility criteria must also be met by future purchasers of a First Homes property. The PPG also states that local authorities can apply local eligibility criteria in addition to the national criteria.
- 5.85 The Council will use local eligibility criteria for local connection to the District (including priority for defined key workers) in assessing prospective applicants wishing to purchase a First Home.
- 5.86 Any locally set eligibility criteria will apply for at least 3 months in addition to the national eligibility criteria from the agreed date that the home is first marketed, after which purchase eligibility would revert to only the national criteria for the final 3 months (a minimum of 6 months in total since the property was first marketed).
- 5.87 If a First Home does not sell within this marketing period as an eligible purchaser cannot be found, the property will instead revert to 'Open Market Sale', with the First Homes discount repaid to the Council as an 'Additional First Homes Contribution', to spend on the provision of affordable housing. Alternatively, there is an option for the Council to buy the property at the at the Discount Market Price, providing options for it be used for other forms of affordable housing.

HOU 10: First Homes

Proposals to deliver First Homes on sites adjoining the built form of Market Towns, Local Service centres, Secondary Villages and Smaller Villages will be supported where:

- a. The scheme comprises at least one or more types of affordable housing that are suitable for first time buyers or renters; and
- b. The scheme can demonstrate that products have regard to local income and local house prices; The HEDNA considers that the purchase price to make First Homes/discouted home ownership affordable for households in the rent/buy gap in Breckland is £130,000.
- c. Arrangements are in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households and the dwellings remain affordable in perpetuity.

Single Plot Exception Sites

- 5.88 Single plot exception sites help provide a solution for individual households to build their own home to meet their own housing needs. This policy approach is intended for those people who have a strong local connection to a specific area of the district and whose needs cannot be met, either due to affordability of the need for specialist accommodation to meet the needs of a veteran or a medical requirement.
- 5.89 To ensure that dwellings on Single Plot Exception Sites remain affordable in perpetuity planning permissions relating to such sites may include conditions which restrict permitted development rights relating to extensions. This is to ensure that the dwellings constructed under this policy remain at an appropriate scale and design to remain affordable in perpetuity.

HOU 11: Single plot exception sites

Single plot exception sites that would deliver an affordable home on sites adjacent to the built form of Market Towns, Local Service centres, Secondary Villages and to smaller villages will be supported where:

a. The proposal is for low-cost home ownership, where:

- i. The applicant can demonstrate that they are unable to access a suitable home currently available on the open market in the parish; and
- ii. The applicant has an evidenced strong local connection to the parish where the new dwelling is proposed; and
- iii. The dwelling meets the council's current definition of affordable housing and will remain affordable in perpetuity; or

b. The proposal will meet a locally agreed specific need for people with long term disabilities or for a veteran provided that:

- i. The size and form of the building, its access and parking provide for the specific needs of residents with disabilities; and
- ii. The application clearly demonstrates a local connection as well as a local need or requirement for the housing through medical evidence; and
- iii. There are no alternative suitable or available sites within the built up area of a settlement, and
- iv. There is no suitable property to meet the identified need available within the village.

In order to ensure that dwellings on exception sites remain affordable in perpetuity planning permissions relating to such sites may include conditions which restrict permitted development rights.

Specialist housing and accommodation needs (2 or more dwellings)

- 5.90 The council is committed to enabling and supporting communities by providing them with choice and control over their accommodation and potential care needs that complement the more holistic approach to health and wellbeing and the provision of physical infrastructure and services.
- 5.91 The council recognises that some residents will require specialist accommodation, be these older persons or those with specific needs. Specialist accommodation can be used to enable individuals to live a certain quality of life and maintain housing independence, and; where moving away to a different town or village is not always appropriate. Specialist housing is important for creating mixed communities.

Housing for Older Persons

- 5.92 The definition of older people covers a large group of those over retirement age, including the active and newly retired, through to the very frail elderly that have a wide range of accommodation needs. In addition to generalised housing, the council supports increased choice and availability of homes specifically designed for older people. Housing for older people can fall within the planning use classes of C2 or C3. Use Class C2 residential institutions all have an element of care, and residential care homes or nursing homes fall within this category.
- 5.93 Specific schemes to meet the needs of older persons will need to be considered in conjunction with the settlement hierarchy. The towns and more sustainable villages are likely to have better opportunities and access to health, shopping and community uses that are accessible locally to meet their needs.

Housing for specialist needs

- 5.94 Specialist needs housing is intended for people with physical disability, frail elderly people, young vulnerable people, people with learning disability,

mental health, or sensory disability. It allows residents to live a higher quality of life near to where they have support or where they are familiar with their surrounding area. As with housing for older people, schemes for specialist housing will need to be considered in accordance with the settlement hierarchy to ensure that day-to-day needs can be met in a sustainable way and contribute to opportunities to maximise their health, quality of life, increase independence and avoid social isolation.

5.95 Key features of specialist housing include:

- self-contained individual dwellings with their own front door irrespective of whether the dwelling is for rent, sale, or shared ownership,
- It can include communal areas such as lounges and restaurants,
- A scheme manager or other types of support service and varying levels of personal care and support.

5.96 The delivery of specific specialist schemes for older or vulnerable people should be considered in partnership with other agencies to ensure they meet specific identified needs. Housing for older and more vulnerable people will also be controlled through conditions and planning obligations. This is to ensure that specialist housing is not being used as a mechanism to circumvent other policies in this plan. Restrictions on occupancy will apply to resales to ensure these properties meet specialist needs in perpetuity.

5.97 In some circumstances, specialist housing may be of a character that meets complex needs arising from only a few individuals located across the region or indeed in the wider area. Where clearly evidenced need exists, the Local Plan supports the provision of such developments within and adjacent to the confines of Market Towns and Local Service Centres, to ensure that facilities are appropriately served by supporting services and infrastructure, and accessible by a number of transport modes.

HOU 12: Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs (2 or more dwellings).

Proposals to meet older persons/specialist housing needs or homes for veterans for two or more dwellings will be supported on sites adjacent to the built form of Market Towns, Local Service centres or Secondary Villages where:

- a. The location is well served by public transport or within walking distance of community facilities (within 400m) such as shops, medical services, public open space, and social networks appropriate to the needs of the intended occupiers, or where this is not the case, such facilities are provided on site; and
- b. The scale, form and design of the development is appropriate to the client group and in relation to the settlement where it is located; and
- c. Highway, parking, and servicing arrangements are satisfactorily addressed; and
- d. Gardens and amenity space are provided and are of an appropriate size and quality.

Proposals for older persons/specialist housing or housing for veterans on suitable sites adjacent to the settlement (higher level settlements) should meet all of criteria (a) to (d) above and

- e. The scale of development should be clearly justified by evidence of need in the district; and
- f. Evidence is provided which demonstrates that there are no alternative suitable available sites within the adjacent settlement boundaries.

Proposals for specialist housing and accommodation to meet clearly evidenced needs arising from outside the district will be considered where they relate to suitable sites that are within or adjacent to the (more sustainable settlements)

In order to ensure that dwellings on exception sites remain affordable in perpetuity planning permissions relating to such sites may include conditions which restrict permitted development rights.

Self and custom build homes

5.98 Paragraph 70 of the NPPF that local planning authorities should seek opportunities, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custombuild housing. For the purposes of this Local Plan the council adopts the definition of Self Build as set out in the Housing and Planning Act 2016 as follows:

“...the building or completion by— (a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. But it does not include the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person.”

5.99 Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

5.100 Self and Custom Build development as an opportunity to bring choice to the housing market as well as enabling local people to design and build their own home that will meet their bespoke needs will continue to be supported. For the purposes of Policy HOU 13, a serviced self-build plot is defined as a parcel of land with legal access to a public highway, and at least water, foul drainage and electricity supply available at the plot boundary. Serviced Self Build plots can be delivered in a number of ways, including:

1. Multiple individual serviced plots located within larger sites which are generally allocated in this Local Plan around the Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Secondary Villages.
2. Single or small sites delivering open market plots – these are likely to be windfall sites (not identified in the Local Plan);

3. Single or small sites delivering affordable plots, including on rural exception sites – these are windfall sites delivered primarily by organisations such as Housing Associations
4. Sites delivered by Town or Parish Councils via their Neighbourhood Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders.

HOU 13: Self and Custom Built Homes

Part 1: Individual plots

Proposals for an individual self and custom build dwellings on sites adjacent to the built form of Market Towns, Local Service centres, Secondary Villages and to smaller villages, that are consistent with the policies of this local plan, to be built and occupied by the applicant or to be built on behalf of the applicant, will be supported in principle.

Part 2: Multiple plots on a site

Proposals for self and custom build dwellings on sites adjoining the built Form of Market Towns and Local Service Centres and that are consistent with the policies of this local plan, to be built and occupied by the applicant or to be built on behalf of the applicant, will be supported in principle.

When outline permission or permission in principle is sought for plots for custom and self-build homes and where details of each plot will be secured via a custom/self-builder at a later date, a plot passport is required. As a minimum, all plots are required to include a plot passport that summarises the main marketing details and specifications of the plot to include:

- a. The site location;
- b. The plot size (m²);
- c. The ratio of built footprint to overall plot size;
- d. The indicative developable footprint;
- e. Permissible building lines;

- f. Side spacing requirements; and
- g. Building heights.

Additional specifications, such as but not limited to materials, landscaping details, and access arrangements may be required on each plot where local context, a planning permission, or a permission in principle indicates this is necessary. Detailed applications for custom and self-build homes on plots with a plot passport will be expected to adhere to the parameters of the plot passport and clearly demonstrate how the criteria have been satisfied. Applications which satisfy the requirements of the plot passport will be supported in principle. Any variations on the plot passport parameters in a detailed application will require full justification for the changes to demonstrate that they are suitable for the plot if they are to be supported.

Part 3: Provision of plots on large sites

Proposals for 100 or more dwellings will provide serviced plots to deliver at least 5% of the total number of dwellings on the site as self-build or custom build homes. All plots set aside for self-build or custom build housing (secured via a legal agreement or planning condition) must include:

- h. Legal access onto a public highway;
- i. Water, foul drainage, broadband connection, and electricity supply available at the plot boundary;
- j. Sufficient space in order to build without compromising neighbouring properties and their amenity and the amenity of future occupiers; and
- k. An agreed design code or plot passport for the plots. If plots remain unsold after a thorough and proportionate marketing exercise which:
 - l. Includes making details available to people on the Breckland custom and self-build register.
- m. Covers a period of at least 2 years from the date at which the plots are made available (with the 2 year time frame not commencing until

- i. Thorough and appropriate marketing is in place; and,
- ii. Criteria (a)-(d) have been implemented; prior to the application being made and if it can be demonstrated that they have been offered to the District Council, a housing association or the town/parish council for the delivery of affordable housing products .then plots may be built out as conventional market housing subject to detailed permission being secured and the relevant District being satisfied that e) and f) have been satisfactorily concluded.

In all cases the Local Planning Authority will require a Unilateral undertaking to future-proof the scheme and ensure the plot(s) would only be constructed as Custom/Self-Build housing.

Residential care and Nursing homes

5.101 Communal establishments form their own category of housing for older and other residents, these include residential and nursing homes providing accommodation care and/or nursing for people whose care or health needs means they cannot live independently. Residents of such establishments will have a bedroom rather than a self-contained dwelling.

HOU 14: Residential And Nursing Care

Proposals for residential care homes/nursing care (Use Class C2) will be supported on suitable sites that are within or adjoining the built form of Market Towns or Local Service Centres.

Resisting development that would lead to a reduction in the number of extra care or care premises unless it can be demonstrated that a replacement facility will be provided or that such a use was not viable;

Where proposals relate to sites adjoining settlements, they will be subject to the following criteria:

- a. the local need or requirement for the facility is clearly evidenced; and

b. evidence is provided which demonstrates that there are no suitable available sites within the built Form of settlements within the same or adjoining parishes.

Residential institutions which fall within Use Class C2 and do not provide self-contained accommodation or support independent living are not classified as housing and will not be expected to contribute to the provision of affordable housing.

Residential Replacement, Extensions and Alterations

- 5.102 As a predominantly rural District, Breckland has a large amount of housing stock located in the rural area. Although these houses are not in the most sustainable locations, they nevertheless form an important part of the housing stock. Whilst the spatial strategy does not seek significant growth in the rural area it is recognised that replacement dwellings may be appropriate to ensure the stock remains viable and safe.
- 5.103 However, replacing homes in the countryside could create an oversupply of large properties which could ultimately result in a limited choice of house types in rural areas. The policy below aims to allow moderate change to properties in rural locations but also to retain an appropriate range and mix in terms of size and tenure of housing types in the countryside to ensure choice and variety.
- 5.104 In rural areas, it is vital to ensure that any replacement residential properties do not adversely impact the character of the countryside. Proposals must therefore have particular regard to the Council's design policies and will be subject to consideration of any potential impact on European sites in line with the Habitats Regulations 2017 and relevant Local Plan policies

HOU 15: Replacement Dwellings

Proposals for the replacement of dwellings in the open countryside must be contained within the existing curtilage. The building must be in residential use and not classed as abandoned.

Replacement dwellings must be of a scale and design sensitive to the countryside setting, with a height and size similar to that of the original dwelling. If an alternative height or scale is proposed, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate that the scheme exhibits exceptionally high quality of design and enhances the character and appearance of the locality.

The original dwelling is taken to be the house as it stood at 1st July 1948 (or as originally built if constructed after this date).

Dwelling annexes and alterations

- 5.105 The creation of annexes can create additional accommodation for a dwelling and can help to create more flexible use of the accommodation to respond to changing family circumstances over time.
- 5.106 Residential annexes should be so that they are ancillary in use and scale to the main dwelling unit and provides genuinely flexible accommodation that can be adapted and re-adapted to meet the changing needs of an extended family. This should include the option of absorbing the annexe back into the main dwelling accommodation, if necessary, by the same or future occupiers.
- 5.107 To meet these requirements, it is essential that the main and annexe accommodation are either directly connected, by an internal link or and have a close spatial relationship with shared facilities and space. The Council will apply restrictive conditions or obligations to ensure annexes do not create substandard dwellings with inadequate standards of access, amenity and space and potentially result in additional dwellings in unsustainable locations.
- 5.108 For the purposes of this Policy a residential annex is defined as detached buildings or extensions within the curtilage of a dwelling which provide additional residential accommodation not wholly integrated with the main dwelling.

Use of Rooms Within the Main Dwelling

- 5.109 The use of rooms within a dwelling for the purpose of allowing a relative to live with their family would not normally require planning permission. However, this accommodation should be occupied by someone who is clearly associated with the occupants of the main dwelling e.g. dependent relative or domestic staff (including a full time nanny or Carer) working for the residents of the principal dwelling.

Extending the Main Dwelling

- 5.110 Attached annexes will be acceptable where a clear dependency is retained at all times with the main dwelling (i.e.: share facilities such as living spaces/kitchens) and as a minimum a doorway between the annexe and existing rooms within the host dwelling. Proposals for an annex that where a dwelling is altered or extended to create separate accommodation with an independent entrance, which could be sold separately to the main dwellinghouse, as a new habitable dwelling irrespective of who is occupying it, will be resisted.

Detached Annexes

- 5.111 Detached annexes will only be acceptable where the scale and appearance of the building is modest in proportion to the site, and a clear dependency is retained at all times with the main dwelling. A detached annexe should share a vehicular access with the main house and have adequate parking and shared amenity facilities for the occupants of the annexe and the main dwelling. The annexe should be located within the curtilage of the main house and should be within the same ownership. There should be no boundary demarcation or subdivision of the garden areas between the annexe and the main dwelling.
- 5.112 In considering applications the Council will consider the following criteria:
1. Physical relationship
 2. Does the annex use part of the existing dwelling.
 3. Is the annex attached to the existing dwelling.

4. If the annex is physically detached, is there potential for subdivision of the curtilage and creation of two plots.
5. Subservient in scale and appropriately designed - does the annex react to its architectural and landscape context.
6. Can the proposed accommodation be justified. Number of beds being provided. One or maximum two beds justified in a particular case e.g. if 24 hour care is required.
7. Is there a functional relationship.
8. Who will be using the annexe.
9. Is there a family connection or are they part of the same household
10. Does the annexe share services (water gas, electric, sewage disposal etc).

HOU 16: Dwelling annexes and alterations

Applications for the creation of a residential annexe will be permitted if there is no material harm to any neighbouring uses, including the living conditions of nearby residents or the overall character and appearance of the surrounding area taking into account the surrounding built form and street scene, and where all the following criteria are met:

- a. The existing dwelling enjoys a lawful residential use; and,
- b. The proposal is in the same ownership as the main dwelling; and,
- c. The proposal does not constitute a new or independent dwelling; and,
- d. It is located within the curtilage of the principal dwelling and shares its vehicular access and amenity space; and,
- e. It is designed in such a way as to easily allow the annexe to be used as an integral part of the main dwelling when it is no longer needed for independent occupation; and,

- f. there is no boundary demarcation or sub-division of the land between the main dwelling and the annexe; and,
- g. is of a scale subservient to the principal dwelling; and,
- h. is sited to achieve a clear dependency between the annexe and the main building at all times that requires occupants to have regular contact and interdependence; and,
- i. there shall only be one annexe per residential dwelling; and,
- j. consists of not more than the minimum level of accommodation required to support the needs of the occupant, being suitable in size, scale, and materials and clearly ancillary and visually subordinate to the principal dwelling; and,
- k. has a clear functional connection with the main dwelling (e.g. the occupant should be a dependent relative of the residents of the main dwelling or directly employed at the main dwelling as a nanny or carer).

Extension or alteration

Extensions or alterations to existing residential properties will be permitted where all the following criteria are met:

- l. The extension or alteration is not disproportionate in size in relation to the original dwelling/plot and does not alter substantially the character of the dwelling.
- m. The extension or alteration must be subservient to the existing dwelling.
- n. The extended or altered dwelling respects the character of the existing dwelling.
- o. The design remains in keeping with the existing dwelling and building materials.
- p. The extension or alteration will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring property.

In the open Countryside, an extension to an existing dwelling must be in keeping with the height, scale and character of the original dwelling and would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality or its countryside setting.

Single Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Conversion of Buildings in the Open Countryside

- 5.113 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, other than in a range of specific circumstances such as where the dwelling may be essential for a rural worker, to make viable use of a heritage asset, re-use redundant or disused buildings, it's the subdivision of existing buildings and otherwise acceptable or is of exceptional, truly outstanding design and architectural quality.
- 5.114 The council recognises that some isolated rural dwellings may benefit from replacement or redevelopment to meet specific needs. This may also include the conversion of older farm buildings that have been vacant for a number of years and are no longer required for agricultural use. Whilst some may be more appropriate for employment uses, others may be more suitable for redevelopment or conversion. Where possible, buildings should be converted. In the event this is not economically viable, or the proposal involves the replacement of an existing residential property, the council will consider the use of condition or other agreement to ensure the original building is removed or demolished within a timely period following the completion of the new dwelling.
- 5.115 The Council will require evidence that the current economic use is not viable. Proposals for other types of residential re-use (e.g. open market housing) requiring a planning application will only be permitted where applicants can demonstrate that a range of other opportunities have been explored and are not deliverable due to lack of demand or viability issues. As part of this applicant will need to explore options for business reuse and to provide evidence that the building has been marketed for sale or let for business use

with a commercial agent and the District Council's business website at an appropriate price for at least 12 months. The replacement of rural buildings for residential use will not normally be considered appropriate, in order to minimise impact on the character of the countryside.

- 5.116 This policy relates to the re-use and replacement of non-residential buildings in the countryside, such as barns and other agricultural buildings. The conversion of agricultural buildings to dwelling houses is permitted development, subject to a number of criteria. There are limits to the number of dwellings to be converted and the size of building proposed for conversion (General Permitted Development Order Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q, 2015 and amendment to Part 3, Class Q, 2018) (MIN15). Outside of the exemptions set out within class Q, the conversion of non-residential buildings to residential use in rural areas will be strictly controlled. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building.
- 5.117 The Council recognises that to sustain an active rural economy and support rural living, conversion of redundant buildings should be supported where appropriate. Proposals for the conversion of redundant farm buildings to retail, residential, leisure, office, industrial and storage uses will be considered against the policy below.

HOU 17: Single Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Conversion of Buildings in the Open Countryside

The sustainable re-use of appropriately located and constructed buildings in the countryside for economic purposes will be supported.

The re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for residential purposes will be permitted where the commercial use of the building has been shown to not be viable. The building proposed to be converted should be substantially intact and capable of conversion without significant extension or re-building and of value to the landscape of the District. The residential re-use of modern agricultural or

industrial buildings considered to be of no aesthetic value, regardless of their location, will not be considered appropriate.

The re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for residential purposes will be permitted where the commercial use of the building has been shown to not be viable. Alternative business use, include tourism, outdoor recreation and community uses

For the conversion of buildings in the countryside, regard will be had to the following criteria:

- a. The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the landscape and the quality of design. Development will be resisted where a proposal fails to take the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality;
- b. Access to the highway and the ability of the highway network to accommodate the demands resulting from the proposed development; and
- c. Consideration of potential conservation and biodiversity issues, in line with the policy of this Plan, and national regulations.
- d. Demonstrable evidence that the building has been marketed for sale or let for business use with a commercial agent and the District Council's business website at an appropriate price for at least 12 months.

For residential conversions, it is often the case that buildings require substantial works to enable them to be re-used, in order to meet Building Regulations and the demands of the new use. Therefore, in order to be acceptable in planning terms, a building should be capable of residential conversion without the need for significant rebuilding or extension. This restriction will mainly apply to modern buildings which are limited in their suitability for re-use due to their modular and/or temporary construction. The policy limits residential re-use to buildings that are predominately constructed using traditional local techniques as these buildings are more suited to residential re-use.

The character of the existing building should be respected and that bedrooms will be expected to have windows which allow for a view and are not solely served by rooflights.

Isolated dwellings in the open countryside will not be permitted unless they are designed to exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Build to Rent

5.118 Build to Rent is defined in the NPPF as purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

HOU 18: Build To Rent

1. Proposals to deliver sites for build to rent housing schemes will be permitted within the built Form of Settlements subject to the following:
 - a. All the units are self-contained and let separately; and
 - b. 20% of the homes are for affordable private rent; and
 - c. Affordable private rental dwellings will be broadly representative of the mix and type of the overall development; and
 - d. Affordable private rent is provided with a minimum 20% discount of local market rents; and
 - e. The discount on the affordable private rent home will apply in perpetuity; and
 - f. Units are to be in a single ownership and management control; and

g. There is to be an agreed professional and on-site management scheme, run by a member of an accredited ombudsman scheme and a recognised professional body; and

h. The homes are to be used as build to rent properties for at least 15 years.

In granting planning permission for build to rent the Local Planning Authority will impose a planning condition requiring scheme operators to offer tenancies of 3 or more years to all tenants in the development, who are eligible to live in the country for that period (under the right to rent).

In granting planning permission for build to rent the Local Planning Authority will consider the use of planning obligations to ensure the appropriate continued management of both affordable and private rent units.

Rural Workers Dwellings

5.119 As a rural district, Breckland is home to a significant number of rural enterprises. The needs of these businesses are different to an urban office based business and may require staff to be located in close proximity to their place of work. The following policy sets out how proposals for dwellings in the countryside catering for rural workers will be assessed.

HOU 19: Rural Workers Dwellings

Proposals for permanent dwellings in the countryside for full-time workers in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and other rural activities will be permitted where:

- a. It can be demonstrated that the dwelling is essential to the functional needs of the business i.e. there is a need for one or more full time workers to be readily available on-site at most times;
- b. It can be demonstrated that the enterprise has been established for at least three years and is, and should remain, financially viable;

- c. There is no other accommodation within the site/holding or within the surrounding area, which is currently suitable and available, or could be made available;
- d. A dwelling or building suitable for conversion to a dwelling within the site/holding has not been sold on the open housing market without an agricultural or other occupancy condition in the last five years;
- e. The proposed dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the functional needs of the enterprise, nor would it be unusually expensive to construct in relation to the income that the enterprise could sustain;
- f. The proposed dwelling is sensitively designed and in keeping with its rural surroundings and will not adversely affect the setting of any heritage asset;
- g. The proposed dwelling will have satisfactory access;
- h. The proposed dwelling is well landscaped, is sited to minimise visual intrusion and is in close proximity to existing buildings to meet the functional need of the business; and
- i. Where the proposal involves a new business that cannot yet demonstrate financial soundness, a temporary dwelling (in the form of a caravan, mobile home or wooden structure that can easily be dismantled and removed from the site) may be acceptable provided all the other criteria outlined above are met.

Where a new dwelling is permitted, the occupancy will be restricted by condition to ensure that it is occupied by a person, or persons currently or last employed in local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and other rural activities, or their surviving partner or dependant(s). Applications for the removal of an occupancy condition related to rural workers will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- j. There is no longer a need for accommodation on the holding/business and in the local area
- k. The property has been marketed for a reasonable period (at least 1 year) and at a price which reflects the existence of the occupancy condition. The applicant will

be required to submit an independent valuation to justify the market price, for which the applicant will bear the cost.

- l. The dwelling has been made available to a minimum of three Registered Social Landlords operating locally on terms which would prioritise its occupation by a rural worker as an affordable dwelling - and that option has been refused.

Technical design standards for new homes

Raising accessibility standards of new homes

- 5.120 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF establishes that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible. Building Regulations control certain building work – principally to secure the health, safety, welfare, and convenience of people in and around buildings. Part M of the Building Regulations sets minimum access standards for all new homes. In 2015 government made some important changes to Part M, with the introduction of a new way of setting technical housing standards in England. The requirements in the regulations are supported by statutory guidance in Approved Document M. Building Regulations apply to new buildings, major refurbishments, and changes of use. Volume 1 applies to dwellings.
- 5.121 The existing minimum standard for accessible housing in England has four main requirements that make homes accessible and visitable for most people, including wheelchair users: level access to the main entrance; a flush threshold; sufficiently wide doorways and circulation space; and a toilet at entrance level.
- 5.122 This applies as the minimum for all new build homes; but not to extensions or changes of use. However, where there is a material alteration to a building’s access, the building cannot be made less compliant than it was before the alteration.
- 5.123 Requirement M4(1) sets basic standards for all new buildings. Known as “Category 1: Visitable dwellings”. Requirement M4(2), introduced in 2015,

sets a higher standard for accessible homes, which is broadly equivalent to the Lifetime Homes Standard. Known as “Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings”. Requirement M4(3) sets a standard for wheelchair accessible homes. Known as “Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings”.

- 5.124 Categories M4(2) and M4(3) are optional requirements which local authorities can apply through local planning policies where they have identified a local need and where the viability of development is not compromised.
- 5.125 The higher M4(2) standard requires additional features including having a living area at entrance level and step-free access to all entrance level rooms and facilities, wider doorways, and corridors as well as clear access routes to reach windows. It also includes further features to make homes more easily adaptable over time for a wide range of occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users, for example sanitary provisions that can be adapted easily for installation of grab rails and stairs designed to allow easy fit of a stair lift.
- 5.126 The M4(3) requirement is achieved when a new dwelling provides reasonable provisions for a wheelchair user to live in the dwelling and have the ability to use any private outdoor space, parking and communal facilities.
- 5.127 The HEDNA identifies a clear need to increase the supply of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings as well as providing specific provision of older persons housing and this is supported by the evidence in the Norfolk Study of Demand for Older Person Housing¹¹, which found that 25% of new dwellings were required to be accessible and adaptable, and 5% were required to be accessible for wheelchair users was needed in Breckland. This is reflected in the Policy approach.

Water

- 5.128 Breckland sits within a much larger area covered by the Anglian Water Company. All of the Anglian Water area has been designated as an 'area of serious water stress' by the Environment Agency¹² and the Water Resources East Regional Plan¹³ predicts that by 2050, there will be 40% less water than the current baseline supply and their evidence supports higher water efficiency standards in Local Plans.
- 5.129 Part G of the Building Regulations includes requirements for water efficiency in residential properties of 125 litres per person per day(lppd) Currently, as Breckland is identified as being an area of serious water stress, it was concluded through the evidence that an optional standard was required of 110 (lppd). More stringent standards may come forward via updated government guidance and building regulations, in which case the local authority would apply the higher standards.
- 5.130 In an area of serious water stress, incorporating water demand management into development from the start promotes water efficiency and resilience, along with the protection of water quality and protection of areas of environmental importance within and adjacent to Breckland. Water reuse, recycling and other suitable measures should be incorporated wherever feasible to reduce demand on mains water supply. Developments are expected to aspire beyond these standards where possible to do so. Applications should include sufficient detail as to intended standard and set out the measures to be incorporated to enable compliance.

5.131

Reducing Energy Consumption – Water Efficiency

- 5.132 The supply and disposal of water has a significant carbon impact. Whilst the bulk (90%) of water-related carbon emissions come from the heating of

1.1

¹² [Water Stressed areas final classification, Environment Agency2021](#)

¹³ [WRE-Regional-Water-Resources-Plan-for-Eastern-England](#)

water, the process of treating and pumping water to homes also has an impact (10%). Reducing water use (supply and disposal) therefore can have a significant carbon impact, even more so if that water is heated. Even small measures, such as a water butt, can make a difference – each time a 100l water butt is filled with rainwater, and used to water garden plants instead of using mains water, it saves 79g/CO₂ (Source: Water UK, which estimates the carbon footprint of 1 litre of domestic water is 0.79g/CO₂/l). That's a carbon saving on top of the wider water environment benefits of using rainwater rather than mains treated tap water.

- 5.133 One, arguably extreme, measure could be through new buildings using rainwater for wider use than garden use (such as for toilet flushing). However, some evidence suggests this may actually not be the most sustainable option, due to the on-site treatment and storage requirements, and may have a higher carbon footprint than the use of mains water. This Plan remains neutral on this point and does not, therefore, promote or require such measures.

Internal Space

- 5.134 The amount of space in a home influences how people live, impacting on the occupant's health and wellbeing. Providing homes of sufficient size to allow residents and families 'room to grow' is a critical part of delivering sustainable communities. Introduced in 2015, the nationally described standards set out requirements for the gross internal floor area of new dwellings as well as minimum floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, such as bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height and are suitable for application across all tenures. The standards are intended to ensure that new dwellings provide a reasonable level of internal space to undertake day to day activities, at a given level of occupancy. Lack of adequate space and overcrowding has been shown to have significant impacts on health, educational attainment, and family relationships. The standard is considered suitable for general needs users and also sufficient to allow some enhanced accessibility but not full wheelchair use.

- 5.135 The standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for the gross internal floor area (GIA) of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage, and floor to ceiling height (2.3m for 75% of the dwelling). These are minimum standards which developers are encouraged to exceed.
- 5.136 The Council will implement the nationally described space standards and successors to new dwellings. This means that developers should state the number of bedspaces / occupiers a home is designed to accommodate rather than simply stating the number of bedrooms. The following policy only applies to new dwellings and therefore is not applicable to either an extension to a dwelling or material change of use.

Future Homes and Buildings Standard:

- 5.137 The Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes built from 2025 produce 75-80% less carbon emissions. It is a set of rules that will come into effect in 2025 to ensure new homes produce less carbon emissions.
- 5.138 Ahead of the Standard coming into effect, a technical specification will be consulted on in 2024 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), ahead of implementation in 2025.
- 5.139 The Future Homes and Buildings Standard will complement the Building Regulations to ensure new homes built from 2025 produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under the old regulations. The built environment accounts for roughly 25% of UK greenhouse gas emissions, with around 14% of this coming from the 28 million homes in the UK, according to the Climate Change Committee. The Future Homes Standard is designed to bring these levels down.
- 5.140 New homes will adopt the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard to measure energy efficiency, and an appendix has been included in Part L of Building

Regulations which sets out a good practice specification for a home built with a heat pump.

- 5.141 Heating systems will be required to run at lower temperatures, enabling heat pumps to work effectively. There will be a series of further amendments to Part F and Part L of the Building Regulations for new homes. Once the legislation is passed in 2025, all new homes will have to be built according to the Standard.

HOU 20: Technical Standards For New Dwellings

Accessibility

All new dwellings must meet Building Regulation M4(1) and 25% should meet M4(2) standards for all new buildings with 5% meeting the M4(3) Standard.

Water efficiency

To minimise impact on the water environment all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 litres per day per person for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. Proposals which go further than this (to, for example, 85 litres per day per person) would be particularly supported.

Water management

In addition to the wider flood and water related policy requirements policies of this Plan, all residential development or other development comprising new buildings:

- a. must ensure outside hard surfacing is permeable (unless there are technical and unavoidable reasons for not doing so in certain areas) thereby reducing energy demand on the water recycling network; and
- b. should consider the potential to incorporate a green roof and/or walls in accordance with good design principles; and
- c. must ensure each proposed garden area includes a rain harvesting water butt(s) of minimum 100litre capacity.

Internal Space in a Home

All market new homes across all tenures will meet the Government's Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS).

For Affordable rented housing the Council will require standards for the following occupancy rates:

1 bed (2 persons); 2 bed (4 persons); 3 bed (5 persons) and 4 bed (6 persons).

For affordable ownership properties:

1 bed (2 persons); 2 bed (3 persons); 3 bed (4 persons) and 4 bed (5 persons).

Energy Efficiency

New homes will be required to adopt the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard to measure energy efficiency and the requirements of Building Regulations including Parts F and L.

Supporting diverse housing type and size

- 5.142 Securing a Mix of Housing National planning policy requires local planning authorities to plan for a mix of housing, based on demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community, including the elderly and people with disabilities.
- 5.143 Local planning authorities should identify the size, type, tenure, and range of housing that is required in different locations. which provides a clear understanding of the housing needs for Breckland, including the need for all types of housing and the needs of different groups in the community.
- 5.144 Policy HOU 21 is concerned with the mix of general market housing only, whilst Policy HOU 24 (Affordable Housing) refers to the mix of housing in respect of the affordable homes element of housing developments. It will aim to ensure that housing development sites deliver a range of housing sizes and types which reflects the needs of the District over the plan period taking into account the current housing stock and the need to diversify the housing offer.

HOU 21: Securing A Mix of Housing

1.The Council will require proposals for residential development to include a mix of market housing which contributes towards a balance of house types and sizes across the District in accordance with the latest HEDNA.

2.In assessing the housing mix in residential schemes the Council may take into account the following circumstances where it may not be appropriate to provide the full range of housing types in accordance with the latest HEDNA:

- a. physical constraints, such as those associated with small sites of less than 5 houses and conversion schemes, where opportunities for a range of different house types are limited;
- b. locational issues, such as highly accessible sites within or close to a town centre where larger homes and low/ medium densities may not be appropriate;
- c. sites with severe development constraints where housing mix may impact on viability;
- d. sites where particular house types and/ or building forms may be required in order to sustain or enhance the setting of a heritage asset; and
- e. developments in parish or neighbourhood plan areas, where there is an up-to-date local housing needs assessment which provides a more appropriate indication of housing need.

The mix of housing should take account of the prevailing character of the area by providing for a form of development which is complimentary to the local area.

Sub-division and Multi-occupation of Dwellings

5.145 Breckland's population has grown considerably in recent decades including increases in seasonal migrant workers. It is important that the housing needs generated by these people are met, with shared accommodation often being a preferred choice for many, for a variety of reasons. Whilst such accommodation does meet a particular housing need, it can cause

difficulties where there is a high concentration in a particular area. Problems mainly occur where there is a concentration of dwellings with a rapid turnover of residents or a concentration of converted dwellings in an established residential area causing issues such as an increase in parking pressures, an increase in anti-social behaviour and crime levels and creating an imbalance in the neighbourhood. These problems are particularly acute in densely populated areas and where properties share party walls. The rental yields that can be realised on shared accommodation can also put pressure on the ability of individual families or households to compete in the local housing market.

- 5.146 An HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) is a property that is occupied by three or more people creating two or more households. Generally, in an HMO, there will be some sharing of amenities such as kitchens and bathrooms, but can also include:
- Buildings that have been sub-divided into bed sits or flats where there are shared entrances and stairwells.
 - Shared houses.
 - Temporary accommodation for the homeless, and sometimes hostels and hotels.
- 5.147 Each habitable unit in an HMO will be subject to the same standards as an individual dwelling, but there are additional standards relating to management, fire safety and facilities.
- 5.148 Planning permission is required for an HMO where it is to be rented to 7 or more unrelated people (regardless of the number of bedrooms). The needs of those requiring subdivided or multi-occupancy living can also be met through the development of purpose built accommodation which increases choice for those people and eases the pressure on existing residential areas. Therefore, purpose built accommodation that helps to meet this identified need will be encouraged in the Market Towns and Local Service Centres provided that it meets the criteria listed in the policy below.

- 5.149 Whether through purpose-built accommodation, conversion or subdivision, any proposals for shared accommodation or self-contained accommodation must deliver accommodation that will not put future occupants at risk. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, development of residential accommodation or bedrooms at ground floor level in an area at risk of flooding.

HOU 22: Sub-Division And Multi-Occupation Of Dwellings Within Breckland

The conversion or change of use of existing dwellings and buildings in other uses to self-contained flats or shared accommodation including houses in multiple occupation will be supported only where:

- a. the existing building is capable of conversion without causing harm to the amenities of future occupants, neighbours and the wider area or would result in safety issues;
- b. in the case of an existing dwelling, it can be demonstrated there is an established lack of demand for the single family use of the property concerned;
- c. the development will not lead to or increase an existing over-concentration of such uses in the area;
- d. adequate provision is made for external communal areas, bin storage and collection, and on-site parking and cycle storage unless it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainably located on a regular bus route or within walking distance of the town or village centre; and
- e. adequate provision of outdoor private amenity space.

Purpose built shared accommodation will be granted within the built form of settlements, where the criteria set out in c) to e) above are satisfied.

Garden and Backland Development

- 5.150 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states that where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply and any allowance should be realistic whilst policies should be in place to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.
- 5.151 Development on gardens, green spaces and other residential amenity spaces is only appropriate where certain criteria are met. The development of gardens does not fall under the ‘previously developed land’ category, as defined in the NPPF and this policy sets out requirements that development proposals will need to meet in order to demonstrate that in exceptional cases, building on a green or other amenity space can be achieved without adverse impacts.
- 5.152 Residential gardens in Breckland largely consist of soft landscaping with lawns, mature trees and shrubs and flower beds, they have important environmental benefits. Similarly, public, communal, or semi-private amenity green spaces make important contributions to quality of life and the environment. Many gardens and communal amenity green spaces in the District combine with adjacent gardens to form green corridors.
- 5.153 Back gardens offer an environment relatively free of vehicles and their associated noise and pollution, and thus make an important contribution to the quality of life in the Breckland, both in terms of their amenity and recreational value and outlook, and in terms of their ecological function. Proposals that develop these spaces could lead to an unacceptable loss of amenity for the residents of existing dwellings in the vicinity and the character of an area adversely affected.
- 5.154 Backland development refers to the development of land which sits behind the existing building line with little or no frontage onto the public highway, for example residential gardens. Proposals on back-land sites are often for

residential development, however in some cases smaller scale office or ancillary uses are proposed.

- 5.155 The council encourages the effective use of the finite land resource and recognises that land within the built form of settlements can usefully contribute towards meeting housing need.
- 5.156 However, badly planned backland development can create unsatisfactory living environments for existing and future residents. This policy seeks to avoid the undesirable cramming of new dwellings onto sites already occupied by existing buildings. Only where the site is large enough to accommodate additional dwellings without causing unacceptable harm to the amenities enjoyed by existing properties, and where an acceptable, separate means of access can be provided, would such a form of development be appropriate.
- 5.157 Such backland development usually involves the use of parts of a number of rear gardens to existing houses for further residential development and can have a considerable impact on the amenities of existing residential areas. Permission will normally only be given to proposals which demonstrate that such impact has been reduced to acceptable levels.
- 5.158 The council is concerned to avoid piecemeal development and the prevention of access to adjoining sites which may also be considered appropriate for residential development. A layout plan for the whole area, which is potentially suitable for development will be required, even if the development is intended to take place in a number of phases.

HOU 23: Residential Development on Backland and Garden Sites

Tandem or backland development

Proposals for tandem or backland development will be permitted where they:

- a. demonstrate a satisfactory means of access to an existing public highway in accordance the Policy of this Plan, that has an appropriate relationship with existing residential properties;

- b. do not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the residents of existing or proposed properties;
- c. are equal or subordinate in scale to surrounding buildings, particularly those fronting the highway, and
- d. that sufficient garden/amenity space for the existing host dwelling(s) and proposed dwelling(s) is retained and provided for in character with surrounding area and
- e. are sympathetic to the landscape, historic environment, and character of the area and the existing pattern and grain of development character as well as the appearance of the surrounding area through its form, layout, boundary treatments and other characteristics

Residential Gardens

Housing development on garden land and/or to the rear or side of existing residential property within a defined Settlement will be supported provided that:

- f. the form, density, scale, and external appearance of the development is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area;
- g. the relationship between buildings within and outside the site ensures that the privacy and amenity of existing and future residents are preserved;
- h. the means of access is appropriate in size and design to accommodate vehicles and pedestrians safely and would not result in harm to the amenities of adjoining residents from noise and disturbance from vehicle movements;
- i. high standard of landscape is incorporated into the design; and
- j. development of the site does not compromise the ability for the more comprehensive development of a wider area. distinctive landscape and nature conservation features, such as trees, hedgerows, and ponds, are retained; and,
- k. the proposed and existing dwellings retain sufficient private and, if appropriate, communal amenity space. In character with the surrounding local area

Affordable Housing

- 5.159 A sufficient supply of housing of all tenures, including affordable housing, is essential to meet the objectives of the Local Plan and to meeting the wide range of housing needs that will be experienced in the District over the plan period.
- 5.160 Affordable housing is housing provided to those that are unable to meet their housing needs in the private sector. Government policy as set out in the NPPF defines affordable housing as 'social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market'. Intermediate housing provides the opportunity for local people, who are unable to afford open market prices, to access the housing market. Eligibility for affordable housing will be in line with the Council's allocation policies and Housing Strategy. Intermediate products such as housing for sale and rent at a cost above social rent, but below market levels, can include shared equity schemes and shared ownership and other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.
- 5.161 In line with the requirements of the NPPF, affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for any subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Affordable rented properties are either Social-Rented or Affordable Rent, which determines the level of rent chargeable. The Council's adopted Tenancy Strategy supports the charging of Affordable Rent levels up to 80% of the local area's market rent for an equivalent property. In Breckland, affordable housing is delivered and managed across the District through partnership work with Registered Providers.
- 5.162 The HEDNA 2024 reviewed affordable housing requirements for Breckland taking account of the access existing and future households in the District can be expected to have to the housing market. Reviewing the affordability of housing to rent and to buy the 2024 HEDNA identifies that the annual arising need for new affordable housing in Breckland is 413 dwellings. This

requirement is almost 60% of the District's total housing requirement of 661 dwellings per year.

- 5.163 This establishes a clear priority and principle in favour of development that secures the delivery of affordable housing, whilst the importance of securing an element of affordable housing from market led schemes will be essential to ensure housing delivery in Breckland makes an effective contribution to housing needs.
- 5.164 The specific amount of affordable housing that should be secured from private, market led development is typically informed by an assessment of the viability of development. In Breckland, at this stage in preparation of this new Local Plan the specific infrastructure costs for development have not yet been identified – and as such the overall viability of development and level of affordable housing that could reasonably be secured from market led schemes requires further analysis. Having said this, at this time the Council applies and is successful in securing a 25% affordable housing contribution from most eligible schemes. This requirement is based upon the evidence within the Local Plan and CIL Viability Assessment 2017 and will be used until this assessment is updated with a revised Local Plan Viability Assessment to be prepared ahead of publication of the next draft of the Local Plan.
- 5.165 Proposals for affordable housing are not exempt from any requirement to provide mitigation measures for European sites (even if exempt from paying any other levy) In line with the Habitats Regulations 2010, and Policies ENV 02 and ENV 03 in the Plan.

Implementation

- 5.166 For the purposes of the policy the definition of residential development includes residential park homes and caravans where they are not subject to occupancy restrictions.
- 5.167 Where an existing dwelling (or dwellings) is to be demolished and replaced with substantially the same type of dwelling, provided it is not eligible for

vacant building credit, no affordable housing contribution will be sought. Essentially no 'additional' development is being created, and therefore no development uplift will be created.

- 5.168 When considering fractions of affordable units, on sites of more than 10 dwellings all points differences will be calculated as a financial sum. For example, 12.4 dwellings would equate to 12 affordable dwellings and 0.4 dwelling financial sum equivalent.

HOU 24: Affordable Housing

The national definition of affordable housing as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, is applied for the purpose of this policy.

Residential development proposals capable of delivering 10 or more units, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more will be expected to deliver a proportion of the development as affordable housing on-site to help meet existing and future affordable housing needs of the District as set out in the HEDNA;

- a. 25% of qualifying developments should be affordable housing;
- b. The size, mix, type, and tenure of affordable homes as defined in national policy, will meet the identified housing need of Breckland as established by the HEDNA and agreed by Breckland District Council; what rented / ownership / social rent etc
- c. The affordable housing should be provided on site. Provision will be made through planning obligations to secure the affordable housing and to ensure it is available at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision;
- d. The affordable rented housing provided on-site should be maintained as affordable housing in perpetuity. Provision will be provided through planning obligations in order to provide the affordable housing and to ensure its availability to initial and successive occupiers;
- e. The Council will seek for affordable housing to be distributed across a development as single units or small clusters, rather than in a single area. The

Council will consider exceptions if an applicant can demonstrate that it is necessary for the long-term management or viability of the affordable housing. Their appearance should be indistinguishable from that of open market homes, reflecting local distinctiveness and design policies in the Local Plan and in subsequent neighbourhood plans; and

- f. The applicant will be required to submit an open book viability assessment where schemes do not meet the above policy requirements. In such cases the Council will commission an independent review of the viability study, for which the applicant will bear the cost.

Commuted Sums

Affordable housing should be delivered on site. Where evidence is provided that the site is not viable if provision is made on site in line with the requirements set out in this policy, a commuted sum will be sought at £50,000 per equivalent whole dwelling as recommended by the Council's Local Plan CIL Viability Assessment, or the figure set out in any successor evidence endorsed by the Council.

Off-site contributions in lieu of built units on site will only be considered where this is robustly justified by evidence. Where the provision of onsite units threatens the viability of the development. The applicant will be required to submit an open book viability assessment in accordance with clause vi of this policy

Vacant Building Credit

In seeking a vacant building credit in respect of the affordable housing on brownfield land, an application will only be considered on the following basis:

- g. Where the building has not been vacated for the sole purpose of redevelopment;
- h. Where the existing building(s) has not been abandoned; and
- i. Where specific information on the floorspace of the proposed residential development and the calculation of the claimed offset has been provided.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpersons

5.169 There is both a legal requirement and a national planning policy requirement to consider the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Legal requirements:

- 5.170 2004 Housing Act – places a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers
- 5.171 2010 Equalities Act – protects the characteristics of Gypsies and Travellers as an ethnic group, and local authorities are required to actively seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination. Gypsies and Travellers have particular needs due to their nomadic culture.

National planning policy requirements:

- 5.172 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to provide land to meet housing and accommodation needs for all people, including for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS).
- 5.173 The NPPF is supported by the 2023 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), which sets out what local authorities are required to do to meet the legal requirements in planning for the accommodation needs of GTTS.
- 5.174 For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:
 - 1. Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.
 - 2. In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

3. whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life.
4. the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life.
5. whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.
6. For the purposes of this planning policy, “travelling showpeople” means: Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.
7. For the purposes of this planning policy, “travellers” means “gypsies and travellers” and “travelling showpeople” as defined above.
8. For the purposes of this planning policy, “pitch” means a pitch on a “gypsy and traveller” site and “plot” means a pitch on a “travelling showpeople” site (often called a “yard”). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for “gypsies and travellers” and mixed-use plots for “travelling showpeople”, which may / will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.

5.175 The council is required to undertake a specific Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), this was produced in April 2024 and the findings are being considered. The report indicates a future need for an additional 71 Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the remaining Local Plan period (2024-2046). Of this, a need for 39 pitches provided within the first 5 years of this period (2024-2029). Options are now being considered as to how this need can be met and include:

- Part of strategic housing allocations
- Deliverability of existing sites
- New sites

- 5.176 National policy sets out a range of issues to consider when assessing applications for Traveller site development. In assessing new sites, the site should be in a sustainable location and should be in reasonable proximity to local services and facilities. Community infrastructure needs will include health, education, and transport links. In order to deliver sustainable communities, and quality place making, development proposals will be required to consider the amenity of new residents and impacts on surrounding communities or other neighbours/neighbouring land uses such as businesses and open space in line with relevant spatial and design policies. In doing so, regard will be had to community cohesion and good design principles such as integration, ensuring no adverse impacts arise from new development. Residential housing mitigation requirements for European sites are also applicable to plots and pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 5.177 To ensure that the levels of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation are maintained, the Council will resist the loss of existing sites, including the conversion to permanent dwellings. Existing Traveller sites will therefore be safeguarded to meet the continuing housing needs of these communities ensuring that sites are not lost to competing uses. Unrestricted means not subject to conditions restricting the time of occupancy such as temporary or personal planning permission. The following policy will apply to any new permission granted as well as to existing sites.

HOU 25: Provision for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Local Plan supports the provision of the following:

71 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households, of which 39 should be provided in the first five years of the plan;

Meeting the identified need for additional pitches / plots (and any additional requirements associated with newly confirmed need from unknown households) will be considered via a range of options including:

- a. Part of strategic housing allocations

b. Deliverability of existing sites

c. New sites

The provision of pitches and plots on new sites will be supported, having regard to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment where:

d. The site is otherwise suitable for residential development and the associated necessary infrastructure requirements will be made available as part of the development proposal;

e. The site will have safe access to the highway and will not result in any unacceptable impact on the capacity and environment of the highway network;

f. The site is in a sustainable location and is of a scale that is not disproportionate to the size of the nearest settlement and the availability of community facilities and infrastructure, including but not limited to transport, education, healthcare, and other community infrastructure provision;

g. The site provides a suitable level of residential amenity for the proposed residents and there is no significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents; and

h. The site is sensitive to local character and does not have an adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape and

Plots for Travelling Showpeople should also be of a sufficient size to enable the storage, repair, and maintenance of equipment. Preference will be given to brownfield locations and those that can readily be serviced. Transit sites should be in close proximity to the main established travelling routes in the area.

Sites that have unrestricted planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople use are safeguarded for this use. Planning permission for alternative development or changes of use will not be permitted, unless it can be robustly evidenced that there is no longer a need for Gypsy and Traveller provision.

Non-Travelling Gypsy and Travellers

The provision of pitches and plots for non-travelling gypsy, travellers and showpeople will be supported, having regard to the need identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment. Proposals will be considered in accordance with the criteria of this policy.

6 Employment and economic development

- 6.1 In accordance with the NPPF this chapter includes policies that support sustainable economic growth within Breckland, through the creation of jobs and prosperity to meet the development needs of business. As a predominantly rural area, economic policies should be tailored to ensure they are flexible enough to accommodate needs, to respond rapidly to changes in economic circumstances, whilst facilitating flexible working practices.
- 6.2 The NPPF (paragraph 28), requires planning policies to positively support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. It has put a strong emphasis on promoting the rural economy and to support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas. It also states that the Local Plan should:
- a. Promote diversification of agriculture and other land-use based rural businesses;
 - b. Support rural tourism; and
 - c. Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship.
- 6.3 The performance of Breckland's economy is largely dependent on a healthy rural economy. Whilst larger scale employment space is dominated by industrial uses, and tends to be concentrated around Breckland's larger towns, the rural economy accommodates important hubs of economic activity, particularly with regards to small scale office and workshop space, as well as being a key employment sector in the District.
- 6.4 Rural business is now increasingly driven by technology. There has been significant growth and development in the agri-science sector which has been continuously driving efficiency and innovation of agriculture

businesses. The overspill of high-tech research activities in this region has benefited from a wide range of rural businesses in Breckland. Small and medium scale rural enterprises represent a significant portion of the economic activities in Breckland due to the rural nature of the District. Therefore, diverse and thriving rural enterprises contribute significantly to prosperity and the creation of more opportunities for jobs across the District.

Employment land and opportunities for growth

- 6.5 Breckland’s current employment land areas are focused particularly within Thetford to the south-west and Dereham to the north-west with most major opportunities for economic growth aligned with the A11 corridor at Thetford, Snetterton Growth Zone, Shipdham Airfield and significant but less strategic opportunities for growth at Dereham.
- 6.6 The rural nature of Breckland influences many characteristics of the economy in Breckland. Agriculture and associated industry including food processing and manufacturing, play an important role in the Breckland economy. The 2024 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) highlights a number of economic sectors of importance for Breckland that provide opportunities for additional growth over the Plan period, including:
- **Manufacturing:** building on the opportunity afforded by Snetterton Commercial Hub and investment in manufacturing, agri-food, and renewable energy sectors.
 - **Transportation and storage:** reflecting Breckland’s position and scope for provision of land strategically sites to make use of the District’s transport links for distribution and logistics.
 - **Accommodation and food service:** identified as a sector that has seen historically high job creation and built on continuing development of Breckland as a destination for visitors.

- Professional, scientific, and technical: the Cambridge Norwich corridor plays an important role in the attractiveness of Breckland for investment in this sector with strong historic growth rates.
- Mobile and remote working: whilst not technically generating significant demands for employment Breckland can be well placed to create an environment attractive to remote workers who may seek the opportunity to stay in Breckland or move to the area, have access to high quality services and local facilities, the countryside for much of the working week but be accessible to the regional hubs of Norwich and Cambridge.

6.7 The 2024 HEDNA notes that many of these economic characteristics for Breckland are focused on the A11, the corridor is identified as the areas strongest industrial market, benefitting from excellent road connectivity to Norwich in the east and Cambridge in the west. However, to the north of the District work has commenced on dualling of the A47 between North Tuddenham and Easton. This work is expected to be completed by 2025/26 and will complete the dualling of the route between Dereham and Norwich. This highway improvement is expected to generate significant benefits for economic growth and investment, reducing journey times whilst increasing the capacity and safety of the route.

6.8 The five market towns, Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton are an essential component of the economic and social structure, acting as service centres to their rural hinterlands. The area has seen a rapid population growth, increasing pay levels that has seen the District close the gap in earning somewhat between residents in Breckland with the wider East region and Great Britain. There continue to be low rates of unemployment and there is a trend for the overall number of jobs to increase, rising from around 51,000 jobs in 2011 to over 57,000 in 2021.

6.9 The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2024 (HEDNA) identifies that Breckland has a relatively successful economy recording significant job growth over the last two decades. The business base is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses but with below average

levels of business start-ups. The proportion of self-employed residents in Breckland has grown substantially in Breckland in the post-covid 19 era, with the proportion of economically active residents defined as self-employed increasing from 6% in 2019 to 15% in 2023. Workforce productivity is relatively low which may in part reflect a slight mismatch in the local economy between lower skilled jobs available, and a more highly qualified resident workforce, many of which commute out of the District to higher paid employment elsewhere.

Breckland's Industrial market

- 6.10 In considering the industrial market in Breckland, the HEDNA 2024 notes that overall, the market in the District is focused towards small and medium size enterprises (SME) occupiers. The industrial market is growing with available stock increasing since 2013 and positive net absorption recorded in recent years (at a most 4,950 sq.m per annum) with key drivers of demand in the manufacturing and agri-tech/agri-food sectors.
- 6.11 There are presently very low vacancy rates in the industrial market, standing at 2.3% in late 2023. This establishes clear evidence of a need and demand to bring forward new-build space, and to provide better quality supply enabling growth of existing local businesses. However, such occupiers typically do not commission delivery so would be dependent upon taking up opportunities for space arising from speculative development. The associated risk and anticipated rents and yields from such schemes mean there are likely to continue to be viability challenges over the Plan period in delivering significant industrial stock.
- 6.12 Market interest appears strongest along the A11 Corridor, at Thetford and Snetterton Commercial Hub, taking account of wider connectivity. However, there are opportunities for the dualling of the A47 to support growth along the A47 Corridor as well, particularly in agri-tech activities.

Breckland's office market

- 6.13 Breckland has a small, localised office market which is focused on micro and small businesses, seeking space typically of less than 100 square metres. The nature of demand and prevailing rents are insufficient to support significant new commercial office development in the District.
- 6.14 Some modest schemes have/are being brought forwards which has contributed to recent floorspace growth, but also to a rising vacancy rate and downward pressure on rents. Wider market trends, particularly with growing home working are noted as potentially reducing demand for office space in the short term. But over the longer term, delivering managed provision of new-build space is noted in the HEDNA as a method to diversify the economy and support growth in higher value-added sectors.

EMP 01: Economic growth strategy

Proposals for economic growth and development in Breckland that support increased opportunities to employment for residents will be encouraged with particular priority for growth in the district driven by:

- a. Supporting proposals for investment in existing employment areas across Breckland's market towns.
- b. Recognising the A11 corridor as a key strategic hub for economic growth and investment, focused in particular on the Snetterton Commercial Hub, providing opportunities for major inward investment across a range of activities but in particular those that can support clustering of expertise in sectors such as Manufacturing, clean tech, agri-food/agri-tech and ancillary uses, construction and development related business and services and businesses complementary to the Snetterton Circuit such as in motor sports.
- c. Maximising the opportunity for additional economic growth and investment arising from the completion of duelling the A47 between Dereham and Norwich.
- d. Supporting the principle of positive investment in existing farms to support business development and the visitor economy.

e. Supporting proposals which encourage sustainable economic development through education and skills training.

Employment land requirements

- 6.15 The HEDNA explored a range of economic growth scenarios to inform the amount of employment and range of employment land that the Local Plan should seek to provide. This included a baseline scenario based upon Oxford Economics forecast, an alternative growth scenarios based upon adjusted assumptions regarding the continued growth rates in selected economic sectors, a labour supply scenario based on the employment land requirements that arise to meet the minimum requirement of expect growth in the labour force in Breckland, and delivery led forecasts based on gross completions, net completions and net absorption (the annual balance between the amount of floorspace occupied and vacated).
- 6.16 In terms of employment growth, the Oxford Economic baseline forecast suggest just 820 additional jobs would arise in Breckland over the period 2021 to 2046. In many ways, evidence of employment growth since 2021 already indicates that this is a highly conservative estimate of likely employment growth in Breckland. The alternative jobs growth scenario leads to growth of approximately 8,496 jobs over this 25-year period, 339 full time equivalent jobs per year. This is still arguably a conservative forecast when compared to the approximately 626 additional jobs created per year between 2011 and 2021. By comparison, the labour demand scenario establishes that the HEDNA’s conclusions on housing needs would translate into a workforce growth of 12,500.
- 6.17 The table below summarises the estimated employment requirements arising from each of these scenarios.

Table 6.1 Employment land requirements 2021 to 2046 - Hectares

	OE Baseline	Alternative forecast	Labour supply	Gross comps.	Net comps.	Net absorption
Office	8.8	11.0	13.3	17.3	4.8	4.9

Office post pandemic	7.7	8.9	10.2	-	-	-
Industrial	32.0	70.3	72.3	91.3	82.5	32.7
Total	39.7	79.2	82.5	108.6	87.3	37.6
Total +20% "Stretch"				130.3		

Breckland Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment, 2024

- 6.18 Informed by the above scenario testing and recommendations of the HEDNA, the Local Plan seeks to deliver up to 130 Hectares of employment land over the plan period. This scale of growth is considered achievable within Breckland without generating additional pressure on housing supply, reflecting the significant scale of workforce growth anticipated as a result of the housing needs assessment and increasing rates of economic activity in older age groups over the Plan period.
- 6.19 There is a wide range of available employment land across Breckland, ranging from potential major strategic locations to locally significant rural industrial areas. The HEDNA 2024 has assessed existing available employment land, remaining employment land allocations within the 2019 Local Plan (Updated 2023), saved policy of the Thetford Local Plan and Site Specific Policies and Proposals Plan and new sites submitted to the Council for consideration as locations for economic development.
- 6.20 Table 4.2 below sets out 25 areas of potential employment land. In total these sites generate a capacity of approximately 277 hectares of employment land and a further 54 hectares of mixed commercial, leisure and retail. This significant exceeds the expected employment land requirement of up to 130 hectares over the Plan period. The Council will further review and refine the development options available for employment land development – informed by responses to this engagement, feedback from stakeholders and the site promoters to establish a functional employment land portfolio that would be deliverable and meet the District’s requirements over the Plan period.

Table 6.2 Key available employment land options for future allocation

Ref.	Site	Town	Area (Ha)	Indicative uses
EmpA1	Land to west of London Road	Attleborough	12.38	General employment
	Haverscroft Industrial Area	Attleborough	6.25	General employment
	Between Bunns Bank and Foundry Corner	Attleborough	10.98	General employment
	North of Bunns Bank Industrial Area	Attleborough	4.6	General employment
	Land east of Dereham Business Park	Dereham	3.3	General employment
	Moorfield, Mattishall Road	Dereham	20.95	General employment
	Shipdham Airfield (Extension)	Shipdham	15	General employment
	Shipdham Airfield	Shipdham	59.18	General employment
	East of Shipdham Airfield	Shipdham	6.9	General employment
	Snetterton Park	Snetterton	9.7	General employment
EmpS1	Snetterton (Northwest of General Employment Area)	Snetterton	15.85	General employment
EmpS2	Snetterton (East of General Employment Area)	Snetterton	8.29	General employment
	Chalk Lane	Snetterton	33.58	General employment
	Snetterton General Employment Area	Snetterton	23.62	General employment
	Twells Business Park,	Snetterton	9.95	General employment
	Land at Heath Road, Snetterton	Snetterton	2.9	General employment
	Falcon Road (Boudica)	Snetterton	54.2	Mixed – sui-generis, inc. Retail and Leisure
	Parcel Q Land, Snetterton	Snetterton	5.6	General Employment
SW2	North of the Eco-Tech Centre	Swaffham	3.2	General employment

Ref.	Site	Town	Area (Ha)	Indicative uses
SW3	West of the Eco-Tech Centre (inc. extension to north)	Swaffham	12.82	General employment
	Thetford SUE (Near Tesco)	Thetford	4	General employment
	Thetford SUE (Lodge Way)	Thetford	7.2	General employment
	Thetford SUE (Off Croxton Road)	Thetford	4.24	General employment
	Thetford SUE (Off Norwich Road)	Thetford	4.17	General employment
	Caxton Way Industrial Estate	Thetford	2.58	General employment
	Fison Way Industrial Estate	Thetford	1.03	General employment
	Thetford Enterprise Park	Thetford	18.17	General employment
	Fengate Drove	Weeting	2.98	General employment

EMP 02: Employment land provision

For the period 2021 to 2046 a total of 130 hectares of employment land will be allocated to provide a choice of employment sites to meet economic need and demand.

The distribution of new employment allocations will reflect sustainability principles, the overall spatial strategy and the development needs of local communities.

Existing employment Land Allocations

Attleborough Employment Allocation

- 6.21 To support development of employment land at the allocations at Attleborough, the following policy sets out key requirements for its delivery. The grade II White Lodge Inn sits immediately to the east of this site. It is a low rise building which sits in open land. A further collection of Grade II listed buildings is located further to the east of the site, Potmere

Farmhouse, and associated barns. Consideration should be given to the wider setting of these heritage assets informing development proposals as well as the potential for archaeological interest on the site.

EMP 03: Attleborough employment allocation EmpA1

Land amounting to at least 10 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (within Classes E(g) and B2 of the Use Classes Order) to the west of London Road.

Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- a. Provision of safe highway access from London Road;
- b. Appropriate design, layout, and landscaping in keeping with the site's location as a key gateway into Attleborough from the A11; and
- c. Development proposals will be informed by the presence of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. The scheme design will seek to conserve and, where possible, enhance the setting of heritage assets.

Snetterton employment allocations

- 6.22 The allocated sites at Snetterton Commercial Hub have the capacity to provide over 100 hectares of employment land and a further 54 hectares of mixed use commercial development.
- 6.23 Snetterton is characterised by a number of different types of employment use that have developed as distinct clusters of activity over a number of years. Local Plan policy for the sites seeks to reflect the findings of the Cambridge to Norwich Technology corridor study and the Council's ambitions for the area, promoting motorsport and advanced engineering associated with the racetrack, as well as building on the area's successes within the distribution and manufacturing sectors. Opportunities to promote clustering and capitalise on the inter-relationships between the activities carried out across the site are highlighted in Policy.

- 6.24 The northern extent of Snetterton, north of the A11, has a mixed character with a range of general industrial uses with opportunities for further expansion of this type of activity.
- 6.25 The southern extent of Snetterton, south of the A11 and south-west of Heath Road, is characterised by the motor racing track and former Snetterton Park and comprises a range of existing buildings and established land uses. This area has excellent visibility from the A11 and provides the opportunity to direct the development and intensification of motorsport and advanced manufacturing uses, building on the proximity of this part of the site to the racetrack. The area provides opportunities for co-location and access to the track for automotive testing and related activity.
- 6.26 The eastern extent of the site (south of the A11 and north-east of Heath Road) contains a range of principally storage and distribution uses, including a rail head. Therefore, to ensure the delivery of the overall vision for the site, it is appropriate to direct new uses falling within Class B8 of the Use Classes Order here. Such uses do not require such close relationship to the track and due to their higher land take and lower employment density, such uses are therefore best directed towards this area of the site. This area offers potential opportunities to support the transshipment of goods to road from rail.
- 6.27 The General Employment Area boundary for Snetterton Heath is proposed to be amended to exclude an existing landfill site that does not provide deliverable opportunities for employment development within the plan period. An additional area of brownfield land at the former Snetterton Park is proposed to be included in the designation in order to provide an opportunity to support re-development for B class employment development to this part of the site. This approach will help to support the wider vision for the site.
- 6.28 The above strategic approach to the use of the site will ensure that the greatest opportunities for clustering and maximising higher job density uses in key locations are maximised.

EMP 04: Snetterton commercial hub – General Employment Area

The distribution of employment development across the site is subject to the following:

- a. Land is allocated for office, light industrial and manufacturing use. The layout of any development should not prejudice future expansion of the site;
- b. Within the southern extent of the Snetterton General Employment Area as defined on the Policies Map, proposals for employment use delivering office, and research and development and manufacturing will be preferred. Proposals that are associated with motorsport, automotive and advanced engineering will be encouraged;
- c. Within the eastern extent of Snetterton General Employment Area as defined on the policies map, proposals for employment development within class B8 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
- d. Proposals that create a new edge to the employment area shall be expected to provide appropriate boundary treatment to minimise the impact on the landscape, having regard to the principles of the Landscape Character Assessment and Breckland Design Guide to ensure design that is complementary to the surrounding area and uses;
- e. Proposals which encourage sustainable economic development through education and skills training.

6.29 Snetterton employment allocation 1 fronts onto the A11 and has access to the existing general Employment Area through Chalk Lane. Norfolk County Council Highways, through consultation responses, have not raised any objections regarding the site.

6.30 The site has very few constraints; however, it is noted that the site is within close proximity (1.3km) to the village of Snetterton North End. However, due to the topography of the landscape and appropriate screening it is not anticipated to have a significant impact upon the existing residential properties.

EMP 05: Snetterton employment allocation EmpS1

Land to the northwest of the General Employment Area

Land is allocated for employment use (within Classes E(g) and B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order) to the northwest of Snetterton North General Employment Area.

Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- a. Development is laid out in a manner that does not preclude the potential for future development in the vicinity;
- b. Proposals for employment development within class E(g) and B2 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
- c. Provision of safe highway access from Chalk Lane;
- d. Suitable noise attenuation measures (which could include building design measures, screening, fencing or bunding) are provided to avoid harm to nearby residential amenity;
- e. Provision of new structural landscaping to the western boundary of the site;
- f. Proposals minimise the impact on the landscape, having regard to the principles of Landscape Character Assessment and Breckland Design Guide to ensure design that is complementary to the surrounding area and uses.
- e. Proposals which encourage sustainable economic development through education and skills training.

- 6.31 Snetterton employment allocation 2 fronts onto the A11 to the north and has access to the existing General Employment Area through Harling Road. Norfolk County Council Highways, through consultation responses, have not raised any objections regarding the site.

EMP 06: Snetterton employment allocation EmpS2

Land to the east of the General Employment Area

Land amounting to approximately 6 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (Within Classes E(g), B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order) to the east of the Snetterton South General Employment Area. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- a. Provision of safe highway access from Harling Road;
- b. Proposals for employment development within class B8 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
- c. Appropriate design and layout in keeping with the site's location as a key gateway with frontage onto the A11; and
- d. Appropriate noise attenuation measures are provided at the northern border of the site with the A11 trunk road, if required.
- e. Proposals minimise the impact on the landscape, having regard to the principles of Landscape Character Assessment and Breckland Design Guide to ensure design that is complementary to the surrounding area and uses.
- f. Proposals which encourage sustainable economic development through education and skills training.

Potential future employment land allocations

Shipdham Airfield

- 6.32 Shipdham Airfield is in part an existing employment area located approximately 2 miles south of Dereham and 5 miles northeast of Watton, in the north of Breckland. This location has the potential to draw benefits from the enhanced accessibility afforded by improvements to the A47 to the north and additional employment opportunities in this area could support potential housing growth in Watton and Dereham and capitalise on and enable growth of an existing, successful employment area.

Moorfield, Dereham

- 6.33 The Moorfield site is located immediately adjacent to the Mattishall and Norwich Road junctions to the A47. It offers opportunities to support additional economic growth in close proximity to Dereham and actively benefit from the improved connectivity likely to be achieved through completing the dualling of the route between Dereham and Norwich.

Thetford Enterprise Park and Strategic Urban Extension

- 6.34 Located across multiple parcels of land to the north of Thetford, employment opportunities integral to the current live planning permission at Thetford Strategic Urban Extension (SUE) and land at Thetford Enterprise Park provide nearly 40 hectares of employment land. Thetford Enterprise Park has been allocated variously for an extended period and forms part of the 2019 Local Plan (updated 2023) General Employment Areas. Whilst a developer may seek to bring the site forward the underlying topography and characteristics of the site present significant obstacles to overcome. Meanwhile, development at the SUE is closely tied to the wider delivery of housing but continues to provide important opportunities to support the sustainability of the development in a location well positioned adjacent to the A11 and associated economic corridor.

General employment areas

- 6.35 As identified on the Policies Map, there are a significant number of employment areas across the District, each of which makes a contribution towards the local economy and provides an important source of local employment.
- 6.36 Employment uses are traditionally defined as activities related to offices, research and development, light and traditional manufacturing and storage and distribution. However, the diversification of the economy means that employment opportunities now emanate from a wider range of uses. These

can be complementary to existing industrial uses and provide valuable supporting services such as cafes and nurseries. However, the intensification of individual uses or the cumulative impact of a number of non-employment uses in the same vicinity can reduce the functionality of employment areas for industrial based employers.

- 6.37 Proposals will be expected to complement their surroundings and not result in any unacceptable impacts on amenity or a severe impact on the local highways network. Proposals will also be encouraged to contribute towards the identified need to make provision for both small and start-up businesses.
- 6.38 The policy incorporates proposals for mixed use developments in order to unlock the site's potential and fund any associated infrastructure works. Mixed use developments include elements of development that do not fall within traditional employment use classes.
- 6.39 National policy is clear that local authorities need to plan for future needs of economic development, but a balance needs to be struck between making land available and not reserving land that has little likelihood of being taken up. For an employment site that is considered as having no reasonable prospect of coming into use, justification would be needed as to whether the site is no longer suitable, available and/or economically viable, including evidence of appropriate marketing and future market demand.
- 6.40 Evidence of marketing can include but is not limited to: Copies of the letter(s) of instruction to the Commercial Agent and dated copies of the Agent's property details; details and evidence of all marketing activity; and logs of any enquiries and how these were pursued. At the culmination of the marketing period, there is an expectation that there would be a written submission from the Commercial Agent (or other specialist) as to the reasoning the site has not been taken up for the use for which it was marketed. In all cases, prospective applicants are advised to agree an appropriate marketing strategy prior to the submission of a planning application.

EMP 07: General employment areas

Sites that are identified as General Employment Areas, employment allocations that have not been superseded by this Plan and proposed employment allocations in this Plan, as illustrated on the Policies Map will be protected for employment use.

Proposals to accommodate new employment development or employment led mixed use schemes, will be permitted on General Employment Areas where the following criteria apply:

- a. It is not a town centre use, unless the location is sequentially preferable and need has been demonstrated; and,
- b. It will not undermine the function of the wider employment area; and,
- c. The scale, bulk and appearance of the development is compatible with the character of its surroundings; and,
- d. There is no significant detrimental health impacts, (assessed through a health impact assessment where appropriate), on the amenity of neighbouring land uses and the character of the area by virtue of increased levels of noise, odour, emissions, or dust and impacts on light; and,
- e. The traffic generated does not have a severe adverse impact on local amenity, highway safety or the operation of the highways network.

Proposals for mixed-use development in identified employment areas will be supported provided that they:

- f. Incorporate a significant employment element (E(g), B2 and B8 uses);
- g. Support the improvement of an employment area that is in need of upgrading; and,
- h. Are compatible and do not constrain the operations of adjoining businesses.

Where the site is considered as having no reasonable prospect of coming into use justification would be needed as to whether the site no longer suitable, available

and/or economically viable, including evidence of appropriate marketing for a minimum of 12 months (unless it is demonstrated by the applicant that this would not be appropriate) and an assessment future market demand.

Employment development outside general employment areas

- 6.41 The majority of employment development will be provided for in the strategic employment allocations outlined in Policy EMP 02 and General Employment Areas as outlined in Policy EC 07. However, rural Breckland plays an important role within the District's economy and therefore it is essential that the businesses within it and the communities that rely on them are supported through planning policies and decisions. Many rural areas host a large number of small and medium sized enterprises which are vital to providing local job opportunities and a diverse economy and so this policy seeks to foster sustainable economic growth in the countryside without detriment to the environment. Proposals for farm diversification will be considered in accordance with Policy EC 06.
- 6.42 The NPPF includes a specific section on the rural economy and expects local planning policies and decisions to support the sustainable growth, and expansion businesses in rural areas, through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. The focus of rural policy nationally and locally is on expanding the diversity of the rural economy while recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside
- 6.43 Appropriate proposals that contribute to strengthening the rural economy will be supported provided that all of the criteria in the policy are met. These are designed to safeguard against functionally, visually, or environmentally inappropriate development in the countryside.
- 6.44 New economic development, or proposals to expand existing premises in the countryside will be supported provided they are suited to a rural location, meet the requirements of this policy, and where relevant, other

national and local policies on employment locations and protected environments. In demonstrating that the business can make a long term contribution to the rural economy it is expected that a business plan, whole estate plans or similar, will be presented with a planning application. For new businesses in particular, this can aid in illustrating the viability of the proposal. It is considered necessary to demonstrate a long term contribution to avoid pressure for non-economic uses in locations which may not be suitable (e.g. residential). To this end an assessment will be made as to whether planning conditions will be required to limit changes of use which would otherwise be permitted under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) in order to achieve the objectives of the policy.

- 6.45 Whilst developers are expected to make the best use of Previously Developed Land (PDL) within the built form of settlements, this policy provides some flexibility, to allow for some development on PDL in the countryside to enable the sustainable growth of rural businesses, as long as it meets the wider objectives of the Local Plan. However, all proposals will firstly be considered in a landscape led context because previously developed sites will not always be appropriate in terms of landscape character. Wider development needs and pressures will not be accepted as a reason to develop on any site outside the built form of settlements.
- 6.46 Where re-use of buildings is proposed, re-use for business is the Council's strong preference, in order to safeguard the local economy. Notwithstanding this position, it is acknowledged that for some buildings future economic use is not viable. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that this is the case, and that any alternative proposal does not have a significant negative impact upon the vitality and viability of the local economy of the surrounding rural area.
- 6.47 Permitted development rights exist for the conversion of certain buildings to residential use. Notwithstanding these rights, in cases where a planning application is required, the provisions regarding the loss of a business site or premise in this policy will apply.

- 6.48 In applying the policy, the Council considers it essential that both the integrity and setting of historic farm buildings are conserved and enhanced. Their appropriate conservation and re-use will ensure that the historical investment that has been made in their materials and energy will be sustained.
- 6.49 The NPPF notes that, in rural areas, sites which meet local community and business needs may have to be found in locations that are not well served by public transport. It will therefore be important that the scale and density of development proposals are related to the site's accessibility, character, and surroundings. In less accessible locations, positive weight will be given to proposals that demonstrably offset their accessibility by clearly delivering other environmental benefits.
- 6.50 Assessment of the highway implications will be made on the basis of the proposal and what would be considered necessary in terms of improvements by the Highway Authority. The reference to 'rural roads' is a generic term, and the Council would be concerned as to the effects of the proposed development on rural tracks, footpaths, and bridleways. Relevant considerations would include past and existing levels of traffic generated from the site; the level, type, and frequency of traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development; and traffic levels accepted under any existing planning permission attached to the land.
- 6.51 Proposals for employment development within close proximity to Breckland SPA will be restricted and assessed in accordance with Policies ENV 02, ENV 03 and ENV 09.

EMP 08: Employment Development Outside General Employment Areas - Sustaining a Prosperous Rural Economy

Development proposals that contribute to sustaining a prosperous rural economy will be encouraged. To support the rural economy, proposals for economic development in the countryside (on sites that are not identified General Employment Areas or allocated sites) will be permitted where they satisfy the following criteria:

- a. It is demonstrated that there are no other suitable sites available on identified or allocated employment sites or within the settlement confines; and,
- b. The proposals demonstrate that the business can make a long term contribution to the local economy;
- c. There are particular reasons for the development not being located on an established or allocated employment site including:
 - i. The expansion of an existing business;
 - ii. Businesses that are based on agriculture, forestry, or other industry where there are demonstrable sustainability advantages to being located in the countryside; or
 - iii. Industries and / or businesses which would be detrimental to local amenity if located in settlements, including general employment areas.
- d. The development is compatible with uses in the surrounding area in terms of noise, smell, dust, pollution, lighting, or operations at unreasonable hours;
- e. Where new buildings are proposed the landowner has not disposed of, or converted, any buildings to a residential use in the previous 3 years which could have met the needs of the development proposed;
- f. The design respects local building styles and materials;
- g. Any new buildings, conversions and curtilage treatments are of a high quality design, are appropriate in terms of siting scale, form, massing, character, and appearance having regard to the surrounding rural area and its setting in the wider rural landscape;
- h. New or replacement buildings are located within or adjoining an existing group of buildings and further expansion into the open countryside is avoided;
- i. It would not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads, byways or restricted byways affected by the proposal or require

improvements to these roads, byways, or restricted byways which could be detrimental to their character and use by motorised and non-motorised traffic;

- j. It would not have a detrimental effect on the fabric, character and setting of historic buildings or other heritage assets; and

Replacement of Rural Buildings

The replacement of rural buildings for commercial and B Use Classes as defined in the Use Classes Order may be considered acceptable where the proposal:

- k. Involves the removal of a building that is substantially intact but is not a traditional building of clear architectural or historic interest;
- l. Represents a clear and substantial improvement in terms of size, scale, impact, and design from the original; and
- m. The replacement buildings are well located to the existing buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative location would be visually less prominent.

Loss of Existing Employment Uses

Existing Employment (Outside General Employment Areas, employment allocations that have not been superseded and proposed employment allocations).

Employment uses in locations outside of those defined on the Policies Map are considered important to the economy, particularly those in rural areas.

Proposals that will result in a permanent loss of employment uses with no alternative proposed will be considered on their own merits. The loss will be weighed in the planning balance, taking into account factors such as the long term sustainability of the location, individual site constraints and the existing and potential market demand for employment uses.

7 Retail and Commercial Development

Retail and town centres

- 7.1 An objective of the Local Plan is to promote the vitality and viability of town centres, including the night-time economy, and support the retention of existing rural services. Policies in the Local Plan must also accord with the NPPF which requires LPAs to use up to date evidence to assess needs for retail floorspace, including both the qualitative and quantitative needs over the plan period. At this time, Breckland’s emerging Local Plan is informed by the 2014 Retail Needs Assessment as updated in 2017 and 2018. Further updates to the Council’s evidence of retail needs and potential amendments to the provision for safeguarding land for retail development will be developed and published alongside later stages of the Local Plan.
- 7.2 Up to date assessments of the role and effectiveness of each of Breckland’s town centres is included in the Norfolk County Council Market Towns Report 2022¹⁴. This reviews Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton’s key characteristics as retail centres and any notable changes in role and vacancy rates. It is notable that the Report highlights Thetford and Watton as two towns with the current highest rate of vacancy for retail units, at around 11% compared to around 6% in Dereham and Attleborough.

Retail Hierarchy

- 7.3 National policy requires that development plans establish a hierarchy of centres in the District, and that new development is proportionate with the position of the centre in the retail hierarchy. The Local Plan encourages vibrant town centres in the District, which attract people and investment so as to maintain and develop the town centres for residents, businesses and visitors. The policy seeks to underpin the town centre first approach and

1.1

¹⁴ Market Towns Report, 2022, Norfolk County Council <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/monitoring-land-use/market-towns-report.pdf?la=en>

support longer term regeneration strategies. In 2021 Breckland District published key delivery strategies for each of the Market Towns. These “Town Delivery Plans” outline a series of interventions and priorities for the District’s towns that are intended to help support their role and attract investment over the period 2021 to 2031.

- 7.4 The key settlements, market towns and local service centres of the District consist of a range of centres of different sizes and characteristics. The vitality of these centres is essential for the overall attractiveness and sustainability of Breckland and underpins the area’s economic prosperity. The 2014 Retail Study concluded that Thetford and Dereham town centres should be classified as main centres. Thetford as a key centre for development and change and Dereham as the main administrative centre serving a wide hinterland of mid Norfolk. The remaining centres of Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton were identified as generally being at the same level of provision and therefore should be classed as such. These findings remain appropriate with the 2022 Market Town’s Report establishing that in terms of pure scale of development Dereham and Thetford have a higher order or town centre units:

Table 7.1 2022 Market Town’s Report – Key data (unit count)

	Convenience	Comparison	Services	Public Services	Vacant	Mixed Use	Total
Attleborough	7	24	53	16	7	9	116
Dereham	11	66	132	31	15	8	264
Swaffham	7	43	55	21	13	9	149
Thetford	16	37	87	28	22	5	198
Watton	11	22	44	13	12	6	108
Total	52	192	371	109	69	37	835

Norfolk Town Centre Market Report 2022

- 7.5 Consideration has been given to the enhancement of Attleborough in the retail hierarchy due to the proposed residential growth. However, in considering the available capacity for retail development as identified in the 2014 Retail Study which included assumptions on the planned growth levels, it is not considered appropriate to elevate the town in the retail hierarchy. The range, scale, and nature of retail service facilities as well as the extent of the rural catchments for the three market towns remain very similar.

Additional Retail Floor Space

- 7.6 National guidance advises that Local Plans should identify the scale of need for main town centre uses.
- 7.7 In 2017, the Council commissioned an addendum to the 2014 Retail Study to reassess the quantitative scope for new retail and food and beverage floorspace in Breckland up until 2036, with a second addendum published in May 2018. The Addendum, as updated, identified that, in terms of convenience retail floorspace, there was some potential capacity over and above planned commitments in the District. However, the provision should be carefully directed. Swaffham had an over provision of convenience floorspace for the foreseeable future; Watton had very limited capacity to support new development, whilst Attleborough, Dereham and Thetford all had some limited capacity once commitments are taken into consideration. There is also limited capacity indicated for the remaining District outside of the 5 main centres.
- 7.8 In terms of comparison goods Breckland's market share of expenditure is estimated at less than 43% and there are high levels of "leakage" outside of the District to higher order centres. The 2018 Addendum reinforces this finding with levels of leakage from the market town catchment areas to outside of the District ranging from 64.8% within Attleborough to 42.5% in Watton.
- 7.9 In the face of increasing competition from nearby higher order centres the 2014 Retail Study concluded that it would be appropriate and realistic to plan to maintain market shares across the District whilst maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centres.

Town Centre Boundaries

- 7.10 The NPPF requires Councils to define the extent of the town centres and primary shopping areas based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated town centres. Policy EC 02 defines the main centres and their boundaries using set definitions which are based upon those used in the NPPF.

- 7.11 Evidence suggests that in some centres policies that seek to maintain a proportion of retail within the primary and secondary shopping frontages are no longer relevant. As town centres evolve the role of policy must change to support the vitality and viability of the centre by supporting the delivery of a greater range of services. Changes in recent years to the General Permitted Development Order, (GDPO) also have the potential to impact on the retail composition of the high street. Current measures allow for greater flexibility for changes of use away from main retail and shopping activities without the need for planning permission in some circumstances. It is important to recognise that the town centres in Breckland act as more than just a retail role but also act as wider service centres for their rural hinterlands. Although it is important to seek to maintain and improve the centres retail offer, policies that seek to retain an unreasonably high proportion of shops may prevent other essential services from being introduced and could prevent the expansion / evolution of the centre. The Local Plan therefore seeks to support retail development by directing it to the Primary Shopping areas in a flexible manner.

Local Centres and Future Provision in the Proposed Urban Extensions

- 7.12 Local centres are important in providing for daily needs without having to travel to larger, higher order centres. In Breckland they can serve a wider rural community than the local service centre they are located in. It is important that these centres are supported, and provision enhanced. The retention of rural shops and community facilities, and the provision of new facilities at an appropriate scale to the settlement, will be supported.
- 7.13 Two large scale urban extensions are envisaged over the lifetime of the Local Plan, and it is important to plan for the local needs of these developments. The 2014 Retail Study advised that provision of local shopping facilities would be appropriate in these developments at the appropriate scale to ensure that residents have access to day to day shops and services within walking distance of their home. It is essential, however,

to ensure that any local centre remains commercially viable and capable of delivery.

- 7.14 The Local Plan seeks to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the five main town centres in Breckland and maintain the local shopping facilities within smaller villages. The strategy is to focus retail and leisure development within town centres in the primary shopping areas and restrict retail and leisure development outside these defined centres where it fails the sequential and /or impact tests, except where it serves a local need in a smaller village.

EC 01: Town centre retail strategy

The Local Plan town centre and retail strategy seeks to:

- a. Support the diversity of main town centre uses in order to enhance their continued vitality and viability with regard to retail, business, cultural and leisure services;
- b. Allow the appropriate provision (in line with needs) of larger retail units (over 200 sq. m) in town centres through the amalgamation of units in order to attract those retailers requiring larger modern shop units as long as the overall retail mix is enhanced;
- c. Deliver improvements to the built environment, including public realm, and streetscape. Encourage innovative design and improvements in local design quality. Both of which can contribute to developing a strong local identity and sense of place.
- d. Work with partners to support the active management of the larger town centres; and
- e. Promote better accessibility through improvements in pedestrian and cycle environment and the designation and management of car parking where it is demonstrated it will bring a positive improvement.

EC 02: Main Town Centre Development Requirements and Retail Strategy

Policies in the Local Plan will seek to support and enhance the vitality of the District's hierarchy of centres and seek to direct floorspace requirements in line with the breakdown in the 2017 retail study projections over the plan period.

Town	Hierarchy	Convenience	Comparison	Food/Drink
Thetford	Key centre	1,509	2,986	757
Dereham	Main centre	839	4,793	849
Swaffham	Medium town	0	737	220
Watton	Medium town	514	1,048	181

These centres will be the preferred location for retail, food and non-food, office, leisure and cultural facilities and other town centre uses as defined by national policy. Retail and other town centre development will be supported, provided that it is of an appropriate scale that reflects the size and role of the centre, respects the character of the centre, including any special architectural and historic interest and contributes to maintaining and enhancing its existing retail function.

Impact Assessment Thresholds

- 7.15 The scale of some retail proposals outside town centres has the ability to affect the vitality and viability of town centres, divert trade away from these areas affecting customer choice and potentially committed, existing and planned private investment in centres. In order to understand the potential effects on a town centre from an out-of-town retail proposal the NPPF allows LPAs to propose locally set floorspace thresholds above which any application must provide an impact assessment. A sequential test should also be applied to applications that are not in the designated town centre.
- 7.16 In assessing the appropriate thresholds for any locally defined impact assessment it is also considered appropriate to follow the 2014 Retail Study recommendations. Generally relying on the NPPF threshold of 2,500 sq. m gross is considered inappropriate for the retail centres of Breckland as

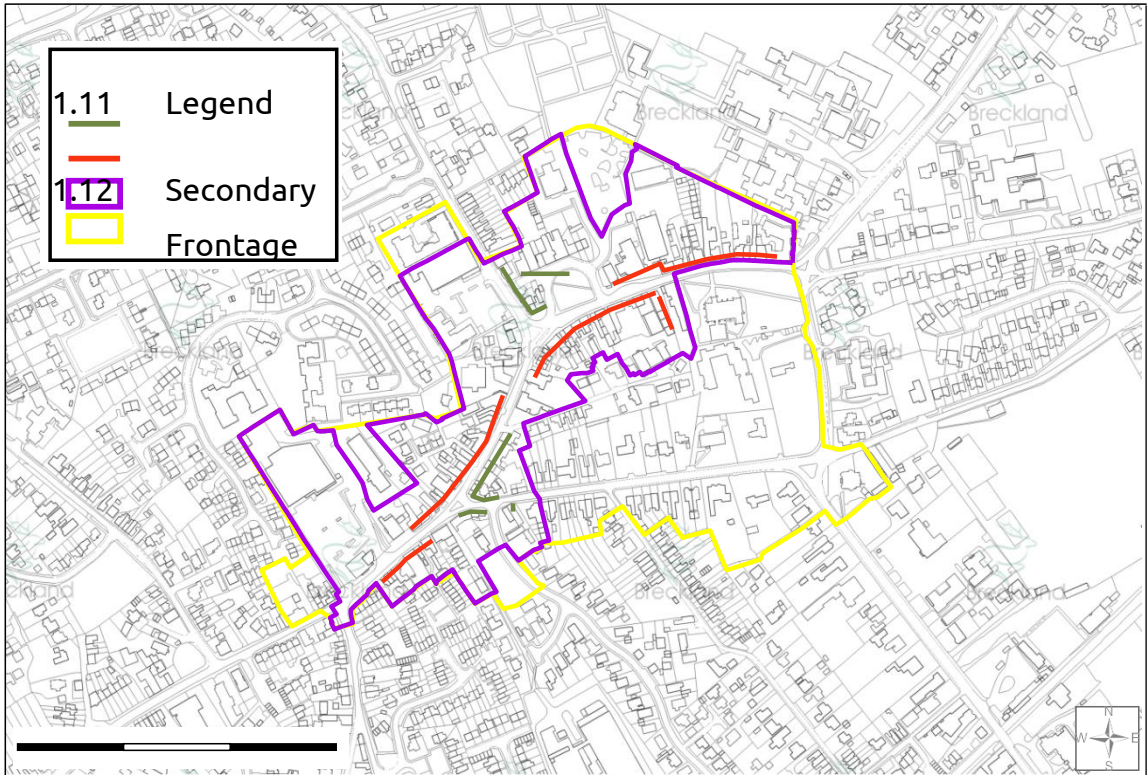
development smaller than 2,500 sq. m could have significant adverse impacts on the town centres. In some smaller towns projections suggest that less than 500 sq. m gross comparison and convenience goods retail floorspace is required. The retail study by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP), recommended that a reduced threshold of 500 sq. m gross is appropriate for Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton. In Dereham and Thetford the floorspace projections are generally higher, the centres larger and capable of absorbing more trade diversion and impact. In these centres the 2014 Retail Study recommends that policy should be set requiring an impact threshold of 1,000 sq. m gross.

EC 03: Town Centre Impact Assessments and Sequential Test

An impact assessment for retail, leisure and/or office schemes will be required on schemes of 1,000 sq. m gross and over in Thetford and Dereham and 500 sq.m gross and over in Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton. Support will also be dependent on how it reflects need as identified in the latest available Retail Needs Assessment (or equivalent) and other evidence.

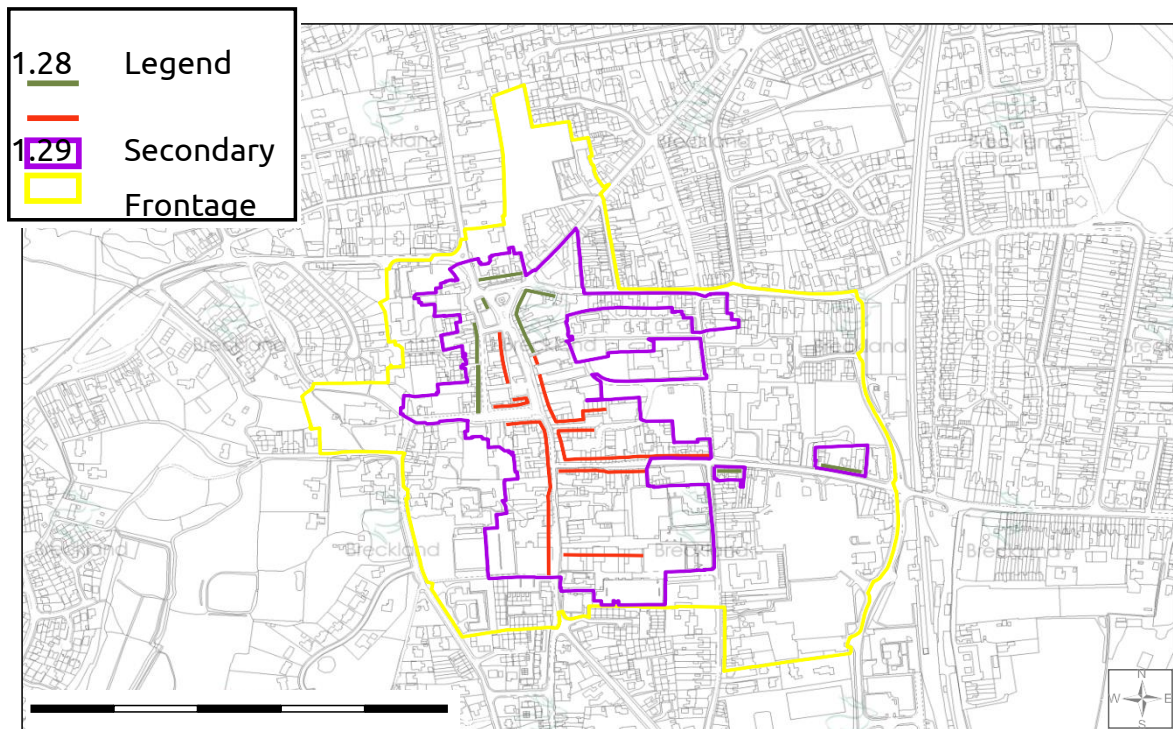
Site selection for retail and other town centre functions should follow the sequential test and prevailing national policies and guidance.

a. Attleborough Town Centre Boundary



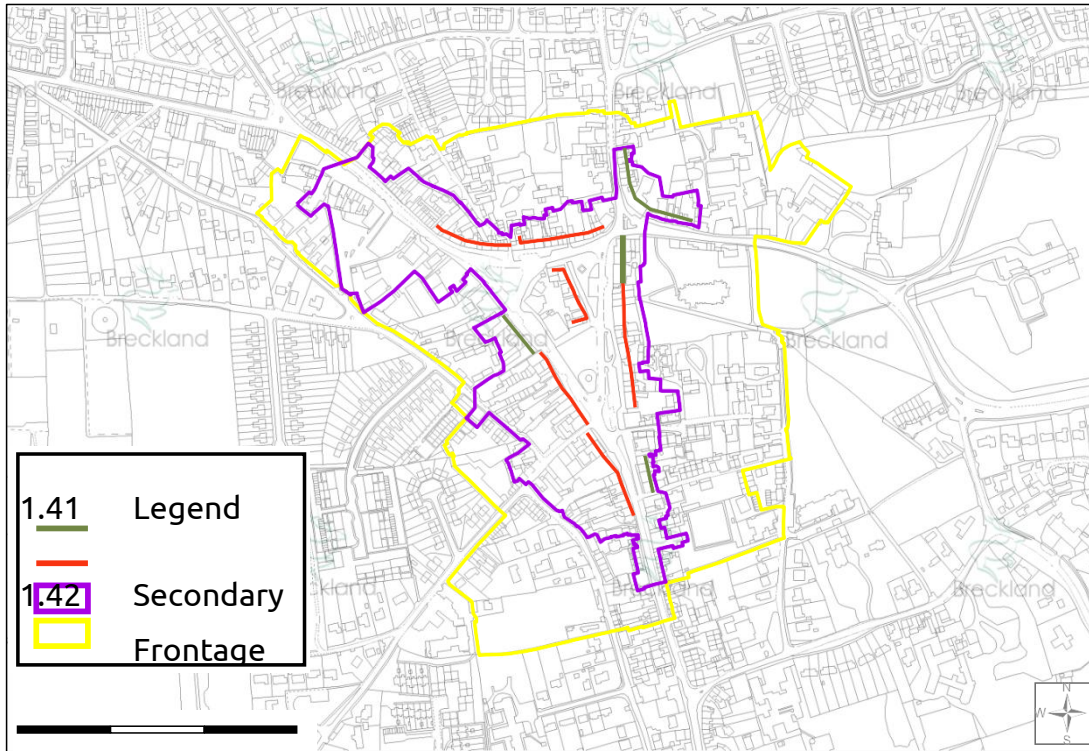
Breckland District Council licence no.100019535. Published 2017.

b. Dereham Town Centre Boundary



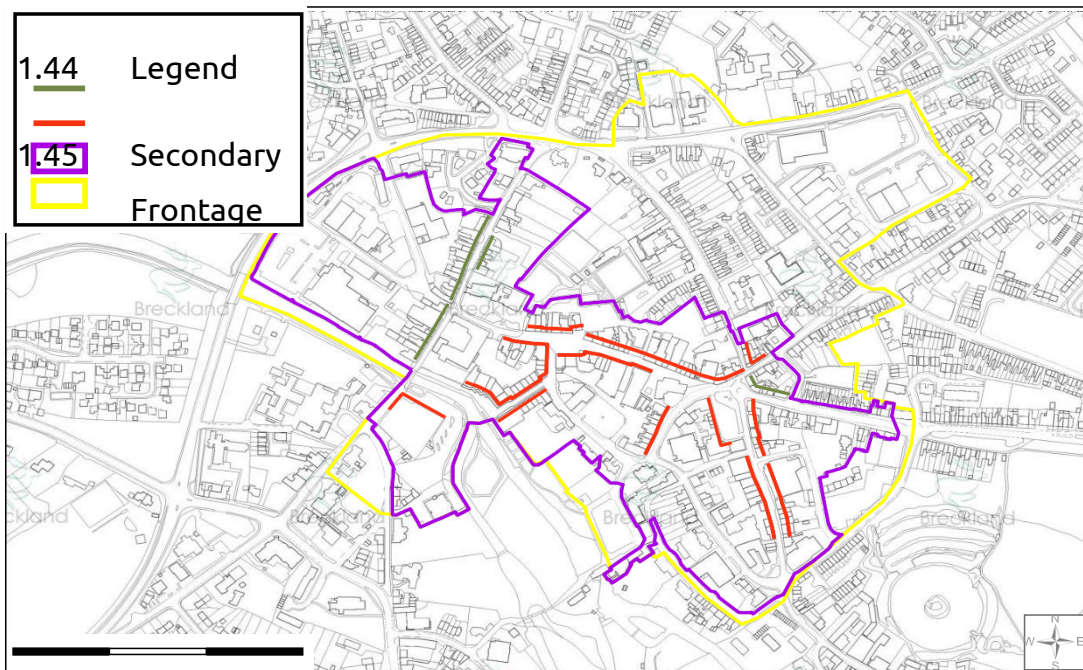
Breckland District Council licence no.100019535. Published 2017.

c. Swaffham Town Centre Boundary



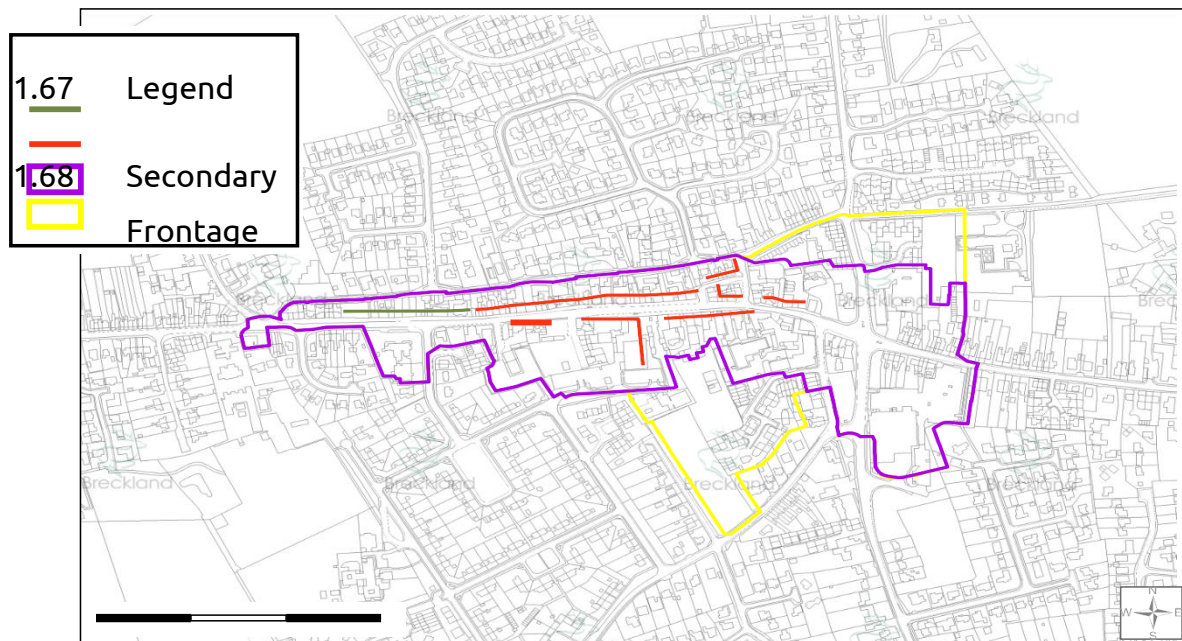
Breckland District Council licence no.100019535. Published 2017.

d. Thetford Town Centre Boundary



Breckland District Council licence no.100019535. Published 2017

e. Watton Town Centre Boundary



Breckland District Council licence no.100019535. Published 2017.

EC 04: The sequential approach to main town centre development

The Local Plan will seek to enhance local provision through focusing retail and leisure proposals within town centres, with retail uses focused within the Primary Shopping Areas. The development of additional retail floorspace outside of defined centres will be restricted where it fails the sequential and impact tests (except where it serves local need). Retail frontages and town centre boundaries will be defined on the policies maps.

The retail role of local service centres will be maintained. The importance of rural shops and facilities will be a material consideration in any application that would result in their loss. Proposals that seek to preserve and enhance the settlement's vitality and viability, or implement environmental improvements, will be supported. Extensions of rural shops and facilities as well as proposals for conversion into shops that are designed to enhance viability will also be supported.

EC 05: Retail development in key settlements

For the Key Settlements of Attleborough and Thetford, a significant proportion of the retail need for the plan period will be met through development of small scale service provision in the Strategic Urban Extensions to serve the expanded

communities. Retail proposals will be supported where they seek to deliver up to 2,400 sq. m gross floorspace A1-A5 use in Thetford and up to 1,900 sq. m gross floorspace A1-A5 use in Attleborough in a local parade format, which has been informed by the Breckland Retail and Town Centre Study. Proposals should be well connected to the local catchment, providing pedestrian, and cycling links and seek to cater for local shopping needs through the delivery of small units as defined under the Sunday Trading Act (280 sq. m gross) capable of serving top-up convenience needs.

Farm diversification

- 7.17 In order to ensure that agricultural businesses are sustainable and competitive, well-conceived proposals relating to the diversification of farm businesses will be supported where they can help ensure the long-term viability of existing farm businesses and provide rural employment opportunities.
- 7.18 A wide range of types of development may be appropriate for diversification including farm shops, leisure and recreation uses, tourism related development, sporting activities and equestrian uses. A careful balance is however required to ensure that scale and character of farm diversification proposals do not conflict with wider countryside objectives, introduce new amenity concerns, or have a negative impact on the natural environment or the highways network.
- 7.19 Existing buildings should be re-used, where possible, to provide any accommodation needed in association with alternative uses.

EC 06: Farm Diversification

Proposals for farm diversification requiring planning permission will be permitted on existing farm-holdings provided that:

- a. They would make a positive contribution to the continued viability of the farm holding; and,

- b. They would retain or enhance the character of traditional farm buildings; and,
- c. Where possible, the proposal re-uses existing buildings of substantial and permanent construction which are structurally sound and capable of conversion without major alterations or the development is well- related to existing buildings if no suitable buildings are available for re- use; and,
- d. The agricultural diversification is subservient to the main agricultural use of the farm; and,
- e. Wherever possible, they add value to produce emanating from the farm or produced locally, or contribute to the tourism economy; and,
- f. The scale and nature of the diversification proposals are appropriate for the location and would not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity, biodiversity, natural environment, landscape character and the enjoyment of the countryside; and,
- g. They do not require new dwellings within the rural area to support the enterprise; and,
- h. They do not create extensive areas of hard-standing, and
- i. The volume and type of traffic that would be generated is appropriate to the accessibility of the site and the standard of the local highway network.

Visitor Economy - Tourism

- 7.20 Breckland's environmental and heritage assets, including the heaths and woodlands of the Brecks, the traditional market towns and the general tranquillity and remoteness of the Breckland countryside are the particular factors which attract tourists to the area. Whilst it is recognised that tourism is an important contributor to the Breckland economy and that some tourist development will seek to locate in the countryside, it is important that tourist related development takes place in a sustainable manner in line with local and national policies in order that it does not adversely affect the

Breckland environment which attracts the tourist activity. The Brecks, Wensum Valley and Thetford Forest are key areas that attract visitors for both day trips and short stays. There are a wide network of footpaths, cycleways, bridleways, and public rights of way that provide excellent leisure and recreational opportunities. In addition, tourist attractions such as Banham Zoo also form large employers within the District.

- 7.21 Tourism is a growing part of the local economy. However, if not properly managed, it could have adverse impacts on the District's environment and the daily life of local people. The challenge is to enable and manage sustainable tourism, which will safeguard the countryside, heritage and culture for future generations while providing benefits to the local economy.
- 7.22 Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses will be supported where these respect the character of the countryside. The Council will also support the provision and expansion of tourist /visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.
- 7.23 The policy recognises the valuable contribution that tourist related industries make to the local economy. The provision of visitor accommodation though new- build, conversion or expansion will be supported in appropriate locations. Proposals will be supported in line with the development hierarchy and in the rural area should be in accordance with the proposed rural policies in this Plan. Proposals for tourism development that may have an effect on Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation importance such as the Breckland SPA, the River Wensum and the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, will have to meet the proposed environmental policies, covering Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation, notably ENV 09. Camping and caravan sites are considered as tourism development not outdoor recreation.
- 7.24 In a rural District such as Breckland there are opportunities for hotel accommodation, cultural and leisure development to support the market

towns and where applicable contribute to regeneration programmes. National planning policy identifies cultural facilities, leisure and hotels as town centre uses and therefore such uses are subject to the sequential approach and proposals should conform to the policy direction for town centres EC02. Proposals for serviced tourist accommodation in the rural areas should represent the most sustainable option to meet a particular need because it is a road related facility meeting the needs of road users or it involves the re-use of sustainably located traditional rural buildings such as a complex of redundant farm buildings or a large country property.

EC 07: Tourism Related Facilities and Attractions

The enhancement and expansion of existing tourism attractions, and tourism infrastructure will be supported in accordance with the development strategy where this would benefit the local economy; the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact; and proposals would be of a suitable scale and type for their location.

Proposals for new tourism related development attracting a significant number of visitors should be located within, or be accessible to, the five market towns. Smaller development proposals involving new tourism related development should be of a suitable scale and type to protect the character of the townscape and landscape within which they are situated. All development proposals will be assessed against the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- a. They can establish an economic benefit for Breckland or bring regeneration benefits, particularly through the redevelopment of brownfield land;
- b. Are accessible by sustainable modes of transport or where a proposal is not readily accessible by sustainable modes of transport, it can be demonstrated that the development relies on a specific geographical resource, or contributions are made to improve accessibility;
- d. Offer the potential to improve access to rights of way, and/or green infrastructure; and,

- e. In the case of proposals in the countryside, demonstrate the need for a rural location for that development.

EC 08: Tourist accommodation – camping, caravanning and holiday lets

Proposals for new or extended caravan, caravan-lodge, camping sites, will be supported where:

- a. The need for the additional accommodation can be justified.
- b. Proposals are located within, or adjacent to, an existing settlement, or on sites where existing service providers require additional space to expand.
- c. There is no significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area or natural assets.
- d. The proposal is of an appropriate scale and nature relative to its location and would not (by itself or cumulatively) have a significant adverse impact in terms of the amount and nature of traffic generated.

Proposals for holiday cottage accommodation will be supported where:

- e. The need for the additional accommodation can be justified.
- f. Schemes for new development are located within, or adjacent to, an existing settlement; and
- g. In the case of schemes in the countryside, they involve the re-use of an existing building in the countryside for a maximum of 2 holiday dwellings, and do not involve new build accommodation.

8 The Environment, Climate Change and Managing Resources

8.1 Breckland District Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019 and is committed to using its powers as a planning authority to ensure that development in the District adopts more sustainable building practices. This has brought into sharp focus the need to rapidly reduce carbon emissions associated with the construction industry, and the energy required to operate buildings as well as a need to manage water resources better.

8.2 To make Breckland a more environmentally sustainable place and net-zero carbon by 2050 the Council aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase local resilience to the impacts of a changing climate through sustainable design. This will be achieved by requiring all development to:

- Minimise greenhouse gas emissions and support the transition to a low carbon society by maximising energy efficiency, low carbon heat and local renewable energy generation.
- Support the principles of the circular economy and promote more effective resource use, to ensure that resources are kept in use for as long as possible and to minimise waste.
- Recognise and adapt to Breckland's changing climate and ensure that development mitigates the risk of overheating and flooding and maximises comfort and wellbeing.
- Maximise opportunities to enhance green infrastructure to deliver multifunctional benefits such as minimising the urban heat effect, enhancing natural carbon sinks, and improving air quality; and
- Promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles in line with Merton's net-zero carbon target.

Management of Water Resources

8.3 Breckland has been identified as a water-stressed area, along with the rest of East Anglia due to the increasing frequency of dry periods with heatwaves

and droughts. This has resulted in less water being produced and the creation of poor ground conditions which struggle to absorb water when heavy down pours occur, leading to localised flooding issues.

- 8.4 Additional to this, many of the District’s water courses are in poor health and this had led to the need to reduce the number of water abstractions in the region, and the Environment Agency has already revoked a number of abstraction licences within the Broads SAC and River Wensum SAC in order to protect these waterbodies.
- 8.5 Along with the pressure of dwindling water resources, there is an increasing demand for water from housing and economic growth, Water Resources East predict that by 2050 overall water supply will decrease from 2,400Ml/d to 1,700Ml/d across East Anglia, whilst demand will increase from 2,132Ml/d to 2,538Ml/d with a deficit in public water supply of 730Ml/d (40% below baseline supply in 2025)¹⁵. The management of water resources is vital not only for housing growth but also for the economy including the agricultural sector, which is particularly vulnerable to water supply restrictions.
- 8.6 Breckland is working with other East Anglian Local Authorities, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency, and other stakeholders to address this issue through the Water Resources East Regional plan which includes major infrastructure projects for new reservoirs, de-salination plants and water re-use plants across the region. However, this will not be enough to safeguard drinking water. and water protection zones will be needed to protect from over demand, including the protection of ground water source zones in the region¹⁶ as well as better water management designed into all housing and economic growth. For Breckland’s proposed growth, these will be informed by a Water Cycle Study and Water Integrated Management Plan.
- 8.7 Policies within this chapter, The Breckland Design Guide, and the Technical Standards policies HOU 20 in the Local Plan refer to water efficiency

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¹⁵ Water Resources East Regional Plan December 2023

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spzs#find-groundwater-spzs>

measures such as reducing water consumption and rainwater harvesting and improved SuDs in both housing and commercial developments. Water quality policies have also been included for those development proposals in nutrient sensitive water catchments.

- 8.8 Climate-responsive design includes locating development in more sustainable locations, sustainable design of the built form and associated landscapes, and encouraging behavioural change in occupants. The Council encourages aspirational sustainable design, including proposals that target Passivhaus standards, on-site renewable energy generation, better water management and promote biodiversity.
- 8.9 Climate responsive design covers many policy areas within the Local Plan from protecting Breckland’s landscapes ENV 03 and ENV 04, creating green space and landscape led design, creating wildlife habitats and biodiversity DES 03, ENV 03, ENV 05, reducing reliance on private vehicles and encouraging active travel DES 04, managing our water and energy resources and sustainable layout, and building design.
- 8.10 Further guidance on climate responsive design can be found in the Breckland Design Guide.

Management of Energy Resources

- 8.11 Evidence has shown that the majority of Breckland’s Green House Gas Emissions are derived from transport with both the main Norfolk roads of the A11, A47 running through it and the diesel rail network still in use, followed by domestic use¹⁷ Breckland’s Local Plan aims to encourage more sustainable development at a smaller scale by reducing GHGs from introducing policies to improve energy efficiencies of dwellings, reduce carbon emissions and encourage the transition to cleaner energy but also at a strategic level by locating development where it can access services without the use of private cars.

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¹⁷ [Green House Gas Emissions by Local Authority Map 2021 \(ONS\)](#)

- 8.12 To reduce CO2 emissions, will require moving away from a reliance of fossil fuels and changing people's energy use behaviours as well as making our homes better designed to reduce the amount of energy required to heat them.

ENV 01: Climate Responsive Design

All development should take the available opportunities to integrate the principles of sustainable design and construction into proposals.

All major development proposals¹⁸ should prepare a Sustainability Statement as part of the Design and Access Statement submitted with their planning application, outlining their approach to:

- a. adaptation to climate change,
- b. carbon reduction,
- c. water management,
- d. site waste management and use of materials

Existing buildings should be retained, remodelled, or refurbished before demolition is considered to reduce carbon impact.

New buildings should be designed for flexibility to allow uses of the buildings to adapt and change over time.

Energy efficiency should be embedded in design both to minimise costs to users and to reduce their environmental impact. All developments should follow the energy hierarchy and design in energy efficiency features from onset.

The use of water saving appliances and fixtures along with systems which improve wastewater quality leaving the development are encouraged in Breckland.

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¹⁸ Major Development means 10 dwellings or more.

Improving biodiversity is also a vital tool to responding to Climate change, the Environment Act 2021 imposes a mandatory requirement to provide a biodiversity improvement of 10% on all new developments and further guidance and biodiversity policies can be found at ENV 03.

The Environment

- 8.13 This section relates to the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment of the District and covers policy issues that include the protection of specific environmental or conservation assets, and more widely the general landscape of the District.
- 8.14 Breckland is a diverse District for biodiversity, geodiversity, and landscape quality, characterised by mixed landscape character areas including “settled” and “plateau” farmland to the north. The landscape changes to the west and the south of the District, with the Brecks, which is an area of extensive heathland within a forest and arable context. A significant proportion of the Brecks is designated as a European Special Protected Area (SPA) site, forming the largest terrestrial protected area in Norfolk. The heathland serves as an important habitat designated for its suitability to support internationally important bird species, particularly Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar, as well as other rare animals and plants.
- 8.15 Breckland contains a wealth of other protected areas such as Redgrave and South Lopham Fen which is designated under the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance. Breckland also has a number of internationally important sites for biodiversity known as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) which are the most important sites for wildlife in the country. These include Norfolk Valley Fens, River Wensum and Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens.
- 8.16 Within Breckland, there are a number Local Nature Reserves (LNR), at Litcham Common (an area of varied heathland), the Great Eastern Pingo Trail of ancient ponds situated between Stow Bedon and Hockham, the meadows at Rushmeadows, Lucy Meadows and Scarning Fen near Dereham as well as

Hoe Rough and Beetley Meadows. The former Gravel works at Sparham Pools which is home to many species of duck, Foxley wood which is Norfolk's largest remaining ancient woodland, New Buckenham Common, Bawdeswell Common and the heath and land west of Weeting. Included in this group is the grass heathland at Barnham Cross Common in Thetford, which is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and located within the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA).

8.17 Aside from the many designated environmental assets Breckland also has a vast area of tranquil countryside. The Breckland landscape is characterised by low plateaus which rise gently to the North with River Channels carved into it. These include rare chalk rivers, which are of significant ecological and biodiverse importance, the River Nar being the most notable. The pattern of agriculture is dependent on the soil quality with the barren soils of the Brecks to the west, and the more fertile soil to the east with grain being grown predominantly to the southeast of the District. The wider rural area shapes the character of the District and provides a scenic backdrop to the scattered market towns and villages.

8.18 The settlements within Breckland are diverse in both size and type and embrace a wide range of building forms, architectural styles and building materials. District wide there are over 1,500 Listed Buildings as well as numerous buildings within the 50 Conservation Areas that cover 45 different parishes. The rich and diverse built heritage of the District contributes to its distinctive and individual characteristics. The Landscape and Architectural Character of Breckland is described in detail in the Breckland Landscape and Architecture Character Appraisal 2022¹⁹ and The Breckland District Landscape Character Assessment 2007.²⁰

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¹⁹ [Breckland-Landscape-and-Settlement-Character-Assessment 2023](https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/20182/Breckland-Landscape-and-Settlement-Character-Assessment/pdf/5833_4.4_Breckland_Landscape_and_Settlement_Character_Assessment_2023-10-06_HR_-_optimized_v4.pdf?m=1709631397630)
(https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/20182/Breckland-Landscape-and-Settlement-Character-Assessment/pdf/5833_4.4_Breckland_Landscape_and_Settlement_Character_Assessment_2023-10-06_HR_-_optimized_v4.pdf?m=1709631397630)

²⁰ [Breckland Landscape-Character-Assessment May 2007](https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/2069/Landscape-Character-Assessment/pdf/Landscape_Character_Assessment_-_May_2007_Final2.pdf)
(https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/2069/Landscape-Character-Assessment/pdf/Landscape_Character_Assessment_-_May_2007_Final2.pdf)

- 8.19 The Council supports planned growth which works in harmony with the District’s natural and historic environment. The policies in this section aim to ensure that natural and historic environmental quality of Breckland is maintained and enhanced.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 8.20 The NPPF requires Local Authorities to plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement, and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is the network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Recognising the value of all green space, not just protected landscapes, green infrastructure is a term used to cover all types of green space, large or small, public, or private. The term Green Infrastructure also includes blue infrastructure, i.e. water bodies such as river corridors.
- 8.21 Green infrastructure performs many functions in meeting both social and environmental goals, such as encouraging active, healthy lifestyles and helping the District to be resilient to more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events resulting from climate change. It also plays a significant role in improving water quality and water management in resources and flood protection as well as enhancing biodiversity.
- 8.22 As a predominantly rural District, Breckland has a vast green and blue infrastructure network, stretching from the protected European sites, through hedgerows, chalk river streams, wetlands, trees across farmlands, to back gardens and local parks. The Council recognises the importance of good quality green and blue infrastructure and in partnership with other Norfolk local authorities prepared the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2020²¹ (GIRAMS) based on the work of the Norfolk Green Infrastructure Mapping Project 2018²². The role of Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Framework

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²¹ Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2020

²² Norfolk Green Infrastructure Mapping Project Report, Norfolk Strategic Planning Group June 2018

launched in January 2023 will also be taken into consideration to inform approaches to further evidence development regarding GI in Breckland and the principles and standards to be applied to development.

- 8.23 New developments will be expected to provide opportunities to incorporate Green infrastructure and enhance existing connectivity recognising the intrinsic value of the Green infrastructure network and ensuring that the functionality of the network is not undermined as a result of development.
- 8.24 The policy supports the overarching aim for green and blue infrastructure in Breckland to provide an integrated, multifunctional, and resilient network of natural and semi-natural green spaces which support Breckland’s communities for the benefit of present and future generations.
- 8.25 The Norfolk GIRAMS study identified strategic opportunity areas for green and blue infrastructure including a River catchment restoration programme at River Nar near Swaffham, The Wendling Beck Nature Recovery Project near Dereham, an ecological park at Lynford at Thetford Forest. Further GI improvement initiatives have come forward with the Thetford Forest Open Habitat Project creating a network of biodiversity corridors based on the Breckland Biodiversity Audit by UEA²³; The Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership Projects²⁴ working on restoring habitats along waterways including riparian buffers and improving chalk rivers and the River Wensum Catchment Partnership²⁵ which aims to improve water quality and biodiversity within the Wensum.
- 8.26 There are also opportunities to improve connectivity to green areas within new development schemes. By identifying green areas in the vicinity of a development site, it is possible to consider the possibility of improving connections early on in the design process. An example could be the provision of foot paths and cycle ways through the site connecting existing

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²³ Securing Biodiversity in Breckland: Guidance for Conservation and Research. First Report of the Breckland Biodiversity, Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia 2010

²⁴ <https://brecks.org/bfer/>

²⁵ <https://wensum.org/projects>

publicly accessible green spaces, or by creating small wildlife corridors such as connecting a public green to a pond or to a hedgerow and fields beyond at the boundary of a site. Guidance on these types of improvements can be found in the Breckland Design Guide.²⁶

ENV 02: Retaining and Enhancing Green and Blue Infrastructure

The integrity and connectivity of existing green infrastructure, as indicated in the policies map should be retained, protected, and enhanced with new green infrastructure being delivered where possible to support sustainable development.

New developments will be expected to exploit the opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and enhance existing connectivity; recognising the intrinsic value of the green infrastructure network and ensuring that the functionality of the network is not undermined as a result of development.

Through its layout and design, new development should respond to the location of existing green infrastructure and support appropriate uses and functions. Where it is considered that the development will have a detrimental effect on the quantity or function of existing green infrastructure, compensatory provision will be required in the form of new and/or enhancements to the existing green infrastructure, mandatory Biodiversity uplifts would also be included in these requirements. Where appropriate, the Council will seek to secure through planning obligations provision for the future management and/or maintenance of green infrastructure.

Developments that fail to exploit opportunities to integrate and enhance the existing local green infrastructure network will not be favourably considered.

Development proposals should also have regard to Council endorsed strategic green infrastructure strategies and made neighbourhood plans when considering opportunities on site to provide connections and linkages with the wider network of green infrastructure.

Opportunities for linking green infrastructure in line with wider strategic areas should be considered when preparing development proposals. These include linking

green areas in the local vicinity of a site including designated areas of open space and local green space designations, Public Rights of Way and areas protected by environmental designations. These should be identified to explore possible opportunities for improving connectivity between sites, where appropriate, and in the context of balancing other planning considerations for the site.

All major development of 50 homes or more located on greenfield sites should provide green space that is proportionate to its scale. Green infrastructure can include public open space, natural sustainable drainage system such as swales, basins and rain gardens, allotments, new and retained habitats including woodland trees and hedgerows, green and blue corridors, and recreational access routes. Some additional guidance on the design of green infrastructure on new developments can be found in the Breckland Design Guide.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.27 The Environment Act 2021 mandates a minimum 10 per cent Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for all development with very few exceptions. --. Biodiversity net gain is a legislative requirement, with the detail of how it is implemented set out in regulations. BNG is calculated using the statutory metric and a biodiversity net gain plan which should set out how BNG will be delivered by the development. Both the metric calculations and the BNG plan should be submitted at the planning application stage
- 8.28 BNG is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure that habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. The delivery of biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancement through development which provides more than the mandatory 10% requirement will be favourably considered.
- 8.29 The application of the mitigation hierarchy (avoiding impacts before mitigating and as a last resort compensating impacts) should be demonstrated. The requirement to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG) on-site will strengthen habitat avoidance on development sites.

- 8.30 The requirement for development to demonstrate BNG does not replace or diminish existing protections for habitats and species which remain in place and continue to be a material consideration of any planning application.
- 8.31 The local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) will agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities. The strategy will include a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities. Norfolk County Council have been appointed as the responsible authority and will prepare the LNRS. Breckland Council is working in collaboration with other Norfolk authorities in the preparation of the LNRS.
- 8.32 Strategic significance is the local significance of a habitat based on its location and habitat type and is categorised as either low, medium, or high in the BNG metric. The ‘strategic significance’ category for each individual habitat parcel, both at baseline and at post-intervention, is assigned based on the LNRS. The River Wensum Catchment including the Wendling Beck Nature Recovery Project have been identified as strategic sites and will be considered as having met the criteria for the “strategic significance” category. Further sites will come forward as the LNRS develops, but in the meantime the determination of strategic significance will be based on the Norfolk Green Infrastructure Strategy Map²⁷ or any other forthcoming published Breckland strategic plans.

ENV 03: Improving Biodiversity

All qualifying development proposals must achieve at least 10 percent biodiversity net gain within their schemes, and this must be calculated using the statutory biodiversity metric and demonstrated within a biodiversity net gain plan. The plan must demonstrate meaningful contributions in its biodiversity uplift proposals providing more joined up habitat which safeguards and enhances habitat connectivity at both site level, locally and within the wider landscape scale.

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²⁷ <https://www.norfolkdiversity.org/ecological-networks/>

Developments which provide more than the 10% mandatory requirement will be favourably considered.

Onsite delivery of Biodiversity net gain should be considered initially if this would deliver the most appropriate outcome for biodiversity and provide the most local benefit. Some guidance on onsite biodiversity design is provided within the Breckland Design Guide.

Locally defined ecological networks will be identified in the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy which is currently being prepared by Norfolk County Council and these will be the focus for the delivery of off-site and landscape scale biodiversity net gain.

The Wensum Catchment has initially been identified as a strategic significant site. As the LNRS evolves, further sites will be assigned to the strategic significance category, but in the meantime any habitat parcel assigned to this category must be fully justified and demonstrate that it is in accordance with the Norfolk County Council's Biodiversity Partnership work and the Norfolk Green Infrastructure Map

For developments which fall outside the scope of mandatory biodiversity net gain, enhancement for biodiversity should be included as part of the proposals, commensurate with the scale of the development.

Protection and enhancement of the landscape

- 8.33 Breckland includes extensive tracts of the nationally and regionally significant Brecks heaths and woodland in the south and west of the district. The importance of these areas has been recognised in The Norfolk and Suffolk Brecks Landscape Character Assessment (2013)²⁸.
- 8.34 The District is generally characterised by river valleys with their associated tributary farmland rising up to the clay plateau farmland which stretches from the Lophams in the south-east to Colkirk in the north-west and the

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²⁸ [Norfolk and Suffolk Brecks-landscape-character-assessment 2013](#)

District's Landscape character has been described in the Breckland Landscape Character Assessment 2007²⁹, the Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment 2007³⁰, and in the consolidated Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment 2023.³¹

- 8.35 Five broad landscape character area types were identified: River Valleys, Chalk River Valley, Settled Tributary Areas, Plateau Farmlands and The Brecks Plantations and within these further sub character types have been described.
- 8.36 The different sub types of landscape identified by the Character Assessments have a varying capacity to accommodate new development, depending on their nature and location. Development will not be permitted where it would be significantly detrimental to the landscape's characteristics or defining features.
- 8.37 In determining proposals for new development, regard shall be had to the Council's Landscape Character Assessments and the Breckland Design Guide, ensuring that all proposals respect the key visual sensitivities of the landscape that are fundamental part of its character. The integration of new development into the existing landscape will be expected to be achieved in all development proposals without causing harm to the features that define them.
- 8.38 The River Valleys and Chalk Rivers will have a high degree of protection from development due to their important environmental quality as well as their significance to the character of Breckland.

ENV 04: Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

The landscape of the District is valued for, its benefit to the rural character and in the interests of biodiversity, geodiversity, and historic conservation. Development

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²⁹ [Breckland Landscape-Character-Assessment 2007](#)

³⁰ [Breckland Settlement-Fringe-Landscape-Assessment 2007](#)

³¹ [Breckland-Landscape-and-Settlement-Character-Assessment 2023](#)

proposals will be expected to contribute to and where possible enhance the local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Development should have particular regard to maintaining the aesthetic and biodiversity qualities of natural and man-made features within the landscape, including a consideration of individual or groups of natural features such as trees, hedges and woodland or rivers, streams or other topographical features.

Development proposals will have regard to the findings of the Council's Landscape Character Assessments and the Breckland Design Guide in the design of their schemes to respond sympathetically to the landscape character.

High protection will also be given to the river valleys and chalk rivers in Breckland as identified in the Landscape Character Assessments, recognising their defining natural features, rich biodiversity, and undeveloped character of their shallow valleys.

Trees and Hedgerows

- 8.39 Trees, hedgerows, and other natural features form an essential part of Breckland's landscape character, enhancing the aesthetics of an area, the quality of the environment and providing a habitat for a range of wildlife. Roadside trees and hedges provide visual screening and can also help to reduce noise and prove beneficial in terms of atmospheric pollution and flood mitigation. These should be retained unless there is overriding reasons for their removal for example highway safety
- 8.40 Existing natural features, where possible, should be incorporated into the landscape scheme which should accompany all new development proposals. Any retained trees should be identified within the landscaping design and along with consideration of their long-term maintenance. Proposals which result in the loss of these features would have to be robustly justified to avoid refusal. However, there may be exceptional instances where the loss of important natural features is unavoidable, for example to enable a scheme to fulfil important objectives such as economic development or the

provision of strategic housing. Where the loss of such features is demonstrably and robustly evidenced as unavoidable, adequate replacement provision, preferably by native British species, of greater value will be sought.

- 8.41 Hedgerow and tree surveys should accompany any development proposals where any trees and hedgerows are likely to be affected by a new development. Further guidance can be found in the Breckland Design Guide.
- 8.42 Some trees in the District have protected status, mainly under the designation of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or those located in a conservation area. A TPO is an order made by an LPA in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. A TPO prohibits cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage, and wilful destruction of trees without the LPA's prior written consent.

ENV 05: Trees, Hedgerows and Development

Trees and significant hedge and shrub masses form part of the green infrastructure network and should be retained as an integral part of the design of development and identified early on in the project. The exception to this is where their long-term survival would be compromised by their age or physical condition, or there are exceptional and overriding benefits in accepting their loss.

Development requiring the loss of a tree or hedgerow including preserved trees, protected hedgerows and trees, trees in Conservation Areas, ancient trees, aged and veteran trees, and trees classified as being of categories A or B in value (BS5837:2012) will require surveys and a robust argument to demonstrate the requirement for loss by suitably qualified experts and. Loss of trees can only be permitted where:

It can be robustly evidenced that it is unavoidable and that it would allow for a substantially improved overall approach to the design and landscaping of the development that would outweigh the loss of any tree or hedgerow.

Where the loss of such features is demonstrably unavoidable, adequate replacement provision, preferably by native species will be sought. Where the loss

of a tree is accepted in these circumstances, developers will be required to ensure the loss is suitably compensated for, taking into account the size and condition of the of tree.

Development Affecting Trees and Hedgerows

Where a proposed development retains existing trees and hedgerows on-site, or where development occurs within a tree root protection area, provision must be made for their care and protection throughout the duration of the development with mitigation measures being put in place to ensure that development works do not have a harmful impact on existing trees. To ensure that tree cover and habitat is retained, it is important that both the short term and long-term impacts that a development may have on trees is evaluated at the earliest opportunity.

Accordingly, the Council will require that a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Method Statement be undertaken by suitably qualified professional in accordance with BS5837:2012

Historic Assets

8.43 Historic Assets can be either Designated Heritage assets or Non-Designated Heritage assets. Breckland has a wealth of historic listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, registered parks, and gardens and these are often set within an ancient landscape which is detailed in the Breckland Landscape and Character Assessment 2023 and Breckland's Historic Characterisation Study 2017³². These all create a unique environment that provides an ever-present link to the past and a positive sense of place. Each parish has historically included a parish church and consequently there are many medieval churches e.g. Bylaugh Church and North Elmham Church and Chapel, and it also includes a high number of isolated and ruined churches and castles e.g. Buckenham castle and Weeting

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³² [Breckland's Historic Characterisation Study 2017](#)

Castle, priories e.g. Thetford Priory and homes ranging from the tiny 16th century Bishop Bonner's Cottages in Dereham to the 15th century moated manor house at Oxburgh. Breckland's rich historic environment provides a valuable contribution to the District's cultural heritage.

- 8.44 The Historic environment is a non-renewable resource. Its fragile and finite nature is a particularly important consideration in planning decisions and conserving this resource is important for future generations to enjoy.
- 8.45 The Council wants to safeguard Breckland's historic environment that holds heritage value for its communities. They also see the need for proactive and informed management of the historic environment so that it continues to make a positive contribution to the lives of its residents. The historic environment may also provide positive opportunities for change, for example where the viable use of a heritage asset is secured to provide for its long-term conservation and contribute towards a viable local economy.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 8.46 Designated Heritage Assets are the responsibility of the government's advisers Historic England. Within Breckland, there are a total of 50 Conservation Areas in the District, most based on historic village centres. It is important that the nature of conservation areas and historic buildings is maintained to ensure their protection for future generations and their continued contribution to the economic prosperity of the District. Social environmental and cultural benefits are derived from this link to the past and it helps to reinforce a sense of place, quality of life, local identity, and character.
- 8.47 Known individual heritage assets are identified in Norfolk County Council's Historic Environment Record, where existing documents analyse particular aspects of the heritage significance of the District.
- 8.48 There is 1,594 Listed Buildings in the District, including 112 Grade I and 102 Grade II*. Whilst the majority of the listed buildings in the District are in good or reasonable repair, a number of buildings are in severe disrepair.

There are 29 Grade I or Grade II* Listed Buildings at Risk as registered by English Heritage. There are also 9 Registered Parks and Gardens (all Grade II), 134 scheduled monuments, plus three shared with adjoining Local Authorities.

- 8.49 Breckland Council understands that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and the policy below aims to conserve designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 8.50 The historic internal layout (which may include later remodelling) and other internal features of Importance should be respected in any proposal. The setting of a listed building often contributes towards its significance this includes the character of the gardens and landscaping, outside space areas as well as inward and outward views. Any curtilage and/or setting of a listed building, which maintains its relationship with its surroundings should be retained. Any buildings and other structures that pre-date July 1948 (as per the 1990 Act) and are within the curtilage of a listed building are to be treated as part of the listed building. These exterior elements should be respected and included within the detailed analysis of the listed site. Energy efficiency measures that do not harm the buildings significance, fabric, or ongoing preservation and which take a holistic whole building approach to energy efficiency may be considered where appropriate. Appropriate guidance for example from Historic England³³ should be followed to introduce these measures. Proposals should have regard to the present and future economic viability or function of the listed building and secure its optimum viable use.

ENV 06: Designated Historic Assets

The significance of designated heritage assets (including their settings), such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas, will be conserved, or wherever possible enhanced. Proposals that may affect the significance of a designated heritage asset will be required to

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³³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/retrofit-and-energy-efficiency-in-historic-buildings/>

provide proportionate evidence to the assets importance, sufficient to identify its significance, including any contribution that its setting makes to enable any impact to be fully assessed in accordance with national policy.

Development that will affect any designated heritage asset will be subject to comprehensive assessment and should conserve or, wherever possible enhance the architectural and historic character, appearance and setting of the asset. Where a proposed development will affect the character or setting of a Listed Building, particular regard will need to be given to the protection, conservation, and potential enhancement of any features of historic or architectural interest.

Listed Buildings and their settings

All proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the building and/or its setting. Any harm to, or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification.

Proposals should contribute to the preservation of the building, not be detrimental to the building's character or any architectural, archaeological, artistic, or historic features that contribute towards its special interest and be appropriate in all aspects of its design and detail. All building materials and methods of construction traditional and contemporary should respect the character of the building.

- 8.51 Alongside the designated heritage assets of the District, Breckland also has a range of other traditional buildings, which contribute to the character of the countryside, including a variety of traditional dwelling types, domestic and agricultural ancillary buildings, chapels, commercial and industry buildings, railway structures and structures associated with wartime use. Whilst there is a set of criteria for inclusion of a building on the National lists of listed buildings, there is no set criteria for selection of non-designated heritage assets. On that basis, and for consistency in the planning process, when a planning proposal is likely to cause harm to a traditional building it will usually be assessed using the local listing criteria identified in the

guidance note published by Historic England.³⁴ At present, although there is no immediate plan for the Council to record Non-Designated heritage Assets, some are appropriately recognised and recorded in adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Regard should be given to these assets when designing development schemes to consider whether the proposals may affect a non- designated asset.

- 8.52 In addition to this there will be a number of currently unknown heritage assets of, as yet undefined significance. These assets play an essential role in reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the locality. Regard should be had to all heritage assets when designing development schemes.
- 8.53 The Council will protect and improve the built environment, paying special regard to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment through positive action and partnership working. The historic environment makes a significant contribution to sustainable communities through sustaining economic vitality providing social and cultural links to the past and ensuring a dynamic and varied built environment. New development must make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The Council has developed the Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment 2023 to help applicants in meeting this requirement. Other heritage assets including locally important parks and gardens will be conserved and where possible enhanced in conjunction with Policy ENV4 and ENV5, landscapes that form the setting to the built and historic environment will also be conserved and enhanced.

ENV 07: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Development should be expected to conserve, or wherever possible enhance the historic character, appearance and setting of non-designated historic assets. Proposals that could affect previously unrecognised heritage assets will be expected through agreement with the Council, to undergo an appropriate assessment,

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³⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag301-local-heritage-listing/>

proportionate to the significance of the asset. The assessment must provide sufficient information for any impact to be fully assessed. In weighing applications that are likely to directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be undertaken, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The conversion of non-designated buildings identified in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record, or through Neighbourhood Plans, of particular architectural or historic merit for economic or residential purposes in locations that would otherwise be unacceptable will be considered where this would ensure the retention of the building. Proposals will be considered having regard to relevant national policy and guidance. In the case of traditional dwellings which positively contribute to the character of Breckland, applications for replacement will be expected to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which includes a structural survey that demonstrates that demolition is necessary and that there is no alternative and viable solution of renovation to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the building and its setting. Proposals should respect the historic fabric, design, materials, elevational treatment, and ornamentation of the original building; not result in an unacceptable level of loss, damage or covering of original features; and have regard to the setting, plot layout and any boundary features as appropriate.

Archaeological Sites

8.54 Norfolk has a wealth of archaeological sites, and some important ones can be found within Breckland from the prehistoric flint mines of Grimes Graves at Lynford to the Breckland Palaeolithic project to the west of the district bordering West Suffolk, where relics of human occupation from 600,000 years ago have been discovered. Throughout the district there have been a number of historic relics found from the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Early Saxon, Roman times and later from archaeological digs of development sites. The identification and exploration of these sites is important as they form part of a rich record of human history not only this region but for the Nation.

ENV 08: Archaeological Sites

Development proposals should identify assets of archaeological significance. An archaeological evaluation will be required for development sites that are known or thought to have the potential to include non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest. Where appropriate, archaeological remains should be left in situ following further design/engineering work. If the benefits of a particular development are considered to outweigh the importance of retaining archaeological remains in situ, satisfactory excavation and recording or remains will be required before development is begun.

The Brecks Protected Habitats and Species

8.55 The Brecks covers 39,434 ha of heathland, forest and arable farmland and is designated (2006) as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Council's Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. The Brecks habitat is important for a range of ground-nesting birds including the Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar, all of which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the EU Birds Directive 2009. The East of England supports 65% of the UK's breeding Pairs of Stone Curlew where most breeding is located within the Brecks. The rich biodiversity of the Brecks is also recognised through other statutory conservation designations including four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), numerous SSSI and National Nature Reserves (NNR), where the latter (NNRs and SSSIs) make up 40% of the total area.

8.56 Several research projects have looked at the impact of disturbance on the distribution of Stone Curlew nests in Breckland. These studies found that Stone Curlew nest density was consistently lower on arable land around settlements and around trunk roads within 1500m³⁵. As a result, all the local planning authorities around the Brecks have adopted 1500 metre

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³⁵ Sharp et al (2008) The effect of housing development and roads on the distribution of Stone Curlews in the Brecks

constraints zone around the boundary of components of the special protection area (SPA) that supports or is capable of supporting Stone Curlew³⁶ Further research following the establishment of the constraint zone reaffirmed the initial findings and provided further evidence on the effects that built development has on the Stone Curlew population in Breckland.³⁷

- 8.57 Natural England has provided guidance on assessing the impact of development on Breckland. The council will have regard to this guidance, or subsequent revisions, when undertaking its Habitats Regulations Assessments as the competent authority.
- 8.58 Woodlark and Nightjar are known to be sensitive to human-related disturbance. Research found that Woodlark density on heathlands was lower on sites with higher levels of human disturbance³⁸ and that higher density of housing resulted in fewer Woodlark and Nightjar on certain heaths in Dorset which was more severe when situated close to the heaths³⁹. Based on this research a 400 metre zone was developed around components of Breckland Special Protection Area which support Woodlark and Nightjar and has been adopted by all the local authorities around the Brecks.
- 8.59 Air pollution poses a threat to the Brecks which include feature habitats and species vulnerable to nitrogen deposition, which can arise from new development particularly agricultural development and any subsequent increase in traffic. The Council is working in partnership with Suffolk Local Authorities, Natural England, and wildlife groups to ascertain the impact of air pollution on these sites and will have regard for any advice that arises from this work.

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³⁶ Liley, D (2016) Stone Curlew Buffers in the Brecks. Unpublished report for Forest Heath District Council. Footprint Ecology

³⁷ Clarke, R., & Liley, D. (2013). Further assessments of the relationship between buildings and stone curlew distribution. Unpublished report by Footprint Ecology for Breckland Council.

³⁸ Mallord, J W., Dolman, P M., Brown, A F., And Sutherland W J., 2007. Linking recreational disturbance to population size in a ground-nesting passerine. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 44(1), pp.185–195.

³⁹ Liley, D., Clarke, R.T., Tyldesley, D., Underhill-Day, J. & Lowen. J. 2007 Evidence to support the Appropriate Assessment of development plans and projects in south-east Dorset Footprint Ecology. Dorset County Council.

- 8.60 Additionally, the Council worked with other Norfolk local authorities in developing the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2020 which, imposes a tariff on all new residential development in Norfolk, the proceeds of which are to be spent on implementing measures to mitigate the recreational impacts as a result of development growth on Habitat sites including the Brecks SPA.

ENV 09: The Brecks Protected Habitats and Species

All development that leads to a net increase in built development within Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) or within a 1500 metre (primary) buffer of component parts of Breckland SPA which support or are capable of supporting Stone Curlew, as shown on the policies map, has the potential for 'likely significant effects' on Breckland SPA alone or in-combination with other developments, and as such will require a project level HRA.

All development that leads to a net increase in built development within the 1500 metre (secondary) buffer around areas outside the SPA that have been identified where there are concentrations of Stone Curlew (most recently using data from 2011 to 2015), as shown on the policies map may also require project level HRA. Within this zone, where it can be shown that adverse effects can be prevented, for example where alternative land outside the SPA can be secured to adequately mitigate the potential effects, planning permission may be granted provided the local planning authority is satisfied that there is sufficient certainty that the proposed measures will be effective and deliverable.

Large developments adjacent to, or just outside the primary or secondary buffer may also require project level HRA. Residential applications outside of the SPA but located in areas where comprehensive Stone Curlew data is missing must provide records or carry out surveys to inform impacts on Stone Curlew outside of the SPA.

Woodlark and nightjar

All development that leads to a net increase in residential development within 400 metres of components of the SPA that support or are capable of supporting Woodlark and/or Nightjar as shown on the policies map, has the potential for 'likely

significant effects' on Breckland SPA alone or in-combination with other developments, and as such will require project level HRA.

Special areas of conservation

Road traffic emissions affecting air quality, new road infrastructure or road improvements within 200 metres of sites designated as special area of conservation have the potential for 'likely significant effects', and as such will require project level habitats regulations assessment⁴⁰.

8.61 In 2023, Natural England provided new guidance for in combination effects for small residential developments based on a planning tool developed by Footprint Ecology. Two types of development were considered to have minimum impact on Stone Curlews in the Breckland SPA.

- Developments where there is not likely to be a significant effect and can be screened out at stage one of an HRA. These include:
 - Development outside of 1.5Km constraint around the SPA
 - Certain development within the 1.5KM constraint zone including householder extensions less than 100% of the existing footprint,
 - redevelopment of existing buildings with no increase in footprint and
 - some small defined development within existing settlements' built form within 1.5KM SPA.

8.62 Developments where there is likely to be a significant effect but due to their scale, placement or nature of the development means they fall below the threshold in regard to the increased residential impact pathway. These developments would need a simple appropriate assessment. These include:

- Non-residential development or change of use of an existing building, where there is no net-increase in footprint,
- An agricultural building less than 120m, an extension to an agricultural building less than 120m² or 100% of the original, whichever is less,

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⁴⁰ Natural England's approach to advising competent authorities on the assessment of road traffic emissions under the Habitats Regulations – NEA001

- a replacement building of less or equal to the existing footprint.

Nutrient Neutrality

- 8.63 In March 2022 Natural England wrote to 74 local planning authorities (LPAs) including Breckland Council advising them that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017⁴¹, they should carefully consider the nutrient impacts of any new plans, policies, and development proposals on protected habitat sites. The protected habitats of concern in Norfolk are the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (SAC) due to phosphorous enrichment and the Broads SAC and Broadland Ramsar due to phosphorous and nitrogen enrichment. These river catchments cover the Northeast of the District including the market town of Dereham and were designated as nutrient sensitive areas in January 2024.
- 8.64 Nutrient impacts are the result of organic waste derived from agricultural runoff, leaky wastewater treatment works and wastewater from new development. This impacts all residential development that results in an increase in the number of overnight stays and non-residential development such as tourist accommodation which results in overnight stays from people outside of the catchments of the SACs as well as commercial development that generates high quantities of surface water and/or due to their manufacturing processes result in an increase in pollutants entering the surface water.
- 8.65 The Habitats legislation requires that relevant developments will only be granted planning permission when there is certainty around the levels of nutrient enrichment they will generate and mitigation to counter it so that development is nutrient neutral.
- 8.66 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 makes it a legal requirement for certain wastewater treatment works designated by the secretary of State to be upgraded by water companies to technical achievable limits by

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⁴¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents/made>

2030.⁴² These upgrades are for certain wastewater treatment works meeting particular criteria including their location in nutrient sensitive areas such as the River Wensum SAC and The Broads SAC. It is anticipated that Dereham Wastewater treatment works will be upgraded by 2030, this will reduce the nutrient load on development in the area, thereby requiring less mitigation. Further upgrades are planned across the District and are yet to be announced.

- 8.67 The Council is working with other Norfolk Local Authorities affected by Nutrient issues to develop mitigation schemes which can mitigate the impacts of nutrient pollution derived from development, enabling a nutrient neutral position and for development to proceed.

ENV 10: Development in Nutrient Sensitive Areas

All residential developments which are located in the nutrient sensitive zones of the River Wensum SAC and/or The Broads SAC, which would lead to an increase in overnight accommodation and all non-residential development that, by virtue of its scale or type, may draw people from outside the catchments of the SACs and/or generate unusual quantities of surface water and/or (by virtue of the processes undertaken) contain unusual pollutants within surface water run-off are required to demonstrate that the development is nutrient neutral.

All qualifying development proposals must calculate the nutrient load of their schemes using either the Natural England calculator or the Norfolk-wide calculator and provide a nutrient mitigation plan to demonstrate how they will achieve a nutrient neutral position with their development proposals.

Agricultural Intensification

- 8.68 Breckland is a predominately rural District and agriculture plays not only a significant role in the nation's food supply and security, but also an integral part to the District's landscape character, ecology, and economy. The Agri-

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⁴² <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3155/stages/17044/amendments/10003516>

Food Sector has a Gross Added Value (GVA) of £127 billion in the UK or 6.2% of the National GVA (2021), representing around 4 million jobs⁴³. In Breckland, agriculture, food and drink processing, and manufacturing continue to comprise a significant proportion of the local economy, with 22% of Norfolk’s agricultural/forestry and fishing businesses based in Breckland, the largest within Norfolk, accounting for £210 million GVA across South Norfolk and Breckland.⁴⁴

8.69 Planning policies at national, and local levels recognise the importance of the agricultural sector. The NPPF seeks to promote strong rural economies through the support of sustainable growth and expansion of businesses in rural areas and the promotion of development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

8.70 However, it is recognised that the agricultural sector is a major contributor to greenhouse gases (GHG) with 69% of Nitrous Oxide gases and 48% of Methane. Breckland Council declared a climate emergency on 19 September 2019. Since then, the Council has committed to reducing the level of greenhouse gases within the district. The Council is striving to achieve net zero as an organisation by 2035, and has developed a sustainability strategy focusing on three main themes:

1. Reducing our own impact as an organisation on the environment.
2. Using our regulatory powers to influence behavioural change (including planning, waste and recycling, environmental protection).
3. Enabling our communities to take action for themselves.

8.71 The Agricultural Sector can play a part in achieving these goals through sustainable agricultural intensification and animal husbandry as well as the decrease in use of synthetic fertilisers making some headway in reducing GHGs. However, further improvements can be made whilst at the same time

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⁴³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/agriculture-in-the-united-kingdom-2022/summary>

⁴⁴ ONS 2021 Regional GVA by Industry (2021)

increasing productivity, through strengthening the sector's capacity for adaptation to climate change in extreme weather events including drought and flooding, improving soil quality by good ecosystem management, more efficient use of existing resources and further engagement in agricultural practices which reduce environmental impacts on water and air quality.

- 8.72 The council's planning department deals with many applications for agricultural development, some of which are complex and involve consideration of issues that can potentially impact on both the environment and local amenity. This Policy sets out some of the main issues that may arise from agricultural development and how they should be evaluated. -.
- 8.73 The Council recognises that planning applications are often submitted to the local planning authority that seek to improve a particular situation and these are welcomed by the Council. It also recognises that new technologies and approaches are being developed to address and ameliorate particular issues. However sometimes the proposed measure could have its own impacts and therefore careful consideration needs to be given to all the potential impacts that may arise from a development.
- 8.74 Breckland Council offers a pre-planning advice service which provides an opportunity for discussions to take place with a development management officer prior to submission to ascertain what additional documentation may be deemed necessary. It is also advised that applicants have early discussions with the Environment Agency for planning applications involving provisions for livestock.

Agricultural Development and Residential Amenity

- 8.75 The amenity of those living close to agriculture development may be adversely affected by negative visual impact, or general nuisance caused by odour emissions, dust, smoke, chemical fumes, noise, or increased traffic movements for example. All these factors need to be carefully considered as part of the application process.

Noise

8.76 Noise can be created by machinery, power plants and vehicle movements associated with some agricultural operations and its impact on residents and the general amenity of the area needs to be carefully considered as part of the planning application process. Mitigation measures to reduce the noise impact should be included in the design as appropriate.

Odour

8.77 The type and strength of odour will vary according to the land use and weather conditions and individual perception. Odours arising from farming activities can be quite common and may be associated with the storing and spreading of animal manures and slurries which are often linked to operational matters outside of the planning system. However, developments requiring planning permission, e.g. intensive livestock units can generate strong odours which vary over the production cycle and can be affected by weather conditions. The impact of this needs to be carefully considered on local residents and the general amenity of the area including the in-combination effect.

8.78 Planning policy requires that the effects of pollution on health, the environment or general amenity should be taken into account. Any odour generating proposals likely to impact on general amenity would be required to provide an odour assessment and odour management plan. The Institute of Air Quality and Management provide guidance on these.⁴⁵

Light pollution

8.79 Careful consideration should be given to any artificial lighting that is included as part of the development proposals. Artificial lighting can be source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes.

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⁴⁵ [odour-guidance-2014.pdf \(iaqm.co.uk\)](#)

Landscapes and Visual Impact

- 8.80 In Breckland where the high quality of the landscape is part of the intrinsic character of the area, the visual impact of major agriculture development can be a significant negative planning issue. Valued landscape is irreplaceable and must be conserved if sustainable development is to be achieved. Applications for major agricultural development will be expected to not only to fully address the landscape impacts of the proposal, both individually and in the context of other similar developments but also endeavour to enhance it.
- 8.81 The Council's planning policies and associated text detail the importance of ensuring that change is appropriate to its setting and is not permitted to overwhelm the inherent character of the landscape. The landscape's ability to accept a proposed development without undue harm will be a primary consideration.
- 8.82 Certain types of agricultural development have the potential to have a detrimental impact on the landscape, particularly industrial scale agriculture such as large poultry units, silage covers, anaerobic digesters and storage buildings. The introduction of agricultural development in a previously open countryside can in itself visually impact adversely on the rural landscape as well as its tranquil nature by virtue of increased activity in the area in increase light and noise, particularly if it is a large-scale scheme. Furthermore, development can lead to a reduction in the quality of landscape character, such as loss of key landscape features (hedgerows, trees, alteration of the natural topography), and any associated infrastructure e.g. road widening and visibility splays or the incremental of development of existing buildings.
- 8.83 All Agricultural development will be expected to demonstrate how any of the above impacts have been considered and put forward proposals to minimise them.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 8.84 Biodiversity can be defined as the variety of sites, habitats and species within a specified locality and is influenced by factors such as geology, topography, and climate. Geodiversity refers to the natural processes and variety of rock. Minerals, fossils, soils, landforms, and natural processes that have shaped the landscape.
- 8.85 Agricultural development is eligible for mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain and further details on providing information to demonstrate the biodiversity uplift to support planning applications can be found in Policy ENV02.
- 8.86 Geodiversity supports the soils in which crops are grown, provide the aggregates for building development, contribute to the landscape in the formation of rocks, hills and water courses as well as supporting the filtering, storing and purification of our water supplies. Any geodiversity issues are expected to be considered within any planning application.

Agricultural Development Near Protected Habitat Sites

- 8.87 Breckland is home to several protected habitat sites as outlined in Policy ENV09, and these need to be referred to with regards any development proposals within the vicinity of these protected sites, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) may be required as part of the application process to determine whether the proposal could have a likely significant effect on a Ramsar Site, Special Protection Areas, and Special Areas of Conservation. Furthermore, applications for major developments will be screened by the Council to determine whether a proposed project is likely to have significant effects on the environment and whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017⁴⁶ set out the circumstances when an EIA will be required for agricultural related development.

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⁴⁶ [Town and Country Planning Act: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations \(2017\)](#)

8.88 Natural England has prepared specific guidance for agricultural development in the vicinity of the Brecks SPA to avoid impacts including cumulative impacts on the Stone Curlew, Night Jar and Woodlark bird populations.

8.89 Natural England has advised that the following development criteria for agricultural development is not likely to have any significant effect on the SPA:

- The proposed building is located further than 1500m away from the SPA boundary
- For those parts of the SPA that are also designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI, a proposed buildings which are within the 1500m of the SPA boundary but more than 1500m away from potential stone curlew nesting sites.
- A proposed new building that would be completely masked from the SPA by existing built development.
- A proposed re-development of an existing building that would not alter its footprint.
- New agricultural buildings of less than 120m²
- Extension to existing agricultural buildings of less than 120m² or 100% of the original whichever is less.

8.90 All planning applications for agricultural development in this area would have to regard to this advice particularly for development which is within the 1500 m of the SPA boundary as outlined in ENV09 and ENV011.

Ammonia and Nitrogen Deposition and Air Quality

8.91 Air quality is affected adversely by ammonia which is harmful both to the natural environment and human health. 87% of ammonia is produced by the agricultural sector with dairy and beef contributing 48% of all agricultural emissions⁴⁷. Ammonia gas is released to the atmosphere from cattle

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⁴⁷ Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board 2024

manures and slurries. Housing manure and slurry handling, storage and spreading all contribute to this pollution along with nitrogen fertilisers.

8.92 The UK has adopted legally binding international targets to reduce emissions of ammonia by 2020 and 2030 through The Clean Air Strategy 2019⁴⁸ stating that a combination of regulations, permitting and support will be introduced to reduce emissions from livestock accommodation, storing and spreading of manures and application of fertilisers.

8.93 In Breckland the levels of ammonia and rates of nitrogen deposition are above those considered to cause loss of species and habitat damage on protected habitat sites such as The Brecks, and the Council has been working through the Shared Nitrogen Action Plan with Natural England, Nature Groups, Local landowners, and Suffolk Local Authorities to put in place measures and policies to address impacts of air quality on The Brecks and other protected habitat areas.

8.94 Potential adverse impacts on air quality from ammonia are most likely to arise from:

- d. an agricultural building to house livestock (primarily beef and dairy cattle, pigs, or poultry); and/or
- e. any new or expanded pit, tank, or lagoon for storing slurry; and/or
- f. any anaerobic digester with combustion plant; and/or
- g. any anaerobic digester without combustion plant

8.95 Depending on the scale and proximity of the proposed development to either a European Protected Site or a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a planning application for any of the above may need to be accompanied by an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA). Whether or not an assessment needs

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⁴⁸ [The clean-air-strategy-2019](#)

to be undertaken can be established by consulting the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) layer on MAGIC3. This assessment must include, as a minimum, a Simple Calculation of Atmospheric Impact Limits (SCAIL)⁴ assessment.

- 8.96 For a), b) and c) this applies only if they are within 10 km of a European Protected Site or 5km of a SSSI, and for d) if they are within 500 metres of either.
- 8.97 If a SCAIL assessment is required with the application, Natural England should be consulted. A SCAIL assessment is not required however to accompany planning applications for agricultural buildings to house primarily sheep or horses.

Water Consumption

- 8.98 Hotter, drier spring and summer growing seasons mean agricultural businesses require more water to irrigate crops in the warming climate. 60% of England’s irrigation licences are located in East Anglia and Water Resources East Regional Plan projects that water needs for irrigation could more than double by 2050 (from 190 Ml/d today to between 264 and 479 Ml/d by 2050).⁴⁹
- 8.99 The Council is working with Water Resources East and local farming groups to put in place water management plans to manage the water supply more efficiently across all sectors including agriculture.
- 8.100 The agricultural sector is vulnerable to water supply issues as it “often relies on direct abstraction from the environment, a number of these licences have been revoked in Norfolk. On-farm reservoirs, even where present, may only store water for one season or one crop cycle ahead. Climate change is increasing the need for additional storage. Otherwise, there is a risk that sufficient water will not be available to irrigate crops.”³³

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⁴⁹ [WRE-Regional-Water-Resources-Plan-for-Eastern-England](#)

- 8.101 All new agricultural development, where possible should utilise water harvesting and reuse systems to collect and store runoff and stormwater in their schemes. These also have additional benefits in reducing runoff volume and preventing water quality degradation downstream.
- 8.102 Additionally, any development proposals that are reliant on the use of a private water supplies, consideration should be given as to whether any increased abstraction will impact on the water supplies of local residents and businesses. In the event that this may be a concern, the applicant may be requested to supply a hydrogeological assessment which examines the impacts.

Water Quality

- 8.103 Part of Breckland is in the catchment of the River Wensum and The Broads, which have a high level of protection under European law as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) being two of the best examples of natural watercourses in Europe and for its associated aquatic ecological interest. These river catchments have significantly declined in quality over recent years due to high concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus within the water, which have exceeded favourable condition limits. This is a significant issue on water quality and ecology.
- 8.104 Following a legal case known as the 'Dutch Case', Natural England advised all affected local authorities with nutrient issues in their river courses that all new development needed to demonstrate 'nutrient neutrality' (no net increases of nutrients from the development and associated activities) to be approved under the Habitat Regulations 2017⁵⁰
- 8.105 Diffuse pollution from some agricultural operations can also significantly increase phosphorus levels entering the river system, particularly from the use of fertilisers, livestock farming, the storing of slurry and anaerobic digesters.

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⁵⁰ [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017](#)

8.106 Farmers are required to operate within various regulations that are outside the remit of the local authority's control, however the appropriate regulations for the reduction and prevention of agricultural pollution 2018⁵¹ and the Farming Rules for Water⁵² are relevant to water quality and agricultural practices. Any intensification of existing farming practices must demonstrate that they are legally compliant in terms of this legislation for further development to be approved. However, if the proposed development enables legal compliance to be achieved, this will need to be explained within the application.

Flood Risk

8.107 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) assesses the levels of flooding within Breckland. It aims to ensure that planning policies and any allocated development sites will not increase the risk of flooding onsite or anywhere else in their surrounding areas. It identifies the District's main flood risk areas, taking into account all sources of flooding and other flooding strategies in the area, this will include not only those areas identified by the Environment Agency but also Norfolk County Council (LLFA) and local intelligence to identify a more complete record of flood prone areas.

8.108 Flood risk and surface water run-off should be carefully addressed. Active management techniques and mitigation measures proposed should also be taken into account. In areas particularly prone to flooding and in respect of planning applications for major agriculture developments (sites of 1 hectare or more), the Environment Agency will be consulted. A Flood Risk Assessment may be necessary in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, paragraph 173.

8.109 Sustainable water management will be required to be an integral element of development in order to reduce flood risk. All SuDs features should be designed in accordance with Ciria SuDs Manual.⁵³

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⁵¹ [The Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)

⁵² [Applying the farming rules for water - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁵³ [Update to the SuDS Manual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Highway Safety and Access

- 8.110 The primary cause for concern in relation to transport issues is the increase in the number and frequency of large farm machinery and lorry movements on narrow rural lanes. This can lead to worries over highway safety, noise, damage to highway surfaces and their verges as well as small narrow bridges over time and the mud and dust in the roads causing hazardous driving conditions.
- 8.111 Therefore, full consultation should take place with the local highway's authority prior to the determination of planning applications to ensure that issues of highway safety are addressed.

Public Rights of Way

- 8.112 If a proposed new agricultural development directly affects a Public Rights of Way an assessment will be required to accompany the application. It is important to ensure that the agricultural developments, whilst taking into account the need for the new development, does not have a significant impact on public rights of way. Both the use and enjoyment of public rights of way should not be adversely affected.

Historic Environment

- 8.113 Breckland's historic environment and heritage assets (those elements of significance with statutory protection) are significant contributors to sustainable development. Together they contribute to the distinctiveness of the District and help to create a sense of place. A well cared for historic environment is key attractor for tourism and investment and generally contributes to a good quality environment.
- 8.114 As the location for some of the development proposals associated with agriculture might be in close proximity or be located within historic farmsteads, they could potentially have a significant impact on the setting of designated and other national or regionally important sites. These impacts will be assessed at the pre-determination stage of a planning application and, where appropriate, mitigation measures to address any adverse

impacts.

ENV 11: Agricultural Intensification

Proposals that involve major agricultural Development or intensification must have considered and addressed the following issues:

Residential Amenity

All applications need to consider its impact on any nearby residential amenity including noise, odour and light pollution and demonstrate how any of these impacts have been considered and mitigated.

Noise

Any proposals which involve the increase in machinery or operations which are likely to increase noise adversely on any nearby residential amenity, European Protected Sites for Species sensitive to noise and/or prevailing landscape acoustic character would be required to provide a noise impact assessment with associated provisions to minimise or mitigate the increase in noise. This would apply to any proposals which would increase in existing operations.

Odour

Any proposals which are likely to release odours or add to existing odorous processes including but not limited to intensive animal rearing, processing animal remains or storage of animal waste, which are likely to impact on nearby residential amenity, would be required to provide an odour assessment and associated odour management plan for the proposal.

Light pollution

Any outdoor lights associated with the proposed agricultural development should explain the purpose of its use and should be:

- a. Fully Shielded (enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments)

- b. Directed downwards to where it is needed (mounted horizontally to the ground below horizon height and not tilted upwards)
- c. Switched on only when needed (no dusk to dawn lamps)
- d. Be no brighter than necessary with a colour temperature of less than 3000K and ideally to a maximum of 500 lumens.
- e. White light low-energy lamps (preferably LED's) and not orange or pink sodium sources

Landscapes and Visual Impact

All agricultural proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have considered the impact of their development on the surrounding countryside and how these impacts have been addressed in the design of their proposals.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

All agricultural proposals (except a few exemptions)⁵⁴ will be required to meet the mandatory requirement of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Any proposals that exceed this will be favourably considered.

Proposals should consider any geodiversity impacts of their schemes and avoid such impacts, however, if these cannot be avoided, should demonstrate how these would be minimised and mitigated for.

Agricultural Development near The Brecks SPA

All proposals which are within the 1,500m constraint zone of the Brecks would be required to provide HRA to demonstrate the need for the facility and justify why it cannot be located elsewhere on the farm outside of the buffer and justify why this is the best location within the buffer.

Additional information would be required on:

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⁵⁴ [Gov UK guidance on biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments](#)

The lighting scheme including information on the light impacts of the proposal. The scheme should demonstrate how the layout of the building has been designed to avoid vehicle headlights and any lighting from doorways and windows. Any security lighting must not spill towards the SPA.

Demonstrate that no increase of pedestrian activity within the SPA area would result from the development proposals.

Demonstrate that there is no significant increase in noise levels and if required provide a noise impact assessment.

For proposals for grain or fodder stalls, a pest management plan would be required.

Ammonia and Nitrogen Deposition and Air Pollution

For any applications within 10Km of a European Protected Site, which include:

f. an agricultural building to house any of the following livestock- beef and dairy cattle, pigs, or poultry or

g. to create a new or expand an existing pit, tank, or lagoon for storing slurry or

h. for an anaerobic digester with a combustion plant;

an air quality impact assessment will be required.

For applications for anaerobic digesters without a combustion plant within 500m of a European Protected Site, an air quality impact assessment will be required.

Water Consumption

Any proposals which require the use of water within its operations should include a water management plan demonstrating the efficient use of water including the use of water harvesting and reuse systems where possible.

Any potential impact from the development scheme on water supplies for local residents, a hydrogeological assessment should be included with the application.

Water Quality

All new agricultural development which may adversely affect water quality e.g. through the increase of livestock, slurry provision or water run off within the designated nutrient sensitive catchment areas of the River Wensum SAC and The Broads SAC are required to demonstrate how these impacts have been considered to reduce their impacts through building design, slurry covers, waste management systems and other nutrient management measures.

Any applications which involve increased livestock in proximity of a river course will be expected to demonstrate measures to reduce the nutrient inputs into the River Wensum SAC or The Broads SAC e.g., by restricting livestock access to the riverbank through fencing and the implementation of sediment traps.

Any intensification of existing farming practices must demonstrate that they are legally compliant in terms of having the necessary permits for further development to be approved. Any new development which enables legal compliance will need to be explained within the application.

Flood Risk and Surface Water Run Off

In areas particularly prone to flooding and in respect of planning applications for major agriculture developments (sites of 1 hectare or more), the Environment Agency will be consulted. A Flood Risk Assessment may be necessary in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, paragraph 103.

Where such a Flood Risk Assessment is deemed necessary, it should be appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and should consider:

- i. Flood risk and surface water run-off implications;
- j. Any increased risk arising elsewhere;
- k. Measures proposed to deal with these risks and effects, e.g. restricting run-off to the Greenfield rates;
- l. Explaining what attenuation measures are in place designed to the 1% with climate change standard to prevent flood risk; and
- m. How the scheme is designed to prevent run-off and erosion issues

Sustainable drainage systems should be utilised where possible following the latest CIRIA SuDs Manual

Highways Safety and Access

Any potential impact on existing highways should be considered early on with consultation with the Local Highways Authority

Public Rights of Way

Any development that has an adverse impact on Public Rights of Way would have to provide thorough justification for its impact.

The Historic Environment

The Local Plan seeks to protect the historic environment and heritage assets from any adverse effects from development including agricultural development.

Any development proposals likely to have a potential impact on a heritage asset would be required to provide a detail heritage statement.

Open Space

- 8.115 Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as 'land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground'. Allotments are also included under the definition of open space. Open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes, and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.
- 8.116 The NPPF states that policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports, and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments is then used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.
- 8.117 For planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities. The most recent audit of all open space provision within Breckland District, excluding Thetford Forest⁽⁵⁵⁾, was undertaken in 2015, work to update this assessment is underway to take account of potential changes in the provision and quality of space over the last 10 years, and note additional areas of space that may have been created within and as part of new development.
- 8.118 The current Open Space Assessment evaluated the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and recreational land provision in the Breckland District (excluding Thetford Forest) and recommended standards and effective mechanisms in order for appropriate provision to be secured to

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⁵⁵ Thetford Forest was excluded from the audit because not all of the forest is publicly accessible. Large areas remain a working forest managed by the Forestry Commission and an important supplier of timber. Thetford Forest also extends into Suffolk. It was considered that the inclusion of such a large area would compromise the open space figure for Breckland and show a disproportionate surplus and/or deficiency.

meet future needs. The assessment noted that Breckland District has a deficit, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in outdoor playing space provision.

- 8.119 The 2015 study showed that when assessing overall playing space in the District at a Fields in Trust (FIT) guidance of 2.56 ha per 1000 population, 70% of the parishes in the District did not meet the FIT guidance. The five market towns of Attleborough, Thetford, Dereham, Swaffham and Watton were shown to have the largest deficiencies in total playing space provision for their populations compared to the FIT guidance, with Thetford having the largest deficiency of any parish in the District. The Updated Open Space Assessment and Playing Pitch Strategy will take into account any new open space or playing pitch provision as a result of housing development since the adoption of the current local plan and provide a new assessment on deficiencies and/or over-supply.
- 8.120 The Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGST) requires that sites of at least 2ha in size, of accessible green space, are available per 1000 people based on no one living more than 300m from the nearest area of natural green space. It also recommends that no one should live 2km from at least one accessible site of at least 20ha; 5 km from at least one accessible site of at least 200ha; and 10km from at least one accessible site of 500ha.
- 8.121 In conclusion, the Breckland Open Space, Sport, and Recreation study 2015 also recommended that:
- The standard found acceptable in the open space assessment of 2.56 ha of open space (0.8 ha for children's play and 1.76 ha for outdoor sport) per 1000 population should be used as a local standard for open space provision and;
 - that there should be a greater focus on provision of new facilities to address quantitative deficits.
- 8.122 The updated Open Space and Playing Pitch Strategy will review the progress in addressing these quantitative deficits and provide recommendations for the new local plan where there should be a greater focus on provision of

new facilities to address quantitative deficits, which will be delivered through new housing development;

- All new children's play and outdoor sports areas should be designed having regard to FIT and Sport England standards to ensure the highest quality of open space area is provided; and
- In terms of outdoor sports, all dwellings in major housing areas must be within 1.2km of outdoor sports areas as recommended by FIT. Outdoor sport areas should be located near to public transport routes, have good provision for car parking and have easy access for pedestrians and cycles. In terms of children's play areas, all dwellings in housing areas should be within 100m of a local area of play (LAP), 400m of a local equipped area for play (LEAP) and 1000m of a neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) as recommended by FIT.

These conclusions and recommendations for Plan making will be reviewed as up to date evidence and a revised Open Space Assessment is completed. Further guidance on Open Space Design has been developed within the Breckland Design Guide 2024

ENV 12: Open Space, Sport & Recreation

Open space designations as identified through latest evidence are shown on the Policies Map.

Existing Provision

Development that would result in the loss of existing designated open space will only be permitted if:

- a. It can be demonstrated (through a local assessment) that there is an excess of recreational or amenity open space in the settlement and the proposed loss will not result in a current or likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- b. recreational facilities within the open space will be enhanced by the proposed development on an appropriate portion of the open space: or

c. the community would gain greater benefit from the development providing a suitable alternative recreational or amenity open space in an equally accessible and convenient location.

New Provision

Currently, all new residential development of 11 or more dwellings will be expected to provide a contribution towards outdoor playing space equivalent to 2.56 hectares per 1,000 population, which equates to 25.6m² of outdoor playing space per person. As set out in the Open Space Assessment (2015), this 25.6m² is broken down to 17.6m² of outdoor sport area and 8m² of children's play space.

There is a presumption that for developments comprising of 25 dwellings or more, outdoor playing space will be provided within the development site. Where on-site provision is provided, the space should be of an appropriate type to serve the needs of the development well related to the proposed residential properties and having regard to relevant standards.

With residential development, priority should be given to the provision of children's play areas since the facility is most likely to be required within an easy reach of dwelling and will be required to conform to the 0.8ha per 1000 people standard in provision of children's play area.

It is recognised that there may be cases where the direct provision of outdoor playing space on-site is not the preferred option. It may be that outdoor playing space does not represent an efficient use of land in the context of the site location or that there is a deliverable opportunity to secure a more meaningful area of outdoor playing space that better serves the whole community in close proximity to the application site.

Contributions in lieu of on-site provision for sites of 25 or more dwellings will be the exception and will need to be supported by robust evidence from the applicant that on-site provision is not appropriate and/or viable.

For sites of less than 25 dwellings, on-site provision will be preferable, but may not be appropriate in all cases and proportionate evidence will be required from the applicant to demonstrate that on-site provision is not appropriate. Any contribution

will need to be towards a specific deliverable scheme in consultation with the relevant parish council and the developer contributions policy in this document. It will be secured through a section 106 agreement.

Where it is not possible to accommodate outdoor sports areas onsite, negotiations will occur on a site-by-site basis to determine specific provision and financial contributions taking into account the financial viability of the development.

In addition to the on-site and off-site contributions, a contribution will be required for 10 years maintenance of the facility. Off-site contribution will be proportional to the type of facility provided and will be calculated having regard to the need for land acquisition, provision of facilities and 10 years maintenance.

Where it can be established through an up-to-date Open Space Assessment that a proposal is located in a Parish assessed to have sufficient play space, provision for other forms of open space which will be informed by the findings of the Open space assessment would be considered as potential to mitigate the specific impacts arising from the proposal.

Occupancy Rates

1 Bedroom	1.5 persons
2 Bedroom	2.0 persons
3 Bedrooms	2.5 persons
4 Bedrooms	3.0 persons
5 Bedrooms +	3.5 persons

Any additional provision on open space will be informed by the Open Space Assessment. Additional guidance on the design of Open Space can be found in the Breckland Design Guide.

Local Green Space

8.123 The NPPF introduced a new designation of “Local Green Space” as a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The NPPF outlines that once designated, development on Local Green Space should only be considered appropriate in very special circumstances. National policy also states the designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

8.124 Breckland District Council supports neighbourhood plan groups in identifying Local Green Spaces in their Neighbourhood Plans. The Policies Maps will be updated in recognition of any Local Green Spaces designated in made neighbourhood plans.

8.125 In addition, as part of this Plan making process a number of responses were received seeking designation of land as Local Green Space. From these submissions, several sites are considered as potential locations for designation as outlined in the Local Green Space policy.

ENV 13: Local Green Space

Applications relating to Local Green Space will be determined in accordance with national policy.

In addition to existing areas of Local Green Space and areas identified through Neighbourhood Plans, the following locations are identified as potential locations for Local Green Space Designation:

006: Old Highways Surveyor Land, Burton Manor, Southburgh, Cranworth

007: Old School, Playing Field, Cranworth

009: Cranworth Village Green, Cranworth

001: Playing Field behind Croxton Village Hall, Croxton

023: Land to north of Lolly Moor, Westfield, Dereham

015: Gressenhall Playing Field, Gressenhall

068: Dereham Road/Old Hall Road, Mattishall

032: North of Dereham Road, west of Back Lane, Mattishall

033: Rayners Way / Dereham Road, Mattishall

039 / 040: Cathedral Meadows, Church Lane, North Elmham

041: Prince William Wood, Orchard Close, North Elmham

005: Land to rear Wayland Road, Rockland All Saints

021: North End, Snetterton

002: Old Swaffham to Watton Railway (Sporle Road and Norwich Road), Swaffham

012: Open space at Swans Nest, Otter Road (site including Play Area adjacent Clover Road), Swaffham

018: Village Hall Playing Fields, Swanton Morley

019: Playing field, Manns Lane, Swanton Morley

020: Cricket Club, The Angel, Swanton Morley

8.126 Submitted sites not proposed as LGS:

- 004: Gressenhall Bowling Green Gressenhall
- 013. Former Mileham Old School Playing field, Back Lane, Mileham

- 069: Dereham Road, Mattishall
- 034: Thynnes Lane, Mattishall
- 035: Mattishall Primary School Playing Fields (already designated LGS in NP)
- 036: East of Malt House Farm, Mattishall
- 037: Norwich Road, Mattishall
- 016: Old School Playing Field, Mileham
- 014: Wilby Green, Wilby, Quiddenham
- 042: Land at Church Lane, Shipdham
- 003: Highfields, Lynn Road, Swaffham
- 008: Ceres Rise, Swaffham
- 011: Open space at Redland Park, Brandon Road, Swaffham
- 013: Open space at Pedlars Meadow, Norwich Road, Swaffham
- 010: Woodrising village green, Cranworth
- 044: Field Maple Road, Watton
- 062: Whitebeam Crescent, Field Maple Estate Central Space, Watton
- 038: Wild Cherry Close, Watton
- 043: Loch Neaton, Dereham Road, Watton
- 045: Church Road, Watton
- 046: Church Walk, Watton
- 047: Ventura House, Norwich Road, Watton
- 048: Langmere Road, Watton
- 049: Stokes Avenue, Watton
- 050: Bridle Road, Watton
- 051: Heron Way, Watton
- 052: Harvey Street, Watton
- 053: Edinburgh Close, Watton
- 054: Jubilee Road, Watton
- 055: South Road, Watton
- 056: George Trollop Road, Watton
- 057: Merton Road, Watton
- 058: Memorial Garden, Watton

9 Design Quality and Principles

- 9.1 This section relates to raising the standards of design in the District that future development is recognisably of its place and contributes to its character and distinctiveness as it evolves over time. High standards are expected of the design, construction, and implementation of new development from the early design work and master planning, its architecture, landscaping and ecological benefits, infrastructure, and sustainability.
- 9.2 The Council has prepared two documents to support good design, which are based on the National Design Guide's ten characteristics of well-designed places and followed the process outlined by the National Model Design Code. The Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, which was completed in 2023, which built upon the work of the Breckland Landscape Character Assessment in 2007, these documents form the framework to describe the character of areas. They are also the basis for the Breckland Design Guide which was adopted in 2024. The Council expects new development to create attractive, thriving, and engaging places to live that contribute to local communities' quality of life, by expecting high standards of design. Developers and their agents will be expected to refer to and abide by the guidance within the Breckland Design Guide and the Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment in all their development proposals.
- 9.3 The Council has set out six design priorities for the design of new development in Breckland and these are described within the Breckland Design Guide, which also provides guidance on these priorities. These also form the vision and objectives for development design in Breckland. These six design priorities are:
1. Development which complements and enhances its context.
 2. Development which has inclusive engagement processes.
 3. Development which integrates with nature.

4. Development which encourages active travel and mitigates the impact of vehicles.
5. Development which contributes to a distinctive local identity.
6. Development which incorporates climate responsive design. See the Chapter on Climate Change for further information on this theme.
7. Development which complements and enhances its context.

9.4 The Council believes that good design begins with a thorough understanding of the site and its context. The Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment has been prepared to help applicants to understand Breckland's character. Development proposals must demonstrate their understanding and explain how their development responds positively to the local context through the submission of design and access statements with their applications. New development should be inspired by the quality and character of the architecture, townscapes, and landscapes of Breckland, and draw on the positive examples from the surrounding area not the poor-quality ones. All new development design should be well-integrated into its local context but also be future proofed so that new places and buildings will continue to contribute to the distinctive identity of places in the future as well as today.

Development which has inclusive engagement processes.

9.5 The Council considers that the involvement of Breckland's communities in the development of their towns and villages is vital to the success of shaping them for the future. Communities bring essential local knowledge which can help a development integrate well into its local area. Collaboration and open engagement are encouraged as this achieves good outcomes for everyone including housebuilders, developers, their design teams and agents, communities, and the Council. Developers should engage with the local community and the Council early on in their proposals. Any proposals that have differed from the community's advice should clearly state in their application their reasons for doing so.

Development which integrates with nature.

9.6 Breckland's landscapes contribute to the district's identity and create attractive settings for its settlements. New development should integrate and complement the natural landscape by incorporating and celebrating existing mature landscape features including hedgerows which not only provide ideal habitats for biodiversity but can also integrate a new building into the landscape. Roadside hedgerows also provide effective amenity privacy and screening for residents. Development proposals should also encourage greater biodiversity in their schemes and further information on biodiversity can be found in Policy ENV03 on Biodiversity Net Gain. New development should also contribute to the wellbeing of communities by providing better access to nature. In considering development proposals consideration will be given to the landscape strategy of the development as well as developments overall contribution to its local context. These landscape strategies should be considered early on in the design process and not as an afterthought.

Development which encourages active travel and mitigates the impact of vehicles.

9.7 Movement networks have shaped Breckland's settlements and continue to inform the layout and patterns of development. Movement strategies have a vital role in encouraging active travel and reducing the use of the private car by maintaining or creating links to existing services within a settlement or a nearby settlement. Accessible and well-connected developments that are sited close to existing services and facilities will make for healthier and more enjoyable places to live. Walking and cycling should be prioritised, whilst still enabling the safe movement of vehicles with traffic calming methods which are appropriate to the character of the location. Car parking should be designed to be unobtrusive and not detract from the overall attractiveness of the development.

Development which contributes to distinctive local identity.

9.8 Responding appropriately to local identity and contributing to creating local character are key to raising design standards and creating attractive

additions to places that look and feel part of Breckland. The design of development should be inspired by the distinctive qualities of the place where it is situated and should respond genuinely to the local character rather than a superficial nod to a particular historic character type, a contemporary design response may be more appropriate where it reflects, evolves, or innovates local identity. In all cases, new built development must be well-designed and built so that it functions well for all users and is attractive in the long-term and becomes a valued part of the district's heritage in future.

DES 01: Development that complements and enhance its context

Development should complement and enhance its context.

- a. All applications except small scale employment (schemes under 1Ha), should demonstrate an understanding of the local context of the site through a thorough site analysis and explain through the design process how the development corresponds to it.

DES 02: Pre-application engagement and advice

Applicants should engage with communities and the Council.

- a. All major applications, or those contrary to policy, or within a conservation area or setting of a listed building or under the NPPF paragraph for isolated homes should seek pre-application advice.
- b. To allow meaningful community engagement with larger developments, all multi-phase developments should provide a masterplan providing key information on the number and types of dwellings, density & heights, layout and frontages, design codes, landscape strategy, open space provision, movement strategy, ecology plans in BNG gain and Nutrient Mitigation if required, and SuDs strategy.

DES 03: Integrating development with nature

Development proposals should be designed around existing mature landscape features which support local character or biodiversity. Existing mature trees and

hedgerows should be retained as they are important landscape features for biodiversity, integrating development into the landscape and for providing privacy and screening. Removal of hedgerows and trees should be clearly and robustly justified in the planning application.

Development proposals should maintain locally important views, open spaces, or landscape features particularly in edge of settlement or rural locations. Locally important views, open spaces and features are those which have been identified within Neighbourhood Plans or have been identified as intrinsically linked to the character through the Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment.

Development proposals in rural villages which have a “dispersed” or “interrupted” character with existing gaps, some form of gap should be retained to maintain the local character.

Landscape strategies should be considered early on the development design, and applicants should demonstrate how the built development has been designed to work alongside the landscape strategy. Landscape strategies should include a rationale of how they complement the building and contribute to the wider landscape, with planting regimes which enhance the landscape character of the site, encourage biodiversity, and provide access to nature both within the development and beyond the site constraints where possible. Landscape Strategies should be submitted together with the development scheme.

DES 04: Encouraging active travel and mitigating the impact of vehicles

New development should always prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over cars and should identify all key walking and cycling routes to key local facilities and services. High speed should be designed out of any proposals with appropriate traffic calming measures, which are sensitive to the local character.

Car parking should be designed to be safe and functional but should also not dominate the street scene or inhibit walking and cycling. Any parking to the front of

buildings should be limited, and planting should be integrated to break up rows of parking.

DES 05: Distinctive local identity

New development should relate to the positive local character and enhance it, evolving and innovating existing character in a way that is appropriate to local circumstances. Applicants should demonstrate how their schemes have achieved these criteria with reference to the Breckland Design Guide and other appropriate guidance.

Proposals should retain where possible existing building and landscape features and incorporate them positively into their development proposal.

Development blocks should be designed to create well-defined streets and orientated to maximise environmental performance.

Plot sizes should be appropriate to the character of the local area, and comparable to nearby development. They should be of a sufficient size and shape to allow for amenity space, parking, services, and waste to be accommodated, without cluttering the street scene or impacting on residents 'amenity space'. High density detached housing with narrow gaps between houses create a poor-quality amenity and street scene and will not be acceptable.

Boundary treatments should be of high quality and the materials used should reflect the buildings of the local area. Green boundaries such as hedges are encouraged due to their biodiversity value. Closed boarded fences for street frontages are not acceptable.

Building heights should relate to the buildings and landscape features in their immediate context and follow the rhythm and character of the area. A detraction from the building height character of the area must be justified through thorough analysis on how it responds sensitively to the local character.

Roof forms should correspond to the surrounding context, and this includes the type, pitch, orientation of ridges, materials and colour and the scale and treatment of other functional elements such as dormer windows and chimneys. Roofs should

be designed, where possible and appropriate, to accommodate sustainable features such as solar panels and water management.

Buildings should be well-proportioned in their elevations as well as the location, orientation and size of entrances and windows. Regard should be had to symmetry in fenestration when already visible in the street scene.

All new developments should incorporate any service elements such as e.g. utilities, waste, recycling and where possible, cycle storage, EV charging points and air source heat pumps without impacting the street scene,

More guidance on this Design Theme can be found in the Breckland Design Guide, which should be refer to in all planning applications.

Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage

- 9.9 Through its Future Breckland work, the Council wishes to preserve the distinctive character features and rich heritage of local centres in order to provide an attractive retail experience for both local residents and visitors. This work enabled Historic England's Historic Action Zone Programme for Swaffham Town Centre, leading to improvements to the town centre. The Council is keen to see further improvements in all of its market towns in development design, particularly within town centres but also within local service centre areas.
- 9.10 The Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment provides descriptions of the distinct characters of each market town but also the common characteristics of town centres, which can assist developers with their schemes. Any development within a town centre needs to have regard to these characteristics.
- 9.11 Good quality shopfronts including signage and advertisements not only attract shoppers encouraging them to stay and spend in the town centre, but they also provide interest to the street scene making a vital contribution to the character of the street and the vitality of our market towns and retail

areas. Poorly designed shop fronts and advertising signs which are visually intrusive are detrimental to health of our market town centres.

- 9.12 Although the following policies are mainly applicable to market towns, they will also be applied to any shop frontage, advertising, and signage applications within villages.

DES 06: Shop Fronts, Advertising and Signage

All proposals to alter an existing shopfront or create a new shopfront, including the installation of external security measures, advertisements or canopies, or advertisements proposed in any other location of which it forms a part, and the street scene in which the proposal is located,

a: must not adversely affect amenity and/or public safety.

b: should relate well to the design of the host building and street scene and its setting in terms of its materials, form, colour palette and proportions.

In all town centre areas including conservation areas, new shop fronts, fascia's, awnings, canopies, advertisements, lighting styles, advertisements and other alterations to commercial premises must be of a high standard of design which respects the character of the street scene and/or Conservation Area and the building to which they relate.

Standardised shopfronts, unsympathetic 'House 'signs, projecting box signs, internally illuminated signs and externally lit signs will not normally be granted consents. Where it can be demonstrated that a premises, relies principally on trading after dark, externally illuminated signs sympathetic to the character of the building and the surrounding area may be permissible.

10 Community

Healthy lifestyles

10.1 The built and natural environments are key determinants of health and wellbeing. The NPPF states that one of the three overarching objectives of the planning system is supporting strong, vibrant, and healthy communities and Planning Guidance on Health and Wellbeing highlights that consideration should be given to how new development, especially new housing, will provide opportunities for people to lead healthy lifestyles and create healthy communities. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave local authorities new duties and responsibilities for health improvement and requires every local authority to use all levers at its disposal to improve health and wellbeing; Local Plans are one such lever.

Breckland's Health and Wellbeing

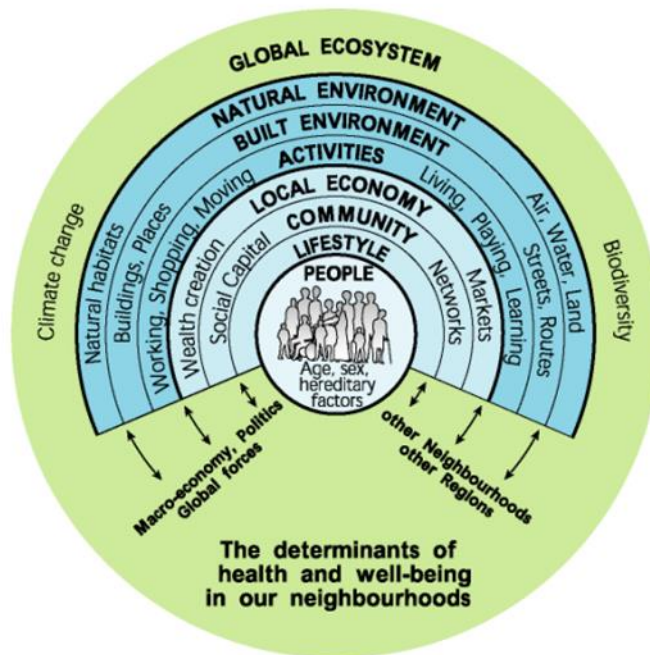
10.2 In Breckland there is a greater average life expectancy for men and women of 80 years and 84 years respectively compared to the rest of England. However, despite 43.1% of Breckland's population reporting good health, women can expect to live 20 years in poor health i.e. from the age of 64 and 17 years from the age of 63 for men. Breckland compared to the rest of Norfolk scores lower on the Index of Multiple Deprivation with a score of 19.6 compared to 21.2. However, there are pockets of deprivation in the market towns of Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford, Watton and the village of Griston which are in the lowest 20% of most deprived neighbourhoods in England. These higher rates of multiple deprivation are based on levels of income, employment, education, and crime. These factors all contribute to poorer health outcomes and are influenced by the built and natural environment.

10.3 Breckland suffers from the same health issues impacting many other areas of the country ; obesity affects 68.9% of the population in Breckland compared to 63.5% for England, increasing mental health issues particularly following the COVID years with an average of 13.82% of patients suffering

from depression and 22.4% of residents experiencing loneliness which is higher than average, high physical inactivity rates at 20.7% and high levels of smoking and alcohol consumption also add to the health challenges in the District. The planning system has a role to play in helping to alleviate these health issues in locating development in sustainable locations and designing-in wellbeing into schemes to create healthy places to live.

- 10.4 The Norfolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Breckland Health and Wellbeing Strategy has identified several key drivers of education, employment, wealth, housing, nutrition, family life, transport, and social isolation, that play a significant role in the health outcomes in Breckland. These key drivers are directly linked to the demand for health provision and are all influenced by the built and natural environment. Ensuring a healthy and safe environment that contributes to people’s health and wellbeing is consequently a key objective of the Council.
- 10.5 It is now widely understood that the design of neighbourhoods can influence physical activity levels, travel patterns, social connectivity, food consumption, mental and physical health, and wellbeing outcomes. A check list of six healthy planning themes have been identified which create healthy places to live and these are illustrated below in Barton and Grant’s Health Map (2006). These themes are Partnership and Inclusion, Healthy Environment, Vibrant Neighbourhoods, Active Lifestyles, Healthy Housing and Economic activity and these themes are reflected in the policies throughout the Local Plan and the guidance in the Breckland Design Guide and follow the principles of Building for a Healthy Life⁵⁶.

a. Determinants of health and wellbeing (Barton and Grant, 2010)⁵⁷



10.6

10.7 Along with designing healthy places to live, planning policies and decisions should make sufficient provision for facilities such as health infrastructure in order to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places that support healthy lifestyles. Engagement between Local Planning Authorities and relevant organisations will help ensure that local development documents support both these aims.

10.8 Decision making in development will form part of a holistic approach to health and wellbeing incorporating services across the Council, including Planning, coordinated through the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and engagement and joint working with the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board.

10.9 Breckland Council along with other Norfolk Local Authorities, the Norfolk Waveney Integrated Care Board, Health Partners, Public Health Norfolk, and Public Health Suffolk created the Planning in Health Engagement Protocol

1.1

⁵⁷ Barton H and Grant M (2006) A health map for the local human habitat The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health November 2006 126: 252-253

(2022)⁵⁸. The Protocol provides a process in which relevant NHS organisations and local authorities should consult to ensure that health considerations are adequately accounted for in plan making and planning applications, this not only includes health service provision but also that the design of development promotes healthy lifestyles for example through active travel or good air quality. The protocol is triggered for all housing development of 50 dwellings or more, care facilities, housing for the elderly, student accommodation, any development which would result in a significant loss of public open space and any other housing development which is considered to significantly impact on health services or have significant health implications.

COM 01: Healthy Lifestyles

New development in Breckland is expected to contribute to the protection and improvement of the physical, social, and mental health and wellbeing of Breckland's residents and to refer to the Breckland Design Guide in creating healthy places to live which are:

- a. Inclusive, safe, and attractive places to live which encourage social interaction and provide for all age groups and abilities.
- b. Designed to enable active and healthy lives through prioritising access to inclusive, active, and environmentally sustainable forms of travel and through promoting road safety and managing the negative effects of road traffic.
- c. Diverse in a mixture of housing types and tenures that meet the needs of all sectors of the population: the elderly, those with disabilities, extended families; low-income households; and those seeking to self-build.
- d. Energy efficient homes with good standards of indoor air quality and ventilation and adaptable to the impact of climate change.

- e. Protected from environmental houses such as noise, ground and water contamination, flood risk, vibration, and poor indoor and outdoor air quality.
- f. Employment diverse in the variety of quality employment opportunities for all skillsets and abilities along with the education and training facilities to enable residents to fulfil their potential.
- g. Socially enriched with social infrastructure to support development such as health, leisure and education which is accessible and inclusive.
- h. New green infrastructure as well as protecting and enhancing existing green infrastructure to promote well-being.
- j. Digital inclusion through high-quality broadband and other digital services to homes, educational facilities, and employment.

Health and Social care partners and Public Health are to be consulted on all planning applications for housing developments of 50 dwellings or more, and for care homes, housing for the elderly, student accommodation and loss of open space.

LPA's will also consult on those sites less than 50 dwellings where there is likely to be cumulative impact (exceeding 50 dwellings) when considered with other contiguous application/s or applications close by. Health partners and Public Health comments to focus on ensuring development will enable healthy lifestyles and allow service delivery to be planned effectively.

New development and Health Impact Assessments

- 10.10 Development where there is likely to be clear health implications will require a formal Health Impact Assessment (HIA). These will normally be, but not limited to, large and complex proposals. In such cases the developer will be required to commission such an assessment from an independent and reputable body. For developments of five or more dwellings, or non-residential development above 1,000 square metres, a Healthy Planning Checklist should be included as part of the supporting documentation with

planning applications. Further information on the Healthy Planning Checklist is available in Appendix 2 of the Planning in Health Protocol (2022)

- 10.11 A HIA is a well-established and widely used range of techniques, which systematically checks that a policy or project will not have unforeseen and negative effects. Approaches to HIA may range from a quantitative emphasis, relying heavily on epidemiological analysis^[59] or a qualitative analysis, drawing on community or stakeholder perceptions, or a combination. The methodology should be agreed with the NHS Norfolk/NCC Public Health at an early stage.

COM 02: New Development and Health Impacts

New development will be expected to take appropriate steps to avoid/mitigate potential negative effects on health and facilitate enhanced health and well-being through the provision of conditions supportive of good physical and mental health. Where possible, new development should also seek to reduce disparities in health between different parts of Breckland by addressing detrimental environmental social and economic conditions.

Development in Air Quality Management Areas and those areas identified as affecting or likely to affect the control of relevant pollutants within the Air Quality Management Area, should be consistent with the local air quality action plan⁵⁹.

Developers will be expected to demonstrate the above, through the following criteria:

- a. A Health Impact Assessment where the Council considers there are likely to be clear health implications from the proposal.
- b. A Healthy Planning Checklist for development of 5 dwellings/1,000m² of non-residential development or more.

1.1

⁵⁹ https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/13048/Breckland-AQAP-2018/pdf/Breckland_Council_Air_Quality_Action_Plan_2018.pdf?m=637448319292030000

c. An assessment of the likely impact of the development on air quality, for development of 5 dwellings/1,000m² of non-residential or more, in or impacting on areas identified as 'at risk' of exceeding air quality objectives.

Protection of amenity

- 10.12 A core principle identified in the NPPF is to create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 10.13 The following policy, applying to all forms of development within the District including changes of use, taken together with the Plan's Design and Community policies and the Breckland Design Guide, seek to ensure a high-quality design and quality of life for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. This policy sets out relevant considerations for assessing the effects of proposals relating to amenity issues.
- 10.14 The development of land and buildings presents the opportunity to provide improvements to the social and economic well-being of everyone living, working, or visiting the District. The protection of the amenities of the District is fundamental to the economic and social well-being of the District. If Breckland is to thrive in the region it must be promoted as an attractive place to work as well as live; the District's environmental and cultural assets are key to this promotion.
- 10.15 For the purposes of this policy, 'amenity' is defined as those desirable features of a place that ought to be protected or enhanced in the public interest. For example, residential amenity includes the protection of adequate levels of sunlight/daylight, access, privacy, outlook, private open space, as well as safeguarding from unacceptable noise and disturbance (including traffic), smell, dust, insects, and light pollution from, for example, commercial or agricultural uses etc.
- 10.16 The potential impact of development needs to be considered both on an individual as well as cumulative basis. The continuance of existing businesses

should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on it because of the introduction of new and incompatible land uses. Such matters will be an important planning consideration in relation to amenity expectations.

COM 03: Protection of amenity

For all new development consideration will need to be given to general amenity impact issues, especially residential amenity. Development will not be permitted which causes unacceptable effects on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants or does not provide for adequate levels of amenity for future occupants. In assessing the impact of development on the living conditions of occupants, regard will be had to the following amenity considerations:

- a. The protection of adequate areas of usable and scheduled private amenity space for the occupiers of existing dwellings;
- b. The provision of adequate areas of usable and secluded private amenity space for the occupiers of proposed dwellings, in keeping with the character of the immediate surrounding areas;
- c. Overlooking of windows of habitable rooms and private amenity space.
- d. Overbearing impact/visual dominance.
- e. Overshadowing of private amenity space.
- f. Loss of daylight and/or sunlight to existing windows of habitable rooms.
- g. Odour, noise, vibration or other forms of nuisance such as artificial light pollution, insects, and vermin, and
- h. Other forms of pollution (including contaminated land, dust, air pollution, for example the emission of particulates etc).

Community facilities

10.17 The Local Plan aims to support thriving urban and rural communities whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Whilst the delivery of new development - in particular housing - will be directed to the most sustainable locations in line with the locational strategy, there is a need to support the settlement hierarchy, rural economy and sustainable communities through the retention and development of local services and community facilities, such as village halls, schools, rural shops, and public houses.

10.18 For the purposes of this policy community facilities are defined as:

- local shops
- meeting places
- indoor and outdoor sports venues
- recreation/play areas
- cultural buildings
- public houses
- EV charging/petrol filling stations, and
- places of worship.

10.19 These, and the provision of new facilities at an appropriate scale to the settlement, will be supported.

10.20 The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. Planning policies and decisions should:

- Plan positively and promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, and places of worship.

- Ensure that established shops, facilities, and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community, and
- Support sustainable growth of rural businesses, diversification of agricultural businesses and rural tourism and leisure developments.

10.21 It is recognised that local shops, and other community facilities such as pubs, post offices, EV charging/petrol filling stations and sports and leisure facilities perform a valuable role in providing for daily needs in local communities across Breckland, not only reducing the need to travel for convenience goods shopping but helping to maintain a sense of place and uniqueness for Breckland's rural communities. The loss of a valued local community facility or service can significantly reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs and have an adverse impact on the wellbeing and social interaction of that community.

10.22 Accessibility to facilities and services remains a key issue for many communities in the District. To reduce the need to travel, to access everyday facilities and to maintain sustainable communities, the Council supports the provision and retention of community facilities as reflected through the proposed hierarchy of centres.

10.23 The strategic economic policy direction regarding the retail hierarchy seeks to maintain and support the provision in smaller villages serving more localised rural needs. The policy approach being to retain essential, facilities especially where they are the only such facility within a village. Local retail provision will be supported at a scale proportionate to the existing size and catchment but not to a level which would undermine similar provision in neighbouring villages. Other community facilities such as pubs, village halls, libraries, places of worship and schools also play a vital role in ensuring Breckland is a great place to live, work, learn and visit.

10.24 Proposals which would result in the loss of a community facility must demonstrate that efforts have been made to retain the facility and that

opportunities for conversion to alternative community uses have also been explored. Supporting information should typically include:

- Marketing information such as the length of time for sale and the asking price.
- Details of the level of interest generated and any offers received.
- Consultation with, and level of interest from, the local community / service providers on a possible alternative community use.
- Whether there is scope for the multi-use of buildings or innovative ways of combining a range of services and facilities on one site.

10.25 In addition, under the Localism Act 2011, local communities can propose to add to the local register an asset of community value. Neighbourhood Plans are also well placed to highlight the valuable role of local centres and community facilities and can identify deficiencies in the provision of community facilities and help to safeguard existing ones.

COM 04: Protecting and enhancing Community Facilities

The creation, enhancement and expansion of community facilities will be supported where this would enhance the existing offer, benefit the local economy and be of a suitable scale and type for its location and in locations in proximity to the area that they will serve.

Proposals, including change of use (outside permitted development rights), which result in the loss of local community buildings (most recently used for this purpose where the use has ceased), will not be permitted unless:

- a: It can be demonstrated that there is no local need for the facility or that its continuing function is no longer viable following appropriate marketing, or
- b: An equivalent facility in terms of quality is provided to serve the same community in an accessible location.

All proposals relating to the provision, loss or redevelopment of Indoor Sports Facilities will have regard to the key findings and recommendations of the latest guidance on Indoor Sport and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities.

11 Resilient and adaptable infrastructure

Transport

11.1 This section sets out the Council's approach to managing growth in car travel and its linked impacts on the local economy, the environment, and communities. Norfolk's fourth Local Transport Plan, sets out a range of objectives for transport and accessibility, by 2036, focused upon:

1. Embracing the future – maximising use of new technology.
2. Delivering a sustainable Norfolk – seeking to ensure new development is beneficial to Norfolk's society, environment, and economy.
3. Enhancing connectivity – making it as easy as possible for residents and businesses to travel from a to b in Norfolk.
4. Enhancing Norfolk's quality of life – Encouraging active travel to improve residents' health and working towards zero carbon.
5. Increasing accessibility – ensuring everyone has access to the facilities and services they require.
6. Improving transport safety - to create a network which encourages safe usage of our roads and to protect vulnerable transport users.
7. A Well Managed and Maintained Transport Network - apply new and innovative technology where it will be most effective.

11.2 The District's economy is such that there are high levels of out commuting and commuting to and from the District's key settlements and market towns which puts pressure on the road network during peak periods. 2021 census data showed over 10,000 residents travel 10-20km to their place of employment and 60% of travel to work journeys are undertaken by car or van. In addition, within Breckland services such as health and education tend to also be sited within the key settlements and market towns. This means that significant numbers of people must travel relatively long distances to

access everyday facilities, often with the added challenge of variable quality public transport.

- 11.3 Two strategic vehicular routes run through the District. The A11 connects Norwich with Cambridge connecting the strategic growth areas of Attleborough, Thetford and Snetterton Employment Area. Following a high-profile campaign, the remaining single carriageway section of the A11 between Thetford and Barton Mills was dualled during 2013 and 2014. This completes the dualing of the A11 between the M11 and Norwich. These two routes are recognised as core corridors for the East region by the Sub-Regional Transport Body as set out in the [Transport East Strategy](#)⁶⁰.
- 11.4 The A47 runs west to east from Birmingham to Lowestoft connecting Swaffham and Dereham but at present is not fully dualled. The A47 Alliance comprises local authorities, local enterprise partnerships (LEP's), the business community, MPs and stakeholders stretching from Lowestoft to Peterborough. This body has presented a clear business case and lobbied Central Government to commit funding for improvements to the A47. As of early 2024 National Highways are expected to begin work on dualing the A47 from North Tuddenham to Easton imminently – with initial clearance work already underway. This scheme will complete the dualing of the route between Dereham and Norwich making a major enhancement to connectivity for the north of Breckland.
- 11.5 Strategic road improvements must not be at the expense of environmental quality and significantly must not result in an adverse impact to the integrity of Breckland SPA, unless it can be demonstrated that there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) in accordance with the Habitats Directive. Early evidence gathering in relation to the SPA interest is required for strategic transport improvements which impact on The Brecks, in order to inform the appraisal of options and project design. Road

1.1

⁶⁰ Transport Strategy 2022-2050, Transport East: https://www.transporteast.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/20230224-TE_Strategy-FINAL.pdf

improvements will not be promoted within 200m of Breckland SAC and within 1500m of Breckland SPA unless IROPI can be demonstrated.

- 11.6 Public transport services in the District are principally provided by the bus due to the rural nature of the District. Bus services focus on linking the District's market towns with shopping and employment destinations at Norwich, King's Lynn, and Bury St. Edmunds. Infrequent services link rural areas with market towns, principally on market days. The [Norfolk County Council Bus Improvement Plan](#)⁶¹ (NCCBIP) (Dec 2021) does highlight that accessibility levels are lowest across Breckland, this is one of the factors why a digitised Demand Responsive Transport solution is being developed in this area as part of the Rural Mobility Fund. Breckland does have a lower than Norfolk average share of journeys made by bus 1.28% compared to 4.75%.
- 11.7 Reducing the reliance on the private car and promoting active lifestyles are mutually beneficial aims which can be achieved by supporting sustainable travel options. However, it should be recognised that for some communities' public transport, walking and cycling are not realistic options, and therefore travel by car will remain an essential option for many people living in more remote rural areas. Recognising that there is a need to manage the growth in car travel, the Council seeks to widen sustainable transport choices and, particularly for shorter local journeys, encourage a reduction in car use. Additionally, to assist in reducing the need for longer distance travel, the Council will focus on retaining rural employment and local facilities in smaller settlements and encouraging home working. The NCCBIP does show that whilst the proportion of journeys made by bus is below the County average, journeys undertaken by bicycle are higher and walking makes up 20% of journeys in Breckland compared to the Norfolk average of 11.5%.
- 11.8 The District, in common with many other places, has an ageing population where the car will, over time as people get older and live longer, become a less feasible method of transport for an increasing number of residents.

1.1

Bus Improvement Plan, Norfolk County Council, [Norfolk County Council Bus Improvement Plan](#)

- 11.9 Sustainable transport policy INF 01 therefore seeks to widen the choice of travel opportunities using public transport, walking, and cycling. In accordance with the principles of housing policy, parking standards may need to be reviewed over time to provide for new initiatives in line with climate change and low carbon objectives. This might include provision of dedicated spaces with charging points for electric vehicles; small and low-carbon vehicles; shared community ‘pool’ vehicles, and local delivery vehicles.
- 11.10 In May 2023 Norfolk County Council published a Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan that seeks to identify project. This draft Plan outlines indicative improvements and active travel routes for a number of key towns and villages in Breckland including Attleborough, Dereham, Thetford and Watton. As this Infrastructure Plan is finalised and implemented this Local Plan will support its delivery.
- 11.11 Meanwhile, the current Walking and Cycling and Walking Action Plan (2016) and Countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2024 the seeks to encourage walking and cycling illustrating the advantages to productivity, health, and wellbeing, reducing carbon emissions, and encouraging tourism. The Action Plan highlights the following cycling trails within the District: Peddars Way; Little Ouse Way; Nar Valley Way; Wensum Way; and Angles Way.
- 11.12 When considering the opportunities to encourage walking and cycling within the District, it is also necessary to consider the perceptions of safety. Studies have shown that the perceptions of safety in relation to both walking and cycling can result in people choosing to make journeys by the private car.
- 11.13 Sustrans, a leading charity enables people to travel on foot and by bicycle, promotes a number of circulars within Breckland including: The Thetford Circular; the Swaffham Loop; and Route 13, which runs from Fakenham to London and passes through the market towns of Dereham and Watton and also connects the District to the north Norfolk coast.

- 11.14 To encourage the use of low emission vehicles to support improvements in air quality, the Council will be working in partnership with Norfolk County Council to achieve the appropriate provision of electric vehicle charging points, particularly for large scale housing, retail, and commercial developments.

INF 01: Sustainable Transport

The Council will work in partnership to promote a safe, efficient, and convenient sustainable transport system. This will be achieved through:

- a. supporting improvements to the road and rail connections both within the District and to the wider area;
- b. locating development so as to ensure wherever possible, new development is accessible to sustainable modes of transport and makes provision for improved public transport;
- c. promoting improved access to, and interchange between, all modes of transport to key settlements and town centres;
- d. reducing the need to travel by private car in towns and villages and increasing the proportion of shorter journeys made on foot or cycle; thereby providing a genuine alternative to the car and helping to facilitate a modal shift and commensurate reduction in carbon emissions; and
- e. promoting and improving safety, security, and healthy lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling, creating, and improving links to existing routes and, for new developments, ensuring the provision of facilities such as secure, accessible bicycle parking with changing facilities on site.

Development should:

- f. seek to minimise the need to travel;
- g. promote opportunities for sustainable transport modes;
- h. not adversely impact on the operation or safety of the strategic road network;

i. improve accessibility to services; and support the transition to a low carbon future.

INF 02: Transport Requirements

Developments should be of high quality, sustainable in design, construction and layout as well as offering maximum flexibility in the choice of travel modes for all potential users. Proposals will be permitted that:

- a. integrate satisfactorily into existing transport networks;
- b. mitigate impacts on the local or strategic highway networks arising from the development itself, or the cumulative effects of development, through the provision of, or contributions towards, any relevant transport improvement deemed to be necessary, including those secured by legal agreement;
- c. protect, and where possible enhance, access to public rights of way;
- d. provides safe, suitable, and convenient access for all users, including appropriate parking and servicing provision in terms of amount, design, and layout (Appendix 2 provides a starting point); and
- e. avoid inappropriate traffic generation and do not compromise highway safety.

Development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of heavy goods vehicle movements will be required to demonstrate by way of a Routing Management Plan that no severe impacts will be caused to the efficient and safe operation of the road network and no material harm caused to the living conditions of residents.

Major development proposals should include an assessment of the impacts of new development on the existing transport network; and demonstrate how they will maximise connectivity within and through a development and to the surrounding areas, including the provision of high quality and safe pedestrian and cycle routes. Where potential transport impacts are identified, developers will be expected to produce Transport Assessments to assess the impacts and identify appropriate mitigation, together with Travel Plans where appropriate.

Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage

- 11.15 All new development should be located so as to minimise flood risk resulting from that development and cumulatively from other development in the vicinity. The policy approach is to steer development towards areas of low flood risk, Flood Zone 1. National policy requires that a sequential and exception test be applied by reference to identified flood zones.
- 11.16 Flood risk across Breckland is not as widespread compared to many areas of Norfolk; flooding usually occurs adjacent to rivers and other watercourses or in low-lying areas. However, it can also occur elsewhere, such as surface water flooding, groundwater flooding caused by springs, or where buildings or other structures affect the natural drainage of the land. Evidence on flood risk is contained within the latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Sequential Test. A full update to the SFRA is being finalised and will replace the 2017 SFRA.
- 11.17 Norfolk County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) with responsibility for managing local flood risk and surface water flooding and the take up of sustainable drainage systems, as well as being tasked with coordinating the management of local flood risk and the provision of advice to LPAs on drainage for new major development.
- 11.18 The Water Cycle Study, SFRA and any subsequent Surface Water Management Plan will inform the level of detail required to accompany planning applications identified in any designated groundwater protection zones and/or critical drainage catchments, or other areas where there is evidence that there is likely to be an increased risk of surface water flooding (e.g. as a result of specific topography with catchment areas feeding into identified flood-vulnerable areas).
- 11.19 This policy requires surface water drainage issues to be addressed in planning applications, both to ensure that such issues and associated flood risk are considered, and to ensure that the impact of drainage measures on the form and visual appearance of developments is properly taken into

account in the assessment of new development. Where necessary the Council will seek to impose Grampian conditions to ensure that appropriate upgrades are completed to the sewerage network in advance of new development taking place.

- 11.20 The use of soft landscaping and permeable surface materials should be maximised. On-site rainwater storage (ponds, basins, and swales), living roofs and walls (where appropriate) will be required unless the developer can provide justification to demonstrate that this would not be practicable or feasible within the constraints or configuration of the site and would compromise wider regeneration objectives.

INF 03: Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage

All new development will:

- a. be located to minimise the risk of flooding, mitigating any such risk through design, and implementing sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles.
- b. incorporate appropriate surface water drainage mitigation measures to minimise its own risk of flooding and should not materially increase the flood risk to other areas. Particular care will be required in relation to habitats designated as being of international importance in the area and beyond which are water sensitive, as well as habitats designated of regional or local importance. Care will also be required in water sensitive zones specifically the nutrient sensitive zones to the East of the District.
- c. demonstrate it has considered the Lead Local Flood Authority Statutory Consultee for Planning Guidance Document April 2024.

Developers will be required to show that the proposed development would:

- d. not increase green field run off rates and vulnerability of the site, or the wider catchment, to flooding from surface water run-off from existing or predicted water flows;
- e. wherever practicable, have a positive impact on the risk of surface water flooding in the surrounding area adjacent to the development; and

f. address potential impact of infiltration upon groundwater Source Protection Zones and/or Critical Drainage Catchments.

This will be minimised through the installation of infiltration and attenuation measures to dispose of surface water in accordance with sustainable drainage system (SuDS) principles and the refinements to, and evolution of, the technical evidence base and guidance (as may be updated and superseded over the life of this Plan).

Proposals for vulnerable development in medium (zone 2) and higher flood risk areas (zones 3a and 3b) must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment, clearly identifying whether the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users, and whether there may be any potential increase or reduction in flood risk elsewhere. In line with the sequential test, areas of functional floodplain should be protected from development. Where possible, through proposals for re-development, opportunities to reinstate areas of functional flood plain should be taken (e.g. reducing building footprints or relocating to lower flood risk zones).

Consideration should be given to assessing opportunities to undertake river restoration and enhancement as part of a development to make space for water. Enhancement opportunities for renewing assets will be encouraged, where viable (e.g. de-converting, the use of bio-engineered river walls, raising bridge so fits to take into account climate change). Any proposals for enhancement and restoration of the river corridor should be subject to consultation with Norfolk County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, and in relevant cases with neighbouring authorities.

In the case of major development on unallocated sites, if the sequential test shows that it isn't possible to use an alternative site, the applicant will need to submit an additional exception test in line with national policy on Flood Risk Assessments.

All applications should reflect best practice and the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) guidance document April 2024, and any updated version providing the appropriate information required to assist in the determination of such application as issued by the LLFA. This includes the requirement to provide details of means of

adoption and maintenance of the systems over the lifetime of the development at the pre-application stage. In adherence with this guidance, drainage strategies must also consider the potential increase in the volume of run-off from a development as a result of increases in the area of impermeable surfaces. Although run-off rates may be restricted to equivalent greenfield rates, the duration over which the site could discharge at this rate is likely to increase.

Renewable Energy

- 11.21 The NPPF supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and encourages the use of renewable resources, including the development of renewable energy. National policy as a whole supports and encourages the development of renewable energy sources.
- 11.22 Renewable energy is central to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In meeting the challenge and to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, the Council recognises the need to have a positive strategy to promote renewable energy generation, whilst at the same time ensuring that the adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including the cumulative landscape and visual impacts.
- 11.23 There are many different types of renewable energy choices, from solar energy, wind, and biomass through to energy efficient installations such as combined heat and power and ground source heating. All of these technologies and methods of construction have a role to play in meeting Government targets and are seen as positive outcomes for the District. The Council will therefore support and encourage the generation of energy from renewable sources. These will be permitted unless there are unacceptable site specific or other impacts that could not be outweighed by wider environmental, social, economic, and other benefits.

Solar Photovoltaic Farm Planning Considerations

- 11.24 As a rural District, Breckland is particularly suited to solar farms. The Government's solar Photovoltaic (PV) strategy was published in 2014. The aim is to create more financial certainty and investor confidence in order to realise the long term potential for solar PV in the UK at a large and small scale. There is no cap on capacity. It is the Government's ambition to see "more ambitious deployment, perhaps approaching 20 Gigawatts (GW) early in the next decade". In Breckland at January 2024, installed PV capacity was reported at 57.34MW with a further 114MW of capacity currently under construction, awaiting commencement or subject to a live planning application total installed capacity may reach 172MW in the near term. Currently installed PV capacity in Breckland is equivalent to 15% of total operating capacity within Norfolk.
- 11.25 Whilst large scale facilities provide an opportunity for greater energy production (as well as potential enhancement to biodiversity), it is also of importance that they are carefully planned and screened to ensure any amenity and visual impacts are minimised. The NPPF states that applicants for energy development should not have to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and that applications should be approved if their impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.
- 11.26 The Governments' Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on renewable and low carbon energy sets out a set of planning considerations at a national level to assess the impact of large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms. National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) also sets out factors influencing site selection and design, technical consideration, impacts and mitigations. Development proposals should have regard to the PPG and EN-3, in addition to this local policy on renewable energy in order to ensure the proposal is acceptable and can be supported by the Council. Key planning considerations include the quality of agricultural land, the visual and landscape impact, the effect on landscape of glint and glare and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety, the impact of

security infrastructure such as lights and fencing and the impact on the setting of heritage assets.

- 11.27 The Council will consider favourably opportunities for biodiversity enhancements around arrays, the potential for complete restoration of the land and appropriate mitigation such as landscape buffers (trees and hedgerows) where compatible in the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Settlement Fringe Study.
- 11.28 Whilst large scale ground-mounted PV solar farms developments can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.

Anaerobic Digestion Planning Considerations

- 11.29 Anaerobic digestion (AD) is a natural process in which micro-organisms break down the organic matter found in wet biomass waste (such as sewage sludge, animal manure and slurry and waste food) in the absence of oxygen, to produce biogas (mainly a mixture of around 60% methane and 40% carbon dioxide) and digestate (a nitrogen rich fertiliser). The National Non-Food Crops Centre (NNFCC) runs the Government's Anaerobic Digestion Portal (<http://www.biogas-info.co.uk/>) – a gateway to information on anaerobic digestion, biogas and digestate. Reference should also be made to 'The Anaerobic digestion strategy and action plan', published by government on 14 June 2011 and an update on progress on detailed actions published in July 2012. Anaerobic Digestion proposals are regarded as waste treatment facilities, where feedstock is classified as waste under relevant legislation and so relevant related national and county best practice guidance and policies will apply.
- 11.30 Anaerobic Digestion proposals raise a number of planning issues including visual and landscape impacts arising from industrial scale plant / buildings; location concerns (in sustainability terms relative to the source of biomass and where relevant combined heat and power (CHP); electricity and/or gas grid connection), potential odour impacts, air emissions, noise impacts,

protection of the water environment and traffic impacts. Failure to supply adequate environmental information to accompany planning applications for anaerobic digestion projects can be a key cause of delay in determining a planning application. Breckland Council therefore encourages early pre-application engagement on all renewable energy projects to optimise project assessment and delivery.

Wind energy development

11.31 In recent years, new wind energy development in Norfolk has been driven by the favourable conditions offshore, and the potential for larger turbines producing higher amounts of energy. Within Breckland, a substation has been constructed near Necton, to enable the energy generated from offshore wind farms to connect to the National Grid.

All Renewable Energy Environmental Concerns

11.32 In relation to all renewable or low carbon energy development the Government's NPPG also states that: the need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections; cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that large scale solar farms can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of solar arrays in an area increases; local topography is an important factor in assessing whether large scale solar farms could have a damaging effect on landscape and recognise that the impact can be as great in predominately flat landscapes as in hilly or mountainous areas; also, that great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) sets out the clear need for environmental requirements, minimising impacts and achieving environmental enhancements.

INF 04: Renewable Energy Development

The Council supports proposals for new renewable energy and low carbon development, subject to consideration of the impact of the development and whether this can be made acceptable. Proposals will be considered having regard to the extent to which there are:

- a. adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or designated and non-designated heritage assets assessed in line with the policies of this Plan;
- b. adverse effects on residential amenity by virtue of outlook / overbearing impact, traffic generation, noise, vibration, overshadowing, glare, or any other associated detrimental emissions, during construction, operation, and decommissioning;
- c. an irreversible loss of the highest quality agricultural land;
- d. cumulative impacts of renewable energy development on an area; and
- e. adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites; nature conservation interests; and biodiversity, assessed in line with the policies of this Plan.

Proposals will be permitted where the impact is, or can be made, acceptable. Applications will be expected to demonstrate that any adverse impacts can be mitigated. Proposals for renewable energy development including the landward infrastructure for offshore renewable schemes requiring planning permission will be assessed to determine whether the benefits they bring in terms of the amount and usability of energy generated outweigh any adverse impacts. When attributing weight to any harm, in addition to other relevant policies in the Local Plan, regard will be given to national policy and guidance, statutory duty and legislation which seeks protection and enhancement of the landscape; designated and non-statutory heritage assets.

Where appropriate the authority will consider the need for planning conditions requiring the decommissioning and removal of all plant and ancillary equipment, and if necessary the restoration of land, on the cessation of use.

Solar Energy Development

The effective use of land by focusing large scale solar farms on previously developed and non-agricultural land, will be encouraged provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Particular factors that the Council will need to consider where a proposal involves greenfield land include:

f. the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land, where possible; and,

g. that the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays.

Telecommunications

11.33 Modern and effective telecommunications systems are essential for the continuing development of the economy and the planning system has an important role in facilitating the improvement and expansion of the telecommunications network. However, whilst there are considerable economic and social benefits associated with the development of telecommunication infrastructure, it is important that such development does not have a significant adverse impact on amenity or environmental quality. Therefore, the Council will seek to ensure that acceptable provision can be made for telecommunications development, whilst ensuring that any adverse impacts associated with development are minimised.

11.34 The visual impact of telecommunications development is a particularly important consideration. When seeking approval for the installation of new telecommunications equipment, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable measures to minimise the visual impact of the proposed development on the local environment. In particular, the design and siting of installations should be informed by the context of the wider locality, including the careful consideration of the height, scale, siting,

colours, and materials to be used. Installations should also be sited where they would not impede roadside visibility splays and sight lines. Any building-mounted installation should also be sensitively designed so that the architectural quality and character of the building is not compromised.

- 11.35 The provision of suitable broadband infrastructure can be an important factor which helps attract investment to the District and facilitates home working. The need for SuperFast broadband is a key issue for Breckland and more widely Norfolk. Therefore, proposals to improve broadband speeds and coverage will be expected and supported. To date, BBfN has seen access to Superfast broadband delivered to over 200,000 premises in Norfolk, increasing coverage from 42% in summer 2013, to over 96% of Norfolk properties during summer 2022 this increased to 97% at the end of 2023 (Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2022).
- 11.36 High quality digital infrastructure is crucial to the success of businesses and also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities, services, and employment. Well-connected places attract modern businesses and can create the conditions for new clusters of digital and creative businesses to emerge. Access to high quality digital infrastructure can also facilitate social inclusion, enable home working, diversify the rural economy, enhance educational and social opportunities, as well as improve access to a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online. Consequently, high quality digital infrastructure will make a significant contribution towards the delivery of sustainable development.
- 11.37 New development should ensure that it has considered any need and demand resulting from the development and taken proactive steps in engaging with service and infrastructure providers to ensure that there is high-speed fibre broadband connectivity or mobile internet coverage in the development.

Some telecommunications development benefits from permitted development rights under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order 1995, (as amended). Where the development is subject to the prior approval procedure, prior

approval will be required by the Council where there is considered to be a significant visual or other impact in terms of the siting and appearance of the development.

INF 05: Telecommunications

The Council will support proposals for the provision and improvement of telecommunications infrastructure provided that:

- a. The installation and any associated apparatus is sited and designed to avoid any unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity, highway safety, the historic environment and the character and appearance of the area where it would be sited;
- b. Any building-mounted installations would not have an unduly detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the building; and
- c. It has been demonstrated that there are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast, or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the area that would not result in a greater visual impact.

The Council expects proposals for residential and business development to include sufficient on-site SuperFast and UltraFast broadband infrastructure to enable connectivity to wider networks.

Developer Contributions

- 11.38 To deliver the Spatial Strategy it will be necessary to direct development to locations where, in order to achieve the wider sustainability advantages of the Strategy, it is known that existing infrastructure will need to be upgraded to meet the needs of all the new development. This is especially important when considering the sustainable urban extensions to Thetford and Attleborough, the growth for Dereham and strategic employment provision for Snetterton and Thetford Enterprise Park.
- 11.39 The Council, in conjunction with partners produced an Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) to identify infrastructure needs and priorities and address any potential funding shortfalls. The principal focus of the IDP is the planned growth along the A11 corridor reflecting the spatial strategy and

particular circumstances and challenges identified through evidence gathering. The IDP addresses the requirements set in the NPPF and therefore forms a key part of the evidence base for this Local Plan. The current IDP was prepared in 2017 and continues to inform the infrastructure requirements arising from the 2019 Breckland Local Plan for the period up to 2017. However, the IDP will be revised and updated as the detailed strategy and allocations for development to 2046 are established through the Local Plan review. The provision of infrastructure is a prerequisite of all development, and the Council will make best use of planning conditions and contributions as a means of providing infrastructure and enhancing facilities and services. Planning obligation requirements under the responsibility of the County Council such as education, highways, and adult services are clearly set out in the NCC's Planning Obligation Standards publication, which is updated annually.

- 11.40 Where infrastructure deficiencies exist, the Council is committed to achieving a consistent and co-ordinated approach to providing new or improved infrastructure through partnership working. The work with partners will involve other delivery bodies, authorities, developers, and other agencies and will positively foster a number of delivery mechanisms. Breckland Council will use its role to support and facilitate infrastructure provision including fully utilising the role of planning contributions and by taking a pro-active perspective in the development and implementation of Multi-Agency Agreements and Local Area Agreements influencing Breckland. Taking this approach to infrastructure provision will also enable disruption to the highway network to be managed, thereby reducing waiting times during construction and resultant emission of pollutants.
- 11.41 Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with new development is a key component of delivering the Spatial Strategy for Breckland and meeting the various needs of the community. Directing the majority of growth to those areas with available key infrastructure such as healthcare, schools, energy supply, water treatment, transport facilities and other community infrastructure such as sport and recreation, libraries and community

buildings will be the basis for sustainable communities in Breckland. This approach will deliver increased local accessibility to key services, ensuring their viability, whilst at the same time making the most of investments in existing infrastructure provision across Breckland.

- 11.42 The design of infrastructure through partnership, working with developers and infrastructure providers should mitigate any significant adverse impact on the landscape and ecologically sensitive areas within Breckland and ensure, where possible, benefits to the economic and social wellbeing of the local community.
- 11.43 On-site infrastructure will be secured based on the needs of each proposal and delivered directly by the developer, or through financial contributions and/or land. Off-site infrastructure will be secured through developer contributions. The Council will continue to seek developer contributions which, as appropriate, may for example include the following:
- Utilities;
 - Transport infrastructure (including walking, cycling and public transport / community transport initiatives);
 - Affordable Housing;
 - Community Infrastructure (including education, libraries, town and village halls, police, and fire service provision);
 - Open Space, sport, and recreation;
 - Green Infrastructure;
 - Biodiversity management mitigation and management;
 - Landscaping (including street furniture and lighting);
 - Flood Defences;
 - Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); and
 - Waste Management/recycling and composting facilities.
- 11.44 This list of infrastructure examples is meant as indicative only and should, therefore, not be viewed as being exhaustive.

INF 06: Developer Contributions

The Council will secure site specific developer contributions for developments of 10 or more dwellings or a gross internal floorspace of 1,000 square metres, excluding rural exception sites, in order to properly service, manage and mitigate the impact of development, subject to viability, which:

- a. Directly related to the development, is necessary to make the development acceptable and fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind; and
- b. Cannot be secured by planning conditions.

Details of significant infrastructure requirements are identified within the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and emerging update Developer contributions will be required to secure infrastructure which is necessary to ensure:

- c. The delivery of affordable housing;
- d. The delivery of community infrastructure (including education, libraries, town and village halls, police, and fire service provision);
- e. The delivery and ongoing maintenance of formal and informal open space including allotments, sport, and recreation, play space or other facilities (or financial contribution) required directly to serve the development and contribute to local community facilities;
- f. Pedestrian and highway safety improvements necessary to mitigate the impact of development on the wider highway network and to secure satisfactory access to the development;
- g. A range of sustainable modes of transport that occupants and visitors to the development are able to access;
- h. The provision of health care facilities;
- i. The delivery of environmental infrastructure (biodiversity management, landscaping, flood defences, SUDs, waste management) and, where necessary their maintenance; and

j. The delivery of any other infrastructure requirements in a made Neighbourhood Plan.

The delivery of development will need to align with the provision of infrastructure. As such, development may require to be phased to ensure the provision of infrastructure in a timely manner. Planning obligations may be used to secure the phasing arrangement. Commuted payments will be sought to secure the necessary future maintenance of infrastructure.

Planning obligation requirements under the responsibility of the County Council such as education, highways, and adult services are clearly set out in the NCC's Planning Obligation Standards publication, which is updated annually.

Implementation Strategy

- 11.45 The NPPF sets a requirement for Local Plans to plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area. Furthermore, paragraph 162 states that "Local Planning Authorities should work with other authorities and providers to: assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy (including heat), telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management, and its ability to meet forecast demands".
- 11.46 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) addresses the requirements set in the NPPF and therefore forms a key part of the evidence base for this Local Plan. The current IDP was prepared in 2017 and continues to inform the infrastructure requirements arising from the 2019 Breckland Local Plan for the period up to 2017. However, the IDP will be revised and updated as the detailed strategy and allocations for development to 2046 are established through the Local Plan review.
- 11.47 A range of evidence has been gathered to develop the IDP through the commissioning of evidence, consideration of existing sources of data and

information and primarily through ongoing dialogue with infrastructure providers. The evolving draft IDP has also been informed by ongoing feedback from statutory consultees. Reviewing comments made at each stage of Local Plan consultation, the IDP reflects discussions with external organisations to further understand, or where applicable seek potential resolutions to, identified infrastructure constraints. The IDP details information, including that received from statutory consultees such as Norfolk County Council in respect of highways and education and the Clinical Commissioning Group for health care provision. Feedback from statutory consultees and infrastructure providers has identified potential solutions for infrastructure constraints that, in some cases, will affect the development phasing of sites.

- 11.48 The IDP document examines infrastructure projects and provides a consideration for each of whether it is critical, essential, or desirable (as defined below) in order to help inform which infrastructure requirements are necessary for the deliverability of a specific allocation in the Local Plan.
- Critical – The development is dependent on the delivery of this infrastructure and will not be permitted without it. Examples include a new electricity power substation to provide power to businesses at Snetterton, where there is currently insufficient electricity capacity for expansion.
 - Essential – The infrastructure is essential to the delivery of the development but there may be a number of options for the type of infrastructure provision and the costs associated with it. The infrastructure is necessary but is not so critical that the entire development is dependent on securing a specific identified piece of infrastructure.
 - Desirable – Infrastructure that is sought to enhance the development. The development is not entirely dependent on this infrastructure.
- 11.49 A combination of funding mechanisms will be used to deliver new and improved infrastructure in Breckland; the primary source of funding coming from developers and landowners through legal agreements accompanying

the grant of planning permission. For major development the sites will be phased to ensure essential infrastructure is delivered or funding provided prior to the completion of new developments. Other sources of funding include grant aid from public funding and private investment. Some improvements to infrastructure are not contingent on the Local Plan such as the Better Broadband for Norfolk initiative and improvements to the strategic road network such as the A47.

- 11.50 The purpose of monitoring and review is to assess the delivery and implementation of the new Local Plan. The Breckland Authority Monitoring Report provides a robust and effective review and monitoring approach. The Local Plan policies will be complemented by a monitoring framework to assess their effectiveness through robust monitoring mechanisms. This will allow the performance of the policies to be assessed and thereby serve to inform any subsequent changes post Plan adoption which may be required to ensure delivery of the Plan.
- 11.51 The Council is committed to delivering growth in accordance with the policies and proposals in this Local Plan. The implementation of the policies in the Breckland Local Plan will be assessed through a monitoring framework set in the Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will contain monitoring indicators, which provide a trigger for the Council to act in accordance with this policy.
- 11.52 If the AMR indicates that the overall level of growth and/or that the delivery of specific development allocations is not being achieved, the Council will take a proactive approach to overcome issues affecting implementation, through the use of the following measures, where appropriate:
1. Undertake an assessment of the relevant policy and implementation procedure to establish the issues affecting delivery; and/or
 2. Review the delivery of site-specific allocations; and/or
 3. Review the mechanisms for financial contributions to development, which may be impacting on development viability; and/or

4. Consider external funding opportunities accessible to either the developer or the Council such as grants or loans to aid delivery; and/or
5. Develop further working relationships with various partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to look at ways to facilitate implementation; and/or,
6. Consider the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents to provide clearer guidance as to how policies should be implemented and/or
7. Consider a partial or full review of the Plan, where considered necessary.

11.53

12 Site Specific Policies - Housing

Housing Allocations

- 12.1 The site-specific development proposals include general generic requirements unless specific additional detail is known. Additional site-specific detail and requirements will be included following discussions with key statutory stakeholders and other organisations and those with an interest in a site.

Swaffham

Development In The Market Towns: Swaffham

- 12.2 Swaffham will accommodate 1,082 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 269 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023 = 257 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 126 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 430
- Site 1: LPR/C4S/DEV/178: West of New Sporle Road: 130
- Site 2: LPR/C4S/DEV/179: East of Sporle Road: 180
- Site 3: LPR/C4S/DEV/195: South of Sporle Road: 120

PROPOSAL SWA 1: Land West Of Sporle Road, Swaffham

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 130 dwellings

A masterplan is required for the site.

The Masterplan must consider:

The scheme will preserve or, where possible, enhance the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. The design of the scheme should have regard to and respect the gateway location of the site;

On site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs commensurate with the scale and location of this development proposal;

A high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide that includes an appropriate layout and building design that includes noise attenuation measures resulting from the A47

The incorporation of any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

The retention of any existing rights of way and creation of links to bus routes and bus stops crating safe routes to the town centre and key facilities within the town

A Utilities Statement will be required to support the planning application to demonstrate how power, broadband, water supply (including water efficiency) and sewerage capacity will be made available in time to serve the site

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL SWA 2: Land East Of Sporle Road, Swaffham

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 180 dwellings.

A masterplan is required for the site.

The Masterplan must consider:

The scheme will preserve or, where possible, enhance the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. The design of the scheme should have regard to and respect the gateway location of the site;

On site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs commensurate with the scale and location of this development proposal;

A high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide that includes an appropriate layout and building design that includes noise attenuation measures resulting from the A47

The incorporation of any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

The retention of any existing rights of way and creation of links to bus routes and bus stops crating safe routes to the town centre and key facilities within the town

A Utilities Statement will be required to support the planning application to demonstrate how power, broadband, water supply (including water efficiency) and sewerage capacity will be made available in time to serve the site

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL SWA 3: Land South Of Sporle Road, Swaffham

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 120 dwellings

A masterplan is required for the site.

The Masterplan must consider:

The scheme will preserve or, where possible, enhance the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. The design of the scheme should have regard to and respect the gateway location of the site;

On site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs commensurate with the scale and location of this development proposal;

A high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide that includes an appropriate layout and building design that includes noise attenuation measures resulting from the A47

The incorporation of any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

The retention of any existing rights of way and creation of links to bus routes and bus stops crating safe routes to the town centre and key facilities within the town

A Utilities Statement will be required to support the planning application to demonstrate how power, broadband, water supply (including water efficiency) and sewerage capacity will be made available in time to serve the site

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Thetford

Development In The Market Towns: Thetford

12.3 Thetford will accommodate 2,732 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 360 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023 = 73 dwellings

- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan
- Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension = 2,400 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0 dwellings

Watton

Development In The Market Towns: Watton

12.4 Watton will accommodate 1,322 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 162 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023 = 266 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 160 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 1,208
- Site 1: LPR/CS4/DEV/225: Land North and East of Shrublands: 1000
- Site 2: LPR/CS4/DEV/224: Land at Southmoor Farm: 200
- Site 3: LPR/CS4/DEV/086: Land to rear of Shrublands: 8

PROPOSAL WAT 1: Land North And East Of Shrublands, Watton

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 1000 houses

A masterplan is required for the site.

The Masterplan must consider:

The scheme will preserve or, where possible, enhance the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. The design of the scheme should have regard to and respect the gateway location of the site;

On site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs commensurate with the scale and location of this development proposal;

A high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

The incorporation of any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

The provision of facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

A Utilities Statement will be required to support the planning application to demonstrate how power, broadband, water supply (including water efficiency) and sewerage capacity will be made available in time to serve the site

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL WAT 2: Land At Southmoor Farm

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 200 houses

A masterplan is required for the site.

The Masterplan must consider:

The scheme will preserve or, where possible, enhance the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. The design of the scheme should have regard to and respect the gateway location of the site;

On site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs commensurate with the scale and location of this development proposal;

A high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

The incorporation of any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

The provision of facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

A Utilities Statement will be required to support the planning application to demonstrate how power, broadband, water supply (including water efficiency) and sewerage capacity will be made available in time to serve the site

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL WAT 3: Land To Rear Of Shrublands

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 8 houses

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant polices.

Local Service Centres

Development In Local Service Centres: Ashill

12.5 Ashill will accommodate 179 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 15 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 79 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 20 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 65
- Site 1: LPR/C4SDEV/320: The Willows: 20 dwellings
- Site 2: LPR/C4S/DEV/319: Greenacre Close: 45 dwellings
- Saved Proposal : Ashill Housing Allocation: Land between Church Street and Hale Road (LP[001]009): 20 Dwellings

ROPOSAL ASH 1: The Willows Ashill

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings.

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL ASH 2: Greenacre Close Ashill

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 45 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Local Service Centres: Banham

12.6 Banham will accommodate 101 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 4 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 55 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 42 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Bawdeswell

12.7 Bawdeswell will accommodate 144 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwelling
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 1 dwelling
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 65
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV231 Reepham Road: 40 dwellings
- Site 2: LPR/C4S/DEV/123 The Street 25 dwellings

PROPOSAL BAWD 1: Reepham Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 40 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide and have regard to and ensure the continued amenity of use of adjacent land uses including an existing multi-use games area and playing pitches.

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

PROPOSAL BAWD: 2: The Street

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 25 dwellings.

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and

contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

Development In Local Service Centres: Beetley

12.8 Beetley will accommodate 60 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 7 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 9 dwellings

- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 44
- Site 1: LPR/CS4/DEV/284: Shrublands: 25 dwellings
- Site 2: LPR/CS4/DEV/134: Fakenham Road: 19 dwellings

PROPOSAL: BEE 1: Shrublands

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 25 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide and exemplar sustainability to demonstrate an overall reduced impact on the natural world by keeping air, water, and soil cleaner and also conserving renewable and non-renewable resources for future generations through the adoption of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient design strategies and building materials that are from ethically sourced, nontoxic, and/or recycled building materials

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

PROPOSAL BEET 2: Fakenham Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 19 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide and exemplar sustainability to demonstrate an overall reduced impact on the natural world by keeping air, water, and soil cleaner and also conserving renewable and non-renewable resources for future generations through the adoption of renewable energy sources and energy-efficient design strategies and building materials that are from ethically sourced, nontoxic, and/or recycled building materials

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

Development In Local Service Centres: Garboldisham

12.9 Garboldisham will accommodate 45 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 2 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 15 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 28 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0
- Saved Proposal : Garboldisham Housing Allocation: Land to the west of Hopton Road (LP[031]004 and LP[031]005) 28 dwellings

Development In Local Service Centres: Great Ellingham

12.10 Great Ellingham will accommodate 415 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 102 dwellings

- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 313 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 0 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Harling

12.11 Harling will accommodate 105 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 8 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 97 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 0 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Hockering

12.12 Hockering will accommodate 105 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwelling
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 41 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 13 dwellings
- New Site allocated in the Local Plan = 50 dwellings
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV400 The Street 50 dwellings
- Saved Proposal : Hockering Housing Allocation: Land to the east of Heath Road (LP[044]005) 13 dwellings

PROPOSAL HOCK 1: THE STREET

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 50 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and

contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

Development In Local Service Centres: Kenninghall

12.13 Kenninghall will accommodate 44 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 4 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 5 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 15 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 15
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV167 Powell Close 15 dwellings
- Saved Proposal : Kenninghall Housing Allocation: Land off Powell Close (LP[051]003) 15 dwellings

PROPOSAL KEN 1: Powell Close

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Local Service Centres: Mattishall

12.14 Mattishall will accommodate 105 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 44 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 59 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into these Plan = 0 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Mundford

12.15 Mundford will accommodate 44 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwelling
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 2 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 50
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV361 West Hall Drive 30 dwellings
- Site 2: LPRC4SDEV361 Bracken Rise 20 dwellings

PROPOSAL MUN 1: West Hall Drive

Proposals for the Allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 30 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities. and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

the retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL MUN 2: Bracken Rise

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Local Service Centres: Narborough

12.16 Narborough will accommodate 188 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwelling
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 54 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 100
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV105 Chalk Lane 70 dwellings
- Site 2: LPRC4SDEV103 Chalk Lane (2) 30 dwellings

PROPOSAL NAR 1: Chalk Lane

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 70 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and

contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL NAR 2: Chalk Lane (2)

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 30 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Local Service Centres: Necton

12.17 Necton will accommodate 128 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 40 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 73 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 15 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

- Saved Proposal: Necton North Pickenham Road and Masons Drive (LP[067]011) 15 dwellings

Development In Local Service Centres: North Elmham

12.18 North Elmham will accommodate 76 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 2 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 34 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 40
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV206 Back Lane 10 dwellings
- Site 2: LPRC4SDEV205 Land South of Eastgate Street 30 dwellings

PROPOSAL NEL 1: Back Lane

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 10 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

PROPOSAL NEL 2: South of Eastgate Street

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 30 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

The Development must demonstrate how it will achieve nutrient neutrality either through mitigation measures onsite to prevent nutrient pollution or demonstrate that it is 'offset' elsewhere within the same catchment.

Development In Local Service Centres: Old Buckenham

12.19 Old Buckenham will accommodate 32 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 8 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 12 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 12
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV209 Attleborough Lane 4 Dwellings
- Site 2: LPRC4SDEV111 Hargram Road 8 dwellings

PROPOSAL OLD 1: Attleborough Lane

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 4 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL OLD 2: Hargram Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 8 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

Development In Local Service Centres: Rocklands

12.20 Rocklands will accommodate 43 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 8 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 12 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 23
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV065 The Street 7 dwellings
- Site 2 LPRC4SDEV064 South of Bell Road (Southlands) 15 dwellings

PROPOSAL ROC 1: The Street

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 7 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL ROC 2: South Of Bell Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 15 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and

contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Local Service Centres: Shipdham

12.21 Shipdham will accommodate 223 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 13 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 132 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 78 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

- Saved Proposals:
- Shipdham Housing Allocation 1 Land behind Old Post Office Street (LP[085]002) 23 dwellings
- Shipdham Housing Allocation 2
- Brick Kiln Lane (LP[085]006) 55 dwellings

Development In Local Service Centres: Sporle

12.22 Sporle will accommodate 82 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 2 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 80 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Swanton Morley

12.23 Swanton Morley will accommodate 263 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 100 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 43 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 120 dwellings⁶²
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Local Service Centres: Weeting

12.24 Weeting will accommodate 33 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwelling
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 32 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

1.1 _____

⁶² These are in the Swanton Morley Neighbourhood Plan

Secondary Villages

12.25 The Local Plan identifies Secondary Villages where they satisfy 3 of the 5 criteria below:

- Public Transport – An assessment of the level of public transport access within the village. This included consideration of the frequency of services and where there is at least one bus route to a higher hierarchical settlement with sufficient frequency for someone to make an appointment or do some shopping.
- Community Facility - This can include a number of different facilities such as a village hall, public house, restaurant or café.
- Employment – The assessment has considered the level of employment available within the village including whether there is a business park and also the size of the businesses within the settlement.
- Shop/Post Office
- School

12.26 The assessment has had regard to the distance of services and facilities from the designated settlement core – and should only be considered to be available where they are within a recognised acceptable walking distance. Based on these criteria, an assessment has been made as to the availability of services within each village. This assessment reflects that in the 2019 Local Plan that was found robust at Examination and remains up to date.

POLICY HOU 05: SECONDARY VILLAGES

Secondary Villages will deliver a total of 739 dwellings within the Plan Period as follows⁶³:

Beeston (50); Carbrooke (16); Caston (12); Gressenhall (6); Griston (81); Hockham (189); Litcham (66); Lyng (6); North Lopham (33); Quidenham (27); Saham Toney (102); Shropham (47); Thompson⁶⁴ (10); Yaxham with Clint Green (94)

Development on sites adjacent to the Settlement to meet identified local needs will be considered against other policies in this Plan including Policy SH 02

Development in Secondary Village: Beeston

12.27 Beeston will accommodate 50 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 11 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 6 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 33
- Site 1: Lprc4sdev028: Back Lane: 10 Dwellings
- Site 2 Lprc4sdev058 Beeston Playing Field And Dereham Road: 5 Dwellings
- Site 3: Lprc4sdev204: School Farm Paddock: 5 Dwellings
- Site 4: Lprc4sdev059: Rose Cottage Syers Lane: 5 Dwellings
- Site 5: LPRC4SDEV203 Back Lane 8 dwellings

PROPOSAL BEES 1: Back Lane

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 10 dwellings

1.1 _____

⁶³ Total number of dwellings in parentheses

⁶⁴ Thompson is designated as a Secondary Village. However, as it lies within the Brecks Buffer additional housing allocations are not considered to be appropriate as they would be contrary to this Policy.

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL BEES 2: Beeston Playing Field And Dereham Road:

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 5 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL BEES 3: School Farm Paddock

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 5 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL BEES 4: Rose Cottage Syers Lane

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 5 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

PROPOSAL BEES 5 Back Lane:

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 8 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant policies.

Development In Secondary Villages: Carbrooke⁶⁵

12.28 Carbrooke will accommodate 16 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 7 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 9 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Caston

12.29 Caston will accommodate 12 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 7 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 5 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Gressenhall

12.30 Gressenhall will accommodate 6 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 3 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 3 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Griston

12.31 Griston will accommodate 81 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 24 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 37 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 20
- Site 1: LPR/CS4/DEV/347: Caston Road: 20 dwellings

1.1 _____

⁶⁵ New allocations have been made within Carbrooke Parish as part of those required for Watton.

PROPOSAL: GRIS 1: Caston Road

Proposals for the location as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Secondary Villages: Hockham

12.32 Hockham will accommodate 189 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 29 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 135 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 25
- Site 1: LPRC4SDEV109: West of Watton Road 20 dwellings
- Site 2: LPRC4SDEV226 Land south of Dawneal: 5 dwellings

PROPOSAL: HOC 1: West Of Watton Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

PROPOSAL HOC 2: South Of Dawneal

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 5 dwellings

Proposals must demonstrate how they accord with the provisions of Policy GEN 01 of this Plan as well as any other relevant polices.

Development In Secondary Villages: Litcham

12.33 Litcham will accommodate 66 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 0 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 16 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 50
- Site 1 LPRC4SDEV257: Lexham Road: 50 dwellings

PROPOSAL: LIT 1: Lexham Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 50 dwellings

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate off street parking associated with the Primary School

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Secondary Villages: Lyng

12.34 Lyng will accommodate 6 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 3 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 3 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: North Lopham

12.35 North Lopham will accommodate 33 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 11 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 22 dwellings

- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Quidenham

12.36 Quidenham will accommodate 27 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 0 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 27 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages Saham Toney

12.37 Saham Toney will accommodate 102 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 22 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 14 dwellings
- Existing Allocations carried forward into this Plan = 66 dwellings⁶⁶
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Shropham

12.38 Shropham will accommodate 47 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 22 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 5 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 20
- Site 1 LPR/C4S/DEV/142: East of Rocklands Road: 20 dwellings

PROPOSAL SHROP 1: East Of Rocklands Road

Proposals for the allocation as identified on the Policies Map, should provide for approximately 20 dwellings

1.1 _____

⁶⁶ These are in the Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan

Development will be subject to compliance with other policies in this Local Plan including on-site provision of the required proportion of affordable housing and contributions towards provision and monitoring of public open space and play areas, as well as other infrastructure, services and other community needs as required;

Development proposals must:

Demonstrate a high quality design reflecting the Breckland Design Guide

Demonstrate a safe and acceptable vehicle access.

Incorporate any necessary off site highway improvements to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key local services and facilities.

facilities and improvements to bus stops and public transport provision in the vicinity of the development;

appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures;

demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in sewage treatment works and the foul sewerage network and that proposals have regard to water quality standards; and,

demonstrate that there is sufficient utility provision available to serve the site including power and water supply;

The retention and enhancement of native hedgerows and trees and provide green corridors connecting development sites, as well as providing for the required level of Biodiversity Net Gain, in accordance with policies in this is Local Plan as well as appropriate wildlife mitigation and improvement measures.

Development In Secondary Villages: Thompson

12.39 Thompson will accommodate 10 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 1 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 2023) = 9 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

Development In Secondary Villages: Yaxham and Clint Green

12.40 Yaxham and Clint Green will accommodate 94 dwellings between 2021 and 2046 as follows:

- Completions 2021 – 2023 = 22 dwellings
- Dwellings with Planning permission (April 23) = 72 dwellings
- New sites allocated in the Local Plan = 0

13 Saved Housing Policies and Proposals

- 13.1 Attleborough SUE
- 13.2 Paras 2.18 – 2.42 including:
- 13.3 POLICY GEN 04: Development Requirements of Attleborough Strategic Urban Extension (SUE) Development
- 13.4 Thetford SUE
- 13.5 Paras 2.43 – 2.49
- 13.6 The following polices from The Thetford Area Action Plan:
- 13.7 Policy TH 2 Approach to the Town Centre
- 13.8 Policy TH 4 Transport - Achieving Modal Shift
- 13.9 Policy TH 5 The Impact of Change on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Buses
- 13.10 Policy TH 6 Thetford Bus Interchange
- 13.11 Policy TH 7 Thetford Railway Station
- 13.12 Policy TH 9 Monitoring and management of Key Biodiversity Sites
- 13.13 Policy TH11 Joe Blunt’s Lane
- 13.14 Policy TH 12 The Thetford Loops
- 13.15 Policy TH 18 Archaeology
- 13.16 Policy TH 20 Thetford Urban Extension Strategic Design Principles
- 13.17 Policy TH21 Locally Distinctive Features of the Landscape
- 13.18 Policy TH 22 Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument
- 13.19 Policy TH 23 Existing Buildings in the Thetford Urban Extension

- 13.20 Policy TH 25 Walking and Cycling
- 13.21 Policy TH 26 Buses
- 13.22 Policy TH 27 A New Railway Station in the Urban Extension
- 13.23 Policy TH 28 Changes to the A11 Trunk Road
- 13.24 Policy TH 29 Improvements to the Local Road Network
- 13.25 Policy TH 30 New Employment Land
- 13.26 Policy TH 31 New Local Centre(s) in the Urban Extension
- 13.27 Policy TH 32 Connecting to a Decentralised Energy Supply
- 13.28 Policy TH 33 Education Provision in the Thetford Urban Extension
- 13.29 Policy TH34 New Health Facility in the Urban Extension
- 13.30 Policy TH 35 Community Buildings
- 13.31 Policy TH 37 Regeneration Proposals in Existing Residential Areas
- 13.32 Dereham Allocation 2: Land to the west of Shipdham Road (LP[025]011) 130
- 13.33 Swaffham Housing Allocation 1: Land off New Sporle Road (South)
(LP[097]006) 51
- 13.34 Swaffham Allocation 2: Land off New Sporle Road (North) (LP[097]008) 75
- 13.35 Watton Allocation 1 Land off Saham Road (LP[104]008 & LP[104]019) 160
- 13.36 Ashill Land between Church Street and Hale Road (LP[001]009) 20
- 13.37 Banham Land adjacent to Gaymer Close and to the south of Greyhound Lane
(LP[003]003, LP[003]009 & LP[003]012) 42
- 13.39 Garboldisham Land to the west of Hopton Road (LP[031]004 and
LP[031]005) 28

- 13.40 Hockering Residential Allocation - Land to the east of Heath Road
(LP[044]005) 13
- 13.41 Kenninghall Land off Powell Close (LP[051]003) 15
- 13.42 Necton Land between North Pickenham Road and Masons Drive
(LP[067]011) 15
- 13.43 Shipdham Brick Kiln Lane (LP[085]006) 55
- 13.44 Shipdham Old Nursery, Land behind Old Post Office Street (LP[085]0 02) 23