

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 21 March 2018

FINAL DRAFT LOCAL PLAN – PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION (REP1752)

<p>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Council are requested to approve the Final Draft Local Plan for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012. Full Council are also requested to give delegated authority to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management, to submit the Local Plan for examination and agree any minor modifications. 2. The Local Plan sets out the level of growth which needs to be planned in Waveney and identifies where that growth should be located and how it should be delivered. The Plan sets out the planning policies which the Council will use to determine planning applications in its area.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
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Wards Affected:	All
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Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member for Planning & Coastal Management
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Supporting Officer:	Samuel Hubbard Principal Planner 01502 523079 Sam.hubbard@eastsoffolk.gov.uk
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Plan sets out the level of growth which needs to be planned in Waveney and identifies where that growth should be located and how it should be delivered. The Plan sets out the planning policies which the Council will use to determine planning applications in its area.
- 1.2 The existing Local Plan, known as the Local Development Framework is made up of a number of documents including:
- Core Strategy (Adopted 2009);
 - Site Allocations Document (Adopted 2011);
 - Development Management Policies (Adopted 2011); and
 - Lowestoft Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan (Adopted 2012).
- 1.3 The Government requires Local Plans to be kept up to date and reviewed at least every five years. There have also been a significant number of changes in National Planning Legislation and Policy since the last Local Plan was prepared. One of these changes is the revocation of the regional level of planning and the requirement for Councils to identify their own objectively assessed needs for development in their Local Plans.
- 1.4 Given the above issues, in March 2016 Cabinet agreed a new Local Development Scheme setting out a timetable for the preparation of a new Local Plan for Waveney.
- 1.5 In April 2016 the Council published a consultation on the 'Options for the new Waveney Local Plan' which marked the first stage of consultation on the new Local Plan. In total 525 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation. Between them they made 3,428 comments. 2,210 of these comments were made on the questions in the consultation document. The other 1,218 comments were made on the potential sites for development which were also part of the consultation.
- 1.6 In July 2017, the Council's Cabinet authorised consultation on a First Draft Local Plan which set out a preferred approach to development across the District. An 8 week consultation took place between 28 July and 22 September 2017. In total 683 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation. Between them they made 1,947 comments. 1,713 of these comments were made on First Draft Local Plan consultation document. The other 234 comments were made on the alternative sites considered that were also part of the consultation.
- 1.7 The comments received during this consultation have helped shape the final draft of the Local Plan which is the subject of this report.
- 1.8 The Final Draft Plan (Appendix A) is a plan that the Council considers to be sound and would wish to adopt. This report requests that Full Council approve the Final Draft Local Plan (Appendix A) for publication under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012. The Regulation 19 stage is a formal stage where stakeholders and members of the public get a final chance to make representations on whether they support the plan or not. The Final Draft Local Plan will be published for 8 weeks from 29 March to 24 May 2018.
- 1.9 Following this stage the plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination into its soundness. Soundness is defined by the following tests:
- **Positively Planned** – the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities

where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

- **Justified** – The most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.
- **Effective** – deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.
- **In accordance with national policy** - as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, guidance and written ministerial statements.

1.10 Similar to the last Local Plan, in order to ensure timely progress following the Regulation 19 stage, approval is also sought to delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management to submit the plan to the Secretary of State, with or without any minor modifications which may be necessary. Subject to the level and content of the response to the Regulation 19 stage, the aim is to submit the plan for examination in June 2018.

1.11 Should the examiner find the Local Plan to be sound, a subsequent report will be brought before this Council to adopt the Local Plan; anticipated to be this autumn. At this stage the Local Plan will be the development plan for the Council and the existing Local Plan (comprising the aforementioned documents) and the all the policies within it will be formally superseded.

2 SUMMARY OF FINAL DRAFT PLAN

Scale and Location of Growth Proposed in the Final Draft Local Plan

2.1 The Final Draft Local Plan identifies a need for at least 8,223 new homes over the plan period 2014-2036 (374 per year). Of the 374 new homes needed annually, 208 need to be affordable to meet local need. However, this proportion of affordable housing would not be financially viably to deliver. Therefore, to increase the number of affordable homes provided through the Local Plan, allocations for housing in the Final Draft Local Plan exceed the total level of housing needed by approximately 12%. An over-allocation also provides confidence that the overall objectively assessed need will be met even if some allocated sites fail to come forward. These numbers are broadly the same as those consulted on during the First Draft Local Plan consultation.

2.2 The plan identifies the potential for 5,000 new jobs to be created in Waveney over the plan period. To ensure this growth is delivered, the plan identifies a need for 43 hectares of new employment land development. Similar to housing, the plan allocates more land than this to ensure choice and flexibility in supply. The plan also identifies a need for at least another 2,197sqm of food store development and 11,063sqm of non-food types of retail development. Again these figures are the same as those previously consulted on.

2.3 Policy WLP1.1 of the Final Draft Local Plan sets out the growth targets and how growth should be distributed across the District. For housing the policy seeks to distribute growth as follows:

- Lowestoft (including Carlton Colville, Oulton, Oulton Broad, and the parts of Gisleham, Corton bordering the built up area) - 56% of housing growth
- Beccles and Worlingham - 16% of housing growth
- Halesworth and Holton - 8% of housing growth
- Bungay - 6% of housing growth

- Southwold and Reydon - 4% of housing growth
- Rural Area - 10% of housing growth

2.4 This distribution of growth is considered the most appropriate, sustainable and deliverable approach. The approach allows all market towns to expand and allows for reasonable levels of growth in villages which will help support existing or new services and facilities. The approach still allows for the majority of development to occur in Lowestoft as the main town in the District. The distribution is slightly different from that which was consulted on last year. The percentage has gone down to 2% in the rural areas and up a single percentage point in Lowestoft and Beccles. This is down to minor changes to the sites proposed to be allocated.

2.5 The Policy focuses employment land development and retail development mainly in Lowestoft and Beccles where there is greatest demand.

Strategy for Lowestoft Area (including Carlton Colville, Corton, Oulton, Oulton Broad, and Gisleham)

2.6 The Final Draft Local Plan continues the focus on the regeneration of central Lowestoft as is currently proposed in the Lake Lothing and Outer Harbour Area Action Plan. The Plan expands this regeneration strategy to cover the town centre and the coastal parts of Lowestoft.

2.7 The plan also allocates a number of large greenfield sites for development to meet housing and employment needs:

- North of Lowestoft Garden Village (east side of the A47) – 1300 homes (740 in plan period) 8 hectares of employment land. New primary school and local shopping centre (Policy WLP2.13). The allocation has been reduced by 100 homes since the First Draft Local Plan and been moved to just one-side of the A47. This helps reduce the impact on the landscape and removes the issues of severance posed by the trunk road.
- North of Union Lane, Oulton (former Lothingland Hospital and land to the east) – 150 new homes (Policy WLP2.14). The density of the site has been increased slightly since the First Draft Local Plan, but a greater area of land has been set aside to protect the burial land on the site and to provide open space.
- North of Hall Lane, Oulton – 190 new homes (Policy WLP2.15). The site area of this site and the number of dwellings has been reduced since the First Draft Local Plan to mitigate the impact on the setting of the listed Manor House.
- South of the Street, Carlton Colville – 900 new homes, new primary school, community centre, country park, flood risk mitigation for Kirkley Stream. (Policy WLP2.16). The density of this site has been increased since the First Draft Local Plan to ensure it is viable to deliver. The proposed masterplan has also been amended to address concerns from the public and Historic England.
- South Lowestoft Industrial Estate -20 hectares of employment land (Policy WLP2.17)
- Mobbs Way – 2.5 hectares of employment land (Policy WLP2.18)
- Oakes Farm, Carlton Colville – 30.3 hectares of sport and leisure development with enabling commercial development. (Policy WLP2.19)
- Gunton Park, Old Lane, Corton – 65 new homes to help enable the relocation of the rugby club to a larger site of higher quality facilities.

Strategy for Beccles and Worlingham

- 2.8 The strategy in the Final Draft Plan for Beccles and Worlingham is the same as that presented in the First Draft Local Plan. The growth proposed over the next 20 years is similar to that experienced by Beccles and Worlingham over the last 20 years. However, the plan seeks to plan for the development in a more strategic way to ensure a greater range of infrastructure and services are provided to support the growth. The plan seeks to ensure that Beccles and Worlingham can retain their individual identities.
- 2.9 The strategy takes advantage of the benefits the Southern Relief Road brings by allocating a strategic development of 1,250 new homes and 5 hectares of employment land between the existing built –up area and the road (Policy WLP3.1). This development provides a logical extension to the town that can be well planned with significant amounts of green space and supporting infrastructure. The plan suggests this area should be developed using garden city principles. The landscape to the south of the town is of low landscape quality and has a lower agricultural land grade making it a sensible location in the town to focus growth. The existing southern part of the built-up area of Beccles and Worlingham suffers from a lack of services and facilities. The infrastructure provided on the new development will provide significant benefits for those already living in south Beccles and Worlingham. Since the First Draft Local Plan, David Lock Associates have been commissioned to prepare a revised masterplan for the site taking into account comments raised during the consultation and subsequent direct engagement with parish and town councils and other stakeholders.
- 2.10 For employment growth, this Local Plan maintains the focus on the Ellough industrial area and the Enterprise Zone and allocates 12.5 hectares of employment land on part of the Enterprise Zone site (Policy WLP3.3).
- 2.11 Land is also allocated for a further 280 dwellings to the west of London Road (Policy WLP3.2)

Strategy for Halesworth and Holton

- 2.12 The strategy for Halesworth and Holton is to increase the level of housing within the town which will help deliver enhanced health and sports facilities and new employment opportunities. This will help attract younger, working age, people to the town and provide more balance to the demographics of the population. The increased levels of development will help support the town centre and enhance its role as a service centre for nearby villages.
- 2.13 The main site for development is the Halesworth Healthy Neighbourhood (Policy WLP4.1), which seeks to deliver 215 new homes, a new retirement community and associated healthcare facilities, new sports facilities on the proposed Halesworth Campus and improvements to the existing Dairy Hill playing fields. The delivery of this site will be an important part of delivering the overall strategy for the town.
- 2.14 Additional allocations in Halesworth and Holton include:
- Chediston Street – 200 homes (Policy WLP4.2)
 - Old Station Road – 10 homes (Policy WLP4.3)
 - Lodge Road, Holton – 15 homes (Policy WLP4.4)
 - Broadway Farm – 2.5 hectares of employment land (Policy WLP4.5)

Strategy for Bungay

- 2.15 The strategy for Bungay allows for a modest level of growth which protects the sensitive landscape around the town which is well related to the Broads.

2.16 Allocations in Bungay include:

- East of St Johns Road – 85 dwellings (Policy WLP5.1)
- West of St Johns Road – 400 dwellings (Policy WLP5.2). This site has been expanded in size to encompass land which already has the benefit of planning permission for housing and employment to ensure a more comprehensive approach to development.

Strategy for Southwold and Reydon

2.17 The main strategy for Southwold and Reydon is to allocate more housing to increase the range of affordable homes in the area whilst protecting the sensitive built and natural environment. There is limited scope within Southwold itself to accommodate new housing. Therefore, the focus for housing is in Reydon. Like Southwold, Reydon has limited scope to expand as it is surrounded by the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

2.18 Considering the above, only one site is allocated in the Southwold and policy WLP6.1 allocates land to the west of Copperwheat Avenue for 220 dwellings. The allocation has been reduced slightly since the First Draft Local Plan to take into account the capacity of the local primary school. The reduction in size also helps protect the setting of a listed building and reduce the impact on the landscape of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Strategy for the Rural Areas

2.19 The strategy for the rural areas is to increase the level of housing delivered compared to recent rates of development. This is in order to help support local communities by supporting local services and allowing people the option to remain in the village which they grew up in.

2.20 The plan creates a hierarchy of villages, namely:

- Larger Villages – accommodating 70% of growth planned for rural areas
 - Barnby and North Cove
 - Blundeston
 - Kessingland
 - Somerleyton
 - Wangford
 - Wrentham
- Smaller Villages – accommodating 20% of growth planned for rural areas
 - Brampton
 - Homersfield
 - Ilketshall St Lawrence
 - Lound
 - Mutford
 - Ringsfield
 - Rumburgh
 - Shadingfield and Willingham
 - Westhall
 - Wissett

- The Countryside, hamlets and other scattered communities - 10% of growth planned for rural areas

2.21 The plan allocates a number of sites across the rural areas. A number of minor changes have been made to the sites allocated in the rural areas since the First Draft Local Plan to address comments received. This includes the removal of a site in Wangford, a site in Wrentham and a site in Willingham/Shadingfield.

District Wide Planning Policies

2.22 The draft plan includes a number of more generic, district-wide planning policies (Policies WLP8.1 to WLP8.40) which will be used to determine planning applications for new developments. These policies will also help inform the content of Neighbourhood Plans. The policies cover:

- Housing
- Employment
- Tourism
- Retail, Leisure and Town Centres
- Sustainable Transport
- Community Services and Facilities
- Climate Change
- Design
- Natural Environment
- Historic Environment

Infrastructure

2.23 The preparation of the draft plan has involved assessing the likely infrastructure requirements to support the growth. The infrastructure requirements for each town are set out in the start of each relevant section. More details on the delivery of infrastructure are included in Policy WLP1.4 and Appendix 1 of the First Draft Local Plan. A preliminary draft revised Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule will be published for consultation alongside the publication of the Local Plan.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

3.1 Having an up to date Local Plan for the District is fundamental to the delivery of the vision and significantly improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

3.2 The publication of the Final Draft Local Plan is a key step in the production of a timely Local Plan.

3.3 Enabling -The strategic policies in the Local Plan, when adopted, will provide the framework for enabling Parish and Town councils and neighbourhood forums to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans. Continuous engagement through the Local Plan making process with Parish and Town councils and the local community will enable their aspirations to be reflected in District Council strategy and policy making.

3.4 Economic Growth – The Local Plan will also allocate land and identify the infrastructure required to deliver economic and housing growth.

- 3.5 Financial Self Sufficiency - Income to the Council will be generated through new development and inward investment, via the community infrastructure levy, new homes bonus and business rate retention.
- 3.6 The Local Plan will be significant in delivering most of the Critical Success Factors and particularly those relating to planning, housing, leisure, economic development and tourism, community health, green environment and communities.
- 3.7 Many of the planned actions for East Suffolk and specifically Waveney will form a part of the Local Plan and give them statutory weight in decision making and when bidding for funding.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of the representations period and the Examination, including the Inspector's fees, will be covered within the agreed Planning Policy and Delivery Team budget.

5 LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP AND CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Council's Local Plan Working Group have overseen the preparation of each section of the First Draft Local Plan and have shaped the strategy, proposals and policies contained within the plan. The Final Draft Local Plan takes into account comments raised during the two consultations referred to above. The Consultation Statement (Appendix B) details all of the consultation undertaken to date and how comments have been taken into account.

6 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 6.1 Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of the plan making process and this has been undertaken during the preparation of the Local Plan. To inform and support the Final Draft Local Plan a Sustainability Appraisal Report has been prepared (Appendix C) to demonstrate how sustainability appraisal, including the consideration of alternative strategy, site and policy options, have informed the document and the policies within it.
- 6.2 The Local Plan has also been subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appendix D). This assesses the likely impacts on European protected sites. The assessment concludes that effects arising from the plan can be mitigated.
- 6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken which is available on request as a background paper to this report. The assessment has not identified any issues.
- 6.4 The Local Plan has been informed by a large number of supporting documents which help justify the strategy, policies and sites within the Local Plan. Many of these were published at the First Draft Local Plan stage and are available on the Council's website. A number of additional studies have also been prepared which will be published alongside the Final Draft Local Plan.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do not publish and submit the Final Draft Local Plan

- 7.1 Not publishing the Final Draft Local Plan under Regulation 19 would delay the preparation of the Local Plan, and would mean the agreed timescales for preparation of the Local Plan, as set out in the Local Development Scheme, would not be met. Failure to produce a timely Local Plan would increase the risk of poorly planned development taking place and an increased risk of planning appeals for developments not in accordance with the existing Local Plan.

8 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To ensure the timely production of the Local Plan, in order to ensure future growth is delivered in a sustainable and planned manner.
- 8.2 The recommendations also request delegated authority for the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management, to make minor modifications to the plan under a number of circumstances. Minor modifications are textual, typographical and factual changes and do not relate to the substance of the strategy, policies or sites or to the overall soundness of the document. Delegated authority is requested in order to ensure the timely progress of the plan through the forthcoming formal stages. If as a result of the representations received, any main modifications are considered necessary, these will be brought back to Full Council for consideration. Main modifications are changes which would alter the substance of the strategy, policies or sites and would be necessary to ensure the plan is sound.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approve the publication of the Final Draft Local Plan under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 (as amended) to receive representations in relation to soundness.
2. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management be given delegated authority to make any typographical or presentational / format changes necessary linked to the publication.
3. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management, be given delegated authority following the 8 week period to receive representations relating to soundness, to agree any minor modifications suggested by representations and submit the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate.
4. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management in consultation with Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management be given delegated authority during the Examination into the Local Plan to address minor modifications that may arise as part of the Examination.

APPENDICES Due to the size of the documents, these are not attached but are available on the website with the Agenda papers.

Appendix A	Final Draft Local Plan (including Policies Map)
Appendix B	Consultation Statement
Appendix C	Sustainability Appraisal Report
Appendix D	Draft Habitat Regulations Assessment

BACKGROUND PAPERS Please note that copies of background papers have not been published on the Council's website but copies of the background papers listed below are available for public inspection free of charge by contacting the relevant Council Department.

Date	Type	Available From
March 2018	Equality Impact Assessment	Planning Policy & Delivery Team
Various	Local Plan supporting evidence	Local Plan pages on Council webpage and from Planning Policy & Delivery Team