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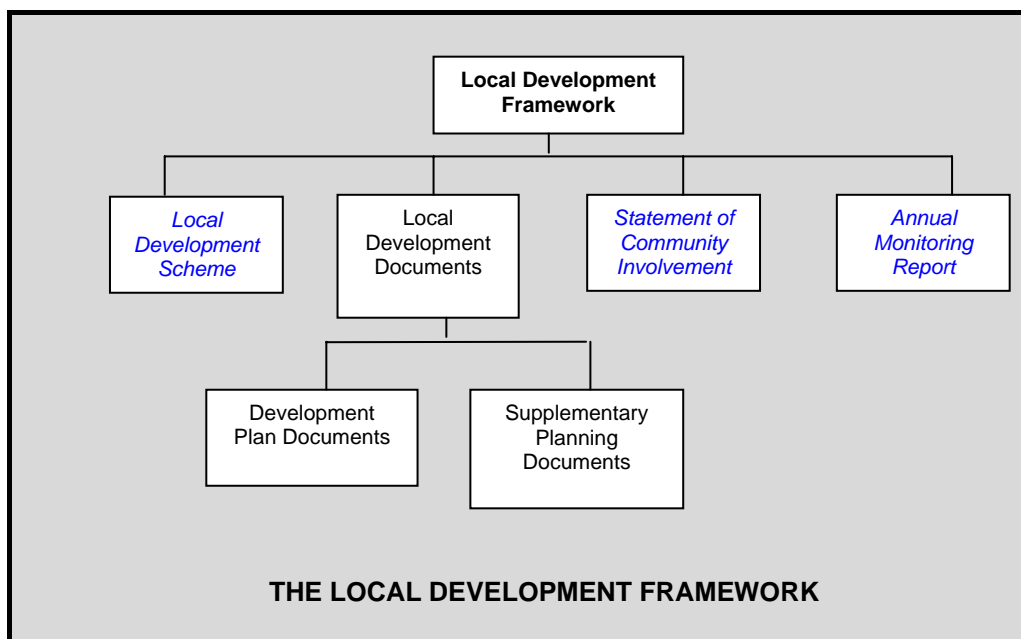
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## **INTRODUCTION**

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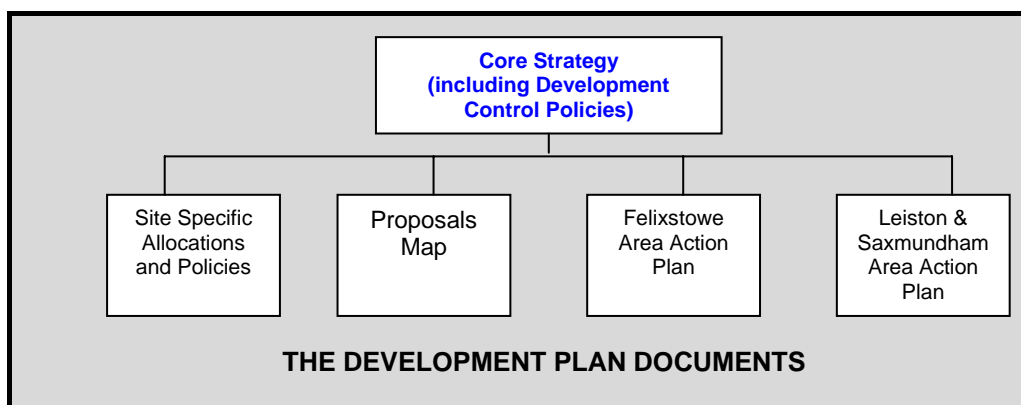
## A NEW TYPE OF PLAN

1. The District Council is preparing a new type of plan that will replace the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (including First and Second Alterations). This will be called a Local Development Framework and consist of a folder of documents like this:



*italic text highlights those documents currently adopted and/or published*

2. There will be five Development Plan Documents. The most significant of these is this, the Core Strategy, as this will establish the context for the remainder. It also contains generic Development Control Policies covering the whole district that will be used in the determination of planning applications.
3. The Site Specific Allocations and Policies will relate to specific areas or places, eg towns and town centres. Where specific sites are allocated or designated for particular uses these will be shown on the separate Proposals Map.
4. Area Action Plans will be prepared at a later date. These relate to areas where change is to take place and will set out an implementation plan for that change.



## THE CORE STRATEGY

5. This Core Strategy sets out the Council's Vision for the area to 2021 and beyond. It then establishes the Objectives that a planning strategy must work to achieve if this Vision is to materialise. In arriving at this Vision and Objectives the Council has drawn upon the issues that have been identified so far during the on-going preparation process. It refers to other strategy documents with which it must conform, notably the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy. It also seeks to devise a planning strategy that relates land-use to accessibility by drawing on the Local Transport Plan. Finally it takes on board comments received through the continuing public consultation process, the last stage of which was the publication of Issues and Options in xxxxxx.
6. Where an issue can be addressed in a variety of ways, the range of options considered has been summarised, with the Preferred Option, and the reason for it, set out in more detail. For some issues, there is no realistic alternative option to the Preferred Option, for example because any change would be beyond the remit of the Council as Local Planning Authority. Where this is the case an explanation is provided.
7. The Objectives and the range of options have been made the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal to assess to what they contribute towards meeting social, economic and environmental objectives and sustainable development. The sustainability, as well as a strategic environmental, appraisal of the Objectives and Core Strategy are contained in a separate document.
8. Following consideration of comments received in response to this document, the Council will draw up and formally submit the full Core Strategy (which will include generic development control policies) to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. A further opportunity to influence the Plan is provided at this stage when representations on the document are invited to be submitted direct to the Planning Inspectorate. An Examination will take place, conducted by the Planning Inspectorate. The representations will be considered either by means of written representations or a public inquiry. The Inspector's conclusions will then be binding on the Council, and the only changes made to the document will be to meet the Inspector's requirements.

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## OTHER INPUTS

9. Having established the Vision of the district in 2021 the next stage is the preparation of Objectives from which detailed policies will derive. These Objectives, and subsequent policies, emerge from a number of sources based on a 'top down, bottom up' approach as follows.

### National Policy

10. The

### Regional Input

11. Regional Guidance for the East of England is set out in a series of strategy documents covering the topics of the environment, the economy, culture, housing, social issues, sustainable development and, of particular relevance, spatial planning. The principles and objectives of each of the strategies are combined in one further document – the Integrated Regional Strategy.
12. Spatial planning is contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – the East of England Plan - a draft of which was published in December 2004. This has been the subject of an examination before independent inspection. The recommendations of the independent Panel were published in June 2006 and submitted for consideration to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Communities and Local Government. The Secretary of State has published for consultation modifications to the RSS. **This Core Strategy has been written on the assumption that, following consultation, the changes will be incorporated into the RSS.** Should this not be the case, and there is a need to amend the Core Strategy, this will need to be done before it is submitted to the secretary of State for independent consideration.
13. The Haven Gateway sub-region is one of the fastest growing areas in the Eastern Region, with a population projected to increase from 611,300 in 2001 to 684,500 in 2021. The ports and the towns of Ipswich, Felixstowe and Colchester are the main regional economic drivers. The Haven Gateway was awarded New Growth Point Status by the Government in 2006 in recognition of its ambitious housing targets set out in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.
14. The Haven Gateway Partnership was launched in 2001 and provides a context within which partners from the private and public sectors can work together to promote economic opportunities and secure the future prosperity of the sub-region. The Partnership, which works closely with existing organisations and operates as an unincorporated association, has produced a **Framework for Growth** which, with its associated Programme of Development is intended to meet the requirements of the Department of Communities and Local Government for funding support, by describing the measures needed to deliver that growth in a sustainable way.

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### **County Wide Transport Policy**

15. At county level Suffolk County Council is responsible for the preparation of a Local Transport Plan. This xxxxxxxxxxxx

### **Local Input**

16. There is a duty on Local Authorities to enable the creation of a Sustainable Community Strategy for their area.
17. The Sustainable Community Strategy has been prepared and adopted by a partnership of public, private, community and voluntary groups – the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The Sustainable Community Strategy will play a key role in informing the preparation of the Local Development Framework. In turn, the Framework must assist in delivering its aims and objectives.
18. Public engagement has taken place over a number of years xxxxxxxx
19. Individual communities are being encouraged to prepare community-led Parish Plans. (over 20 have been prepared to date) Realistic Parish Plans can help influence the Local Development Framework and help it meet the needs of individual communities. Parish and Town Councils can lead the preparation of such plans but they need to demonstrate that they have the support and involvement of the community at large.
20. In addition and finally, the District Council has its own vision and priority issues that need to be addressed. These are contained in its Corporate Strategy.

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## **PART ONE THE VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

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## THE VISION

### A VISION OF THE DISTRICT AS A WHOLE

- 1.1 **The Council's Vision for the district as a whole** is centred in its motto: 'Where Quality of Life Counts'. The achievement of this is based around the achievement of a balance. This will take advantage of economic opportunities and address the social challenges of the diverse rural area while at the same time protecting and enhancing the environmental heritage, the countryside, traditional villages, historic market towns and urban communities all of which provide the district with its unique character.
- 1.2 The international issue of climate change has historically been particularly relevant to the Suffolk Coastal District given the significant areas located adjacent to the coast and vulnerable as a result of rising sea levels. In addition, areas adjacent to or within the many river floodplains have been susceptible to flooding. Changes in weather conditions have also influenced agricultural prosperity and the supply of water.
- 1.3 Two primary causes of 'greenhouse gases' such as CO<sub>2</sub> - energy generation and vehicle use – have been addressed within the district. The latter through a carefully thought out strategy of reducing travel by private car.
- 1.4 By 2021 much of the high level of housing needed:
  - to address the effects of declining household size (with the resultant need for up to 10% more housing units just to accommodate the existing population),
  - continued inward migration arising from both increased employment and the area's attraction as a retirement location, and
  - meeting the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy,

will have taken place in the south around the regional centre of Ipswich and major employment centre of Felixstowe.
- 1.5 Adjacent to Ipswich, housing will be provided in support of its role as the county town. Martlesham Heath, including BT's Martlesham Heath research and development headquarters, will have developed further as a key part of the ICT (Information, Communication, Technology) cluster for the East of England. At Felixstowe new housing will be provided for some of the many workers who are currently forced to commute into the town to work each day, and for local residents (particularly the young) who wish to remain in the locality, and in order to support local services. The regeneration of the resort and diversity of new employment will have enhanced Felixstowe, consolidating the Port of Felixstowe status as the pre-eminent container port in the country. The Haven Gateway, including Felixstowe, will be a key transport gateway for the country.
- 1.6 Elsewhere, the five market towns of Aldeburgh, Framlingham, Leiston, Saxmundham and Woodbridge will have retained their vitality and had their prosperity enhanced by appropriate levels of commercial and residential development. They will be the focus for local services and jobs for the surrounding rural areas.



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- 1.7 As part of a sustainable pattern of living, the development that has taken place in some villages will have been limited and restricted to meeting local needs, with more focused on those communities that provide a range of services. Nevertheless, all rural communities will be vibrant and healthy, linked to services including IT. Although the farming industry will continue to be dominant, despite pressures placed upon it, the rural economy will be diverse, with an improved tourism package that is built on the character of the area.
- 1.8 The prospects of an ageing population, so evident at the start of the millennium, will have reduced. The age profile will be more evenly distributed with the 18 to 30s better represented than ever before. Local people, particularly young first time buyers, will not be forced out of the area because of competition from those who can afford to pay more for housing. Young people who have left the area in order to pursue Further Education will have incentives to return, namely skilled jobs, a good spread of housing across the areas of need, homes that they can afford and an exceptional environment.
- 1.9 Emphasis will be on partnership working with the relevant agencies. Issues such as the elderly in the more remote rural areas will have resulted in providing them with the opportunity to remain close to or within their existing communities and social support systems. In respect of people with learning difficulties provision will have moved away from large institutional services to community-based activity for day services and smaller residential facilities.
- 1.10 Deprivation will no longer be an issue, as support will have been given to addressing the needs of the previously relatively deprived areas of Saxmundham and Leiston, the southern parts of Felixstowe, and large parts of the rural area.
- 1.11 All new development will have been supported by the appropriate infrastructure (roads, public transport, education, health, play space, open space etc) and provide a safe environment with little fear of crime. Whenever new housing development has taken place, a high priority will have been given to the provision of housing that is affordable and constructed to a high standard of design and is tailored to meet the needs of local people. Emphasis will have been given to ensuring the integration of the new within the established communities, with associated new facilities being provided for the benefit of both.
- 1.12 Use of motor vehicles will remain important particularly within the rural areas. Opportunities to improve the main strategic road network (particularly the A12 and A14) and key local routes will have been identified and will have been taken or committed to where this can be achieved without any overriding environmental objection. The reliance of the local populations on the rural road network will also have been recognised in improvement programmes. Increased opportunities will also have been provided for cycling and walking within and around the main settlements as well as in rural areas.
- 1.13 Improved public transport also continues to be important given the lack of access by a large proportion of the rural population to a car. The integration of private and public transport will be a fundamental objective. The two local rail routes along the East Coast and between Ipswich and Felixstowe, including their stations, continue to be supported and enhanced. Generally, innovative

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ways will have been found to secure and encourage public and community transport provision to serve both residents and visitors.

- 1.14 The distinctive and valued natural and historic landscape, and the built environment, will continue to be protected, but will have been enhanced over the preceding period. Large parts of the landscape of the district will remain of national importance and be designated as such, being a key asset for local people and visitors. It will be managed in order to retain its character. Such character extends beyond biodiversity and visual impression to include tranquillity and ambience, particularly relevant in the secluded parts of the coast. For the coast and estuaries long-term plans will be in place that recognise climate change but respect the social, economic and environmental character of coastal areas and communities.
- 1.15 In the towns and suburban areas, the quality of the urban townscape will have been preserved or improved, including by the protection or creation of green open spaces.
- 1.16 Centres of excellence in education and the arts will be established, including theatres, museums and cultural activities. Add to these a wide range of leisure pursuits (including sailing, which continues to provide an input into the local economy), and the result is a distinct district.
- 1.17 Cutting across the Vision is the issue of transport, where the Council will work with the highway and rail authorities, and other relevant suppliers of public transport, to create a sustainable and integrated transport system, adequate to support the economic and residential life of the district.

**In summary, building upon the best of the present, the Suffolk Coastal district in 2021 will be one where people want to live and invest, and care for others and the environment.**

## **A VISION OF EACH OF THE PARTS**

- 1.18 **In addition to the Vision of the district as a whole, parts of it have also been examined.** Each town has been assessed on the basis of their individual character and qualities. A separate Vision has been created for each town. In addition, a Vision has been created for the area east of the town of Ipswich given its specific reference in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a location for growth.

### **Aldeburgh**

- 1.19 The **Vision for Aldeburgh** in 2021 is a small town that:
- a) Retains and protects its close-knit historic character without suffering the effects of “town cramming”;
  - b) Retains its retail and service offer, serving both “old” and “new” town residents alike, its hinterland and visitor populations;
  - c) Has sufficient services and facilities, particularly health and education, to serve the population profile;

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- d) Has the benefit of some affordable housing, created in order to address the age imbalance of the population and enabling local residents to remain within the area;
  - e) Retains the sensitive environment generally, particularly the setting and edges of the town;
  - f) Has the benefit of traffic management measures in the High Street and elsewhere providing an improved physical environment within the central areas, and restricting potential damage to the sea defences to the south of the town
  - g) Retains its role as a tourist centre, offering a range of accommodation and visitor attractions.
  - h) Is protected from the risk of flooding to an appropriate, cost-effective and practical level.

### **East of Ipswich**

1.20 This area incorporates the parishes of Brightwell, Foxhall, Little Bealings, Martlesham, Nacton, Playford, Purdis Farm, Rushmere St. Andrew and the town of Kesgrave. Although separate communities in their own right and not part of the regional centre of Ipswich, they form part of a larger area – the Ipswich Policy Area. Here, the Regional Spatial Strategy specifies that new housing development should be provided but leaving the precise location to the Local Development Framework.

1.21 The **Vision for the communities east of Ipswich** in 2021 is:

- a) An area that has created its own distinctive identity with smaller readily distinguishable neighbourhoods and communities within the larger area;
- b) An area which has embraced change and maximised opportunities to provide a full range of social and community facilities to complement and build on those already present for the benefit of existing and future populations;
- c) An area that includes a mix of uses, and size, type and tenure of dwellings to enable the creation of more sustainable communities;
- d) An area where public transport provision, foot and cycle paths have been upgraded and promoted to minimise the need to use private motor vehicles to access employment, schools and other key facilities;
- e) An area where development has been phased and scaled to ensure that new or upgraded utility and other social and community provision is provided in advance of or parallel to new housing and employment provision;
- f) An area where priority has been given to creating a safe and attractive environment, including the provision of advanced planting and landscaping to create new settlement boundaries that blend with the surrounding landscape;
- g) The retention of the Sandlings areas on the edge of Ipswich because of their historic and biodiversity interests;
- h) Maximisation of opportunities to achieve access to green space, including the countryside and
- i) An area where opportunities for new employment provision have been maximised, particularly those associated with the strategically important hi-tech business at BT and through the provision of new business starter units.

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## **Felixstowe Peninsula South**

- 1.22 Felixstowe Peninsula South consists of Felixstowe (including the Port) and the two adjoining communities of Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary.
- 1.23 The **Vision for the Felixstowe Peninsula South** in 2021 is for an integrated area that:
- a) Has embraced the opportunities for regeneration, growth and change;
  - b) Has retained the separate identities of the individual settlements and communities;
  - c) Has maintained and protected the high quality and variety of the built environment;
  - d) Has provided additional housing to accommodate the existing and some new population, by making maximum use of brownfield opportunities prior to creation of fully serviced new localities.
  - e) Has maximised the opportunities created by additional levels of development to provide an extended comprehensive range and scale of facilities distributed between the settlements for the benefit of the wider area and the older and newer communities;
  - f) Provides a scale and range of housing to meet the needs of the existing and future populations to provide a more sustainable balance between housing and employment provision; and providing the opportunity to reduce commuting;
  - g) Has expanded the quality and availability of public transport provision between the settlements to improve access to jobs and other local services and facilities;
  - h) Has expanded the local employment base to provide a wider range and choice of employment type and site together with enhanced education and skills, alongside that provided by an expanded Port function;
  - i) Has resolved issues of accessibility to and from the Port along the A14 including the provision of facilities for lorries and HGVs;
  - j) Has forged strong economic, social and cultural links between the communities and the Port for the benefit of both;
  - k) Has developed its tourism role in terms of services, facilities and accommodation, which builds on the qualities and facilities offered by the town of Felixstowe, creating strong links between the seafront and town centre areas and the qualities of the surrounding natural environment;
  - l) Has expanded the retail, service and other facilities available within the town centre commensurate to meet the needs of the whole population both resident and visitor; and
  - m) As a priority is well defended from risk of flooding and coastal erosion.

## **Framlingham**

- 1.24 The **Vision for Framlingham** in 2021 is a small town that:
- a) Retains its historic quality character without suffering the effects of “town cramming”;
  - b) Retains a healthy retail and service offer, serving both “old” and “new” town residents alike, its hinterland and visitor populations;
  - c) Has sufficient services and facilities, particularly health, education and community facilities to serve the population profile;

- 
- d) Has maximised the opportunity to redevelop vacant brownfield land on the edge of the settlement to create new mixed use development of housing and employment, tailored to meet the needs of the local population;
  - e) Has increased the scale and range of the employment offer;
  - f) Retains the sensitive setting and edges of the town;
  - g) Retains its role as a tourist centre, offering a range of accommodation and visitor attractions and facilities, but ensuring that any retail element is balanced so as not to detract from that available and designed to serve the needs of the local resident population
  - h) Has benefited from improved utility provision; and
  - i) Has created improved access to the town centre through improvements to the town car parks, linked to improved local public transport provision.

### **Leiston**

1.25 The **Vision for Leiston** in 2021 is a small town that:

- a) Has experienced only limited new development in the form of new housing provision, with priority being given to affordable housing to meet local needs;
- b) Has worked within the nuclear safeguarding limits to maintain the vibrancy of the town, with efforts being concentrated on retaining and improving the quality and range of facilities available to local residents and an improved physical environment;
- c) Has retained, strengthened and expanded its employment base, despite the detrimental effects of decommissioning Sizewell Station 'A';
- d) Has accepted and embraced an incremental improvement in its tourism offer building on its location and its industrial heritage ; and
- e) Has protected and enhanced the sensitive settings to the town.

### **Saxmundham**

1.26 The **Vision for Saxmundham** in 2021 is that of a small market town that:

- a) Has consolidated its role as a market town providing for the range of retail, social and community needs of its resident population and rural hinterland;
- b) Has experienced limited new development in the form of new housing provision, with priority being given to affordable housing to meet local needs;
- c) Has seen a further up-grading of the physical environment within the town centre, improving its appeal to both residents and tourists;
- d) Has increased its employment base to offer improved job prospects within the local area; and
- e) Has seen improvements to the local railway station to encourage more use to be made of local public transport provision.

### **Woodbridge**

1.27 The **Vision for Woodbridge** in 2021 is for a small market town that:

- a) Retains the quality of the built environment and the character of the riverside and estuary
- b) Has experienced limited growth on a range of sites across the town
- c) Has maintained the A12 as a firm edge to the town

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- d) Has enhanced and thereby strengthened the links between the town centre, Market Hill and the riverside.
  - e) Enjoys a vibrant riverside environment that incorporates a range of uses. Residential uses in this area will have been resisted to ensure employment uses and its tourism and amenity offers are not jeopardised.
  - f) Has maintained and enhanced the quality of its town centre through the retention and enhancement of its anchor stores as well as encouragement of small scale, independent retail businesses
  - g) Provides a balanced range of provision to meet the needs of residents – both locally and from the rural catchment area - and tourists.
  - h) Actively manages traffic and visitors to the town and surrounding area through the use of suitable car parking and signage; and
  - i) Encourages wider use of walking (including within the town centre), cycling and public transport.

## THE OBJECTIVES

- 1.28 The Objectives of this Core Strategy are divided into six “themes” each of which will contribute towards the achievement of this Vision.

**Theme 1 – The Spatial Framework: Achieving a Better Quality of Life**  
**To ensure that development supports the principles of sustainable development and secures sustainable communities**

### **Objective 1 – Sustainable Development and Sustainable Communities**

To deliver more integrated and sustainable patterns of land use, movement, activity and development.

### **Objective 2 – Settlement Policy**

To ensure that the number and distribution of new houses and jobs are balanced and reflect sustainable principles, including making greater use of previously developed land, whilst respecting the character of settlements and local surroundings. In doing so to sustain viable rural communities where access to day-to-day facilities is not restricted to the use of the private car.

### **Objective 3 – Countryside**

To provide a framework which will maintain and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment, whilst securing the long-term prosperity of those living and working within the rural area, including the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### **Theme 2 - Housing**

**To encourage the improved provision of, and access to, appropriate housing to meet existing and future needs.**

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#### **Objective 4 - New Housing**

To meet as a minimum, the district's housing requirements as identified in the regional spatial strategy for the period 2001-2021. This includes providing housing that will encourage younger people to remain in the district, but also addresses the needs of what is currently an ageing population.

Such provision to be made in a manner which addresses both the immediate needs of the local resident population and the longer-term future needs of the population, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and sustainable communities.

#### **Objective 5 Meeting Housing Demand**

To increase the stock of housing to provide for the full range of size type and tenure of dwellings to meet the demands of the existing and future population by maximising the use of the existing stock through conversion, adaptation or extension and targeting new provision to meet identified shortfalls and longer term needs.

### **Theme 3 - Strengthening The Economy**

**To stimulate a prosperous economy in order to improve the quality of life for the community.**

#### **Objective 6 - Economic Development**

To increase prosperity and employment growth to meet, as a minimum, the identified employment needs of the district as indicated in the RSS, to achieve a more sustainable balance between workers and jobs and to attract workers to remain in employment within the district.

#### **Objective 7 - The Rural Economy**

To strengthen and diversify the rural economy through:

- Fostering the maintenance and expansion of existing employment and creation of new employment in the market towns of the district
- Encouraging small-scale farm and rural diversification enterprises which are compatible with objectives in respect of the environment
- Supporting agriculture
- Expanding the districts tourism offer where it is compatible with the objectives in respect of the environment

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#### **Objective 8 Tourism**

To promote all year round tourism based on the attributes (environmental, cultural and people) of the area, which optimises the benefits of employment and value to the economy that is compatible with maintaining the quality of life of the area.

#### **Objective 9 Retail Centres**

To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres; to foster market towns as service employment and retail centres; and to encourage the retention of appropriate local services including post offices and shops in villages and district centres.

#### **Theme 4 - Accessibility**

**To protect, improve and use our environment in a way that not only benefits the people who live, work and visit the area, but also leaves a rich and diverse legacy for future generations.**

#### **Objective 10 Transport**

To minimise the environmental impact of travel, by reducing the need to travel, encouraging the use of more environmentally friendly modes of transport, and widening choice of modes.

#### **Theme 5 - Protecting and enhancing the environment**

**To protect, improve and use our environment in a way that not only benefits the people who live, work and visit the area, but also leaves a rich and diverse legacy for future generations.**

#### **Objective 11 - Protecting and Enhancing the Physical Environment**

To maintain and enhance the quality of the district's distinctive natural and built environments, by:

- the careful use of siting, design and impact of new development and limiting the scale of development to that appropriate to its location; and
- Safeguarding, enhancing and managing the culture and heritage of the district



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### **Objective 12 – Climate Change**

To both minimise the factors that contribute towards climate change and mitigate against its potential effects by:

- Ensuring development minimises the use of natural resources by utilising recycled materials where appropriate, minimises greenhouse gas emissions, helps to reduce waste and minimises the risk of pollution.
- Encouraging and promoting schemes which create renewable energy where consistent with the need to safeguard residential amenity, the environment and the landscape;
- Minimising the risk of flooding and ensuring appropriate management of land within flood plains
- Improving the process of estuary and coastal management, incorporating an integrating social, recreational, economic, physical and environmental issues and actions

### **Theme 6 - Develop a safe and healthy community**

**The Core Strategy will protect and promote the well being of the community in terms of its health, safety, leisure and cultural opportunities, and access to leisure opportunities.**

### **Objective 16 Physical and Community Infrastructure**

To ensure that appropriate infrastructure, such as transport, utilities or community facilities are provided in order to address current deficiencies and meet the needs of new development.

In terms of community infrastructure to identify needs and deficiencies in public, voluntary and commercial service provision and seek new approaches to meet those needs and address deficiencies

### **Objective 17 Local Services**

To promote better access for every member of the community – particularly younger and older people, those who are disadvantaged, those in remote rural areas, and families – to housing, employment, services and facilities.

In doing so to encourage the retention of appropriate local services including post offices and shops in villages and district centres

### **Objective 18 Leisure**

To ensure that the community is as healthy as possible by providing/promoting opportunities for it to live a healthy lifestyle.

In particular to meet the needs of younger people, including providing them with opportunities to contribute to the development and delivery of services and activities to meet their needs

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## **PART TWO THE STRATEGY**

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## THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The twin principles of sustainable development and the creation of sustainable communities are central to the new planning system. Simply expressed, the concept of sustainable development means ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both present and future generations. In relation to sustainable communities it means working toward communities which are active, inclusive and safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed and built, well connected, thriving, well served, fair for everyone, and diverse, reflecting their local circumstances. These twin principles are required to underlie and support all new development plan documents (DPD's).
- 2.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) translates these national principles to the regional level. It seeks to achieve a sustainable relationship between jobs, homes and services at both the strategic and local level. Conserving the environment, quality of life, local character and natural resources are also important. Tackling the problems of social inclusion and deprivation are key strands in achieving sustainable development. It is the role of the Suffolk Coastal Core Strategy to cascade these principles further to the local level, tailoring them to address local circumstances.
- 2.3 The Core Principles relating to sustainable development and sustainable communities are based around government advice and the RSS, highlighting the aspects of sustainable development and sustainable communities considered critical to the Suffolk Coastal district.

#### **Strategic Policy CS1 – Sustainable Development**

Central to the Core Strategy for the future of the Suffolk Coastal district is the achievement of sustainable development. Of particular relevance to the district are:

- (a) The application of a defined settlement hierarchy itself based on sustainability principles;
- (b) Provision of sufficient housing to meet the needs of current and future populations, in a way which is both sustainable, appropriate to the widely varying communities which make up the District, and avoids or minimises the negative impacts which can arise from development;
- (c) Enabling a healthy economy, notably in the town centres and rural areas;
- (d) Transport accessibility to services and an integrated and sustainable transport system;
- (e) The conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment;
- (f) The effects of climate change;

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(g) Maintaining and enhancing a sense of place;</li><li>(h) The provision of appropriate infrastructure in order to support existing and proposed communities; and</li><li>(i) The achievement of quality local services accessible to all sections of the community:</li></ul> |
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## SETTLEMENTS

- 2.4 Establishing a settlement hierarchy is a fundamental pre-requisite to identifying a range of possible spatial development options. It is this that will determine the level and density of new development considered acceptable for each level within the hierarchy, and from this, the possible development combinations, that could realistically meet the housing and employment requirements for the district, as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. It also involves identifying and assessing what are considered appropriate levels of services and facilities including retail, for each settlement type, with the aim of maintaining and where appropriate extending existing levels of provision.
- 2.5 In accordance with the principles of sustainable development and sustainable communities, the Regional Spatial Strategy requires that the major centres be the focus of the largest scale of development. Thereafter it states that development will be focused in market towns and then at key service centres. In all other rural settlements and related communities it states that local authorities should consider the potential to accommodate new development, sympathetic to local character and of an appropriate scale and nature, including local employment and housing need. The Core Strategy needs to consider a settlement hierarchy based on that set out at the national and regional levels.
- 2.6 The settlement hierarchy is defined by on a combination of function and physical form. It reflects what actually happens on the ground, i.e. looking at individual communities and how and at what level they operate. It provides a fine-grained approach to the range of settlement types that exist across the district. Settlements are categorised according to sustainability factors including size, level of facilities, their role in relation to their locality, as well as their physical form. This will ensure that the number and distribution of new houses and jobs are balanced and reflect sustainable principles whilst respecting the character of settlements and local surroundings. On the one level the hierarchy reflects the situation as it currently exists “on the ground”. It recognises and acknowledges individual roles. At a second level, it provides the framework within which settlements considered to be sustainable are able to continue to grow and develop or to consolidate their existing role. Development is therefore expressed in terms of three key uses, access (or lack of access) to which, is considered to underpin quality of life. These are housing, employment and retail (including access to services and facilities).

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### Strategic Policy CS2 – Settlement Policy

The following settlement hierarchy would be used in determining the scale of development appropriate to a particular location:

**Major Centres** - defined as settlements capable of development for strategic purposes.

**Market Towns** - settlements capable of expansion, including estate scale development, where such development would support the role of the settlement, contribute to regeneration and not be detrimental to their character and setting

**Key Service Centres** – settlements which provide the full range of specified facilities and are capable of sustaining some minor expansion, groups of houses and infilling consistent with their character and setting

**Local Service Centres** – settlements providing a smaller range of facilities than the key service centres. Development within these settlements would be confined to, dependent on their individual character, infilling or small groups which address specific local economic, social or community objectives. Also includes settlements that contain a smaller range of facilities but link with neighbouring settlements (as a “cluster”), so as to between them provide for a greater range of facilities and services that go a long way to meeting all day to day needs of the wider locality.

**Other Villages** - settlements with few or minimal facilities where the presumption is against new development unless it can be justified as a rural exception.

**Countryside** - the area outside the settlements above including the hamlets and small groups of dwellings that are dispersed across the district. These are considered to form part of the countryside.

- 2.7 The provision of the physical and social infrastructure necessary to support all development at all levels of the hierarchy, including the use of developer contributions, is considered elsewhere in the Core Strategy.

- 2.8 *An alternative Option considered was a hierarchy based on physical size rather than sustainability criteria. This has the benefit of being simple in its approach. However, it fails to reflect the current emphasis on sustainable settlements and the need to look at the function of settlements as well as their size. The approach therefore fails to accord with latest advice in the Regional Spatial Strategy to which the Core Strategy is required to conform as it cannot distinguish, or provide the basis for distinguishing, even those settlements which are key service centres from others. To progress with this option might therefore risk failing a key test of soundness.*

### COUNTRYSIDE

- 2.9 National policies and guidance require that the quality and character of the countryside is protected for its own sake and, where possible, enhanced.

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Particular regard is required to be had to any areas that have been statutorily designated for their landscape, wildlife or historic qualities.

2.10 National policy also increasingly recognises the need for more regard to be had to rural issues and to the problems and opportunities these areas experience. Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) sets out the governments objectives for the rural areas as follows:

- a) To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas
- b) To promote more sustainable patterns of development
- c) To promote the development of the English regions by improving their economic performance so that they are able to reach their full potential; and
- d) To promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agricultural sectors

### **Strategic Policy CS3 – Development in the Countryside**

In Suffolk Coastal the countryside outside of towns and villages, including hamlets and other small communities, will continue to be protected for its own sake from development that is inappropriate in terms of its type or scale, or does not require a rural location.

The emphasis will be on:

- Meeting the needs of agriculture and horticulture
- Promoting protection and enhancement of the environment including biodiversity
- Encouraging an accessible countryside
- Supporting the rural economy
- Meeting local social needs

## **HOUSING**

2.11 The amount of new housing is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), also known as the East of England Plan. This considers the district in the context of the region and identifies a requirement within Suffolk Coastal of 10,200 new houses between the years 2001 and 2021. The RSS apportions the housing requirement between the part of the district within the “Ipswich Policy Area” (IPA) and the part outside of it at 3,200 dwellings and 7,000 dwellings respectively. The IPA includes the borough of Ipswich and parts of the districts of Babergh, Mid-Suffolk and Suffolk Coastal. The town and parishes affected within Suffolk Coastal are Brightwell, Foxhall, Kesgrave, Little Bealings, Martlesham, Nacton, Playford, Purdis Farm and Rushmere St Andrew.

2.12 This requirement is for the period from 2001 (the base date of the RSS) to 2021. This means that this Core Strategy, assuming adoption in 2009, will contain a housing framework for only 12 years. Government advice is that the

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provision of housing should be planned over a period of at least 15 years. If the annual requirement of 510 dwellings overall is extended by three years the total requirement will increase from 10200 dwellings to 11730. The apportionment between the Ipswich Policy Area and the rest of the district will be 3680 and 8050 dwellings respectively.

- 2.13 In increasing the requirement for that part of the district within the Ipswich Policy Area (IPA) the Council will need to liaise with adjoining authorities to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the planning of the area.

## **HOUSING SUPPLY**

- 2.14 In addressing the overall housing requirement, consideration needs to be given to the sources of supply. In this respect:
- a) House construction has already occurred since 2001, the base date of the Regional Spatial Strategy;
  - b) There are a significant number of outstanding planning permissions, some of which are under construction. A large proportion is situated on the edge of Ipswich; and
  - c) There is potential within the urban areas – on vacant land, redundant employment areas, intensification of existing sites etc
- 2.15 There is a further source of supply that needs to be considered. This is the occurrence of unpredicted developments, often referred to as “windfall”. These can take the form of conversions or the unexpected closure of an employment complex but most often they occur as small sites – usually minor infill plots in the towns and villages. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 on Housing states that “allowances for windfall should not be included in the first 10 years of land supply unless local planning authorities can provide robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. In these circumstances an allowance should be included but should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.”
- 2.16 In other words, authorities should seek to meet their housing targets through the identification of specific sites that they know are deliverable. Windfall by its very nature is unpredictable and should not be relied upon to meet those targets.
- 2.17 However, there is a case for taking account of a sum, based on historic trends, for the final 5 years of the 15 year plan period. However, historic trends cannot be expected to continue unchanged given that the new local development framework is introducing a new settlement policy with an approach to development based on sustainability criteria. Therefore, an allowance has been made for small sites but at a reduced level in comparison with previous years namely reduction by one third.
- 2.18 The Council estimates that from the sources listed above provision can be identified for over three quarters of the total housing requirement, as illustrated in table 1 below. The remaining proportion will require positive provision in the Local Development Framework.

Table 1 Net Housing Requirements 2007-2024

	<b>Ipswich Policy Area</b>	<b>Rest of District</b>	<b>Total District</b>
<b>Requirements</b>			
RSS Requirement 2001-2024	3680	8050	11730
- Completions 2001-2007	1540	2310	3850
<b>Requirement 2007-2024</b>	<b>2140</b>	<b>5740</b>	<b>7880</b>
<b>Supply</b>			
+ Outstanding planning permissions 2007 (discounted by 10%)	740	1420	2160
+ Urban Potential	210	890	1100
+ Small Sites (5 years' supply 2019 – 2024)	220	940	1160
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>1170</b>	<b>3250</b>	<b>4420</b>
<b>Net requirement 2007-2024</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>2490</b>	<b>3460</b>

## HOUSING DISTRIBUTION

### Ipswich Policy Area

- 2.19 Ipswich is the county town and a port. It represents the largest employment centre in Suffolk, accounting for around 30% of all employment, and is of regional significance. In the Regional Spatial Strategy it is identified as one of the Key Centres for Development and Change.
- 2.20 The adjacent area within Suffolk Coastal consists of a diverse area of villages, older urban communities and modern housing developments. It also contains the major employment centre at Martlesham Heath and is well placed in relation to major retail and other social and community facilities. It is well served by public transport provision and foot and cycle paths. Nonetheless, the main A1214 remains heavily used and further development will need to take this into account. The A14 within the district serves the Port of Felixstowe and concern has been expressed about its current capacity. This will also be an important consideration when considering options for growth.
- 2.21 In respect of growth options the part of Suffolk Coastal abutting Ipswich can broadly be broken into four segments:

Option 1 - North-east (Playford, Rushmere St Andrew (village), Tuddenham St Martin and Westerfield). Here the urban area quickly breaks out into rural landscape. Further out the Fynn Valley is a designated special landscape area and overall the area is of high agricultural value. There is also a constraint imposed upon the valley in respect of flood risk. The integrity of the gaps between settlements is of particular importance. Those around Rushmere St Andrew village are occupied by sports fields.



Option 2 - East (Kesgrave north and Playford). East of Ipswich development has tended to follow the corridor of the A1214 but on one side only. To the north are agricultural fields and woodland with the occasional isolated large property. There are remnants of heathland and a sand pit.

Option 3 - East (Kesgrave south and Martlesham). East of Ipswich development has proceeded in a series of large 'blocks' eg Bixley Farm and Grange Farm. Opportunities exist for further expansion. Strategic gaps do remain between the settlements, some of which are isolated blocks of remnant heathland. The Mill river valley requires protection as a special landscape area, wildlife corridor and area at risk from flooding.

Option 4 - East of the A12 at Martlesham. The A12 presents in many respects a defining boundary. There may be capacity issues in terms of traffic although a park and ride facility exists at Martlesham and a dedicated bus lane is partly installed. A strategic employment site – Martlesham Heath – is present.

Table – Options for Direction of Growth to the East of Ipswich

	Opportunity or Constraint	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
OPPORTUNITIES	Large capacity potential	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Good access to services and facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Good access to public transport	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Potential to include road improvements to the north of Ipswich	✓	✓		
	Well-related to main urban area – less 'sprawl'			✓	
	Potential enhanced public transport route		✓	✓	
	Brownfield land potential				✓
	Proximity to employment			✓	✓
CONSTRAINTS	Coalescence of settlements	✓			✓
	Listed buildings/scheduled ancient monuments	✓	✓		
	Noise issues	✓		✓	✓
	Radial road capacity	✓	✓	✓	
	Landscape value	✓			✓
	Possible contaminated land		✓		
	Air quality issues		✓		✓
	Biodiversity issues		✓	✓	

2.22 As outlined in Table 1 the net housing requirement for this area in the period 2007 to 2024 is 970 dwellings which will predominantly need to be located on 'greenfield' land. At this stage it is preferred that there be a strategic approach to the planning of the area, including provision for appropriate infrastructure. The Council, therefore, could take a longer term view of the area and, in making a decision on the location of that growth, consider the need for housing beyond 2004. In order for that to occur there should not be a constraint imposed by false ceilings in respect of housing numbers.

2.23 The Council's **preferred option for growth to the east of Ipswich is Option 3** above.

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- 2.24 The housing market is, of course, dominated by the adjacent urban area of Ipswich. Given the large numbers of houses immediately available on previously developed land within Ipswich (plus that identified within Suffolk Coastal) and given that the release of such land is a priority in national policy, the release of greenfield land is not expected to occur until later in the period of the Core Strategy. This is likely to be in the mid-period of 2014 to 2019. However, the release of previously developed land will be carefully monitored, as will the nature of the houses being constructed in order to achieve a balanced housing market. The release of the land may, as a result, be brought forward in a subsequent review of the Core Strategy.

### **Felixstowe/Walton and The Trimleys**

- 2.25 Felixstowe has more people of retirement age and fewer people of working age than the norm, either in the rest of Suffolk or across the UK, though broadly comparable with other seaside towns. This profile could become critical to the vitality and viability of the town and the service it provides to other settlements in its hinterland, if these trends continue. Younger generations already have to look outside Felixstowe for careers and housing.
- 2.26 The population of Felixstowe is increasing slowly although household size is falling. Despite slow population growth, there are therefore even more people looking for homes, and Felixstowe has more and more smaller households - single people or couples particularly those that are key workers or first time buyers. The number and type of new homes provided in the town has not matched this increase in demand for homes.
- 2.27 The growth of jobs in Felixstowe, driven by expansion of the Port, means that employment is now out of balance with the availability of housing. As a result, more of the new jobs are being taken up by people who are not able to find a home in Felixstowe, even if they would like one. The 2001 Census revealed that there was a daily net inflow to Felixstowe of 2,719 workers. This comprised an outflow of 3,600 Felixstowe residents to jobs in Ipswich and elsewhere and an inflow of 6,319 non-residents who work in Felixstowe but live elsewhere.
- 2.28 The Port has permission to expand its business through a major re-configuration of the port area and its deep water berths. If or when it does, the potential exists for the housing imbalance to get worse unless measures are introduced to address this. At a time when planning policy is aimed at reducing the need to travel to minimise the use of finite energy resources and the production of greenhouse gases, the current development pattern may not be sustainable. Additionally, the local economy does not benefit if these in-commuters spend their wages elsewhere, rather than support shops and services in the town and villages.
- 2.29 As outlined in Table x the net housing requirement for the area outside the Ipswich Policy Area in the period 2007 to 2024 is 2490 dwellings. In accordance with the settlement hierarchy, and to achieve the Vision of the Core Strategy in respect of Felixstowe, a large proportion of this total should be located there.
- 2.30 An attempt has been made to assess the potential from current previously-developed ('brownfield') land within Felixstowe and the Trimley villages. The total estimate of 300 dwellings is relatively small given the size of the

settlements, largely due to their nature with few redundant sites and constraints imposed by such factors as flood risk. Therefore, allocations of greenfield land will be necessary.

2.31 Expansion of Felixstowe is constrained to the east, south and west by the sea, the port and the Orwell estuary. The port is a generator of noise, both from activity within it as well as heavy goods vehicles and freight trains moving to and from it. The estuary is an extremely valuable environmental resource (as is the Deben estuary to the north east), highly protected by both international and national designations. Both estuaries are also part of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths area of outstanding natural beauty. Both estuaries are also associated with flood risk. For the Orwell this risk extends into the port and the built up area around it. The coast also offers a risk from erosion.

2.32 Opportunities for development of previously developed land are extremely limited given the constraints. Opportunities for expansion are also limited with the options being:

Option 1 - the north-west between Walton and Trimley St Mary where the issue of noise from the A14 is likely to influence the area available

Option 2 - the north and north-east where landscape issues are important. The opportunity is available for longer term planning of the town with further development a possibility. Candlet Road in many ways acts as the physical boundary of the town.

Option 3 - within the parishes of Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary themselves. Both have been identified as Key Service Centres with 2001 populations of 1945 and 3672 respectively, including estate scale development. Modest expansion is possible without removing their individual character. Issues of landscape impact will be important

Option 4 – north of the A14 at Trimley St Martin where landscape issues are important as well as the crossing of a major threshold in the form of the A14 itself

Table – Options for Direction of Growth at Felixstowe and the Trimleys

	Opportunity or Constraint	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
OPPORTUNITIES	Large capacity potential		✓	✓	✓
	Good access to services and facilities	✓	✓	✓	
	Good access to public transport	✓		✓	
	Potential to create green infrastructure in the form of access to the AONB		✓		✓
	Well-related to main urban area – less ‘sprawl’	✓			
	Potential enhanced public transport route		✓		
	Brownfield land potential				
	Proximity to employment	✓			

CONSTRAINTS	Coalescence of settlements	✓		✓	
	Listed buildings/scheduled ancient monuments		✓	✓	
	Noise issues	✓		✓	✓
	Road capacity issues	✓			
	Landscape value		✓	✓	✓
	Possible contaminated land				
	Air quality issues	✓			
	Biodiversity issues		✓	✓	✓

- 2.33 Given the constraints, **the preferred option for growth is Option 1 above**. This is expected to occur in the short to medium term 2010 to 2015 given the current lack of previously developed land. However, this is unable to accommodate sufficient housing to meet the requirements to 2024 and work should commence on a masterplan based on Option 2 north of Candlet Road for the long term future development of the town. This could include the creation of employment and community facilities.

### Market Towns

- 2.34 There is marked general support for development within market towns. Reasons given generally included:
- It gives them the opportunity to prosper.
  - It addresses their requirements.
  - It creates affordable housing.

#### Aldeburgh

- 2.35 Aldeburgh is a very small coastal town and resort. It lies entirely within the area of outstanding natural beauty and heritage coast. Its setting, therefore, is extremely sensitive. The built environment is of historic and architectural interest. The Alde estuary creates potential issues of flooding.
- 2.36 Given these constraints, the town may not be considered one suitable to accommodate housing to meet the strategic needs of the district. Development will, therefore, occur in the form of infilling and groups of houses within the defined physical limits or in accordance with other policies in the Core Strategy. Opportunities on previously developed land are minimal.

#### Framlingham

- 2.37 Framlingham is a medieval market centre the historic core of which is much in evidence today. It acts as an employment and community focus for a significant rural catchment area. Recent estate-scale development has occurred on the peripheries.
- 2.38 Further extensions of the town are less constrained by some of the key thresholds present in other towns in the district, ie designated landscape or areas of wildlife importance. Nonetheless, it does have some important constraints that could affect the scale and location of peripheral growth:
- The character and setting of the historic town, particularly on the northern edge

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- The river Ore and associated flood risk
  - The limited capacity of the B-road network that serves the town and consequent impacts of traffic on neighbouring settlements, a point made by some respondents
- 2.39 Given these constraints, the recent high level of growth and the potential development of previously developed land it may not be appropriate for Framlingham to provide further land for housing development to meet strategic needs.

#### Leiston

- 2.40 Leiston is a compact town the early growth of which was largely related to its function as an employment centre based on engineering, notably the Richard Garrett works. Since its demise the major employer has become the Sizewell nuclear power station. This economic decline and reliance on one employer, together with the fragility of the town centre, is cause enough to justify the preparation of an Area Action Plan as part of the Local Development Framework. This will focus on issues relating to economic and social regeneration.
- 2.41 The unique circumstances of nuclear safeguarding limit the future expansion of the town. Opportunities exist, however, for development within the physical limits of the town on previously developed land. Subject to the issue of nuclear safeguarding there may be the opportunity to make modest strategic allocations for development on greenfield land. These will be considered as part of the Site Allocations Local Development Document.

#### Saxmundham

- 2.42 Saxmundham is a small market town in the valley of the river Fromus and with the benefit of a railway station within the town. Its historic core lies on the west bank of the river and the town has developed westwards with considerable new development in recent years. The A12 has now become the western physical limit of the town.
- 2.43 Other key thresholds are:
- The importance of maintaining a gap between Saxmundham and Carlton and Kelsale to the north
  - Flood risk either side of the Fromus
  - The clearly defined southern edge to the town, marked by mature trees and hedgerows and including the historic parkland of Hurtshall
- 2.44 There is within the current Local Plan an outstanding allocation for residential development to the east of the river Fromus. This has the advantage of contributing towards the regeneration of the adjacent town centre and creating open space alongside the Fromus. Elsewhere some sites are available within the urban area and further greenfield releases may be unnecessary. Potential sites will be considered as part of the Site Allocations Local Development Document.

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## Woodbridge

- 2.45 Woodbridge is a historic market town that has expanded to the north and west into the parish of Melton. It has a good range of community facilities, public transport links to Ipswich (including rail) and a retail base in the form of the town centre.
- 2.46 Those in favour of further growth of Woodbridge referred to such benefits as:
- The provision of affordable or any housing to keep up with the demands of local people.
  - A strong economic base
- 2.47 The town is more or less at capacity, constrained by a series of key thresholds:
- The Deben estuary to the east (area of outstanding natural beauty and international wildlife importance) and associated flood risk
  - The A12 to the north and north-west
  - A strategic gap with Martlesham to the south
  - A strategic gap with Melton to the north-east
- 2.48 Further significant peripheral expansion of Woodbridge (and Melton) would not be possible without a significant change in its character, or without key thresholds being breached. Although the supply of previously developed land is minimal, the preferred strategy for the future development of the town is potentially one of constraint although modest expansion may be possible depending upon environmental considerations. Potential sites will be considered as part of the Site Allocations Local Development Document.

## Villages

- 2.49 Much support has been expressed for the distribution of new housing across villages as well as towns. Reasons given include:
- Equitable distribution.
  - Economic benefits.
  - Avoidance of 'ghetto/exclusive connotations'.
  - Support for local services.
  - Prevents stagnation in the countryside.
  - The retention of lively, balanced communities.
  - Would enable the creation of community facilities through planning gain.
- 2.50 Concerns expressed related primarily to inadequate infrastructure and the impact upon individual settlements.
- 2.51 A number of settlements have been identified as key service centres. Of these the settlements of Martlesham, Melton, Purdis Farm, Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary have already been considered in the contexts of the Ipswich area, Felixstowe and Woodbridge.

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- 2.52 The criteria for assessing the suitability of the other settlements for further development beyond that of infilling or small groups of dwellings within the defined physical limits are:
- a) The local need for housing;
  - b) The views and aspirations of the local community;
  - c) The amount and type of facilities available; and
  - d) The nature of the individual settlement, most notably the sensitivity of its setting
- 2.53 Of these, item (d) is particularly critical. In this respect a number of the settlements are:
- located in sensitive landscape such as the area of outstanding natural beauty and to a lesser extent special landscape area
  - compact, with well defined physical limits and/or
  - linear in form
- 2.54 Given all of the above, none of the key service centres are considered appropriate for further substantial growth in order to meet the strategic needs of the district. They may be appropriate for modest development in order to create affordable housing or perhaps to enable local facilities. A notional total of 200 units could be assumed plus the current Local Plan allocation of land at Rendlesham. This is in addition to development on previously developed land within each physical limits boundary. The appropriate settlements and the precise location of the developments will be considered as part of the Site Allocations Local Development Document, the next to be produced in the Local Development Framework process.

### **The Preferred Distribution**

- 2.55 There is a need to allocate land to accommodate 3460 new dwellings, predominantly on greenfield sites if brownfield sites cannot be located. Table 2 contains a potential distribution of housing development between 2007 and 2024. It is based on the settlement hierarchy, the strategic policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy, the achievement of the Vision, the capacity of the individual settlements and the response to consultation. It demonstrates the positive provision of housing in order to meet stated requirements. If small sites are excluded, the occurrence of which is hard to control, it shows a general distribution of housing as follows:

Ipswich Policy Area	-	29%
Felixstowe/Walton (and the Trimleys)	-	31%
Market Towns	-	25%
Other settlements	-	16%

#### **Strategic Policy CS4 – Meeting Housing Requirements**

The Core Strategy will make provision for a minimum of 7880 new dwellings in the district in the period 2007 to 2024, distributed as indicated in table.

This will consist of at least:

- 2140 new dwellings in that part of the Ipswich Policy Area within the Suffolk Coastal district; and
- 5740 new dwellings elsewhere in the district

Table Housing Supply 2007-2024

	East of Ipswich	Rest of District	District Total
<b>Ipswich Policy Area</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	740	-	740
Urban potential	210	-	210
Allocations	970	-	970
<b>Felixstowe/Walton &amp; Trimleys</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	180	180
Urban potential	-	300	300
Allocations	-	1620	1620
<b>Aldeburgh</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	90	90
Urban potential	-	60	60
Allocations	-	0	0
<b>Framlingham</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	100	100
Urban potential	-	120	120
Allocations	-	0	0
<b>Leiston</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	70	70
Urban potential	-	70	70
Allocations	-	200	200
<b>Saxmundham</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	100	100
Existing Local Plan Allocation (East of Fromus)	-	150	150
Urban potential	-	100	100
Allocations	-	0	0
<b>Woodbridge &amp; Melton</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	330	330
Urban potential	-	60	60
Allocations	-	200	200
<b>Other Key Service Centres</b>			
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	260	260
Existing Local Plan Allocation (Rendlesham)	-	120	120
Urban potential	-	180	180
Allocations	-	200	200
<b>Other Local Service Centres &amp; Villages</b>			



Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	-	290	290
Urban potential	-	0	0
Allocations	-	0	0
<b>Total Provision</b>			
Small Sites <sup>2</sup>	220	940	1160
Outstanding planning permissions <sup>1</sup>	740	1420	2160
Existing Local Plan Allocations	0	270	270
Urban potential	210	890	1100
Allocations	970	2220	3190
<b>Total Provision</b>	<b>2140</b>	<b>5740</b>	<b>7880</b>

## FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

- 2.56 Government guidance requires that Local Planning Authorities through their local plans can maintain a 5 year supply of land. There is therefore no option other than to ensure such provision. Based on recent rates of construction however, the Council is satisfied that the preferred options set out above offers sufficient flexibility, to comply with government guidance. This is because a high proportion of the initial five-year tranche comprises outstanding planning permissions, much of which consists of large estates under construction.
- 2.57 However, it is expected that such developments will be built out after 5 years and will need to be replaced by some of the allocations unless the sources of land in urban locations continues to supply the house-building industry. This will need to be monitored. It is expected that in practice, new development will be provided on a mix of brownfield and greenfield sites. The housing trajectory shown in Appendix x gives an indication of how this may be achieved.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 2.58 The District Council commissioned a housing needs study, completed in July 2006. The key points to emerge from this study are:
- a) Household affordability depends on the relationship between the cost of appropriate local housing and the amount that the household is able to afford;
  - b) The housing model used identifies an overall net requirement in the next 5 years for 2,335 additional dwellings (at 467 dwellings per year this equates reasonably well with the expectation of the Regional Spatial Strategy);
  - c) The net requirement is attributable to a net gain of 2,500 households through migration coupled with an indigenous decline of 200 households (as fewer households form than dissolve);
  - d) The balance of housing requirements is for 19% social housing, 5% intermediate (i.e. 24% affordable housing) and 76% general market housing. This balance is determined on the basis of affordability, assuming that the relationship between house prices and income remains constant.

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2.59 Based on the proportions arising from the survey, the following targets will be set for affordable housing in the period 2007 to 2024 (figures have been rounded):

- 1500 social units (19% of total of 7880) or 100 per annum
- 400 intermediate units (5% of 7880) or 30 per annum

#### **Strategic Policy CS5 – Affordable Housing**

Appropriate policies will be formulated in order to achieve 1900 affordable housing units across the district in the period 2007 to 2024. This will consist of:

- 1500 social units and
- 400 intermediate units

These targets will be monitored and may be modified to take account of up-to-date housing needs surveys.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION**

2.60 Achieving a strong and diverse economy, which provides a more sustainable balance between workers and jobs is a key objective of the Plan. It is a fundamental element in achieving Vision for the area insofar as it relates to re-balancing the population structure by providing an incentive particularly for those aged 18-30 to stay locally, or to be attracted into the district.

2.61 The Council will seek to ensure that there is a continuous supply of employment land in order to:

- Achieve the Core Strategy objectives;
- Create the jobs required by the Regional Spatial Strategy; and
- Provide a choice of sites in terms of size, location and quality

2.62 The distribution of this land will reflect the spatial strategy of the Core Strategy, ensuring that employment opportunities are in places:

- Consistent with the RSS;
- Consistent with the settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy;
- That are sustainable; and
- That support regeneration

2.63 The Strategy to achieve this is based around a hierarchy of employment sites. This hierarchy has regard to both the level, scale and siting of existing employment uses, the proposed allocations and the new over-arching settlement hierarchy and countryside policies.

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### **Strategic Policy CS6 – Employment Site Hierarchy**

The provision of employment land and creation of new jobs will be based on a hierarchy of sites as follows:

**Strategic Employment Sites** –sites of more than local economic importance. Two are identified:

- The Port of Felixstowe is a container port of national importance that has recently been granted permission for a major reconfiguration. It is anticipated that this re-configuration alone will provide directly and indirectly for approximately 1200 new jobs.
- The Martlesham Heath Business Campus contains Adastral Park, the international research establishment of British Telecom. This is a vital component of the local economy and occupies one end of the Ipswich-Cambridge Science corridor.

**General Employment Areas** – it is anticipated that most economic activity of a general nature will take place on these areas, including any extensions to them. They will be shown on the Proposals Map and are listed in Table 4 below. Most existing employment provision at the market towns would fall within this category.

**Local Employment Areas** – these consist of more than one business and generally occur throughout the district, whether it is in urban or rural locations. They provide employment and help to retain viable and balanced communities. They are numerous and generally small in scale. Uses will be restricted to B1 only. The suitability of new sites will be determined by the policies of the Core Strategy but will generally be resisted in the countryside.

## **NEW EMPLOYMENT**

- 2.65 There are two means of achieving new employment:
- The identification of new areas for employment uses; and
  - The protection of existing sites.
- 2.66 Sites for new local employment will be identified in the Site Allocations Local Development Document. However, there are three potential areas of strategic rather than local significance.
- 2.67 Firstly, an extension to Ransomes Europark at Nacton creating potentially 14 hectares of employment land. Located as it is adjacent to the county town of Ipswich and adjacent to the A14 this has the potential to provide employment to serve a wider area;
- 2.68 Secondly, there is the opportunity to create a high-tech business cluster based on the reputation and international significance of British Telecom at Martlesham. The development is to be known as the Suffolk Innovation Park and it will provide an invaluable contribution to the employment base of Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal.

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- 2.69 Such a development can be accommodated as part of the redevelopment and rationalisation of the existing Adastral Park. It would strengthen the strategic employment site and stimulate opportunities for other development within the Campus.
- 2.70 Thirdly, there remains an issue at Felixstowe Port over the availability of land to support port-related uses – warehousing, distribution, container storage, lorry parking etc. A study is underway into the needs of the Port in these respects. The outcome may be the need to allocate land in the Site Allocations Local Development Document.
- 2.71 A strategic employment study carried out in 2005 confirmed that within the Suffolk Coastal District Council area, 8.5 hectares land can easily be identified in order to contribute 8000 new jobs to the requirement for the Haven Gateway sub-region to the period to 2021 as set out in the regional Spatial Strategy. The vast majority of that land is of medium or good quality. This provision will occur on land:
- Currently vacant within the Martlesham Heath Business campus;
  - Currently vacant adjacent to the Port of Felixstowe;
  - Forming the creation of a Suffolk Innovation Park at Martlesham Heath;
  - Forming a strategic proposal for additional development at Nacton
  - Currently vacant on general employment areas across the district;
- 2.72 In addition, there is potential:
- As a result of a reconfiguration of Adastral Park;
  - Forming parts of strategic allocations of land for housing; and
  - Occurring as a result of conversions in rural locations

#### **Strategic Policy CS7 – New Jobs**

The Core Strategy will make provision for at least 8.5 hectares of employment land within the district, creating at least 8000 new jobs in the district in the period 2001 to 2021 as a contribution to the Regional Spatial Strategy requirements. This will include additional land at Nacton as an extension to Ransomes Europark.

The strategy of creating new employment land will be complemented by one of protecting that existing.

### **REGENERATION**

- 2.73 Although the economy of the District is generally sound and social deprivation not prominent, there are areas where the Council considers regeneration to be a priority:
- a. the rural areas, largely as a result of the decline in the agricultural economy;

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- b. the town of Leiston, where the decommissioning of Sizewell A nuclear power station has added to the impact of the decline in local engineering;
  - c. the town centres, where concern exists over the impact of out-of-town stores as well as the growth of the Ipswich retail economy; and
  - d. the resort of Felixstowe, largely a result of changing holiday
- 2.74 As well the policies in this Core Strategy the Council proposes two **Area Action Plans** to form part of the Local Development Framework.
- 2.75 The first to be prepared will be in respect of Felixstowe. Its geographical area will include the town centre, seafront, and residential areas in the south and west wards. Its subject matter will include proposals and actions to address:
- The decline in the tourism economy
  - The physical decline of the seafront and Victorian/Edwardian frontages and gardens
  - Social deprivation
  - Enhancement of the town centre, part of which is a conservation area
  - The development of vacant sites
  - Traffic and pedestrian movement
  - Diversification of the local economy
- 2.76 The second will be a joint one in respect of Leiston and Saxmundham. Its geographic area is undecided but its subject matter will include proposals and actions to address:
- Social deprivation
  - Enhancement of the town centres, both conservation areas
  - The development of vacant sites
  - Traffic and pedestrian movement
  - Enhancement of the local economies
  - In respect of Leiston, mitigating the impact of the closure of Sizewell A

## THE RURAL ECONOMY

- 2.77 The rural economy comprises a myriad of uses the largest of which are the agricultural and horticultural businesses. In terms of land use and land coverage, it is agriculture and forestry that most influence the appearance of the countryside and thereby comprise a major influence in terms of the tourist industry, the expansion of which is a Council priority. It is important therefore that the Plan recognises the variety of uses that go on within the rural areas, and that can be satisfactorily accommodated within them. At the same time, it is crucial to ensure that uses that are more appropriately located within the main urban centres and market towns are directed to these locations, if the quality of the rural environment is to be maintained and enhanced.
- 2.78 Agriculture plays an important role in the economy of Suffolk Coastal, with employment in the sector nearly 5 times the national average. However, the industry has been undergoing many changes and will continue to do so in the future with an expected decline in the numbers of people employed. With limited opportunities for alternative employment within the rural areas the Council is keen to provide a policy framework within which alternative and supporting uses to the main agricultural use can be permitted.

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- 2.79 Consistent with the general policies on the Countryside and in accordance with national and regional guidance, the Council will continue to resist development that has no need to be located there. The new countryside policy CP2 provides further spatial guidance highlighting the key influences within the different parts of the countryside across the district.

**Strategic Policy CS8 – Economic Development in the Countryside**

The countryside is an important economic asset supporting a variety of uses including agriculture, horticulture, forestry, tourism and a host of other smaller service industries and businesses. The countryside is also a dynamic environment that is to be protected for its own sake.

A key element of the plan will be to look to ensure that opportunities to maximise the economic potential of the rural areas, particularly where this will secure employment locally, are supported. However, support will only be offered where it can be proven that the use will have no adverse impact on the built or natural environments, is compatible and well related to the rural settlements, and accords with Policy xx. In relation to individual proposals, issues such as scale, access to the main road networks, to markets, labour etc. will be important.

**TOURISM**

- 2.80 The variety of the environment within the district, its history and culture enable it to appeal to a variety of tourist markets ranging from day visitors, short breaks and traditional summer holiday type uses. It is within easy reach of large sections of the population of the south-east and Midlands. The opportunity also exists to raise the profile of the area as a place to visit for foreign tourists linked with the 2012 Olympics as few visit the area at present. Improving the tourism potential of Felixstowe is seen as an important element in achieving the regeneration of the town. Increasingly, the district is also seen as an area attractive to second home owners.
- 2.81 Tourism is recognised as being one of the five largest industries within the UK and this importance is recognised in the district. The overall value of tourism to Suffolk Coastal has been estimated at £142 million. Of this, approximately 37%, was generated by staying visitors and 63% generated by day visitors. This expenditure supports estimated 2,800 full time job equivalents and when part-time and seasonal jobs are considered tourism expenditure supports almost 4000 actual jobs. Evidence suggests that bed-spaces are full at weekends during the summer period. Tourism is therefore an important and growing sector of the economy.
- 2.82 There are a number of issues in relation to increasing the tourist potential of the area. Managing visitor numbers; second homes; encouraging new tourist uses which complement/link up existing provision, maximising the maritime connections, and the potential decline of the resort of Felixstowe.
- 2.83 The tourism appeal of the district to the west of the A12 receives less attention but to the east has resulted in significant adverse impacts on the

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host communities. Also, due to the soft nature of the coastline, erosion and risk of flooding have presented a continual threat in some areas.

- 2.84 Improving the tourist offer is a Council priority, not only for the wider district, but particularly in relation to its role in the regeneration of Felixstowe, and to the continuing prosperity of the market towns. Providing continued support in principle to the tourist industry will therefore remain a priority within the Plan. At the same time, it is recognised that such support needs to be tailored to ensure that any expansion does not materially harm in particular the natural and built environment assets that are the main attractions for visitors to the area.

#### **Strategic Policy CS9 - Tourism**

The district of Suffolk Coastal will consist of distinct areas where proposals for tourism-related development will be determined by their capacity to absorb new development and additional visitors.

The areas are:

- The resort of Felixstowe, which is a priority for new tourist activity
- The market towns of Framlingham, Leiston and Saxmundham. These are considered to have the capacity to absorb some modest development thereby taking pressure off the more sensitive areas
- Aldeburgh and Woodbridge. Two small towns in sensitive locations within and adjacent to the AONB respectively. The protection of their settings will be of prime importance
- The Heritage Coast. The environment is of national significance and the only development to be permitted will be individual conversions to tourist accommodation to a high standard of design
- The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Development will be restricted to conversions and improvements (not extensions) to existing facilities
- The remaining area east of the A12. Modest developments may be permitted close to settlements that offer a range of facilities.
- The area west of the A12. This area has the potential to absorb additional tourist pressure and subject to the implications for the environment, including the generation of traffic, the Council will support and promote tourism west of the A12

Where necessary the Council will support the introduction of local management solutions to the problems created by tourism.

#### **Alternative Options**

- 2.85 The alternative options in relation to the Core Strategy therefore relate to the approach that the Council should adopt.
- 2.86 Option One is a continuation of the current policies whereby proposals are assessed against their impact on the environment and local communities. There is a general strategy of resisting large-scale development in the AONB, notably the “honeypots” that have developed there. Small-scale activities, notably the provision of accommodation, are encouraged across the district. Such an approach tends to be sweeping in its application and fails to apply sustainability criteria.

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- 2.87 Option two is to apply a discerning policy whereby the district is divided into distinct areas where the tourism potential will be managed, encouraged or resisted. The result is a hierarchy of tourism development, linked to the hierarchy of settlements created earlier.
- 2.88 Option two is the preferred option because of its ability to balance the advantages of tourism to the economy and the disadvantages of impact on the environment.

## **RETAIL AND RETAIL CENTRES**

- 2.89 The district is supported by a number of retail centres. These are:
- towns and market towns (Felixstowe and the five market towns Aldeburgh of Framlingham; Leiston Saxmundham and Woodbridge); and
  - District and local centres in the villages throughout the area
- 2.90 In addition, the population is served by substantial out-of-town retail stores and centres at Martlesham and Purdis Farm. Beyond the district boundaries the retail pattern is influenced by:
- Major retail centres – Ipswich and Norwich
  - Regional Centres – Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds
- 2.91 National and regional policy guidance requires Local Authorities to identify the retail needs of their area and devise a retail hierarchy to accommodate it reflecting, for each centre, both their current and future roles. It acknowledges that this may include the expansion or managed contraction of centres.
- 2.92 Research undertaken both within the region as a whole and within the district did not identify any need for major change to the retail structure within the district to meet existing need. Emphasis within this part of the region is on maintaining and enhancing the viability and vitality of existing retail centres, and making proper provision for new forms of retail distribution. No need has been proven requiring a new retail centre to be provided.
- 2.93 This advice is supplemented by a Retail Study commissioned by the Council and published August 2003. This looked at the main urban areas of Felixstowe and Ipswich Fringe and the five market towns. Whilst some of the findings in the study have been acted upon, or been superseded by events, much of their commentary remains valid and useful. Where minor adjustments in provision are promoted, through the study these will be addressed under the site-specific policies or area action plans, due to their limited impact in relation to the overall strategic approach to be set out in the Core Strategy.
- 2.94 The requirement for new retail floorspace is set out in Table x. This is for the period to 2016. Future monitoring of the Core Strategy will establish whether this has been created and a subsequent review will roll forward the requirement beyond 2016.

Table: Capacity for New Retail Floorspace 2016



Centre	Convenience Goods Floorspace Square metres	Comparison Goods Floorspace Square metres
Aldeburgh	0	240
Felixstowe	830	4380
Framlingham	20	340
Leiston	490	640
Saxmundham	820	480
Woodbridge	570	3190
Total	2730	9270

Figures are rounded

#### **Strategic Policy CS10 – Retail Floorspace**

The Core Strategy will enable the provision of the following new floorspace for the period 2003 to 2016:

- 2730 sq. m of convenience goods floorspace
- 9270 sq. m of comparison goods floorspace

This will be created within existing centres in order to add to the qualitative provision and strengthen their trading positions.

- 2.95 The role of the Core Strategy in relation to retail provision is also to identify a retail hierarchy within the District and to provide guidance in relation to the type, scale and level of development appropriate to each level of the hierarchy.
- 2.96 A retail hierarchy has been devised which mutually supports and complements the roles of settlements as set out in the Settlement Hierarchy Policy CS2. Policy emphasis will be on supporting and enhancing the retail potential of these settlements but at a level appropriate to the identified function of the individual settlement. Where proposals for expanded retail provision at one centre are shown to be likely to have an unacceptable adverse impact on a neighbouring retail centre they will be resisted

#### **Strategic Policy CS11 – Retail Hierarchy**

A retail hierarchy has been drawn up to reflect the existing levels of provision and settlement roles as set out in the settlement hierarchy. This also takes on board the likely scales of future development. The hierarchy is defined as follows:

##### Major Centre - (Felixstowe)

Should incorporate a range of provision including convenience stores, supermarket, comparison goods, and retail warehousing

##### Market Towns – (Aldeburgh, Framlingham, Leiston, Saxmundham, and Woodbridge)

Should incorporate a range of provision including convenience stores, supermarket, and comparison shopping provision. Emphasis will be on retaining the range of provision to meet the needs of the towns and their

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hinterlands whilst supporting their role as local tourist centres.

Key Service Centres

Should include provision of convenience and day-to-day shopping. Emphasis will be on retention of existing provision.

Local Service Centres

Should include provision of convenience shopping. This could take the form of a local farm shop, or similar facility linked/ancillary to another use. Emphasis will be on retention of existing provision.

Other Villages/Countryside

Where no provision currently exists (this includes the provision of a farm shop or similar) this situation is unlikely to change. Any proposals for development should be re-directed towards higher order settlements that by their nature are more sustainable.

- 2.97 The only area where a potential alternative option would apply is the Ipswich Policy Area. This area is seen as an extension to the urban area of Ipswich, which is identified within the RSS retail hierarchy as a major regional centre, reflecting its role as the county town. Within the Core Strategy, it is an area that is identified as capable of accommodating significant levels of development and already contains retail provision at local and district centres within Grange Farm, Rushmere and Kesgrave. At the eastern extent of the Ipswich Policy Area within the Suffolk Coastal Area, is Martlesham Heath, which effectively operates as an out of town retail centre, including a superstore and retail warehouse and leisure provision. It is well related to local areas of housing, public transport provision and the strategic employment site at Adastral Park and would serve an expanded population within this wider Ipswich Policy Area.
- 2.98 However, wider expansion of the area would be likely to result in an unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of Woodbridge town centre situated only four miles distant. Policy emphasis from the national and regional level is that the role of market towns should be supported. Given the importance of Woodbridge in its wider role as a market town, important both to local residents, businesses and visitors, and to its role in shaping the future Vision for the district, further expansion is not a reasonable option.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 2.99 Responsibility for local transport lies with Suffolk County Council as the highway authority for Suffolk. The authority prepares transport strategy, primarily in the form of the Local Transport Plan (LTP).
- 2.100 A key objective of both county and national policy is to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.
- 2.101 The diverse nature of Suffolk coastal is a particular challenge for transport delivery. The northern part is predominantly rural with the population living in

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towns and villages that increasingly act as dormitory settlements. Transport policies for these areas need to reflect the facts that:

- Facilities are dispersed and employment opportunities may be distant; and
- Many people do not have access to a car

2.102 The southern part of the district is more densely populated and transport issues relate to the movement of people between residential, employment and commercial centres. The links to Ipswich and Felixstowe, as major employment centres, are important to accessibility to jobs and services.

## **SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT**

2.103 The basis of the transport objective is to promote more sustainable transport choices for people. Although parts of the district are rural and alternative modes are not available the overall aim should be to encourage the use of transport modes other than the car. New development that is likely to generate significant journeys in terms of numbers and lengths should be sited in locations that are well served, or have the potential to be well served by public transport, walking and cycling. The most accessible locations tend to be the major urban areas, market towns and key service centres which all act as transport hubs. This is the basis of the Settlement hierarchy.

2.104 In general the Council will seek to improve pedestrian and cycling networks in the district, not only in respect of access to jobs and shops but also the countryside (including equestrian facilities), green space and recreational facilities. Multi-user routes will be supported.

### **Strategic Policy CS12 - Travel**

Through the Core Strategy the Council will ensure wherever possible, that new development is located in areas where the need to travel is minimised and, where realistic alternatives to use of transport other than by private motor vehicle are available, to provide incentives to encourage use of these alternative modes.

Standards such as those devised for the number and location of parking spaces to serve proposed developments will have regard to the necessary reliance on the private motor vehicle in some of the rural parts of the district.

All proposals for major development should be accompanied by travel plans.

The Council will encourage public transport operators to provide services in support of the Council's Vision for the district, and in particular the roles of each of the settlements within the settlement hierarchy.

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## CONNECTIVITY

- 2.105 Ensuring effective transport links within the district has already been highlighted. In addition, links to Ipswich are also considered important given its role as a regional centre. The establishment of such links will require effective joint working between the district council, county council and adjoining authorities if a high quality, reliable network is to be achieved.
- 2.106 The market towns already act as transport hubs that act as feeder networks serving the surrounding areas. It is also important that these provide effective links to Ipswich and ultimately to other parts of the Haven Gateway sub-region, the region and the rest of the country. Important to the network is the East Suffolk rail line with stations at Westerfield, Woodbridge, Melton, Wickham Market (sited at Campsea Ash), Saxmundham and Darsham. The Council will work in partnership with relevant authorities and agencies to help improve services on this line.
- 2.107 Also important to the district are the freight and passenger connections to Felixstowe. In this respect the Council supports the improvements to the rail network that facilitate increased freight movement to and from the port by rail.

### **Strategic Policy CS13 - Connectivity**

The Council will work with neighbouring authorities, the highway authority and transport providers to enable improved connectivity within, into and out of the district. This will centre on improving:

- Bus routes and services between the rural settlements and the market towns;
- Bus and rail routes between the market towns and Ipswich and Lowestoft;
- Accessibility of rail stations and facilities at rail stations for cars and cycles;
- Transport connections to Stansted airport; and
- Transport connections to Felixstowe Port, including the increased use of the rail network for the transfer of freight

## DEMAND MANAGEMENT

- 2.108 Suffolk Coastal does not suffer the congestion problems that an urban authority might face. However, the district does contain part of the urban fringe of Ipswich, including the A12 and A14 trunk road, and there are issues in respect of the capacity of these roads to accommodate further traffic.
- 2.109 A recent study of the A14 Newmarket to Felixstowe corridor has identified two key issues that affect Suffolk Coastal:
- The overall capacity of the A14 to accommodate further traffic; and
  - East-west travel movements across Ipswich

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- 2.110 In particular, the Orwell Bridge is of concern. The current usage by 60,000 vehicles per day brings it close to capacity at peak periods. This is predicted to rise to 76,000 by 2021. Of these movements only 59% are through movements. The remaining 41% are local – drivers using the bridge as a local southern ring road around Ipswich. When blockages occur the effects are very disruptive, particularly in respect of traffic serving the Port.
- 2.111 A further study is underway to examine east-west movements across Ipswich and to formulate proposals to increase capacity through management, road improvements or new construction. The outcome of this study will be available for a subsequent review of the Core Strategy.
- 2.112 The A12 is a valuable artery running north to south through the district, connecting the rural areas with the primary route network and the rest of the country. It is essential to the local economy (including that of Lowestoft to the north) but journey times are hampered by stretches of single carriageway and reduced speed limits. Discussions are currently underway regarding the possible provision of a by-pass, or other solution for Farnham and Stratford St Andrew where the road is particularly narrow and twisting with buildings located very close to the roadline.

## **THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 2.113 The acknowledged quality of the district's built and natural environments is one of its key assets, making it an attractive area to live and work, and for attracting tourists. Maintaining this quality is one of the Council's stated priorities. There is however a balance to be struck between maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment, whilst recognising that the area will always be subject to change, not all of which change is covered by planning legislation. The role of the Core Strategy is therefore two-fold in this regard. Firstly it will provide advice and guidance in relation to those matters over which it has direct control through the planning legislation. Secondly it will look to provide appropriate support to other plans and strategies of statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission where these impact on the local environment.

### **BIODIVERSITY**

- 2.114 In 1992 the UK was one of 157 nations to sign up to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In 1994 the UK Biodiversity Action Plan was published confirming the Government's commitment to the principles and requirements of the Convention. The Government recognised that a national plan could only be implemented successfully if it was delivered at the local level. In Suffolk a working party was formed to prepare a Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan. This includes all relevant habitats and species that are identified in the UK Action Plan along with a number of Suffolk 'character' species that had been identified during the process of public consultation.
- 2.115 The Council is duty bound to afford protection to areas designated for their wildlife interest, with the highest levels of protection going to those areas of international and national importance. The issue in relation to the Core Strategy will be to ensure that sufficient regard is had to these areas when

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identifying levels and scales of new development to be accommodated throughout the district. Whilst some of the broad locations identified for development are included at this level, it is more of an issue to be addressed at the Site Specific Allocation stage where development will be expected to be steered away from these areas.

#### **Strategic Policy CS14 - Biodiversity**

**The Council will use the development process to maximise opportunities to enhance biodiversity by protecting and enhancing statutory and non-statutory protected sites, protected species and biodiversity action plan habitats and species, and contributing to regional targets through the restoration and creation of new priority habitats**

**Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced using a framework based on a network of:**

- **designated sites (international, national, regional and local)**
- **wildlife corridors**
- **the rivers, estuaries and coast**
- **habitats and species identified in the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan**

**Improved site management and increased public access to these sites will be encouraged where appropriate.**

## **LANDSCAPE**

- 2.116 The district contains a variety of landscape types, all of which contribute to the quality of its environment.
- 2.117 A landscape character assessment of the district is currently being undertaken as part of a wider county-wide assessment. Landscape character assessments recognise the merits of the landscape character types which have resulted from the differences in a range of features including field and settlement patterns, biodiversity, soils, cultural heritage and local building materials. The Council considers it important that these different character areas are conserved and enhanced, but that this must be integrated with the need to accommodate change in order to address social or economic objectives and meet the needs of communities. In doing so it will be necessary to ensure that not only is harm to the environment minimised but that opportunities are taken to bring about improvements where possible. This applies whether the initiative for change is brought about by land management decisions or new development.

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#### **Strategic Policy CS15 - Landscape**

The policy of the Council will be to identify the various landscape character areas which exist within the district and then to protect and enhance those areas either through opportunities linked to development or through other strategies.

The promotion of local distinctiveness will be encouraged.

Where development in the countryside is justified proposals must include measures to enhance, restore or create special features of the landscape as appropriate.

### **QUALITY OF DESIGN**

- 2.118 The achievement of the highest standards of design will be essential in all development. Most issues relating to quality of design, energy efficiency measures, use of re-cycled materials; local distinctiveness, fear of crime etc will be addressed through generic development control policies.

#### **Strategic Policy CS16 - Design**

The achievement of a high quality of design, including landscaping, is essential in all development.

All proposals must:

- Provide an attractive, functional, accessible and safe environment;
- Respect the context, both in respect of the immediate surroundings (scale, height, materials, function etc) but also the local vernacular;
- Include sustainable methods of construction;

Proposals must also be accompanied by a statement setting out ways in which the design and construction will create energy efficiency. Development which is considered to be wasteful of energy or fails to maximise opportunities will not be supported.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 2.119 Climate change poses a genuine threat to our planet. The scale of the challenge means that all sectors of the community have to be involved if we are to meet targets for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change.
- 2.120 Local Authorities in particular have a crucial role to play in responding to this challenge. Some Councils, including Suffolk Coastal, have shown their commitment to this important issue by signing The Nottingham Declaration. This is a voluntary pledge to address the issues of climate change. It is a high-level, broad statement of commitment that over 200 Councils have signed, demonstrating their support for action to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from their own activities and those within the community that contribute to climate change. By signing, the Council has pledged to actively tackle climate change and work with others to reduce emissions country-wide.

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## Construction

- 2.121 Emissions of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, are a primary contributor to climate change. The UK emitted more than 150 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2004 and energy use in buildings accounted for nearly half these emissions. More than a quarter came from the energy used to heat, light and run homes.

### Strategic Policy CS17 – Construction

The Council's Core Strategy will be based around the achievement of a distribution of development that minimises the impact on the environment and contributes towards sustainable development.

Proposals will be required to:

- Ensure prudent use of natural resources.
- Achieve reduced levels of energy consumption as a result of the actual development and its future occupancy.
- Reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.
- Minimise air, common noise and light pollution.
- Make provision for waste minimisation and recycling.
- Utilise sustainable construction methods

## Renewable Energy

- 2.122 The government has estimated that around one third of the country's carbon emissions come from energy generation. It, therefore, advocates through Planning Policy Statement 22 the encouragement of schemes that utilise renewable energy resources.
- 2.123 The Suffolk Coastal area can contribute towards the generation of renewable energy, most notably wind power. However, the environment is a sensitive one and needs protection. As the concept of renewable energy is promoted at national level the Option of resisting it entirely is not appropriate. Instead the Core Strategy must contain a policy which encourages the generation of renewable energy, most notably to serve local communities, but protects the environmental assets of the area.

### Strategic Policy CS18 – Renewable Energy

The environmental and economic benefits of renewable energy production are recognised. Proposals for renewable energy facilities will generally be supported where consistent with other policies of the Core Strategy.

However, particular regard will be paid to the impact on the environment, bearing in mind the importance of parts of the district in landscape, heritage and wildlife terms.



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## Nuclear Power

2.124 The government has recently declared there to be a need to re-examine the option of nuclear power in the light of the uncertainties in the supply of world-wide energy and the need for diversity and flexibility in the energy mix, particularly those energy sources that represent low carbon options. The District already has for many years been a key location for the production of electricity from nuclear power in the form of the now decommissioned Sizewell A Power Station and the currently operational Sizewell B Power Station. Land is available at Sizewell for further capacity to the north of the current B Station and there is a National Power grid connection which could be utilised in the event of a future power station being proposed at Sizewell. The future of nuclear power and in particular the procedures for location of new nuclear power stations is therefore of significance and fundamental importance to the District Council's activities not only in terms of land use planning issues but also environmental, economic and social issues relating to the immediate locality and the District as a whole.

2.125 British Energy has submitted to the Council some statistics on the impact of nuclear power on the economy:

*"As well as providing between 2000 and 3000 direct jobs over the 6.5 year construction period [assuming a twin unit development of 5 years with a 1.5 year stagger] new development would also bring substantial long term employment spanning some 60 years of operational life. For a twin unit there would be a minimum of 420 permanent posts created with additional employment generated during regular maintenance over-hauls. Economic benefits would also be enhanced through the large number of contracts placed with local firms during both construction and operation of the plant."*

2.126 If the government's proposed procedures are adopted they will result in a policy statement which would set out the criteria for the siting of new nuclear power stations and list those sites which met the criteria. There would be public consultation on the possible sites. The intention is that the eventual local public planning inquiry on each site would then be able to focus on local issues relating to any such site.

### Strategic Policy CS19 – Nuclear Power

In respect of the possibility of a third nuclear power station at Sizewell, the Council considers the local issues to consist of the following:

- a) Proposed layout and design
- b) Grid connection / power line changes
- c) Landscape/visual character assessment including cumulative effects
- d) Coastal erosion/coast protection issues
- e) Ecological impacts (on nearby designated sites)
- f) Construction management- sustainable procurement policy
- g) Transport issues- routing of vehicles during construction- upgrade of roads, use of rail and sea for access
- h) Social issues – local community issues during long construction period- housing of workers in the local area

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- i) Economic impacts upon the area during and after construction
  - j) Site decommissioning
  - k) On-site storage of nuclear waste
  - l) The long term implications for new, permanent housing
  - m) To ensure that the benefits (including financial contributions) are enjoyed by local communities

### **Flood Risk /Coastal Erosion**

- 2.127 The District comprises gently undulating countryside intersected by a number of freshwater rivers such as the Deben, Alde and Ore, which have large flood plains. Much of the coastline is low lying, below sea level, protected by sea defences against tidal inundation.
- 2.128 Parts of the district are at therefore potentially at risk from both fluvial and tidal flood risk and from coastal erosion. Inevitably there are serious concerns about the impacts of coastal erosion and coastal flooding, both in respect of current properties at risk but also the long-term management of the area. These issues are therefore of considerable concern and is key factors in determining the scale and location of development. The implications arising from flood risk and coastal are different to those of other environmental concerns, in that they can have a direct impact on human health and safety. It is therefore appropriate to raise them separately from other environmental concerns.
- 2.129 In order to assist the process of determining where new development should be located, the Council has commissioned a strategic flood risk assessment to be undertaken. This information will not be available until early 2007, but the information it contains will be used to influence the final choice of development sites and the phasing of their development. The LDF will also take on board information provided within the Shoreline Management Plan. This document is important as it identifies those coastal areas such as Dunwich where the coastline is expected to continue to erode. Further advice in relation to individual sites, the subject of planning applications, is also already provided by the Environment Agency.

#### **Strategic Policy CS19 – Environmental Risk**

**The Council recognises and acceptst that flood risk and coastal erosion will continue to impact to varying extents on different parts of the district. As a consequence it will work with other relevant agencies in determining the overall spatial strategy for the plan period to assist the phasing of new development provision accordingly.**

**In considering proposals for development or the provision of services the Council will seek to ensure that communities and the environment are not adversely affected by the actions of natural and other forces:**

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**Proposals must take particular account of the need to**

- **Ensure protection from, and not worsen the potential for, flooding and**
- **Restrict new development in areas at risk of coastal erosion**

## **COMMUNITY WELL-BEING**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

2.130 The Council identifies two types of infrastructure:

- Physical infrastructure – This includes transport facilities, water supply, foul and surface water sewage, drainage, waste disposal, and utilities (gas and electricity). Flood defence is considered elsewhere.
- Community infrastructure – This includes health and social facilities, schools, cemeteries, open space and play space (considered elsewhere), community halls, etc. It is generally provided by the public and voluntary sectors.

2.131 The main driver of the requirements for infrastructure is the combination of housing and population growth. The main issues in respect of the provision of the necessary infrastructure in order to support that growth are funding and phasing.

2.132 Emerging from national policy making is an expectation that developer contributions will be a source of funding. Already during the Local Development Framework process the following providers have indicated that it would be necessary if standards are to be maintained – transport, education, primary health care, police and play/open space.

2.133 Therefore, the Site Allocations Local Development Document will contain a delivery plan. For each proposal the infrastructure (roads, public transport, play space, water supply etc) to support it will be identified and costed. The development will not be permitted to go ahead until the Council is satisfied that such infrastructure will be in place. This may require its provision as part of the development or as a result of a financial contribution towards it.

#### **Available Options**

2.134 None have been considered. There is an expectation in government and regional guidance that developer contributions are a means towards achieving infrastructure and Local Development Frameworks must indicate the circumstances in which they will be sought and the priorities to be achieved.

#### **Strategic Policy CS20 - Infrastructure**

The Core Strategy will identify needs and deficiencies in public, voluntary and commercial service provision and seek new approaches to meet those needs and address deficiencies. This will entail the development of a

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strategy whereby developer contributions (normally through legal agreements) are sought for the services and facilities considered to be the highest priority, and for which alternative sources of funding are the most difficult to find.

Such prioritisation will be contained within Supplementary Planning Documentation.

## LOCAL SERVICES

2.135 The Council recognises the value of local services, particularly to rural residents and those with restrictions on mobility due to age, health or the simple lack of a car.

2.136 Access to local services is an issue that has frequently arisen during consultation. Not every household has access to a car. The basic facilities have been identified as:

- A general shop.
- Post Office.
- Pub.
- Primary School.
- Meeting place.

Table 7 Provision of Facilities

Number of Parishes	2000	2004	Change
With none of the 5 facilities	17	20	+3
With 1 of the facilities	20	17	-3
With 2 of the facilities	24	31	+7
With 3 of the facilities	16	7	-9
With 4 of the facilities	16	16	-
With all 5 facilities	11	13	+2

2.137 In the last four years, the number of parishes that do not have any of the five facilities has increased.

2.138 In many cases it will not be viable to locate new or retain existing facilities in some of the smaller rural settlements. Where this happens, access to the market towns or key service centres becomes vital.

### Strategic Policy CS21 – Local Services

Through the Core Strategy support will be given to proposals which protect or enhance existing services and community assets, or lead to the creation of new, or connection to existing, ones

The Core Strategy will seek to achieve the retention of appropriate local services including post offices and shops in villages and district centres.

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## SPORT AND LEISURE

- 2.139 Both the Council, through its corporate strategies, and the Local Strategic Partnership through the Community Strategy, promote the concept of healthy communities. One of the ways of achieving this, and hence an important role for the Local Development Framework, is to ensure the provision of areas for sport and recreation.

### Play Space

- 2.140 Play space can be broken down into the two elements of play areas for children's use (including equipped playgrounds and casual kick-about areas) and sports grounds for youth and adult use (including pitches, greens and courts). There are national standards for the provision of such play space, related to population size. The Council has carried out an audit of all facilities in every community and identified deficiencies. This was done in consultation with the communities themselves.

#### **Strategic Policy CS22 – Sport and Play**

**Proposals involving the loss of existing playing pitches, sports grounds and other play/sport facilities will be judged against the overall needs of the community or group of communities, adopted standards of provision and the availability of facilities elsewhere.**

**Proposals for new residential development will be expected to provide or contribute towards sport and play space.**

### Green Space

- 2.141 It is widely accepted that green open spaces are an essential resource in creating an agreeable quality of life. This is particularly important within urban environments where parks and open spaces can be wildlife havens, places for quiet relaxation, places for healthy exercise or focal points for community interaction. Green open spaces also contribute to the character of any urban or rural settlement. Green space can not only include parks but also open spaces, commons, 'green corridors', and areas of ecological interest over which there is public access.
- 2.142 A green space strategy is currently being devised. This will:
- Include an audit of current provision;
  - Assess this provision against constructed standards; and
  - Identify any gaps, having regard to future levels and distribution of housing growth
- 2.143 The outcome will be a combination of policies designed to create and enhance green space and locational proposals.

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### **Strategic Policy CS23 – Green Space**

The Core Strategy will promote well-managed access to, and involvement in, green space in and around communities, including Suffolk Coastal's countryside and coast in order to benefit health, community cohesion and greater understanding of the environment without detriment to wildlife and landscape character

A strategy will be devised that addresses the needs for green space both generally and in specific locations, notably the edges of settlements.

Developer contributions will be used to fund their creation, subject to their priority in comparison with other elements of community infrastructure.

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## **PART THREE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES**

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## SETTLEMENTS

### 3.1



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## **PART FOUR IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

