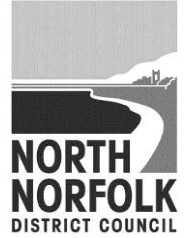


Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party



Please Contact: Linda Yarham

Please email: linda.yarham@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Direct Dial: 01263 516019

4 October 2018

A meeting of **Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party** will be held in the **Council Chamber** at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer on **Monday 15 October 2018 at 9.30 am.**

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours.

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. It will not always be possible to accommodate requests after that time. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained [here](#) or from Democratic Services, Tel: 01263 516010, Email: democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Anyone attending this meeting may take photographs, film or audio-record the proceedings and report on the meeting. Anyone wishing to do so must inform the Chairman. If you are a member of the public and you wish to speak on an item on the agenda, please be aware that you may be filmed or photographed.

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mrs S Arnold, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Ms V Gay, Mrs A Green, Mrs P Grove-Jones, Mr N Pearce, Ms M Prior, Mr R Reynolds, Mr S Shaw, Mr R Shepherd, Mrs V Uprichard, Mr D Young

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



**If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting,
please let us know in advance**

If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

Heads of Paid Service: Nick Baker and Steve Blatch
Tel 01263 513811 **Fax** 01263 515042 **Minicom** 01263 516005
Email districtcouncil@north-norfolk.gov.uk **Web site** www.north-norfolk.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

2. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

3. MINUTES

Page 5

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of a meeting of the Working Party held on 20 August 2018.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Code of Conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest.

6. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (IF ANY)

7. Local Plan Preparation – Small residential allocations and approach to growth in villages

Page 11

Summary: This report considers the approach to small scale developments in villages and recommends an approach for the new Local Plan.

Recommendations: **1. That the Working Party re-affirms its previous decision that small scale growth opportunities will be permitted in a range of identified villages via infill, subdivision, rural building conversions, brownfield redevelopments and growth promoted via Neighbourhood Plans but *additionally* the draft plan (or a separate plan) will also seek to allocate small areas of land suitable for between 10 and 20 dwellings with no more than one or two sites in each community.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Mark Ashwell, Planning Policy Manager – 01263 516325 Mark.ashwell@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

8. Local Plan – Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Studies

Summary: This report provides an update on two landscape assessment studies which will provide evidence to inform the preparation of the Local Plan and once approved, in the determination of planning applications.

Conclusions: The landscape of North Norfolk is one of its defining characteristics with much of the district recognised as nationally important (AONB). Up to date assessments of landscape character and how landscapes are susceptible to change are important considerations for both Local Plan preparation and determining planning applications. These studies will ensure the Council’s evidence in this area is up to date.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet to accept and publish the Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Studies as a source of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.**
- 2. That both documents are subject to a minimum six-week public consultation period alongside the new Local Plan with a view to adopting both as formal supplementary planning documents (SPDs)**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	All Wards
Contact Officer, telephone number and email:	
Iain Withington, Planning Policy Team leader – 01263 516034 Iain.withington@north-norfolk.gov.uk	
Cathy Batchelar, landscape Officer 01263 516155 Cathy.batchelar@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

9. Neighbourhood Planning Update – Corpusty and Saxthorpe examination

Summary: This report provides an update on the examination of Corpusty and Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and seeks delegated authorities to move to referendum subject to agreement with the Inspectors report.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet that delegated powers are given to the Planning Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Planning Manager to modify the Corpusty & Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and allow it to proceed to referendum subject to agreeance with the modifications contained in the examiner’s report.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	Corpusty and Saxthorpe
Contact Officer, telephone number and email:	
Iain Withington, Planning Policy Team leader – 01263 516034 iain.withington@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

10. RAPID REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Page 22

To consider the recommendations from the Rapid Review of the Local Plan.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution (if necessary):

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

12. TO CONSIDER ANY EXEMPT MATTERS ARISING FROM CONSIDERATION OF THE PUBLIC BUSINESS OF THE AGENDA

20 AUGUST 2018

Minutes of a meeting of the **PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 9.30 am when there were present:

Councillors

Mrs S Arnold (Chairman)
R Reynolds (Vice-Chairman) in the Chair for Minute 37

Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	S Shaw
Mrs P Grove-Jones	R Shepherd
N Pearce	Mrs V Uprichard
Ms M Prior	

Observers:

Mrs A Claussen-Reynolds
N Dixon
B Hannah
M Knowles
Mrs A Moore
P Moore
J Punchard
E Seward
B Smith
N Smith
Ms K Ward

5 members of the public were in attendance

Officers

Mr M Ashwell – Planning Policy Manager
Mr I Withington – Planning Policy Team Leader

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Bütikofer and Mrs A Green.

30. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

31. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2018 were approved as a correct record and at the request of the Chairman, who had not been present at the meeting, were signed by the Vice-Chairman.

32. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

34. UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

All updates were contained within the Officers' reports.

35. LOCAL PLAN – OPTIONAL TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The Working Party considered a report and received a presentation by the Planning Policy Team Leader setting out the evidence for introducing optional technical standards around accessible & adaptable dwellings, national described space standards and water efficiency. The presentation expanded on the report and provided a summary of the evidence. A further detailed topic paper was also available and would be published to support the consultation version of the emerging Local Plan.

The evidence supported introducing a number of reasonable options which would also need to be subject to detailed Sustainability Appraisal and public consultation before the final approach for the Local Plan is agreed. The Planning Policy Team Leader sought a steer from the Working Party on the options for further policy development. In addition to the adoption of the optional technical standards set out in the report, he recommended that the nationally described space standards be implemented across all new dwellings and tenures, and that a policy approach be developed around base line sustainability requirements with an update to Policy EN6. The Planning Policy Manager circulated a letter which had been received from Norfolk Homes, which commented on all items on the agenda. There would be an opportunity to make the points raised on this item through the consultation process.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones considered that level access could be a problem in flood-prone areas. She considered that outwards opening doors for bathrooms should be mandatory.

Councillor R Reynolds stated that architects and developers were already meeting many of the optional standards and that imposing them could be restrictive in terms of affordable housing delivery.

Councillor J Punchard stated that many people of his generation were renting as they could not afford to buy, and he was concerned that imposing additional standards would increase rents and impact on people's ability to live.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones asked if it had been proved that inward migration of elderly people was causing the rapid growth in the elderly population.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the number of people in the higher age brackets would increase due to people who were currently living in the District growing older and inward migration of people aged 55+.

Councillor Ms K Ward questioned the concerns raised in the letter from Norfolk Homes regarding viability as developers could charge a premium for accessible homes or adaptations.

Councillor R Reynolds considered there needed to be a balance as to whether or not the recommendations were adopted. He considered that elderly people were well looked after in North Norfolk. It was important not to restrict the building programme as it could have an adverse impact on elderly people in the future.

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett referred to the disabled access issue. There were fewer planning applications for bungalows as they look up more land and were costly to build. She considered that the adaptability of dwellings for stairlifts should be considered and that the higher wheelchair standards should be applied to market housing as well as affordable housing.

The Planning Policy Team Leader explained that national policy did not allow the Authority to apply the higher wheelchair standards to market housing.

Councillor R Shepherd considered that developers would be selective as to how they met the standards to keep within acceptable viability limits.

The Planning Policy Team Leader stated that there had been a move to adopt the standards currently being put forward under the Code for Sustainable Homes so they were not new to the industry.

Councillor J Punchard supported the proposed space standards but considered that the resulting increase in the size of the building could lead to overlooking unless plot sizes were increased.

The Planning Policy Manager considered that it was more important to deliver homes that people wanted to live in and which were more suited to the District's needs, rather than try to achieve higher densities. It would introduce higher costs, but these had been fully costed in the Local Plan Viability Study and were not considered to be onerous. Some developers would have to amend some types of properties in order to comply with the national standards, but consideration had to be given to what was needed in the area based on the evidence, which clearly pointed to the need to address the deficiencies.

Councillor B Smith broadly supported the Government's approach. However, much of the discussion was around older people, whereas there were many younger people in wheelchairs who needed to be able to move around their homes. He considered that unless specialist accommodation was provided at ground floor level there could be problems accessing bedrooms.

The Planning Policy Team Leader stated that the standards provided for accessible lifts. There was evidence of need to accommodate people over 65 in the District as the largest proportion of the District's population and the fastest growing. In relation to younger people (18-64) the evidence identified that the need remained static over the plan period and accounted for approx. 4% of that age group.

Councillor Ms M Prior supported the recommendations for disabled accommodation. However there was already a requirement for 10% on major developments which had not been mentioned for some time. She expressed concern regarding enforcement of the standards. She stated that there was a need for 2-bed houses to keep young people in the District and that 5-bed houses were not needed.

The Planning Policy Team Leader explained that Building Control would be responsible for enforcing the standards, with the exception of the space standard which would be dealt with by planning conditions.

With regard to water efficiency standards, Councillor P Moore stated that 25% of water was leaked and pressure should be brought to solve the problem. He asked if the installation of water butts could be encouraged.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that there were a number of measures which could be taken by developers to meet the standard. There were many technical measures to increase water efficiency at minimal additional cost and most developers were already meeting the standards in this area as a matter of course. Installation of water butts could be one of the possible measures.

The Chairman reported that the Duty to Co-operate Forum had requested a presentation by Anglian Water at its next meeting. Anglian Water had said that it could service any new development but needed to be challenged.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be recommended to develop a policy approach based around the adoption of Optional Technical Standards based on

- a) **100% dwelling requirement for Optional M4(2) - Accessible and Adaptable dwellings;**
- b) **5% dwelling requirement on affordable properties for optional M4(3) - Wheelchair User Dwellings;**
- c) **Implementation of the Higher Water Efficiency standards across all new dwellings;**
- d) **Implementation of Nationally Described Space Standards across all new dwellings and tenures;**
- e) **Development of a policy approach around base line sustainability requirements which updates Policy EN6.**

36. LOCAL PLAN – WHOLE PLAN VIABILITY ASSESSMENT

The Working Party considered a report and received a presentation by the Planning Policy Team Leader in respect of the viability evidence supporting the Local Plan.

In general terms, housing development proposed in all locations in the North Norfolk District Local Plan is broadly viable with maximum affordable housing percentages of 45% and 25% across geographical zones identified.

The findings would be shared with the development industry through a workshop scheduled for later this month where an opportunity would be given to comment on the findings and the assumption used. It was intended that the study would inform policy making around affordable housing rates and support the Local Plan through examination.

The Chairman asked if the housing Incentive Scheme would form part of the new policy.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the new Local Plan would determine viability by setting the levels which would encourage developers and landowners to release land.

Councillor E Seward asked if the affordable housing ratios of 25%/45% would make inroads into the waiting list.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the waiting list was not a good indicator of need as it included people who were currently in affordable housing and wanted to transfer. Some of the people on the waiting list would find their own accommodation. The assessment looked at whether the overall housing target would deliver enough affordable housing. There was a need for 20% of all housing to be affordable and the Authority was currently delivering 18%. The proposed ratios would deliver around 20%.

RESOLVED

That the results of the study are noted and following industry engagement and any necessary amendment the study is published as part of the evidence base for Local Plan preparation.

The Chairman left the meeting at this point to attend another meeting. The Vice-Chairman took the Chair for the remaining business.

37. PLANNING POLICY UPDATE – PUBLICATION OF NEW NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Planning Policy Manager presented a report which summarised the key provisions of the new National Planning Policy Framework and its likely impacts in relation to the on-going review of the North Norfolk Local Plan particularly in relation to housing provision.

The new National Planning Policy Framework retained much of the thrust and detailed content of the earlier version but included some significant changes in relation to housing provision, targets for delivery of growth and the types of sites which should be identified for residential development. These would need to be addressed as part of Local Plan preparation.

The final housing target remained unclear and the Government was considering a further revision to its methodology.

Councillor Mrs P Grove-Jones referred to a first-time buyer development in her Ward, where owners had been able to sell the dwellings on with no restrictions and as a result, the dwellings were no longer in the first-time buyer market. She asked how this would be dealt with for future developments.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that there were no provision in the legislation for recycling of first-time buyer developments.

Councillor P Moore suggested that legal agreements (Section 106) would help to ensure that first-time buyer developments remained in the first-time buyer market.

Councillor Ms K Ward asked what impact the additional work on small sites would have on the timetable.

The Planning Policy Manager stated that the impact was unknown at present as consideration would need to be given as to how small sites would be approached. There were a number of potential options to consider. The team did not have the resources to consider a large number of sites without impacting on other work and there could be a significant risk to the timetable. There was also a risk in terms of the 2019 Council elections if the draft plan was not out to consultation by February as the Council would be in purdah and consultation may have to be delayed until after the elections.

Councillor Mrs A Moore stated that she was in favour of the proposed large development in North Walsham to deliver infrastructure. A relief road was needed to take lorries out of the residential areas.

Councillor E Seward supported Councillor Moore's view. He considered that the critical mass of development was needed to secure funding for infrastructure for other facilities as well as roads. It was necessary to allow the developers to build but also maximise their contributions towards infrastructure. He considered that the County Council should be approached to help with funding.

Councillor Mrs A Fitch-Tillett requested that her vigorous opposition to any incursion into the AONB be recorded.

RESOLVED by 6 votes to 0 with 1 abstention

- 1. That preparation of the draft plan proceeds on the basis that 'up to' 11,000 dwellings *may* be required.**
- 2. That the plan identifies approx. 15 smaller sites of around 1 hectare for allocation *provided* such sites were put forward and are suitable for development.**
- 3. That the additional large sites identified in Section 5 of the report are identified as provisional preferred options.**

The meeting closed at 12 noon.

CHAIRMAN

Local Plan Preparation – Small residential allocations and approach to growth in villages

Summary: This report considers the approach to small scale developments in villages and recommends an approach for the new Local Plan.

Recommendations: **1. That the Working Party re-affirms its previous decision that small scale growth opportunities will be permitted in a range of identified villages via infill, subdivision, rural building conversions, brownfield redevelopments and growth promoted via Neighbourhood Plans but *additionally* the draft plan (or a separate plan) will also seek to allocate small areas of land suitable for between 10 and 20 dwellings with no more than one or two sites in each community.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Mark Ashwell, Planning Policy Manager – 01263 516325 Mark.ashwell@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

1.1 At the February Working Party Members agreed in principle to a distribution of housing growth and other types of development which would be focussed mainly in and around the District’s towns and a small number of the larger villages (Selected Villages - Mundesley, Ludham, Briston and Blakeney). The Working Party has subsequently identified a range of sites close to these selected settlements as ‘provisional preferred options’ for potential allocation and public consultation. Collectively these would provide for approximately 4,000 dwellings. Whilst this quantity is likely to be sufficient, when added to existing commitments and future windfall, to address a housing target set at around 9,500 dwellings, it would not deliver any higher targets which are likely to be required as a further consequence of the new NPPF and its revised standard methodology for the calculation of housing requirements. Government is to consult shortly on further changes to the standard methodology with changes being proposed with the express intention of increasing housing supply, so it is likely that higher targets will be required.

1.2 It was also agreed that outside of the identified selected settlements further growth in a selection of the more rural settlements was to be permitted in locations, which, although they have a more limited range of services, could nevertheless accommodate some small scale growth in a sustainable way. It was not the intention to specifically allocate land for development in these smaller settlements but instead it was agreed that development could be permitted via policies which would allow for

infill, rural exceptions developments, brownfield redevelopment, and development promoted locally via the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.

1.3 The recently published National Planning Policy Framework 2018 states that sustainable development in rural areas should be supported, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, isolated homes should be avoided except in specific defined circumstances and planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive especially where this would support local services. Specific support is given in the framework for policies which deliver rural exceptions developments comprising mainly of affordable homes including starter homes to purchase. The NPPF also recognises that some development in one community may support facilities which are available elsewhere in a nearby settlement recognising that closely related clusters of settlements may have strong functional connections. Policies should also protect and enhance valued landscapes and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and significant development should be focussed on locations which limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. Beyond this broad policy framework the NPPF does not prescribe a specific approach to growth in villages allowing for each authority to take account of local evidence in determining where, how much, and what type of growth might be appropriate provided their approaches are justified by appropriate evidence.

1.4 The settlement hierarchy and the approach towards allowing limited growth in other settlements agreed at the February Working Party would comply with the requirements of the new framework but it stops short of specifically allocating land for development in rural communities and might therefore be criticised for lacking certainty of delivery. Furthermore the revised NPPF also introduces a new requirement for each authority to *'identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare in size'* unless it can be shown via the plan making process that this is not possible. Taken at face value this would mean that the Plan for North Norfolk should make provision for around 400- 500 dwellings on smaller sites depending on the final housing target which is set and how much of that target remains to be provided on the date of plan adoption. Given that a one hectare site would typically provide for between 20-40 dwellings, depending on density of development, this would necessitate the identification of around 20-30 smaller site allocations. Very few of the sites identified so far as provisional preferred options would fulfil this requirement (just four) and in the main this smaller size of site has not been suggested in the towns via the previous call for sites process. Some consideration of how growth in villages might assist in meeting this small site requirement is therefore desirable.

2. Is development acceptable in villages and if so which ones?

2.1 As outlined above it is clear in the NPPF that growth of rural communities where it can be shown to contribute towards maintaining or enhancing vitality should be supported. Equally isolated homes and larger scale developments are not supported in rural areas and growth in communities which do not have supporting infrastructure, local employment opportunities, and day to day services such as schools, shopping and health care facilities runs the risk of unsustainable growth with residents having to travel elsewhere to access these services. Nevertheless small scale growth which has regard to the range of services available, the character of individual places, the availability and suitability of potential development sites and the functional relationships between places would be NPPF compliant and could make a small

contribution towards addressing affordable housing needs and support smaller scale house builders as envisaged in the framework.

2.2 Previous work undertaken as part of the development of the overall approach to housing growth in the district identified that very few villages have the broad range of services which are desirable to support growth. This supported the previous decision not to specifically allocate land for development in these locations. Only four villages have what were identified as essential facilities (shops, schools, and health services) and these have been selected for allocations and provisional sites have been identified. Outside of these four larger villages the distribution and availability of key facilities is very variable. For example, there are around 30 settlements which have both a shop(s) and a primary school and some other basic facilities including at one end of the scale very small communities such as Little Snoring (pop approx. 600) and at the other, larger places such as Bacton (pop approx. 1,200).¹ There are also some fairly large communities (in North Norfolk terms), which have very few facilities themselves, and relatively closely related to larger settlements (eg Kelling, Sutton and Hempstead which are closely related to Holt, Stalham and Fakenham respectively).

3. Suggested way forward.

3.1 It is not proposed at this stage to depart from the broad principles of development distribution agreed at the February Working Party. It remains the case that much of the rural area of the District including many of the smaller hamlets are unsuitable locations for any significant growth. However Officers do consider that there would be scope to make small allocations in a wider selection of communities than has hitherto been suggested, in part to help address the requirement to identify smaller sites.

3.2 However the process of selecting which settlements might include allocations, the identification and appraisal of site options and the preparation of consultation materials will inevitably be a time consuming process and would delay further the consultation on the draft plan. Further significant delay at this stage is undesirable and it is therefore proposed that consultation proceeds on the draft plan which would include details of the policy approach to smaller villages, the selection of villages where small allocations would be made (named settlements), but would not identify the specific sites at this stage. Specific sites in villages would then be identified at a later stage in the process (potentially in a separate Plan) and would be subject to separate consultation processes. This approach would not only allow the majority of the plan to proceed to public consultation but it would also allow communities to comment on the overall approach to growth in villages and for the Council to consider any representations before finally deciding if allocations are to be made and which sites to identify.

3.3 It is therefore recommended that the Working Party re-affirms its previous decision that small scale growth opportunities will be permitted in a range of identified villages via infill, subdivision, rural building conversions, brownfield redevelopments and growth promoted via Neighbourhood Plans but *additionally* the draft plan (or a separate plan) will also seek to allocate small areas of land suitable for between 10 and 20 dwellings with no more than one or two sites in each community.

3.4 Subject to Working Party agreement in principle to this approach Officers would then prepare a detailed methodology for the selection of settlements where allocations could be made which itself would be published for consultation alongside the draft plan in the new year.

¹ Settlement Profiles. NNDC 2018

4. Recommendation

That the Working Party re-affirms its previous decision that small scale growth opportunities will be permitted in a range of identified villages via infill, subdivision, rural building conversions, brownfield redevelopments and growth promoted via Neighbourhood Plans but *additionally* the draft plan (or a separate plan) will also seek to allocate small areas of land suitable for between 10 and 20 dwellings with no more than one or two sites in each community.

5. Legal Implications and Risks

5.1 The Council must produce a local plan which complies with various regulatory and legal requirements. The approach recommended in this report would comply with these.

6. Financial Implications and Risks

6.1 Failure to undertake plan preparation in accordance with the regulations can leave the Council open to challenge.

Local Plan – Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Studies

Summary: This report provides an update on two landscape assessment studies which will provide evidence to inform the preparation of the Local Plan and once approved, in the determination of planning applications.

Conclusions: The landscape of North Norfolk is one of its defining characteristics with much of the district recognised as nationally important (AONB). Up to date assessments of landscape character and how landscapes are susceptible to change are important considerations for both Local Plan preparation and determining planning applications. These studies will ensure the Council’s evidence in this area is up to date.

- Recommendations:
- 1. That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet to accept and publish the Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Studies as a source of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.**
 - 2. That both documents are subject to a minimum six-week public consultation period alongside the new Local Plan with a view to adopting both as formal supplementary planning documents (SPDs)**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	All Wards
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Iain Withington, Planning Policy Team leader – 01263 516034 Iain.withington@north-norfolk.gov.uk Cathy Batchelar, landscape Officer 01263 516155 Cathy.Batchelar@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Landscape character effectively underpins many of the factors which make the District unique and which contribute to the quality of life in the District. North Norfolk’s landscape is vitally important to the local economy as well as parts being of national importance for its natural beauty through designation of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a tool to identify what makes a place unique, and can serve as a framework for decision making that respects

local distinctiveness. Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area's defining characteristics is a key component in ensuring that any change or development does not undermine whatever is valued or characteristic in a particular location.

- 1.3 LUC (Land Use Consultants) were commissioned in February 2018 to review and update the existing landscape character evidence base, which included producing:
 - An updated Landscape Character Assessment
 - A new Landscape Sensitivity Study
- 1.4 A presentation on the documents by LUC will be presented to the working party.

2. Content of Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.1 The character assessment updates the District's existing Landscape Character Assessment. Providing context for policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan, informing the determination of planning applications, and informing the management of future change.
- 2.2 The LCA apportions the landscape of the district into two levels of character assessment - Types and Areas. These are mapped areas which demonstrate similar characteristics in relation to appearance, history and ecology at two different scales; one fairly broad (Types) and one more detailed (particular Areas within those Types). The LCA maps the Types and Areas, describes them, assesses their key characteristics and particular valued attributes, evaluates their condition and ability to adapt to change.
- 2.3 10 landscape types and 16 landscape character areas have been identified as listed:

Table 1 - Landscape Character Types and Areas in North Norfolk District

Ref	Type	Area (s)
ROF	Rolling Open Farmland	ROF1 Holkham to Raynham
TF	Tributary Farmland	TF1 North Norfolk Tributary Farmland
LPF	Low Plains Farmland	LP1 North Norfolk Low Plains Farmland
RV	River Valleys	RV1 River Wensum and tributaries
		RV2 River Bure and tributaries
		RV3 River Ant and tributaries
		RV4 River Stiffkey and tributaries
		RV5 River Glaven and tributaries
		RV6 Mundesley Beck
SF	Settled Farmland	SF1 Stalham, Ludham and Potter Heigham
CS	Coastal Shelf	CS1 Weybourne to Mundesley Coastal Shelf
WR	Wooded Ridge	WR1 Wooded Cromer Ridge
RHA	Rolling Heath & Arable	RHA1 North Norfolk Rolling Heath and Arable
DCM	Drained Coastal Marshes	DCM1 Holkham Drained Marshes
		DCM2 Blakeney, Wiveton, Cley and Salthouse Drained Marshes
OCM	Open Coastal Marshes	OCM1 North Norfolk Open Coastal Marshes

- 2.4 Each chapter contains the following information for the Landscape Character Types:
- Type name and location
 - Photographs illustrating the key elements
 - Key characteristics of the Area and for each Type
 - Valued Features and Qualities
 - Forces for change / Detractors
 - Landscape Vision
 - Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
 - Maps showing Topography and Hydrology, Superficial geology, Priority habitats and ancient woodland, cultural heritage designations for each Type.
- 2.5 An overview map is provided which identifies the landscape classification: Landscape Character Types and Areas. The map can be used to identify which broad Landscape Character Type is of interest and then the relevant chapter referred to for the assessment. A flowchart provides a step by step guide to using the study.

3. Content of Landscape Sensitivity Study

- 3.1 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment has become an important tool for informing the management of landscape change, by assessing and mapping the relative sensitivity of different landscapes to different types of change, based on an understanding of sensitivity and value.
- 3.2 The study focuses on the sensitivity of the landscape around types of renewable energy development.
- 3.3 The National Planning Practice Framework and Guidance places emphasis on developing positive strategies to promote energy from renewable and low carbon source. Local planning authorities are required to design policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development whilst ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.4 The Council has therefore commissioned LUC to undertake this Landscape sensitivity study (LSS). The study will provide a context for policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan and can assist in informing appropriate locations for renewable energy development. It can also be one of the evidence considerations to be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications in relation to renewable energy. The study should not however be used in isolation, other considerations such as other physical constraints, environmental constraints (e.g. biodiversity and heritage) and policy constraints (Undeveloped Coast) will also influence the strategy and decision of applications.

Table 2- How the Study can be used

Potential uses of study	How the study can be used
Identifying suitable locations for renewable and low carbon energy	The relative ratings of sensitivity will feed into the identification of potential 'suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy', as required by NPPF.
Assessing and appraising planning applications	<p>The sensitivity levels in combination with the generic guidance can be used to consider whether a development is in an appropriate location and whether it is likely to have an adverse effect on the landscape, either as a result of its location or its design.</p> <p>In addition, the flowchart on page 3 of the North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (2018) should be used to shape proposals and assist in planning decisions.</p>
To develop policy in relation to renewable and low carbon energy and impacts on landscape	This study can help with informing criteria based policies as part of the Local Plan.

- 3.5 This work follows on from initial work undertaken on the potential policy approaches available to the Council in identifying potential suitable area for wind energy development, with a report taken to the November Working Party.
- 3.6 The Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) forms the spatial framework and evidence base for the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.
- 3.7 The study assesses the sensitivity of each character Area for different types of renewable energy development including:
- Wind energy development
 - Field-scale solar PV development
 - Onshore cable routes (for offshore wind farms)
 - Commercial battery storage
 - Anaerobic digestion (AD) plants
 - Substations and cable relay stations (for offshore wind farms)
 - Reservoirs
- 3.8 The study also includes an assessment of the landscape sensitivity of six former airfields sites to the range of renewable energy developments.

- 3.9 The Study takes into account the sensitivity of national and local landscape designations; namely the Norfolk Coast AONB, the Heritage Coast and the Undeveloped Coast.

4. What happens next?

- 4.1 The Draft LCA and Sensitivity Assessment will be published as a source of evidence and be subject to a period of consultation alongside the First Draft Local Plan early next year.
- 4.2 Following the consultation exercise, the Council will consider all representations and where necessary amend the document in line with the comments made. A statement will be published, setting out a summary of the main issues raised in the consultation and how these issues have been addressed in the SPD. It is anticipated that both documents will be approved and adopted as an SPD next year. In the meantime, the consultation documents will form part of the evidence base to inform policies and proposals in the emerging local plan and when dealing with planning applications.

5. Recommendation

1. That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet to accept and publish the Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Studies as a source of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan for North Norfolk to cover the period 2016-2036.

2. That both documents are subject to a minimum six-week public consultation period alongside the new Local Plan with a view to adopting both as formal supplementary planning documents (SPDs)

6 Legal Implications and Risks

- 6.1 The Council must produce a Plan which complies with various regulatory and legal requirements and in determining its preferred policy approaches they must be justified and underpinned by evidence.

7 Financial Implications and Risks

- 7.1 Failure to undertake plan preparation in accordance with the regulations is likely to render the plan 'unsound' at examination and result in the need to return to earlier stages. Substantial additional costs would be incurred.

Neighbourhood Planning Update – Corpusty and Saxthorpe examination

Summary: This report provides an update on the examination of Corpusty and Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and seeks delegated authorities to move to referendum subject to agreement with the Inspectors report.

Recommendations: **1. That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet that delegated powers are given to the Planning Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Planning Manager to modify the Corpusty & Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and allow it to proceed to referendum subject to agreeance with the modifications contained in the examiner’s report.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
All Members	Corpusty and Saxthorpe
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Iain Withington, Planning Policy Team leader – 01263 516034 iain.withington@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Corpusty and Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination by the qualifying body in June 2018. In line with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) as well as the provisions of the Localism Act the plan was publicised for a six-week period between Monday 25 June and Monday 6 August 2018.
- 1.2 Twelve representations were received from Bidwells, Environment Agency, Gladman Developments, Historic England, Marine Management Organisation, National Grid, Natural England, North Norfolk District Council, Norfolk County Council, Norfolk County Council - Member for Melton Constable, Sport England and a member of the public.
- 1.3 Mr Andrew Ashcroft was subsequently appointed as an independent examiner and with the agreement of all parties the examination was agreed to proceed from a start date of 17th September 2018.
- 1.4 It is expected that the examiners draft report will be received towards mid-October. Early indications are that there will be no fundamental concerns raised though through the initial round of inspectors questions it was strongly indicated that the draft neighbourhood plan will require modifications in order to comply with the legal requirements and basic conditions tests, before it can proceed to referendum.

- 1.5 Initial questions raised by the examiner focused on high level issues detailed below:
- Community Views vs Evidence – policies should be based on evidence, not views.
 - The Plan looks back historically and should focus on what the situation / policy is now – e.g. ‘proposed extensions to a settlement boundary’ would be found in a consultation document, but a final plan shows The Boundary.
 - In some areas supporting text was included in policy wording and some of the policies lacked the desirable clarity to ensure they could be applied effectively and interpreted as intended.
- 1.6 As a result the inspector has indicated through his initial clarifications that he is likely to recommend modifications that improve the structure of the report, remove policies that duplicate and overlap areas and take a robust approach where it is considered the approach is not supported by evidence and or raises conformity issues. Whilst in practice the Planning Authority can make a decision not to support the Inspectors suggested modifications this is considered to be highly unlikely at this stage.
- 1.7 The Parish Council are very keen to conclude the plan preparation process as quickly as possible and to expedite the remaining stages of the process delegate powers are sought in order to modify the NP in line with the expected examiner’s report and allow it to proceed to referendum in line with the requirements of the 2012 Regulations (as amended), subject to officer’s agreeance with the recommendations contained in it.
- 1.8 Should officers propose to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner the regulations allow the Planning Authority to decide what action to take. Any proposed changes are required to be subject further representations. Should such a situation arise a full report will be brought to the next available Working Party in order to decide on the appropriate course of action.

2. Recommendation

That the Working Party recommend to Cabinet that delegated powers are given to the Planning Portfolio Holder in conjunction with the Planning Manager to modify the Corpusty & Saxthorpe Neighbourhood Plan and allow it to proceed to referendum subject to agreeance with the modifications contained in the examiner’s report.

3 Legal Implications and Risks

- 3.1 The Council must produce a neighbourhood plan which complies with various regulatory and legal requirements.

4 Financial Implications and Risks

- 4.1 Failure to undertake plan preparation in accordance with the regulations can leave the Council open to challenge.

Recommendations from the Rapid Review of the Local Plan

General

To recommend to Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party:

That the timetable for the Local Plan (written in plain English) is published in a prominent place on the Council's website (e.g. front page) and is regularly updated to reflect any changes made

Housing

To recommend to Planning & Built Heritage Working Party:

1. That work is commenced in relation to the evaluation and generation of contingency sites ('Plan B') to establish whether it is required and any associated risks with pursuing this option. This work should be undertaken so that an informed decision can be made in the Autumn.
2. That cross party support for the Local Plan is critical to ensure work continues uninterrupted beyond the Local Elections in 2019 and therefore that **all** Members are fully engaged in the consideration of the policy options relating to the level of the OAN which will be included in the draft Local Plan, recognising that Full Council will approve the final version of the Local Plan and that Overview & Scrutiny Committee can make recommendations to Council if they feel that the above issues have not been addressed
3. That Overview & Scrutiny Committee receive a further report from the Planning Policy Manager in October 2018 to
 - (a) consider the revised OAN data and any policy options and implications
 - (b) provide pre-decision scrutiny and
 - (c) support a mechanism to engage all members in the assessment of key policy choices, including referral to and consideration by Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party
4. That further policy work is undertaken with particular reference to innovations in the provision of affordable housing, including a local definition of affordable products (eg what is 'usefully affordable' across North Norfolk?)

Environmental Policies

To recommend to Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party:

1. That an up to date evidence base on Policy SS2 (Development in the Countryside) is produced to balance economic development with countryside protection, particularly in relation to micro businesses' start-up businesses and businesses which provide services to our aging demographic
2. The introduction of a rolling programme of reviewing and updating Conservation Area Reviews prioritised to reflect potential or anticipated development applications as this will provide additional protection from developer challenge in appeal situations as evidenced by the Conservation Officer submission to the Rapid Review

Resources

To recommend to Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party:

1. That a communications and **engagement** plan is produced and implemented to ensure that Members and local communities are fully engaged with the Local Plan process and supported to respond to challenges. This should commence in Autumn 2018 as mitigation against a further delay and should be resourced with appropriately qualified and skilled communications and change professionals
2. That if it is apparent by October 2018 that the Local Plan will not be ready for consultation in January 2019, that a revised timetable is published and all affected parishes are actively briefed and a revised risk assessment is undertaken to understand what mitigation is needed to support the five year land supply in this scenario