

Towns F

F Towns

F.1 Downham Market

Main Town

Description

F.1.1 Downham Market stands on elevated ground on the eastern edge of the Great Ouse valley around 13 miles south of King's Lynn. It is the Borough's second largest town, with a population of around 10,000. The town grew up as an agricultural and trading centre and has a good range of services serving both the local population and a wider rural area.

F.1.2 Downham Market lies at the junction of the A10 King's Lynn to London road and the A1122 Wisbech to Swaffham road, and has direct railway services to King's Lynn, Cambridge and London. An extensive bus service links the town to its hinterland and nearby towns.

F.1.3 There are a range of local employment opportunities. The town's historic industrial and trading links based on the River Great Ouse and the Relief Channel have declined, but now these watercourses support some leisure uses.

F.1.4 The town has a wealth of historic buildings and other heritage assets, reflected in an extensive Conservation Area and numerous listed buildings. The distinctive Victorian Clock Tower provides a focal point in the handsome Town Square.

F.1.5 The town lies mainly on the Lower Greensand and Kimmeridge Clay belts which form the western boundary of the chalk upland area of High Norfolk. Many of the town's quality buildings are constructed in the distinctive brown of the local carstone. As this stone is not suited to being dressed into regular blocks it is normally used in conjunction with brick piers, and this contributes to the local building style.

Strategic Context

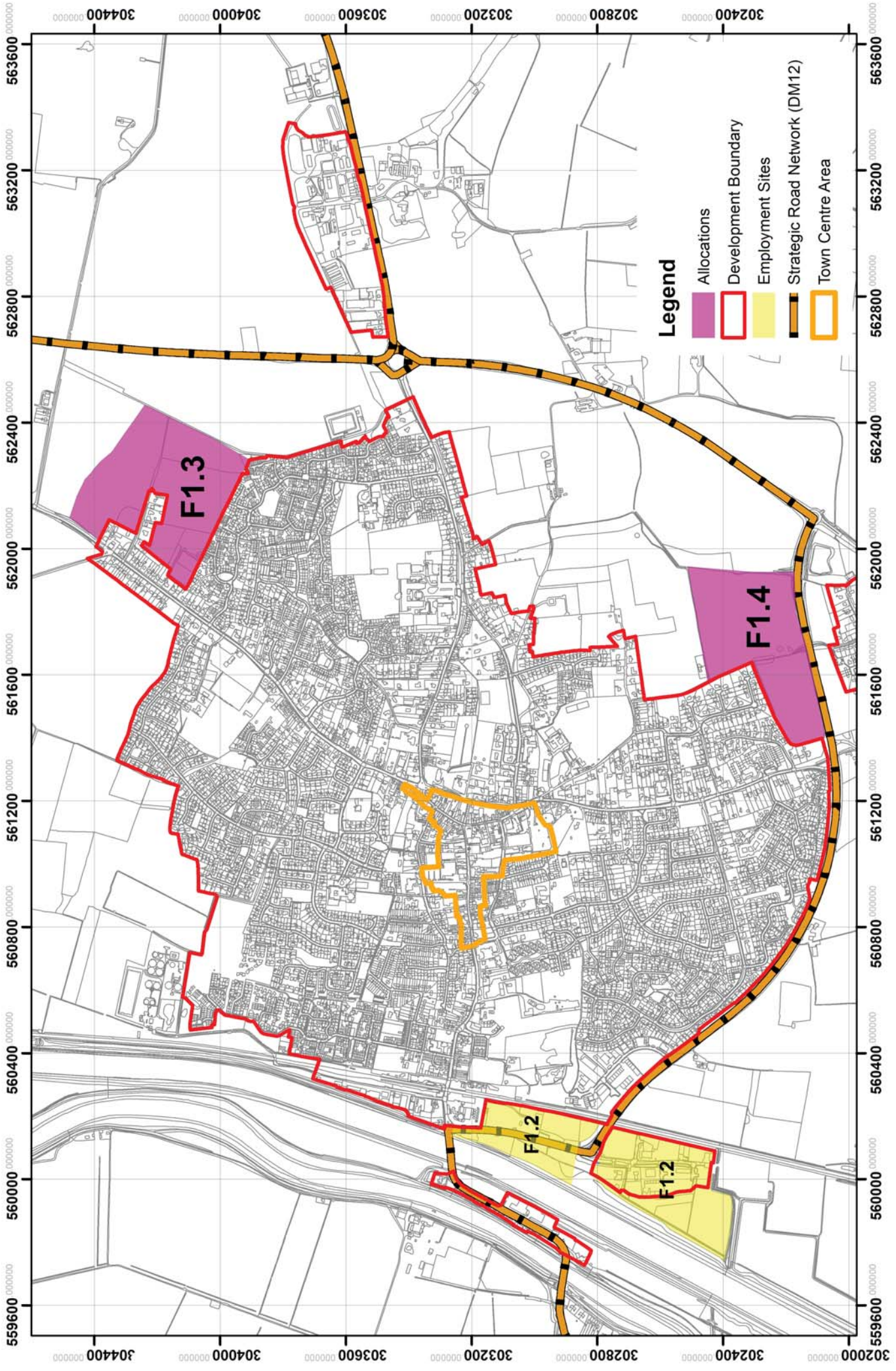
F.1.6 Downham Market was designated a 'Main Town' in the Core Strategy. Although the general strategy is to locate the bulk of new development and growth in the Borough's towns over the plan period to 2026, recognition has been given to the large scale housing growth Downham Market has accommodated in recent years. A lower proportion of the Borough's new growth over the next decade or so has therefore been allocated to this town, compared to others, in order to provide a slower pace of growth allowing the town to settle and for services and facilities to adjust to the increased population.

F.1.7 It is envisaged that growth will still continue, but at a slower pace than in recent times. The Core Strategy planned that the town would receive allocations for at least an additional 390 homes, and 15 hectares of employment land.

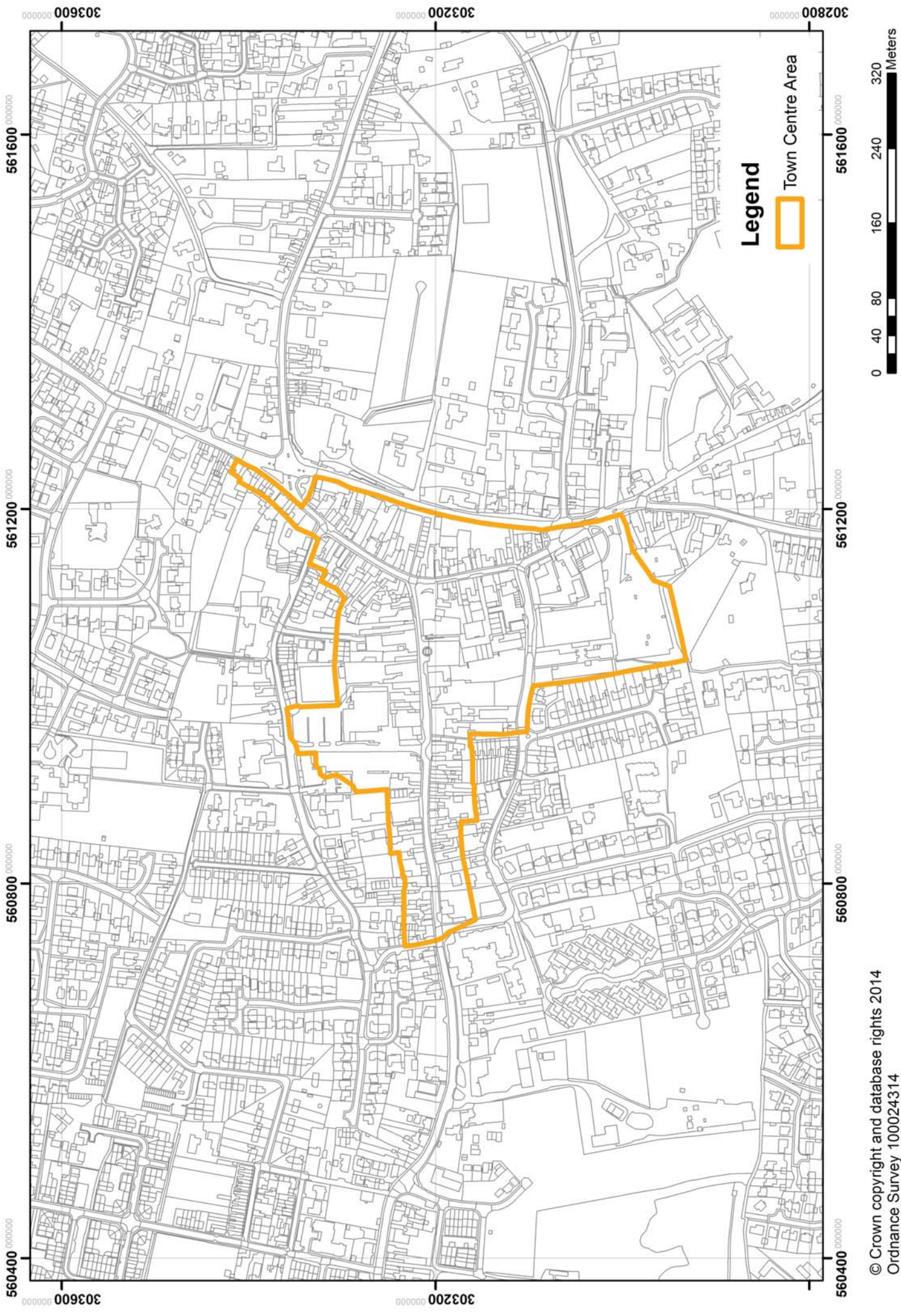
F.1.8 The western side of the town, around the River Great Ouse and the Relief Channel, are constrained by high degrees of flood risk (identified as Flood Risk Zone 3 and Tidal Defence Breach Hazard Zone by the Borough's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment).

Towns F

F.1.9 The flood risk to the west, and the A1122 by-pass road to the south, form clear geographical and physical constraints to growth of the town in these directions. The Key Diagram in the Core Strategy indicates broad “areas for urban expansion” around the eastern side of Downham Market.



Inset F1 Downham Market



© Crown copyright and database rights 2014
Ordnance Survey 100024314

Downham Market Town Centre Area (Policy F1.1) Zoomed

F Towns

POLICIES

Town Centre Area and Retailing

Policy F1.1 - Downham Market Town Centre Area and Retailing

1. A town centre area for Downham Market is defined on the Policies Map. This will be taken as the town centre for the purposes of retail development in and around Downham Market, and the application of the sequential test in the National Planning Policy framework.
2. The Borough Council will promote this area as the prime focus in the town for retail, community and professional services, leisure, culture and entertainment. The historic character, local distinctiveness, facilities, amenity and vibrancy of the area will be maintained and enhanced, both for their own sake and to strengthen the appeal of the town centre.
3. In order to achieve this, development of retail, offices serving visiting members of the public, hotels, assembly and leisure uses, and community and cultural facilities (e.g. Use Classes A, C1, D1, D2 and sui generis theatres) will be particularly encouraged in the area.
4. Other uses which contribute to the character and vibrancy of the town centre will be encouraged, including residential (C3), and offices/light industry (B1). The development of high quality housing in the town centre would be particularly welcomed for its contribution to its architectural quality, social mix, and economic health.
5. Additional general industrial uses (B2) and warehousing and distribution (B8) will not be permitted in the town centre area unless it can be demonstrated that they will not have adverse impacts on the character, amenity and traffic of the town centre.
6. The retention of active frontages (i.e. window displays, entrances, and views of internal activity, etc.) will be encouraged in the retail heart of the Town Centre, as will the refurbishment or replacement of shop frontages where this secures an active frontage and strengthens the local distinctiveness of the town and its heritage, and the active use of upper storeys of buildings. However, this does not preclude the removal of retail frontages outside the retail heart of the town. The reinstatement of the original ground floor frontages of historic townhouses, for instance, will be particularly welcome for the contribution to the town's historic character, unless this has adverse impacts on the retail function of the town as a whole or on designated heritage assets.

Justification

F.1.10 Town centres are changing, and regaining a richer mix of uses, including leisure uses. The policy is intended to support this mix of uses, and the physical and heritage assets of the town, while retaining the town centre as the primary focus for retailing in the town. The latter is in accordance with, and forms the reference area for, the town centre retail policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Employment Land

F.1.11 The Core Strategy aims to provide a sufficient and flexible supply of employment land during the plan period (Policy CS10 Economy). This is to include a 16.5ha site allocation in Downham Market.

F.1.12 There is a range of employment land in use around the town, and there are no plans to reduce any of this by allocation for other uses. There is also an existing planning permission for further employment uses on part of a 24 hectare (60 acre) site at Bexwell, to the east of the town.

F.1.13 The new allocation and the existing employment land and planning permissions together provide the potential for further strengthening the area's employment base, and for employment within the town to evolve to provide more employment to match the housing growth of recent years and reduce out-commuting.

Policy F1.2 - Land off St. John's Way, Downham Market

Land in the vicinity of St. John's Way, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for employment uses (classes B1, B2 and B8).

Justification

F.1.14 The allocation is in fulfilment of Policy CS04 (Downham Market) of the Core Strategy. This states that 'In supporting the town provision will be made at least 15ha in existing employment areas; combined support for an employment area along the east bank of the Relief Channel south of Hythe Bridge; and as part of a balanced mix of uses within areas of renewal and replacement'. The allocated area is within the broad location indicated by Figure 5 of the Core Strategy Diagram.

F.1.15 The allocation is just over 16.5 ha, and is a continuation and extension of an existing industrial area.

F.1.16 The proposed site is located so as to take advantage of accessibility from the A1122 Primary Route (which links directly to the A10 trunk road) and their proximity to the railway (giving the potential to be served by an alternative freight mode). The sites are also within walking distance of the town centre and the railway station, which is advantageous for access to employment by public transport or on foot or cycle.

F.1.17 Almost the whole of the two areas are at high risk of flooding (Zone 3), but the employment uses allocated are categorized as 'less vulnerable' and compatible with this degree of risk by the National Planning Policy Framework and associated Technical Guidance. The allocated area is also in the flood defence breach Hazard Zone.

F Towns

Housing Land

F.1.18 Two areas to the east of the town are allocated for housing development, one to the south-east and the other to the north-east. The spread of the new housing across two sites will help provide a degree of choice and competition, reduce the impact upon existing residents and businesses in each locality, and mitigate the risk of the development of either area being held up by problems and help ensure timely delivery.

Policy F1.3 - Downham Market North-East: Land east of Lynn Road in vicinity of Bridle Lane

Land north-east of Downham Market of around 16.2 ha, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for a high quality, well landscaped development of 250 dwellings and associated facilities, subject to the following:

1. Inclusion with any planning application of:
 - a. a masterplan for the whole allocated area showing how the various considerations and requirements (including those below) can be integrated and delivered.
 - b. a transport assessment to demonstrate how adequate road access and improved walking and cycling facilities and connections would be satisfactorily achieved.
 - c. an ecological study that establishes that either:
 - i. there would be no negative impact on flora and fauna;
 - ii. or, if any negative impacts are identified, establishes that these could be suitably mitigated.
 - d. A heritage assets assessment to identify such assets (including archaeology) and measures to conserve these as appropriate.
 - e. an assessment of any contamination of land on the site, and how this will be remediated if necessary.
 - f. an assessment of the potential for extracting, either in advance of development or in the course of its development, any viable reserve of carrstone or silica sand on the site.
2. Incorporation in the development of:
 - a. design, layout and landscape planting to form an attractive and firm northern boundary, incorporating a landscape buffer;
 - b. a road access to Lynn Road
 - c. roads and layout to facilitate potential future development to the south and east of the site
 - d. local highway improvements to fully integrate the development in to the surrounding network;
 - e. pedestrian and cycle ways within and beyond the site, including links to Downham Market town centre;

- f. a network of roads, and cycle and pedestrian routes, which would facilitate potential future development beyond the eastern boundary of the site;
- g. a landscape planting scheme to integrate the development within the local landscape, and provide visual amenity and biodiversity within the development;
- h. land for allotments, and path improvements, in line with the Borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy as it relates to Downham Market;
- i. a proportion of affordable housing provision in accordance with the Council's current standards;
- j. upgrading of the water supply and sewerage infrastructure to service the site by agreement with Anglian Water;
- k. financial contributions towards the provision of infrastructure including;
 - additional primary and secondary school places,
 - strategic infrastructure for Downham Market, as set out in the Council's Infrastructure Study;
- l. outdoor play space of at least 1.4 hectares of (based on a population of 582, assuming 2.33 persons per dwelling, and a requirement of 2.4 ha per 1,000 population);
- m. protection and enhancement of public rights of way within or adjacent to the site;
- n. retention of wooded area in the south-west corner of the site for its nature conservation and amenity value;
- o. sustainable drainage systems to address surface-water run-off (including attenuation), flood risk, biodiversity and the avoidance of groundwater pollution;
- p. Inclusion within the development of neighbourhood shops and/or community facilities would be welcomed.

Justification

F.1.19 This site is currently mainly un-serviced/agricultural land (Grade 3) bordered by existing farmland and residential development. The site includes part of the former (World War II) Downham Market airfield.

F.1.20 The site is well located in relation to the main highway network and is within easy reach of the Town Centre. The adjacent main road, Lynn Road, has a bus service and a petrol station/convenience store. The Core Strategy Inspector's Report supported growth to the east of the town, including this area.

F.1.21 Traffic leaving the area to head out of town has ready access towards King's Lynn, and via A10 to south and east. Potential to link into and extend existing neighbourhood road network. A public bridleway runs along the eastern edge of the site, and another runs east-west through the site.

F.1.22 The locality is an attractive area of town for future residents, and hence readily marketable for new housing.

F Towns

F.1.23 The site is in multiple ownership, but commitment to develop has been expressed and discussions are said to have taken place between owners. The major landowner has undertaken substantial work already to establish development requirements and parameters.

F.1.24 There appear no fundamental constraints to development, and there is the potential for future expansion to the east and south beyond at some point in the future (subject to future development plans). In the long term this could potentially help link to future employment and leisure development at Bexwell to the east.

F.1.25 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stage 2: Final Report, 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including through the area of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements.

F.1.26 The site is at little risk of flooding (Zone 1).

F.1.27 The former WWII airfield use of the site gives rise to both archaeological interest and some potential for land contamination (understood to be minor), both of which warrant further examination.

F.1.28 The allocated site is considered suitable for development of 250 dwellings and any associated neighbourhood facilities. The intention is to provide a firm boundary to the north, preserving a separation between Downham Market and Wimbotsham, with appropriate landscape treatment to that boundary to integrate the development into the landscape and provide an attractive edge to the town. Together with allocation F2.4 (below), the allocation reflects the Town Council's preference for new housing development to be split between different areas around the town.

Policy F1.4 - Downham Market South-East: Land north of southern bypass in vicinity of Nightingale Lane

Land to the south east of Downham Market of around 13.9ha, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for a high quality, well designed development of 140 dwellings and associated facilities, making the most of the subject to:

1. Prior submission of:
 - a. a masterplan for the whole showing how the various considerations and requirements (including those below) can be integrated and delivered.
 - b. a transport assessment to demonstrate how adequate road access and improved bus links together with walking and cycling facilities and connections would be satisfactorily achieved.
 - c. an ecological Study that establishes that either:
 - i. there would be no negative impact on flora and fauna;
 - ii. or, if any negative impacts are identified, establishes that these could be suitably mitigated.

- d. an archaeological assessment, identifying the ;
- e. an assessment of the potential for extracting, either in advance of development or in the course of its development, any viable reserve of carr stone or silica sand on the site.

2. Provision of:

- a. high quality local highway improvements to fully integrate the development in to the surrounding network, addressing;
 - b.
 - i. a new road linking to the A1122 to provide access to the site;
 - ii. improved bus links to Downham Market town centre and associated infrastructure;
 - iii. pedestrian and cycle ways within and beyond the site, including links to Downham Market town centre and the existing byway on the site's western boundary;
 - iv. a network of roads, and cycle and pedestrian routes, which would facilitate potential future development beyond the boundaries of the current allocation (including to the north and east);
- b. a landscape planting scheme to integrate the development within the local landscape, and provide visual amenity and biodiversity within the development;
- c. protection of the existing band of trees across the southern part of the site, subject of a Tree Preservation Order, and incorporation into the overall layout in a way that takes advantage of their potential contribution to the amenity of the area, and is likely to facilitate their long term protection and maintenance.
- d. a proportion of affordable housing provision in accordance with the Council's current standards;
- e. land for allotments, and path improvements, in line with the Borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy as it relates to Downham Market;
- f. upgrading of the water supply and sewerage infrastructure to service the site by agreement with Anglian Water;
- g. financial contributions towards the provision of infrastructure including:
 - a.
 - i. additional primary and secondary school places,
 - ii. strategic infrastructure for Downham Market, as set out in the Council's Infrastructure Study;
- h. outdoor play space of at least 0.78 hectares of (based on a population of 326, assuming 2.33 persons per dwelling, and a requirement of 2.4 ha per 1,000 population);
- i. protection and enhancement of public rights of way within the site;

F Towns

- j. sustainable drainage systems to address surface-water run-off (including attenuation), flood risk, biodiversity and the avoidance of groundwater pollution;
- k. Inclusion within the development of neighbourhood shops and/or community facilities would be welcomed.

Justification

F.1.29 The site is currently agricultural land (and a single dwelling), bordered by existing residential development to the west, farmland to the east, and the A1122 road to the south.

F.1.30 The Core Strategy Inspector's Report supported growth to the east of the town, which includes this general area. The specific allocated site is within easy reach of the town centre. The site is well related to the town's main highway network. A new access will be required onto the town's southern bypass (A1122). The site has cycling and pedestrian access, and this would provide a more direct route to the town centre, thus helping encourage non-car journeys. A restricted byway, Nightingale Lane, runs down the western edge of the site, giving access to a bridge across the A1122 and beyond to the south, and into the residential road network to the north-west.

F.1.31 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stage 2: Final Report, 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including through the area of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements.

F.1.32 The allocated land has been actively promoted by the owner's agent, and is said to be readily available for development.

F.1.33 There is the potential for further development beyond the allocated site boundaries at some point in the future (subject to future development plans), but the Council considers that 140 dwellings are an appropriate allocation during the current plan period, and together with allocation F1.3 (above), reflects the Town Council's preference for new housing development to be split between different areas around the town.

F.2 Hunstanton

Hunstanton

Main Town

Description

F.2.1 Hunstanton is the smallest of the three towns in the Borough with a population of 4,229. The town acts as a service centre for the surrounding rural area, a local employment centre and is also a successful seaside resort. It is situated on the Norfolk coast some 16 miles from King's

Lynn and, to the east, the town of Wells-next-the-Sea is 17 miles away. Hunstanton is situated on the west coast of Norfolk at the mouth of the Wash and stands at the highest point on this geological shelf as the land slopes gently downwards to the north, east and south of the town.

F.2.2 Hunstanton evolved from the vision of Henry Styleman Le Strange for a planned coastal holiday village to be built on his own land, with the focal point to be a triangular green sloping down to the sea. The Golden Lion Hotel was the first building (1846) but development remained slow until the Great Eastern Counties Railway decided to build the line from King's Lynn to Hunstanton in 1862. Under the patronage of his son Hamon Le Strange, and spurred on by the investment boom between 1850 and 1870, Hunstanton soon expanded beyond the original planned coastal village to become a fully fledged Victorian seaside resort. Its main buildings are substantial but not over grand; its squares and open spaces are elegant yet informal. It is a comfortable, modest place, small in architectural scale with well-defined boundaries. Its character is spacious, breezy and green, where the effect of the open sea and sky has a strong impact on the light, views and settings of the buildings. The Hunstanton Conservation Area was first designated in 1984 and its boundaries were extended in 2009.

F.2.3 The Wash is recognised internationally, nationally and locally as a critically important site for wildlife. A summary of relevant statutory designations on The Wash includes; Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), National Nature Reserve (NNR), Ramsar Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, and European Marine Site.

F.2.4 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies that broadly the town is not constrained by flood risk, except for an area to the south of the town which is subject to tidal flood zones 2 and 3 (medium and high risk).

F.2.5 The town has limited transport links, with road access to the town from the A149. However there is a regular bus service to King's Lynn, surrounding villages, and also along the Norfolk coast.

F.2.6 The Core Strategy states that the town will provide for at least 580 new homes by the end of plan period, with allocations of at least 220 new dwellings and approximately 1 ha of employment land. The policies below go beyond this and allocates for 330 dwellings in total. It identifies directions of urban expansion for the town and a broad location for employment expansion (Core Strategy, p102, Figure 10). The Core Strategy set general directions of growth for urban expansion to the east of the A149, and immediately south of the town. Research and consultation since that time has clarified the key infrastructure requirements, impact on the environment (natural and historic), and the preferences for growth areas from key stakeholders including Hunstanton Town Council. This has aided the Council in determining the development allocations and policy details.

Policies

F.2.7 Policy CS05 (in the Cores Strategy) outlines our policy approach for the town, providing further information and guidance on its role as a service hub for the local area, and a tourist destination with a range of facilities / activities. The following pages detail the policies for Hunstanton town centre area and retailing, and proposed site allocations including housing and employment land.

567200 000000

567600 000000

Legend

-  Development Boundary
-  Disused Railway Trackway (DM13)
-  Strategic Road Network (DM12)
-  Town Centre Area

341200 000000

341200 000000

340800 000000

340800 000000

340400 000000

340400 000000

567200 000000

567600 000000

Hunstanton Town Centre Area (Policy F2.1) Zoomed

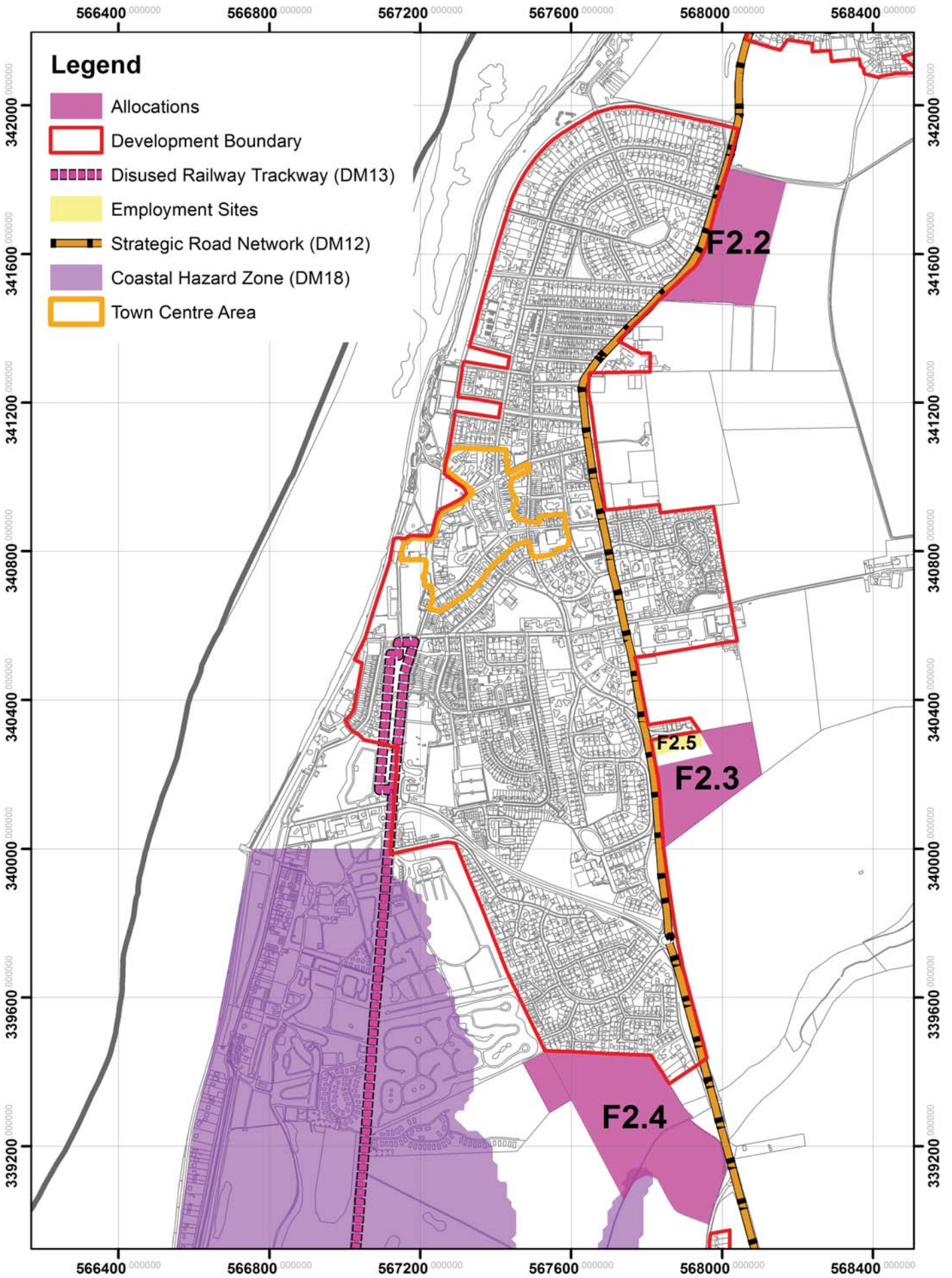
Town Centre Area and Retailing

Policy F2.1 Hunstanton - Town Centre Area and Retailing

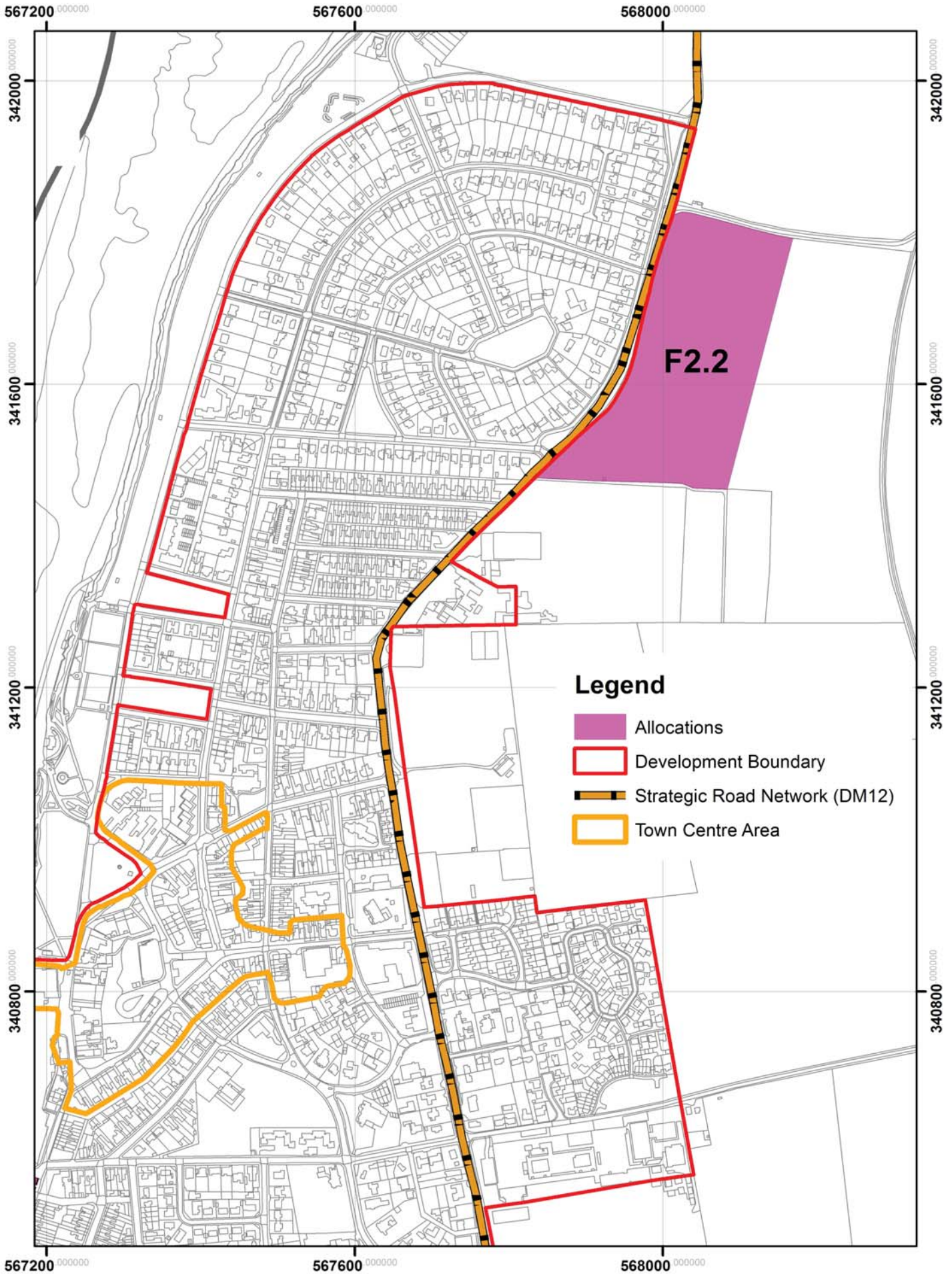
1. A town centre area for Hunstanton is defined on the Policies Map. This will be taken as the town centre for the purposes of retail development in and around Hunstanton, and the application of the sequential test in the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The Borough Council will promote this area as the prime focus in the town for retail, community and professional services, leisure, culture and entertainment. The historic character, local distinctiveness, facilities, amenity and vibrancy of the area will be maintained and enhanced, to strengthen the appeal of the town centre.
3. In order to achieve this, proposals for retail, offices serving visiting members of the public, hotels, assembly and leisure uses, and community and cultural facilities (e.g. Use Classes A, C1, D1, D2 and sui generis theatres) will be particularly encouraged in the area and will be assessed against their compliance with Policy CS13.
4. Other uses which contribute to the character and vibrancy of the town centre will be encouraged, including residential (C3), and offices/light industry (B1). The development of high quality housing in the town centre would be particularly welcomed for its contribution to its architectural quality, social mix, and economic health.
5. Additional general industrial uses (B2) and warehousing and distribution (B8) will not be permitted in the town centre area unless it can be demonstrated that they will not have adverse impacts on the character, amenity and traffic of the town centre.
6. The retention of active frontages (i.e. window displays, entrances, and views of internal activity, etc.) will be encouraged in the main streets of the Town Centre, as will the refurbishment or replacement of shop frontages where this secures an active frontage and strengthens the local distinctiveness of the town and its heritage, and the active use of upper storeys of buildings. However, this does not preclude the removal of retail frontages outside the main retail streets of the town.

Justification

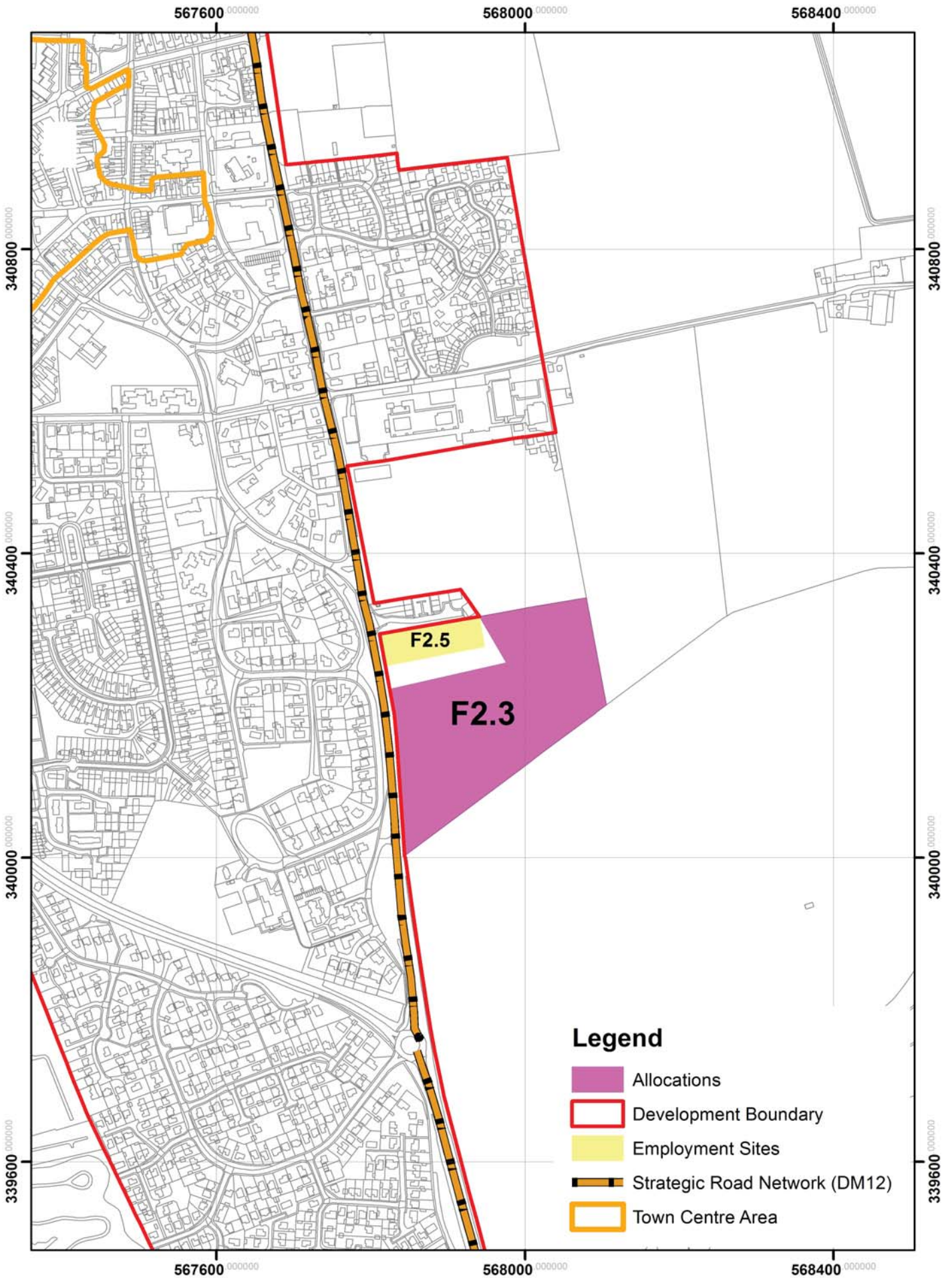
F.2.8 Ensuring the vitality of town centres is a fundamental part of national planning policy. In order to remain competitive, and to avoid 'dead' shop fronts, it is desirable to promote a range of different uses in addition to retail in town centres. This policy should help to promote a year round economy in Hunstanton as a coastal resort and enhance its role as a market town offering a range of services within a rural hinterland. The defined town centre is the prime focus for services and amenities. A mixture of uses is also desirable in the surrounding seafront area to complement the town centre and to provide facilities for residents and tourists visiting the sea front.



Inset F2 Hunstanton



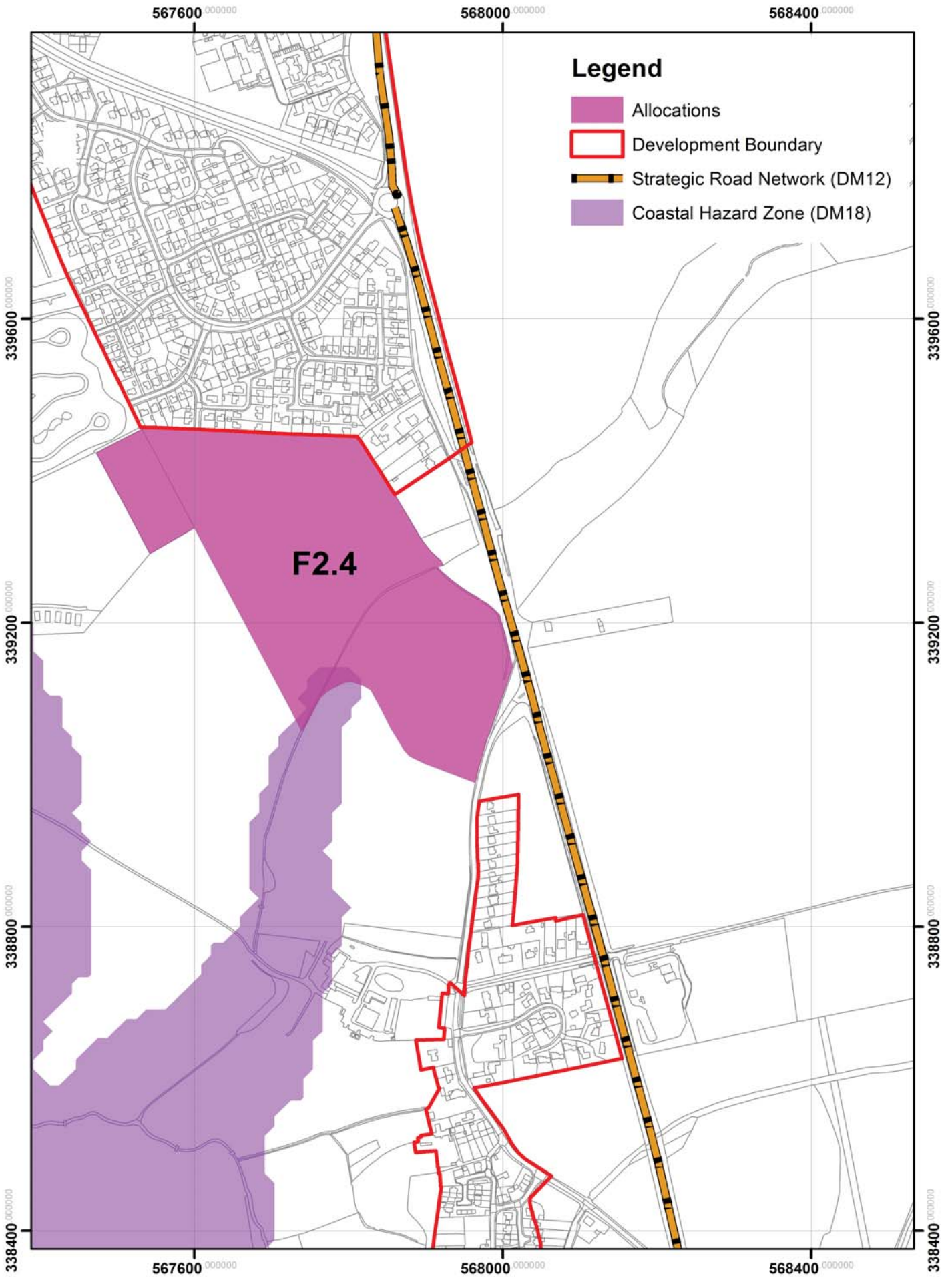
Hunstant (F2.2) Zoomed



Legend

- Allocations
- Development Boundary
- Employment Sites
- Strategic Road Network (DM12)
- Town Centre Area

Hunstanton (F2.3&F2.5) Zoomed



Hunstanton (F2.4) Zoomed

F Towns

Site Allocations

Policy F2.2 Hunstanton - Land to the east of Cromer Road

Land amounting to 6.2 hectares is allocated for residential development of 120 dwellings. Development will be subject to compliance with all of the following:

1. Provision of safe vehicular and pedestrian access (to be from the A149) including a new crossing point and access to sustainable transport links,
2. Provision of affordable housing in line with current standards;
3. Submission of details of layout, phasing, and appearance;
4. Submission of details showing how sustainable drainage measures will integrate with the design of the development and how the drainage system will contribute to the amenity and biodiversity of the development. A suitable plan for the future management and maintenance of the SUDS should be included with the submission;
5. Incorporation of a high quality landscaping scheme including the retention and enhancement of established hedgerow and the planting of new shelter belts and woodland to the north and east boundaries to minimise the impact of the development on the setting of Old Hunstanton Conservation Area, the Grade I Listed Hunstanton Hall as well as the Hall's park and gardens which are listed as Grade II and the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
6. Submission of a Heritage Asset Statement that establishes that there will be no negative impact on Heritage Assets in the locality, accompanied by an Archaeological Field Evaluation of the site;
7. Outdoor play/recreation space of at least 0.67 ha (based on a population of 280, assuming 2.33 persons per dwelling, and a requirement of 2.4ha per 1,000 persons);
8. Enhanced informal recreational provision on, or in the vicinity of the allocated site to limit the likelihood of additional recreational pressure (particularly in relation to exercising dogs) on Habitats Regulations protected nature conservation sites in the wider area. This may require open space provision over and above the Council's normal standards for play space detailed in the previous clause, and may consist of some combination of
 - informal open space (over and above the Council's normal standards for play space);
 - pedestrian routes which provide a variety of terrain, routes and links to greenspace and/or the wider footpath network;
 - a contribution to implementation of the Borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy as it relates to Hunstanton, or other greenspace provision or management in the wider area within which the site is located.
9. Provision of a programme of publicity aimed at both occupants of the development and other residents of Hunstanton, highlighting the opportunities for recreation (especially dog walking) in the vicinity avoiding areas within the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Protection Area, and the sensitivity of those areas to dog walking and other recreation.

10. Submission of a project level habitats regulations assessment, with particular regard to the potential for indirect impacts through recreational disturbance on the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area.
11. The site overlies a Groundwater Vulnerability Zone. Accordingly, the developer should address any risks to controlled waters from contamination at the site, following the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Environment Agency's 'Guiding Principles for Land Contamination';
12. A financial contribution for any upgrades or additional provision in terms of water supply, sewerage, schools, highways etc. necessary to serve the development.

Justification

F.2.9 This site (submitted site ref. no. 828/851), together with allocations F2.3 and F2.4 (see below) provide the most sustainable opportunities, of the available options, to deliver the additional housing needed in the town. Site F2.2 is in reasonable proximity to the town centre and other facilities of the town, and avoids the adverse landscape impacts of the alternative potential development sites to the south of the town. H1 alone, however, is insufficient to meet the full amount of development identified as needed in Hunstanton by the adopted Core Strategy at a density commensurate with the character of the town and the site's surroundings.

F.2.10 The site is flat, meaning it could be fairly easily screened from the wider countryside, in comparison to land to the south of the settlement which is highly visible on the approach to Hunstanton from the A149 due to the topography of the site. The flat topography of the site makes it easy to develop and will encourage new residents to walk and cycle from their homes.

F.2.11 The built extent of Old Hunstanton is approximately 400m north of the site, and is a designated Conservation Area. Undeveloped agricultural land separates the two settlements, and distant views of the southern extent of Old Hunstanton can be seen from the northern boundary of the site. However, any new development on the site would not extend beyond the northern built extent of Hunstanton, situated to the west of the A149. Additionally, a significant 400m belt of agricultural land would maintain the gap between the settlements. The policy contains a clause to ensure that a significant, high quality landscaping scheme will be delivered on the northern and eastern boundaries. This will help screen new development from the wider countryside and reduce the visual impact on the setting of Old Hunstanton Conservation Area to the north, the setting of Hunstanton Hall and Listed Buildings to the north east and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east.

F.2.12 The site comprises agricultural land (Grade 3) with some established hedgerow/trees forming the site boundary. There are no major landscape features of importance within the site boundary. Whilst the Council will seek to retain established trees and hedgerow, new development will result in the loss of productive agricultural land. It is not possible to allocate the level of growth sought for Hunstanton on previously developed land, therefore the Council considers that a balance should be struck to enable some growth in Hunstanton whilst ensuring the remaining surrounding agricultural land can remain productive and accessible to agricultural vehicles.

F Towns

F.2.13 The Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment Report identified the need for a range of measures to ensure no adverse impact on the nearby designated nature conservation areas through exacerbation of existing adverse recreational impacts. These measures are set out in the policy.

F.2.14 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stages 1 & 2, 2009 & 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including the vicinity of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements, and this ties in with the desire to ensure high standards of amenity and quality of life for residents of the new development, and the need for additional green infrastructure mentioned in relation to habitat protection.

F.2.15 There are Historic Environment Records relating to some archaeological finds such as Iron Age pottery and potential evidence of post-medieval banks. Therefore, the policy requires the developer to submit a Heritage Asset Statement and conduct an Archaeological Field Evaluation to understand the potential archaeological impact of new development.

F.2.16 Anglian Water has indicated the presence of a water mains crossing the site. Further discussion would be required between the Council, Anglian Water and the developer to identify whether this would affect the layout or construction of development if this site is allocated for housing.

Policy F2.3 Hunstanton - Land south of Hunstanton Commercial Park

Land south of Hunstanton Commercial Park Land amounting to 5 hectares, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for 50 residential units comprising a mixture of:

- market housing;
- affordable housing; and
- housing with care.

Development will be subject to compliance with all of the following:

1. Provision of safe vehicular and pedestrian access (to be from the A149) including a new crossing point (to serve proposals F2.3 and F2.5) and access to sustainable transport links;
2. Submission of details of layout, phasing, and appearance;
3. Incorporation of a high quality landscaping scheme including the retention and enhancement of established hedgerow and the planting of new shelter belts to the north, east and southern boundaries to minimise the impact of the development on the setting of Grade II* listed Smithdon High School and gym, Grade II* listed and scheduled remains of St Andrew's Chapel and the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
4. Submission of details showing how sustainable drainage measures will integrate with the design of the development and how the drainage system will contribute to the amenity and biodiversity of the development. A suitable plan for the future management and maintenance of the SUDS should be included with the submission;

5. Submission of a Heritage Asset Statement that establishes that there will be no negative impact on Heritage Assets in the locality, accompanied by an Archaeological Field Evaluation of the site, if required;
6. Provision of affordable housing on site, or an equivalent financial contribution, to meet current standards.
7. Outdoor play/recreation space of at least 0.28 ha (based on a population of 233, assuming 2.33 persons per dwelling, and a requirement of 2.4ha per 1,000 persons);
8. Enhanced informal recreational provision on, or in the vicinity of the allocated site to limit the likelihood of additional recreational pressure (particularly in relation to exercising dogs) on Habitats Regulations protected nature conservation sites in the wider area. This provision may consist of some combination of
 - informal open space (over and above the Council's normal standards for play space);
 - pedestrian routes which provide a variety of terrain, routes and links to greenspace and/or the wider footpath network;
 - a contribution to implementation of the Borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy as it relates to Hunstanton, or other greenspace provision or management in the wider area within which the site is located.
9. Provision of a programme of publicity aimed at both occupants of the development and other residents of Hunstanton, highlighting the opportunities for recreation (especially dog walking) in the vicinity avoiding areas within the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area, and the sensitivity of those areas to dog walking and other recreation.
10. Submission of a project level habitats regulations assessment, with particular regard to the potential for indirect impacts through recreational disturbance on the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area.
11. A financial contribution for any upgrades or additional provision in terms of water supply, sewerage, schools, highways etc. necessary to serve the development.

Justification

F.2.17 The topography of the site is relatively flat and the site is surrounded by development on two sides (adjacent to industrial estate and secondary school to the north, and residential development to the west). The site is a smaller and more enclosed field than most of the agricultural land to the east of Hunstanton. All of these factors will aid visual screening of the site from the wider countryside, reducing any potential detrimental impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The policy includes a clause to ensure that the existing hedgerow on the southern and eastern border is improved to help screen development from the wider area.

F.2.18 The option of new development on land to the south of Hunstanton Commercial Park has received the greatest level of positive response from infrastructure providers, key stakeholders, local interest groups, Hunstanton Parish Council and the public. This site is located closer to the town centre and local services of all the potential options for development outside the proposed

F Towns

development boundary. The site therefore offers the greatest opportunity for new residents to walk and cycle to local services. Norfolk County Council Highways Authority has indicated this land as their preferred option for housing. They have specified that local highway improvements would be required including a crossing point for the A149 and extension to the 30mph limit to deliver this allocation.

F.2.19 The Council would prefer to allocate a mix of specialist residential development (defined as accommodation which has been specifically designed and built to meet the needs of the elderly which could be of varying tenure), market dwellings and affordable housing to complement the proposed Care Home on F2.3. Such proposals will offer a wider choice of residential accommodation for local people and new residents in an area which is characterised by an ageing population.

F.2.20 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stage 2: Final Report, 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including through the area of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements.

F.2.21 Development in this location would not compromise the strategic gap between Hunstanton and adjacent settlements. The site is adjacent to Smithdon High School Development and the Grade II* listed and scheduled remains of St Andrew's Chapel to the south-east. The policy includes a clause to give emphasis to the importance of addressing impacts upon heritage assets and their settings in the design of the proposed housing.

F.2.22 Whilst the site is currently in productive agricultural use (grade 3) as previously stated, it is not possible to allocate the level of growth sought for Hunstanton on previously developed land. The Council considers that a balance should be struck to enable some growth in Hunstanton whilst ensuring the remaining surrounding agricultural land can remain productive and accessible to agricultural vehicles.

F.2.23 The Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment Report identified the need for a range of measures to ensure no adverse impact on the nearby designated nature conservation areas through exacerbation of existing adverse recreational impacts. These measures are set out in the policy.

F.2.24 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stages 1 & 2, 2009 & 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including the vicinity of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements, and this ties in with the desire to ensure high standards of amenity and quality of life for residents of the new development, and the need for additional green infrastructure mentioned in relation to habitat protection.

F.2.25 Anglian Water have indicated the presence of a water mains crossing the site. Further discussion would be required between the Council, Anglian Water and the developer to identify whether this would affect the layout or construction of development if this site is allocated for housing.

Policy F2.4 Hunstanton - Land north of Hunstanton Road

Land north of Hunstanton Road amounting to 12.6 hectares should be allocated for development of 163 dwellings on 6.2 ha of the site, and open space on 6.4 ha of the site subject to:

1. Provision of affordable housing in line with current standards;
2. Provision of safe vehicular and pedestrian access;
3. Submission of a final masterplan for the site incorporating details of layout, phasing and conceptual appearance;
4. Details of plans for the proposed open space with regards to public access, recreational and ecological opportunities, potential hard and soft landscaping including play space(s) and arrangements for the ongoing management of the space;
5. Enhanced informal recreational provision on, or in the vicinity of the allocated site to limit the likelihood of additional recreational pressure (particularly in relation to exercising dogs) on Habitats Regulations protected nature conservation sites in the wider area. This provision may consist of some combination of:
 - informal open space (over and above the Council's normal standards for play space);
 - pedestrian routes which provide a variety of terrain, routes and links to greenspace and/or the wider footpath network;
 - a contribution to implementation of the Borough's Green Infrastructure Strategy as it relates to Hunstanton, or other greenspace provision or management in the wider area within which the site is located.
6. Provision of a programme of publicity aimed at both occupants of the development and other residents of Hunstanton, highlighting the opportunities for recreation (especially dog walking) in the vicinity avoiding areas within the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Protection Area, and the sensitivity of those areas to dog walking and other recreation;
7. Submission of a project level habitats regulations assessment, with particular regard to the potential for indirect impacts through recreational disturbance on the Wash Special Protection Area and the North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area;
8. Incorporation of a high quality landscaping scheme to limit the visual impact of proposed development on the countryside and on the southern approach to Hunstanton;
9. Submission of details of sustainable drainage measures and how they will integrate with the design of the development and how they will contribute to the amenity and biodiversity of the development. A suitable plan for the future management and maintenance of the SUDS should be included with the submission;
10. An Archaeological Field Evaluation of the site should be undertaken following on from the results of the desk based Archaeological Assessment. This should be undertaken prior to consideration of extraction of minerals from the site;
11. Submission of an Environmental Statement that satisfies Norfolk County Council that:

F Towns

- the applicant has carried out investigations to identify whether the resource (sand, gravel, carr stone) is viable for mineral extraction; and if the mineral resource is viable, that:
 - the applicant has considered whether it could be extracted economically prior to development taking place; and if the mineral resource can be extracted economically, whether (or not):
 - there are opportunities to use the onsite resource during the construction phase of development.
12. A financial contribution to existing infrastructure and/or services or provision of new infrastructure necessary to serve the development to be determined upon submission of the planning application.

Justification

F.2.26 The site is grade 3 agricultural land surrounded by a golf course to the west, a residential estate to the north, the A149 to the east and agricultural fields to the south. The topography of the site rises from a low point in the south east corner to higher ground on the northern boundary and the site is therefore open to view, particularly when approaching the town from the south. Technical reports submitted relating to Ecological Feasibility, Archaeology Assessment and Visual Assessment suggest that land be left undeveloped to the south, thereby reducing the potential for landscape intrusion and also allowing for enhanced ecological and recreational benefit. The policy contains provision for archaeological investigation. The existing tree belt to the west provide a degree of screening which should be reflected in detailed layouts.

F.2.27 The majority of the site is not at high risk of flooding and the housing development itself should not be affected by flooding. There are some general infrastructure issues relating to the capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Works which apply to all allocations in Hunstanton. The principle of access from the A149 has been established to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. The junction details can be determined at application stage. Provision needs to be made for pedestrian and cycle access to Hunstanton town through existing development to the north. Any new road would need to cross a tributary of the Heacham River; consent would be required from the Lead Flood Authority.

F.2.28 The maintenance of a strategic gap between Heacham and Hunstanton is of great importance. It is acknowledged that part of the allocation site falls in Heacham Parish, however the proposed housing does not. In addition, although the site is not in the Norfolk Coast AONB, it forms part of its setting and any development on the site should address views in and out of the AONB.

F.2.29 The Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment Report identified the need for a range of measures to ensure no adverse impact on the nearby designated nature conservation areas through exacerbation of existing adverse recreational impacts. These measures are set out in the policy.

F.2.30 The Council's Green Infrastructure Study (Stages 1 & 2, 2009 & 2010) identifies enhancements to the footway network around the town and including the vicinity of the allocated site. The proposed development is intended both to benefit from and contribute to such enhancements, and this ties in with the desire to ensure high standards of amenity and quality of life for residents of the new development, and the need for additional green infrastructure mentioned in relation to habitat protection.

Employment Land

Policy F2.5 Hunstanton - Land south of Hunstanton Commercial Park

Land south of Hunstanton Commercial Park Land amounting to 1 hectare is and identified on the Polices Map is allocated for employment use, subject to the following:

1. A financial contribution for any upgrades or additional provision in terms of water supply, sewerage, highways etc. necessary to serve the development;
2. The site overlies a Groundwater Vulnerability Zone. Accordingly, the developer should address any risks to controlled waters from contamination at the site, following the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Environment Agency's 'Guiding Principles for Land Contamination'.

Justification

F.2.31 The Core Strategy sought to renew an allocation for employment of 1 hectare in size to the east of the A149 which had originally been identified in the 1998 Local Plan.

F.2.32 The site is a smaller part of submitted site 833, currently the north-west corner of an agricultural field immediately south of Hunstanton Commercial Park and Smithdon High School. As detailed in the justification for F2.3, the site is chosen for a number of factors but mainly because it is a sustainable location for growth adjacent to existing development and it's the closest of all options to Hunstanton Town Centre and associated services and facilities. There is an established access to the commercial area from the A149, however, depending on the nature of the employment use it may be preferable to develop the site in conjunction with allocation F2.3 which will require a new access point onto the A149. Linking these developments may optimise the viability of the development enabling a greater contribution to new infrastructure.

F.2.33 Hunstanton Town Council has promoted the use of the site for a care home. The Borough Council would accept such a use on this site having regard to the employment opportunities associated with such development and the level of identified need for such accommodation in Hunstanton and the nearby villages of Heacham and Dersingham. Hunstanton is one of relatively few settlements in the northern coastal area of Norfolk that have a sufficient population to sustain a high level of services and facilities and therefore this site comprises an ideal location to situate a new Care Home.

F Towns

F.2.34 It would also offer the potential for the integration of the development of this site with housing allocation F2.3 adjacent. However, the site's owners have other aspirations, there are no detailed proposals for such a development, and it remains to be seen whether this type of development can actually be delivered on this site. Nevertheless, the Borough Council is keen to further explore this potential, invites comments on the possibility, and would be happy to discuss with prospective developers and service providers the potential for development of a residential care home on this site.

F.3 Wisbech Fringes (inc.Walsoken)

Settlements adjacent to Wisbech

Description

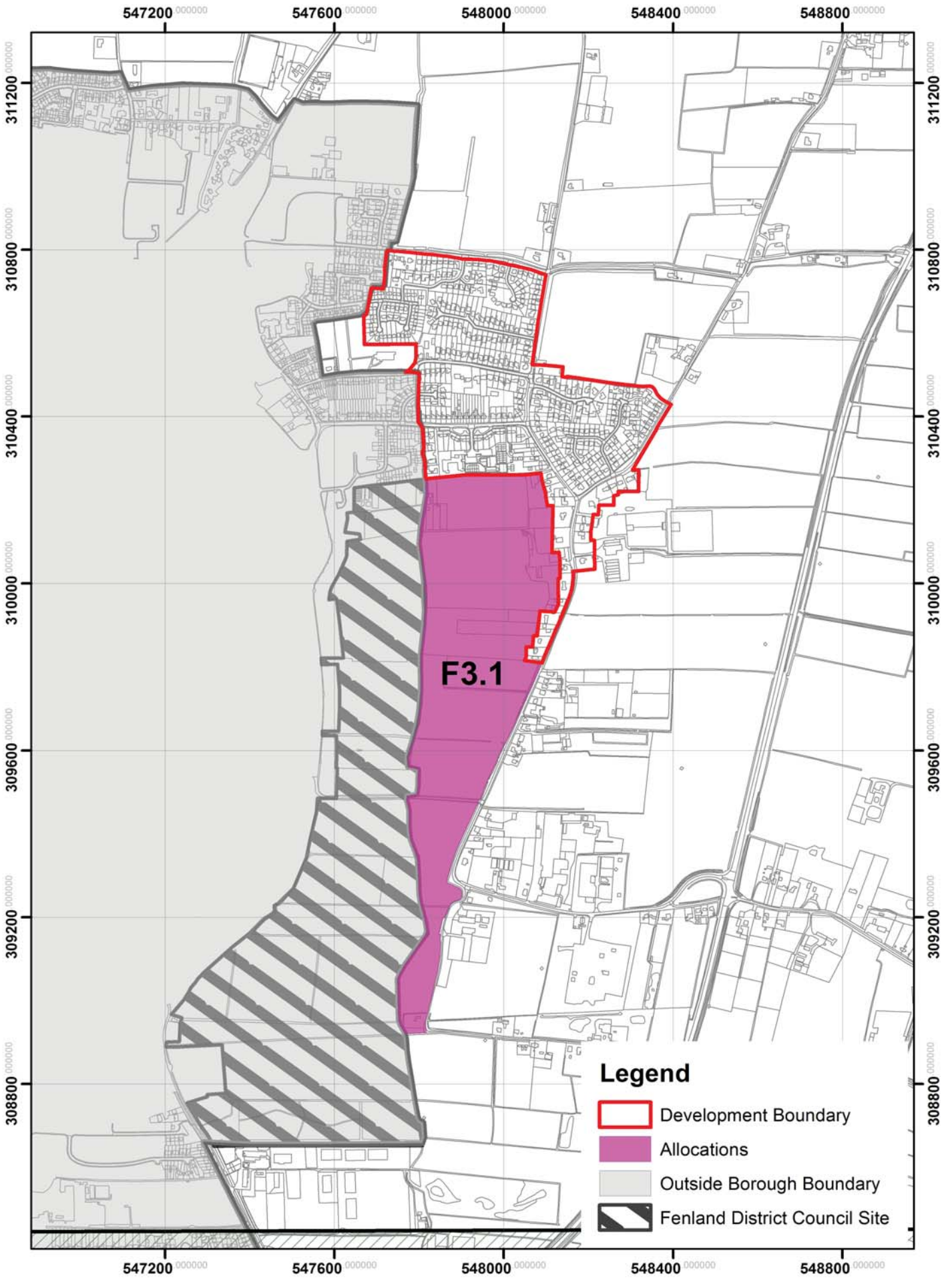
F.3.1 The Core Strategy acknowledges the fact that for Wisbech (which is in the Fenland District Council Area) to cater for growth within its catchment some of the growth would likely need to take place in the adjacent district of West Norfolk. Wisbech is located at the edge of West Norfolk, and taking into account constraints to development in other parts of the Wisbech area it is likely that some development would need to be accommodated in West Norfolk. Wisbech, with a population of some 22,840 people is the largest settlement in Fenland district and has a significant range of services and facilities. It is an important destination for the surrounding rural settlements (including some of those in West Norfolk). However, the growth of Wisbech is constrained by the capacity of the highway network both internal (i.e. within the town) and external (i.e. the A47) and flood risk issues in some sectors. This makes the area adjacent to the town in West Norfolk a significant opportunity for sustainable growth.

Strategic Background

F.3.2 The boundary with Fenland District Council is close or adjacent to the north and east of the town. Development in these areas is subject to continuing joint working with Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Norfolk County Council. Of particular importance in this regard is the need to ensure that development proposed for Wisbech in the Fenland Local Plan successfully complements existing and/or new development proposed at Wisbech which falls within the Borough Council area.

F.3.3 The Borough Council's Core Strategy makes provision for a minimum of 550 houses for the edge of Wisbech in the period to 2026. Strategic directions of growth are indicated in the Core Strategy towards Walsoken and West Walton as well as towards Emneth. The area to the edge of Wisbech is a suitable and sustainable location for growth in West Norfolk, but joint planning with Fenland District Council is necessary to establish the ultimate form of planned expansion for Wisbech.

F.3.4 The resulting development will comprise (in Fenland) the whole of the land to the east of Wisbech as identified in the Fenland Local Plan and shown on the accompanying plan, plus additional adjoining land to the east and/or south of that land as falling in King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council's administrative area. The precise boundaries for this additional land is considered below.



Inset F3 Wisbech Fringes

Wisbech Fringe

Policy F3.1 Wisbech Fringe - Land east of Wisbech (west of Burrowgate Road)

Land to the east of Wisbech (approximately 25.3 hectares), as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for 550 dwellings, subject to:

1. Prior to the submission of a detailed planning application, the applicant should provide:
 - a. an ecological study that establishes either:
 - i. there would be no negative impact on flora and fauna; or
 - ii. if any negative impacts are identified, establishes that these could be suitably mitigated.
 - b. an archaeological assessment;
 - c. a landscape assessment to determine whether existing areas of mature orchards, could be retained and enhanced to serve as multi functional public open space areas with amenity and biodiversity value;
 - d. A broad concept plan / masterplan for the wider development area (including the adjacent Fenland allocations) showing how the various considerations and requirements (including those below) can be integrated and delivered. This is to be agreed jointly by both Fenland District Council and the Borough Council.
2. An application should include the provision of:
 - a. The proposed access(es) to serve the development must ensure that there is no unacceptably net adverse impact on the local and strategic highway network and on existing residential amenity. Access towards the A47 will probably be in the form of a new junction, with the arrangements for delivering such upgrade being agreed as part of the comprehensive delivery scheme for the allocation;
 - b. Local highway improvements to fully integrate the development into the surrounding network;
 - c. Improved bus links to Wisbech town centre and associated infrastructure;
 - d. Pedestrian and cycle ways within and beyond the site, including links to Wisbech town centre;
 - e. Additional primary and secondary school places, and if required the provision of a site for a new primary school;
 - f. Strategic infrastructure for the wider area proportionate to the size of the development;
 - g. Protection and enhancement of public rights of way within the site;
 - h. Sustainable drainage systems to address surface-water run-off, flood risk, biodiversity and the avoidance of groundwater pollution.
 - i. Provision of affordable housing in line with current standards.

F Towns

Site Justification and factors to be considered in the wider expansion

F.3.5 Transportation

- The Highways Authorities in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk together with the Highways Agency consider that adequate arrangements for the scale of traffic likely to be generated can be designed:
 - The adjacent development and road network on the edge of Wisbech provides opportunity to link to already established routes.
 - Suitable improvements to local connectivity for public transport; cycle and pedestrian linkages into Wisbech town primarily through the Fenland area proposals which abut the town itself.
 - Improvements to the Broadend Road junction with the A47.
- As part of the planning for the expansion of Wisbech Fenland District Council are preparing a transport strategy for the town.
- Increased traffic – Design and Access Statements will be required considering safety and cumulative impact on the existing network.

F.3.6 Design

- The site is contained in the local context by Broadend Road and to the north by the development fronting on to Chapall Road. Further to the west it adjoins open land abutting Wisbech and Stow Road. There will be a need to screen development from the wider countryside (particularly to the east towards the A47 by retaining/improving existing hedgerows and creating new green areas for potential wildlife habitat.
- The distance and intervening landscape and fragmented views provides some of this screening.
- The boundary between Fenland and West Norfolk is an administrative boundary, but physically on the ground it is difficult to see any obvious dividing line or feature.
- It is important that there is a comprehensive approach to the wider development which will straddle the administrative boundary. The wider context of the expansion as part of the growth of Wisbech is the determining factor. Hence the policy requirement for a co-ordinated and comprehensive layout.
- Careful consideration of the historic landscape is needed using local factors to influence new designs, but also ensuring recorded and unrecorded finds are protected.
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems is needed but reflecting the existing drainage patterns.

F.3.7 Infrastructure

- Further development will need to fund improvements to existing infrastructure, particularly expansion to existing schools. In this regard a joint approach with Cambridgeshire has been initiated as the majority of children are like to attend Wisbech schools.
- Green Infrastructure – There is capacity to create new publicly accessible green space with reference to existing local features. Suitable linkages offsite are required as appropriate.

- Electricity – electrical supply capacity is tight, the area is likely to require its power infrastructure to be upgraded in response to growth, but again as part of wider Wisbech considerations. The Adopted Fenland Local Plan addresses the wider infrastructure situation..

F.3.8 Community facilities

- Integrating the new community with the existing community will be required, but there are existing structures in Wisbech to build on and enhance. There is potential to have community involvement in the planning and design process and to promote long term community cohesion.
- Health – All options require expansion of facilities especially when the total scale of development in Wisbech is taken into account.

F.3.9 Affordable Housing

- Provision of new housing will increase the local housing stock which should improve local choice and affordability (in addition to the provision of some affordable housing).

F.3.10 Flood Risk

- A small portion of the site falls in flood zone 2, and a smaller portion in flood zone 3. It should be possible to avoid this land (in the extreme south east of the site) or use it for less vulnerable uses.

F Towns

Walsoken

F.3.11 The village of Walsoken is situated on the outskirts of Wisbech to the northeast of the town. There is little, if any, visible separation between Wisbech and Walsoken. The population of Walsoken is approximately 1,540.

F.3.12 The area within the borough is characterised by a uniform residential pattern, apart from the open space around the Church of All Saints. The buildings are predominantly modern in character and the material is mainly brick with interlocking tile roofs.

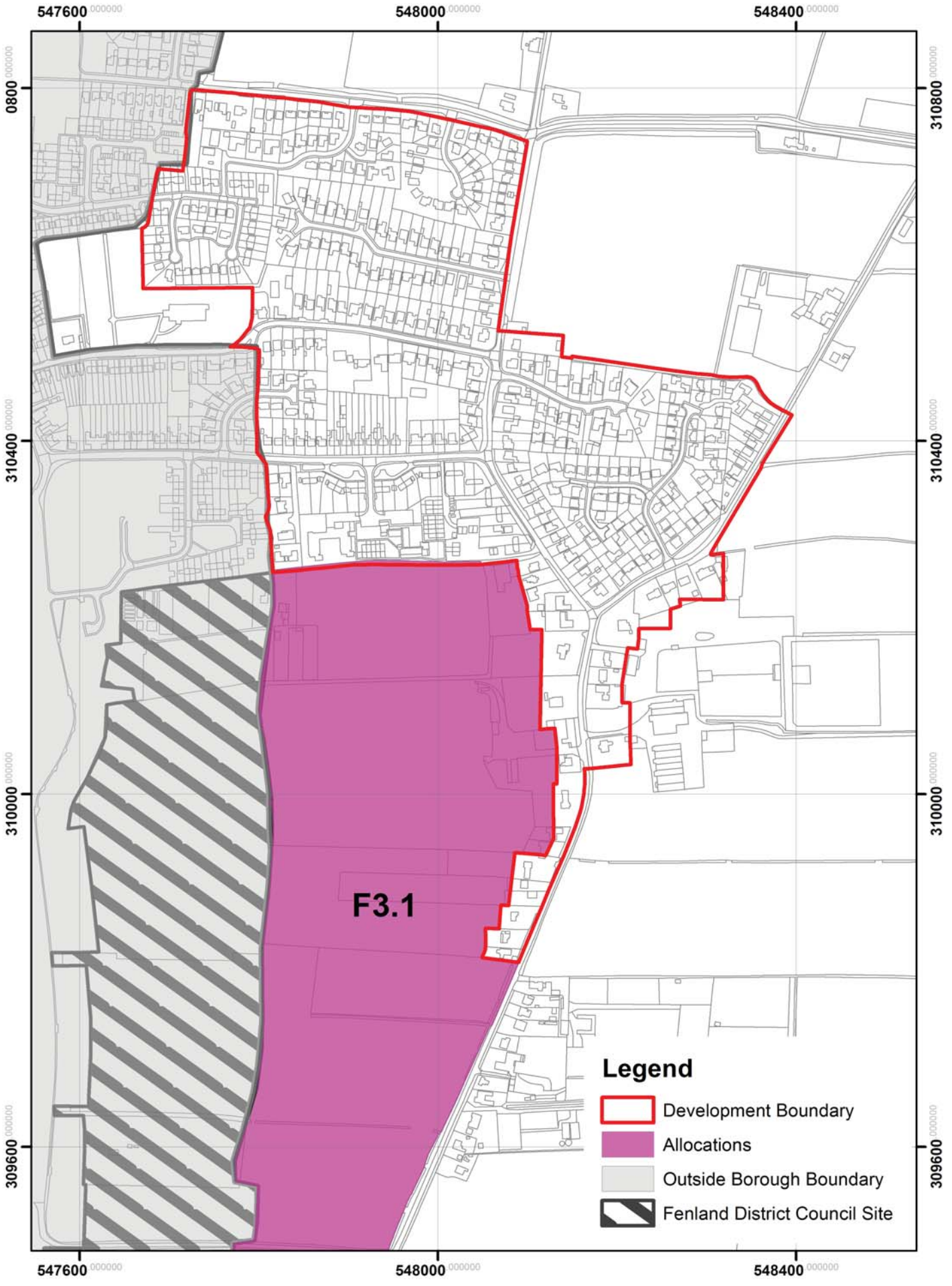
F.3.13 The Infrastructure Study (2010) identifies a number of issues which would need to be addressed as part of any new development within the area around the village. This includes the expansion of schools and healthcare, and potential improvements to the capacity of utilities. These are considered further below.

F.3.14 The Landscape Character Assessment (2007) refers to Walsoken bordering the 'Open Inland Fens' to the east and encompassing a rich mix of arable fields, fruit orchards, plantations and pasture. It has an intact mature landscape structure including the rows of poplars and large concentration of fruit orchards with panoramic views across the area, frequently framed by the orchards. There is a historic drainage network, and a strong sense of tranquillity throughout the area.

F.3.15 In terms of flood risk only a small part of the built area of the village is constrained and this is at low to medium risk (category 2).

F.3.16 The Core Strategy identifies Walsoken as a 'Settlement Adjacent to a Main Town', because although it has a range of services within the village itself, its proximity to Wisbech means that the settlement benefits from the range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the town.

F.3.17 A development boundary has been defined for Walsoken as shown on the next page.



Legend

-  Development Boundary
-  Allocations
-  Outside Borough Boundary
-  Fenland District Council Site

F Towns