

# Core Strategy Regulation 25

Local Development Framework

## King's Lynn & West Norfolk



**your views, your vision...  
help us to plan your future.**

<b>1</b>	<b>Preface .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Vision .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Policies for Places .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Area wide policies .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Key Diagrams .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Implementation .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Monitoring .....</b>	<b>101</b>



## 1 Preface

Planning for the future of the Borough is not easy. On the one hand we want to make opportunities for the area to regenerate and prosper economically and to have enough decent homes for people to live in. At the same time however we need to protect and enhance the qualities that make West Norfolk a great place to live and work – the coast, the countryside, and communities.

This document and the draft proposals it contains try to strike that balance. The Core Strategy is a very important document as it will set the pattern for development for the next 15 years or more. Whilst we are at an early stage in the preparation of our Core Strategy a lot of previous work has been undertaken and this document captures this and shows how it has influenced our current thinking. We are keen to understand how practical the proposals are and what the impact may be on service providers and any additional facilities that might be needed. Whilst I know that communities, businesses and residents are interested in the detail of our new development, this document seeks to give the broad scale and roles for places rather than detailed sites. We will move onto specific sites and locations later in the year.

Thank you for taking time to read the document and we look forward to receiving your comments.



Councillor Vivienne Spikings

Cabinet Member for Development

## 2 Introduction

### Background to this document

**2.1** The Borough Council is working to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF) for this area. The LDF contains a number of individual documents as shown in the diagram below.

Components of the Local Development Framework (LDF)



**2.2** This document represents a stage towards the preparation of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is the main component in setting out the long term strategy - including the vision and objectives for the area and broad policies for steering and shaping new development. It will show the broad locations for housing and employment growth as well as indicating the infrastructure needed to support this. It will also outline policies suggesting where development might be constrained. The Core Strategy will guide development and use of land up to 2025, and when adopted will replace the Borough Local Plan (1998); the document will contain policies which will be used by the Council when deciding on planning applications. As the Core Strategy is dealing with broad issues around development it will be necessary to prepare a Site Specific Allocations document to define particular sites for a range of uses, and provide detail guidance as to how they should be developed. Consultation on this document will start in early 2009. The LDF generally, but in particular the Core Strategy, needs to interpret the policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy - the East of England Plan, showing how these will work at the local level. (The RSS is currently being reviewed and the Core Strategy needs to be able to reflect any changing circumstances that might arise. The review end date is 2031).

**2.3** It is a requirement that the LDF and the Community Strategy are integrated with each other. The LDF is a major tool in realising the Community Strategy and it is appropriate that they share the same vision and objectives. The LDF will provide particular guidance on spatially related items to bring about the implementation of the Community Strategy. Elements of the vision reflect joint consultation work between LDF and Community Strategy in February 2008 which has influenced the formally agreed vision. As part of the consultation, some 200 people attended 12 workshops for the general public, and 43 parish and town councils attended 4 workshops. In addition 63 respondents made over 700 comments on the consultation documents.

**2.4** New Regulations were published in 2008 which amended the way in which the LDF is to be prepared. The Borough Council has previously undertaken various consultations on elements of the LDF. This document consolidates that work, as well as the previous sustainability appraisal. Summaries of evidence upon which this document relies are also presented. The Borough Council needs to demonstrate that we have met the requirements of the new Regulations therefore we are re-presenting some of the previous work, but also suggesting potential policy approaches or options to reflect the evidence collected. We are seeking views on these potential approaches, before we move on to prepare the version of the Core Strategy that we will submit to the Secretary of State. In terms of further stages:

Consultation on Content of the Plan	Feb-April 2009
Publish and Consult on draft Submission Plan	October 2009
Submission to Secretary of State	March 2010
Hearing into the Submitted Plan	Summer 2010
Adoption	Spring 2011

**2.5** In May 2008 King's Lynn was confirmed as a Growth Point, bringing with it additional investment from Government. This designation means additional funding to help achieve the appropriate infrastructure necessary to deliver housing and regeneration.

**2.6** Outputs from this current consultation will likely shape the content of the 'submission' version of the Core Strategy. The Borough Council is keen to establish that the Strategy and individual elements of it are deliverable, or that evidence is advanced to support alternative suggestions. This document contains questions to prompt responses after each 'possible approach' is outlined. These questions can be responded to on-line at <http://west-norfolk-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

**2.7** The Borough Council is very aware that it is proposing significant development within the Borough, and that we are in a very challenging economic climate at the present time. Nevertheless we are planning for some 15 years ahead and need to make adequate provision for that period. Clearly there may be a need to re-visit policy as circumstances dictate.

**2.8** The approaches to policy and allocations outlined in this document are for consultation. They do represent an approach based on evidence collected to date, but importantly they are potential approaches, and have not been endorsed by the Council other than for consultation purposes.

## Structure of the document

**2.9** This diagram shows the overall structure of this Core Strategy document.



## 2.10 In summary:-

1. The Policy Context and Spatial Portrait together with the Community Strategy background combine to give;
2. The overall Vision (and visions for towns and places) and the more detailed Spatial Strategy for the Borough (the vision contains individual objectives)
3. The Area Based policies and the Generic Subject policies follow from the vision/objectives and Spatial Strategy.
4. This section provides guidance on delivering the Core Strategy and monitoring the achievement of the objectives by implementing the policies.
5. As the Core Strategy is a broad Strategic document there will be a need for a detailed Site Specific Allocations and Policies document as a separate piece of work.

## 2.11 Within the document the Area based and Generic Policy sections broadly follow a standard approach:-

- Elements of the Vision supported by the Chapter
- Context
- Consultation – What have you told us?
- Evidence gathered to date
- Sustainability Appraisal recommendations
- A summary of what we have learnt
- The potential approach to be taken
- Justification
- Implementation
- Rejected options (as appropriate)

## 2.12 A simple question is asked after each potential policy approach to stimulate a response.

## 2.13 Any response should be made online at <http://west-norfolk-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

## 2.14 We need to receive this by **5pm on Monday 6 April 2009.**

### Policy Context

**2.15** This document has been prepared against a background of national and regional policy and guidance notably, but not exclusively, with regard to the **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** <sup>(1)</sup>. Furthermore, the document has close links to the evolving **Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)** <sup>(2)</sup> currently under preparation.

- 
- 1 The East of England Plan may be viewed at:  
[http://www.go-east.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional\\_planning/?a=42496](http://www.go-east.gov.uk/goeast/planning/regional_planning/?a=42496)
  - 2 Transforming West Norfolk. The draft document may be viewed at:  
<http://www.wnp.org.uk/default.aspx>



**2.16** The Regional Spatial Strategy is set out within the **East Of England Plan** published in May 2008. It covers the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and provides a regional framework to inform the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDD). LDDs must be in general conformity with the RSS together with local transport plans and other regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes having a bearing on land use activities.

**2.17** The key drivers of policy are fully set out within the RSS but relevant extracts are usefully summarised here:

- Putting in place a framework that promotes sustainable development, especially to address housing shortages, support the continued growth of the economy and enable all areas to share in prosperity, whilst driving up energy efficiency and carbon performance, improving water efficiency and recycling an increasing percentage of waste
- Reconciling growth with protection of the environment and avoiding adverse effect on sites of European or International importance for nature conservation
- Concentrating growth at the key centres for development and change, which includes all of the region's main urban areas, and have potential to accommodate substantial development in sustainable ways to 2021 and beyond
- Recognising the importance of a number of priority areas for regeneration, which include many of the key centres for development and change, whilst not overlooking pockets of deprivation in otherwise relatively buoyant town and rural areas

**2.18** Policies making particular reference to King's Lynn or the Borough include:

SS3:	Achieving sustainable development by concentrating new development at specific locations including King's Lynn.
E5:	Locating major new retail development and complementary town centres uses primarily in specific centres including King's Lynn
H1:	Achieving a net increase of 12,000 dwellings within the Borough between 2001 and 2021 <sup>(3)</sup>
ENV 2&3:	Green infrastructure and landscape conservation within the North Norfolk Coast AONB

---

3 PPS3 Housing extends this provision for a period of 15 years beyond adoption of the LDF; currently assumed as 14,400 dwellings by 2025

KL1: King's Lynn is designated a key centre for development and change incorporating urban renaissance and growth – 12,000 additional dwellings, 5,000 jobs. Particular aims include:

- Enhance the quality of the urban environment
- Make effective use of previously developed land
- Provide an improved range of services in the town
- Support economic development, job growth and the regeneration of communities
- Provide improved transport choices both within the urban area and between the town and its hinterland

Other topic based policies within the Plan also impact upon the Borough to varying extents which lie beyond the scope of this summary. Nevertheless, particular mention should be made of:

WAT4: Flood Risk Management, to guide development away from areas likely to be at future flood risk unless the benefits of development outweigh the risks and appropriate mitigation measures are incorporated.

**2.19** The **Sustainable Community Strategy – Transforming West Norfolk** (September 2008) currently exists in draft form. It is the result of collaboration between the Borough Council and a group of key public, private and voluntary sector organisations who work together to improve services and the quality of life in West Norfolk. It is intended that the final document will be adopted by all partners within the forthcoming months.

## 3 Vision

### Spatial Portrait

**3.1** The following is a short description of the Borough to summarise its character, key demographic and economic factors, and identify some of the challenges that need to be met by the Council and its partners.

**3.2** The Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is about 100 miles north of London and extends from the north Norfolk coast, along the eastern side of The Wash, through the Marshlands, Fens and Brecks to the borders of Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. The Borough is the sixth largest district in England covering an area of some 550 square miles (142,877 hectares) with a population of 139,100 (2004 estimate). This combination of rurality and sparse population results in a number of challenges.

**3.3** The main population centre is King's Lynn (35,250 pop.) though the Borough also includes the market town of Downham Market (7,700 pop.), the coastal resort of Hunstanton (5,000 pop.) and more than 100 villages of varying sizes. The regional centres of Peterborough, Cambridge and Norwich are some 40-50 miles distant creating a role for King's Lynn as a service centre and economic driver to a sub-region in excess of 200,000 population.

**3.4** Main transport routes include the A47(T) trunk road (Leicester to Great Yarmouth), three principal roads (A10, A17 & A134), a direct electrified rail service to Cambridge and London, sea links to northern and eastern Europe and an extensive system of navigable waterways. The A47(T), railway and port all feature within the Trans European Network.

**3.5** The tracts of unspoilt coast, attractive countryside and numerous historic settlements and buildings form major attractions to the area and there are many examples of national and internationally important designations protecting aspects of the environment. The impact of rising sea levels and management of coastal erosion together with the separate risks of both tidal and fluvial flooding are becoming increasingly significant to the future development of the Borough.

**3.6** Although the importance of agricultural production must not be underestimated, a legacy of the agricultural based economy is a low-wage economy stemming from relatively low skills levels and associated low aspiration levels. Nevertheless, the economic base is changing and the Borough is now home to world-leading businesses in pharmaceuticals, precision and aerospace engineering and advanced manufacturing sectors including commercial refrigeration, robotics, electronics and specialist chemicals. The key employment sectors now fall within advanced engineering and manufacturing, added value food activity and tourism.

**3.7** The Borough considers the following assets to be of strategic importance:

- Extensive tracts of high quality agricultural land
- Numerous National and International environment designations, notably those relating to The Wash and the North Norfolk Coast
- A47(T), A10 and A17 principal roads
- King's Lynn – Cambridge – London rail link
- RAF Marham / BAe complex
- National Construction College at Bircham Newton
- College of West Anglia
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**3.8** Recent indicators of successful inward investment include King's Lynn Power Station and Palm Paper (under construction)

**3.9** By 2017 more than a quarter of the population will be over retirement age, with 10% of residents aged over 75 years; the proportion of those under 25 is below the national average. The northern, coastal part of the Borough is characterised by significant levels of second home ownership, exceeding 50% in some parishes. This has a disproportionate impact on the levels of services that are sustainable, given that these properties remain empty for significant periods of the year.

**3.10** Pockets of isolation and deprivation are real issues, both in King's Lynn and in some of the more rural parts of the Borough. Furthermore the agricultural and food processing industries are attractive to migrant workers bringing an increasing mix of nationalities and cultures which impact upon issues of social cohesion and service delivery. Some of the more entrenched issues important to local people are fear of crime, activities for young people and transport links.

**3.11** King's Lynn remains centred upon an historic medieval core although there are numerous examples of Georgian heritage and Victorian town expansion. The local fishing industry retains access to the riverside although the port facilities have retrenched to the Alexander and Bentinck docks. There was further expansion to the town during the 1960s and 1970s with influx from the Greater London area generating associated housing and employment areas. A large part of the car free shopping centre has recently been redeveloped.

**3.12** The town has been designated both a Key Centre for Development and Change within the RSS, and a Growth Point in support of the government's housing delivery strategy. This places a dual onus on the town to lead in the provision of additional new homes and new jobs whilst regenerating itself to enhance the quality of the urban environment and make effective use of previously developed land.



**3.13** The Council and its strategic partners have adopted an Urban Development Strategy and have developed an Integrated Programme of Delivery to respond to these challenges. At the forefront of the strategies is the delivery of:

- the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area;
- the Waterfront Regeneration and Marina; and
- a framework for a new 'bus station and retail expansion of the town centre

**3.14** Downham Market is the second largest town in the Borough. Its prime characteristic is that of a compact market town and service centre to the surrounding rural area with modern employment sites at Trafalgar Way and St John's business parks. However, the town's position between the A10 and railway has proved to be attractive for commuters and in recent years the town has seen substantial residential expansion which seems not to have been matched with appropriate investment in local services. The "river" frontage alongside the Relief Channel appears under utilised and may afford an opportunity to strengthen the town's tourism and leisure roles.

**3.15** Hunstanton has a dual function. The town is a seaside resort originally developed around the former railway terminus now providing a short-stay and day-visit role although efforts are being made to lengthen the tourism season. Nevertheless, Hunstanton also acts as an important service centre for year-round residents and the surrounding rural areas although the seasonal nature of visitors to the town, with consequent fluctuation in the demands made on local services, impacts upon the level and nature of employment and service potential. A masterplan for the regeneration of the town centre and southern seafront has been completed

**3.16** Although outside of the Borough the town of Wisbech abuts the County boundary and some of the town's development is within the Borough. Wisbech presently fulfils the role of a local service centre to the western part of Norfolk but remains under the influence of King's Lynn as the primary service centre in the sub-region. It is accessible to the A47(T) and also has a river-side port with some potential to extend the existing port associated employment area into the Borough's administrative area.

**3.17** The Borough has a large rural area with a diverse landscape, ranging from coastal marsh and reclaimed marshland to fen, and chalk plateau through undulating sandstone to The Brecks. Although it is sparsely populated it nevertheless contains over 100 villages, each with its own distinctive character, needs and aspirations. With a population spread across such a broad area it is not surprising that social cohesion, accessibility to numerous essential services and consequent logistics of service delivery are seen to be important issues by many.

**3.18** Those settlements within and adjoining the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty may be perceived as affluent villages, popular choices for tourism, second homes and rural retreats with higher property values; yet many residents share similar difficulties in obtaining affordable homes and accessing services, shopping, healthcare and

education etc, as their counterparts in villages further to the south. Nevertheless, rural living is seen to be a desirable way of life overall and this, together with the changing needs of agriculture, continues to create increasing demands for reasonably priced housing, local employment opportunities and access to essential services.

**3.19** The 16 points in the first part of the Vision outlined below are the same as those in the West Norfolk Partnership - Sustainable Community Strategy. The place elements are specific to this Core Strategy document.

## Our Vision for the Future

### Statement 1

**People will want to be part of the success story that is West Norfolk, drawn here to live, work, invest and visit.**

*In 2030...*

1. West Norfolk enjoys an unparalleled balance between quality of life and quality of opportunity with people drawn to the area to take advantage of this

### Economy

*We want to help people of all ages improve their skills and qualifications, and help raise their aspirations. We want to help people become entrepreneurs and benefit from the growing knowledge economy. We want to be a place where professional people want to live and work.*

*In 2030...*

2. King's Lynn's reputation as a great place to live and work has spread across the country and reflects its regional importance
3. West Norfolk has a thriving economy with local employment opportunities
4. all young people succeed in school with raised aspirations
5. all adults in West Norfolk have the opportunity to develop their skills or learn new ones throughout their lives
6. West Norfolk is among the premier short-break destinations in the country tourism based on its historical, cultural and environmental offer

### Society

*We want to help reduce inequality wherever it exists. We want to make sure that people have good quality housing and local facilities, we want to help people deal with social change and ensure that a growing economy brings higher wages and an improved quality of life.*

*In 2030...*

7. all communities in West Norfolk are strong, cohesive and safe
8. everyone living and working in West Norfolk receives quality services that meet their needs
9. residents of West Norfolk are active and engaged in their communities, helping to identify and respond to local needs
10. housing in West Norfolk will be focused on 'brownfield' land in sustainable towns and villages and be targeted towards local demand
11. All people in West Norfolk are active and healthy

### **Environment**

*We want to safeguard our justifiably famous natural and historic environment, at the same time making sustainability a central principle to our vision. We want to build connections with other local and regional economies, reduce reliance on the car, and prepare ourselves for the challenges of climate change.*

*In 2030...*

12. West Norfolk has undergone regeneration and growth that complements its high quality historical and natural inheritance
13. communities in West Norfolk benefit from quality public spaces and parks with access to the coast and countryside that make the area special
14. West Norfolk is meeting the challenges of climate change
15. people will be less reliant on the motor car to access places and services
16. West Norfolk still feels like somewhere unique in its own right, based on its own local distinctiveness.

### **The Vision for towns and places**

**King's Lynn** will be an urban centre of regional significance.

Population of the town will grow from 41,500 to 50,000 by 2021 in accordance with the Growth Point status

The overarching vision is to secure:-

- A high standard of design in buildings and in the public realm, particularly in the major heritage asset of the central area.

- Measures to reduce or mitigate carbon emissions
- A focus on brownfield land within the existing urban area.
- Mitigation of the risk of tidal flooding and fluvial flooding through the provision of effective defences and the design of new developments in lower lying areas.

**Downham Market** will be a key local centre serving the Fens and the southern part of the Borough with the services necessary to meet the demands of a growing population. It will provide employment land and premises within, or adjacent to, the urban area to meet the needs of existing and potential new businesses.

The town's location on the King's Lynn – Cambridge – London main rail line provides opportunities for consolidating sustainable development but significant further housing growth will be resisted until the imbalance in service provision resulting from the considerable residential expansion of recent years has been redressed

**Hunstanton** will continue to meet the needs and expectations of those who choose to live and work in and near the town while developing its role as a seaside visitor destination.

It will be:-

- A local town. which meets the needs of residents with an expanded and improved retail core
- A town that respects its heritage whilst looking to the future.
- An environmental resort making the most of the coast's natural assets.
- An more attractive seaside destination where visitors stay longer and spend more.
- An active town expanding the existing water sports offer as a sector with all year round tourism potential.

The economy of the **rural areas** will be bolstered by a modest scale of new development, including the provision of affordable housing, in settlements which have both a range of services and which are accessible by a daily public transport service to the main urban areas.

There will be recognition of the needs of the agricultural sector, the potential for diversification into other activities and renewable energy appropriate to the specific rural location.

Accessibility to essential services will be improved.



## Spatial Strategy

**3.20** The spatial strategy is designed to deliver these visions. It will form the basis for the coordination of further strategies and the development of detailed policies to address those issues identified in the spatial portrait, and guide future consideration and investment by the Council and the West Norfolk Partnership.

**3.21** The overarching theme accepts that a successful strategy is not based simply upon the allocation of sites for development. It is both the nature of development and the appropriate management of resources, which establish and constrain the character and quality of development, that ultimately produces attractive environments in which people choose to live, work and visit. Therefore, in addition to delivering the challenges set by the East of England Plan this strategy strives to increase confidence in the business economy, and improve both the quality of life and the quality of the environment.

### Policy 1

Priority will be given to employment opportunities that will provide good quality, permanent and well paid jobs. Furthermore, the Council and its partners will continue to work with locally based employers to ensure a commitment to training and jobs filled by a skilled and adaptable workforce with high aspirations. The value of part-time and seasonal employment and the value and impact of migrant workers, are both recognised and we will promote understanding and accrediting the skills to maximise their contribution to sustainable growth.

Development priorities will reflect a settlement hierarchy designed to ensure new investment is directed to the most sustainable places. King's Lynn will be the main centre and economic driver within the Borough, a significant "engine of growth" and sub regional centre in the East of England. Strategic provision will therefore be based upon the following:

- A range of housing meeting regional targets, which is characterised by good design; a proportion of which meets affordability criteria, particularly in the rural area of the Borough. This housing will be broadly allocated as follows:
  - King's Lynn - 7,000
  - Downham Market - 2,900
  - Hunstanton - 520
  - Rural areas - 4,740 (of which 3,900 will be within the Wisbech fringe and Key Service Centres)
- Employment growth will be focused on the provision of 5,000 new jobs associated with the role of King's Lynn as a regional service centre encouraging new business creation and development. As such the town will contain the majority of employment opportunities in the Borough.

- The existing employment area associated with the port will be safeguarded;
- Priority will be given to bringing forward the Hardwick Estate Extension proposed within the Local Plan;
- Land south of the A47(T) (in the general area known as Whitehouse Farm) will be released for employment uses without requiring comprehensive mixed use development previously promoted across the wider area
- Elsewhere, existing employment sites shall be safeguarded unless there are overriding environmental reasons that the use should cease or be relocated. In the rural areas new employment opportunities that demonstrate sound principles of sustainable development will be encouraged
- King's Lynn town centre will be expanded and developed to meet the growing demands of the sub region and to provide a quality alternative to the nearest main retail centres of Norwich, Peterborough and Cambridge. Major retail development outside the town centre may be considered acceptable where it forms an essential part of bringing forward a larger mixed use scheme meeting the strategy and principle of development for that area
- The regeneration of the urban area of King's Lynn shall continue with the completion of:
  - The Nar Ouse Regeneration Area Millennium Community, and
  - The Waterfront Regeneration and Marina project

A large part of King's Lynn, and a very large part of the rural area, are affected by future risk of tidal and/or fluvial flooding. The Council will continue to work with the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and Anglian Water Services to ensure continued maintenance of existing defences and associated infrastructure. Where possible, new development will be guided away from areas considered to be at risk of flooding; exceptions may be made where the economic benefit of development outweighs that risk and the development proposed is accompanied by works or funding to mitigate that risk

Underpinning the growth and development of King's Lynn will be a major review of transport strategy. This will improve the public transport network linking the main centres of population within and beyond the Borough and the implementation of associated measures in order to improve circulation within King's Lynn by all modes including the car, public transport, cycling and walking. This will acknowledge the fact that unmanaged use of the car and associated parking, with associated delays, is not compatible with an historic town centre: but will also reflect the rural nature of King's Lynn's hinterland where the car will remain the primary transport mode to the town within the plan period. Improvements to the efficiency and safety of principal roads throughout the Borough will be sought.

### Question 1

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential strategy approach?
- What are the implications of this strategy to future service delivery / business needs?

## 4 Policies for Places

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

**4.1** This chapter supports all elements of the Vision.

### Introduction

**4.2** Policies for Places builds on the Spatial Strategy and explains our policy approach for each of the towns in the Borough, the rural areas and the coastal area.

**4.3** The chapter starts by providing some background information which has helped to inform the policy approach, and explains how we have arrived at the policies proposed and then each policy approach is listed.

### Context

**4.4** The Spatial Portrait provides us with a current picture of the settlements within the Borough. The Spatial Strategy outlines our direction for growth across the Borough.

**4.5** The RSS Spatial Strategy section outlines a hierarchical approach to development across the region, and within each borough. This hierarchical structure for new development has been adopted in the proposed policy approach below.

### Consultation - What you have told us.

- Recognise the need to expand the King's Lynn economy.
- Support rural employment and diversification (including working from home)
- Support for a dispersed approach to development in the Borough, recognising the importance of King's Lynn, and using a hierarchy strategy.
- Requests for some development in rural areas to sustain rural communities, we need a balanced approach. King's Lynn is a priority but not at the expense of the rest of the borough.
- Mixed views on any further expansion of Downham Market.
- Need for affordable housing. This is a priority for rural areas, and also Hunstanton and Downham Market.
- Downham Market – can't keep expanding (some agents also promoting expansion)
- King's Lynn – address the transport issues to enable the new growth planned.

### Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy.

**4.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment published Dec 2008.** The study outlines potential flood risk throughout the Borough, but more specifically provides us with detailed information on the three towns.



**4.7 Urban Development Strategy published April 2006.** This document is a model which sets out a strategy for King's Lynn (predominantly the town centre), providing a basis on which development and enhancement can be planned and implemented.

**4.8 Sports, Recreation and Open Space Assessment published April 2006.** The study includes an audit of the existing open space provision in the Borough in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility. It goes on to consider future requirements and gives recommendations for the way forward.

**4.9 Differentiating rural areas in West Norfolk published January 2006.** This work identifies how villages in the Borough differ and groups them accordingly, based on a range of census variables.

**4.10 Town Centres Study published September 2006.** The Study was carried out to inform and guide retail and leisure planning in the Borough with key objectives to establish vitality and viability in our town centres and to provide assessment of current and projected retail and leisure needs until 2021.

**4.11 Landscape Character Assessment published March 2007.** This provides an assessment of landscape character to enable better understanding of the Boroughs landscape and for monitoring change.

**4.12 Strategic Housing Market Assessment published July 2007.** The Assessment considers all aspects of the current housing market in West Norfolk, market and affordable housing, and makes recommendations for a policy approach to housing provision.

**4.13 Employment Land Study published November 2007.** This undertakes a review of the existing supply of employment land across the Borough and identifies the future quantity of land required for employment use. This future quantity is based on a range of factors including the RSS job target, market conditions, economic forecasts etc.

**4.14 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment published May 2008.** The SHLAA estimates our existing housing potential on brownfield sites in the Borough, and looks forward over a 20yr time frame from adoption of the LDF. This provides us with detailed results on each settlement.

**4.15 The King's Lynn Growth Point Programme of Development published 2008.** This was submitted to DCLG last year and provides a holistic plan of growth for King's Lynn. It creates a balance of economic, environmental, social and cultural assets which make King's Lynn attractive to residents, visitors and businesses.

**4.16 The King's Lynn Town Centre Extension Master Plan published Nov 2008.** Outlines a Masterplan examining the opportunity to extend the town centre and create a high quality new shopping place within King's Lynn.

**4.17 The Hunstanton Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan published May 2008.** The Built Environment Masterplan provides a detailed framework for the enhancement of the built environment and public realm, the promotion of development opportunities in the area and the attraction of new investment, which are important to the future prosperity of Hunstanton.

## **Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us**

**4.18** Promoting King's Lynn as a Key Centre for Development and Change, increasing service provision and developing the local economy would have significant economic and social benefits for the Borough. Improving the Quality of Life for residents; improving access to local services, learning and employment opportunities. This will help to attract new residents and visitors to the Borough, benefiting our local economy.

**4.19** The role of Downham Market as a service centre could be strengthened by supporting improved retail and employment opportunities, improving Quality of Life in the town and benefiting the local economy.

**4.20** Hunstanton could benefit from expanding rural and service industries, and by enhancing its role as a year round visitor destination. This would create a more stable local economy, with improved job opportunities and would improve access to services.

**4.21** In rural areas it will be more challenging to respond to sustainability priorities. The sparse nature of the Borough will make it difficult to reduce traffic movements, and therefore emissions, and a flexible approach to employment opportunities should be considered to benefit local communities and the rural economy.

**4.22** The Core Strategy should play a role in managing flood risk, and have a positive impact on the protection of our wildlife and natural resources throughout the Borough. With regard to social objectives, the Core Strategy will sit alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy and can assist the provision of improved access to services and facilities, working towards issues of crime, health and community cohesion in all settlements.

## **What have we learnt?**

- The studies provide us with both Borough wide information, detailed information on settlements throughout the Borough and in some cases the studies are settlement or site specific. These studies are used as background information in devising our policy approach, and some even recommend specific policy direction based on the conclusions of the study.
- The consultation results identify general support for the growth of King's Lynn, however the views towards further growth in Downham Market are far more mixed. There is also support for a hierarchical approach to development across the Borough.
- The Sustainability Appraisal identifies the issues for consideration throughout the Borough, and specifically the differences between issues for our settlements.

## Policy Approach

### Settlement Hierarchy of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

#### Policy 2

East of England Plan focuses growth on King's Lynn as a Key Centre for Development and Change, with lower levels of growth in the other towns and Key Service Centres. In rural areas it is also appropriate to identify smaller villages for growth where there is a local need.

Significant scale development will be located within King's Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market.

#### Sub-Regional centre

Kings Lynn town and the adjacent built up area.

In King's Lynn, it is important to strengthen the town's role as a sub-regional retail centre, enhancing the retail function alongside tourist facilities and leisure development, in accordance with the Town Centres Study.

#### Main Towns

Downham Market and Hunstanton.

In Downham Market and Hunstanton, the focus will be on maintaining and enhancing the roles of the towns providing essential convenience, service and tourist facilities in accordance with the Town Centres Study. Promoting and enhancing the existing offer of each centre and supporting opportunities for redevelopment and continued investment.

Wisbech does make a significant contribution to the provision of services and facilities enjoyed by residents in the west of the Borough. There seems to be an opportunity to take advantage of this provision and extend the town eastwards

#### Rural Areas

Local shops, post offices and services will be protected to retain the local character and sustainability of settlements (See Page 35 ).

#### Key Service Centres

Key Service Centres have been identified by a settlement hierarchy as suitable for accommodating higher levels of development, which will help to sustain the wider rural community. These Service Centres were selected on the basis of presence of a primary school, healthcare facilities, a range of services that can meet basic day-to-day needs, and a level of public transport that can enable access to and from the settlement. Points were scored according to the presence of these criteria. The thresholds for each settlement category based on this point scoring system are shown below under each heading.

**NOTE: 7 or more points:** *To qualify as a 'Key Service Centre', the settlement must firstly include a school, as village schools are considered core facilities which play an important role in promoting and supporting a sense of community. Additionally, a convenience store should be present, preferably a doctors' surgery (though villages without these will be considered if scoring sufficient points), and a travel to work public transport service should be in operation. This is an important consideration in order to meet national policy objectives or promoting accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services, and reducing the need to travel, especially by car.*

Local scale development will be concentrated in identified Key Service Centres. This will include new housing, employment and retail development.

### Rural Villages

Rural villages have a limited but locally important role. Smaller scale development will be considered in these locations to help sustain existing services. This should be appropriate to meet the needs of the village and its surroundings. These settlements may see some limited growth, which will help support surrounding rural areas (e.g. some small-scale infilling or affordable housing).

**NOTE: Between 4- 6 points:** *Fewer facilities are present compared to those in the Key Service Centres, with the settlement having little or no convenience shopping, an infrequent bus service and, in most cases, will feed into larger villages.*

### Smaller Villages or Hamlets

Development in the will be limited to specific identified needs.

**NOTE: Less than 4 points:** *These are villages with little or no services. In most cases no school, bus service or local convenience store will be present.*



Key Service Centre	Rural Villages	Smaller Villages or Hamlets
Brancaster	Burnham Overy Staithe	Anmer
Brancaster Staithe/ Burnham Deepdale	Burnham Thorpe	Ashwicken
Burnham Market	Castle Rising	Bagthorpe with Barmer
Castle Acre	Denver	Barroway Drove
Clenchwarton	East Winch	Barton Bendish
Dersingham	Fincham	Barwick
Docking	Great Bircham / Bircham Tofts	Bawsey
East Rudham	Harpley	Bircham Newton
Emneth	Hillington	Boughton
Feltwell	Ingoldisthorpe	Brookville
Gayton	Marshland St James	Burnham Norton
Great Massingham	Middleton	Burnham Overy Town
Grimston	North Creake	Choseley
Heacham	Northwold	Congham
Hilgay	Pott Row	Crimplesham
Hockwold Cum Wilton	Roydon	East Walton
Marham	Saddlebow	Flitcham Cum Appleton
Methwold	Sedgeford	Fordham
North Wootton	Shouldham	Fring

Key Service Centre	Rural Villages	Smaller Villages or Hamlets
Old Hunstanton	St Johns Fen End / Tilney Fen End	Gayton Thorpe
Outwell	Stow Bardolph	Hay Green
Snettisham	Stow Bridge	Holme next the Sea
South Wootton	Syderstone	Houghton
Southery	Thornham	Lakesend
Stoke Ferry	Tilney All Saints/ Three Holes	Leziate
Terrington St Clement	Walpole Cross Keys	Little Massingham
Terrington St John	Walpole Highway	Methwold Hythe
Tilney St Lawrence/ St Johns Highway	Walpole St Andrew/ Walpole St Peter	Nordelph
Upwell	Welney	North Runcton
Walsoken	Wereham	Pentney
Watlington	West Newton	Ringstead
West Walton/ West Walton Highway	West Rudham	Runcton Holme
West Winch	Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen	Ryston
Wiggenhall St Germans	Wimbotsham	Salters Lode
		Setchey
		Sherbourne
		Shouldham Thorpe
		South Creake
		Stanhoe
		Ten Mile Bank

Key Service Centre	Rural Villages	Smaller Villages or Hamlets
		Tilney Cum Islington
		Tilney High End
		Titchwell
		Tottenhill
		Tottenhill Row
		Walpole Marsh
		West Acre
		West Bilney
		West Dereham
		West Winch Mill
		Whittington
		Wiggenhall St Mary the Virgin
		Wolferton
		Wormegay
		Wretton

In the settlements where growth is suggested, the accommodation of this development would still be dependent on the availability of sites taking into account issues such as flood risk. These implications will be considered further during the preparation of the Core Strategy, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment documents and sites identified in the Site Specific Policies and Allocations DPD.

**Question 2**

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**

## Policy approach to strategic development within King's Lynn

### Policy 3

The Council will reinforce the role of King's Lynn as a key centre for development and change, so as to:

- Facilitate and support the regeneration and development priorities identified in the Spatial Strategy;
- Foster economic growth and inward investment;
- Improve accessibility for all

Three broad options may be considered to achieve this:

1. Regeneration and intensification of brownfield sites and limited greenfield sites within the existing settlement boundary
2. Extensive growth upon greenfield sites beyond the existing settlement boundary
3. A strategy that places significant emphasis on brownfield redevelopment within the town, together with the development of an urban extension.

These are further considered in the Key Diagrams section (see Page 92).

### Question 3

**Which option is most suited to future service delivery?**

## Policy 4

Option 3 is currently considered to be the most sustainable approach and consequently:

Priority will be given to the regeneration of previously developed land where this can be achieved

- within the protection afforded by current flood defences,
- without detriment to the transport network serving the town and its approaches, and
- where the development can be integrated satisfactorily within the local services

Where it can be demonstrated that constraints affecting the redevelopment of previously developed land are so significant as to seriously impair the achievement of the housing provision target consideration will be given to the release of undeveloped land within or around the town subject to the same criteria and additionally, where the development will neither adversely affect the nearby Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty nor sensitive aspects of the natural environment.

In support of this overall development strategy the Council will continue to promote the completion of:

- the Millennium Community within the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area to provide for a mixed use development of approximately 850 new homes; new campus' for the College of West Anglia and Anglia Ruskin University; new Academy and local school; local services and employment area
- the Waterfront Regeneration Area and Marina incorporating a mixed use development of up to 900 new homes and marina, retail and commercial units
- the regeneration of the town centre as a sub-regional resource for shopping, leisure, culture and tourism by:
  - Securing the expansion of the town centre to the east by redevelopment of the area bounding the 'bus-station incorporating up to 20,000m<sup>2</sup> retail floorspace; Library and leisure facilities; approximately 100 new homes; and public realm improvements including a new 'bus-station with improved pedestrian links to the railway station

Including as part of these schemes:

- the development of surplus land adjoining Lynnsport & Leisure Park for new homes and swimming pool facility and the subsequent redevelopment of St James' Swimming Pool for housing
- the redevelopment of the existing College of West Anglia campus for new housing

Furthermore the Council will safeguard existing employment and distribution sites within and around the town, particularly around the port, unless it can be demonstrated:



- there is an overriding environmental objection to continued use of the land as an employment site, or
- there is no viable alternative commercial use, or
- there is greater benefit in a mixed use scheme that either
  - meets the strategic objectives, or
  - the introduction of alternative uses enables the release of a larger area for suitable development

In addition, the Council will provide for new employment areas on the following sites:

- Hardwick Estate Extension
- Saddlebow Road
- Land south of Hardwick Narrows

## **Community services and strategic infrastructure**

The Council will also ensure that appropriate provision is made within and around King's Lynn for services and infrastructure including open space and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the growing population

The Council will support the continued presence of a general hospital at King's Lynn to serve the needs of its growing population, the broader population of West Norfolk and the relevant catchment from Breckland, north east Cambridgeshire and south Lincolnshire. Should it be necessary to consider relocation of the facility to ensure continued or improved services the Council will not necessarily oppose in principle, relocation to an undeveloped site and subsequent mixed residential development on the current site

King's Lynn's function as a Key Centre for Development and Change means that it must adequately cater for both traffic movements into the town from its hinterland and also within the town, linking residential areas with service provision. A balanced package of transport interventions is required that addresses the key issues identified below:

### **a) Links to the town centre from outside**

- Public Transport – focusing on links to King's Lynn from Key Service Centres. Such measures might include bus priority measures, possibly including the displacement of other vehicular traffic to alternative routes; investigation of potential efficiencies and feasibility of options such as Park and Ride and a new rail halt.
- Parking - a parking strategy should be implemented possibly including the rationalisation of town centre car parks to edge of centre locations on key routes.
- Traffic Management – removal of through traffic to the A149 bypass should be considered.

### **b) Links within the town**

- Air quality need to be addressed. The measures above will contribute to improving this in the town centre.
- Walking and Cycling corridors to key services should be created to build on the strength of existing networks.

### **Question 4**

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**

## Policy approach to development in Downham Market

### Policy 5

The focus for Downham Market will be on ensuring the town consolidates its position as a service centre for the local area. The town has undergone a significant programme of residential development; subsequently the town has suffered for a number of years from an under investment in local services.

The strategy for growth is to:

- Consolidate and strengthen the role of Downham Market as a service centre, encouraging investment in social, retail and cultural infrastructure.
  - Improving access to quality services, such as education and health, siting these in central accessible locations.
  - Supporting opportunities for improvements to cultural and leisure facilities.
  - Securing the provision of affordable housing, contributing to the creation of mixed and balanced communities.
- Strengthen the local economy, creating opportunities for growth and investment.
  - Ensuring there is a suitable supply of land and premises to respond to the current needs and future growth of the economy.
  - Improving the range and quality of retail provision in Downham Market.
  - Support opportunities to develop leisure and tourism uses along the river frontage, to support the recreational offer of the town. Clear linkages should be made with the town centre.
- Allow a limited amount of growth in the town (allocating up to 500 new dwellings to the east of the town - see Policy 10) on brownfield sites. However we need to resist significant housing growth, or expansion of the town before the present imbalance in local service provision has been redressed. It is crucial Downham Market does not continue to be overwhelmed by residential development and is given a period of time to stabilise.
- Respect and enhance the built and natural environment in the town. Maintain the landscape and the quality of open space in Downham Market.
- Improve walking and cycling links between the residential areas and the town centre and railway station. Public transport focus should be to improve reliability of routes to King's Lynn and to Ely/ Cambridge.

**Question 5**

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**

## Policy approach to development in Hunstanton

### Policy 6

The focus for Hunstanton will be on ensuring the town develops its position as a successful service hub for the local area, while strengthening the role as a tourist destination with relevant and responsive year-round activities. This will utilise evidence within the Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan.

The strategy for growth is to:

- Retain and strengthen the role of Hunstanton as a service centre, supporting retail, culture and social infrastructure.
  - providing modest and balanced employment growth to provide jobs and opportunities to meet the needs of existing and new residents. This should be quality year round employment, and not solely reliant on seasonal / tourist activity.
  - promoting opportunities for residential development within the town centre, particularly for affordable housing.
  - allocating up to 200 new dwellings to the south and or east of the town – (further investigation and clarification needed); (see Policy 10).
- Strengthen the town's role as a visitor destination. Support will be given to additional tourist facilities and leisure development which extends the season by providing diverse year-round activities, while acknowledging the valuable natural assets of the town.
- Develop a transport and movement strategy for the town, to expand upon the information in the Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan. This should include –
  - a parking strategy. The provision of adequate levels of parking is key, particularly during the summer months. For the town centre area there is a demand for parking at all times of the year, stemming from retail uses,
  - improvements to public transport; increasing the frequency and reducing journey times of services to Kings Lynn; and extending the year-round growth of the Coasthopper route;
  - improvements to routes, signage and facilities for walking and cycling.
- Build upon the relationship between Hunstanton and King's Lynn so the town is able to benefit from growth proposals for King's Lynn.
- Enhance the local character of the town, promoting high quality design of the built environment and the public realm. In particular;

- Respect the heritage of Hunstanton while promoting the vibrancy of the town centre and The Green. New development should meet modern requirements while respecting the built environment in the conservation area.
- Promote a new style of design for the Southern Seafront area, creating a new identity that reflects modern and exciting high quality architecture rather than replicating the past. The public realm should be enhanced with a consistent approach to design and layout helping to forge the new character of this area.

### Question 6

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**



## Policy approach to development in Rural Areas

### Policy 7

The strategy for the rural areas is to promote sustainable communities and sustainable patterns of development to ensure strong, diverse, economic activity, whilst maintaining local character and a high quality environment. This will be achieved by focusing most new development in or adjacent the edge of identified key service centres selected from the Settlement hierarchy policies where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together.

Provision will be made for a total of 3,800 new homes within or adjacent to these selected key service centres

Elsewhere, more modest levels of development will be permitted within or adjacent the edge of villages to meet local needs and maintain the vitality of these communities where this can be achieved in a sustainable manner, particularly with regard to accessibility to housing, employment, services and markets, and without detriment to the character of the surrounding area or landscape. Sites may be allocated for affordable housing or exception housing in accordance with criteria to support the housing strategy.

Within villages, priority will be given to retaining local business sites unless it can be clearly demonstrated that continued use for employment (including tourism or leisure) of the site is economically unviable, or cannot overcome an overriding environmental objection, or a mixed use can continue to provide local employment opportunities and also meet other local needs.

Beyond the villages, the strategy will be to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, and its natural resources to be enjoyed by all. The development of greenfield sites will be resisted unless essential for agricultural or forestry needs.

Nevertheless the strategy will be supportive of well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that contribute to sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the agricultural enterprise, and are consistent in their scale with their rural location. Similarly, the conversion of existing buildings for business purposes will be encouraged where this will have a beneficial impact upon local economic and social needs or opportunities without adverse effects upon the surrounding area. Conversion to residential use will only be considered where the existing building makes a positive contribution to the landscape, a non-residential use is proven to be unviable and the accommodation to be provided is commensurate to the site's relationship to the settlement pattern and accessibility to existing housing, employment and services.

The replacement of existing buildings for business purposes will be considered where the design introduces significant environmental improvements to the surroundings. The replacement of non-residential buildings with residential accommodation will be subjected to the same criteria as new housing.

In terms of transport there will be a focus on improving accessibility between towns and villages so helping to reduce social exclusion, isolation and rural deprivation. To do this the Council and its partners will seek to:

- improve the quality of the bus network;
- extend the choice of transport available for communities;
- provide integrated and safe routes for and pedestrians cyclists.

recognise that in the most rural areas the private car will remain an important means of travel.

### Question 7

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

## Policy approach to development in Coastal Areas

### Policy 8

Due to the unique and sensitive nature of the Norfolk coast it is crucial that we manage our approach to visitors, as the visitor economy will continue to play an important role in the local economy.

Access to services and facilities which serve the local community should be promoted and encouraged to ensure that the local economy is healthy all year and doesn't rely chiefly on tourists during the summer season.

The Council will work with partners to limit any detrimental impacts of coastal change and take account of the Shoreline Management Plan, which will plan for future change.

The Council will resist new and replacement dwellings and the extensive alteration of dwellings and relaxation of occupancy limitations unless the outcome of the Shoreline Management Plan acknowledges the absence of risk or promotes the retention and/or improvement of local sea defences.

Plan for the impacts of climate change and the threats and opportunities it will present.

### Question 8

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

## 5 Area wide policies

### Sustainable Development

#### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 3 - Thriving economy
- 6 - Tourist destination
- 9 - Residents active in the community
- 11 - Active and healthy
- 12 - Growth and regeneration
- 15 - Access to open space
- 16 - West Norfolk is unique

#### Context

**5.1** The Government has now committed the UK to cutting greenhouse-gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The Government has also already set out its plans to make all new homes zero carbon by 2016.

**5.2** The RSS provides targets of an increase of renewable energy of 10% by 2010 and 17% by 2020 with the very high probability that this figure will rise. Given the urgency to meet these targets there will have to be changes in the way local authorities address the issue of renewables and sustainable construction.

**5.3** The Homes and Communities Agency, formally English Partnerships adopted the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 as a base standard and soon BREEAM Standard 3 will be made mandatory.

**5.4** 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 underground heating. All of these technologies have a role to play in meeting Government targets.

**5.5** The rural nature of our Borough coupled with it's unique and diverse environment means that in order to meet targets set by the Government we will need to look for innovative solutions and maximise opportunities to help cut our carbon emissions.

**5.6** There are challenges to face. Due to our location and the nature of many of our settlements, the use of the car remains to be the only viable option for many residents to travel. Changes in the road network and long term investment in public transport may be able to lessen the problem along with ensuring that new development is sensibly located with adequate facilities. Consideration will also need to be given as to how future proposals connect to the National Grid.

**5.7** The open landscapes of the east of England have been promoted by developers as a good location for wind farms, and this type of development is growing especially towards Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. In time this may change the landscape and impact on our wildlife.

**5.8** The Council will need to take into account the environmental and social issues this type of development activates.

**5.9** Other types of renewable installations and energy efficiency devices should be explored and encouraged in order to ensure a good mix of technologies and methods to cut emissions and contribute to the National Grid.

**5.10** The Borough has one Air Quality Management Zone and possibly a second. The Borough will continue to monitor the areas and promote remedial action where appropriate, introduce measures of mitigation where necessary and ensure new development does not exacerbate the problem.

**5.11** The Borough has an incredible wealth of environmental assets. With this wealth come challenges as the Borough will need to provide extra homes and associated infrastructure without causing a detrimental impact on these qualities. Grasping opportunities to enhance and expand on what we have are vital to ensure that wildlife and people can adapt to the impacts of climate change.

## **Consultation - What you have told us**

**5.12** As part of the most recent Issues and Options consultation the specific section on 'Attractive and Sustainable' issues - The comments received showed the following areas for consideration -

- Should make clearer the importance of our heritage, and the conservation of our built environment
- Support for a dispersed approach to development in the borough, recognising the importance of Kings Lynn and using a hierarchy strategy for the borough. However would like some development in rural areas to sustain rural communities, we need a balanced approach. Kings Lynn is a priority but not at the expense of the rest of the borough.
- Mixed views on any further expansion in Downham Market.
- Real need for affordable housing. This is a priority for rural areas, and also Hunstanton and Downham Market. New development should include an aspect of affordable housing.
- Developers should provide quality open space. This is wider and should safeguard biodiversity and include ecological enhancement to contribute towards the Green Infrastructure Management Plan.
- Protect good quality agricultural land / enhance our waterways / support the Shoreline Management Plan / protect AONB but shouldn't adopt a blanket restriction on new development.
- Support green infrastructure and provide for a full range of recreation facilities

- Recognise the balance between economic priorities for the borough and the environment. Also the priorities for financial contributions from developers.
- Have regard to flood risk
- There is support for renewable energy (although concerns at wind turbines), but need to consider the % we'll require.

## **Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy**

**5.13** The Air Quality Management Plan has highlighted an area of concern in London Road. Consideration will need to be given as to how the effects can be mitigated here.

**5.14** The Council has prepared an Environmental Statement. This sets out what the Authority has achieved in terms of improvements to the local environment, waste and energy efficiency. From this the Council intends to build on its achievements and monitor any changes.

**5.15** The Council is also signed up to the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance which encourages developers and planners to maximise opportunities for wildlife enhancement on development sites.

**5.16** The Norfolk Wildlife Trust has prepared Econet Mapping for the Borough (see 5.158 ). This maps opportunities in the area for protection and enhancement and is referred to later in the document. This is separate to the Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough which looks at the sensitivity of different landscape types in the area and to what extent they can accommodate change.

**5.17** A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been completed for the Borough and this shows area of high flood risk. By using this evidence development can be steered away from areas at risk and more sustainable communities can be planned as a result.

**5.18** A Green Infrastructure Study and Water Cycle Study are currently being prepared. The Shoreline Management Plan is currently being prepared by the Environment Agency.

## **Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us**

**5.19** It is important that policies are supported by research.

**5.20** The effects of climate change will lead to hotter drier summers and droughts are likely to become much more frequent; this is a potential future sustainability issue facing King's Lynn and West Norfolk, and therefore it is important that development incorporates water efficiency measures to avoid water shortages in the longer term. Safeguarding protected sites and historic buildings from adverse impacts should also be made explicit.

**5.21** It is important that we encourage the provision of renewable energy.



## What have we learnt?

**5.22** The need to meet renewable targets is acknowledged and whilst we are still learning about the various technologies and how the planning system can deliver the targets, there is still much more research to be done.

**5.23** The Council has written an Environmental Statement which sets clear targets and we have also signed up to the Nottingham Declaration and adopted the Norfolk Climate Change Strategy.

**5.24** We also need to address demands of future legislation and consider the future development of renewable technologies.

### Policy 9

#### Policy approach

Avoidance of new development in areas with an increased vulnerability to climate change will be necessary in some circumstances.

The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment outlines potential flood risk throughout the Borough, but more specifically provides us with detailed information on the three towns. This will guide development away from areas of high flood risk and create a more sustainable approach to future growth.

The emerging Shoreline Management Plan which looks at changes in management on the coast will also serve to highlight the future needs and changes that may affect coastal communities with changes in climate.

The Council and its partners will support and encourage the generation of energy from renewable sources. These will be permitted unless there are unacceptable locational or other impacts that could not be outweighed by wider environmental, social, economic and other benefits.

Promote and encourage opportunities to achieve high standards of sustainable design and energy efficiency including use of re-used or recycled materials and of local and traditional materials.

Construction techniques, layout, orientation, internal design and appropriate insulation will also need to be maximised to improve efficiency.

Development will need to demonstrate good design standards in sustainable locations where there is good access to services and facilities minimising the need to travel.

## Question 9

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

### Justification

**5.25** The RSS has included a policy whereby new development of more than 10 dwellings (new build or conversions) or 1000m<sup>2</sup> of non residential floor space should reduce at least 10% of their emissions by using decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. For developments over 100 dwellings a 20% reduction of emissions will be necessary. Therefore this will not need to be reiterated in local policy.

There will also be some cases where development should not be sited for reasons of sustainability, for example in high flood risk areas. A sustainability checklist could be devised to establish what has been considered and the evidence base for the development and this could help planners to decide how to incorporate energy efficient and renewable features.

### Implementation

**5.26** Working in partnership with other organisations will be essential to delivery of aspirations and ensuring that planners are working on up to date policies and guidance. The Norfolk Climate Change Task Force will be a useful resource in understanding localised issues and working to new Government targets.

**5.27** Working in partnership with adjacent authorities will also serve to ensure that we are tackling the issues of sustainability in a coherent and coordinated way.

**5.28** The local population should feel that they are being taken into account in the decision making process.

**5.29** The Green Infrastructure Study, Council Environmental Statement, Water Cycle Study, Landscape Character Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will be used as background data to inform planning decisions.

### Rejected Options

**5.30** Setting a specified target would be reiterating regional policy therefore this is taken into account in the policy.

**5.31** It is important that the Council takes a supportive approach to the issues associated with sustainability, renewable energy and climate change, this is in line with Government guidance.

## Housing

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 2 - a great place to live
- 7 - cohesive and safe communities
- 10 - suitable housing
- 14 - climate change
- 15 - access to services

### Context

**5.32** Socio-economic context - age structure is older than the national average, and earnings are relatively low.

**5.33** Housing stock - study area has a low proportion of affordable social rented housing, private rented sector is about average, and more detached housing reflects the rural nature of the area.

**5.34** House prices - housing market is dominated by Kings Lynn and Downham Market; there is a strong rental market in Kings Lynn, particularly with the increase in migrant workers.

**5.35** Employment - higher proportions of people in lower skilled jobs.

**5.36** Migration and travel to work

- key driver of change in the study area
- significant patterns of commuting within and outside of area
- more people live in sub-region than work in it
- attractive destination for older or wealthy in-migrants

**5.37** Nature of dwelling stock and resident households

- Demand outweighs supply in the social rented sector
- The owner-occupied sector has the lowest turnover of stock and is characterised by the largest properties. Households in this sector display the most affluent profile with the highest incomes and the highest level of car ownership.
- The private rented sector records the highest turnover
- The social rented sector displays the smallest housing stock and the lowest level of under-occupation. The financial profile of these households is much worse than households in the other two tenures with average incomes little over a third of those in the owner-occupied sector.

- There remain a large number of aspirational owners amongst younger households that will be unable to afford to purchase a home, these potential owners would be suitable for low cost ownership schemes offered with a substantial discount.
- There is a large inflow of existing households, although there is a net outflow of newly forming households.

## **Consultation - What you have told us.**

- Recognise the need to consider our approach to migrant worker housing. Ensuring private sector housing is of sufficient quality and looking at varying needs of transient groups. Need for accommodation to be close to local services and amenities.
- Housing for the elderly should be part of larger estates with a mix of housing types, and close to local services and amenities. There is a need for more supported housing in the borough.
- Support for a mix of housing types in a new development, and if the Council do indicate the types and sizes of mix there should be a flexible approach, reflecting the SHLAA and SHMA.
- Support for high quality housing provision, although this should not just be in Kings Lynn. Should have a flexible policy approach for sub division, to enable planners to refuse applications where subdivision would be detrimental to the character of the area.
- Mixed views of lifetime housing. Should consider as one type of property, so could be part of the mix on new development. Careful design in any new development should enable adaptation.
- Growth should be in sustainable locations, but also support for appropriate rural areas. There is a need for a range of sites.
- Protect the character and heritage of our market towns, and natural environment
- Balanced development in rural areas.
- Downham Market – can't keep expanding.

## **Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy**

**5.38 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** – (Carried out for the three districts of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk / North Norfolk / Breckland).

- The study reveals the need for affordable housing by type and tenure including intermediate housing – almost a quarter of the net need is for intermediate housing. In the case of all 3 districts the level of need is far above any likely capacity to meet it. However, the SHMA concludes that 750 new homes in KLWN could be supported by the market and still provide an adequate provision of affordable housing. The Housing Needs Survey indicates a need for some 800 a year.
- This need has risen as prices have increased faster than household income, and new supply of appropriately priced housing has been limited

- There are significant differences in the price of housing both for sale and for rent in different areas of the borough. The study identified two distinct housing market areas i.e. the western coastal area, and the rest of the borough.
  - The Western Coastal area shows a more affluent and settled population with a high proportion of second home ownership and retired people, having much larger savings than the average.
  - Rural issues include: income differences (fringe areas are poorer than purely rural areas); housing aspiration differences and access to services shown sharply rural/urban
- An analysis of movement of households in and out of the borough shows a net inflow of existing households without children (likely to include retiring and semi-retiring households) and a net outflow of newly forming households and households with children. This migration information along with information about the existing high proportion of older person households is an important policy consideration in projecting future needs.

## 5.39 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

**5.40** The SHLAA looks forward over a 20yr time frame from adoption of the Core Strategy - the Core Strategy is currently projected for adoption in 2010, and therefore the SHLAA period covers 2010-2030.

**5.41** Sites identified for the SHLAA, and therefore to be considered as options, included:

- A list of basic locations that were judged sustainable in terms of local employment and services. This was combined with local information on services which led to settlements being included or excluded from consideration.
- Settlements considered by the previous Urban Capacity Study were looked at under new SHLAA approach. These were added to sites submitted by land owners and developers for consideration.
- Sites must pass a 'sieving' process where they are considered 'deliverable, developable and available etc...'
- The sieving process will also include the cross-referencing of SHLAA identified sites against the SFRA to check the amount of development that will be viable whilst considering flood risk in the short and long term. It is expected that this will have a significant effect upon the location and amount of new housing that can be delivered.

**5.42** The study estimates that there is the potential to deliver **11,209** new homes over the twenty-year period from Core Strategy adoption, (of which **8,235** can be delivered within King's Lynn).

**5.43** The phasing of the sites has been assessed as falling into the following timescales:

Years	Dwellings
0 - 5	4,461
6 - 10	3,582
11 - 15	1,452
16 - 20	216
Not phased	1,452

**5.44 Affordable Housing and site viability study – Fordham Research (October 2008)**

**5.45** Key recommendations on the thresholds and proportions applied to Section 106 agreements were made following the completion of an Affordable Housing Viability Assessment undertaken by Fordham Research. They suggest:

- % contributions could be raised in some locations
- A differentiated geographical approach could be applied.
- Thresholds for qualifying sites could be reduced
- A flexible approach will be needed if viability is threatened.

**5.46 Gypsy and Traveller RSS Review (Draft February 2008) and Gypsy and Traveller Norfolk accommodation needs survey (Norfolk / Cambridge Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments - GTAAs)**

**5.47** The estimated need of 53 pitches for King's Lynn and West Norfolk has been accepted, and remains as such in draft Policy H4 of the RSS Review. However this figure does not include any level of transit pitch provision nor plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople.

**5.48** Overall there has not been sufficient evidence on which to base Transit Site allocations across the region. Evidence provided by the Showman's Guild of Great Britain identifies need arising from the sites that currently exist, but does not recommend a Strategic Regional Distribution.

**5.49** The omission of such targets for Transit Site need from RSS draft policy H4 should not preclude local planning authorities (LPAs) from granting permission for the development of Transit Sites or Travelling Showpeople sites according to the interim measures outlined in CLG Circular 04/2007.



**5.50** Local authorities should seek to achieve levels of provision required by 2011 as soon as possible through the development control process, particularly when opportunities present themselves, and also through the preparation of Local Development Documents.

**5.51** Beyond 2011, provision across the region should be made for an annual 3% increase in the level of overall residential pitch provision (to be calculated from overall planned provision in 2011). Where Local Development Documents look beyond 2011 they should seek to continue the distributional strategy for 2006-11 outlined in H4 above unless evidence from up to date Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments suggests otherwise.

### **Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us**

**5.52** Generally speaking, the sustainability of the Borough may be compromised where development for housing uses previously undeveloped land. This will result in loss of land and also will potentially impact upon the landscape or the character of the area. On the positive side there is a need for the housing and therefore there will be social benefits to satisfying that need. Economically the housing supports economic growth, and the social benefits of that. Affordable housing, in particular when addressing the mix of types; tenures; potential exceptions to policy; also gives positive social benefits. Again economic benefits will be apparent.

- Potential disadvantages of using up land can be mitigated by:
- Making sure development is in appropriate locations.
- Considering carefully the scale of development and the impact on surrounding areas.
- Ensuring adequate supporting services nearby.
- Using as much previously developed land as possible. (In Kings Lynn particularly the use of 'brownfield' land could be prioritised, but the potential impact on the historic core needs to be considered carefully).

### **What have we learnt?**

- There are significant housing pressures in the Borough, both for growth and to address existing affordability issues. Notwithstanding the current economic climate we need to make provision for potential growth. (We do monitor the situation and review it regularly).
- A range of needs is apparent from differing tenure types to the sizes and types of houses.
- The design of new developments is important as is the relationship to surrounding development.
- We need to recognise the differing characteristics of the parts of the Borough.
- A robust approach to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, taking account of geographical spread, needs to be put in place, with an appropriate geographical spread.
- We should fully utilise current permissions and commitments for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

**5.53** As a first step it is important to assess how much new housing development is required across the Borough and the potential sources to meet this figure.

## Housing land requirement calculation for Core Strategy

A	East of England Plan minimum dwelling provision 2001 - 2021	12,000
B	(To ensure 15 years supply from date of adoption - assumed to be 2010 - additional 4 years required to provide until 2025 at 600 pa.)	2,400
C	Minimum to find to 2025, plus a 10% allowance for flexibility and non-compliance	14,400 (+1,400) = 15,800
D	Completions 2001 to end of March 2008	5,300
E	Existing permissions still to be built	4,600
F	Need to find sites to accommodate completions amounting to at least	5,900

**5.54** The potential sources for these completions which need to be examined could be:

- Sites identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). A description of this work and the outputs is given above. Whilst some 11000 units were shown, some of these will have permission, and others need to be checked against the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment so that vulnerable sites can be discounted. The SHLAA contains a significant number of sites within the built-up areas of the towns; the majority of these are in Kings Lynn. An important question is whether a strategy primarily focused on brownfield land would be appropriate
  - The **current Local Plan** (1998) makes allocations, some of which have not been taken up. These need to be re-visited and assessed for their suitability, but could provide significant sites. Potentially there are some 4200 units on allocations which are unbuilt without permission. As above these need to be checked against the SFRA.
  - The above are potential sources of sites to allocate. Each location will need to be analysed for its suitability and deliverability. This will be done for the Site Allocations DPD, but at this stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy it is appropriate to consider broad options and locations as is done in the Policies for Places section.
- Policy approach

## Policy 10

### Housing Distribution

The plan will identify sufficient land for a minimum of 16,200 new dwellings across the Borough over the period 2001 to 2025, (12,000 to 2021 and an additional 2400 to maintain a 15 year supply from adoption date of the Core Strategy, anticipated 2010. The total allows 10% for flexibility and non-completion of commitments etc.) to be distributed broadly as follows:

- **King's Lynn** – Provision for at least 7100 dwellings in total (with 4000 new allocations) will be made in King's Lynn through the development of strategic sites identified on the proposals map and through other smaller sites that will be allocated through the Site Allocation DPD.
- **Downham Market** – Provision will be made for at least 3000 dwellings in total (with 500 new allocations) in Downham Market over the plan period, which will require new allocations in the town and will be identified through the Site Allocation DPD.
- **Hunstanton** – Provision will be made for at least 530 new dwellings in total (with 200 new allocations) in Hunstanton, which will require the identification of new allocations within the town. Where possible new allocations should support the aims and objectives in the Hunstanton regeneration plan and involve the redevelopment of previously developed land in the centre of the town. New greenfield allocations will be restricted to land east of the A149 and will be identified through the Site Allocation DPD.
- **Wisbech** fringe (Emneth / Walsoken) - Provision will be made for up to 500 new dwellings to support the service centre function of Wisbech.
- **Key Service Centres** – Provision will be made for at least 3800 new dwellings in total (with 740 new allocations) in the Key Service Centres identified by the Settlement Hierarchy (see Page 21). Most of this provision will be met through existing completions and commitments, with new housing allocations in appropriate villages to be identified through the Site Allocations DPD.
- **Rural Villages** – Provision will be made for at least 1000 dwellings in total (with 320 new allocations) in the rural villages. New housing allocations will be restricted solely to the provision of small scale infilling or affordable housing allocations or potential exceptions housing to meet the identified needs of the local community, and will be identified through the Site Allocations DPD.
- **In total new allocations amount to 6300.**

## NOTE:

Distribution of allocations in percentage terms is:

<b>Main towns - Kings Lynn / Downham Market / Hunstanton</b>	<b>66%</b>
Kings Lynn	44%
Key Service Centres (x37)	23%
Total for Borough key settlements	89%
Rural Villages (x32)	6%

## Housing – type, size, tenure

Proposals for housing must take appropriate account of need identified in the most up to date strategic housing market assessment with particular regard to size, type and tenure of dwellings. (These needs will include appropriate provision for all sectors of the community, for example including the needs of elderly people or people with disabilities).

## Affordable Housing

The Council will work with partner organisations to ensure there is an adequate supply of good quality affordable housing distributed throughout the Borough. This will be achieved by having regard to up to date strategic housing market assessments and affordable housing needs studies.

The **thresholds** over which affordable housing provision will be sought are:

**King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton and Rural areas (i.e. all areas);**  
Sites of 10+ dwellings or 0.132 of HA

The **percentage** which will be sought for affordable housing provision on qualifying sites is 30%.

A flexible approach on both thresholds and proportions will be taken to ensure scheme viability and balance housing need, negotiated scheme-by-scheme, subject to open book approach by developers.

**Tenure mix** - 70:30 Rented to 'shared ownership', adjusted where necessary to balance housing need and make schemes viable, subject to negotiation. 30% 'shared ownership' to include other forms of intermediate tenure, including intermediate rented.

In negotiating the proportions and tenures of affordable housing account will be taken of the site characteristics and effects on the economic viability of the development through open book explanations. Provision will be 'on-site' unless demonstrated that this is not feasible.

It is appropriate to consider the exceptional provision of affordable housing (maintained in 'perpetuity') to meet local rural need in settlements which meet basic sustainability criteria.

### **Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

Provision will be made for the 53 permanent pitches identified as needed in the Borough between 2006 and 2011 for gypsies and travellers. Sites for gypsies, travellers (or travelling show people) will be given permission where they:

- are capable of being serviced by basic utilities;
- ensure an appropriate geographical spread;
- avoid environmentally sensitive areas and areas at risk from flooding;
- afford good access to main routes (including the A47(T); A17; A10; A148/9; and A134 );
- are located within a reasonable distance of facilities and supporting services (such as schools or health provision).

Provision for transit sites and additional provision of permanent sites for gypsies and travellers **above** the 53 pitches will be considered where additional need is demonstrated.

### **Question 10**

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

## Justification

**5.55** The numerical requirements are given from the Regional Spatial Strategy (to 2021) and the years to 2025 reflect the advice in PPS3. The relative distribution between settlements relates back to the overall vision, and the aspirations for the particular places. Kings Lynn town is the **main focus** for employment development and the bulk of new housing provision; this is considered appropriate from a sustainability perspective. Continued housing growth in Downham Market and Hunstanton reflects the size and function of those settlements. Wisbech, although not within the Borough, does abut the boundary, and parts of Emneth and Walsoken parishes are contiguous with the town. As a significant service centre for the area it is appropriate to support this function with additional growth. More modest housing growth in the **Key Service Centres** is appropriate to support the local housing needs, potentially support local employment opportunities which diversify the job market, and provide additional support for the viability of local services. These places as the name suggest contain basic services and journey to work public transport. In **Rural Villages** which are reliant for many needs on nearby larger centres it would not be appropriate to locate significant amounts of new housing growth here. Such significant expansion would be unsustainable. However there will be opportunities for limited infilling and housing for specific local needs without detriment to the form and character. The percentage splits between settlements noted in the draft policy reflects the need to locate development in the most sustainable places - 88% is directed to the key towns and villages.

**5.56** The elements of the policy dealing with **affordable** or special needs housing reflect very particular circumstances evidenced from focussed studies. The affordable housing thresholds and percentages take into account demand, viability of development and the size and function of settlements in the Borough.

**5.57** Affordable housing including social rented and intermediate housing cannot be delivered by the market alone. It is likely that the majority of new affordable housing will be delivered through Section 106 planning agreements. Such agreements will require developers to transfer a proportion of their housing at a price below market value to a Registered Social Landlord. Other sites will provide purely affordable housing, and will include rural exception sites. Such development is likely to be dependent upon the Registered Social Landlord securing grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency.

**5.58** Specifically the **Gypsy and Traveller** approach reflects need evidenced from regional and local sources and criteria aimed at achieving deliverable sites.

## Implementation

**5.59** The achievement of the provision outlined above depends on appropriate market conditions. The Borough Council can ensure that the proper planning for strategic infrastructure has taken place, facilitate implementation plans (site briefs etc) and deal with planning applications in an efficient way, but broadly the risks will lie with the private sector.

**5.60** There are **significant risks** associated with implementing a development strategy policy which in part relies on large scale capital investment, particularly for the strategic infrastructure improvements in this case to enable housing development. As a Growth Point, with the imperative to deliver both housing and employment growth, we know that many significant schemes need pump priming. Any lack of recognition or potential investment gaps will seriously jeopardise our ability to deliver to timetable. More localised investments as part of particular development schemes or applications must incorporate sustainable solutions from inception of a scheme.

### Rejected Option

**5.61** Options which do not recognise the significant sustainability advantages of locating a significant proportion of the Borough's growth in Kings Lynn perform more poorly. Equally it is beneficial to recognise the advantages of the other main towns. In this context an option based significantly on a dispersed pattern of development is not considered appropriate. The sparse rural character of the Borough means that service centre villages are important hubs for services. Options which ignore this feature, such as concentration exclusively in the main towns are also rejected.

**5.62** Whilst there is pressure for increased amounts of affordable housing, evidence suggests that any option seeking to increase the percentage of affordable housing sought from developers, or a significant lowering of the thresholds could adversely affect the viability of housing schemes in large parts of the Borough. The overall need to deliver housing targets, in many cases on brownfield sites leads to a rejection of options that change threshold / percentages.



## The Economy

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 2 – a great place to live
- 3 – Thriving economy
- 4 – Success in schools
- 5 – Adult learning opportunities
- 6 – Tourist destination
- 8 – Quality services
- 12 – Growth and regeneration
- 15 – Access to services
- 16 – West Norfolk is unique

### Context

**5.63** West Norfolk ranks 150th (out of 408) districts nationally in the 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and 21st in the country on inequality. There are significant variations of affluence and poverty in parts of both the urban and rural areas, and particular wards in King's Lynn are among the bottom ten per cent in an index of the most deprived areas in the country and parts of the Fairstead Ward in King's Lynn are in the bottom 3% nationally.

**5.64** A major issue for the borough is existing low skills, educational attainment and career aspirations. 42% of the population are functioning at basic skills level. The proportion of working age people with higher level qualifications (NVQ level 4 or above) in West Norfolk is well below the county and regional average. 18.2% of our population has no qualifications and 52% of schoolchildren in the borough achieved 5+ good GCSE passes in 2007/2008 compared with 62% nationally.

**5.65** There are 62,000 jobs in West Norfolk with 15% of these self-employed and 65% full time. The King's Lynn urban area accounts for 55% of all jobs in the borough and acts as the economic driver for the borough. The central area of the town (with 8,400 jobs) includes retailing, the service sector, and community and recreational facilities. The Hardwick area covering the industrial estates to the south of the town account for 8,500 jobs, and the other area is the Docks, riverside and North Lynn Industrial Estates with 2,400 jobs.

**5.66** Downham Market accounts for 5% of all jobs and Hunstanton for 4%, and these are within or adjoining the town centres. There are also significant concentrations of employment at RAF Marham, the National Construction College at Bircham Newton and in the Wisbech fringe area.

**5.67** In terms of employment sector the public sector is the largest employer with 29.6%, followed closely by distribution, hotels and restaurants (26.1%), manufacturing (13.8%) and banking, finance and insurance (10.7%).

**5.68** We are more dependent on the agriculture and fishing sectors than the rest of Norfolk and the region and have strengths in valued added food processing and pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing and precision engineering. There is a smaller proportion of employment in the knowledge based sectors in the borough when compared with the county and the region, and the service sector is also under represented.

**5.69** West Norfolk's occupational profile reveals that there are fewer people employed in managerial and professional occupations and more in the Skilled Trades and Elementary occupations than is the average for the county, region and nationally. The average total income in West Norfolk is £21,300 which is below the national average. However the borough also has low levels of unemployment.

**5.70** The Economic Partnership agreed in 2007 that the key sectors of the economy are advanced engineering/ manufacturing, food related activity and tourism and that these should continue to be recognised, supported and promoted. This reflects the one of the goals set out in the Vision for King's Lynn. These sectors are expected to be the key sectors in the West Norfolk Economic Regeneration Strategy with the addition of the public / service sector which is acknowledging King's Lynn's role as a sub regional centre. The West Norfolk Economic Regeneration Strategy provides more information on our local economy, a detailed strategy for economic growth in the Borough. This sits alongside the county-wide Shaping Norfolk's Future Strategy produced by the county Economic Development Partnership, and the Regional Economic Strategy 'A Shared Vision'.

**5.71** Consideration should also be given to the West Norfolk Tourism Strategy and the Cultural Strategy for West Norfolk. Both providing guidance and detailing priorities for growth and development in these sectors across the Borough.

**5.72** King's Lynn is the principal comparison retail destination in the Borough while both Downham Market and Hunstanton provide essential convenience, service and tourism roles serving the daily needs of local resident populations and the wider tourist/visitor customer base.

**5.73** The larger centres at Cambridge and Norwich continue to draw trade away from the town and may impact upon the Borough's ability to retain comparison goods expenditure over the longer term. Nevertheless there seems to be significant potential capacity for additional floorspace in the Borough. There is more limited forecast capacity for new convenience goods retailing

## **Consultation - What you have told us**

- Support for improving skills and local knowledge base to create an educated and trained workforce.
- The Council should adopt a pro active approach to retaining/supporting and attracting new business
- Provide a range of employment sites, ensure these are available for employment uses

- Support rural employment and diversification (including working from home)
- Re use brownfield sites in rural areas for employment first before allowing residential
- Support the rural exception sites for appropriate employment uses, subject to meeting criteria
- Support for a dispersed approach to development in the borough, recognising the importance of Kings Lynn and using a hierarchy strategy for the borough. However would like some development in rural areas to sustain rural communities, we need a balanced approach. Kings Lynn is a priority but not at the expense of the rest of the borough.
- Protect and enhance our cultural facilities, promote and expand our tourism offer across the borough
- Need for flexible town centre policies
- Balanced development in rural areas
- Support for brownfield first strategy because of the regeneration benefits, but recognise the need to deliver so a range of sites should be allocated. Have a realistic strategy
- Improve broadband / wireless connections throughout the borough
- Improve the strategic road network; A47 but also A10 and A17.
- Secure the future of the Port

### Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy

**5.74 Employment Land Study published November 2007.** The Study reviews the existing supply of employment land; identifies the future quantity of land required for employment use (based on economic forecasts, market conditions, and past rates of take-up); and broadly identifies the location, type quantity of sites required ensuring adequate supply of employment land through to 2021.

#### 5.75 Recommendations:

- Key Allocated Sites and Major Commitments – where specific issues should be addressed to enhance their availability, sustainability and attractiveness or, where their identification for employment is no longer appropriate;
- Potential Mixed-Use and Redevelopment Opportunity Sites – recommendations for potential mixed-use development opportunities.
- Maintaining a Portfolio of Sites – classification of sites by availability, and outlines those sites recommended for inclusion and protection in the Site Specific Policies and Allocations DPD. Also recommends a policy criteria approach to resisting the loss of employment land to other uses.
- Need for Additional Employment Land (up to 2021) –
  - Supply of allocated land exceeds forecast requirements particularly in manufacturing (however this does not take into account availability of the allocated land).
  - Key issue is to assist in the delivery of existing sites so they are genuinely available and able to effectively contribute to the employment land portfolio, particularly in King's Lynn.

- The quantity of supply is generous for the borough, providing additional opportunities for small-scale sustainable employment outside of King's Lynn and Downham Market is important to promote a vibrant economy in the rural areas of the borough.
- Support the Council's general policy approach to limited and sustainable forms of employment in rural areas, but would encourage specific promotion of small-scale employment development in and around some of the Borough's other larger settlements such as Hunstanton and Terrington St Clement.

**5.76 Town Centres Study published September 2006.** The Study was commissioned to inform and guide retail and leisure planning in the Borough. The key objectives were to establish vitality and viability in the town centres of King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton to provide an assessment of current and projected retail and leisure needs until 2021 (based on PPS6 indicators).

**5.77 Recommendations:**

- National guidance recommends retaining the town centre focus for development.
- King's Lynn is the main comparison retail destination in the Borough with Downham Market and Hunstanton providing essential convenience, service and tourist roles.
- The retention of facilities in village centres is key to the sustainability and vitality of rural communities, and policy should aim to retain these important facilities wherever possible.
- The polarisation of retail towards larger centres at national and regional level (e.g. Norwich and Cambridge) is set to continue and this has implications for the Borough as additional floor space is being directed to these larger centres.
- Nevertheless, forecasts indicate significant potential capacity for additional comparison floor space in the Borough.
- There is limited capacity for new convenience goods retailing.
- The main focus for the LDF should be to promote and enhance the existing offer of each centre. Redevelopment and continued investment should be supported to help maintain and enhance the retail and leisure offer, and to provide criteria based policies against which planning applications can be assessed.

**5.78 Town Centre Extension Development Framework.** The Study brief was to consider the scope and capacity to support the regeneration of the town as a sub regional attractor by the redevelopment of the bus station area and with the benefit of improving links between the town centre and rail station.

**5.79** The findings confirmed that the redevelopment of this area was viable in accordance with the identified framework.

**5.80 The Hunstanton Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan.** The Built Environment Masterplan provides a detailed framework for the enhancement of the built environment and public realm, the promotion of development opportunities in the area and the attraction of new investment, which are important to the future prosperity of Hunstanton.

## Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us

**5.81** The policy approach seeks to strengthen our local economy, raising skill levels and aspirations, creating employment opportunities, increasing earnings and improving the quality of life; all key SA objectives for the Borough.

**5.82** Considering the supply of employment land, it is important to take into account the loss of greenfield land, but this should be balanced against improved opportunities for residents living here and those wanting to relocate to the Borough. Most importantly direct benefits to the economy will include the creation of new jobs, opportunities and services. The proposed location of employment land follows the settlement hierarchy and therefore significant growth will take place in the most sustainable locations.

**5.83** Proposals to retain and locate employment development in rural areas will increase travel movements and emissions as a result. However the economic and social benefits to the rural community outweigh the issue of increased emissions, and it may be possible to further mitigate travel movements.

**5.84** Improvements to education facilities within the Borough, while may involve the loss of some greenfield land, will create opportunities for improved learning within communities. It will create a greater skilled workforce, retain school leavers and attract skilled employees and families to move into the Borough. It will also attract new businesses to relocate.

**5.85** A constant risk to any new economic development is the impact on local character, landscape, wildlife and heritage, and any proposals should not be in conflict with the SA objective to prevent any adverse impact on these.

## What have we learnt?

- The borough has sufficient quantity of employment land but that the public sector needs to assist in the delivery of these sites where the private sector is unwilling or unable to, so as to ensure they are genuinely available.
- The focus for employment development should be on King's Lynn with opportunities in Downham Market, Hunstanton and within our rural areas.
  - Need to maintain our pro-active approach to retaining and supporting existing business and attracting new
  - Need to provide for a full range of employment sites
  - Support for rural employment and diversification - Consider a rural exception policy approach to employment development in rural areas.
- Brownfield first approach.
- The Borough faces a challenge to improve the skills, educational attainment and employment aspirations of the residents.
- Expand the tourism offer in Hunstanton, with careful consideration given to impacts on the natural environment along the coast.
- Adopt a hierarchical approach to retail development in the Borough

- There is additional capacity for comparison floorspace in the Borough.
- There is limited capacity for new convenience good retailing in the Borough.
- Promote and enhance our existing centres through redevelopment opportunities and continued investment.
- Retention of village facilities.
- It is important to carefully consider balancing the Sustainability Objectives in line with Council priorities for the Borough.

## Policy 11

### Policy approach

#### The Economy

The local economy will be developed:

- To facilitate job growth in the local economy, delivering the RSS target of 5,000 additional jobs by 2021.
- To increase the proportion of higher skilled jobs while ensuring that opportunities are available for the development of all sectors of the economy and workforce.

Sufficient employment land will be allocated in locations consistent with the Settlement Hierarchy (see Page 21) to meet identified and future needs and provide for choice. This will be addressed through the allocation of sufficient land to provide a choice between a range of location, type and size sites. The LDF will ensure that a readily available supply of land is maintained throughout the plan period (at least a five year supply of readily available land is maintained, with a further 10 years that is developable and an additional 10 years allocated.) Development Briefs (SPDs) will be prepared to focus on overcoming constraints to key sites.

Retails, tourism, leisure, and cultural industries are key elements of the economic and social vibrancy of our borough, and contribute to the regeneration and growth of the area. Our policy approach to retail development is addressed within the settlement hierarchy policy. The Council will support opportunities to improve and enhance our visitor economy; in particular supporting the expansion of the tourism offer in Hunstanton to create a year-round economy. This should reflect the priorities identified in the Hunstanton Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan.

The Council will support the rural economy and diversification through a rural exception approach to new development within the countryside; and through a criteria based approach to retaining employment land and premises.



Rural Exception Sites - Permission may be granted on land which would not otherwise be appropriate for development for an employment generating use which meets a local business need. Any development must satisfy the following criteria-

- Have local support for the development
- Be appropriate in size and scale to the local area
- Should be adjacent to the village centre/ services
- The proposed development and use will not be detrimental to the local environment or local residents.

The Council will seek to retain land or premises currently or last used for employment purposes (including agricultural uses) unless it can be demonstrated that:

- Continued use of the site for employment purposes is no longer viable, taking into account the site's characteristics, quality of buildings, and existing or potential market demand; or
- Use of the site for employment purposes gives rise to unacceptable environmental or accessibility problems particularly for sustainable modes of transport; or
- An alternative use or mix of uses offers greater potential benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs, or in delivering the Council's regeneration agenda.

## **Skills and Aspirations**

Opportunities for innovation, skills and training will be expanded through:

- Facilitating the expansion of, and access to, further and higher education provision.
- Encouraging links between training and education provision and relevant business concentrations.
- Supporting primary and secondary schools, throughout the Borough, to improve facilities for the provision of a good range of vocational and academic education for the whole community.

## **Question 11**

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**



## Justification

**5.86** The proposed approach seeks to ensure that there is sufficient land and premises available to meet the needs of the borough, and meet the RSS target of 5,000 jobs.

**5.87** There is a need for sufficient employment land to be allocated but more importantly that this land is readily available, and are attractive sites for employment uses. The Council recognises the need for rural employment and diversification is crucial to a borough of this geographical size and population sparsity, to support the local rural economies. However it is more difficult to respond to local employment uses, and a rural exception site approach will enable the Council to be more responsive to business needs. But also by protecting existing employment sites within villages, resisting the loss of these to residential development, this enables us to protect such sites and create opportunities within rural communities. The location of employment land will mirror the sustainable settlement hierarchy approach to ensure new employment is located near to residential development.

**5.88** A significant issue for the borough is our low skill levels, and the implications for our local economy. It is important that this issue is reflected in the policy and our support and encouragement for improved education opportunities is reinforced.

**5.89** Other important aspects of our economy should be reflected in our policy, such as the visitor economy and retail. The approach to retail development specifically is addressed within the settlement hierarchy policy.

## Implementation

**5.90** The achievement of the jobs target specified by the RSS depends on appropriate market conditions. The Borough Council can ensure that the proper planning for strategic infrastructure has taken place, facilitate implementation plans (site briefs etc) and deal with planning applications in an efficient way, but broadly the risks will lie with the private sector.

**5.91** There are significant risks associated with implementing a development strategy policy which in part relies on large scale capital investment, particularly for the strategic infrastructure improvements in this case to enable employment development. A lack of recognition of the need to pump prime, and potential investment gaps will seriously jeopardise our ability to deliver to timetable. More localised investments as part of particular development schemes or applications must incorporate sustainable solutions from inception of a scheme.

**5.92** The regeneration of King's Lynn Town Centre and Hunstanton should continue by promoting the Town Centre Expansion / Regeneration of the Town Centre and Southern Seafront in partnership with existing operators as set out in the Masterplan and Framework documents.

## Rejected Option

**5.93** The strategy for our economy is written to acknowledge the growth agenda, and implement this in a practical sustainable way. It acknowledges the differing geographical nature of parts of the Borough, and the need to support our varied local economy.

**5.94** A more dispersed approach to the allocation of employment land is not a realistic alternative. It is unsustainable and there are limitations in terms of infrastructure for supporting employment development in more rural parts of the borough. It is important that employment growth takes place alongside residential growth, therefore in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. Concentration on development in King's Lynn also responds to the local market requirements.

**5.95** Other options could include an alternative approach to employment land in rural areas. Without a rural exception policy for employment it is likely that business in rural areas will be stifled and new opportunities restricted. Also without a policy approach protecting existing employment sites within rural areas, it is likely these sites will go forward for residential development, again reducing opportunities for the rural economy.

**5.96** Similarly failing to address education and skills development in policy will reduce opportunities for improved facilities and access to learning, and would be in conflict with our vision for the borough

## Transportation

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 2 - a quality place to live
- 8 - Quality services
- 14 - Climate change challenge
- 15 - Less reliance on cars

### Context

**5.97** The Borough sits at important junctions of the A10, A17 and A47 roads, linking to Norwich, Cambridge and Peterborough and more generally to the south and Midlands. It is also a significant port and has good rail links to Cambridge and London. Kings Lynn itself is characterised by higher than average levels of walking and cycling to work (although these are declining), low levels of bus use, continuing increases in car use and significant traffic delays / congestion and car traffic dominance. This leads to the public realm suffering as a result and air quality management issues in places.

**5.98** The market towns of Downham Market and Hunstanton provide the essential services such as education, employment and convenience goods shopping. They need to be economically viable and retain these facilities. In many ways they act as interchange points. They also offer the opportunity to access facilities on foot or by cycle due to distances, but the wider service centre role for villages will potentially be primarily car based.

**5.99** The Borough is poorly connected in transport terms, reflected in the low proportion of jobs taken by non-residents, and of residents who work elsewhere. This is in contrast to the regional economic centres of Norwich and Cambridge, which have connectivity scores well above the national average. Norwich and Cambridge workers also stand out as much less reliant on the car when travelling to work compared to districts like West Norfolk, which underlines the reliance on the car as a social and economic necessity in a large rural district.

**5.100** The Norfolk coast is a popular tourist destination, for both day and long stay visitors. The influx of visitors results in highly seasonal traffic flows and associated traffic problems in the summer season. Most visitors use the A149 coast road to get to destinations, but this road passes through the core of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and many coastal villages. General problems from traffic include congestion, speed, safety and parking.

**5.101** There is a limited network of bus services to the nearby market towns, with the nearest rail station at King's Lynn. The environment of the Norfolk coast, including its landscape, streetscape and tranquillity is one of its major attractions. These aspects are under threat from the impacts of motor traffic, which also contributes to climate change.

**5.102** The **Regional Spatial Strategy** (Transport Strategy) shows Kings Lynn to be a Regional Transport Node for the improvement of inter-urban public transport, both of a strategic nature and for coordinating local interchange too. Overall the aim of the RTS is to manage travel behaviour to reduce the rate of road traffic growth, but at the same time using sustainable access for new growth proposals. The RSS also notes that Kings Lynn should have policies that provide improved transport choices both within the urban area and between the town and its hinterland.

**5.103** Within the **Norfolk Local Transport Plan** there are specific sections addressing issues in the Borough:

#### **5.104 King's Lynn Sub-Region**

**5.105** The King's Lynn sub-regional strategy will work to complement the Urban Renaissance Strategy for King's Lynn and the wider area. It will therefore:

- Help to deliver improvements to public spaces, in particular the town centre, and create a vibrant environment in which people will spend time and choose to live
- Focus on improving travel choice, especially better public transport within King's Lynn and between King's Lynn and other parts of the sub-region and removing traffic from key public spaces
- Provide a framework through which to deliver transport improvements that will assist regeneration and growth.

#### **5.106 Market Towns**

**5.107** This strategy recognises the role of market towns as service centres to their surrounding areas. It will seek to:

- Improve their role as interchange centres, including interchange between modes in the towns, and connections between the towns and surrounding rural areas and other market towns/urban areas
- Improve accessibility within the towns, particularly improving the walking and cycling environments
- Traffic has been growing considerably in market towns due to housing and population growth and we need to remove traffic from town centres where possible, sometimes through providing traffic with new alternatives roads, to promote vibrant public spaces and thriving local economies to serve the rural hinterland.

**5.108** The LTP aims to improve both local and strategic accessibility, although no specific measures are currently identified.

**5.109** King's Lynn's Growth Point status offers the potential for additional funding for transport interventions to and within the town.

## Consultation - What you have told us

**5.110** As part of the most recent Issues and Options consultation included a specific section on 'Accessible and Connected' issues - linking people to improved services and information, and to stronger communities within and outside West Norfolk. The comments received showed the following areas for consideration -

- Improve broadband / wireless connections throughout the borough
- Improve public transport provision (including improving our rail service)
- Address congestion / air quality / traffic issues in Kings Lynn
- Improve the strategic road network; A47 but also A10 and A17.
- Consider a Park and Ride scheme for King's Lynn, and a Parkway Station
- Secure the future of the Port
- Adopt a clear parking strategy for Kings Lynn and Downham Market
- Improve road safety across the borough.

## Evidence – What it tells us and implications for policy

**5.111 Kings Lynn Area Transportation and Land Use Strategy.** A survey of residents across the Borough was carried out in November 2007 as a prelude to the main traffic study. This was important in highlighting public perceptions regarding the main traffic issues in the Borough. Traffic congestion was seen as the most serious problem (around 8 in 10 respondents indicated that congestion was severe or very severe in King's Lynn), with quality of public transport being deemed the second most important issue. Respondents were slightly less concerned with lack of pedestrian priority areas and air pollution. However an air Quality Management Area has been declared in the centre of Kings Lynn.

**5.112** In addition to these concerns, the main issues identified as threats to the town if growth is not properly planned along with the transport system include:

**5.113** Main issues identified as threats to the town if growth is not properly planned along with the transport system:

### **5.114 Strategic**

- Road vs. rail investment
- A47 and junctions
- Accessibility

### **5.115 Urban**

- Town centre through traffic
- Congestion
- Ability to deliver bus priority (and encourage mode shift)
- Parking – location and quantity

- Air quality
- Walking and cycling links / corridors
- Southgates roundabout

## 5.116 Rural

- Public transport links to King's Lynn from Downham Market and Hunstanton
- Community transport links for more rural areas.
- Acceptance of a more car-based scenario for more rural areas with emphasis on walking and cycling for local journeys

**5.117** According to the survey, two thirds of the sample wanted to see fewer cars in the town centre. Kings Lynn and West Norfolk is significantly above the average for travel to work by car, and very much below the average for journeys to work by public transport. In order to encourage transport use however, respondents felt that there was a need for improved reliability and frequency. With regards to cycling and walking, 13% of respondents felt that more cycle paths are required.

**5.118 Community Strategy.** Evidence collected as part of the preparation of the Sustainable Community Strategy suggests that the Borough overall is poorly connected, both by road and rail but also in respect of electronic communication - broadband and wireless.

## Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us

**5.119** Approaches which seek to make improvements to strategic or other major transport routes could have the effect of making transport more efficient and safe, thus reducing emissions, and it would improve accessibility, but will require significant investment. It could have the effect of increasing travel by car however.

**5.120** Working to promote Kings Lynn as a major transport node would again have efficiency and accessibility advantages, but with potentially high costs too.

**5.121** If we are to site new development only in places where there is better access to improved public transport opportunities, and links to larger towns or Kings Lynn there would be sustainability advantages – less emissions and better accessibility. However the question is whether public transport can be improved to such a degree. A more dispersed pattern is likely to continue the reliance on the private car.

**5.122** Traffic management is likely to become a more serious option if car use is not reduced. The effects of the associated pollution are seen in the Air Quality Management Zone in Kings Lynn. From a sustainability viewpoint the social and environmental effects are significantly negative.



**5.123** Securing the role of the port has been considered. The place within the local economy is acknowledged. From a sustainability standpoint it provides for a (partly) non road based freight transport mode, thus potentially reducing emissions. Environmentally there may be some hazards, but socially it provides for historical and identity benefits.

**5.124** Overall there are tensions between seeking to reduce the use of private cars and improving other transport potential for environmental benefit and seeking to maintain or improve accessibility for the population of the Borough from a social or economic perspective. The rural nature of much of the District means that many of the issues of personal mobility are likely to remain significant, and a degree of reliance on the private car to access key services must be accepted. However, positively planning for future growth provides an excellent opportunity to ensure that sites in the best locations are developed, maximising the ability to enable more sustainable transport solutions focussed on key routes to service centres and employment locations to come forward.

### **What have we learnt?**

**5.125** The need to recognise the importance of the strategic road network and rail links to the Borough, most of which converge in Kings Lynn is acknowledged. The studies, Sustainability Appraisal and the consultation all support the enhancement of public transport. However this will mean different things in different parts of the Borough. In the rural areas the main concern is the lack of public transport provision and its inability to meet day to day needs, thus leading to high car ownership and use, and an acceptance that the private car continues to have a significant role. Step change improvements to public transport are unlikely. In order to minimise environmental impacts it will be appropriate to locate the major proportion of new growth to more sustainable locations, where key services are located and there are genuine alternatives to using the private car. Whilst for example the rail line to Kings Cross is well used there are capacity limitations.

**5.126** The more sustainable locations include Kings Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton together with the key service villages. All will provide opportunities for changing to more sustainable modes of transport. Particularly in Kings Lynn there will be greater potential for public transport usage. However we are also aware that air quality and congestion are issues in the town and traffic management including car parking strategies, possibly including park and ride will be vital.

**5.127** The importance of transport infrastructure in attracting new investment and business to the local area, alleviating car dependency, and ensuring that there are viable and environmentally sustainable alternatives is important for West Norfolk's future. Improving rail connections, ICT/broadband communications, and transport provision for the elderly are key to encouraging commuting, home-working, and accessible travel, all of which are important quality of life issues and encourage more flexible working, maximising the area's potential, given its relative proximity to Norwich, Cambridge, and London.



## Policy 12

### Policy approach

### Strategic links

The Council will work with partner organisations, (including the Regional Transport Board, Highways Agency, public transport operators, Network Rail, Norfolk County Council and neighbouring authorities), to deliver a sustainable transport network which improves connectivity within and beyond the Borough, and reinforcing the role of Kings Lynn as a regional transport node, so as to:

- Facilitate and support the regeneration and development priorities as identified in the Spatial Strategy;
- Foster economic growth and investment
- Improve accessibility for all.

Priority will be given to:

- improving the strategic networks serving freight and passenger movements to, from and through the Borough (including via the port) and including the introduction of measures to reduce congestion, and improve reliability and safety of travel within the A47(T) corridor and also the corridors associated with the A10, A17, A134, and A148/9. This will include seeking:
  - Bypasses for Middleton & East Winch, and West Winch; and junction improvements at key interchanges including A47(T)/A149;
  - improvements to rail infrastructure, facilities, and services on the King's Lynn to Cambridge/King's Cross rail line, aimed at achieving better frequency and quality of travel.;
- provision for Kings Lynn of park and ride facilities; and a new rail halt to serve in addition to the existing town centre terminus and future facilities and developments.
- achieving improvements within the towns of King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton, particularly where there are air quality issues.
- achieving a balanced package of highway, traffic management (including car parking) and public transport improvements.
- maximising the use of alternative modes of freight movement via rail and the port.
- improving accessibility between towns and villages, and within the towns, so helping to reduce social exclusion, isolation and rural deprivation. To do this the Council and its partners will seek to:
  - improve the quality of the bus network;
  - extend the choice of transport available for communities;
  - provide integrated and safe routes for and pedestrians cyclists.

- investigate re-establishing rail links to Hunstanton from Kings Lynn by some form of light rail system.
- recognise that in the rural areas the private car will remain an important means of travel.

### **Dealing with transport issues in new development**

Development proposals should demonstrate that they have been designed to:

- Reduce the need to travel.
- Promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location and related to the uses and users of the development.
- Provide for safe and convenient access.
- The Council will seek appropriate contributions to appropriate transport improvements.

### **Question 12**

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**

### **Justification**

**5.128** The proposed approach seeks to ensure that the capacity of the transport systems within and linking to the Borough are adequate to match the needs of an expanding area. There are particular priorities around the strategic networks, but also important considerations for accessibility within the towns and between villages and towns. There are potential issues of isolation and rural deprivation to be addressed. It has to be acknowledged that the private car will have a role to play for some time to come in connecting particularly the rural settlements to service centres. Local improvements are required to maximise the opportunities for sustainable developments in the main towns, these are likely to be focussed on public transport and walking and cycling solutions. Detailed traffic management and car parking strategies will also be key tools.

**5.129** The Borough is positively seeking new development, particularly in Kings Lynn, to foster regeneration, and aid accessibility for the wider community, but in a sustainable way. Therefore new development needs to ensure it can work safely from a transport viewpoint, but that it also promotes appropriate sustainable solutions to fit the geographical location, and contributes financially as necessary.

## Implementation

**5.130** Working with Norfolk County Council as the transportation authority and through involvement with the Local Transport Plan, will be the primary implementation mechanism.

**5.131** Other significant involvement comes from:

- Strategic improvements will also need the involvement of Highways Agency, Network Rail and the East of England Regional Assembly.
- More local improvements will again need NCC joint working.
- Local bus and rail companies will be crucial in public transport route improvements.
- As development proposals come forward they will need to meet any particular brief requirements, or advice from NCC.
- Outputs from the KLATS will be vital in developing a strategy for Kings Lynn.
- As a designated Growth Point the Kings Lynn area will have close relationships to the Government Office East and other strategic agencies.

**5.132** There are significant risks associated with implementing a transport strategy policy which in part relies on large scale capital investment, particularly for the strategic network improvements. As a Growth Point with the imperative to deliver housing and employment growth, we know that many significant schemes need pump priming. Any lack of recognition or potential investment gaps will seriously jeopardise our ability to deliver to timetable. More localised investments as part of particular development schemes or applications must incorporate sustainable transport solutions from inception of a scheme.

## Rejected options

**5.133** The transport strategy above is written to acknowledge the growth agenda, and implement this in a practical sustainable way. It acknowledges the differing geographical nature of parts of the Borough.

**5.134** There are potential options which:

- Allow a more dispersed pattern of development – does not perform well in sustainability terms, particularly it would not reduce carbon emissions.
- Do not improve strategic networks.
- Focus on strategic road network only.
- Focus on strategic rail network only.
- Fits new growth to current constraints i.e. no new investment – we are unlikely to be able to meet regional requirements adopting this approach. Without some new investment even current allocated or committed projects would be difficult to implement. For example air quality is a current issue.

**5.135** However these options are not considered appropriate, they do not reflect the evidence and consultations discussed above.

## Environmental Assets

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 3 - Thriving economy
- 6 - Tourist destination
- 9 - Residents active in community
- 11 - Active and healthy
- 12 - Growth and regeneration
- 13 - Access to open space
- 16 - West Norfolk is unique

### Context

**5.136** The Borough has a wealth of natural assets. Including an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 5 Ramsar sites - internationally recognised for their wetland importance, 8 Special Areas of Conservation – internationally recognised for their unique habitats, 4 Special Protected Areas – internationally recognised for their birdlife. 6 National Nature Reserves, 29 Sites of Special Scientific Interest – nationally recognised for their ecological and geological importance, 195 County Wildlife Sites – locally recognised for their biodiversity value, 23 ancient woodlands, 5 historic parks and gardens, 42 Conservation Areas and approximately 2000 Listed Buildings.

**5.137** These areas are already protected by International and National law therefore the Council will seek to ensure these areas remain protected.

**5.138** Local sites outside of this legislation however need to be safeguarded in the LDF.

**5.139** Part of the appeal of the area to visitors and local people is the environment, therefore it is important that these assets are protected and enhanced.

**5.140** Planning Policy Statement 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation helps to avoid development or activities which introduce a detrimental impact upon the quality of the natural environment.

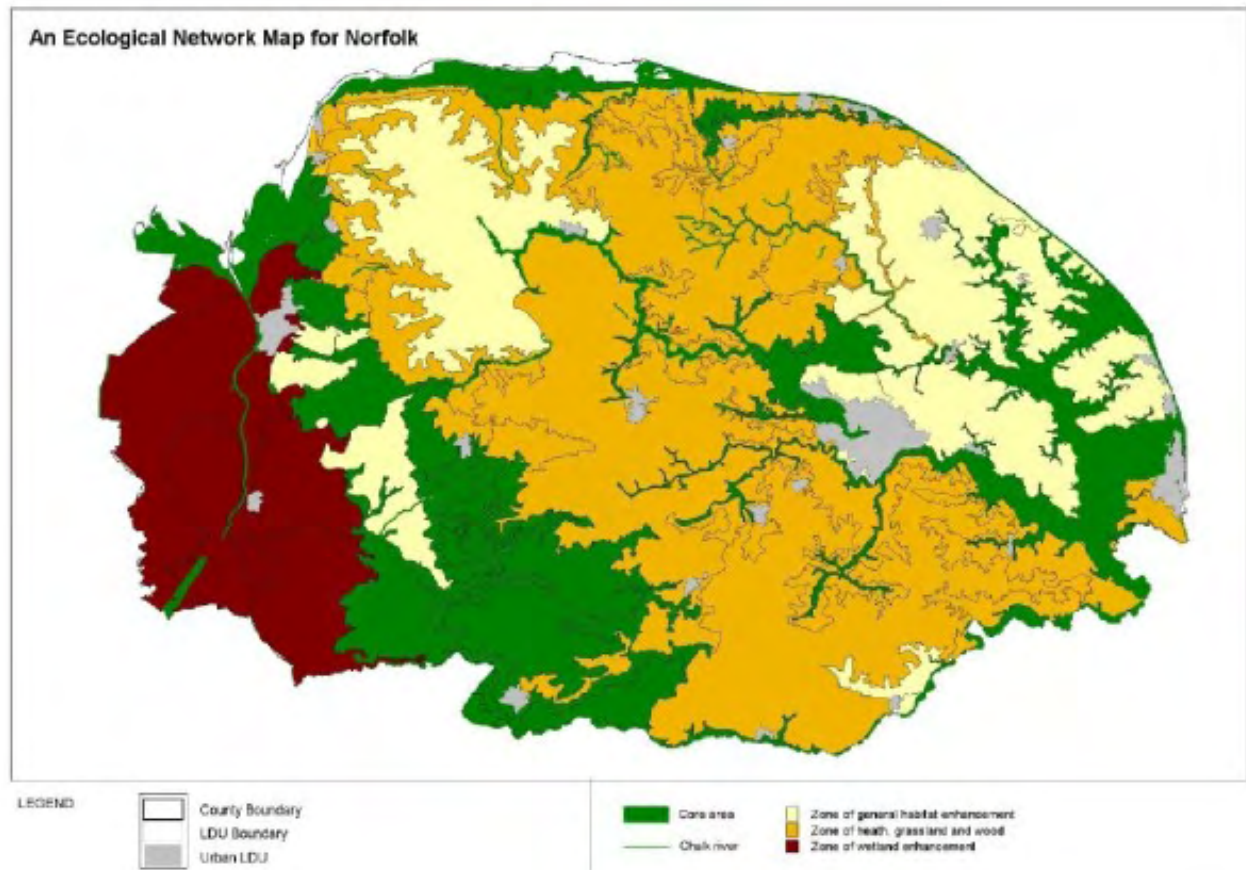
**5.141** Our Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough recognises the different landscape character types and their sensitivity to accommodate change. It also provides guidance on how planning can help to make better decisions and shape the future of a more attractive and healthy environment. [Borough Landscape Character Assessment](#)





**5.142** The East of England Regional Biodiversity Map identifies areas for creation and enhancement of wildlife and this will be considered alongside the emerging Green Infrastructure Study. [www.norfolkbiodiversity.org](http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org) (see website)

### Ecological Map of Norfolk



**5.143** The Green Infrastructure Study will seek to mitigate for the high levels of growth in the Borough by identifying multi functional areas of green space which is accessible to local people and visitors to the area.

**5.144** The consideration of maintenance and management of these sites in the long term will be addressed through the study.

**5.145** The increased growth in the borough means that there will be impacts on the natural environment in terms of land loss and disturbance. By working in partnership with other organisations more strategic environmental gain can be made.

## **Consultation - What you have told us.**

**5.146** As part of the most recent Issues and Options consultation the specific section on 'Attractive and Sustainable' issues - The comments received showed the following areas for consideration -

- Should make clearer the importance of our heritage, and the conservation of our built environment
- Support for a dispersed approach to development in the borough, recognising the importance of Kings Lynn and using a hierarchy strategy for the borough. However would like some development in rural areas to sustain rural communities, we need a balanced approach. Kings Lynn is a priority but not at the expense of the rest of the borough.
- Mixed views on any further expansion in Downham Market.
- Real need for affordable housing. This is a priority for rural areas, and also Hunstanton and Downham Market. New development should include an aspect of affordable housing.
- Developers should provide quality open space. In addition to this developers should safeguard biodiversity and include ecological enhancement to contribute towards the Green Infrastructure Management Plan.
- Protect good quality agricultural land / enhance our waterways / support the Shoreline Management Plan / protect AONB but shouldn't adopt a blanket restriction on new development.
- Support green infrastructure and provide for a full range of recreation facilities
- Recognise the balance between economic priorities for the borough and the environment. Also the priorities for financial contributions from developers.
- Have regard to flood risk
- There is support for renewable energy (although concerns at wind turbines), but need to consider the % we'll require.

## **Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy**

**5.147** The Air Quality Management Plan has highlighted an area of concern in London Road. Consideration will need to be given as to how the effects can be mitigated here.



**5.148** The Council has prepared an Environmental Statement. This sets out what the Authority has achieved in terms of improvements to the local environment, waste and energy efficiency. From this the Council intends to build on its achievements and monitor any changes.

**5.149** The Council is also signed up to "Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance for Norfolk" which encourages developers and planners to maximise opportunities for wildlife enhancement on development sites.

**5.150** The Norfolk Wildlife Trust has prepared Econet Mapping for the Borough. This maps opportunities in the area for protection and enhancement and is referred to later in the document. This is separate to the Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough which looks at the sensitivity of different landscape types in the area and to what extent they can accommodate change.

**5.151** A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been completed for the Borough and this shows area of high flood risk. By using this evidence development can be steered away from areas at risk and more sustainable communities can be planned as a result.

**5.152** A Green Infrastructure Study and Water Cycle Study are currently being prepared. The Shoreline Management Plan is currently being prepared by the Environment Agency. An Appropriate Assessment will be prepared to assess the impacts of the proposals in the LDF on international sites of importance.

**5.153** National Guidance on biodiversity and geodiversity is very thorough and our national and international sites are protected by current legislation. The sites which have little protection are our local sites such as County Wildlife sites. Through the Green Infrastructure study local sites will be identified and assessed as to how they can be enhanced and managed for the local community to have access to and enjoy.

## **Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us**

**5.154** Policies should be stronger on encouraging the incorporation of biodiversity into new development, improving access to areas biodiversity value whilst ensuring that this does not have adverse impacts on their integrity and ensuring that, where possible, measures are put in place to enable habitats and biodiversity to adapt to the impacts of climate change. In addition to addressing the need to protect habitats and species, policies should encourage the creation of new habitats alongside development. This would have positive effects on the appearance of the Borough, whilst also having positive effects on biodiversity. Encourage the provision of publicly accessible open space in development which has biodiversity value, especially in areas that are currently in deficit.

## **What have we learnt?**

**5.155** The Borough has a very distinctive and high environmental quality. Some areas are of international value and there are a large number of sites around the Borough all recognised as being of importance to nature conservation.

**5.156** Clearly the growth envisioned for the Borough may be at odds with the functioning of these sites.

**5.157** It is crucial that the Council continues to work in partnership with other organisations and builds on the information of these sites and species to ensure that decisions are based on robust evidence and that a better understanding of our local environment is achieved.

## Policy 13

### Policy approach

#### Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

The Council, will identify areas through the Green Infrastructure Management Plan and Econet map for the Borough, and work with partners to ensure an integrated network of green infrastructure is successfully created and managed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of local communities and the wider Borough. This will create a high quality environment for biodiversity to flourish and will contribute to an improved quality of life for current and future residents and visitors.

The Council and it's partners will support a range of initiatives, including Biodiversity Action Plans and proposals that will improve areas of poor quality lacking in biodiversity and geodiversity.

The Council will seek to protect and enhance local sites such as County Wildlife sites from development which damages biodiversity interest.

New development will be required to provide newly created areas or features of biodiversity interest.

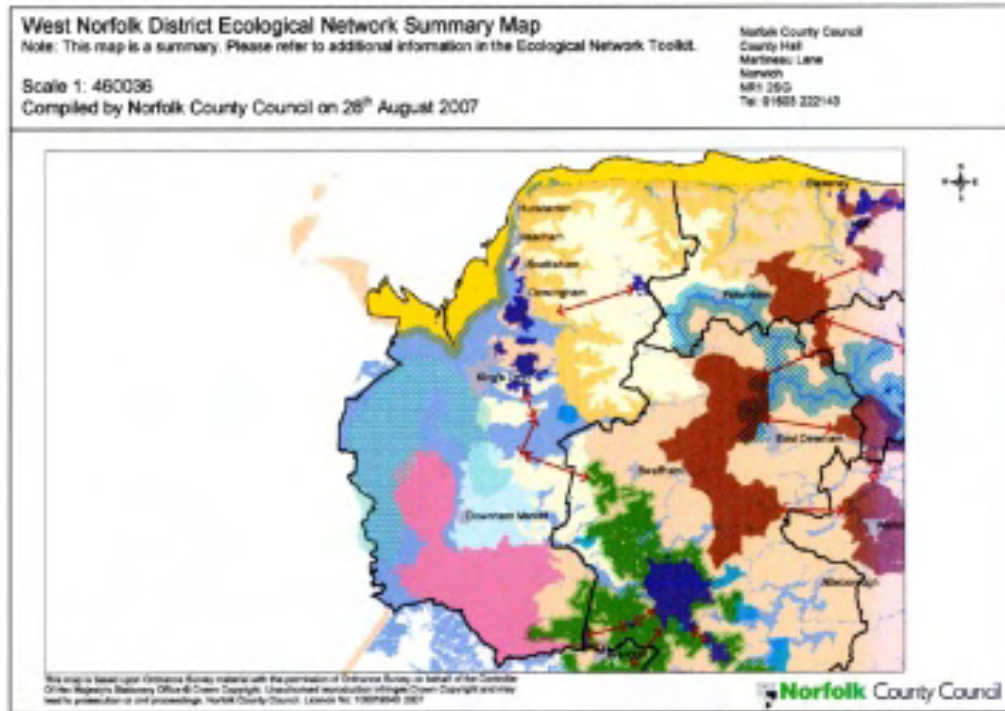
Where appropriate, SPD and masterplans will be prepared to provide further guidance on the provision of green infrastructure.

#### Landscape Character Assessment

Proposals for development should be informed by, and be sympathetic to, the distinctive character areas identified in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment.

Development proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the area (including its historical, biodiversity and cultural character), gaps between settlements, landscape setting, distinctive settlement character, landscape features and ecological networks.

### 5.158 [West Norfolk District Ecological Network Summary Map](#)



District Boundary	Fluctuating Water Bodies
Core Habitat Corridors	Brecks Buffer Zone
Coastal Buffer Zone	Brecks Core Area
Coastal Habitat Enhancement Zone	Urban Areas
Large Scale Habitat Creation Zone - Peat Soils	Wetland Habitat Enhancement Zone
Downham Market Landscape Zone	Core Woodland Area
Calcareous Grassland Core Area	Zone of Grassland - Heathland - Woodland Enhancement
Heathland Core Area	Zone of General Habitat Enhancement
Orchard Core Area	River Buffer Zone

### Question 13

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

## Justification

**5.159** Government legislation strongly encourages not only the protection of existing sites of nature conservation but the creation of new sites.

**5.160** As part of achieving Growth Point Status a Green Infrastructure study will be required to ensure that areas are protected from increased development to safeguard areas of biodiversity and provide multi functional green space.

**5.161** The Green Infrastructure Plan will identify areas and working with partners will enable more funding, increased management and community benefits.

**5.162** The Landscape Character Assessment is a useful tool which provides baseline data on the landscape, ecological networks and archaeology of the Borough. This can help planners and developers make informed decisions and improve the visual and ecological quality of the environment.

## Implementation

**5.163** The Green Infrastructure Study will be the main mechanism for delivery, along with the Landscape Character Assessment and econet mapping work.

**5.164** Working in partnership with other organisations such as Natural England, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership is needed to ensure that we are operating to best practice and guidance.

**5.165** Close working with other Local Authorities in Norfolk on the issue of our natural environment will help to make our efforts more coherent and coordinated. Rejected Option

**5.166** International and National sites are already protected therefore do not need to be highlighted in an LDF policy.

**5.167** Not safeguarding areas for biodiversity would contravene Government legislation and would not meet the objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal.

## Community, Social and Culture

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

- 2 – a great place to live
- 4 – Success in schools
- 6 – Tourist destination
- 7 – Cohesive communities
- 8 – Quality services
- 9 – Residents active in community
- 11 – Active and healthy
- 13 – Access to open space
- 16 – West Norfolk is unique

### Context

**5.168** Social issues may be considered under several themes:

**5.169 Isolation and access to services:** According to the 'Rural and Urban Classification 2004', 26% of West Norfolk's wards are classified as urban, 24% as town and fringe, and 50% as village, hamlet and isolated dwellings. The dispersed nature of settlements and associated services in some areas of the Borough has implications for community cohesion, leading in some cases to feelings of isolation.

**5.170 Migration and minority groups:** West Norfolk is experiencing an increasing mix of nationalities and cultures. Between 2004 and 2007 the borough-wide area has received the third highest number of migrant workers in the Eastern region. This has become an increasingly contentious issue, as well as putting a strain on services and affecting community relations. The Council, with its partners, needs to ensure that it is responsive to the challenges this presents to both service delivery and community cohesion.

**5.171 Demography:** The proportion of the population over retirement age will exceed a quarter by 2017, with 10% of residents over 75. This is projected to rise by nearly two thirds over the next 25 years. The proportion of those under 25 is below the national average.

**5.172 Deprivation:** There is significant variation in levels of affluence across the Borough, with pockets of urban and rural deprivation with poor access to jobs and services.

- West Norfolk ranks 21st in England on inequality (being the difference between the most and least deprived wards in the Borough). Pockets of isolation and deprivation are real issues, both in King's Lynn and in some of the more rural parts of the Borough. Funding from the government's Safer and Stronger Communities Fund was awarded to the areas

because part of the Fairstead ward is in the bottom 3% in an index of the most deprived areas in the country.

- The northern, coastal part of the Borough is characterised by significant levels of second home ownership, exceeding 50% in some parishes. This has a disproportionate impact on the levels of services that are sustainable, given that these properties remain empty for significant periods of the year, also impacting on community cohesion

**5.173 Crime:** The Quality of Life Survey indicates that residents' across the Borough are of the general opinion that crime has either stayed about the same over the last two years or has increased a little more.

- Nearly 50% of all crime recorded in the Borough occurs in the five neighbourhoods in King's Lynn identified by the SSCF Plan (see the 'Evidence' section below), an area with 17% of the Borough's population. 17.8% of all crime in the Borough in 2005 was recorded in the St Margarets with St Nicholas area.
- Downham Market is the neighbourhood with the highest public perception of crime according the Quality of Life Survey figures. There are ongoing issues in Downham Market, particularly the Howdale Road area which has seen increasing incident and complaints relating to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and violent crime.

**5.174 Education:** In 2007, the proportion of the working age population for King's Lynn and West Norfolk with no qualifications was 17%. 52% of school leavers with 5 or more GCSE passes at Grade A\*-C in 2006-2007. One of the biggest challenges facing West Norfolk is the raising of skills, employment-related aspirations and improving educational attainment levels. 42% of the population is functioning at basic skills level or below; so there is a need to improve the local skills base to help drive up what is a relatively low-wage economy.

**5.175 Health:** The difference in life expectancy between the best and worse wards in the Borough is over 10 years, representing significant health inequalities. There are also higher proportions of people living with limiting long-term illnesses in the Borough than the national, regional or county averages. These inequalities are likely to continue unless addressed by policy and health-specific plans.

**5.176 Tourism:** Tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. It is recognised that tourist attractions are essential to the prosperity and well being of the area and local economy. The tourist industry is seasonal in nature, with associated variations in population levels and demand on services.

**5.177 Community Cohesion Issues:** There is a need for the Council, with its partners, to tackle some of the more entrenched issues that are important to local people, having the greatest impact on people's everyday lives at a neighbourhood level; such as fear of crime, activities for young people, and transport links. Data collected from the 2006 BVPI survey indicated that the Borough is part of a wider area around the Wash experiencing lower than national levels of cohesion.



**5.178** The signs of a strong community are measured by the extent to which local people feel that people from different backgrounds live harmoniously in the area and together make a contribution to our future.

**5.179** Cohesion lies at the heart of what makes a strong, safe and sustainable community.

**5.180** This encompasses:

- a sense of belonging, and where people feel involved in the development around them
- diversity of backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated
- similar life opportunities available for all backgrounds
- strong and positive relationships developed at the workplace, schools and within neighbourhoods.

## **Consultation - What you have told us**

**5.181** In achieving cohesive and sustainable communities, regard must be had to issues of open space, housing, employment, tourism and culture, infrastructure and facilities, and good design in development in general. The comments received showed the following areas for consideration, which re-iterate this point:

- Support for improving skills and local knowledge base to create an educated and trained workforce
- Protect and improve cultural and leisure facilities available
- Support green infrastructure and provide for a full range of recreation facilities
- Cultural and leisure facilities are crucial to improve our Quality of Life
- Retain and improve local services for all elements of our community
- Protect the character and heritage of our market towns, and natural environment
- Protect and enhance our cultural facilities
- Promote and expand our tourism offer across the Borough.

## **Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy**

**5.182** The following studies identify social and community issues and/ or how these relate to culture and tourism in the Borough. The Core Strategy seeks to use these as evidence to generate policies, in this case bringing together issues that contribute to a 'sustainable' community.

**5.183 Sports, Recreation and Open Space Assessment (2006)** – this is an audit of sports, recreation and open space provision in the Borough; assessing quantity, accessibility and quality. This provides the Borough Council with recommendations for the future, and may also play a role in rectifying problems of anti-social behaviour by improving provision of recreation and play-area facilities (see below, under Policy Approach).



**5.184 Green Space Strategy (2008-13)** – It will allow us to allocate resources and implement plans that ensure attractive, safe and well managed spaces that are accessible to all.

**5.185 Differentiating Rural Areas in West Norfolk (2006)** – this study identifies how villages differ, and groups them accordingly, thus highlighting the challenge of addressing individual village needs and problems in the LDF. A ‘one size fits all’ approach will not be appropriate for the Borough in developing policy for community needs.

**5.186 Town Centres Study (2006)** – this study is designed to inform and guide retail and leisure planning in the Borough. Culture and tourism will have an important contribution in achieving the revival of our towns (see section on The Economy, for a more comprehensive summary).

**5.187 The King's Lynn Growth Point Programme of Development (2008-11)** – this document highlights the importance of the holistic approach needed in implementing the regeneration of King's Lynn - i.e. balancing economic and environmental assets against social and cultural needs, making the town attractive to residents, visitors and businesses alike. Key themes in the Programme for Development include ‘Infrastructure for sustainable communities –green infrastructure, community facilities’, and ‘Heritage, culture and image’.

**5.188 Community Cohesion Strategy (2008)** – this strategy describes the importance of ‘community cohesion’ with the aim to eliminate discrimination, thus creating social equity through the achievement of safe, strong and sustainable neighbourhoods.

**5.189 The West Norfolk Partnership Quality of Life Survey (2007)** – Indicators in West Norfolk Partnership Quality of Life Survey 2007, including neighbourhood perceptions/facilities, social perceptions and personal lifestyles, together comprise resident's perceptions of community cohesion across the Borough, and their quality of life.

**5.190** The results suggest two most northerly neighbourhoods of Hunstanton and Burnham, and Dersingham and Gayton are the most cohesive in the Borough, with the percentage of residents in both neighbourhoods agreeing that their local area was one where people of different backgrounds get on well together, over 20% higher than the borough-wide average. The two neighbourhoods of King's Lynn North and Downham Market are the least cohesive, scoring significantly lower than the borough-wide average. Places where residents enjoyed living in their area ‘not at all’ again included the neighbourhoods of King's Lynn north and Downham Market.

**5.191 Safer and Stronger Communities Fund Implementation Plan (2006)** – identifies five key areas of deprivation in King's Lynn (Fairstead, Gaywood, South Lynn, St. Margarets with St. Nicholas, and North Lynn), with the aim to close the gap between the more disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the Borough average. These were chosen by the West Norfolk Partnership in accordance with the SSCF guidance.

## Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us

**5.192** The following issues and options were raised in the SA as having important implications for community cohesion and quality of life, and will therefore be considered for incorporation into policy:

- Creation of green networks – encourage environmental improvements and protect and enhance our landscapes. This will include provision of recreational facilities and safeguarding open space.
- Community infrastructure – respond to evolving Government legislation and guidance to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate community infrastructure. This will support or supplement existing services and facilities for the local community to enjoy and benefit from, thus reducing feelings of isolation and contributing towards more cohesive communities.
- Regeneration – renewal will support West Norfolk as a relatively self-contained and sustainable area with an appropriate range of amenities within the region. This in turn can make the area more attractive to those wanting to move to or invest in West Norfolk. Overall, this will produce a better standard of living with access to an improved range of services.
- Migrant workers – avoid social exclusion by considering additional housing needs for migrant workers, thus contributing towards more cohesive communities.
- High skilled employers -encourage and assist appropriate new facilities, services and jobs to secure more skilled employment in the Borough. There will be greater opportunity for this with the Growth Point Status, therefore providing more opportunities for the local community and raising the skills base in the Borough.

## What have we learnt?

**5.193** As mentioned above (in the evidence base and the SA), policy must draw on several factors contributing to cohesive communities, so the first point to note is the need for a holistic approach when considering sustainability in communities. Objectives that relate to community reflect the cross-cutting nature of this topic (see above).

**5.194** Secondly, factors that influence perceptions of community cohesion often act on a highly localised level, as demonstrated by the results of the West Norfolk Quality of Life Survey. Local demography, as well as social and environmental factors should contribute to developing a programme of actions for tackling social and community issues.

**5.195** Other indicators in this survey suggest that community cohesion and social interaction are both key to determining the quality of life of residents. The results show a good degree of correlation between a sense of community spirit and whether people feel that different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.

**5.196** The strong correlation demonstrated between community cohesion and quality of life, coupled with the findings from Differentiating Rural Areas, and the SSCF Plan, should influence a place shaping approach to build cohesive communities in the long term. This point is re-iterated by the Regional plan which identifies King's Lynn as a priority area for regeneration and the towns of Downham Market and Hunstanton for smaller scale development to meet local needs.

## Policy 14

### Policy approach

#### Delivering community well-being and enhancing quality of life

The Borough Council aims to promote thriving communities, with a sense of cohesion and local identity, thus improving the well-being of local people, reducing crime and fear of crime, renew disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and to help people enjoy the best possible health. The achievement of safer and stronger communities will be particularly targeted at those parts of the Borough with higher levels of deprivation (for example, Fairstead, North Lynn, Gaywood, South Lynn and the central area of King's Lynn).

Where development takes place, good design (in terms of appropriate form, location, design and layout of development) is therefore important in order to optimise site potential, to support existing local facilities, to aid movement and to contribute towards safer communities. This means taking into account the need to reduce the opportunities for crime and fear of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, and promote safe living environments. For example, by allowing public spaces to be overlooked by neighbours and planning potential escape routes. Principles of crime prevention based on environmental design include consideration to:

- protected space, with a clear age group intention
- boundaries and security features in design
- management issues such as monitoring and maintenance
- adequate litter provision and seating/ lighting, with clear signage displaying rules

At the design stage, attention should be had to the CABE 'Building for Life' national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods, and all new schemes should be assessed against the Building for Life criteria.

Where appropriate, new development will incorporate community infrastructure that will support or supplement existing services and facilities for the local community to enjoy and benefit from. This will help to relieve feelings of isolation, therefore contributing towards more cohesive communities and supporting the role of King's Lynn as a sub-regional centre.

Promoting healthy and active lifestyles is a priority, whilst maximising opportunity for healthier forms of travel than the use of the car (see below for provision for open space and recreation).

Provision will be made for appropriate facilities to aid education opportunities, with the aim to enhance the skills base in the Borough, contributing to improved overall quality of life for residents.

## **Open Space, Leisure and Recreation**

The Green Space Strategy, in addition to feedback from the consultation process, show that the community places great importance on parks, open spaces and access to nature as being important issues for their 'Quality of Life'. Over half of residents believe that maintaining, protecting and enhancing the 'Quality of Life' in the area is the most important issue for the Borough Council.

It is important that all age groups in the community are provided for adequately and the need for youth gathering and socialising is recognised with appropriate facilities included in a positive way.

Provision will therefore be made for land for recreation and leisure opportunities and community activities, whilst maintaining and preserving existing resource where open space is adequate. Consideration will be had to maintaining and enhancing the natural and built environment whilst allowing for development in a sustainable way, with the aim to provide good quality spaces and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Where appropriate, all development will be expected to make provision, or a contribution towards provision, of open space. The LDF will support proposals and activities that protect, retain or enhance existing recreational and amenity assets, or lead to the provision of new assets (a future Supporting Plan Document will address developer contributions to open space provision).

In rural areas, where possible, this means utilising redundant agricultural buildings, and in towns and built-up areas, the use of Brownfield land for new development, whilst preserving existing open space.

With development taking place in King's Lynn town centre as a priority (in accordance with PPS 6), consideration should be had to the historic setting and preservation and enhancement of its unique built environment. In rural areas, preservation of the natural environment should be a priority (see Policy 12 Page 76).

## **Tourism and Culture**

Tourism and culture industries feature in our core strategy policies as these are a key economic asset. Tourism is identified in the Town Centres Study as playing a key contribution to the revival of our towns, as described in national guidance (PPS 6).

Additionally, our consultation with the public has shown the tourist industry to be considered to have an important role to play in development. However the main tourist appeal in the Borough is based on the unique natural environmental assets and built environment that reflects the heritage of our towns. For example, King's Lynn has a rich history with a strong maritime, merchant and industrial tradition. Culture and sense of place have an important role in strengthening the tourism economy. When considering new development to promote and enhance tourism, it is important to both protect these assets and to ensure that future proposals are firstly in keeping with, and secondly, are shaped by this unique heritage. Some of the comments received during public consultation support the need to preserve local heritage and identity in general, which can be supported through attention to detail in design at the development control stage of development.

Promotion of tourism and leisure industries will be assisted by implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, and taking forward the regeneration Masterplans and Development Plans for King's Lynn and Borough-wide.

Improvements will be made to the gateways into King's Lynn town centre, easing access and thus improving the visitor experience, and enhancing connectivity to services.

### Question 14

- **Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?**
- **What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?**

### Justification

**5.197** There is a clear need for the long-term building of sustainable communities, as described in the Community Cohesion Strategy and by the SSCF. This is reflected by evidence in the Quality of Life Survey which highlights residents' perceptions of the Borough and crime and deprivation figures for certain priority areas.

**5.198** Despite there not being a specific national or regional policy dealing explicitly with community cohesion, this is part of the over-arching theme of sustainable development which governs all decision making and planning. Social and cultural considerations are an important element of the 'holistic' approach needed for King's Lynn, as described in its Growth Point strategy.

**5.199** Maintaining local distinctiveness will be a key part of the long-term vision for the Borough, and encouraging cohesive communities and neighbourhood identity will be an important social objective in achieving sustainable development.

## Implementation

**5.200** The Council will work with its partners in achieving aspirations for safer and more cohesive communities.

**5.201** In the short term, good design is an important consideration in development control (see above), as it has implications for community and heritage issues (for example, in terms of appearance of the design and its impact on local amenity, safety features and associated crime, etc.

**5.202** The immediate low perceptions of community cohesion across the Borough need to be addressed. Additionally, there needs to be a focus on utilising the area-based grant to tackle low scores in deprivation (addressed by the SSCF). However, development will be about promoting a future agenda and not solely on tackling 'problems'. There will be a focus on promoting community relations, not only for today, but to create the foundations for a cohesive and neighbourly West Norfolk in the future. Three key priority areas are identified by the Community Cohesion Strategy for achieving long-term sustainable communities:

1. Improving communications, thus improving community relations and reducing tensions;
2. Developing local intelligence on these tensions as well as on crime and disorder;
3. 'Building for the Future', i.e. engaging young people in community cohesion and developing educational opportunities to address local issues (the key issue identified in CCS being the influx of migrant workers and the associated tensions this brings).

## Rejected Options

**5.203** There were none.

## 6 Key Diagrams

### Key Diagrams

**6.1** These diagrams outline the main places in the borough where something may happen, and will illustrate the options available to us. One example of this is the three development scenarios for King's Lynn.

**6.2** This document will not state where the allocations will go specifically but may just indicate a general direction for growth. In terms of the Key Service Centres there is no guarantee that these will automatically receive residential allocations in each village. The decision on specific allocations will be addressed in the Site Specific Policies and Allocations document.



# Core Strategy Diagram



Core Strategy Consultation - February 2009

## NOTATION:

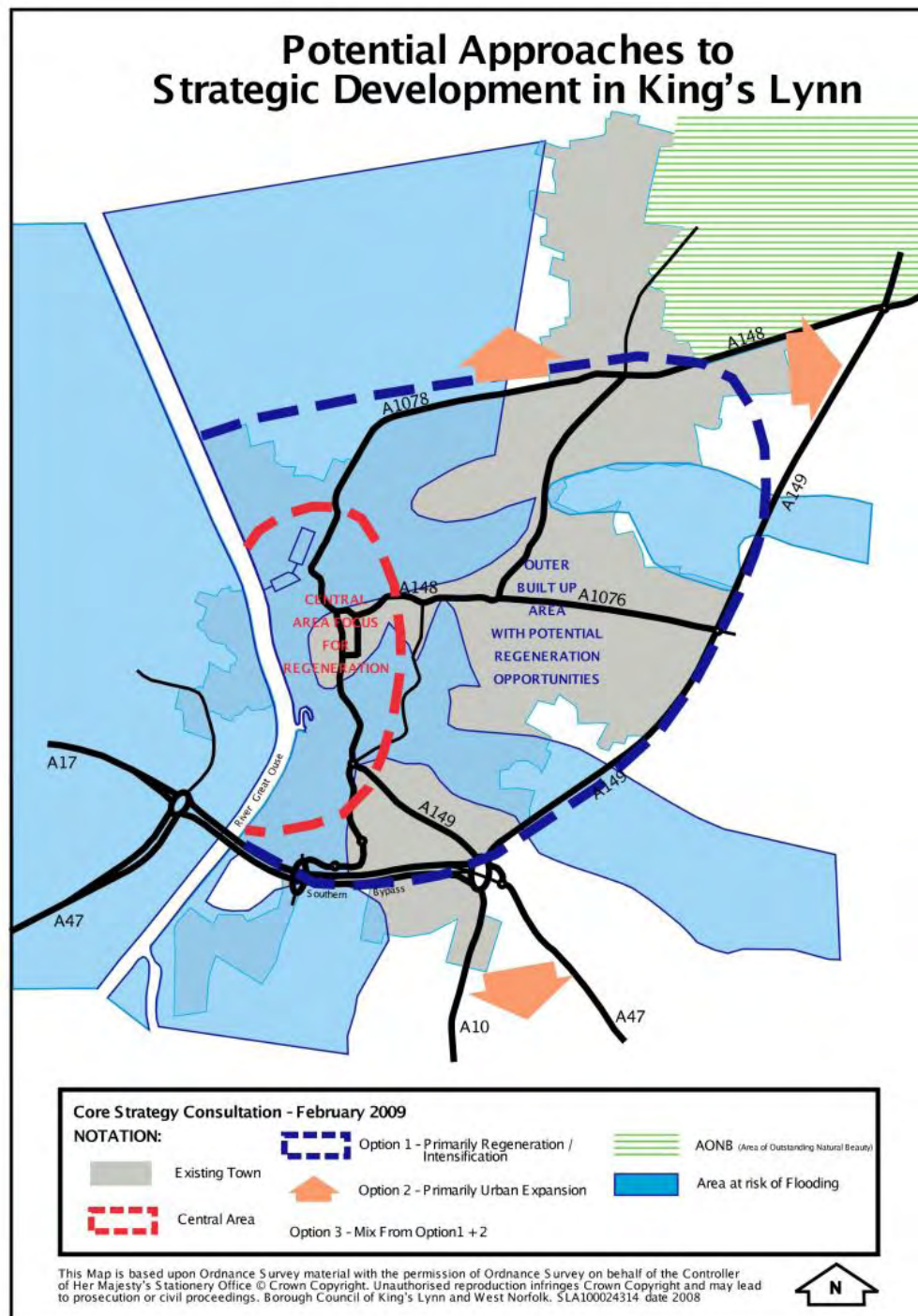
- |  |   |  |                             |  |                                  |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|  | Towns                                       |  | Borough Boundary            |  | AONB                             |
|  | Key Service Centre                          |  | A47 T                       |  | Coastal Zone (subject to change) |
|  | Rural Village                               |  | Main Roads                  |  | Railway Network & Stations       |
|  | Port  |  | Improved Reliability/Safety |  | Enhanced Rail Service            |
|  | Potential Urban Expansion (East of Wisbech) |  | Rivers                      |  |                                  |
|  |   |  | Coastal Management          |  |                                  |

This Map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. SLA100024314 date 2008.

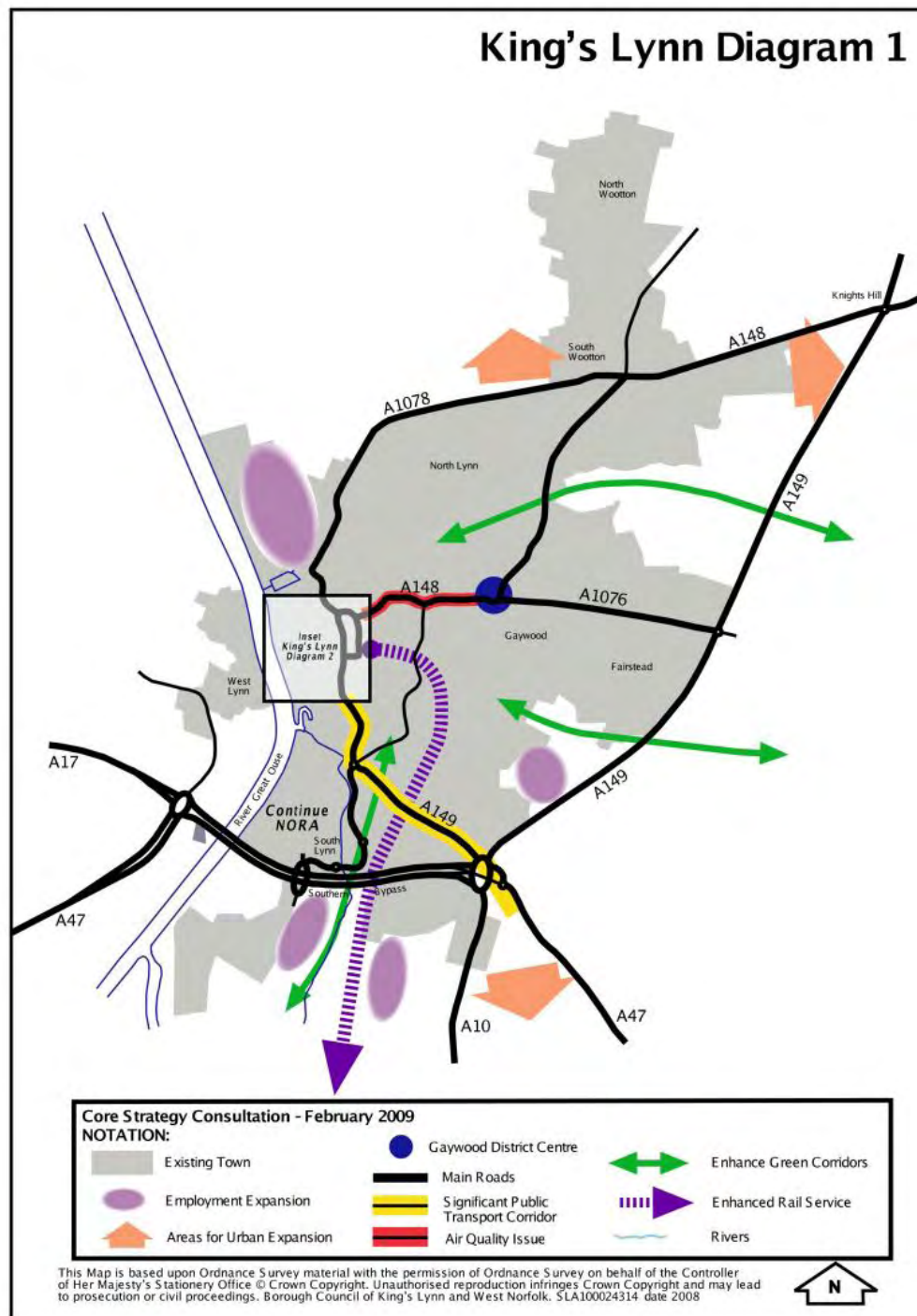


Work addressing the overall housing requirement for King's Lynn has considered three broad options as follows

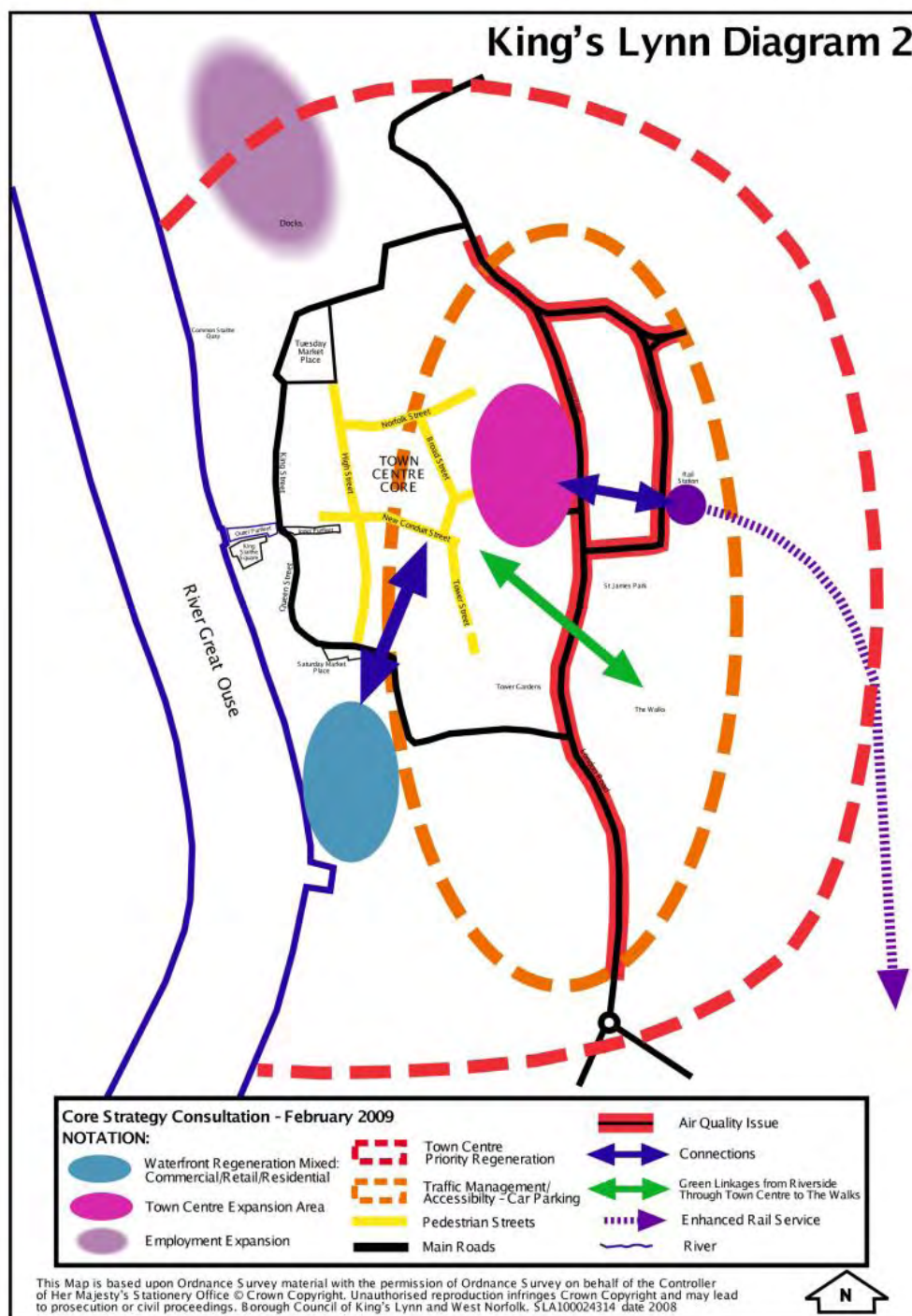
Option 1 – Re-using land	Option 2 – mainly urban extension	Option 3 - mix
<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More efficient use of land</li> <li>• Supports RSS &amp; Council emphasis on regeneration</li> <li>• Improves the quality of existing development in town</li> <li>• Use of existing infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>New facilities can be shared with existing development areas</p>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids potentially difficult sites</li> <li>• Possible earlier implementation</li> <li>• Additional variety of sites / housing types</li> <li>• Supported by new facilities</li> <li>• Opportunity for comprehensive planning / provision of facilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains efficient use of land and existing facilities</li> <li>• Balanced release of land can maintain focus on regeneration of existing urban areas</li> <li>• Provides additional variety in sites and housing types</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disadvantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to overload infrastructure /utilities</li> <li>• Limited choice of types of sites and scope for variety in house types</li> <li>• Limited opportunity for comprehensive planning and provision of facilities</li> <li>• Potential for increased density to impact on neighbouring areas</li> <li>• Potential for adverse change to the character of the town overall</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disadvantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't deliver RSS requirement re regeneration</li> <li>• Requires major infrastructure provision</li> <li>• Difficult to share benefit of new infrastructure between new sites and existing urban areas</li> <li>• Diverts investment from existing urban areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disadvantages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires mechanism to regulate balanced release of land</li> <li>• Potential for imbalance in sharing new facilities with existing development</li> <li>• Less scope for comprehensive planning and provision of facilities</li> </ul>



**6.4** The growth point bid identified three potential directions where greenfield land could support option 3; these are indicated on the following diagrams



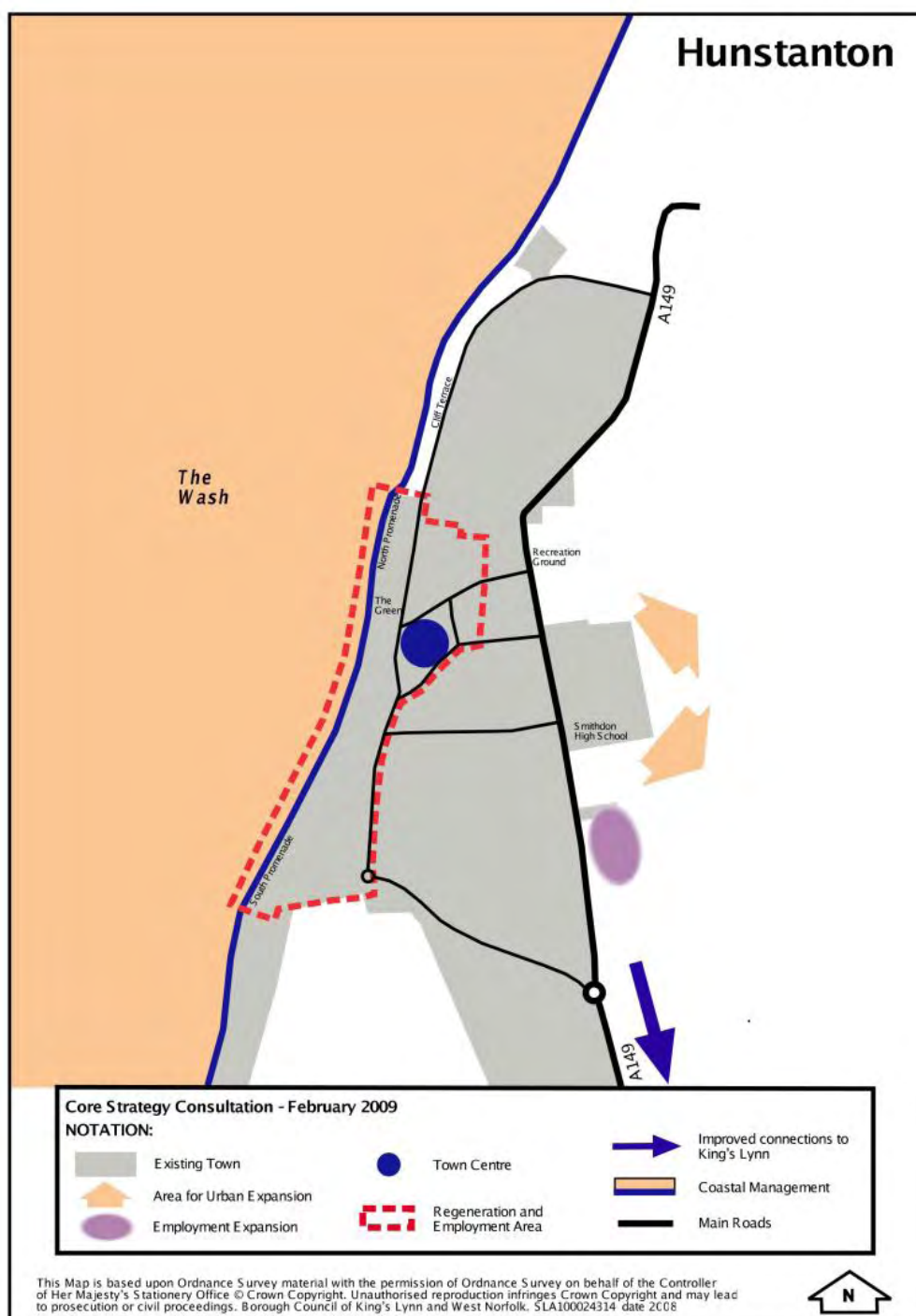




## Downham Market possible approach



## Hunstanton possible approach





## 7 Implementation

### Elements of the Vision supported by this Chapter

**7.1** All the Strategic objectives are relevant to the Implementation chapter.

#### Context

**7.2** Implementation of the content of the Core Strategy depends on the co-ordinated activity of numerous bodies and not just the Borough Council. It is crucial that infrastructure supporting the growth is put in place in a timely manner. There is a significant amount of investment required to support growth. Some of the infrastructure will be provided through Section 106 agreements whilst other elements will occur as a result of other bodies own investment plans.

**7.3** An infrastructure audit is being undertaken to establish capacities and any specific geographical difficulties. The results of this study will inform the final choice of options.

**7.4** The Government has indicated its intention to bring in a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to provide funding for infrastructure. This mechanism would be in addition to Section 106 agreements, although these would be likely to be re defined. Exact details of CIL are not known at the moment, or the way in which it might be used. Nevertheless the principles of some form of developer contribution and the broad categories identified below are still appropriate to consider.

#### Consultation - What you have told us.

**7.5** The following comments reflect the views of respondents which cover how new development should be handled and the factors which are considered important as growth is implemented.

- Improve broadband / wireless connections throughout the borough
- Improve public transport provision (including improving our rail service)
- Address congestion / air quality / traffic issues in Kings Lynn
- Improve the strategic road network; A47 but also A10 and A17.
- Improve road safety across the borough.
- King's Lynn – address the transport issues to enable the new growth planned
- Support for brownfield first strategy because of the regeneration benefits, but recognise the need to deliver so a range of sites should be allocated. Have a realistic strategy.
- Flood risk should guide strategy.
- Balanced development in rural areas.
  - allow growth in rural economy
  - need for affordable housing
  - support for the exception policy for rural employment and affordable housing
  - important to support rural services

- Protect the character and heritage of our market towns, and natural environment
- Retain and improve local services for all elements of our community throughout the borough, this is particularly important in rural areas.
- Cultural and leisure facilities are crucial to improve our Quality of Life
- Support green infrastructure and provide for a full range of recreation facilities
- Recognise the balance between economic priorities for the borough and the environment. Also the priorities for financial contributions from developers.
- Real need for affordable housing. This is a priority for rural areas, and also Hunstanton and Downham Market. New development should include an aspect of affordable housing.
- Developers should provide quality open space. This is wider and should safeguard biodiversity and include ecological enhancement to contribute towards the Green Infrastructure Management Plan.
- Protect and improve cultural and leisure facilities available
- Support for improving skills and local knowledge base to create an educated and trained workforce.

### **Evidence - What it tells us and implications for policy.**

**7.6** It is clear that new growth cannot be accommodated without adequate provision of infrastructure to support it. The precise levels of current provision and future requirements are to be the subject of a study. **Results to be confirmed, also KLATS, Green Infrastructure etc.**

### **Sustainability Appraisal - What it tells us**

**7.7** In general terms providing for growth **without** adequate infrastructure is not sustainable. Socially communities could be isolated, or community cohesion could be compromised. Environmentally the adverse effects would be through the need to travel or substandard facilities. Economically adverse effects could be apparent because of inefficiencies and areas not functioning as anticipated – because of the lack of facilities. The positive effects of the anticipated infrastructure will not be realised.

### **What have we learnt?**

**7.8** Without the proper and timely provision of infrastructure to support development it will not function as anticipated. This can be at a simple level of a footpath to link a housing development to a school, or possibly more significantly the provision of a primary school itself, without which additional travel would be incurred. The intention of the Borough Council is to create communities which have the best chance of success, environmentally, economically and socially, and not ones which lack basic facilities from the outset. We are not simply seeking to allow housing estates.

## Policy 15

### Policy approach

#### Infrastructure provision

All development in the plan area will be accompanied by appropriate infrastructure provided in a timely way as appropriate, with arrangements for its subsequent maintenance.

Provision will be achieved through:

- Contributions from all market residential and commercial development in the plan area through appropriate legal agreements.
- Coordination with the investment programmes of other public bodies and utility providers
- Taking full advantage of mainstream Government funding streams
- Active use, where necessary, by the local planning authorities and County Council of their legal powers to bring about the strategically significant development, including compulsory purchase.
- In the case of community or social development, a reduced contribution, taking account of the social value of the development concerned.

The resulting funds will be gathered, managed and spent in a transparent way.

Future maintenance of infrastructure provided on the site or built or improved as part of the development will be achieved either through adoption by a public body with appropriate maintenance payments or other secure arrangements such as the establishment of a local infrastructure management body. This will apply to all infrastructure, including, where applicable.

- Community and recreation facilities [ education facilities, community halls, health facilities, libraries, social services facilities, allotments etc]
- Improved public transport facilities
- Other appropriate transport infrastructure including pedestrian and cycle links
- Affordable or supported housing
- Sustainable Drainage Systems, including surface water
- Green infrastructure including habitat creation/ recreation facilities/landscaping
- Water conservation measures
- Emergency services including crime prevention
- Recycling/composting facilities
- Street furniture
- Local and renewable energy generation

- Utilities
- Public art

The Council will set out through a Supplementary Planning Document the rate and thresholds for contributions. The Supplementary Planning Document will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains up to date and relevant.

The Council will take account of the impact of contributions on the viability of a scheme (particularly on brownfield sites) and where appropriate agree a lower or nil contribution provided:

1. The development of the site is in the wider public interest; and
2. The developer is prepared to share information on development costs and margins with the Council prior to consent being granted.

## Question 15

- Do you have any specific comments on this potential policy approach?
- What are the implications of this policy approach to future services / business?

## Justification

**7.9** Development must provide adequate infrastructure to enable the impacts of that development to be mitigated. Additionally appropriate provision to enable the development to function in a safe way is also required. The Kings Lynn area is the main location for the growth within the Borough, and has been designated as a Growth Area. Government funding is available to support this growth, but this is limited and is not a substitute for developer funding, in the main it is likely to be used to support strategic provision.

## Rejected Options

**7.10** The suggested approach is intended to ensure adequate contributions to infrastructure. It is not appropriate to consider options which do not do this. As noted above the Government is likely to introduce a CIL. The implications of this are not fully clear at this stage. An option based on CIL will need to be assessed as detail emerges.

## 8 Monitoring

### Statement 2

The Core Strategy when finalised will include a monitoring framework to ensure that in a structured way we are measuring the effectiveness of the policies and proposals in the plan. Are the policies delivering what was anticipated? Are targets being met? Are the policies contributing to the achievement of the overall Vision set out in the plan?

It is currently anticipated that we will monitor the plan through checking the individual elements of the Vision. Each of the 16 elements, or 'outcomes' given in the Vision can be assigned an 'indicator(s)' and this can be measured, and tracked against a target. Given that we are using a common Vision between the Local Development Framework - Core Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy, this will aid the reporting processes. As part of the requirements on the Council there is a need to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report to show the effectiveness of its planning work. Published each December this is a timely check, and opportunity to flag up changes needed to policy.

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# Core Strategy Regulation 25

Local Development Framework

**King's Lynn & West Norfolk Development Services**

February 2009



If you would like this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact us at the address below and we will do our best to help.

## **Development Services**

**Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk**

**King's Court**

**Chapel Street**

**King's Lynn**

**Norfolk**

**PE30 1EX**

**Tel:** 01553 616200

**Fax:** 01553 616652

**Email:** [ldf@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.west-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk)

*This document has been produced using recycled paper from sustainable sources.*

*Cover design: Vivitext Design Group 01485 534566*

**IN**   
**TRAN**  
communication for all