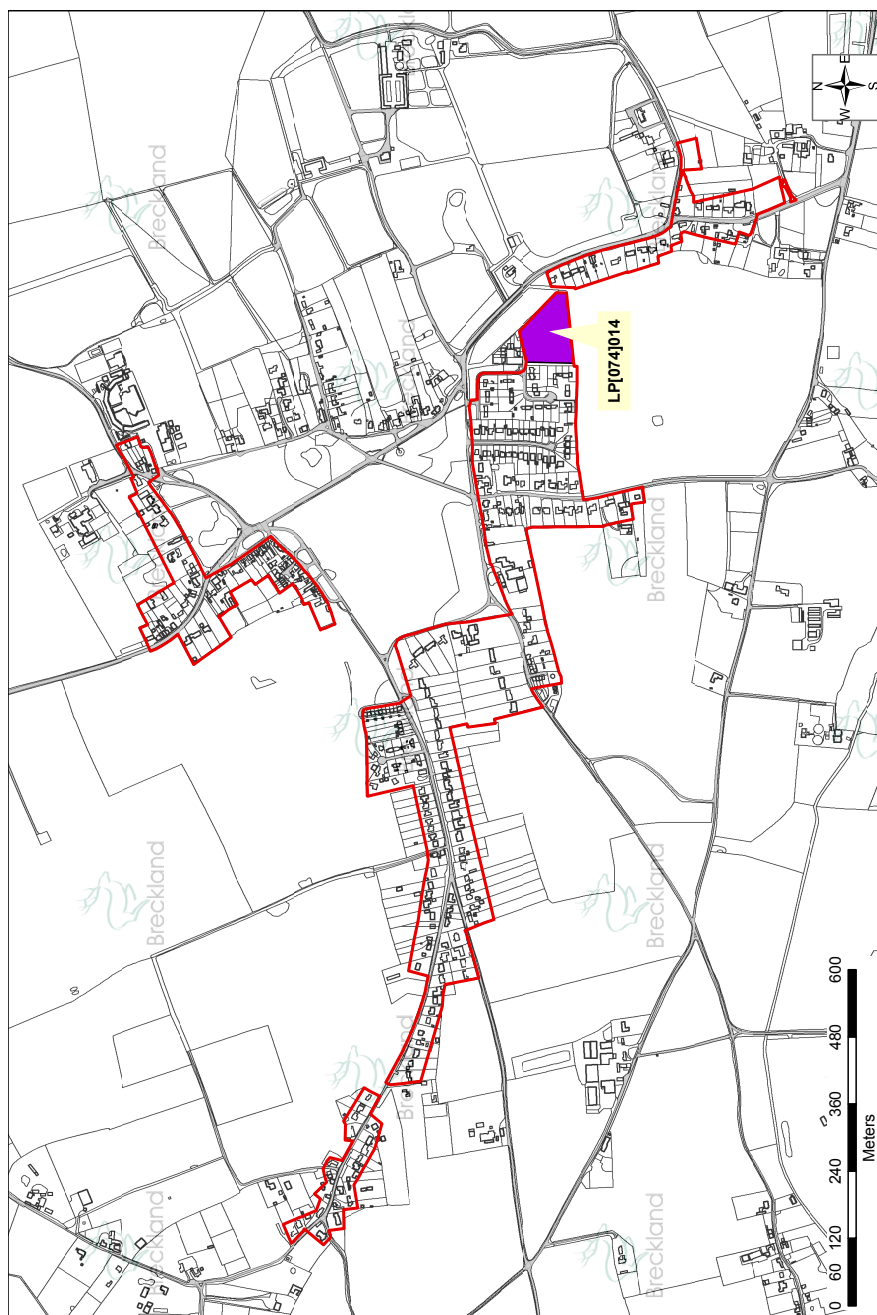


Map 3.15 Summary of the Old Buckenham Allocations.



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Old Buckenham Residential Allocation 1

Land off St. Andrew's Close (LP[074]014)

Land amounting to 0.9 hectares is allocated for a residential development of at least 20 dwellings. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Appropriate density to reflect and respect existing development;
2. Appropriate use of height and scale to ensure the site's position as a key gateway to the settlement;
3. Access on to St Andrews Close;
4. Retain appropriate screening between the site and the B1077; and
5. a pre-application enquiry with Anglian Water Services is required for this site in accordance with the Water Cycle Study to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is available to transfer wastewater for treatment. Where insufficient capacity within the wastewater network is identified, financial contributions may be sought.

3.300 The site is situated upon 0.9 hectares of Grade 3 greenfield land to the east of the St Andrews Close. The site adjoins the existing settlement boundary to the east and south west of the site, with agricultural land to the south of the site.

3.301 The site itself is within 800m (10 minutes walking distance) to key services, meaning that the site is sustainable and will limit the use of personal car journeys.

3.302 The site is situated with the 'Buckenham Settled Tributary Farmland' Landscape Type where development considerations include conserving the small scale rural road pattern, ensuring that new development within the settlements reflects the use of local materials; and monitors development and boundary treatments to the settlement edges.

3.303 The Historic Characterisation Study determined that development of the site would have limited impact on the historic environment. Development proposals must demonstrate that a full analysis of the immediate and wider context of the site has been undertaken so as to inform an appropriate design response. The existing pattern of development to St. Andrews Close will be an additional factor in the formulation of proposals.

Shipdham

3.304 Shipdham is identified as a Local Service Centre through the locational strategy and it will see 10% growth through the plan period, providing an additional 285 dwellings over the plan period to 2036. Of these 260, there are currently 69 completions and 136 commitments, meaning that the new allocation for the remainder of the Local Plan Period to 2036 is 80.

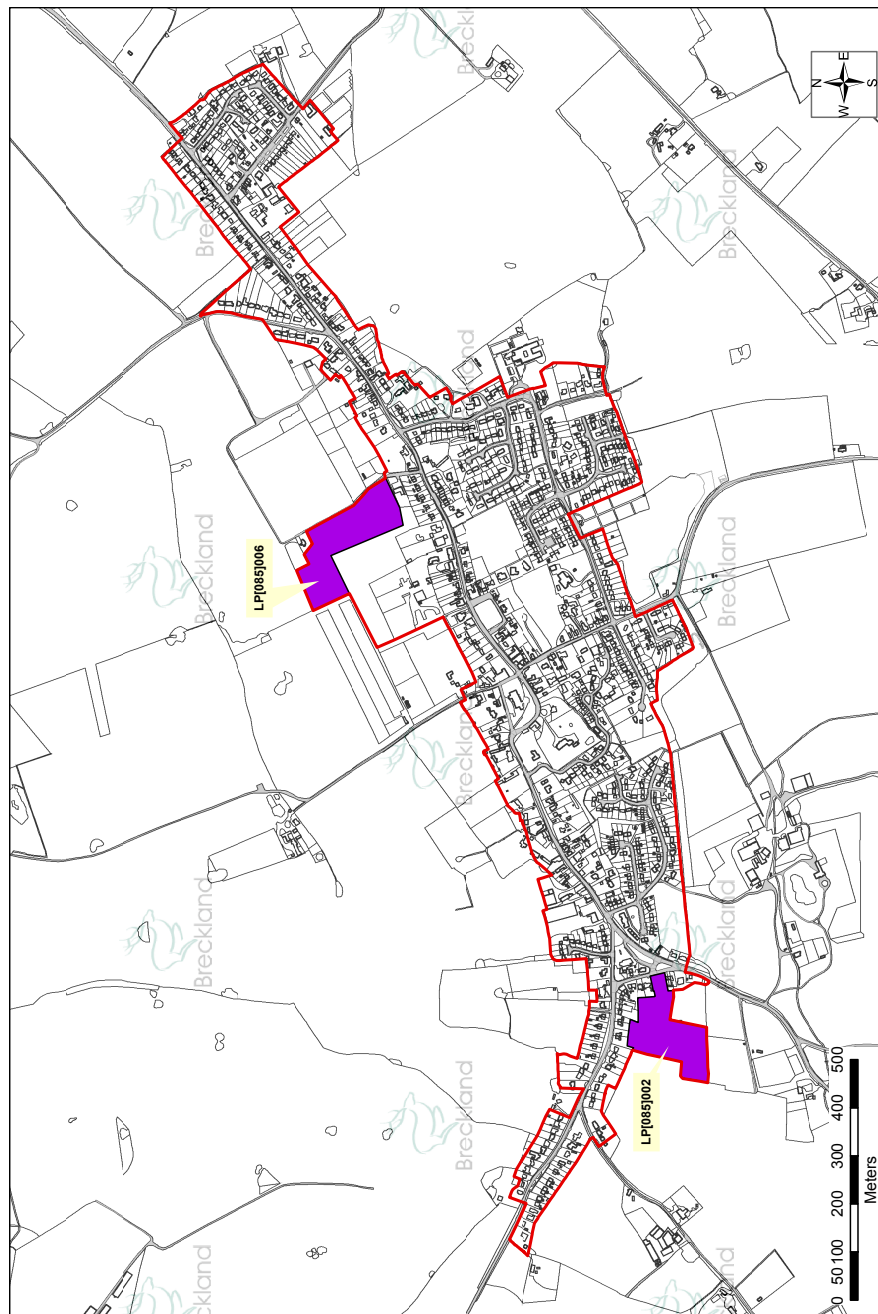
3.305 The 2011 Census showed that there was a population of 2057. Shipdham is identified as a Local Service Centre village as it meets the criteria by having the following services:

- Thomas Bullock Primary School;
- 2 Shops and Post Office;
- Village Hall, Golden Dog Public House, The Millwright Arms, Doctors Surgery; King's Cafe, Bullock Park Pavilion;
- Regular bus service to Dereham, Swaffham and Watton; and
- The Inter-Departmental Business Register (2016) shows 69 businesses within the parish.

3.306 Shipdham has a rich historic environment with an extensive conservation area and a number of listed buildings, predominantly around the church.

3.307 The Breckland Landscape Character Fringe Assessment shows that most of the land surrounding the village is situated within the Landscape Character Area 'Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau', which is an area of moderate/high sensitivity.

Map 3.16 Summary of the Shipdham Allocations.



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Shipdham Residential Allocation 1

Old Nursery, Land behind Old Post Office Street (LP[085]002)

Land amounting to 1.1 ha is allocated for a residential development of at least 25 dwellings. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Retention of existing access point from Old Post Office Street with implementation of additional off-site highway improvements to improve the safety of the Watton Road/Old Post Office Street junction to the satisfaction of Norfolk County Council as Highway Authority;
2. Appropriate density and design to reflect and respect existing development;
3. Retention of existing boundary trees and hedges, where appropriate;
4. Appropriate sustainable surface water attenuation measures are provided; and
5. A pre-application enquiry with Anglian Water Services is required for this site in accordance with the Water Cycle Study to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is available to transfer wastewater for treatment. Where insufficient capacity within the wastewater network is identified, financial contributions may be sought.

3.308 The site is situated upon 1 hectare of Grade 3 agricultural land to the southwest of the existing settlement boundary. There is existing development to the north of the site and the east. Agricultural land is located to the south and the west. This site currently has the decision to grant planning permission for 23 dwellings (planning reference 3PL/2015/1267/O) and is currently awaiting the completion of a section 106 agreement.

3.309 No known fundamental constraints regarding the site. The Historic Characterisation Study determined that development of the site would have limited impact on the historic environment.

3.310 The Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment indicated that the site is situated within the Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau which is a landscape that is classified as having Moderate/High sensitivity to change.

Shipdham Residential Allocation 2

Land west of Brick Kiln Lane (LP[085]006)

Land amounting to 2.4 ha is allocated for a residential development of at least 55 dwellings. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Access to be obtained from Chapel Street through permitted development site: Old Coal Yard, Chapel Street including associated highway and footway improvements;
2. Appropriate density and design to reflect and respect existing development;
3. Retention of existing boundary trees and hedges, where appropriate;
4. Appropriate sustainable surface water attenuation measures are provided; and
5. a pre-application enquiry with Anglian Water Services is required for this site in accordance with the Water Cycle Study to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is available to transfer wastewater for treatment. Where insufficient capacity within the wastewater network is identified, financial contributions may be sought.

3.311 The site is situated upon 2.4 hectares of Grade 3 agricultural land to the north of the existing settlement boundary. There is existing development to the south of the site with agricultural land to the east. To the west of the site there is an outline planning permission on the Old Coal Yard site, previously an allocated site (SH1) through the Adopted Site Specific Policies and Proposals Development Plan document, and this would allow for appropriate access onto the preferred site.

3.312 The site itself is within 800m (10 minutes walking distance) to key services, meaning that the site is sustainable and will limit the use of personal car journeys.

3.313 The Breckland Settlement Fringe Landscape Assessment indicated that the site is situated within the Crows Hill and Thorpe Row Arable Plateau which is a landscape that is classified as having Moderate/ High sensitivity to change.

3.314 No known fundamental constraints regarding the site. The Historic Characterisation Study determined that development of the site would have limited impact on the historic environment.

Sporle

3.315 Sporle is identified as a Local Service Centre through the locational strategy and it will see 10% growth through the plan period, providing an additional 67 dwellings over the plan period to 2036. There are currently 16 completions and 16 commitments. The proposed allocation for the remainder of the Local Plan Period to 2036 is 35.

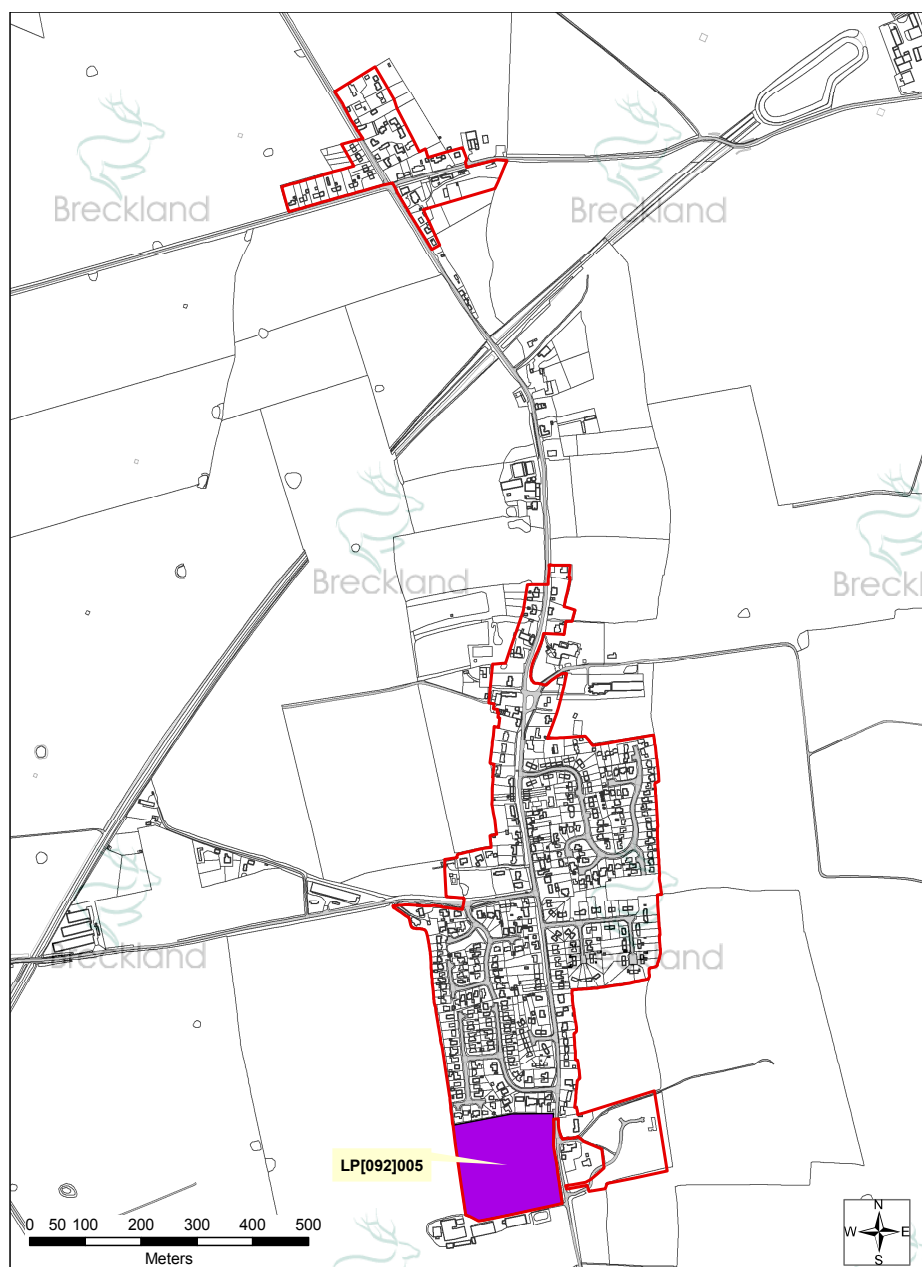
3.316 The 2011 Census showed that there was a population of 1011. Sporle is identified as a Local Service Centre village as it meets the criteria by having the following services:

- Sporle Church of England Primary School;
- Shop and post office;
- Village Hall, Peddars Inn Public House;
- Frequent bus service; and
- The IDBR (2016) shows that there are 22 businesses within the parish.

3.317 The Breckland Landscape Character Assessment shows that most of the land surrounding the village is situated within the Landscape Character Area 'River Wissey settled tributary farmland'.

3.318 The land to the north and east of the settlement is predominantly agricultural land of grade 3 quality, while the area to the west and south of the settlement is grade 2.

Map 3.17 Summary of the Sporle Allocations.



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Sporle Residential Allocation 1

Land to the north of Essex Farm (LP[092]005)

Land amounting to approximately 2.1 hectares is allocated for a residential development of at least 35 dwellings. A minimum of 1 Local Area for Play (LAP) shall be provided. Development will be subject to compliance with adopted Local Plan policies and the following criteria:

1. The principle access is provided from The Street;
2. New structural landscape is provided on the southern boundary of the site to minimise the impact of the new settlement edge formed by the development;
3. Suitable improvements to pedestrian and cycle links from the site to the village along The Street are provided;
4. The site specific flood risk assessment included with the planning application shall address the significant overland flow path running through the site. If the flow path cannot be avoided then it should be demonstrated how any proposed mitigation to achieve flood free development does not worsen flooding elsewhere. Appropriate sustainable surface water attenuation measures should be included as part of the landscaping scheme;
5. The scheme design, whilst preserving and enhancing, is complementary to the special interest of the designated heritage assets. The scheme design proposal will be informed via a detailed appraisal of the assets' significance; and
6. A pre-application enquiry with Anglian Water Services is required for this site in accordance with the Water Cycle Study to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is available to transfer wastewater for treatment. Where insufficient capacity within the wastewater network is identified, financial contributions may be sought.

3.319 The site is situated upon 2.1 hectares of Grade 2 agricultural land to the south of the existing settlement boundary. There is existing development to the north and east of the site. Essex Farm is located to the south of the site and agricultural land is located to the west.

3.320 The site adjoins the existing settlement boundary and is within 800m (10 minutes walking distance) of key facilities, but just outside of 800m of the school.

3.321 The site is located within the 'River Wissey settled tributary farmland' and development guidelines in this area include ensuring important views are maintained.

3.322 The Historic Characterisation Study, 2017, indicated that development proposals must respect the setting of the nearby heritage asset, the Grade II Listed Wolferton House. Due to the location of this site in relation to the designated heritage asset, the scheme design proposal will need to be informed via a detailed appraisal of the asset's significance.

Swanton Morley

3.323 Swanton Morley is identified as a Local Service Centre through the locational strategy and it will see 10% growth through the plan period, providing an additional 180 dwellings over the plan period to 2036. Of these 180, there are currently 80 completions and 15 commitments, meaning that the new allocation for the remainder of the Local Plan period to 2036 is 85*.

3.324 The 2011 Census showed that there was a population of 2100. Swanton Morley was previously identified as a local service centre village through the Local Development Framework and was allocated 50 dwellings, on a single site to the north of the village. This site is now under construction. The village contains Robertson Barracks which is the base for 1st The Queens Dragoon Guards.

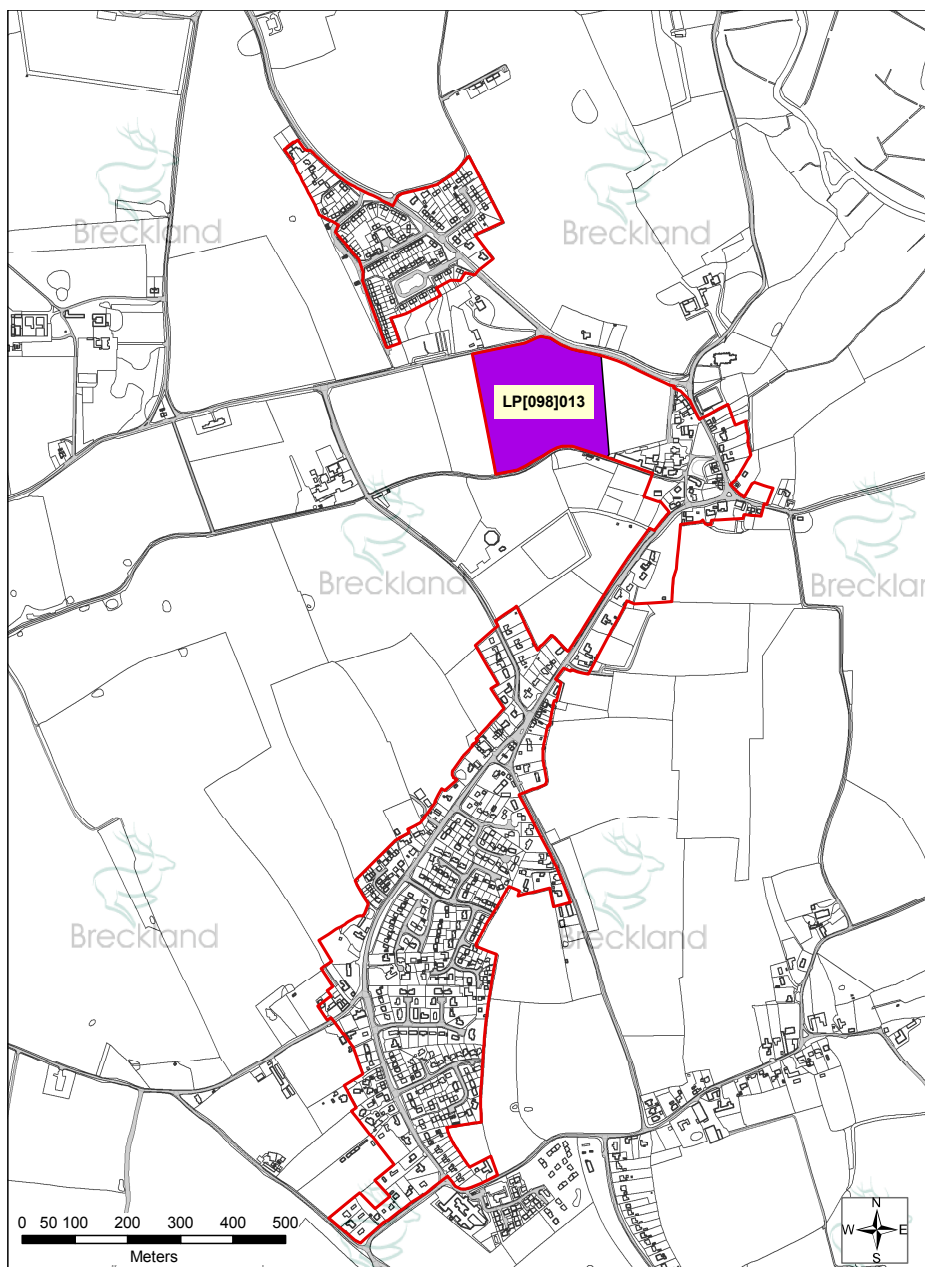
3.325 Swanton Morley is identified as a Local Service Centre village as it meets the criteria by having the following services:

- Swanton Morley Primary School;
- Village shop and post office; butchers;
- Community facilities in the form of public houses Darby's and The Angel, village hall and doctors surgery;
- The village has a regular bus service to Norwich; and
- There are a good range of businesses and employment opportunities. The Inter-Departmental Business Register (2016) shows 52 businesses within the parish.

3.326 The River Wensum runs to the north-east of the village and the settlement fringe landscape character area classifies this as the most sensitive area of the village in relation to landscape change. The majority of the village lies within the Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland character area which has a moderate sensitivity to change. The hamlet of Woodgate is located to the south east of Swanton Morley and incorporated within the parish boundary. The landscape character assessments notes the importance in landscape terms of avoiding the coalescence of these two settlements.

3.327 Swanton Morley parish council is currently preparing a neighbourhood plan, when adopted this will form part of the development plan for the area. *The neighbourhood plan provides the opportunity to meet the parish's aspirations for further growth.

Map 3.18 Summary of the Swanton Morley Allocations.



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Swanton Morley Residential Allocation 1

Land off Rectory Road (LP[098]013)

Land amounting to 4.9 hectares is allocated for a residential development of at least 85 dwellings. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Provision of safe highways access to the site from Rectory Road;
2. Retention of important boundary trees and hedgerows to provide appropriate screening for the site;
3. Provision of suitable pedestrian access to Harkers Lane public right of way;
4. The layout and design of the site will provide an appropriate response to the established pattern of development in the area, including with regard to density;
5. Development should provide a minimum of a Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) on site along with related landscaping and facilities;
6. A pre-application enquiry with Anglian Water Services is required for this site in accordance with the Water Cycle Study to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is available to transfer wastewater for treatment. Where insufficient capacity within the wastewater network is identified, financial contributions may be sought;
7. A site specific flood risk assessment should be provided with the application. Appropriate sustainable surface water attenuation measures may need to be provided within the site, and where possible included as part of a landscaping scheme; and
8. Layout of the scheme should not prejudice future development on adjoining land.

3.328 This site forms an extension of the Hopkins Homes site on Rectory Road which is currently under construction. The site which is currently under construction was allocated through the Site Specifics Policies and Proposals DPD. The preferred allocation is a greenfield site, with an agricultural land grade of 3. The principal access to the site should be achieved from Rectory Road. Hoe Road East is not suitable for vehicular access without significant improvement.

3.329 The site is well located to services and facilities within the development. To the rear of the site is Harkers Lane which is a public right of way and provides a walking route to the primary school. The development should provide suitable access to Harkers Lane. The settlement fringe landscape character assessment includes this site within the Northall Green Enclosed Arable Farmland character area which has a moderate sensitivity to change. The junction of Rectory Road with Town Street represents a key gateway within Swanton Morley.

3.330 The site has limited constraints. The historic characterisation study has indicated that development proposals for the site must demonstrate that a full analysis of the immediate and wider context of the site has been undertaken so as to inform an appropriate design response. Development should respect the form and character of the surrounding area, including the lower densities on Hoe Road East.

Weeting

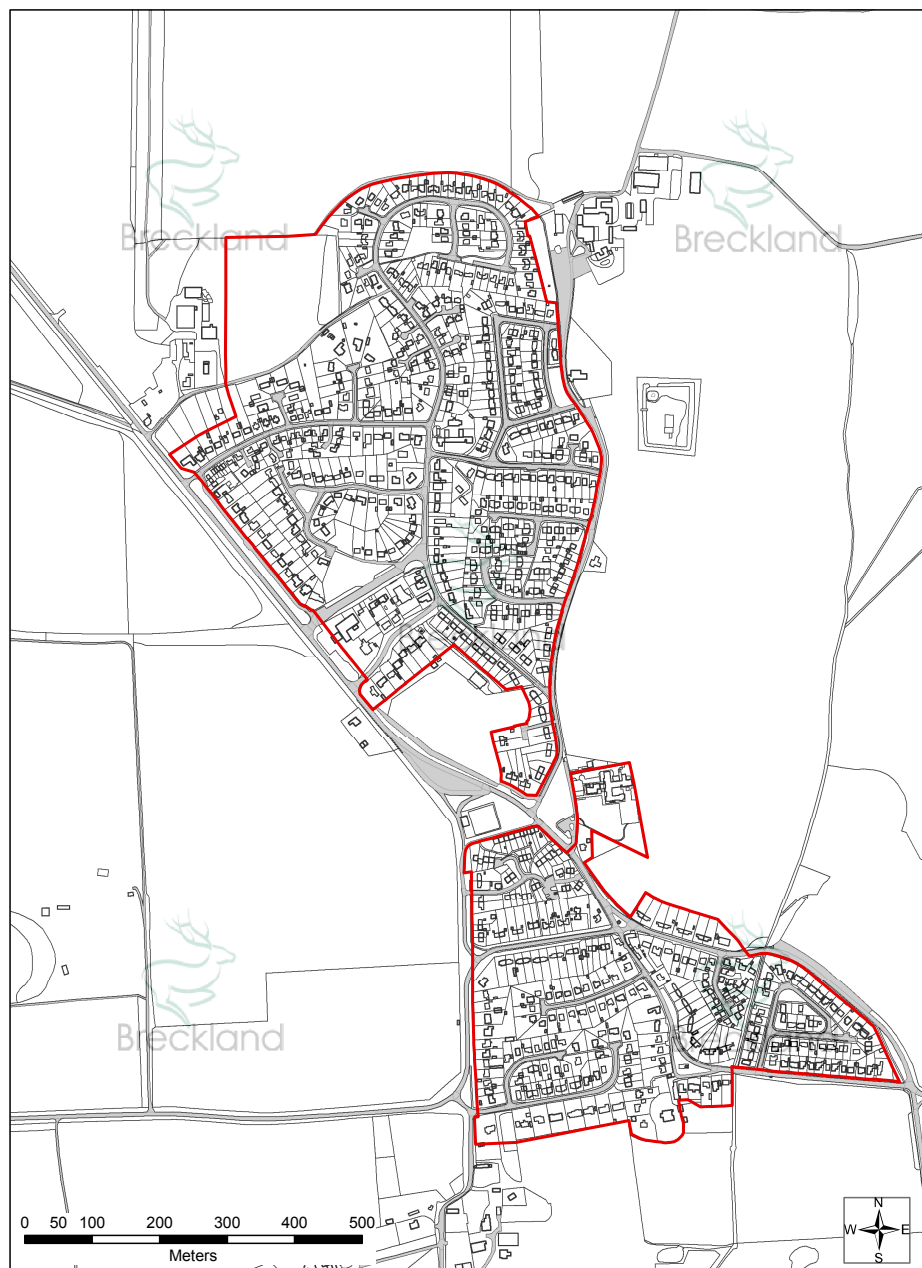
3.331 Weeting is identified as a Local Service Centre through the locational strategy, however it is not proposed for housing growth and is instead allocated solely for services protection and enhancement. The village is located within close proximity of the Breckland Farmland Special Protection Area (SPA) and is covered by the 1500m buffer zone which is designated for the protection of the Stone Curlew which is the special interest feature of the SPA. Due to the environmental constraints surrounding the village it is not considered that an allocation is appropriate.

3.332 The 2011 Census showed that there was a population of 1839. Weeting was previously identified as a local service centre village through the Local Development Framework and for the reasons set out above, it was not designated for growth.

3.333 Weeting is identified as a Local Service Centre village as it meets the criteria by having the following services:

- Weeting Primary School;
- Village shop and post office;
- Community facilities in the form of the Saxon public house, a village hall and a fish and chip takeaway;
- The village has a regular bus service between Kings Lynn and Thetford. There is also a rail service in the neighbouring town of Brandon; and
- There are a good range of businesses and employment opportunities. There are two employment areas within the village at Fengate Drove and to the east of Mundford Road.

Map 3.19 Weeting Settlement Boundary



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4 Transport

Transport

4.1 This chapter sets out the Council's approach to managing growth in car travel and its linked impacts on the local economy, the environment and communities. Norfolk's third Local Transport Plan, 'Connecting Norfolk' sets out a vision that by 2026 Norfolk will have a transport system that allows residents and visitors a range of low carbon options to meet their transport needs and attracts and retains business investment in the county.

4.2 The District's economy is such that there are high levels of out commuting and commuting to and from the District's key settlements and market towns which puts pressure on the road network during peak periods. In addition, within Breckland services such as health and education tend to also be sited within the key settlements and market towns. This means that significant numbers of people must travel relatively long distances to access everyday facilities, often with the added challenge of variable quality public transport.

4.3 Two strategic vehicular routes run through the District. The A11 connects Norwich with Cambridge connecting the strategic growth areas of Attleborough, Thetford and Snetterton Employment Area. Following a high profile campaign, the remaining single carriageway section of the A11 between Thetford and Barton Mills was dualled during 2013 and 2014. This completes the dualling of the A11 between the M11 and Norwich.

4.4 The A47 runs west to east from Birmingham to Lowestoft connecting Swaffham and Dereham but at present is not fully dualled. The A47 Alliance comprises local authorities, local enterprise partnerships (LEP's), the business community, MPs and stakeholders stretching from Lowestoft to Peterborough. This body has presented a clear business case and lobbied Central Government to commit funding for improvements to the A47. The Government has committed to investment of over £300m for improvements along the A47 for delivery in the early 2020s.

4.5 Strategic road improvements must not be at the expense of environmental quality and significantly must not result in an adverse impact to the integrity of Breckland SPA, unless it can be demonstrated that there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) in accordance with the Habitats Directive. Early evidence gathering in relation to the SPA interest is required for strategic transport improvements which impact on The Brecks, in order to inform the appraisal of options and project design. Road improvements will not be promoted within 200m of Breckland SAC and within 1500m of Breckland SPA unless IROPI can be demonstrated.

4.6 Public transport services in the District are principally provided by the bus due to the rural nature of the District. Bus services focus on linking the District's market towns with shopping and employment destinations at Norwich, King's Lynn and Bury St. Edmunds. Infrequent services link rural areas with market towns, principally on market days. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan details a number of the allocated development sites in the Plan which present the opportunity to divert existing bus routes to serve new residents and improve overall connectivity, funded by developer contributions.

4.7 Reducing the reliance on the private car and promoting active lifestyles are mutually beneficial aims which can be achieved by supporting sustainable travel options. However, it should be recognised that for some communities public transport, walking and cycling are not realistic options, and therefore travel by car will remain an essential option for many people living in more remote rural areas. Recognising that there is a need to manage the growth in car travel, the Council seeks to widen sustainable transport choices and, particularly for shorter local journeys, encourage a reduction in car use. Additionally, to assist in reducing the need for longer distance travel, the Council will focus on retaining rural employment and local facilities in smaller settlements and encouraging home working.

4.8 The District, in common with many other places, has an ageing population where the car will, over time as people get older and live longer, become a less feasible method of transport for an increasing number of residents. The 2011 Census shows that 15.5% of the households within Breckland do not have access to a car. This figure illustrates a general trend within the East of England, with an average of 18.5%, and reflects the rural nature of the District.

4.9 Sustainable transport policy TR 01 therefore seeks to widen the choice of travel opportunities using public transport, walking and cycling. In accordance with the principles of housing policy, parking standards may need to be reviewed over time to provide for new initiatives in line with climate change and low carbon objectives. This might include: provision of dedicated spaces with charging points for electric vehicles; small and low-carbon vehicles; shared community 'pool' vehicles, and local delivery vehicles.

4.10 Norfolk County Council's Cycling and Walking Action Plan (2016) seeks to encourage walking and cycling within the District illustrating the advantages to productivity, health and wellbeing, reducing carbon emissions and encouraging tourism. The Action Plan highlights the following cycling trails within the District: Peddars Way; Little Ouse Way; Nar Valley Way; Wensum Way; and Angles Way.

4.11 Sustrans, a leading charity enables people to travel on foot and by bicycle, promotes a number of circulars within Breckland including: The Thetford Circular; the Swaffham Loop; and Route 13, which runs from Fakenham to London and passes through the market towns of Dereham and Watton and also connects the District to the north Norfolk coast.

4.12 To encourage the use of low emission vehicles to support improvements in air quality, the Council will be working in partnership with Norfolk County Council to achieve the appropriate provision of electric vehicle charging points, particularly for large scale housing, retail and commercial developments.

Policy TR 01 Sustainable Transport Network

The Council will work in partnership to promote a safe, efficient and convenient sustainable transport system. This will be achieved through:

- a. supporting improvements to the road and rail connections both within the District and to the wider area;
- b. locating development so as to ensure wherever possible, new development is close to access points such as bus stops and that proposals include provision for improved public transport;
- c. promoting improved access to, and interchange between, all modes of transport to key settlements and town centres;
- d. reducing the need to travel by private car in towns and villages and increasing the proportion of shorter journeys made on foot or cycle; thereby providing a genuine alternative to the car and helping to facilitate a modal shift and commensurate reduction in carbon emissions; and
- e. promoting and improving safety, security and healthy lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling, creating and improving links to existing routes and, for new developments, ensuring the provision of facilities such as secure, accessible bicycle parking with changing facilities on site.

Development should:

- seek to minimise the need to travel;
- promote opportunities for sustainable transport modes;
- not adversely impact on the operation or safety of the strategic road network;
- improve accessibility to services; and
- support the transition to a low carbon future.

Major development proposals should include an assessment of the impacts of new development on the existing transport network. Where potential transport impacts are identified, developers will be expected to produce Transport Assessments to assess the impacts and identify appropriate mitigation, together with Travel Plans where appropriate.

Policy TR 02 Transport Requirements

Developments should be of high quality, sustainable in design, construction and layout as well as offering maximum flexibility in the choice of travel modes for all potential users. Proposals will be permitted that:

- integrate satisfactorily into existing transport networks;
- mitigate impacts on the local or strategic highway networks arising from the development itself, or the cumulative effects of development, through the provision of, or contributions towards, any relevant transport improvement deemed to be necessary, including those secured by legal agreement;
- protect, and where possible enhance, access to public rights of way;
- provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all users, including appropriate parking and servicing provision in terms of amount, design and layout; and
- avoid inappropriate traffic generation and compromising highway safety.

Development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of heavy goods vehicle movements will be required to demonstrate by way of a Routing Management Plan that no severe impacts will be caused to the efficient and safe operation of the road network and no material harm caused to the living conditions of residents.

Development proposals should include an assessment of the impacts of new development on the existing transport network. Where potential transport impacts are identified, developers will be expected to produce Transport Assessments to assess the impacts and identify appropriate mitigation, together with Travel Plans where appropriate.

5 Environment

5.1 This section relating to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment of the District covers policy issues that include the protection of specific environmental or conservation assets, and more widely the general landscape of the District.

5.2 Breckland is a diverse District for biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape quality, characterised by mixed landscape character areas including 'settled' and 'plateau' farmland to the north. The landscape changes to the west and south of the District, where the Brecks contains extensive areas of heathland within a forest and arable context. A significant proportion of the Brecks is designated as a European Special Protected Area (SPA) site, forming the largest terrestrial protected area in Norfolk. The heathland serves as an important habitat designated for its suitability to support internationally important bird species, particularly Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar.

5.3 Breckland contains a wealth of other protected areas such as Redgrave and South Lopham Fen which is one of only four sites within Norfolk designated under the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands of International Importance. Breckland also has a number of internationally important sites for biodiversity known as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) which are the most important sites for wildlife in the country. These include Norfolk Valley Fens, River Wensum and Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens.

5.4 Within Breckland, there are four Local Nature Reserves (LNR), at Litcham Common (an area of varied heathland), the Great Eastern Pingo Trail situated between Stow Bedon and Hockham (a mix of wetlands, woodlands and grasslands), land west of Weeting and grass heathland at Barnham Cross Common in Thetford. The latter is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and located within the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA).

5.5 Aside from the many designated environmental assets Breckland also has a vast area of tranquil countryside. The wider rural area shapes the character of the District and provides a scenic backdrop to the scattered market towns.

5.6 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.

5.7 The planned levels of growth could impact on the District's natural and historic environment. The policies in this section aim to ensure that natural and historic environmental quality of Breckland is maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

Green Infrastructure

5.8 The NPPF requires Local Authorities to plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. Green infrastructure is the network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Recognising the value of all green space, not just protected landscapes, green infrastructure is a term used to cover all types of green space, large or small, public or private; including water bodies such as river corridors.

5.9 Green infrastructure performs many functions and plays a significant role in helping to attract people, employment and investment to the District. Green infrastructure also helps in meeting social and environmental goals, such as encouraging active, healthy lifestyles and helping the District to be resilient to more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events resulting from climate change.

5.10 As a predominantly rural District, Breckland has a vast green infrastructure network, stretching from the protected European sites, through to hedgerows and trees across the northern farmlands, to back gardens and local parks. Although there is no District wide green infrastructure study the value of the green infrastructure network is nevertheless well understood and recognised. Rather than identify key green linkages for protection, the Council is seeking in its policy to recognise the value of all green infrastructure and the contribution it makes to the local area in which it is located.

5.11 The green infrastructure policy requires developers to recognise the intrinsic value of green infrastructure and ensure that proposed development does not harm the green infrastructure network within 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. Standards for the protection and provision of recreational open space and trees and landscape are dealt with under separate policies in the Plan.

5.12 The HRA identifies the need for further green infrastructure and open space as part of a suite of measures to prevent additional recreational pressure for development at Thetford, Mundford and Swaffham and to prevent urban effects on sensitive heathland sites including Barnham Cross Common, Thetford Heath, Thetford Golf Club and Marsh and at East Wretham and Brettenham. For larger development sites allocated through the Local Plan specific green infrastructure requirements are set out in relevant site allocation policies.

Policy ENV 01 Green Infrastructure

The network of green infrastructure in the District, including water bodies, should be safeguarded, retained and, where opportunities arise, enhanced. Enhancement of the green infrastructure network will be sought through the promotion of positive action, and the development management process.

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

Through its layout and design, new development should respond to the location of existing green infrastructure and support appropriate uses and functions. Where it is considered that the development will have a detrimental effect on the quantity or function of existing green infrastructure, applications will be expected to demonstrate how the green infrastructure network will be enhanced as a result of the development. Developments that fail to exploit opportunities to integrate and enhance the existing local green infrastructure network will not be favourably considered.

Sites, habitats and species of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance

5.13 The planning system has an important part to play in meeting the UK's national and international commitments for habitats and species. In considering sustainable development proposals, the Council will have regard for the relevant biodiversity legislation and policy. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system should contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, seeking net gains where possible and establishing coherent ecological networks. Regard should also be had to The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as amended, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. A key purpose of biodiversity legislation and policy is to embed biodiversity protection, restoration and enhancement as an integral part of policy making.

5.14 Breckland has a wide range of sites which are protected for their biodiversity or geological interest. The ecological network in the District is inherently connected to the wider Norfolk area and should be viewed as a component part of a much wider network which stretches beyond the District's boundaries. There are a range of protected sites in the District, arguably the most famous being The Brecks, an extensive area of largely conifer plantation and arable farmland but with extensive areas of heathland within the forest and arable landscape. The Brecks also includes fen, grazing marsh and naturally fluctuating waterbodies (meres and pingos).

5.15 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. **5.16** The District also contains 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. **5.17** Other key ecological features of the District include extensive areas of woodland and shelter-belts, often associated with large estates, and arable landscape features, comprising Scots pine shelter-belts, hedgerows, mature trees, copses, ponds and field margins. Some of these areas are designated as County Wildlife Sites, of which Breckland has more than any other District in Norfolk. Designated or not, these areas are key components of the ecological network at a local scale and collectively, when viewed as part of the green infrastructure network, amount to a significant biodiversity resource.

5.16 From The Brecks to the Norfolk Valley Fens, the range of sites with conservation and environmental interest is broad. Protected sites in Breckland as shown on the policies map comprise: Internationally designated sites Special Protection Areas (SPAs); Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); Ramsar sites; Nationally designated sites Ancient Woodland; Sites of Special Scientific Interest; National Nature Reserve; Locally designated sites Local Nature Reserves; Roadside Nature Reserves; Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites; County Wildlife Sites.

5.17 The sites designated under the protections listed above are the key biodiversity sites and geological features in the District. The different sites benefit from varying degrees of protection based on the rarity of the habitat and the diversity of species that they support. The range and quality of these sites is crucial not only for the wildlife they support but also as an educational and cultural resource and in supporting the overall quality of life in Breckland. As such, these areas are key components of the aspiration of achieving successful and sustainable development in Breckland.

5.18 When preparing applications applicants should consider the potential effects of the application on biodiversity demonstrating that potential effects have been avoided, and where this is not possible, adequately mitigated for. Biodiversity net gains and contribution to ecological networks should be sought wherever possible. If, when considered alone or with existing and known future projects, an application is likely to affect a European site the applicant must provide a report accompanying the application showing the site(s) that may be affected together

with sufficient information to enable the Council if necessary to undertake an appropriate assessment. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the whole process of assessment, including - where one is required - the appropriate assessment stage.

Policy ENV 02 Sites of International, European, National & Local Nature Conservation Importance

The highest level of protection will be given to European Sites, with development only permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effect (either directly or indirectly) on the integrity of any European site (either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects).

Where measures to mitigate for potential adverse effects are identified, the proposed mitigation measures must be justified as fit for purpose with appropriate evidence.

If it cannot be ascertained that no adverse effect on European site integrity will result, the proposed development will only be permitted where there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Development likely to have an adverse effect (either directly or indirectly) on a site of national, regional or local biodiversity, or geological interest, as identified on the Policies Map, will not be permitted unless:

- a. it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal that outweigh the need to safeguard the special ecological / geological interest of the site, and;
- b. it has been demonstrated, where development would result in significant harm, that it cannot be reasonably located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm, and;
- c. residual harm, after all measures to prevent and adequately mitigate will be adequately compensated for.

Where the Council considers that a designated site, protected species or any species or habitat of principal importance for conservation may be affected by a development proposal, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) will be required to be submitted with the planning application to assess effects on European sites and effects on flora and fauna. Whilst the EIA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) are separate and distinct elements, the EIA information is likely to inform the Council's HRA where an appropriate assessment is required.

In accordance with the stepwise approach to protecting biodiversity, all development with the potential to affect biodiversity should demonstrate how such effects have been considered firstly, how effects that cannot be avoided have been minimised, and how net gains for biodiversity are being secured as part of the development.

Where development is permitted, the authority will consider the need for conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and / or geological interest. Where development is likely to have an impact upon a species that is not protected by other legislation, and in particular where a habitat or species is listed as a Priority Habitat or Species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), 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, appropriate conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are utilised.

Policy ENV03 outlines specific requirements that apply to The Brecks SPA.

The Brecks Special Protection Area

5.19 Covering 39,141ha of heathland, forest and arable farmland, The Brecks is of International and European value to birdlife. Designated in 2006 as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Council's Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, The Brecks habitat is important for a range of ground-nesting birds including the Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar. The East of England supports 65% of the UK's breeding pairs of Stone Curlew where most breeding is located within the Brecks. The rich biodiversity of The Brecks is also recognised through other statutory conservation designations including four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), numerous SSSI and National Nature Reserves (NNR), where the latter (NNRs and SSSIs) make up 40% of the total area.

5.20 Evidence used to support the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2009 included research to inform the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Core Strategy which examined the effects of housing and roads on the distribution of the Stone Curlew in The Brecks. The adopted mitigation policy required that any new development which may impact on the SPA must be subject to Appropriate Assessment. New development is not permitted within 1,500m of the edge of the SPA unless it can be demonstrated by an appropriate assessment that the development would not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. Such circumstances may include the use of existing buildings and development where completely masked from the SPA by existing development.

5.21 Stone Curlews are also found outside the SPA; these birds are clearly part of the SPA population and functionally linked. Accordingly, areas have been identified where there are concentrations of Stone Curlew (using data gathered over the periods 1995-2006, and 2007-2015).

5.22 In 2013 a "Further Assessments of the Relationship between Buildings and Stone Curlew Distribution" study was carried out to update previous work on the effect of buildings and roads on Stone Curlews in The Brecks. Including new analysis and using additional survey data, this study report focused on the effects of buildings on the distribution of breeding Stone Curlew in The Brecks. The report provides strong support for the continuation of a 1500m zone around the areas capable of supporting Stone Curlews. Within this zone additional development is likely to have a significant effect on the SPA.

5.23 The 2013 research also suggests that the planting of woodland/screening as a mitigation measure is unlikely to be effective and that the effect of nest density is strongest as a result of the amount of buildings rather than type. One of the key aims of the research was to differentiate the effects of nest density due to different building classes. Due to the sample size and number of buildings identified there needs to be an element of caution applied to the results, however, the research indicates that there was no evidence of a negative impact of agricultural or commercial buildings. As such, the analysis suggests that project level HRA for non-residential development in the SPA buffer zones may be able to demonstrate that adverse effects can be ruled out.

5.24 A draft protocol entitled 'Agricultural Buildings and the Breckland Special Protection Area stone curlew constraint zone' was produced by Natural England (2013) with input from stakeholders. Natural England suggested that Breckland Council may wish to update and formally adopt this protocol to take account of the most recent Footprint Ecology report and expand it to include commercial buildings, and this has therefore been taken into account in the Local Plan HRA. For non-residential developments which meet certain criteria, this should result in a simplified Habitats Regulations Assessment. This has been reflected in the policy wording.

5.25 A report providing a comprehensive analysis of current and projected visitor patterns to European protected sites across Norfolk was commissioned by Norfolk County Council and the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership on behalf of Local Authorities and completed in 2017. The report entitled 'Visitor surveys at European protected sites across Norfolk during 2015 and 2016' highlights that whilst survey areas in The Brecks received a much lower number of visitors than other survey sites such as those on the Norfolk coast, the proportion of local visitors (with Norfolk postcodes) was significantly higher to sites in The Brecks. The report presents evidence that of all designated sites included in the survey, Breckland SPA had the highest proportion of local visitors to the Brecks, from the

settlements of Thetford, Mildenhall, Swaffham, Mundford, Brandon (of which Mildenhall and Brandon are outside the District within Suffolk). There is therefore evidential support for mitigation strategies to apply to new development in those settlements.

5.26 The Thetford SUE represents the largest area of planned growth within the District which would result in increased recreational pressure in The Brecks. A number of strategic mitigation measures were accepted as part of the adopted Thetford Area Action Plan in July 2012 which have been saved through this Local Plan. Further measures have been incorporated within a number of site allocation policies within the plan to ensure that mitigation is provided to reduce the impact of recreational pressure on designated sites.

Policy ENV 03 The Brecks Protected Habitats & Species

The Council requires that a Habitats Regulations Assessment is undertaken on all proposals for development that are likely to have a significant effect on The Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) which is classified for its populations of Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar, and/or Breckland Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for its heathland habitats. Development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA or the SAC.

Stone Curlew

Plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken to identify where built development is likely to significantly affect the Breckland SPA. Map 5.1 identifies a 1,500m buffer zone from the edge of those parts of the SPA that support, or are capable of supporting, Stone Curlew, where new built development would be likely to significantly affect the SPA population. The plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment also identifies areas that have a functional link to the SPA, because they support Stone Curlew outside, but in close proximity to the SPA boundary. These areas also have a 1500m buffer zone, within which new built development would be likely to significantly affect the SPA population.

Development within the SPA boundary, or located less than 1500m away from the SPA boundary or identified areas that have a functional link (see Map 5.1) will not normally be permitted.

Where a proposed building is outside the SPA but within 1500m of the SPA boundary or identified areas that have a functional link (see Map 5.1), there may be circumstances where a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment is able to demonstrate that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPA. Applicants must provide evidence to show how their proposal meets the criteria listed in Natural England's "Agricultural Buildings and the Breckland SPA Stone Curlew constraint zone" advice note, or successor document. Circumstances where the proposal is able to conclusively demonstrate that it will not result in an adverse effect on Breckland SPA may include where the proposal is:

- More than 1500m away from potential stone curlew nesting sites inside the SPA (these are those parts of the SPA that are also designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI);
- A new building that will be completely masked from the SPA by existing built development;
- A proposed re-development of an existing building that would not alter its footprint or increase its potential impact;
- A new agricultural building of less than 120 sqm;
- An extension to existing agricultural buildings of less than 120 sqm or 100% of the original, whichever is less. -

Woodlark and Nightjar

Development within 400m of the SPA that support, or are capable of supporting Woodlark and/or Nightjar will not normally be permitted.

The Council will consider the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment to determine the implications of development on Nightjar and Woodlark on a case by case basis, depending on the location and nature of the proposal.

Recreation pressure and urban effects

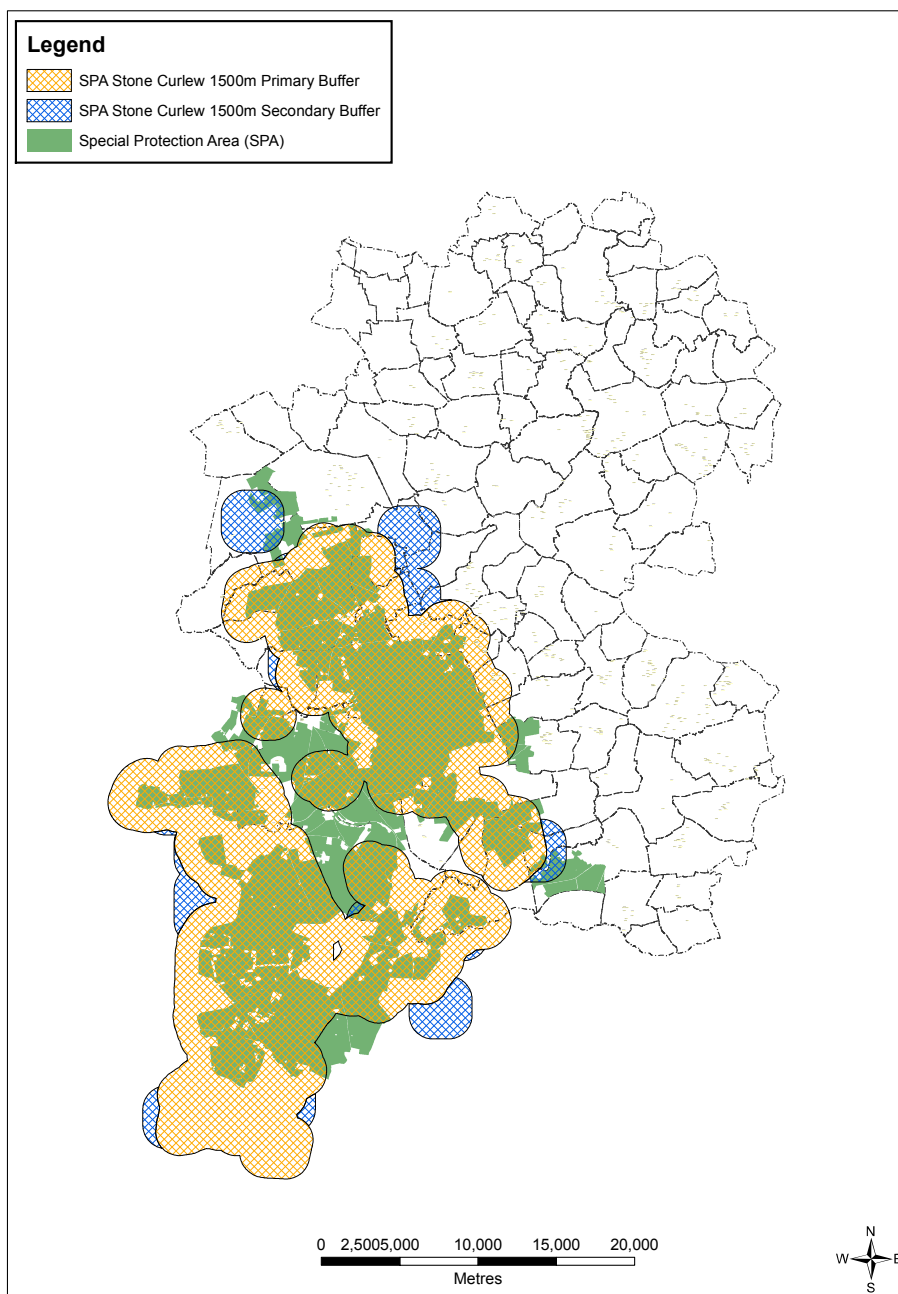
Plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment has identified the potential for increased disturbance to Nightjar, Woodlark and Stone Curlew as a result of recreation, and the potential for other urban effects such as increased fire, litter and eutrophication to significantly affect Breckland SPA and SAC.

The Council will work with partners to develop a framework of measures that manage and monitor access. Proposals for development in Thetford, Swaffham and Mundford will be required to demonstrate the inclusion of mitigation measures that contribute to the framework to address the potential impact of increased recreational pressure on Breckland SPA. This should comprise:

- new on-site recreational areas in accordance with other policy requirements in this plan, and/or;
- other measures that contribute to managing recreation pressure, such as educational/information materials, staff resources, managing car parking and projects targeting dog walking.

The Council will work with partners to develop a framework for managing and monitoring urban effects. Proposals for development where urban heaths at Thetford (Barnham Cross Common, Thetford Heath, Thetford Golf Club and Marsh), East Wretham or Brettenham are likely to be used as local greenspace will need to demonstrate the inclusion of mitigation measures that contribute to the framework to address the potential impact urban effects on Breckland SPA.

Map 5.1 SPA Primary and Secondary Buffers



Open Space, Sport and Recreation

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

5.28 The NPPF at paragraph 73 states that policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments is then used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.

5.29 In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities. An audit of all open space provision within Breckland District, excluding Thetford Forest⁽¹⁾, was undertaken in 2015. The Open Space Assessment evaluated the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and recreational land provision in the Breckland District (excluding Thetford Forest) and recommended standards and effective mechanisms in order for appropriate provision to be secured to meet future needs. The assessment shows that Breckland District has a deficit, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in outdoor playing space provision.

5.30 The study shows that when assessing overall playing space in the District at a Fields in Trust (FIT) standard of 2.56 ha per 1000 population, 70% of the parishes in the District do not meet the FIT standard. The five market towns of Attleborough, Thetford, Dereham, Swaffham and Watton have the largest deficiencies in total playing space provision for their populations compared to the FIT standard, with Thetford having the largest deficiency of any parish in the District.

5.31 Furthermore, 70% of the parishes in the District do not meet the FIT standard for children's play area provision. The 5 market towns of Attleborough, Thetford, Dereham, Swaffham and Watton have the highest proportion of children in addition to the highest deficiency of provision in children's play compared with the FIT standard. Thetford has the highest percentage of children compared to the other four market towns, but also has the highest deficiency of children's play areas against the FIT standard.

5.32 Only 30% of the parishes in Breckland meet the FIT outdoor sports standard. The five market towns have an average or above quality score, despite having a deficiency in the amount of space. Whereas the majority of the rural parishes have an average or below sports quality score, despite having lower FIT standards. A similar pattern was found following the 2010 assessment and consequently the policy focus is to improve the quality, rather than quantity, of rural sports pitches.

5.33 The Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGST) requires that sites of at least 2ha in size, of accessible green space, are available per 1000 people based on no one living more than 300m from the nearest area of natural green space. It also recommends that no one should live 2km from at least one accessible site of at least 20ha; 5 km from at least one accessible site of at least 200ha; and 10km from at least one accessible site of 500ha.

5.34 In conclusion, the Breckland Open Space, Sport and Recreation study recommended that:

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

- The local standards of 2.56 ha of open space (0.8 ha for children's play and 1.76 ha for outdoor sport) per 1000 population should be used as a local standard for open space provision;
- There should be a greater focus on provision of new facilities to address quantitative deficits, which will be delivered through new housing development;
- The Local Plan should allocate additional areas of open space;
- All new children's play and outdoor sports areas should be designed in accordance with FIT and Sport England standards to ensure the highest quality of open space area is provided; and
- In terms of outdoor sports, all dwellings in major housing areas must be within 1.2km of outdoor sports areas as recommended by FIT. Outdoor sport areas should be located near to public transport routes, have good provision for car parking and have easy access for pedestrians and cycles. In terms of children's play areas, all dwellings in housing areas should be within 100m of a local area of play (LAP), 400m of a local equipped area for play (LEAP) and 1000m of a neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) as recommended by FIT.

5.35 Planning obligations sought need to be in accordance with regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) requiring the provision of infrastructure necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, reasonable in scale and kind and directly related to the development. Developers cannot be required to meet existing shortfalls in infrastructure provision.

5.36 The HRA identifies the need for further open space as part of a suite of measures to prevent additional recreational pressure for development at Thetford, Mundford and Swaffham and to prevent urban effects on sensitive heathland sites including Barnham Cross Common, Thetford Heath, Thetford Golf Club and Marsh and at East Wretham and Brettenham. Project level HRA's may identify requirements for additional open space or the specific provision of open space as part of the mitigation measures to protect European sites.

Policy ENV 04 Open Space, Sport & Recreation

Existing Provision

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

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

New Provision

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

There is a presumption that for developments comprising of 25 dwellings or more that open space, sport and recreation facilities will be provided within the development site. Where on-site provision is provided, the space should be of an appropriate type to serve the needs of the development, well related to the proposed residential properties and in accordance with relevant standards.

Within a residential development of 25 or more dwellings priority should be given to the provision of children's play areas since the facility is most likely to be required within an easy reach of dwellings and will be required to conform to the 0.8ha per 1000 people standard in provision of children's play area in accordance with the NPFA standard.

- 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 (or equivalent provision if provided as 1 large LAP)
- 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 and an Outdoor Sport Area
- On sites of 400 dwellings and above - Minimum of 1 Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) and an Outdoor Sport Area

It is recognised that there may be cases where the direct provision of open space on-site is not the preferred option. It may be that open space does not represent an efficient use of land in the context of the site location or that there is a deliverable opportunity to secure a more meaningful area of open space that better serves the whole community in close proximity to the application site. Contributions in lieu of on-site provision will be the exception and will need to be supported by robust evidence from the applicant that on-site provision is not preferable. Any contribution will need to be towards a specific deliverable scheme in consultation with the relevant parish council and the developer contributions policy in this document. The contribution will be required to name a specific scheme.

Major development sites comprising more than 10 dwellings but less than 25 dwellings will be expected to make proportionate off site contributions towards open space, sports and recreational facilities.

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 (2015) which will be reviewed periodically.

* The population resulting from a particular development is calculated using the occupancy rates set out below. Using these occupancy rates it is possible to calculate the level of outdoor playing space needs for any given development.

Table 5.1 Occupancy rates

1 bedroom	1.5 persons
2 bedrooms	2.0 persons
3 bedrooms	2.5 persons
4 bedrooms	3.0 persons
5 bedrooms or more	3.5 persons

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

5.38 Replacement dwellings will not be required 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.

5.39 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 occupation's use to that purpose.

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

5.41 It is accepted that certain development will not create demand for all elements of open space requirements. For example the occupants of a 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 Council to apply that element of the standard. However, it is worth noting that although children's play areas 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 5.2 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 standards
All new dwellings	Replacement dwellings (on a one for one basis) i.e. no new additional units

Dwelling gains resulting from new development	Extensions and annexes within the curtilage of a main property for dependent relatives
Conversion or part conversions creating additional independent residential units with separate facilities	Sheltered housing schemes, nursing homes, controlled hostel accommodation
Bedsit accommodation with shared facilities	Temporary permission for mobile homes
Permanent permission for mobile homes	

Local Green Space

5.42 The NPPF introduced a new designation of “Local Green Space” as a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Paragraph 76 of the NPPF says that ‘By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.’

5.43 National policy also states the designation should only be used:

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

5.44 The 2015 Open Space Assessment reviewed sites submitted to the Council by Parish Councils at the time of the study and the recommendations have been carried forward into the Local Plan. The following are designated as areas of Local Green Space that are in conformity with the NPPF criteria:

Table 5.3 Local Green Space designations

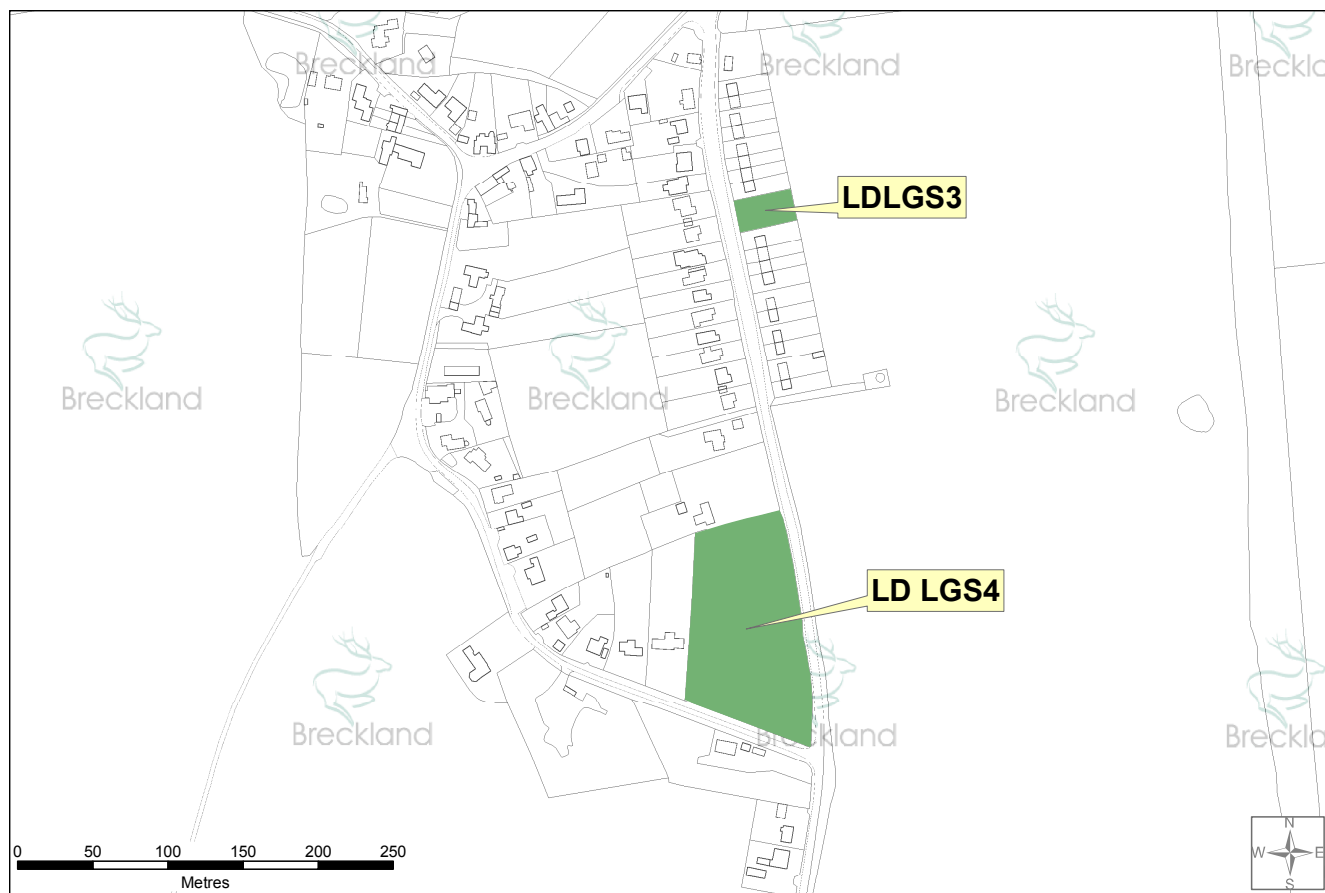
LDLGS3	Little Dunham
LDLGS4	Little Dunham
TLGS9	Thetford

Figure 5.1 Key to Local Green Space Maps

Legend	
	Local Green Space Designation

Little Dunham

Map 5.2 Little Dunham Local Green Space



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Thetford

Map 5.3 Thetford Local Green Space



Landscape Character

5.45 Breckland includes extensive tracts of the nationally and regionally significant Brecks heaths and woodland in the south and west of the district. The importance of these areas has been recognised in The Brecks Landscape Character Assessment (LCA, 2013). The LCA identified eight distinct, and sensitive, valued character areas within the Brecks, with the core landscape types being the Brecks Arable Heathland Mosaic, the Brecks Plantation and the River Valleys.

5.46 The Brecks Landscape Character Assessment (2013) covers only The Brecks area of the District (south and west). A District wide LCA was produced in 2007, which states that the rest of 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.

5.47 The different sub types of landscape identified by the LCAs have a varying capacity to accommodate new development, depending on their nature and location. Development will not be permitted where it would be significantly detrimental to the landscape's characteristics or defining features.

5.48 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.

5.49 The entire landscape is considered through both the Landscape Character Assessment and the Settlement Fringe study, both of which form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

5.50 Breckland's Landscape Character Assessment has previously identified river valleys as areas which should have high protection from development due to their important environmental quality. It is considered that this approach should continue within the Local Plan.

Policy ENV 05 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape

The landscape of the District will be protected for the sake of its own intrinsic beauty, 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.

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 only released in areas where the impact on the landscape is minimal. 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.

Trees and Hedgerows

5.51 Trees, hedgerows and other natural features form an essential part of Breckland's landscape character, enhancing the aesthetics of an area, the quality of the environment and providing a habitat for a range of wildlife. They can also help to reduce noise and prove beneficial in terms of atmospheric pollution and flood mitigation.

5.52 Where new development is proposed the preference will always be to incorporate existing natural features into the development. However, there may be instances where the loss of important natural features is unavoidable, for example to enable a scheme to fulfil important objectives such as economic development or the provision of housing. Where the loss of such features is demonstrably unavoidable adequate replacement provision, preferably by native British species, of the same or greater value will be sought.

5.53 Some trees in the District have protected status, mainly under the designation of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or those located in a conservation area. A TPO is an order made by a LPA in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. A TPO prohibits cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage and wilful destruction of trees without the LPA's prior written consent.

Policy ENV 06 Trees, Hedgerows and Development

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

Development requiring the loss of a protected tree or hedgerow (including preserved trees, protected hedgerows, trees in Conservation Areas, ancient trees, aged and veteran trees and trees classified as being of categories A or B in value (BS5837:2012)) will only be permitted where:

- a) the removal of a tree or hedgerow will enhance the survival or growth of other protected trees or hedgerows, or;
- b) it would allow for a substantially improved overall approach to the design and landscaping of the development that would outweigh the loss of any tree or hedgerow.

Where the loss of trees is accepted in these circumstances, developers will be required to retain enough space to ensure that at least one tree of a similar ultimate size to that removed is planted with sufficient room to reach maturity without future pressure for pruning or removal.

Development Affecting Trees and Hedgerows

Where a proposed development retains existing trees and hedgerows on-site, or where development occurs within a tree root protection area, provision must be made for their care and protection throughout the duration of the development with mitigation measures being put in place to ensure that development works do not have a harmful impact on existing trees. To ensure that tree cover and habitat is retained, it is important that both the short term and long term impacts that a development may have on trees is evaluated at the earliest opportunity. Accordingly the Council may require that a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and Method Statement be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional in accordance with BS5837:2012.

The Historic Environment & Heritage Assets

5.54 Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that: "local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment". The NPPF also states that local plans should include strategic policies to deliver the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment (paragraph 156) and should identify land where development is inappropriate because of its environmental or historic significance (paragraph 157).

5.55 The historic environment of Breckland is recognised as a unique and irreplaceable resource. Breckland District is fortunate to possess a rich and diverse architectural heritage, displaying the use of a wide range of materials, dictated prior to industrialism by the immediate geology and landscape of the surrounding area. Typically, 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.

5.56 The District also contains numerous designated heritage assets: 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, 200 scheduled monuments and 9 Historic Parks and Gardens included on the Historic England Register, designated to assist in the conservation and enhancement of particular features of historic or architectural interest.

5.57 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.

5.58 There are many types of heritage asset within the District, some of which are protected through national or local designations, others which have no formal designation or protection. The Council has developed two separate policies to deal with the different types of assets.

Designated Heritage Assets

5.59 There are a total of 50 Conservation Areas in the District, most based on historic village centres. It is important that the nature of conservation areas and historic buildings is maintained to ensure their protection for future generations and their continued contribution to the economic prosperity of the District. Social, environmental and cultural benefits are derived from this link to the past and it helps to reinforce a sense of place, quality of life, local identity and character.

5.60 Known individual heritage assets are identified in Norfolk County Council's Historic Environment Record, whilst a number of existing documents analyse particular aspects of the heritage significance of the District.

5.61 There are 1,536 Listed Buildings in the District, including 113 Grade I and 102 Grade II*. Whilst the majority of the listed buildings in the District are in good or reasonable repair, a number of buildings are in severe disrepair. There are 25 Grade I or Grade II* Listed Buildings at Risk as registered by English Heritage.

5.62 There are also 9 Registered Parks and Gardens (all Grade II), 130 scheduled monuments, plus three shared with adjoining Local Authorities.

5.63 Breckland Council understands that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the policy below aims to conserve designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Policy ENV 07 Designated Heritage Assets

The significance of designated heritage assets, including nationally protected listed buildings and their settings, scheduled monuments, archaeological sites, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and their settings, will be conserved and enhanced and given the highest level of protection. Proposals that would affect the significance of a designated heritage asset will be required to provide sufficient information to enable any impact to be assessed.

Development that will affect any designated heritage asset will be subject to comprehensive assessment and will be expected to conserve and, wherever possible, enhance the character, appearance and setting of Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens and other designated 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, conservation and potential enhancement of any features of historic or architectural interest; this includes internal features, floor plans and spaces or any object or structure within the curtilage of a listed building that predates 1st July 1948.

The conversion of buildings of particular architectural or historic interest for economic or residential purposes in locations that would otherwise be unacceptable will be considered where this would ensure the retention and ongoing conservation of the building. Proposals will be considered having regard to national policy and relevant guidance.

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 appropriate, archaeological remains can be left *in situ* following further design/engineering work. If the benefits of a particular development are considered to outweigh the importance of retaining archaeological remains *in situ* satisfactory excavation and recording of remains will be required before development is begun.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

5.64 Alongside the designated heritage assets of the District, Breckland also has a range of non-designated historic assets which contribute to the character of the countryside, such as a variety of traditional dwelling types, domestic and agricultural ancillary buildings, chapels, commercial and industrial buildings, railway structures and structures associated with wartime use. Many of the known non-designated heritage assets are listed in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record, and regard should be had to this if proposals may affect a non-designated asset. In addition to this there will be a number of currently unknown heritage assets of, as yet, undefined significance. These assets play an essential role in reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the locality. Regard should be had to all heritage assets when designing development.

5.65 The Council will protect and improve the built environment, paying special regard to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment through positive action and partnership working. The historic environment makes a significant contribution to sustainable communities through sustaining economic vitality, providing social and cultural links to the past and ensuring a dynamic and varied built environment. New development must make a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of the historic environment.

Other heritage assets and locally important parks and gardens will be conserved and where possible enhanced. In conjunction with Policy ENV06, landscapes that form the setting to the built and historic environment will also be conserved and enhanced.

Policy ENV 08 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Development will be expected to conserve and wherever possible enhance the character, appearance and setting of non-designated historic assets. Proposals that could affect previously unrecognised heritage assets will be expected, through agreement with the Council, to undergo an appropriate assessment in line with the significance of the asset. The assessment must provide sufficient information for any impact to be assessed.

The conversion of non-designated 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 having regard to relevant national policy and relevant guidance.

In the case of traditional dwellings which positively contribute to the character of Breckland, applications for replacement will be expected to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement which includes a structural survey that demonstrates that the demolition is necessary and that there is no alternative and viable solution of renovation to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage

5.66 All new development should be located so as to minimise flood risk and increased flood risk resulting from that development. The policy approach is to steer development towards areas of low flood risk, Flood Zone 1. National policy requires that a sequential and exception test be applied by reference to identified flood zones.

5.67 Flood risk across Breckland is not as widespread compared to many areas of Norfolk; flooding usually occurs adjacent to rivers and other watercourses or in low-lying areas. However, it can also occur elsewhere, such as surface water flooding, groundwater flooding caused by springs, or where buildings or other structures affect the natural drainage of the land. Evidence on flood risk is contained within the latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Sequential Test, completed in 2017.

5.68 Norfolk County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) with responsibility for managing local flood risk and surface water flooding and the take up of sustainable drainage systems and is tasked with coordinating the management of local flood risk and the provision of advice to LPAs on drainage for new major development.

5.69 The Water Cycle Study, SFRA and any subsequent Surface Water Management Plan will inform the level of detail required to accompany planning applications identified in any designated groundwater protection zones and/or critical drainage catchments, or other areas where there is evidence that there is likely to be an increased risk of surface water flooding (e.g. as a result of specific topography with catchment areas feeding into identified flood-vulnerable areas).

5.70 This policy requires surface water drainage issues to be addressed in planning applications, both to ensure that such issues and associated flood risk are considered, and to ensure that the impact of drainage measures on the form and visual appearance of developments is properly taken into account in the assessment of new development. Where necessary the Council will seek to impose Grampian conditions to ensure that appropriate upgrades are completed to the sewerage network in advance of new development taking place.

5.71 The use of soft landscaping and permeable surface materials should be maximised. On-site rainwater storage (ponds, basins and swales), living roofs and walls (where appropriate) will be required unless the developer can provide justification to demonstrate that this would not be practicable or feasible within the constraints or configuration of the site and would compromise wider regeneration objectives.

Policy ENV 09 Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage

All new development will:

- be located to minimise the risk of flooding, mitigating any such risk through design and implementing sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles.
- incorporate appropriate surface water drainage mitigation measures to minimise its own risk of flooding and should not materially increase the flood risk to other areas. Particular care will be required in relation to habitats designated as being of international importance in the area and beyond which are water sensitive, as well as habitats designated of regional or local importance.

Developers will be required to show that the proposed development would:

- i) not increase green field run off rates and vulnerability of the site, or the wider catchment, to flooding from surface water run-off from existing or predicted water flows;
- ii) wherever practicable, have a positive impact on the risk of surface water flooding in the surrounding area adjacent to the development; and
- iii) address potential impact of infiltration upon groundwater Source Protection Zones and/or Critical Drainage Catchments.

This will be minimised through the installation of infiltration and attenuation measures to dispose of surface water in accordance with sustainable drainage system (SuDS) principles and the refinements to, and evolution of, the technical evidence base and guidance (as may be updated and superseded over the life of this Plan).

Proposals for vulnerable development in medium and higher flood risk areas must be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment, clearly identifying whether the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users, and whether there may be any potential increase or reduction in flood risk elsewhere. In line with the sequential test, areas of functional floodplain should be protected from development. Where possible, through proposals for re-development, opportunities to reinstate areas of functional flood plain should be taken (e.g. reducing building footprints or relocating to lower flood risk zones).

Consideration should be given to assessing opportunities to undertake river restoration and enhancement as part of a development to make space for water. Enhancement opportunities for renewing assets will be encouraged, where viable (e.g. de-converting, the use of bio-engineered river walls, raising bridge soffits to take into account climate change). Any proposals for enhancement and restoration of the river corridor should be subject to consultation with Norfolk County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, and in relevant cases with neighbouring authorities.

In the case of major development on unallocated sites, wider sustainability benefits should not remove the need to consider flood risk or surface water management, or the need to mitigate accordingly. Development will need to provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that clearly outweigh the flood risk.

All applications should reflect best practice and the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) guidance, and any updated version (currently April 2017) providing the appropriate information required to assist in the determination of such application as issued by the LLFA. This includes the requirement to provide details of means of adoption and maintenance of the systems over the lifetime of the development at the pre-application stage.

Renewable Energy

5.72 The NPPF supports the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and encourages the use of renewable resources, including the development of renewable energy. National policy as a whole supports and encourages the development of renewable energy sources. As a result of EU Directive 2009/28/EC, the UK committed to a legally binding target to achieve 15% of all energy generated from renewable resources, including electricity, heat and transport, by 2020. The 2006 Energy Review has an aspiration that 20% of electricity is to be from renewable resources by 2020. The overarching strategy to reduce carbon emissions to meet the requirements of the Directive and the Climate Change Act is contained in the UK Renewable Energy Strategy and the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan.

5.73 Renewable energy is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In meeting the challenge and to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, the Council recognises the need to have a positive strategy to promote renewable energy generation, whilst at the same time ensuring that the adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including the cumulative landscape and visual impacts.

5.74 There are many different types of renewable energy choices, from solar energy, wind and biomass through to energy efficient installations such as combined heat and power and ground source heating. All of these technologies and methods of construction have a role to play in meeting Government targets and are seen as positive outcomes for the District. The Council will therefore support and encourage the generation of energy from renewable sources. These will be permitted unless there are unacceptable site specific or other impacts that could not be outweighed by wider environmental, social, economic and other benefits.

5.75 As a rural District, Breckland is particularly suited to solar farms. The Government's solar Photovoltaic (PV) strategy was published in 2014. The aim is to create more financial certainty and investor confidence in order to realise the long term potential for solar PV in the UK at a large and small scale. There is no cap on capacity. It is the Government's ambition to see *"more ambitious deployment, perhaps approaching 20 Gigawatts (GW) early in the next decade"*. The past four years has seen a growth in the delivery of such facilities and their associated energy production capacity, but as at June 2013, the capacity of PV was 2.4 GW, forecast to reach 10 GW by 2020.

5.76 Whilst large scale facilities provide an opportunity for greater energy production (as well as potential enhancement to biodiversity), it is also of importance that they are carefully planned and screened to ensure any amenity and visual impacts are minimised. The NPPF states that applicants for energy development should not have to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and that applications should be approved if their impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

5.77 Whilst large scale ground-mounted PV solar farms developments can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.

Solar Farm Planning Considerations / Assessment Criteria

5.78 The effective use of land by focusing large scale solar farms on previously developed and non agricultural land, will be encouraged provided that it is not of high environmental value.

5.79 Particular factors that the Council will need to consider where a proposal involves greenfield land include:

- the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and
- that the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays.

5.80 The Government's NPPG makes specific reference to a Ministerial speech in April 2013 encouraging development on brownfield land, low grade agricultural land and on buildings; and to a Written Statement to Parliament in March 2015. The guidance notes:

- That solar farms are normally temporary structures and planning conditions can be used to ensure that the installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use;
- The proposal's visual impact, the effect on landscape of glint and glare and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety;
- The need for, and impact of, security measures such as lights and fencing;
- Great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of large scale solar farms on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence, a large scale solar farm within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset;
- The potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges; and
- The energy generating potential, which can vary for a number of reasons including latitude and aspect.

5.81 The guidance also advises that the approach to assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of large scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing the impact of wind turbines. However, in the case of ground mounted solar panels, it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography the area of a zone of visual influence could be zero.

Government Aims on Solar Energy

5.82 The Written Statement to Parliament in March 2015 sets out the Government's aims on solar energy development and highlights concerns about the unjustified use of high quality agricultural land making it clear that any proposal for a solar farm involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence.

Anaerobic Digestion Considerations /Assessment Criteria

Anaerobic digestion (AD) is a natural process in which micro-organisms break down the organic matter found in wet biomass waste (such as sewage sludge, animal manure and slurry and waste food) in the absence of oxygen, to produce biogas (mainly a mixture of around 60% methane and 40% carbon dioxide) and digestate (a nitrogen rich fertiliser). The National Non-Food Crops Centre (NNFCC) runs the Government's Anaerobic Digestion Portal (<http://www.biogas-info.co.uk/>) – a gateway to information on anaerobic digestion, biogas and digestate. Reference should also be made to 'The Anaerobic digestion strategy and action plan', published by government on 14 June 2011 and an update on progress on detailed actions published in July 2012. Anaerobic Digestion proposals are regarded as waste treatment facilities, where feedstock is classified as waste under relevant legislation and so relevant related national and county best practice guidance and policies will apply.

Anaerobic Digestion proposals raise a number of planning issues including visual and landscape impacts arising from industrial scale plant / buildings; location concerns (in sustainability terms relative to the source of biomass and where relevant combined heat and power (CHP); electricity and/or gas grid connection), potential odour impacts, air emissions, noise impacts, protection of the water environment and traffic impacts. Failure to supply adequate environmental information to accompany planning applications for anaerobic digestion projects can be a key cause of delay in determining a planning application. Breckland Council therefore encourages early pre-application engagement on all renewable energy projects to optimise project assessment and delivery.

All Renewable Energy Environmental Concerns

5.83 In relation to all renewable or low carbon energy development the Government's NPPG also states that: the need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections; cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that wind turbines and large scale solar farms can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of turbines and solar arrays in an area increases; local topography is an important factor in assessing whether wind turbines and large scale solar farms could have a damaging effect on landscape and recognise that the impact can be as great in predominately flat landscapes as in hilly or mountainous areas; also, that great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting.

Policy ENV 10 Renewable Energy Development

Proposals for renewable energy development including the landward infrastructure for offshore renewable schemes requiring planning permission will be assessed to determine whether the benefits they bring in terms of the volume and usability of energy generated outweigh any adverse impacts. Proposals will be considered having regard to the extent to which there are:

- i. adverse impacts on the local landscape, townscape or designated and undesignated heritage assets, particularly listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens;
- ii. adverse effects on residential amenity by virtue of outlook / overbearing impact, traffic generation, noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker, glare or any other associated detrimental emissions, during construction, operation and decommissioning; and
- iii. adverse impacts upon designated wildlife sites; nature conservation interests; and biodiversity.

Permission will be granted where there are no significant adverse impacts and effects or where any identified adverse effects and impacts are demonstrably outweighed by the benefits. When attributing weight to any harm, in addition to other relevant policies in the Local Plan, regard will be given to national policy and guidance, statutory duty and legislation which seeks protection and enhancement of the landscape; designated and non-statutory heritage assets.

Where appropriate the authority will consider the need for planning conditions requiring the decommissioning and removal of all plant and ancillary equipment, and if necessary the restoration of land, on the cessation of use.

6 Economy and Employment

Economic Development

6.1 The size and dispersed nature of the area's population presents significant challenges for the Council in delivering balanced economic growth. Breckland's strategic position is emphasised by the good road communications offered by the A47 and A11, the latter of which has recently benefited from major improvements providing a complete dualled road linking Norfolk to the rest of the country for the first time. The five market towns, Attleborough, Dereham, Swaffham, Thetford and Watton, are an essential component of the economic and social structure, acting as service centres to their rural hinterlands. The area has seen a rapid population growth, increasing pay levels and low rates of unemployment and there is a trend for the overall number of jobs to increase. However, average wages remain relatively low in comparison with regional and national levels due to a lower level of qualifications of people in the District and a low level of skills required by many of the available jobs.

6.2 The Employment Growth Study and Employment Land Review 2013 for Breckland, identifies that Breckland has a relatively successful economy recording significant job growth over the last two decades. The business base is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses but with below average levels of business start-ups and self-employment. Workforce productivity is relatively low which may in part reflect a slight mis-match in the local economy between lower skilled jobs available, and a more highly qualified resident workforce, many of which commute out of the District to higher paid employment elsewhere.

6.3 Employment space in the District is dominated by industrial uses and tends to be concentrated around Breckland's larger towns. The rural economy also accommodates important hubs of economic activity, particularly with regards to small scale office and workshop space. The District has seen moderate levels of new development over the past eight years, the majority for B1c/B2 manufacturing uses and B8 warehousing.

6.4 Demand for employment space remains steady, focused upon small scale industrial accommodation. The majority of commercial property market activity is concentrated within the settlements of Thetford and Dereham and, to a lesser extent Attleborough, with very limited activity occurring outside of these key areas. Some of the District's stock is dated and/or poorly specified with evidence that this issue has been constraining industrial activity – specifically in the past in terms of attracting new industrial occupiers.

6.5 Within this context, the Employment Growth Study and Employment Land Review 2013 identified a number of policy issues for consideration:

- Consider rationalising existing and future supply of industrial space by seeking to concentrate this space in the District's key locations and areas of strongest market demand (such as Thetford and Attleborough). This would help support critical mass of development on fewer sites, provide a clearer signal to potential investors and also support any necessary upfront infrastructure works. Future development of employment space in the District should also build upon, and take advantage of, significant infrastructure improvements associated with the duelling of the A11 from Fiveways to Thetford as well as the proposed Thetford SUE which will also provide a key driver of economic growth within the District over the plan period.
- In the more peripheral areas of the District where demand levels are weaker, it may be necessary to adopt a flexible approach to bringing forward employment sites by allowing the development of other higher value non-B uses on part of allocated sites, in order to unlock the site's potential and fund any associated infrastructure works.
- At the same time, the Council could consider releasing some of the District's poorer quality and poorer performing sites in more peripheral locations characterised by relatively low market demand and that suffer from constraints to (re)development (such as proximity to residential uses). This would help to ensure an appropriate distribution of employment space across the District in accordance with market demand.

- Over the longer term (i.e. 20 year plan period), it is recommended that any new provision of office space follows an enterprise centre type model, with small units for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and local start-ups and shared workspace and networking opportunities. It is also recommended that any new office space is focused upon Breckland's town centres, benefiting from a more attractive working environment and range of facilities for staff.
- Given the rural nature of much of the District, it is also important that the Local Plan continues to recognise the important role of rural settlements in providing employment space and opportunities for local residents. This is unlikely to justify specific land allocations, however the provision of a positive policy framework (e.g. re-use of buildings) that encourages rural enterprise and diversification schemes represents the most appropriate way of ensuring that rural needs can be met.

6.6 The NPPF requires LPAs to develop a clear understanding of the business needs and markets operating in their areas. It also sets out the need for evidence to be assembled to understand the need for land and floorspace, existing and future supply of land for economic needs as well as understanding the qualitative issues associated with existing employment provision.

6.7 The Employment Growth Study and Employment Land Review 2013 for Breckland, considered the requirements from the NPPF. The study also utilised a number of demographic and economic models as well as involving local stakeholders to map out possible growth scenarios for the District. Four different scenarios of future employment space requirements were considered for the period up to 2031; these were based on a number of approaches which reflect economic growth, past development trends and potential labour supply factors. The majority of these scenarios point to a lower level of future economic growth in Breckland than the District has achieved in the recent past, partly reflecting a more pessimistic post-recession economic outlook. The overall space requirements relating to these scenarios range from 134,235 sq.m to 310,180 sq.m of all types of employment space, implying in broad terms a need for between 31.6 ha and 74.7 ha of employment land. The majority of this spatial requirement relates to industrial (B1c/B2/B8) uses.

6.8 The Local Plan seeks to deliver 64 Hectares of employment land over the plan period. This figure sits between the 'Policy on' job growth scenario, which takes account of planned investment and intelligences about future sector/site based potential as an uplift on East of England Forecasting Model projections and the past trends in completions of employments space scenario. The Employment Growth Study and Employment Land Review 2013 recommended that allocating at least the baseline job growth requirement whilst providing capacity within the District to meet the slightly higher alternative 'policy-on' requirement.

6.9 The completions data has been assessed between 2012-2016 to ensure that the data used within the 2013 study is still accurate. Whilst the level of completions over the period has increased slightly when averaged over the 12 year period this would not result in a dramatic increase in the amount of employment land required. The baseline projections of employment growth and scenarios accounting for planned investment are also still considered to be up to date as of 2017.

6.10 The emerging SHMA has considered an approach to "balance out" the need for new dwellings with the expected level of new jobs forecast for the Central Norfolk Housing Market Area (HMA), utilising the latest information from the East of England Forecasting Model. For Breckland, an uplift is applied to the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for the District to account for the growth in jobs.

6.11 The Local Plan seeks to save policies in Dereham, Swaffham and Thetford totalling at least 34 hectares of employment land. At least 10 hectares of employment land in Attleborough and at least 20 hectares of employment land in Snetterton has been allocated through the Local Plan. It is considered that this increase in employment provides a balanced approach across the District over the plan period.

6.12 Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan moved to the Submission Draft Plan stage in February 2017. Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan making process, the Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan has sought to allocate the 10 hectares of employment land and has actively sought to highlight an area of search for employment land. Due to the progression of the Local Plan and the need for certainty around the provision of employment land in the area, the Local Plan has sought to allocate the area that the Neighbourhood Plan has identified.

6.13 Located in the centre of the District, Watton accommodates a reasonable amount of industrial space (with a focus on light industry and engineering) and a steady flow of industrial requirements from local occupiers. The office market is very small in scale, with very limited accommodation for office users. Available supply of employment space comprises just over 2ha made up of small pockets of undeveloped land and outstanding planning permissions across the town's existing sites (including at Norwich Road Industrial Estate, Threxton Road Industrial Estate). This demand / supply balance appears to be relatively well matched, with no identified need for additional employment space in Watton.

Policy EC 01 Economic Development

For the period 2011 – 2036, 64 Hectares of employment land will be allocated to allow for a range and choice of employment sites to meet economic need and demand.

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

Attleborough – at least 10Ha

Dereham - at least 3Ha (consisting of the specific allocations identified in the Sites Specific Policies and Proposals DPD - Policies D5 – which has been identified as a saved policy for this Local Plan)

Swaffham – at least 9Ha (consisting of the specific allocations identified in the Sites Specific Policies and Proposals DPD– Policies SW2 and SW3 - which have been identified as saved policies for this Local Plan)

Thetford – at least 22Ha (consisting of the specific allocation identified in the Thetford Area Action Plan - Policy TH30 - which has been identified as a saved policy for this Local Plan)

Snetterton – at least 20Ha

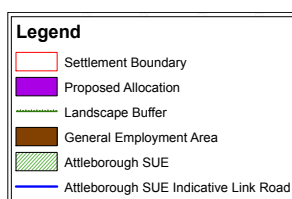
6.14 Policy EC 01 sets out the amount of employment land to be allocated within the Local Plan. It proposed that for the period 2011 - 2036, 67 hectares of employment land would be allocated to allow for a range and choice of employment sites to meet economic need and demand. The distribution of the new employment allocations proposed was as follows:

- **Attleborough** - at least 10 hectares
- **Dereham** - at least 3 hectares (consisting of the specific allocations identified in the site specific policies and proposals DPD - Policies D4 and D5 - which have been identified as saved policies for the Local Plan)
- **Swaffham** - at least 9 hectares (consisting of the specific allocations identified in the site specific policies and proposals DPD - Policies SW2 and SW3 - which have been identified as saved policies for the Local Plan)
- **Thetford** - at least 22 hectares (consisting of the specific allocations identified in the Thetford AAP - Policy TH30 - which has been identified as saved policies for the Local Plan)
- **Snetterton** - at least 20 hectares

6.15 The approach to Dereham, Swaffham and Thetford is to carry forward allocations identified within both the Site Specific Policies and Proposals DPD and Thetford Area Action Plan. It is not therefore proposed to allocate new sites through the Local Plan.

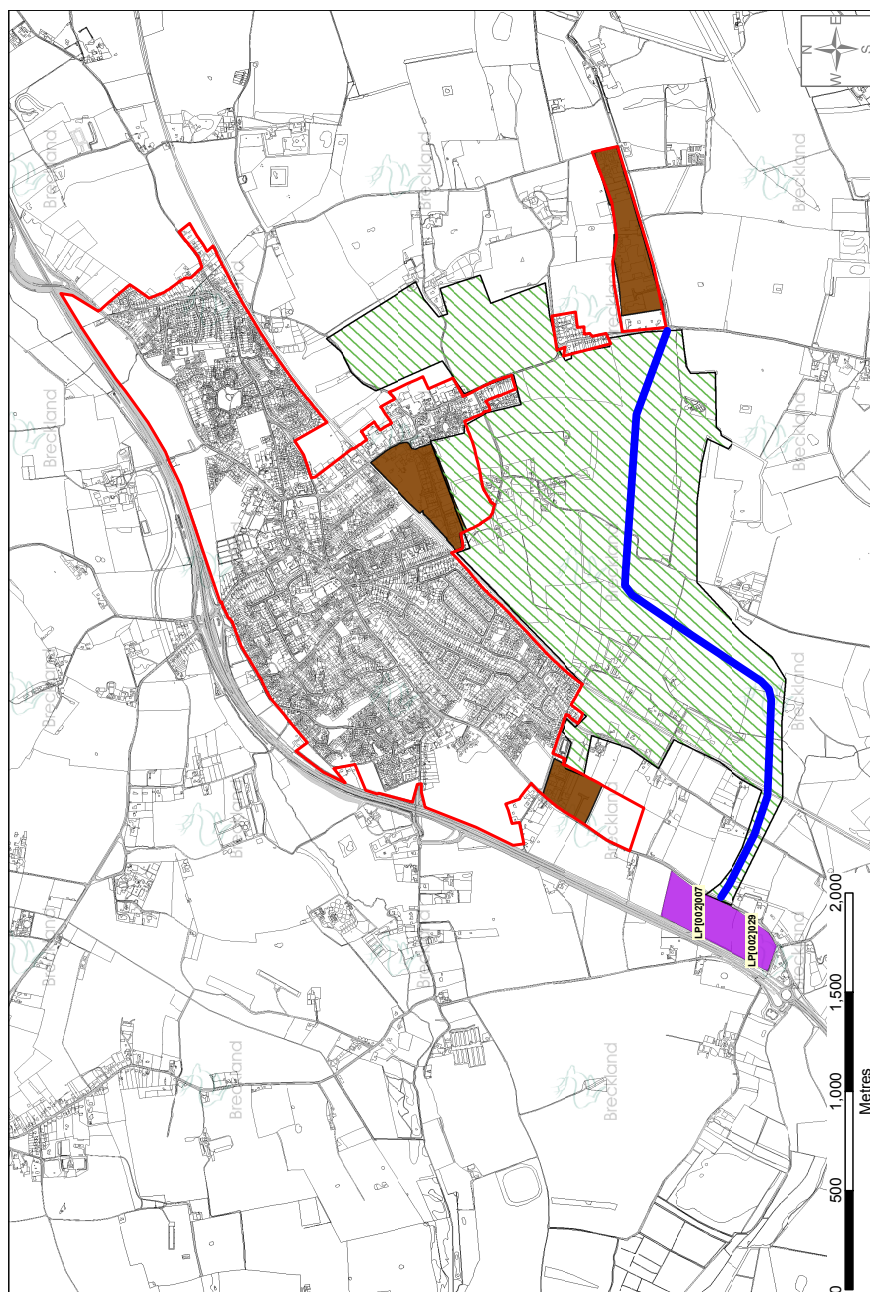
6.16 In line with the Employment Growth Study the Local Plan seeks to allocate 20 additional hectares of employment land at Snetterton Heath and 10 hectares of employment land at Attleborough. The 10 hectares of employment land at Attleborough has been identified through the Neighbourhood Plan, but has been formally allocated through the Local Plan in order to ensure that the requirements of the Employment Growth Study are fulfilled through the lifetime of the plan.

**Figure 6.1 Key for
Employment maps**



Attleborough Allocations

Picture 6.1 Summary of Attleborough Allocation



6.17 The allocation, proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan, totals approximately 12.5 hectares; however, in line with government guidance, a 20% reduction has been applied to convert from gross to net resulting in approximately 10 hectares net internal employment land.

6.18 The emerging policy LE. P1 in the Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft February 2017 seeks to allocate land to the west of London Road for 10 ha of employment land as a result of evidence undertaken to support both the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan. This Local Plan policy provides the strategic context for the allocation with the intention that the Neighbourhood Plan will provide detailed policy criteria to shape the development of the employment site. As the Neighbourhood Plan is in its final submission stage (as of February 2017) and has not yet been subject to examination or referendum only limited weight can be applied to the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. However, the emerging policy LE. P1 has been formed by evidence, is in conformity with the Council's strategic policy direction and has been subject to public consultation and therefore the policy in the Local Plan provides a link to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan policy.

Attleborough Employment Allocation 1

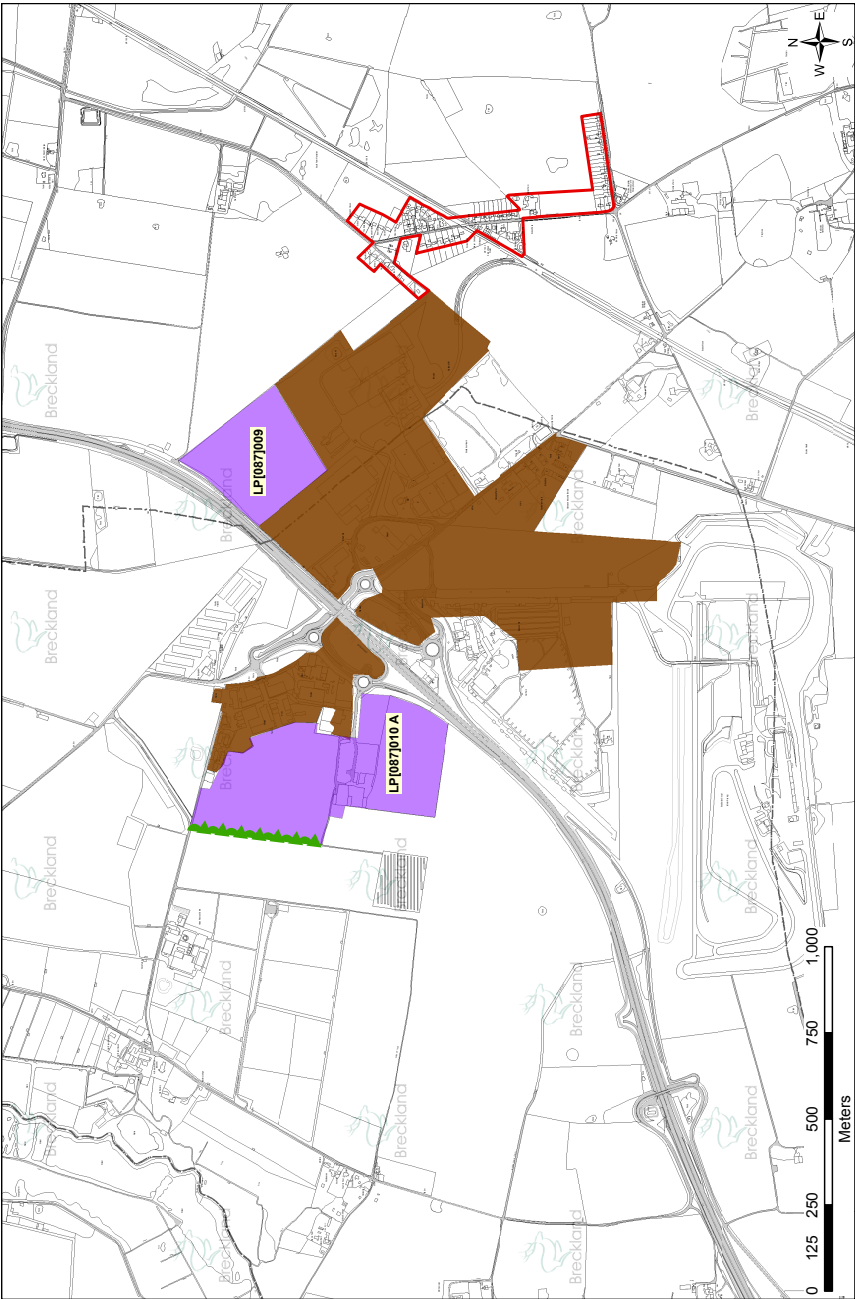
Land to the west of London Road (LP[002]029 & LP[002]007)

Land amounting to 10 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (within Classes B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order) to the west of London Road. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Provision of safe highway access from London Road;
2. Appropriate design, layout and landscaping in keeping with the site's location as a key gateway into Attleborough from the A11; and
3. The planning application will have regard to emerging Policy LE. P1 in the Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan Submission Draft February 2017 or the final Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan, if brought into force.

Snetterton Heath Allocations

Map 6.1 Summary of Snetterton Heath Allocations



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6.19 The two allocated sites provide a total of 28.82 hectares, however in line with government guidance, a 20% reduction has been applied to convert from gross to net with a further 10% reduction applied to allow for appropriate landscape screening, layout and design, resulting in a total of 20 hectares net internal employment land from the two preferred sites.

6.20 Further to this, a change to the General Employment Area (GEA) is proposed by removing the landfill site from the GEA (SNE 01) and reallocating this to the area to the north of site LP[087]011 (SNE 02). This change seeks to reflect the existing uses on the GEA. The proposed area of landfill to be removed is 7.8 hectares, and the extension proposed to the GEA, as shown on the maps, is 11.1, however when the 30% gross to net multiplier and 10% landscaping multiplier is applied this comes to 7.77 hectares.

Snetterton Employment Allocation 1

Land to the north west of the General Employment Area (LP[087]010A)

Land amounting to 14 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (within Classes B1 and B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order) to the north west of Snetterton North General Employment Area. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Development is laid out in a manner that does not preclude the potential for future development in the vicinity;
2. Proposals for employment development within class B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
3. Provision of safe highway access from Chalk Lane;
4. Suitable noise attenuation measures (which could include building design measures, screening, fencing or bunding) are provided to avoid harm to nearby residential amenity;
5. Provision of new structural landscaping to the western boundary of the site.

6.21 The site is situated upon 20 hectares of grade 3 agricultural land with the A11 to the south of the site and the existing General Employment Area to the east. The site frontages onto the A11 and has access to the existing general Employment Area through Chalk Lane. Norfolk County Council Highways, through consultation responses, have not raised any objections regarding the site.

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

Snetterton Employment Allocation 2

Land to the east of the General Employment Area (LP[087]009)

Land amounting to approximately 6 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (Within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order) to the east of the Snetterton South General Employment Area. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Provision of safe highway access from Harling Road;
2. Proposals for employment development within class B8 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
3. Appropriate design and layout in keeping with the site's location as a key gateway with frontage onto the A11; and
4. Appropriate noise attenuation measures are provided at the northern border of the site with the A11 trunk road, if required.

6.23 The site is situated upon 8.8 hectares of Grade 3 agricultural land to the north of the existing General Employment Area. The site frontages onto the A11 to the north and has access to the existing General Employment Area through Harling Road. Norfolk County Council Highways, through consultation responses, have not raised any objections regarding the site.

6.24 The site is currently subject to a live planning application (3PL/2013/0727/D) comprising a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses. The permission proposes access to Harling Road, which has been completed.

6.25 No fundamental constraints to the development of the site have been identified.

Policy EC 02 - Snetterton Heath

All proposals at Snetterton Heath will be determined subject to criteria a) to e) of Policy EC 03 General Employment Areas.

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

1. Within area LP[087]010 as defined on the policies map, 20ha of land is allocated for B1 and B2 use. The layout of any development should not prejudice future expansion of the site;
2. Within the southern extent of the Snetterton General Employment Area as defined on the policies map, proposals for employment use within classes B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred. Proposals that are associated with motorsport, automotive and advanced engineering will be encouraged;
3. Within the eastern extent of Snetterton General Employment Area as defined on the policies map, proposals for employment development within class B8 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred; and
4. Proposals that create a new edge to the employment area shall be expected to provide appropriate boundary treatment to minimise the impact on the landscape, having regard to the principles of the Landscape Character Assessment.

Reasoned Justification

6.26 Draft Strategic Policy PD06 that was subject to consultation in January/ February 2016 identifies Snetterton Heath for an allocation of at least 20ha of new employment land over the plan period. The existing area is characterised by a number of different types of employment use that have developed as distinct clusters of activity which have established over time. This policy seeks to reflect the findings of the Cambridge to Norwich Technology corridor study and previous work under the auspices of the Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) by promoting motorsport and advanced engineering associated with the race track, as well as building on the area's successes within the distribution and manufacturing sectors. The policy seeks to direct particular types of activity within the 'B use classes' to specific areas of the site to promote clustering and capitalise on the inter-relationships between the activities carried out across the site.

6.27 The northern extent of Snetterton Heath, north of the trunk road, has a mixed character with a range of general industrial uses and planning permission was granted on 19th January 2016 for a new general industrial operator. In this area, proposals for new general industrial development would be acceptable having regard to the nature of the existing development.

6.28 The southern extent of Snetterton Heath, south of the trunk road and west of Heath Road, is characterised by the motor racing track and former Snetterton Park and comprises a range of existing buildings and established land uses. This area has excellent visibility from the A11 and provides the opportunity to direct the development and intensification of motorsport and advanced manufacturing uses, building on the proximity of this part of the site to the race track. The area provides opportunities for co-location and access to the track for automotive testing and related activity.

6.29 The eastern extent of the site (south of the A11 and north-east of Heath Road) contains a range of principally storage and distribution uses, including a rail head. Therefore, to ensure the delivery of the overall vision for the site, it is appropriate to direct new uses falling within Class B8 of the Use Classes Order to this location. Such uses

do not require such close relationship to the track and due to their higher land take and lower employment density, such uses are therefore best directed towards this area of the site. This area offers potential opportunities to support the transshipment of goods to road from rail.

6.30 The General Employment Area boundary for Snetterton Heath is proposed to be amended to exclude an existing landfill site that does not provide deliverable opportunities for employment development within the plan period. An additional area of brownfield land at the former Snetterton Park is proposed to be included in the designation in order to provide an opportunity to support re-development for B class employment development to this part of the site. This approach will help to support the wider vision for the site.

6.31 The above strategic approach to the use of the site will ensure that the greatest opportunities for clustering and maximising higher job density uses in key locations are maximised.

Saved Employment Allocations

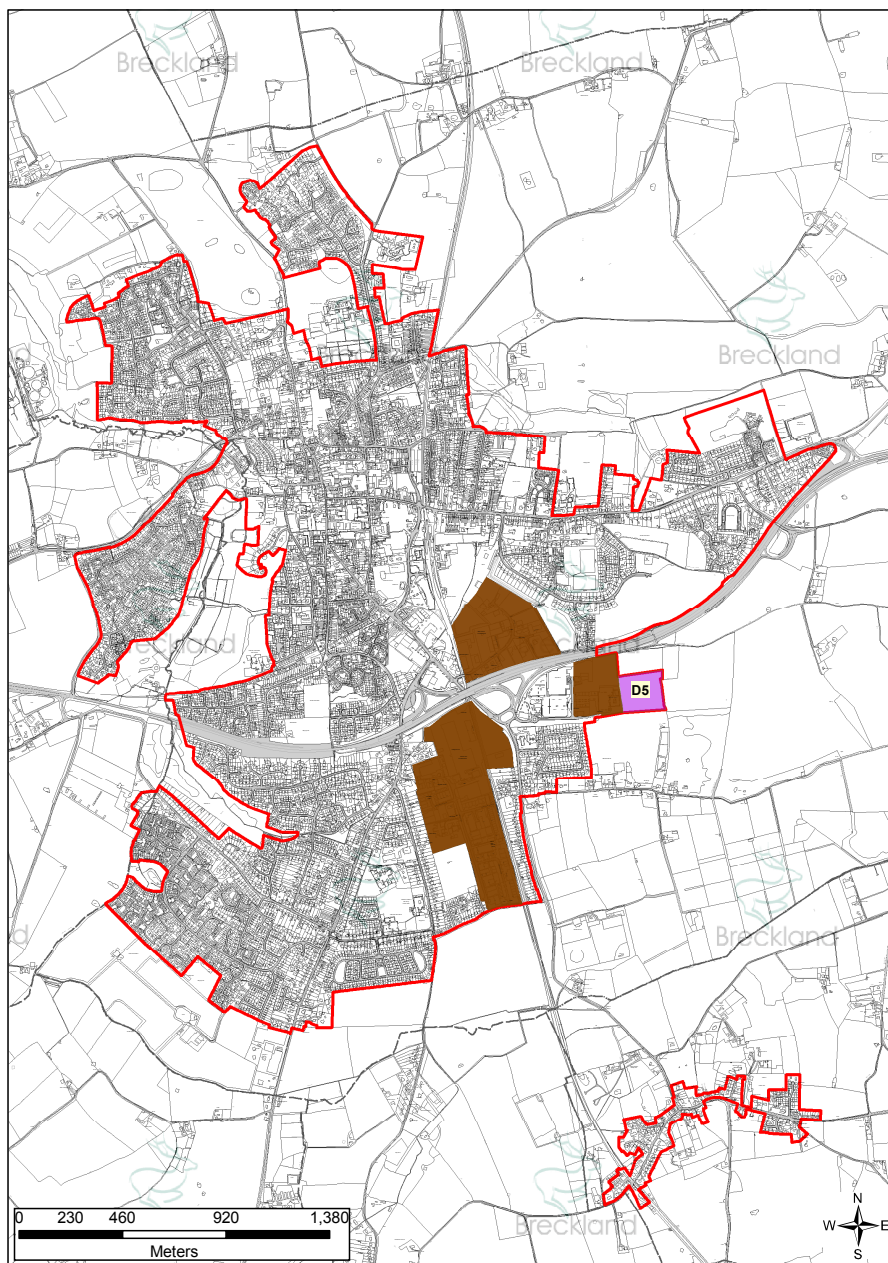
6.32 The following allocations have been taken forward from the adopted Site Specific Policies & Proposals Development Plan Document (2012). The suitability of the sites have been re-appraised in the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment which forms part of the evidence base for the employment allocations. The sites were determined to be suitable and available for economic development with no overriding constraints to delivery and therefore have been selected for allocation in the Local Plan. The following policies listed in Table 6.2 will be saved to form part of this Local Plan. Saved employment allocations are shown on the Policies Maps.

Table 6.1

Saved Policy	Area	Location
Policy D5 Land at Dereham Business Park	3.1ha	Dereham
Policy SW2 Land to the North of the Eco-Tech Centre	3ha	Swaffham
Policy SW3 Land to the West to the Eco-Tech Employment Area	5.8ha	Swaffham
Policy TH 30 New Employment Land	22ha	Thetford

Dereham Saved Employment Allocations

Map 6.2 Dereham Saved Employment Allocations



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Land at Dereham Business Park

Saved Policy - Policy D5

Land east of Dereham Business Park

Land amounting to 3.1 hectares is allocated for employment use (within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order, as amended) to the east of Dereham Business Park. Development will be permitted subject to compliance with adopted policies in the Core Strategy and the following criteria:

- a. Vehicular access is provided via Kingston Road/ Walpole Loke, and should include the provision of necessary highway improvements to ensure highway safety;
- b. Appropriate footpaths and cycleways are provided linking the site with existing footways at Yaxham Road as well as a footway to the north through to Cherry Lane;
- c. Suitable noise attenuation measures (which could include building design measures, screening, fencing or bunding) are provided to avoid harm to surrounding residential amenity;
- d. Important boundary trees are retained as part of detailed landscaping schemes;
- e. Existing boundary screening is retained and enhanced to include new structural landscaping to minimise the visual impact of development and extent of new build development into the open countryside;
- f. Development is laid out in a manner that does not preclude the potential for future development in the vicinity; and
- g. Appropriate sustainable surface water attenuation measures are provided, and where possible included as part of landscaping schemes.

The Council will consider the need to impose appropriate conditions limiting the hours of operation of businesses to ensure the amenity of any proximate residential development is not harmed.

Reasoned Justification

6.33 This site comprises an area of agricultural land located to the east of Dereham, east of the existing Dereham Business Park. The site is bordered by existing development at Walpole Loke, including the Breckland Council Offices. The site has limited screening at the eastern boundary and development would represent a new edge to the built form of Dereham.

6.34 Proposals for development on this site within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) will be permitted subject to the above policy and the provisions of the adopted Core Strategy to meet part of the strategic requirement for new employment land in Dereham.

6.35 The site is to be accessed via Kingston Road/ Walpole Loke and the Local Planning Authority will, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, seek appropriate contributions for enhancements to the local highway network should these be required. The development should also provide suitable footpath and cycle provision to link the site to Yaxham Road to enable greater opportunities to access the site by these modes. Detailed proposals should also make appropriate provision of a footway/cycle link from the development north to Cherry Lane. This will enable enhanced opportunities for sustainable movements between new employment allocations and residential development to the east of Dereham.

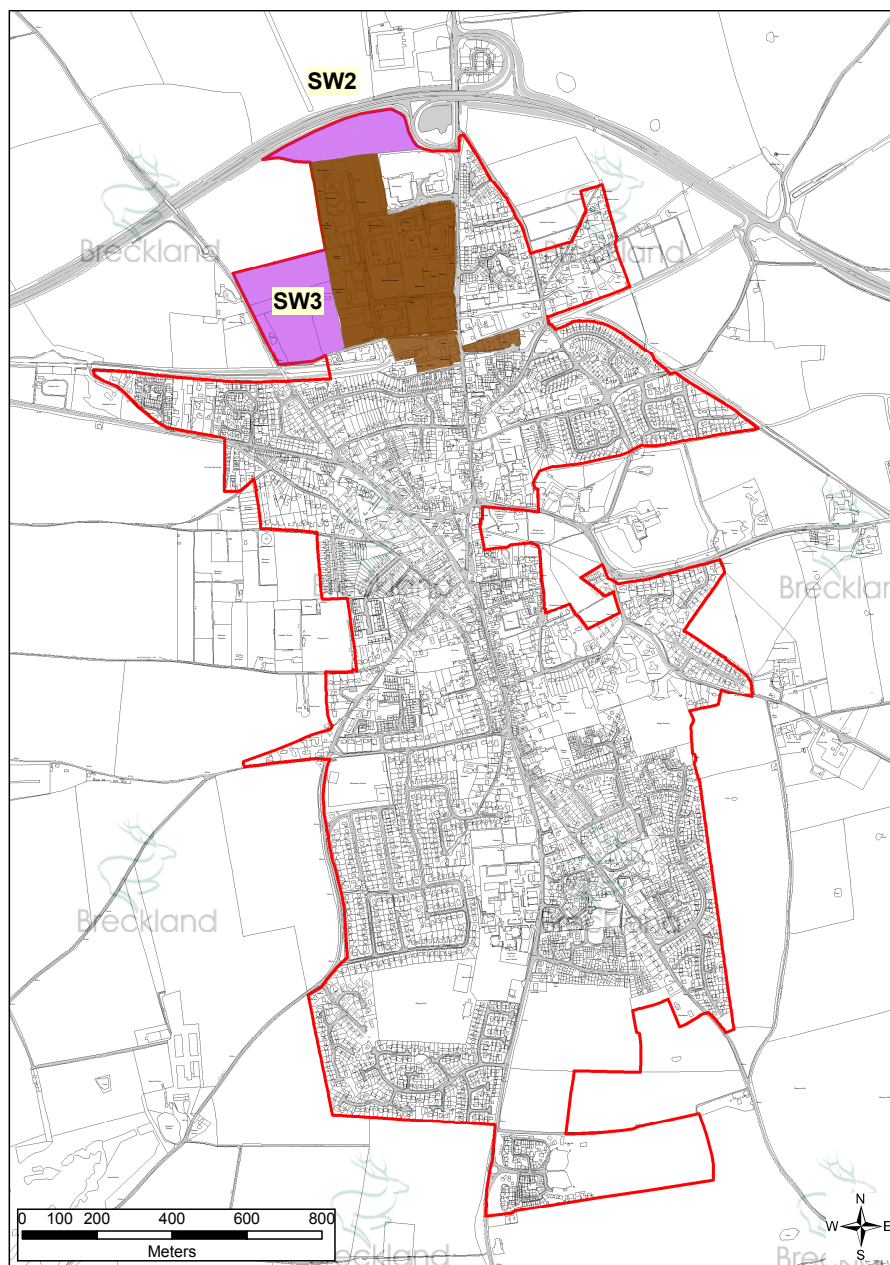
6.36 New structural landscaping shall be provided to the eastern boundary of the site in order to minimise the visual impact of new built development on the open countryside. This is essential as the site will form a new edge to the settlement, which can currently be viewed from a number of important routes to the east of the town. A

structural landscaping scheme shall be provided as part of any detailed proposal and delivered prior to the completion of any commercial units. This will ensure that visual impact is minimised, but could also form part of a sustainable drainage scheme.

6.37 In order to ensure that the amenity of surrounding residential development is not adversely affected by the development of this allocation for employment use, the Local Planning Authority will consider the need to impose conditions on subsequent Planning Applications so that proposals include appropriate noise attenuation mitigation measures if required. These measures could include building design measures, screening, fencing or bunding which can control noise, although this will depend on the precise uses proposed.

Swaffham Saved Employment Allocations

Map 6.3 Swaffham Saved Employment Allocations



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Saved Policy - Policy SW2

Land to the North of the Eco-Tech Centre

Land amounting to approximately 3 hectares is allocated for employment development. The development will provide a mix of B class units only. Development will be subject to compliance with adopted Core Strategy policies and:

- a. Access provided only from the Eco-Tech Employment Area;
- b. Provision of a landscape buffer between the development and the A47 trunk road; and
- c. Development will not commence until vacant, developable land in the existing Eco-Tech centre has been developed.

Reasoned Justification

6.38 The site is a small arable field, between the Eco-Tech Employment Area and the A47 trunk road. The site is screened by trees and hedges on the western, eastern and southern boundaries. The development of the site would form a natural extension to the existing employment area. The site is approximately 3 hectares in size and will contribute to the employment needs for Swaffham as identified in the Core Strategy. The Eco-Tech employment area is served by a local bus service.

6.39 The site is of an irregular shape which will limit opportunities for large industrial units. Although employment uses are not regarded as noise sensitive developments in PPG24, in the interests of amenity a landscape buffer of planting should screen the development from the A47 trunk road.

6.40 There are currently a number of trees on the southern boundary of the site where the only safe point of access is located. Some of these trees will need to be removed in order to achieve a suitable access. The only safe point of access is through the existing employment area. This would involve road construction over Breckland Council and potentially third party land. These ownership constraints could affect the delivery of the site. However, they are not seen as insurmountable. There are still a number of vacant lots in the existing employment area. It is important to ensure that these lots are brought forward prior to the release of this site for employment land.

6.41 The site is well related to the A47 and the location was concluded by Breckland Council's Employment Land Review (2006) as being attractive to the market.

Saved Policy - Policy SW3

Land to the West of the Eco-Tech Employment Area

Land amounting to approximately 5.8 hectares is allocated for employment development. The development will provide a mix of B class units only. Development will be subject to compliance with adopted Core Strategy policies and:

- a. Access is provided only from the Eco-Tech Employment Area;
- b. Provision of adequate planting and landscaping on exposed boundaries of the site;
- c. The layout and design of the site will have regard to the potential of adjoining land to the north of the site providing a long term option for employment development beyond 2026;
- d. Provision of pedestrian/cycle access from West Acre Road;
- e. Investigation and remediation of possible ground contamination; and
- f. Development will not commence until the land allocated by Policy SW2 has been implemented.

Reasoned Justification

6.42 The site consists of part of a larger arable field to the west of the Eco-Tech Employment Area. The site also covers a smaller field to the south-east corner of the allocation. The site is bounded by some dispersed residential development to the south on Bears Lane and to the west on West Acre Road but is otherwise located between employment development at Eco-tech and the A47 bypass. Careful consideration will be given to the proposed employment uses on this site where they abut adjoining residential properties and regard will be given to amenity in the context of Core Strategy policy and the content of PPS23 'Pollution' and PPG24 'Noise'.

6.43 Access to the site will need to be secured through the existing Eco-tech site as the highway network from West Acre Road and Bears Lane is unacceptable for the potential traffic generated. Access onto both Bears Lane and West Acre Road will be limited to pedestrian and cycle access, given the benefit of providing a direct and attractive route from the site to the town centre.

6.44 The boundary between the site and the employment area consists of trees, hedges and fencing. The site has hedges on its boundary against West Acre Road and Bears Lane. There are also a number of small trees and hedging on the boundaries of the smaller field within the site. There is no planting or physical boundary to the site to the north. Therefore, as part of any development proposal, landscaping and planting on the northern boundary would be required. However, the landscaping should not sterilise the potential for future expansion of the employment area to the north of the site. To the north and west of the site are arable fields. To the south of the site beyond Bears Lane is the dismantled railway line which provides a physical buffer to the residential estates to the south.

6.45 The development of the site would form an extension to the existing employment area. The site is approximately 5.8 hectares in size and will contribute to the employment needs for Swaffham identified in the Core Strategy.

6.46 The Breckland Landscape Character Assessment states that the land in this area, between the north of the town and the A47, has lower sensitivity to change than the rest of the character area due to the urbanising influence of adjacent employment areas. Therefore, with appropriate screening to the north, impact on the landscape will be minimal. There are a number of trees on the site and on the boundary. Some of these may have to be removed to achieve access to the site. However, any mature or valuable trees should be maintained as part of detailed proposals.

6.47 The detailed Water Cycle Study (2010) identifies that there is a lack of strategic sewer provision in this part of the town. This could be a constraint to the type of industry that could be developed on the site and detailed discussions with Anglian Water are encouraged prior to the submission of any Planning Application. There are no known energy constraints in bringing this site forward.

6.48 The ultimate delivery of the site will be dependant upon market conditions. In order to ensure the unnecessary early loss of undeveloped land, development will not commence on this site until the land allocated for employment under Policy SW2 has been brought forward by virtue of a detailed Planning Application. If there are material reasons why development cannot take place on SW2 first, development on this site will be considered for early release.

6.49 Part of the site is on a potentially backfilled quarry. Before planning permission can be granted a desk study and full site investigation, including gas monitoring, will be needed.

6.50 The site is well related to the A47 and the location is concluded by the Employment Land Review (2006) as being attractive to the market.

Saved Policy - Policy TH30

New Employment Land

(a) Amount of Employment Land and Location

Land amounting to at least 22 hectares for new employment development shall be provided within the Thetford Urban Extension. This shall be in locations which provide good access to the A11 trunk road and the land should be provided as appropriately serviced. This shall include mains services such as water, electricity and gas brought to site in order to ensure timely supply and delivery of land to the commercial market. The provision of the 22 hectares of employment land in the urban extension should be phased for delivery as indicated in the table below:

Table 6.2 Location of Employment Development

Location	Area
Near Tesco	4.0Ha
Lodge Way	14.5Ha
Off Croxton Road	2.5Ha
Off Norwich Road	7.2Ha

The saved employment allocation (E.1)⁽²⁾ adjacent to the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument will be replaced by the Lodge Way allocation (in table above), in the same broad location, for employment development subject to the following:

- It is accessed by business related traffic from Wyatt Way and Lodge Way only, with secondary access from Croxton Road for public transport only;
- The actual shape of the allocation is amended to reflect the Scheduled Monument;
- Appropriate screening is provided which enhances the setting of the Scheduled Monument and acts as a buffer to existing residential development;
- The site is allocated for B1 (business) and B8 (storage and distribution) use; and
- The design allows for ease of access by buses and walking and cycling.

(b) Layout and Design Principles

Planning applications for employment land should have regard to the following principles in order to make the new employment areas in Thetford attractive, integrated into the town, quality places and attract a wide range of tenants:

- Convenient access by walking, cycling and public transport;
- Well connected to the rest of the town;
- Screening from the existing and future neighbouring residential uses;
- Ensure appropriate and sympathetic boundary treatments to key road frontages within employment areas using native hedgerow planting with fencing set behind;
- Ensure car parking and service yards are clear of road frontages, particularly to the A1066;

- vi. Quality tree planting and landscaping;
- vii. Efficient use of land;
- viii. Provide for a wide range of land uses in order to attract a wide range of tenants;
- ix. Designed to provide a quality working environment and image, including the gateways into the site;
- x. Innovative waste and recycling infrastructure;
- xi. Design out crime; and
- xii. Potential for biodiversity to be provided for.

Reasoned Justification

6.51 Thetford is identified as a key employment location along the A11 corridor and is the focus for significant jobs growth in the Breckland Adopted Core Strategy. The Core Strategy identifies at Policy CP3 the need to plan for some 30-40 hectares of strategic employment land at Thetford within the A11 to deliver 5,000 new jobs to 2026. The amount of new employment land proposed and Thetford Enterprise Park with Planning Permission, along with a high jobs growth target, seeks to ensure that the town not only continues to be an important economic location, but also improves the balance between jobs and new homes contributing to the objective of self containment i.e. people living and working in Thetford. Delivery of jobs is also critical to the transport strategy for Thetford. Breckland Council will expect a range of new employment sites to be delivered across Thetford's Urban Extension in accordance with the above policy.

6.52 Thetford is also a key location within the Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) and Breckland Council has placed significant emphasis on delivering quality and high value employment opportunities in the finance, ICT, research and advanced engineering and manufacturing sectors. There are already a number of these types of businesses in the Thetford area, and the continued growth of motorsport-related industry along the A11 can help to ensure the town benefits from economic growth in this sector, consistent with the REV objectives.

6.53 The Thetford Enterprise Park (TEP) is a key employment site in close proximity to the A11. The site has the benefit of outline Planning Permission and is currently being serviced in order to aid the delivery of new employment development in the short to medium term. This site will make an important contribution to delivering new jobs; however this will not be sufficient on its own to deliver the requirement and further sites will be needed. The Employment Land Review (2006) recommended that a new business park be developed along with the Thetford Enterprise Park in order to bring forward inward investment to the town and the preferred policy approach seeks to ensure suitable employment provision in the urban extension. The policy seeks to ensure that the additional employment land proposed in Thetford as part of the Thetford Urban Extension comes forward in a timely manner to help deliver the significant jobs growth target along with housing growth in the town. Ensuring such land is serviced by the developers will make sure land is ready to be developed when the commercial market is in a position to expand.

6.54 In deciding where to locate employment and how the allocations are built out, Core Strategy Policy DC1 is of importance with regards to the effect of differing land uses on each other, needs to be considered. For example the juxtaposition of residential and light employment could result in amenity issues for residents in terms of noise.

6.55 Further to the above, and to reflect the Lodge Way allocation being adjacent to Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument, Breckland Council would encourage plans for well designed offices or warehouses of a scale that reflects the sensitive location.

Existing Employment Allocation

6.56 Since this allocation was recommended to be saved as part of the Core Strategy, some of its area has since been scheduled as part of the Scheduled Monument at Gallows Hill. The general location of this allocation remains, next to the existing Wyatt Way Industrial Estate. The only vehicular access to this employment area

should utilise Wyatt Way and Lodge Way (with the footways continued and adequate provisions for cyclists). Walking and cycling routes should be provided to access the site in a well designed way from Amelia Opei Way. Other walking and cycling routes should be provided from the north of the allocation.

Design Principles

6.57 The design principles as set out in the policy seek to ensure that new employment areas learn from the successes and mistakes of the design of existing employment estates. They have been produced in liaison with CABE expert design enablers using elements of the evidence base produced to support the TAAP, namely the Thetford Green Infrastructure Study, Thetford Transport Study and the Employment Land Review.

6.58 The criteria seeks to ensure the issues that the TAAP address are taken into account as part of the design, for example transport issues as well as setting a good image for the new employment areas and creating a good working environment for workers.

6.59 In terms of new employment proposals, continuous engineered bunding/banking should be avoided as this would be harmful to landform and landscape character. It is more desirable in landscape terms to have a bund which includes landform variation and is not continuously banked with different planting types and densities to 'foil' rather than screen development. This would provide some Breckland Character to the development.

Economy

6.60 In accordance with the NPPF this chapter includes policies that support sustainable economic growth within Breckland, through the creation of jobs and prosperity to meet the development needs of business. As a predominantly rural area, economic policies should be tailored to ensure they are flexible enough to accommodate needs, to respond rapidly to changes in economic circumstances, whilst facilitating flexible working practices.

6.61 The NPPF (paragraph 28), requires planning policies to positively support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. It has put a strong emphasis on promoting the rural economy and to support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas. It also states that the Local Plan should:

- promote diversification of agriculture and other land-use based rural businesses;
- support rural tourism; and
- promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

6.62 The performance of Breckland's economy is largely dependent on a healthy rural economy. Whilst larger scale employment space is dominated by industrial uses, and tends to be concentrated around Breckland's larger towns, the rural economy accommodates important hubs of economic activity, particularly with regards to small scale office and workshop space, as well as being a key employment sector in the District. Agricultural businesses are scattered across the rural area of the District which presents challenges for delivering balanced economic growth.

6.63 Rural business is now increasingly driven by technology. There has been significant growth and development in the agri-science sector which has been continuously driving efficiency and innovation of agriculture businesses. The overspill of high-tech research activities in this region has benefited from a wide range of rural businesses in Breckland. Small and medium scale rural enterprises represent a significant portion of the economic activities in Breckland due to the rural nature of the District. Therefore, diverse and thriving rural enterprises contribute significantly to prosperity and the creation of more opportunities for jobs across the District.

General Employment Areas

6.64 As identified on the Policies Map, there are a significant number of employment areas across the District, each of which makes a contribution towards the local economy and provides an important source of local employment.

6.65 Employment uses are traditionally defined as Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 under the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. However the diversification of the economy means that employment opportunities now emanate from a wider range of uses. These can be complementary to existing industrial uses and provide valuable supporting services such as cafes and nurseries. However, the intensification of individual uses or the cumulative impact of a number of non B1, B2, B8 uses in the same vicinity can reduce the functionality of employment areas for industrial based employers.

6.66 Proposals will be expected to complement their surroundings and not result in any unacceptable impacts on amenity or a severe impact on the local highways network. Proposals will also be encouraged to contribute towards the identified need to make provision for both small and start-up businesses.

6.67 The policy incorporates proposals for mixed use developments to address an issue raised in the Employment Growth Study, suggesting the need for a flexible approach to bring forward employment sites by allowing the development of other higher value non-B uses on part of allocated sites, in order to unlock the site's potential and fund any associated infrastructure works. Appropriate proposals to diversify and ensure the long term sustainability of existing employment areas will therefore be supported where they contain a significant employment element; contribute positively to the viability of the employment land and would not undermine, and are otherwise compatible with, existing employment uses.

Policy EC 03 General Employment Areas

Sites that are identified as General Employment Areas on the Policies Map will be protected for employment use. Proposals to accommodate new employment development (B1, B2 and B8 uses) will be permitted on General Employment Areas where the following criteria apply:

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

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

- Incorporate a significant employment element;
- Are compatible with existing employment uses;
- Support the improvement of an employment area that is in need of upgrading;
- Do not constrain the operations of adjoining businesses; and
- Are capable of reinstatement for business and industrial use.

Employment Development Outside of General Employment Areas

6.68 The majority of employment development will be provided for in the strategic employment allocations outlined in Policy EC 01 and on established employment areas as outlined in Policy EC 03. 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. It is recognised that the changes made over recent years to the permitted development rights for the change of use of agricultural buildings are relevant to the operation of this policy (see Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015).

6.69 Proposals for the expansion of existing rural businesses, 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 generally be supported. The demonstration of sustainability advantages should include evidence 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.

6.70 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.

6.71 In order to ensure that business development in the rural areas is sustainable, 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. Design and Access Statements accompanying replacement rural buildings for business use should address criteria (d) to (f) inclusive and the requirements of planning policy relating to design, amenity and accessibility.

6.72 Proposals for employment development within close proximity to Breckland SPA will be restricted and assessed in accordance with Policies ENV 02 and ENV 03.

Policy EC 04 Employment Development Outside General Employment Areas

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

- a. It is demonstrated that there are no other suitable sites available on identified or allocated employment sites; and/or
- b. There are particular reasons for the development not being located on an established or allocated employment site including:
 - 1. The expansion of an existing business;
 - 2. 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
 - 3. 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 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 Council 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.

Retail & Town Centres

6.73 An objective of the Local Plan is to promote the vitality and viability of town centres, including the night time economy, and support the retention of existing rural services. Policies in the Local Plan must also accord with the NPPF which requires LPAs to use up to date evidence to assess needs for retail floorspace, including both the qualitative and quantitative needs over the plan period. The scale of some retail proposals outside town centres has the ability to affect the vitality and viability of town centres, divert trade away from these areas affecting customer choice and potentially committed, existing and planned private investment in centres. In order to understand the potential effects on a town centre from an out of town retail proposal the NPPF allows LPAs to propose locally set floorspace thresholds above which any application must provide an impact assessment. A sequential test should also be applied to applications that are not in the designated town centre.

Retail Hierarchy

6.74 National policy requires that development plans establish a hierarchy of centres in the District, and that new development is proportionate with the position of the centre in the retail hierarchy. The Local Plan encourages vibrant town centres in the District, which attract people and investment so as to maintain and develop the town centres for residents, businesses and visitors. The policy seeks to underpin the town centre first approach, ensuring that the District's town centres are the main focus for retail and leisure development and are not undermined by inappropriate out of centre ad-hoc development. It also seeks to support longer term regeneration strategies such as the Riverside regeneration scheme at Thetford and provide the foundations for growth and investment and the development of Council action plans such as the emerging "Open for Business" Strategy.

6.75 The key settlements, market towns and local service centres of the District consist of a range of centres of different sizes and characteristics. The vitality of all these is seen as essential for economic prosperity and through linked trips within town centres reduce carbon emissions as well as providing the potential to support sustainable transport initiatives. The 2014 Retail Study recommended that the Local Plan policies should continue to seek to maintain and enhance the existing shopping hierarchy. The study concluded that Thetford and Dereham town centres should be classified as main centres. Thetford as a key centre for development and change and Dereham as the main administrative centre serving a wide hinterland of mid Norfolk. The remaining centres of Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton were identified as generally being at the same level of provision and therefore should be classed as such.

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

Additional Retail Floor Space

6.77 National guidance advises that Local Plans should identify the scale of need for main town centre uses.

6.78 In 2017, the Council commissioned an addendum to the 2014 Retail Study to reassess the quantitative scope for new retail and food and beverage floorspace in Breckland up until 2036. It identified that, in terms of convenience retail floorspace, there was some potential capacity over and above planned commitments in the District. However, the provision should be carefully directed. Swaffham had an over provision of convenience floorspace for the foreseeable future; Watton had very limited capacity to support new development, whilst Attleborough, Dereham and Thetford all had some limited capacity once commitments are taken into consideration. There is also limited capacity indicated for the remaining District outside of the 5 main centres.

6.79 In terms of comparison goods Breckland's market share of expenditure is estimated at less than 43% and there are high levels of "leakage" outside of the District to higher order centres. The 2017 Addendum reinforces this finding with levels of leakage from the market town catchment areas to outside of the District ranging from 65% within Attleborough to 42.5% in Watton.

6.80 In the face of increasing competition from nearby higher order centres the 2014 Retail Study concluded that it would be appropriate and realistic to plan to maintain market shares across the District whilst maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centres.

Table 6.3 Summary of Comparison and Convenience Floorspace Projections 2017-2036

Settlement	Net Convenience Retail Floorspace sq m	Net Comparison Floorspace sq m	Gross Food and Beverage Floorspace sq m
Thetford	862	3669	925
Dereham	1950	5220	849
Attleborough	1025	1242	820
Swaffham	0	804	220
Watton	491	1172	181
Other Breckland	141	92	506
Total	2783	12199	3502

Impact Assessment Thresholds

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

Town Centre Boundaries

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

6.83 Evidence suggests that in some centres policies that seek to maintain a proportion of A1 use – retail within the primary and secondary shopping frontages are no longer relevant. As town centres evolve the role of policy must change to support the vitality and viability of the centre by supporting the delivery of a greater range of services. Changes in recent years to the General Permitted Development Order, (GDPO) also have the potential to impact on the retail composition of the high street. Current measures allow for greater flexibility for changes of use e.g Class A uses to C3 - residential use and Class A1 - retail shops to A2 use - financial services. It is important to recognise that the town centres in Breckland act as more than just a retail role but also act as wider service centres for their rural hinterlands. Although it is important to seek to maintain and improve the centres retail offer, policies that seek to retain an unreasonable high proportion of shops may prevent other essential services from being introduced and could prevent the expansion / evolution of the centre. The Local Plan therefore seeks to support retail development by directing it to the Primary Shopping areas in a flexible manner.

Local Centres and Future Provision in the Proposed Urban Extensions

6.84 Local centres are important in providing for daily needs without having to travel to larger, higher order centres. In Breckland they can serve a wider rural community than the local service centre they are located in. It is important that these centres are supported and provision enhanced. The retention of rural shops and community facilities, and the provision of new facilities at an appropriate scale to the settlement, will be supported.

6.85 Two large scale urban extensions are envisaged over the life time of the Local Plan and it is important to plan for the local needs of these developments. The 2014 Retail Study advised that provision of local shopping facilities would be appropriate in these developments at the appropriate scale to ensure that residents have access to day to day shops and services within walking distance of their home. It is essential, however, to ensure that any local centre remains commercially viable and capable of delivery.

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

Policy EC 05 Town Centre and Retail Strategy

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

Town	Hierarchy	Convenience Requirement (net sq m)	Comparison Requirement (net sq m)	Gross Food and Beverage Floorspace sq m
Thetford	Key Centre for development and change	862	3669	925
Dereham	Main Town Centre for administration	1950	5220	849
Attleborough	Medium Town Centres	1025	1242	820
Swaffham		0	804	220
Watton		491	1172	181

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

An impact assessment for retail, leisure and/or office schemes will be required on schemes of 1,000 sq m gross and over in Thetford and Dereham and 500 sq m gross and over in Attleborough, Swaffham and Watton. Support will also be dependent on how it reflects need as identified in the 2014 retail study and other evidence. Site selection for retail and other town centre functions should follow the sequential test and prevailing national policies and guidance.

The following definitions apply to the District's retail areas, as shown on the policies maps:

- Town Centre – Defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area.
- Primary Shopping Area – Defined area where retail development is concentrated, (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are contiguous and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).
- Primary Frontage – Primary frontages are areas of mainly shops (Use Class A1).
- Secondary Frontage – Secondary frontage provides greater opportunities for a diversity of uses.

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

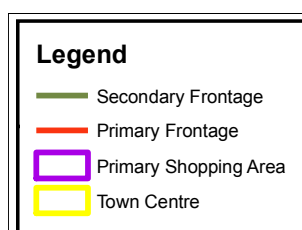
The retail role of local service centres will be maintained. The importance of rural shops and facilities will be a material consideration in any application that would result in their loss. Proposals that seek to preserve and enhance the settlement's vitality and viability, or implement environmental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

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

In addition, the Local Plan town centre and retail strategy seeks to:

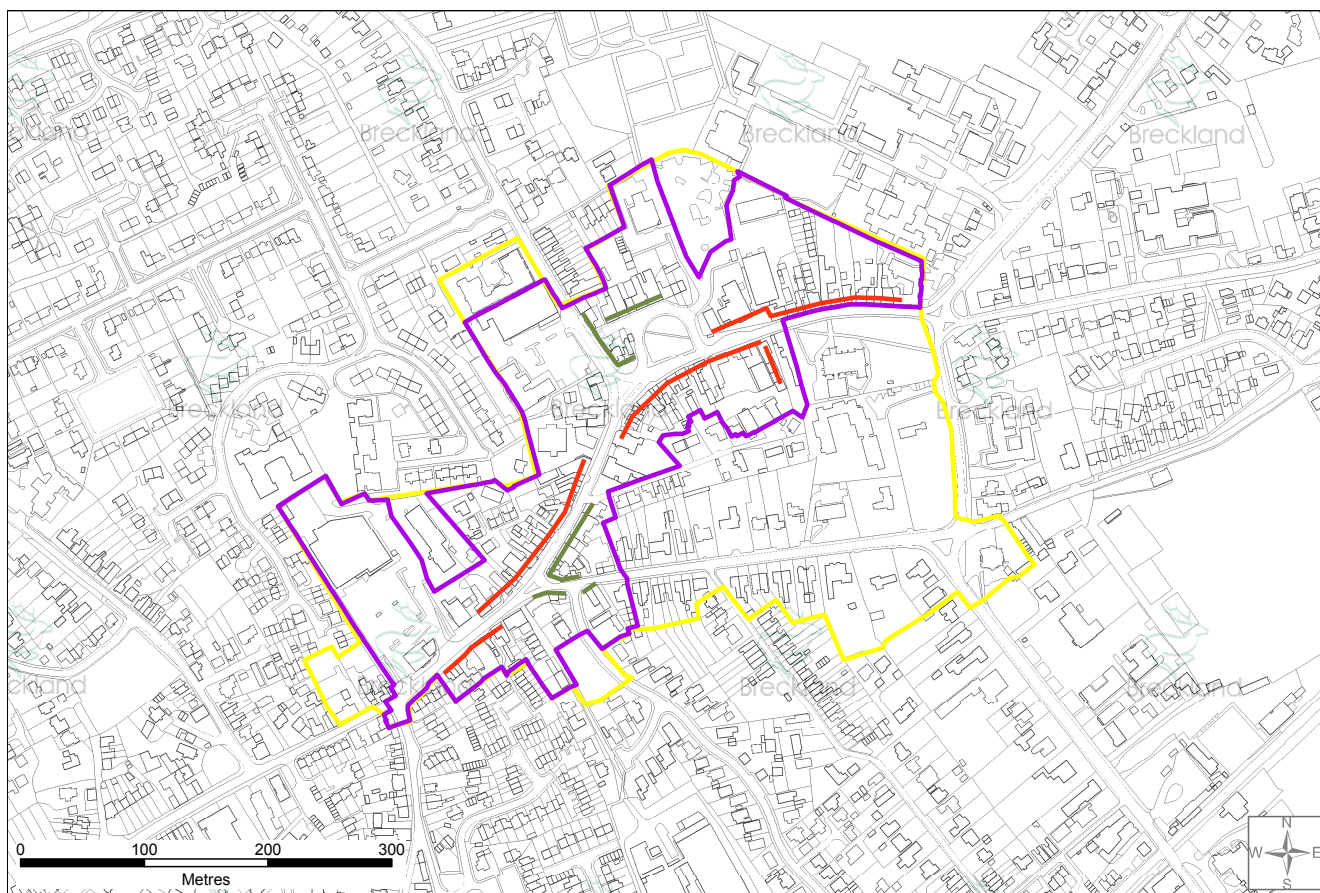
- Support the diversity of main town centre uses in order to enhance their continued vitality and viability with regard to retail, business, cultural and leisure services;
- Allow the appropriate provision (in line with needs) of larger retail units (over 200 sq m) in town centres through the amalgamation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

Figure 6.2 Key to Town Centre Maps



Attleborough

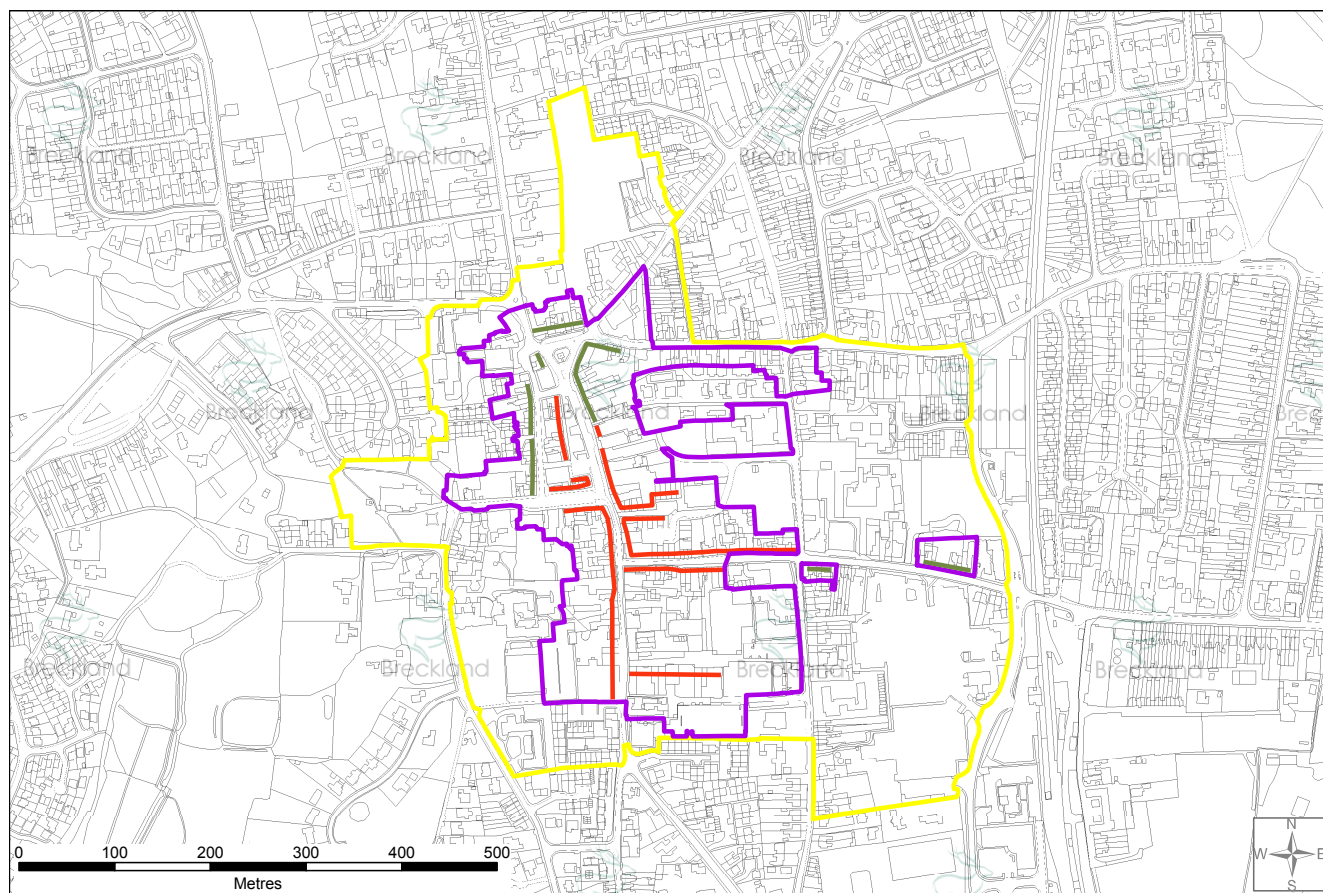
Map 6.4 Attleborough Town Centre Boundary



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Dereham

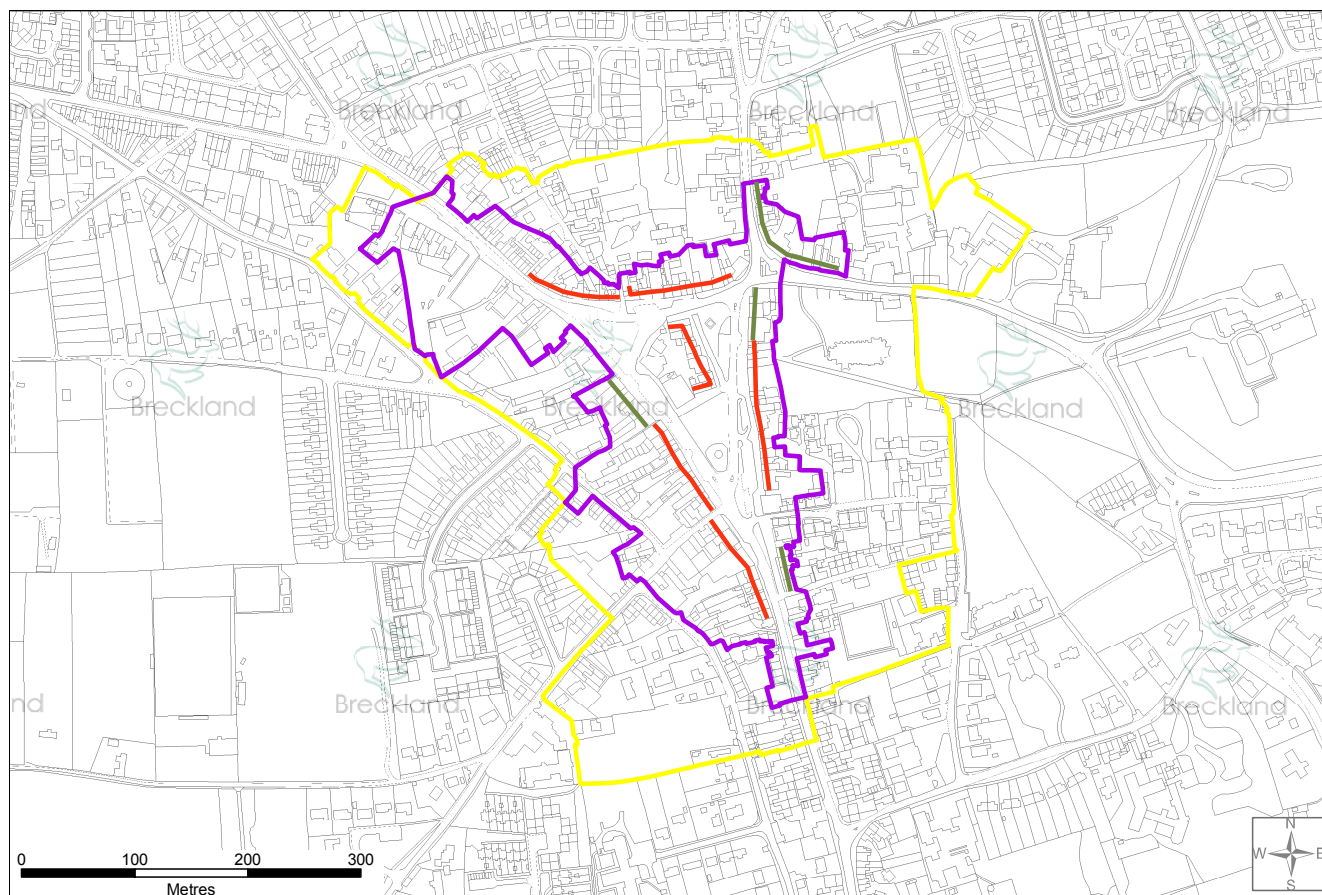
Map 6.5 Dereham Town Centre Boundary



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Swaffham

Map 6.6 Swaffham Town Centre Boundary

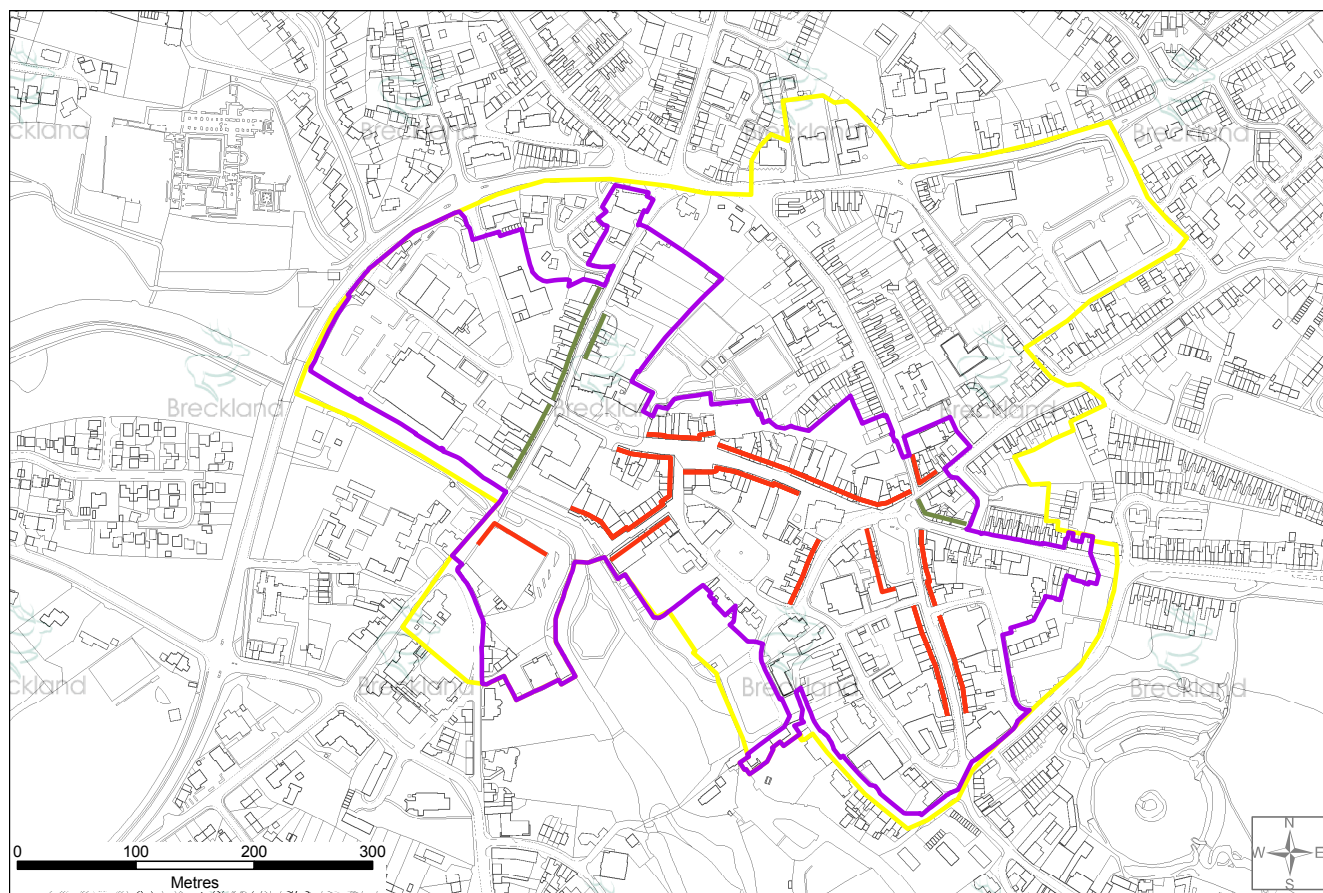


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Thetford

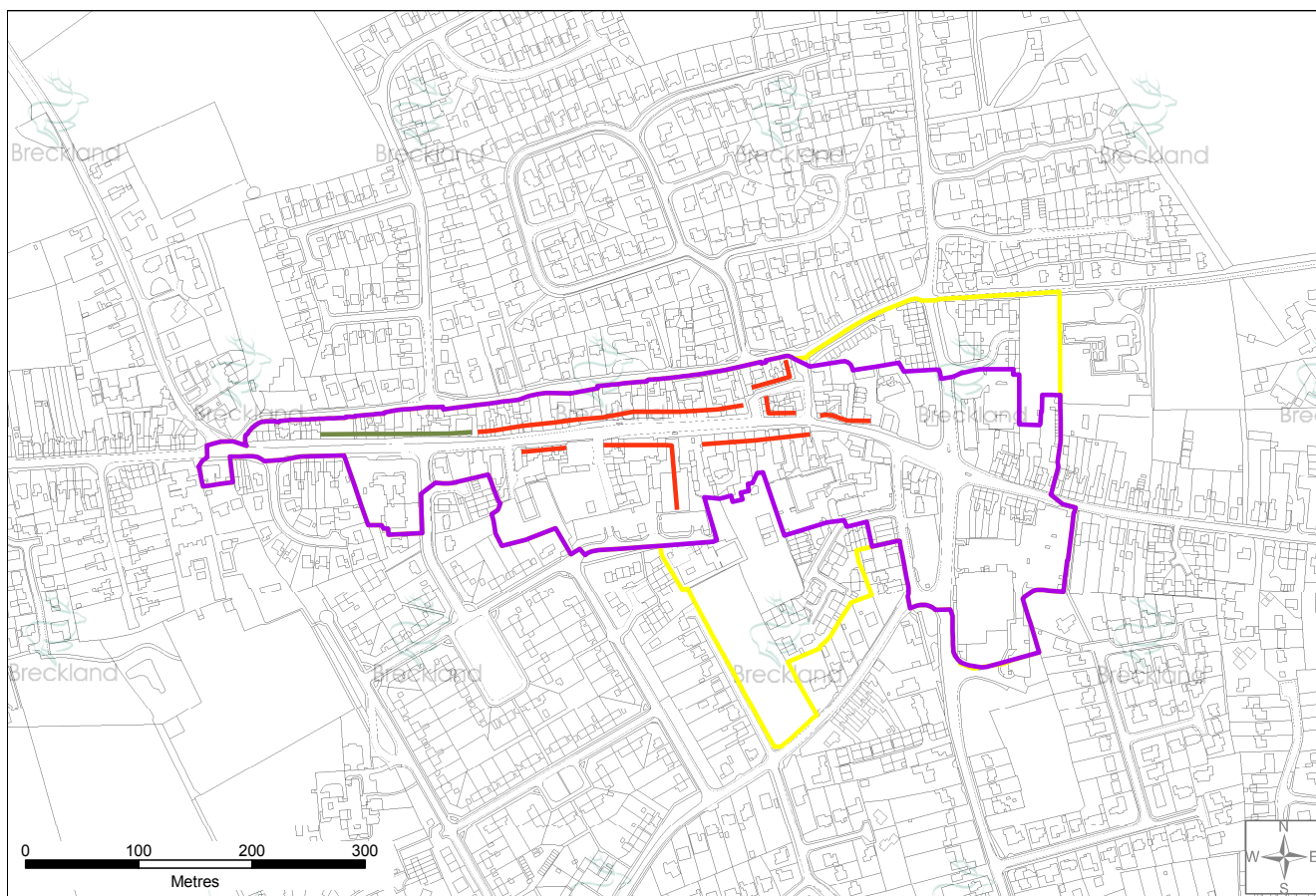
Map 6.7 Thetford Town Centre Boundary



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Watton

Map 6.8 Watton Town Centre Boundary



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Farm Diversification

6.87 This policy reflects the various changes in national planning policy with respect to agricultural development in the countryside (see Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015).

6.88 In order to ensure that agricultural businesses are sustainable and competitive, well-conceived proposals relating to the diversification of farm businesses will be supported where they can help ensure the long-term viability of existing farm businesses and provide rural employment opportunities.

6.89 A wide range of types of development may be appropriate for diversification including farm shops, leisure and recreation uses, tourism related development, sporting activities and equestrian uses. A careful balance is however required to ensure that scale and character of farm diversification proposals do not conflict with wider countryside objectives, introduce new amenity concerns or have a negative impact on the natural environment or the highways network.

6.90 Existing buildings should be re-used, where possible, to provide any accommodation needed in association with alternative uses.

Policy EC 06 Farm Diversification

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

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

Visitor Economy - Tourism

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

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

6.92 Tourism is a growing part of the local economy. However, if not properly managed, it could have adverse impacts on the District's environment and the daily life of local people. The challenge is to enable and manage sustainable tourism, which will safeguard the countryside, heritage and culture for future generations while providing benefits to the local economy.

6.93 Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses will be supported where these respect the character of the countryside. The Council will also support the provision and expansion of tourist /visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres.

6.94 The policy recognises the valuable contribution that tourist related industries make to the local economy. The provision of visitor accommodation through new-build, conversion or expansion will be supported in appropriate locations. Proposals will be supported in line with the development hierarchy and in the rural area should be in accordance with the proposed rural policies in this Plan including the housing policies HOU 04 and HOU 05. Proposals for tourism development that may have an effect on Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation importance such as the Breckland SPA, the River Wensum and the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, will have to meet the proposed environmental policies, covering Sites of European, National & Local Nature Conservation, notably ENV 02 and ENV 03. Camping and caravan sites are considered as tourism development not outdoor recreation.

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

Policy EC 07 Tourism Related Development

The creation, enhancement and expansion of tourism attractions, and tourism infrastructure will be supported in accordance with the development strategy where this would enhance the existing tourism offer, benefit the local economy and be of a suitable scale and type for its location.

Development of an appropriate scale should be located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact. Where a proposal is not readily accessible by public transport, then it will be supported where it relies on a specific geographical resource or contributions are made to improve accessibility.

Leisure, tourism and cultural development proposals and visitor accommodation attracting a significant number of visitors should be located within, or be accessible to, the five market towns. Smaller development proposals should be of a suitable scale and type to protect the character of the townscape and landscape within which they are situated.

Development proposals will be assessed against the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- Support the vitality and enhance the role of the market towns as tourist and leisure destinations through encouraging greater visitor numbers;
- Bring regeneration benefits, particularly through the redevelopment of brownfield land;
- Are accessible by sustainable modes of transport and / or are in close proximity to existing visitor attractions;
- Offer the potential to improve access to rights of way, green infrastructure; and
- Support agricultural diversification of an appropriate scale and type in rural areas, and would support the continued viability of rural businesses.

Particular emphasis is placed on improving the quality of existing visitor accommodation / attractions and the need to broaden the range of accommodation and attractions provided. Camping and caravan sites will be supported where there is an unmet need. Proposals should be small in scale to limit impact on landscape and amenity and utilise, or be well related to, existing rural buildings.

Advertising and Signage

6.96 The design of advertisements and signage can have a great impact on the character or appearance of an individual building or surrounding area. This is particularly the case in the main settlements of the District where the majority of businesses are located. Sensitive design can ensure that proposed advertising and signage does not harm the character of an area. New or altered signs and advertisements should be designed to respect the building of which they are part as well as any adjoining shopfronts and the general street scene.

6.97 To prevent inappropriate displays, the Council will seek to ensure that advertisements are of an appropriate scale and size, are well designed and are sympathetic to both the building on which they are to be displayed and the general characteristics of the locality. Standardised or corporate displays that have no regard to the character of the building on which they are to be displayed or the general characteristics of the locality will be unlikely to be acceptable.

Policy EC 08 Advertising and Signs

Advertisements and signs (illuminated and non-illuminated) should be sensitively designed and located having regard to the character of the building on which they are to be displayed and/or the general characteristics of the locality. The size, scale, materials, colour scheme and any means of illumination selected should be appropriate to the local area and in areas of historic value, such as conservation areas, particular regard should be had to any impact of proposals on the historic character of the frontage. Proposals which obscure features of architectural or historical interest, or are uncharacteristic of a building's design, will not be permitted.

7 Communities

Design

7.1 The Council must plan for growth, and it is therefore important that top priority is placed on high quality design when considering planning applications for new development. In doing so the objective is to improve the District's built environment and protect its distinctive character. A full survey and record of the District's character, The Breckland Characterisation Study, was completed in 2017 providing an understanding of character and context, and variation across the different settlements across the District, informing the planning, development and design process.

7.2 The Council believes that good quality development is based on a clear understanding of the site and its context. A new building cannot be divorced from its surroundings, nor can a new group of buildings be divorced from their surroundings or their relationship to each other. Development should have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. Design-led developments that respond to site characteristics and local context make the greatest contribution to improving the built environment and in areas of poor or ill-defined character development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area.

7.3 Development should be designed so that it can be adapted to meet changing social, economic or technological conditions. 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.

7.4 Development should complement the natural landscape, natural features and built form that surrounds it. In considering development proposals consideration will be given to the shape and configuration of a building or buildings, and its 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.

7.5 Consideration will be given to the density of buildings in a particular area and the landscape/townscape effect that any increase in density would bring. The real or perceived heights and scales of buildings relative to each other and their surroundings will be an important consideration, as will the relationship of the density, scale and height. Subordination will be a key consideration when determining proposals for extensions. The scale and proportion of an addition should be subservient to the host building.

7.6 The way that a building, or group of buildings are laid out on a site can have a profound effect on their appearance and how they are used. When considering new development regard will be had as 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.

7.7 The space that surrounds, and is in between, buildings can be just as important as the buildings themselves. Therefore, for all new developments consideration will be given to the incorporation, preservation and enhancement of natural features on a site. Boundary treatments should be complementary to the built design and be incorporated such as to enhance the design of development. Areas of enclosure should be logically set out and support the practical functionality of an area.

7.8 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 therefore be given to how the detailing and materials used in a particular development gives expression to an overall design. Detailing and materials help the cohesiveness of a development, with particular consideration to the junctions of walls, roofs and fenestration. Therefore, detailing and materials should be a key part of the building design, stemming directly from the functional needs of the building, and not be used as an afterthought to add decoration to an otherwise bland design.

7.9 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 alongside the other principles of good design.

Policy COM 01 - Design

New development should be designed to the highest possible standards. All new development must achieve a specification of high architectural, urban and landscape design quality and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The Council will promote high quality design in the District by requiring that the design of new development meets the following criteria:

- a. Preserves or enhances the special character of the historic environment, and complements the district's heritage assets, in accordance with policy ENV 07 & ENV 08;
- b. Integrates to a high degree of compatibility with the surrounding area, in terms of: layout, form, style, massing, scale, density, orientation, materials, and design, in order to reinforce the positive and distinctive local character and amenity as described in the Breckland Historic Characterisation Study (2017);
- c. Incorporates sustainable design and durable construction, observing best practice in energy efficiency and climate change mitigation, and is accessible and adaptable to different activities and land uses and the changing needs of all, including disabled and older people;
- d. Consists of high quality details and materials that respects or improves local character;
- e. Responds appropriately to, and is completely integrated with, the existing layout of buildings, surrounding streets, open spaces and patterns of development. The layout of new development should create direct, recognisable, through routes that improve legibility and movement through places, and positively contribute to street frontages;
- f. Ensures that high quality hard and soft landscaping is integral to layout and design, and opportunities to introduce green urban design solutions are optimised. Specifically, development proposals should respond to: i) landform; ii) levels, slopes and the fall from the ground; iii) trees on and close to the site; iv) natural boundary features; v) the biodiversity of the site and its context; and vi) maximise the use of permeable surfaces;
- g. Is designed to reduce opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour, creating safe, secure and accessible environments;
- h. Provides an appropriate level of amenity for buildings, as outlined in HOU 06;
- i. Provides high standards of accommodation for housing in terms of size, quality and arrangement of internal space, external private and external communal amenity space, and access to usable open space;
- j. Creates clear distinctions between private and public space, and integrates building services equipment and facilities in a well-planned manner;
- k. Requires development to provide appropriate facilities for refuse, recycling and servicing;
- l. Preserves key and important views, as illustrated in the Breckland Historic Characterisation Study (2017);
- m. Does not compromise highway safety, enabling safe access for vehicles and for walking and cycling;
- n. Provides adequate parking as outlined in TR 01 and consideration of safe storage for bicycles; and

- 7
- o. Development should be designed to reduce the impact on local air quality, particularly from road traffic, especially in those areas in or likely to impact on, areas identified as 'at risk' of exceeding air quality objectives.

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

All development proposals should respond to current best practice and demonstrate that they are in general conformity with the design principles set out in established urban design guidance, any subsequently produced design guidance Supplementary Planning Document adopted by the Council or other design guidance endorsed by the Council and/or through neighbourhood planning.

In some cases the Council will request the involvement of a developer funded Design Review.

Healthy Lifestyles

7.10 Improving the health and well being of the community is a priority of Breckland Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and a key objective of this Plan. Links between planning and health are apparent throughout the NPPF and accompanying National Planning Practice Guidance; stipulating that LPAs should involve all sections of the community in ensuring health and wellbeing and ensure that health infrastructure is considered in local and neighbourhood plans as well as in decision making.

7.11 The Local Plan seeks to improve the health and wellbeing for all by:

- Ensuring that all development is sustainable, making prudent use of resources, so as not to compromise the wellbeing of future generations;
- Providing incentives for young people who have left the area to return – namely facilitating employment provision, training opportunities and a good spread of housing that meets their needs;
- Protecting and enhancing existing social and community infrastructure – such as education, health, cultural and leisure facilities – to improve community wellbeing in line with an understanding of predicted future needs and current gaps in infrastructure;
- Working with partners to deliver sport and recreation schemes, developing and improving community facilities such as recreational areas and multi use games areas for young people and creating opportunities for healthier lifestyles;
- Safeguarding and enhancing green infrastructure and providing a comprehensive network of high quality open spaces such as parks and gardens, and natural green spaces; and
- Supporting independent living for older and disabled people.

7.12 Health is influenced by social, economic and environmental conditions and planning policies have a significant role to play in creating the conditions for improving health. Accordingly, proposals for development will be screened to ensure they contribute to improved health outcomes for all and that negative effects are avoided. Development proposals can support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help create healthy living environments which should, where possible, include making physical activity easy to access and create places and spaces to meet, to support community engagement and social capital.

7.13 The Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2017) highlighted that the population in the age band 5-54, the most active population for participation in sport and physical activity, is projected to increase by 1.9% over the 2016-2031 period. However, rates of adult participation across all activities has decreased from 32.7% of all adults participating at least once a week in 2006 to 29.8% in 2016. The study also finds that over 50% of the adult population in Breckland did not participate in any sport or physical activity in 2016.

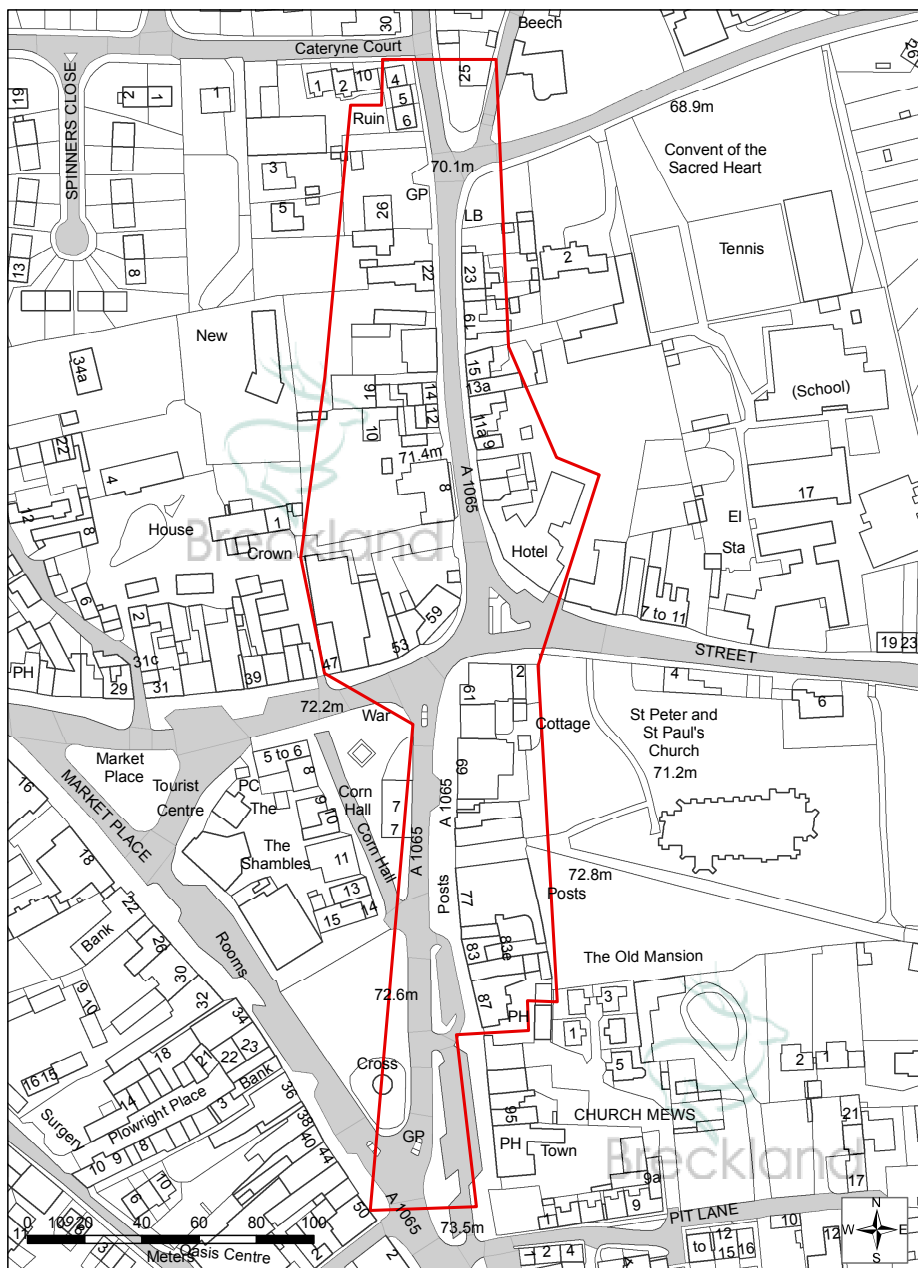
7.14 The Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2017) sets out the need to protect, enhance and provide facilities in the market towns within Breckland. The study examined the supply (quantity, quality, accessibility and capacity of provision) and demand (profiles of demographics, current and likely future sport participation and latent demand) of all facilities types within the District in order to 'build a picture' of the provision within the District and provide recommendations going forward to 2031.

7.15 To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution including cumulative effects of pollution on health, the NPPF states (paragraph 120), that the "potential sensitivity of an area or proposed development adverse effects from pollution, should be taken into account." Paragraph 124 adds, "that planning polices should sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objections for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas is consistent with the local air action plan."

7.16 Breckland currently has 1 Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) designated on the 1st of May 2017:

- Swaffham: A1065 running through Swaffham between Whitecross Road to the south and Sporle Road to the north (Map 7.1)

Map 7.1 Swaffham AQMA



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7.17 Air Quality within the District is updated annually in the Council's Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR). This document provides an annual update of areas that are considered to be AQMAs or 'at risk'.

Policy COM 02 Healthy Lifestyles

All new development (excluding minor applications) will be expected to:

- demonstrate that appropriate steps have been taken through its design and construction and implementation to avoid or mitigate potential negative effects on the health of the population;
- facilitate enhanced health and well being through the provision of conditions supportive of good physical and mental health (such as enabling physical activity); and
- reduce, where possible, disparities in health between different parts of Breckland by addressing detrimental environmental social and economic conditions.

Development in Air Quality Management Areas and those areas identified as affecting or likely to affect the control of relevant pollutants within the Air Quality Management Area, should be consistent with the local air quality action plan.

Developers will be expected to complete and submit the following with planning applications:

- i. Health Impact Assessment for large and complex proposals;
- ii. A Healthy Urban Planning Checklist for development of 5 dwellings/1,000m² non residential or more.
- iii. An assessment of the likely impact of the development on air quality, for development of 5 dwellings/1,000m² non-residential or more, in or impacting on areas identified as 'at risk' of exceeding air quality objectives.

All proposals relating to the provision, loss or redevelopment of Indoor Sports Facilities will have regard to the key findings and recommendations of the Indoor Sport and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2017).

7.18 Major development will be subject to the most comprehensive screening which, in the case of particularly large complex development and those that have clear health implications, may take the form of a formal Health Impact Assessment (whether or not such an application also requires an EIA). In such cases the developer will be required to commission such an assessment from an independent and reputable body.

7.19 Health Impact Assessment is a well-established and widely used range of techniques. The purpose of HIA is essentially to systematically check that a policy or project will not have unforeseen and negative effects. Approaches to HIA may range from a quantitative emphasis, relying heavily on epidemiological analysis ⁽³⁾ to a qualitative analysis, drawing on community or stakeholder perceptions, or a combination. The methodology should be agreed with the NHS Norfolk/NCC Public Health at an early stage.

Protection of Amenity

7.20 A core planning principle identified in the NPPF (at paragraph 17) is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

7.21 The following policy, applying to all forms of development within the District including changes of use, taken together with policy COM 01, seeks to ensure a high-quality design and quality of life for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. This policy sets out relevant considerations for assessing the effects of proposals relating to amenity issues.

3 Epidemiology studies the causes, distribution and control of diseases in populations

7.22 The development of land and buildings presents the opportunity to provide improvements to the social and economic well-being of everyone living, working or visiting the District. The protection of the amenities of the District is fundamental to the economic and social well-being of the District. If Breckland is to thrive in the region it must be promoted as an attractive place to work as well as live; the District's environmental and cultural assets are key to this promotion.

7.23 For the purposes of this policy, 'amenity' is defined as those desirable features of a place that ought to be protected or enhanced in the public interest. For example, residential amenity includes the protection of adequate levels of sunlight/daylight, access, privacy, outlook, private open space, as well as safeguarding from unacceptable noise and disturbance (including traffic), smell, dust, insects and light pollution from, for example, commercial or agricultural uses etc.

7.24 The potential impact of development needs to be considered both on an individual as well as cumulative basis. The continuance of existing businesses should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on it because of the introduction of new and incompatible land uses. Such matters will be an important planning consideration in relation to amenity expectations.

Policy COM 03 Protection of Amenity

For all new development consideration will need to be given to general amenity impact issues, especially residential amenity. Development will not be permitted which causes unacceptable effects on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants, or does not provide for adequate levels of amenity for future occupants. In assessing the impact of development on the living conditions of occupants, regard will be had to the following amenity considerations:

1. The provision of adequate areas of usable and secluded private amenity space for the occupiers of existing and proposed dwellings, in keeping with the character of the immediate surrounding area;
2. Overlooking of windows of habitable rooms and private amenity space;
3. Overbearing impact/visual dominance;
4. Overshadowing of private amenity space;
5. Loss of daylight and/or sunlight to existing windows of habitable rooms;
6. Odour, noise, vibration or other forms of nuisance such as artificial light pollution, insects and vermin; and
7. Other forms of pollution (including contaminated land, dust, air pollution, for example the emission of particulates etc).

Community Facilities

7.25 The Local Plan aims to support thriving rural communities whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Whilst the delivery of new development - in particular housing - will be directed to the most sustainable locations in line with the locational strategy, there is a need to support the settlement hierarchy, rural economy and sustainable communities through the retention and development of local services and community facilities, such as village halls, schools, rural shops and public houses.

7.26 For the purposes of this policy community facilities are defined as:

- local shops;
- meeting places;
- indoor and outdoor sports venues;

- recreation/play areas;
- cultural buildings;
- public houses;
- petrol filling stations; and
- places of worship.

7.27 These, and the provision of new facilities at an appropriate scale to the settlement, will be supported.

7.28 The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. Planning policies and decisions should:

- Plan positively and promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings and places of worship;
- Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and
- Support sustainable growth of rural businesses, diversification of agricultural businesses and rural tourism and leisure developments.

7.29 It is recognised that local shops, and other community facilities such as pubs, post offices, petrol filling stations and sports and leisure facilities perform a valuable role in providing for daily needs in local communities across Breckland, not only reducing the need to travel for convenience goods shopping, but helping to maintain a sense of place and uniqueness for Breckland's rural communities. The loss of a valued local community facility or service can significantly reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs and also have an adverse impact on the wellbeing and social interaction of that community.

7.30 Accessibility to facilities and services remains a key issue for many communities in the District. In order to reduce the need to travel to access everyday facilities and to maintain sustainable communities, the Council supports the provision and retention of community facilities as reflected through the proposed hierarchy of centres.

7.31 The strategic economic policy direction regarding the retail hierarchy seeks to maintain and support the provision in smaller villages serving more localised rural needs. The policy approach being to retain essential facilities especially where they are the only such facility within a village. Local retail provision will be supported at a scale proportionate to the existing size and catchment but not to a level which would undermine similar provision in neighbouring villages. Other community facilities such as pubs, village halls, libraries, places of worship and schools also play a vital role in ensuring Breckland is a great place to live, work, learn and visit.

7.32 Proposals which would result in the loss of a community facility must demonstrate that efforts have been made to retain the facility and that opportunities for conversion to alternative community uses have also been explored. Supporting information should typically include:

- Marketing information such as the length of time for sale and the asking price;
- Details of the level of interest generated and any offers received;
- Consultation with, and level of interest from, the local community / service providers on a possible alternative community use;
- Whether there is scope for the multi-use of buildings or innovative ways of combining a range of services and facilities on one site.

7.33 In addition, under the Localism Act 2011, local communities can propose to add to the local register an asset of community value. Neighbourhood Plans are also well placed to highlight the valuable role of local centres and community facilities and can identify deficiencies in the provision of community facilities and help to safeguard existing ones.

7.34 In considering proposals that would result in the loss of local community facilities, the Council will take into account what other facilities and services are available locally. Where proposals relate to the conversion of shops and other facilities, the retention of elements which would allow a range of future uses, such as separate upper floor access should be considered where practical.

Policy COM 04 Community Facilities

Proposals for the provision and retention of community facilities will be supported.

The creation, enhancement and expansion of community facilities will be supported in accordance with the development strategy where this would enhance the existing offer, benefit the local economy and be of a suitable scale and type for its location and in locations in close proximity to the area that they will serve.

Proposals, including change of use (outside permitted development rights), which result in the loss of local community buildings (most recently used for this purpose where the use has ceased), will not be permitted unless:

- It can be demonstrated that there is no local need for the facility or that its continuing function is no longer viable following appropriate marketing; and
- An equivalent facility in terms of quality is provided to serve the same community in an accessible location or;
- An appropriate alternative community facility to meet local needs is not required or likely to be viable, as demonstrated by evidence submitted by the applicant.

Where new development increases the demand for community facilities, the Council may require a developer contribution to improve the qualitative and quantitative offer of the existing facilities.

8 Infrastructure and Delivery

Telecommunications

8.1 Modern and effective telecommunications systems are essential for the continuing development of the economy and the planning system has an important role in facilitating the improvement and expansion of the telecommunications network. However, whilst there are considerable economic and social benefits associated with the development of telecommunication infrastructure, it is important that such development does not have a significant adverse impact on amenity or environmental quality. Therefore, the Council will seek to ensure that acceptable provision can be made for telecommunications development, whilst ensuring that any adverse impacts associated with development are minimised.

8.2 The visual impact of telecommunications development is a particularly important consideration. When seeking approval for the installation of new telecommunications equipment, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable measures to minimise the visual impact of the proposed development on the local environment. In particular, the design and siting of installations should be informed by the context of the wider locality, including the careful consideration of the height, scale, siting, colours and materials to be used. Installations should also be sited where they would not impede roadside visibility splays and sight lines. Any building-mounted installation should also be sensitively designed so that the architectural quality and character of the building is not compromised.

8.3 The provision of suitable broadband infrastructure can be an important factor which helps attract investment to the District and facilitates home working. The need for SuperFast broadband is a key issue for Breckland and more widely Norfolk. Therefore, proposals to improve broadband speeds and coverage will be expected and supported.

8.4 Some telecommunications development benefits from permitted development rights under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order 1995, (as amended). Where the development is subject to the prior approval procedure, prior approval will be required by the Council where there is considered to be a significant visual or other impact in terms of the siting and appearance of the development.

Policy INF 01 Telecommunications

The Council will support proposals for the provision and improvement of telecommunications infrastructure provided that:

- The installation and any associated apparatus is sited and designed to avoid any unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity, highway safety and the character and appearance of the area where it would be sited;
- Any building-mounted installations would not have an unduly detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the building; and
- It has been demonstrated that there are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the area that would not result in a greater visual impact.

The Council expects proposals for residential and business development to include sufficient on-site SuperFast and UltraFast broadband infrastructure to enable connectivity to wider networks.

Developer Contributions

8.5 To deliver the Spatial Strategy it will be necessary to direct development to locations where, in order to achieve the wider sustainability advantages of the Strategy, it is known that existing infrastructure will need to be upgraded to meet the needs of all the new development. This is especially important when considering the sustainable urban extensions to Thetford and Attleborough, the growth for Dereham and strategic employment provision for Snetterton and Thetford Enterprise Park.

8.6 The Council, in conjunction with partners has prepared an Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) to identify infrastructure needs and priorities and address any potential funding shortfalls. The principal focus of the IDP is the planned growth along the A11 corridor reflecting the spatial strategy and particular circumstances and challenges identified through evidence gathering.

8.7 The provision of infrastructure is a prerequisite of all development and the Council will make best use of planning conditions and contributions as a means of providing infrastructure and enhancing facilities and services.

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

8.9 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.

8.10 The design of infrastructure through partnership, working with developers and infrastructure providers should mitigate any significant adverse impact on the landscape and ecologically sensitive areas within Breckland and ensure, where possible, benefits to the economic and social wellbeing of the local community.

8.11 On-site infrastructure will be secured based on the needs of each proposal and delivered directly by the developer, or through financial contributions and/or land. Off-site infrastructure will be secured through developer contributions. The Council will continue to seek developer contributions which, as appropriate, may for example include the following:

- Utilities;
- Transport infrastructure (including walking, cycling and public transport/community transport initiatives);
- Affordable Housing;
- Community Infrastructure (including education, libraries, town and village halls, police and fire service provision);
- Open Space;
- Green Infrastructure;
- Biodiversity management mitigation and management;
- Landscaping (including street furniture and lighting);
- Flood Defences;

- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); and
- Waste Management/recycling and composting facilities.

8.12 This list of infrastructure examples is meant as indicative only and should, therefore, not be viewed as being exhaustive.

8.13 Planning obligations are restricted in terms of 'pooling' contributions to no more than five obligations for the same infrastructure project, or type of infrastructure. In calculating the amount of developer contributions payable, account will be taken of the total quantum of development, including any previously implemented permissions.

Policy INF 02 Developer Contributions

The Council will secure site specific developer contributions in order to properly service, manage and mitigate the impact of development which:

1. Directly related to the development, is necessary to make the development acceptable and fairly and reasonably relate in scale and kind; and
2. Cannot be secured by planning conditions.

Details of significant infrastructure requirements are identified within the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Developer contributions will be required to secure infrastructure which is necessary to ensure:

1. The delivery of affordable housing;
2. The delivery of community infrastructure (including education, libraries, town and village halls, police and fire service provision);
3. The delivery and ongoing maintenance of formal and informal open space including allotments, sport and recreation, play space or other facilities (or financial contribution) required directly to serve the development and contribute to local community facilities;
4. Pedestrian and highway safety improvements necessary to secure satisfactory access to the development;
5. A range of sustainable modes of transport that occupants and visitors to the development are able to access;
6. The provision of health care facilities;
7. The delivery of environmental infrastructure (biodiversity management, landscaping, flood defences, SUDs, waste management);
8. Where appropriate, in order that the delivery is integrated with development phasing to ensure timely provision and commuted payments will secure necessary future maintenance; and
9. The delivery of any other infrastructure requirements in a made Neighbourhood Plan.

Implementation Strategy

8.14 The NPPF sets a requirement for Local Plans to plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area. Furthermore, paragraph 162 states that "Local Planning Authorities should work with other authorities and providers to: assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, water supply, wastewater and its treatment, energy (including heat), telecommunications, utilities, waste, health, social care, education, flood risk and coastal change management, and its ability to meet forecast demands".

8.15 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) addresses the requirements set in the NPPF and therefore forms a key part of the evidence base for this Local Plan. Dividing the information on infrastructure into a number of subheadings; Transport, Water, Energy, Telecommunications, Education, Community Facilities, Health, Community Safety and Green Infrastructure, the IDP identifies the infrastructure requirements to deliver growth proposed in the Breckland District Local Plan over the plan period up until 2036.

8.16 A range of evidence has been gathered to develop the IDP through the commissioning of evidence, consideration of existing sources of data and information and primarily through ongoing dialogue with infrastructure providers. The evolving draft IDP has also been informed by ongoing feedback from statutory consultees. Reviewing comments made at each stage of Local Plan consultation, the IDP reflects discussions with external organisations to further understand, or where applicable seek potential resolutions to, identified infrastructure constraints. The IDP details information, including that received from statutory consultees such as Norfolk County Council in respect of highways and education and the Clinical Commissioning Group for health care provision. Feedback from statutory consultees and infrastructure providers has identified potential solutions for infrastructure constraints that, in some cases, will affect the development phasing of sites.

8.17 The IDP document examines infrastructure projects and provides a consideration for each of whether it is critical, essential or desirable (as defined below) in order to help inform which infrastructure requirements are necessary for the deliverability of a specific allocation in the Local Plan.

- Critical – The development is dependant on the delivery of this infrastructure and will not be permitted without it. Examples include a new electricity power substation to provide power to businesses at Snetterton, where there is currently insufficient electricity capacity for expansion.
- Essential – The infrastructure is essential to the delivery of the development but there may be a number of options for the type of infrastructure provision and the costs associated with it. The infrastructure is necessary but is not so critical that the entire development is dependant on securing a specific identified piece of infrastructure.
- Desirable – Infrastructure that is sought to enhance the development. The development is not entirely dependent on this infrastructure.

8.18 A combination of funding mechanisms will be used to deliver new and improved infrastructure in Breckland; the primary source of funding coming from developers and landowners through legal agreements accompanying the grant of planning permission. For major development the sites will be phased to ensure essential infrastructure is delivered or funding provided prior to the completion of new developments. Other sources of funding include grant aid from New Anglia Local Economic Partnership, public funding and private investment. Some improvements to infrastructure are not contingent on the Local Plan such as the Better Broadband for Norfolk initiative and improvements to the strategic road network such as the A47.

8.19 The IDP includes a summary table detailing the District wide infrastructure needs, including phasing, needed to support growth up until 2036. This is based on the following growth assumptions:

- District Wide - 2,431 allocated dwellings for Market Towns and LSCs excluding Thetford and Attleborough;
- Attleborough - 2,650 allocated dwellings to be delivered in the plan period; and
- Thetford - 3,250 allocated dwellings to be delivered in the plan period.

8.20 The purpose of monitoring and review is to assess the delivery and implementation of the new Local Plan. The Breckland Authority Monitoring Report produced on an annual basis provides a robust and effective review and monitoring approach. The Local Plan policies will be complemented by a monitoring framework to assess their effectiveness through robust monitoring mechanisms. This will allow the performance of the policies to be assessed and thereby serve to inform any subsequent changes post Plan adoption which may be required to ensure delivery of the Plan.

Appendix 1 - Housing Trajectory

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Completions	346	329	425	491	619	793							
SHMA Requirement	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612
Annualised Housing Target Liverpool Shortfall Requirement							647	647	647	647	647	647	647
Revised annual stepped without shortfall							584	584	584	584	584	622	622
Stepped trajectory with shortfall split via Liverpool methodology							619	619	619	619	619	657	657
Projected Completions							510	757	912	983	945	763	775

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
Completions												
SHMA Requirement	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612	612
Annualised Housing Target Liverpool Shortfall Requirement	647	647	647	647	647	647	647	647	647	647	647	647
Revised annual stepped without shortfall	622	622	622	622	622	622	622	622	622	622	622	622
Stepped trajectory with shortfall split via Liverpool methodology	657	657	657	657	657	657	657	657	657	657	657	657
Projected Completions	713	610	800	800	697	590	534	580	530	560	535	470

Appendix 2 - Parking Standards

Table .1

Use Class of Development Proposal	Minimum Car Parking provision for Disabled Users	Minimum Car Parking provision (number of Spaces)	Minimum Cycle parking Provision (no of Spaces)
A1 , A2 and laundrettes and the retail floorspace of other uses not specifically covered elsewhere	1 per 400m ²	1 per 20m ²	1 per 70m ²
Food Retail within A1	1 per 280m ²	1 per 14m ²	1 per 70m ²
A3 and A4	1 per 100m ²	1 per 5m ²	1 per 25m ² plus 1 per 4 staff
A5	1 per 100m ²	1 per 3m ²	1 per 25m ² plus 1 per 4 staff
B1	1 per 600m ²	1 per 30m ²	1 per 36m ²
B2	1 per 1200m ²	1 per 60m ²	1 per 60m ²
B8 and outside growing and storage areas of garden centres	1 per 2000m ²	1 per 100m ²	1 per 80m ²
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
C3	In Line with Preferred Direction PD Com 06	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

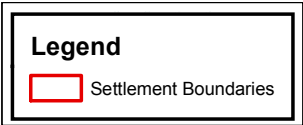
Use Class of Development Proposal	Minimum Car Parking provision for Disabled Users	Minimum Car Parking provision (number of Spaces)	Minimum Cycle parking Provision (no of Spaces)
Day Care Centres	1 car space for disabled users per 10 other car spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per staff plus 1 per 4 persons attending	1 per 100m ² 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 spaces plus drop-off/pick-up point plus public transport provision	1 per 2 staff plus 1 per 15 students plus drop-off/pick-up point plus public transport provision	1 per 3 students plus 1 per 4 staff
Art galleries, Museums, Public/Exhibition halls and Libraries	1 car space for disabled users per 600m ² plus drop-off/pick-up point	1 per 30m ²	1 per 30m ² plus 1 per 4 staff
Places of Worship	1 car space for disabled users per 200m ²	1 per 10m ²	1 per 10m ²
D2	1 car space for disabled users per 440m ² plus bus/coach drop-off/pick-up point	1 per 22m ²	1 per 20 seats or 1 per 75m ² plus 1 per 4 staff
Motor service centres	1 car space for disabled users per 600m ²	1 per 30m ²	1 per 4 staff
Motor vehicle showrooms	1 car space for disabled users per 900m ²	1 per 45m ²	1 per 4 staff

Appendix 3 - Policy HOU 04 settlement boundaries

Settlement Boundaries

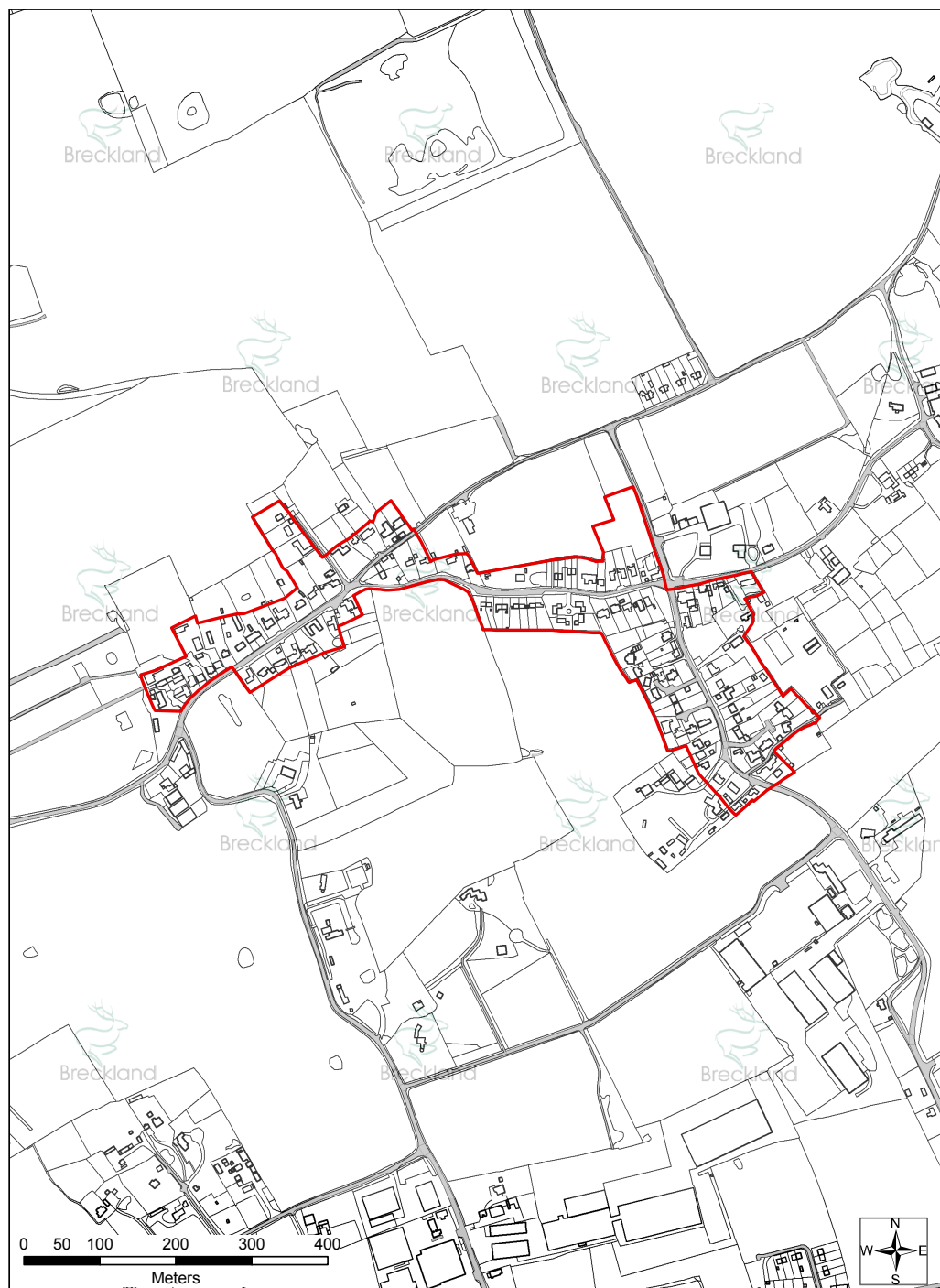
.1 The following key relates to the settlement boundary maps in this section.

**Figure .1 Key to
Settlement Boundary
Maps**



Beeston

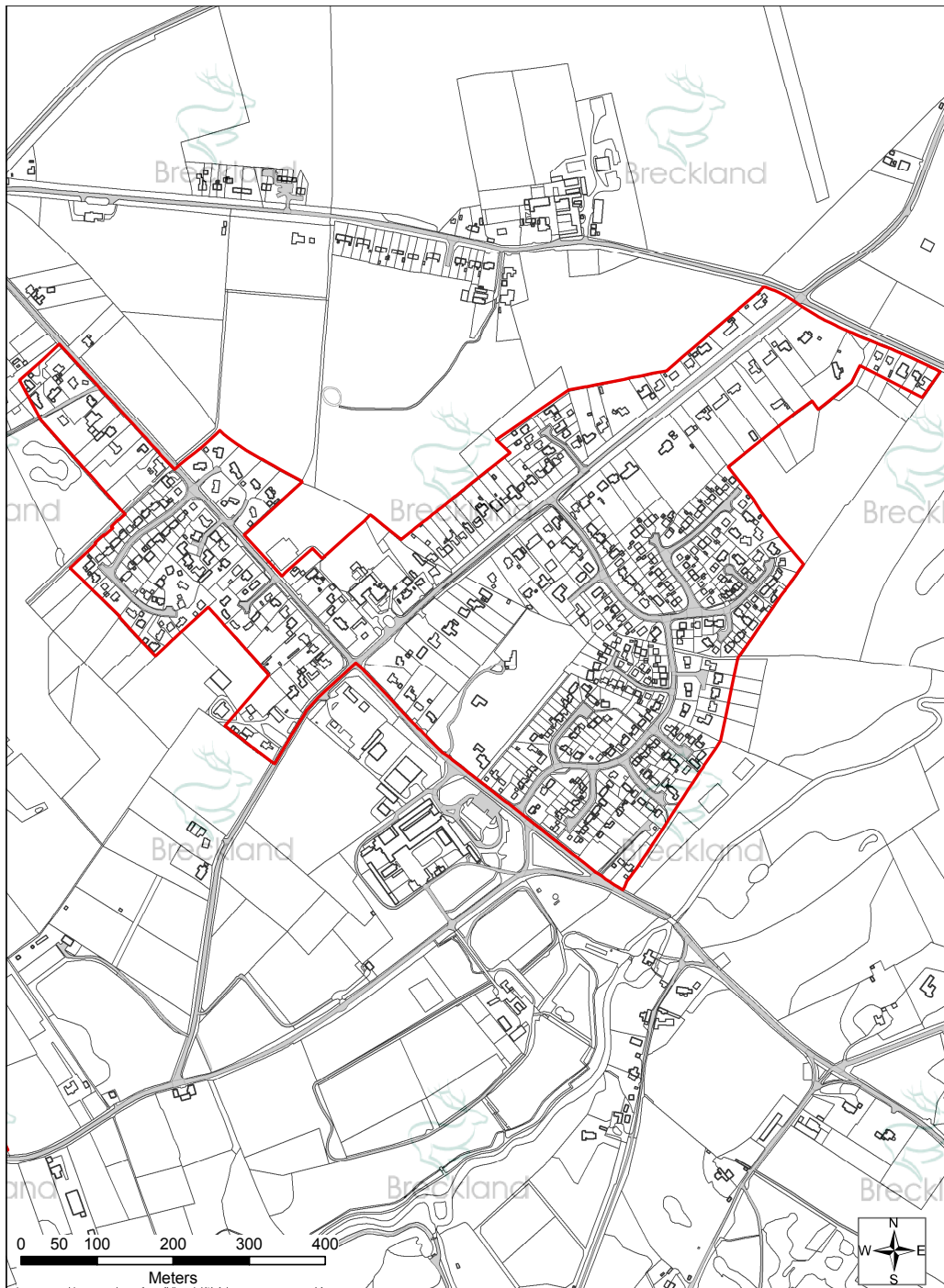
Map .1 Beeston Settlement Boundary



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Beetley

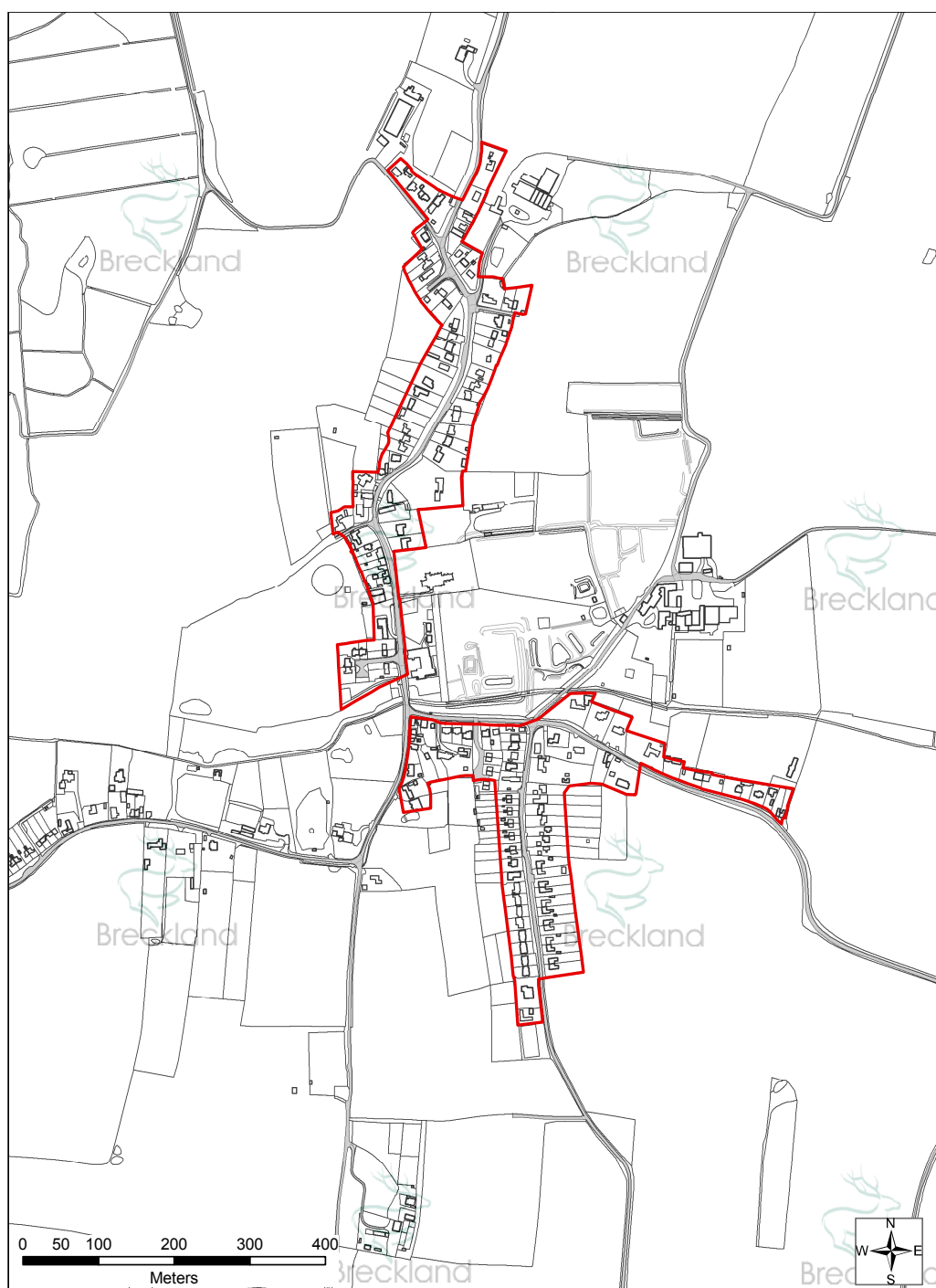
Map .2 Beetley Settlement Boundary



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Carbrooke

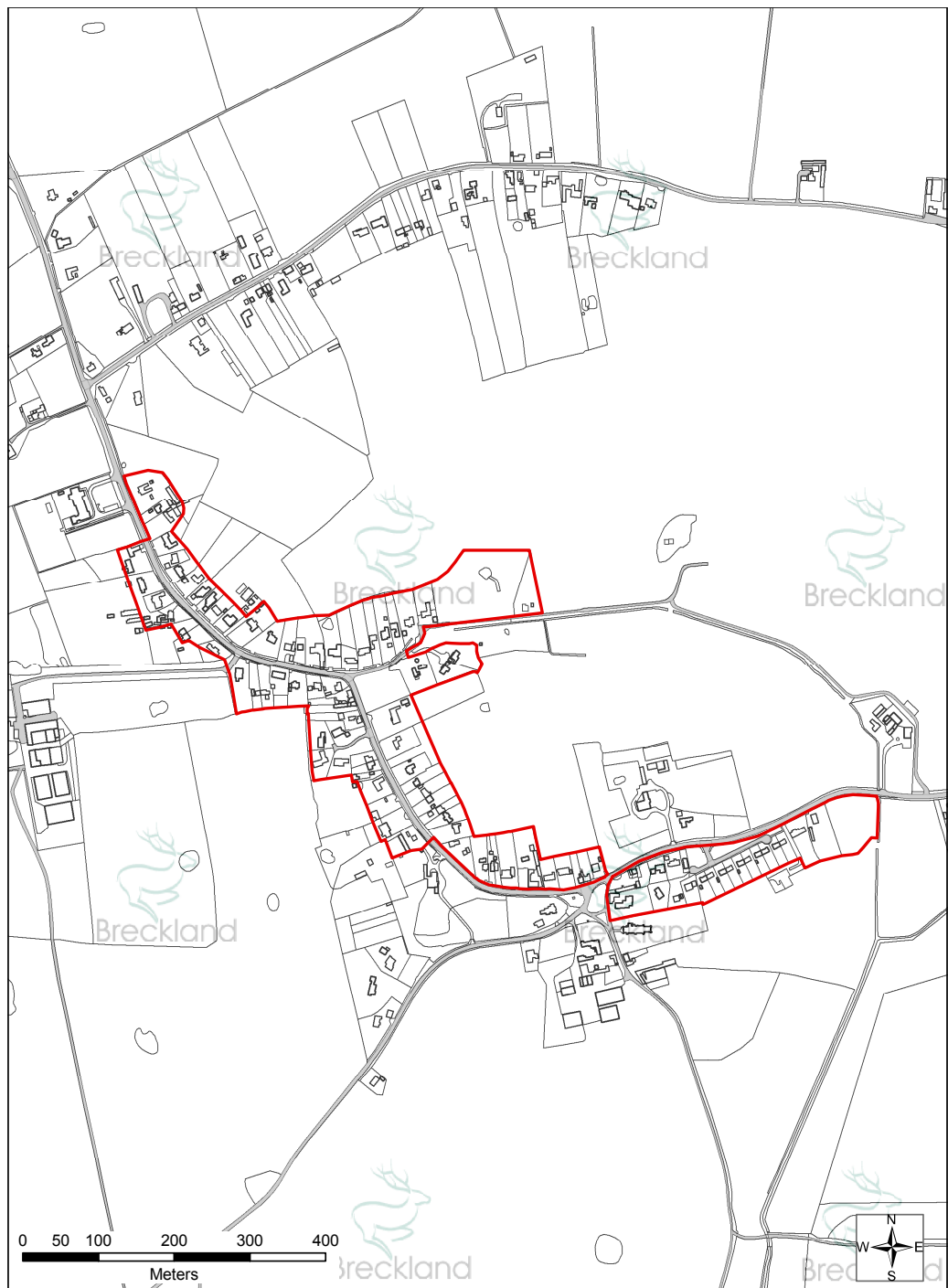
Map .3 Carbrooke Settlement Boundary



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Caston

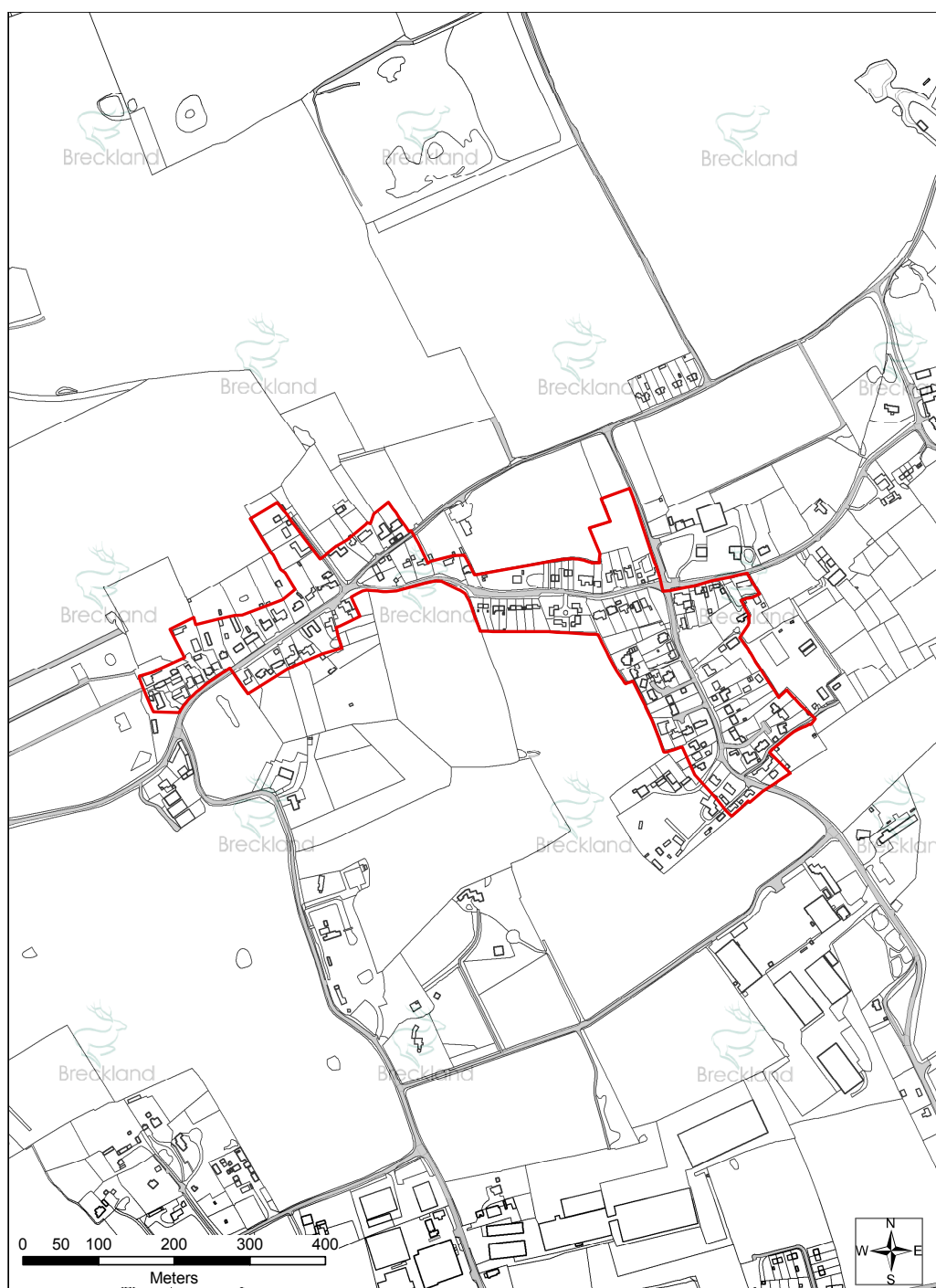
Map .4 Caston Settlement Boundary



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Gressenhall

Map .5 Gressenhall Settlement Boundary



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Griston

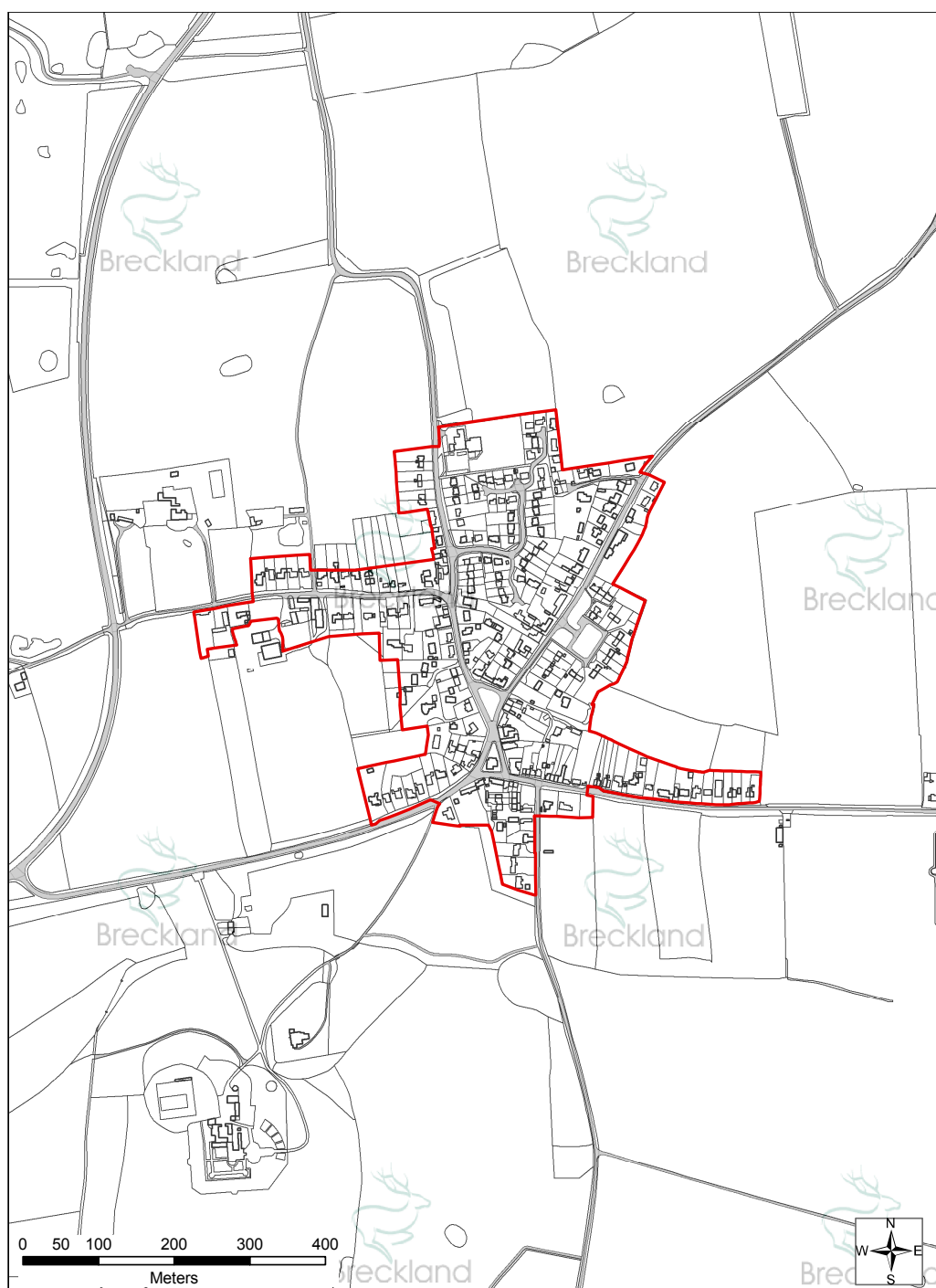
Map .6 Griston Settlement Boundary



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Hockham

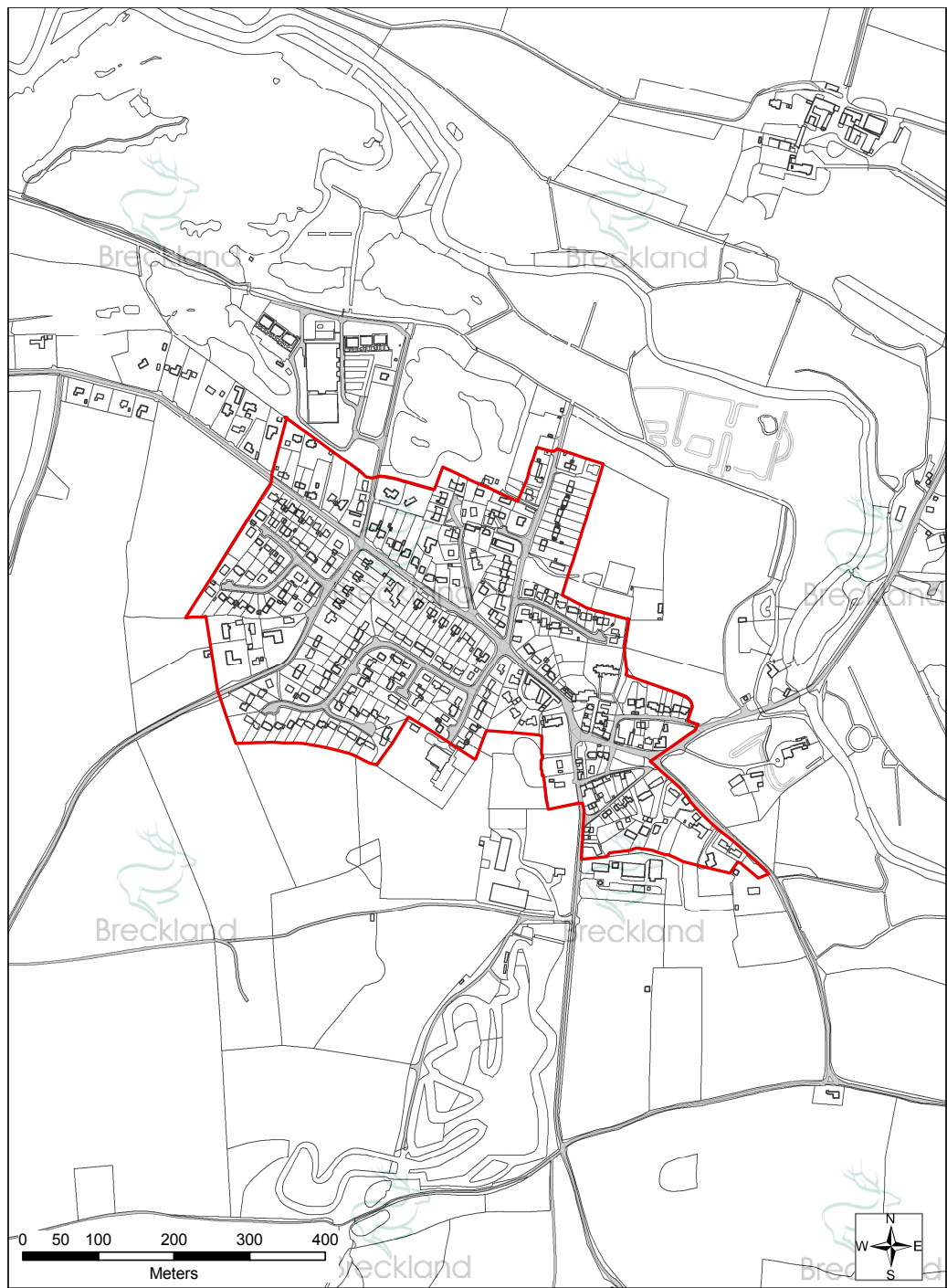
Map .7 Hockham Settlement Boundary



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Lyng

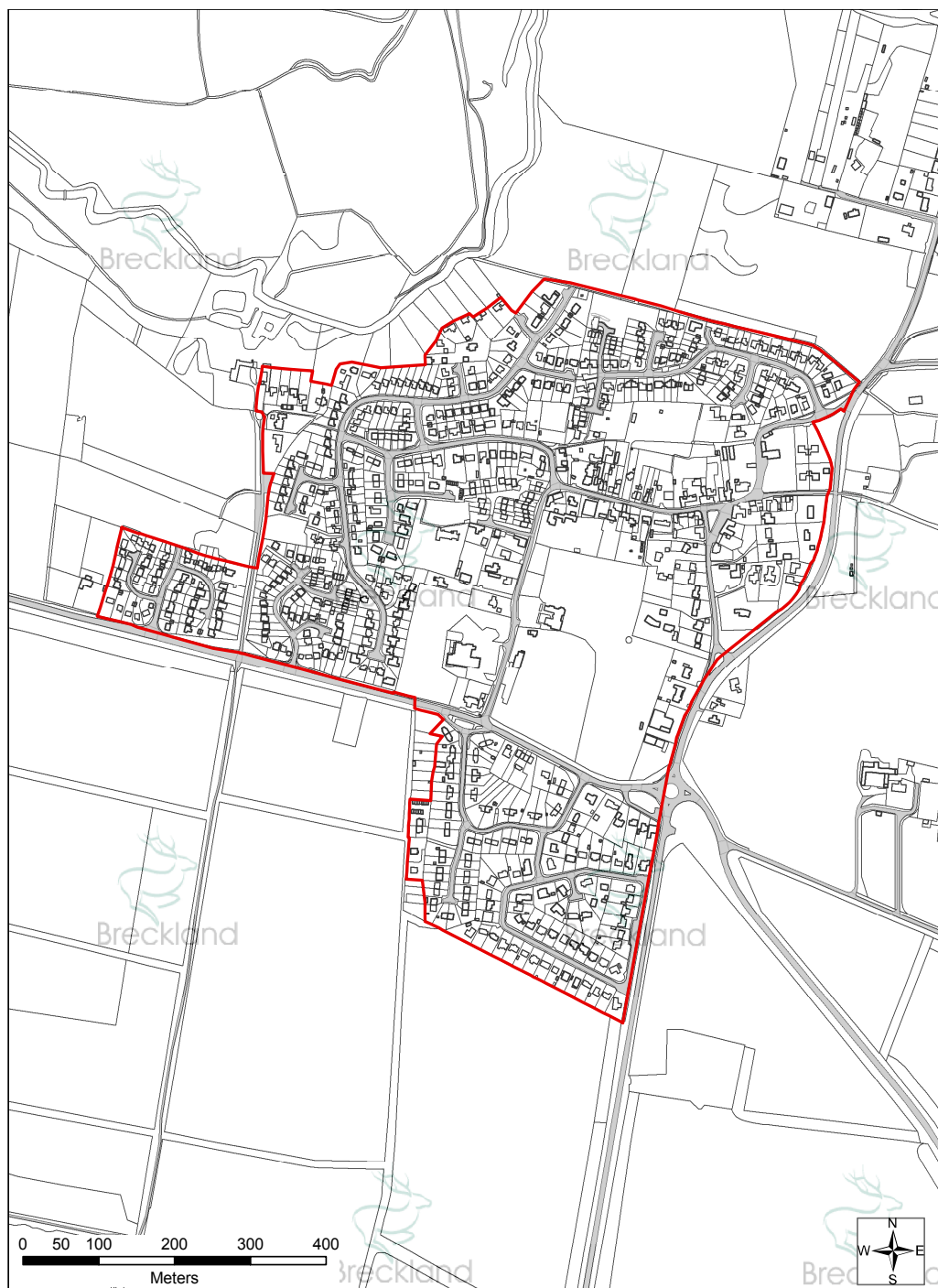
Map .8 Lyng Settlement Boundary



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Mundford

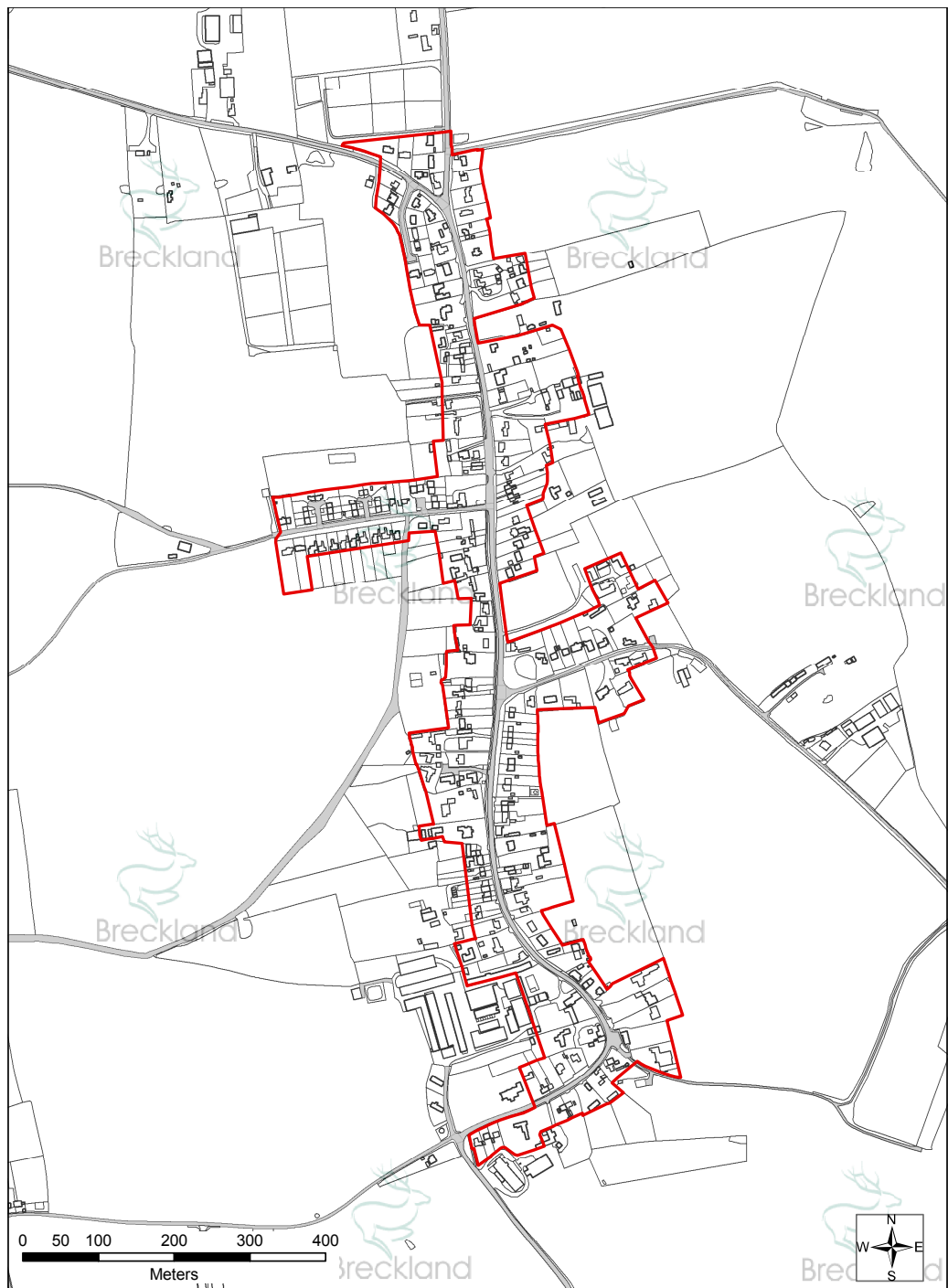
Map .9 Mundford Settlement Boundary



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North Lopham

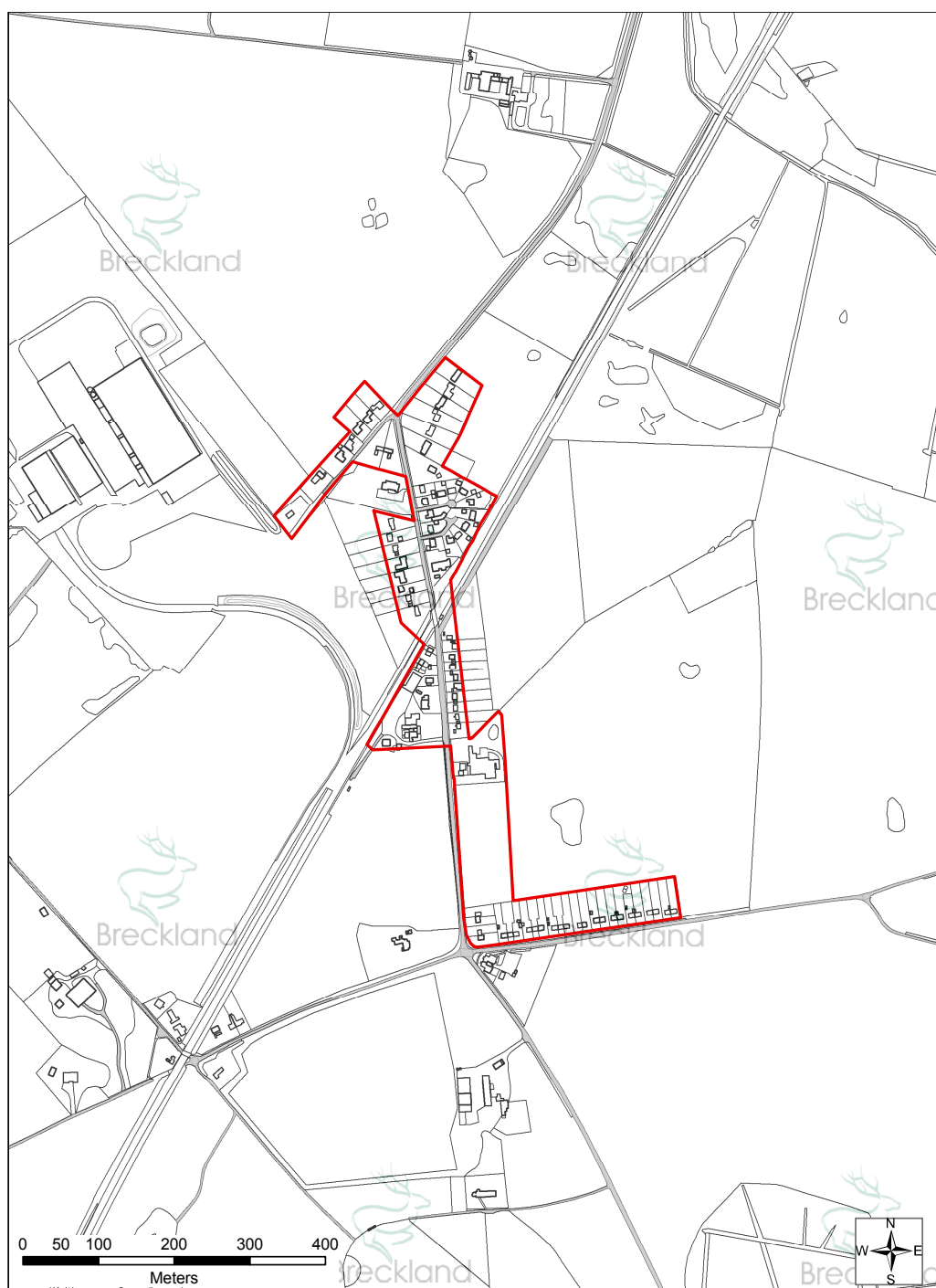
Map .10 North Lopham Settlement Boundary



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Quidenham (Eccles Road)

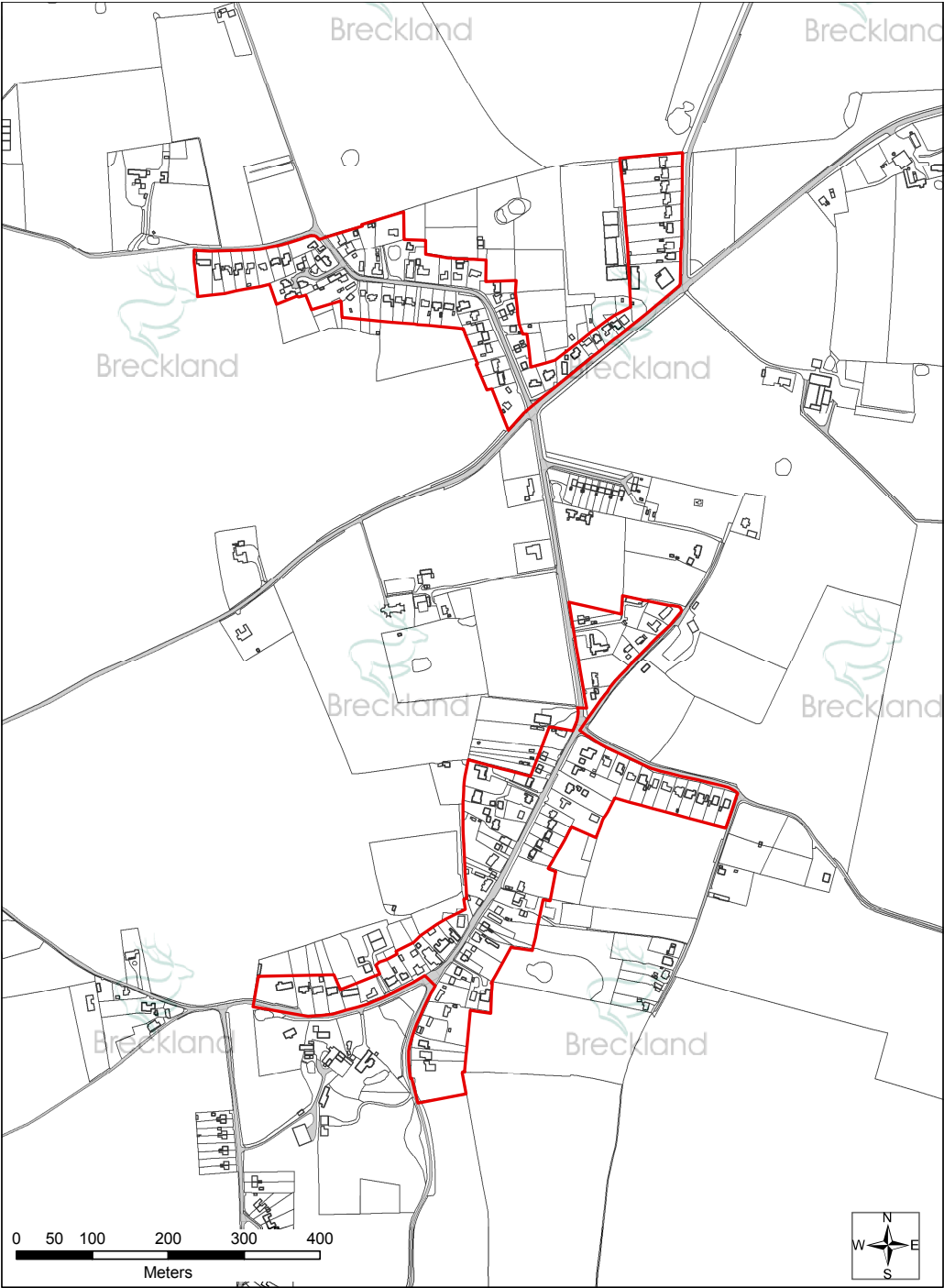
Map .11 Quidenham Settlement Boundary



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Rocklands

Map .12 Rocklands Settlement Boundary



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Saham Toney

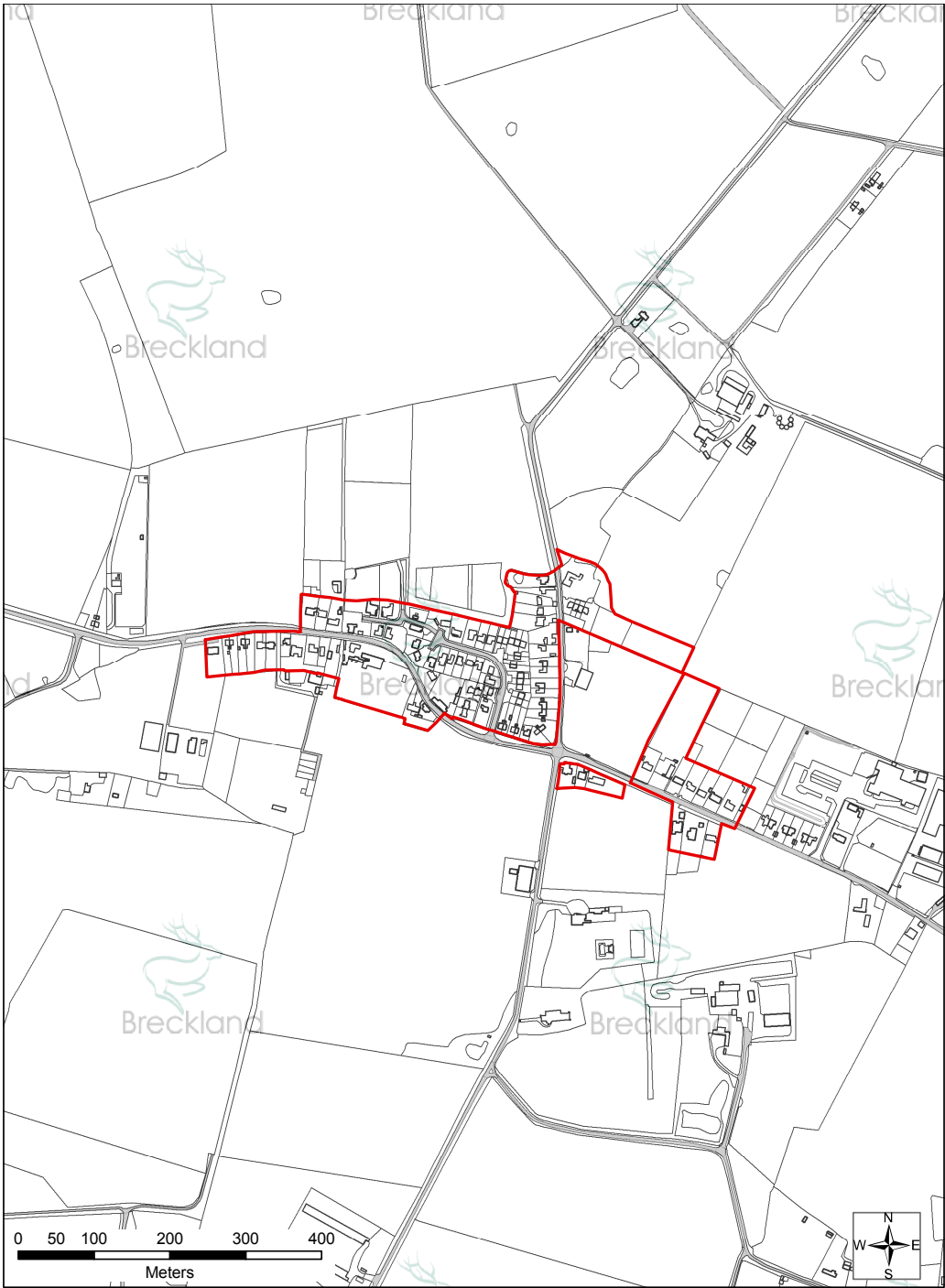
Map .13 Saham Toney Settlement Boundary



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Shropham

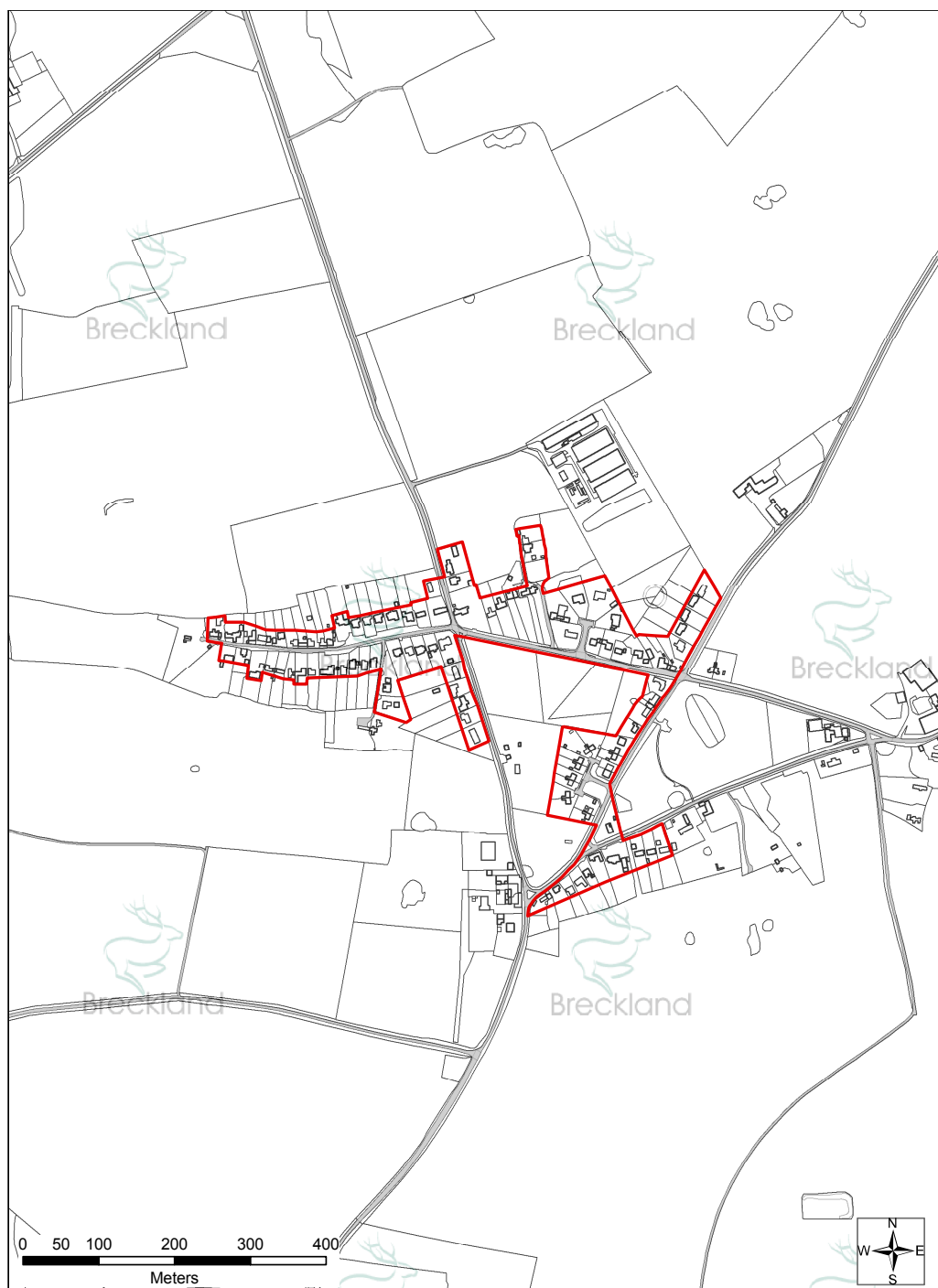
Map .14 Shropham Settlement Boundary



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Thompson

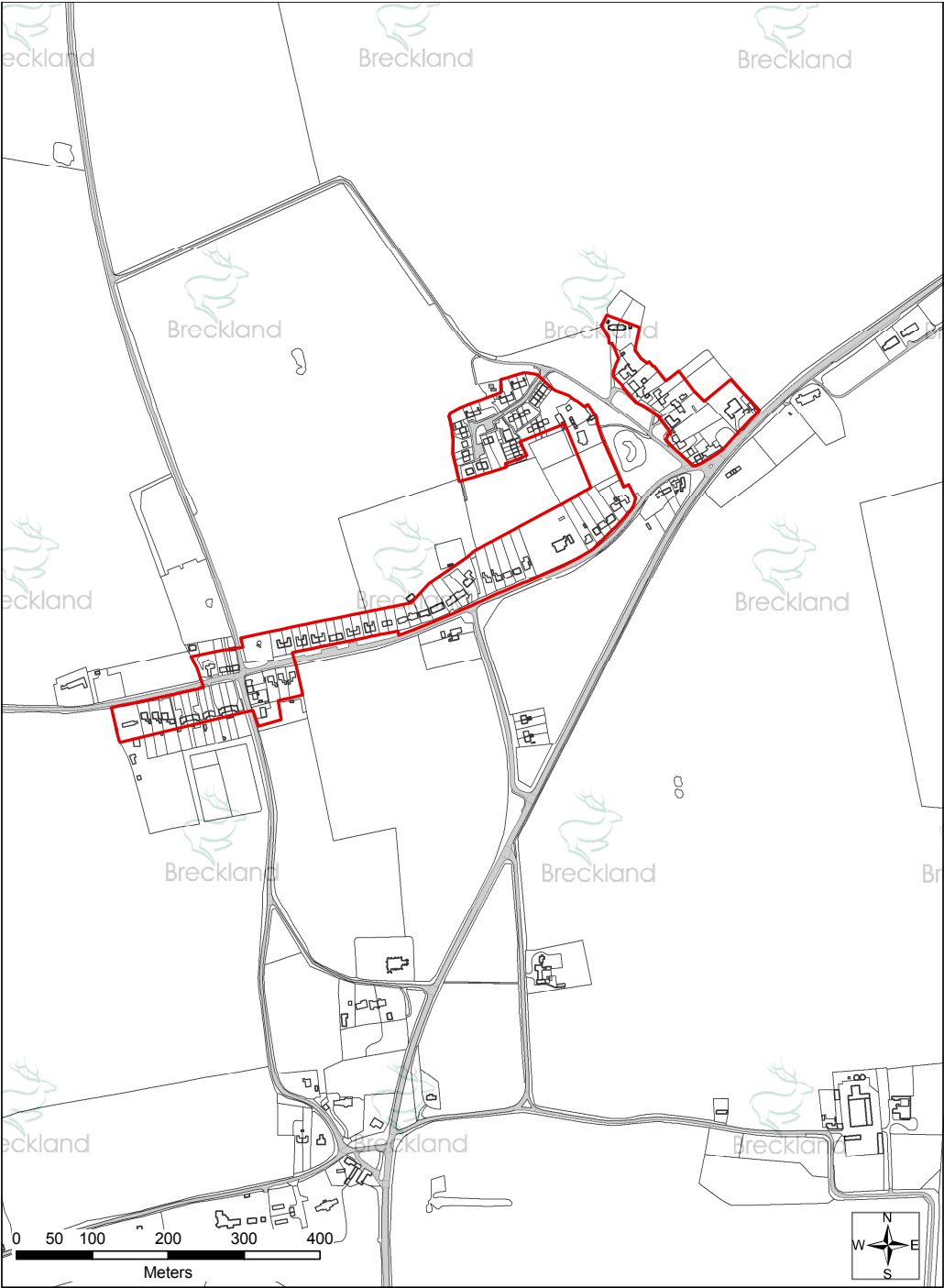
Map .15 Thompson Settlement Boundary



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Weasenham

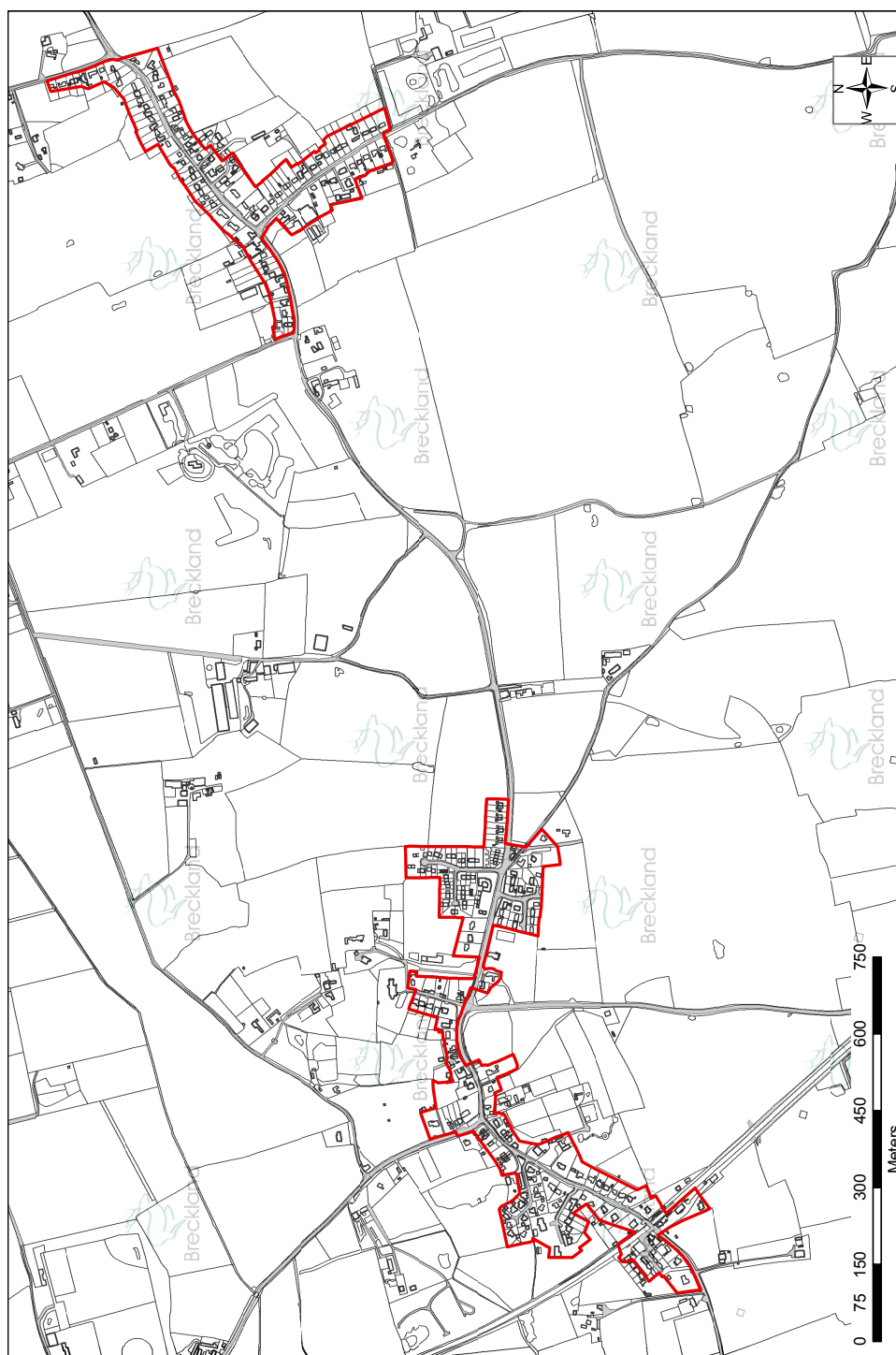
Map .16 Weasenham Settlement Boundary



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Yaxham & Clint Green

Map .17 Yaxham Settlement Boundary



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Appendix 4 - List of Saved Policies

Saved Policies

Table .1 List of Saved Policies

Policy	Document
Policy TH 4 Transport - Achieving Modal Shift	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 5 The Impact of Change on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Buses	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 6 Thetford Bus Interchange	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 7 Thetford Railway Station	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 9 Monitoring and management of Key Biodiversity Sites	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 11 Joe Blunt's Lane	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 12 The Thetford Loops	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 18 Archaeology	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 20 Thetford Urban Extension Strategic Design Principles	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 21 Locally Distinctive Features of the Landscape	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 22 Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 23 Existing Buildings in the Thetford Urban Extension	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 25 Walking and Cycling	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 26 Buses	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 27 A New Railway Station in the Urban Extension	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 28 Changes to the A11 Trunk Road	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 29 Improvements to the Local Road Network	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 30 New Employment Land	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 31 New Local Centre(s) in the Urban Extension	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 32 Connecting to a Decentralised Energy Supply	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012

Policy	Document
Policy TH 33 Education Provision in the Thetford Urban Extension	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 34 New Health Facility in the Urban Extension	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 35 Community Buildings	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012
Policy TH 37 Regeneration Proposals in Existing Residential Areas	Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP), 2012

13 Glossary

Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	An AQMA is an area designated where air quality does not already, or is predicted not to, meet air quality objectives. This could be just one or two streets, or it could be a much larger area. It is then a requirement that affected Local Authorities implement a plan to improve air quality - a Local Air Quality Action Plan - that seeks to improve the air quality in areas designated AQMAs.
Allocation	An area of land identified for development in a development plan. The allocation will specify the type of development that will be permitted on the land.
Amenity	Element of a location or neighbourhood that helps to make it more attractive or enjoyable for residents and visitors.
Ancient Woodlands	Woodland that is believed to have existed from at least medieval times and as such probably been continuously wooded since 1600.
Area Action Plans (AAP)	Area Action Plans are Development Plan Documents from the previous Local Development Framework system. As specific plans for areas of change or conservation their purpose being to deliver planned growth, stimulate regeneration, protect areas sensitive to change through conservation policies, make proposals for enhancement and resolve conflicting objectives in areas where there was significant development pressure. It is anticipated that over time the content of AAPs be contained within the Local Plan.
Authorities' Monitoring Report (AMR)	A report produced each financial year to indicate the progress of production of planning policy documents, and monitor the effectiveness of policies contained within the adopted 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.
Biodiversity	The whole variety of life encompassing habitat diversity, all genetics, species and ecosystem variation including plants and animals. Biodiversity has value in its own right and has social and economic value for human society.
Biomass	The total dry organic matter or stored energy of plant matter. As a fuel it includes energy crops and sewage as well as forestry and agricultural residues.
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	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has

	been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.
Brownfield Land Register	A register of previously developed land suitable, available and achievable for residential development of at least 0.25ha or capable of supporting at least 5 dwellings that each local planning authority is required to prepare and maintain.
Building Regulations	Sets minimum construction standards for building works. They exist to ensure the health and safety of people in and around all types of buildings (i.e. domestic, commercial, and industrial). They also provide for energy conservation and access to and use of buildings.
Central Norfolk Housing Market Area, CNHMA	Housing market area in and around Greater Norwich, Broadland, Breckland, North Norfolk and South Norfolk. A Housing Market Area is the area within which most people moving, without changing employment, would stay.
Change of Use	A material change in the use of land or buildings from one class of use to another as defined by the Use Classes Order constitutes development and therefore requires planning permission.
Commitments & Completions	<p>Commitments - the term used to represent the level of development already given planning permission but not yet build out.</p> <p>Completions - the number of dwellings that have been built out following the granting of planning permission.</p>
Community Facilities	Facilities providing for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, leisure and cultural needs of the community. Community facilities are defined as: local shops, meeting places, indoor and outdoor sports venues, recreation/play areas, cultural buildings, public houses, petrol filling stations and places of worship.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	CIL is a levy that local authorities in England and Wales can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhood want.
Community Strategy	A strategy prepared by a community to help deliver local aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.
Comparison Retail / Shopping	Shopping for items like clothes, products, household and leisure goods which are not bought on a regular basis.
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 land 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 or enhance. There are special rules on some development in conservation areas.
Contaminated Land	Land which contains potentially harmful substances as a result of human activity or from natural causes may be regarded as contaminated land.
Convenience Retail	This refers to shopping for everyday essential items like food, drink, newspapers and confectionery.
Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is one of the Development Plan Documents which formed part of the Local Development Framework. It set out the long term spatial vision, strategic objectives and core policies for the development of the area. Once adopted, the Local Plan will supersede the current Core Strategy.
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	A site of important nature conservation value within a County context but which are not protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Cultural facilities	Includes theatres, cinema, halls, music venues (usually in pubs), libraries, public art installations and art galleries.
Deliverable	For sites to be considered deliverable the NPPF states that sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable. Sites with planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that schemes will not be implemented within five years, for example they will not be viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans.
Density	A measure of the intensity of residential development. Usually expressed as either the the number of dwellings per hectare (dph) or the number of habitable rooms per hectare (hrha).
Design & Access Statement	A statement that accompanies a planning application to explain the design principles and concepts that have informed the development and how access issues have been dealt with.
Developable	For sites to be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.
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.

Development Management	The process whereby a Local Planning Authority considers the merits of a planning application and whether it should be given permission having regard to the policies and proposals in the Development Plan.
Development Plan	This is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.
Duty to Co-operate	Local Councils now have a duty to co-operate with their neighbouring Councils and a set of prescribed bodies as defined by the Localism Act 2011 on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities.
Dwelling	A building or any part of a building that forms a separate and self-contained unit designed to be occupied by a single family or household.
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.
Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	An equality impact assessment involves assessing the likely or actual effects of policies or services on people in respect of disability, gender and racial equality.
Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)	<p>Planning applications for development proposals of 1 hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1 and all proposals for new development located in Flood Zones 2(Medium Probability) 3a (High Probability) and 3b (The Functional Floodplain*)should be accompanied by a FRA. This should identify and assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from the development and demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed, taking climate change into account. For major developments in Flood Zone 1, the FRA should identify opportunities to reduce the probability and consequences of flooding.</p> <p>* The Functional Floodplain comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.</p>
Flood Zones	Flood Zones are the starting point for the sequential approach. Flood Zones refer to the probability of sea and river flooding only, ignoring the presence of existing defences.
General Conformity	All planning policy documents must align with the expectations of the National Planning Policy Framework. This is known as general conformity.
General Employment Areas	Existing employment sites which have been identified to be protected for employment uses including business, general industrial and storage/distribution uses.
Green Corridors	Relatively continuous areas of open space threading through the built environment which whilst linked are not always publicly accessible. They may allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension to the habitats of the sites they join.

Green Infrastructure	The multifunctional, interdependent network of open and green spaces and green features. This network includes urban areas, the urban fringe and the countryside. It provides multiple benefits for people and wildlife.
Green Infrastructure Management Plan (GIMP)	A plan to manage green infrastructure.
Greenfield Site	Land that has not previously been used for urban development. It is usually land last used for agriculture located next to or outside existing built-up areas of a settlement.
Habitat	The natural home of an animal or plant, often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.
Habitable Room	Habitable rooms provide the living accommodation of the dwelling. They include living room, dining room, study, home office, conservatory and bedroom. They exclude the bathroom, WC, utility room, store room and circulation space. A kitchen is not considered to be a habitable room unless it provides space for dining.
Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)	An assessment of land availability identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period. The assessment of land availability includes the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment requirement as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
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 Historic England.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Landscape Character Assessment	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.
Lifetime Homes	Designed to provide accessible and convenient homes for a large proportion of the population including families with young children, frail older people and those with temporary or permanent physical or sensory impairments. Designed to be flexible enough to meet existing and changing needs of most households and easily adapted to meet the needs of future occupants.
Listed Building	A building or other structure recorded on a statutory list of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The grades of listing are Grade I, II* or II with Grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures within the curtilage. A listed building is a heritage asset.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	The old-style portfolio of Development Plan Documents including a Core Strategy, Development Management Policies, Proposals and Area Action Plans which collectively set out the Spatial Planning Strategy for a Local Planning Authority

	area. Single Local Plan documents are now generally replacing these Local Development Framework documents.
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	A public statement setting out a project plan for how all parts of the Local Plan will come together. It lists the documents to be produced and the timetable for producing them.
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	The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan.
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	The Local Government body responsible for formulating Planning Policies in an area, 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.
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.
Main Town Centre Uses	Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
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 variety of activities and 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 (including the creation and re-creation) for the benefit of wild species.
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	An area designated by Natural England to protect and conserve nationally important areas of wildlife habitat and geological formations and to promote scientific research.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The NPPF forms the national planning policies that Local Planning Authorities need to take into account when drawing up their Local Plan and other documents and

	making decisions on planning applications. The NPPF is published by the Department of Communities and Local Government.
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is online guidance that should be read in conjunction with the NPPF.
Neighbourhood Plans	A Plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
Northern Distributor Road (NDR)	A 20 km dual carriage way planned to run from A47 Postwick, east of Norwich to the A1067 north of Taverham.
Older People	People including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.
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'. Allotments are also included under the definition of open space. Open space should be taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.
Permitted Development Rights	Rights to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application for planning permission, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)	The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act amended parts of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). In particular, the 2004 Act 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 Condition	A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
Planning Inspectorate (PINS)	The Planning Inspectorate is an independent executive agency, sponsored by DCLG and the Welsh Government. The Planning Inspectorate deals with planning appeals, national infrastructure planning applications, examinations of local plans and other planning-related and specialist casework in England and Wales.
Planning Obligation	A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.
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.

Policies Map	An obligatory part of the adopted development plan comprising the area base map depicting allocated sites for particular land use and development proposals and sets out the area to which specific policies apply.
Previously Developed Land	Previously developed land is another definition for brownfield land.
Primary Shopping Area	Defined area where retail development is concentrated, generally comprising the primary frontage and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage.
Primary and Secondary Frontages	Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.
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.
Renewable Energy	Energy derived from a source that is continually replenished, such as wind, wave, solar, hydroelectric and energy from plant material, but not fossil fuels or nuclear energy. Although not strictly renewable, geothermal energy is generally included.
Section 106 Agreement	A legal agreement under Section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act conferring planning obligations on persons with an interest in land. 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 SSSI is an area identified by Natural England as of special interest by reason of its fauna, flora, geological or physiographic (landform) features. Classification notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
Sites of Archaeological & Historic Interest	This designation applies to a site at Mundford Road Thetford, which is widely regarded as being linked to Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni. The site is currently being considered for Scheduled Ancient Monument status by Historic England.
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 (SAC)	Protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Every Local Planning Authority has to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement. It sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the standards to be achieved in involving the community and stakeholders in the preparation of planning policy documents and planning applications.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Document providing supplementary information in respect of the policies in development plan documents and not forming part of the development plan nor subject to independent examination. SPDs can be taken into account as a material planning consideration but must be subject to public consultation if to be accorded weight in decisions taken on development proposals.
Sustainable Development	This covers development that meets the needs of the present, socially, environmentally and economically, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
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.
Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)	SUDS can reduce the total amount, flow and rate of surface water that runs directly to rivers through stormwater systems.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	An assessment of land availability identifying a future supply of land for housing. Paragraph 159 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	An evidence based document providing an analysis of the housing market area to inform policy formation. The purpose of which is to have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. Paragraph 159 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should prepare a SHMA to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.
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.

Town Centre	Area defined on the Local Authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.
Travel Plan	A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.
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.
Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW)	Wastewater treatment works.
Windfall Sites	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available through the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.