

Breckland Council: Breckland Local Plan

Strategic Policy Assessment

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan which covers their area. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) says that, “Plans should make explicit which policies are strategic policies” (para 21). This document clarifies the strategic policies in Breckland District for those considering preparing or in the process of preparing Neighbourhood Plans or Neighbourhood Development Orders.

2. Background

- 2.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. This act allows qualifying bodies (parish or town councils, or neighbourhood forums in areas without parish or town councils) to produce Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders. Neighbourhood Plans allow communities to set planning policies for their area. Neighbourhood Development Orders allow communities to grant up-front planning permission for developments they want or need.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans and Orders are tested against a series of ‘basic conditions’ through examination. One of the basic conditions that they must meet is to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for their area. Outside the strategic elements of the development plan, Neighbourhood Plans and Orders can plan positively to support local development by shaping and directing development in their area. Therefore, it is important that neighbourhood planning groups and bodies can identify which policies are strategic.
- 2.3 If successful at examination and referendum the neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.4 The NPPF says, “Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.” (p.10, footnote 18).

3 The Development Plan

- 3.1 At March 2021, the Development Plan for Breckland comprised

- ***Breckland Local Plan and associated Policies Map (November 2019)***
- ***Core Strategy and Development Control Policies (2009) (Saved policies)***
- ***Thetford Area Action Plan (2012) (Saved policies)***

Further information on the Local Plan can be found at the following link:

<https://www.breckland.gov.uk/adoption>

- **Attleborough Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2036 (January 2018)**
- **Croxton, Brettenham and Kilverstone Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036 (January 2019)**
- **Mattishall Neighbourhood Plan 2017 – 2036 (November 2017)**
- **Swaffham Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2036 (May 2019)**
- **Swanton Morley Neighbourhood Plan 2016 - 2036 (December 2019)**
- **Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2036 (June 2017)**
- **Saham Toney Neighbourhood Plan (November 2021)**

Further information on these plans can be found at the following link:

<https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4284/Neighbourhood-Plans>

- **Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-2030 (July 2016)**

Further information on this Plan can be found at the following link:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/minerals-and-waste-planning-policies/adopted-policy-documents>

3.2 A Local Plan review is underway to replace the Breckland Local Plan. This document will be updated when the position, as set out above, changes.

4 Policy context

4.1 National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) considers that a Neighbourhood Plan as a basic condition must be in general conformity with, and plan positively to support, the strategic policies of the development plan (Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 41-036-20190509). NPPG (Paragraph: 074 Reference ID: 41-074-20140306) states with regards to clarifying what is meant by ‘general conformity’,

“When considering whether a policy is in general conformity a qualifying body, independent examiner, or local planning authority, should consider the following:

- *whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with*
- *the degree, if any, of conflict between the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal and the strategic policy*
- *whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy*
- *the rationale for the approach taken in the draft neighbourhood plan or Order and the evidence to justify that approach”*

4.2 The NPPF paras 20-23 describe strategic policies as those that set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for housing, infrastructure, community facilities and conservation and enhancement of

the natural, built and historic environment (para 20). Strategic policies are those that address the big picture rather than dealing with detailed matters. They may cover things like the spatial pattern of development, protection of valued assets of district wide significance and issues that affect the whole district. The NPPG (Paragraph: 076 Reference ID: 41-076-20190509) advises that strategic policies will be different in each area and that whether a policy is a strategic policy the following are useful considerations:

“Strategic policies will be different in each area. When reaching a view on whether a policy is a strategic policy the following are useful considerations:

- whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective*
- whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development*
- the scale at which the policy is intended to operate*
- whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced*
- whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the local plan or spatial development strategy*
- in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the local plan or spatial development strategy*
- whether the local plan or spatial development strategy identifies the policy as being strategic”*

4.3 Those preparing Neighbourhood Plans are therefore advised to carefully consider the policies in the Breckland Local Plan and ensure that Neighbourhood Plan policies, taking account of the NPPG set out above, which sets out what is meant by general conformity, as a basic condition, are in general conformity with them. If a Neighbourhood Plan intends to consider any matters relating to minerals and waste, the qualifying body is advised to contact and work closely with Norfolk County Council

Breckland Local Plan Reg.19 Adopted version: Strategic Policies

GEN 1 Sustainable Development in Breckland

GEN 2 Promoting High Quality Design

GEN 03 Settlement Hierarchy

GEN 4 Development Requirements of Attleborough Strategic Urban Extension (SUE)

Development Requirements of Attleborough Strategic Urban Extension (SUE)

Policy GEN 05 Settlement Boundaries

Policy HOU 01 Development Requirements (Minimum)

Policy HOU 02 Level and Location of Growth

Policy HOU 03 Development Outside of the Boundaries of Local Service Centres

Policy HOU 04 Village with Boundaries

Policy HOU 05 Small Villages and Hamlets Outside of Settlement Boundaries

Policy HOU 06 Principle of New Housing

Policy HOU 07 Affordable Housing

Policy HOU 08 Provision for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Policy HOU 09 Specialist Housing

Policy HOU 10 Technical Design Standards for New Homes
Policy TR 01 Sustainable Transport Network
Policy TR 02 Transport Requirements
Policy ENV 01 Green Infrastructure
Policy ENV 02 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement
Policy ENV 03 The Brecks Protected Habitats & Species
Policy ENV 04 Open Space, Sport & Recreation
Policy ENV 05 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape
Policy ENV 07 Designated Heritage Assets
Policy ENV 08 Non-Designated Heritage Assets
Policy ENV 09 Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage
Policy ENV 10 Renewable Energy Development
Attleborough Employment Allocation 1
Snetterton Employment Allocation 1
Snetterton Employment Allocation 2
Policy EC 01 Economic Development
Policy EC 03 General Employment Areas
Policy EC 04 Employment Development Outside General Employment Areas
Policy EC 05 Town Centre and Retail Strategy
Policy COM 01 Design
Policy COM 02 Healthy Lifestyles
Policy COM 03 Protection of Amenity
Policy INF 02 Developer Contributions
Policy INF 03 Local Plan Policy Review

Detailed Policies

Policy HOU 11 Residential Replacement, Extension and Alteration

Policy HOU 12 Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside

Policy HOU 13 Agricultural Workers Exceptions

Policy HOU 14 Affordable Housing Exceptions

Policy ENV 06 Trees, Hedgerows and Development

Policy EC 06 Farm Diversification

Policy EC 07 Tourism Related Development

Policy EC 08 Advertising and Signs

Policy COM 04 Community Facilities

Policy INF 01 Telecommunications

Policy EC 02 - Snetterton Heath

Dereham Housing Allocation 1

Dereham Housing Allocation 2

Dereham Housing Allocation 3

Dereham Housing Allocation 4

Dereham Housing Allocation 5

Swaffham Allocation 1

Swaffham Allocation 2

Swaffham Allocation 3

Swaffham Allocation 4

Swaffham Allocation 5

Swaffham Allocation 6

Watton Housing Allocation 1

Watton Housing Allocation 2

Ashill Housing Allocation 1

Banham Housing Allocation 1

Bawdeswell Housing Allocation 1

Garboldisham Housing Allocation 1

Harling Housing Allocation 1

Hockering Residential Allocation 1

Kenninghall Housing Allocation 1

Narborough Housing Allocation 1

Necton Housing Allocation 2

Necton Housing Allocation 3

North Elmham Housing Allocation

North Elmham Housing Allocation 2

Old Buckenham Residential Allocation 1

Shipdham Residential Allocation 1

Shipdham Residential Allocation 2

Sporle Residential Allocation 1

Swanton Morley Residential Allocation 1

Can you confirm what happened to the following 'Saved policies'?

Saved Policy - Policy D5 Land east of Dereham Business Park still saved

Saved Policy - Policy SW2 Land to the North of the Eco-Tech Centre still saved

Saved Policy - Policy SW3 Land to the West of the Eco-Tech Employment Area still saved

Saved Policy - Policy TH30 New Employment Land still saved