

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk representation on the Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Development Plan Submission Consultation (November 2022)

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk has worked to support Old Hunstanton Parish Council in the preparation of their neighbourhood plan and compliments them on a very thoughtful, comprehensive and well produced plan.

The borough council would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Old Hunstanton Parish Council on its preparation of its neighbourhood plan.

The borough council recognises the work which has gone into the plan to reach this stage and the challenging nature of issues the plan seeks to address, and commends the skill, care and effort which has gone into the plan's preparation so far.

In order to fulfil our duty to guide and assist, required by paragraph 3 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the council commented on the emerging Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) during the pre-submission consultation. We are committed to helping this plan succeed. To achieve this, we offer constructive comments on issues that are considered to require further consideration. The borough council's comments (where applicable) are provided in the following table which divides the plan into its various sections and policies.

The tests to be applied to neighbourhood plans are (summarised):

- (a) contributes to achieving sustainable development;
- (b) in general conformity with the strategic policies of the (borough council's) local plan;
- (c) having regard to the NPPF it is appropriate to adopt the plan; and
- (d) compatible with EU obligations.

Our comments at this stage are merely a constructive contribution to the process and should not be interpreted as the Council's formal view on whether the draft plan meets the basic conditions.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains how the examination of a neighbourhood plan is very different from that of a local plan. The Examiner is limited to testing whether the neighbourhood plan meets the "basic conditions" and "is not testing the soundness of a neighbourhood plan or examining other material considerations".

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	Future Development Section	

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10	Policy 2- Settlement Breaks	<p>The policy preamble is not considered to be positively prepared as required by paragraph 16 b of the NPPF. Wording changes could rectify this whilst the policy aim remains.</p> <p><i>Area A Hunstanton has already built up to its Parish boundary along much of its eastern side, which makes the preservation of this area crucial to maintaining separation between the two settlements. Hunstanton's draft Neighbourhood Plan identifies Area A as a green buffer zone and this Plan mirrors that. The area is the belt of land between Old Hunstanton's Parish boundary to the west and the AONB (with the protection that affords) to the east.</i></p> <p><i>Area B This area is the coastal margin between Old Hunstanton to the south and Hunstanton to the north. Development in the area cannot be sustainable as it is in a flood zone. The eastern section is also designated as an AONB.</i></p> <p><i>Area C Holme-next-the Sea's Neighbourhood Plan also places importance on maintaining separation between Holme and Old Hunstanton Any development along the A149, potentially joining the two settlements is to be resisted; it is also an area in a flood zone and designated as an AONB.</i></p>
12	Policy 4- Conservation Area	<p>Map 4- It is a bit unclear not sure if this is because it is online. May be worth to change the colours on the layers to make this clearer. We can help sort out better scaled maps if you wish or have two separate maps presenting the conservation area and then the listed buildings.</p> <p>The title non- designated heritage assets on page 14 should this be on page 15? Also, this is spelt incorrectly.</p> <p>Which table is the non-designated assets one? Please make this clearer.</p>
15-17	Policy 5- Non- Designated Heritage Assets	<p>Map 5 looks unclear online.</p> <p>The use of the word 'must' is too strong as there may be occasions where it is not possible, practicable or desirable to preserve particular features. Please add a caveat to this sentence such as</p> <p>'Any development proposed in connection with a Non-Designated Heritage Asset, listed above, must, <u>where possible</u>, preserve the particular features which contribute to its character and appearance, particularly those of historic or architectural interest.</p>

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18-20	Policy 6- New Housing as Permanent Dwellings	<p>Whilst I am sure it is true it may not be appropriate in the fourth paragraph to quote the reference of other second homeowners. The wording seems quite negative as currently drafted.</p> <p>It is also questionable whether this can be enforced or how it will be monitored.</p> <p>Strategic Housing Team: Whilst the intentions of this policy are well founded, consideration should be given to the potential unintended consequences. This type of policy is still a relatively new concept and the limited evidence to date from areas where similar policies have been adopted suggests that this type of policy could reduce the appetite of developers to operate in the area due to the uncertainty caused. If this is the case, the policy could reduce the amount of new development coming forward and fail to deliver on the intended aims of the policy. There is a wider perspective to take in that there are benefits to the local economy from second homes, but the balance with the downsides needs to be considered. Unintended consequences could include; Putting pressure on the prices of unconstrained occupancy second hand properties and therefore impacting on affordability. The 'constrained' properties may be more difficult to sell, or possibly schemes will prove unviable, so development is stalled.</p> <p>There are other positive mechanisms to accommodate homes for local people such as the Councils well established 'local exceptions' policy for sites outside defined plan boundaries. The conditions are clear when developers start on this path, and can be controlled in perpetuity.</p> <p>There is a quote from a second home owner which suggests there is a need for affordable housing for families in the village, however there is no specific policy within the plan that supports Affordable Housing to come forward. This is area that perhaps ought to be considered further. All affordable sites provide the opportunity for affordable rented and intermediate products such as shared ownership, shared equity etc to come forward. This provides real opportunity to provide affordable homes and local connection criteria can be applied.</p>
20	Policy 7- Consultation	<p>Could this policy be strengthened?</p>

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21-24	Policy 8- Community facilities	<p>Map is unclear.</p> <p>Policy 8- Refer back to the previous table and give the table a heading to make this clearer in the policy.</p> <p>What information would applicants need to show to justify clause a?</p>
25	Housing Infill Development	<p>Please show how the calculations have been made on the different samples to reach 40% or less.</p>
28	Policy 10- Demolition & replacement of dwellings	<p>Need to expand on the situation, what if the house was bigger than the 40% and they wanted to rebuild. Does this mean it would have to be smaller?</p> <p>The title talks about demolition and replacement, but the policy talks about new and extended residential development. Do you want to differentiate these points? Or change the title?</p>
29	Policy 11- Design, Style & Materials	<p>Requiring everything to blend in is overly prescriptive. New and innovative design can be acceptable.</p>
30-31	Policy 12-Height of replacement buildings	<p>The word 'suitable' is subjective, suggest the following word amendments.</p> <p>An increase in height over the replaced building will only be acceptable where this is compatible with the appearance of adjacent buildings and the amenity of their occupiers, unless allowed by permitted development rights. New buildings shall be of a suitable height to <u>blend in with the appearance of adjacent buildings and the amenity of their occupiers, unless allowed by permitted development rights,</u> with the existing surroundings.</p>
32	Policy 13- Water and drainage	<p>Policy 13- Could be reworded to be clearer. At the moment the policy gives off the impression all measures would be expected, is this the case?</p> <p>What development does this refer to?</p>
	Policy 14- Groundwater, the River Hun, ditches and ponds	<p>This policy is not proportionate as drafted.</p>

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36	Policy 15-Mobile Phone and Broadband provision	Not all new development may be relevant for this policy and statement. It is not proportionate as drafted.
37	Policy 16 Existing and New Businesses	<p>For clause c would a business need to look like any of the buildings?</p> <p>The last paragraph about caravan parks is negatively worded and slightly confusing. There is no justification or evidence to explain why this statement has been added regarding caravan parks. Amend as follows:</p> <p>Any caravan parks, an exception to this general rule, may not only exceed Certified Site criteria when they are: i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small • privately run campsites with a maximum of five caravans or motorhomes at any one time for up to 28 consecutive days • allowing space of six meters between each unit.
38	Policy 17 Advertising and Signage	Currently the justification and evidence does not seem to fit these criteria.
40	Policy 18 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment and Landscape	What do you mean and want to achieve in this policy? Can it be expanded?
43	Policy 19 Dark Night Skies	The policy as drafted is too prescriptive and it is questionable whether it could be enforced.
45	Policy 20 - Greenspaces	Are these supposed to be Local Green Space designations?