

Changes to the Sustainability Appraisal following focused changes to the Core Strategy Pre Submission Document

Purpose of document

The aim of this document is to look at the focused changes for the Core Strategy Submission Document and ascertain whether these changes have an impact on the outcome of the original Sustainability Appraisal for the Core Strategy Submission Document.

The Sustainability Appraisal assesses the policies of the Core Strategy and scores each policy against a set of tested sustainability objectives. The Sustainability Appraisal acts as an audit trail for the policies in the Core Strategy and also measures positive and negative impacts of the policies. If there are negative impacts then changes to the policy or mitigation can be applied. This helps to build a sound document.

The aim of this particular exercise is to ascertain whether the new changes to the policies will have negative or positive environmental, social or economic impacts. This will show whether the Core Strategy continues to have a sustainable approach in light of the changes.

If there are negative effects due to the changes made then there will need to be measures put in place which will mitigate or cancel out the negative effect of the policy change.

Format of document

Firstly will be the proposed change. Next is a statement which demonstrates how this has affected the scores of the Sustainability Appraisal, if at all and draws a conclusion as to how to progress with the policy in light of any changes to the scores.

An overall summary is included at the end of this document for ease of reference.

Proposed change to policy

CS02 The Settlement Hierarchy

Change in categorisation of settlements.

Addition of settlements to existing 'Key Rural Service Centres to create joint 'Key Rural Service Centres.'

- Brancaster with Brancaster Staithe/Burnham Deepdale
- Terrington St. John with St. John's Highway/Tilney St Lawrence.
- Grimston/Pott Row with Gayton
- Methwold with Northwold

Therefore, Brancaster Staithe, Burnham Deepdale, Pott Row and Northwold will change from Rural Villages to joint Key Rural Service Centres.

Change in designation of Stoke Ferry from 'Rural village' to 'Key Rural Service Centre.'

Change in designation of the following settlements from 'Smaller villages and hamlets' to

'Rural Villages':

- Ashwicken
- Burnham Overy Staithe
- Flitcham
- Ten Mile Bank
- Tilney Fen End
- Walpole Marsh
- Walpole St Andrew
- Walpole Highway
- Wormegay

(note: Walpole Marsh/Walpole St Andrew and Walpole St Peter are now redefined as one Rural Village).

Change in designation of the following settlements from 'Rural Villages' to 'Smaller villages and hamlets':

- Nordelph
- Saddlebow
- Setchey
- Stow Bridge
- Tottenhill
- Wereham
- Wighenhall St. Mary Magdalen.

Addition of previously unnamed settlements to the category 'Smaller villages and hamlets':

- Bagthorpe with Barmer
- Barwick
- Choseley
- Fordham
- Little Massingham
- Ryston
- Stow Bardolph

Merge 'Rural Villages' Marshland St James with St Johns Fen End and Tilney Fen End to become one 'Rural village'.

Addition of settlement: Great Bircham to be joined with existing 'Rural Village' Bircham Tofts.

Deletion from 'Smaller villages and hamlets' the settlement: West Winch Mill.

Effects of policy change on SA

The SA for the proposed Core Strategy has not looked at specific settlements when assessing the broad policy of strategic growth against SA objectives. Specific settlements will undergo an SA at the Site Specifics stage of the LDF process.

The new classification of the settlements Brancaster Staithe, Burnham Deepdale, Pott Row and Northwold and Stoke Ferry as key Rural Service Centres could mean slightly more development targeted in these areas than before. This will not affect the outcome of the SA score because there will continue to be mixed effects from developing in the smaller villages and towns outside of the three main towns in terms of impact on the environment. However, there will also be the positive impacts of improved access to services and creation of spaces which work well and look good. If one of these settlements had a particular issue which would constrain growth then the SA score would need to change. Brancaster Staithe and Burnham Deepdale are in the AONB and close to designated sites however this is covered in the SA through the Appropriate Assessment and the Green Infrastructure Strategy which will take into account all the settlements and the impacts development may have on them. Pott Row, Northwold and Stoke Ferry are villages which have no real constraints to development which would cause the SA to change its score.

Change in designation of settlements Ashwicken, Burnham Overy Staithe, Flitcham, Ten Mile

Bank, Tilney Fen End, Walpole Marsh, Walpole St Andrew, Walpole Highway and Wormegay from 'Smaller villages and hamlets' to 'Rural Villages' would not mean a change to the SA because as before it has been considered that there will be further growth outside of the three main towns to meet the housing needs of the Borough. This will inevitably cause a mixed effect when considering the growth of some of the smaller villages and loss of greenfield land.

However, Rural Villages will not see the same level of growth as Key Rural Service Centres and therefore the impact will not be as significant if they were to change to this higher designation. Again these points are already considered in the original SA scoring.

Change in designation of settlements Nordelph, Saddlebow, Setchey, Stow Bridge, Tottenhill,

Wereham, Wiggshall and St. Mary Magdalen from 'Rural Villages' to 'Smaller villages and hamlets' will mean that these settlements will see less targeted growth. In environmental terms this will mean a more positive effect as less greenfield land will be used and there will be less disturbance from traffic, noise light etc. However it may also mean that these settlements will not benefit to the same degree from

increased services and facilities. Therefore the SA scores remain the same as before.

The Addition of previously unnamed settlements to the category 'Smaller villages and hamlets', Bagthorpe with Barmer, Barwick, Choseley, Fordham, Little Massingham, Ryston and Stow Bardolph will not cause a change to the SA scores as these small settlements will not see focused growth and therefore their size and function will not change.

Merge 'Rural Villages' Marshland St James with St Johns Fen End and Tilney Fen End to become one 'Rural village and Great Bircham to be joined with existing 'Rural Village' Bircham Tofts. Again this will not affect the final scores of the SA because there are no major constraints in these settlements and major growth will still be directed towards the main towns of King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton.

Deletion from 'Smaller villages and hamlets' the settlement: West Winch Mill. West Winch Mill is not considered a settlement area and therefore this will have no impact on the original SA score. The larger expansion to the south east of King's Lynn adjacent to West Winch will play a much larger role in the growth needs of the borough.

Proposed change to policy

CS03 King's Lynn Area

Fourth bullet point deletion of text "land south of Hardwick Narrows".

Effects of policy change on SA

This amendment to the policy is required to align more closely with the key diagram.

Because the amendment refers to the loss of a small section of land and there will be a continued focus on development in the King's Lynn area this does not affect the final outcome of the SA.

Therefore there is no change to this final score for policy CS03.

Proposed change to policy

CS05 Hunstanton

Within the 2nd paragraph and 1st bullet point of policy CS05 the policy will be amended to read-

- allocating up to 200 new dwellings to the east and/or south of the town.

Effects of policy change on SA

The SA for the proposed Core Strategy has not looked at specific settlements when assessing the broad policy of strategic growth against SA objectives. Specific settlements will undergo an SA at the Site Specifics stage of the LDF process.

This policy has undergone minimum change with just the addition of possible growth to the South of the town. The east of the town has already been identified for additional growth. This area of Hunstanton does not have any real constraints which impact on the SA objectives and because the change to the wording is minimal there is no change to the final SA score.

Proposed change to policy

CS08 Sustainable Development

'For developments over 100 dwellings a 20% reduction of CO2 emissions will be *encouraged*.

(i.e. delete word *required* and replace with *encouraged*).

Effects of policy change on SA

It was felt through consultation that the original wording was not justifiable and not practical for developers. It also set a slightly higher recommendation than the regional approach.

The policy still requires new development of more than 10 dwellings (new build or conversions) or 1000m² of non residential floor space to reduce their predicted CO₂ emissions by at least 10%. Therefore this Merton style policy will still be effective for reducing CO₂ emissions.

However whereas the original policy required developments over 100 dwellings a 20% reduction of CO₂ emissions, the revised policy will encourage a 20% reduction. This weaker wording could potentially mean that developers may be less inclined to meet the higher target and therefore the opportunity to make larger reductions in CO₂ emissions could be missed.

Because of this the SA score will be subject to change in the SA objective reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses and other pollutants (including air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)'.
The scoring on this objective will change from a significant positive to positive effect.