

18 Housing

18.1 The adopted Breckland Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD allocates a total of 7,877 dwellings in Thetford from 2001 to 2026, with 6,500 allocated from 2009 to 2026 (see Policy CP1).

18.2 Recognising that housing growth will create a critical mass of population to support the wider regeneration of the town, Thetford's housing allocation was provided in Policy TH 1 of the East of England Plan which directed 6,000 homes to the town by 2021. It is important to recognise that the case for investment and growth in Thetford was locally driven by Breckland Council and others such as Thetford Town Council. The Government has stated that the local evidence used to inform Regional Plans remains a material consideration in plan preparation. The local case for 6,000 homes in Thetford was founded on the need to support the local economy, meet housing need and support the wider regeneration of the town. At the time of the Core Strategy examination in 2009 there was very little local objection to the housing figures or the rationale for growth and regeneration in Thetford. As the evidence base for Thetford develops, it has become clear that accommodating growth will not be without its challenges and a more flexible approach, whilst in broad conformity with the Core Strategy, is required.

18.3 The adopted Core Strategy states that the majority of these dwellings will be provided in the Strategic Urban Extension to the north of Thetford. In order to avoid adverse impact of development on the Breckland SPA and SAC, the Habitats Regulations Assessment work for the Core Strategy limited the direction of growth of Thetford. The outcome of the HRA process has been the protection of the qualifying features of the Breckland SPA whilst simultaneously enabling growth to occur, provided this takes place via a single urban extension to the north of the town.

18.4 Breckland Council has prepared a more detailed topic paper which provides additional information on the housing numbers contained in this document. However, as set out in detail in the accompanying topic paper, there is local environmental evidence following the Core Strategy preparation which justifies the current proposed housing numbers for the town (5,000 dwellings).

Housing Trajectory

18.5 The Housing Trajectory for Thetford is shown in figure 17.1. The trajectory shows that significant development is not due to commence until 2012/2013. There is a step change over 8 years to the peak at 470 dwellings per year from 2019. Please note that the red is that which has been developed or has planning permission; the blue is an allocation of 5,000 dwellings.

18.6 The housing trajectory does not include windfall developments which are yet to get planning permission. It also does not include any potential development from the regeneration of the existing residential estates or from any changes to the town centre.

Housing Mix

18.7 The Urban Extension will provide for a mix of housing in line with the available evidence on housing need, including specialist forms of accommodation to meet particular need. The starting point will be evidence contained in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and augmented with more localised evidence on particular needs in Thetford where available and agreed with Breckland Council. Affordable housing, whether for sale, shared ownership or affordable rent product⁽⁴²⁾, will be integrated within the overall development and substantial areas of affordable housing will be avoided.

42 The Government is proposing a range of reforms to the way social housing is delivered. These include giving greater flexibility to social landlords to determine the types of tenancies they grant to new tenants. In addition, the introduction of a new affordable rent product will allow a more diverse offer for the range of people accessing social housing. Source: 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme – Framework by CLG and HCA, February 2011



18.8 Major residential development will be expected to include a proportion of dwellings that cater for elderly residents designed and located so as to be integrated with the scheme as a whole. The Local Planning Authority is keen to see as many dwellings as possible designed and built to Lifetime Home standards⁽⁴³⁾ within the Urban Extension. Provision of additional space and facilities to facilitate independent living such as communications systems and carer accommodation will be supported.

43 <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/>



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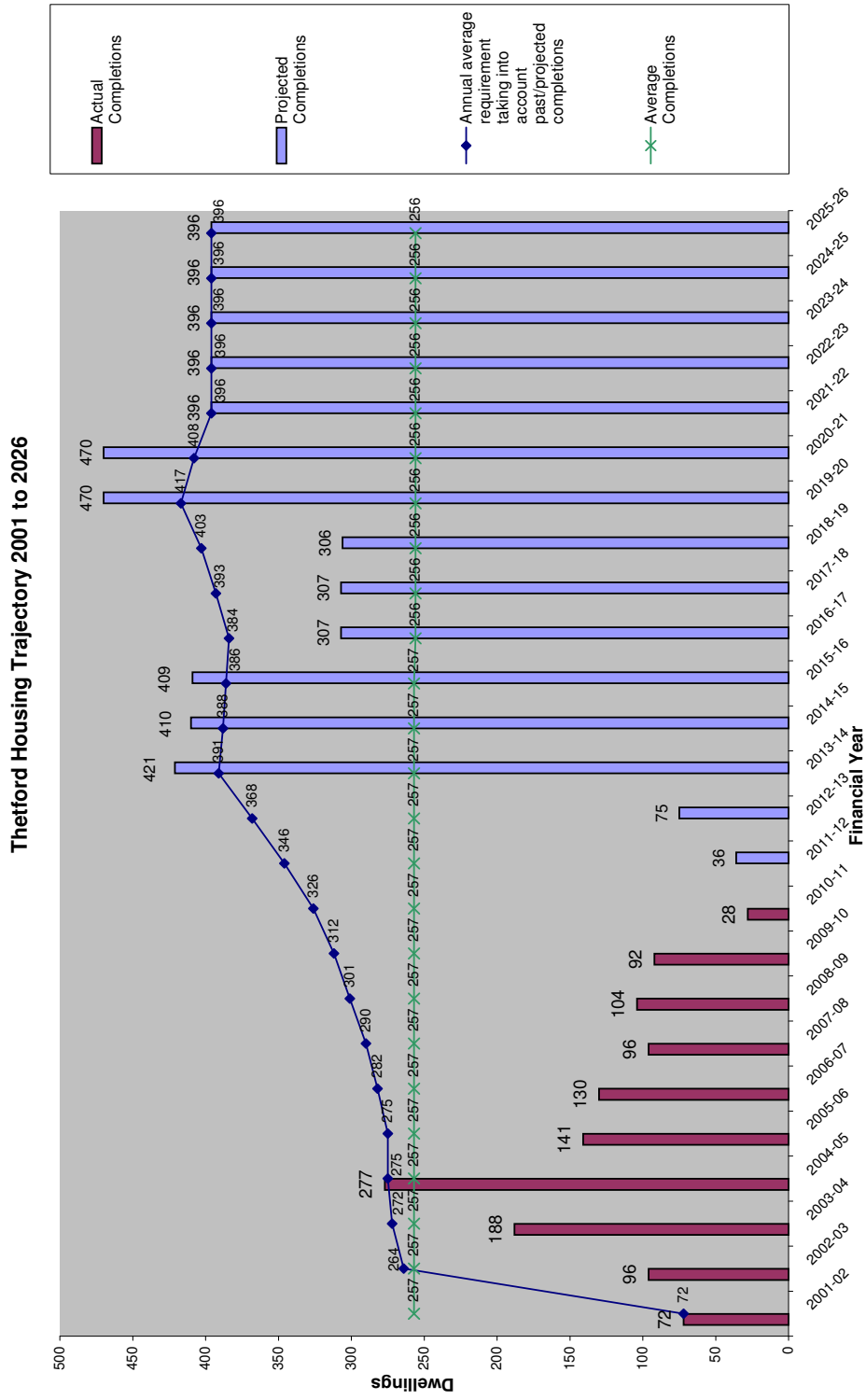
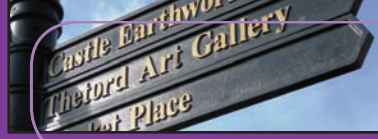


Figure 18.1 Housing Trajectory



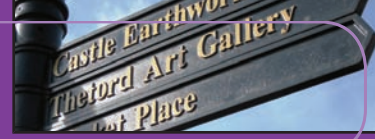
19 Vision for the Urban Extension

Vision for the Thetford Urban Extension

Thetford Urban Extension will have positive, tangible impacts for all who live in Thetford, and its adjoining communities, enhancing its status as a destination of choice and contribute to the revitalisation of Thetford town centre. It will create a unique environment for residents and businesses building on the riverside shopping district, the important and diverse heritage of the town combined with excellent access to the leisure and recreational opportunities provided by its intimate proximity to the forest. It will create a highly desirable location to live work and play. It will act as a catalyst for change, will improve social cohesion and contribute to Thetford's Healthy Town Status. The development will promote the use of public transport and a healthier lifestyle with the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes to the town and surrounding countryside.

The development will respect the local distinctive character of Thetford (including heritage assets and existing green infrastructure) and will have the potential to come forward in a manner that has an organic feel. It will be well designed and deliver a place that maximises the locational advantages, particularly relating to landscape and green infrastructure and its location as a gateway into the town.

The site should provide distinct places and new communities which are also "of Thetford" and evolve with the town. The development will result in neighbourhoods whose delivery will be gradually phased to reflect local infrastructure capacity and the delivery of employment areas and will ensure integration with existing communities.



20 Masterplan

20.1 The Urban Extension to the north of Thetford will deliver some 5,000 new homes and 22ha of employment land adjacent to the A11⁽⁴⁴⁾. Consequently the Urban Extension will contribute to the wider regeneration of the town and be connected to the existing town centre and services. Through a masterplanning approach the Urban Extension will contribute to the town's infrastructure and integrate with the social and transport networks already present in Thetford.

20.2 Map 20.1 'Draft Masterplan for the Thetford Urban Extension.' has been provided to illustrate how the Masterplan⁽⁴⁵⁾ for the Urban Extension will be framed and how it will relate to the policies in the adopted Core Strategy and this TAAP document. The detail of this diagram could change as a result of detailed planning, but gives an indication of the plans for the Urban Extension.

Movement Network

20.3 The movement network identifies primary, secondary and tertiary roads as well as routes for walking and cycling. The principles underlying the movement network are two-fold. The first principle is to achieve the necessary modal shift away from single occupancy car journeys in combination with the high levels of internalised transport movements in Thetford which are resultant from the tandem delivery of homes and jobs. The second principle is to ensure that the movement network allows for orbital movement (principally by foot, cycle and bus) through the site away from the strategic road network (the A11) and the local road network in order to access employment, education and the town centre. The movement network is already framed by the only two arterial routes into the town (Croxtan Road and Norwich Road) and by some existing off-road foot/cycle links (Green Lane and Joe Blunt's Lane) which could be enhanced together with new linkages.

Land Budget

20.4 The land budget for the development of the Thetford Urban Extension has evolved as background reports and statutory designations have influenced the extent of land available for development. Detail on this issue in relation to the housing numbers is set out in a separate supporting Housing Topic Paper. The results of a reduced area of land for development to the north of Thetford means that the Urban Extension Masterplan will consist of the following land uses:

Land Use	Total
Employment Land (including retail and community)	28.2Ha
Residential	120 to 135Ha
Allotments	5.2Ha
Playing Fields	19Ha
Open Space	22.2Ha
Centres - shops/units	1 Local Centre, 1 mixed use centre and 3 parades of shops/units

44 The Core Strategy at Policy CP3 allocated 30 to 40Ha of employment land to Thetford. This includes 18Ha of employment land at the Thetford Enterprise Park which already has planning permission. 22Ha of employment land is allocated within the Thetford Urban Extension.

45 Records show that in parts of the land allocated for the Thetford Urban Extension, there are some back-filled pits and old landfills. These are likely to require, at the least, desk top investigation but could result in site investigation. More details will be clarified as part of the PPA process and at the planning application stage.



Land Use	Total
Primary Schools	Around 6Ha (3 x 420 place Primary Schools)
Secondary School	North Site Expanded. 6Ha allocated.

Table 20.1 Summary Land Budget for the Thetford Urban Extension.

Overview of Constraints Analysis and Land Budget

20.5 Taking into account all the requirements of the policies of the Core Strategy (such as employment allocation and open space), and also allowing for the existing locally distinct features of the landscape such as tree blocks and pine belts as well as the varied environmental designations in the area, the potentially developable land area in the Thetford Urban Extension for residential development is between 120-135Ha. In order to meet the housing numbers as set out in the Core Strategy, a high density of around 50 dwellings per hectare would be required which would result in an unacceptably hard and dense urban edge to the town.

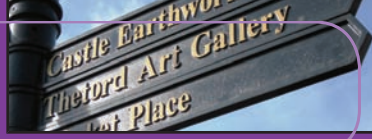
20.6 The Thetford Urban Extension does present an opportunity to make efficient use of land, develop sustainable patterns of development and allow for densities which enable greater numbers of non-car transport movements and the use of energy production technologies to be maximised. Correspondingly, where the Urban Extension abuts the rural and more sensitive hinterland, a softer and lower density edge will be more acceptable. At an average density of 37 houses per hectare (net), it is possible to accommodate up to 5,000 dwellings in the Urban Extension - the approach taken by the TAAP and covered in more detail in the separate Housing Topic Paper.

Phasing

20.7 An urban extension of the scale planned for Thetford will need to be phased over the next 15 years in line with known infrastructure delivery and assessments of the market capability for annual delivery (expressed in the housing trajectory). It is envisaged that the Urban Extension will come forward in five phases which reflect community areas informed by infrastructure delivery, the existing landscape and green infrastructure and transport networks. Initial phases are influenced by existing infrastructure availability and the ability to deliver incremental infrastructure upgrades as the Urban Extension progresses.

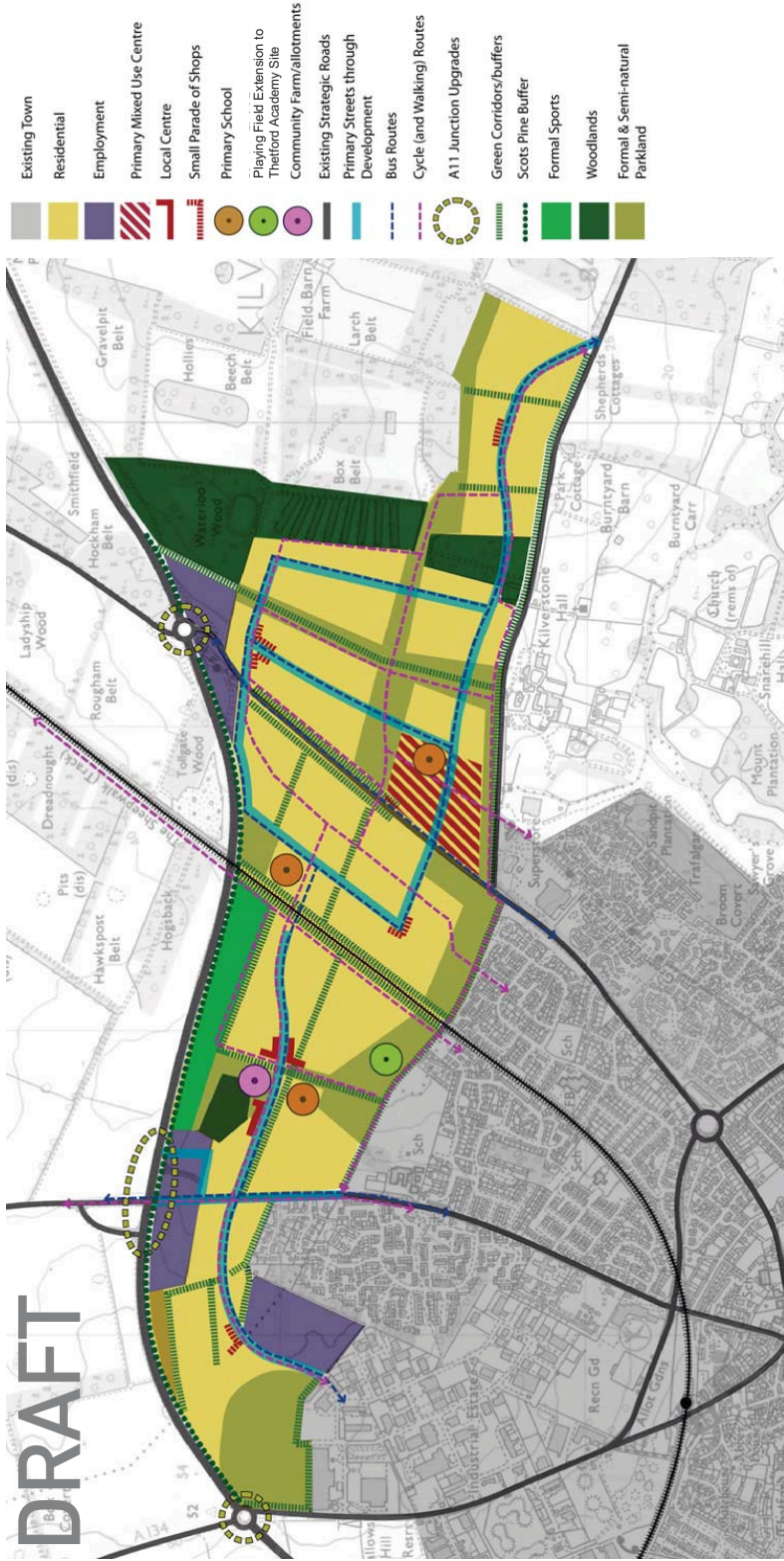
20.8 Development should be phased so as to ensure the optimum relationship between demand for education, health and retail facilities and public transport and the incoming population and to minimise the disruption to early occupants from construction activities. Other facilities such as cycle routes and open space should be front loaded as far as possible to ensure that early occupants can take advantage of them. The phasing of the Thetford Urban Extension is shown on the following map.

20.9 There are areas of the site which are either identified as containing mineral resources or are close to sites of previous mineral extraction, indicating that a viable resource of sand and gravel may exist under parts of the site. Any planning application for the Urban Extension will need to have reference to Core Strategy Policy CS16 of the Norfolk Mineral and Waste Development Framework.



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Theford Urban Extension Masterplan



- Existing Town
- Residential
- Employment
- Primary Mixed Use Centre
- Local Centre
- Small Parade of Shops
- Primary School
- Playing Field Extension to Theford Academy Site
- Community Farm/allotments
- Existing Strategic Roads
- Primary Streets through Development
- Bus Routes
- Cycle (and Walking) Routes
- A11 Junction Upgrades
- Green Corridors/buffers
- Scots Pine Buffer
- Formal Sports
- Woodlands
- Formal & Semi-natural Parkland

THETFORD AREA ACTION PLAN
THETFORD URBAN EXTENSION PROPOSAL
14/09/12
NOV 2010

This is the draft Masterplan for the Theford Urban Extension and provides a basis for some of the technical evidence underpinning the TAAP. Masterplanning is an iterative process and as development proposals progress areas of the Masterplan are likely to evolve within the context provided by the TAAP. The section in the TAAP is not meant to include great detail but rather show how the development could look at a more strategic level. It will be for planning applications to reflect the policies in the TAAP and include more detail.

With regards to the playing field extension to the Academy site, please see Policy TH32 for more details. It should be noted that Policy TH26 seeks land to be set aside for a potential new train station in the Urban Extension. This is not shown on this map, but would be situated on the railway at a suitable point between the A11 and Joe Blunt's Lane.

Map 20.1 Draft Masterplan for the Theford Urban Extension.

DRAFT



- PHASE 1
- PHASE 2
- PHASE 3
- PHASE 4
- PHASE 5
- OPEN SPACES
- EXISTING PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK
- PROPOSED PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK

THETFORD AREA ACTION PLAN	
PHASING DIAGRAM	
14/9/12	
NOV 2010	Alan Baxter

Map 20.2 Draft Thetford Urban Extension Phasing Plan.

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Summary

20.10 The indicative land-use area breakdown and phasing summary is as follows:

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Total
Estimated dates	2013/14/15	2016/17/18	2019/20	2021/22/23/24	2025/26	-
Employment, social and retail land uses ⁽⁴⁶⁾	4.0Ha	14.5Ha	2.5Ha	6.5Ha	0.7Ha	28.2Ha
Number of Dwellings	1,160	920	940	1,230	750	5,000
Green Infrastructure	Structural Tree Planting (See Policy TH 20 'Thetford Urban Extension Strategic Design Principles')	Gallow's Hill Monument (see Policy TH 22 'Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument')				
Allotments	1.0Ha	2.1Ha	-	1.4Ha	0.7Ha	5.2Ha
Sports Fields	4Ha	4Ha	4Ha	4Ha	3Ha	19Ha
Amenity Open Space	3.2Ha	7.87Ha	1.8Ha	7.4Ha	2.0Ha	22.2Ha
Children's Play	Will be provided in line with policy DC11 of the Core Strategy and include a variety of play equipment.					
Local Centre/Parade of Shops	Potential retail (mixed use) in the area of Tesco	Parade of Shops and part of Local Centre	More of Local Centre	Parade of Shops	Parade of Shops	3 parades of shops and 1 local centre
Primary School	1 (2Ha)	1 (2Ha)	-	1 (2Ha)	-	3 (6Ha)
Secondary School	-	Expanded	-	-	-	North Site Expanded
Energy	Electricity: 11kV extension for the first 500 homes. 33kV substation for further development Gas: Low pressure mains from medium pressure mains at Joe Blunts lane	Electricity: 11kV extension from new substation Gas: Low pressure mains from medium pressure mains at Joe Blunts lane Energy: CHP biomass plant	Electricity: 11kV extension from existing network Gas: Low pressure mains extensions	Electricity: 11kV loop back to primary substation Gas: Possible low pressure mains extensions	Electricity: 11kV loop back to primary substation Gas: Possible low pressure mains extensions	

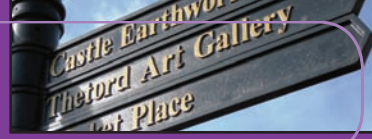
46 This does not include 18Ha at TEP which already has Planning Permission.



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	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Total
Water	Foul drainage: Gravity pumping station and rising main from Norwich Rd to Thetford STW via Joe Blunt's lane and Croxton Rd	Foul drainage: Second pumping station and rising main towards gravity head	Foul drainage: Gravity drainage to existing pumping station	Foul drainage: Gravity drainage to existing pumping station	Foul drainage: Gravity drainage to existing pumping station	
Health Provision	Review of Healthy Living Centre by NHS Norfolk	New health centre to incorporate primary medical and dental services, and additional community services				8 GPs and 6 Dentists
Police Provision	An expanded Police station in current location with response unit near to A11					
Transport Infrastructure	Bus service from Thetford Urban Extension via Norwich Road. Mundford Road/Hurth Way roundabout improvement. Commence implementation of parking strategy and Town Centre Masterplan measures. Commence implementation of walking and cycling improvements on key routes and as part of the Thetford Urban Extension development. Continue Smarter Choices work. Norwich Road/A11 junction	Bus service from Thetford Urban Extension via Croxton Road. Enhance frequencies of external bus services to destination outside of Thetford Croxton Road/Mundford Road improvement. Internal link road bus corridor within Thetford Urban Extension. Rail bridge inside Thetford Urban Extension to provide bus link between two areas. Improvement to Brandon Road/Bury Road/London Road junction. Consider need for new railway station based on demographics of Thetford Urban Extension residents. Continue implementation of walking and cycling improvements on key routes and as part of the SUE development. Continue Smarter Choices work. Croxton Road/A11 junction. London Road/Brandon Road junction		Capacity improvements along A1075 Norwich Road. Bus priority improvement on A1075 Norwich Road approach to Hurth Way Roundabout. Continue implementation of walking and cycling improvements on key routes and as part of the Thetford Urban Extension development. Continue Smarter Choices work. Mundford Road/A11 junction. Brandon Road/A11. London Road/A11		

Table 20.2 Showing the Indicative Land Budget and Phasing of the Thetford Urban Extension.



Policy TH 20

Thetford Urban Extension Strategic Design Principles

A strategic masterplan will need to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the granting of any planning permission to ensure that the following principles will apply to the Thetford Urban Extension.

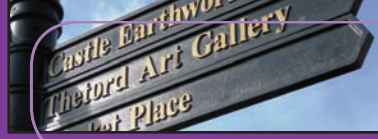
Landscape and Setting⁽⁴⁷⁾

- i. The setting of the distinctive buildings north and south of Kilverstone Road near to Kilverstone Hall and associated parkland, including Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument, will be protected and enhanced.
- ii. Opportunities for conserving, enhancing and restoring biodiversity populations and ecological interest, including heathland creation, will be explored.
- iii. Development proposals respond to the landscape setting and respect and reinforce local landscape character. Development will be an attractive and interesting feature in the landscape and will be integrated into the landscape through a variety of edge treatments. Development will avoid creating a hard solid edge to the A11 bypass.
- iv. Development will follow the local topography.
- v. Tree buffers are required between new development and transport infrastructure (namely the A11, arterial roads and railway), incorporating native understorey planting.
- vi. Green spaces and water features will be incorporated to contribute to the character of the area, provide for recreation and enhance biodiversity. Consideration should be given to opportunities to create new pine belts where they can provide a screening function.
- vii. The effect of road lighting on night-time character of the landscape will be considered and new development should maintain dark night skies through carefully controlled lighting, especially to the development edge.
- viii. The development will contain distinctive character areas which provide for a strong sense of local identity and community spirit.
- ix. Development will be flexible in its design, making best use of energy and other natural resources, including any proven viable mineral resources which occur on site, to allow for sustainable living which reflects the predicted impacts of climate change. Development in the Green Roof Area, as identified on the Policies Map, must incorporate green roofs.

Townscape

- i. Residential development will be of high quality design and create a sense of place.
- ii. Communities will be served by accessible local centres which provide a focus for community activity and meet the day-to-day needs of neighbourhoods.
- iii. Neighbourhoods will be well connected through permeable, well overlooked street and footpath and cycling networks.
- iv. Density of development will reflect the access to services and facilities.
- v. Cyclists and pedestrians will be provided for in a safe and convenient way.
- vi. The design and layout of the road network will address the issue of inappropriate vehicle speeds.

47 Settlement fringe Study, (LUC, 2008) and Green Infrastructure Study, (LUC, 2007)



Reasoned Justification

20.11 There is generally a harsh and poorly integrated urban edge to the north of Thetford, with large steel clad industrial sheds, car parking and service yards and chainlink/palisade fencing all evident, in addition to patchy and neglected field-boundary hedgerows and structural vegetation. As such the Urban Extension offers the opportunity for enhancement and softening to provide a better gateway and entrance to Thetford⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Distinctive Buildings

20.12 Kilverstone Hall is Grade II listed including many of the curtilage buildings and structures. The Hall itself has early C17 features and has been further rebuilt in 1913 in the Jacobean style. The Urban Extension directly abuts the Hall and any development in this area will need to be protect its setting in terms of the layout, infrastructure, density and edge treatment. The area identified to accommodate the Urban Extension is on land which is currently in agricultural use but contains many features of a landscape that was once directly related to the occupation of Kilverstone Hall such as Maiden's Walk and Fisher's Fan.

20.13 There are other sites within the Urban Extension whose setting needs to be protected and enhanced, namely the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument (see Policy TH 22 'Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument') and the existing buildings in the Urban Extension, which are undesignated heritage assets of local historic interest (see Policy TH 23 'Existing Buildings in the Thetford Urban Extension').

Ecological Interest

20.14 Much of the land allocated for the Thetford Urban Extension is currently subject to Environmental Stewardship (provides funding to farmers and other land managers in England to deliver effective environmental management on their land) or Environmentally Sensitive Areas Schemes (incentives to encourage farmers to adopt agricultural practices which would safeguard and enhance parts of the country of particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value). Historically, the Brecks around Thetford would have been areas of heathland which have subsequently been lost to afforestation or agriculture. The soil conditions and climate would support local schemes to recreate areas of heathland as part of the urban extension with the Gallows Hill area affording the most likely opportunity to implement this.

20.15 The plans for the Thetford Urban Extension should also have regard to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, and every opportunity should be taken to achieve positive gain to biodiversity through the form and design of development. As appropriate, measures will include creating, enhancing and managing wildlife habitats and natural landscape. Priority for habitat creation should be given to sites which assist in achieving targets in the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). In developing proposals it is important to afford first priority to maintaining and enhancing the existing habitats of species. The translocation of species should only be considered as a measure of last resort. Measures should facilitate the survival of the species' population, reduce disturbance to a minimum and provide adequate habitats to sustain at least the current level of a population. Mitigation may include the provision of specific measures to reduce disturbance, harm or potential impacts, provision of adequate alternative habitats to sustain, and, where possible, enhance the affected population, or facilitating the survival of individual members of the species.

20.16 New development (residential, employment, schools, community and industrial) has the potential to reverse the declines of urban bird species such as swift, house sparrow and starling. A range of nest boxes are available that can be included in the construction of new buildings (residential and employment). The development should also incorporate areas of nectar-rich plants to maintain healthy insect populations and plants that will provide seed during the winter. By providing such areas it will ensure there is a sufficient year-round food resource for birds that colonise the development.

48 Settlement Fringe Study (LUC, 2008) and Green Infrastructure Study (LUC, 2007)



20.17 Good design principles to incorporate biodiversity into new development are contained within the Town and Country Planners Association's Ecotowns Biodiversity Worksheet⁽⁴⁹⁾ and the UK Green Building Council's (UK GBC) biodiversity guidance⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Tree Planting

20.18 Structural planting is required to mitigate the impacts of development. This provides the opportunity to impart a clear sense of the Breckland landscape character within the Thetford Urban Extension and to create a setting and sense of place that is recognisably Thetford. Such planting should be undertaken at an early stage of development in order to allow the trees to become more mature prior to the occupancy of the dwellings and impart a sense of establishment. A fine balance is required between mitigating the impacts of development and reflecting the historic landscape from excessive and inappropriate planting. Details (extent and variety of species) of such planting and the management should be submitted with any planning application and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. The width of the planting is likely to reflect the scale of existing vegetation which will vary across the area. If land uses such as playing fields are proposed to adjoin the transport infrastructure, the dimensions of the planting could potentially be less when compared to residential land uses. Proposals that include new planting will need to be subject to archaeological evaluation and mitigation to avoid damaging important remains and artefacts. This will be considered through assessment of detailed Planning Applications.

20.19 It is important to maintain local distinctiveness and character of the tree stock. Where new landscaping is proposed, stock should be of local provenance. The pines around Thetford, which form the distinctive Breckland pine belts and hedges come from an 'Elveden' strain, however beech lines and edges to plantations are also a local landscape feature on certain approaches to the town. Broadleaved species, such as oak, should also form part of landscaping schemes where appropriate. Liaison with the Forestry Commission as well as taking advantage of any national tree planting campaigns could aid the delivery of this policy.

Views and Topography

20.20 Any new planting should be sympathetic to patterns within the valley. Development needs to ensure a transitional, porous urban edge to new residential development, using native woodland planting to enable filtered views in and out rather than introducing blanket woodland screening. The potential for long views to the current Thetford settlement edge within this open landscape are sensitive. Structural vegetation which filters views, including oak trees and pine hedgerows, should be conserved and enhanced (see Policy TH 21 'Locally Distinctive Features of the Landscape'). Areas of mass woodland planting would not reflect landscape character. The higher land and exposed open landscape also increases potential visual sensitivity of development in this area.

Green Roofs

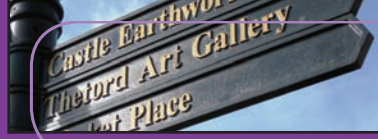
20.21 The Thetford Green Infrastructure Study prepared by LUC (2007) recommended the use of green roofs on development flanking the A11 corridor, close to valley crests, i.e. at the highest points of the site.

20.22 Green roofs (roofs that are partially or completely covered with vegetation) will:

- mitigate impacts of certain forms of development;
- assist in delivering development that is climate-change adapted;
- further mitigate the visual effects of the development from views to the north, contributing to landscape;
- enhance the landscape setting/sense of place of the development;
- enhance the biodiversity credentials of development; and
- assist in surface-water management.

49 <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/biodiversity.html>

50 http://www.ukgbc.org/site/document/download/?document_id=591



20.23 Green roofs are sometimes referred to as living roofs. There are also brown roofs, the main aim of which is to maximise the number of species on the roof as well as planting specific species, such as a threatened species living on a brownfield site. Breckland Council requires developers to consider green roofs on developments out of the Green Roof Area.

Density

20.24 The Urban Extension provides an opportunity to provide for a mix of densities and housing across the development area. The density of development will respond to local character within the site with densities generally lower at the periphery of the site where the boundary of development needs to blend into the surrounding countryside and avoid a hard urban edge to the A11 corridor.

20.25 Density will also reflect the access to services. Densities should be managed so as to ensure that there is a rapid build up of demand such that the provision of services can take place at the earliest possible opportunity and that under-capacity on the one hand or unacceptable lead times for new facilities are avoided. Higher densities as outlined in Policy DC2 of the adopted Core Strategy document will be encouraged adjacent to local centres, the commercial area at the junction of Kilverstone Lane and Norwich Road and transport nodes such as the proposed railway station.

Connectivity

20.26 Vehicle speeds higher than 30mph result in increased severity of injuries or fatalities; injury rates decline with reduced vehicle speeds. 20mph zones and associated measures have been shown to lead to reduced numbers and severity of accidents and to encourage walking and cycling. *Manual for Streets*⁽⁵¹⁾ demonstrates how these conditions can be created through the design and layout of road networks. Proposals for home zones and for shared surfaces in appropriate situations will be supported.

20.27 In order to attain modal shift, development needs to ensure it is permeable to those modes other than single occupancy car use. Policy TH 25 'Walking and Cycling' sets out the requirement for attractive walking and cycle routes and that these should fit in with the town-wide walking and cycling network as set out on Map 9.1 'Walking and Cycling Network'

51 *Manual for Streets* provides guidance for practitioners involved in the planning, design, provision and approval of new residential streets, and modifications to existing ones.
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets>



21 The Existing Environment and Landscape

Policy TH 21

Locally Distinctive Features of the Landscape

Features of Thetford's Locally Distinctive Landscape including pine belts, contorted pines, woodland blocks and field boundaries will be conserved and managed to provide for biodiversity, create a focus for new green infrastructure, ensure development is properly integrated with its wider landscape and to protect local distinctiveness. Structural landscape features within developments should be conserved, reinforced and enhanced as enhancements to the wider townscape/landscape, biodiversity and recreational functions. New native field boundary hedgerow planting will be expected, where appropriate, to create both sustained/long-term cover and to enhance habitat connectivity.

A management plan for these features will be submitted alongside planning applications and agreed by the Local Planning Authority and subsequently implemented. These management plans should be consistent with other management plans.

Where development proposes the loss of features of the Locally Distinctive Landscape (for example to provide access to developments), proposals should provide justification for such a loss and also provide appropriate mitigations and/or compensation measures. The loss of features and mitigation/compensation measure will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the integrity of the distinctive landscape is maintained.

Development will not be 'hard up' to or encroach onto the features of the Locally Distinctive Landscape. Root protection areas will be respected in all design considerations with details provided as part of planning applications.

Reasoned Justification

21.1 It is important to conserve and manage the features of the locally distinctive landscape in order to:

- provide for biodiversity;
- give a sense of place to the Thetford Urban Extension;
- acknowledge the agricultural past of the site; and
- help maintain the existing green network and associated biodiversity benefits.

21.2 Appropriate arboricultural management should be undertaken to prolong the lifespan of the pine belts, contorted pines, woodland blocks and field boundaries and opportunities should be taken not only to retain existing features within development to set the framework in which development can occur but also to plant new lines to create developments with a clear 'Thetford' sense of place and identity. Such management could seek to incorporate the guidelines and principles behind the agricultural land-related Agri-Environment schemes in order to benefit biodiversity.

21.3 Loss of important features of locally distinctive landscape should be minimised and located in areas agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Mitigation for any loss will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and could be in the form of appropriate enhancement of existing features or contribution to the management of existing features.



21.4 Where new planting is proposed, the local planning authority will seek to preserve long views into and out of the site. New planting will be encouraged where it reinforces historic field patterns and enhances habitat connectivity.



Policy TH 22

Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument

The Local Planning Authority will support enhancements to the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument that:

- i. raise awareness of the scheduling;
- ii. preserve the physical condition of the monument and improve its setting;
- iii. aid biodiversity; and,
- iv. form a focus for the creation of new areas of semi-natural greenspace.

Proposals that harm the monument and its setting will not be permitted.

Any detailed plans for the phase of the Urban Extension which includes Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument should be produced in close liaison with English Heritage, Natural England, Norfolk County Council's Historic Environment Service and the Local Planning Authority. An associated implementation plan for improvements and long-term management regime for the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument will be secured by a legal agreement as part of the planning application for the Urban Extension.

Residential and commercial development and associated transport infrastructure adjacent to the monument will be permitted where the density and orientation of the development engenders ownership by the community and preserves and enhances the setting of the monument.

Reasoned Justification

Background

21.5 The area of Gallows Hill, and the Fison Way Industrial Estate in particular, have provided evidence for Iron Age occupation, significant Romano-British finds and possible late-Roman finds and buildings. Since its excavation in the 1980s, the site has been returned to cultivation and was designated a Scheduled Monument in 2009. The Scheduled Monument represents a potent symbol of late Iron Age power in East Anglia. Any tentative history of the site has become entwined with the Boudicca story and the site is often referred to in the public sphere as the 'Boudicca Site'. Its correct title is an Iron Age Religious Site and Associated Enclosures on Gallows Hill⁽⁵²⁾. Development north of Thetford allows for the setting of the monument to be enhanced and for its longer-term archaeological and ecological management to be considered.

21.6 Breckland Council considers that the area could be managed in a way which increases potential tourism, benefits biodiversity and provides an open area for the wider benefit of Thetford's residents. The site has the potential to meet neighbourhood scale provision for the north of the town in relation to ANGSt⁽⁵³⁾.

The Scheduled Monument

21.7 The site could include some or all of the following soft enhancements on or adjacent to the monument as illustrated on Map 21.1 'Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument':

52 THETFORD HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SURVEY, NAU Archaeology, (2009)

53 Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) provides a set of benchmarks for ensuring access to places near to where people live.



- To highlight the monuments importance, appropriate provisions could be made for tourists. This could include interpretation panels and a raised ground to provide views over the monument and towards Thetford Forest and, if appropriate, a small car park and cycle parking adjacent to the monument but not directly on it.
- The monument itself should be used and managed to encourage biodiversity. Initial discussions have identified that the site could be usefully managed as acid heathland with uncultivated margins to accommodate the brush-thighed seed-eater (*Harpalus Froelichii*) which is a ground beetle that requires open vegetation on sandy soil, extensive bare ground and regular and intense soil disturbance⁽⁵⁴⁾. The area is also important for another beetle: *Ophonus laticollis*. A management plan should be produced as part of any planning application for this area.
- To prevent compaction of the monument, public access should be limited. The potential for either an area of, or an area adjacent to the monument to be provided as open space to reduce public access onto the rest of the monument should be considered as part of the masterplan and subsequent planning applications.

Areas Adjacent to the SM

21.8 Currently the setting of the monument is compromised by existing industrial development to the immediate south of the site. English Heritage have identified that development has the opportunity to enhance the monument by incorporating it into a wider scheme and providing a belt of screen planting on the strip of land between the monument and the industrial buildings to the south.

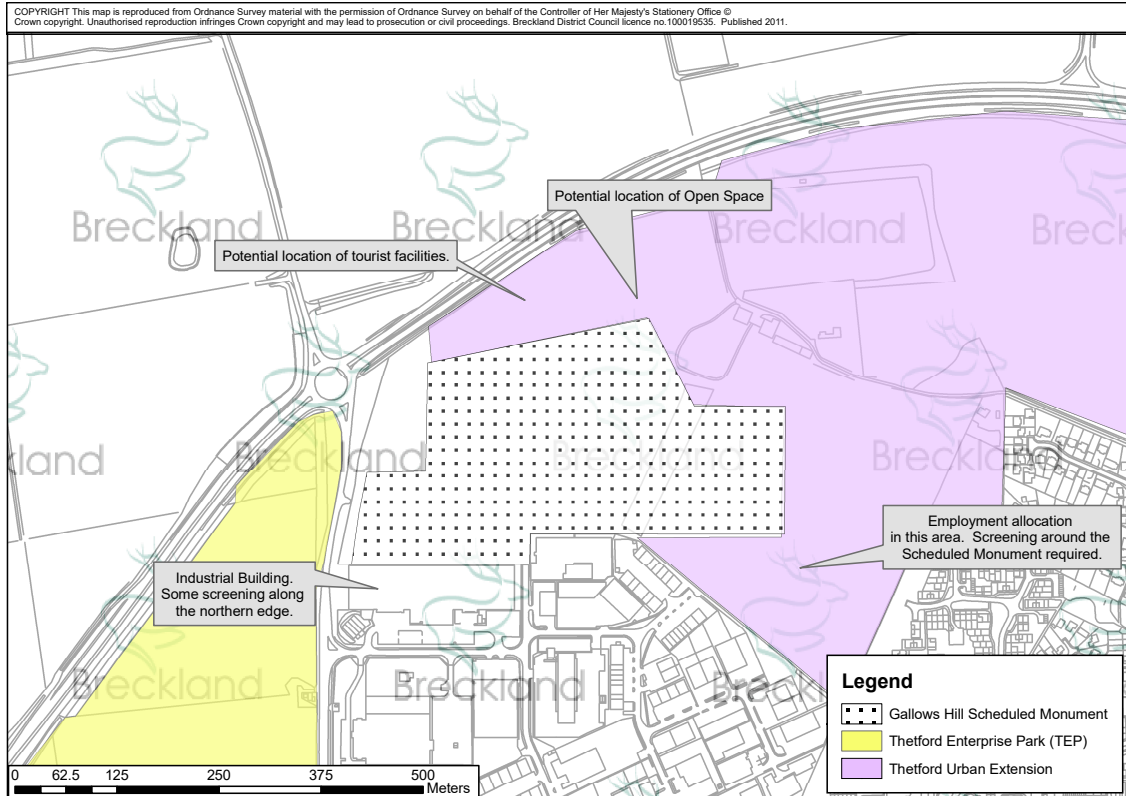
21.9 Any residential development near to the monument should be designed in a way to enhance the setting and reflect the monument. Housing should face the monument, rather than having back gardens in between the buildings and the monument. There should be no hard boundary in the form of fencing or roads immediately next to the monument.

21.10 The area between the monument and the A11 is designated as a site of 'Archaeological and Historic Interest' as identified the Policies Map. Any infrastructure between the monument and the A11, such as waste wastewater network or guided bus ways should be designed in a way to enhance the setting of the monument, taking care of likely archaeological remains as per Policy TH 18 'Archaeology'. Careful consideration will be given to the construction techniques and foundation depths of any transport infrastructure required in proximity to the monument.

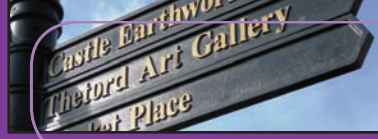
54 The UK Species Action Plan target is to “ensure the maintenance of five viable populations [of *H. froelichii*] across the historic range by 2010”. The Survey for the brush-thighed seed-eater *Harpalus Froelichii* in Norfolk Breckland, by Dr. Mark G. Telfer (2009), reported finding populations on the 6 metre ESA Margin on the Scheduled Monument.



Adopted Thetford Area Action Plan DPD: Historic Past, Healthy Future



Map 21.1 Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument



Policy TH 23

Existing Buildings in the Thetford Urban Extension

Existing buildings within the Thetford Urban Extension as identified on the Policies Map should be retained as undesignated heritage assets of local historic interest. Breckland Council will require such buildings to be thoroughly assessed for biodiversity as part of the Planning Application. Careful consideration will be given to ensuring any proposals for these buildings benefits biodiversity and results in appropriate renovation and reuse which retains the character and settings of these buildings.

Breckland Council supports the principle of Blakeney Farm and Lodge Farm being used for community uses or public houses as part of a Local Centre or small shopping parade in the Urban Extension.

Reasoned Justification

21.11 The purpose of this policy is to protect, retain and enhance buildings identified as 'undesignated heritage assets of local interest' within the urban extension. The policy identifies Red House, Keepers Cottage, Turnpike Cottage, Tollgate and Well Cottage, Blakeney Farm and Lodge Farm.

21.12 These buildings reflect the evolution and the agrarian history to the north of the town, in particular farms and associated cottages linked to estate management in Victorian and Edwardian periods. A number of these buildings occupy prominent positions in the landscape and are constructed of materials typical of the Thetford vernacular from these periods (namely flint, red brick, pantiles and later slate and gault bricks). The notable exception is Red Lodge on Norwich Road which is Edwardian and an unusual building type for Thetford with a broad palette of materials.

21.13 Breckland Council's assessment is that the existing buildings identified within the Urban Extension are not of such value that they merit listed status, however, they are valuable local reference points to the history of the site and the historical management of farmland on the periphery of Thetford in the C19th and early C20th. The retention of these buildings and a respect for their setting will be expected as part of the masterplan for the Urban Extension and subsequent planning applications. Proposals to remove or significantly alter these locally distinctive buildings must be accompanied by evidence in the Design and Access Statement outlining the justification for the proposal and an explanation as to why alternative options which could retain these buildings have not been selected. In the case of Blakeney Farm and Lodge Farm, the Council recognises that the traditional farmhouse and barn buildings have been significantly altered over time to reflect changing agricultural practises. The Council is supportive of proposals that retain these buildings as part of Local Centres and would encourage their reuse for community uses or as a public house to serve the new community.

21.14 Such traditional buildings, in particular farm buildings, have the potential to be used by breeding birds, bats and barn owls. As such, Breckland Council requires thorough and robust surveys to understand the biodiversity value of the buildings. Any improvements to the buildings should accommodate provisions for biodiversity which should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.



Policy TH 24

Surface-Water Management

Development proposals within the Thetford Urban Extension will be permitted where this provides an appropriate Surface-Water Management Plan (SWMP). The SWMP should be provided as part of any application. A full ground investigation will be required to inform such SWMPs.

The SWMP in the Urban Extension must address, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and SuDS Approval Body (Norfolk County Council), the following:

- Provide details on the Infiltration Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) methods to be used;
- Show how the recommendations of the SWMP will be designed and integrated into the development and how such features will be multi-functional in their use (with drainage, recreation, biodiversity and amenity value);
- Take into account potential effects on biodiversity, including demonstration that the recommendations of the SWMP will be managed in a way that would enhance their biodiversity potential;
- Achieve no overall net increase in surface-water run off when compared to greenfield rates to meet the relevant standards specified in the Water Cycle Study; and,
- Demonstrate that regard has been given to the local drainage context beyond the site boundary.

Any submitted SWMP must include evidence that the Environment Agency has agreed an acceptable level and type of infiltration.

Reasoned Justification

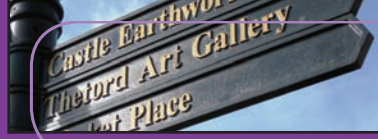
21.15 Management of surface water is key to preventing downstream flood risk as a result of development. It is important that all new developments should provide appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for the disposal of surface water so that it is retained either on-site or within the immediate area, or other water retention and flood storage measures. SuDS reduce overall run-off volumes leaving the site, control the rate of flow and improve water quality before it joins any watercourse or other receiving body.

21.16 The geology and soils underlying the Urban Extension are believed to be permeable and therefore conducive to the use of infiltration SuDS methods. SuDS are an alternative approach to drainage that replicate as closely as possible the natural drainage of the site before development. This reduces the risk of flood downstream of the development, helps replenish ground water and remove pollutants gathered during run-off, benefiting local wildlife, in line with the SuDs management train. The SuDS 'management train' (otherwise known as source to stream) is a sequential process which aims to deal with surface-water run-off locally returning the water to the natural drainage system as near to the source as possible. National Planning Policy highlights the aims for greenfield and brownfield applications of SuDS in PPS1 and PPS25. The latter (at Annex F10) establishes the key principles in relation to run-off from developments on greenfield and previously developed land.

21.17 Proposals should be compliant and consistent with the Interim Code of Practice for SUDS⁽⁵⁵⁾ or an appropriate successor document such as any future national SuDS standards and the forthcoming Norfolk SuDS Guidance. SuDS design should be discussed with the relevant SuDS approval body (Norfolk County Council).

21.18 SuDS should relate to topography and natural drainage routes and should form a focus/integral amenity features of new semi-natural greenspace and green links (GI Study, LUC, 2007).

55 http://www.ciria.org.uk/suds/pdf/nswg_icop_for_suds_0704.pdf



21.19 The Breckland Water Cycle Study (Stage 2, Detailed Study, 2010) has identified evidence for the use of sustainable drainage and has set out respective target run-off rates for greenfield development in Thetford. Therefore, all greenfield developments in Thetford will be required, through appropriate SuDS features, to achieve no overall net increase in surface-water run-off to meet the relevant standards specified in the Water Cycle Study.

21.20 Due to the large site areas, it is likely that both smaller-scale source control methods (e.g. soakaways, infiltration trenches) and larger-scale regional control methods (e.g. infiltration basins) could be used. A review of relevant OS mapping (1:40,000 scale) indicates that the nearest significant watercourse to the sites is the River Thet. However, in order to connect to this, a small ('B' class road) and potential third party land would have to be crossed. Therefore, infiltration methods should be investigated as the primary method of surface-water management.

21.21 The presence of a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (inner, outer and total catchment)⁽⁵⁶⁾ local to the Thetford Urban Extension could present some potential constraints to the use of infiltration method, particularly if there are significant contaminants present within underlying soils. It may be that only clean roof run-off will be acceptable for discharge to ground. Discussions on suitable infiltration SuDS will be needed with the Environment Agency prior to adoption of a surface-water management strategy in order to determine the acceptable level and type of infiltration.

21.22 Developers will normally be expected to make provision for SuDS on site. However, where this cannot be achieved, suitable in-lieu financial contributions will be sought through Section 106 Agreements or the proposed CIL for the provision, management and maintenance of 'strategic SuDS' that may provide a sustainable drainage solution for more than one site. Breckland Council are keen to emphasise that the provision of SuDS does not necessarily have an impact on any land budget as they can be of dual use (e.g. green infrastructure) and integrated into the development. As well as optimising the use of space, this form of integration of key infrastructure functions can significantly reduce longer-term maintenance and aftercare liabilities.

21.23 With regards to managing SuDS in a way to benefit biodiversity, such management plans should be prepared in consultation with Natural England.

21.24 The management of surface water also has implications on water quality and there is a strong relationship between sustainable drainage and Water Framework Directive targets for the UK, delivered in this region through the Anglian River Basin Management Plan (led by the Environment Agency).

21.25 Breckland Council is supportive of a SWMP being prepared on both a Breckland and Thetford context, which is the responsibility of Norfolk County Council in its role as the drainage authority. When this SWMP is delivered, it will provide further determination of the extent of Local Flood Risk, enhancing the current understanding of Strategic Flood Risk provided through the Water Cycle Study and SFRA already funded by Breckland Council. SWMPs are delivered through multi-agency partnerships led by Norfolk County Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), following the model of Norwich and King's Lynn SWMPs.

56 For more information, please see the Environment Agency's website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/37833.aspx



22 Movement

Policy TH 25

Walking and Cycling

A walking and cycling network and its phasing will be identified and the design of the network included as part of any planning application for the Thetford Urban Extension and agreed with both the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highways Authority. This network must fit into the townwide network (see section -9 'Transport') as well as the Thetford Loops and must be completed at appropriate stages of the development to ensure that new residents are encouraged to walk and cycle from the outset. The network must link directly and conveniently with destinations such as services and facilities which are or will be regularly used by the community as well as integrating with public transport in Thetford. It must be designed in a manner which is safe and convenient to ensure walking and cycling are obvious, visible and attractive modes of transport for the community.

Subsequent planning applications for detailed development phases will be permitted where they positively plan for and deliver the identified walking and cycling networks. Proposals which detract from the attractiveness and affect the functionality of the networks will not be permitted.

Reasoned Justification

22.1 Walking and cycling are healthy and sustainable modes of transport. The Thetford Urban Extension must be designed in a way to encourage walking and cycling by providing a comprehensive and convenient network with few barriers so as to attain the necessary modal shift. Walking and cycling should become obvious and attractive modes of travel for those living in the Thetford Urban Extension. The relatively flat and compact nature of Thetford lends itself to an attractive walking and cycling environment, particularly for commuting and school journeys.

22.2 Breckland Council will expect developers/promoters to look beyond the immediate boundary of the application site to ensure that residents in the Thetford Urban Extension and adjoining communities are able to walk and cycle towards the rest of the town. The Thetford Urban Extension walking and cycling network should fit seamlessly into the town-wide network as shown on Map 9.1 'Walking and Cycling Network'.

22.3 Significant work has already gone into promoting walking and cycling in Thetford through Norfolk County Council and Healthy Town projects. Participation rates have improved, but further increases in walking and cycling will be necessary to attain modal shift to healthier and more sustainable modes of transport. Additional projects to encourage and facilitate increased cycle and walking participation are likely to develop during the lifetime of this AAP and Breckland Council will investigate the potential for development to support such initiatives.



Policy TH 26

Buses

(a) Services

New bus services to the town centre and to the existing employment areas on Mundford Road and London Road will be in place from the first day of occupation by a resident in the Thetford Urban Extension.

The frequency of these bus services must be at least every ten minutes to and from the Thetford Urban Extension in at least the peak period but preferably more frequent. Fares must be affordable to ensure buses are an attractive alternative to single occupancy car use. The precise bus service package will be agreed with the Local Highways Authority.

(b) Routes

The layout in the agreed Masterplan of the Thetford Urban Extension will facilitate attractive and practical routes which maximise bus penetration across the Urban Extension and individual phases of development will be permitted when this is achieved. The new bus services must include services and facilities as destinations. New bus services to link to destinations outside of Thetford. Improvements to the bus service between Bury St Edmunds and Thetford will be undertaken in phase 1, prior to occupation of the Thetford Urban Extension.

(c) A New Bridge Over the Railway

As part of the transport network provided in the Masterplan, the Urban Extension will deliver a bridge crossing over the railway between Joe Blunt's Lane and the A11 which enables bus, pedestrian and cycle movement only. The design, position and standard of the bridge will be identified on the Masterplan and agreed with Network Rail and the Local Highways Authority.

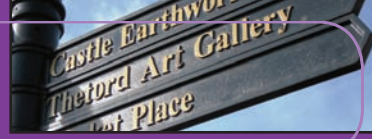
(d) Bus Design Principles

The following design principles will be included in the Thetford Urban Extension and detailed in all Planning Applications:

- Bus priority measures at all junctions on the agreed bus route network;
- Bus boarders;
- A bus stop within 400m of all properties;
- Provision of service-related bus information at all stops;
- At least 50% of all stops within the Thetford Urban Extension will have shelters, preferably more; and
- Real Time Information at all stops.

(e) Funding

The provision of bus services and bus infrastructure, including the railway bridge and bus stops, will be funded from the new development either through CIL (or S106 agreements prior to 2014) or through direct provision through a legal agreement to the satisfaction of the Local Highways Authority.



Reasoned Justification

22.4 The bus is seen as the form of public transport having greatest potential as an alternative to single occupancy car use in Thetford. It is envisaged that the mode split levels for buses could increase significantly over the plan period. As such it is important that the facilities are put in place to promote the bus as a real alternative to single occupancy car use.

Services

22.5 Evidence contained in the Transport Plan for Thetford (Mott MacDonald, 2010), recommends a frequency of at least 6 buses an hour from the Urban Extension which will provide a frequent service and will enable the bus to be an appealing alternative to single occupancy car use.

22.6 Services from the Urban Extension should include the new bus interchange in the centre of Thetford on its route as well as the existing employment areas in the town, although precise routes will be worked up in detail and consider existing services. Whilst users are likely to prefer direct services to the end destinations, a balance must be struck between this and the buses servicing existing community en-route to their destinations in order to benefit the whole of the town and to aid viability of the services.

22.7 Linked to this section is the forthcoming public transport review in the area which will review the destinations in and around the town, served by existing buses, as well as the frequency and the start and finish time of the services, again with the ultimate aim of attaining modal shift away from single occupancy car use.

22.8 Peak period is defined as between 8am and 9am in the morning and 5pm and 6pm in the later afternoon/evening.

Routes

22.9 The bridge over the railway will provide a safe and convenient link between the east and west sections of the new Urban Extension. To encourage the use of sustainable transport modes, this bridge will only accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, buses and emergency vehicles, but not private or commercial vehicles. Delivered as part of Phase 2 of the development, in order to join Phases 1 and 2 together, the bridge should as a minimum be provided as a single lane bridge for buses plus cycle and pedestrian provision. Any mechanism to control the use of the bridge to these modes should not unduly inconvenience these bona fide users i.e. barrier arrangements to allow only bus usage, should not act as barriers to pedestrians or cyclists.

22.10 The existing level crossing between Joe Blunt's Lane and the A11 could offer an appropriate location for the bridge. At this location the railway track cuts into the land and is around 2 metres below the surrounding land reducing the extent of any engineering needed to enable a structure to span over the railway at an acceptable clearance.

22.11 Bury St Edmunds is highlighted as an important destination for buses. Bury St Edmunds offers health, education, shopping and entertainment services and facilities beyond those currently provided in Thetford. Whilst the TAAP seeks to improve the town centre and a knock on effect could be an improvement in the shopping and entertainment offer in Thetford, Bury St Edmunds will remain an important destination for these uses in the short to medium term. Furthermore there are no plans to provide a college or hospital in Thetford and therefore Bury St Edmunds will remain an important destination for Thetford's residents for such services.

22.12 Other priority destinations that should have improved bus services are Brandon (for employment and leisure for example) and destinations along the A11 between Thetford and Norwich mainly for employment). Norwich itself is a key destination for health, recreation, education and retail trips.



Bus Design Principles

22.13 Bus priority should be incorporated into the development, with a particular emphasis placed on links to employment zones and along the entrance and exit routes to the Urban Extension. All bus lanes would be accessible to cyclists and also be designated 'safer routes to school'.

22.14 A bus boarder consists of a section of pavement built out into the road to create a narrowing of the carriageway at the site of the bus stop. The key benefits of bus boarders are:

- They create a designated area of footway for passengers waiting for the bus and minimise the kerb space required for a bus to pull in and out of a stop;
- They can deter illegal parking at the bus stop as the buildout makes it more obvious that parking there would cause an obstruction;
- They raise the prominence of bus services in the area;
- They maintain the place of the bus in the traffic flow, reducing the time taken to rejoin the flow;
- They allow the bus to stop parallel with the kerb, without complex manoeuvres which in turn makes it easier for older and disabled passengers, and those with children and pushchairs to board and alight from the vehicle;
- By stopping in the correct place, at the correct angle, boarding and alighting time can be reduced as passengers can easily step on and off the vehicle;
- They can be helpful in reducing the overall speed of traffic on the road; and
- They are helpful in reducing the overall time spent at the bus stop.

22.15 It is essential that every stop should have a static display of timetables, route maps and location maps for every service utilising the stop, along with any relevant information such as that relating to limited stop services.

22.16 Given the urban nature of the proposed route corridors, a target of at least 50% of all stops within the Thetford Urban Extension to have shelters is suggested, with the remaining 50% being either major interchanges or stand-alone bus stops. Such shelters should not create obstacles for pedestrians or footways.

22.17 The provision of Real Time Information (RTI) will give accurate arrival times for all services passing the stop and is likely to contribute to passenger growth on all passing bus routes. RTI could also potentially give advice on the approach of any limited stop buses which do not serve the stop in order to avoid passenger confusion.

22.18 Energy-efficient lighting could be provided either through existing mains supplies where available, or in the case of new stops there is potential to use solar power to provide flag lighting and on-demand LED lighting for the timetable panel.



Policy TH 27

A New Railway Station in the Urban Extension

The Masterplan for the Urban Extension and subsequent proposals are required to set aside land between Joe Blunt's Lane and the A11 to enable the delivery of a new railway station in the period 2016-2026. The location of land for the proposed station should be accessible and well-related to the proposed bus, cycle and pedestrian bridge over the railway (to provide access from one platform to the other for disabled people for example). The area of land to be set aside for the station will be agreed with the Local Transport Authority through the masterplanning process and reflected in subsequent proposals.

Proposals which inhibit the delivery of this facility will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that there is no feasible prospect of a station being delivered in the plan period (by 2026).

The interim use of the site for temporary development will be permitted where the proposed use is compatible with the adjoining railway and the time frame to vacate the site, as secured through conditions, is compatible with any plan or decision to implement a station proposal.

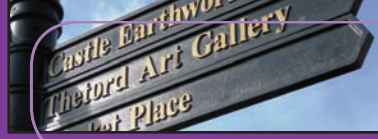
Reasoned Justification

22.19 The Thetford Transport Study (2010) has identified that a station in the Thetford Urban Extension could potentially serve a useful transport purpose and play a significant role in promoting sustainable transport choices from the new community and surrounding rural villages. Such a station would be additional to the existing railway station i.e. Thetford could have 2 railway stations.

22.20 It is most likely that any new demand arising from the opening of a new station at the Thetford Urban Extension would be largely derived from walk-up passengers. A high-level distance-band analysis suggests that while there would be a degree of overlap where the new station may abstract some users living in the existing town from the existing station, the new station could be expected to have a catchment area covering the vast majority of the Urban Extension. It also suggests that those living in this area would otherwise be unlikely to use rail, especially for the critical journeys to Norwich, because they are not within the main walk-up catchment of Thetford's current station, but are within easy driving distance of the main Norwich road, which itself links into Norwich's park-and-ride bus facilities. This leads to a preliminary conclusion that a station at the Thetford Urban Extension may have the potential to serve a meaningful new market for rail, and assist the new development in promoting sustainable transport choices along a critical artery.

22.21 Land should be set aside for this use, although it is acknowledged that there is the need for further analysis of the physical feasibility of such a station, of its operating implications, and, critically, of the likely levels of demand before an outline business case appraisal can be carried out to establish whether there is a clear socio-economic basis for the project to proceed. Before detailed work is carried out, the masterplanning process will be advised by the Local Transport Authority on the land requirements to be reserved following engagement with Network Rail and train operating companies.

22.22 The delivery of a new station for the urban extension will be at best a medium-term project (i.e. after 2016) and there remains a considerable uncertainty that it will be delivered in this plan period. However, at this early stage of detailed local planning for Thetford up to 2026, the evidence in the Thetford Transport Study (2010) identifies that a second station is a desirable contribution to achieving modal shift. The proposal for a new railway station is not currently contained in any franchise arrangement or capital investment plan. Setting land aside for its provision within this document will secure the option for the future.



22.23 However, given the restricted land budget to the north of Thetford it is also desirable not to see the site area for a new station sterilised in the short-medium term. On this basis the Local Planning Authority will be supportive of temporary land uses which are compatible with its track-side location. This could include open space (such as temporary allotments), car parking and temporary structures/compounds associated with the development of the urban extension. The Local Planning Authority will consider the use of necessary conditions to limit occupation and use of the area. Any temporary use will be considered to be over and above the requirement for that particular use as set out in local and national guidance and policy as well as this Area Action Plan so the delivery of a new train station would not result in an under-provision of the temporary use.



Policy TH 28

Changes to the A11 Trunk Road

(a) Delivery of Upgraded Junctions

The five junctions on the A11 bypass around Thetford will be upgraded during the period of this plan as follows:

- i. The Masterplan for the Urban Extension is required to make provision for improvements of the A11 junctions as a result of the new growth;
- ii. The precise timing for delivery of the junction improvements will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, Highways Agency and Local Transport Authority;
- iii. The delivery of the Urban Extension will be controlled by necessary conditions, including occupation of development, until such points that the required junction improvements have been implemented;
- iv. Breckland Council requires the development of the Urban Extension to fund the delivery of the A11 junction upgrades;
- v. Mitigation measures will be agreed with Natural England, and implemented to avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of the Breckland SAC as a result of the junction upgrades at the Brandon Road / A11 junction. Mitigation will include consideration of alternative junction designs and further mitigation measures to avoid an adverse effect on the integrity of the Breckland SAC; and
- vi. Proposals for development which inhibit the delivery of the necessary junction improvements will not be permitted.

(b) Junction Standards

The five junctions of the A11 Thetford Bypass must be improved to an appropriate standard as agreed with the Highways Agency. Surface water-run off should be addressed as part of the design as well as the potential for the central areas of the roundabouts to be managed to benefit biodiversity.

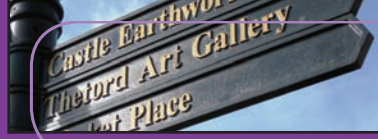
The design and details of how and when the improvements are to be provided must be included in any Masterplan and associated planning applications for the Urban Extension. The delivery, timing and funding of the junction improvements and appropriate habitat mitigation will be secured by legal agreement.

(c) A11 Lighting

Any revisions to the lighting schemes for the junctions on the A11 Thetford Bypass must be designed to be efficient and reduce light pollution and retain as far as practicable the unlit night time character at the fringe of Thetford. Any proposals to light the full length of Thetford Bypass will be resisted by the Local Planning Authority.

Reasoned Justification

22.24 Studies show that even without the proposed growth in Thetford, the junctions around the town with the A11 will suffer congestion to some extent by 2026, with the Mundford Road (A134) junction experiencing the worst congestion. The issues are exacerbated by the proposed growth of Thetford.



22.25 Mitigation involving physical improvement measures to the junctions could provide nil detriment⁽⁵⁷⁾ to the A11 network albeit at significant, monetary cost.

22.26 The Transport Assessment of planning applications for the Urban Extension will detail the improvements to the A11 junctions, providing justification for the approach taken and proving the changes are acceptable in terms of transport impact, archaeology and biodiversity in the area. The Transport Assessment will also include a timescale of when improvements could take place which will be subject to further discussion and agreement between all relevant stakeholders.

22.27 Consideration will be given to the timing of A11 improvements in relation to the eventual timing of proposed local road network improvements to minimise disruption to both the local and strategic road networks. The Local Transport Authority should be party to any discussions regarding A11 improvements that have the potential to have an impact on the operation of the local road network.

22.28 The Local Planning Authority will ensure that any other development proposals in the area will not inhibit the ability to deliver future improvements to the A11 junctions.

22.29 Signalisation could be used as a potential mitigation measure which will help bring traffic congestion and delays to a situation no worse than the 2026 'no Thetford growth' baseline level as set out in the Transport Study (2010). There are some junctions which will continue to operate in an acceptable manner without signalisation. There could potentially be a safety case for signalling all the junctions and timely advice will be sought from the Highways Agency on the precise package of junction improvements.

22.30 Section 12 'Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure' identifies the A11 junctions as being gateways to the centre. Furthermore, the central areas of the roundabouts could be improved and managed to benefit biodiversity. Such changes would need to be agreed with the Highways Agency.

22.31 The improvements to the trunk road have the potential to impact upon surface water flooding through the creation of artificial engineering features. These artificial flood sources include raised channels such as canals, or storage features such as ponds and reservoirs. In 2006, blocked gullies on the A11 resulted in flooding of the carriageway. The policy seeks to ensure that surface water run-off is appropriately controlled.

22.32 Lighting has the potential to impact upon the character and tranquillity of Thetford and the surrounding environs, as well as affect sensitive habitats and species. The Council recognises that the existing junctions are already lit, but will resist proposals to further light the A11 in order to maintain the tranquillity of the area and to limit harm to the amenity of existing and future residents in the vicinity. The Highways Agency has indicated that there is no accident data to suggest that lighting the full length of the road is necessary for safety reasons.

22.33 Regarding the A11 junction with London Road (A1075), Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council and the Highways Agency will discuss the changes as part of the imminent A11 Thetford to Five-Ways dualling scheme in order to ensure a junction form is provided that can accommodate the planned additional movements at this junction. Such discussions could result in cost-effective delivery as well as minimising disruption to users and minimise risk to the workforce who would deliver the changes.

Impact of Improvements on European Sites

22.34 In order to make the delivery of the Urban Extension acceptable in highway terms, the particular improvements needed to the A11 junction at Brandon Road will require the land take of 0.78ha of designated Breckland SAC and classified SPA. Having made an appropriate assessment and having regard to Natural England's

57 Nil detriment means no worse than the '2026 no Thetford growth baseline figures' i.e. the congestion the A11 is likely to experience in 2026 with growth will be no worse than the congestion the A11 is likely to experience without the growth in Thetford. This benchmark originated from the Highways Agency early on in the Transport Plan production process.



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advice, this would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA. However, it would be likely to have a significant effect on the SAC. Furthermore, it cannot be ascertained that the integrity of the SAC would not be adversely affected by the junction's current land take requirements. Therefore, alternative designs or additional mitigation measures will be required for this junction improvement to take place. Consequently, the plan contains an absolute and explicit requirement that the Brandon Road / A11 junction upgrade will be designed so that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC. The Council will seek a legal agreement with the developers of the Urban Extension in order to ensure that mitigation can be implemented.

22.35 The HRA of the Core Strategy also indicated a potential adverse effect on the Breckland SAC from additional road development within 200m due to the impact of air pollution, principally as a result of the addition of nitrogen. The proposed upgrading of the junction at Brandon Road to accommodate additional traffic has the potential to result in an adverse impact on the SAC in this regard. However, transport evidence to support the AAP reveals that the existing junction arrangement would be over-capacity by 2026 due to natural growth in traffic movements and that road improvements would be required notwithstanding the growth at Thetford. The junction improvements will aid movement and limit the potential for unacceptable levels of traffic queueing, which will in turn limit the ability of stationary traffic to build up in proximity to the European site.



Policy TH 29

Improvements to the Local Road Network

In order to deliver the Thetford Urban Extension, the capacity of the local road network in Thetford will be upgraded by 2026 as follows, with the precise details being agreed with the Local Highways Authority, Highways Agency (where appropriate) and Local Planning Authority:

- i. Croxton Road/Mundford Road junction will be enlarged and signalised;
- ii. Hurth Way/Norwich Road roundabout will be enlarged and signalised;
- iii. Bury Road/London Road/Brandon Road/Norwich Road junction will be enlarged and re-signalised whilst not harming the designated heritage assets nearby;
- iv. Mundford Road north of Wyatt Way to A11 will be the subject of capacity enhancements whilst not harming the designated heritage assets nearby;
- v. Norwich Road from Hurth Way to the A11 will be the subject of capacity enhancements whilst protecting the integrity of the mature trees to the north of Kilverstone Road and the mature tree buffer to the south of Kilverstone road; and
- vi. Norwich Road, between Hurth Way and the Bury Road junction, will be the subject of capacity enhancements.

The locations of these local road network capacity enhancements are shown on the Policies Map. Developments which prevent the implementation of these proposals will not be permitted.

The timing, design and construction of these schemes will be agreed through the Masterplan for the Urban Extension and associated planning permissions. Breckland Council requires the development of the Urban Extension to fund the delivery of these improvements.

Reasoned Justification

22.36 The requirements in Policy TH 29 'Improvements to the Local Road Network' are based on current understanding and assumes a worse case scenario based on projected modal splits. Further analysis may reveal that a lower level of intervention is acceptable. Such analysis would need to be agreed with the Local Transport Authority and Highways Agency (as appropriate).

22.37 Modelling has shown that the areas identified would suffer from congestion by 2026, even without the growth of Thetford. The traffic related knock-on effects of the Thetford Urban Extension will exacerbate the issue significantly. As a result, the 5 areas identified will require changes. These changes will essentially aim to increase capacity of the aforementioned junctions or links.

22.38 The term 'capacity enhancements' refers to a range of measures that minimise the impact of congestion on public transport movements and provide for pedestrians and cyclists whilst addressing the flow of traffic. Such improvements could include redistribution of road space, bus priority measures or smart technology. The precise details will be included as part of the planning application and would need to be approved by Local Transport Authority, Local Planning Authority and the Highways Agency (where the proposal affects the A11).

22.39 Any changes will be required to appreciate:

- i. Scheduled Monuments and other areas of historic interest (see sections 21 'The Existing Environment and Landscape' and 16 'Archaeology');
- ii. Listed buildings;
- iii. The setting of Thetford's conservation area (see Policies Map);



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- iv. The existing townscape and landscape, including trees and hedges (see 21 'The Existing Environment and Landscape');
- v. Pedestrians, cyclists and buses (see 9 'Transport');
- vi. Amenity issues (Core Strategy policy DC1 on Amenity);
- vii. Surface water run-off;
- viii. The nature of Thetford as a rural Market Town;
- ix. Relevant strategies and plans (e.g. The Town Centre Masterplan); and
- x. Impact on existing residents (for example accessing properties).

22.40 Consideration will be given to the timing of local road network improvements in relation to the eventual timing of proposed A11 improvements to minimise disruption to both the local and strategic road networks. The Highways Agency should be party to any discussions regarding local road network improvements that have the potential to have a residual impact on the operation of the A11.



23 New Jobs

Policy TH 30

New Employment Land

(a) Amount of Employment Land and Location

Land amounting to at least 22 hectares for new employment development shall be provided within the Thetford Urban Extension. This shall be in locations which provide good access to the A11 trunk road and the land should be provided as appropriately serviced. This shall include mains services such as water, electricity and gas brought to site in order to ensure timely supply and delivery of land to the commercial market. The provision of the 22 hectares of employment land in the urban extension should be phased for delivery as indicated in the table below:

Location	Area	Phasing
Near Tesco	4.0Ha	Phase 1 - 2013/14/15
Lodge Way	14.5Ha	Phase 2 - 2016/17/18
Off Croxton Road	2.5Ha	Phase 3 - 2019/20
Off Norwich Road	7.2Ha	Phase 4 and 5- 2020 to 2026

Table 23.1 Location and Phasing of Employment Development

The saved employment allocation (E.1)⁽⁵⁸⁾ adjacent to the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument will be replaced by the Lodge Way allocation (in table above), in the same broad location, for employment development subject to the following:

- i. It is accessed by business related traffic from Wyatt Way and Lodge Way only, with secondary access from Croxton Road for public transport only;
- ii. The actual shape of the allocation is amended to reflect the Scheduled Monument;
- iii. Appropriate screening is provided which enhances the setting of the Scheduled Monument and acts as a buffer to existing residential development;
- iv. The site is allocated for B1 (business) and B8 (storage and distribution) use; and
- v. The design allows for ease of access by buses and walking and cycling.

(b) Layout and Design Principles

Planning applications for employment land should have regard to the following principles in order to make the new employment areas in Thetford attractive, integrated into the town, quality places and attract a wide range of tenants:

- i. Convenient access by walking, cycling and public transport;
- ii. Well connected to the rest of the town;
- iii. Screening from the existing and future neighbouring residential uses;

58 Saved from the Breckland Local Plan (1999)



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- iv. Ensure appropriate and sympathetic boundary treatments to key road frontages within employment areas using native hedgerow planting with fencing set behind;
- v. Ensure car parking and service yards are clear of road frontages, particularly to the A1066;
- vi. Quality tree planting and landscaping;
- vii. Efficient use of land;
- viii. Provide for a wide range of land uses in order to attract a wide range of tenants;
- ix. Designed to provide a quality working environment and image, including the gateways into the site;
- x. Innovative waste and recycling infrastructure;
- xi. Design out crime; and
- xii. Potential for biodiversity to be provided for.

Reasoned Justification

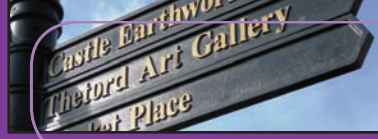
23.1 Thetford is identified as a key employment location along the A11 corridor and is the focus for significant jobs growth in the Breckland Adopted Core Strategy. The Core Strategy identifies at Policy CP3 the need to plan for some 30-40 hectares of strategic employment land at Thetford within the A11 to deliver 5,000 new jobs to 2026. The amount of new employment land proposed at Thetford Enterprise Park with Planning Permission, along with a high jobs growth target seeks to ensure that the town not only continues to be an important economic location, but also improves the balance between jobs and new homes contributing to the objective of self containment i.e. people living and working in Thetford. Delivery of jobs is also critical to the transport strategy for Thetford. Breckland Council will expect a range of new employment sites to be delivered across Thetford's Urban Extension in accordance with the above policy.

23.2 Thetford is also a key location within the Rural Enterprise Valley (REV) and Breckland Council has placed significant emphasis on delivering quality and high value employment opportunities in the finance, ICT, research and advanced engineering and manufacturing sectors. There are already a number of these types of businesses in the Thetford area, and the continued growth of motorsport-related industry along the A11 can help to ensure the town benefits from economic growth in this sector, consistent with the REV objectives.

23.3 The Thetford Enterprise Park (TEP) is a key employment site in close proximity to the A11. The site has the benefit of outline Planning Permission and is currently being serviced in order to aid the delivery of new employment development in the short to medium term. This site will make an important contribution to delivering new jobs; however this will not be sufficient on its own to deliver the requirement and further sites will be needed. The Employment Land Review (2006) recommended that a new business park be developed along with the Thetford Enterprise Park in order to bring forward inward investment to the town and the preferred policy approach seeks to ensure suitable employment provision in the urban extension. The policy seeks to ensure that the additional employment land proposed in Thetford as part of the Thetford Urban Extension comes forward in a timely manner to help deliver the significant jobs growth target along with housing growth in the town. Ensuring such land is serviced by the developers will make sure land is ready to be developed when the commercial market is in a position to expand.

23.4 In deciding where to locate employment and how the allocations are built out, Core Strategy Policy DC1 is of importance with regards to the effect of differing land uses on each other needs to be considered. For example the juxtaposition of residential and light employment could result in amenity issues for residents in terms of noise.

23.5 Further to the above, and to reflect the Lodge Way allocation being adjacent to Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument, Breckland Council would encourage plans for well designed offices or warehouses of a scale that reflect the sensitive location.



Existing Employment Allocation

23.6 Since this allocation was recommended to be saved as part of the Core Strategy, some of its area has since been Scheduled as part of the Scheduled Monument at Gallows Hill. The general location of this allocation remains, next to the existing Wyatt Way Industrial Estate. The only vehicular access to this employment area should utilise Wyatt Way and Lodge Way (with the footways continued and adequate provisions for cyclists). Walking and cycling routes should be provided to access the site in a well designed way from Amelia Opei Way. Other walking and cycling routes should be provided from the north of the allocation.

Design Principles

23.7 The design principles as set out in the policy seek to ensure that new employment areas learn from the successes and mistakes of the design of existing employment estates. They have been produced in liaison with CABI expert design enablers using elements of the evidence base produced to support the TAAP, namely the Thetford Green Infrastructure Study, Thetford Transport Study and the Employment Land Review.

23.8 The criteria seek to ensure the issues that the TAAP address are taken into account as part of the design, for example transport issues as well as setting a good image for the new employment areas and creating a good working environment for workers.

23.9 In terms of new employment proposals, continuous engineered bunding/banking should be avoided as this would be harmful to landform and landscape character. It is more desirable in landscape terms to have a bund which includes landform variation and is not continuously banked with different planting types and densities to 'foil' rather than screen development. This would provide some Breckland Character to the development.



24 Local Centres

Policy TH 31

New Local Centre(s) in the Urban Extension

Two new Local Centres, consistent with definition in national planning policy (currently PPS4 or successor document), will be provided in the Urban Extension to serve the new development to the north of the town. The Local Centres should be capable of including a range of small shops and services, and should be in locations which maximise opportunities for access by foot and cycle by new communities as identified on the Masterplan.

The Local Centres delivered as part of the Urban Extension will provide a total of approximately 1,700m² (net) floorspace. Of this, approximately 500m² (net) should be provided as new comparison goods or other A class floorspace, and 1,200m² (net) new convenience floorspace. The preference is that the convenience floorspace is provided as small foodstores of under 500m² (net) to meet local needs, with the comparison or other A class elements comprising smaller units of around 200m².

The development of the Local Centres shall be phased for completion post 2016 (phase 2 onwards) as significant new housing and population growth takes place.

Reasoned Justification

24.1 The Urban Extension will provide local shopping facilities within walking distance for new residential development, and these facilities will deliver longer term retail floorspace projections between 2016 and 2026. The provision of new local shopping provision to serve these areas should be phased to coincide with the completion of residential units as the population expands, and as such the policy seeks to phase the local centres for delivery post 2016 which coincides with phase 2 of the urban extension⁽⁵⁹⁾.

24.2 Breckland Council expects the Local Centre in the Urban Extension to be easily accessible by modes other than single occupancy car use and designed for linked trips, as well as providing suitable facilities for pedestrians and cyclists including cycle parking.

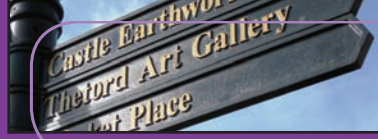
24.3 The Local Centres will complement, not compete with the town centre, and as such the policy seeks to ensure that smaller units are provided so as not to adversely impact the town centre.

24.4 The Retail Study and Town Centre Study includes projections up to 2026, however it should be noted that projections beyond 5 years become less reliable. There could be the potential for the Local Centre(s) to expand to a District Centre in the future depending on evidence to support this, however this will be dependent on future retail evidence and subsequent assessment of impact upon the town centre and will be considered through future reviews of this document.

24.5 Acceptable land uses at Local Centres include the following:

- Cafe's, restaurants and pubs;
- Retail development (as per this policy) with residential on upper floors;
- Bring recycling facilities (see Policy TH 36 'New Bring Recycling Facilities');
- Community Buildings (although see Policy TH 35 'Community Buildings');

59 based on the current draft of the masterplan (2010)

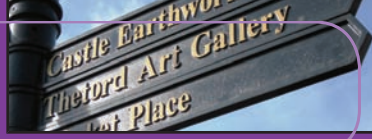


- Children's play; and,
- Health provision (see Policy TH 34 'New Health Facility in the Urban Extension').

24.6 In deciding where to locate such centres and how the allocations are built out, Core Strategy Policy DC1 is of importance with regards to the effect of differing land uses on each other needs to be considered. For example the juxtaposition of residential and public houses could result in amenity issues for residents in terms of noise.

24.7 Where car parking is proposed, the provisions of Policy DC19 of the adopted Core Strategy will be applied.

24.8 The Local Centre should be designed in a way to the principles of designing out crime.



25 Infrastructure - Physical and Social

Water and the Thetford Urban Extension

25.1 The Water Cycle Studies, undertaken by Scott Wilson on behalf of Breckland Council in 2008 and 2010, are the evidence base used to inform this section.

Water Supply Infrastructure

25.2 A strategic main passes to the east of the proposed development areas and would be sufficient to feed the new development areas. However, the developers would be responsible for funding an extension to the rising main to the development areas as there is no water mains coverage within the Thetford Urban Extension, and this would most likely require a new local pumping station. Local connections would then be required on a house by house basis.

25.3 The location and layout of any pumping station proposal will be permitted where it is agreed with the water company having regard to local amenity, landscape and future maintenance requirements.

Waste Water Infrastructure

25.4 The Water Cycle Study assumed that any spare 'capacity' in the existing wastewater network would be required to cater for the infill development (identified for Thetford as approximately 1,000 new properties) and climate change related increases in storm flows in order to prevent an increase in sewer flooding within the existing urban extent of Thetford.

25.5 As well as capacity for infill of 1,000 new properties, there is further capacity in the existing wastewater network in the north of the town to allow development to occur with connections up to approximately 1,000 homes in this location. Beyond the 1,000 infill plus 1,000 new properties to the north of the town, strategic scale investment would be required in wastewater network infrastructure in order to service additional development.

25.6 The design and planning period to contract award for the wastewater pipeline is of 30 month duration due to the need to acquire railways and highways consents owing to the proposed location of the pipeline to the south of the A11 and the requirement for the new pipe to pass beneath the railway line.

25.7 The new pipeline system could run inside the A11 and to the north of the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument, in conjunction with and taking account of any walking, cycling and bus infrastructure provided in this area. Detailed planning of the route of new pipeline systems must take account of potential archaeological and biodiversity sensitivities in this area and should be combined if appropriate with any other infrastructure in the area. Although the scheduled monument will be avoided, the area between the monument and the A11 is likely to be archaeologically sensitive in its own right. Discussion with English Heritage and Norfolk County Council's Archaeology Team will need to be had as early as possible, with proper archaeological assessment and evaluation.

25.8 See section 15 'Water and Flood Risk' regarding the Waste Water Treatment Works.



Policy TH 32

Connecting to a Decentralised Energy Supply

The Thetford Urban Extension is to be designed in a manner that allows for the connection (in particular for heat) to decentralised energy supply as part of meeting relevant carbon compliance levels in the Building Regulations. This could include existing or proposed CHP facilities subject to planning permissions.

Reasoned Justification

25.9 Decentralised and renewable energy, such as biomass Combined Heat and Power (CHP), is a recognised technology which can reduce carbon emissions on-site, and forms part of the Government's hierarchy for achieving zero carbon housing developments. Evidence contained within the Council's A11 Energy Study⁽⁶⁰⁾ reveals that biomass community heating⁽⁶¹⁾ saves between 570-1,500 kg/yr of CO₂ per dwelling (based on displaced mains electricity). The A11 Energy Study considers that a community biomass scheme (CHP) should be the preferred approach to delivering a zero carbon energy solution to meet the new growth in Thetford in terms of delivery and cost-effectiveness and the Council endorses such an approach.

25.10 Paragraph 27 of PPS1 supplement considers that where there are firm proposals for decentralised renewable energy (for example the EPR proposal off the A134, or another decentralised renewable energy solution), Local Planning Authorities can expect development to connect to them or to be capable of connecting to them in future. This is relevant to Thetford as the A11 Energy Study finds that a decentralised biomass solution is the most cost effective mechanism to achieve zero carbon developments in the town. Breckland Council considers that the development of the Urban Extension should explore opportunities to connect to decentralised and renewable energy supply in meeting reductions in carbon emissions in line with the national timetable.

25.11 Breckland Council considers that the Urban Extension should also be designed/laid out in a manner so as not to irreversibly preclude options to connect to a decentralised energy supply solution as part of meeting requirements to develop new homes to zero carbon standards post 2016.

25.12 This Policy does not directly relate to the provision of renewable energy generation/supply, rather potential for future connection of all new development to such a supply. Core Strategy Policies CP12 and DC15 guide renewable energy generation and supply and such proposals will be subject to the usual Development Management process.

60 prepared by consultants IT Power (2010)

61 A central energy centre contains a wood chip fuelled boiler. A heat main delivers heat to individual houses.



Policy TH 33

Education Provision in the Thetford Urban Extension

(a) Primary Sector Schools and Nursery Provision

The Thetford Urban Extension will require the building of three new 420 place Primary Schools, with nursery provision, within the new development. The land area to be set aside for each of these schools will be around 2ha depending on site conditions.

The detailed phasing of delivering schools would need to be developed through the emerging masterplan and a heads of terms agreement associated with any development proposal. The County Council will monitor the pupil numbers generated by this development as the first two schools fill.

The third school could be designed to be built in two phases; first as a 210 place with scope for expansion to a 420 place school later should the need arise.

In addition the County Council will keep school organisation in the existing primary sector schools in the town under review.

(b) Secondary Schools

6.6 hectares of land to the north of Joe Blunt's Lane, will be set aside in the Urban Extension to allow for the ongoing provision of the Academy (at the North Site, Formerly Rosemary Musker High School) over the plan period.

(c) Location

The location of any new school and/or new land associated with the expansion of an existing school/academy will need to be agreed with the Local Education Authority, Academy Sponsors (where the school is an Academy) and Local Planning Authority at the masterplan/planning application stage.

(d) Access

Proposals for new or extended schools and educational sites will be expected to demonstrate how the site will be designed and managed to ensure that a significant majority of the workforce and clientele are able to access the site safely and conveniently on foot, by cycle or by public transport.

(e) Funding

The provision of education facilities, including land, made necessary by the Thetford Urban Extension will be funded from the new development either by CIL or through a S106 legal agreement prior to 2014, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, Education Authority and the Academy.

Reasoned Justification

25.13 The development of 5,000 dwellings is likely to result in the following number of children based on all the dwellings being family units (i.e. multi-bed units). (Norfolk County Council, July 2011).

School (age)	Number of Children
Nursery (3 - 5)	420



School (age)	Number of Children
Primary (5 – 11)	1,270
Secondary (11 - 16)	700
Sixth Form (16 - 18)	140

Table 25.1 The number of children of different ages likely to be associated with 5,000 dwellings.

25.14 A development of 5,000 new homes is likely to generate an additional 1,270 primary sector pupils. There are only a few surplus places in the primary sector schools in the north of Thetford, where this development will take place which will not meet the demand of the new development. Therefore there is a need to provide 3 primary schools in the Thetford Urban Extension.

25.15 On the basis of 5,000 new houses to the north of Thetford, the implication for secondary provision is that there would be a requirement to accommodate a further 700 pupils (11-16 age range) plus a further 140 sixth form pupils (16-18 age range) at the Academy. The Academy will eventually need to be expanded to accommodate up to 2,600 pupils in order to bring all pupils in Thetford onto a single campus and cater for the planned housing growth to the north of the town.

25.16 The existing land area of the Academy (North Site) is 8.7ha, but this includes approximately 2ha of protected woodland.

25.17 To provide for both the combined secondary education offer on the North Site and to accommodate the extra secondary school aged pupils resulting from development and change in the town, 6.6ha of land is required to be set aside in the Urban Extension adjacent to the North Site. The time scale for the expansion of the Thetford Academy will depend on the rate of housing growth.

25.18 Some existing areas of school playing field may need to accommodate some new building to enable the expansion of existing schools to meet the needs of a growing town. Breckland Council will however ensure the adequate amount of playing fields to serve the needs of the expanded school are provided.

25.19 Joe Blunt's Lane is a track along the Parish Boundary between Thetford and Croxton. As such it is an important feature of the landscape which has significant recreational and biodiversity value. Policy TH 11 'Joe Blunt's Lane' seeks to protect and enhance Joe Blunt's Lane as a pedestrian and cycle route for many different uses. It is therefore expected that either playing fields or school buildings associated with Academy (North Site) (formerly Rosemary Musker High School) and its expansion will be north of Joe Blunt's Lane and implemented in such a way that the Lane's route remains uninterrupted. As a consequence there would need to be suitable mitigation/safeguarding measures to ensure adequate security. The Academy will need access (people and services) to the north of Joe Blunt's Lane and as such there will need to be a designated crossing point across the Lane to the new part of the Academy site.

25.20 It is important that schools and school sites support healthy living objectives. These include: active play on site; access by active travel means in particular walking and cycling; healthy food procurement; and sustainable architecture and energy use.



Policy TH 34

New Health Facility in the Urban Extension

Provision in the Urban Extension will be made for a new multi-purpose health facility (additional to the existing Healthy Living Centre on Mundford Road) to incorporate a GP Surgery, with additional space for a commercial pharmacy, and a linked dental surgery in an area highly accessible to the bulk of the population of the proposed Thetford Urban Extension (i.e. In a local centre).

This facility will be made available for use from 1st April 2019 (subject to the planned growth reflecting current projections).

The facility should provide for approximately 6 dentists and around 3 GPs as well as necessary accommodation for community services.

Reasoned Justification

Background

25.21 Thetford is currently served by a range of local Primary Care Services covering general medical (GP) services, dentistry and pharmacy. There are 2 large General Practices in the town centre (School Lane and Grove Lane Surgeries) with School Lane also operating from the relatively new Thetford Healthy Living Centre located on Mundford Road. The latter building also houses a wide range of other health services for local people including diagnostics, physiotherapy, mental health, Children's and other community services and has physical capacity for 7,500 more patients, although currently not the required number of GPs.

25.22 Thetford currently has one existing large dental practice situated in the centre of Thetford. This practice is running at capacity with the current population and has no spare capacity to absorb any additional population from the development. There is also a specialist surgery in the existing Healthy Living Centre which is used for provision of dental services to patients with special needs, but is unsuitable to be used as a general practice facility. Existing dental services are at capacity but NHS Norfolk are looking to locate another provider in Thetford to help ease current pressures in the short term.

25.23 There are 5 pharmacies in Thetford; Boots and Lloyds in the town centre, and others located within Tesco's and Sainsbury's supermarkets with a fifth now open at the existing Healthy Living Centre.

25.24 Patients needing to access acute hospital care are predominantly referred to the West Suffolk Hospital at Bury St Edmunds, or to the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital or the Queen Elizabeth 2nd Hospital in King's Lynn.

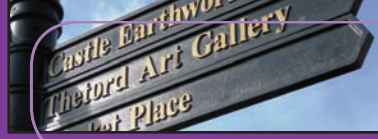
25.25 Mental health services are provided by Suffolk Mental Health.

The Proposed Health Facility Strategy

25.26 In order to provide sufficient health services, additional district nursing and additional staff will be required which will be accommodated in the existing or proposed health facilities.

25.27 In line with the current NHS Norfolk strategy the areas of identified additional health care provision would be located in a new facility located in the proximity of the Thetford Urban Extension to house primary medical, primary dental and community services. The New Health Facility⁽⁶²⁾ will:

62 Based on an estimated additional population of around 12,000 people.



- be operational from April 2019,
- provide 6 dentists,
- provide services for 4,500 patients (around 3 GPs),
- be easily accessible by many modes of transport. It is envisaged that the facility could be located in a Local Centre in the Urban Extension, highly accessible to the majority of the community. The location should also be well served by public transport and have excellent walking and cycling access as well as Sheffield Stand cycle stands in convenient and well surveyed locations with shelters.

25.28 The population of the Thetford Urban Extension is estimated to be around 11,000 to 12,000 people. Whilst the New Health Facility would provide GP services for 4,500 patients as detailed above, there is physical capacity at the existing Healthy Living Centre for 7,500 more patients or around 5 GPs. The provision of GPs to meet the increase in demand from the 11,000 to 12,000 people who are to live in the Urban Extension will therefore be in the order of 8 GPs.

25.29 The preferred model for additional health services is, where feasible, to co-locate primary and community services in one location. This would allow for improved accessibility to a range of services, opportunities to reconfigure and expand out of hospital services, and a better 'one-stop-shop style' service for patients. Central to this will be improving the offer of medical and community services of the Thetford Healthy Living Centre, in particular relocating outpatient and diagnostic services for which Thetford residents currently have to travel elsewhere. In addition it would allow economies of scale resulting in better use of NHS resources in a tight financial climate, and a much better likelihood of being responsive to future changing needs.

25.30 Breckland Council would also support further town centre provision of health care (with regard to Core Strategy and TAAP Policies) as well as the potential for any satellite service or facility to meet the needs of residential areas to the south of the town, to improve their access to such services as well as reducing the need to travel.

25.31 West Suffolk Hospital, Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and Queen Elizabeth 2nd Hospital have sufficient physical capacity to accommodate additional activity.

25.32 In line with Core Policies 4 and 5 of the Core Strategy Breckland Council recognises the need to secure developer funding either through CIL (or S106 prior to 2014) or other finance initiatives towards the capital costs of new health infrastructure directly related to the planned growth. The detail around CIL will be contained in a separate document being produced by Breckland Council.



Policy TH 35

Community Buildings

(a) Shared Facilities

Breckland Council's preference is to support community usage of school and education facilities. As such:

- i. new education facilities should provide for and be set up to allow for appropriate community usage of the facilities; and
- ii. any education facilities that are refurbished or rebuilt should provide for and allow community usage of its facilities to at least a similar standard as before refurbishment or rebuilding but preferably more.

(b) New Community Centres

Proposals to deliver 1 x 300m² small multi-purpose community facility by 2016 and 2 x 300m² small multi-purpose community facility between 2016 and 2026 (EDAW 2009) will be permitted subject to the following criteria and set out in a detailed planning application(s):

- i. the need cannot be served by using schools or education facilities as set out under part a(i) above;
- ii. a long term funding (minimum 10 years), maintenance and management plan is produced to identify how the centre will generate sufficient income to ensure self financing to assure Breckland Council of the proposed facility's sustainability. This could include a permanent usage for part of the facility (e.g. health or social care);
- iii. the proposed community centre is located as part of the proposed centres or small shopping parades as identified on the Map 20.1 'Draft Masterplan for the Thetford Urban Extension.'; and
- iv. it is designed in a way so as to reduce running and maintenance costs (including appropriate water and energy efficiency measures).

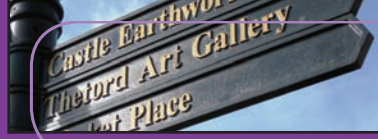
(c) Religious Buildings

Such proposals should be located at the proposed centres as shown on the Policies Map.

Reasoned Justification

25.33 In order to provide the most appropriate facilities for the proposed development, an analysis of the existing facilities in Thetford was undertaken and can be found in the report titled 'Community Infrastructure and Thetford'. The assessment shows that:

- Thetford is well catered for in terms of facilities for the community to hire out;
- There is a spread of sizes of venues – the smallest being capable of holding less than ten people and the largest over 300 people;
- All venues might have or do have spare capacity;
- The cost of venues ranges from as little as £8 an hour up to £40 an hour;
- Barring any obstacles such as the river or railway, all of the existing town and much of the proposed development area is within 800m of an existing venue of some kind; and
- The majority of schools in Thetford hire out some facilities to the public.



25.34 Thetford has three community centres which provide a strong base on which to serve the growing population. Existing provision of community facilities is not utilised to full capacity. In some areas, improvements to quality and/or access need to be made to ensure that any surplus capacity can, and is, taken up by the community. Through improvement of quality and accessibility it is likely that the current provision will be sufficient to meet demand arising from the earliest phases of development.

25.35 Furthermore, the existing schools provide excellent facilities for the community to hire out. Indeed the Government in their White Paper entitled 'Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st Century schools system' says, 'The best schools have long recognised that offering a wide menu of positive activities, both in and out of school hours, can be integral to improving attainment, narrowing gaps between different groups and engaging with parents'.

25.36 Breckland Council's preferred approach of supporting community use of education facilities is thus a reflection of Thetford being well served by many varied types of facilities and these facilities being underutilised. It is acknowledged that the ultimate decision for allowing schools to be used by the public is that of the Governing Body. Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council, in discussions with the schools, will consider the use of an appropriate covenant that allows community use in perpetuity. There is provision in the policy for new community buildings if several criteria are met. These criteria will ensure that any new community facility's usage and existence is sustained, learning from the experience of other such facilities in Thetford which have in some cases had intervention in order to maintain their existence. Where appropriate, Breckland Council will work with relevant organisations such as the local Development Trust.

25.37 The primary purpose of these buildings is to provide a community meeting space. However there should be the scope to accommodate ancillary uses, some of which may be permanent. Some examples of acceptable permanent uses include a café, outreach health and social care or a community enterprise.

25.38 Community facilities could be multi-functional and provide a venue and facilities for such activities as martial arts, table tennis or badminton in line with Policy TH 13 'Indoor Sports Facilities'.

25.39 In order to promote efficient use of land, car parking should be shared with that of the local centre.

25.40 In the context of this policy, the term 'school or education facility' refers to Primary Schools and Secondary School (Academy), i.e. venues where people are taught.



Policy TH 36

New Bring Recycling Facilities

New Bring Recycling Facilities shall be provided in locations easily accessible by the public, at the local centres or parade of shops as identified on the Map 20.1 'Draft Masterplan for the Thetford Urban Extension.' These should be fenced off and secure, have no overhead cabling nearby and be sited in areas where they do not cause undue disruption to the community in terms of the noise from emptying or general use.

Centres must be managed in a way to prevent potential related issues such as fly tipping or the build-up and spread of litter. Sites also require appropriate traffic management in order to allow suitable access for service vehicles.

The land, once developed to suitable standards, as agreed by the Local Planning Authority should then be handed over to Breckland Council at nil charge.

Reasoned Justification

25.41 The Core Strategy requires consideration be given to the provision of appropriate waste storage and means of collection in new development. As such, in order to help Thetford's residents to recycle and divert waste from landfill, Breckland Council expects new bring recycling facilities will be provided as part of the Thetford Urban Extension. These sites should include bottle banks and textile collection points for example.

25.42 Such sites attract users at all times producing noise and fumes from vehicles if not properly sited and designed. The operating hours and servicing (emptying of bins/receptacles) of the site needs careful consideration due to the potential impact noise of materials thrown into empty bins, vehicles dragging bins across concrete surfaces and the significant noise from the emptying of glass recycling bins into collection lorries.

25.43 The policy sets out a number of criteria that will ensure new bring recycling facilities are provided in a manner that enhances the use by the community and aids the collection of recycled materials.



Picture 25.1 Bottle banks, paper and cardboard banks and textiles collection points - an example of 'bring' recycling facilities.

Thetford's Household Waste Recycling Centre

25.44 The current Recycling Centre in Thetford is one of the smallest in the County and therefore inadequate given the proposed growth of the Town. The County Council is committed to funding a new replacement Recycling Centre for Thetford, which will be capable of handling the additional waste arising from the Thetford Urban Extension. The new Recycling Centre is programmed to open in summer 2012.