

West Suffolk Local Plan

Preferred Options

Part Two: Non-strategic Policies

Regulation 18



#YourFuture #YourSay

May 2022

West Suffolk
Council

About this consultation and how to respond

This preferred options consultation draft of the local plan is the second opportunity for you to get involved with preparing the new plan. We want to hear your views and to make this as easy as possible for you to do this. This is #YourFuture #YourSay and now is the chance for you to help shape the future of West Suffolk.

A good local plan is central to the future development of West Suffolk and our communities. It is much more than just about where housing and associated facilities may go but will also set out how best to support the future prosperity of our area and future generations as well as tackling wider issues such as improving the economy, health and tackling climate change, it is about planning to make sure we get the right kind of development in the right place while protecting our environment. The local plan shapes planning and development in West Suffolk here up to 2040 which is why it is vital that people have their say.

How to comment

All of the consultation information is available to view in our [live exhibition hall](#). There is also an online chat facility in the exhibition hall where you can chat to planning officers if you have any questions.

The best way to comment on the local plan is online via the council's [consultation system](#). If you have difficulty commenting online, or you need information in a different format, please let us know and we will be happy to help.

You can email us planningpolicy@westsuffolk.gov.uk and if you have any questions on any aspect of this consultation, please contact a member of the strategic planning team on 01284 757368.

The consultation period runs from 26 May 2022 (9am) to 26 July 2022 (5pm) and all comments must be received by Tuesday 26 July 2022 at 5pm.

We have commissioned and produced background evidence that have helped inform this draft of this plan. These are available to view at West Suffolk Local Plan background evidence documents on our website.

How we deal with your data and protect it

We are collecting your personal information in order to process your comments under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. Your name, address, (and all unredacted personal details as submitted by yourself), organisation, and comments may be passed to an independent planning inspector or examiner to consider the soundness legal compliance of the planning policy documents being produced. Apart from that your data will not be shared with third parties unless used for council purposes, in order to enquire and receive information relating to your comments, the prevention or detection of crime, to protect public funds or where we are required or permitted to share data under other legislation.

Your data will be kept until the document is superseded in line with our retention policy.

You have the right to access your data and to rectify mistakes, erase, restrict, object or move your data in certain circumstances. Your data will not be subject to automated decision making and processing. For further information on our data protection policies please go to our website: [How we use your information](#) or email: data.protection@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Please note that all images in this document were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contents

1.	Introduction	6
2.	Spatial strategy	8
	NSP01 Housing settlement boundaries	8
	NSP02 Development in the countryside	9
	NSP03 Masterplans	11
	NSP04 Development briefs	13
	NSP05 Well-designed places	15
3.	Climate change.....	17
	NSP06 Meeting the challenge of climate change	17
	NSP07 Renewable and low carbon energy	21
4.	Infrastructure	23
	NSP08 Infrastructure services and telecommunications development ..	23
	NSP09 Broadband	25
	NSP10 Rights of way	27
	NSP11 Transport assessment and travel plans	28
	NSP12 Active and sustainable travel	29
	NSP13 Parking standards	31
	NSP14 Waste	32
5.	Natural, built and historic environment.....	34
	NSP15 Biodiversity and geodiversity	34
	NSP16 Protected species	36
	NSP17 Trees	37
	NSP18 Landscape	38
	NSP19 Protecting and enhancing natural resources, minimising pollution and safeguarding from hazards.....	40
	NSP20 Flood risk and sustainable drainage.....	41
	NSP21 Water quality and resources	43
	NSP22 Listed buildings.....	45
	NSP23 Non designated heritage assets, local heritage assets and buildings protected by article 4 directions	47
	NSP24 New uses for historic buildings	49
	NSP25 Conservation areas	51
	NSP26 Development affecting parks and gardens of special historic or design interest.....	54
	NSP27 Archaeology	56
	NSP28 Enabling development	58

6.	Home and healthy communities	60
	NSP29 Affordable housing	60
	NSP30 Housing type and tenure	63
	NSP31 Custom and self-build	65
	NSP32 Housing in the countryside	67
	NSP33 Special housing needs	69
	NSP34 Alterations and extensions to dwellings including self-contained annexes.....	71
	NSP35 Extensions to domestic gardens in the countryside	72
	NSP36 Agricultural and essential workers dwelling	73
	NSP37 Residential use of redundant buildings in the countryside	74
	NSP38 Rural exception sites	75
	NSP39 Provision for Gypsies and Travellers	77
	NSP40 Open space, natural and semi-natural green space, sport, play and recreation facilities	79
	NSP41 Community facilities and services	82
	NSP42 Leisure and cultural facilities.....	84
7.	Economy.....	85
	NSP43 Safeguarding employment.....	85
	NSP44 Proposals for main town centre uses	87
	NSP45 Local centres.....	89
	NSP46 Street trading and street cafes	91
	NSP47 Public realm improvements.....	92
	NSP48 Shop fronts and advertisements	93
	NSP49 Ancillary retail uses	94
	NSP50 Farm diversification	95
	NSP51 Re-use or replacement of buildings in countryside	96
	NSP52 Tourism development	98
	NSP53 Business and domestic equine.....	99
8.	Horse racing industry.....	100
	NSP54 Development relating to the horse racing industry.....	100
	NSP55 Development affecting the horse racing industry	102
	NSP56 Redevelopment of existing sites relating to the horse racing industry	104
	NSP57 Horse walks	106

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This section of the West Suffolk Local Plan sets out the council's preferred parameters for non-strategic policies. Non-strategic policies set out more detailed policies for specific areas and types of development. This part of this plan will include policies to be used in day-to-day decision making.
- 1.2. The non-strategic policies have been drafted for the preferred options through the use of policy parameter. These set out the purpose of each policy, what each policy intends to allow or restrict and key points and criteria of the policies. The parameters we have developed for non-strategic policies that will be used to determine applications have been divided into the following seven themes:
 - Spatial strategy
 - Climate change
 - Infrastructure
 - Homes and healthy communities
 - Economy
 - Natural built and historic environment
 - Horse racing industry.
- 1.3. Your views are an important part of the process, and we welcome responses from both the public and statutory stakeholders to the non-strategic policies in this plan. This is #YourFuture and the chance to have #YourSay.

Evidence to support non-strategic policies

- 1.4. Evidence and research have helped develop the policy parameters for the site allocations set out in this part of this plan, as well as the outcomes of the West Suffolk Issues and Options consultation carried out in October 2020. Evidence produced to support this plan is ongoing and will be made available on the [background evidence webpage](#) when published. These documents should not be read in isolation.

Next steps

- 1.5. This preferred options consultation draft of the local plan is the second opportunity for people in West Suffolk to get involved with preparing the new plan. It is important to note that no firm decisions have been made at this stage. We are seeking your views at this stage to assist with making these decisions.
- 1.6. At the end of each section there are questions asking for your opinion on the policies being proposed. Please respond setting out your comments the reference number of the policy where applicable.
- 1.7. Following the close of this consultation, the comments will be analysed and used to help produce the final submission version of the local plan

for a final round of consultation in 2023. This plan will then be submitted for examination by an independent planning inspector. The timeline for plan production and key dates can be viewed [here](#).

2. Spatial strategy

NSP01 Housing settlement boundaries

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to support proposals for residential developments in defined housing settlement boundaries.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals for new residential development will be permitted within housing settlement boundaries where it is not contrary to other policies in this plan.
- b. Housing settlement boundaries define the extent to which residential development proposals will be supported.
- c. Housing settlement boundaries are defined on the policies map.

Justification and evidence

- 2.2. Housing settlement boundaries for the settlements listed in the table below are defined in the policies map book and on ['Find my nearest'](#). These may not be the physical boundary of the settlements, but in policy terms are the boundaries which manage development inside and outside of that area. Small settlements that have been categorised as countryside in our settlement hierarchy, do not have defined housing settlement boundaries.
- 2.3. The current adopted local plans, defines 'settlement boundaries' in the former Forest Heath area which includes all types of land use within the built-up area, whereas the former St Edmundsbury area defines 'housing settlement boundaries' where residential land uses are concentrated. A consistent approach is proposed in the local plan review, this defines the housing settlement boundaries for West Suffolk, where residential land uses are concentrated and excludes non-residential uses such as existing employment land uses. The housing settlement boundaries are shown on the policies map. A full review of the housing settlement boundaries will be undertaken prior to the publication of the submission draft plan.

Question

NSP02 Development in the countryside

- 2.4. The purpose of this policy is to set out what forms of development are acceptable in the countryside and protect the countryside from unsustainable development.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will give support to proposals for a new or extended building in the countryside where they are in accordance with other relevant policies in this plan and specifically for: agriculture, horticulture or forestry; affordable housing to meet a proven local need; equine related activities; small scale facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, leisure and tourism; agriculture, forestry or equine business key worker where an essential need is proven; the replacement of an existing dwelling on a one for one basis of a similar scale and floor area and small scale residential development in accordance with other policies on housing in the countryside.
- b. Proposals for sustainable economic growth and expansion of businesses in the countryside will be supported where: it will not result in the irreversible loss of the best or most versatile agricultural land; there is no detrimental impact on biodiversity, the character and visual amenity of the landscape or the historic environment.
- c. There are no severe impacts on highways network and any significant impacts should be mitigated.
- d. All proposals should be sensitive to their surroundings and respect the intrinsic character of the countryside, take opportunities to make a location more sustainable such as improving active travel links.
- e. For all proposals the use of previously developed land and sites well related to existing settlements should be used where viable and opportunities exist.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines sustainable development.
- 2.6. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out the Government's definition of the objective of sustainable development as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', and in paragraph 8 expands on what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system, setting out three objectives: economic, social, and environmental.

- 2.7. Paragraph 80 says 'Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside' and sets out criteria where development might be acceptable.
- 2.8. Paragraphs 84 and 85 set out how planning policies and decisions should support a prosperous rural economy and sets out criteria where development might be acceptable.
- 2.9. Paragraph 174(b) states 'policies and decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystems – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland'.

Background evidence

- 2.10. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports including:
 - [Bramshill v SSHCLG \[2021\] EWCA Civ 320](#) – this considers isolated homes in the countryside. The proposal sought to convert the mansion into apartments and build new homes in place of existing buildings on site.
 - Appeal decision [APP/E3525/W/17/3171480](#) – The Old Pumping Station Lower Road Hundon Sudbury Suffolk CO10 8DZ – dismissed – outside the settlement boundary, eight dwellings on the edge of a village. Occupants would need to rely on private cars. The development was not considered sustainable.
 - Appeal decision [APP/F3545/W/20/3265128](#) – The Willows, The Green, Depden, Suffolk IP29 4BY – The appeal site is in the countryside, and is not in a cluster of dwellings, contrary to the spatial strategy of the development plan.
- 2.11. Responses to the issues and options consultation generally indicated support for the policy approach in allowing small scale residential development where there is a proven need, development that supports the rural economy, the use of brownfield land and encouraging landscaping and biodiversity

Question

NSP03 Masterplans

- 2.12. The purpose of this policy is to set out the circumstances where masterplans will be required and the key issues which are to be addressed.
- 2.13. Masterplans provide developers and local community with certainty, enabling the right development in the right place and a faster consenting process with less dissent.

Policy parameters

- a. Masterplans will be required for proposals on land allocated in local plans when specified in local plan policy, or exceptionally on large or complicated sites where the local planning authority think a masterplan is justified.
- b. The policy will list the key design issues to be addressed in any masterplan, these will include as appropriate:
- Site boundaries.
 - Neighbouring plots.
 - Landscaping.
 - A biodiversity plan.
 - Measures to protect the historic environment.
 - Design measures to minimise climate change risk.
 - Town and local centres.
 - Public art.
 - Design principles of employment sites.
 - Design principles of social infrastructure sites.
 - Pedestrian, cycle, public rights of way and public transport linkages.
 - Highway and road network.
 - Waste and recycling facilities.
 - Measures to reduce energy demand.
 - Timetables for phasing and section 106 funding.
 - How amenity will be protected.
 - A clear set of overarching design principles to guide the development.
 - Well defined and distinctive character areas and development parcels.
 - Walkable and integrated neighbourhoods.
 - Connectivity with surrounding areas as well as providing access to the surrounding countryside and open space.
 - A hierarchy of routes and spaces with a permeable and legible layout.
 - Neighbourhood parks and smaller green spaces.
 - A range of housing densities, house types and mix of uses for each neighbourhood including the level of affordable housing provision.
 - Prioritisation given to pedestrian and cycle movement and active travel.

- Community function of streets which are inclusive, welcoming and people-friendly and provide places for social interaction.
 - How the development will seek to protect the historic environment.
 - Measures to minimise climate change risks and ensure all developments are resilient, including incorporation of managed sustainable drainage systems.
 - Blue and green corridors.
 - Electrical capacity, electric vehicle charging and heat pumps.
 - Sustainability measures to reduce energy demand.
 - Reference to the national model design code and the ten characteristics of well-designed places in the national design guide.
- c. The policy will make reference to the [masterplan protocol](#) and other relevant design guidance.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.14. Paragraph 73c of the National Planning Policy Framework states that tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes should be used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community.
- 2.15. Paragraph 125 requires area-based design guides, codes and masterplans to ensure land is used efficiently but also to create beautiful and sustainable places. Developments should make optimal use of land.

Background evidence

- 2.16. The [national design guide](#) provides key principles and characteristics that the policy should have regard to. This includes well-designed places that consider their context. It looks at uses, movement and built form.

Question

NSP04 Development briefs

- 2.17. The purpose of this policy is to set out the circumstances when a development brief might be required and the key issues which are to be addressed.
- 2.18. Development briefs provide developers and local community with certainty, enabling the right development in the right place and a faster consenting process with less dissent.

Policy parameters

- a. Development briefs will be required by the local planning authority where they are of a size, or in a location, or proposing a mix of uses, or of significant local interest to make a development brief necessary.
- b. Development briefs should have been through consultation and approved prior to the determination of a planning application, in accordance with the council's protocol.
- c. Development briefs should accord with the design policy and include an analysis of site conditions, consultation feedback and identification of key design issues (agreed with the local planning authority in advance.) The development brief will identify:
 - Site constraints and opportunities.
 - Context and character – urban form, local development patterns and character traits.
 - Design principles.
 - Housing mix, affordable housing, density ranges, employment, type of use(s) (use class) and building(s) type and size.
 - Mix of uses.
 - Social and physical infrastructure to serve the development.
 - Landscaping, planting.
 - Biodiversity net gain.
 - Wildlife and historic features – incorporation and enhancement.
 - Connectivity and sustainable movement –links to active.
 - Active and sustainable travel – filtered permeability, links to public transport, workplaces, services, on and off site, public transport routes and stops.
 - Vehicle movements and electric vehicle charge points.
 - Phasing.
 - Details of materials, design features and characteristic to achieve local distinctiveness.
 - Sustainable design and construction and energy efficiency measures.
 - Blue corridors and sustainable drainage systems.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.19. Paragraph 73c of the National Planning Policy Framework states 'that tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes should be used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community'.
- 2.20. Paragraph 125 requires 'area-based design guides, codes and masterplans to ensure land is used efficiently but also to create beautiful and sustainable places. Developments should make optimal use of land'.

Background evidence

- 2.21. The [national design guide](#) provides key principles and characteristics that the policy should have regard to. This includes well-designed places that consider their context. It looks at uses, movement and built form.

Question

NSP05 Well-designed places

- 2.22. The purpose of this policy is to be an overarching local design policy to ensure that all development adhere to good design principles.

Policy parameters

- a. The National Planning Policy Framework and national design guide sets out that good design is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development and the planning process should result in the 'creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places'.
- b. Proposals for development will be required to:
 - Create or maintain a sense of place, respecting the local characteristics.
 - Result in high quality architecture and provide a visually attractive layout.
 - Respect the character, scale, density and massing of a locality.
 - Create places that are safe, suitable for all and accessible.
 - Retain gardens, important open space and landscapes, which contribute to character and appearance of an area.
 - Promote health and well-being through adhering to 'secure by design' principles, national space standards and through sustainable forms of transport.
 - Provide adequate outdoor amenity space for all residential properties.
 - Not adversely affect amenities of areas by reason of noise, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light and other pollution.
- c. Proposals should include a concise assessment of the key positive character traits that have been identified and how the new design will make reference to them. For major developments, a character study will be needed to inform this assessment.
- d. All application types and proposals will be required to adhere to and be assessed against the appropriate and detailed criteria set out within this policy.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.23. Paragraph 96 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states "Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space."
- 2.24. The NPPF emphasises the importance of good design and creating healthy, inclusive and safe spaces. Key chapters within the NPPF are chapter 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities and chapter 12 Achieving well designed places.
- 2.25. Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) "The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."
- 2.26. Paragraph 128 of the NPPF "To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences."

Background evidence

- 2.27. [Building Beautiful Commission Report \(2020\)](#) – the Government published a report following the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission was announced in 2018 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The report proposes a number of planning recommendations to improve design quality of new development.
- 2.28. [National Design Guide \(2021\)](#) – The National Design Code sets out how well design places can be achieved in practice.
- 2.29. [National Model Design Code \(2021\)](#) – The National Model Design Code sets out clear design parameters to help local authorities and communities decide what good quality design looks like in their area.
- 2.30. [Campaign to Protect Rural England](#) – local green space a tool for people and nature's wellbeing (2022).
- 2.31. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

3. Climate change

NSP06 Meeting the challenge of climate change

- 3.1. The purpose of this policy is to help to address climate change, contribute to the circular economy and to guide sustainable design and construction.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will require all new development (including extensions to buildings) to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Proposals will be required to demonstrate how they minimise energy and resource consumption through construction, design and layout.
- b. The policy will require measures to be appropriate to the nature and scale of development.
- c. Any development should be well located and orientated taking account of long term climate change impacts such as flooding or overheating.
- d. Proposals for all new development will be required to submit an energy statement, which should follow the energy hierarchy and state what energy targets will be set and what energy efficiency measures or strategies will be employed to meet or exceed such targets. Space and water heating must not be from fossil fuels (gas, oil, coal). For example, solar photovoltaic panels, ground and/or air source heat pumps, building orientation should avoid overheating and aim for passive heat.
- e. A reduction in carbon emissions will be required through energy efficiency measures and on-site renewable energy generation. Passivhaus principles and certification will be encouraged.
- f. The policy will require all new development to provide electric car charging points in line with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019.
- g. All new major development will need to demonstrate how net zero carbon will be achieved during the build and operation within a certain timescale. A percentage of on-site renewable energy generation will be required.
- h. The policy will require all major developments to incorporate whole life carbon assessments.
- i. For commercial and applicable residential proposals (for example, care homes) Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) will be used. Development over 1000 square metres must submit a BREEAM pre-assessment with the planning application of how the proposal will achieve BREEAM

excellent. Development over 500 square metres must submit a BREEAM pre-assessment with the planning application of how the proposal will achieve BREEAM very good. Proposals for development under 500 square metres will be required to submit an energy statement, which should follow the energy hierarchy and state what energy targets will be set and what energy efficiency measures or strategies will be employed to meet or exceed such targets. Some on-site renewable energy generation will be required unless this is not possible due to constraints inherent within the site, or where it would compromise the viability of the development.

- j. All proposals should show how their implementation follows the waste hierarchy.
- k. Development should be in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 which aims to reduce carbon by increasing recycling from domestic properties and business as well as improving the consistency of waste collection across England.
- l. All proposals should consider responsible sourcing and the sustainability of their construction materials.
- m. Further work will be undertaken to understand and monitor the requirement of this policy and how it will be applied.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2. Paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'new development should avoid increased vulnerability to climate change. In vulnerable areas risks can be managed through appropriate adaptation measures, such as green infrastructure. New development can reduce greenhouse gas emissions through its design and orientation. It should reflect the government's national technical standards'.

Background evidence

- 3.3. [UK housing: Fit for the future?](#) Committee on Climate Change (2019) notes that decarbonising and adapting the UK's housing stock is critical for meeting legally binding emissions targets by 2050 and preparing for the impacts of climate change. The report identifies five priorities for government action and assesses progress in improving housing to meet our climate objectives and make recommendations for further action.
- 3.4. The council declares a climate emergency in 2019, later strengthened to a climate and environment emergency in July 2020. West Suffolk's Environment and Climate Change Taskforce was established to strengthen and expand the work the authority is already undertaking and has produced a road map of initiatives aimed at taking the council to net-

zero carbon emissions by 2030. This includes using the local plan to improve the environmental performance of housing.

- 3.5. [Suffolk Climate and Emergency Plan](#) issued in 2020 (supported by Ricardo evidence report) seeks to make the county carbon neutral by 2030. The plan seeks to prioritise improving the thermal efficiency of building stock and carbonising the supply of heat, encouraging greater take up of public transport and active travel and a large roll out of zero emission vehicles.
- 3.6. The Suffolk Climate and Emergency Plan states that planning is not just concerned with buildings but also about placemaking. This includes more than just buildings, but how development is connected. Transport can be a big emitter of carbon. Sustainable transport and low emission vehicles are considered in the infrastructure section. Development should also be appropriately located in an area that is not at risk from flooding.
- 3.7. In December 2021 the Government set changes to the Building Regulations (to come into effect from June 2022) as it works towards implementing the Future Homes and Buildings Standard (after in 2025). This is a set of standards that will complement the Building Regulations to ensure new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80 per cent less carbon emissions than homes delivered under current regulations. The changes to Building Regulations will ensure that new homes in England will have to produce around 30 per cent less carbon emissions, and new buildings such as offices and shops will have to cut emissions by 27 per cent. The changes include uplifts to fuel and power (Part L) and ventilation (Part F), and notification of a new Approved Document O to mitigate the risk of overheating in new homes. A climate change Topic Paper will provide more details of the changes to building regulations and how these are being expressed in planning documents. will be referenced and taken into account in this local plan.
- 3.8. The energy hierarchy is often illustrated as a pyramid or triangle with the best, most sustainable approach at the base, and least sustainable approach at the apex. The best solution is to reduce consumption and wastage (tier one at the base of the pyramid). The next tier in the hierarchy is energy efficiency measures, then the use of renewable and sustainable resources, the use low emission sources of energy and finally at the top of the pyramid is the least sustainable approach which is to continue to provide conventional sources of energy (for example gas).
- 3.9. The waste hierarchy is a simple approach that progresses from the most favourable and sustainable approach to the least sustainable. The Government produced guidance on the waste hierarchy in 2011. There are five stages: prevention, re-use, recycling, recovery, and finally disposal.
- 3.10. [Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019](#) – Suffolk County Council guidance for parking for different types of vehicles in different types of building.

Question

NSP07 Renewable and low carbon energy

- 3.11. The purpose of this policy is to encourage and guide proposals for renewable and low carbon energy-generating and storage assets and distribution networks. This can include new solar farms, battery storage and anaerobic digestion plants.

Policy parameters

- a. Such schemes will be supported if there is no landscape harm, or the benefits outweigh the disbenefits when assessed through a landscape and visual impact assessment. This will show:
 - Minimal visual impact – landscape or townscape.
 - Mitigation measures for any visual impacts.
 - Assess in isolation and cumulatively the impact of the proposal on the environment.
- b. Development should avoid the best and most versatile agricultural land wherever possible as defined by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Land Classification of England and Wales.
- c. The policy provides for biodiversity net gain. There should be no detrimental impacts on issues of biodiversity, geodiversity and water quality.
- d. There should be no harmful impacts on historical, archaeological and cultural heritage, highway safety and associated infrastructure, aviation, telecommunications and associated infrastructure, soil quality and residential amenity.
- e. The policy will require that after the cessation of generation, the site is restored to its original use. A decommissioning strategy or plan for site restoration should be provided with every application. The policy will require that the site enables agricultural activities to be continued after cessation of the use where applicable and encourage co-location of agricultural activity during the lifetime of the project.
- f. The policy will encourage co-location of energy producers and stores.
- g. The policy will specify that wind development proposals should identify any impacts on local communities. A residential visual amenity assessment should be submitted with all wind farm applications. The policy should consider how the development affects air traffic operations. The impact of any wind farm on bats and migrating birds and bird strike is also to be considered.
- h. Additionally, solar farms potential glint and glare and effects on biodiversity should be considered (ecology and nature conservatory and mitigation statements will be required).

- i. The policy will state that energy storage should be co-located with generating and or distribution assets wherever possible. If this is not possible then detailed reasons must be provided. A site management plan should be submitted that demonstrates fire safety measures are adequately addressed.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.12. Paragraph 158 'when determining applications for low carbon development, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate need for the proposal. If the impacts can be made acceptable the application should be approved. Suitable areas for low carbon energy can be identified in plans'.

Background evidence

- 3.13. The council has declared a [climate change emergency](#) incorporating 50 initiatives seeking to tackle climate change and reduce greenhouse gases as well as protect the environment. One target is net zero greenhouse gas (carbon) emissions reduction by 2030.
- 3.14. [Suffolk Green](#) has produced a local energy system monitoring tool (Local Energy Asset Representation) which pulls together information on energy demand, generation, storage and distribution assets, fuel poverty, building design types, and local geography using data analysis.

Question

4. Infrastructure

NSP08 Infrastructure services and telecommunications development

- 4.1. The purpose of this policy is to guide proposals for infrastructure services and telecommunications development for example, mobile phone masts. These should be designed and sited to minimise intrusion and visual impact.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy should permit telecommunication developments where:
 - There are no significant detrimental effects on biodiversity, ecology, geodiversity and best and most versatile agricultural land.
 - Heritage assets, conservation areas and designated landscapes are conserved and their settings.
 - There is no severe impact on highways network and any significant impacts should be mitigated.
 - There is no significant adverse impact on residential amenity.
 - It will not cause irremediable interference on electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national or international interest.
 - It will not interfere with broadcast and electric communication services.
- b. The policy will require that a landscape and visual impact assessment is submitted. This should:
 - Show the proposal in context and not contribute to landscape and street clutter.
 - The proposal is sympathetically designed, minimising size and scale and camouflaged where appropriate.
 - Include an appraisal of environmental impacts alone or in combination.
- c. The policy will state that infrastructure and telecommunications developments will be favourably considered where the proposal represents the highest appropriate standards of siting and design for the location. The applicant may be asked to demonstrate how the power supply could be shared. If the equipment is no longer required, the applicant should remove the apparatus and restore the land to its previous condition.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.2. Paragraph 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'planning policies should support the expansion of electronic communications networks including full fibre broadband connections. Policies should resolve how high quality digital infrastructure from multiple providers can be delivered and upgraded'.

Background evidence

- 4.3. [Mobile phone base stations and health – The Department of Health](#). This outlines some of the measures taken to address health concerns about mobile phone service.
- 4.4. [Code of practice for wireless network development in England](#) – This government guidance for operators supports the government's objective of delivering high quality wireless infrastructure, whilst having regard to environmental concerns. It sets out the legal and policy framework for digital connectivity, siting and design principles for different types of equipment. It details the types of planning permission that cover wireless infrastructure.

Question

NSP09 Broadband

- 4.5. The purpose of this policy is to require new development to be compatible with local fibre and other ultra-fast high-speed broadband infrastructure where appropriate. This will be demonstrated through a connectivity statement submitted with planning applications where appropriate.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will state that the council will expect all applicable new major development to submit with the application a connectivity statement that sets out what measures the proposal has put in place to comply with this policy.
- b. All new residential and commercial developments should provide the infrastructure required to enable connectivity to the high-speed electronic communications network unless it is not practical to do so. For major developments (10 or more dwellings or sites of greater than 0.5 hectares) this should be through direct fibre to the premise access.
- c. Where not practical to do so, as a minimum and subject to viability of the scheme, suitable ducting that can accept fibre to the premises should be provided.
- d. Further work will be undertaken to understand and monitor the requirement of this policy and how it will be applied.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.6. Paragraph 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'planning policies should support the expansion of electronic communications networks including full fibre broadband connections. Policies should resolve how high quality digital infrastructure from multiple providers can be delivered and upgraded'.

Background evidence

- 4.7. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.
- 4.8. Building Digital UK is responsible for ensuring that every UK home and business can access fast and reliable digital connectivity.
- 4.9. [Resources for communications network providers](#) – this details challenges faced by networks providers and how Barrier Busting Task Force can help to remove barriers to deployment and guidance on working with local authorities.

- 4.10. [Better Broadband for Suffolk](#) – aims for all of Suffolk to access superfast fibre broadband and enables property searches for suppliers of superfast broadband.

Question

NSP10 Rights of way

- 4.11. The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and enhance public rights of way for pedestrian, cyclist, byways or horse rider use.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will seek improvements to rights of way associated with new development, facilitating sustainable access modes on and off site as appropriate. Contributions will be sought towards improvements.
- b. Public rights of way must be maintained on their original alignments and should be enhanced. Public rights of way running through a site should be maintained as a green corridor appealing for all types of users. The rights of way network should be seamlessly integrated with the site layout.
- c. The policy will detail the aims and objectives of the Suffolk Green Access Strategy Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.12. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – planning policies and decisions should protect and provide for public rights of way.
- 4.13. Paragraphs 104 and 112 of the NPPF – walking, cycling and public transport should be promoted.
- 4.14. Paragraph 105 – sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas.

Background evidence

- 4.15. [Suffolk Green Access Strategy Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030](#) – a Suffolk County Council document on managing and promoting green access to secure healthy communities. It looks at whether rights of way meet future needs, and the opportunities local rights of way create for all.

Question

NSP11 Transport assessment and travel plans

- 4.16. The purpose of this policy is to require major development proposals or applications likely to have a significant transport implication, to submit the following documents alongside their planning applications:
- A transport assessment of appropriate scale.
 - A travel plan that identifies physical management measures necessary to address the transport implications arising from development.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy supports proposals that demonstrate that the transport impacts are satisfactorily mitigated via a transport assessment or travel plan.
- b. The developer will be required to provide necessary funding to deliver and provide for the ongoing monitoring of any travel plan.
- c. Travel plan measures should not be used to address or overcome identified road safety measures caused by new development unless the outcomes are demonstrated to be guaranteed.
- d. Developers will be required to make a contribution via planning obligations towards the delivery of improvements to transport infrastructure to facilitate access to more sustainable transport modes.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.17. National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 113 – Travel plans are required for all developments that generate a significant amount of traffic. The application may be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment.

Background evidence

- 4.18. Transport policies should be developed in collaboration with Suffolk County Council Highway Authority and neighbouring councils to ensure strategies are aligned.

Question

NSP12 Active and sustainable travel

- 4.19. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development prioritises walking, cycling and other sustainable forms of transport which contribute to multimodal journeys over motorised transport. The government has set out its ambition of half of all journeys in towns and cities in England being cycled or walked by 2030. To do this they make it clear that cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys. New developments should be designed in ways that are safe, well-connected, and accessible for all users, and maximise the greatest possible use of sustainable and active forms of travel in line with Suffolk Design Streets Guide 2020. Developments should demonstrate and enhance sustainable routes from their site to local facilities, services, destinations and the wider countryside.
- 4.20. Ensuring that development promotes, and prioritises active travel will help tackle some of the most challenging issues we face in society. Benefits of greater levels of active travel would include:
- Reducing the burden on the NHS by improving health and wellbeing.
 - Managing congestion.
 - Combating climate change and air pollution.
 - Creating safer streets.
 - Addressing inequalities.

Policy parameters

- a. Maximise walking opportunities irrespective of the level of personal mobility and contribute to a positive public realm that incorporates walking, improving pedestrian and wheelchair routes.
- b. Ensure a safe, segregated, and accessible environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Contribute towards the existing cycle network, and protect existing routes, provide cycle parking in line with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019. Ensure that facilities such as workplace showers are provided. Cycle infrastructure should be built to the requirements of Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20, or successor documents.
- c. Ensure that employment uses and destinations have facilities such as workplace showers, covered cycle storage, changing rooms, drying rooms and lockers provided (to allow people to cycle all year around) and that new homes have sufficient cycling storage for a range of bicycles.
- d. New development should prioritise walking and cycling by delivering high quality, coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive walking and cycling routes.
- e. Public transport usage should be maximised with appropriate contributions, well-designed facilities, passenger information

infrastructure, bus improvements, and protection and enhancement of public transport routes.

- f. Ensure that new and existing sustainable transport routes are created or upgraded to enable safe direct access to surrounding settlements, destinations and facilities and the wider countryside.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.21. Paragraph 104 and 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework – walking, cycling and public transport should be promoted.
- 4.22. Paragraph 105 – sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas

Background evidence

- 4.23. [Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk) – a government document that encourages active travel
- 4.24. [Cycle Infrastructure Design, Local Transport Note 1/20 July 2020](#) – a document about planning for cycling, encouraging a well-connected network
- 4.25. [Suffolk Green Access Strategy Rights of Way Improvement Plan \(ROWIP\) 2020-2030](#) – a Suffolk County Council (SCC) document on managing and promoting green access to secure healthy communities
- 4.26. [Suffolk Design Streets Guide 2020](#) – A SCC guide for considering all road users with different typologies of movement
- 4.27. [Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019](#) – SCC guidance for parking for different types of vehicles in different types of building.
- 4.28. [West Suffolk's Promoting Physical Activity Framework 2022-2026](#) – encouraging people to live more active lives

Question

NSP13 Parking standards

- 4.29. The purpose of this policy is to make sufficient provision for parking (whilst reducing over-reliance on cars,) and providing sufficient electric vehicle charging points.

Policy parameters

- a. All developments will need to provide appropriately sited car parking and secure, conveniently located cycle provision and make provision for visitor, emergency and service or delivery vehicles in line with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019.
- b. The policy will allow as an exception in town centres or areas with good public transport, a reduced level of car parking in all development proposals. Proposals are expected to minimise provision of car parking, for example the use of carpooling as part of the travel plan. Exceptions to car parking may be permitted in rural areas, with satisfactory evidence and justification alongside a transport assessment or travel plan.
- c. The policy will require all new development including car parking spaces to provide electric vehicle charging points in line with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.30. Paragraph 105 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'local parking standards should take into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development, the availability of public transport, local car ownership levels, the need to provide spaces for plug in and ultra-low emission vehicles'.
- 4.31. Paragraph 108 'maximum parking standards should only be used where there is a compelling justification. The quality of town centre parking should be improved.

Background evidence

- 4.32. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.
- 4.33. [Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019](#) – Suffolk County Council guidance for parking for different types of vehicles in different types of building

Question

NSP14 Waste

- 4.34. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safe and efficient collection of waste from developments as part of a positive approach to urban design.

Policy parameters

- a. Within and near to new developments there should be appropriate vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian access having regard to the ease of collection of waste and recycling materials.
- b. All new commercial and residential developments should be well connected to waste facilities such as depots and waste transfer stations.
- c. Business premises and households should have appropriate waste and recycling container storage, and disposal points within the home and/or business and at collection points having regard to council waste management policy, Suffolk Waste Partnership, Resources and Waste Strategy, and Suffolk Design Streets Guide.
- d. Underground waste storage systems should be considered for new major residential development exceeding 50 dwellings.
- e. New major residential developments should consider the location of a well-connected network of litter and recycling bins of appropriate design and location to reflect future need and reduce the impact of envirocrime.
- f. Developments should incorporate suitable surface, layout and design of the streetscape to reduce obstructions and enable easy mechanical cleaning.
- g. This policy will need to have regard to requirements of other policies and national guidance.
- h. Further work will be undertaken to understand and monitor the requirements of this policy and how it will be applied.

Justification and evidence

[Waste management plan for England \(2013\)](#)

- 4.35. There should be close cooperation between planning and waste authorities having regard to the waste management plan for England.

National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)

- 4.36. Paragraph 1 – positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering England’s waste ambitions. Waste management should be considered alongside other spatial planning concerns. The design and layout of proposals should complement sustainable waste management.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 4.37. Paragraph 20 – strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design of places including infrastructure for waste management.

Background evidence

- 4.38. The West Suffolk Council and the [Suffolk Waste Partnership](#) sets out the requirements for waste management arrangements at a household and business level, including vehicle access requirements.
- 4.39. The [Resources and Waste Strategy](#), established through the Environment Act 2021, is at ‘closed’ public consultation stage. This is set to introduce measures to change how waste is managed in order to reduce waste and improve waste recovery; it is aimed at households and businesses.
- 4.40. In support of underground waste storage systems:
- [Going underground: Could underground waste storage systems be the way forward?](#)
 - [Underground waste: Vacuum System Takes Waste Management to a New Level | Best practice - Smart City Sweden](#)
 - [Could underground waste collection come to the UK? | Resource Magazine](#)
- 4.41. [Suffolk Design: Street Guide](#) – the emerging guidance will help the design of new residential developments, showing how to create sustainable transport layouts that promote walking and cycling.

Question

5. Natural, built and historic environment

NSP15 Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 5.1. The purpose of this policy is to protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity. The policy seeks to reverse the decline of biodiversity.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy must protect sites designated for their biodiversity and geodiversity value, conserve, restore and enhance important habitats (including priority habitats) and other important biodiversity features on sites or affected by developments.
- b. The mitigation hierarchy – avoid, mitigate, compensate – must be enshrined within the policy.
- c. The policy will consider the designation of local wildlife sites (LWS) within the district following a review of existing LWS in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill and ecological surveys in Mildenhall, Newmarket and Brandon.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 174 and 179) requires that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks.

Background evidence

- 5.3. [Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) places a duty on all public authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by Government in its 25 year environment plan.
- 5.4. The law concerning designated sites is published separately because its application is wider than planning.
- 5.5. [The Environment Act 2021](#) delivers a step-change in the Government's ambition to restore and enhance our natural environment, introducing measures to require and support lasting action for nature.

- 5.6. Wildlife audits have been undertaken for all the strategic housing and economic land availability assessment 'included' sites. These provide valuable baseline information about the biodiversity value of each of the potential development sites and will be invaluable in site selection and policy writing for individual sites, in identifying the ecological network and potential for enhancements.

Question

NSP16 Protected species

- 5.7. The purpose of this policy is to set out how the council will consider the protection of species on development sites.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy should require effects on protected species to be avoided. If this is not possible, they should be reduced to a minimum, mitigated for, or as a last resort compensated in line with the mitigation hierarchy.
- b. Applications will be required to be supported by appropriate and up to date ecological reports and surveys, which fully assess the impact of the proposed development on protected species.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.8. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 179) requires that plans should promote the protection and recovery of priority species and (paragraph 180) requires that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Background evidence

- 5.9. [Section 40 of The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) places a duty on all public authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. A key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by Government in its 25 year environment plan.
- 5.10. The law concerning protected species is published separately because its application is wider than planning.

Question

NSP17 Trees

- 5.11. The purpose of this policy is to retain existing trees, and encourage new or replacement planting, wherever possible.

Policy parameters

- a. Existing trees on development sites should be retained and protected during construction and in the long term.
- b. Where it is necessary to remove trees, the loss should be appropriately compensated.
- c. Proposals for new development, where appropriate, should provide new tree planting.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.12. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 130) states that "Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible."

Background evidence

- 5.13. Trees are an important part of every community. All trees and woodlands, wherever they are in the landscape, including our towns and cities, can provide a wide range of benefits which increase our quality of life. These benefits include improvements in air quality, reduction of the 'urban heat island', opportunities for people to re-connect with nature and attractive open spaces to improve health and well-being. They help to reduce food risk and can improve water quality amongst others.
- 5.14. [Section 197 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) places a duty on the local planning authority to include appropriate provision for the preservation and planting of trees.

Question

NSP18 Landscape

- 5.15. The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance the diverse landscape character of the district. The existing policy requires updating following new evidence on the landscape character of the district.

Policy parameters

- a. All proposals for development to be informed by, and be sympathetic to, the character of the landscape as described in the West Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment and Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment.
- b. Proposals to demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, enhance and where possible restore the character of the landscape, including the setting of settlements, the significance of gaps between them and the nocturnal character of the landscape.
- c. Proposals will require the submission of landscape proposals, appropriate to the scale of development, with applications for planning permission.
- d. Any development proposals that are likely to have a significant impact on the landscape must assess the potential impact (including cumulative impact) and propose how negative effects will be minimised through alternative site selection, design, suitable mitigation measures or as a last resort appropriate compensation.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.16. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 174) requires that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 5.17. Paragraph 131 'planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible'.

Background evidence

- 5.18. A [landscape character assessment](#) of the district has been completed. This work identifies the different landscape character areas across West Suffolk and highlights local distinctiveness and articulates the special

qualities of each area, as well as providing guidance on how to manage change.

Question

NSP19 Protecting and enhancing natural resources, minimising pollution and safeguarding from hazards

- 5.19. The purpose of this policy is to require all developments to minimise all emissions and forms of pollution to ensure the protection of and no deterioration to air or water quality.

Policy parameters

- a. All applications will need to be accompanied by sufficient information for the proposal to be adequately assessed for potential hazards.
- b. Any proposal which is likely to result in unacceptable impacts on the natural environment, air quality, odour, health and safety of public, water quality, land conditions and quality will not be permitted.
- c. Proposals will not be permitted where there would be an unacceptable risk to unstable land, contamination, due to the storage or use of hazardous substance or due to the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a), trees and/or valued landscapes.
- d. When considering applications, if necessary, the Local Planning Authority will impose conditions to secure appropriate works, remediation and monitoring.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.20. Paragraphs 183 to 188 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that 'planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development'.
- 5.21. Policies should take into account air quality management areas and clean air zones.
- 5.22. Paragraph 174 (b) says 'planning decisions should recognise ... natural capital and ecosystem – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland'.

Question

NSP20 Flood risk and sustainable drainage

- 5.23. The purpose of this policy is to guide flood risk and sustainable urban drainage, setting out when development may be permitted in addition to methods to reduce flood risk.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will require that development proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse effect on existing watercourses or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Development will only be permitted if it has been assessed sequentially as low risk. Development should be safe for its lifetime and not increase flow rate compared to a greenfield scenario.
- b. The policy should make reference to the Suffolk Sustainable Drainage System Guide 2016 (appendix A to the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Strategy) and any updated guidance.
- c. The policy will require all development to consider the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Sustainable drainage systems design should begin as early as possible. The design of SuDS should consider (in order to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding):
 - Effects of climate change.
 - Effects of development in the catchment.
 - Development near airbases should minimise the opportunities for bird strike.
 - SuDS should be considered in addition to public open space.
 - SuDS should incorporate the four pillars of SuDS: water quality, water quantity, biodiversity and amenity.
 - SuDS should be managed for their whole life.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.24. The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 152 states 'the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate taking account of flood risk and coastal change'.
- 5.25. Paragraph 154 'new development should be planned in order to decrease vulnerability from impacts arising from climate change. Risks can be managed through adaptation measures'.
- 5.26. Paragraph 159 'development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding. Development in these areas should be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere'.

- 5.27. Paragraph 161 'plans should apply a sequential, risk based approach to the location of development, safeguarding land for flood management, reducing the risk of flooding with initiatives such as green infrastructure and relocating development where necessary, to more sustainable locations'.

Background evidence

- 5.28. [West Suffolk Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study Stage 1 \(2021\) and addendum \(2022\)](#) – these documents show where flood risk is an issue and reveals water usage.
- 5.29. [Suffolk Sustainable Drainage Systems \(SuDS\)](#) – a local guide, Appendix A to the Suffolk Flood Risk Management Strategy – this describes key details for SuDs components, local flooding information and guidance.

Question

NSP21 Water quality and resources

- 5.30. The purpose of this policy is to improve water quality and manage the use of water resources by ensuring all development proposals suitably manage and reuse surface and wastewater.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will safeguard the quality of rivers and ground water including source protection zones.
- b. The policy will require new residential development to be water efficient – limiting water consumption to at least 80 litres per person per day, and using efficient water fittings, (in line with the most up to date standard). Non-residential development must be accompanied by a water efficiency strategy.
- c. The policy will require water to be considered as a resource and will expect water butts to be provided for all new dwellings unless it is demonstrated that this is not appropriate. Water capture and re-use systems such as grey water recycling is encouraged on all types of development.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.31. Paragraph 20b of the National Planning Policy Framework requires provision of infrastructure such as water supply and wastewater.
- 5.32. Paragraph 34 'developer contributions may be sought for water management'.
- 5.33. Paragraph 153 'planning for climate change should consider water supply'.
- 5.34. Paragraph 174 'new development should be safeguarded from water pollution and seek to improve water quality wherever possible'.

Background evidence

- 5.35. [Anglian Water Services Water Resources Management Plan 19](#) – this sets out how to manage water in a scarce region. The plan promotes efficient use of resources, reducing leakage and consumption. Water supply resilience should be improved. Environmental improvements are occurring where abstraction is decreasing. Planning for growth and adaptation to climate change are mentioned.
- 5.36. [Water Cycle Study Stage 1 2021, with Addendum 2022](#) – this considers whether development proposed in the West Suffolk Local Plan can be

accommodated by water and wastewater infrastructure and the wider water environment. Initial calculations show an overall increase in demand of 3900m³/day between 2021 to 2041.

Question

NSP22 Listed buildings

- 5.37. The purpose of this policy is to set out how proposals to alter, extend or change the use of listed buildings, or developments that affect their setting will be assessed.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the building and/or its setting. Any harm to, or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification.
- b. The level of detail in any supporting information should be proportionate to the asset's and/or building's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on significance.
- c. Proposals should contribute to the preservation of the building, not be detrimental to the building's character or any architectural, archaeological, artistic or historic features that contribute towards its special interest; be an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, design and detail; use appropriate materials and methods of construction which respect the character of the building.
- d. The historic internal layout (which may include later remodelling) and other internal features of importance should be respected.
- e. The setting of the listed building which contributes towards significance, including inward and outward views; the character or appearance of a park, garden or yard of historic or design interest, particularly where the grounds have been laid out to complement the design or function of the building should be respected.
- f. A curtilage and/or setting which is appropriate to the listed building, and which maintains its relationship with its surroundings should be retained.
- g. Energy efficiency measures that do not harm the buildings significance, fabric or ongoing preservation and which take a holistic whole building approach to energy efficiency may be considered where appropriate.
- h. Proposals should have regard to the present and future economic viability or function of the listed building and secure its optimum viable use.
- i. The policy will set out how policies to demolish all or part of a listed building will be assessed.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.38. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.39. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.40. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 5.41. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.

Background evidence

- 5.42. The [Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#). This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.
- 5.43. [Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: How to Improve Energy Efficiency – Historic England \(2018\)](#). This document provides advice and guidance on improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings.
- 5.44. [Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes – Historic England \(2020\)](#). This document provides advice and guidance on improving traditional homes, which are defined as heritage assets.
- 5.45. [Building Regulations and Energy Efficiency – Historic England \(2017\)](#). This guidance provides advice to help prevent the conflicts between energy efficiency requirements in Part L of the Building Regulations and the conservation of historic and traditionally constructed buildings.
- 5.46. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP23 Non designated heritage assets, local heritage assets and buildings protected by article 4 directions

- 5.47. The purpose of this policy is to set out how proposals to demolish, extend or alter non designated heritage assets, local heritage assets and buildings protected by article 4 directions will be assessed.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the building and its setting.
- b. Proposals should respect the historic fabric, design, materials, elevational treatment and ornamentation of the original building; not result in an unacceptable level of loss, damage or covering of original features; and have regard to the setting, plot layout and any boundary features as appropriate.
- c. A clear justification will be required for any works causing harm, so that this can be weighed against any public benefits.
- d. The level of detail in any supporting information should be proportionate to the works proposed and the importance of the building.
- e. This policy will seek to establish how we capture and monitor non-designated assets.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.48. The NPPF defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 5.49. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.50. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.51. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.

- 5.52. Paragraph 203 states that “The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”
- 5.53. Paragraphs 203 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be considered.

Background evidence

- 5.54. [Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management – Historic England \(2019\)](#). This advice note supports the management of change in a way that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of historic areas through conservation area appraisal, designation and management.
- 5.55. [Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage – Historic England \(2021\)](#). This advice supports communities and local authorities in introducing a local heritage list in their area or making changes to an existing list. It sets out a consistent approach to the identification and management of local heritage assets.
- 5.56. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#). This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.

Question

NSP24 New uses for historic buildings

- 5.57. The purpose of this policy is to set out how proposals to alter the use of a historic building will be assessed. Historic buildings are heritage assets identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will support proposals which protect the special significance of a building and that will not detrimentally affect: the character, appearance, setting, important historic fabric, scale, height, massing, alignment, architectural style, materials, form, function and construction methods of the building.
- b. Any harm to or loss of significance caused will require clear and convincing justification.
- c. The level of detail in any supporting information should be proportionate to the asset's and/or building's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on significance.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.58. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.59. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.60. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 5.61. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.

Background evidence

- 5.62. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#). This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.

Question

NSP25 Conservation areas

- 5.63. The purpose of this policy is to set out how proposals for development within or in the setting of conservation area will be assessed.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will set out criteria that a proposal will need to meet to be supported. These include: the need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area or its setting, and views into, through and out of the area; be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, detailed design; the retention of important natural features; the retention of important traditional features such as original doors, windows, shop fronts and boundary treatments; and the use of materials and building techniques and details which complement or harmonise with the character of the area.
- b. Applicants will be required to demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the conservation area and/or its setting where relevant.. The proposal should demonstrate how it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- c. Any new shop fronts, fascias, awnings, canopies, advertisements which require express consent, and other alterations to commercial premises will be required to respect the character of the conservation area and the host building. Standardised shop fronts, unsympathetic house signs, projecting box signs, internally illuminated signs and externally lit signs will not normally be supported. If it can be demonstrated that premises rely principally on trading after dark externally illuminated signs sympathetic to the character of the building and the surrounding area may be permissible in areas where there is no alternative lighting. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guide 2015.
- d. Proposals to demolish buildings or structures that make a positive contribution to conservation area will only be permitted in very exceptional circumstances. Applicants must demonstrate that they have addressed the considerations set out in national legislation and guidance and as appropriate should include evidence that: the building or structure is structurally unsound and beyond reasonable repair, or the proper repair of the building would result in the loss of the qualities which give it architectural or historic interest; all possible measures to sustain an existing use or find an alternative use have been explored and failed, and redevelopment would bring substantial public benefits; and planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the site and a contract for the carrying out of the works has been made.
- e. A clear justification will be required for any works causing harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area, so that this

can be weighed against any public benefits.

- f. The level of detail in any supporting information should be proportionate to the works proposed and the importance of the building.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.64. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.
- 5.65. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.66. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.67. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 5.68. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.
- 5.69. Paragraph 206 "Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."

Background evidence

- 5.70. [Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management – Historic England \(2019\)](#). This advice note supports the management of change in a way that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of historic areas through conservation area appraisal, designation and management.
- 5.71. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#). This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.

- 5.72. [West Suffolk Conservation Area Appraisals](#). Appraisals and management plans for conservation areas across West Suffolk set out why an area is of historic interest. The plans detail the various aspects of interest within the area and how it will be managed in relation to everyday living and future development.
- 5.73. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP26 Development affecting parks and gardens of special historic or design interest

- 5.74. The purpose of this policy aims to ensure that development proposals are not harmful to the character of any park or garden of historic or design interest, or its wider setting.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that they do not have a detrimental impact on the overall design and layout, integral built and natural features and important views into, within or out of the park or garden.
- b. A clear justification will be required for any works causing harm, so that this can be weighed against any public benefits.
- c. The level of detail in any supporting information should be proportionate to the works proposed and the importance of the building.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.75. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.
- 5.76. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.77. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.78. Paragraph 200 states that 'any harm or loss of the significance of a registered park or garden should require clear and convincing justification and substantial harm or loss should be exceptional.'
- 5.79. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 5.80. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.

Background evidence

- 5.81. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#). This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.
- 5.82. The setting of [Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 \(second edition\)](#). This document sets out guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.

Question

NSP27 Archaeology

- 5.83. The purpose of this policy is to set out how proposals that may affect sites of known or potential archaeological importance or interest will be addressed.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals for development which would have an adverse effect on a scheduled ancient monument, or other site of archaeological importance or their settings will not be supported.
- b. Proposals on sites of archaeological interest, or of potential archaeological importance will normally be supported if there is no overriding case against development and satisfactory measures are agreed to assess or evaluate prior to determination and/or preserve or record any archaeological interest before development commences, as appropriate.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.84. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 5.85. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.86. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.87. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.
- 5.88. Paragraph 194 states 'where a site on which development is proposed that includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.

- 5.89. Paragraph 203 states that 'the effect of a proposal on a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account with balanced judgement required about the amount of harm or loss and the significance of the asset'.
- 5.90. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.

Background evidence

- 5.91. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#) – This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.
- 5.92. [The Suffolk Historic Environment Record](#) – is a collection of information about the nature and location of archaeological sites in Suffolk.

Question

NSP28 Enabling development

- 5.93. The purpose of this policy is to set out the exceptional circumstances where permission may be granted for development, which would otherwise not be acceptable, in order to secure the conservation of a listed building or other historic asset.

Policy parameters

- a. the list of key criteria to be met for enabling development to be acceptable will include:
- The need to not materially harm the special interest of the heritage asset or its setting.
 - To secure the long-term future of the heritage asset through a full and properly implemented scheme of repair, and, where applicable its continued use for a sympathetic purpose.
 - The amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the future of the heritage asset, and that its form minimises harm to other public interests.
 - The public benefit of securing the future of the heritage asset through enabling development decisively and demonstrably outweighs the disbenefits of overriding other planning policies or objectives.
 - The heritage asset is not detrimentally fragmented.
 - Sufficient subsidy is not available from any other source.
 - It is necessary to resolve problems arising from the inherent needs of the heritage asset, rather than the circumstances of the present owner, or the purchase price paid.
- b. The policy will refer to the guidance set out in the Historic England publication Enabling Development and Heritage Assets (June 2020) or any subsequent revision.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.94. Paragraphs 189 to 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 5.95. Paragraph 190 states that 'plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'.
- 5.96. Paragraphs 194 to 198 set out how local planning authorities should deal with proposals affecting heritage assets.

- 5.97. Paragraphs 199 to 208 addresses how the potential impacts of proposed development on the significance of designated heritage assets should be considered.
- 5.98. Paragraph 208 states 'local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies'.

Background evidence

- 5.99. [The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Historic England \(2015\)](#) – This advice note set outs good practice to assist local authorities in implementing historic environment policies and helps them to make a well informed and effective local plan.
- 5.100. [Enabling Development and Heritage Assets – Historic England \(2020\)](#).

Question

6. Home and healthy communities

NSP29 Affordable housing

- 6.1. The purpose of this policy is to address the affordable housing needs of West Suffolk.

Policy parameters

- a. On brownfield sites of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares or more 30 per cent of new dwellings will be affordable.
- b. On greenfield sites of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares or more 40 per cent of new dwellings will be affordable.
- c. Where this would result in a requirement for a percentage of a dwelling to be affordable this should be rounded up (0.5 or above) or down as appropriate to a whole number.
- d. A maximum of 10 per cent of the total number of homes on the site should be for affordable home ownership (unless the development is one of the types listed as an exception under para 65 of the National Planning Policy Framework).
- e. Where a proposal for a site includes first homes, they should make up 25 per cent of all affordable homes secured through developer contributions.
- f. The remaining 75 per cent of affordable homes will deliver as much affordable housing to rent as viability allows given the affordable need as set out in part one of this plan and evidenced in the housing needs study of specific groups.
- g. The affordable homes should be distributed across the development and integrated within the design and layout such that they are indistinguishable from the market housing on the same site. This should be implemented in small groups or clusters, in accordance with the guidance provided in the [West Suffolk Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document](#).
- h. All new affordable homes should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards.
- i. Affordable homes should be the appropriate type and size to meet local needs as informed by the council's latest evidence on local housing need.
- j. Planning permission will be refused for development proposals where it appears that a larger site has been deliberately sub-divided into smaller development parcels in order to avoid the requirements of

this policy.

- k. Housing sites with multiple phases of development will have the affordable housing provision reviewed in the application for each phase secured through the mechanism of a Section 106.
- l. Viability at the application stage will be considered in line with paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021. The West Suffolk Local Plan will be subject to a viability assessment at each stage of plan making and a whole plan viability assessment will support the submission plan. Current evidence indicates that securing affordable homes as outlined above is deliverable taking account of other development costs assumed so far. The deliverability and viability of proposed sites will be kept under review as the preparation of the local plan progresses.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.2. Paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay'.
- 6.3. Paragraph 62 "Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes."
- 6.4. Paragraph 65 "Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups."
- 6.5. Planning practice guidance (PPG) "A minimum of 25 per cent of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be first homes. It is expected that first homes (and the mechanism securing the discount in perpetuity) will be secured through section 106 planning obligations."
- 6.6. PPG "Once a minimum of 25 per cent of first homes has been accounted for, social rent should be delivered in the same percentage as set out in the local plan. The remainder of the affordable housing tenures should be delivered in line with the proportions set out in the local plan policy."

- 6.7. PPG “The 25 per cent expected first homes contribution for any affordable product can make up or contribute to the 10 per cent of the overall number of homes expected to be an affordable home ownership product on major developments as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.”

Background evidence

- 6.8. [Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) – Cambridgeshire authorities and West Suffolk Council. GL Hearn (Oct 2021) this considers demographic profile and local housing need including custom and self-build.

Question

NSP30 Housing type and tenure

- 6.9. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all new residential development provides the appropriate type and size of new homes to meet the current and predicted future housing requirements of the communities in West Suffolk.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals are likely to be supported where a range of house types and sizes, both market and affordable, is provided that reflects the identified housing needs shown in the latest housing needs study as set out below:

Size	Market	Affordable homes to buy	Affordable homes to rent
One bedroom	0-10%	15-25%	30-40%
Two bedrooms	25-35%	40-50%	30-40%
Three bedrooms	40-50%	25-35%	20-30%
Four bedrooms	15-25%	0-10%	0-10%

- b. Deviation from the above mix may be justified when applying the mix to individual development sites, if evidence is submitted that demonstrates the nature of the site and character of the area, including the existing mix of properties and any up to-date evidence of need (such as the housing register) justify flexibility in the approach. The council will monitor the mix of housing delivered and respond accordingly so that the strategic mix requirements are closely met.
- c. All new dwellings should meet or exceed the nationally described space standards or any subsequent national standard or policy.
- d. All new homes should be built to building regulations M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable' standard, with 10 per cent of new market homes and 25 per cent of affordable homes are built to building regulations M4 (3) 'wheelchair user' standard.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.10. Paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework “To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”
- 6.11. Paragraph 62 “Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.”

Background evidence

- 6.12. [Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) – Cambridgeshire authorities and West Suffolk Council. GL Hearn (Oct 2021) this considers demographic profile and local housing need including custom and self-build.

Question

NSP31 Custom and self-build

- 6.13. The purpose of this policy is to take a positive approach to permitting custom and self-build (which contribute towards the local housing mix). This will be subject to viability and the West Suffolk Self build and Custom Build Register which records demand when planning applications are considered.

Policy parameters

- a. Developers of sites of 20 dwellings or more should supply at least five per cent of the total dwellings as custom and/or self-build plots. Where this would result in half a dwelling the requirement for self and custom build should be rounded up (0.5 or above) or down as appropriate to a whole number. This will not contribute towards the provision of affordable housing.
- b. All self-build and/or custom-build plots are to be occupied as homes by the self and/or custom-builders for a minimum period of three years.
- c. Plots must be made available, and appropriately marketed for a period of at least 12 months before being returned to the market or built out by the developer.
- d. The council will maintain and have regard to the register of people who are interested in self-build and/or custom build.
- e. The local plan will bring forward land for self-build and/or custom build dwellings including exploring redevelopment opportunities on council owned land or land in which it has an interest.
- f. Proposals for individual or small groups of self and custom build homes will be supported subject to compliance with other relevant policies in this plan.
- g. Communities preparing neighbourhood plans will be encouraged to consider the identification of sites which make provision for self and custom-build projects within their neighbourhood plan area subject to demand.
- h. Further work will be undertaken to understand and monitor the requirements of this policy and how it will be applied.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.14. Paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'the size, type, tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including... people wishing to commission or build their own homes'.
- 6.15. Footnote 28 under section 1 of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

Background evidence

- 6.16. [West Suffolk self and custom build register](#). One hundred and thirty-seven applicants had registered an interest up to 2021. This equates to approximately 30 entries per year.
- 6.17. [Housing Needs of Specific Groups](#) – Cambridgeshire authorities and West Suffolk Council. GL Hearn (Oct 2021) this considers demographic profile and local housing need including custom and self-build.

Question

NSP32 Housing in the countryside

- 6.18. The purpose of this policy is to support limited residential development in small cohesive groups of dwellings without development boundaries, in order to enhance or maintain the vitality of West Suffolk's rural communities.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will permit the development of a small infill plot by a single new dwelling or pair of dwellings if within a small cohesive group of dwellings (seven or more) fronting an existing highway. The proposed development should be commensurate with the scale and character of the existing dwellings. A small plot for the purposes of this policy is one which can accommodate one detached or a pair of semi-detached dwellings where the plot size and spacing between dwellings is similar to adjacent properties.
- b. Proposals that harm or undermine a visually important gap that contributes to local character, result in an unacceptable level of harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties or have an adverse impact on the environment or highway safety will not be supported.
- c. Locations should have good, useable sustainable transport links, including footpaths, cycle routes and public transport to higher order settlements with a range of services and facilities.
- d. Development should not contribute towards coalescence with adjacent settlements or peripheral groups of dwellings or contribute towards the development of isolated homes in the countryside, one or two dwellings at a time, on sites next to other sporadic rural housing.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.19. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines sustainable development.
- 6.20. Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states "In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this."
- 6.21. Paragraph 79 states "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality

of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.”

- 6.22. Paragraph 80 says “Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside’ and sets out criteria where development might be acceptable.”

Background evidence

- 6.23. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors’ reports including [Bramshill v SSHCLG \[2021\] EWCA Civ 320](#)
- 6.24. [Appeal decision APP/F3545/W/20/3244428](#) – land adjacent to Candlemas Barn, Flempton Hall, Bury Road, Flempton. Inspector allowed application for dwelling, for a site located in a group of eight dwellings.

Question

NSP33 Special housing needs

- 6.25. The purpose of this policy is to support the delivery accommodation of the growing elderly population and those with special housing needs in West Suffolk.

Policy parameters

- a. On sites deemed appropriate for residential development by other policies in the local plan, proposals for new or extensions to existing accommodation for elderly and/or vulnerable people will be supported where they meet the following criteria.
- They are designed to meet the specific needs of residents including requirements for disabled persons where appropriate.
 - All new homes should be M4(2) compliant and a minimum of 10 per cent of new market homes and 25 per cent of new affordable homes M4(3) compliant as appropriate to meet the specific needs of the residents.
 - Acceptable amenity space of an acceptable quantity and quality is provided.
 - The development is in a location that is well served by public transport, community, and retail facilities.
 - The proposal does not lead to an over concentration of similar accommodation in the area.
- b. In the countryside proposals for extensions to existing specialist accommodation will be supported where a need can be clearly demonstrated and the proposal meets the above criteria and other policies of this plan.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.26. Paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework states 'the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'.

Background evidence

- 6.27. [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups Study - GL Hearn \(2021\)](#) found that There is projected to be a 69 per cent increase in the population aged 75 and over between 2020-2040 across West Suffolk. The number of older people with dementia is expected to increase by 64.6 per cent from 2020 to 2040. There is also a

62.5 per cent increase projected for those with mobility problems over the same period.

- 6.28. Where viability permits, the council should seek to deliver 100 per cent of new homes as M4(2) compliant and at least 10 per cent of new market homes and 25 per cent of new affordable homes as being M4(3) compliant to meet the identified need.
- 6.29. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP34 Alterations and extensions to dwellings including self-contained annexes

- 6.30. The purpose of this policy is to permit extensions and alterations to dwellings and ancillary development within their curtilage.

Policy parameters

- a. Any proposal for extensions or alterations will be required to respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, not adversely affect residential amenity of neighbouring properties or result in overdevelopment.
- b. Properties located outside of a defined housing settlement boundary, will be required to demonstrate that any proposal is subservient in scale to the existing dwelling, in addition to the other policy criteria.
- c. Any proposal for a self-contained annexe will need to demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy.
- d. Any proposal for an annexe will be subject to restrictions to control the use and does not become a separate dwelling.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.31. Within the National Planning Policy Framework there is no specific reference to alterations and extensions to dwellings including self-contained annexes, however regard is given to the framework as a whole.

Background evidence

- 6.32. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspector's reports.

Question

NSP35 Extensions to domestic gardens in the countryside

- 6.33. The purpose of this policy is to protect the character and appearance of the countryside from unsuitable development, comprising enlarging residential gardens and/or curtilages.

Policy parameters

- a. Small and unobtrusive extensions to residential gardens and/or curtilages will be permitted where they do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area.
- b. Any proposal will need to demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy, this will include not involving the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land and landscape features.
- c. Where possible, when considering planning applications, extensions to domestic gardens should be restricted and controlled via condition to remove permitted development rights, to ensure appropriate use of the land and to safeguard the appearance of the area.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.34. Within the National Planning Policy Framework there is no specific reference to extensions to domestic gardens, however regard is given to the framework as a whole.

Background evidence

- 6.35. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspector's reports.

Question

NSP36 Agricultural and essential workers dwelling

- 6.36. The purpose of this policy is to permit new dwellings in the countryside for a rural worker where it is related to a rural enterprise. These rural enterprises include farming, forestry and equine.

Policy parameters

- a. The agricultural, essential and rural enterprises this policy relates to will be defined at the beginning of the policy.
- b. Any proposal will only be permitted where the local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal can demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy and other policies in the adopted local plans.
- c. Proposal for a new dwelling to support a new rural enterprise business, will be of a temporary form for the first three years.
- d. Proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence detailing the essential need, viability of the business and demonstrating that there are no other suitable alternatives available.
- e. Any proposal will need to be of an appropriate design, scale and form and compatible with the character and appearance of the area.
- f. When considering planning applications, proposals for rural enterprise dwellings should be restricted and an occupancy condition should be imposed.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.37. The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside'

Background evidence

- 6.38. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspector's reports.

Question

NSP37 Residential use of redundant buildings in the countryside

- 6.39. The purpose of this policy is to protect the countryside from unsustainable development and permit the conversion of redundant buildings in the countryside, subject to satisfying appropriate criteria.

Policy parameters

- a. This policy will be linked with another policy NSP49 for re use or replacement of buildings in the countryside. Any proposal will only be permitted under this policy, provided it has been fully demonstrated that all permitted uses defined within that policy have been explored first.
- b. Any residential use will require a minimum of marketing of 12 months to demonstrate that the alternative uses have been reasonably explored. The policy will set out how an applicant will be required to work with the local planning authority to seek to agree an appropriate value of the building being marketed and what is expected from the marketing to ensure that genuine attempts have been made.
- c. Any proposal will need to demonstrate that the existing building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without having to be extended.
- d. Proposals will need to retain the existing buildings character.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.40. The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless ... the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting'.

Background evidence

- 6.41. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspector's reports.

Question

NSP38 Rural exception sites

- 6.42. The purpose of this policy is to support the provision of affordable housing in villages and settlements where other policies in this plan would normally restrict housing development.

Policy parameters

- a. The policy will support rural affordable housing schemes adjoining but outside a housing settlement boundary and in the designated countryside, provided it is adjacent to a settlement.
- b. The development will be required to: assist in meeting a proven local need; be well related to existing services and facilities; sympathetic to the character and form of the settlement; proportionate in scale; the site is the most suitable to meet the need; and will not negatively impact on biodiversity and landscape character and any unavoidable harm will be adequately mitigated.
- c. In exceptional circumstances a small amount of market housing will be allowed on exception sites where it can be justified on viability grounds to facilitate the affordable housing. The market housing in the form of custom and self-build housing will be supported to facilitate affordable housing subject to a proven need identified in the housing needs study for specific groups.
- d. The initial and subsequent occupation of the dwellings will be restricted to those having an identified local need for affordable housing and priority given to those with a local connection to the village through the use of conditions or legal obligations.
- e. For the purposes of this policy local housing need is confined to the parish in which the proposal is situated and immediately adjoining parishes and evidenced by the council's waiting list or a housing needs survey.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.43. Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states 'in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this'.

Background evidence

- 6.44. [Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Housing Needs of Specific Groups Study - GL Hearn \(2021\)](#) found that some 409 households per annum will require affordable housing to rent between 2020 and 2040.

Question

NSP39 Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.45. The purpose of this policy is to address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and travelling showpeople in West Suffolk, set out requirements regarding the location and design of sites and criteria against which planning applications will be assessed.

Policy parameters

- a. The need for new pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for travelling showpeople are currently being assessed through an updated needs assessment. This provision will be met either as extensions to existing sites or by the identification of allocated sites either as part of major development sites or small-scale stand-alone sites.
- b. The policy will set out criteria to guide planning applications where there is identified need that cannot be met on existing sites. This will include: the definition of Gypsies and Travellers is met; accessibility to local facilities and services including schools and health facilities; the ability of local services and facilities to meet the additional demand generated; the scale of the proposal in relation to the nearest settled communities; impact on surrounding land uses, landscape character, settlement character, heritage or biodiversity; rights of way and the road network from traffic generation; adequate access for vehicles and pedestrians, parking and manoeuvring space for vehicles and the provision of open space; sufficient space for accommodating and moving caravans and vehicles; and compliance with other relevant development plan policies.
- c. Proposals for sites will be considered in the light of the above criteria and additional criteria to ensure sites are built to an appropriate quality to meet the needs of future residents, including meeting an identified need; the mix and type of accommodation; pitch sizes and layout; adequacy of facilities, services and amenities, recreational space and any space for employment related uses; boundary treatments and mitigation of any impact on visual amenity.
- d. Proposals for transit pitches will be required to meet the above criteria as appropriate as well as being conveniently accessible to the main 'A' and 'B' class road network; and an agreement being in place for satisfactory site management, including the maximum period and frequency of stay.
- e. Existing sites will be protected from redevelopment to alternative uses unless replacement provision of an improved standard and location is provided elsewhere.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.46. Paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay'.
- 6.47. Paragraph 62 "Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes."
- 6.48. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. DCLG (2015). This document sets out the Government's planning policy for Traveller sites. Policy B, paragraphs 8 to 13 deals with planning for Traveller sites in local plans and Policy H paragraphs 22 to 28 deal with the determination of planning applications for Traveller sites.

Background evidence

- 6.49. [Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment – interim statement \(May 2022\)](#) – identifies the emerging needs of Gypsies and Travellers over the plan period to 2040.

Question

NSP40 Open space, natural and semi-natural green space, sport, play and recreation facilities

- 6.50. The purpose of this policy is to support the provision and expansion of open space, natural and semi-natural green space, sport, or recreation facilities subject to compliance with other policies.

Policy parameters

- a. Development proposing the loss of such space or facilities will not be permitted unless:
 - The space or facility is surplus to requirements throughout the lifetime of the plan period.
 - Replacement of at least the same quality and quantity of open space or facilities is made available in a suitable location.
- b. The policy will require open space provision where relevant to the acceptability of the development, and this will be secured through conditions and/or planning obligations.
- c. The policy will require open space, clubhouses, pavilions, car and cycle parking and ancillary facilities to be inclusive, designed to a high standard and accord with other policies in this plan. They must be well maintained for their lifetimes, well-related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals for floodlighting will only be supported if the benefits are considered to outweigh the identified harm.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.51. National Planning Policy Framework – the definition of sustainable development includes accessible open spaces to reflect current needs and support health, social and cultural wellbeing.
- 6.52. Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework ‘existing open space, sports and recreational facilities and land should not be built upon unless an assessment shows them to be surplus to requirements, or the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better facilities in a suitable location, or the development is for alternative provision which has benefits that outweigh the loss’.
- 6.53. Paragraph 98 ‘access to high quality open space is important for communities’ health, wellbeing and delivers benefits for nature as well as tackling climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust, up to date assessments of need (qualitative and quantitative)’.

Background evidence

- 6.54. [Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment](#) (2022) – this document sets out the current and future needs for outdoor sports facilities. The methodology applied to assess the needs and opportunities for sports facilities follows Sport England’s recommended approach, advocated in ‘Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance’ (2014).
- 6.55. [Indoor Sports Facilities Assessment](#) (2022) – this document sets out the current and future needs for indoor sports facilities. The methodology for the study follows the ‘Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance’ (2014) approach, developed by Sport England.
- 6.56. [Open Space Assessment](#) (2021) – recognises the role of open space provision as a resource to West Suffolk as a locality. This document focuses on reporting the findings of the research, consultation, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping that underpin the study. It provides detail regarding what provision exists in the area, its distribution and accessibility. It will help inform direction on the future provision of accessible, high quality, sustainable open space provision in West Suffolk. It can help to inform the priorities for open space provision as part of future population distribution and planned growth.
- 6.57. [West Suffolk Strategic Framework](#) – sets out our vision and what the council aims to achieve together, with our partners, local businesses, communities and residents. This means focusing our efforts and resources in the areas that are the greatest priorities for West Suffolk’.
- 6.58. [West Suffolk Promoting Physical Activity Framework](#) (2016) – sets out the council’s ‘commitment to enable and encourage people to lead active lives thereby increasing activity levels across West Suffolk. This will lead to improved health and wellbeing for our communities resulting in less reliance on health care services’.
- 6.59. [Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2022](#) – has a vision that ‘people in Suffolk live healthier, happier lives. We also want to narrow the differences in healthy life expectancy between those living in our most deprived communities and those who are more affluent through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities’.
- 6.60. [Sport England’s strategy ‘Uniting the Movement’](#) (2021) – contains a vision for ‘a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives’.
- 6.61. [Sport England Playing Pitch Policies](#) – Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications involving either the provision, or loss of, playing pitches. It considers proposals affecting playing fields in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular paragraph 97) and against its own playing fields policy.
- 6.62. [Planning for Sport Guidance](#) (2019) – Sport England - Sets out how the planning system can help provide opportunities for everyone to be

physically active. It highlights the vital role planning systems play in shaping environments (including open spaces) which offer opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity.

- 6.63. [Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard](#) (2015) –Fields in Trust - Beyond the Six Acre Standard sets out a range of benchmark guidelines on quantity, quality and accessibility for open space and equipped play. It also offers some recommendations to minimum site sizes.

Question

NSP41 Community facilities and services

- 6.64. The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance community services and facilities. The community facilities and services include pubs, post offices, schools, health care facilities, community centres, village halls, allotments and sports facilities.

Policy parameters

- a. Community facilities and services which are to be permitted and sought to be protected will be set out at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community).
- b. Any proposal that results in the loss of a defined community facility or service will require a minimum of marketing of 12 months to demonstrate that the existing use is not viable. The policy will set out how an applicant will be required to work with the local planning authority to seek to agree an appropriate value of the land and/or premise being marketed and what is expected from the marketing to ensure that genuine attempts have been made.
- c. The loss of a community facility or service will only be permitted where the local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal can demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy and other policies in the adopted local plans including an assessment of whether alternative facilities are available.
- d. Proposals for major developments, where necessary will be required to improve, provide or contribute to community facilities and services within the area.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.65. Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'non-strategic policies can include provision of community facilities at local level. Paragraph 93 – Planning policy can plan positively for community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, pubs and places of worship,) which enhance the sustainability of residential environments. Policies should guard against the loss of facilities which reduce community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. Policies should ensure that established facilities can modernise to retain their community benefit'.

- 6.66. Paragraph 187 'planning policies should ensure that new development can integrate with existing facilities and businesses (such as places of worship.) '

Changes to Use Class Order

- 6.67. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses.

Background evidence

- 6.68. [Asset of Community Value process](#). The local authority is able to designate a building and/or an area of land as an asset of community value to ensure the protection of the use of the building and/or land in the interest of a community.

Question

NSP42 Leisure and cultural facilities

- 6.69. The purpose of this policy is to permit new leisure and cultural facilities or improvements and extensions to existing facilities.

Policy parameters

- a. Any proposal will be required to be well connected to existing services and facilities within a settlement and be of an appropriate scale and form.
- b. Proposals should be reached safely and accessibly by public transport, cycling and walking.
- c. There would be no unacceptable impacts on character, appearance or amenities of the area and the design is of a standard acceptable to the local planning authority.
- d. Any proposal for a leisure and cultural facility in the countryside, located away from a settlement, will only be permitted where the local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal can demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy and other policies in the adopted local plan.
- e. Proposals for major developments, where necessary will be required to improve, provide or contribute to leisure and cultural facilities within the area.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.70. Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that "Planning policies and decisions should enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as... sports venues, cultural buildings and public houses...sustainable rural leisure developments."
- 6.71. The Theatres Trust consider all planning applications relating to Theatres in the UK. They have publications and a theatres database.

Question

7. Economy

NSP43 Safeguarding employment

7.1. The purpose of this policy is to protect employment land and businesses.

Policy parameters

- a. Employment land and uses will be defined at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and service).
- b. To ensure that our existing employment land and premises, as well as our new strategic and non-strategic employment allocations identified part three of this plan are protected, a different assessment approach will be required to be given for each. This approach is as a result of the loss of valued employment allocations within the district in recent years and the need to protect these important sites. As such, the non-strategic employment policy will be broken into two parts.
- c. Any change of use to a non-employment use will require a minimum of marketing of 12 months to demonstrate that the existing use is not suitable, available and deliverable. The policy will set out how an applicant will be required to work with the local planning authority to seek to agree an appropriate value of the land and/or premise being marketed and what is expected from the marketing to ensure that genuine attempts have been made.
- d. Any non-employment use proposed on sites and premises used and/or designated on the policies maps for employment purposes, and that is expected to have an adverse effect on employment generation, will only be permitted where the local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal can demonstrate that it complies with set criteria contained within this policy and other policies in the adopted local plans. The loss of employment land and businesses will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- e. When considering planning applications, proposals for employment uses will be restricted to the use that is being applied for and controlled via condition in order to safeguard employment land in the future.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.2. Paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development'.

Changes to Use Class Order

- 7.3. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses. Use Classes B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution) remain.

Background evidence

- 7.4. [The employment land review](#) study prepared by Ramidus Consulting and CAG Consultants was published in November 2021. It has assessed existing employment provision and future need for employment land in the district to 2040.
- 7.5. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP44 Proposals for main town centre uses

- 7.6. The purpose of this policy is to protect and enhance the local planning authority's town centres as defined on policies maps, in order to create vibrant town centres to support the local economy.

Policy parameters

- a. Permitted uses for the defined town centres and primary shopping area will be set out at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community).
- b. Although there has been the introduction of Use Class E and there has been recent changes to permitted development rights, the National Planning Policy Framework still directs retail to town centres and primary shopping areas. The importance of protecting existing retail uses, as well as supporting new retail proposals will be emphasised within the policy.
- c. Any proposal for a main town centre uses and which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan must apply a sequential test to demonstrate that there are no suitable, viable and available sites in defined town centres or on the edge of town centre locations.
- d. Any proposals for retail and leisure use outside of defined town centres and local centres which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, for 280 square metres or more, will require an impact assessment to demonstrate that it will not have a significant adverse impact in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The threshold set reflects the findings of the retail and main town centre uses study background evidence document.
- e. To ensure the vitality and viability of our town centres, a balance of the defined uses shall be maintained, and proposals will be permitted, subject to compliance with other policies and material considerations.
- f. The council will support in principle a variety of retail uses including shared start-ups, pop-up shops and making use of empty shops for retail purposes subject to compliance with other policies and material considerations.
- g. Proposals for residential use in town centres will only be permitted on upper floors of premises, subject to compliance with other policies and material considerations.

- h. When considering planning applications, proposals for main town centre uses will be restricted to the use that is being applied for and controlled via condition.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

7.7. Chapter 7 (Ensuring the vitality of town centres) of the National Planning Policy Framework, details that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Key points from the chapter include:

- Main town centre uses should be located in town centres and a sequential test should be undertaken for proposals in out of centre locations.
- When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a set proportionate locally set floorspace threshold.

Changes to Use Class Order

7.8. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses.

Background evidence

- 7.9. The [retail and main town centre uses study](#) prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton was published in 2022. It has assessed existing retail and main town centre use provision and future quantitative and qualitative need for new retail and commercial leisure floorspace in the district to 2040.
- 7.10. The study has advised how needs can be met through an assessment of current and proposed site allocations and in accordance with the town centres 'first' (sequential) approach.
- 7.11. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP45 Local centres

- 7.12. The purpose of this policy is to protect new and existing local centres defined in part three of the local plan and on the policies map. Local centres comprise a variety of uses which include community centre, shop, takeaway facility and post offices.

Policy parameters

- a. Permitted uses for defined local centres will be set out at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and service) and F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community).
- b. The retail and main town centre uses study has helped to inform this policy regarding the health of local centres and threshold for retail development in the defined areas.
- c. The local planning authority will seek to maintain a mix of uses to safeguard and ensure the long-term provision of the services and facilities within local centres, given the importance of these in communities. The uses will comprise leisure and recreation, health and community, small scale retail and education.
- d. Any proposals for retail and leisure use outside of defined town centres and local centres which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, for 280 square metres or more, will require an impact assessment to demonstrate that it will not have a significant adverse impact in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The threshold set reflects the findings of the retail and main town centre uses study background evidence document.
- e. Proposals for new or extended uses within local centres will be permitted provided that there is no adverse impact on residential amenity, highway safety or the environment.
- f. Any proposal for a change of use that results in the loss of one of the defined uses, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the use is no longer viable or that it will not impact the vitality or viability of the local centre.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.13. Paragraph 92 d) of the National Planning Policy Framework states 'planning policies should ensure that established shops, facilities, and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community'.

Changes to Use Class Order

- 7.14. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses.

Background evidence

- 7.15. The [retail and main town centre](#) uses study prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton was published in 2022. It has assessed existing retail and main town centre use provision and future quantitative and qualitative need for new retail and commercial leisure floorspace in the district to 2040.
- 7.16. The study has advised how needs can be met through an assessment of current and proposed site allocations and in accordance with the town centres 'first' (sequential) approach.

Question

NSP46 Street trading and street cafes

- 7.17. The purpose of this policy is to support proposals for street trading and street cafes in designated primary shopping areas and town centres as defined on policies maps.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals will be permitted subject to there being no adverse impact on residential and visual amenity, public safety and highway safety.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.18. Paragraph 87 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework "In town centres planning policy should: retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones."

Background evidence

- 7.19. The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing pandemic which has changed our lives and the way we live. As a result, various rules and legislation has been brought in by the government to manage the pandemic and support businesses. In June 2020, the government set out plans to support businesses such as pubs restaurants and cafes to enable them to serve customers outdoors.

Question

NSP47 Public realm improvements

- 7.20. The purpose of this policy is to create attractive and welcoming public realm areas to encourage visitors, the use of sustainable transport and areas that can be used for a range of community events and purposes.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals will be required to provide active street frontages and create attractive and safe street environments.
- b. Proposals should prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement and create places for public life and interaction.
- c. Proposals should provide connected and high-quality public spaces, to improve the legibility of the townscape and provide a high quality setting for our historic towns and villages.
- d. Any proposals for major developments or redevelopments in town centres and key service centres, will be required to provide or contribute towards public realm improvements where reasonable or necessary to their acceptability.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.21. Paragraph 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework "Policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: b) safe and accessible...through high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas..."

Background evidence

- 7.22. [Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places \(Historic England, 2018\)](#) highlights that 'public realm enhancement needs to consider spaces as places for public interaction, not just corridors for movement'.
- 7.23. [National Design Guide \(2021\)](#) highlights 'streets are places for people as well as for movement'.

Question

NSP48 Shop fronts and advertisements

- 7.24. The purpose of this policy is to require proposals for works to shop fronts or the provision of advertisements to preserve and enhance the premises or location they relate to.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals will only be permitted where they respect the character and appearance of the area and do not adversely affect amenity or public safety.
- b. Any proposal must have regard to the West Suffolk Shop Front and Advertisement Design Guide and reference will be made to this within the policy.
- c. Any proposals for works to shop fronts or the provision of advertisements in conservation areas, will need to accord with the requirements of the local policy on conservation areas.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.25. Paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that 'the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts'.

Background evidence

- 7.26. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.
- 7.27. [West Suffolk Shopfront and Advertisement Design Guide \(2015\)](#). This is a supplementary planning document which provides guidance to improve the general standard of shopfront design and advertisement throughout West Suffolk.

Question

NSP49 Ancillary retail uses

- 7.28. The purpose of this policy is to allow the provision of ancillary retail uses attached to certain uses.

Policy parameters

- a. The uses will be defined at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community).
- b. Any proposal of ancillary retail uses will only be permitted where it is small in scale and relates to the primary use.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.29. Within the National Planning Policy Framework there is no specific reference to ancillary retail uses, however regard is given to the framework as a whole, in particular the relevant sections on retail.

Changes to Use Class Order

- 7.30. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses.

Background evidence

- 7.31. The [retail and main town centre uses study](#) prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton was published in 2022. It has assessed existing retail and main town centre use provision and future quantitative and qualitative need for new retail and commercial leisure floorspace in the district to 2040.

Question

NSP50 Farm diversification

- 7.32. The purpose of this policy is to permit proposals for farm diversification, in order to support the viability of existing farm businesses.

Policy parameters

- a. The uses which will be supported by the policy will be defined within the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020 and taking into consideration the requirements of other policies. The uses will include farm shops, tourism related development, renewable energy proposals, food processing and/or packaging and leisure and recreation activities.
- b. Proposals will only be permitted subject to compliance with a range of criteria set out within the policy.
- c. Any proposal will need to be a subsidiary element of the existing farm business and be of a scale and nature which is appropriate to the location and site context.
- d. Proposals will not be permitted where they have an adverse impact on amenity, landscape character, biodiversity, flooding or highway safety.
- e. Where possible, proposals should seek to reuse existing buildings and/or structures. Any proposals which comprise a new building, should be of an appropriate design, scale and form and avoid the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.33. Paragraph 184 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that 'planning policies and decision should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses'.

Question

NSP51 Re-use or replacement of buildings in countryside

- 7.34. The purpose of this policy is to allow for the conversion and re-use of buildings in areas designated as countryside to be permitted for set uses, subject to satisfying appropriate criteria.

Policy parameters

- a. The permitted uses will be set out at the beginning of the policy, addressing the changes to the Use Class Order in 2020. A consistent approach will be taken across our policies regarding Class E (commercial, business and services), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). The uses will include employment, recreational uses, community uses and tourist accommodation.
- b. Any proposal must demonstrate that the existing building is structurally sound and capable of conversion. Furthermore, any alterations or extensions must be subservient and appropriate in form given the buildings location.
- c. Proposals will not be permitted where there is an adverse impact on highway safety and amenity.
- d. The nature of any proposed use must be compatible with its location and relate well to services and facilities, such as public transport, cycling and walking.
- e. The replacement of some buildings will be permitted in exceptional circumstances, on the justification of two key aspects; the replacement building would result in a more sustainable development and the proposal would restore visual or historical coherence of a group of buildings where this would otherwise be lost.
- f. This policy will be linked with another policy for residential use of redundant buildings in the countryside. Any proposal will only be permitted under that policy, provided it has been fully demonstrated that all permitted uses defined within this policy have been explored first.
- g. Where possible, when considering planning applications, any proposal should be restricted and controlled via condition.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.35. Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 'planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'.
- 7.36. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF 'planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist'.

Changes to Use Class Order

- 7.37. In September 2020, the [Use Class Order](#) was updated. Three new use classes were created: Class E (commercial, business and service), F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and F2 (local community). Uses Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2 have been deleted and replaced with new the new use classes or have now become sui generis uses.

Background evidence

- 7.38. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

NSP52 Tourism development

- 7.39. The purpose of this policy is to permit proposals for tourism development, which includes overnight visitor accommodation such as hotels, air b and b, bed and breakfast and holiday lodges, as well as extensions to existing facilities.

Policy parameters

- a. Any proposal will be required to demonstrate that it relates well to existing services and facilities, defined settlements and public transport. Proposals will need to be well located as for users to be able to walk and cycle to nearby services and facilities.
- b. Any proposal will need to be of an appropriate design and form, as to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area.
- c. Proposals for larger scale tourism development should be located in the defined towns and key service centres within the district, to ensure they are situated in sustainable locations.
- d. Where possible, when considering planning applications, new tourism development proposals should be restricted and controlled via condition where new dwellings would not be permitted otherwise.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.40. Paragraph 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework 'planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'.
- 7.41. Paragraph 184 'states that planning policies and decision should enable sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside'.

Background evidence

- 7.42. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.
- 7.43. The [retail and main town centre uses study](#) prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton was published in 2022. It has assessed existing retail and main town centre use provision and future quantitative and qualitative need for new retail and commercial leisure floorspace in the district to 2040.

Question

NSP53 Business and domestic equine

- 7.44. The purpose of this policy is to allow proposals for business and domestic equestrian related development in the countryside.

Policy parameters

- a. Proposals will only be permitted subject to compliance with a range of criteria set out within the policy. These will include:
- Commensurate landscape mitigation measures to be provided.
 - A proposal does not result in detrimental impact to residential amenity or highway safety.
 - Proposals will not result in adverse impact to the landscape character and biodiversity.
 - Proposals should re-use existing buildings and where appropriate and any new buildings should be located in or adjacent to an existing group of buildings.
 - The best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a) will be protected unless it can demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that there are no suitable alternative sites.
 - Where the scale of a development requires associated residential accommodation, the proposal must accord with our other local policy related to essential and agricultural workers dwelling.
 - Proposals will provide a satisfactory scheme for the disposal of waste and ensure appropriate land is available for grazing and exercise where necessary.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.45. Within the National Planning Policy Framework there is no specific reference to domestic or business-related equine activities, however regard is given to the framework as a whole.

Background evidence

- 7.46. A range of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors' reports.

Question

8. Horse racing industry

NSP54 Development relating to the horse racing industry

- 8.1. The purpose of this policy is to support proposals for new development relating to the horse racing industry (HRI).

Policy parameters

- a. Any proposal will need to provide satisfactory evidence of the business viability, functional need for and scale of the proposal and the contribution made to the HRI as a whole.
- b. Any proposal should be of an appropriate design and make a positive contribution to the areas character, local distinctiveness and biodiversity.
- c. The occupation of any essential residential accommodation proposed will be restricted by condition or legal agreement to those who are necessary for the 24-hour operation and management of the proposal.
- d. Proposals shall include detailed consideration of highway safety, including the movement of horses to and from training, highway safety, network capacity and accessibility for all modes of transport, and measures to reduce transport impacts of the proposal to an acceptable level.
- e. The policy will be applicable to HRI uses plan wide recognising the important role this unique industry plays in the local economy, especially around Newmarket.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.2. There are no specific references to the horse racing industry in the National Planning Policy Framework. However paragraph 130 requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; paragraph 8 (a) lists supporting growth as an environmental objective and paragraph 8 (c) lists improving biodiversity as an environmental objective of sustainable development and the approach to this is set out in paragraphs 81 to 85 and 174 to 182; Paragraphs 110 and 111 consider the impact of development proposals on transport networks.

Background evidence

- 8.3. Policies relating to the horse racing industry have been informed by a number of studies including '[Newmarket Horseracing Industry – Local, national and international impact of the HRI in Newmarket' Deloitte 2015](#)'; '[Newmarket's Equine Cluster – The economic impact of the horseracing industry centred upon Newmarket' SQW 2014 \(updated 2017\)](#)'; '[2009 Register of HRI Establishments at Newmarket' Smiths Gore 2009](#)'; '[Newmarket Conservation Area Appraisal'](#) Forest Heath District Council 2009 as well as a number of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors reports.
- 8.4. The protection of the horse racing industry is paramount. A suite of specific local policies has been prepared in order to safeguard and enhance the horse racing industry.

Question

NSP55 Development affecting the horse racing industry

- 8.5. The purpose of this policy is to protect existing horse racing industry (HRI) uses from the adverse impacts of development proposals.

Policy parameters

- a. Material adverse impacts on the HRI uses include noise, traffic volume, loss of paddocks or other open space, access and servicing requirements.
- b. The policy will apply to impacts that affect the operational use of existing HRI sites or that would threaten the long-term viability of the HRI as a whole.
- c. Proposals that will adversely affect the economic, social or environmental importance of the HRI will not be permitted unless the benefits of the proposal would significantly outweigh any harm.
- d. Proposals shall include detailed consideration of highway safety, including the movement of horses to and from training, highway safety, network capacity and accessibility for all modes of transport, and measures to reduce transport impacts of the proposal to an acceptable level.
- e. The policy will be applicable to HRI uses plan wide. This recognises the importance of the industry as well of the unique nature it has in terms of facilities needed to support it.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.6. There are no specific references to the horse racing industry in the National Planning Policy Framework. However, paragraph 130 requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. paragraph 8 (a) lists supporting growth as an environmental objective and the approach to this is set out in paragraphs 81 to 85. Paragraphs 110 to 113 consider the impact of development proposals on transport networks.

Background evidence

- 8.7. Policies relating to the horse racing industry have been informed by a number of studies including [‘Newmarket Horseracing Industry – Local, national and international impact of the HRI in Newmarket’ Deloitte 2015](#); [‘Newmarket’s Equine Cluster – The economic impact of the horseracing industry centred upon Newmarket’ SQW 2014 \(updated](#)

[2017](#)); ['2009 Register of HRI Establishments at Newmarket' Smiths Gore 2009](#); ['Newmarket Conservation Area Appraisal'](#) Forest Heath District Council 2009 as well as a number of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors reports.

- 8.8. The protection of the horse racing industry is paramount. A suite of specific local policies has been prepared in order to safeguard and enhance the horse racing industry.

Question

NSP56 Redevelopment of existing sites relating to the horse racing industry

- 8.9. The purpose of this policy is to support proposals for the change of use of racehorse training yards, stud farms, horse training grounds and other horse racing related uses, to other horse racing industry (HRI) uses, if satisfactory evidence is provided that the specific benefit to the HRI of the proposal, outweighs the loss of the existing use.

Policy parameters

- a. The change of use of racehorse training yards, stud farms, horse training grounds and other horse racing related uses, to other uses will only be permitted if allocated as a proposal in an adopted local or neighbourhood plan.
- b. The policy will also apply to associated residential accommodation and buildings and/or land last lawfully used for HRI purposes.
- c. Any proposal should be of an appropriate design and make a positive contribution to the areas character, local distinctiveness, and biodiversity.
- d. Where necessary conditions will be attached to any permission restricting future changes of use.
- e. Proposals shall include detailed consideration of highway safety, including the movement of horses to and from training, highway safety, network capacity and accessibility for all modes of transport, and measures to reduce transport impacts of the proposal to an acceptable level.
- f. The policy will be applicable to HRI uses plan wide.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.10. There are no specific references to the horse racing industry in the National Planning Policy Framework. However paragraph 130 requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; paragraph 8 (a) lists supporting growth as an environmental objective and paragraph 8 (c) lists improving biodiversity as an environmental objective of sustainable development and the approach to this is set out in paragraphs 81 to 85 and 174 to 182; Paragraphs 110 and 111 consider the impact of development proposals on transport networks.

Background evidence

- 8.11. Policies relating to the horse racing industry have been informed by a number of studies including '[Newmarket Horseracing Industry – Local, national and international impact of the HRI in Newmarket' Deloitte 2015](#); '[Newmarket's Equine Cluster – The economic impact of the horseracing industry centred upon Newmarket' SQW 2014 \(updated 2017\)](#)'; '[2009 Register of HRI Establishments at Newmarket' Smiths Gore 2009](#)'; '[Newmarket Conservation Area Appraisal'](#) Forest Heath District Council 2009 as well as a number of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors reports.
- 8.12. The protection of the horse racing industry is paramount. A suite of specific local policies has been prepared in order to safeguard and enhance the horse racing industry.

Question

NSP57 Horse walks

- 8.13. The purpose of this policy is to support the retention and improvement of the existing horse walk network in Newmarket and Exning.

Policy parameters

- a. The extension of the existing network or the provision of facilities will be supported by such measures as parking restrictions, traffic management proposals, and signage.
- b. Where appropriate land may be reserved in development proposals, provided directly by a horse racing industry (HRI) interest and/or secured by legal agreement.
- c. Any proposal shall be of an appropriate design and make a positive contribution to the areas character, local distinctiveness, and biodiversity.
- d. Proposals shall include detailed consideration of highway safety, including the movement of horses to and from training, highway safety, network capacity and accessibility for all modes of transport, and measures to reduce any transport impacts of the proposal to an acceptable level.

Justification and evidence

National Planning Policy Framework

- 8.14. There are no specific references to the horse racing industry in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 8.15. However, Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states: "Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed, and d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains."
- 8.16. Paragraphs 110 and 111 consider the impact of development proposals on transport networks.
- 8.17. Paragraph 130 requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; paragraph 8 (a) lists supporting growth as an environmental objective and paragraph 8 (c) lists improving biodiversity as an environmental objective of sustainable development and the approach to this is set out in paragraphs 81 to 85 and 174 to 182.

Background evidence

- 8.18. Policies relating to the horse racing industry have been informed by a number of studies including '[Newmarket Horseracing Industry – Local, national and international impact of the HRI in Newmarket](#)' Deloitte 2015; '[Newmarket's Equine Cluster – The economic impact of the horseracing industry centred upon Newmarket](#)' SQW 2014 (updated 2017); '[2009 Register of HRI Establishments at Newmarket](#)' Smiths Gore 2009; '[Newmarket Conservation Area Appraisal](#)' Forest Heath District Council 2009 as well as a number of relevant appeal decisions and inspectors reports.
- 8.19. The protection of the horse racing industry is paramount. A suite of specific local policies has been prepared in order to safeguard and enhance the horse racing industry.

Question