



*St Edmundsbury*  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Z243

## Cabinet 17 September 2008

### Refreshed St Edmundsbury Growth Area Programme of Development

#### 1. Summary and Reasons for Recommendations

- 1.1 In August 2007 the Borough was provisionally declared a Growth Area by the Government, subject to the content of the final East of England Regional Spatial Strategy. In October 2007 the Council submitted a Programme of Development to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that included a bid for nearly £30 million of Government Growth Area Fund allocation. In December 2007 the Government announced that the Council had been allocated £2.02 million for 2008/2009 with a combined provisional allocation of £2.85 million for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011.
- 1.2 The Government has now asked growth areas to submit a refreshed Programme of Development by 1 October 2008 in order to secure the provisional Growth Areas Fund allocation and potentially secure additional funding from the Government's Growth Area Fund reserve of £172 million. The submission has to be in accordance with guidelines published by the Government in July 2008.
- 1.3 The Refreshed Programme of Development updates the existing document but has had to be prepared in accordance with updated guidance issued in late July 2008. For this reason, Cabinet is asked to note the working draft (**to follow as Appendix A**) and delegate approval of the final submission to the Acting Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees and supports the submission of the refreshed Programme of Development for the Growth Area Fund on 1 October 2008; and
- 2.2 The document attached as Appendix A is noted as work in progress with approval of the final submission to be delegated to the Acting Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation.

**3. Corporate Objectives**

3.1 The recommendations meet the following, as contained within the Corporate Plan:-

- (a) Corporate Priority: *'Secure a sustainable and attractive environment';*
- (b) Cabinet Commitments: *'Managing the future development of the Borough'; and*
- (c) Vision 2025: *Addresses all themes.*

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#### **4. Key Issues**

- 4.1 Designation of St Edmundsbury as a growth area means there has been recognition of the successful housing delivery made in the Borough going back to 2003, and the growth identified in the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy published in May 2008.
- 4.2 Growth area status means that the Council can bid for infrastructure funding to support housing growth. The Council has, with the support of the County Council, already secured £2.02 million for 2008/2009 with a combined provisional allocation of £2.85 million for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 based on the content of a Programme of Development submitted to the Government in October 2007.
- 4.3 Bids may be made for a range of capital and revenue projects, for infrastructure, expertise and staffing capacity and for research always providing that this meets the bidding criteria and directly assists in the delivery of housing. The Programme of Development submitted in 2007 identified projects requiring just over £25 million capital funding and just under £1 million revenue funding.
- 4.4 The refreshed Programme of Development has been written in accordance with the guidelines published by the Department of Communities and Local Government but is based on the Council's 2007 submission. It has to demonstrate what the Council is doing to deliver the planned housing growth and why additional support from the Government is necessary to help deliver it.
- 4.5 The Programme of Development needs to be supported by the Cabinet and the other partners that are part of the Council's Growth Area Board.
- 4.6 The refreshed Programme of Development is being produced in a very short period of time to meet the submission timescales of 1 October 2008. Cabinet will be circulated with a working draft (to follow) and officers at the County Council, the East of England Development Agency and the Suffolk Development Agency have also been asked for comments. Work on the final document will continue until the despatch date with final approval by the Portfolio Holder being necessary to enable the submission timescale to be met.
- 4.7 The outcome of the bid process will be known in December 2008.

#### **5. Other Options considered**

- 5.1 There are a range of external funding opportunities that can assist with delivering housing related infrastructure. The opportunity to bid through the Growth Area Fund has only arisen because of the identification of St Edmundsbury as a Growth Area.

#### **6. Community impact**

##### 6.1 General and Diversity implications

- 6.1.1 The potential to secure additional funding for the Borough Council will assist in supporting the delivery of sustainable, inclusive, accessible and affordable housing in St Edmundsbury.

<b>7. Consultation</b>																
7.1 The draft document is being prepared ready for submission on 1 October 2008 so is being circulated to partners and stakeholders at the moment. Any comments received will be incorporated into the final submission document, subject to the agreement of the Portfolio Holder.																
<b>8. Resource implications</b>																
8.1 The availability of funding from the Growth Area Fund is of potential benefit to the community of St Edmundsbury both now and in the future in supporting the delivery of sustainable housing growth.																
<b>9. Risk Assessment</b>																
9.1 This is an opportunity that must be pursued. The Growth Area project is being managed through the Councils Project Management process and a Growth Area Partnership Board has also been established to manage the delivery of the project																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Risk area</th> <th>Inherent level of Risk (before controls)</th> <th>Controls</th> <th>Residual Risk (after controls)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>High/Medium/Low</td> <td></td> <td>High/Medium/Low</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Funding Bid Submission</td> <td>Low</td> <td>Close supervision and effective management of the process by Senior Officers</td> <td>Low</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Risk area	Inherent level of Risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual Risk (after controls)		High/Medium/Low		High/Medium/Low	Funding Bid Submission	Low	Close supervision and effective management of the process by Senior Officers	Low				
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Funding Bid Submission	Low	Close supervision and effective management of the process by Senior Officers	Low													
<b>10. Legal or policy implications</b>																
10.1 The submission of bids for funding is covered by DCLG guidelines which are being followed.																

<b>Wards affected</b>	All	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Transport & Planning
<b>Background Papers</b>	DCLG Guidance	<b>Subject Area</b>	Planning and Development Control

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**Cabinet**  
**17 September 2008**

**Refreshed St Edmundsbury Growth Area  
Programme of Development**

**Appendix A to Report Z243**

# **St Edmundsbury Growth Area**

**Refreshed Programme of Development**

**Cabinet Draft**

**September 2008**

**KEY**

RED – Text that will need updating as information becomes available

## Introduction to the Programme of Development

In October 2007, St Edmundsbury Borough Council, working with Suffolk County Council, submitted the first St Edmundsbury Growth Area Programme of Development. The document demonstrated St Edmundsbury's ambitions to achieve sustainable growth in the heart of a region that is under significant pressure for new development. As a result of the submission, an award of **£xxxxx** was made to the borough for 2008/9 from the Growth Area Fund, with an indication of a further **£xxxx** for the following two years, 2009-10 and 2010-11.

This revised Programme of Development builds upon the foundations set out in the 2007 document and sets out a realistic vision for achieving growth and the infrastructure and resources needed to deliver it. It recognises the opportunities to deliver growth to meet existing and future community needs in the two towns of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill and the villages that surround them.

This bid is for funding for projects to be carried out in the medium term (2008-2011) and include:

1. major works associated with bringing forward the redevelopment of Station Hill / Tayfen Road in Bury St Edmunds;
2. provision of relief roads that are required to enable housing and employment sites to be developed;
3. improvement of A14 junction associated with delivery of the relief road;
4. studies to identify long term housing growth and infrastructure capacity; and
5. resources to deliver development sites through the planning process with minimum delay.

These schemes alone have, subject to planning approval, the potential to deliver in the region of 1,800 new homes in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, an increase of around 750 over and above what is allocated in the recently adopted Local Plan. In addition, other previously unidentified sites are already coming forward on previously developed land that will further increase the amount of housing that is being constructed in the borough.

This bid totals around £30 million.

## Introduction to the St Edmundsbury Growth Area

The borough of St Edmundsbury was provisionally designated as a Growth Area by the Department for Communities and Local Government in August 2007 with official confirmation being made upon publication of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy in May 2008. The designation is based on the uplift in planned housing numbers from the Suffolk County Structure Plan allocations that existed in 2003 and the planned housing growth in 2008.

St Edmundsbury Borough Council has embraced this designation and has subsequently put in place the necessary arrangements to deliver the planned growth contained within the East of England Plan.

### INSERT MANAGEMENT DIAGRAM

**Partners:** A Partnership Board has been established comprising Councillors representing both St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Suffolk County Council, as well as the East of England Development Agency and the Suffolk Development Agency. The Board is supported by an inter-agency Officer Group.

**Location:** St Edmundsbury is located at the heart of western Suffolk, at the centre of the triangle created by Norwich, Ipswich and Cambridge. The borough runs north from Haverhill, on the Essex and Cambridgeshire borders, to the Norfolk border with much unspoiled natural beauty and a keen sense of its rural heritage.

Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill are the two main towns within which 57 percent of the population live.

### **Bury St Edmunds:**

This historic market town is a centre for tourism, with its medieval street plan, cathedral, abbey ruins, and fine timber-framed and Georgian buildings. It has a large rural hinterland and thus a wider range of shops and services than might be expected in a town of its size. The town has good communication links with the only railway station in the borough, linking it with Ipswich to the east and Cambridge and Peterborough. Both London and the Midlands can be reached in less than 90 minutes via the A14. Approximately 360,000 people live within 20 miles of the town, which has experienced a period of rapid growth in the past 60 years, almost doubling in size since 1931.

The Local Plan makes provision for 2,275 new homes in the town between 2004 and 2016 as well as provision for new jobs, shops and community facilities. The council has made considerable investment in the town to enable development, including the recently constructed multi-screen cinema and the current redevelopment of the former Cattle Market to provide a town centre mixed use development of shops, homes and entertainment



venue. In addition, West Suffolk College is part of the new University Campus Suffolk and has proposals for significant expansion on its present site.

### **Housing Delivery – table of completions 1996 - 2001 – 2008**

West Suffolk Hospital, in Bury St Edmunds, serves a wide catchment area and next to it is St. Nicholas' Hospice. Combined, these facilities have grown in response to the changing requirements of the health service and the local community. A long term masterplan is being prepared by the health authority to inform future expansion opportunities at the hospital and it is anticipated that this will be consulted upon shortly. Once in place, this masterplan will inform the determination of future applications for development.

Bury St Edmunds is a sub-regional centre for leisure and culture activities and has a good range of facilities including a leisure centre, a regional athletics track as well as other sports pitches and informal parks and gardens. The borough has a museum service, and the council runs two major halls and a yearly Arts Festival. The historic Theatre Royal has recently undergone a major refurbishment and the council has enabled the opening of a multi-screen cinema that has proved highly successful in providing a more diverse leisure offer for the community.

#### Bury St Edmunds Transport Strategy

In 2006 the borough and county council's jointly commissioned the preparation of a Transport Strategy for Bury St Edmunds. The main focus of the strategy was to identify the nature and scale of transport interventions required to support the role and function of Bury St Edmunds as a sub-regional area and a service centre for western Suffolk.

Key issues considered within the associated study were:

- new development proposals, including the cattle market and future growth, and impact on surrounding established communities; and
- constraints of the A14 junctions, including congestion and limited opportunities to cross the A14 and the railway.

Suggested improvements included within the action plan include:

- improved bus and rail interchange facilities, linked to the proposed Station Hill redevelopment;
- potential shuttle bus around the town centre linking car parks with the retail and historic centre;
- real time passenger information;
- better parking management to discourage commuter parking;
- redesign of A14 junctions to improve capacity;
- green travel planning, including a site plan for the proposed public service village development;
- school travel plans;

- completion of the town's cycle networks linking residential areas to schools, employment sites and the town centre;
- re-routing bus services within the town to provide better coverage; and
- bus priority measures

#### Bury St Edmunds Highways Agency Agreement:

The council continues to undertake the highway function in Bury St Edmunds as agents on behalf of the county council. This partnership arrangement has been successful in delivering a responsive highways service at a local level and has recently been extended to 2009. The work undertaken by the borough council includes the delivery of maintenance and capital programme projects, highway safety schemes, environmental enhancement projects and local transport plan schemes.

#### Bury St Edmunds Cattle Market

The council, in partnership with developers, is enabling the 24,620 sq m (265,000 sq ft) redevelopment of the town centre cattle market site. The scheme will effectively extend the town's original medieval grid street pattern that was set out by Abbot Baldwin in the 11th century and it will include a Dagenham's department store, approximately 35 shops, 62 residential units, a new public building and over 850 car parking spaces.

Planning consent was granted in February 2005. Construction started in November 2006 and the development is scheduled to open in February 2009. The project has attracted part funding from the East of England Development Agency.

#### Bury St Edmunds Public Service Village

St Edmundsbury and Suffolk County Council are developing a combined service delivery approach for the people of Western Suffolk. This partnership follows a commitment to co-locate and deliver services from a new joint service building - West Suffolk House, in Bury St Edmunds. The councils have worked together at all levels from the Leaders and Chief Executives to front line staff to address the huge range of issues involved in moving to joint service delivery and co-location.

The joint commissioning and procurement of a new shared building by the councils is symbolic of the commitment to improve service delivery and the ability to deliver major infrastructure projects from concept to reality.

#### **Haverhill:**

The town was part of the Greater London Council's expansion scheme, and experienced a period of very rapid growth, more than quadrupling in size from 4,000 in 1951 to nearly 20,000 in 1991. On the A1307, it is less than 20 miles from Cambridge, 16 miles from the M11 to London, near Stansted Airport and

is part of the 'M11 Corridor'. A centre experiencing growth in manufacturing and other industries, the town has some interesting architecture and its community has a strong sense of identity.

The Local Plan makes provision for nearly 1,600 new homes in the town by 2016 as well as continued growth in employment provision and associated facilities. There is a major commitment by the council for investment and regeneration in the town centre, where a town centre vision masterplan has been prepared and a new multi-screen cinema opens imminently.

Because of the rapid expansion of the town in the 1960's and early 1970's, there are few opportunities for the development of previously developed land. Therefore, the majority of new housing development is planned on greenfield sites. New housing completions were very high in the late 1990's but these have slowed down recently as the provision of jobs and other vital infrastructure takes place.

### **Housing Delivery – table of completions 1996 - 2001 – 2008**

The council has been in some dialogue with the Cambridgeshire local authorities concerning improved transport connections between Haverhill and Cambridge and although improved bus services are in place, much remains to be done to improve sustainable travel options between the two centres and, indeed, to nearby Stansted Airport. The Council continues to seek improvements for trips to the airport by public transport from both Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds.

Haverhill has a range of facilities including the leisure and arts centres and parks. The leisure and cultural provision in Haverhill is currently being looked at as part of the Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan, and the opening of a multiscreen cinema complex in 2008 will significantly add to the offer.

Given its proximity to Cambridge, Haverhill is also well served by the Addenbrookes Hospital.

#### Haverhill transport issues

The local transport plan for Suffolk notes that there is significant out commuting from Haverhill to employment opportunities in Cambridge and that the county council has been working with Cambridgeshire County Council to improve public transport services linking the town with Cambridge. The plan makes provision for increasing the frequency of bus services between the two centres.

#### Haverhill Town Centre masterplan

In 2004 the council launched a major initiative to regenerate Haverhill town centre. The masterplan vision document identifies a number of opportunities

for new retail, business, leisure and residential development in the town centre. These long term opportunities will enable the town centre to provide an appropriate level of services and facilities as part of the overall expansion of the town. Planning consent has recently been granted for a supermarket in an edge-of-centre location and a new multiplex cinema with associated restaurants is currently under construction. The council has invested in environmental enhancements to town centre streets and is currently developing a comprehensive improvement programme for part of the town centre that may include a bid for a Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

### Regeneration

The council has a key corporate priority to regenerate Haverhill Town Centre and has committed a significant capital sum to deliver that priority. The regeneration programme is based upon projects set out in the Haverhill Master Plan Vision document approved in 2005. The masterplan vision identifies key projects and is supported by a rolling work programme of projects to deliver the vision.

The Governance of this 10 year regeneration programme is being managed through the Haverhill Area Working Party, a cross party working group which also includes representatives of the Town and County Councils.

Key projects being delivered at the moment include the £9m investment in a new 5 screen cinema and restaurant complex adjacent to Haverhill Leisure centre. This project is being undertaken in partnership with developers CityGrove and cinema operator Cine-world and will bring much needed leisure and entertainment facilities to Haverhill.

Town centre enhancements are being delivered with the most recent at Jubilee Walk where £400,000 of borough council investment in the public realm will be supplemented with a £200,000 investment from Suffolk County Council to undertake improvements to Haverhill bus station.

**Rural area:**

Approximately 43 percent of the borough's population live in the 77 parishes in our rural areas. Many villages are traditionally attractive, with thatched and timber framed cottages; Clare and Cavendish are perhaps the two best known. Some of the villages are tiny; the three smallest have populations of just 30. Only three rural parishes have a population of more than 2000.

A rural services action plan has been prepared by the council which identifies a series of initiatives which will contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the social, economic and environmental well-being of the rural area.

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## Key Statistics

### Population profile:

- Mid-2007 population estimate –
- Growth since 2001 - ???%
- Age profile

	2001	2031
0-19	24%	
20-39	28%	
40-64	32%	
65 and over	16%	

SOURCE: Office for National Statistics

The population has increased by 12% since the 1991 census and 98 percent of the borough population is white compared with the UK average of 91 percent. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year population estimate for the borough in 2007 is 102,900. The long term population projections published by ONS project the population of the borough to grow by xx% to 126,700 by 2031. It is anticipated that by this time a third of the borough's population will be aged 65 or over.

### Homes:

#### Housing Delivery:

- County Structure Plan requirement 1996-2016 – 440 per annum
- Housing Deliver 1996 – 2008 - ??? per annum
- Regional Spatial Strategy requirement 2002-2021 – 500 per annum
- Housing Delivery 2001-2008 - ??? per annum
- Housing commitments at 1 April 2008 = ????

The distribution of house building across the borough since 1996 is illustrated in the graph below.

## GRAPH

Delivery against the higher targets set in the recently published East of England Plan (the RSS) has not been so significant, primarily due to the fact that the council has been planning for the lower targets of the Structure Plan.

#### The Housing Market:

Average House prices:  
Bury St Edmunds  
Haverhill

St Edmundsbury  
Suffolk  
Region

SOURCE: Land Registry - **???? 2008**

Housing Need:

- Number on waiting list – August 2008 - **????**
- Change since August 2007 - **??%**

Affordable Housing:

The Housing Requirements Study, carried out in 2005, identified a need for between 40% and 50% of all new housing to be affordable over the next five years. Approximately 19% of all housing needs to be affordable rented housing and the rest in intermediate tenures, such as equity shared and shared ownership, to meet the needs of existing and new populations within the housing market.

The most recent Housing Needs Assessment was commissioned by the Council in 2005 and identified a significant level of need. It provides robust evidence for the policy in the adopted Local Plan which seeks that 40% of new housing on sites that meet a certain criteria should be “affordable”. There is a need to review this study as part of the preparation of the new Local Development Framework and the Council has worked with other local authorities in the Cambridge Sub-Region to produce a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The Assessment concluded that ..... **???????**

The council is part of the Cambridgeshire Housing Sub-Region. Our track record in securing grant funding for affordable housing delivery is excellent and we received £13.9 million grant assistance from the Housing Corporation in the two bid rounds years 2004/06 and 2006/08. This grant funding, managed in association in partnership with Registered Social Landlords has enabled the delivery of nearly 500 new homes within St Edmundsbury.

**What do we know about recent settlements and the current programme??**

**Economy and employment:**

- Borough economic activity rate - 80.4%
- County economic activity rate - **???**%
- Regional economic activity rate - **???**%
  
- Unemployment rate - **???**%.
- Change 2007 – 2008 - **???**%
  
- Sectors of employment

Sector	Bury St Edmunds	Haverhill


- Average earnings (borough) - £??? per week
  - Borough - £??? per week
  - County - £??? per week
  - Region - £??? per week
- Change ??????????????????

Although 70% of employed residents work in the borough, the strong connection with the Cambridge Sub-Region is highlighted by the fact that nearly 10% work in Cambridgeshire. **Include information from Haverhill wards working in Cambridgeshire**

Employment Land:

The council continues to monitor the availability of land for new employment development. The most recent analysis was undertaken as part of the preparation of the annual monitoring report for 2006/7 and indicates that a total of 96.5 hectares of land was available across the borough. **Can this be updated?** However, of this total only 35 hectares was available in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill. This is creating particular problems for the expansion of the economy in Bury St Edmunds where, although a further 68 hectares is allocated for development as a strategic release, the land cannot be released for development until a relief road is constructed by developers between the site and the A14.

The draft RSS makes provision for some 18,000 jobs across St Edmundsbury, Mid Suffolk and Forest Heath in the period 2001-2021. Although work is ongoing between the three planning authorities and other partners to undertake a joint Employment Land Review and to determine the distribution of these jobs across these districts, it is anticipated that St Edmundsbury, and primarily Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, will plan for the largest proportion.

**Health:** The borough's residents are among the healthiest in the country and only 7% of the population are classed as having general health that is 'not good' compared to an England and Wales average of 9.2%. Recent mid year population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics indicates that the number of people aged over 65 in the borough now exceeds those under 16 years old. **CHECK** This aging population is likely to have implications for health and social care providers and the services they provide. It is equally important that continued provision is made for health services for the younger population, particularly for those with specific health requirements.

**Natural Environment:** Within the borough there are a number of internationally, nationally and locally important nature conservation sites. Special Landscape Areas cover the Lark Valley and the Brecks, the area south of Bury St Edmunds, including Ickworth Park, and the historic parklands



at Ampton, Culford, Euston and Hengrave. The borough also has a range of assets in terms of the built environment and these will continue to be preserved and enhanced. However, it is recognised that there are shortfalls in open space provision around some areas of population. A recreational open spaces assessment was prepared for the council in 2005 and we now need to commission a green infrastructure study to follow up this work in the context of the regional plan growth targets.

### **Breckland Special Protection Area and other designations**

#### **How much of the borough is covered by SPA, SSSI, NNR, SLA???**

Air quality is generally of a high standard in the borough and meets the Government's objective for local air quality.

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## The Borough Council

St Edmundsbury Borough Council's corporate vision is to *"improve the quality of life for everyone in the borough in an efficient and cost-effective way"*. We know that it is not a vision we can turn into reality on our own and so we have established a reputation, at local, county, regional and national levels as a council that not only is keen but also extremely capable of excellent partnership working. Under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment in **xxxx** the Audit Commission rated St Edmundsbury as excellent in recognition of the delivery of services.

Although a small, rural district council, we have a tremendously ambitious capital programme, delivering investments for our community such as a new cinema in Haverhill a shopping and leisure development in Bury St Edmunds and innovative offices which will be shared by ourselves and the county council to offer customers better, more joined-up services. All of these projects involve partnership working – the first two with private sector developers and the third with the county council.

We are also committed to delivering our community's priorities, with affordable housing always being among these. We work closely with a wide range of private and registered social landlords plus housing developers to ensure affordable housing is provided in a variety of ways. This includes, for example, our planners working to maintain the 40% target for affordable housing and our strategic housing team developing new ways of bringing the necessary housing within reach through schemes such as guaranteed deposits, or guaranteed rents for private landlords.

A number of up-to-date strategies are already in place that guide and inform the spatial planning process in the borough. These include:

Document	Lead	Published
Community Strategy	Western Suffolk LSP	2006
St Edmundsbury Vision 2025	St Edmundsbury Borough Council	2005
St Edmundsbury Corporate Plan	St Edmundsbury Borough Council	2007
Suffolk Local Transport Plan	Suffolk County Council	2006
Bury St Edmunds Transport Strategy	St Edmundsbury BC / Suffolk CC	2006
Haverhill Town Centre Masterplan	St Edmundsbury Borough Council	2005
Economic Development Strategy	St Edmundsbury Borough Council	2005

## Local Government Reorganisation

In **xxxxxxx** the Boundary Commission announced its preferred option for the future organisation of unitary local government in Suffolk. Two potential options have been proposed which, at the time of preparing this Refreshed Programme of Development, are undergoing consultation. In September, Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury and Waveney councils published joint proposals for three unitary councils based on West, East and North-Haven unitary councils for Suffolk. A final announcement is expected to be made in **xxxxx 2009** and it will be essential that the necessary arrangements are put

into place to ensure that the delivery of the growth area programme continues to be a priority for the new local government structure.

## **The Community Strategy**

The council is an active member of a larger local strategic partnership for western Suffolk that also covers the whole of the neighbouring Forest Heath district and part of the Babergh district. The Community Strategy "Making Life Better" was published in 2006 and the ten year plan proposes four main areas of work, namely:

- making sure our children and young people reach their full potential;
- making sure our communities are safe, strong and have a good environment;
- making sure our communities are healthy; and
- making sure we have a prosperous economy without damaging our environment.

The LSP, through implementing the community strategy, is seeking to:

- encourage achievement in children and young people;
- make Western Suffolk a safer place and build a stronger community;
- protect our natural and built environment and local biodiversity, and ensure sustainable development;
- reduce avoidable early deaths by providing education and support on health and wellbeing;
- alleviate poverty and reduce health inequalities;
- enable a prosperous, sustainable economy;
- encourage sustainable tourism, and
- improve skills and learning opportunities.

## **St Edmundsbury 2025**

During 2005 the council prepared, in consultation, a long term visionary strategy for the borough. St Edmundsbury 2025 sets out the council's vision for the borough for the next 20 years. The aim, with a close regard for available resources, is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the borough by finding a common vision and bringing together key organisations and people to make it happen. The vision has been developed with key partners and the wider community. It is an overarching document that will assist the council and its partners in developing and implementing more detailed strategies across a range of service areas.

The vision statements in the document are formed around six key themes which, during the consultation process, were identified as containing the most important issues for consideration over the 20 years period. The vision document also contains action plans that set out in broad terms what initiatives will be undertaken to achieve the vision.

The vision and action plans are not intended to contain every last detail of what the borough will look and feel like in 2025 – this is the task for more

detailed documents such as the Local Development Framework, Local Transport Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

The visionary document sets 11 targets for sustainable development in the borough, as follows:

In 2025 St Edmundsbury will be a place:

- where communities work together to reduce waste and litter, conserve resources and to make their settlements sustainable and attractive;
- which is an international leader in resource efficiency;
- which is supporting innovative research into alternative technologies;
- which values, protects and enhances the distinct landscapes and biodiversity within the borough;
- which has successfully retained and enhanced its built and natural heritage and environment;
- where people have access to and use a sustainable integrated transport system;
- where best environmental practice is commonplace in all organisations;
- where communities and businesses have benefited from adopting a low carbon approach to energy;
- which has adapted and mitigated the effects of climate change;
- which has successfully developed home-grown businesses supplying local produce and products;
- where the principles of sustainable design, location and construction are commonplace in all new developments.

The vision for housing is that the borough will be a place:

- which has an affordable range of housing to meet the needs and demographic profile of the community;
- where redundant town centre properties can be developed quickly and appropriately for residential use;
- where all new homes are built to a high standard of design with sustainability features incorporated as a matter of course;
- where innovative design solutions to new housing are encouraged;
- where first time buyers are able to buy homes in their own communities.

## **St Edmundsbury Corporate Plan**

The council has a 10 year corporate plan which is reviewed annually. The 2007 plan sets out the following priorities:

- Raising standards and corporate efficiency
- Improving the safety and well being of the community
- Securing a sustainable and attractive environment
- Creating a prosperous local economy

In this context, the Cabinet has identified a series of cross-cutting commitments to achieve these priorities. For 2007/8 these are:

1. improving efficiency and value for money
2. managing the future development of the borough
3. future development of Haverhill
4. Bury St Edmunds town centre
5. rural services
6. keeping our borough clean and green
7. reducing crime and disorder
8. developing staff and members
9. a strong voice for western Suffolk

### **The Local Transport Plan for Suffolk**

Suffolk County Council published the Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the area in 2006 covering the period to 2011. The Plan notes:

- there are major commuting trips into and out of Bury St Edmunds;
- the county has relatively high levels of car ownership, especially in the rural areas;
- many of the county's historic market towns suffer from high volumes of through traffic, including heavy goods vehicles; and
- the Haven Gateway ports of Felixstowe and Harwich are likely to be an important entry point for both people and equipment

The draft transport strategy for Suffolk, as contained in the 2006 LTP includes the following objectives relevant to St Edmundsbury:

- to facilitate sustainable growth in the Haven Gateway and Cambridge sub-regions, in particular Ipswich as a Regional Interchange Centre, and also in the sub-regional centre of Bury St Edmunds; and
- to help maintain viable communities in market towns and villages throughout Suffolk and serve the needs of this largely rural county

The LTP also states that the county council is working with the borough council and the Highways Agency *"to develop a longer term transport strategy for Bury St Edmunds, to improve accessibility to and within the town, to ensure that its continued role as a sub-regional centre is not compromised by traffic congestion on the A14, and to accommodate future growth whilst maintaining the high quality of its historic built environment."*

The LTP's objectives relevant to the borough are:

- Relieve congestion in and around Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds town centres;
- Improve public transport, walking and cycling, particularly in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds;
- Develop sustainable modes of travel between West Suffolk and employment opportunities in Cambridge;
- Maintain and improve Suffolk's transport network to support safe travel and access in the Haven Gateway and Cambridge sub-regions;
- Encourage investment in rail infrastructure to increase the proportion of freight transported by rail;

- Better manage and target investment on the A14 and improve safety by reducing conflicts between passenger transport (including cycling) and freight;
- Minimise the impact of traffic and transport infrastructure (including air quality) in market towns, villages and tourism 'honeypots' to protect the County's environment and built heritage; and
- Maintain and improve Suffolk's transport network to support businesses and communities.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

The council's most recent economic development strategy was published in 2005 and provides a 20 year vision for St Edmundsbury's economy. The strategy, which is integrated into the council's overall 2025 vision, contains the following objectives:

- encourage the development of new enterprise and help existing firms to grow;
- attract inward investment and businesses;
- provide the infrastructure for economic development;
- ensure an adequate supply of commercial sites and premises;
- promote the economic vitality, prosperity and accessibility of the town centres;
- support rural and community enterprise;
- work with partners to develop tourism in western Suffolk;
- ensure that existing and new developments have adequate community facilities;
- enhance the environment and encourage sustainable development;
- protect, maintain and market the borough's heritage;
- support the creation of a new Suffolk university and ensure that its benefits reach western Suffolk;
- encourage more home working and the infrastructure to support it;
- improve public transport; and
- engage with economic development agencies and partners at all levels.

## St Edmundsbury Project and Programme Delivery

The council has an excellent track record of major project and programme delivery, including in partnerships with other authorities, agencies, joint ventures and the private sector. A distinctive part of the approach has been the governance arrangements that are put in place that have ensured the appropriate balance of political and programme management.

The council has in-house programme board and project management approaches which have been successfully deployed to manage the council's capital programme and project delivery. Council staff have been trained in programme and project management and external assessment for projects using gateway reviews by organisations such as 4Ps has been a part of our approach.

Over the last five years a number of key note programmes have been successfully delivered for the people of St Edmundsbury. For example:

### Waste Management

As one of the highest performing councils in England with a recycling and composting rate of 50% the council has achieved national and regional recognition for its waste services. Awarded Beacon Status in 2000/01 and again with the Suffolk Waste Partnership in 2006/07, the council has been at the forefront of changing the way waste is collected and treated. Working with partners the council has successfully introduced a 3 wheeled bin collection service for recyclable, compostable and residual waste operating on a fortnightly collection regime. Customer satisfaction is high and other Local Authorities from across the UK have visited to share information and learn from the council's experiences before introducing the scheme within their own authorities.

With our neighbouring authority Forest Heath District Council, the Borough has bid for and received funding that has enabled the council to attain this high recycling rate. £4,175,000 received by the two council's has funded the completion of the compostable kitchen and garden waste collection, (the brown bin scheme) and the upgrade to a composting plant. The full implementation of the dry recyclable collection service (the blue bin scheme) was delivered across the Borough in 2004/05 and the construction of a waste transfer station was also completed in just 7 months. All the projects were delivered on time and within budget. In 2005 the council, as part of successful joint bid of £6,500,000 with our partners across the County, received funding of £1,742,000 to build a composting facility in the centre of the Borough along with support towards revenue costs. Furthermore, funding equating to £778,000 has also been received across the County for waste awareness schemes. St Edmundsbury led on the "Perfect Bin Scheme" and the projects have been quoted by Defra and the Waste Resource Action Programme as examples of Best Practice.

Again these programmes were delivered on time and within budget.

The Corporate Director of Environment has led, and with the waste management team, delivered this innovative programme.

#### Consultation

When it comes to delivering projects, the council has considerable experience in community engagement. Facilitated workshops were held in local communities as part of the preparation of the Local Plan and the council worked in partnership with CAFE and Inspire East to hold a government funded pilot "design clinic" as part of the process of considering options for the redevelopment of Station Hill in Bury St Edmunds.

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## Planning Policy Framework

The borough is covered by an up-to-date planning policy contained in the Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan which was adopted in June 2006 and plans for development to 2016. The Plan was prepared in accordance with the content of the Suffolk Structure Plan, which provides a framework for growth to 2016.

The strategic aims of the Local Plan are:

### Strategic Aim A

To meet the requirements for housing in such a way that is sustainable and will best serve the whole community

### Strategic Aim B

To secure economic vitality and wealth creation in all communities without causing unacceptable harm to the environment.

### Strategic Aim C

To sustain and enhance rural communities while maintaining and where possible improving the rural environment.

### Strategic Aim D

To maintain and develop leisure, cultural, educational and community facilities to meet the needs of residents and visitors

### Strategic Aim E

To provide opportunities for people to shop for all their needs by sustainable means in towns, local and district centres, which are thriving and viable locations

### Strategic Aim F

To enable people and goods to move around efficiently and safely to the benefit of the economy and community, with minimum harm to the environment and by seeking to reduce car dependency and encouraging more sustainable forms of transport where appropriate and providing greater accessibility to services for all.

### Strategic Aim G

To maintain and improve the quality of the built environment.

### Strategic Aim H

To achieve a balanced natural environment where the use of resources and energy is minimised, materials and waste recycled and development undertaken with minimum adverse impact, giving close regard to the principles of sustainability.

### Strategic Aim I

To ensure that existing and new development is adequately served by community facilities and public services which are accessible by sustainable forms of transport.

The Local Plan makes provision for most new housing to be developed in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, although around 18% is expected to be built in the villages and designated rural service centres. Bury St Edmunds has particularly good opportunities for delivering new housing on previously developed land and only 50 of the allocated homes are to be developed on greenfield sites. However, the picture is reversed in Haverhill where opportunities are constrained by the towns urban form and by the fact that it experienced significant growth in the 1960's.

As previously referred to, since 1996 there has been a generally consistent programme of house building across the borough that has generally been above the County Structure Plan target. Indeed, the average completion rate for the ten year period is 495 homes compared with the County Structure Plan requirement of 440.

This growth rate is set to continue for the remainder of the Local Plan period, with a number of the sites allocated now coming forward for development. The table below illustrates the current availability of housing land against the Structure Plan requirement.

		Dwellings	Average dwellings per annum
a)	Housing requirement 1996 – 2016	8,800	440
b)	Net additions to stock 1996 – 2008	????	
c)	Residual requirement for 2008 – 2016 (a-b) (residual annual average = $???? / 8$ years)	????	???
d)	Requirement for 5 years – 2008 – 2013 (residual average of $???$ dwellings x 5 years)	????	

At 1 April 2008 there were **xxxx** dwellings either with planning consent or on sites identified in the Local Plan. This would equate to almost 11 years worth of housing land supply.

In addition to the already committed sites, it is anticipated that a number of “windfall” sites will come forward in the lifetime of the Local Plan that have not previously been identified. There is a possibility that these sites could deliver around 800 additional homes by 2016 and the majority of these homes will be constructed on previously developed land.

### East of England Plan context

The East of England Plan was published in May 2008 and makes provision for 10,000 new homes in St Edmundsbury between 2001 and 2021 and suggests that provision should be made for a further 540 new homes a year in the period 2021 to 2031.

In addition, Bury St Edmunds is identified as a “Key Centre for Development and Change” and Haverhill is included within the Cambridge Sub-Region. The implications for the borough of the Plan, in terms of housing delivery, are explored later in this document.

During the early stages of the East of England Plan the council actively promoted additional growth in the borough. The first draft of the Plan, published for consultation in December 2004 proposed 8,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021. This would have meant a slowing down of house

building in St Edmundsbury when compared with the Suffolk Structure Plan figure and with the past trends for house building.

Overall the proposed rate of growth now included in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for St Edmundsbury is more than 20% greater than in the previous Structure Plan. It is these housing numbers that the borough council is now planning for in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and the current housing land availability situation across the borough is indicated in the table below.

		Dwellings	Average dwellings per annum
a)	Housing requirement 2001– 2021	10,000	500
b)	Net additions to stock 2001– 2008	????	
c)	Residual requirement for 2008 – 2021 (a-b) (residual annual average = 3,350 / 9 years)	????	???
d)	Requirement for 5 years – 2008 – 2013 (residual average of 372 dwellings x 5 years)	????	

Work is now commencing on a limited review of the RSS to extend the plans for housing provision to 2031. The borough council will seek to play an active part in assessing whether there is capacity to accommodate any additional growth in St Edmundsbury over and above that already planned. This assessment will be informed by robust evidence in the form of studies currently being undertaken to identify environmental and infrastructure capacity other capacity issues.

## RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER AREAS

### Cambridge Sub-Region

There has always been a close link between the borough and Cambridge and this was partially recognised by the inclusion of Haverhill, as one of a ring of market towns that form the Cambridge Sub-Region identified in the East of England RSS. The council has consistently sought to work with the Cambridgeshire local authorities to acknowledge the role that Haverhill can play in accommodating an element of sustainable growth in the sub-region. Transport links between the town and Cambridge remain of concern, however, and the council is working with other relevant local authorities to seek improvements and reduce accident risk along this route

### Haven Gateway

Being just 25 miles from Ipswich and the Haven Gateway growth point, there is the potential for there to be some impact on Bury St Edmunds from the growth ambitions of the area. In particular, the construction of new container facilities at both Felixstowe and Harwich is likely to have a significant impact on the amount of container-based traffic passing through the town either on the A14 or the railway. The council will seek to work with the Haven Gateway

Partnership to maximise benefits and reduce any impacts of this growth on the town and has been involved in the Felixstowe Port Related Facilities Study being undertaken during 2008. The findings are expected to be published before the end of the year.

### **Thetford Growth Point**

The designation of Thetford as a growth point will have some impact on the borough and, in particular, Bury St Edmunds. The borough boundary is just 2 miles from the centre of Thetford and Bury St Edmunds 12 miles to the south. The construction of an at least 6,000 new homes in the town will place an additional demand for jobs and services in Bury St Edmunds. The council is working with Breckland District Council to assess any likely impact on infrastructure in the borough, including sub-regional health and education facilities. In commenting on the Breckland LDF, the council has suggested that a way of collecting planning contributions towards the improvement of these facilities should be found, despite them not being within the Breckland area.

### **Sub-regional Studies Suffolk County Council to complete**

A partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy is commencing at the time of preparing this refreshed Programme of Development. Work has been undertaken to begin to define the geographical extent of revised sub-regions but St Edmundsbury may well be included with Cambridge in a joint study area. This would stretch as far as Huntingdon and Royston. At around 50 miles across, the studies, which would examine growth opportunities, will necessarily be at a high level and will not be able to address more local issues. However, if they are to make an impact on the Review work, these studies will need to be well advanced by mid 2008, and their interim findings should be available to inform the more detailed capacity studies that the council proposes to commission in Summer 2008. This will ensure no duplication of work and that the higher level studies inform the local level, more detailed assessments.

### **St Edmundsbury Local Development Framework**

The council is committed to putting in place a revised development strategy for the borough at an early date, although the responsibility for the completion of all the proposed Development Plan Documents is likely to fall to whatever new structure for local government in Suffolk that emerges from the Boundary Commission's restructuring of Suffolk local authorities.

The Annual Monitoring Report for the Local Development Framework will review progress on the various Development Plan Documents proposed in the Local Development Scheme, but it is anticipated that the timetable for the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD and the Development Control Policies DPD will need to be reviewed in view of the programme for Local Government Review in Suffolk.

- **Core Strategy**

In March 2008 the council consulted widely on Issues and Options for the Core Strategy and, having regard for the recently introduced regulations concerning the preparation of LDF's, the council intends to consult on options for the location of strategic sites in November 2008. The final Core Strategy, including the preferred locations for strategic sites, will be consulted upon in Spring 2009 prior to submission to the Secretary of State for Examination. This schedule accords with the approved Local Development Scheme. Adoption of the Core Strategy is anticipated in Spring 2010.

- **Site Allocations DPD**

At the same time as the council consulted on the Core Strategy Issues and Options Report, submissions were invited for potential development sites across the borough. Over 100 sites were submitted and these will be the subject of a parallel consultation exercise in November 2008.

- **Development Control Policies DPD**

The Local Development Scheme notes that work on the review of development control policies would commence with consultation on Issues and Options to be addressed by the PPD in November 2008. However, given that the policies in the Local Plan are relatively up-to-date, and the council's likely inability to complete this document before the proposals of the Boundary Commission come into force in 2010, it is likely that only a limited review will now be undertaken, to address those policies that are in immediate need of review.

### **The Emerging Core Strategy**

It is acknowledged that it will be necessary to provide housing sites to 2026 in accordance with the 15 year requirement in Planning Policy Statement 3. However, at an early stage, the council has determined that the Core Strategy will provide a longer term planning framework and provide strategic direction to 2031. This, together with the preparation of a number of background studies, will enable positive and informed input in the parallel review of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy and by informing its content from the local level.

A number of issues have already been identified from strategies and studies that will need to be addressed in the preparation of the Core Strategy, including:

- Declining opportunities for additional brownfield development in Bury St Edmunds and, especially, Haverhill;
- The need to protect and enhance the rich natural and historic assets of the borough;
- The danger of coalescence of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill with surrounding villages;
- The need to balance homes and jobs to reduce levels of out-commuting; and

- The need for major infrastructure investment to support growth in the two towns.

As noted above, consultation on Issues and Options to be addressed by the Core Strategy took place in March 2008. A report on the outcome of the consultation has been published and the Council is at an advanced stage in determining the strategy for the distribution of future growth across the borough. The strategy is likely to propose a continuation of the current framework in the recently adopted Local Plan, with most new development taking place in Bury St Edmunds, but at a lesser rate than currently planned due to infrastructure constraints, a higher level of growth in Haverhill and a small increase in the rate of growth in sustainable villages the rural areas,

Consultation on options for strategic sites in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill will take place in November 2008. A number of potential sites are being promoted by developers and landowners, but the council is seeking to ensure that such sites bring positive benefits to the respective towns and proposals are sustainable.

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## Vision and Rationale for Growth

As noted above, the council has sought to maintain a level of housing growth in St Edmundsbury that will ensure the local economy grows in a sustainable manner. With this in mind, the two main settlements of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill will be the focus for long term growth in the Growth Area.

**Bury St Edmunds** is identified in the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the East of England Plan as a "Key Centre for Development and Change" *but the policy for the town, Policy BSE1, states that the "scope for additional growth beyond 2016 should be considered through the review of this Plan in the context of infrastructure issues."* It is clear from this draft policy that further work is required to assess future infrastructure capacity and identify projects that will overcome restrictions to delivering sustainable growth in the town. For example, early consultation with government bodies has identified that two junctions on the A14 are at capacity at the morning peak and that increasing capacity at these junctions is unlikely to reduce the risk of traffic queuing on the A14.

The town has consistently accommodated growth for many years and failure to resolve the infrastructure issues identified in the RSS will have a significantly detrimental impact on the growth of the local economy. Its strategic location on the A14, midway between the Cambridge Growth Area and the Haven Gateway Growth Point make it ideally placed to grow in a sustainable manner while playing an important role in the settlement hierarchy of the region.

A key objective of any growth plans is to manage the impact on the natural and built environment as well as ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to accommodate such growth. The medieval core of the town is of exceptional value and it will be essential for works to be implemented that will enable the increase level of population to be accommodated without having a detrimental impact on this unique fabric. In addition, the countryside around the town plays an important role in separating the urban area from the surrounding villages in close proximity.

Vision: By 2021 the town will have continued to build on its role as an important employment, service and housing centre. At the same time it will have been able to exploit its strategic position on the corridor linking Cambridge and the Haven Gateway Growth Areas. It will have retained its sustainable attributes with only a relatively small proportion of its residents needing to commute to jobs in more distant locations. To allow for this, the growth of employment developments will have kept pace with housing and population expansion.

The majority of new housing development will have been on brownfield sites and it will also incorporate the principles of sustainable designs, location and construction.

All development will have respected the historic town centre that provides a high quality focus to the town. Where appropriate, that historic core will have

been enhanced by restoration of existing buildings, the development of new buildings and improvements to the public realm.

New growth of housing and population will have been matched by expansion of infrastructure and community facilities, notably the local base of University Campus Suffolk which will make a significant contribution to improving the skills base of the town and western Suffolk.

The emerging Core Strategy identifies that the proportion of growth allocated to Bury St Edmunds is likely to be less than the strategy in the adopted Local Plan. This reflects the infrastructure capacity issues identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy and the need to address these before opportunities for further growth can be realised. These infrastructure issues include the capacity of the junctions on the A14 which splits the town in two. Further studies are required to consider the opportunities that there might be overcome these constraints.

**Insert potential housing numbers that could be accommodated based on meeting RSS figures**

Other key issues to consider in assessing opportunities for growth in the town include:

- Potential impact on the historic town centre;
- The potential for accommodating additional shopping, leisure and community facilities;
- The need to avoid coalition of the town with surrounding villages;
- The needs to improve green infrastructure, including facilities in existing parks and open spaces;
- The ability to achieve higher levels of sustainable travel modes; and
- The ability of existing infrastructure, including schools, health facilities, open space and public transport to accommodate growth.

The Council is working with Forest Heath District Council and have commissioned consultants to prepare an Environment and Capacity Study that will assess the opportunities and barriers to accommodating further growth in the town in the period to 2031. In particular, the study will assess the environmental capacity to accommodate further development and the infrastructure requirements in order to make such growth sustainable. It is anticipated that this study, which has been funded by the 2008/9 Growth Area settlement, will be completed at the end of 2008.

### **Bury St Edmunds Area Action Plan**

As the Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the town as a Key Centre for Development and Change, it would be appropriate to take a more comprehensive approach to the future planning of the town than can be achieved in the LDF documents currently programmed to be prepared. The



council will be giving careful consideration as to whether an Area Action Plan for the town should be prepared, with work commencing on this development plan document in 2009.

**Development Sites:**

A number of sites allocated in the Local Plan remain available for development by 2016. These are detailed below with details of their current status:

Local Plan reference	Site	Capacity	Status	Estimated timescale for development
BSE1 (a)				

In addition to the allocated sites, a number of other large sites are now in the development pipeline that, combined, will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the RSS housing figures. These are accounted for in the Housing Trajectory later in this document.

**Site specific matters**

Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds

Land at Moreton Hall has been developed as a planned mixed use urban extension over a period of at least 30 years. Although no further land is allocated in the local plan for additional housing, capacity has been identified for additional housing on sites that have already been granted planning consent, primarily as a result of increased densities over and above that originally anticipated in the former local plan. The developers estimate that an additional 250 homes could be accommodated on the site and consulted on a revised masterplan for the area in Autumn 2007. The masterplan was subsequently adopted by the Borough Council as non-statutory planning guidance in **?????? 2008**

In addition to the housing area, the council has allocated a significant area of land for the long-term provision of employment land for the town. This strategic site lies adjacent to the A14 and, at current development rates, would provide land well beyond the East of England Plan period.

However, the further development of this area is constrained by the capacity of the highway network. Junction 44 of the A14 (Moreton Hall) is at capacity in the morning peak and a provision is made in the County Structure Plan and the local plan for the construction of a relief road from Moreton Hall to the new junction at Rougham, Rookery Crossroads (junction 45). As with the

Haverhill relief road, the structure plan states that this road will be developer funded and it is not provided for in the Local Transport Plan. Without this road, the opportunity for further employment development that will ensure the balanced provision of homes and jobs in the town, and the realisation of the vision for growth, is severely constrained.

The Borough Council prepared and consulted on a Concept Statement for the development of the area in ?????????? and it has subsequently been adopted as non-statutory planning guidance. Developers have now secured options for the development of the site and have appointed consultants to prepare a masterplan for the area. Their timetable indicates consultation taking place in the draft masterplan towards the end of 2008 and the adoption of the masterplan in Spring 2009.

### Station Hill / Tayfen Road, Bury St Edmunds

The Replacement Local Plan allocates over 10 hectares of land on the edge of Bury St Edmunds town centre for a mixed use redevelopment including housing. Although adjoining sites, they are allocated in separate policies and it is anticipated that they will be developed separately and possibly over a long period.

The development potential is constrained by a number of issues, but in particular the need to relocate strategic operational rail sidings and to replace a gasholder. Potential developers are in protracted negotiation with Network Rail and the users of the sidings and it although it was anticipated that a planning application for new sidings out of the town centre would be submitted early in 2008, the negotiations are yet to be completed and it is unlikely that the application will now be submitted before the end of the year. In terms of housing, the Local Plan makes provision for 140 homes on the site, but the council believes that this capacity could be increased significantly if the rail sidings can be relocated out of the town and a satisfactory design led solution is implemented.

The area adjacent to the Station has been allocated for development for a number of years and in March 2005 the council worked with CABE and Inspire East to hold a pilot "Design Clinics" involving local stakeholders to agree the design criteria for any future development on the site. The Local Plan allocation in the local plan requires a concept statement and masterplans to be prepared prior to the consideration of planning applications for the development of the sites. The council has prepared and, following consultation, adopted a Concept Statement for the wider area as planning guidance. A draft masterplan for the Tayfen Road allocation was consulted on by the prospective developers in ??? 2008 and revisions are currently being prepared prior to re-submission to the council. The developers of the Station Hill area have also employed consultants to prepare a masterplan and it is anticipated that consultation will be undertaken in parallel to the submission of the planning application for new sidings.

Delivery of this development, including the infrastructure improvements, will provide a high quality mixed development in close proximity of the town centre and public transport facilities.

### Transport Improvements

The Bury St Edmunds Transport strategy proposes a number of projects that are required to overcome existing accessibility issues in the town and manage congestion. Without these, opportunities to accommodate long term growth will be restricted and could be delayed. These projects have been tested in preparing the strategy and a costed programme of works has been published. However, granted funding from the Growth Areas Fund is not required at this time.

**Haverhill**, at the southern end of the borough, offers considerable scope to accommodate further growth. The secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the East of England Plan identifies (in Policy CSR1) that the town is one of a ring of market towns in the Cambridge Sub-Region that could accommodate growth *"where such development would contribute to the social and economic needs of the community and good public transport exists or can be provided."* The town is already accommodating high levels of growth and is clearly well placed to make a contribution to the accommodation of growth in the Sub-region, as well as the wider London, Stansted, Cambridge, Peterborough Growth Area. In addition, sites are available in the town centre for future retail and service development necessary for balanced growth.

Vision: By 2021 the town's employment base will have been strengthened and diversified so that there is a wider range of employment opportunities within the town and a greater proportion of its residents securing appropriate jobs there, contributing to a more sustainable settlement. For those who continue to commute, improved public transport will provide a more effective competitor to car travel, especially for journeys to Cambridge.

Housing growth will have continued in the plan period, in particular a major greenfield site to the north west of the town where homes will have been built to the highest standards of design and in accordance with the Government's "Code for Sustainable Homes." This will have been accompanied by adequate infrastructure and services including open spaces. Forward funding of some elements of this may have been necessary.

The town centre will have a wider range of shops and services, reflecting the growth that has taken place in the town and the fact that it grew from a base of having less provision than other towns of its size. As a consequence it will be able to cater for a broader range of the needs of all of its residents and will be the first choice destination for leisure and shopping trips of the towns' residents. It will have also benefited from public realm improvements which, in themselves, will have encouraged the upgrading of the "retail offer".

A limited study was carried out in the mid-1990's that examined the capacity of the surrounding landscape to accommodate growth without having a detrimental impact on neighbouring settlements. Work is now required to build upon this study to identify the environmental and infrastructure capacity of the town as well as the need for additional green infrastructure. Due to the close proximity of the town with Essex and Cambridgeshire, work will also be necessary with those authorities in respect of potential development sites and improvements to transport links with Cambridge and Stansted Airport. The council already works closely with Braintree District Council in the determination of planning applications in the Essex part of the town.

As noted above, the Council is working with Forest Heath District Council and have commissioned consultants to prepare an Environment and Capacity Study that will assess the opportunities and barriers to accommodating further growth in Haverhill in the period to 2031. In particular, the study will assess the environmental capacity to accommodate further development and the infrastructure requirements in order to make such growth sustainable. It is anticipated that this study, which has been funded by the 2008/9 Growth Area settlement, will be completed at the end of 2008.

### **Haverhill Area Action Plan**

Given the likely scale of development in the town over the long term, it would be appropriate to prepare an Area Action Plan as part of the Local Development Framework. Although not currently planned for in the Council's Local Development Scheme, this approach would enable a more rounded approach to the sustainable growth of the town to be achieved. The Area Action Plan will translate the outcomes of the various studies into a spatial plan for the managed long term growth of the town.

### **Immediate Projects:**

#### **North West Haverhill**

Land on the north-west edge of Haverhill has been allocated for development for a number of years. The replacement Local Plan reaffirmed this proposal, while adjusting the boundary of the development to take a more realistic account of the housing capacity of this part of the town.

The Local Plan allocation recognises that this is a strategic site that is likely to be developed beyond 2016. The total capacity of the site is estimated to be approximately 1100 homes, which will add to the 390 homes already nearing completion at the western end of the site.

However, additional housing on this site cannot be delivered until a relief road is completed between the A143 Wrating Road and the A1307 Withersfield Road. Provision is made in the County Structure Plan for the construction of this road, but with a requirement for it to be delivered by the site developers.

A Concept Statement has been prepared by the council and has been adopted as non-statutory planning guidance in **October 2007??**. The

landowners have commenced work on the preparation of the masterplan for the site and it is anticipated that this will be formally adopted in Spring 2009. At this time planning applications can be determined and construction of the road could commence later in 2009. The objectives of the concept statement ensure that any development on this site will provide homes and associated infrastructure that will be constructed to the highest standards of design and sustainability codes. The opportunity will also be used to provide green corridors and pedestrian and cycle route extensions from the town centres.

### **Hanchet End Business Park**

Land on the western edge of the town is allocated in the Replacement Local Plan for the development of a business park. Although there is not an immediate shortage of available land for new employment in the town, it is recognised that this site could make an important role in the larger Cambridge Sub-Region. It may also help to reduce the significant levels of out-commuting from Haverhill to Cambridge. In order to take the development forward through the planning process, the local plan requires that a concept statement and masterplan is prepared. Because of the importance of its setting and topography, the council will be seeking to bring in additional expertise to prepare the concept statement for the site.

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## Housing Delivery

As noted above, the Regional Spatial Strategy allocates 10,000 new homes to St Edmundsbury in the period 2001-2021, with an indication of a need to provide a further 540 homes a year in the 10 years beyond 2021. However, a number of these have already been built, have a current planning consent or are identified in sites allocated in the Local Plan. The situation, using a base date of 1 April 2008, is as follows:

### TABLE

#### Housing Requirements in St Edmundsbury at 1 April 2008

Based on East of England regional Spatial Strategy May 2008

a) Requirement 2001 – 2021		10000
b) Completed 2001 – 2008		3,020
c) Commitments 1 April		3980
Comprising:		
• Consents	1620	
• Local Plan allocations	1730	
• Rural Windfall	-	
• Urban Capacity to 2016	630	
Residual a – b – c		3530
Minimum requirement 2021-2031 – 540 per annum		5,400
<b>Total requirement 2008-2031</b>		<b>XXXX</b>

NB – Figures rounded to nearest 5

#### Other sites coming forward / increases in capacity

In addition to the housing figures set out in the table above other development is in the pipeline that could reduce the residual requirement to around **2,500** homes. These include the following development sites:

Site	Status	Number
Bury St Edmunds, Moreton Hall	Amended capacity in approved Masterplan	250
Shire Hall	Development Brief approved	???
Out Westgate	Windfall site with PP	??? net
Tayfen Road	Draft masterplan	100???
Station Hill	Concept Statement	250 above Local Plan

	approved	allocation
Haverhill		

However, many of these sites are dependent on the implementation of expensive infrastructure projects referred to in this development programme.

These known pipeline housing projects are accounted for in the housing trajectory graph below. It illustrates both past and projected future completion rates for housing across the borough. It compares these figures with the annualised emerging East of England Plan requirement (the blue line) and indicates a projected annual requirement for each year based on the delivery of the regional plan figure (the yellow line). The graph also indicates a projected annual completion rate based on the number of homes that the council expects to be built over the 20 year period. The trajectory does not take necessarily take account of planning consents on small sites (under 10 homes) that have yet to be completed. It is assumed that this figure is accounted for in the Urban Capacity Study and the allowance for small site windfall consents in the rural areas. No allowance is made for small site windfall housing in rural areas beyond 2016.

#### Estimated housing delivery on key sites

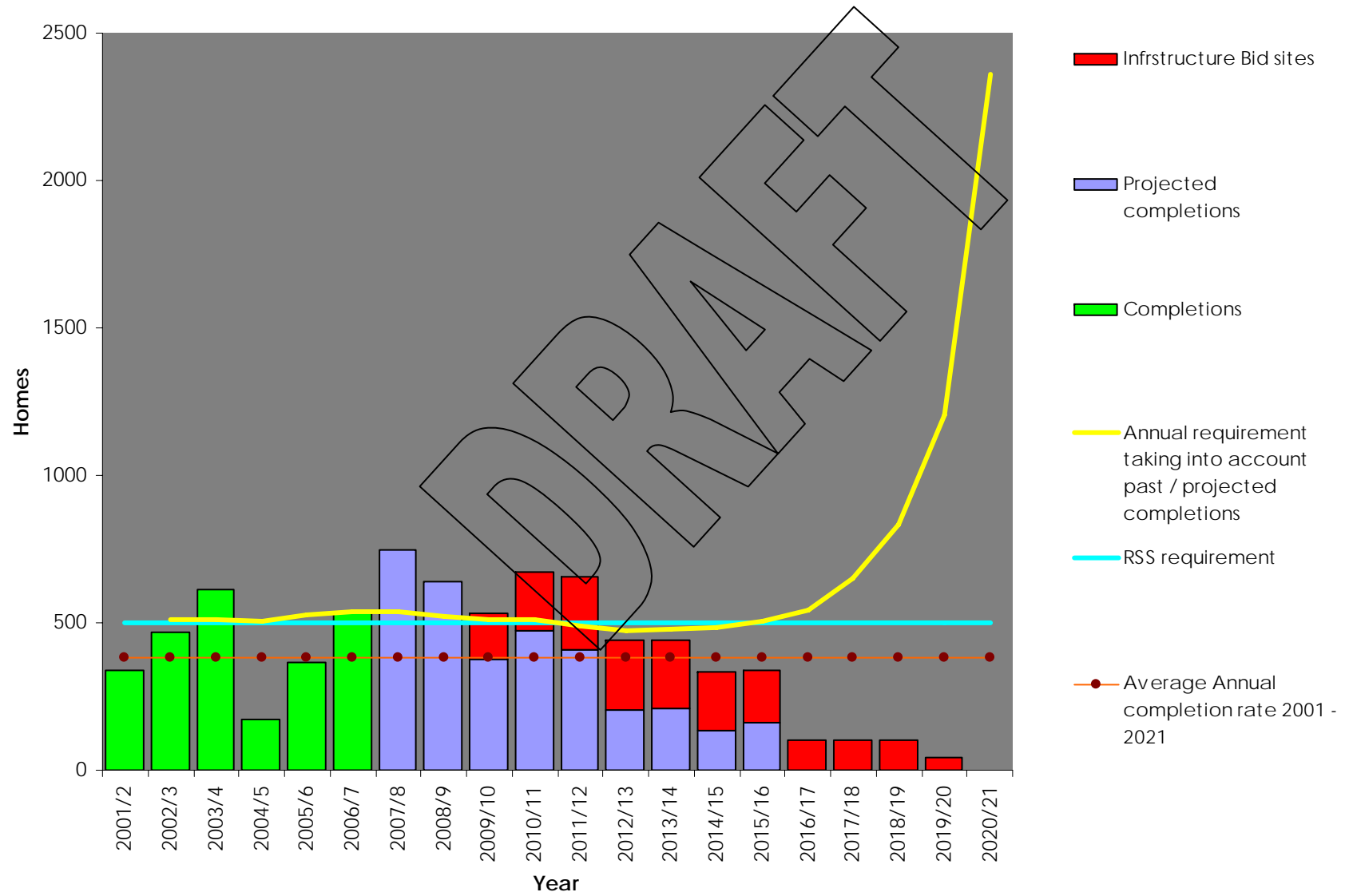
Table

Site	Capacity	Masterplan / Development Brief	Outline Approval	Commence on site	Completion
NW Haverhill	1150	Spring 2009	Summer 2009	Late 2009	2018
Moreton Hall	250	Spring 2008	?	?	?
Station Hill	400	Winter 2008/9	Autumn 2009	Spring 2010	2013
Tayfen Road	150???	Autumn 2008	Spring 2009	Late 2009	2012

	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	TOTAL	
Actual Completions	338	468	612	170	367	536	536															3027
Local Plan allocations								145	184	165	149	85	85	45	74							932
Large site commitments								398	174	56	30											1311
Infrastructure Bid sites									80	255	280	250	240	210	190	100	100	100	45			1850
Other urban capacity								72	72	72	54	54	54	54	54							558
Windfall on rural small sites								23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23							207
Other potential									60	200	220	130	110	80	60	100	100	100	45			250
Potential LDF sites												100	150	200	200	400	450	450	500	500		2900
Projected completions								638	533	671	656	542	552	532	541	500	550	500	545	500		10499



Figure xxxx: Housing Trajectory



## Long term housing growth

The borough council is working in partnership with Forest Heath District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council to prepare a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Work commenced in Summer 2008 with consultation with house builders on the proposed methodology and on identifying potential housing sites. It is expected that this study will be completed in **???????? 2008**.

In addition to the requirement identified in the table above, PPS3 (Housing) requires that local planning authorities have at least 15 years of housing land available at the time of adoption of their Local Development Framework. In St Edmundsbury, this would require identification of sites through to 2026 as a minimum. The East of England Plan RSS identifies targets for housing provision beyond 2021, based on the districts annual requirements for the period 2006-2021. In St Edmundsbury's case, that is 540 per annum and equates to a further 2,700 homes.

There is therefore a minimum requirement in the LDF to find sites for an additional **6,160** homes to 2026. Growth beyond this period will be informed by the preparation of the Core Strategy and associated infrastructure and environmental capacity studies. However, a continuation of the current RSS rate would provide for **5,000** homes between 2021 and 2031.

The council has given careful consideration to the content of this Programme of Development and, in particular, the potential of projects to deliver the additional housing identified in the draft East of England Plan. The projects described below are not in any current programmes, and without support, are unlikely to deliver housing in the foreseeable future unless other areas of the proposal are limited, such as the delivery of affordable housing or community facilities.

The projects are presented in three phases, those underway or planned for 2008; medium term projects for 2008- 2011 including candidate projects for funding from this bid; and longer term post 2011 projects – outline of key infrastructure necessary to support

## CONSTRAINTS TO GROWTH

- A Growth Capacity Study: to assess both the long term environmental and infrastructure capacity issues based on potential development scenarios;
- Water Cycle Study: to examine the potential impacts of long term growth on three main aspects of the water cycle;
- Green infrastructure Study: to prepare a strategy which would deliver a network of quality green spaces;

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: to provide a detailed and robust assessment of the extent and nature of the risk of flooding in the borough and its implications for land use planning.
- Strategic Housing land Availability Study: To inform the potential for additional long term housing growth in the borough that will inform the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

It is proposed that briefs for these studies will be prepared between now and 1 April 2008. Subject to adequate funds resulting from this bid being awarded, contracts for these studies will be let in the first half of 2008/9.

The issue of development and flood risk is particularly relevant in St Edmundsbury given that the borough's two towns and many villages are located in river valleys. While the average flow of the watercourses in the borough is low, previous experience has demonstrated that extreme weather conditions have the potential to cause damage through flooding.

The region relies on vulnerable underground water resources for its water supply. These precious resources are under pressure from development, due to increased water demand from housing and industry and the risk of pollution. The Council has commissioned, with adjoining councils, a water cycle study and strategic flood risk assessment to examine the potential impacts of long term growth on three main aspects of the water cycle, namely:

- **Water resources** - increased demand for water and the infrastructure to distribute it
- **Water quality** - increased generation of sewerage and other waste water, requiring collection and treatment systems. Increased risk to the quality of the water environment including its ecology
- **Flood risk** - increased waste water or run-off could increase risks of flooding

## PROJECT DELIVERY:

### Projects underway 2008:

- West Suffolk College / University Campus Suffolk access road: enabling the expansion of the education facility to improve education opportunities at a local level. This road was completed In September 2008 in time for the commencement of the new academic year.
- Bury St Edmunds Cattle Market development: providing additional retail and leisure facilities in the town centre. The project is in an advanced stage and the retail and residential element of the project will be completed in Spring 2009.
- Masterplan preparation for sites at Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill that will guide long term development sites, including
  - North-West Haverhill
  - Station Hill /Tayfen Road, Bury St Edmunds
  - West Suffolk Hospital expansion
  - Increased housing capacity at Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds
- STUDIES

### Proposed Medium Term Capital Infrastructure Projects 2008-2011

To be updated to note present position

### Proposed Medium Term revenue projects 2008/9 – 2010/11

A number of projects are proposed that will inform the potential for longer term growth potential in St Edmundsbury, including the delivery of the East of England Plan housing requirements. These primarily involve studies that will examine the capacity for growth to 2031 which, at the same time, will inform the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

### Long term projects – beyond 2011

#### Bury St Edmunds Secondary School

The county education department has identified a need in the medium term for an additional secondary school at Bury St Edmunds. This will cater for both enlarged school rolls resulting from the areas population growth and any consequential changes from the restructuring of the school system from three tiers to two. The identification of a site is likely to be undertaken in

conjunction with the preparation of the LDF. Funding to support the project from the Growth Areas Fund is not being sought at this time.

### **Future Infrastructure Funding Resource**

The completion of the studies required to inform the locations of future growth in the borough are expected to highlight the need for further infrastructure improvements. Where medium term infrastructure projects are funded on a "claw-back" basis, this returned funding will be used to support future projects, thereby reducing any future call on growth area or community infrastructure funding programmes.

### **Development delivery**

The recently adopted Local Plan takes a strategic approach to the delivery of major development sites. Many of the allocated sites require a masterplanning approach that seeks to engage the community at an early stage and also ensures that potential problems of delivery can also be identified early in the development process. Masterplans are generally informed by concept statements prepared by the council that provide more detail in the interpretation of the local plan policy for the site. To date the council has adopted five masterplans and concept statements have been prepared for a number of other important development sites.

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**Medium term capital projects – 2008/09 – 2010/11**

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Map Ref	Scheme name	Lead organisation and partners	Timeframe-start and complete	Project objectives	CLG Funding sought & reason			Revenue or Capital	Other Funding - by year and source			Total scheme cost £m
					08/09	09/10	10/11		08/09	09/10	10/11	
	Station Hill / Tayfen Road, Bury St Edmunds	Private developers with Network Rail, St Edmundsbury BC, Suffolk CC, National Grid and public transport operators	Q1 2008/09 - Q4 2011/12?	Relocation of rail sidings to release land for development; Removal of gasholder; Public transport interchange at station and bus corridor improvements	£2m	£8m	£2.5m	Capital	£0	£0	£0	£12.5m
					<p>CLG funding is sought to cover the extraordinary costs of bringing this edge of town centre site forward for development and to ensure that affordable housing targets are met. The injection of these funds will help bring forward upto 360 additional homes over and above those already identified in the adopted Local Plan.</p>							
	North-West Haverhill	Private developers with St Edmundsbury BC, Suffolk CC	Q1 2009/10 - Q4 2009/10	Construction of relief road	£0	£6m	£0	Capital	£0	£0	£470k	£6m - long term net cost = nil
					<p>CLG funding is sought to pump prime the construction of this relief road to enable housing to be constructed. This funding will be clawed back through planning obligations from developers of the housing. Once recouped, this funding will provide funds for facilitating other development and to contribute towards improvements to public transport infrastructure provision between Haverhill and Cambridge.</p>			<p>This figure represents the grant funding being recouped through a tariff section 106 approach based on an agreed sum per completed dwelling. The first housing is expected to be occupied in the year after the road has been constructed. This recovered funding will be used to deliver future housing related infrastructure projects.</p>				

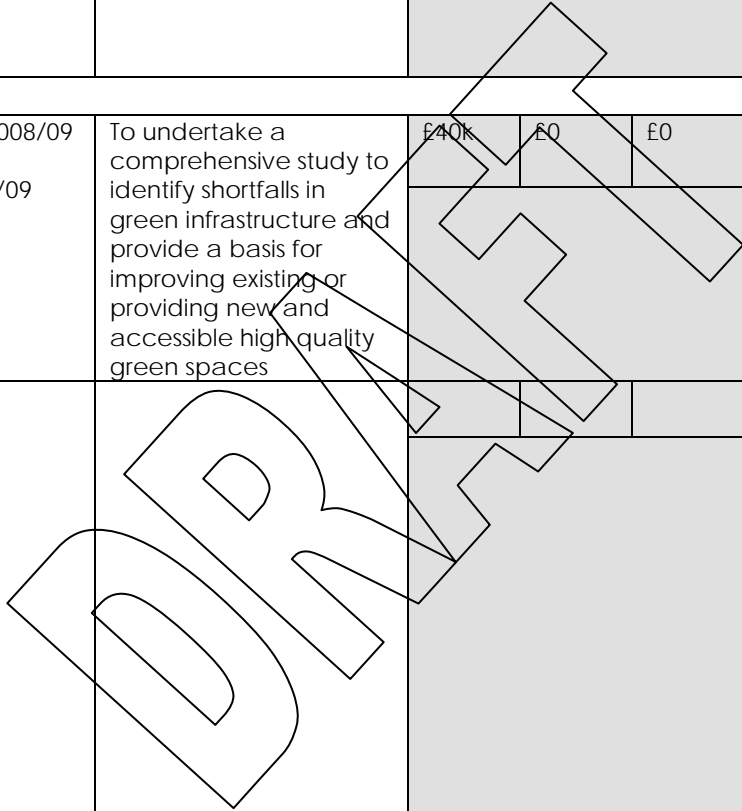


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	Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds	Private developers with St Edmundsbury BC, Suffolk CC and Highways Agency	Q2 2009/10 - Q1 2010/11	Construction of relief road and extension of slip roads at Junction ?? <b>A14</b>	£0	£5m	£10m	Capital	£0	£0	£100k ?	£15m - long term net cost = nil
					CLG funding is sought to pump prime the construction of this relief road to enable housing to be constructed. This funding will be clawed back through planning obligations from developers of the housing. Once recouped, this funding will provide funds for facilitating other development			This figure represents the grant funding being recouped through a tariff section 106 approach based on an agreed sum per completed dwelling or business unit. The first development is expected to be occupied in the year after the road has been constructed. This recovered funding will be used to deliver future housing related infrastructure projects.				
	Bury St Edmunds Sustainable Transport provision	Suffolk CC with St Edmundsbury BC		To encourage a modal shift from car to sustainable transport to deal with existing congestion, to allow growth planned in the RSS to take place without the need for significant additional highway schemes in the historic town, and to minimise carbon emissions. This would consist of a package of projects incorporating high quality bus corridors, bus priority measures, Park and Ride schemes, improvements to walk and cycle networks.	£0	£0	£0	Capital	£900k	£1.05 m	£600k	£2.52m
					Growth Area funding not required at this time			Community Infrastructure Fund bid and Local Transport Plan				

**Revenue funding projects 2008 - 2011**

	Green Infrastructure Study	St Edmundsbury BC	Q2 2008/09 - Q4 2008/09	To undertake a comprehensive study to identify shortfalls in green infrastructure and provide a basis for improving existing or providing new and accessible high quality green spaces	£40k	£0	£0	Revenue	£10k	£0	£0	£50k



	Growth Implementation support	St Edmundsbury BC	Q1 2008/09 - Q4 2010/11	To establish additional temporary resources to manage the effective early delivery of the growth area projects, allocated local plan housing sites and other identified windfall housing sites including additional temporary resources to provide specialist advice e.g. project management, master planning, planning, transport, urban design, sustainable construction, drainage, development economics	£220k	£220k	£220k	Revenue	£?	£?	£?	£660k
					Delivery of higher or faster levels of growth will require appropriate technical or specialist support for which the capacity does not exist.				Planning & Housing Delivery Grant (Funding criteria not known)			

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**Longer term projects – Post 2011**

					2011/12	2012/13	Post 2013		2011/12	2012/13	Post 2013	
	Bury St Edmunds Sustainable Transport provision – phase 2	Suffolk CC with St Edmundsbury BC	2011 – 2014	To encourage a modal shift from car to sustainable transport to deal with existing congestion, to allow growth planned in the RSS to take place without the need for significant additional highway schemes in the historic town, and to minimise carbon emissions. This would consist of a package of projects incorporating high quality bus corridors, bus priority measures, Park and Ride schemes, improvements to walk and cycle networks				Capital	£650k	£1.45m	£500k	£2.6m
					Growth Area funding not required at this time							
	Future Infrastructure Funding Support	St Edmundsbury BC	2011 ongoing	To fund additional infrastructure projects to support additional housing delivery				Capital				
					Growth Area funding not required at this time				Funding recouped from other infrastructure funded projects (see above).			
	Bury St Edmunds Secondary School	Suffolk CC	2011??	To provide a new secondary school to meet growing school rolls				Capital		£30m		
					Growth Area funding not required at this time				"Building Schools for the Future" and developer contributions			

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