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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Context

**1.1** The Breckland Local Development Framework (LDF) aims to:

- set a spatial vision for the Breckland area with clear economic, social and environmental objectives;
- consider the needs and aspirations of Breckland residents; and
- achieve an integrated approach to regeneration and delivery of needed development.

**1.2** The Breckland LDF is made up of a number of documents which will enable and manage future land-use and development in the District. The approach in Breckland has been to prepare a joint Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), as the first part of the LDF. This approach has been endorsed by the Government Office and reflects the pressing need to update both the spatial strategy and policy framework for shaping sustainable communities in Breckland.

**1.3** The Core Strategy element of the DPD is central to achieving the above aims and provides the long-term vision for the District to 2026. The LDF period to 2026 will meet the specific requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England to 2021 including the need to deliver 15,200 homes and at least 6,000 jobs between 2001 and 2021. However, a requirement of PPS3 'Housing' is to have a demonstrable 15 year housing land supply and this requires that the LDF goes beyond 2021 to 2026. This will mean delivering a further 3,900 homes between 2021 and 2026, bringing the District total for 2001-2026 to 19,100 net new homes. This approach was firmly endorsed through the Issues and Options (Regulation 25) consultation in 2007.

**1.4** Importantly, all other DPDs, including the Development Control policies produced as part of the LDF must be in conformity with the Core Strategy. Many of the policy topics included in the Core Strategy have been developed further and covered in greater detail in the Development Control policies.

**1.5** The Core Strategy document contains the following elements:

- A **Spatial Portrait** setting out the conditions that exist in Breckland and highlighting the issues to be addressed within the document.
- A set of **Issues and Challenges**, derived from the evidence base, that will need to be addressed by the Spatial Vision and Strategy. These issues will provide a brief snapshot of the issues and challenges that are driving change in Breckland.
- An overall **Spatial Vision** setting out what the area will be like in the future and a broad overview of how this will be achieved (2001-26).
- A set of **Spatial Objectives** outlining the main policy topics that will be pursued in order to achieve the vision.
- A **Spatial Strategy** that will set out how the Council plans to deal with the key issues and Spatial Objectives that have been identified, and how the Council envisages the different parts of the District developing in relation to these issues in order to realise the Spatial Vision.
- A **Key Diagram** illustrating the Spatial Strategy.
- A series of **Core Policies** for delivering the vision and objectives (these will provide a strategic framework for informing and coordinating investment and making decisions about specific development proposals).
- A set of **indicators and targets** to provide a framework for monitoring the plan's implementation.

**1.6** This document has been prepared following extensive consultation with the general public, statutory and non-statutory bodies and other interested groups. It has also been prepared in the context of the Breckland Sustainable Community Strategy.

**1.7** In addition to the Core Strategy and Development Control Development Plan Document (DPD), Breckland plans to produce a number of other Local Development Document (LDDs) as listed below:

- Thetford Area Action Plan DPD
- Attleborough and Snetterton Heath Area Action Plan DPD
- Site Specific Policies and Proposals Document DPD
- Developer Obligations Document Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

**1.8** The details of these DPDs can be found in the Council's Local Development Scheme.

## **1.2 Relationship with Sustainability Appraisal**

**1.9** Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) is a key component of the Local Development Framework process and the preparation of this document has been informed by a Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR) which assesses the social, economic and environmental impacts of policies and proposals. The Sustainability Appraisal Report draws together an assessment of these conditions, their effects and identifies key spatial issues that the Local Development Framework needs to address. These issues are carried through the Core Strategy and will be addressed through its objectives and policies.

**1.10** The findings of the SAR have been an important influence on the proposed content of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies, as the policies proposed represent the most sustainable option possible.

**1.11** The SAR prepared for the Preferred Options of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies contained a detailed analysis of preferred options and alternative options. The Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanies this document confirms the sustainability of the proposed submission strategy and policies.

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## **1.3 Relationship to Habitats Regulations**

**1.12** Regulation 85B of the Habitats Regulations requires plan making authorities to determine whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect upon any European site. In considering the implications of the Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies document for European sites, an Appropriate Assessment has been undertaken in order to comply with the Habitats Regulations. An initial Appropriate Assessment undertaken at the Preferred Options stage highlighted the need for additional information to be collected in order to enable the completion of a full assessment. This primary data has been collected throughout the document preparation process and has been fed into the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies document.

**1.13** A number of policies within this proposed Core Strategy and Development Control Policies document were considered to have significant effects that would be likely, or that a precautionary approach would need to be taken as it could not be determined that particular plan policies would not have a significant effect upon any European site.

**1.14** In light of the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment, mitigation measures must be put in place to remove any significant effects or likely significant effects that the plan may have on European sites. Mitigation measures include amendments made to policies to remove elements that could have an effect, or to require other actions that can eliminate any effects. The policies in this document that have an effect on European sites have been amended to ensure that the qualifying features are not harmed, as well as considering other measures that will be necessary. These mitigation measures are incorporated throughout the document where necessary. In some cases, the mitigation measures necessary have in themselves had a significant role in shaping the final direction of the Core Strategy as well as particular policies.





#### 1.4 Relationship to other plans and strategies

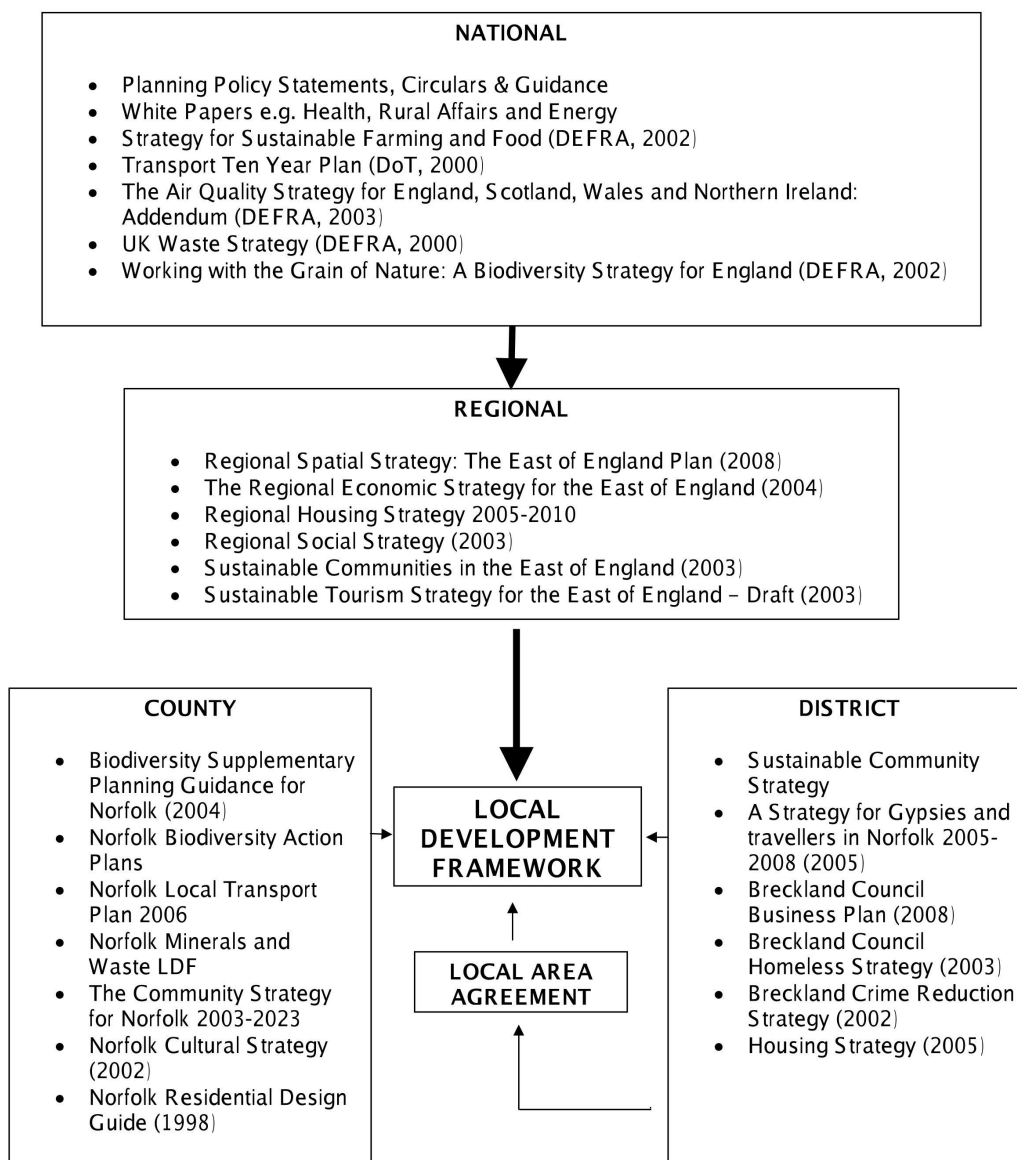
**1.15** A key principle of the Core Strategy will be to ensure the efficient use of land by balancing competing demands within the context of sustainable development. In dealing with these competing demands it is important that the Core Strategy is recognised as forming part of a coordinated approach together with a number of other strategies and programmes.

**1.16** Many of the policies in the LDF will be dependent on the granting of planning permission in terms of their implementation. However, as part of a spatial planning approach, there will be policies upon which the successful delivery will, in part, be dependent on other plans and strategies. Figure 1.1 'Plans and Strategies' below illustrates the relationship between the LDF and interrelated programmes and strategies.

**1.17** In developing the Core Strategy, there is a requirement to take into account a range of national, regional and local policies and strategies. The content of these strategies have been appraised in the Sustainability Appraisal Report and this process has ensured that their contents have influenced the sustainability objectives and development of policy of this LDF. Additionally, the responsibility and mechanisms for implementing policy are identified throughout the LDF including reference to other plans and strategies where appropriate. This will assist in ensuring coordinated action on the competing demands which the LDF is seeking to address.

**1.18** Of the plans and strategies identified, the Sustainable Community Strategy for Breckland is central to guiding the vision and objectives of this Core Strategy. This is necessary to ensure that the spatial objectives for planned change over the next decade or so are, as far as is practicable, in alignment with the desires and aspirations of the local community. Additionally, the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England, *The East of England Plan* is of particular importance given the requirement that the Breckland LDF must be in general conformity with the objectives and policies contained in the plan. It is also important that there is a consistent approach between this Core Strategy and those of neighbouring authorities. Breckland is one of three authorities who constitute the Rural East Anglia Partnership (REAP) housing sub-region. REAP have already produced a sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment as required by PPS3. The key relationships with the Sustainable Community Strategy and The East of England Plan are set out in the following sections of this Introduction.

Figure 1.1 Plans and Strategies





## 1.5 Requirements of the East of England Plan (RSS)

**1.19** The LDF must meet the requirements of, and be in general conformity with, the East of England Plan. The East of England Plan is the top tier of the Development Plan for the region and provides the direction for development for the Eastern Region as a whole and sets out the strategic context for the Breckland LDF. The vision for the East of England as set out in the Plan is:

*'By 2021 the East of England will be realising its economic potential and providing a high quality of life for its people, including by meeting their housing needs in sustainable inclusive communities. At the same time it will reduce its impact on climate change and the environment, including through savings in energy and water use and by strengthening its stock of environmental assets'*

**1.20** The East of England Plan defines specific targets and policy requirements which need to be incorporated in the LDF, this includes housing figures at the District level. The requirement for Breckland is to deliver 15,200 homes and 6,000 net new jobs over the period 2001 to 2021.

**1.21** In addition to these District wide targets, Thetford is identified as a "Key Centre for Development and Change" by Policy TH1 of the East of England Plan. This means that Thetford will be the main strategic location for growth in the District over the plan period. Thetford will provide for 6,000 of the District's housing requirement in conjunction with a diversified employment base that will maintain the town's self containment.

**1.22** In addition to setting out housing and jobs targets, the East of England Plan also sets out a number of policies which seek to secure sustainable development through different measures. These policies include:

- an expectation for authorities to set appropriate targets for affordable housing against a minimum expectation of 35% of housing coming forward being affordable after the adoption of the RSS;
- Encouraging on-site and/or decentralised renewable energy generation in the context of an interim minimum requirement of 10% of energy for all new development over 10 dwellings or 1,000m<sup>2</sup> to come from such sources;
- Support renewable power generation with the aim of meeting regional targets of 1,192 Megawatts installed capacity by 2010 and 4,250 Megawatts by 2020;
- Year on year improvement in per capita consumption rates of water; and
- To adopt a strategy to achieve the recovery of 50% of municipal waste and 72% of commercial waste by 2010 and 70%/75% respectively by 2015.

**1.23** These policies provide the overarching framework for the Breckland LDF. The Council's policies and strategy reflect these requirements and will enable the District to achieve the targets and policies objectives set out in the East of England Plan.

## 1.6 Relationship With the Sustainable Community Strategy

**1.24** The Breckland Sustainable Community Strategy was published in April 2008 by the Breckland Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) which is a collaboration between the District and County Councils, working with the Area Partnerships, Health Services, the Police, Town and Parish Councils and other key agencies. The LDF must have regard to the Community Strategy, with Government Guidance in PPS12 (paragraph 1.10) stating that "...the LDF should be a key component in the delivery of the Community Strategy, setting out its

spatial aspects where appropriate and providing a long term spatial vision". Strong linkages between the LDF and the Community Strategy will help to ensure that the LDF is based on a greater understanding of the community's needs as well as establishing an integrated approach towards future development.

### 1.7 Delivering a Spatial Plan

**1.25** The following Core Policies have been prepared to fulfil the objectives of the Spatial Portrait and Vision and set the context for the Local Development Framework. These policies outline Breckland's approach to achieving sustainable development in the District. The Core Strategy policies have been developed through continuous community involvement and seek to provide a local context to national and regional planning policy. The policies have been considered through the SAR and have been developed having had regard to the responses received at all stages of consultation.

**1.26** Critically the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD will integrate with other strategies and programmes that will shape Breckland and deliver sustainable forms of development on the ground. Delivering a spatial plan will require strong partnership working to achieve sustainable development. This will involve three key strands to spatial planning in Breckland:

**1. Sustainable Locations** - Linking housing and employment at locations which are well served by transport, facilities and community services and are not at risk of flooding or harm to the integrity of Breckland's environment.

**2. Sustainable Communities** - Well designed spaces and places, where people can access work and services and enjoy themselves close to where they live with respect to the environment where they are located.

**3. Sustainable Technologies** - Building materials and methods which will help reduce the depletion of natural resources and emission of greenhouse gasses and buildings which will last a long time through their flexibility and adaptability for other potential future uses.

**1.27** Delivery of the Core Strategy will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and reviews of the Sustainability Appraisal baseline as part of the wider 'plan, monitor, manage' process. Progress towards achieving the spatial objectives will be assessed in the context of the Monitoring and Implementation Framework (MIF) in section five of this document. The MIF identifies a number of risks to the delivery of the Spatial Plan and outlines the respective contingency measures.

**The policies in this document should be read in conjunction with one another as they are all interdependent and their combined effect on a development proposal should be considered.**





## 2 Spatial Strategy

### 2.1 Spatial Portrait

**2.1** In developing a Strategy for future development in Breckland, it is important to understand the context and the main attributes of the District in terms of its geography, economy, environment and social characteristics. The Spatial Portrait below is expanded in more detail in the baseline assessment of the Sustainability Appraisal Report that accompanies this document.

#### Geography

**2.2** Breckland is a geographically large rural District in central Norfolk covering an area of over 500 square miles. Just over half of the population lives in the many dispersed villages and hamlets found in the 108 rural parishes, with the remaining 49% of the population living in the District's five towns of Thetford, Dereham, Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton. Thetford, which is Norfolk's fourth largest settlement, is the principal retail, service and employment centre in the south of the District. Dereham and Attleborough are the second and third largest towns in the District, which serve as administration and service centres, but are also a focus for retail and employment. Elsewhere, Swaffham and Watton are similarly sized market towns and provide a good range of services for day-to-day needs. There are also 14 larger villages in the District which have a range of services and some of these villages can sustain further modest growth. This leaves some 95 rural Parishes with very few or no services, including some Wards which are amongst the most deprived in Norfolk in terms of access to services.

**2.3** The regional centre of Norwich exerts a sphere of influence over the east of the District. To a lesser extent the sub-regional centres of King's Lynn and Bury St. Edmunds have a relationship with parts of the west and south of the District respectively. Communities in Breckland look to these 3 centres for higher order retail, transport and service provision, such as hospitals. Increasingly, the south of the District looks to growth and investment emanating from other regional centres, such as Cambridge, Stansted and the M11 Corridor. Thetford in particular displays a good balance of homes and jobs and as such is identified as a regional sub-area for significant growth in the East of England Plan.

#### Transport Links

**2.4** Given the rural nature and dispersed pattern of settlement, movement in the District is primarily by private car. Two trunk road routes run across the District. The A47 links Dereham and Swaffham with Norwich in the east and King's Lynn in the west, while the A11 links Attleborough and Thetford with Norwich to the north and Newmarket and Cambridge in the south-west. The A11 is programmed to be completely dualled during the period of this Plan and on this basis will sustain further economic growth. Despite congestion, the A47 is not programmed for improvements to its capacity during the period of this Plan. The remaining parts of Breckland are served by a network of non-trunk "A" category roads and secondary and minor roads, which are unlikely to be improved significantly during the period of this Plan. Thetford and Attleborough are connected



to the national rail network with regular services to Norwich and Cambridge and beyond to the Midlands and north of England. Public transport services in the District are principally provided by bus and focus on linking the District's market towns with shopping and employment destinations at Norwich, King's Lynn and Bury St. Edmunds. There are more infrequent services in the rural areas linking villages with their local town, principally on market days.

## Population

**2.5** Breckland has a diverse community of over 128,000 people (Mid 2006 Estimate, Norfolk County Council) which is forecast to increase to 161,000 by 2026. Generally, quality of life is good with official crime rates being low and generally decreasing. However there are pockets of health and disability related deprivation, notably in some of the Thetford wards. Additionally, the average age of Breckland residents' is increasing and this raises issues for health and service provision, as well as the economy and housing market. Traditionally, Gypsy and Travelling Communities have been a significant ethnic group in Breckland. More recently, migrant workers from the European Union have become established as a significant new community with numbers estimated between 6,000 and 15,000.

## The Economy

**2.6** The growth of the Breckland population has led to growth in the working age population. This has been driven to a significant extent by high levels of in-migration from overseas. The number of people with higher level qualifications is low, however the number of people with other qualifications is comparable with other areas of the region and the country.

**2.7** Wages are also relatively low in comparison with the national and regional averages. This reflects the lower level of qualifications of people in the District and the low level of skills required by many of the available jobs. Although there is a high number of people who live and work in the District, many higher qualified workers are travelling out of the District to access higher paid and higher skilled work. Unemployment in the District is very low and has been consistently below both the national and county figures, however there is no complacency and the Council recognises the need to improve the efficiency, competitiveness and adaptability of the local economy.



Jobs growth has been very high at 23.1% for the period from 1991 to 2004 compared with Norfolk at 11.3%. It will be a significant challenge to continue this rate over the plan period, with at least 6,000 net new jobs forecast for the District up to 2021.

**2.8** The local economy has undergone significant change in recent years with the general manufacturing sector continuing to decline as it is generally unable to compete with lower cost imports. However, there remains strength in the sector with a concentration of small and medium sized companies in specialist manufacturing predominantly in Thetford and Attleborough. There is a strong distribution sector in the District mostly based on regional and local distribution rather than a strategic market and is based mainly in Thetford





and Snetterton, capitalising on the connectivity of the A11 corridor. This sector is likely to grow significantly over the plan period. The banking, finance and insurance sector is currently under represented in the District, although there is a significant local presence in Dereham and Swaffham. This sector is one of the strongest growing in the District and will represent a significant increase in town centre based employment over the plan period. The farming and related food preparation sectors have and continue to undergo restructuring but remain strong, particularly in the rural parts of the District for the production of meat products including poultry. These sectors are however unlikely to grow over the plan period, the consequences of which the LDF will need to be sufficiently flexible to respond to. The jobs growth in the District is therefore likely to be made up of some decline in traditional industrial and manufacturing jobs that is more than made up for by growth in service and office based work and growth in sectors that do not occupy traditional B Class employment space such as the retail, health, leisure and tourism sectors.

**2.9** The commercial property market in Breckland is concentrated around Thetford benefiting from good accessibility from its position on the A11 and its rail links to Norwich and Cambridge but with lower land values than these two regional centres. Attleborough and Snetterton also benefit from good accessibility from the A11 and have active commercial property markets. Strategic improvements to the A11 will enhance accessibility from Thetford, Attleborough and Snetterton, with full dualing of the road likely within the plan period. The Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) initiative has been set up to take advantage of these improving communication links and the strong base of motorsport and related specialist engineering and manufacturing. REV seeks to promote the A11 corridor and bring forward sites in Thetford and at Snetterton for these specialist engineering and manufacturing sectors that show particular potential to provide well paid and highly skilled jobs in Breckland. Dereham benefits from its proximity to Norwich, its central location in Norfolk and good east/west accessibility from the A47. It is consequently an attractive location for local and regional firms serving the Norwich and Norfolk markets. Swaffham and Watton do not enjoy the same levels of accessibility or proximity to Norwich and therefore there is less demand for commercial space in these two towns, however there is demand mainly from small local firms wishing to expand.

## Housing

**2.10** Closely linked to the economy, Breckland's housing market has seen house prices rise much faster than incomes. At present, the average two-bedroom property cost 5¾ times the average income. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment in 2006/07 has set out a number of mechanisms for achieving a balanced housing market in Breckland. The Local Development Framework is required by the East of England Plan to deliver at least 15,200 new homes over the period to 2021, of which at least one third are required to be affordable and of which 6,000 will be delivered in Thetford as a Key Centre for Development and Change. In order to provide at least 15 years of deliverable housing land, the Local Development Framework will roll forward to 2026 and positively plan for 19,100 net new homes to 2026.

## Environment

**2.11** Breckland is a diverse District for biodiversity, landscape and heritage. It takes its name from The Brecks, which is a nationally unique landscape and habitat of sandy heath, forest and arable farmland found in the west and south of the District. This habitat contains a number of nationally important bird species such as Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar and large swathes of the Brecks are protected by National, European and International designations. Breckland contains 13% of all SSSIs found in the East of England. Elsewhere the character of Breckland is clay farmland, punctuated with woodland, occasional river valleys and dispersed settlement. The historic character of Breckland's settlements is recognised by 50 separate Conservation Areas and over 1,500 Listed Buildings.

**2.12** Breckland also has an interesting geodiversity. Breckland is an area of lowland glacial landscape overlying chalk bedrock. Its special landforms include pingos, patterned ground and fluctuating meres. Many of these features are recognised as being of regional and national importance.

**2.13** Breckland is one of the driest areas of the country and availability of water resources is an issue with the increasing pressure for development. Climate change has been identified as the most significant challenge that we currently face. The release of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, is the main contributing factor and human activity is a direct cause. We can expect warmer wetter winters and drier hotter summers; reduced water resources and more extreme weather events.

**2.14** Breckland's location means that it is not vulnerable to sea level changes. However, many parts of Breckland have a high clay content and consequently inadequate drainage, which can lead to problems of flash flooding.

**2.15** Road traffic is a significant source of carbon dioxide. There is a high level of commuting by car, and congestion at peak times in the market towns. Breckland has one of the highest rates of commuting to work by car in Norfolk.







## 2.2 Issues and Challenges

**2.16** The Spatial Portrait, together with its underpinning baseline data and emerging evidence base documents, have enabled issues to be identified that will need to be addressed by the Local Development Framework in order to ensure that the development needs of the District are met in the most sustainable and successful manner. These issues are summarised below.

### Housing, Employment and Regeneration

**2.17** A key issue and challenge within Breckland is to find sufficient land and sustainable opportunities to ensure the delivery of the level of jobs and housing that is required by the East of England Plan and maintain a 15 year land supply required by Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3). Breckland needs 12,000 net new homes to be provided, of which at least a third will be affordable housing, within the plan period up to 2026. These homes will need to have first-class access to services, local facilities and open space in order to create and maintain inclusive communities.

**2.18** Breckland is also expected to provide at least 6,000 new jobs, principally in the west of the District focusing on Thetford and the A11 corridor linking in with Regional Economic Strategy Objectives.

**2.19** Higher order settlements such as Norwich, affect the self-containment of Thetford and the other market towns within the District. In addition to housing and employment provision, the retail offer, services and amenities within these settlements need to be improved to tackle leakage from the localities to other centres and ensure adequate facilities for all. Promoting growth in the towns will also help to tackle issues of accessibility.

**2.20** These challenges must be met against the background of a limited supply of brownfield land for development, constraints on existing infrastructure, an over-reliance on manufacturing and food-processing, the decline in the farming industry and a low skill base in the local job market. It is a necessity to keep detrimental impacts upon the natural and built environment to a minimum.

**2.21** Both of the growth targets within the East of England Plan need to be met over the period 2001-2021 and this means that the required growth will not only be significant but will also need to be delivered over a short time period.

### Environment

**2.22** Breckland is a District rich in biodiversity with a distinctive landscape and varied heritage. The District contains a number of special areas of protection which are recognised to be of European importance as they are home to the Nightjar, Woodlark and Stone Curlew. It contains 13% of the SSSIs within the East of England, as well as 2 Special Protection Areas, 4 Special Areas of Conservation, 3 National Nature Reserves and one RAMSAR site. These particular features create a unique landscape that contributes to making Breckland an individual and attractive place.

**2.23** Alongside these important, distinct and attractive characteristics of the natural environment is the heritage found in the built environment. The settlements within Breckland are diverse in both size and type and embrace a wide range of building forms, architectural styles and building materials. District wide there are over 1,500 Listed Buildings as well as numerous buildings within the 50 Conservation Areas that cover 45 different Parishes. The rich and diverse built heritage of the District contributes to its distinctive and individual characteristics.

**2.24** Important water resource aquifers lie close to the surface in Breckland meaning that development close to or above these aquifers could lead to ground water contamination with resultant effects in terms of water supply.

**2.25** The existing housing stock and industrial premises are reliant on traditional forms of power, this adds to the national issues of carbon production and climate change. New and existing development should become more reliant on renewable forms of energy to minimise its environmental impact and address national climate change targets.

**2.26** As a consequence of its characteristics, Breckland as a whole, and in particular the specific environmental sites and natural resources that are nationally and internationally important, will need to be adequately protected from the impacts of development. In addition, new development will have to be of a sufficiently high quality of design to maintain and enhance the existing natural and built environments, whilst also minimising wider environmental impact by embracing environmentally sustainable construction.

### **Natural Resources**

**2.27** As a large rural District in an area of significant growth the natural resources of Breckland will be subject to pressure from a variety of sources including new development, climate change and diversification in how land in an agricultural District is used and managed. A key challenge is to balance the competing uses for land as a natural resource against the ability of the District to meet its development needs. This needs to be done in a way which reflects the requirement for mineral extraction and productive agricultural land and the need to sustainably locate new development.

**2.28** As one of the driest Districts in England, a key issue is availability of water resources to meet the needs of residents, businesses and agriculture. Rainfall in the District is low and watercourses tend to be small, flowing from headwaters that follow a north-south axis along the middle of the District. Water is principally sourced from the chalk aquifer beneath Breckland and changes in climate are likely to affect the natural capacity to re-charge this important source. The challenge is to ensure that there is a strategic approach to water abstraction, supply and demand. The reliance on the aquifer requires an approach that development does not contaminate this vulnerable resource.

### **Accessibility**

**2.29** There are two issues defining accessibility in Breckland. The first issue is around movement within and beyond the District. Principal road links are limited to the east-west corridors of the A47 and A11 which provide efficient links to regional centres such as Norwich and Cambridge. Public transport is limited to rail in Thetford and Attleborough and varying levels of bus services for the remainder of the District. The inconsistencies in public transport provision means that car use dominates and this is resulting in unsustainable patterns of travel together with issues of social exclusion for those households without access to a car.

**2.30** The second issue is accessibility to services and facilities, as 51% of the population lives in the rural areas where there has been a decline in service provision linked to increasing mobility for car owners and a rationalisation of service and retail provision. Significant areas of the District are now without key service provision allied with very limited public transport provision resulting in three rural areas within Breckland being identified as Accessibility Action Areas by Norfolk County Council. The challenge in Breckland is to ensure that further development does not exacerbate rural isolation and promotes inclusive communities by enhancing access to local services and facilities. There is also a challenge around the role and position of market towns, ensuring that they remain viable services and retail centres for their rural hinterlands.



## 2.3 Spatial Vision

**2.31** The Spatial Vision for Breckland sets out how the Council envisages Breckland to be in the future. It is grounded in the issues and challenges that have been identified in the assessment of the District and articulates the overarching development strategy, priorities and principles that will deliver the sustainable development needs of the District.

### Spatial Vision

By 2026, Breckland's settlements and its wider rural area will have developed as a dynamic, prosperous and self-sustaining community through the delivery of at least 19,100 net new homes and significant employment growth, supported by necessary facilities, services and infrastructure. The new housing will have been integrated with new and existing facilities and will be comprised of an appropriate tenure, type and mix to address issues of affordability and social inclusion. In response to the challenges of delivering sustainable development in a predominantly rural area, the majority of development will have been directed to key settlements, providing services and facilities to their hinterlands. This development in the key settlements will have been supported by appropriate development in villages and in rural areas where it addresses local need or is a sustainable response to an advantage offered by a location. The jobs, housing and other services and facilities will be located and of a scale and balance to deliver self-contained settlements reducing the need to travel and maximise opportunities for delivery of sustainable transport provision.

Along the A11 corridor significant employment growth will have been achieved in advanced engineering, motor sport, research and development and logistics, building on the emerging employment base and taking advantage of the excellent highway network and linkages to other centres of business. In the rest of Breckland, employment will meet local needs with the important cultural, heritage, landscape and natural assets forming the basis for tourism, leisure and recreation.

Building on the town's function as the main service centre in the south of Breckland and its location on the A11 corridor and railway, Thetford will continue to develop as a key strategic centre and gateway to the Brecks. Significant levels of sustainable housing and jobs will have been delivered, acting as a driver for and supported by a regenerated town centre and regeneration elsewhere in the town.

Elsewhere on the A11 corridor and railway, Attleborough will develop as a location for substantial housing and employment growth. There will be sustainable connections to employment locations at Snetterton and the greater Norwich area. The environment and function of the town will have been enhanced by further retail provision and a new link road from the A11 to the B1077.

Balanced growth of housing, employment, services and facilities will have been delivered in the market towns of Dereham, Swaffham and Watton. The particular attributes of the market towns will define the scale and direction of growth, but the aim for all will be, as a minimum, to reinforce their position within the settlement hierarchy. Where opportunities are identified in the Towns, growth plans will be put in place to ensure their development and enhancement as centres for living and working and to improve the services and facilities they offer. This enhancement will improve their sustainability as self-contained settlements and provide wider benefits to their hinterland.

The natural, built and historic environment of the District will be comprehensively protected and enhanced, as appropriate, to ensure that their inherent environmental and visual qualities are retained. In particular the special landscape quality of the Brecks, internationally important habitats and species and areas of scientific interest and wildlife benefits will be protected from harm. All development will be within the environmental limits placed on Breckland, particularly with respect to the District being located in the



driest region of the country and the extensive areas that are designated as European Habitats. The quality of the built environment, building on the District's heritage and archaeological values, will be protected with high quality design being a key principle of all development.

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## 2.4 Spatial Objectives

**2.32** The issues, problems and challenges which were derived from the evidence base, have informed the development of the Spatial Vision in association with the Spatial Portrait. The topic areas identified in the issues, problems and challenges along with the Spatial Vision informed the creation of Higher Strategic Themes. The purpose of these themes is to encapsulate the key issues, problems and challenges that the Council needs to be address through its LDF. These Higher Strategic Themes have in turn enabled individual strategic objectives to be derived that represent the first articulation of the Council’s view on how the issues, problems and challenges will be addressed through the LDF.

**Table 2.1**

Issue/ Problem/ Challenge	Higher Strategic Theme	Individual Strategic Objectives
Housing, Employment and Regeneration	To deliver significant housing and employment growth at key settlements providing services and facilities to their hinterlands.	<b>SO1:</b> To deliver a minimum 15,200 net new homes with 6,000 net in Thefford between 2001 – 2021 in accordance with the RSS and in addition a minimum of 3,900 further homes by 2026 to ensure that all residents have access to a decent home.
		<b>SO2:</b> To secure sufficient affordable housing for those in need.
		<b>SO3:</b> To ensure high and stable levels of employment through restructuring the local economy providing a minimum of 6,000 net new jobs District wide in the period 2001-2021 in accordance with the RSS, so everyone can share in the prosperity of the District.
		<b>SO4:</b> To develop and retain a flexible and highly skilled workforce through training.
		<b>SO5:</b> To address infrastructure and green infrastructure deficits, and infrastructure capacity issues.
		<b>SO6:</b> To ensure that infrastructure and green infrastructure delivery keeps pace with the levels of growth.
		<b>SO7:</b> To strengthen Breckland’s towns as places for shopping, work, services and leisure. Balancing housing, employment and service growth to promote self-containment.
Environment	To comprehensively protect and enhance, as appropriate, the natural, built and historic environment of the District.	<b>SO8:</b> To protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape of Breckland.
		<b>SO9:</b> To protect and enhance the built and historic environment of Breckland and require new development to meet high quality design standards.
		<b>SO10:</b> To require high quality design that meets high environmental standards.
		<b>SO11:</b> To enhance open space provision throughout the District.

Issue/ Problem/ Challenge	Higher Strategic Theme	Individual Strategic Objectives
		<p><b>SO12:</b> To promote renewable energy to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p><b>SO13:</b> To minimise the risk of flooding to existing and new developments.</p>
Natural Resources	To respect the environmental limits of the District, in particular water resources.	<p><b>SO14:</b> To maximise the opportunity to redevelop sustainable previously developed land.</p> <p><b>SO15:</b> To prevent groundwater contamination and a deterioration in air, water and soil quality.</p> <p><b>SO16:</b> To require the efficient use of water resources.</p> <p><b>SO17:</b> To minimise the amount of waste produced and promote sustainable waste management.</p>
Accessibility	To enhance accessibility to services to reduce need to travel and inequalities in access.	<p><b>SO18:</b> To provide for a significant modal shift from a reliance on the private car, in particular single person car use, to sustainable forms of transport.</p> <p><b>SO19:</b> To ensure good accessibility for all to jobs, facilities and services in Breckland.</p> <p><b>SO20:</b> To reduce rural isolation through the protection and provision of key services and facilities in the rural areas.</p> <p><b>SO21:</b> To reduce urban isolation and social exclusion through the promotion of appropriate tenure mixes in new developments and improved accessibility to key services and facilities.</p>



## 2.5 Spatial Strategy

**2.33** The Spatial Strategy sets out in greater detail how the Council plans to deal with the key issues identified and how the Council sees the different parts of the District developing in response to these issues. The Spatial Strategy identifies the different types of place within the District and how they will develop. It shows how and where the growth in housing, employment and retailing will be accommodated and sets out priorities for areas that will be protected from development pressures. It explains how the different places of the District will be shaped over the period to 2026.

### Policy SS 1

#### Spatial Strategy

Breckland comprises seven types of place:

- The Key Centre for Development and Change; Thetford
- The Market Town for Substantial Growth; Attleborough
- The three market towns; Dereham, Swaffham and Watton
- The Local Service Centre Villages
- The Snetterton Heath Employment Area
- The rural settlements; and,
- The countryside

**Thetford** will be the focus for growth in Breckland. The Spatial Portrait identifies Thetford as the principal retail, service and employment centre in the south of the District. It displays a good balance of homes and jobs with a well developed market for industrial and distribution property; it has connections to the national rail network and is located on the A11 equidistant from Norwich and Cambridge. It offers unique opportunities to link to and foster the emerging cluster of motor sport and auto-engineering industries focused on the A11 corridor and emanating from Cambridge, Stansted and the M11 corridor. Furthermore, this accords with the East of England Plan.

It will provide 6000 homes over the period between 2001 and 2021 and between 1,500 and 2000 new homes between 2021 and 2026. In addition, up to 5,000 net new jobs to the end of the plan period will have been delivered. This jobs growth will include the allocation of a new business park. The centre of the town will be the subject of major regeneration and with expanded retail, leisure, cultural and educational facilities will become a civic hub bringing together existing and new communities. Total food and non-food retailing floorspace will expand by approximately 9,400m<sup>2</sup> over the plan period in connection with this town centre regeneration.

**Attleborough** will be a major focus for employment and residential growth. The Sustainability Appraisal has identified Attleborough as having potential for substantial growth, harnessing economic expansion along the A11 corridor between Cambridge, Thetford and Norwich and providing the necessary balance

of housing to support the enhancement of the Snetterton Heath employment site. It has had the most active commercial market outside Thetford and Dereham in recent years and it also has access to main line rail connections. It has a range of services commensurate with its position as a lower order centre and is able to serve the day to day needs of local residents. There is spare capacity at the local high school and potential for further expansion.

It will provide in the region of 4,500 new homes over the plan period. It will also provide between 1,500 and 2,000 net new jobs up to 2021. The population increase will provide the capacity to sustain higher-level services and improve the order of the centre. These services will be facilitated through the expansion of the town centre, which will include the development of approximately 4,800m<sup>2</sup> of food and non-food retailing.

**Dereham** will experience significant employment growth coupled with focused housing growth to enhance its position as the administration centre of Mid-Norfolk and exploit its existing employment base and position on the A47 Trunk road. Dereham is the administration and service centre for the north of the District and is a focus for retail and employment. It has a good range of retail and service uses including convenience and comparison shopping, services, entertainments and community facilities. Despite its position in the settlement hierarchy and its service offer, Dereham has both education and utility capacity constraints that limit its potential for growth.

Dereham will provide up to 2,000 new houses over the plan period. It will provide between 900 and 1,800 new jobs over the remainder of the plan period. The town centre will grow and the service offer will be improved to enhance the settlement's potential for self-containment. In acknowledgement of this aim, food and non-food floor retail floorspace will expand by approximately 11,000m<sup>2</sup> over the plan period.

**Swaffham** and **Watton** are mid-sized market towns that provide a good range of services for their residents' day-to-day needs but have limited capacity for expansion in their centre's due to the constraints of their heritage buildings and Conservation Areas. Both suffer from congestion in their centre, with traffic pollution a problem for pedestrians in Swaffham. Existing residential commitments in Carbrooke, adjoining Watton, means that limited school capacity remains in Watton and this will constrain the potential for significant further expansion. The evidence base indicates that both settlements have limited potential for economic growth and mainly support small local businesses. However, Swaffham's better location provides it with slightly better prospects than Watton and makes it suitable for greater expansion, the Employment Land review identifies that land around the Ecotech Centre in Swaffham should be allocated for development.

Swaffham will provide some 1,000 houses over the plan period; Watton will deliver up to 900 houses over the same period. In terms of jobs growth approximately 300 to 650 jobs will be generated in Swaffham over the plan period, and approximately 250 in Watton. Food and non-food retailing floorspace will be expanded in Watton by approximately 300m<sup>2</sup> and by 850m<sup>2</sup> in Swaffham.

**14 Service Centre villages** have been identified within the District based on detailed evidence contained in a Local Service Centre Background Paper; these are Banham, Great Ellingham, Harling, Litcham, Mattishall, Mundford, Narborough, Necton, North Elmham, Old Buckenham, Saham Toney, Shipdham, Swanton Morley and Weeting. Service Centre Villages are those that contain adequate services and facilities to meet the day-to-day requirement of their existing residents. These services and facilities include some or all of; a convenience shop, public transport, health care, primary school and access to employment opportunities. The strategy for all Local Service Centre villages will be primarily around service protection and enhancement and development to meet local needs.





Harling, Narborough, Shipdham and Swanton Morley will see a positive housing allocation for the remainder of the plan period. They all have a high level of service provision and can sustainably accommodate a modest level of growth. Land will be allocated for 100 homes in Shipdham and 50 homes will be allocated in Harling, Narborough and Swanton Morley. In addition to this strategic allocation, at least 70 homes from existing commitments will be built between these villages.

Over the remainder of the plan period, 140 homes will be built in the village of Necton. These homes will be developed entirely from existing commitments.

Banham, Great Ellingham, Litcham, Mattishall, Mundford, Necton, North Elmham, Old Buckenham, Saham Toney and Weeting will not see a positive housing allocation for the remainder of the plan period, but will see between them at least 100 homes developed from existing commitments.

**Snetterton Heath Employment Area** is located on the A11 between Thetford and Attleborough. It has excellent road and rail access and links to the emerging motorsport and performance engineering sectors growing up along the A11. The site contains an existing, un-restricted, testing circuit and is adjacent to un-constrained land that is located away from residential areas. The area has been identified in the Employment Land Review as having potential for expansion and the Review recommends that an additional 20ha of land be allocated for motor sport and advanced engineering uses. Despite its advantageous position Snetterton Heath Employment Area has electricity capacity constraints, but these can be realistically overcome to release the potential of the area.

Snetterton will provide between 500 and 1,500 jobs up to 2021. The electricity capacity constraints at Snetterton will be resolved by upgrading the existing network or providing an on-site power generation source.

**The rural settlements:** The District of Breckland contains a number of small rural villages that have few, or in some cases no, local services. These settlements are not capable of sustaining consequential growth as many are completely reliant on higher order settlements for services and facilities. The Sustainability Appraisal has identified that these settlements do not represent a sustainable option for significant expansion.

The rural settlements will provide nominal housing and employment growth during the plan period where local capacity allows. Where key local services and facilities do exist within the rural settlements these will be protected.

**The Countryside:** In addition to the rural settlements, Breckland contains large areas of predominantly un-developed agricultural land. Sustainability Appraisal indicates that these areas do not represent a sustainable option for development.

Minimal development predominantly comprising the diversification of rural enterprises will be accommodated in the countryside. Some other employment uses may be accommodated in the countryside where a rural location is necessary for the functioning of the business or it utilises a particular attribute and is a sustainable solution to an identified need.

In addition to the areas of generic countryside, the District also contains several distinctive areas of special biodiversity, geological and landscape interest. These comprise:

- The areas of the Brecks which are the habitat of the Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar that have a European designation as Special Areas of Protection (SPA), as well as other areas of suitable habitat for the qualifying features outside of the protected area,

- Any of the 13% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the East of England that are found in the District,
- The Norfolk Valley Fens, Breckland, River Wensum and Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens Special Areas of Conservation (SACs),
- The Ramsar Site at Redgrave and South Lopham Fen,
- Redgrave and Lopham Fen, Weeting Heath and Brettenham Heath National Nature Reserve, and Litcham Common, Great Eastern Pingo Trail and Thompson and Barnham Cross Common Local Nature Reserve; also,
- Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments,
- Any areas identified as priority habitats or target areas for habitat creation in the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan.

These areas of special biodiversity, geological and landscape interest will be comprehensively protected from the effects of new development. In particular, the Core Strategy will not allocate or promote any development within a 1,500m zone from the boundary of the areas of Breckland SPA with Stone Curlew. Additionally, the Core Strategy will apply a 1,500m zone from that habitat which supports the Breckland SPA Stone Curlew population. In this second zone development will only be considered if the proposal is supported by a project level Habitats Regulation Assessment and suitable mitigation can be provided. These zones are shown on the key diagram.

**2.34** The Spatial Strategy for the District has been developed with regard to the key issues and challenges for the district as set out within Section 2.2 Issues and Challenges, the evidence base developed through the LDF process and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2005.

**2.35** The key issue for the District is accommodating the development needs within environmental and landscape limitations, whilst promoting more sustainable patterns of development through enabling improved accessibility to key services and facilities, public transport nodes and employment opportunities.

**2.36** Examination of the baseline evidence has identified that the large majority of key services and facilities, employment opportunities and public transport facilities are centred on the market towns and larger villages of the District. When this evidence is considered against the key issues for the District it is clear that if more sustainable patterns of living are to be promoted then the large majority of development in the District must be focused on the market towns and larger villages.

**2.37** Thetford is a nationally recognised Growth Point. The town is well located being equidistant between Norwich and Cambridge on the A11, with direct rail links to both. It already provides an important service function to its hinterland and by making the most of existing transport connections, environmental assets and strengthening links to the automotive/motor sport industry it has the potential to grow further. Any growth can be coupled with securing the long term management of important environmental assets and supporting social and economic regeneration objectives in the town. For these reasons Thetford has been acknowledged as the Key Centre for Development and Change. In acknowledgement of the significant environmental



constraints that surround Thetford comprising Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), strategic urban extensions will be directed to the north of the town.

**2.38** Of the other four market towns it is clear from the examination of the evidence base that Dereham is currently the most advanced, supporting the most active industrial and distribution market in Breckland outside of Thetford, and having the most fully developed retail offer. However, it is constrained by its road connections via the A47 to the east and west, Norwich and King's Lynn respectively, and as a consequence south via the A11. Significant sections of the A47 remain single carriageway with no imminent plans for improvement. There is no mainline rail connection carrying a regular service and bus connections, although available, are constrained by the established issues on the A47. High school capacity is nearing exhaustion and both of Dereham's schools are landlocked offering no clear potential for significant expansion. The waste water treatment works is already showing signs of strain and although there is apparent capacity in the receiving water course, significant development will carry with it the need for upgrading. For these reasons Dereham's growth has been tailored to a level which will enable its advancement without risking overloading the delicate balance of its infrastructure constraints.

**2.39** Beyond Dereham, Attleborough shows the greatest potential for advancement and growth. There is a relatively active industrial and distribution market despite Thetford's current precedential position. Nevertheless Attleborough's position on the A11 makes it a prominent and accessible location for economic growth, which will further benefit from the planned improvements to the A11. Attleborough also benefits from being located close to Snetterton, which is a key employment centre in the District also located on the A11. Attleborough has good public transport links with mainline rail connections to the major centres of Norwich and Cambridge and to a lesser extent bus connections to Norwich and Thetford. There is utilities capacity in Attleborough, with an availability of electricity, gas and water supply. There are constraints on the disposal of waste water without infrastructure improvements above a level of 1,300 houses, although this constraint is resolvable. High school places are limited but the high school is not landlocked and there is the potential for significant expansion into adjacent land in order to accommodate additional demand. There are also potential options to provide a wider strategic solution to high school provision in combination with neighbouring institutions. There are considerable issues with traffic congestion through the town centre and with development breaching the railway line, this offers a planning challenge. However these constraints can be resolved.

**2.40** In order to build on its growth potential and seek solutions to existing constraints Attleborough has been chosen to accommodate significant growth over the plan period. This growth will be directed to the south of the A11 in order to direct development away from areas at risk of flooding and prevent the landscape impact associated with breaching the hard edge of the settlement created by the A11 to the north. A significant proportion of this development will also be directed to the south of the existing railway line. This direction will enable strategic level solutions to be implemented to existing problems of congestion in the town centre and will prevent further excessive elongation of the settlement away from the town centre which may further exacerbate existing congestion.

**2.41** Swaffham and Watton do not have the developed base of Dereham nor the potential for growth of Attleborough. Both have limited commercial markets for industrial and distribution space, which principally support small local businesses looking to own and occupy their own space. Although Swaffham's employment market is slightly more developed than Watton due to the publicly supported success of the Ecotech centre. Both also have small town centres which principally serve the day-to-day needs for their residents, although again, Swaffham's retail offer is more fully developed than that of Watton. Neither Swaffham or Watton benefit from mainline rail connections to higher order centres and although bus connections are available they are constrained by constraints of the surrounding road network. In broad terms there are no significant utilities constraints in either Swaffham or Watton. However, waste water disposal in Swaffham is potentially problematic. Improvements to the the ability to discharge are required and there are significant trunk sewer constraints to the south and west of the town. Primary or Secondary school infrastructure is not likely to be a significant



constraint. Due to their limited commercial markets, locally focused retail offers and limited public transport opportunities, growth in Swaffham and Watton, like in Dereham, has been tailored to allow for advancement whilst not compromising the wider objectives to promote more sustainable ways of living.

**2.42** Away from the market towns the Council has identified larger villages which fulfil an important service function to their own residents and those of the immediate hinterland. The objective of the council is to protect and enhance the role of these villages. The decision making criteria for the selection of these villages was related to the amount of key facilities that these villages possessed. These key facilities were defined as a primary school, healthcare facility, local employment opportunities, available public transport to an appropriate standard and a convenience store for the supply of day-to-day goods.

**2.43** Fourteen villages have been designated "Local Service Centre villages" in Breckland based upon the preceding criteria. These villages are Banham, Great Ellingham, Harling, Litcham, Mattishall, Mundford, Narborough, Necton, North Elmham, Old Buckenham, Saham Toney, Shipdham, Swanton Morley and Weeting. The role and function of these villages will be protected and enhanced through the protection of existing facilities, the promotion of new facilities in the villages and, where appropriate, allocations for residential growth.

**2.44** There are locations in the District which offer a particular opportunity to harness economic growth. One of these locations is Snetterton Heath. Forming part of the Rural Enterprise Valley Project vision for the promotion of advanced engineering and motor sport related economic growth in the District, Snetterton is a key employment location within the A11 corridor. Engineering is an over-represented employment sector in Breckland, with about 18% of the engineering jobs in Norfolk located in the District. From 1998-2002 Breckland experienced a 28% growth in engineering sectors. Major development is in the pipeline within Snetterton connected with the racing circuit. The A11 is considered to be primed for cluster development linking into the regionally identified motorsport cluster linking Hethel to Cranfield, and supporting the adjacent growth locations of Thetford and Attleborough. In recognition of this opportunity the employment use of Snetterton Heath will be protected and will be enhanced.

**2.45** Breckland is a rural area and many of its villages and residents will fall outside of the classifications of place that are specifically set out in the development hierarchy. The strategy for these areas is however no less important. Many of these villages support very few, if any, services and facilities. This means that if more sustainable patterns of living are to be achieved, and the possibility of rural isolation reduced, then these villages cannot support significant growth. However, although significant growth is not planned in these areas there will nevertheless be opportunities for progression and enhancement. A suite of mechanisms are set out to enable this progression and enhancement. These mechanisms include development within defined settlement boundaries, the provision of affordable housing, the re-use of rural buildings, the provision of dwellings related to rural enterprises, the replacement of existing dwellings, the protection of services and the diversification of existing rural enterprises. These measures should ensure the sustainable progression of the smaller villages of the District.

**2.46** The south and west of Breckland contains a considerable number of internationally protected habitats including the Breckland Special Protection Area which consists of farmland areas protected for the Stone Curlew and forest areas protected for the Nightjar and Woodlark. At present there are only 150-160 breeding pairs of Stone Curlew in the UK and they only nest in two locations including the Brecks. Primary research was undertaken in 2008 to assess the extent to which the Stone Curlew avoids built development, including roads, when nesting in the Breckland area. This research is unique to the Brecks due to the other nesting location in the UK being Salisbury Plain.



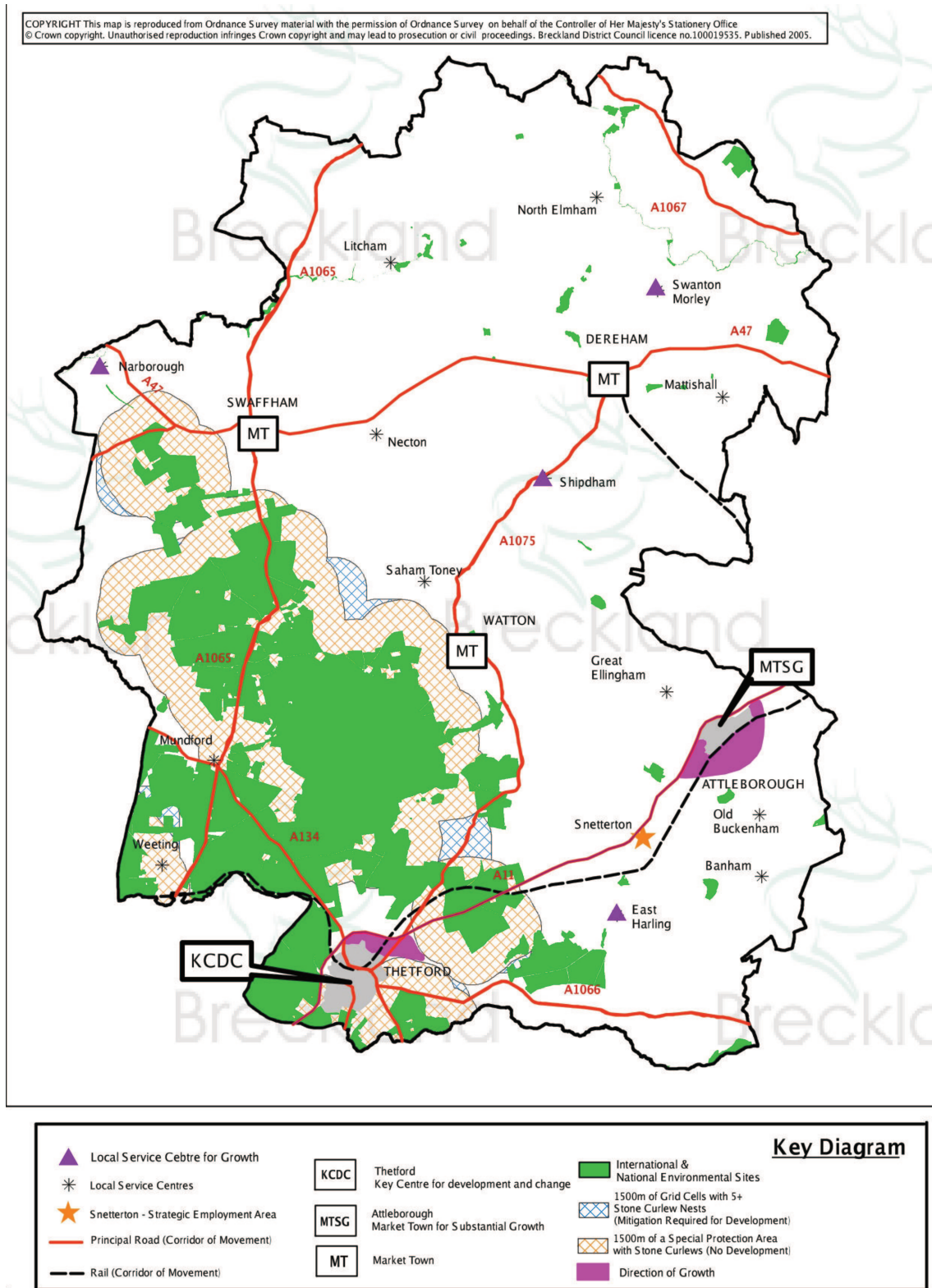


## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

**2.47** The outcome of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is that the impact of development on Stone Curlews can only be avoided at a distance of 1,500m from habitats which support the Stone Curlew. The output of the HRA concludes that there are in effect two 1,500m buffers. The first 1,500m zone will extend from the boundary of the Special Protection Area which supports Stone Curlew and within this buffer there will be no allocations for development in the Core Strategy.

**2.48** A second 1,500m zone will extend from supporting Stone Curlew habitat which is defined as kilometre grid squares which have supported 5 or more nesting attempts by Stone Curlew over the period 1995-2006. Within this second zone development will be considered provided it is supported by project level HRA and alternative habitat will be provided in mitigation. Furthermore, any development proposal within the second 1,500m buffer which is also within 400m of Breckland Forest SPA must also be able to demonstrate, through project level HRA that the Woodlark and Nightjar features of the SPA will also not be adversely affected by the proposal.

## 2.6 Key Diagram





### 3 Core Strategy Policies

**3.1** The Spatial Strategy, underpinned by the Spatial Vision, sets out how the Council plans to deliver the development needs of the District over the plan period, whilst dealing with the key issues that were identified from the evidence base. It also began to illustrate how these issues would be tackled in the pursuit of delivering the Spatial Objectives.

**3.2** The following Core Policies set out the individual issues that will need to be adhered to in order to deliver the Spatial Strategy and consequently realise the Spatial Vision. The Core Policies are divided into four sub-sections as set out in the Spatial Objectives, which are in turn related to the Issues and Challenges that have been defined.

#### 3.1 Housing, Employment and Regeneration

**3.3** This section deals with the higher strategic theme of delivering significant housing and employment growth at key settlements providing services and facilities to their hinterlands. The policies deal with the scale and distribution of growth in the housing and employment sectors, the timely provision of key infrastructure and the development of Breckland's Town Centres.

##### 3.1.1 Housing

#### Policy CP 1

##### Housing

Provision is made for the development of at least 19,100 homes and associated infrastructure in the District within the period 2001-2026.

The table below sets out how this strategic requirement will be met over the plan period.

Town/Settlement	Already Built (April 2001 to 31st March 2009)	Currently Permitted (as of 1st April 2009)	New Allocations	Total
Attleborough	490	133	4,000	4,623
Dereham	1,197	213	600	2,010
Swaffham	252	520*	250	1,022
Thetford	1,104	273	6,500	7,877
Watton	411	284	300	995
Harling	66	18	50	134
Narborough	36	0	50	86
Shipdham	53	64	100	217
Swanton Morley	21	26	50	97
All other Parishes	1,605	1,111	0	2,716
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,235</b>	<b>2,642</b>	<b>11,900</b>	<b>19,777</b>

The new greenfield allocation in Thetford will consist of a strategic urban extension to the north-east of the town within the boundary of the A11.

Housing allocations in Attleborough will consist of urban extensions to the south of the A11. The majority of the housing allocation in Attleborough will be to the south of the railway, with the remainder to the north of the railway.

Additionally as part of the strategic housing needs of the District the provision of 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches as detailed in Policy CP2 will contribute to the 19,100 housing units needed in Breckland to 2026.

### **Phased Delivery**

The release of land for housing will be managed in order to deliver the above levels of development over the period to 2026 in line with housing trajectories. In developing these trajectories full regard has been given to the strategic infrastructure requirements necessary to support housing delivery, including infrastructure necessary to mitigate effects on European Habitats. Priority will be given to the re-use of previously developed land in sustainable locations in order to achieve the District target of 25% of new housing on previously-developed land. The adequacy of housing land supply will be assessed through the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report. Depending on the results of monitoring it may be necessary to adjust the pace of housing delivery by bringing forward, or holding back, new development. In the case of Local Service Centres, allocations will be made for sites of no less than 10 dwellings to ensure that the release of land delivers wider sustainability objectives.

### **Housing Need**

Development should provide a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of the District's communities, as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The precise detail of housing mix will be set out for larger sites in Area Action Plans and the Site Specific Policies and Proposals Development Plan Document.

\*The figure for Swaffham includes one large site for 414 dwellings which was permitted after 1st April 2008 and is awaiting a section 106 agreement. If this site was not to come forward the policy will allow for the addition of 414 dwellings to the positive allocation for Swaffham.

### **Reasoned Justification**

**3.4** Breckland has one of the highest District housing figures in the East of England as set out in the East of England Plan (RSS). The scale of new housing to meet RSS requirements in Breckland equates to an average of 780 new homes each year from 2001 to 2021. This level of provision results in a need to deliver at least 15,200 by 2021. The RSS provides further specificity at Policy TH1 by directing that 6,000 net new homes are delivered in Thetford as a Key Centre for Development and Change.

**3.5** A requirement in PPS3 is to maintain a demonstrable 15 year housing land supply. Therefore the Spatial Strategy and Policy CP1 will provide for the strategic delivery of housing to 2026. Regional policy supports this approach and advises that annual averages for house building to 2021 are extrapolated forward. In the Breckland context this means rolling forward the 780 annual average as outlined in the East of England Plan (2006-2021) to provide for at least a further 3,900 new homes to 2026. The end date of 2026 will allow for a 15 year land supply upon adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010 and will mean that the overall District housing figure for the period 2001-26 is at least 19,100 new homes.





**3.6** Delivery on this scale will contribute towards a balanced housing market in Breckland aimed at meeting the needs of existing communities and the net in-migration that is forecast for the East of England, including Breckland. The constituent parts of the policy aim to positively and pro-actively provide for the strategic delivery of housing. The policy makes no allowance for windfall sites although in addition to the strategic provision identified in the Policy CP1 it is also estimated that some 3,000 housing units will be developed on rural (Local Service Centre and other villages) windfall sites over the LDF period. It is important to note that this allowance is regarded as an addition above and beyond the 19,100 homes strategically planned for in the policy.

**3.7** It is likely that further housing developments will be permitted between the adoption of the plan and the adoption of subsequent DPDs. In the Local Service Centre villages, any housing development of 5 dwellings and above that is permitted as an exception to the plan (i.e. the implications of Paragraph 71 of PPS3 relating to 5 year supply of housing) on land outside of defined settlement boundaries will be subtracted from the new allocation commitment identified in the policy. New planning permissions within the existing settlement boundaries of the Local Service Centre villages will be treated as windfall and will not contribute to the allocation figure in the policy. In the market towns any housing development of 10 dwellings and above that is permitted after the adoption of this plan will contribute to the planned allocations outlined in the policy. The implications of this paragraph will be monitored and reported through the Annual Monitoring Report.

**3.8** The distribution of new housing growth aims to meet the requirements of Spatial Strategy, which is a reflection of the primary objective to secure a sustainable pattern of development. Accordingly, the emphasis will be upon maximising the contribution of previously developed land to the District's housing need and secondly, on securing the comprehensive development of sustainable urban extensions at Thetford and Attleborough. At Thetford mechanisms will be set out in an Area Action Plan for monitoring and managing the release of land to 2021 to meet RSS requirements, including phasing and any sequential release of land. The Area Action Plan will also address the circumstances under which reserve land to 2026 would be released at Thetford. The broad location for the sustainable extension at Thetford will be land to the north-east of the town, within the boundary of the A11. Beyond 2021, new housing growth in Thetford will take place on identified sites within the town that may include deliverable brownfield land. The precise land areas and mix of uses will be set out in the Thetford Area Action Plan utilising evidence base work undertaken in respect of the town's Growth Point Status. The town is also constrained to the east, and north of the A11 due to protected European habitats and species. The Council will require demonstration, through subsequent Habitats Regulations Assessments, that proposed development to the north-east of Thetford will not result in harm to European habitats or species.

**3.9** For Attleborough, the policy plans for the strategic release of a sustainable greenfield urban extension to the south of the A11 for in the region of 4,000 new homes by 2026. The A11 acts as a physical boundary to the town. Land to north of the A11 has a higher environmental/landscape sensitivity, including flood risk. Road access to the town centre and employment areas is limited from the land to the north of the A11. The broad area includes land to the north and south of the railway. The majority of development will occur to the south of the railway in order to deliver a new road crossing over the railway to ease congestion in the town centre. The development will also allow for significant capacity enlargements to the sewage treatment infrastructure. Mechanisms for the release of land together with the identification of the precise land areas and mix of uses will be set out in the Attleborough and Snetterton Heath Area Action Plan.

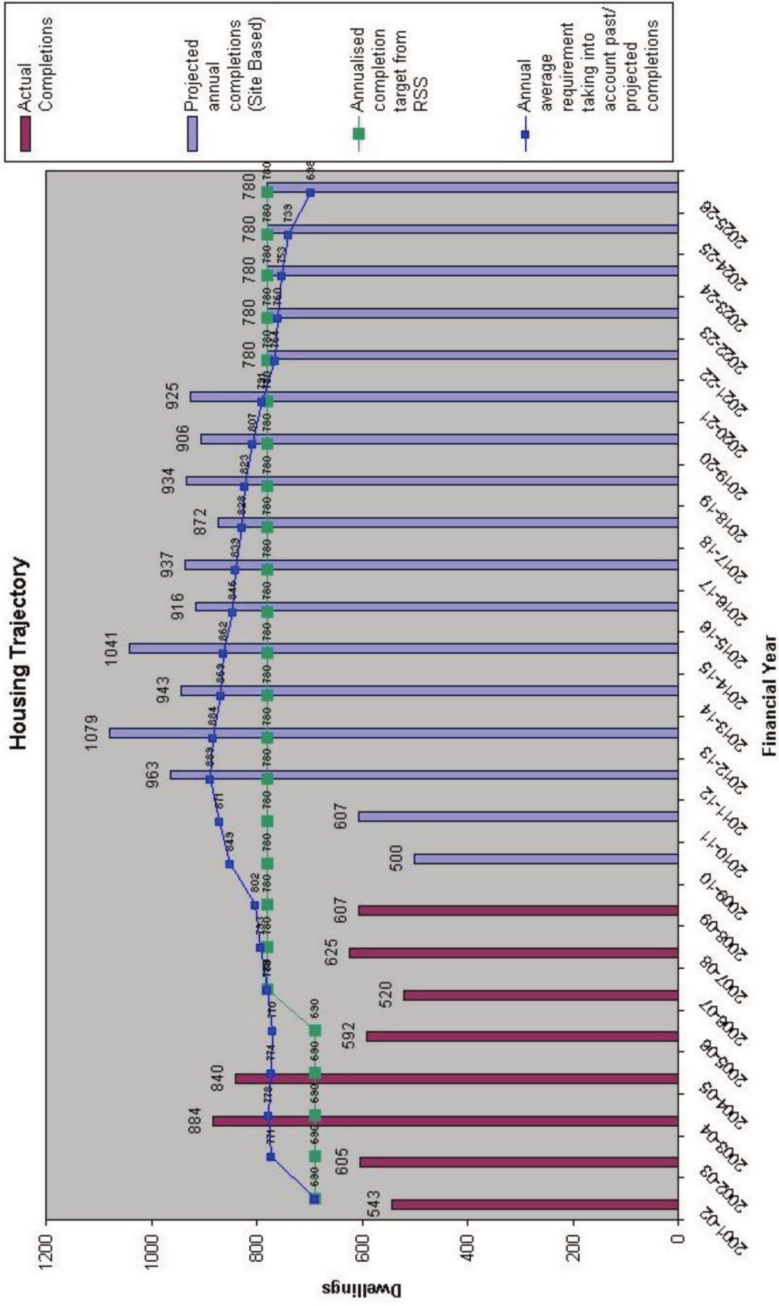
**3.10** There will be gradual growth in the other market towns with priority being given to brownfield sites within the towns, followed by brownfield sites adjoining the town and then peripheral greenfield sites. Outside of the market towns, the LDF will positively plan for modest development at Harling, Narborough, Shipdham, and Swanton Morley. The detail around the release of housing land in the market towns and Local Service Centre villages will be provided in the Site Specific Policies and Proposals DPD.



**3.11** The following trajectory sets out what has been achieved to date and the future delivery of housing. As demonstrated by the diagram, Breckland has not met the annualised average of 780 homes per year set out in the RSS over the period to 2008 and this will necessitate a significant step change in housing delivery towards the latter phases of the LDF period to 2026. The trajectory shows that by 2021 the District meets the 15,200 completions requirement outlined in the East of England Plan. Post 2021, strategic development will occur only in Thetford and Attleborough.



Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document



**3.12** Housing development in the early years of the plan 2009-2015 will be predominantly focused in Thetford and the market towns of Dereham, Swaffham and Watton and the Local Service Centre villages. Major development in Attleborough will occur later in the plan period (2015 and beyond) due to the need to ensure essential infrastructure is in place before housing is completed. Detailed phasing of housing development will be set out in Area Action Plans and the Site Specific Policies and Proposals DPD.

**3.13** In addition it will be necessary to phase the new housing allocations in the towns detailed above to reflect the provision of water infrastructure required to support this level of development. This approach will ensure that the release of allocations are unlikely to have a significant effect on European Habitats which are dependent on water availability and quality. Strategic water infrastructure necessary to support growth in the plan period is identified in Policy CP4 and this will need to be delivered before the dependent development takes place. There is a quantum of housing development which cannot be accommodated within existing water resource and waste water quality capacities. Technical solutions exist to resolve these issues but the commitments are not yet in place. For this quantum of development will be reassessed under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations at the first plan review.

**Table 3.1 Development Allocations and Water Resource Capacity**

	Allocation which can be taken forward under existing consents	Allocation which can be taken forward subject to the implementation of required water infrastructure which is currently committed	Allocation which can only be taken forward subject to implementation of required water infrastructure which is uncommitted. This figure is subject to plan review and revisit of the HRA.
Thetford	5,035	0	1,500
Attleborough	1,200	0	2,800
Dereham	600	0	0
Swaffham	250	0	0
Watton	300	0	0

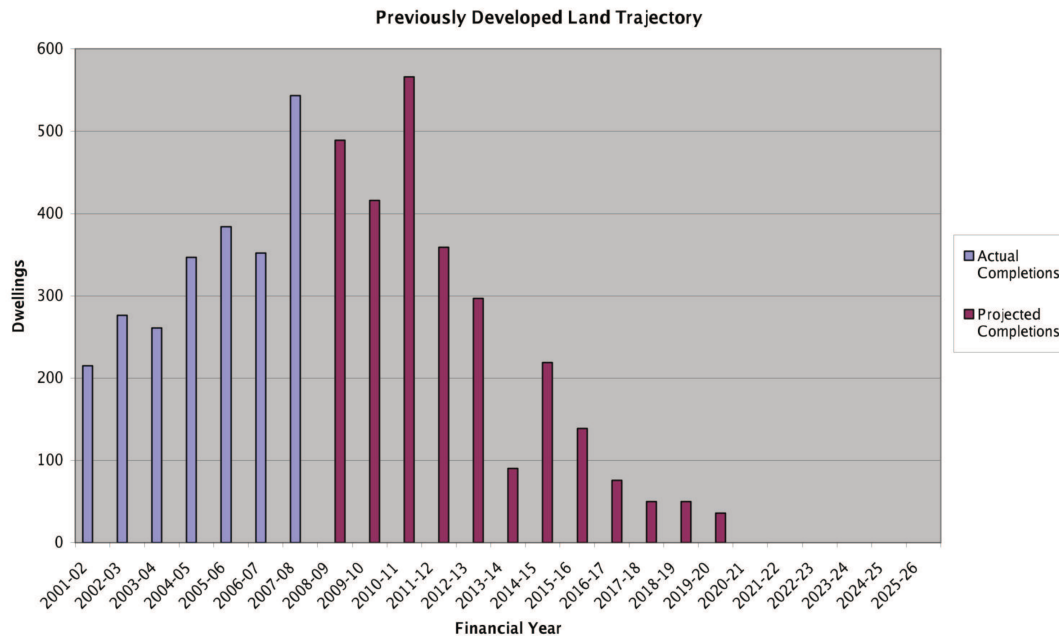
**3.14** The housing trajectory will be kept under review and Annual Monitoring Reports will provide updates to the trajectory to demonstrate progress towards meeting housing targets. A separate housing trajectory will be developed for Thetford as part of the Area Action Plan and will be used to monitor the progress of housing delivery in this strategic location.

**3.15** The East of England Plan sets the target of 60% of new development to be on Previously Developed Land (PDL). In a rural District like Breckland, with high housing need, it is unlikely that the 60% target can be achieved. The District has therefore set a more realistic and achievable target of 25%. The District's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has identified a limited number of PDL opportunities. The sites identified in the SHLAA, together with past completions and current commitments indicate that the 25% target is likely to be achieved. The following graph at figure 3.2 illustrates the District's potential PDL housing trajectory.





**Figure 3.2 Previous Developed Land Trajectory**



**3.16** The proposed scale and distribution of housing will contribute to balancing the housing market in Breckland by addressing the overall demand for housing and a proportion of the backlog of housing need. In addition to the supply of housing land it will also be necessary to intervene in the nature of housing built in Breckland in terms of the size and type of housing and the tenure mix to ensure that the housing is reflective of Breckland's needs. To achieve this, the general starting point will be that all housing developments will be expected to provide a mix of house types, sizes and tenures that meet the profiles set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and a proportion of homes to lifetime homes standard. This requirement will not be onerous on proposals for individual dwellings or small-scale schemes (e.g. less than 5 dwellings). Elsewhere it is anticipated that the accompanying Design and Access Statement will address the issue of housing mix and lifetime homes. On larger sites and allocations, a guide to the mix of house types and sizes will be provided at the individual site level through either the Site Specific Allocations DPD or relevant Area Action Plan.

**3.17** The provision of affordable housing to help meet the needs of the District's communities is the Council's top priority. The Council will therefore require that a high percentage of houses provided on development sites will be affordable. The approach to affordable housing has been informed by the Breckland Housing Needs Survey and a sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment. These assessments will be updated on a regular basis.

### 3.1.2 Gypsies and Travellers

#### Policy CP 2

##### The Travelling Community

##### Gypsies and Travellers

Within the period to 2011 a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site for 15 pitches will be allocated in either the Site Specifics Policies and Proposals Development Plan Document or Area Action Plan dependent on location. The allocation will meet the identified need for Breckland as set out in the Single Issue Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The site selection process for a permanent Gypsy and Traveller site will be guided by the following criteria:

- a. The site will be a sustainable location on the A11 Corridor where there is no adverse impact on the safe and efficient operation of the highway network;
- b. The site will be within reasonable distances to facilities and supporting services;
- c. The site will be properly serviced; and
- d. The site will not have an adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape, particularly the river valleys and the Brecks Heathlands character areas as set out in the Breckland Landscape Character Assessment.

In selecting a sustainable location, preference will be given to previously-developed land or a vacant and derelict site in need of renewal.

##### Travelling Showpeople

Travelling Showpeople's needs in Breckland will be assessed through a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. Where a need is identified in the Assessment the Site Specifics Development Plan Document will allocate land for the required number of plots in an appropriate location. The site selection process for Travelling Showpeople will be guided by the following criteria:

- e. Preference will be given to releasing land on the outskirts of the towns and Local Service Centre villages where services can be sustainably accessed; and
- f. The location of the site will take account of the scale and nature of the Showpeople's business in terms of scale of storage required and/or land required for exercising animals; and
- g. The site will not have an adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.18** ODPM (now CLG) Circular 01/2006 requires Local Authorities to make suitable provision for Gypsies and Travellers where a need for accommodation is identified. The baseline for the LDF identifies that Gypsies and Travellers are the largest indigenous ethnic minority in Breckland. There is currently a permanent site at Swaffham and a short stay stopping site has been provided for at Thetford. However these sites are not capable of meeting the projected future needs. Failure to meet need will increase the potential for unauthorised encampments which can cause environmental damage and tension with settled communities. Meeting the need for Gypsies and Travellers must not be done at the expense of sustainability or the character and biodiversity of the District. Proposals will have to relate well to existing services and facilities and not adversely affect the amenities of settled communities.



**3.19** The appropriate scale of permanent pitch provision for Breckland is provided for in a single issue review of the Regional Plan around Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. The review sets out the need for 15 additional pitches over an interim period from 2006 to 2011 in advance of a full review of the Regional Plan (pitches are defined as a piece of land where a Gypsy or Traveller household can reside; typically this may contain a building, parking space and on average 2 caravans). The Review has been informed by data from annual counts of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments recorded by District Councils. Fifteen additional permanent pitches for the period 2006-11 has been identified by Breckland Council. In terms of site management and distribution of need it is considered that these permanent pitches are best provided on one site, sustainably located on the A11 corridor.

**3.20** The identification of the A11 corridor for a new permanent site is consistent with a number of factors supported by evidence base such as Norfolk Gypsy and Traveller Strategy which indicate that the principal road corridors are favoured locations for the travelling community. In terms of sustainable locations on the A11, Thetford and Attleborough would provide the most sustainable locations, although Thetford already has a short stay stopping site for temporary use by Gypsy and Travellers. Thetford and Attleborough would also satisfy criterion (b) of the policy, enabling a new permanent site to be within a reasonable distance (e.g. less than 1,600m/20mins walk) to facilities and supporting services such as education, health and day-to-day shopping needs. The proper servicing of a permanent site will include safe highway access, to facilitate safe movement and services within the site, sewerage, water, electricity and structural landscaping. It is also likely that a permanent site will require appropriate facilities for the management of the site.

**3.21** The allocation of a permanent site will be made in either the Site Specifics Development Plan Document or Area Action Plan dependent on location. Any site will be based on there being a clear need and the proposal representing the most sustainable and practical option. Proposals for additional short stay stopping sites and individual Gypsy and Traveller pitches will not contribute to the District need for 15 permanent pitches. Such proposals will, however, be considered with reference to criteria (b) to (d) of Policy CP2 and guidance set out in ODPM Circular 01/2006.

**3.22** The Regional Plan Review on Gypsy and Traveller provision has not included any assessment of the needs of Travelling Showpeople. In the absence at the Regional Level of district level plot numbers, there is no local evidence of a clear and immediate need to provide for travelling showpeople's accommodation in Breckland. The Council is committed to Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments which will include the housing needs of Travelling Showpeople. Where a need is identified in advance of a review of the Regional Spatial Strategy it will be necessary to release land through the Site Specifics Development Plan Document using the criteria in Policy CP2. In the interim individual proposals for travelling showpeople's plots will be considered using the criteria in Policy CP2 and the guidance set out in CLG Circular 04/2007.

### 3.1.3 Employment

#### Policy CP 3

##### Employment

Provision is made for development that will deliver at least 6,000 jobs in the District to 2021 as identified for Breckland in the Regional Spatial Strategy, and distributed as follows:

Location	Net additional jobs to 2021
Thetford	5,000
Attleborough	1,500 - 2,000
Dereham	900 - 1,800
Swaffham	300 - 650
Watton	250
Snetterton	500 - 1,500
Rural Areas	1,200 – 1,500

The spatial delivery of new employment in Breckland will require the following:

- a. Development proposals that contribute to the creation and retention of a wide range of jobs, educational and re-skilling opportunities;
- b. The protection and promotion of existing employment sites which have been identified as fit for purpose in the Employment Land Review. These sites are defined as General Employment Areas on the Proposals Map;
- c. The intensification and more efficient use of existing employment sites and premises where they are either not fully used or unsuited to modern business needs;
- d. The protection and promotion of town centres as the focus for retail, leisure, office and tourism development. In particular the town centre of Thetford will be regenerated to provide a significant uplift in town centre related employment. Town Centres will be defined on the Proposals Map;
- e. The development of some 30-40ha of strategic employment land, within the A11, the details and delivery strategy for which will be determined through an Area Action Plan for Thetford;
- f. The release of some 20ha of strategic employment land at Snetterton, to facilitate the development of a motorsport related cluster and the continued development of road and rail warehousing and distribution uses at the Snetterton Heath Employment Area, the details of which will be determined through an Area Action Plan for Attleborough and Snetterton;
- g. The release of some 10ha of land for employment development at Attleborough which is well related to the A11, the details of which will be determined through a subsequent DPD;
- h. The release of at least 5-10ha of employment land at Dereham and at least 5ha of employment land at Swaffham, at locations well-related to the A47, the details of which will be determined through Site Specific Allocations DPD;
- i. The release of land for employment development to enable existing types of businesses to develop at Watton, Shipdham Airfield and Roudham Industrial Areas; and,
- j. The use of sustainably located agricultural or other rural buildings, including replacement buildings.





The provision of employment land and floorspace in a form that meets the requirements of the sectors and types of firms which exist in the District, whilst respecting the environmental objectives, will be informed by updates of the Employment Land Review study and by monitoring the provision made against the needs of the local economy.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.23** The scale and distribution of new employment set out in Policy CP3 will contribute towards the delivery of the Spatial Strategy and the objective of securing sustainable economic growth to 2021 and beyond to 2026. This reflects an approach that is based upon maximising the opportunity for people to work close to where they live thereby achieving a more sustainable balance of jobs and homes. It is also based on an understanding of where the employment market wishes to locate based on the findings of the Council's Employment Land Review (2006) with the attractiveness of access to the A11 and A47 being critical factors. The Employment Land Review, forecasts for Breckland projected floorspace requirements by broad employment sector. The growth in the key sectors of warehousing, office and other services has also formed the basis for the employment strategy set out in this policy and for strong growth targets and floorspace requirements for the District to 2021 and beyond.

**3.24** Breckland has maintained sustained economic growth since the mid-1990s and is well placed within the region to continue its economic prosperity and regeneration. The proximity of Norwich and Cambridge, the developing cluster of businesses allied to the motorsports engineering sector and the location of Thetford as a regional Key Centre for Development and Change on the A11 trunk road will be significant drivers for the local economy. The LDF period to 2026 will require policy responses to address further structural changes in the rural economy and to positively respond to opportunities for farm diversification and rural tourism, whilst protecting the unique landscape and heritage that makes Breckland an attractive place to work and visit.

**3.25** Priorities for Employment Development in the LDF will be closely aligned to the Regional Economic Strategy and local economic strategies including the Breckland Economic Prosperity Strategy and the Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) initiative along the A11 corridor. The LDF will help deliver at least 6,000 net new jobs identified for the area in the East of England Plan with an expectation that this figure will be exceeded through a combination of partnership working with key agencies and releasing the right amount of additional employment land at the right locations, particularly strategic locations along the A11.

**3.26** Thetford as a Key Centre for Development and Change will develop its regional economic role, the delivery of which will be supported by interventions such as the Rural Valley Enterprise (REV) project and reflecting the town's Growth Point Status. There will be a focus on increasing the net number of "high value" business jobs in the finance, ICT and research sectors while supporting its manufacturing and service industries. A focused strategy of interventions to bring forward employment land and deliver additional jobs growth will be implemented. In addition to the development of the Thetford Enterprise Park and protecting existing employment sites in the town, the LDF will deliver a strategic employment site(s) to the north of town within the A11 as part of a mixed-use sustainable urban extension, the details of which will be determined through an Area Action Plan for Thetford. Employment growth in Thetford will be further bolstered by the regeneration of the town centre and increased jobs in the retail and service sectors and smaller scale local employment provision in other locations, contributing to an overall target of 5,000 net new jobs for the town by 2021.

**3.27** Elsewhere along the A11, strategic employment land will be released at Snetterton and Attleborough to support regional and local economic initiatives. At Snetterton some 20ha will be released to deliver further employment allied to the motor sport industry and the outcomes of the REV Project given the advantages offered by the location of the racing circuit. Some of the 20ha will also deliver additional warehousing and distribution uses, taking advantage of the direct road and rail connections into the area. The precise scale and location of employment land to be released will be determined through an Area Action Plan for Attleborough



and Snetterton Heath. Delivery at Snetterton will be dependent on the necessary energy infrastructure being in place and this will require a partnership approach brokered by Breckland Council. At Attleborough the strategy will be to protect existing employment sites and release further employment land which is well-related to the A11 bypass. The expanded population in Attleborough resulting from 4,000 additional homes is estimated to support approximately 1,500 to 2,000 population based jobs in a variety of sectors, in addition to jobs created in the established employment uses.

**3.28** Away from the A11, the delivery of jobs will be focused on the A47 corridor, principally around Dereham, to augment its role as the key administrative, business and retail centre for mid-Norfolk and at Swaffham to support its market town role, extending the success of the Ecotech Business Park and limit out-commuting to other centres. Outside of the A11 and A47 transport corridors, the emphasis will be on supporting the growth of existing businesses which serve the Breckland area. On this basis, employment sites will be protected and, where appropriate, allowed to modestly expand at Watton, Shipdham Airfield and Roudham.

**3.29** In the rural area, tourism developments as well as other manufacturing and service activities that support agriculture will be supported as key sectors that will deliver employment growth. Across the rural parts of the District there will be a favourable approach to the re-use of sustainably located rural buildings, including their replacement, for business purposes, subject to policy in PPS7 <sup>(1)</sup> and the other policies of this DPD to support employment growth in the rural area.

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1 Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas



### 3.1.4 Infrastructure

#### Policy CP 4

##### Infrastructure

The release of land for development will be dependant on there being sufficient capacity in the existing local infrastructure to meet the additional requirements arising from new development. Suitable arrangements will be put in place to improve infrastructure, services and community facilities, where necessary, to mitigate the impact of development. New development will be required to demonstrate that it will not harm the District's ability to improve the educational attainment, accessibility to services and jobs and health and well-being of Breckland's communities. This will be achieved by:

- a. Providing for health and social care facilities, in particular supporting the Strategic Services Development Plan of the Primary Care Trust, the provision of new and improved health and social care facilities at Thetford and Attleborough and the improvement of health and social care facilities at other market towns and service centre villages.
- b. Securing the physical infrastructure to support the requirements of education, skills and lifelong learning strategies, particularly:
  - (i) Secondary Education provision in Thetford including a dedicated tertiary education campus and the expansion of existing High Schools;
  - (ii) Secondary Education provision in Attleborough that provides for the strategic urban extensions to the south of the town and acknowledges constraints to expansion at Old Buckenham High School;
  - (iii) New primary school provision in Thetford, Attleborough and Dereham
  - (iv) Capacity enhancements at Dereham's High Schools, Wayland High School (Watton), Litcham High School and Hamonds High School (Swaffham) as a result of new growth.
- c. Providing additional waste water treatment capacity in order to deliver strategic development. Further testing through a Detailed Water Cycle Study will investigate sustainable solutions for waste water infrastructure upgrades that can be delivered in time to meet the requirements of the proposed development.
- d. Providing for strategic enhancement of the energy supply network (electricity) to Attleborough, Thetford, Dereham, Watton and Snetterton to support housing and employment growth. Details of the necessary improvements to the energy supply network at Snetterton Heath, including the location and capacity of infrastructure, will be addressed through the Attleborough and Snetterton Area Action Plan.
- e. Ensuring access and safety concerns are resolved within all new developments. This will include the strategic transport requirements as identified in the Transport and Infrastructure studies for Thetford, Attleborough and Dereham. In particular, the construction and occupation of new housing and other uses to the south of Attleborough will be phased in accordance with existing infrastructure capacity limits and linked to the delivery of new infrastructure including the completion of a new distributor road linking the B1077 to the A11. The Area Action Plan will set out the growth delivery phases and infrastructure delivery trigger points, based on robust and detailed evidence. Any new

road infrastructure required to serve strategic growth will not take place within 200m of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and;

- f. Securing the provision of improved policing and emergency services provision and community, library and indoor sports facilities where these are clearly linked to and generated by new housing growth.

Arrangements for the provision, or improvement of infrastructure, including in terms of access to facilities, to the required standard will be secured by planning obligation or, where appropriate, via conditions attached to a planning permission. This will ensure that the necessary improvements can be completed prior to occupation of development, or the relevant phase of a development. In respect of sustainable urban extensions at Thetford and Attleborough the potential of a tariff approach to infrastructure provision will be investigated through Area Action Plans. Subject to legislation being enacted, the Council will also consider the use of an appropriate mechanisms (Community Infrastructure Levy) in order to secure contributions from developers towards key infrastructure, the detail of which will be developed through a separate Local Development Document.

The adequacy of infrastructure provision in Breckland will be the subject of regular reviews between the District Council, Primary Care Trust, Education and Transport Authorities and utility providers to inform the monitoring and implementation of the Core Strategy.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.30** Ensuring infrastructure provision keeps pace with new development is a key component of delivering the Spatial Strategy for Breckland and meeting the various needs of the community. Directing the majority of growth to those areas with available key infrastructure such as healthcare, schools, energy supply, water treatment, transport facilities and other community infrastructure such as sport and recreation, libraries and community buildings will be the basis for sustainable communities in Breckland. This approach will deliver increased local accessibility to key services, ensuring their viability, whilst at the same time making the most of investments in existing infrastructure provision across Breckland.

**3.31** In order to deliver the Spatial Strategy it will be necessary to direct development to locations where, in order to achieve the wider sustainability advantages of the Strategy, it is known that existing infrastructure will need to be upgraded to meet the needs of all the new development. This is especially important when considering the sustainable urban extensions to Thetford and Attleborough, the growth for Dereham and strategic employment provision for Snetterton. In addition to the specific infrastructure set out in the policy, the provision of infrastructure is a prerequisite of all development and the Council will make best use of planning contributions as a means of providing infrastructure and enhancing facilities and services.

**3.32** Where infrastructure deficiencies exist, the Council is committed to achieving a consistent and co-ordinated approach to providing new or improved infrastructure through partnership working. The work with partners will involve other delivery bodies, authorities, developers and other agencies and will positively foster a number of delivery mechanisms. Breckland Council will use its role to support and facilitate infrastructure provision including fully utilising the role of planning contributions and by taking a pro-active perspective in the development and implementation of Multi-Agency Agreements and Local Area Agreements influencing Breckland. This managed approach to infrastructure provision will also enable disruption to the highway network to be managed, thereby reducing waiting times during construction and resultant emission of pollutants.

**3.33** In respect of Thetford as a Key Centre for Development and Change and New Growth Point, delivery of infrastructure commensurate with the planned scale of growth may require an informal Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV). Additional evidence work as part of the Area Action Plans and the Site Specific Policies and





## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

Proposals Development Plan Document will determine whether a tariff approach will be required in Thetford and Attleborough and possibly other strategic locations to ensure key infrastructure is in place or provided in phase with the development.

**3.34** Primary education facilities are for the purposes of formal compulsory education of the age groups 4-11, Secondary education facilities are for the purposes of formal compulsory education of the age groups 11-16, Tertiary education facilities are for the purposes of formal non-compulsory education in the post 16+ age group.

### 3.1.5 Developer Obligations

#### Policy CP 5

##### Developer Obligations

All development in the plan area will be accompanied by appropriate infrastructure to meet site specific requirements and create sustainable communities. The infrastructure will be provided in tandem with the development and where appropriate arrangements will be made for its subsequent maintenance.

At least for the early part of the plan period, arrangements for the provision, or improvement of infrastructure will be secured by planning obligation or, in some cases where appropriate, via conditions attached to a planning permission. This will ensure that the appropriate necessary improvements can be completed prior to occupation of the development, or the relevant phase of the development.

During the later part of the plan period, Thetford and Attleborough have the potential of a tariff approach to assist funding strategic infrastructure through their respective Area Action Plans. Subject to legislation, the Council will also consider the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to address strategic infrastructure delivery, which will supersede any tariff which was already in place.

In addition to any tariff or CIL mechanism, individual on-site requirements will continue to be secured through developer obligations. The detailed nature of the obligations sought and the level of charge made will reflect the requirements of Core and Development Control Policies, together with any Area Action Plan Policies, and will be determined through one or more of the following:

- a. A district-wide Developer Obligations Supplementary Planning Document which will be subject to periodic review reflecting relevant cost indices. This SPD will have two parts: (1) relating to on-site infrastructure requirements and associated continuing maintenance costs; and (2) relating to contributions off-site.
- b. If considered appropriate, a tariff approach will be implemented for developments in Thetford and/or Attleborough and Snetterton. This approach and the detailed working mechanism, will be investigated through Area Action Plans for these locations. If a tariff approach is introduced, then the off-site contributions element of the Developer Obligations SPD will not be applicable in that location.
- c. The Council will investigate the preparation of a CIL Development Plan Document to cover all or part of the District (subject to Regulation) and would replace any tariff approach that had been introduced in the District. Should a CIL DPD be prepared, then the off site contributions element of the Developer Obligations SPD will not be applicable to that location.

Site specific infrastructure requirements to be addressed through developer obligations may include the following:

- Affordable Housing
- Utilities
- Appropriate transport infrastructure
- Improved public transport facilities, including walking, cycling and community transport initiatives
- Open Space
- Community Infrastructure, (including education, library, police and fire service provision).
- Green Infrastructure
- Biodiversity management
- Landscaping



- Flood Defences
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- Local and renewable energy generation
- Waste management / recycling and composting facilities
- Street furniture
- Administrative costs

Future maintenance of infrastructure provided on the site or built or improved as part of the development will be achieved through adoption by a public body with appropriate maintenance payments or other secure arrangements.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.35** In certain instances, it may be possible to make acceptable development proposals, which might otherwise be unacceptable, through the use of planning conditions or, where this is not possible, through planning obligations. Planning Obligations are legally binding agreements between Local Planning Authorities and persons with an interest in a piece of land. They will generally be used to secure funds or works and for essential elements of schemes such as the provision of affordable housing, public transport services or new infrastructure such as roads or a community centre. Each planning obligation will be specific to the proposed development and should be sought only when it meets all the tests as set out in Circular 05/2005 by the Secretary of State. In essence, planning obligations, whether sought or offered, must be:

- relevant to planning;
- necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the proposed development;
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and
- reasonable in all other respects.

**3.36** Planning Obligations may be used to prescribe the nature of development; to compensate for loss or damage created by development or; to mitigate a development's impact on the surrounding built and natural environment.

**3.37** This could also include contributions to provide for regular maintenance or monitoring of facilities provided through developer obligations. The detail of such mechanisms will be set out in a Developer Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will consider the need for and level of any contributions required from different categories of development. Prior to the implementation of any tariff or Community Infrastructure Levy, the Council will continue to seek contributions from development for education, libraries, police and fire service provision, where appropriate, utilising Planning Obligations standards prepared by Norfolk County Council.

**3.38** In relation to biodiversity management the use of obligations will be used to fund the management of sites protected for their biodiversity value, in particular the heaths at Thetford (Barnham cross Common, Thetford Heath and Thetford Golf Club and Marsh) which are likely to be used as greenspace by local residents. Contributions will be used to implement management plans for these areas together with wider measures necessary to manage habitats suitable for Annex 1 birds (Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar). This is in order to mitigate significant effects as a result of the growth proposed in this Plan. The framework for developer contributions relating to biodiversity management will be set out in the Supplementary Planning Document and subject to review.



**3.39** Additionally, the Council will seek an administrative contribution to cover the cost of arranging and monitoring developer obligations. The basis for the administration cost will be set out in the Supplementary Planning Document and subject to review.

**3.40** The Council, in conjunction with partners will prepare an Integrated Development Programme (IDP) to identify infrastructure needs and priorities and address any potential funding shortfalls. The focus of the IDP will be growth along the A11 corridor reflecting the particular circumstances and challenges identified through evidence gathering.

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### 3.1.6 Green Infrastructure

#### Policy CP 6

##### Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure of local and strategic importance will be protected and enhanced.

All new development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional green infrastructure and the protection and enhancement of the district's existing green infrastructure. The Council will when allocating sites for development in subsequent Development Plan Documents have full regard to the protection and enhancement of the quantum and/or function of green infrastructure. The Council will set out specific requirements within subsequent Area Action Plans and/or other Development Plan Documents for the protection or enhancement of green infrastructure on allocated development sites.

Through its layout and design, new development should respond to the location of existing green infrastructure and should support appropriate uses and functions. Through the Development Control process where it is considered that the development will have a detrimental effect on the quantum or function of existing green infrastructure then the development will not be permitted unless replacement provision is made that is considered to be of equal or greater value than that which will be lost through development.

In enhancing existing green infrastructure, development should seek to provide physical/functional linkages between different elements of green infrastructure, and introduce an appropriate multi-functional use of spaces and linkages. This may be achieved in part through the improvement of the function of existing green infrastructure.

On-site provision and/or off-site contributions will be sought. Such provision will be required in accordance with adopted policies and strategies relating to green infrastructure and biodiversity network provision.

Where compensatory provision is to be made for the loss of existing green infrastructure the provision of new and/or enhancement of green infrastructure will be required in addition to any compensatory provision. Where appropriate, in accordance with adopted standards, the Council will seek to secure via planning obligations provision for the future management and/or maintenance of green infrastructure.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.41** This policy sets out the Council's approach towards the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure across the District. The policy assists the plan strategy and the objective of achieving sustainable development through the protection and enhancement of the key environmental assets of the District.

**3.42** Green infrastructure is the sub-regional and local network of sites protected for their environmental, habitat and/or cultural heritage values and other green spaces whether publicly accessible or not, and the network of linkages between them. Spaces and linkages should be multi-functional and operate at all spatial scales from within a settlement through to open countryside.

**3.43** Standards for the protection and provision of green infrastructure in terms of recreational open space have been set out in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, as is detailed guidance on the protection of trees and landscape. These elements will be dealt with through the development control process.

**3.44** Detailed strategic requirements for the protection of key environmental assets is set out elsewhere in the Core Strategy. Additional standards for the provision, protection and enhancement will be developed through subsequent Area Action Plans and other Development Plan Documents. Such standards will be informed by relevant strategies and studies such as those relating to biodiversity and habitat, tourism and recreation, open space, accessibility and the Thetford and the Dereham Green Infrastructure studies. These standards will be applied to development in Breckland upon adoption in conjunction with the existing policies of the Core Strategy and the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

**3.45** For larger development sites allocated through Area Action Plans and other Development Plan Documents, specific Green Infrastructure requirements may be set out in relevant site allocation policies.

**3.46** The Council will expect that a legal agreement is entered in to where it is necessary to secure green infrastructure provision, or to ensure the long term sustainable management of green infrastructure. Unless stated elsewhere Breckland Council will normally not be responsible for the long term maintenance and management of green infrastructure.

**3.47** This policy will be applied in combination with the requirements of policies CP8: Natural Resources, CP10: Natural Environment, DC8: Tourism Related Development, DC11: Open Space, DC13: Flood Risk and DC17: Historic Environment.

#### Definition

Green Infrastructure consists of public and private assets, with and without public access, in urban and rural locations, including:

- Allotments
- Amenity space, for example, communal green spaces within housing areas
- Corridors and linear features including hedgerows, ditches, disused railways and verges
- Brownfield and Greenfield sites
- Urban parks and gardens
- Registered commons and village and town greens
- Children's play space
- Natural and semi-natural habitat for wildlife
- Playing fields
- Cemeteries
- Pockets parks
- Country parks
- Woodland
- Historic Parks and Gardens and historic landscapes
- Nature reserves including county wildlife sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments
- Locally designated heritage sites
- Rivers, watercourses and water bodies, including flooded quarries
- Development sites with potential for open space and green corridors and potential for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- Land in agri-environmental management
- Public rights of way including cycleways, footpaths, bridleways and other recreational routes



**Green Infrastructure should:**

- Contribute to the management, conservation and improvement of the local landscape, strengthening important local character where necessary and creating appropriate new local character where existing character is weak or has been lost.
- Contribute to the protection, conservation and management of historic landscape, archaeological and built heritage assets
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity to ensure that development and implementation of the strategy results in a net gain of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats
- Be delivered through the enhancement of existing woodlands and also by the creation of new woodlands and forest areas
- Create new recreational facilities, particularly those that present opportunities to link urban and countryside areas
- Take account of and integrate with natural processes and systems
- Be managed and funded in urban and rural areas to accommodate nature, wildlife and historic and cultural assets, and provide for sport and recreation
- Be designed to high standards of quality and sustainability to deliver social and economic, as well as environmental benefits
- Provide focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning

### 3.1.7 Town Centres

#### Policy CP 7

##### Town Centres

Support will be given to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the following hierarchy of town centres, including the provision of additional retail floorspace as outlined below:

**Table 3.2 Source - Breckland District Council Updated Retail and Town Centre Study (2007)**

Town	Hierarchy	Net comparison floorspace requirement (m <sup>2</sup> ) 2007-18	Net convenience floorspace requirement (m <sup>2</sup> ) 2007-18
Thetford	Key Centre for Development and Change	7,000 - 7,500	2,000 - 2,500
Dereham	Main Town and Administrative Centre serving mid-Norfolk	7,750 - 8,500	2,000 - 2,500
Attleborough	Town Centre serving a wide rural catchment	2,250 - 2,750	1,750 - 2,250
Swaffham	Mid-size Town Centres – serving local need	1,000 - 1,500	0
Watton		250 - 500	0
<b>Totals</b>		<b>18,250 - 20,750</b>	<b>5,750 - 7,250</b>

The vitality of town centres within the District will be maintained and enhanced in accordance with their identified role in the Spatial Strategy, through a combination of promotional or physical improvement measures, and addressing retail development in the following ways:

- a. Permitting appropriate retail, leisure, cultural and business proposals;
- b. Focusing retail proposals within town centres to the Primary Shopping Areas as defined on the Proposals Map and limiting proposals to under 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace unless it can be demonstrated that there is a need and no negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- c. Restricting retail development, except extensions under 200m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, outside the defined centres, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the development, there are no sequentially preferable sites and no negative impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- d. Defining Primary and Secondary retail frontages on the Proposals Map in Thetford, Dereham, Attleborough, Swaffam and Watton within which there will be a control on types of new development and change of uses at ground floor level to ensure that there is a healthy retail core and a vibrant mix of uses in surrounding town centre areas; and
- e. Identifying and protecting Local Centres where these exist or where these will be delivered as part of a strategic urban extension(s);





- f. Encouraging proposals which seek to deliver environmental improvements, enhanced car parking provision and reduce the impact of traffic / dominance of the car for town centre users;
- g. Recognise the need to enhance the retail offer of Attleborough town centre to support additional growth.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.48** Breckland Council commissioned consultants to prepare a Retail and Town Centre Study in 2004 to inform the scale of additional floorspace that needs to be planned for in the towns in District up to 2018. The study was updated in 2007 and identified that a combination of significant population growth and rising retail expenditure will support significant additional retail floorspace in Breckland. Significant increases in floorspace can be supported in Thetford given the large scale of growth planned for the town, and support the regeneration of the town centre. The scale of retail growth in Dereham reflects its' growing status as the main town and administrative centre for mid-Norfolk. The identification of additional development in the town could support additional phases to the successful Town Centre redevelopment scheme.

**3.49** The Council's Retail and Town Centre Study (2004) recognises significant leakage of retail and leisure expenditure to other higher order centres outside the District including Norwich, Bury St. Edmunds and King's Lynn. The vitality and viability of Breckland's towns will need to be maintained and enhanced given the proximity of these higher order centres, and the identification of additional comparison floorspace at Dereham and Thetford is needed to ensure leakage does not increase over time.

**3.50** Attleborough is identified to accommodate further retail development including a level of additional food retailing equivalent to a small-medium sized supermarket, and up to an additional 2,250m<sup>2</sup> comparison floorspace reflecting the wider strategy for growth in the town, and evidence contained within the Retail and Town Centre Study. The intention is to support development in the the town centre to a level that can provide for the needs of an expanded town reflecting Attleborough's position in the Spatial Strategy.

**3.51** The strategy for Swaffham and Watton is to protect their core retail function, allowing for small-scale incremental growth and consolidating their position in the retail hierarchy. The retail study update (2007) identified that Swaffham has the potential for slightly more non-food retail floor space up to 2018 based on levels of surplus expenditure available in the town and within its catchment.

**3.52** The Council considers that proposals of up to 2,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace are appropriate to the context and role of the town centres in the District. Schemes above this level shall provide an assessment of the impact of proposals on the centres, and the need for the development. This is to ensure that scale of development is directed to the right type of centre and to accord with the provisions of national planning policy.

**3.53** Beyond 2018, the Council will assess the requirements for additional retail floorspace in the District based upon the findings of updated retail and town centre studies as appropriate. Further updates of the retail study will feed into the Development Control Process alongside the preparation of Development Plan Documents reflecting relevant planning permissions and completions, and additional population growth in line with the Spatial Strategy. This is particularly notable in relation to the key growth locations of Attleborough and Thetford.

**3.54** The focus for delivering retail, leisure, cultural and business proposals, including hotels, tourist accommodation and B1(a) offices will be in the town centres as defined on the Proposals Map. Retail development will be further directed to the primary shopping areas as shown on the Proposals Map, and within these areas primary and secondary frontages will be identified. The primary frontage will define the



heart of the retailing within the town centre and alternative uses will be carefully controlled. In secondary frontages the aim will be to support a healthy mix of town centre uses as listed above and including an element of residential development. In all town centres the use of upper floors will be encouraged in order to maintain vibrant and attractive centres.

**3.55** The vitality and viability of town centres will be further enhanced by environmental improvements and by the reduction in the dominance of the car through measures which either remove traffic such as pedestrianisation or enhanced public transport or measures which enable the car parking requirements of town centre users to be met efficiently.

**3.56** Outside of the town centres, the Council will identify Local Centres (small parades of shops providing local top-up shopping and services). In Thetford there are some small clusters of shops/services on the western estates and proposals at these locations will be considered in the context of national planning policy in relation to town centres and retail development. Additionally, the scale of growth at sustainable urban extensions in Thetford and Attleborough could deliver new Local or District Centre(s). The area comprising any new Local Centre at Thetford together with the role of existing centres on the Western Estates will be identified through further evidence underpinning the Thetford Area Action Plan and updated on the Proposals Map.

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## 3.2 Natural Resources

**3.57** This section deals with the higher strategic theme of respecting the environmental limits of the District, in particular water resources. The policies contained in this section deal with the issues of protecting the finite environmental assets of the District such as land, minerals and water and minimising pollution of the environment. The policies also cover the issues of minimising waste production and promoting recycling and re-use and the utilisation of sustainable construction techniques.

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### 3.2.1 Natural Resources

#### Policy CP 8

##### Natural Resources

All development must be consistent with the principles of the proper management of natural resources. Development will only be supported where it will enhance, or protect against the non-essential loss of the natural resources of the District. Whilst mechanisms are in place to ensure that the development needs of the District are met, development should nevertheless avoid the unnecessary loss of high-grade agricultural land which is a finite resource and is important to the rurality of Breckland. The delivery of this objective in terms of agricultural land will be enhanced through the maximisation of the re-use of previously developed land, provided that the land is in a suitable location.

Development must not cause a deterioration in water quality. Development should minimise any unavoidable adverse effects on air quality. These objectives will be achieved through the phasing of development allocations in subsequent Development Plan Documents and the development control process. Direct contamination caused by the construction process or resultant operations should be avoided.

All practicable measures should be incorporated to ensure the most efficient use of the water resource and reduce average per capita consumption. In delivering this objective, regard should be had to the specific Development Control Policy on design.

In defining the strategic approach to development, regard has been had to the findings of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. These findings alongside national policy on flood risk, including the sequential test, will be taken into account when allocating sites for development in subsequent DPDs.

All new development will be located in such a way as to minimise its own risk of flooding and new development should not materially increase the flood risk to other areas or increase the risk of flooding to European Habitats which are water sensitive. This will be minimised through the installation of infiltration and attenuation measures to dispose of surface water (SUDS). In considering proposals for development regard will be had to national Planning Policy and the Development Control Policy on Flood Risk.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.58** The inappropriate use of finite resources can impinge on the ability of future generations to fulfil their needs. In other circumstances over exploitation can have severe repercussions for the District. This policy ensures that adequate protection is given to the District's natural resources and will help to preserve those resources for future generations.

**3.59** An assessment should be made of the potential impact of a proposed development upon natural resources in the short and long term. This assessment should indicate appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary.

**3.60** In order to fulfil its growth commitments the Council will need to allocate significant areas of land for development. The Council will when allocating sites for development in subsequent Development Plan Documents have full regard to the impact of that development in terms of natural resources. For land, this will mean that an emphasis is put on the re-use of previously developed land. In terms of water, it will mean



that water efficiency measures will need to be included as part of new developments, e.g. rain water harvesting or grey water collection. More widely, development processes such as the reclamation and recycling of materials will be supported.

**3.61** Flooding from rivers and surface run off is an issue for the District. Full regard will be had to the issue of flood risk in allocating sites for development in subsequent DPDs. In considering the issue of flood risk, regard will be had to national policy, including the sequential test and the findings of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The key principle will be to direct development away from areas that are at risk of flooding. Normally new development should not increase flood risk to other locations.

**3.62** The principles of the sequential test will also apply for individual developments and regard should be had to national policy and the flood risk policy in the Development Control Policies DPD.

**3.63** There are a number of European Habitats in Breckland which are by virtue of their location at risk from pollution from increased flooding events which could be associated with new development upstream. These include a number of the Norfolk Valley Fens and the River Wensum Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). The Habitats Regulations Assessment of this DPD has concluded that the effect of pollution from flooding can be mitigated if new developments install infiltration and attenuation measures to dispose of surface water. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) is recommended.

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### 3.2.2 Pollution and Waste

#### Policy CP 9

##### Pollution and Waste

The high quality management of the District's environment will be encouraged and supported through the careful appraisal of development proposals to ensure that they do not damage the environment. Management of the environment will require the emission of pollutants in terms of noise, odour, light or other waste materials or by-products to be minimised. Appropriate construction technologies and design principles are required to minimise waste generation.

In fulfilling the development needs of the District, development and service provision must make all opportunities to utilise sustainable construction technologies. Development should strive to maximise the re-use and recycling of waste materials and minimise the environmental consequences of waste production. This will include consideration of appropriate waste storage and ease of collection in new developments. Mitigation against all forms of pollution, including air, noise, water, light and land, will be a fundamental consideration in the design process. A development's design should actively seek to minimise or mitigate against forms of pollution. This mitigation must include measures that would protect future occupiers of a site from external sources of pollutants, where appropriate.

Development should minimise any unavoidable polluting effects. This objective will be achieved through the development control process where development will be required to avoid or minimise the pollution of the environment and to prevent any direct contamination caused by the construction process or resultant operations. Where necessary appropriate mitigation measures will be secured via planning condition or obligation.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.64** Delivery of the Spatial Vision requires a more efficient approach to the use of natural resources in a way which minimises pollution, overall energy consumption, waste production and maximises renewable energy. The Core Policy is intended to restrict polluting development and encourage developments to take a responsible approach to waste production and energy efficiency. Wider issues around amenity are addressed in more detail in Policy DC1 in the Development Control Policies.

**3.65** Baseline evidence confirms that air quality and water quality are generally good in Breckland and that potential land contamination is relatively low-scale. Additionally, the very rural nature of the District is represented by significant areas of tranquility and low levels of light pollution. The Spatial Strategy seeks to protect and, where possible, enhance the District's environment. On this basis new development should seek to reduce emissions and other pollution in order to protect the natural environment of Breckland. Appendix A to Planning Policy Statement 23 "Planning and Pollution Control" sets out the relevant matters that should be considered when examining individual planning proposals. The weight given to each criteria will depend on the particular circumstances and the relevant pollution control bodies will be consulted where necessary. In addition to the guidance in PPS23, applicants are encouraged to make pre-application enquiries with the Council and key pollution control bodies such as the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive.

**3.66** New development should also seek to minimise the more indirect effects of development on the environment by adopting renewable energy technologies, including passive solar design, solar water heating and photovoltaics, to be incorporated into developments and encouraging buildings to incorporate sustainable construction technologies, including water and energy conservation techniques. The policy also seeks to



minimise the production of waste and maximise the re-use and recycling of waste materials. In addition to the policies and proposals of the Norfolk Waste LDF, this will be achieved in the local context by requiring recycling facilities to be incorporated into developments, with a particular emphasis on integrating waste management facilities for the strategic development locations at Thetford, Attleborough, Snetterton and Dereham. Consideration will also need to be given to the provision of appropriate waste storage and means of collection in new development. The Council will seek to secure such appropriate measures through the Development Control process and may prescribe such appropriate measures within site specific policies in subsequent Development Plan Documents.

**3.67** Where there is the potential for pollution as a result of development, the Council will expect there to be a demonstration of how any effects have been avoided or minimised through the design of development or mitigation measures. Where polluting effects are unavoidable, control and mitigation of those effects will be sought through planning condition or obligation if necessary. In cases where there are external sources of pollution that would effect the future occupiers of a proposed development, the Council will expect through design the development incorporates sufficient mitigation to protect those future occupiers.

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### 3.3 Environment

**3.68** This section deals with the higher strategic theme of protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment of the District. This section covers policy issues such as the protection of specific environmental or conservation assets, and more widely the general landscape of the District. It covers the design of new development and the principles for new renewable or decentralised energy generation and on-site energy generation in new developments.

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### 3.3.1 Natural Environment

#### Policy CP 10

##### Natural Environment

##### Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Through the promotion of positive action and the development control process, the enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity in the district will be sought. There is an expectation that development will incorporate biodiversity or geological features where opportunities exist. Development that fails to exploit opportunities to incorporate available biodiversity or geological features will not be considered appropriate.

##### Ecological Network

Open spaces and areas of biodiversity interest will be protected from harm. The restoration, enhancement, expansion and linking of these areas to create ecological networks will be encouraged by:

- Minimising the fragmentation of habitats, creation of new habitats and connection of existing areas to create an ecological network as identified in the Norfolk and Breckland District Ecological Network Mapping Report.
- Appropriate management of valuable areas, such as County Wildlife Sites (CWSs);
- The designation of Local Nature Reserves and CWSs;
- Creating green networks to link urban areas to the countryside; and
- Maximising opportunities for creation of new green infrastructure and networks in sites allocated for development.

##### Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Development that may affect an SSSI that is not also subject to an international designation will be subject to the follow requirements:

Development that may have an adverse impact upon an SSSI, either directly or indirectly, will need to be accompanied by a suitable environmental assessment which identifies the impact of the development on the SSSI and potential mitigation measures that may be incorporated to assuage any impact. Only in exceptional circumstances will development be permitted if it is shown to have a detrimental effect on a SSSI. For the purposes of this requirement exceptional circumstances will be only where the benefits are of national or regional importance and clearly outweigh the need for the protection of the site.

##### Regional and Local Sites

A full environmental appraisal will be required for development that may have a direct or indirect impact upon any site of regional or local biodiversity, or geological interest identified on the Proposals Map. These will include: County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Ancient Woodland, Local Nature Reserves, Habitats identified in the UK and Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan and local sites of geodiversity. Only in exceptional circumstances will development be permitted that would have an adverse effect upon a site of regional or local biodiversity or geological interest. When considering exceptional circumstances regard will be had to:

- The regional and local importance of the site in terms of its contribution to biodiversity, scientific and educational interest, geodiversity, visual amenity and recreational value.
- The benefit that will be provided by the development in relation to the public interest.

### Protection of Species

The Council will require that an appropriate assessment is undertaken of all proposals for development that are likely to have a significant effect on the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) and will only permit development that will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. In applying this policy the Council has defined a buffer zone (indicated orange on the Proposals Map) that extends 1,500m from the edge of those parts of the SPA that support or are capable of supporting stone curlews, within which:-

- a. Permission may be granted for the re-use of existing buildings and for development which will be completely masked from the SPA by existing development; alternatively
- b. Permission may be granted for development provided it is demonstrated by an appropriate assessment the development will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA.

In other locations, indicated in blue on the Proposals Map, the Council will apply the policy set out above to afford protection to other land supporting the qualifying features of the SPA.

Where it can be shown that proposals to mitigate the effects of development would avoid or overcome an adverse impact on the integrity of the SPA or qualifying features, planning permission may be granted provided the Local Planning Authority is satisfied those proposals will be implemented.

The Council will consider the need for an appropriate assessment to determine the implications of development on other interest features of the SPA (i.e. Nightjar and Woodlark) on a case by case basis.

Where development is likely to have an impact upon a species that is not protected by other legislation, and in particular where that species is identified in the Norfolk and UK Biodiversity Action Plan, there will be an expectation that the development proposal will be accompanied by an impact study commensurate with the scale of the impact and the importance of the species.

Wherever a proposed development may have a detrimental impact upon a designated site or protected species, conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are utilised, where appropriate.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.69** From the Brecks to the Norfolk Valley Fens, Breckland has a diverse landscape, significant areas of which have particular conservation or environmental interest. The range and quality of these sites is crucial not only for wildlife, the environment, as an educational resource and more widely the biodiversity of the District as a whole, but are also beneficial to the overall quality of life in Breckland and the development of the area as an attractive place to live and work. As such, these areas are key components of the aspiration of achieving successful and sustainable development in Breckland.

**3.70** There are a number of habitats within Breckland that cannot be recreated easily, if at all, and which are high priorities for action in terms of restoration of existing sites or buffering from external impacts or linking habitats.

**3.71** The key ecological characteristics of the District can be summarised as;

- The Brecks, comprising an extensive area of largely conifer plantation and arable farmland but with extensive areas of heathland within the forest and arable landscape. Other habitats within the Brecks include fen, grazing marsh and naturally fluctuating water bodies (meres and pingos). A significant proportion of the Brecks, including arable farmland, is designated as European protected sites, forming



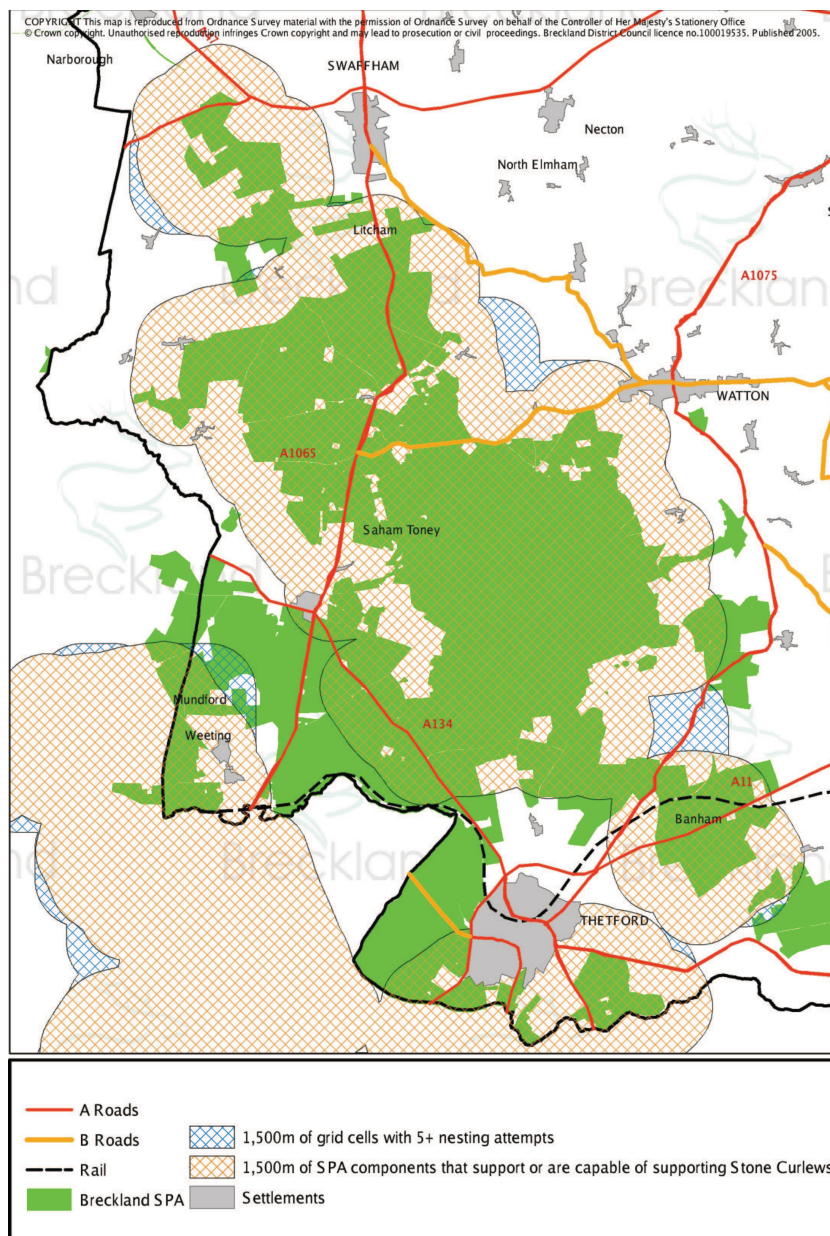


the largest terrestrial protected area in Norfolk. These are designated for their suitability to support internationally important bird species, particularly Stone Curlews, Woodlark and Nightjar.

- A number of river valleys, including the Wensum, Waveney, Yare/Blackwater, Nar, Whitewater, Tud, Wissey, Little Ouse and Thet. These have extensive areas of wetland habitats, comprised mainly of grazing marsh with areas of fen and reedbed; many of the rivers are recognised as chalk streams. Some of these habitats are European protected sites.
- Relatively extensive areas of woodland and shelterbelts, often associated with large estates. There are also a number of ancient woodlands and individual Veteran Trees scattered through the District.
- Arable landscape features, comprising Scots pine shelterbelts, hedgerows, mature trees, copses, ponds and field margins. These features are key components of the ecological network at a local scale; collectively, they amount to a significant biodiversity resource.
- The urban area of Thetford and other market towns, such as Attleborough and Swaffham.
- It is important to recognise that the Brecks and other habitats cross the County boundaries and that the ecological network should be consistent across this.

**3.72** Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites are protected by International conventions or European Directives and these areas are identified on the Proposals Map. In order to ensure that there are no significant effects on European habitats and species new development will only be permitted within 1,500m of SPAs that are suitable for stone curlew if it can be demonstrated, through an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations, that there will be no adverse impact on the qualifying features. Beyond the SPA boundary, on other land suitable for stone curlew or where they are present, a 1,500m development restriction buffer will also operate. These are areas where there have been five nesting attempts or more since 1995 or where other conditions are suitable, such as soil type. These areas are identified in blue on the Proposals Map. In these areas development may also be acceptable providing alternative land outside the SPA can be secured to mitigate any potential effects.

**Map 3.1 1500m Buffers around Special Protection Areas with Stone Curlews**



**3.73** In respect of Woodlark and Nightjar in the Breckland Forest SSSI component of the Breckland SPA the authority will take a precautionary approach to development within and in close proximity to their suitable habitat. Development proposals within 400 metres of Breckland Forest SSSI will be required to submit a scoping opinion to the Local Planning Authority as to whether the proposal will be subject to Appropriate Assessment.

**3.74** Other habitats and species do not enjoy the benefit of legislative protection. In reflection of this lack of external protection and in recognition of their contribution to Breckland, the nationally, regionally or locally important areas of conservation or environmental interest which are not otherwise protected will be



comprehensively protected through the planning process. To achieve this, allocations for development in subsequent DPDs will avoid the designated areas identified in the above policy. Designated sites in the above policy will also be protected through the development control process.

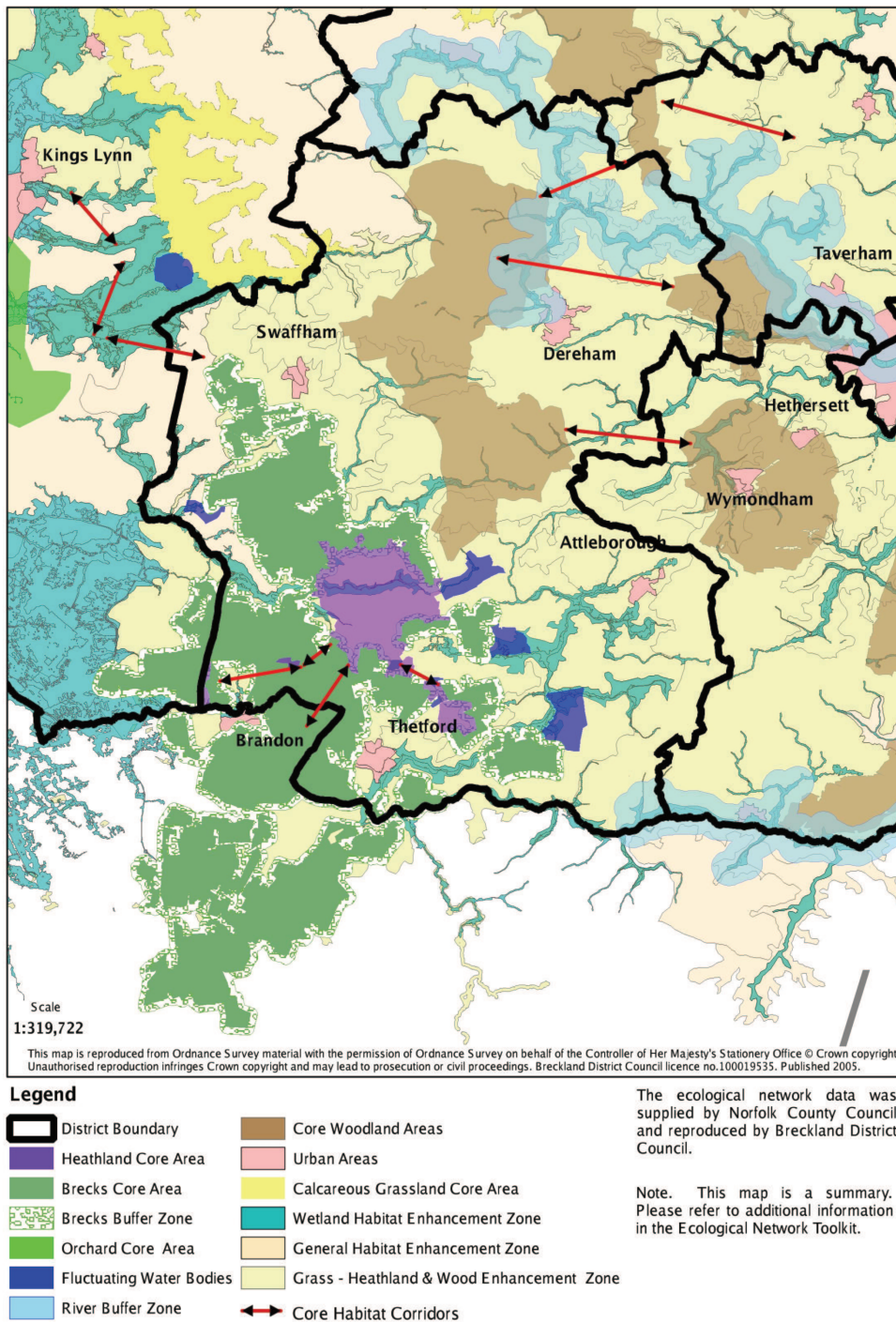
**3.75** Much of Norfolk has suffered a dramatic reduction in biodiversity. A significant cause of this has been the rise of intensive agriculture over the past 60 years alongside the development of housing and infrastructure. Once extensive areas of habitats now comprise small remnants isolated from each other. With so much of the region's wildlife fragmented in small and isolated habitats, there are significant consequences for its long-term survival. One approach to safeguarding wildlife in the long term is that of the Ecological Network – comprising of:

- Core areas – clusters of high value wildlife sites
- Buffer areas – surrounding the core areas to reduce the adverse impacts from adjacent land-uses
- Enhancement areas – focus on habitat creation
- Corridors and stepping stones – promote connectivity between sites and through wider landscape

**3.76** The planning process, through allocations in subsequent DPDs and development control offers the opportunity to integrate the concept of an Ecological Network into local planning and seek to conserve, restore and re-establish habitats and create linking corridors. The following map at figure 3.3 shows the Ecological Network in Breckland and the surrounding Districts.



Figure 3.3 Breckland District Ecological Network Summary Map







## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

**3.77** New development also provides the opportunity to improve and enhance the biodiversity of the area, either by incorporating areas of biodiversity value into new development or by creating new areas as part of the design process. Failure to enhance these opportunities will significantly diminish the potential for the district to be enhanced as it develops.

**3.78** The Breckland Environment Strategy commits Breckland to promote good ecological and sensitive management practice on Council owned and private land to ensure that the integrity of the valuable areas that make up the Ecological Network is maintained.

**3.79** In addition to Breckland's ecological assets, Breckland contains some unique geodiversity. There are a number of SSSIs designated for geological interest and one Regionally Important Geological Site at Newton - by Castle Acre Chalk Pit. Geodiversity can be lost through landfill, new development and aggregates extraction. However development can also provide the opportunity to improve and enhance the geodiversity of the area by retaining small sections as part of the design process and/or by rescue sediment logging.

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### 3.3.2 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

#### Policy CP 11

##### Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

The landscape of the District will be protected for the sake of its own intrinsic beauty and its benefit to the rural character and in the interests of biodiversity, geodiversity and historic conservation. Development should have particular regard to maintaining the aesthetic and biodiversity qualities of natural and man-made features within the landscape, including a consideration of individual or groups of natural features such as trees, hedges and woodland or rivers, streams or other topographical features.

The release of land in Breckland will have regard to the findings of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment to ensure land is released, where appropriate, in areas where the impact on the landscape is at a minimum. Development should also be designed to be sympathetic to landscape character, and informed by the LCA.

High protection will be given to the Brecks landscape, reflecting its role as a regionally significant green infrastructure asset. Proposals within the Brecks Landscape Character Areas will not be permitted where these would result in harm to key visual features of the landscape type, other valued components of the landscape, or where proposals would result in a change in the landscape character.

High protection will also be given to the River Valleys and Chalk Rivers in Breckland as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment, recognising their defining natural features, rich biodiversity and the undeveloped character of their shallow valleys.

The Council expects all development within the District to be of the highest design quality in terms of both architecture and landscape. It should have regard to good practice in urban design and fully consider the context within which it sits. It should embrace opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of an area and contribute to creating a sense of local distinctiveness.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.80** Breckland District has a remarkable landscape, including extensive parts of the regionally significant Brecks Heaths and woodland in the south and west of the District. Elsewhere the District is generally characterised by river valleys with their associated tributary farmland rising up to the clay plateau farmland which stretches from the Lophams in the south-east to Colkirk in the north-west. This remarkable landscape is considered to be an important resource, not only for its intrinsic character and beauty, but also its contribution to the rural character of the area and its essential contribution to the biodiversity of the District.

**3.81** A Landscape Character Assessment produced on behalf of the Council has identified a number of sub-types of landscape within the District. These landscapes have a varying capacity to accommodate new development depending on their nature and location without the development being significantly detrimental to the landscapes characteristics or defining features.

**3.82** In determining proposals for new development, regard shall be had to the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, ensuring that all proposals respect the key visual sensitivities of the landscape that are a fundamental part of its character. The integration of new development into the existing landscape will be expected to be achieved in all development proposals without causing harm to the features that define



them. The Council will give high protection to the River Valleys and Chalk Rivers from development that would harm their defining landscape characteristics, including mineral extraction and other incompatible restoration schemes.

**3.83** In Thetford, all development proposals will have regard to the findings of the Thetford Green Infrastructure Study, District-wide Landscape Character Assessment and Settlement Fringe Assessment as well as other supporting evidence recognising the need for regeneration in the town centre whilst ensuring that the historic environment is protected. Additional detailed policy dealing with townscape will be provided in the Thetford Area Action Plan.

**3.84** Significant regeneration will occur in Thetford; new development should be integrated into the existing historic fabric. Consideration will be given to the individual characteristics or group value of historic buildings and Conservation Areas, in particular the Castle Hill, Nunnery and Priory. Development that fails to make sufficient use of, or contribution to, the historic areas of the town will not be considered appropriate. Detailed guidance for development in Thetford will be published in the form of the Thetford Area Action Plan.

**3.85** Significant development is also proposed in town centres of Attleborough and Dereham. New development should be designed and built to a high standard to ensure that the character of the Conservation Area is preserved, and where possible enhanced. Proposals in Dereham should also have regard to the findings of the Dereham Green Infrastructure Study and Implementation Plan. The Site Specific Policies and Proposals Development Plan Document will set out in detail those areas which are of particular historic or conservation interest and need particular consideration as well as identifying opportunities for the enhancement of green infrastructure and specific policies relating to landscape and townscape.

**3.86** The attractiveness of the District's landscape and the large areas which are already accessible to the public place recreational and visitor demands on the countryside. A number of strategies seek to promote tourism and healthy lifestyles, utilising the opportunities which a rural district like Breckland offers. In the Breckland SPA area of the District there is a need to ensure sustainable levels of recreation in the countryside to prevent recreational pressure having an adverse impact on Annex 1 bird species. Breckland Council is committed through this Core Strategy, its other Development Plan Documents and wider corporate activities to manage sustainable access in those parts of the District. This will include close partnership working with the Forestry Commission, RSPB and Natural England to develop access management strategies for the Breckland SPA areas to prevent increasing visitor numbers in inappropriate and sensitive locations.

### 3.3.3 Energy

#### Policy CP 12

##### Energy

The Local Authority encourages and will support the provision of renewable and low-carbon technologies, including micro-renewables secured through new residential, commercial or industrial development.

Opportunities to deliver decentralised energy systems, particularly those which are powered by a renewable or low-carbon source, will be supported. Renewable and low-carbon, decentralised systems will be encouraged to support the sustainable development of major growth locations such as Thetford, Attleborough and Snetterton Heath.

Commercial scale renewable energy generation developments will be supported throughout the District. Large scale developments of this type will be subject to a comprehensive environmental assessment which will be based on the individual and unique circumstances of the case. When considering such assessments, regard will be given to the wider environmental benefits of providing energy from renewable sources as well as effects on amenities and the local environment. Where there is the potential to exploit a clear opportunity for the construction of renewable energy infrastructure, and a willing land-owner and developer is in place, the authority will consider making a specific allocation for renewable energy development through subsequent Development Plan Documents.

A significant proportion of the energy supply for substantial new developments will be expected to be gained from on-site and/or decentralised renewable or low-carbon energy sources. The threshold and requirement for the provision of on site or decentralised energy generation will be set out in the Development Control Policy on Energy Generation and Efficiency. Requirements will be expressed as a percentage of the anticipated energy requirement of the development; this percentage will be in line with regional and national policy. The threshold for, and magnitude of this requirement, may be altered by policies contained within subsequent Development Plan Documents where local constraints allow. Where there is a disparity between the generic development control policy and a site specific policy the latter will take precedence.

It is also expected that where there is an opportunity through the creation of decentralised or on-site energy systems to deliver a supply in excess of the percentage requirement, that the opportunity will be embraced in the interest of its wider benefit.

In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority will consider a reduction of percentage energy supply in order to ensure the rate of delivery of development is maintained.

#### Reasoned Justification

**3.87** The purpose of the policy is to promote the use of renewable energy and to set out the strategic mechanisms through which an increase in the use of renewable energy will be achieved.

**3.88** There is a national commitment to generate 10% of all electricity from renewable sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020. For the East of England the regional target is to have 1,192 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity for renewable energy generation by 2010 and 4,250 MW by 2020. There has been a significant amount of commercial scale renewable energy development in Breckland in the past, principally by way of wind turbines due to the availability of the wind resource locally this has the potential to continue. However,





the subject of wind energy is very emotive and a key issue is the visual and noise impact on the surrounding landscape/area. These or similar type of amenity issues may also equally apply to other types of commercial energy generation, e.g biomass.

**3.89** In addition to fully renewable sources of energy generation, there is significant evidence to support a change to low carbon forms of development that would tackle the causes of Climate Change.

**3.90** Schemes for decentralised renewable or low carbon commercial energy generation development will need to have particular regard to the impacts upon the visual amenities of the area or the residential amenity of neighbouring residents, this will include the consideration of all of the necessary supporting equipment or infrastructure. The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will set out local criteria for the consideration of commercial scale renewable energy generation developments.

**3.91** The Housing Green Paper *Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable* sets out governments commitment to achieving zero carbon new homes by 2016. This target will be achieved by staggered changes to the Building Regulations in order to reduce carbon emissions by 25% by 2010, 44% by 2013 and reaching zero carbon in 2016. Policies will not be put in place that replicate or cut across matters within the scope of other legislation.

**3.92** The East of England Plan sets out a requirement for 10% of on-site renewable energy generation. Through the Development Control process the Council will apply this requirement. The Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will set out the local requirements for renewable energy generation. When allocating sites for development through subsequent Development Plan Documents, the Council will consider whether there are local circumstances that would allow for a higher target to be achieved. This could take the form of greater on-site provision or contributions to a larger renewable energy scheme that would provide a greater net gain of renewable energy. Where such circumstances allow the Council will impose these additional site specific policies on the provision of renewable energy as part of an allocation.



### 3.4 Accessibility

**3.93** This section covers the higher strategic theme of enhancing accessibility to services to reduce need to travel and inequalities in access. It deals specifically with requirements for travel infrastructure, connection to existing services and facilities and the protection and enhancement of services in the rural villages.

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### 3.4.1 Accessibility

#### Policy CP 13

##### Accessibility

New growth in Breckland will be delivered to promote accessibility improvements. This principle is promoted through the balanced distribution of housing and employment throughout the District, but will also be delivered through the following mechanisms set out below.

Within the Key Centre for Development and Change and in the market towns, cycleway and pathway networks will be developed to improve choice of travel and to ensure safe access to developments on foot and by bicycle. Improvements to public transport networks will be encouraged and the essential infrastructure for their operation will be delivered through the transport authority and contributions levied from significant development. The emphasis on the provision of these alternative forms of transport will be balanced against the necessity to make suitable provision for the private car as a reflection of its important position as a method of transport for those residing or working in isolated rural areas. This provision should take the form of adequate parking provision for residential and commercial developments throughout the District.

The development of schools and other training facilities will need to be developed in conjunction with education and training services to accommodate the needs of the growing populations. Such facilities should be located in appropriate areas to allow for ease of access by multiple methods of transportation.

In addition to education facilities, health, community, sports and recreation facilities (including public open space) will also need to be provided to meet the needs of the growing population. These developments should also be sited in areas that allow for ease of access by a variety of methods. Open space should be integrated within developments as a preference to ensure easy access by foot.

To complement the encouragement of alternative modes of transportation, significant emphasis will be given to the design of public spaces, streets and neighbourhoods. Design should promote the use of these areas through the use of appropriate lighting and natural surveillance.

In addition to these mechanisms, all new development will need to be integrated within existing or proposed transport infrastructure to further ensure choice of transportation method and enhance the potential accessibility benefits derived from the growth. Support will also be given to demand-responsive public transport as part of the wider strategy to improve accessibility, particularly in the rural area.

The concentration of development advocated by the proposed distribution and the improvements to travel choice and accessibility promoted through the above mechanisms will promote modal shift and will reduce reliance on the private car and a change to sustainable modes of transport as far as is practicable in a widely dispersed rural District.

Travel Plans should be submitted for major schemes <sup>(2)</sup> or those schemes where there are significant transport implications, such as those where a Transport Assessment is required.

In accordance with the criteria set out in Policy CP4 Infrastructure, there will be a requirement to provide elements of key infrastructure at the appropriate juncture of the development process to ensure that needs of the population are met.

2 thresholds as defined in annex D of Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport

The Council will identify and protect strategically important transport routes as Corridors of Movement in order to ensure that development does not prejudice their ability to carry long-distance traffic.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.94** Breckland is a rural area with a large number of dispersed villages, as a result geographic isolation can be a problem. For many there is no, or very minimal, public transport service available; for many others the fixed routes or timetables of public transport services do not meet their needs. This lack of availability of alternatives to the private car has meant that many groups and individuals are excluded from job opportunities and services. In addition to these issues, many journeys are chains involving multiple interchanges. If any part of that interchange becomes unavailable then the whole journey becomes inaccessible.

**3.95** The Spatial Strategy for the District promotes balanced growth in jobs and housing coupled with improvements in services and facilities primarily focused around the Key Centre for Development and Change (Thetford) and the other market towns. This strategy should help to enhance the self containment of these settlements and improve the accessibility of jobs and services not only to their residents but also to those in their hinterland. However, locating housing, jobs and services close together is only one aspect of tackling accessibility. Individual and cumulative developments will also have to ensure that sufficient physical infrastructure is provided to ensure that accessibility benefits are realised.

**3.96** The Local Planning Authority, in partnership with the Local Transport Authority and the Highways Agency will develop further detailed transport evidence to assess transport options, mitigation and demand management measures associated with strategic growth locations identified in the Spatial Strategy. In addition, the Area Action Plans for Attleborough and Snetterton Heath and for Thetford will be supported by detailed Transportation Strategies which will examine the specific options for securing modal shift at these locations informed by transport partners including Network Rail and bus operators. In preparing transport options particular regard will be given to policies in the Local Transport Plan and successor documents.

**3.97** In order to deliver sustainable transport objectives, Travel Plans should be developed for major schemes and those schemes that are likely to have significant transport implications. These should be developed in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority.

**3.98** Where proposals are required to provide infrastructure early on in the development cycle, the Council will seek to ensure this is provided in a timely manner in order to minimise any harm that could be caused by its delay.

**3.99** In Breckland, the principal strategic routes that will form the basis for identification as 'corridors of movement' are as follows:

- A11
- A47
- A134
- A1075
- A1066
- A1065
- A1122
- A1067
- Mid-Norfolk Rail line
- Norwich to Cambridge Rail line





**3.100** The principles of the above policy will need to be considered for all new development and should be read in conjunction with the infrastructure policy of the Core Strategy and the open space and design policies of the Development Control Policies chapter. Area specific requirements for the provision of measures to promote accessibility will be set out in the subsequent Site Specific Policies and Proposals DPD and Area Action Plans.

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### 3.4.2 Rural Communities

#### Policy CP 14

##### Sustainable Rural Communities

Village and countryside communities will be supported by appropriate development in order to make them more sustainable. The Local Service Centre villages identified in the Spatial Strategy will be the focus for service provision and enhancement in the rural areas and will accommodate the scales of development set out in the distribution policies. In the smaller villages and rural communities the type and scale of development will reflect the need to maintain the vitality of these communities.

##### Housing

In villages not identified for a specific level of growth in the settlement hierarchy, residential development will only be permitted where:

- a. There are suitable sites available inside the limits of a defined settlement boundary; or
- b. It is an affordable housing scheme for local needs in accordance with the Council's 'exceptions site policy'; or
- c. It involves the appropriate re-use of a rural building; or
- d. It provides a site for gypsy and travellers or travelling showpeople; or
- e. It is a dwelling required in association with existing rural enterprises where it complies with the requirements of national guidance in relation to new dwelling houses in the countryside; or
- f. It is a replacement of an existing dwelling.

##### Rural Settlement Boundaries

Settlement boundaries will be defined for rural communities as shown on the Proposals Map. The settlement boundaries will be reviewed as part of the Site Specifics Policies and Proposals Development Plan Document. The basis of the review process will be the rationalisation of settlement boundaries to result in more logical and defensible boundaries by addressing the following:

- g. To focus new development to sustainable locations where there are key local services; and
- h. To protect the form and character of a settlement from inappropriate proposals, including backland development; and
- i. To facilitate the inclusion of adjoining brownfield sites and small-scale sites (5 units); and
- j. To facilitate the removal of boundaries within the Stone Curlew buffer.

##### Protection of Local Services

Key local services for the rural communities include: convenience stores for the supply of day-to-day goods (including farm shops), post office, pub, primary school, healthcare facilities, indoor sport facilities, petrol filling stations and public transport. Such services will be supported and their enhancement or the provision of new services encouraged. Where necessary, key services will be protected from the pressures of development. Where new services are proposed in rural villages that fulfil a community need and can demonstrate reducing rural isolation, they will be supported.

##### Employment in the Countryside



The diversification of existing rural enterprises and the development of new enterprises where a rural location is either environmentally or operationally justified will be supported, provided there are no significant detrimental environmental, landscape, conservation or highway impacts.

### Reasoned Justification

**3.101** Breckland has many small villages distributed throughout the District. Unlike the market towns, the character of these villages can be significantly affected by relatively minor development. Shops, pubs, garages and other small businesses provide a vital community role in small settlements. Day to day services can struggle to remain viable in rural areas against a background of competition from higher order settlements and a buoyant housing market can make residential re-development of a village shop or business very attractive and profitable. People in villages increasingly have to travel further to meet their everyday needs. The loss of services can particularly affect those people without the ability to travel easily e.g the elderly and the young, the low paid and the unemployed.

**3.102** In order to maintain a level of local services, key local services will be protected through the planning process in order to support their retention and alleviate re-development pressures. For the purposes of this policy, a key local service will be anything that the Council considers to be essential to the ongoing vitality of a village or settlement and will include, as a minimum, all convenience stores for the supply of day-to-day goods, post offices, pubs and garages which have an element of convenience retailing necessary to the vitality of the village. The criteria that will need to be met for the re-development of a key local service is set out in Development Control Policies. It is important to note that this element of the strategy is coupled with the delivery of new development in the market towns and key local service centres as advocated in the Spatial Strategy. This will improve the service offer of these settlements and will have hinterland benefits in terms of improving proximate service offer to the smaller rural villages.

**3.103** The protection of services is only one element of ensuring sustainable rural communities develop and prosper in Breckland. The other element, as related to planning, is the support for appropriate development in the rural areas. This is in part delivered through the development strategy with focused growth in the identified local Service Centre villages, but will also be encouraged through appropriate development as defined in the policy in suitable rural settlements. It is important that rural isolation and unsustainable service delivery is not perpetuated through development in settlements with few or no facilities. A review of the rural settlement boundaries will be undertaken through the Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document and will be based upon the criteria defined within the Core Policy.

**3.104** Also allied to the achievement of sustainable rural communities is the support for appropriately located economic development, including rural tourism. The promotion of economic development will need to be tempered against the necessity to protect the countryside and the environment, and promote sustainable modes of transport. Therefore economic development in the countryside will only be supported where the operation of the business necessitates the locations, represents a sustainable solution to an identified need and is in line with national policy. Specific criteria for economic development in the countryside and the diversification of farming enterprises is contained in the Development Control Policies.

## 4 Development Control Policies

**4.1** The Spatial Vision for Breckland, the Spatial Strategy, Objectives and the Core Policies form the overarching framework that will manage development in Breckland up until 2026. The Development Control Policies build on the framework set out in the Spatial Strategy and Core Policies and provide detailed guidance to be used in determination of planning applications. The Development Control Policies are integral to the delivery of the Spatial Vision, Strategy and Objectives of the Local Development Framework (LDF).

**4.2** General advice on the scope and content of the Development Control Policies is contained in PPS 12 (Local Development Frameworks) It states that the LDF should include a limited set of policies which should be clear, concise, and easily understood. It advises that the Development Control Policies should ensure that development conforms with the Spatial Vision and Objectives, but that Local Planning Authorities should not produce a compendium of use-related policies, which can be repetitive and quickly become out of date. The focus should be on topic-related policies.

**4.3** The Development Control Policies of the Breckland District LDF aim to deliver the development needs of the District, protect its natural resources, enhance and protect the natural and built environment, promote accessibility and equality throughout the District.

**4.4** As with the Core Policies, the following Development Control Policies are categorised into "Higher Strategic Themes" identified through the Spatial Objectives. It is notable that the higher strategic theme of natural resources does not occur as an exclusive sub-section in the Development Control Policies. Many of the objectives of this theme will be wholly delivered through the application of the Core Policies. In the circumstances where elements of this theme needed a Development Control Policy response the particular spatial objectives has been disseminated into other policies of the document. This dissemination is reflected in the summary tables which follow each policy and explain the relationship to particular strategic objectives.

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## 4.1 Protection of Amenity

### Policy DC 1

#### Protection of Amenity

For all new development consideration will need to be given to the impact upon amenity. Development will not be permitted where there are unacceptable effects on the amenities of the area or the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants, or future occupants of the development site. When considering the impact of the development in terms of the amenities of the area and residential amenity, regard will be had to the following issues;

- a. Overlooking and/or privacy loss.
- b. Dominance or overshadowing.
- c. Odour, noise, vibration or other forms of disturbance.
- d. Other forms of pollution (including contaminated land, light pollution or the emission of particulates).
- e. Important features or characteristics of the area; or.
- f. Quality of the landscape or townscape.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.5** The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the delivery of sustainable housing, employment and infrastructure improvements across the District is not significantly detrimental to its amenities or that of its residents.

**4.6** The Local Development Framework is promoting a step-change in the scale of development in Breckland. This step-change will result in significant levels of house building, commercial and industrial development and all the associated service and infrastructure provision. The impact of this scale of development on a rural District such as Breckland needs to be carefully controlled so that the natural and built environment, and the well-being of communities and businesses are not adversely affected by the change. Therefore, this policy will apply to all forms of development within the District, including changes of use.

**4.7** The development of land and buildings presents the opportunity to provide improvements to the social and economic well-being of everyone living, working or visiting the District. The protection of the character of the District landscapes and townscapes and its historic and natural environment will ensure that people can continue to enjoy the unique amenities of the District. The protection of the amenities of the District is not only key to the social well-being of the District, but also its economic well-being. If Breckland is to develop as an economic force in the region then it must be promoted as an attractive place to work as well as live and the District's environmental and cultural assets are key to this promotion.

**4.8** For the sake of clarity, in the context of this policy, amenity is defined as those desirable features of a place that ought to be protected in the public interest. This might include protection of the visual appearance of the landscape or townscape; or in terms of residential amenity this might be the protection of a suitable level of privacy, or safeguarding from excessive noise or light pollution. In considering forms of disturbance, this consideration will include, *inter alia*, the effect of increased heavy goods traffic from a proposed development and issues of shadow flicker as a result of a wind turbine development.



## 4.2 Housing, Employment and Regeneration

**4.9** This section sets out the specific Development Control Policies which relate to the higher strategic theme of Housing, Employment and Regeneration. This section follows on from Core Policies 1 - 7, which sought to set out the scale and distribution of development, needs for infrastructure and strategy for the town centres. The Development Control Policies within this section set out the detailed criteria for the assessment of planning applications for housing, employment, tourism and town centre proposals. These policies only form part of the overall development strategy for the District and therefore need to be read in conjunction with all other relevant Core and Development Control Policies of the Local Development Framework.

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## 4.2.1 Principles of New Housing Development

### Policy DC 2

#### Principles of New Housing

Within the settlement boundaries as defined on the proposals map, new housing development will be permitted.

To deliver the Core Policy relating to housing mix and density, the Council will apply the following principles:

#### An appropriate density of housing.

- a. The design and layout will optimise the density of the development to a level which is acceptable for the locality. Proposals for high density developments (above 40 dwellings per hectare) will be encouraged at appropriate locations, including the centres of the towns, areas with good public transport accessibility and sustainable urban extensions.
- b. In rural locations and at the edges of settlements where it can be demonstrated that there is a combination of local character (including environmental features) and limited accessibility factors, proposals for lower density development will be permitted (22-30 dwellings per hectare).

#### An Appropriate Mix and Type of Housing

- c. All residential proposals will secure an appropriate mix of dwelling size, type and tenure in order to meet the needs of Breckland's citizens and create sustainable communities. The precise mix will be based on the findings of the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, an analysis of the local housing mix and the need to deliver lifetime homes.
- d. Mixed-use schemes including residential development will be encouraged provided that satisfactory living accommodation is secured.
- e. Proposals for residential annexes will be supported provided that the proposed accommodation is well-related to the main dwelling and the scale of the annexe does not dominate the existing dwelling.

### Reasoned Justification

**4.10** The purpose of the policy is to deliver sustainable housing provision across the District by improving rates of provision, securing the best mix of housing and ensuring that new homes meet the requirements of a growing number of smaller and/or elderly households.

**4.11** The two principles outlined in the policy seek to deliver the Spatial Strategy through the efficient use of land (Spatial Objective 1) and to deliver a mix of housing types and sizes to meet need (Spatial Objective 2).

**4.12** The Government expects that all new housing should be developed at no less than 30 dwellings per hectare (net). Higher density housing developments are encouraged in areas with good access to public transport, services and facilities consistent with the wider aims of sustainability, including reducing the need to travel. Within the Breckland context, it is considered that the main towns and Local Service Centre villages identified in Core Policy CP1 fulfil these expectations. Higher density housing should not be discouraged in other areas of the District, however it is important that in these locations the design of new housing is of a

high standard and respects local character. Where high density development is being proposed the accompanying Design and Access Statement should set out why high density is appropriate and its merits in terms of design, character and sustainability for the locality.

**4.13** Conversely, at the edge of rural settlements and in some parts of the urban settlements in Breckland, the density of existing residential development is lower than 30 dwellings per hectare consistent with the character of a rural area. Typically, development in smaller rural settlements in Breckland is between 22 and 30 dwellings per hectare and in some cases is much lower. There will be exceptional circumstances in the interest of character and wider sustainability issues, such as accessibility, where it will be appropriate to secure density of development consistent with 22-30 dwellings per hectare. In such cases the onus will be on the applicant through the accompanying Design and Access Statement to demonstrate why a density below 30 dwellings per hectare has been selected and the merits in terms of design, character and sustainability.

**4.14** PPS3 requires a mix of housing sizes and tenures to be provided in order to achieve balanced housing markets. On all residential developments, the proposed balance of housing will reflect the mix identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment, in order to sustain mixed communities.

**4.15** Requiring all new developments to provide a range of housing sizes will help to ensure that development contributes to achieving social inclusion and a balanced housing market. This will enable a wider choice of housing for Breckland's citizens to help meet identified needs, including the growing requirement for lifetime homes.

**4.16** Additionally, as part of a sustainable approach to using land, mixed use developments and the efficient use of existing buildings will be promoted through the LDF. Residential uses can make a valuable contribution to mixed use schemes provided that satisfactory living accommodation is secured in terms of fire safety and means of escape, size, amenity, facilities, open space, appearance and general outlook. Within settlement boundaries, live-work units will also be encouraged as part of an approach to securing the best use of land provided the amenity of surrounding properties is protected.

**4.17** In the context of the scale of housing need and demographics reflecting greater numbers of single elderly and young people in Breckland, residential annexes will be supported in principle as a means of providing ancillary accommodation. To ensure that proposals for annexes are genuine efforts to provide additional accommodation and not an attempt to develop self-contained units, close scrutiny will be given to the design, layout and relationship to the existing dwelling. Preference will be given to the re-use of existing buildings within the residential curtilage and where necessary the applicant will be required to enter a condition or legal agreement to ensure that the annexe remains ancillary to the original dwelling. Any unit should consist of not more than the minimum level of accommodation required to support the needs of the occupant.





## 4.2.2 Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside

### Policy DC 3

#### Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside

The replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- a. The scale of the replacement is not disproportionate to the original dwelling; and
- b. Evidence is provided that the use of the dwelling has not been abandoned; and
- c. The replacement dwelling is located within the existing curtilage, unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative location would be visually less prominent; and
- d. The size and design of the replacement is appropriate to the landscape character of the location; and
- e. There is no increase in the number of units.

Extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where the extension does not result in a dwelling that is disproportionate to the scale of the original dwelling and the size and design of the extension are appropriate to the landscape character of the location.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.18** The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies that the greatest need for housing in the District is for smaller properties. This policy gives protection to traditional smaller properties in the countryside, therefore helping to meet the objective of providing appropriate housing for the needs of the population.

**4.19** To help protect the character of the Breckland countryside extensions and replacements of dwellings need to be controlled in terms of scale and design. Large extensions to dwellings and replacement dwellings can individually and cumulatively adversely effect the character of the countryside over time.

**4.20** In determining what constitutes as a "disproportionate scale", account will be taken of the extent to which the dwelling has been previously extended, or could be extended under Permitted Development rights and the character of the area. For the purposes of this policy 'original' is defined as the dwelling as it was built or as it existed as of the 1st July 1948.

### 4.2.3 Affordable Housing Principles

#### Policy DC 4

##### Affordable Housing Principles

To meet District housing needs the Council will apply the following principles:

40% of the total number of housing units will be provided and maintained as affordable housing within all new residential development on sites which the Local Planning Authority determines:

- a. Has a capacity for 5 or more dwellings; or
- b. Comprises of an area of 0.17ha or larger

The policy will be applied to all sites and proposals which, individually or as part of a wider but contiguous site in the same ownership and/or control, could accommodate a level of development that would meet the above thresholds.

In assessing the suitability of affordable housing the Council will require that:

- c. The affordable housing will be provided as built units on site; and
- d. The mix, size, type and tenure of affordable homes will meet the identified housing need of Breckland as established by Housing Needs Surveys and Assessments; and
- e. The affordable housing shall comprise of a mix of social rented accommodation and intermediate housing consistent with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment; and
- f. The affordable housing is integrated into residential layouts so as to provide for a distribution of affordable housing within the development site that will enhance community cohesion; and
- g. Developers and owners enter into planning obligations in order to provide the affordable housing and to ensure its availability to initial and successive occupiers.

The 40% requirement and the precise mix may only be reduced where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that existing physical constraints on the site, in addition to the 40% requirement, will result in extraordinary costs which the development could not reasonably be expected to bear.

In exceptional circumstances off-site contributions in lieu of built units on site will be considered where evidence is provided to the Council's satisfaction that wider sustainability advantages would be secured and existing physical constraints will result in extraordinary costs which make the provision of on-site units unviable.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.21** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that a level of affordable housing is provided through developments to meet the housing needs of the District's population.

**4.22** Housing provision has been identified as a key priority for Breckland Council. The Breckland Housing Needs Survey (2007) identifies a net affordable housing requirement of 964 units per year. This compares with a total annual dwelling requirement of 780 units per year. Therefore, in order to assist in meeting the identified need, help create a balanced housing market and provide a decent home for all, the Council will be seeking the provision of affordable housing on new housing sites over certain thresholds.



**4.23** The Housing Needs Study recommends that the level of need in Breckland is sufficient to justify an affordable housing target of 40% on eligible sites. Historically target levels have been in the order of between 10% and 30% and this has been insufficient to make significant in-roads in meeting housing need in the District. In view of the high level of need compared with total housing requirement, a relatively high affordable housing target is considered to be appropriate.

**4.24** The percentage of affordable housing on new developments with a capacity of 5 or more dwellings will be 40% of total provision. The East of England Plan requires that affordable housing provision must constitute at least 35% of housing supply in all authority areas after the plan's adoption. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment recommends that the level of need in Breckland is sufficient to justify an affordable housing target of 40% on eligible sites. Breckland is within the Rural East Anglia Housing sub-region and a target of 40% provision would be consistent with the sub-regional priorities and actions necessary for achieving a balanced housing market.

**4.25** The threshold for affordable housing seeks to ensure that as many sites as possible contribute to affordable housing, and the starting point will be for provision to be made on-site. Evidence demonstrates that this is a viable threshold and would yield at least one affordable unit for every two market dwellings. The percentage requirement will only be negotiated where it can be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that there are exceptional physical constraints on the site which render the above provision unviable. The likely physical constraints could include ground contamination, land stability or extraordinary infrastructure costs necessary to prepare the site for development (e.g. significant flood defences). Any case which aims to demonstrate that a site cannot viably support affordable housing provision must be accompanied by a professional assessment of the site conditions and a separate professional assessment by a quantity surveyor or similar on the development economics of the site, to enable the Council to determine the validity of any exception case and whether a reduced or off-site contribution may be viable.

**4.26** In exceptional circumstances there may be scenarios where on-site affordable housing provision is not viable, practical or suitable in wider sustainability terms. In cases of viability the Council will require a professional assessment by a quantity surveyor or similar on the development economics of the site. Practicalities such as management issues may also result in commuted sums or off-site provision being more preferable. In such cases the Council will need to be satisfied that either the proposed development cannot practicably accommodate an element of affordable housing on-site or there is evidence that the scale and location of provision is unlikely to be adopted by a Registered Social Landlord. In all cases where off-site contributions or commuted sum payments are being proposed, the Council will give strong consideration to the likelihood of delivery and the risk of non-provision arising from the absence of on-site provision. Proposals promoting off-site provision will be required to address the risk of non-delivery and provide assurance to the Council that there is a realistic prospect that affordable housing can be delivered.

#### 4.2.4 Affordable Housing on Exception Sites

### Policy DC 5

#### Affordable Housing on Exception Sites

In order to meet local rural housing need, new affordable housing development may be permitted in Local Service Centre villages and other rural settlements of 3,000 population or less, on small sites which would not otherwise be released for housing, where:

- a. There is a proven need in the parish or individual settlement for affordable housing; and
- b. The size of the site and the mix of dwelling sizes and tenure on the site reflects the identified need;
- c. The scheme ensures that all dwellings will remain available as affordable housing and exclusively for local need, in perpetuity and that the necessary management of the scheme can be permanently secured;
- d. The site is well related to facilities and services within the existing settlement;
- e. It can be demonstrated that there is no land available within the settlement boundary that is suitable for the number and type of housing proposed; and
- f. The site is adjacent to the defined settlement boundary.

In the case of small rural settlements where there is no settlement boundary, proposals for affordable housing will be permitted where:

- g. The above criteria (a) to (c) inclusive can be met; and
- h. It has been demonstrated through additional evidence that the need cannot be met in a more sustainable settlement; and
- i. The scale of the proposal is commensurate with the level of service provision.

Where permission for affordable housing is granted on exception sites, the Council will seek a Planning Obligation to ensure affordable housing is maintained to meet the identified needs of occupants in perpetuity. Details will be needed of the legal mechanism proposed to achieve these requirements. The Council will also consider the need to remove Permitted Development rights to help ensure that dwellings meet the identified needs of occupiers.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.27** The purpose of this policy is to ensure the need for affordable housing in the rural areas is provided for.

**4.28** This policy provides for the development of affordable housing in areas that would not normally be acceptable for residential development. This approach ensures that in exceptional circumstances affordable housing can be brought forward to meet local housing need without incurring the considerable expenses associated with developing on land specifically allocated for private market housing. This approach can help to deliver the amount of affordable housing required to meet the District's housing needs, as identified in the Housing Needs Surveys and can contribute towards the creation of balanced communities.

**4.29** The key policy test for affordable housing on exception sites is that it meets an identified local housing need. Therefore, any proposal for this type of development will need to be accompanied by evidence of a local housing need, preferably taking the form of an up-to-date Parish needs survey. The scale and mix of housing proposed on an exception site must reflect the identified need. Proposals will be subject to a Planning Obligation which ensures that the housing will be managed to meet the needs of local people in perpetuity.





**4.30** Where appropriate, as in the case of exception sites in small rural communities or where local characteristics dictate, Permitted Development rights will be removed to ensure that the stock of affordable housing remains appropriate to the identified need and / or the exception site does not become unacceptably harmful to the landscape, or character of the periphery of a rural settlement.

**4.31** To avoid causing unnecessary harm to the character of the District's landscape or its rural settlements, opportunities to meet identified housing needs by providing affordable housing on land within the development boundary should be explored before an exception site is considered. Only when it is demonstrated that there is no suitable site inside a defined settlement boundary can sites outside, but adjoining the boundary be considered. Sites for affordable housing will still need to be well-related to village facilities and key local services even if they are outside the settlement boundary. When considering proposals for exception sites adjoining the outside of a defined settlement boundary, preference will be given to previously-developed land where the affordable housing scheme would represent a significant environmental improvement.

**4.32** In the rural settlements that do not have a defined settlement boundary, exceptions sites will only be permitted in order to meet a specific local need that cannot be met in a more sustainable manner elsewhere. In such cases, the Council will expect detailed evidence of the specific need supplemented by a reasoned justification of why the receptor settlement represents the most sustainable option having had regard to issues such as reducing the need to travel, maintaining the viability of rural communities and local social and economic connections.

## 4.2.5 General Employment Areas

### Policy DC 6

#### General Employment Areas

Sites that are identified as General Employment Areas on the proposals map will be protected for employment use. Proposals to accommodate new employment development<sup>(3)</sup> will be permitted on General Employment Areas where:

- a. It is not a town centre use<sup>(4)</sup>, unless the location is sequentially preferable and need has been demonstrated; and
- b. It will not undermine the function of the wider employment area.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.33** In order to deliver the overall District employment targets in Core Policy CP3, a necessary component will be the protection of existing employment sites at appropriate locations to provide a sufficient choice to meet foreseeable employment needs. The protection of employment sites will help meet the requirements of a number of employment sectors over the plan period from small start-up enterprises through to the significant expansion of existing employers. The General Employment Areas as identified on the Proposals Map have been assessed as being attractive to the employment market, can realistically accommodate further employment development or are established for employment uses.

**4.34** A number of established employment locations have come under development pressure for changes of use to non-employment uses, principally retail and leisure, which can undermine town centre vitality or can pose a threat to existing employment enterprises. In addition to this policy, proposals for town centre uses as defined in PPS6 will also be considered in the context of retail policy, in particular the demonstration of need and the absence of a sequentially preferable location. Non-employment uses on established industrial estates can also create tension with existing users in terms of amenity and volumes of traffic and parking which can harm the ability of existing and appropriately located businesses to operate effectively. In applying this policy, the Local Planning Authority will take into account the nature of the existing employment area and the compatibility of the proposed use within that environment in order to maintain vibrant employment areas that meet the needs of business and general industrial sectors.

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3 Within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended, as well as other activities such as Builders Yards, Hire Businesses and Vehicle Sales which are unsuitable for Town Centre locations

4 As defined in PPS6 (2005), paragraph 2.39, which includes Use Class B1(a) offices



#### 4.2.6 Employment Development Outside of General Employment Areas

##### Policy DC 7

##### Employment Development Outside of General Employment Areas

Proposals for employment uses outside of the identified General Employment Areas and allocated sites will only be permitted where:

- a. It is demonstrated that there are no other suitable sites available on identified or allocated employment sites;
- b. There are particular reasons for the development not being located on an established or allocated employment site including:
  - i. The expansion of an existing business;
  - ii. Businesses that are based on agriculture, forestry or other industry where there are sustainability advantages to being located in close proximity to the market they serve; or
  - iii. Industries and / or businesses which would be detrimental to local amenity if located in settlements, including general employment areas.
- c. The development of the site would not adversely affect the type and volume of traffic generated.

##### Replacement of Rural Buildings

The replacement of rural buildings for B Use Classes as defined in the Use Classes Order<sup>(5)</sup>, may be considered acceptable where the proposal:

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

The authority will consider the need for appropriate measures in order to maintain the visual appearance and architectural character of buildings and prevent the proliferation of buildings in the countryside.

##### Reasoned Justification

**4.35** The majority of employment development will be provided for on established employment areas and the strategic employment allocations outlined in Policy CP3. However, in a rural District such as Breckland there will be a need to provide for those businesses which support the rural economy and improve opportunities for rural communities to live and work in close proximity. To support a working countryside, proposals for the expansion of existing rural businesses or for new businesses which are either related to rural activities (such as agriculture and forestry) or where there are clear sustainability advantages for businesses being located close to the market they serve, will be supported subject to the policies relating to environmental impact, accessibility and amenity. The demonstration of sustainability advantages should include evidence

5 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended



of reduced need to travel, re-use of previously-developed land or existing buildings and enhanced opportunities for rural communities to access employment in their locality. Such evidence should be professionally prepared and provided in a Sustainability Statement accompanying the proposal.

**4.36** Additionally, there are a number of businesses which, due to the nature of their activities, cannot reasonably be expected to locate on established employment areas which are often within or on the edge of built up areas. Such uses include those activities which would be detrimental to local amenity and therefore need to be located some distance from residential areas. A number of employment sites are provided for in the rural areas away from settlements, including Shipdham Airfield (Cranworth), Snetterton and Roudham and available land within these areas should be investigated in the first instance.

**4.37** In order to ensure that business development in the rural areas is sustainable and has minimal impact, proposals will be expected to make best use of previously-developed sites or the replacement of existing rural buildings. In the case of replacement buildings, the policy applies to large modern agricultural buildings which can be intrusive in landscape terms because their design and construction has been a specific response to agricultural requirements. The clear and substantial improvement in terms of size and scale requires that replacement buildings will have a significantly reduced volume and a reduced visual impact. To secure this objective, the Design and Access Statement accompanying replacement rural buildings for business use will, in detail, address criteria (d) to (f) inclusive and the requirements of planning policy relating to design, amenity and accessibility.





## 4.2.7 Tourism Related Development

### Policy DC 8

#### Tourism Related Development

##### Tourist Facilities

Proposals for tourist facilities will be permitted where:

- a. The need for the development can be justified;
- b. Proposals contribute to the tourism objectives of countryside strategies in Breckland;
- c. There are no significant effects on European habitats or species;
- d. The proposal is well related to Local Service Centre villages and villages with facilities; or
- e. The proposal involves the re-use of a rural building or sustainably located previously-developed land.

##### Tourist Accommodation

Proposals for tourist accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites and self-catering accommodation that need to be located in the countryside will be encouraged where:

- f. A need can be demonstrated for the proposal;
- g. The development forms part of a rural diversification scheme or is for the expansion of an existing attraction;
- h. It is well related to an existing settlement and facilities; and
- i. The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted through the use of conditions or legal agreements to ensure a tourist use solely and not permanent residential use.

Where a tourist related proposal involves new buildings in the countryside additional evidence will be required of:

- j. The sustainability advantages of requiring new buildings
- k. The particular countryside attraction that the new buildings will support; and
- l. The absence of suitable existing buildings in the vicinity.

In the case of hotel and motel accommodation, proposals will be permitted in the five market towns, using the sequential approach which focuses such uses to town centres as identified on the Proposal Map.

Proposals for hotel and motel accommodation outside of the identified town centres will only be permitted where the need for the development can be justified and where:

- m. It is a road related facility which primarily seeks to meet the needs of road users; or
- n. It involves the re-use of sustainably located existing rural buildings.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.38** Tourism is an important contributor to the Breckland economy and there is scope for the further growth of this sector of the economy. Breckland's environmental and heritage assets, including the heaths and woodlands of the Brecks, the traditional market towns and the general tranquility and remoteness of the

Breckland countryside are the particular factors which attract tourists to the area. Whilst it is recognised that some tourist development will seek to locate in the countryside, it is important that tourist related development takes place in a sustainable manner and does not adversely affect the Breckland environment which attracts tourist activity. The Brecks, Wensum Valley and Thetford Forest are attractive to many visitors for both day trips and longer visits. These areas are also protected for the important European habitats and species that they support. Proposals for significant tourism development that may have an effect on the Breckland SPA and the River Wensum and the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, will only be permitted where a site level Habitats Regulations Assessment can successfully demonstrate that there are no significant effects on qualifying features on these areas (as required by Habitats Regulations).

**4.39** Proposals for tourist accommodation in the countryside, including touring caravan and camping sites, will be supported where the evidence of need is provided. Proposals which are either allied to an existing and established tourist attraction or form part of a well-conceived and sustainable rural diversification scheme will be supported subject to other planning policies.

**4.40** In order to control the scale of tourism development to that which is genuinely needed in Breckland, all proposals for either tourist facilities or tourist accommodation will need to be accompanied by an assessment of the need for the development which includes: an analysis of market supply, need and demand (including evidence of similar establishments in the locality, their visitor numbers or occupancy rates); compliance with regional and local tourism strategies; and evidence about the accessibility of the proposal to the market need and demand.

**4.41** In the case of proposals in the countryside which do not involve the re-use of existing buildings, additional evidence will be required to demonstrate that there are no suitable existing buildings in the vicinity and the new buildings represent the most sustainable option in terms of their location and construction. In order to ensure that tourist accommodation in the countryside is sustainable it will need to be well-related to existing settlements and facilities such as shops and public houses which can benefit from tourism expenditure. A reasonable distance from facilities would be 1,600 metres which is approximately a 20 minute walk.

**4.42** Serviced accommodation in the form of hotels or motels needs to be carefully controlled in order to ensure that a large number of visitors are attracted to one single, sustainable destination. National planning policy identifies hotels and motels as town centre uses and therefore such uses are subject to the sequential approach. In a rural District such as Breckland there are opportunities for hotel accommodation to support the town centres and where applicable contributing to regeneration programmes. Exceptionally, there may cases for serviced tourist accommodation in the rural areas where the proposal represents the most sustainable option to meet a particular need because it is a road related facility meeting the needs of road users or it involves the re-use of sustainably located traditional rural building such as a complex of redundant farm buildings or a large country property. All proposals for serviced tourist accommodation will need to be accompanied by an assessment of the need for the development which includes: an analysis of market supply, need and demand (including evidence of similar establishments in the locality, their occupancy rates); compliance with regional and local tourism strategies; and evidence about the accessibility of the proposal to the market need and demand.



#### 4.2.8 Proposals for Town Centre Uses

### Policy DC 9

#### Proposals for Town Centre Uses

##### Primary Frontages

Proposals for retail development will be permitted within the primary frontage areas of the town centres. The change of use of ground floor Class A1 units to other Class A uses of the Use Classes Order<sup>(6)</sup> will only be permitted where:

- a. The proportion of other Class A units does not exceed 25% of the total number of units in the frontage;
- b. The number, frontage lengths and distribution of other Class A uses in the frontage does not result in any one over-concentration of non-retail uses detracting from the retail character;
- c. The proposed use will result in regular pedestrian footfall avoiding relative inactivity in the shopping frontage;
- d. The proposal does not prejudice the effective use of upper floors;
- e. The proposal retains or provides a shop front with windows and entrances which relate well to the design of the host building and to the street-scene and its setting.

##### Secondary Frontages

Proposals for town centre uses at ground floor level within classes A, B1(a), C1, D1 and D2 of Use Classes Order<sup>(7)</sup> will be permitted within the secondary frontage areas of town centres where the proposal, either cumulatively or individually, is considered to have no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the area. The change of use of ground floor premises to other uses, including residential, will only be permitted where:

- f. The proportion of non A, B1(a), C1, D1 and D2 units does not exceed 50% of the total frontage;
- g. The proposal does not prejudice the effective use of upper floors;
- h. The proposal would not irreversibly preclude the option to return the property or site to a retail or town centre use;
- i. The proposal retains or provides a shop front with windows and entrances which relate well to the design of the host building and to the street-scene and its setting.

Proposals for residential, leisure and office uses above premises in town centres will be supported in order to help increase the vitality of these areas throughout the day.

Development proposals in the defined town centres will also be supported where they represent the best opportunity to bring forward sites identified for redevelopment and improve the town centre environment. Proposals should demonstrate how the outcomes of other studies (such as Town Centre Health Checks and other town centre strategies) have been considered and can maximise benefits to the vitality, viability and environmental quality of town centres in the district.

6 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended

7 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended

## Reasoned Justification

**4.43** The policy seeks to positively support retail, leisure, entertainment, arts and cultural proposals within defined areas of the main town centres in Breckland. Within each town centre there is a defined Primary Shopping Area shown on the Proposals Map, within which primary and secondary retail frontages have been delineated. Street level frontages will be maintained for the types of business that attract people to town centres, with the emphasis being on protecting a core of retail activity at the heart of the town. Away from this primary area, a greater diversity of town centre uses will be permitted in adjoining areas with the emphasis on limiting residential development to ensure a mix of retail, services, leisure and culture.

**4.44** In protecting primary retail frontages, proposals that would result in more than 25% of the total number of units being non-retail will not be permitted. Where capacity exists to accommodate non-retail uses such as food outlets and financial services, the Local Planning Authority will seek to ensure that clusters of non-A1 uses do not dominate a particular part of a retail frontage resulting in areas of reduced activity or through their over-concentration will result in a particular amenity issue. Clusters of three or more non-A1 uses in any element of a primary frontage will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that the retail character is not harmed and there are no resultant amenity issues.

**4.45** In secondary retail frontages there will be a more flexible approach to encourage a greater mix of town centre uses. These areas, as defined on the Proposals Map, already contain a number of other non-retail uses. To help deliver a good mix of uses within the wider Primary Shopping Area, residential uses will be limited to 50% of the total length of secondary retail frontages. This will help to ensure that Breckland's town centres remain vibrant with many people visiting and using the town for many differing needs and requirements. The main town centres within the district have good access via a number of modes of transport, and continuing to support the growth and development of these centres will enable citizens to partake in multi-purpose trips.

**4.46** In order to ensure that town centres remain vibrant, residential and office uses above ground floor shops will be supported to ensure that people use town centres throughout the day and night, and this will provide for a diverse mix of uses and introduce greater opportunities to maximise the potential of town centres. This policy also allows for leisure and entertainment proposals to be permitted in town centres which complement the objective of ensuring vibrant town centres. This gives further opportunities to enhance the diversity of town centres by promoting the types of uses that will attract people to these areas.





#### 4.2.9 Telecommunications

### Policy DC 10

#### Telecommunications

#### Planning Applications

When considering planning applications for telecommunications development, regard will be had to the benefits of an effective telecommunications network and the individual nature of telecommunications technology. In addition planning permission will only be granted in cases where evidence is submitted which demonstrates, to the Council's satisfaction, that:

- a. The possibility of mast or site sharing has been fully explored;
- b. There are no alternative and preferable sites available in the locality that could reasonably accommodate the proposed telecommunications development, including existing antennae, buildings or structures;
- c. The proposal is in conformity with the latest national guidelines on radiation protection. This will include consideration for both the individual and cumulative effects of the apparatus having regard to any other significant Electro-Magnetic Field generators in the locality, and;
- d. There are no significant detrimental impacts upon the residential amenity of neighbours, the character and appearance of the locality, the safe and satisfactory functioning of the highway network or any other objective of the plan.

#### Prior Approval

Where a code system operator intends to install equipment under permitted development rights that are subject to the prior approval procedure, prior approval by the Planning Authority where there is considered to be a material impact in terms of the equipment's siting or appearance. Details of the apparatus will be required in respect of criteria (a) to (d) as listed above.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.47** This policy seeks to set out the conditions where new telecommunications apparatus will be permitted. The policy seeks to ensure that the Council can utilise its powers to influence an appropriate design and location where applicable.

**4.48** Modern telecommunications are considered to be an essential element in the life of local communities and for the local economy. Much of the telecommunications network has been long established, however relatively recent advances have led to an increase in the need for new infrastructure, i.e. mobile phone apparatus. Although the benefits of this infrastructure is recognised it is also necessary to ensure that the environmental impacts of new infrastructure is kept to a minimum. Therefore the Council will adopt a criteria based policy approach to the consideration of telecommunications infrastructure.

**4.49** For all new telecommunications development, the preference will be to accommodate new apparatus on existing masts and / or within existing telecommunication apparatus sites. If this is not possible new development should make use of other appropriate structures that are already present in the landscape,

unless this approach would have an inherently greater impact upon the landscape than that which would result from a new structure. For all telecommunication development proposals regard will be had to the impact of the apparatus on those amenities that ought to be preserved in the public interest.

**4.50** A commonly held concern over telecommunications apparatus is its impact upon health. It is the Government's firm view that the planning system is not the place to determine health safeguards. It remains central Government's responsibility to determine what measures are necessary to protect public health. In recognition of this standing advice the Council will seek assurances that all new development is in accordance with up to date national emission guidelines.

**4.51** Although larger scale telecommunications development requires the benefit of planning permission, there are many aspects which do not, as these enjoy permitted development status by virtue of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO). The Local Authority will require prior approval for such apparatus when there are considered to be significant impacts in terms of siting or appearance.

### **4.3 Environment**

**4.52** The Development Control policies in this section deal with the higher strategic theme of Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment of the District. This section follows on from Core Policies on the Environment which sought to protect the specific environmental or conservation assets of the District, preserve its wider landscape, ensure high design quality, protect the amenities of the built environment, and set out the principles for new renewable or decentralised energy generation and on-site energy generation in new developments.

**4.53** The Development Control policies of this section set out the criteria for the assessment of development proposals in terms of green infrastructure, trees and landscape, flood risk, the energy efficiency of new developments, commercial scale renewable energy generation developments, the design of new development, the protection of the historic environment and the conversion of buildings of particular historic or architectural interest. As with the Development Control policies under the higher strategic theme of Housing, Employment and Regeneration, these policies only form part of the overall development strategy for the district and therefore need to be read in conjunction with all other relevant Core and Development Control Policies of the Local Development Framework.



### 4.3.1 Open Space

#### Policy DC 11

##### Open Space

##### Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities

Development that would result in the loss of existing sport, recreational or amenity open space will only be permitted if:

- a. it can be demonstrated (through a local assessment) that there is an excess of recreational or amenity open space in the settlement and the proposed loss will not result in a current or likely shortfall during the plan period; and
- b. recreational facilities within the open space will be enhanced by the proposed development on an appropriate portion of the open space; or
- c. the community would gain greater benefit from the developer providing a suitable alternative recreational or amenity open space in an equally accessible and convenient location.

The development of existing open space with an ecological value (a known biodiversity or nature conservation interest) will not be permitted.

##### Outdoor Playing Space Contributions

All new residential development is expected to provide a contribution towards outdoor playing space equivalent to 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. For developments of 25 dwellings or more, or on sites of 0.8ha or more, open space should be provided on site with priority given to children's play space. For developments of fewer than 25 dwellings off site contributions will be required.

The 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population standard equates to 24m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor playing space per person. The 24m<sup>2</sup> is broken down to 16m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor sport area and 8m<sup>2</sup> of children's play space. Outdoor playing space will be required on site at the following levels:

- On sites of 25 dwellings and above - Minimum of 1 Local Area for Play (LAP)
- On sites of 50 dwellings and above - Minimum of 2 LAPs
- On sites of 80 dwellings and above - Minimum of 1 Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
- On sites of 200 dwellings and above - Minimum of 2 LEAPs + Outdoor Sport Area
- On sites of 400 dwellings and above - Minimum of 1 Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) + Outdoor Sport Area

Where it is not possible to make on-site provision of outdoor playing space, financial contributions for improvements to local facilities will be required. The level of contribution will be calculated in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix E 'Open Space Contributions'. For developments of less than 200 dwellings financial contributions for the off-site provision of outdoor sports will be required. For developments of less than 25 dwellings financial contributions for the off-site provision of children's play areas will be required.

In addition to the on-site and off-site contributions, a contribution will be required for 10 years maintenance of the facility. The contribution will be proportional to the type of facility provided and will be calculated in accordance with the criteria set out in the Breckland Open Space Assessment which will be reviewed periodically.

## Reasoned Justification

**4.54** The Breckland Council Open Space Assessment identified 542 sites that fall within the typologies of open space listed in PPG17<sup>(8)</sup>. These sites include; sports pitches, children's play areas, parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors, amenity greenspace, allotments, cemeteries and church yards. For the purposes of the policy 'open space' will cover all sites identified in the Open Space Assessment. The provision of new open space will be permitted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the development will not result in any adverse effects on European habitats or species, including possible issues of disturbance, lighting or any other effects that may harm qualifying features. This should be considered, where appropriate, through a Habitats Regulations assessment at site level.

**4.55** The Open Space Assessment identified serious deficiencies in the the provision of outdoor sports fields and children's play areas (Outdoor Playing Space) throughout the District, particularly in the five towns, when compared to the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) 2.4ha standard. To address this deficiency it is important that all new developments contribute to the provision of outdoor playing space in order to meet the needs generated by the development.

**4.56** The NPFA standard which consists of 1.6 hectares of outdoor sport provision per 1,000 people and 0.8 hectares of children's play areas per 1,000 people, will be applied to all new residential development. For developments of 25 or more dwellings, children's play areas will be provided on site in line with the standard. For developments of 200 or more dwellings, outdoor sport areas will be provided on site in line with the standard. Below these thresholds financial contributions for off-site provision will be required.

**4.57** The 2.4 hectare per 1,000 population standard equates to 24m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor playing space per person. The 24m<sup>2</sup> is broken down to 16m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor sport area and 8m<sup>2</sup> of children's play space. The population resulting from a particular development will be calculated using the occupancy rates set out below:

1 bedroom	=	1.5 persons
2 bedrooms	=	2 persons
3 bedrooms	=	2.5 persons
4 bedrooms	=	3 persons
5 or more bedrooms	=	3.5 persons

**4.58** Table 4.1 'Worked Example - Calculation of Outdoor Playing Space needs' shows a worked example of the outdoor playing space needs for various house sizes.

**Table 4.1 Worked Example - Calculation of Outdoor Playing Space needs**

Number of Bedrooms	Outdoor Sports needs (m <sup>2</sup> )	Children's Playing Area needs (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total Outdoor Playing Space needs (m <sup>2</sup> )
1	24	n/a	24
2	32	16	48
3	40	20	60
4	48	24	72

8 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation





Number of Bedrooms	Outdoor Sports needs (m <sup>2</sup> )	Children's Playing Area needs (m <sup>2</sup> )	Total Outdoor Playing Space needs (m <sup>2</sup> )
5 or more	56	28	84

**4.59** Where on-site provision is provided, such space should be of the appropriate type to serve the needs of the development and well related to the proposed residential properties and in accordance with relevant standards.

**4.60** For developments where it is not possible to provide outdoor playing space on-site, financial contributions for improvements to local facilities or provision of new facilities will be required. Off-site contributions are particularly important in the delivery of outdoor sport facilities where contributions from a number of developments would be needed due to the larger area of land required and the associated costs. The level of contribution will be calculated in accordance with the criteria set out in the Breckland Open Space Assessment which will be reviewed periodically. An example of this is shown in Appendix E 'Open Space Contributions'.

**4.61** In addition to these contributions, contributions will also be required for the maintenance and upkeep of the facility for a period of 10 years. This contribution can be calculated from the information available in the Breckland Open Space Assessment.

**Exceptions to the standard and contributions**

**4.62** Contributions in line with the 2.4ha standard will be required for all additional new residential units. This includes most specialised types of housing including agricultural dwellings, affordable housing, and staff accommodation.

**4.63** Replacement dwellings will not be asked to make a provision unless additional units are being created. If additional units are being created then the net gain of units will be subject to providing a contribution.

**4.64** Extensions to dwellings will not be subject to making a provision unless where new units of accommodation are being created. This is applied whether or not the unit is tied by condition to the main house, for example staff accommodation. Provision will not be sought where the unit is for a dependant relative, and a specific planning condition or obligation is attached, limiting the occupations use to that purpose.

**4.65** Permissions for temporary mobile homes will not be expected to provide open space.

**4.66** It is accepted that certain development will not create demand for all elements of open space requirements. For example the occupants of sheltered housing scheme, nursing homes, hostel accommodation where the occupancy is controlled would not be expected to use all children's play areas. In these cases it would not be appropriate for the District Council to apply that element of the standard. However, it is worth noting that although children's play area may not be appropriate there is an element of amenity area or communal space that could benefit residents of the new proposal. Such cases will be considered individually on their own merits.

**Table 4.2 Summary of Exceptions to Open Space Contributions**

Developments where the Council will seek to apply the play and outdoor sports space standard.	Development that is likely to be considered exceptions to the play and outdoor playing space standard.
All new dwellings	



Developments where the Council will seek to apply the play and outdoor sports space standard.	Development that is likely to be considered exceptions to the play and outdoor playing space standard.
Dwelling gains resulting from redevelopment	Replacement dwellings (on a one for one basis) i.e. no additional units.
Conversion, or part conversions creating additional independent residential units with separate facilities.	
	Extensions and annexes within the curtilage of a main property for dependant relatives.
	Sheltered housing schemes, nursing homes, controlled hostel accommodation.
Bed-sit accommodation with shared facilities.	
Permanent permission for mobile homes.	Temporary permission for mobile homes



### 4.3.2 Trees and Landscape

#### Policy DC 12

##### Trees and Landscape

Any development that would result in the loss of, or the deterioration in the quality of an important natural feature(s), including protected trees and hedgerows will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances where the benefit of development is considered to outweigh the benefit of preserving natural features, development will be permitted subject to adequate compensatory provision being made. The retention of trees, hedgerows and other natural features *in situ* will always be preferable. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable, replacement provision should be of a commensurate value to that which is lost.

Appropriate landscaping schemes to mitigate against the landscape impact of and complement the design of new development will be required, where appropriate.

Conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to secure landscaping schemes and the replacement of trees, hedgerows or other natural features or their protection during the course of development. Where necessary maintenance payments for new landscaping may be sought via planning obligation.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.67** This policy sets out the Council's aim to preserve the District's trees, hedgerows and other natural features and secure appropriate landscaping schemes to mitigate the impact of and complement new development.

**4.68** Trees, hedgerows and other natural features are an essential feature of Breckland's landscape; enhancing its visual amenities, the quality of the environment and providing a habitat for a range of wildlife. Certain landscape features can also help to reduce noise and can have benefits in terms of atmospheric pollution or flood mitigation.

**4.69** Where new development is proposed the preference will always be to incorporate natural features into the development. There may be instances where the loss of important natural features is unavoidable when providing development that will fulfil important objectives such as economic development or the provision of housing. Where the loss of such features is unavoidable adequate replacement provision of the same or greater value will be secured.

**4.70** A landscaping scheme will be required for all new residential or economic development. The purpose of a landscaping scheme that accompanies a development proposal should seek to mitigate against any detrimental landscape impact of the development and enhance the design of the development. Reasonable maintenance payments for new landscaping may be secured via planning obligation for new development proposals.

**4.71** All planning applications should be accompanied by a detailed site plan, drawn to scale, which shows the position of all existing natural features on or adjacent to the development site. This plan should be accompanied by a supporting statement that explains which features, if any, will be removed or cut back, and how any of these features will be protected during the course of the development. Where development is proposed that will have an impact upon one or more important tree specimens, the Council will expect any planning application to be accompanied by a tree survey that has been carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standard (currently BS5837:2005).



**4.72** Where appropriate, conditions will be imposed on a planning permission to require the replacement of a tree or other natural feature lost through development and the protection and/or retention of existing or newly planted natural features.

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### 4.3.3 Flood Risk

#### Policy DC 13

##### Flood Risk

New development should be located in areas at least risk of flooding. New development will be expected to minimise flood risk to people, property and places. Proposals which increase the risk of flooding to people, property or places, either directly or indirectly, will not be permitted in accordance with a risk-based approach.

New development will only be permitted in Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 & 3 and those areas deemed at risk from flooding by the District's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, where subject to the successful application of the sequential test:

- In Zone 2 - Uses are water compatible, less vulnerable, more vulnerable and essential infrastructure\*
- In Zone 3a - Uses are water compatible, or less vulnerable\*
- In Zone 3b - Uses are water compatible only\*.

All development proposals in areas at risk of flooding will be expected to provide a Flood Risk Assessment commensurate with the scale of the flood risk and recognising all likely sources of flooding.

Proposals for flood management or other infrastructure offering improvements that lower the risk of flooding will be supported, subject to the proposal having no other adverse effects on amenities, or the use of buildings or land which ought to be preserved within the public interest.

Suitable measures to deal with surface water arising from development proposals will be required to minimise the impact to and from new development. The preference is to manage surface water through the incorporation of SUDS unless this is not technically feasible, or where it can be demonstrated that ground conditions are unsuitable for such measures.

\*as defined in Annex D of PPS25 - Table D.1

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.73** The purpose of this policy is to minimise flood risks to new development and protect existing development from an increased flood risk resulting from new development. Although flood risk across the District is not a widespread problem, there is a risk that the significant development that will occur in the District has the potential to increase this flood risk. In addition, it is anticipated that the results of climate change may mean that in some areas the risk of flooding may increase. It is therefore important that the issue of flood risk is taken into account for all development proposals.

**4.74** PPS25<sup>(9)</sup> sets out the Government policy in relation to flood risk. PPS25 states that new development should be steered towards Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk). In preparing the Core Strategy, the Council commissioned consultants to prepare a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to refine information relating to the probability of flooding, reflect other sources of flooding (including ground water and surface water and others as set out in PPS25) as well as the impact of climate change. The Council has utilised the findings of

9 Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (December 2006)

the SFRA in determining the location of new growth through the Spatial Strategy in accordance with the sequential test to land at low risk of flooding, reflecting the limited areas of land in Breckland within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (Medium and High Probability).

**4.75** The Council's SFRA indicates that there are only limited areas of the District that are identified as having a medium or high annual probability of flooding (>0.1% or greater than 1 in 1,000 annual probability). The findings of the SFRA provide sufficient evidence that the scale of development in Breckland can be accommodated without the need to apply the Exception Test. In discharging its Development Control function, the Council will utilise the findings of the SFRA as well as the Environment Agency's Flood Zones to determine the appropriateness of proposals in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

**4.76** Any development that is proposed in an area that is at risk of flooding, or where the development is likely to increase the risk of flooding to another location, should be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Any proposed development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 will require a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), as well as proposals greater than 1 hectare in Flood Zone 1. All FRAs should be commensurate with the scale of risk identified. This is consistent with the requirements of PPS25 and the Environment Agency's Standing Advice. Development will not normally be permitted where it would result in an increase in the risk of flooding to another area, except where that increased risk is negligible.

**4.77** The preference for dealing with surface water drainage will be through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). This could include the use of systems such as living roofs, basins and ponds, swales or permeable surfaces. The Council will require as part of development proposals an assessment of ground conditions to determine the suitability of a site to utilise SUDS. The Council will also have regard to the findings of the Water Cycle Study in relation to the appropriateness of specific forms of SUDS in growth locations, recognising the potential impact of infiltration systems upon groundwater Source Protection Zones.

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#### 4.3.4 Energy Generation and Efficiency

##### Policy DC 14

###### Energy Generation and Efficiency

Sustainable building forms and construction will be promoted and supported. All new development will be expected to maximise the energy efficiency through the use of design, construction techniques, layout, orientation and massing, internal design, materials, insulation and heat recovery.

All new development above 1,000m<sup>2</sup>, or 10 units in the case of residential development will supply at least 10% of the energy they require through on-site and/or decentralised renewable sources. The sources that are used should be appropriate to the location of the development and may include, for example, such technologies as wind, biomass or photovoltaics.

Where the provision of renewable energy would make a development unviable a reduction in the 10% target of renewable energy will be considered. For a reduction in the target for renewable energy to be considered a detailed viability appraisal will need to be provided to demonstrate that the target would make development unviable. Where a reduction to the target for renewable energy is agreed, the energy efficiency of the development should be maximised through the design and construction of a development.

In cases where there is a lead-in time for renewable energy infrastructure the Council will accept some development coming forward in advance of infrastructure coming on stream. In these circumstances there will need to be a demonstration that no overall net gain in the use of energy from renewable sources has been lost.

###### Reasoned Justification

**4.78** This policy aims to reduce the use of non-renewable forms of energy associated with carbon dioxide emissions in new developments. This policy supports the plan strategy by reducing new development reliance on carbon based energy sources and increasing energy supply from renewable sources.

**4.79** The incorporation of renewable energy generation technologies and energy efficient design into new developments can have a significant benefit in terms of the emission of greenhouse gases. Therefore the Council will expect that all proposals for new development that exceeds the size thresholds as set out in the policy will be accompanied by an energy assessment illustrating that the required standards have been met or exceeded.

**4.80** The Council will encourage development to exceed the minimum standards set out in the policy. Proposals that clearly fail to exploit an opportunity for energy efficiency will not be permitted. Direct on-site provision will normally be the preferred mechanism for reducing the reliance of the District on traditional forms of energy generation. However, off-site schemes for the production of renewable energy will be acceptable particularly where it would provide a greater benefit in terms of the amount of energy that will be generated. Where appropriate, an off-site contribution will be levied in lieu of on-site provision. This off-site contribution may provide total funding for a renewable energy scheme or fund part of a larger scheme in conjunction with off-site contributions from different developments.



**4.81** The Council expects that where off-site provision is made the lead-in time for renewable energy infrastructure development may come forward before energy infrastructure comes on-line. The Council will accept a phasing that brings development forward in advance of renewable energy infrastructure provided that there is no net reduction in the proportion of energy gained from renewable sources.

**4.82** Where a case is put forwards that development would become unviable in fully complying with the policy, the Council will accept a lower provision only where a detailed appraisal is produced setting out both the viability constraints and all steps that have been taken to ensure that the development is as energy efficient as possible.

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### 4.3.5 Renewable Energy

#### Policy DC 15

##### Renewable Energy

Proposals for renewable energy development <sup>(10)</sup>, will be supported in principle. Permission will be granted for these developments unless it, or any related infrastructure such as power lines or access roads etc, has a significant detrimental impact or a cumulative detrimental impact upon:

- a. Sites of international, national or local nature and heritage conservation importance;
- b. The surrounding landscape and townscape;
- c. Local amenity as a result of noise, fumes, electronic interference or outlook through unacceptable visual intrusion;
- d. Highway safety.

Where development is permitted, mitigation measures will be required as appropriate to minimise any environmental impacts, such measures will be secured via condition or legal agreement. All development proposals for a renewable energy generation scheme should, as far as is practicable, provide for the site to be reinstated to its former condition should the development cease to be operational.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.83** The construction of commercial scale renewable energy generation facilities is the principle means for generating 10% of UK electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020. These are the targets set out in the Climate Change Programme together with a more ambitious target of 60% by 2050 proposed in the 2003 Energy White Paper. Research has shown that off-shore and on-shore wind, biomass, biofuels and solar power are the sources with the greatest potential to deliver renewable energy in the region. The East of England Plan includes targets of 1,192 Megawatts of installed capacity for renewable energy by 2010 and at least 4,250 Megawatts by 2020. This is equivalent to at least 10% of the East of England's energy consumption by 2010 excluding offshore wind (14% including it) and at least 17% by 2020 excluding off-shore wind (44% including it).

**4.84** The Council will support commercial scale renewable energy developments unless the environmental impacts of allowing the proposal would outweigh the wider social, economic and environmental benefits derived from it, the criteria for which is set out in the policy. Due to the likelihood of renewable energy technology changing rapidly over time the policy sets out provisions should the use cease to be operational.

**4.85** In 2003, the Council commissioned consultants to prepare a Wind Turbine Development Landscape Character Assessment, Evaluation and Guidance specifically in relation to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate wind turbine developments. The determination of applications for wind turbines made under policy DC15 will have regard to the findings of this assessment in relation to landscape sensitivity and other visual considerations in addition to the findings of the District wide Landscape Character Assessment.

**4.86** Potential mitigation measures will vary according to the nature of the installation. Where proposals involve modest installations careful siting may be sufficient or appropriate landscape screening could be used to mask or reduce the impact of the proposal. Measures should also be considered to avoid siting large and prominent installations in locations where they could be a distraction to highway users.

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10 including technologies such as wind turbines, biomass or solar systems, as well as other forms of renewable energy defined in national policy



**4.87** Further detailed guidance is set out in the companion guide accompanying PPS22: Renewable Energy and details different forms of renewable energy technologies. The companion guide also provides additional information regarding the planning issues as well as other possible economic, social and community benefits arising from renewable energy proposals.

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### 4.3.6 Design

#### Policy DC 16

##### Design

All new development should achieve the highest standards of design. In assessing any proposed development consideration will be given to the following design principles:

**Local Character:** All design proposals must preserve or enhance the existing character of an area. Particular regard should be given to reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture and complimenting existing buildings. Additionally contemporary design, where it enhances sustainability will be encouraged in the District.

**Public Realm:** The continuity of street frontages is particularly important in the market town centres and all new development should provide a natural demarcation of public and private spaces, without the need for excessive or artificial barriers. Public spaces should be designed to ensure that access routes are attractive, maintainable, well lit and well surveyed, easily accessible to all members of the community and free from unnecessary screens, barriers, signage or other street paraphernalia.

**Connectivity:** Interdependent places and locations, such as town centres and transport interchanges or residential development and open space, should be well connected along routes that promote a choice of transport mode. These routes should be clearly legible so that it is easy to navigate from one place to another.

**Adaptability:** Development should be designed so that it can be adapted to meet changing social, economic or technological conditions. This adaptability will need to reflect the different pressures that will be placed on a building throughout its lifetime. This might include changing family circumstances or ageing of the occupier in the case of a dwelling house, or changes in industry or economic base for commercial premises.

**Diversity:** Development should provide a range of choice that will promote and instill vitality into an area. This might be interpreted as a mix of uses within a town centre development, or a mixture of tenure and housing types within residential development.

**Crime Prevention:** Crime prevention should be a fundamental part of the design process, the physical structure of new development will be expected to integrate crime prevention measures with the other principles of good design.

In addition to these design principles, when considering development proposals, including additions to existing buildings, regard will be given to the following design issues:

**Form and Character:** Development should compliment the natural landscape, natural features and built form that surround it. In considering development proposals consideration will be given to the shape and configuration of a building or buildings, and it's or their style, design and arrangement. Regard will also be had to the distinctive features or qualities of a proposed building and its surroundings and the contribution new development makes to these features or qualities.

**Density, Height, Massing and Scale:** A new building cannot be divorced from it's surroundings, nor can a new group of buildings be divorced from their surroundings or their relationship to each other. In considering new development, consideration will be given to the density of buildings in a particular area

and the landscape/townscape effect of any increased density. The real or perceived heights and scales of buildings relative to each other and their surround will be a key consideration as will the relationship of the density, scale and height.

**Layout, Siting and Grouping:** The way a building, or group of buildings are laid out on a site has a profound effect on their appearance and how they are used. When considering new development regard will be had to whether the layout makes the best use of features of the site in terms of its appearance, function and making the best use of layout to improve energy efficiency.

**Landscaping, Boundary Treatments and Enclosure:** The space that surrounds and is in-between buildings is just as important as the buildings themselves. For all new developments consideration will be given to the, incorporation, preservation and enhancement of natural features on a site. Boundary treatments should be complimentary to the built design and should be incorporated such as to enhance the design of development. Areas of enclosure should be logically set out and should help the practical functionality of an area.

**Building Detailing and Materials:** The way in which a building is detailed, the quality of materials and how they are used can have a significant effect upon the overall appearance of a development. Consideration will be given to how the detailing and materials used in a particular development give expression to an overall design. Detailing and materials should be used to help the cohesiveness of a development, with particular consideration to the junctions of walls, roofs and fenestration. Detailing and materials should be a key part of the building design, stemming directly from functional needs of the building. Detailing and materials should not be used as an afterthought to add decoration to an otherwise bland design.

Development that does not fully address the values of the design principles or the design issues will not be acceptable.

### Reasoned Justification

**4.88** The purpose of this policy is to achieve high quality design across the District through setting out key design principles and issues. The policy assists in achieving the plan strategy by helping to ensure that new development meets high design standards.

**4.89** Good design is about making places that work well for the people that use them. Design is about more than the way buildings look, it is about how different places and uses are connected and how people move between them. It is about the creation of useable, vibrant and accessible places. It is also about the creation of individual and distinctive places where people like to live, work and use. For these reasons design is a key aspect of new developments.

**4.90** The design principles set out the high level design framework for new development that supports the diverse nature of good design. The design issues set out key considerations for good design that will be applicable to design at all scales.

**4.91** Due to the complex and diverse nature of good design it is not possible to set out a rigid framework of preordained building types and sizes, street layouts or materials that would be appropriate for all circumstances. Therefore the Council intends to subject all development proposals to an assessment based upon how well a design reacts to the design principles that are set out in the policy.





## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

**4.92** Where a development is required to submit a "Design and Access Statement" it should set out how the development address the design principles and issues set out in the policy. When developing design, consideration should be given to consultation with important stakeholders such as the Police Architectural Liaison or English Heritage. The Council Business Plan sets out that by 2010 all new developments will gain secure by design status.

**4.93** When creating a design for a new development consideration should also be given to the design implications set out in other policies of the Local Development Framework. These policies include, CP6 Green Infrastructure, CP8 Natural Resources, CP9 Pollution and Waste, CP13 Accessibility, DC11 Open Space, DC12 Trees and Landscape, DC14 Energy Generation Efficiency and DC17 Historic Environment.

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### 4.3.7 Historic Environment

#### Policy DC 17

##### Historic Environment

Any development that will affect a Listed Building or a Conservation Area will be subject to comprehensive assessment. New development will be expected to preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens and other areas of historic interest. Where a proposed development will affect the character or setting of a Listed Building, particular regard will need to be given to the protection, preservation and enhancement of any features of historic or architectural interest.

The conversion of buildings of particular architectural or historic merit for economic or residential purposes in locations that would otherwise be unacceptable will be considered where this would ensure the retention of the building. Proposals will be considered against relevant guidance including national policy advice (currently PPS7 & PPG15) and specialist publications such as 'Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places' produced by English Heritage.

Sites of archaeological interest and their settings will be protected, enhanced and preserved; development which has an unacceptable impact upon a site of archaeological interest will not be permitted. Where it is considered appropriate in cases where development coincides with the location of a known or suspected archaeological interest an archaeological field evaluation will be required. Where the benefits of a particular development are considered to outweigh the importance of retaining archaeological remains *in situ* satisfactory excavation and recording of remains will be required before development is begun.

##### Replacement of dwellings

In the case of traditional dwellings<sup>(11)</sup> which positively contribute to the character of Breckland, replacement will only be acceptable where the application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which includes a structural survey that demonstrates that the demolition is necessary and that there is no alternative and viable solution of renovation to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.94** Breckland contains over 1,500 Listed Buildings and a wealth of other important non-designated buildings that contribute to both the urban and rural contexts and the historic environment as a whole. Breckland also has 50 Conservation Areas and 10 Historic Parks and Gardens included on the English Heritage Register, designated to assist in the preservation and enhancement of particular features of historic or architectural interest. The character of these areas is defined by the combination of elements such as the mixture and style of buildings, the extent and form of open spaces, the quality and relationship of buildings, prevalent building materials and the amount of trees or other green features. These features contribute to the overall character of the area and need to be recognised and respected in proposals for new development.

11 A dwelling that is unlisted and outside of a Conservation Area but has a historical value



**4.95** The Council recognises that new development (including demolition of buildings) may be appropriate in Conservation Areas or near to historically important buildings or parks and gardens, but that the emphasis should be on the controlled and positive management of change. This reflects the need to allow historic areas to react to the changing circumstances in which we live and prosper whilst making clear that proposals for new development will be judged against their effect on the character and appearance on the area.

**4.96** In some circumstances it may be desirable to permit schemes which would normally be unacceptable. Where this is contemplated the re-use of buildings for economic purposes will usually be preferable although residential conversions may also be appropriate depending on location and the type of building involved. The Council will expect a thorough assessment to accompany any proposals including justification for the retention of or alteration of the existing building and the benefits arising from the scheme. The Council will have regard to expert guidance and other advice when considering proposals.

**4.97** Breckland also contains a number of archaeological sites which are of importance for their educational, research and tourist value. There are over 100 Scheduled Monuments within Breckland as well as other non-statutory sites identified in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. These are a finite resource and can be easily damaged or destroyed when development takes place unless they are positively identified and protected. Many archaeological remains exist below ground and their extent and significance may not be known in advance. Therefore the policy seeks to put appropriate safeguards in place where development affects a site where archaeological remains may exist, or are discovered including the need for archaeological evaluation and assessment and preservation of remains *in situ*.

**4.98** Traditional and vernacular buildings within Breckland make a valuable contribution to the character of the District and are a visual reminder of the District's social and cultural history. Before the mid 19th Century and the creation of the railway network, most buildings were built from locally sourced materials, resulting in vernacular architecture displaying a range of materials directly influenced by its immediate geology and wider landscape. Within Breckland, typically the vernacular consists of the use of brick, flint, chalk, clay lump and timber framing for walling with thatch, clay tiles and, in later years following industrialism, slates for roofing. Traditional and vernacular buildings within the open countryside may also contribute to the character of a particular landscape area. Where a building is felt to provide a positive contribution to the landscape of an area they will also be considered for their retention. Some traditional and vernacular buildings can be disguised by layers of change. Where such examples exist, the Council will place emphasis on the retention and repair of these buildings.

**4.99** The need for housing in Breckland will create pressures to incorporate or demolish existing dwellings to achieve a greater use of land through intensification of land-uses and the modernisation of housing stock. In some cases this will present an opportunity to replace housing that is no longer fit for purpose with well-designed replacement houses which make the best use of the land available. However, intensification should not come at the expense of the loss of traditional and vernacular unlisted buildings which are of special architectural or historic interest. Where a proposal includes the demolition of a traditional unlisted building, the Council will require accompanying evidence as part of the Design and Access Statement that clearly demonstrates that the building is structurally incapable of repair and enhancement and that demolition is necessary. This evidence will include a structural survey of the dwelling(s) together with detailed assessments of how any proposed demolition and replacement will represent an improved and complimentary response to the character of the area. Additionally, proposals will be required to demonstrate that there are no alternative or viable solutions to provide an acceptable and improved standard of accommodation through extending or subdividing the property.

**4.100** All buildings carry a sense of embodied energy. The components of a building's embodied energy is the energy consumed by all of the processes associated with the production of the building, from the acquisition of natural resources to completion of construction. In the consideration of the replacement of a traditional or vernacular building, the embodied energy of the existing building should be taken into account. When a building is replaced, additional energy is required to demolish the existing building and construct the



new building. Unless the materials of the existing building are re-used, the embodied energy of the existing building will be lost. Therefore in some cases it will be more sustainable to retain a building and improve its energy efficiency than demolish the building and replace it with a new build.

**4.101** Planning permission will not be granted for the replacement of a dwelling of architectural or historic merit on grounds of the cost of repair set against the cost of new build as this is not considered an accepted justification for its demolition.

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#### 4.4 Accessibility

**4.102** The Development Control policies in this section deal with the higher strategic theme of Accessibility. This section follows on from Core Policies on Accessibility which sought to ensure that accessibility to services, facilities, housing and employment in the District were improved for both the Market Towns and the Rural Settlements. The Development Control policies of this section set out the criteria for the assessment of development proposals in terms of access to facilities, parking provision, the conversion of buildings in the countryside and farm diversification. As with the Development Control Policies under other higher strategic themes, these policies only form part of the overall development strategy for the district and therefore need to be read in conjunction with all other relevant Core and Development Control Policies of the Local Development Framework.

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#### 4.4.1 Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure

##### Policy DC 18

###### Community facilities, recreation and leisure

###### New community facilities, recreation and leisure

Sustainable proposals for community, recreation and leisure facilities will be supported within the Key Centre for Development and Change, the Market Towns and Local Service Centre villages in order to support improved accessibility to services, support the role of the centre in the development hierarchy and reduce rural isolation.

Proposals for community, recreation and leisure facilities in other rural settlements will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it will provide for an identified local need and is of community benefit, the settlement is isolated from another similar facility and the development represents the most sustainable option to meet the identified need.

###### Protection of key services and facilities

Key local services and facilities will be protected from proposals for development that would result in the loss of that key service or facility. Proposals for the redevelopment of a key local facility will not be permitted unless:

- a. adequate alternative provision is available within or adjacent to the settlement or will be provided as part of the development process;
- b. all reasonable efforts have been made to preserve the facility or service but the service is no longer considered viable;
- c. the service or facility is in an inherently unsustainable location and the reuse of the site would be a more sustainable solution than the retention of the service or facility.

In Local Service Centre villages, development will not be permitted where this would result in the total loss of a key service or facility that would undermine the strategic identification of that village as a Local Service Centre.

##### Reasoned Justification

**4.103** The policy gives support to the provision of community, recreational and leisure facilities across the District. However it is accepted that large facilities may attract large numbers of people and therefore should be directed to the main town centres across the District. Therefore all development proposals which are likely to attract large numbers of people, e.g. a bowling alley or skating rink, will be expected to be accompanied by a supporting statement which justifies the sustainability of the proposed location. This approach is supported by national and strategic guidance and seeks to ensure that new large facilities can be accessed by a variety of modes of transport and offer increased opportunities for linked trips, increasing their overall sustainability.

**4.104** Shops, pubs, garages and other small businesses provide a vital community role in small settlements. Day to day services can struggle to remain viable in rural areas against a background of competition from higher order settlements, and a buoyant housing market which can make residential re-development of a village shop or business a very attractive and profitable investment opportunity. People in villages increasingly have to travel further to meet their everyday needs and the loss of services can particularly affect those people without the ability to travel easily e.g. the elderly and the young, the low paid and the unemployed.



## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

**4.105** The policy allows for local facilities to be located in other areas where they are specifically to meet identified needs. Examples of such facilities may include new neighbourhood healthcare facilities, village/community halls, and indoor sports facilities. These will have specific locational requirements to be close to the communities they are to serve and the policy allows for this.

**4.106** In order to maintain a level of local servicing, key local services will be protected from re-development through the planning process. For the purposes of this policy a key local service will be anything that the council considers to be essential to the ongoing vitality of a village or settlement and will include as a minimum:

- Convenience store for the supply of day-to-day goods (including Farm Shops)
- Post Offices
- Public Houses
- Petrol Filling Stations
- Primary healthcare facilities
- Indoor sports facilities
- Primary Schools
- Bus interchanges

**4.107** Adequate alternative provision would require a facility of roughly equal, or improved size, operation and accessibility. All reasonable steps to retain a facility would comprise an obvious attempt to operate, investigation of possible diversification to make the unit viable and if this fails marketing the unit for a period of no less than 12 months at reasonable price, commensurate with the value of the unit in a variety of sources including: trade publications, internet, local press and an agents board at the premises.

**4.108** In determining whether all reasonable efforts have been made to preserve a service or facility, a demonstration of these efforts should include thorough marketing campaign, the extent to which shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

#### 4.4.2 Parking Provision

### Policy DC 19

#### Parking Provision

Development proposals will be permitted where the provision of car parking accords with the local parking standards, set out in supporting text, that have been subjected to the following reduction multiplier:

Location	Multiplier
Designated Town Centre Area	0.5
Key Centre for Development and Change (Thetford)	0.7
Attleborough and Dereham	0.8
Swaffham and Watton	0.85
Local Service Centre villages and Snetterton Heath Employment Area	0.9

These reductions will not apply to any development that falls within Class C of the Use Class Order <sup>(12)</sup>.

In addition to these location based parking standard reductions, a reduction in car parking standards will also be applied where it is considered to be in the interest of sustainable development and it has been identified in another Development Plan Document.

Development adjacent to corridors of movement will need to reflect the need for off-road parking provision in circumstances where it would ensure the satisfactory functioning of the highway network.

Car free developments, or those with very limited parking provision, will only be considered in town centres and/or where they are near to a public transport nodes.

The Council will consider flexibility in the application of parking standards where it can be demonstrated that there are particular site-based factors that would justify an exception. However, all parking areas will have at least one space for people/drivers with disabilities.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.109** National planning policy, specifically that contained within PPG13<sup>(13)</sup> advocates sustainable development and measures to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, and modal shift. Modal shift is the change from single person private car use to more sustainable modes of transport including rail, public transport, walking and cycling. The policy seeks to minimise parking in locations that are well served by public transport and in town centres, and this is considered to be one of the most beneficial mechanisms in terms of promoting modal shift by encouraging cycling, walking and the use of public transport.

**4.110** Car free or limited parking developments will only be considered where there are considerable opportunities for access by public transport. These will be supported in areas that can be considered as key public transport nodes where opportunities exist to utilise different forms of public transport in close proximity,

12 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended

13 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (March 2001)





as well as areas where opportunities for multi-modal journeys can be made such as by bus and rail. The availability of sustainable transport options should be identified, and enhanced accessibility to developments by non-car modes should be secured through the aims of a Travel Plan, where provided.

**4.111** The Council will consider flexibility in the application of parking standards multipliers, reflecting a wider view of the development as well as site-based characteristics that may result in the need to provide parking more closely aligned to the maximum level. This may include developments where there may be concerns that inappropriate on-street parking could lead to highway safety being compromised if reduction multipliers are applied rigidly. The need to deviate from the reduction multipliers should be demonstrated through a Transport Assessment.

**4.112** Paragraph 51 of PPS3<sup>(14)</sup> states that Local Authorities should, *inter alia*, develop residential parking policies for their areas that take account of expected levels of car ownership. The Council recognises the role of the car in Breckland and levels of car ownership. As such, the Council will not apply the above multipliers to developments that fall within Class C of the Use Classes Order<sup>(15)</sup>. Instead, the policy seeks to encourage sustainable modes of travel rather than reduced residential parking.

**4.113** The requirement for parking provision for people with disabilities does not apply for residential development except where communal parking areas are used.

**4.114** The Council will apply the minimum standards for cycle parking in new developments as set out in Appendix D 'Parking Standards'. These will not be the subject of any reductions as indicated for car parking standards in order to support cycling as a sustainable mode of transportation.

**4.115** The standards that will be used to determine the level of parking that will be required for new development are set out in the table shown in Appendix D 'Parking Standards'.

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14 Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

15 Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended

### 4.4.3 Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

#### Policy DC 20

##### Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

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

The re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for residential purposes will only be permitted where the commercial use of the building has been shown to be unviable.

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

- a. The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the landscape and the quality of design. Development will not be permitted where it does not take the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the appearance of the locality.
- b. The sustainability of the location. In the case of conversions for economic purposes this will mean the relationship of the building to other employment areas and its accessibility from residential areas. In the case of residential conversions it will comprise the accessibility of the building to key services and facilities.
- c. Access to the highway and the ability of the highway network to accommodate the demands resulting from the proposed development.
- d. In the case of residential conversions the building proposed to be converted should be substantially intact and capable of conversion without significant extension or rebuilding and should be of value to the landscape of the District. The residential re-use of modern agricultural or industrial buildings of no aesthetic value, regardless of their location, will not be considered appropriate.

#### Reasoned Justification

**4.116** The re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed buildings in the countryside, where this would meet sustainable development objectives is supported. However, it is important to ensure that any proposal for re-use is appropriate to the form and location of the building. Therefore, uses that are closest to the original purpose of the building will usually be the most appropriate, and as such the re-use of countryside buildings for economic development purposes will usually be preferable. Residential conversions may be appropriate for some types of buildings and in certain locations, providing that it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that the economic re-use of the building was unviable.

**4.117** Any schemes for the re-use of countryside buildings should ensure that the important architectural or historic features and qualities of a building are maintained, whether the building is Listed or not. This will include the consideration of both the buildings fabric and more widely the layout, siting and interrelationship of buildings.

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



**4.119** Where a building is of particular architectural or historic merit regard should be had to DC17:*Historic Environment*, in addition to the provisions of this policy.

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#### 4.4.4 Farm Diversification

##### Policy DC 21

##### Farm Diversification

Proposals to diversify the range of economic activities operating on a farm will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a. The nature of the development is complementary in kind and compatible in scale with the continuing farm enterprise;
- b. Where the proposal involves a diversification to retail uses, it must be demonstrated that there is a need for the development to be located in the area, and that there are sustainability advantages in the location of the development;
- c. The development does not have an adverse effect on the vitality or viability of town centres and existing shops and services in villages and;
- d. The location, scale and form of the proposed development, in terms of both buildings and operation, will be appropriate to its setting, the surrounding landscape and any proximate environmental interest;

##### Reasoned Justification

**4.120** The purpose of this policy is to set out the supporting policy mechanisms for the diversification of farming enterprises and sets out the criteria under which such diversification will be acceptable.

**4.121** In a rural district such as Breckland farming is a particularly important activity, not only in terms of its economic value but also in terms of its contribution to managing the landscape and maintaining biodiversity. Farming is becoming an evermore competitive industry and often if farming enterprises are to survive then it is essential that they are allowed to diversify and generate new income streams.

**4.122** In recognition of this need the local authority will be supportive of well conceived farm diversification schemes where the proposed development will form a complementary part of the farming enterprise and compatible with the existing operation of the farm. However, it is also important to strike a balance between the types of development that will be permitted on farms and the wider sustainability agenda so that the objectives of the plan are not undermined. Therefore schemes for diversification which contain an element of a town centre use, e.g. retail, will only be permitted where that function is justified in its location, and a local need is demonstrated.

**4.123** It is important to note that provision for the reuse or replacement of existing buildings for economic purposes is made in other policies of the plan and this will also play a part in supporting the viability of farming enterprises.





## 5 Monitoring and Implementation Framework

**5.1** Monitoring and review are key elements of the new planning system. Through comprehensive monitoring of the planning framework and of delivery an assessment of past performance and likely future performance can be established. This will provide the basis for triggering any necessary contingencies to be implemented or the need for a review to be undertaken. Through continuous monitoring of the performance of the policies in the plan and of delivery, and review where necessary, the efficient delivery and the sustainability of the Spatial Strategy can be maintained.

**5.2** This section will identify:

- key dependencies between the delivery of development and the Spatial Strategy and necessary infrastructure provision;
- what the risks to delivery of development associated with infrastructure provision are, and what the contingency measures are relative to changes in the timing of infrastructure delivery if there is a failure to deliver infrastructure; and
- the framework for monitoring policy performance.

### Key Infrastructure Dependencies

**5.3** Essential in the delivery of growth and development is the timely delivery of necessary supporting infrastructure. The ability to deliver infrastructure (or otherwise) and the timing of its delivery are critical determinants of the scale and location of development and its phasing.

**5.4** Infrastructure is provided by a variety of commercial and public agencies through a range of different funding and delivery mechanisms. In terms of public bodies responsible for infrastructure funding, prioritisation and delivery decisions are taken at different levels varying from the national through to the regional to the local, or at a combination of the levels. Decisions relating to development contributions and prioritisation are taken at the local level with regard being had to other funding and delivery mechanisms.

**5.5** Breckland Council has adopted a 'prospectus' approach to funding delivery through the development of an investment strategy for the District. A Programme of Development has been produced and submitted to Government to seek support of the delivery of growth and regeneration of the Thetford Key Centre for Development and Change through Growth Point status. These approaches have allowed early consideration and understanding of potential funding available to underpin delivery of the Spatial Strategy and to start to establish with the relevant bodies and agencies roles and responsibilities.

**5.6** Generally in Breckland the critical areas of dependency between development and infrastructure arise in transport and access including public transport provision; the provision of utilities including water supply, sewage treatment and power, and supporting community infrastructure including education and health facilities.

**5.7** The strategy for growth in Breckland has been determined following consultation with the bodies responsible for infrastructure delivery. Whilst the views of those bodies have been used in testing the Spatial Strategy for robustness of delivery and underpin the policies, there remain some areas which will require further detailed evidence based assessment in consultation with the responsible bodies and agencies. This arises from the planning cycles of some organisations being on different time frames from the Core Strategy, limitations placed on some commercial providers by the regulatory provisions governing their activities in relation to the degree of certainty they require before being able to undertake more detailed feasibility work, and from matters being identified in consultation.



**5.8** The key dependencies between the delivery of the Spatial Strategy and infrastructure provision are set out in the table on the next page. Where a risk arises and the identified contingency can not be implemented then a review of the Spatial Strategy and policies may be required.

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**Table 5.1 Key Infrastructure Dependencies**

Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
<b>Thetford</b>					
All Development	Reinforcing Power Supply.	New sub-station for northern expansion (est. cost £8million). Commissioning could commence by 2013.	Delay in the implementation of new power supply will result in delays in development in Thetford (particularly northern expansion). Delay would adversely affect delivery rate and result in increased development rate in later phases of plan period.	Alternative 'local power sources' provided ahead of strategic network delivery.	EDF, Breckland Council and Private Developers/Landowners.
All Development	Increase junction capacity at A11. Enhancements to Croxton Road junction.	Developer Contributions.	Limited capacity reduces development levels. Delayed provision delays development.	Consider alternative siting of employment allocations to minimise impact. Consider alternative residential development scenarios through subsequent AAP to minimise impact on highway network. Undertake public transport improvements to minimise impact.	Highways Agency, Highways Authority and Private Developers/Landowners.

Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
All Development	Increased Waste Water Treatment Capacity.	Developer contributions. Upgrades required post 2016.	Capacity of existing Wastewater Treatment Plant effectively caps development level.	Increase existing plant capacity or provide new treatment facilities (additional or additional/ replacement).	Anglian Water, Environment Agency and Private Developers.
Housing	Childcare and schools.	Developer, Norfolk County Council (LEA) contributions. Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme.	Limitations to existing school capacities and the ability of some facilities to expand on site will constrain the amount of development that can be built.	New nursery facilities, new primary schools and expansion of existing secondary schools.	Norfolk County Council, Learning and Skills Council and Private Developers.
Housing	Health and Social Care.	Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.	Constraints upon the availability of primary care facilities will limit the ability to accommodate increased population levels.	Provision of new primary care facilities.	Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.
Housing	Community and Leisure Facilities.	Private Developers and Developer Contributions. Building Schools	The existing level of Community and Leisure facilities are not capable of providing for the needs of the	Expansion of existing facilities or possible provision of new facilities. Leisure facilities could be provided as part of a co-located site for a new school.	Private Developers, Norfolk County Council.





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Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
Housing	Emergency and Essential Services.	Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Fire Service, Primary Care Trust, Developer Contributions.	<p>for the future (BSF) programme.</p> <p>The existing level of service from emergency and essential services needs expanding to accommodate a much enlarged population.</p>	Provision of New Safer Neighbourhood Team and more ambulance and fire staff.	Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Fire Service, Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.
<b>Dereham</b>					
Housing	Schools	Developer Contributions, Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme, Norfolk County Council.	Limited school capacity constrains housing level as number of new pupils cannot be accommodated in existing sites.	New school provision in Dereham (new primary school developed to accommodate growth in school age pupils resulting from development). Additional growth may require relocation of high school to less constrained location.	Norfolk County Council, Learning and Skills Council and Private Developers.
All Development	Waste Water Treatment	Anglian Water to fund Sewage Treatment Works upgrades. Developer contributions for local sewerage upgrades.	Limited capacity (flow and water levels of quality) of receiving water course for existing Wastewater Treatment Plant caps development level	New treatment plant with discharge into alternative water course.	Anglian Water, Environment Agency and Private Developers
<b>Attleborough</b>					

Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
All Development	Improved junction capacity to A11.	Funded through developer contributions.	Limited capacity is a constraint to overall development levels. Delayed provision of junction improvements delays development in the short-medium term, resulting in higher growth rates later in the plan period.	Secure alternative sources of funding to 'pump prime' cost of upgrades. Other contingencies could include significant enhancement in public transport provision to minimise impact of private car journeys. Consider alternative locations for employment development and routes for HGVs.	Highways Agency, Highways Authority and Private Developers.
All Development	New crossing over railway line to increase capacity.	Developer contributions, Network Rail. Could be commissioned by 2013 (subject to any planning/ funding delays).	Limited capacity effectively caps levels of development to the southeast of the railway line before unacceptable impact on local highways occurs.	Crossing capacity may be able to be increased by increasing capacity of existing crossing points.	Strategic Rail Authority/Network Rail; Highways Authority and Private Developers.
All Development	Waste Water Treatment Works Upgrades	Will need to fit in with Anglian Water Asset Management Planning (AMP) Phases.	Sustainable solutions cannot be found for necessary upgrades.	A specialist Waste Water Working Group will work to identify sustainable solutions for infrastructure upgrades. If solutions prove to be impossible through the detailed work the plan will	Anglian Water Services Ltd, Environment Agency, Breckland Council.



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Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
		Significant upgrades will be needed in AMP5 to meet Water Framework Directive standards for current discharges. If a solution is found then further significant upgrades will be required in AMP6 to meet Water Framework Directive standards for proposed development.		need to be reviewed. This may lead to planning for reduced growth levels than set out in the current RSS.	
All Development	Water Supply.	Anglian Water AMPs programme. Improvements needed to water supply. Likely to be post 2016.	Limited water supply may constrain growth.	Improvements need to be made to the supplying bore hole possibly in combination with the Great Ouse Ground Water Scheme (GOGS) to accommodate the need for water that will be created by growth in the District.	Anglian Water, Environment Agency.
All Development	Electricity Supply.	EDF, developer contributions.	Although there is anticipated to be sufficient power supply to accommodate the	Alternative 'local power sources' provided ahead of strategic network delivery.	EDF, Breckland Council and Private Developers.

Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
Housing	Childcare and schools.	Developer, Norfolk County Council (LEA) contributions. Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF).	<p>levels of development proposed an additional significant energy draw on the system capacity issue may become apparent.</p> <p>Limitations to existing school capacities and the ability of some facilities to expand on site will constrain the amount of development that can be built.</p>	New nursery facilities, new primary schools and expansion of existing secondary schools. Possibility of the reconstruction of the Old Buckenham high school to accommodate some of the needs created by development.	Norfolk County Council, Learning and Skills Council and Private Developers.
Housing	Health and Social Care.	Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.	Constraints upon the availability of primary care facilities will limit the ability to accommodate increased population levels.	Provision of new primary care facilities.	Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.





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Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
Housing	Community and Leisure Facilities.	Private Developers and Developer Contributions. Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.	The existing level of Community and Leisure facilities will need to be extended to provide for the needs of the enlarged population.	Expansion of existing leisure facilities and possible provision of new community facilities. Leisure facilities could be provided as part of a co-located site for a new school.	Private Developers, Norfolk County Council.
Housing	Emergency and Essential Services.	Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Fire Service, Primary Care Trust, Developer Contributions.	The existing level of service from emergency and essential services needs to be expanded to accommodate a much enlarged population.	Provision of more police, ambulance and fire staff. Possible relocation of police station.	Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk Fire Service, Primary Care Trust, Private Developers.
<b>Snetterton Heath</b>					
Employment	Increased Power Supply.	EDF.	Limited capacity of the strategic power connection to the grid limits development levels.	Alternative 'local power source' provided alongside reinforced strategic power connection.  Alternative deliverable land (i.e. 20 hectares) will be released at Attleborough to deliver job growth in the northern section of the A11 corridor in Breckland - to be determined through Attleborough and Snetterton Heath Area Action Plan.	EDF, Breckland Council and Private Developers/Landowners.



Location and Development Description	Key Infrastructure Dependencies	Funding/ Timescales	Risks	Contingencies	Responsible agencies/bodies
<b>A11 Corridor (including Thetford and Snetterton Heath)</b>					
Employment	A11 capacity between Thetford and Fiveways (Mildenhall).	Construction expected to commence 2012/13 (this is subject to any planning/ funding delays).	Single carriageway (limited capacity) reduces accessibility and inhibits inward investment along A11 corridor (and beyond) with impact on employment growth and economic restructuring.	Increase capacity of A11 by dualling.	Department for Transport, East of England Regional Assembly and Highways Agency.

**Policy Monitoring Framework**

**5.9** The policies contained within this document will be monitored to ensure that the Local Development Framework delivers the aims and objectives for the District up to 2026. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Authorities to publish Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). The AMR will illustrate the performance of policies on an ongoing basis, and provides the main mechanism for policy review and performance management.

**5.10** The indicators listed below each of the policies in this document provide a clear and direct link for monitoring. Each of the indicators included will be monitored on an annual basis through the Council's AMR. The following table summarises these monitoring indicators along with the bodies responsible for implementation:



Table 5.2 Core Strategy Policy Monitoring Framework

Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Indicator(s)	Target	Responsible Bodies
CP1 - Housing	SO1 and SO2	% Housing completions on PDL.	25%.	Breckland Council; Landowners; Development Industry; Registered Social Landlords; Housing Corporation.
		Amount of housing completed that is Affordable.	40%.	
		Total amount of housing completed.	780 per annum.	
		Monitor RSS review.	Adjust housing provision in accordance with revised figures.	
CP2 - The Travelling Community	SO1	Number of permanent pitches provided.	15 up to 2011.	Breckland Council; Landowners; Gypsy and Traveller Community; Norfolk County Council.
CP3 - Employment	SO3 and SO4	Employment by place of residence (%)	Maximise.	Breckland Council; Landowners; Norfolk County Council; EEDA.
		Economic Activity Rate.	Maximise.	
		Amount of employment land developed (per annum).	Maximise.	
		Employee Jobs by District (ABI).	Net increase of 6,000 jobs by 2021.	
CP4 - Strategic Infrastructure	SO5 and SO6	Development of Essential Infrastructure.	No target identified.	Breckland Council; Breckland Local Strategic Partnership; Norfolk County Council; EEDA; GO-East; Primary Care Trust; Utility providers; Environment Agency.
		Affordable Housing delivered as a result of development.	40% per annum	Breckland Council; Developers; Registered Social Landlords; Town and Parish Councils; Norfolk County Council.

Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Indicator(s)	Target	Responsible Bodies
CP6 - Green infrastructure	SO5, SO6 and SO8	Open space provided (ha). Green Infrastructure lost due to development without replacement. Amount of Green Infrastructure Provided by New Developments (Ha).	In accordance with standards in policy DC11. No target identified. No target identified.	Breckland Council; Norfolk County Council; Town and Parish Councils; Landowners; Developers.
CP7 - Town Centres	SO7	Number of vacant retail units. Retail development completed (m <sup>2</sup> ). Identification of Local Centres.	Minimise annually. No target identified No target identified.	Breckland Council; Breckland Local Strategic Partnership; Norfolk County Council; Town Councils; Development Industry.
CP8 - Natural Resources	SO14, SO15, and SO16	Development on previously-developed land (ha).	Maximise annually (25% target for residential development).	Breckland Council; Developers; Landowners.
CP9 - Pollution and Waste	SO15 and SO17	% of household waste collected which is recycled/ composted.	33% by 2015.	Breckland Council; Norfolk County Council; Environment Agency; Health & Safety Executive.
CP10 - Natural Environment	SO8 and SO9	Local Nature Reserves and County Wildlife Sites designated. % of SSSI areas in favourable or recovering condition.	Improved Biodiversity - proportion of Local Sites where active conservation management is being achieved. 95% of SSSI's to be in a favourable or recovering condition by 2010.	Breckland Council; Countryside Management Projects; Norfolk County Council; Norfolk Wildlife Trust; Natural England.
		Number of BAP habitats created as part of new developments.	Maximise.	





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Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Indicator(s)	Target	Responsible Bodies
CP11 -Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape	SO8 and SO9	Proportion of Local Sites where active conservation management is being achieved.  Hectares of development in highly sensitive landscapes.  Countryside Quality Counts.	Maximise annually.  No target identified.	Breckland Council; Norfolk County Council; developers.
CP12 - Energy	SO12	Installed capacity of renewable or decentralised energy systems to support major growth locations.	No target identified.	Breckland Council; developers.
CP13 - Accessibility	SO18 and SO19	% of households without a car in rural areas of the District able to access a market town or local service centre by public transport in 30 minutes at least twice per week.	Maximise	Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council.
		% of persons commuting by car or van.	Minimise	
		% of persons who travel to work by public transport.	Maximise	
		Monitor County LTPs.		
		Monitor proposals for expansion of Brandon through neighbouring authorities of DPDs.		



Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Indicator(s)	Target	Responsible Bodies
CP14 - Sustainable Rural Communities	SO20	<p>% of homes in rural areas further than 30 minutes public transport time from town centres.</p> <p>% of homes in rural areas further than 1000m from a primary school.</p> <p>% of homes in rural areas further than 300m from a convenience store or 30 minutes public transport time.</p> <p>% of homes in rural areas further than 1000m or 30 minute public transport time from a doctors surgery.</p>	Minimise.	Breckland Council; Norfolk County Council; Primary Care trust; Public Transport providers; Norfolk Rural Community Council; Parish Councils.

Table 5.3 Development Control Policy Monitoring Framework

Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Core Policies	Indicator(s)	Target
DC1 - Protection of Amenity	S08, S09	CP9	No indicator identified.	No target identified.
DC2 - Principles of new Housing	S01, S02		Average density of developments.	30 dph.
			Number of houses built by tenure and size.	780 a year, type and size to be determined by Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
DC3 - Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside	SO1	CP1	None Identified.	



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Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Core Policies	Indicator(s)	Target
DC4 - Affordable Housing Principles	SO1, SO2	CP1	Percentage of total dwellings that are affordable per annum.	40%.
DC5 - Affordable Housing on Exceptions Sites	SO1, SO2	CP1	Number of homes built on exception sites.	Maximise .
DC6 - General Employment Areas	SO3, SO4	CP3	Employment land developed in hectares and floor space (m <sup>2</sup> ).	Maximise
DC7 - Employment Development Outside General Employment Areas	SO3, SO4	CP3	Employment land developed outside of General Employment areas in hectares and floor space (m <sup>2</sup> ) per annum.	No target
DC8 - Tourism Related Development	SO4	CP3, CP13	Amount of Tourist development by hectare and location.	Maximise within Local Service Centres, and Towns.
			Number of tourist accommodation units developed by location.	
DC9 - Proposals for Town Centre Uses	SO7	CP5	% of non-retail uses on defined primary and secondary retail frontages.	Maximum 25% non-retail in primary frontage. Maximum 50% non-retail in secondary frontage.
			A class floor space (m <sup>2</sup> ).	Maximise in accordance with Policy CP7.
DC10 - Telecommunications	SO5, SO6	CP4	No indicator identified.	No target identified.

Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Core Policies	Indicator(s)	Target
DC11 - Open Space	SO11	CP4, CP12	Comparison of Open Space provision to District standard and other national standards.	Meet standard.
			Area of outdoor playing space provided from developments (Ha).	Maximise.
			Area of open space lost to development (Ha).	Minimise.
DC12 - Trees and Landscape	SO8, SO9	CP8, CP9	Protected trees lost as a result of development.	Minimise.
			Protected Hedgerows lost.	No target.
DC13 - Flood Risk	SO13	CP6	Number of dwellings permitted in EA defined flood zones 2 or 3, or flood risk areas identified in SFRA.	Zero dwellings per annum.
			Other development types permitted in EA defined flood zones or risk areas identified in SFRA and contrary to policy.	Zero ha per annum.
			Number of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.	Zero per annum.





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Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Core Policies	Indicator(s)	Target
DC14 - Energy Generation and Energy Efficiency	SO10, SO12	CP10, CP11	Number of developments as defined in the policy that provide 10% of their energy from renewable sources.	Maximise.
DC15 - Renewable Energy	SO12	CP11	MW of installed renewable capacity per annum.	Maximise.
DC16 - Design	SO9, SO10	CP10	Building for Life Assessments.	No target identified.
DC17 - Historic Environment	SO9, SO10		Number of planning permissions granted contrary to English Heritage and Conservation Officer advice. Number and percentages of heritage features at risk.	Minimise
DC18 - Community facilities, recreation and leisure	SO18, SO19 and SO20	CP12, CP13	Amount of completed floor space of community, recreation and leisure facilities by location (m <sup>2</sup> ).	Maximise in Local Service Centres and Towns.
			Floor space of Key Services and facilities lost to re-development of other uses (m <sup>2</sup> ).	Zero
			% of rural areas with presence of and access to essential services and facilities.	



Policy	Spatial Objective(s)	Core Policies	Indicator(s)	Target
DC19 - Parking Provision	SO18, SO19	CP12	Amount of completed development in accordance with car parking standards (floor area).	Maximise.
DC20 - Conversion of buildings in the Countryside	SO3, SO4, SO19, SO20	CP3, CP13	No indicator.	No target identified.
DC21 - Farm Diversification	SO3, SO21	CP12, CP13	No indicator.	No target identified.



## Appendix A Saved Policies to be Replaced

**A.1** The Breckland District Local Plan was adopted in 1999. In 2007, Breckland Council made representations to the Secretary of State to save a number of policies from the adopted Breckland Local Plan (1999) beyond the transition period from the implementation of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).

**A.2** The policies in the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies document will supersede a number of the saved policies from the Local Plan. The Council wishes to save the remaining policies in Table A.1 until they can be replaced by those contained within other subsequent DPDs (including the Site Specifics policies and proposals document and Area Action Plans as detailed elsewhere in the Core Strategy).

**A.3** The Council has assessed the remaining saved policies to determine which are to be superseded by the policies in the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD. Table below indicates those that are to be saved or replaced.

**Table A.1 Local Plan policies to be saved or replaced**

Saved Local Plan Policy No.	Local Plan Policies to be saved or replaced by Core Strategy/Development Control Policy
ENV6 - Protection of habitat	To be replaced by Policy CP10.
HOU2 - Housing in the towns	To be replaced by Policies CP1 and DC2.
HOU3 - Development of small scale residential development	To be replaced by Policy DC2.
HOU4 - Development of small groups of houses	To be replaced by Policy DC2.
HOU6 - New dwellings outside settlement boundaries	To be replaced by Policies CP14 and DC2.
ECO2 - Allocation of land at Snetterton Airfield	To be replaced by Policy DC6.
ECO3 - Allocation of land for Bad neighbour employment uses	To be replaced by Policies CP3, DC6 and DC7.
ECO5 - Development of employment uses outside settlement boundaries	To be replaced by Policy DC7.
TRA5 - Traffic generation	To be replaced by Policy CP13.
REC2 - Provision of open space	To be replaced by Policy DC11.
(002)2 - Allocation of site H2 (Attleborough)	To be replaced by Policy CP1.
(002)6 - Allocation of site H6 (Attleborough)	To be replaced by Policy CP1.
(002)8 - Allocation of site E2 (Attleborough)	To be replaced by Policy CP3.
(002)9 - Allocation of site E3 (Attleborough)	Policy to be saved.

Saved Local Plan Policy No.	Local Plan Policies to be saved or replaced by Core Strategy/Development Control Policy
(002)11 - Allocation of sites OS2, OS3, OS5 (Attleborough) for housing development allocations H1, H", H3, H4, H5 and H6	To be replaced by Policy DC11.
(002)12 - Seek to provide site OS6 (Attleborough)	Policy to be saved.
(025)1 - Allocation of site E1 (Dereham)	Policy to be saved.
(087)1 - Development related to motor racing (Snetterton)	Policy to be saved.
(099)1 - Allocation of sites E1 and E2 (Thetford)	Policy to be saved.
(099)4 - Protection of the amenity value of the rivers Thet and Little Ouse	To be replaced by Policy CP11.
(104)3 - Allocation of site E4 (Watton)	To be replaced by Policies CP3 and DC6.
(104)5 - Identification of redevelopment opportunity RO2 (Watton)	To be replaced by Policies CP1 and CP3.
(104)6 - Identification of redevelopment opportunity RO3 (Watton)	To be replaced by Policy CP1.
(107)1 - Identify land for industrial development (Weeting)	Policy to be saved.

#### Norfolk Structure Plan Policies to be replaced

**A.4** A number of policies from the adopted Norfolk County Structure Plan have been saved by the Secretary of State and have not been replaced by the adopted East of England Plan. Breckland Council does not wish to save any of these policies as part of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies document as the issues are either dealt with in this document or are not relevant to the District's particular circumstances. The following table outlines these policies and reasons for their replacement:

**Table A.2 Structure Plan policies to be replaced**

Structure Plan Policy Ref.	Reasons for replacement
T2	Policy will be replaced by other policies within the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.
T17	This policy is too detailed for the Core Strategy or Development Control Policies DPD. The general sentiment of this policy will be addressed through Policy DC1.
RC8	Policy will be replaced by Development Control policy DC1. The remainder of the Policy will also be sufficiently covered by other emerging Core Policies (such as CP9) and will not require saving.





Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

Structure Plan Policy Ref.	Reasons for replacement
EC10	Policy will be replaced by Development Control Policy DC8, and it is considered that the remains of the policy are not relevant in a Breckland context.

## Appendix B Glossary

### Adoption

The final confirmation of a development plan or Local Development Document as having a statutory status by a Local Planning Authority (LPA).

### Affordable Housing

The Government's definition for affordable housing is set out in Planning Policy Statement 3. PPS3 defines affordable housing as:

*'Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:*

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.*
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision'.*

### Allocation

An area of land identified in a Development Plan. The allocation will indicate the Council's preferred use for the land.

### Ancient Woodlands

Woodland that is believed to have existed from at least medieval times.

### Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

A report produced each financial year to indicate the progress of production of the local development framework and effectiveness of policies contained within the plan. The report will outline action that may need to be taken to meet targets or if policies need to be replaced. Changes will be implemented through a revised Local Development Scheme.

### Area Action Plans (AAP)

Plans for areas of change or conservation. Their purpose is to deliver planned growth, stimulate regeneration, and protect areas sensitive to change through conservation policies, make proposals for enhancement and resolve conflicting objectives in areas where there is significant development pressure. Area Action Plans are Development Plan Documents, which means they carry the full weight of the planning system in determining planning applications.

### Biodiversity

The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variation including plants and animals.



### **Brief / Planning Brief**

A planning brief can include site-specific development briefs, design briefs, development frameworks and master plans that seek to positively shape future development.

### **Brownfield Land or Site**

Brownfield land is another term for previously developed land, or land that contains or contained a permanent structure and associated infrastructure. Brownfield land occurs in rural and urban areas, but does not include agricultural or forestry land or buildings. The definition laid down in Government policy, which all local planning authorities should follow, is in Annex B of PPS3: Housing.

### **Capacity (in retailing terms)**

Money available within the catchment area with which to support existing and additional retail floor space.

### **Catchment (in retailing terms)**

An area, often considered within easy walking or driving distance, in which people are happy travelling to shops.

### **Community Forest**

A large area of land transformed into a wooded landscape by a partnership of local authorities, national/agencies and private, voluntary and community organisations to support employment, recreation, education and wildlife.

### **Community Strategy**

A strategy prepared by a community to help deliver local aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.

### **Comparison Shopping**

The provision of retail items not obtained on a frequent basis, for example televisions and white goods.

### **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**

An order issued by the Government or a Local Authority to acquire land or buildings for public interest purposes. For example the redevelopment of certain brownfield sites.

### **Conservation Area**

An area of special architectural or historic interest, designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, whose character and appearance it is desirable to preserve and enhance. There are special rules on some development in Conservation Areas.

### **Convenience Shopping**

The provision of everyday essential items, such as food.

### **Core Strategy**

The Core Strategy is one of the Development Plan Documents forming part of a Local Authority's Local Development Framework. It should set out the Vision, Spatial Strategy and Core Policies for the spatial development of the area.

### **County Wildlife Site (CWS)**

A site of important nature conservation value within a County context but which is not protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

### **Curtilage**

The area normally within the boundaries of a property surrounding the main building.

### **Density**

In the case of residential development, a measurement of either the number of habitable rooms per hectare or the number of dwellings per hectare.

### **Design guide**

A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with the design policies of a local authority or other organisation often with a view to retaining local distinctiveness.

### **Design statement**

A design statement can be made at a pre-planning application stage by a developer, indicating the design principles upon which a proposal is to be based. It may also be submitted in support of a planning application.

### **Development**

Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission (see also "permitted development").

### **Development Control**

The process whereby a local planning authority manages, shapes, and considers the merits of a planning application and whether it should be given permission with regard to the Development Plan.

### **Development Plan (DP)**

The approved or adopted statutory land use and spatial plans for an area. The Development Plan sets a Local Planning Authority's policies and proposals for the development, conservation and use of land and buildings in the Authority's area. Under the present planning system, the development plan generally includes the structure plan and the minerals and waste local plans prepared by the County Council and the Local Plan prepared by the district council - or the single unitary development plan prepared by unitary councils.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) replaces this system with a Regional Spatial Strategy prepared by the regional assembly and a local development framework prepared by district or unitary councils.

The Development Plan - with its policies and proposals - is the most important consideration for Local Planning authorities when they make a decision on a planning application.

**Development Plan Document (DPD)** - Under the new system of local planning brought in under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the term 'development plan document' covers any Local Development Document that is part of the Development Plan. A Development Plan Document has to be independently





## Adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

tested by a Government inspector and carries full weight in relation to planning applications, which distinguishes it from a supplementary planning document. Development Plan Documents include the Local Planning Authority's Core Strategy, Area Action Plans and Proposals Map.

### **Examination in Public (EIP)**

A term given to the examination of the Regional Spatial Strategy, or Structure Plans under transitional arrangements.

### **Environment Agency (EA)**

Government appointed body responsible for pollution control and water quality.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

EIA is a procedure that must be followed for certain types of development before they are granted permission. The procedure requires the developer to compile an Environmental Statement (ES) describing the likely significant effects of the development on the environment and proposed mitigation measures.

### **Evidence base**

The information and data gathered by Local Authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, social and economic characteristics of an area.

### **Floodplain**

Generally flat-lying areas adjacent to a watercourse, tidal lengths of a river or the sea where water flows in times of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences.

### **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)**

An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

### **General Conformity**

A process by which Regional Planning Bodies consider whether a Development Plan Document is in "general conformity" with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Also, all other DPDs must conform to a Core Strategy DPD.

### **General Employment Areas**

Existing employment sites which have been identified to be protected for employment uses including business, general industrial and storage/distribution uses.

### **General Permitted Development Order (GPDO)**

A Government policy order outlining that certain limited or minor forms of development may proceed without the need for planning permission.

### **Government Offices (GOs)**

Representatives of central Government in the regions, bringing together the work of ten government departments.

## Green Infrastructure

A network of multi functional public and private green spaces which are protected for their environmental, habitat and/or cultural heritage values. Green infrastructure is designed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of communities, whilst creating linkages between settlements and the surrounding countryside. Green infrastructure includes open space, which is defined in PPG17 as meaning "all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also at as a visual amenity." Green infrastructure can include: allotments, children's play space, woodland, rivers and watercourses, cycle paths and footpaths.

## Greenfield Site

Land that has not previously been used for urban development. It is usually land last used for agriculture and located next to or outside existing built-up areas of a settlement.

## Government Planning Policy / PPGs / PPSs

National Planning Policies that Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities need to take into account when drawing up development plans and other documents and making decisions on planning applications. Government planning policy guidance is set out in a series of Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG's). These policies are produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. As a result of the Government's planning Green Paper in 2001, many of the PPG's are being revised and renamed Planning Policy statements (PPS's). These focus on stating Government policy; whilst good practice guidance for Local Authorities is set out in separate documents accompanying the PPS's.

## Habitat

The natural home of an animal or plant, often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.

## Habitat Regulations Assessment

An assessment to test whether the proposals and policies contained within a land use plan could have a significant effect upon any European designated habitat site. Sites covered by assessment include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Upon establishing a significant effect the assessment will recommend mitigation measures. Should mitigation measures not be found and there are no alternative options the assessment will consider compensatory measures subject to there being imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

## Historic Parks and Gardens

Parks and gardens which are of historic value and have been included on the national *Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England* based on an assessment by English Heritage.

## Human Rights Act

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law. The general purpose of the ECHR is to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to maintain and promote the ideals and values of a democratic society. It sets out the basic rights of every person together with the limitations placed on these rights in order to protect the rights of others and of the wider community. The specific Articles of the ECHR relevant to planning include, Article 6 (Right to a fair and public hearing), Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence), Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination) and Article 1 of Protocol 1 (Right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property).



## Independent Examination

The process by which an Independent Planning Inspector may publicly examine a 'Development Plan Document' or a 'Statement of Community Involvement', and any representations, before issuing a binding report.

## Infrastructure

The physical features (for example roads, rails, and stations) that make up the transport network.

## Inspector's Report

A report issued by an Independent Planning Inspector regarding the planning issues debated at the independent examination of a development plan or a planning inquiry. Reports into DPDs will be binding upon local authorities.

## Intermediate Housing

PPS3 defines Intermediate Housing as: '*Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above. These can include shared equity products (eg. HomeBuy), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent. These definitions replace guidance given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3) and DETR Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing. The definition does not exclude homes provided by private sector bodies or provided without grant funding. Where such homes meet the definition above, they may be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing. Whereas, those homes that do not meet the definition, for example, 'low cost market' housing, may not be considered, for planning purposes, as affordable housing*'

## Issues, Options and Preferred Options

The 'pre-submission' consultation stage of DPD's with the objective of gaining public consensus over proposals ahead of submission to Government for independent examination.

## Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

A tool to identify and understand the factors that give character to the landscape and to help inform policy and decisions about how the landscape may change in the future.

## Listed Building

A building or other Structure of Special Architectural or Historic Interest included by the Government on a statutory list and assigned a grade (I, II\* or II).

## Local Development Document (LDD)

(1) Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – these are the statutory planning documents that the Council must produce under the legislation and include:

(2) Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – documents that will provide additional and supporting detail for policies and proposals, where necessary. Whilst the community will be consulted on their content, these documents will not be subject to independent scrutiny.

### **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

A portfolio or folder of Local Development Documents collectively setting out the Spatial Planning Strategy for a Local Planning Authority area. As a result of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it replaces Local Plans and Unitary Development Plans.

### **Local Development Scheme (LDS)**

A public statement setting out a project plan for the preparation of Local Development Documents.

### **Local Nature Reserve (LNR)**

Area designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as being of particular importance to nature conservation and where public understanding of nature conservation issues is encouraged.

### **Local Plan**

An old-style Development Plan prepared by District and other Local Planning Authorities. These plans will continue to operate for a time after the commencement of the new development plan system, by virtue of specific transitional provisions.

### **Local Planning Authority (LPA)**

The Local Government body responsible for formulating Planning Policies (in a Local Development Framework), controlling development through determining planning applications and taking enforcement action when necessary. This is either a District Council, Unitary Authority, Metropolitan Council or National Park Authority. For the purposes of development concerned with minerals or waste, the County Council or Unitary Authority is normally the Local Planning Authority - and is also referred to as the Minerals Planning Authority or the Waste Planning Authority.

### **Local Transport Plan (LTP)**

A five-year integrated transport strategy, prepared by Local Authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The plan sets out the resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy. Local Transport Plans should be consistent with the policies and priorities set out in the Regional Transport Strategy as an integral part of the RSS.

### **Material Consideration**

A matter that should be taken into account in deciding on a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.

### **Mixed use (or mixed use development)**

Provision of a mix of complementary uses, such as residential, community and leisure uses, on a site or within a particular area.

### **Nature Conservation**

The protection, management and promotion of wildlife habitat for the benefit of wild species, as well as the communities that use and enjoy them.





### **National Nature Reserve (NNR)**

Area designated by Natural England to protect and conserve nationally important areas of wildlife habitat and geological formations and to promote scientific research.

### **Need (in Retail Terms)**

The balance of supply and demand between retailers and consumers. Often measured in terms of excess expenditure available to allow new shops to be built.

### **Local Centre**

A number of shops serving a local neighbourhood sometimes referred to as a Local Centre.

### **Open Space**

Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as '*land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground*'. Open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.

### **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is the latest piece of planning legislation. It amends much of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In particular, the 2004 act has made major changes to the system of development plans and introduced sustainable development, as defined by Government policy, as an objective of the planning system.

### **Planning Obligations and Agreements**

A legal agreement between planning authority and a developer, or offered unilaterally by a developer ensuring certain works related to a development are undertaken or contributions made to the provision of infrastructure or facilities (Sometimes called a Section 106 agreement).

### **Planning permission**

Formal approval sought from a Council, often granted with conditions, allowing a proposed development to proceed. Permission may be sought in principle through outline plans, or be sought in detail through full plans.

### **Previously Developed Land**

Previously Developed Land is another term for brownfield land, or land that contains or contained a permanent structure and associated infrastructure. Brownfield land occurs in rural and urban areas, but does not include agricultural or forestry land or buildings. The definition laid down in Government policy, which all local planning authorities should follow, is in Annex B of PPS3: Housing.

### **Protected Species**

Plants and animal species afforded protection under certain Acts of Law and Regulations.

### **Ramsar site**

Area identified under the internationally agreed Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (signed at Ramsar in Iran), focusing on the ecological importance of wetlands generally.

## **Regeneration**

The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

## **Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)**

Non-statutory sites of regional importance recognised by Natural England and local authorities.

## **Regional Planning Body (RPB) / Regional Assembly**

Each of the English regions outside of London has a Regional Chamber that the regions generally call “Regional Assemblies” (not to be confused with the term “Elected Regional Assemblies”). They are responsible for developing and co-ordinating a strategic vision for improving the quality of life in a region. The Assembly is responsible for setting priorities and preparing certain regional strategies, including Regional Spatial Strategies. For example, in the East of England the RPB is the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA).

## **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)**

Statutory regional spatial strategies will replace non-statutory regional planning guidance notes produced for each English region. Regional spatial strategies will be part of the development plan. As a consequence, they are likely to be more detailed and will carry much more weight in relation to determining planning applications. In London, the spatial development strategy prepared by the mayor forms the regional spatial strategy.

## **Representation**

A comment on a draft of a Development Plan Document that is made within a formal consultation period or at publication stage on the soundness of the plan. It will normally support or object to the plan or part of the plan.

## **Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR)**

Fragments of unimproved, semi-natural grassland verges containing plant species that are now rare or scarce at the national or county level. To help to protect them, these sensitive sites are designated Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs) by Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and are individually managed to ensure the survival of the species for which they are designated.

## **Saved Policies /Saved Plan**

Policies within Unitary Development Plans, Local Plans, and Structure Plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents.

## **Scheduled Monument**

A structure placed on a schedule compiled by the Department of National Heritage in England for protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.

## **Scoping**

The process of working out the issues, environmental impacts, alternatives and depth of investigation which an environmental impact assessment or strategic environmental assessment should go into.

## **Section 106 Agreement**

A legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act (1990). See also: Planning Obligations and Agreements.



### **Sequential approach / sequential test**

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, ensuring land with no flood risk is developed before land with flood risk.

### **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

A site of special scientific interest is identified by English Nature under Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act as requiring protection from damaging development on account of its flora, fauna, geological and/or physiological features.

### **Sites of Archaeological & Historic Interest:**

A place with a known or potential archaeological interest.

### **Social Housing**

PPS3 defines social housing as: *'Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. The proposals set out in the Three Year Review of Rent Restructuring (July 2004) were implemented as policy in April 2006. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Housing Corporation as a condition of grant.'*

### **Soundness**

A term referring to the justification of a Development Plan Document. A DPD is considered "sound" and based upon good evidence unless it can be shown to be unsound.

### **Spatial Planning**

Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. That will include policies which can impact on land use, for example by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means.

### **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**

Protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive.

### **Special Protection Area (SPAs)**

Protected sites classified under the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds, the Birds Directive.

### **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Every local planning authority has to prepare a statement of community involvement. Its aim is to specify how the authority will try to achieve consensus on emerging local development documents and major planning applications and how it will engage the public in the process.

### **Statement of Consultation / Statement of Compliance**

A report or statement issued by local planning authorities explaining how they have complied with their SCI during consultation on Local Development Documents.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

An assessment of the environmental effects of a draft plan or programme, which is open to public consultation.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

A study which assesses the amount of land available for housing. The study takes into account the likely delivery of unimplemented planning permissions and identifies land that could be developed for housing. All land identified in the assessment is tested for developability and deliverability. The study identifies land that is both greenfield and previously developed. The SHLAA is an important part of the evidence base which helps underpin the Core Policy on Housing.

### **Sustainable**

Meeting people needs now, socially, environmentally and economically, without jeopardising the needs of future generations.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy**

The Council's long term plan to deliver sustainable communities and improved quality of life for people. It provides a overarching vision for Breckland, which guides all plans and strategies relating to the District. The Sustainable Community Strategy demonstrates how public, private and voluntary organisations will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

To identify and evaluate what the effects of the strategy or plan are likely to be on social, environmental and economic conditions of the strategy or plan area.

### **Submission Document**

A Development Plan Document submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination before a Government appointed Planning Inspector. Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Supplementary Planning Documents Supplementary planning guidance, which is set to be renamed 'supplementary planning documents', can give further context and detail to local development plan policies. It is not part of the statutory Development Plan, therefore, it does not have the same weight when local planning authorities are considering planning applications.

### **Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is an approach towards development that tries to make sure people satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a good quality of life without compromising the quality of life for future generations. The Government will try to achieve that through five principles:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly





### **Sustainable travel / Sustainable Transport**

Often meaning walking, cycling and public transport (and in some circumstances “car sharing”), which is considered to be less damaging to the environment and which contributes less to traffic congestion than one-person car journeys.

#### **Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA)**

An assessment of the effects upon the surrounding area by traffic as a result of a development, such as increased traffic flows that may require highway improvements.

#### **Tree Preservation Order (TPO)**

A mechanism for securing the preservation of single or groups of trees of acknowledged amenity value. A tree subject to an order may not normally be topped, lopped or felled without the consent of the Local Planning Authority.

#### **Use Classes Order**

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same class. The order was amended in 2005.

#### **Viability**

In terms of retailing, a centre that is capable of success and continuing effectiveness.

#### **Vitality**

In terms of retailing, the capacity of a centre to grow or develop.

#### **Windfall Site**

A site not allocated in a plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of the plan.

## Appendix C Evidence Base List

Breckland Council has assembled a range of information to inform and underpin the preparation of its Local Development Framework. This is known as the evidence base and provides an understanding of the needs, opportunities and constraints within the area. This ensures that up to date information, on key aspects of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the District is available to enable the preparation of a sound spatial plan to meet the objectives of securing sustainable development. The development of the evidence base is a continuing process. Studies completed so far are listed below:

### Sustainability Appraisal and Monitoring

#### Sustainability Appraisal Report

The Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Core Strategy is made up of three documents. These are listed below:

#### **Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Submission Sustainability Appraisal Report**

This document summarises the changes between Preferred Options and the Submission document. It also assesses the impact on sustainability baseline of the Submission strategy and policies.

#### **Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment): Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD: Development of Preferred Options (2007)**

This sustainability appraisal report accompanied the Preferred Options consultation document for the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies. It provides the context for the Preferred Option, considers and appraises alternative options and considers the negative and positive effects that the Preferred Options and alternative options may have upon existing environmental, social and economic conditions in Breckland.

#### **Sustainability Appraisal of the Breckland LDF: Scoping Report (January 2005)**

This is a systematic and continuous assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies contained within the Development Plan Documents.

In addition, a Sustainability Appraisal Report was completed for the 2005 Preferred Options draft and is detailed below.

#### **Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD: Preferred Options (2005)**

This Sustainability Appraisal report accompanied the original Preferred Options consultation document for the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies in October 2005. It provided the context for the then Preferred Option and considered the negative and positive effects that it may have upon existing environmental, social and economic conditions in Breckland. The Appraisal also included the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment.

#### **Breckland Annual Monitoring Report**

A statutory document prepared by the Council as part of the Local Development Framework which provides a Monitoring Framework for the implementation of the Local Development Scheme, adopted planning policies and set out the housing trajectory for Breckland.



## Housing, Employment and Regeneration

### **Rural East Anglia Partnership: Strategic Housing Market Assessment Sub-Regional Report. June 2007 Prepared by Fordham Research on behalf of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council, Breckland Council and North Norfolk District Council**

This report is an assessment which will provide a robust evidence base on how the housing market operates in Rural East Anglia and what measures need to be followed in terms of strategic housing and planning in order to balance the local housing market in Breckland, King's Lynn & West Norfolk and North Norfolk. The Assessment has been prepared in accordance with guidance in PPS3 (November 2006) and related (draft) guidance on SHMAs.

### **Housing Needs Survey (2007) Prepared by Fordhams on behalf of Breckland Council**

This provides detailed analysis of housing needs in Breckland and includes information about crucial issues such as the suitability of current housing, household income and affordability of housing across Breckland. The Survey estimates an annual shortfall of affordable housing amounting to 964 units per annum over a five year period to 2012. The Survey takes account of latest Government guidance.

### **Affordable Housing - Site Viability Thresholds Study (2007): Prepared by Fordhams on behalf of Breckland Council**

As part of wider work on a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Rural East Anglia, Fordham Research was commissioned by Breckland District Council to produce financial appraisals in respect of a series of notional housing sites in the District. The appraisals were designed to assess the impact on development viability of size thresholds and targets for affordable housing provision being considered in preparation of the Local Development Framework.

### **Thetford Growth Framework and Infrastructure Study (2007): Prepared by EDAW for Thetford Growth Point Partnership**

The study was commissioned as part of the Growth Point initiative for Thetford to enhance the evidence base around the sustainable growth options for the town in light of the housing and employment figures provided in the Regional Plan. The study also outlines the infrastructure requirements

### **Breckland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2008)**

The study assesses land availability for housing over the plan period. It includes unimplemented planning permissions and greenfield and previously developed land with potential for housing development.

### **A Strategy to Address the Housing and Support Needs of People with a Physical or Sensory Impairment. (Adopted November 2008)**

The strategy identifies that through the general increases in housing stock levels there will be a requirement to increase the number of homes specifically designed to meet the basic needs of physical disability (i.e. lifetime homes). A strategic recommendation is to prioritise the development of lifetime homes and transitional housing across Norfolk.

### **Employment Land Review (2006): Prepared by Roger Tym & Partners on behalf of Breckland Council**

This reviews existing allocated employment land to assess its suitability in light of changing needs of businesses and the local economy.

**Sub-District Employment Projections (December 2006) Prepared by Roger Tym & Partners on behalf of Breckland Council**

This analysis provides a spatial breakdown of the 6,000 jobs figure for Breckland in the Draft RSS to the Ward level, based on a number of policy scenarios and market factors.

**Breckland Retail and Town Centre Study (2004): Prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners on behalf of Breckland Council**

The Study provides a comprehensive assessment of the health of the five town centres in Breckland including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of each. Importantly, the study also provides analysis on future retail floorspace requirements based on an assessment of future retail spending. The study is informed by primary research (1,000 household interviews) and secondary data from retailers turnover figures and trends in consumer spending.

**Breckland Retail and Town Centre Study Update (2007): Prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners on behalf of Breckland Council**

This update primarily focused on the future retail floorspace requirement, updating figures using latest floorspace turnover and consumer data in light of the developing LDF strategy, retail permissions and town centre monitoring.

**Breckland Core Strategy Infrastructure Study (2008): Prepared by EDAW on behalf of Breckland Council**

The study looks at the infrastructure needs of planned economic and residential development and to test the District wide effects of developer contributions required by the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD on financial viability of employment and residential development.

**A11 Energy Study - Stage 1 - Prepared by IT Power Ltd on behalf of Breckland District Council**

The study looked at the energy infrastructure requirements of Thetford, Snetterton and Attleborough arising from the growth agenda along the corridor. There is sufficient energy to meet the needs arising from growth in Attleborough. There are localised energy constraints in Thetford which are not insurmountable but are now more fully understood and can be resolved through the planned growth of the town. Whilst Snetterton has strategic energy constraints these too can be overcome and it remains important for this LDF to promote the location as a strategic employment allocation to provide clarity and confidence for further investment.

**Economic Impact of 4,000 homes in Attleborough (2008): Prepared by PACEC on behalf of Breckland Council.**

To reevaluate the economic impact of 4,000 additional homes in Attleborough, compared to previously consulted figures of 1,000 homes which informed earlier Employment Land Assessments.

## **Environment**

**Breckland Water Cycle Study: Stage 1 – Outline Study (2008): Prepared by Scott-Wilson on behalf of Breckland Council.**

The study tests the overall water infrastructure needs including waste water treatment, and test the environmental capacity for growth in terms of water resources. The study will also investigate water efficiency measures and provide guidance for the implementation of sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) through new developments.





### **Open Space Assessment (2007) Breckland Council**

The assessment sets out a picture of existing provision, quality and future need for open space in Breckland, based on the open space typologies in PPG17. The assessment advises on standards for the amount and accessibility of different types of open space giving a picture of where there is adequate provision or not enough open space.

### **Breckland Landscape Character Assessment (2007): Prepared by Land Use Consultants on behalf of Breckland Council**

This provides a comprehensive Breckland wide assessment of landscape character to inform land use planning and land management decisions.

### **Breckland Landscape Character Assessment: Fringe Study (2007) Prepared by Land Use Consultants on behalf of Breckland Council**

This study provides a detailed assessment of the landscape character on the fringes of the five towns and 12 Local Service Centre villages in Breckland to inform land use planning and land management decisions at the Core Strategy and Site Specific stages of the LDF.

### **Thetford Green Infrastructure Study (2007): Prepared by Land Use Consultants on behalf of Breckland Council**

The study was commissioned as part of the Growth Point initiative for Thetford to enhance the evidence base around the Green Infrastructure requirements resulting from the significant growth of Thetford to 2021 and beyond.

### **Breckland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) Prepared by Mott MacDonald on behalf of Breckland Council.**

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provides a detailed and robust assessment of flood risk in the District and its implications for land-use planning. It is a technical background document to the LDF process and its output is intended for planning consultation purposes only. The principal output of the Study is mapping of the towns and larger villages in Breckland at a 1:10,000 scale showing the appropriate PPG25 flood risk zones. The SFRA was 'signed off' by the Environment Agency in June 2005. Please note that in 2007 an update of the SFRA was prepared by Mott MacDonald to incorporate PPS25 policy advice and revised climate change predictions. This update was signed off by the Environment Agency in February 2008.

### **Dereham Green Infrastructure Study (2008); Prepared by Ecology, Land and People (ELP) on behalf of Dereham Town Council, Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council.**

A Green Infrastructure Study and accompanying Implementation Strategy for the market town of Dereham. The study provides detailed evidence to underpin the emerging Breckland Core Strategy in relation to the delivery of new green infrastructure, as well as recommending opportunities for the enhancement of the existing. The assistance in the production of a Green Infrastructure Study is also a year 1 action point set out in the Council's adopted Environment Strategy.

## **Accessibility**

### **Thetford Transport Study (2006) Prepared by Mott MacDonald for Norfolk County Council and Breckland Council**

The study analyses the transport situation in Thetford and provides a strategy for enhancing accessibility and addressing the transport implications of future growth.



**Attleborough Transport Study (2007) Prepared by Mott MacDonald for Norfolk County Council and Breckland Council**

The study analyses the transport situation in Attleborough and provides a strategy for enhancing accessibility and addressing the transport implications of future growth.

**Attleborough Proposed Link Road Solutions. Route Identification Study (2008): Prepared by Mott McDonald for Norfolk County Council and Breckland Council**

The study examined four possible options for a link road over the railway to service land to the south of the town whilst providing a direct route from Bunns Bank to the A11 avoiding the need to congest the town centre. The study concludes that a link road to serve a sustainable urban extension to the south of Attleborough is technically deliverable. All four link road options examined can be engineered to a standard acceptable to the Highways authority and Network Rail and are viable.

Full copies or summaries of these documents are available on [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk) via the Local Development Framework quick link on the homepage.



## Appendix D Parking Standards

Table D.1 Parking Standards

Use Class of Development Proposal <sup>(16)(17)(18)(19)</sup>	Minimum Car Parking Provision for Disabled Users (Number of spaces) <sup>(20)</sup> and other minimum requirements <sup>(21)</sup>	Maximum Car Parking Provision (Number of Spaces) <sup>(22)(23)</sup>	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision (Number of Spaces)
A1 , A2 and laundrettes and the retail floorspace of other uses not specifically covered elsewhere	1 per 400m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 20m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 70m <sup>2</sup>
Food retail within A1	1 per 280m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 14m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 70m <sup>2</sup>
A3 and A4	1 per 100m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 5m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 25m <sup>2</sup> plus 1 per 4 staff
A5	1 per 100m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 3m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 25m <sup>2</sup> plus 1 per 4 staff
B1	1 per 600m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 36m <sup>2</sup>
B2	1 per 1200m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 60m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 60m <sup>2</sup>
B8 and outside growing and storage areas of garden centres	1 per 2000m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 100m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 80m <sup>2</sup>
C1	1 car space for disabled users per 20 bedrooms	1 per bedroom	1 per 5 bedrooms plus 1 per 4 staff
C2	1 car space for disabled users per 10 other car spaces	1 per 3 beds or 1 per dwelling unit plus 1 per 2 staff	1 per 20 beds plus 1 per 4 staff

22 Gross floor area will be used for all provision determined by m<sup>2</sup>.

23 The number of staff present at peak times will be used for all provision determined by staff numbers.

20 Spaces provided for disabled users will be taken off the total number of spaces provided.

21 Drop-off/pick-up points, coach or bus parking, other non-car provision and provision for different uses within mixed use developments should be designed and managed in such a way that it is used for its intended use

16 For uses that are covered by national standards, provision will be provided in accordance with those standards from the relevant threshold.

17 For uses that are not covered by this policy, provision will either be determined by national standards where they exist or on a case by case basis.

18 Where sites are proposed for mixed use development, parking provision will be determined on a pro rata basis.

19 For uses such as B8 and motor vehicle showrooms where there is outside storage or display area this is considered to be part of the gross floor area for calculating provision.

Use Class of Development Proposal <sup>(16)(17)(18)(19)</sup>	Minimum Car Parking Provision for Disabled Users (Number of spaces) <sup>(20)</sup> and other minimum requirements <sup>(21)</sup>	Maximum Car Parking Provision (Number of Spaces) <sup>(22)(23)</sup>	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision (Number of Spaces)
C3	1 car space for disabled users per 5 dwellings	Minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling	None for houses with garages or private gardens 1 per dwelling for all other dwellings
D1	1 car space for disabled users per 10 other car spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point plus additional space for ambulance parking/drop-off.	1 per staff plus 2 per consulting room	1 per 4 staff plus 1 per consulting room
Day Care Centres	1 car space for disabled users per 10 other car spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per staff plus 1 per 4 persons attending	1 per 100m <sup>2</sup> plus 1 per 4 staff
Creches and Nurseries	1 car space for disabled users per 20 other car spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per full time equivalent staff plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per 15 children plus 1 per 4 staff
Primary and Secondary Schools	1 car space for disabled users per 20 other car spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point plus public transport provision	1 per 2 staff	1 per 5 children plus 1 per 4 staff
Higher and Further Education	1 car space for disabled users per 20 other car	1 per 2 staff plus 1 per 15 students plus	1 per 3 students plus 1 per 4 staff

22 Gross floor area will be used for all provision determined by m<sup>2</sup>.

23 The number of staff present at peak times will be used for all provision determined by staff numbers.

20 Spaces provided for disabled users will be taken off the total number of spaces provided.

21 Drop-off/pick-up points, coach or bus parking, other non-car provision and provision for different uses within mixed use developments should be designed and managed in such a way that it is used for its intended use

16 For uses that are covered by national standards, provision will be provided in accordance with those standards from the relevant threshold.

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Use Class of Development Proposal <sup>(16)(17)(18)(19)</sup>	Minimum Car Parking Provision for Disabled Users (Number of spaces) <sup>(20)</sup> and other minimum requirements <sup>(21)</sup>	Maximum Car Parking Provision (Number of Spaces) <sup>(22)(23)</sup>	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision (Number of Spaces)
	spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point plus public transport provision	drop-off/pick-up point plus public transport provision	
Art galleries, Museums, Public/Exhibition halls and Libraries	1 car space for disabled users per 600m <sup>2</sup> plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup> plus 1 per 4 staff
Places of Worship	1 car space for disabled users per 200m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 10m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 10m <sup>2</sup>
D2	1 car space for disabled users per 440m <sup>2</sup> plus bus/coach drop-off/pick-up point	1 per 22m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 20 seats or 1 per 75m <sup>2</sup> plus 1 per 4 staff
Motor service centres	1 car space for disabled users per 600m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 30m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 4 staff
Motor vehicle showrooms	1 car space for disabled users per 900m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 45m <sup>2</sup>	1 per 4 staff

- 22 Gross floor area will be used for all provision determined by m<sup>2</sup>.
- 23 The number of staff present at peak times will be used for all provision determined by staff numbers.
- 20 Spaces provided for disabled users will be taken off the total number of spaces provided.
- 21 Drop-off/pick-up points, coach or bus parking, other non-car provision and provision for different uses within mixed use developments should be designed and managed in such a way that it is used for its intended use
- 16 For uses that are covered by national standards, provision will be provided in accordance with those standards from the relevant threshold.
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- 18 Where sites are proposed for mixed use development, parking provision will be determined on a pro rata basis.
- 19 For uses such as B8 and motor vehicle showrooms where there is outside storage or display area this is considered to be part of the gross floor area for calculating provision.

## Appendix E Open Space Contributions

**E.1** It is not seen as feasible for developments of fewer than 25 dwellings to provide outdoor playing space on site; therefore the scheme provides a mechanism where an applicant can provide an appropriate provision by means of a financial contribution for improvements to facilities locally, or the contributions from a number of sites can be grouped together to provide or enhance a facility, benefiting the residences of that parish.

**E.2** These contributions are calculated by the estimated cost of the area required by the dwelling size shown in the tables below

**Table E.1 Indicative Children's Play Contributions**

Children's Play	
One bed dwelling	None
Two bed dwelling	£480
Three bed dwelling	£600
Four bed dwelling (or more)	£720

**Table E.2 Indicative Outdoor Sport Contributions**

Outdoor Sport	
One bed dwelling	£480
Two bed dwelling	£640
Three bed dwelling	£800
Four bed dwelling (or more)	£960

**E.3** These contributions will reflect the cost of providing and/or updating the provision of both children's play and outdoor sports provision, together with the associated ongoing maintenance costs and where necessary the cost of acquiring land.

**E.4** The proposed Local Breckland Open Space Standard of 2.4ha per 1,000 population requires 16m<sup>2</sup> for every person on the basis of 8m<sup>2</sup> children's play and 24m<sup>2</sup> outdoor sports. Contributions for maintenance and commuted payments will be proportionately based on the cost of laying out and equipping typical areas based on the requirements identified.

**E.5** In deriving an open space contribution there are four constituent parts:-

- Children's Play Provision
- Outdoor Sports Provision
- Maintenance
- Land Acquisition

### Children's Play Provision



**E.6** The contributions for maintenance and commuted payments will reflect the local standards of providing children's play areas in accordance with the following requirements:

- A Local Area for Play (LAP)
- A Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
- A Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)

**E.7** Costs will include initial implementation costs, ongoing maintenance and a contribution towards a mid-term renewal/refurbishment cost).

### **Outdoor Sports Provision**

**E.8** Payments in lieu of direct provision of outdoor sports pitches will be proportional depending on the nature of the provision. Forms of outdoor sport provision include the following:

- MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area)
- Sports Pitches (e.g. Football Pitch)
- Bowling Green
- Tennis Courts
- Parking
- Sports Pavilion / Changing Facility

**E.9** The Local Standard looks for courts, greens and pitches to be provided to enable outdoor sport/recreation for all age groups (from children to adults).

### **Maintenance**

**E.10** For some considerable time (estimated to be >10 years) Breckland has applied a standard maintenance rate for open space of £5.21 per m<sup>2</sup>. There is no evidence on how this maintenance sum was calculated and over what period it is intended to apply (e.g. 5years, 10 years etc). It has been used for some time in commuted sum payments and represents an underestimation of the actual cost of maintaining open space.

**E.11** In 2005 Breckland Council entered a 10 year contract with SERCO for environmental services within the District including maintenance of public open space within the District. However, due to the nature of the contract it is complex to identify a generic per m<sup>2</sup> maintenance costing for items such as grass cutting, hedge maintenance, trees etc and to compare current costs against the established £5.21 per m<sup>2</sup>.

**E.12** Therefore in preparing this Assessment the current maintenance charges of adjoining authorities have been scoped as a reasonable basis for comparative purposes. This assumes that the cost of maintaining open space in similarly sized authority area with similar spatial distributions of development is a reasonable proposition.

**E.13** In the case of off-site provision the developer will pay a maintenance sum for a period of 10 years. The Council considers that this is a reasonable period for a developer to contribute to maintaining open space before the cost falls to the local community.

### **Land Acquisition**

**E.14** For commuted sums an assessment will be made at the time of the planning application of the appropriate cost of acquiring land to fulfil the requirement for open space in the same parish or group of local parishes. The valuation will reflect the local housing market and ensure that the Council or a partner organisation would be able to purchase the land like for like. A residential land value will enable the acquisition



of land within settlement boundaries and for larger areas of land adjoining the boundary where a considerable hope value for residential often exists. The valuation will be sought from the District Valuer on a periodic basis.





## Calculating Provision

**E.15** Table E.1 'Indicative Children's Play Contributions' and Table E.2 'Indicative Outdoor Sport Contributions' above provide indicative worked examples of commuted payments proportionately based on providing a LEAP at £30 per m<sup>2</sup> and a football pitch at £20 per m<sup>2</sup> (including 10 year maintenance). These payments will change as the costs for equipment, installation and maintenance will increase over time with inflation. Detailed costs have been provided in the Breckland Open Space Assessment to provide a guide to the scale of sum likely to be required. These calculations will be updated periodically to reflect factors such as inflation and changing costs in equipment and labour.

**E.16** If the Council decides to accept a commuted payment from a developer then this will be calculated and index linked to the actual commencement on site rather than when permission is given, as there may be several years between them.

## Parish Groupings for off-site Provision

**E.17** Contributions from developers for off-site provision should go into projects in the developments locality. It is evident that within the smaller parishes in the District that there will either be fewer developments or none, and funds will take time to accumulate. As it is unlikely that there will be enough development in a single Parish to provide new or improved facilities, Parishes have been grouped together. Parishes have been grouped together by their geography, transport links, population, likelihood of future development and current outdoor playing space provision. Due to the high rates of development in the market towns, the towns have only been grouped with parishes in which current development straddles the Parish boundaries.

**E.18** The grouping of Parishes should allow funds to be directed to outdoor playing space projects that are accessible to all the people in the grouping. The balance of funds collected from developer contributions can then be bid for by parishes within the grouping for improvements to their existing facilities or the provision of new facilities.

**E.19** When funds for a given Parish cumulate to a level sufficient to allow an improvement to the recreational provision for that Parish, they may be released from the District Council. Funds will only be available where the District Council is satisfied that they will be used or add to existing facilities. Funds cannot be used for more general purposes, such as maintenance or running costs of existing facilities.

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