

Local Plan Review Pre-Submission Stage 2021

7 Social and Community

7.1 Housing

Introduction

7.1.1 Delivering new affordable homes remains a key national and local priority, to meet housing need. This policy seeks to deliver affordable housing as a percentage of development of qualifying sites. The policy set percentages and thresholds for sites in different locations. These are to be reviewed from time to time.

7.1.2 Affordable housing is housing provided to those that are unable to meet their housing needs through the private sector. Government policy as set out in the NPPF defines affordable housing as affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing, and other affordable routes to home ownership. ⁽²³⁾

7.1.3 In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for any subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Affordable rented properties are either Social-Rented or Affordable Rent, which determines the level of rent chargeable.

7.1.4 The Borough Council have commissioned and conducted a number of studies to identify an up to date picture housing need, and to create a strategic plan for housing in the borough. As well as publishing a number of guidance documents. These include:

- Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (2020)
- Older person and specialist care accommodation study (2020)
- Local Plan review viability study (2020)
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2016)
- Guidance on affordable housing contributions secured through section 106 planning agreements (2019)
- Affordable Housing Policy (2011)

7.1.5 The elements of the policy dealing with affordable or special needs housing reflect very particular circumstances evidenced from the focused studies. The affordable housing threshold and percentage takes into account demand, viability of development and the size and function of settlements in the borough.

23 The Affordable Housing definition was amended to include First Homes in May 2021 - What is a First Home? First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which: a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value; b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below); c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and, d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London). First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. PPG 24 May 2021 Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 70-001-20210524

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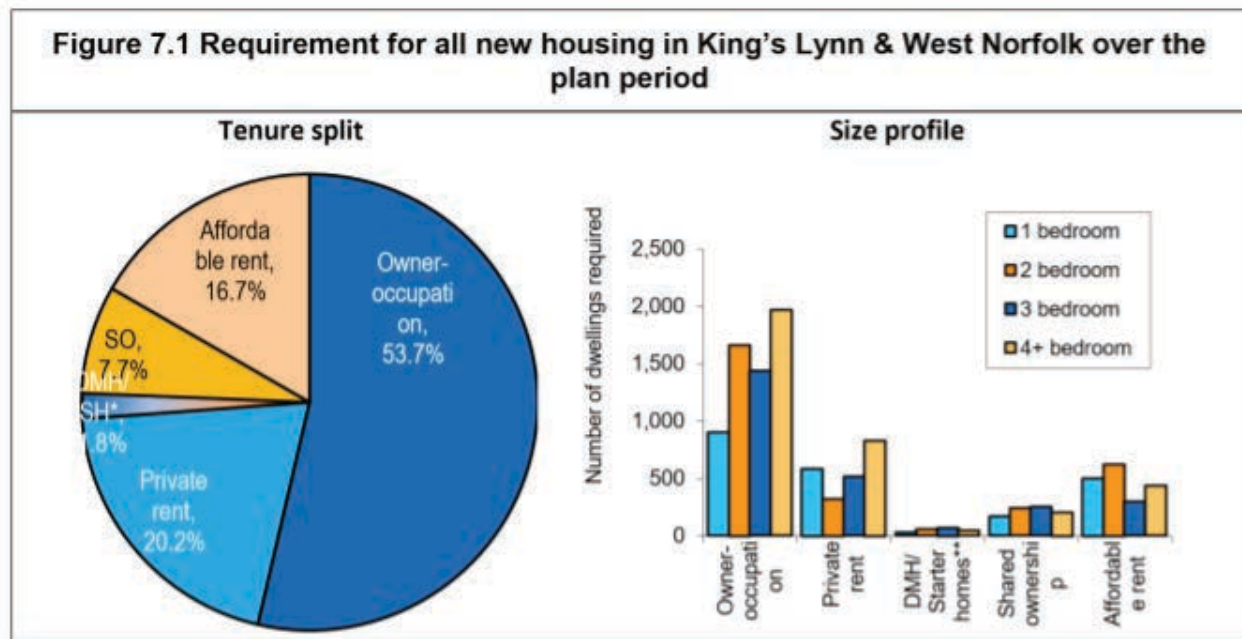
7.1.6 Affordable housing including social rented and intermediate housing is unlikely to be delivered by the market alone. The majority of new affordable housing will be delivered through Section 106 Planning Agreements. Such agreements will require developers to transfer a proportion of their housing at a price below market value to a Registered Provider of Social Housing (RP). Other sites will provide purely affordable housing and will include rural exception sites. Such development is likely to be dependent upon the Registered Provider of Affordable Housing (RP) securing grant funding from the Homes England. A 15% affordable housing contribution will be sought in the built-up area of Kings Lynn (i.e. the un-parished area). In seeking to apply this in a consistent manner in parishes surrounding the built-up area (including those specifically noted in Policy LP02 as being '...adjacent to King's Lynn...') a 20% contribution will be sought. The Housing Need Assessment (HNA 2020) suggests that 24.4% affordable housing need for rent and shared ownership plus a further 1.8% for discount market sale. It is envisaged that the discount market sales need will be met mainly through exception sites. The HNA identifies shared ownership as the most affordable form of affordable home ownership and suggest a split between rent and shared ownership of 68% and 32%.

7.1.7 NPPF Paragraph 64 states that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups (subject to exemptions see NPPF).

7.1.8 In light of the above evidence from the HNA 2020 and the overall percentages of affordable housing being sought, securing at 10% of sites as affordable home ownership would significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups including families. Therefore, the 70/30% split as identified in the Core Strategy Policy CS09: Housing is carried forward in the Local Plan review, based upon the latest HNA and subject to viability.

7.1.9 The HNA provides the following conclusion as illustrated by figure 7.1 below. This sets out the size and tenure requirements over the plan period (between 2016 and 2036).

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7.1.10 *Discount market housing/ Starter homes figures represent potential demand rather than a requirement

Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

7.1.11 The Planning Policy for Travellers Sites (PPTS 2015) defines the travelling community as comprising Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Gypsies and Travellers are defined in the PPTS as 'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such'. Travelling Showpeople are defined in the PPTS as 'Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above'.

7.1.12 In determining whether persons are 'Gypsies and Travellers' for the purposes of this policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- Whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life;
- The reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life;
- Whether there is an intention to living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

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7.1.13 The Council is required to plan for the future needs of Travellers in the Borough over the plan period up until 2036. In respect of those Gypsies and Travellers who do not lead a nomadic lifestyle, the Borough Council will continue to assess and plan to meet their needs as part of its wider responsibilities to plan to meet the accommodation needs of its settled community.

7.1.14 The needs assessment for the purposes of decision making is the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2016) (or successor document). The document covers the plan period to 2036. This document forms the main evidence base for the Local Plan review on this subject matter. The study covers the needs of Gypsies (including English, Scottish, Welsh and Romany Gypsies), Irish Travellers, New (Age) Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople. The GTAA has sought to establish the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the study area (King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough area) through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews and engagement with members of the travelling community living on all known sites.

7.1.15 The GTAA concludes that there is a need for an additional 5 pitches over the plan period to meet the traveller need and a possible need for an additional 2 plots for travelling show people to meet the need over the plan period. Based upon the GTAA (2016) it is considered that a criteria-based policy approach is a reasonable, pragmatic and proportionate response to the current situation for the Local Plan review. It can provide an appropriate response to any proposals received to address the modest level of need identified. This combined approach for existing and new sites should ensure that the need is met, it should however be noted that needs assessments are reviewed periodically.

7.1.16 National policy sets out a range of issues to consider when assessing applications for Traveller site development. In assessing new sites, the site should be in a sustainable location and should be in reasonable proximity to local services and facilities. Community infrastructure needs will include health, education and transport links. In order to deliver sustainable communities, and quality place making, development proposals will be required to consider the amenity of new residents and impacts on surrounding communities or other neighbours/neighbouring land uses such as businesses and open space in line with relevant spatial and design policies. In doing so, regard will be had to community cohesion and good design principles such as integration, ensuring no adverse impacts arise from new development. Residential housing mitigation requirements for European sites are also applicable to plots and pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

7.1.17 To ensure that the levels of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation are maintained, the Council will resist the loss of existing sites, including the conversion to permanent dwellings. Existing Traveller sites will therefore be safeguarded to meet the continuing housing needs of these communities ensuring that sites are not lost to competing uses. Unrestricted means not subject to conditions restricting the time of occupancy such as temporary or personal planning permission. The following policy will apply to any new permission granted as well as to existing sites.

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Implementation

7.1.18 The policy aims to strike the balance between creating mixed and balanced communities, which is in line with the NPPF, and ensuring that development is viable and can come forward i.e. is deliverable. It is considered that this approach is best taken forward by assessing each proposal on its own individual merits.

7.1.19 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.

7.1.20 It should be noted that proposals for affordable housing are not exempt from any requirement to provide mitigation measures for European sites (even if exempt from paying any other levy).

7.1.21 Custom and Self-Build Housing schemes will also need to comply with the policy requirements regarding the on-site provision of affordable housing. This will be agreed by the Borough Council and could include the negotiated transfer of serviced plots to a registered provider for example.

7.1.22 For the purposes of the policy the definition of residential development includes residential park homes and caravans where they are not subject to occupancy restrictions.

7.1.23 Where an existing dwelling (or dwellings) is to be demolished and replaced with substantially the same type of dwelling, provided it is not eligible for vacant building credit, no affordable housing contribution will be sought. Essentially no 'additional' development is being created, and therefore no development uplift will be created.

7.1.24 For Rural Exception sites a sequential approach will be taken to assess and ensure that the site proposed is the best one available for the specified settlement in order to meet the need. For this purpose, planning considerations such as location, context, access, and flood risk will be considered. This should therefore avoid having multiple competing sites which meet the same need.

7.1.25 Experience in the Borough and elsewhere has been that attempts may be made to avoid the affordable housing requirement by artificial sub-division of sites and incremental developments of numbers of houses below the threshold. Such developments will deliver neither the proportion of affordable housing required to meet needs, nor the mix of housing stock required to sustain balanced communities.

7.1.26 The policy is intended to avoid such 'playing' of the system, while recognising the realities of change over time and exceptional circumstances that may require the threshold to be set aside. Example: Permission is granted for 4 market dwellings on a site of 0.15 ha in a rural village. The site is not required to provide affordable housing as it is below the threshold set in the policy. Development is completed on the site. Then 4 years later, an

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application is made for 3 more houses on land immediately adjacent to the completed site. Both sites are assessed in combination to determine the affordable housing contribution. Therefore, the total number of dwellings on both sites is 7 and the developer will be required to deliver the relevant proportion of affordable housing (20% in this rural example), or equivalent financial contributions if this cannot be delivered on site as per points 10 and 11 of the policy below.

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7.2 LP28- Affordable Housing

Strategic Policy

Policy LP28- Affordable Housing

Housing – type, size, tenure

1. The national definition of affordable housing as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), is applied for the purpose of this policy;
2. Proposals for housing need to meet the need as identified in the most up to date housing needs 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). Proposals will also be required to be agreed by the Borough Council;
3. The Council will work with partner organisations to maximise the delivery of affordable housing to respond to identified housing need throughout the borough. This will be achieved by having regard to both up to date Local Housing Needs (LHN) and Housing Needs Assessments (HNA), and affordable housing needs viability studies;
4. The affordable housing should be provided on site. Provision will be made through planning obligations to secure the affordable housing and to ensure it is available at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision;
5. The affordable rented housing provided on-site should be maintained as affordable housing in perpetuity. Provision will be made through planning obligations to provide the affordable housing and to ensure its availability to initial and successive occupiers;
6. On new developments affordable housing should be fully integrated with general market housing to achieve a mixed and balanced community. The affordable housing element in terms of aesthetics should be in keeping with the wider development, reflecting local distinctiveness and design policies of the Local Plan review and Neighbourhood Plan (should one be in force) ensuring characteristics of the development are carried across all of the housing. This avoids large concentrations of single tenure dwellings and creates mixed and sustainable communities in which accommodation is tenure-blind with the appurtenance of affordable and market homes being indistinguishable;
7. Affordable housing provision may come forward as a percentage of allocated or other permitted sites, or as exception sites in suitable locations. The percentage which will be sought for affordable housing provision on qualifying sites is:

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- a. 15% within the built-up area of Kings Lynn
 - b. 20% in all other areas
8. The thresholds over which affordable housing provision will be sought are:
- a. King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton - Sites of 0.33 ha or 10 or more dwellings
 - b. Rural areas - Sites of 0.165 of ha or 5 or more dwellings

Tenure mix

9. 70:30 Rented to First Homes (25%) and shared ownership (5%), adjusted where necessary to balance housing need and make schemes viable. Shared ownership to include other forms of intermediate tenure, including intermediate rented as agreed by the council.

Commuted Sums

10. Affordable housing should be delivered on site. Only where schemes seek not to meet the policy requirement will an open book viability assessment (prepared in accordance with NPPG on Viability) be necessary and accepted. If provision is made on site in line with the requirements set out in this policy, a commuted sum will be sought at £60,000 per equivalent whole dwelling as recommended by the Borough Council's Local Plan CIL Viability Assessment (or the figure set out in any successor evidence endorsed by the Borough Council).
11. Off-site contributions in lieu of built units on site will only be considered where this is robustly justified by evidence. Where the provision of on-site units threatens the viability of the development, the applicant will be required to submit an open book viability assessment in accordance with clause 10 of this policy.
12. 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.

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Vacant Building Credit

13. In seeking a vacant building credit in respect of the affordable housing on brownfield land, an application will only be considered on the following basis (as detailed within the 'Guidance on affordable housing contributions secured through section 106 planning agreements (2019)' or future successor document):
- Where the building has not been vacated for the sole purpose of redevelopment;
 - Where the existing building(s) has not been abandoned; and
 - Where specific information on the floorspace of the proposed residential development and the calculation of the claimed offset has been provided

Delivering Affordable Housing on Phased Development

Allocated Sites

14. On sites allocated for residential development through the Local Plan process the requirement to provide affordable housing under Strategic Policy LP01 Housing Distribution will apply jointly to the whole of a single allocated site that is developed incrementally (through sub-division etc.) and where development of the whole site results in a requirement for a proportion of (or in exceptional circumstances a contribution to) affordable housing.

Windfall Sites

15. On windfall sites the requirement to provide affordable housing will apply where the Borough Council considers that the proposed development forms part of a larger site which, if developed, would result in a requirement for a proportion of (or contribution to) affordable housing. If the application site satisfies one or more of the following criteria, then it will be considered to be part of a larger site for the purposes of this policy:
- a. **Land ownership** – If an application site is in the same ownership as one or more adjacent plots of land at the time the application is made or within 5 years of the date that planning permission is granted, and development of those sites would comply with other policies of the Local Plan;

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- b. **Planning history** – If there is evidence of previous applications for development of a larger site of which the application site forms a part within the past 5 years of the date that planning permission was granted is made and development of the larger site would still be acceptable under other policies of the Local Plan; or
- c. **Extensions to existing consented development** – If the site forms an extension to a development that has been granted planning permission in the 5 years before the application is made and which is still capable of being implemented or the site forms an extension to a development that is being built out on the date the application is made.

Exceptions Sites

16. The Borough Council will support schemes for the provision of affordable housing as exceptions to normal planning policies where:
 - a. The site adjoins a sustainable settlement, as defined by the settlement hierarchy (LP02);
 - b. The proposal is supported by evidence of local affordable housing need;
 - c. Future management for affordable housing is supported by a Registered Social Landlord;
 - d. The scheme must be genuinely affordable housing led and any element of subsidy through provision of market housing is proven through viability assessments.

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

17. The Local Plan review supports the provision of the following:
 - additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households;
 - 2 additional plots for Travelling Showpeople.
18. These additional pitches / plots (and any additional requirements associated with newly confirmed need from unknown households) will be secured via:

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- Support for the expansion of existing sites; and / or
 - The provision of new sites where the criteria below are met.
19. The provision of pitches and plots on new sites will be supported, having regard to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment where:
- a. The proposal meets the identified need;
 - b. The site is otherwise suitable for residential development and the associated necessary infrastructure requirements will be made available as part of the development proposal;
 - c. The site will have safe access to the highway and will not result in any unacceptable impact on the capacity and environment of the highway network;
 - d. The site is in a sustainable location in reasonable proximity to relevant services and facilities including but not limited to transport, education, healthcare and other community infrastructure provision;
 - e. The ability to achieve neighbourliness can be demonstrated in relation to the living conditions of current or future residents of the site and interaction with immediate neighbours and the wider settled community neighbourhood; and
 - f. The site is sensitive to local character and does not have an adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape.
20. The Borough Council will work with partners in county or other appropriate groupings to keep under review a network of transit sites and appropriate provision for travelling showpeople across the count.

Policy LP28 contributes to Strategic Policy Objectives 1, 3, Economy, 6, 7, 9, Society, 11, 13, 15, Environment, 16, 17, 18, King's Lynn, 28, 29, 30, 31 Rural Areas.

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7.3 LP29- Housing for the Elderly and Specialist Care

7.3.1 Strategic Policy

Policy LP29-Housing for the Elderly and Specialist Care

Development proposals providing specialist housing options for older people's accommodation and others with support needs, including sheltered housing, supported housing, extra care housing and residential/nursing care homes will be encouraged. The following types of development will be permitted:

1. bungalows in accordance with 'LP04: Development Boundaries';
2. accessible apartments in accordance 'LP04: Development Boundaries'; and
3. grouped accommodation with appropriate elements of support, shared facilities and/or nursing care/wardening where either:
 - a. it is located within Development Boundaries (LP04), and
 - close to town or village shops, public transport, community facilities and medical services; and
 - these are easily reached by those without access to a car, as appropriate to the needs and level of mobility of potential residents; or
 - b. it is located outside Development Boundaries (LP04), and
 - is reasonably related to the Development Boundary of a Main Town, Growth Key Rural Service Centre or Key Rural Service Centre;
 - a Travel Plan shows how residents without cars will have access to shops, community facilities and medical services, as appropriate to the needs and level of mobility of potential residents. The plan should also demonstrate how visitors and staff without cars can access the premises. Measures included in the plan will need to be secured by planning condition and/or a planning obligation;
 - proposals meet the identified need for older people or people with a care need and;
 - a planning condition restricts the occupancy to older people or people with a need for care.

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4. Schemes will be required to provide ancillary, communal facilities to complement those available locally, whilst avoiding duplication. Such facilities might range from small scale provision such as a restaurant, bar or hairdresser, to extensive facilities such as a library, crafts/woodworking room, gym/leisure facilities;
5. The design of housing covered by this policy should be in accordance with other relevant policies of the Local Plan review including but not limited to LP06, LP18 and LP21, and also provide:
 - suitable storage space for items that aid mobility;
 - sheltered external recreational space, and where this cannot be achieved, to the provision of external balconies.
6. Additionally, special consideration in terms of the design, layout and massing will be required for areas which could potentially impact upon the Norfolk Coast AONB and/or it's setting.

Policy Justification and Supporting Text

7.3.2 To deliver sustainable communities means to support the needs of the current population and any future populations. Paragraph 59 of the NPPF states that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed. Paragraph 61 continues: within this context, the type of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including, but not limited to older people, and people with disabilities. Paragraph 127 (point f) of the NPPF states that planning policies should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

7.3.3 Housing for older people is defined as social sector 'sheltered' and age-exclusive housing and private sector leasehold retirement housing. This will include schemes, for rent and for sale, with on-site staff support, those with locality-based support services and schemes with no associated support services. Housing with care is defined as it includes extra care schemes, often called 'assisted living' in the private sector, with 24/7 care available on-site and housing schemes that offer bespoke care services, even if these are not full on-site 24/7 care, across both the social and private sector.

7.3.4 The Borough Council takes this responsibility seriously and to support the Local Plan review with up to-date and proportionate evidence has commissioned and published both a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (Simon Drummond-Hay, 2020) to supersede the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and in collaboration through the Norfolk

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Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) with the other Norfolk planning authorities a Demand for Specialist Older Persons Housing and Dementia Care Housing Study (Three Dragons, 2020).

7.3.5 These studies illustrate that the Borough has a relatively aged population structure, and this characteristic is likely to become more pronounced in the future, with the number of residents over 75 anticipated to increase from 13,288 in 2020 to 19,166 by 2036. And that those requiring specialist accommodation, due to limiting long term illness and difficulty in performing personal care and tasks, will increase from 3,335 in 2020 to 4,810 by 2036.

7.3.6 It is also noteworthy that the provision of accommodation particularly suitable for older people, whilst meeting their specific needs could also free up existing housing. This could then be available for families and other younger people for whom it may be more suited.

7.3.7 Given the significant need for housing suitable for older people and people in need of care it is necessary to promote and encourage this form of development. The policy seeks to prioritise such development in certain geographic areas which are considered to be more suitable than others. This is based upon the Local Plan review Settlement Hierarchy and the guide produce by Three Dragons as part of their study which looks at services, facilities and the daily needs of people within this group.

7.3.8 It is anticipated that the need for this type of housing will be meet through a combination of allocations and windfall developments. The Local Plan provides such an allocation at Hunstanton (Policies F2.3 & F2.5). Other allocations may come forward through future Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. The Borough Council has a duty to assist communities who wish to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their area and would very much welcome the delivery of such an allocation and would assist with this process. The Borough Council, subject to this policy, will support and encourage the provision of such housing on windfall sites.

7.3.9 Given the need and recognising that it may be difficult to secure this accommodation on windfall sites within the defined Development Boundaries, the policy also allows for accommodation for older people and people with care needs outside of Development Boundaries but which are reasonably related to the more sustainable settlements within the Borough. For such sites it will be necessary to ensure that they are able to provide good access to services and facilities for those with no access to a private car. To demonstrate good accessibility, such housing will need to be appropriate for the intended users, for example by providing ramps, lifts and stair lifts. It is also key that what is proposed and provided actually meets the identified need.

7.3.10 The design standards should have regard to the principles set out in the 'Housing our Aging Population Panel for Innovation' (HAPPI) report which published in 2009 sought to consider what reforms were needed to ensure that new build specialised housing meets the future needs and aspirations of older people.

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7.3.11 In addition to this policy, the Borough Council is applying a requirement in Policy LP30 that all new housing should be to 'M4(2): Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings' standards where practical. The intention of this approach will be to maximise the flexibility of new housing to accommodate a wider spectrum of housing needs. This will support housing needs of older people but also those with specialist needs such as those who are disabled and some wheelchair users.

7.3.12 It is strongly recommended that prior to submitting a planning application, applicants discuss the level of specific elderly or vulnerable users' housing need with both the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council.

7.3.13 Design

7.3.14 Schemes will be required to meet the development criteria established for other residential developments relating to high quality sustainable design including LP06, LP18 and LP21.

7.3.15 Whilst there is likely to be a minimum scale of provision for schemes in order for the particular model of care to retain viability, proposals should nevertheless be well related to their local surroundings in respect of size and design.

7.3.16 The Borough Council wishes to ensure that schemes and their accommodation maintain longevity in terms of appearance, cyclical maintenance, running costs, responses to climate change and adaptability to meet future lifestyles and technologies throughout the life of the building and is therefore future-proofed to ensure such adaptability.

7.3.17 The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers a significant portion of the Borough. The statutory purpose of designating an area of land as an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. This comprises the area's distinctive landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic and cultural environment. With this in mind and in line with the NPPF, Policy LP16 Norfolk Coast AONB, and taking into consideration the Norfolk Coast Partnership's management strategy 'Norfolk Coast Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty Strategy' special consideration will need to be given should the proposed development have the potential to impact upon the AONB and/or its setting.

7.3.18 Affordable Housing

7.3.19 The obligation to make an affordable housing contribution will depend on which Use Class Order the Borough Council considers the scheme to be. The particular characteristics of housing with care and extra support are likely to make it more expensive to deliver than general market housing, which may affect its ability to provide a full affordable housing contribution. However, this may be offset by other planning obligations, such as contributions towards education, which may not apply. Where viability is an issue, it will be assessed in the same way as any other scheme.

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7.3.20 Housing with care and extra support can take a variety of forms which can influence whether it is classified as C2 or C3. The nature and type of service and accommodation in a scheme will determine the Use Class and therefore whether or not it needs to accord with the provisions of LP28 in providing an affordable housing contribution where this is viable and appropriate.

7.3.21 The Borough council will usually regard the following factors as indicating that a development falls within Use Class C3 and therefore subject to the affordable housing requirements of policy LP28:

- Units within a scheme consist of single, self-contained units of occupation being used as a single dwelling for an individual household;
- Units are designed, or adapted, for residential purposes - containing the normal facilities for cooking, eating and sleeping associated with use as a dwelling house i.e. they afford the facilities required for day to day private domestic existence.

7.3.22 In relation to housing with care and extra support schemes, the factors which differentiate C2 and C3 are those relating to the predominant level of care provided and whether it is provided as a condition of residency, which is more likely to indicate a C2 classification. However, receiving a care service does not in itself necessarily determine it as C2 accommodation if it is not a requirement. If the level of care provided is high or equivalent to the service normally associated with residential care homes, a C2 classification would be indicated.

7.3.23 The Borough Council will take all the characteristics of a scheme into account in determining the Use Class and will not consider any one factor as the defining criterion.

7.3.24 Where the development of housing with care and additional support forms part of a larger development, for example in a retirement community which might contain C2 residential nursing home accommodation, the individual parts of the development will be treated separately in determining their use class, providing they are in separate buildings.

7.3.25 The composition of the affordable housing will be the subject of negotiations and may be Extra Care Housing or General Needs housing or a mixture of both. Factors influencing affordable housing type will include the physical nature of the development, the flexibility of the site in providing for a range of needs, and the assessed housing need.

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7.4 LP30- Adaptable and Accessible Homes

7.4.1 Strategic Policy

Policy LP30- Adaptable and Accessible Homes

All new homes must be designed and constructed in a way that enables them to be adaptable, so they can meet the changing needs of their occupants over their lifetime. Planning permission will be granted for new dwellings subject to the following:

- 50% of new homes must be built to meet requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations: Category 2 for accessible and adaptable dwellings.
- The encouragement, where practicable and viable, of dwellings on schemes involving major development being provided as wheelchair adaptable dwellings in accordance with the Building Regulations M4(3) standard: Category 3.
- The Borough Council will require a minimum of 5% of the affordable housing contribution (new dwellings) on major housing developments to accord with Category M4(3) (wheelchair adaptability).

Exemptions will only be considered where the applicant can robustly demonstrate that compliance would significantly harm the financial viability of the scheme, or where it is not practical to do so given the flood risk. All residential proposals should be accompanied by a separate document setting out how proposals (including each dwelling type) accord with each of the standards as detailed in Building Regulations. Where exemptions are sought on practicality or viability grounds, the minimum number of units necessary will be exempted from the requirements i.e. If only 1 out of 3 wheelchair accessible dwellings can be provided, then the 1 still applies.

Policy Justification and Supporting Text

7.4.2 The intention of this approach will be to maximise the flexibility of new housing to accommodate a wider spectrum of housing needs. This will support the housing needs of older people but also those with specialist needs such as those who are disabled and wheelchair users, leading to positive impacts on health and well-being. Making homes adaptable and accessible from the start will reduce the likelihood of people having to leave their homes as their needs change and allow people to stay within their local communities, creating mixed and inclusive communities.

7.4.3 Delivering sustainable communities means supporting the needs of the current and any future population. Paragraph 59 of the NPPF states that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements should be addressed. Paragraph 61 continues: within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including, but not limited to, families with children,

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older people, and people with disabilities. Paragraph 127 (point f) of the NPPF states that planning policies should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

7.4.4 Paragraph 008 (Reference ID: 63-008-20190626) of the PPG is clear that ‘Accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future.’ The same paragraph then goes on to clarify that ‘accessible and adaptable housing will provide safe and convenient approach routes into and out of the home and outside areas, suitable circulation space and suitable bathroom and kitchens within the home. Wheelchair user dwellings include additional features to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs or allow for adaptations to meet such needs.’

7.4.5 The National Building Regulations include specific nationally agreed construction standards (the M4(2) standard) which would deliver accessible and adaptable homes. However, as a national standard they are optional and depend partly on the viability of this aspect when considered with other requirements of the Local Plan. So, the Borough Council is requiring that 50% of dwellings on a scheme must meet the M4(2) standard. Homes built to this standard are more flexible and readily adaptable as people’s needs change. They are suitable not just for the elderly but also for families with pushchair needs, or those with a temporary or permanent disability or health issue.

7.4.6 It is estimated that the national unmet need for wheelchair adaptable properties is the equivalent of 3.5 per 1,000 households. However, Planning Practice Guidance states that M4(3) (wheelchair adaptability) should only be applied to properties where the LPA is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling. A proportion of new dwellings that accord with Category M4(3) wheelchair adaptability on larger housing developments is required when the Borough Council is negotiating within the affordable housing contributions. The policy will be applied taking account of the Council’s current housing needs, for example, the most up to date Housing Needs Assessment, etc.

7.4.7 Where the specific requirements of Building Regulations may not be achievable, an element of flexibility is recognised as being required in the delivery of these standards. This may be due to, site specific challenges around topography, flood risk and/or the relationship to design. It is acknowledged that a significant proportion of the Borough is at risk to flooding, and that this could be a constraint to achieving this. Where developers demonstrate that the M4(2) or M4(3) requirements are not feasible to be delivered on viability grounds exemptions will be on a case by case basis on the clear evidence submitted at planning application stage, e.g. the topography of the site makes provision as a whole not feasible and impacts development viability significantly.

7.4.8 To support the Local Plan review with up-to-date and proportionate evidence the Borough Council has commissioned and published the following: a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (Simon Drummond-Hay, 2020) to supersede the 2014 Strategic Housing

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Market Assessment (SHMA), in collaboration through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) with the other Norfolk planning authorities, a Demand for Specialist Older Persons Housing and Dementia Care Housing Study (Three Dragons, 2020) and a Local Plan review viability study (Simon Drummond-Hay, 2020).

7.4.9 These studies illustrate that the Borough has a relatively aged population structure, and this characteristic is likely to become more pronounced in the future, with the number of residents over 75 anticipated to increase from 13,288 in 2020 to 19,166 by 2036. People requiring specialist accommodation, due to limiting long term illness and difficulty in performing personal care and tasks, will increase from 3,335 in 2020 to 4,810 by 2036. Additionally, many households have persons with disabilities which require adaptations to homes.

7.4.10 The evidence studies suggest that all new homes in the Borough should be designed to be adaptable to meet current and future needs. The HNA (page 83/84) states that the need for adaptable and accessible homes in King's Lynn and West Norfolk by the end of the plan period (2036) will be either be 12,354 or 13,215 depending upon whether it is assumed that all or 50% of the institutional population have mobility issues. However, the Local Plan Review Viability Assessment (Simon Drummond-Hay, 2020) has concluded that it is only financially viable for 50% of all new homes to meet requirement M4(2) of Part M of the Building Regulations. The Policy reflects this finding.

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7.5 LP31- Residential Development Reasonably Related to Existing Settlements Policy

Introduction

7.5.1 This policy is designed to provide a flexible framework for more modest levels of growth of an appropriate character by identifying the key types of development likely to be suitable, and enabling appropriate, small-scale development reasonably related to existing settlements in a sensitive manner. The policy should support housing developments which reflect local needs and promotes sustainable development in rural areas, with a view to enhancing and maintaining the vitality of such communities, including supporting local services, allowing communities to grow and thrive. This reflects the aims of the NPPF and in particular paragraph 78.

7.5.2 For the purpose of this policy small scale refers to schemes of between 1 to 5 dwellings. The policy does allow for small groups of development (not major development so less than 10 dwellings) but only in exceptional circumstances. In both cases the development needs to be appropriate in scale and character of the settlement and its surroundings.

Relevant Local and National Policies:

- National Planning Policy Framework - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes:
- Core planning principles (roles and characters of different areas)
- para 59: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- para 77 - 79: Rural Housing
- para 172: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Strategic Policies:

- LP01 Spatial Strategy
- LP02: Settlement Hierarchy
- LP03 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- LP04 - Development Boundaries
- LP07 - The Economy
- LP16 - Norfolk Coast AONB

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- LP18 - Design and Sustainable Development
- LP19 - Environmental Assets - Green Infrastructure, Landscape Character, Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP21: Environment, Design and Amenity Policy
- LP28 Affordable Housing
- LP36 Community and Culture
- LP41 Development in Rural Areas

Policy Approach

7.5.3 It is recognised that windfall development makes an important contribution towards housing supply and delivery throughout the Borough. It enables people to live in desirable sustainable locations. This policy creates the opportunity for further windfall development to come forward, however it appreciates that such development needs to be appropriately located and of an appropriate nature. This policy clarifies the form of development which could be permitted.

7.5.4 The policy recognises that areas which sit outside of defined development boundaries, for settlements listed in the settlement hierarchy, which are close to the settlement and their defined development boundaries may be sustainable locations for housing development, i.e. close to services and facilities. This is why the policy states 'reasonably related to' the settlement and development boundary as these areas could be considered part of the settlement although they sit outside of the settlement's development boundary. The policy also caters for the rounding off existing development boundaries. The policy makes it clear that the proposed development does not have to be immediately next to the development boundary.

7.5.5 Infill development can make an improvement to the street scene where a gap has been left, for example due to demolished buildings or where it replaces lower quality development. It also provides the opportunity for growth without spoiling the form and character of the settlement.

7.5.6 The Borough Council recognises the importance that custom and self-build housing can play in contributing not only to housing supply but also to completions. Given this, and that it allows people to create a home which they ultimately want, the Borough Council is supportive of this type of housing. Further details on this can be found within the introductory text to Policy LP01 – Spatial Strategy Policy, under the heading 'Custom and Self-Build' and the Borough Council's Custom & Self-Build Action Plan.

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7.5.7 The Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers a significant portion of the Borough. The statutory purpose of designating an area of land as an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. This comprises the area's distinctive landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic and cultural environment. With this in mind and in line with the NPPF, Policy LP16 Norfolk Coast AONB, and taking into consideration the Norfolk Coast Partnership's management strategy '*Norfolk Coast Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty Strategy*' this policy does not apply to areas which are within the AONB.

7.5.8 Careful Consideration will be required for areas which could impact upon natural environment designations and their setting, for example the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA). And for areas which could have an impact upon historic environment designations and their settings such as conservation areas.

7.5.9 The Borough Council is very supportive of those communities who wish to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their Area. As such the Borough Council believes it should be up to the Qualifying Body (town/parish council or forum) and the local community to decide if this policy should apply within their Area. Please see Policy LP01 – Spatial Strategy Policy for further information in relation to Neighbourhood Plans.

Policy LP31 Residential Development Reasonably Related to Existing Settlements

For the purpose of this policy small scale refers to development of between 1 to 5 dwellings.

1. Residential development will be permitted in areas reasonable related to existing settlements identified in the Settlement Hierarchy Policy LP02 and their development boundaries where it involves:
 - a. the sensitive infilling of small gaps either wholly or in part, or rounding off the existing development boundary; and
 - b. the development is appropriate to the scale and character of the settlement and its surroundings; and
 - d. it will not fill a gap which provides a positive contribution to the street scene or views in/out of the locality; and
 - e. recognition that the development must conserve or enhance the natural environment and conserve and where appropriate enhance any heritage assets in the locality; and

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- f. sitting sympathetically within the wider landscape, preserves or enhances the setting of the nearest settlement; and
 - g. where possible the development is located to maximise the use of walking, cycling, and public transport to access services.
2. In exceptional circumstances the development of small groups of dwellings, i.e. not major development, so less than 10 dwellings, may be considered appropriate where the development is of a particularly high quality and would provide significant benefits to the local community.
3. Meaningful consultation with the Town/Parish Council, local community and other local stakeholders will be encouraged prior to submitting a planning application.
4. Additional weight will be given to proposals for Custom and Self-Build development.
5. This Policy does not apply within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
6. This Policy does not apply to settlements covered by a Made Neighbourhood Plan. Unless the relevant Neighbourhood Plan allows this.

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7.6 LP32- Houses in Multiple Occupation Policy

Introduction

7.6.1 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) were introduced under Class C4 in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment)(England) Order 2010 and is the use of a dwelling house by not more than six residents. Under Article 2 (4) of the order, purpose of Class C4 HMOs does not include a converted block of flats to which S.257 of the Housing Act 2004 applies. However, HMOs have the same meaning as S254 of the Housing Act 2004 which defines them as: a building or part of a building that consists of one or more units of living accommodation, which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household and two or more of the households share one or more basic amenities such as a bathroom and kitchen.

7.6.2 The number of HMOs in the Borough has increased markedly in recent years. HMOs make an important contribution to the mix and range of housing to meet the needs of a diverse community and workforce. In the Borough there is a particular concentration of HMOs within certain areas of King's Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market. This type of accommodation is associated with a number of issues and problems, particularly in areas of high concentration, including acceptable room size and living conditions, noise and anti-social behaviour, parking provision and waste storage and removal.

7.6.3 Planning permission may not always be needed, depending on circumstances, for a change of use to certain types of smaller HMOs. However, the Council considers it useful to have a clear policy in place for those situations, including larger HMOs, where planning applications are required. The standards expected to be provided among all HMOS are high and must comply with legislation as set out under weblink: https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20114/houses_in_multiple_occupation/413/what_is_an_hmo

7.6.4 Large HMOS as defined by the central government are required to have a mandatory license, if the household is occupied by five or more people, forming two or more households, with shared basic amenities. As defined on our website³, for the situation of purpose-built flats (those that were originally built as flats - not converted into flats):

- a. If a purpose built flat is occupied by five or more people, and it's in a block comprising of up to two flats, it **will** be licensable;
- b. and if a purpose built flat is occupied by five or more people, and it's in a block comprising three or more flats, it **will not** be licensable.
- c. Mandatory licensing applies to flats such as those above shops on traditional high street type locations, but not large purpose-built blocks of flats

7.6.5 Further information on HMOS is provided within this weblink: https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20114/houses_in_multiple_occupation

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Relevant Local and National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Strategic Policy LP18 Design and Sustainable Development
- Strategic Policy LP36 Community and Culture

Policy Approach

7.6.6 A policy is proposed in order to regulate and manage this type of accommodation because of the pressures and problems mentioned above. In deciding applications for the conversion of existing dwellings and new developments of properties for multiple occupation, the views of Housing Services, Community Safety and Neighbourhood Nuisance, Building Control, Licensing and any other relevant sections within the Borough Council will be sought and taken into account (insofar as they are planning matters).

Policy LP32– Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

1. The conversion of existing dwellings to and new development of properties for multiple occupation may be permitted where:
 - a. there is no adverse impact on the amenity of existing and new residents and the historic and natural environment; **and**
 - b. the development and associated facilities, including bin storage, car and cycle parking, can be provided without detriment to the occupiers of adjoining or neighbouring properties; **and**
 - c. the site is within reasonable distances to facilities, public open space, supporting services and local employment.
 - d. the proposed scheme is of a high quality and meets the necessary standards set out in legal national requirements.

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7.7 LP33- Enlargement or Replacement of Dwellings in the Countryside Policy

Introduction

7.7.1 The character and beauty of West Norfolk's countryside needs to be protected in accordance with Strategic Policy LP41.

7.7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable rural development. There is no national guidance regarding replacement dwellings and residential extensions, but these can equally have a negative impact on the countryside if not carefully managed. Therefore, there is a need for a local policy to control such potential impacts.

Relevant Local and National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Strategic Policies:
 - LP01 Spatial Strategy
 - LP41 Development in Rural Areas
 - LP18 Sustainable Development

Policy Approach

7.7.3 For the purposes of this policy, the countryside is defined as any area outside of the settlements listed in Strategic Policy LP02 The Settlement Hierarchy.

7.7.4 Where dwellings are replaced, in order to control further extensions that may impact on the landscape and rural character of an area, a condition may be necessary to remove or reduce permitted development rights to extend the resulting dwelling. In line with the presumption against new dwellings in the countryside, proposals to replace a property should not increase the number of units.

7.7.5 This policy should be applied in accordance with Policy LP21: Environment, Design and Amenity and LP16 Norfolk Coast AONB Policy.

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Policy LP33– Enlargement or Replacement of Dwellings in the Countryside

1. Proposals for replacement dwellings or extensions to existing dwellings will be approved where the design is of a high quality and will preserve the character or appearance of the street scene or area in which it sits.
2. Schemes which fail to reflect the scale and character of their surroundings or which would be oppressive or adversely affect the amenity of the area or neighbouring properties will be refused.

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7.8 LP34- Housing Needs of Rural Workers Policy

Introduction

7.8.1 King's Lynn & West Norfolk is a large rural Borough, and in order to promote sustainable patterns of development to ensure strong, diverse, economic activity in line with Strategic Policy LP41 it is important to address the housing needs of rural workers such as farm and forestry workers.

7.8.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets guidance to steer new development to the most sustainable locations, avoiding new isolated homes in the countryside. However, national policy does identify special circumstances including the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.

7.8.3 At the local level, it is important to have a policy that ensures housing is provided and protected for rural workers. This will ensure the housing needs of rural workers are met and avoid unnecessary new development in the countryside.

Relevant Local and National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Strategic Policies
 - LP01 Spatial Strategy
 - LP41 Development in rural areas
 - LP18 Design and Sustainable Development

Policy Approach

7.8.4 To ensure that new development in the countryside is carefully controlled, the proposed approach is to ensure that new rural occupational dwellings are only permitted where it relates to a proven need for a worker to live near their place of occupation.

7.8.5 Agricultural occupancy conditions are imposed when a dwelling is given planning permission because it is necessary to the running of an agricultural enterprise but would not otherwise have been permitted. In accordance with national and local policy, this policy seeks to ensure the housing needs of farm, forestry and other rural workers are protected. Therefore, applications for the removal of restrictive occupancy conditions will require robust justification and will be assessed against the fact that the permission was originally granted as an exception to meet an essential rural need.

7.8.6 For the purposes of this policy a 'rural worker' is defined as someone who is needed to live permanently in the countryside or a Smaller Village and Hamlet (outside other designated settlements) and:

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- to provide vital support to, an agricultural, forestry or other enterprise which supports the rural economy and environment;
- and on or in close proximity to that enterprise;
- and where neither the worker nor the enterprise can be located in a designated settlement (excepting Smaller Villages and Hamlets).

Policy LP34 – Housing needs of rural workers

Permanent occupational dwellings

1. New permanent dwellings should only be allowed to support existing rural based activities on well-established rural based enterprises, providing:
 - a. there is a clearly established existing functional need, requiring occupants to be adjacent to their enterprises in the day and at night,
 - b. the need could not be met by existing dwellings within the locality,
 - c. the application meets the requirements of a financial test demonstrating that:
 - i. the enterprise(s) and the rural based activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them **and**;
 - ii. are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so **and**;
 - iii. the rural based enterprise can sustain the size of the proposed dwelling;
 - iv. acceptable in all other respects

Temporary occupational dwellings

2. If a new dwelling is essential to support a new rural based activity, it should normally, for the first three years, be provided by a caravan, or other temporary accommodation.
3. New temporary dwellings should only be allowed to support rural based activities providing:
 - a. the proposal satisfies criteria 1a and b above;
 - b. the application is supported by clear evidence of a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned (for example significant investment in new farm buildings is often a good indication of intentions);
 - c. the application is supported by clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis.

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Existing Occupational Dwellings

4. Preference will be given to retaining agricultural or other rural based occupancy dwellings where there is a local identified need.
5. Proposals for the relaxation or removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that:
 - a. the dwelling has been occupied in accordance with the terms of the occupancy condition for a minimum of 5 years; **and**
 - b. there is no longer a need for the dwelling by those working, or last working, in the locality in agricultural, forestry or a rural enterprise, established by evidence of marketing (including the provision of details of an independent market valuation reflecting the occupancy condition, as well as all viewings and offers made) for a 12 month period at a price that reflects the occupancy condition.

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7.9 LP35- Residential Annexes Policy

Introduction

7.9.1 Residential annexes have grown in popularity in recent years and are commonly developed to provide additional semi-independent accommodation for members of the same family, particularly older family members who may need additional support. A residential annex can be defined as accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling within the residential curtilage and is a form of extra accommodation in the same way an extension to the dwelling would be. Annexes should be well related to the main dwelling. To be considered as an annexe as opposed to a separate dwelling, it must share the same garden, parking and access as the main dwelling. It should also be ancillary and subordinate to the main dwelling, as close as possible to the main dwelling, and it should not be designed as being capable of sold or let as a separate unit. Annexes can be formed by extensions to the main dwelling, conversion of a building ancillary to the dwelling such as a garage, or the development of a new separate unit.

7.9.2 Within defined settlements, annexes are generally an acceptable form of additional accommodation for residents. The design, layout and scale of annexes are crucial factors in determining the impact on the amenity of existing or new residents and on the visual form and character of the local area. Ensuring that there remains safe and adequate parking and access is also a key factor in assessing applications. Problems arise when developing annexes separate from the main dwelling, because they may appear to be used as separate dwellings and are intrusive in the landscape in countryside locations.

7.9.3 There is currently no national guidance specifically relating to residential annexes so proposals are currently assessed against more general policies in the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. This policy will provide clarity on the planning criteria used to define and assess applications for residential annexes.

Relevant Local and National Policies:

- National Planning Policy Framework: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- National Planning Policy Framework: Achieving well-designed places
- Strategic Policies:
 - LP41: Development in Rural Areas
 - LP18: Design and Sustainable Development
 - LP16: Norfolk Coast AONB Policy

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Policy Approach

7.9.4 In principle, annexes will be permitted in the defined settlements as listed in Strategic Policy LP02 Settlement Hierarchy providing they comply with other relevant planning policies relating to design, amenity and access in the Local Plan. Stricter criteria will apply to applications for annexes in the wider countryside to ensure that the countryside is protected from adverse development.

Policy LP35 – Residential Annexes

1. Development of residential annexes will be approved only subject to the following being secured by condition or planning agreement:
 - a. it remains in the same ownership as, and is occupied in conjunction with the principal dwelling;
 - b. it is ancillary and subordinate in scale to the principal dwelling;
 - c. its occupant(s) share(s) the existing access, garden and parking of the main dwelling;

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7.10 LP36- Community and Culture Policy

Introduction

7.10.1 Planning is about more than just physical land use. It is essential that planning policy aims to improve the wellbeing of local communities by tackling social issues, and creating the right conditions for people to have a good quality of life. The first part of this chapter examines the key social issues which are affecting communities in the borough, while the second part identifies the significance of culture to the community.

7.10.2 A socially and culturally sustainable community means that it is active, inclusive and safe – fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities. In order to achieve this goal, policies in the Local Plan must address the following key issues:

- **Inequality** - the difference between the most and least deprived wards in the borough.
- **Health** - encouraging more healthy and active lifestyles.
- **Crime** - reducing the fear of crime as well as actual incidents of crime to ensure people feel safe.
- **Community Cohesion** - community cohesion is achieved when:
 - a. there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
 - b. the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
 - c. those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;
 - d. strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

7.10.3 There are typically seven domains of deprivation which combine the official measure for the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) these are: income, employment, health, crime, barriers to housing and services and living environment⁽²⁴⁾. 'Pockets' of deprivation are a key issue for the borough, both in urban areas including King's Lynn and Hunstanton, as well as some of the more rural parts of the district⁽²⁵⁾.

7.10.4 The national statistics of English indices of deprivation (2019) relatively ranks each small area (Lower Super Output Area) in England from most deprived (1) to least deprived (32,844). The data for local authorities (2019)⁽²⁶⁾ highlights that King's Lynn & West Norfolk IMD average score was 94 out of 317 for local authority districts in its average rank for

24 MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation (2019) (IoD2019) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835115/IoD2019_Statistical_Release.pdf

25 MHCLG (2019) Local Authority Maps- Indices of Deprivation (2019) Available at: <https://imd2019.group.shef.ac.uk/>

26 MHCLG (2019) Local Authority District Summaries Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

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deprivation making this fall in the top 25% most deprived districts in England. The most deprived domains for the borough was education with an average score of 33 (top 10%) and health scored at 67 alongside housing (top 20%)⁽²⁷⁾

7.10.5 A health profile of the area between 2013-2015⁽²⁸⁾ highlighted that the average life expectancy varies by 3 years (for men) and 2 years (for women) between the most deprived wards and the most affluent areas of the borough. Individuals who have good access to public open space including, parks, greens, leisure and sports facilities and other recreation facilities have a better opportunity to have an active and healthy lifestyle.

7.10.6 West Norfolk is fortunate to have one of the lowest crime levels in England ranking at 268 out of 317 making the borough fall within the top 20% least deprived areas in England. Recent statistics (2020) show that the crime rate was 4.8 per 1000 population compared to 6.2 in England. The highest crime rates were anti-social behaviour and violence and sex offences. Anti-social behaviour has stayed at a consistent rate from 2018-2020 of around 1.4 per 1000⁽²⁹⁾. One of the main ways in which the planning process can help to reduce the likelihood of crime is to ensure it is a key consideration in the design process, particularly for access routes and public spaces. As highlighted, in the national design guide (2019) well designed places and careful planning can help users feel safe and secure within shared amenity spaces without the need for security measures. This will complement policy on design outlined in the Design and Sustainable Development Policy LP18.

7.10.7 West Norfolk is experiencing an increasing mix of people of different nationalities and cultures. Over the past decade parts of King's Lynn and the wider borough have welcomed a significant number of economic migrants, mainly from the A8 accession countries that joined the EU in 2004, particularly from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. Population estimates in 2018 show that for EU nationals West Norfolk (6%) were marginally above Norfolk overall (5.1%) and very similar to estimates in England (5.9%). Broad ethnic groups within the borough show that 97.3% of the population is White, followed by Asian at 1.3% and Black, Mixed and Other falling below 0.9%. This highlights how little diversity is present within the borough overall Norfolk Insight (2020)⁽³⁰⁾

7.10.8 Providing opportunities for the community to work together, either by involving the community early in the design of new development, creating shared community facilities or by supporting different kinds of community groups, sports and activities will help to improve community cohesiveness.

27 .Norfolk County Council (2018) Norfolk JSNA Briefing Document
https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Briefing_paper_-_Deprivation.pdf

28 Health and Wellbeing Profile June 2017 King's Lynn & West Norfolk
https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Kings_Lynn_and_West_Norfolk_HWB_profile_2017.pdf

29 King's Lynn & West Norfolk Crime & Community Safety Area Report (2020)
<https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/crime-and-community-safety/report/view/c4759afd921045e68237e611043725c2/E07000146>

30 Population Estimates <https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/population/report/view/b15822d80ec54439bb12134b7c857bb9/E07000146/>

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7.10.9 The policy for Community & Culture aims to work alongside wider strategies undertaken by the West Norfolk Partnership⁽³¹⁾ and other agencies such as the Norfolk Constabulary as well as charities and community groups to address the social and community issues outlined above. The West Norfolk Partnership is a strategy group and the concept behind the Partnership is to tackle the issues that residents of West Norfolk say affect their lives. The partner organisations come together and discuss issues to provide the link between the statutory sector and the voluntary sector who provide that 'ear to the ground' for community needs. These issues will cover similar topics to ones which were commissioned in previous 'Quality of Life' Surveys in the past including: health and wellbeing, crime, facilities for all ages. Previous and ongoing work within the partnership is how the SWAN Youth project in Downham Market came into being, because people in the southern neighbourhood said there was nothing for young people to do⁽³²⁾

7.10.10 The policy aims to ensure West Norfolk is a great place for people to live and work by creating opportunities for the community to interact, supporting the provision of community facilities and infrastructure and ensuring that future development is designed in a way which helps to avoid the creation of, or increase the amount of social problems experienced by residents in the borough.

Relevant Local and National Policies and Guidance:

- LP37 Community Facilities
- LP22 Open Space + 'FIT' Standards
- National Planning Policy Framework: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- National Design Guide (2019)- Public Spaces and Uses

The Cultural Context

7.10.11 Culture is a collective term for a diversity of different activities and attractions. The cultural assets of West Norfolk are considered to include the arts, the natural and built heritage, libraries, museums, archives, galleries, sports and leisure, churches and other places of worship as well as events, concerts and festivals. As culture is so wide ranging, it is strongly linked to policies on the economy and environmental assets.

7.10.12 A Vision of Norfolk 2021 produced in partnership with Norfolk County Council identifies the importance of culture to people in Norfolk:

- building communities we can be proud of;
- nurturing our growing digital economy;
- making the most of our heritage, culture and environment;
- developing the skills of our people through training and apprenticeships;

31 West Norfolk Partnership Strategy Group

<https://democracy.west-norfolk.gov.uk/documents/s16760/WN%20Strategy%20Group%20-%20Presentation%20for%20E%20and%20C%20Sept%202017.pdf>

32 Swan Youth Project <https://www.swanyouthproject.org/>

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- building new homes to help young people get on the housing ladder;
- installing infrastructure first.

7.10.13 West Norfolk is rich in cultural assets and hosts a variety of different events and festivals across the borough each year. Whilst more strategic cultural facilities are focused in the larger settlements such as King's Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market, there are many smaller but important tourist and/or cultural facilities throughout the rest of the borough as well as many traditional local events and festivals. The borough is fortunate to be rich in cultural heritage in the built and natural environment. Environmental Assets Policies LP19 and LP20 focuses on protecting and enhancing the rich heritage of the borough such as the many historic Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as well as the distinctive inland waterways which support tourism and recreation.

7.10.14 The Borough Council has already made improvements to significant cultural venues in King's Lynn in recent years and it is essential that cultural facilities are improved and continue to grow in King's Lynn to serve an expanded population. The Borough Council also have a financial assistance scheme where community organisations including charities, voluntary and community groups can apply for funding for a revenue or capital projects covering community buildings, cultural projects, sports, play areas etc. There is set criteria for the funding as referenced on the council website, nonetheless it is part of the Borough Council's offer to the community and responding to their needs⁽³³⁾

7.10.15 Cultural facilities can contribute to improving quality of life, reinforcing local distinctiveness, driving regeneration, providing jobs and promoting tourism. For this reason, it is vital that the Community and Culture Policy LP36 aims to protect and promote West Norfolk's existing cultural assets, as well as facilitating new cultural facilities where appropriate. Policy LP36 will prioritise locating cultural facilities sequentially in accessible locations in the larger settlements, in line with the Settlement Hierarchy Policy LP02 and national planning policy on sustainable development.

33 Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk 2020 Revenue and capital grants
https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20228/community_grants/785/revenue_and_capital_grants

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Strategic Policy

Policy LP36 Community and Culture

1. Delivering community well-being and enhancing quality of life through good design
2. Where possible, developers should examine best practice on design in new development and should aim to involve the community early in the design process of new development.
3. The form, design, location and layout of development should enhance community wellbeing, by:
 - a. being accessible and inclusive - ensuring that people of any age, gender, ethnicity and ability can use and access the development;
 - b. being adaptable - creating high quality development which is capable of being modified either for different uses or to suit people with different needs;
 - c. being locally distinctive - contributing to a sense of place and identity;
 - d. reducing the opportunity for crime - considering factors such as natural surveillance, boundaries and security features, lighting and the management of public space to promote safe living environments;
 - e. being within walking distance of open space - to increase peoples quality of life and enable active and healthy lifestyles.
 - f. creating places that promote social interaction, to allow people who are isolated and more vulnerable to cope with the impacts of climate change.

Creating sustainable communities through the provision of community infrastructure.

3. The Borough Council will:
 - a. support proposals that protect, retain or enhance sports, leisure and recreation facilities including children's playgrounds or create new facilities in accessible locations;
 - b. work with NHS Norfolk to ensure that new health facilities are provided to serve an expanded population, particularly in growth areas in King's Lynn.

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4. The Borough Council recognises the importance of community facilities and services (also referred to as community infrastructure) to improving people's quality of life, reducing inequality and improving community cohesion. The Council will, working with partners, seek opportunities to gain funding for the development of community infrastructure, particularly in deprived parts of the borough (see Policy LP05).

Protecting, enhancing and promoting cultural facilities

5. The Borough Council will seek to protect and enhance existing cultural assets. If a cultural facility is no longer viable and the Council cannot secure funding, the Council will seek to explore alternative options such as co-locating multiple facilities on a single site to prevent the loss of cultural facilities and to increase the economic viability of such facilities.
6. Development will not be permitted in cases where it would result in a loss of existing cultural facilities, unless equivalent new or improved facilities, where need justifies, can be provided within the same settlement boundary or in close proximity of the existing facility.
7. New cultural facilities will actively be encouraged by the Borough Council, providing they are compatible with their location and setting and do not conflict with Economy Policy LP07. New cultural facilities will be located sequentially, in accessible sites in King's Lynn and the Main Towns of Hunstanton and Downham Market. Cultural facilities proposed in accessible locations in Key Rural Service Centres or the more rural settlements and areas will be considered based on localised impacts.

Policy LP36 contributes to Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 5 Economy; 6, 7, 8, 10; Society; 12, 14, 15 Environment.

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7.11 LP37 - Community Facilities Policy

Introduction

7.11.1 Community facilities such as village halls, pubs, shops, allotments and churches play an important role in bringing the community together and provide valuable services particularly in more rural settlements. In line with Strategic Policies LP07 Economy and LP36 Community and Culture the priority is to protect community facilities where possible, particularly where there is no alternative provision within the settlement. Strategic Policy LP05 identifies that community facilities will be sought within, or through, contributions from, new development.

7.11.2 With over 11,000 new homes planned for the Borough over the plan period to 2036 it is important that new community facilities are provided to meet the needs of an expanding population. Strategic Policy LP05 identifies that community facilities will be sought within, or through contributions from, new development.

Relevant Local and National Policies

- National Planning Policy Framework: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- Strategic Policy LP05 Infrastructure Provision
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Green Infrastructure Strategy

Policy Approach

7.11.3 The policy seeks to protect existing community facilities where there is a proven demand and to encourage replacement facilities in the immediate locality if it is not viable to retain the facility on site. The application of criteria to protect community facilities aims to build upon strategic policies by setting a clear and consistent approach to assessing applications for development.

7.11.4 Evidence to meet the policy requirements may include, for example, one or more of the following:

- for (a), information on alternative provision in the area, typical provision in equivalent areas, the geography and social make up of users and potential users; changes in the demand or need for the type of facilities; and
- for (b), in the case of market provided facilities (e.g. shops, pubs, restaurants, etc.), evidence of marketing the business or premises for a sustained period (usually a minimum of 12 months), at a price reflecting the authorised use, details of income/profit achieved in recent years, evidence of significant long term changes in the relevant market.
- in the case of non-market provide facilities, the withdrawal or absence of the funding, personnel or other resources necessary to provide the facility.

7.11.5 The adequacy and persuasiveness of the evidence will be judged in the particular circumstances of the case, and against the objectives set out in the first paragraph of the policy.

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7.11.6 Strategic Policy

Policy LP37 – Community Facilities

1. The Council will encourage the retention of existing community facilities and the provision of new facilities, particularly in areas with poor levels of provision and in areas of major growth.
2. Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that either:
 - a. the area currently served by it would remain suitably provided following the loss, or, if not;
 - b. it is no longer viable or feasible to retain the premises in a community facility use.