

Sustainable development panel

Date: Wednesday, 24 February 2016

Time: 09:30

Venue: Westwick room, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

Committee members:

Councillors:

Bremner (chair)
Herries (vice chair)
Bogelein
Grahame
Jackson
Lubbock
Thomas (Va)
Woollard

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Agenda

Page no

1 **Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence

2 **Declarations of interest**

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)

3 **Minutes**

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To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016.

4 **One Planet Norwich Festival 2016**

7 - 10

Purpose - This report informs members of the arrangements for the second One Planet Norwich Festival in 2016.

5 **Local Development Scheme 2016-17**

11 - 36

Purpose - To present the draft revised Local Development Scheme, which is the work programme for producing key planning documents which will form part of the local plan for Norwich. The Local Development Scheme is attached at Appendix 1 and covers the period to mid- 2018.

6 **River Wensum Strategy update**

37 - 44

Purpose - To update members on progress made to date by the River Wensum Strategy Partnership with preparation of a strategy for the River Wensum in Norwich, and to provide an overview of key themes and emerging proposals.

Date of publication: **Tuesday, 16 February 2016**

Sustainable development panel**09:30 to 11:10****13 January 2016**

Present: Councillors Bremner (chair), Herries (vice chair), Bogelein, Grahame, Jackson, Lubbock, Thomas (Va) and Woollard

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2015.

3. Cosy City update

The environmental strategy manager presented the report. Members were advised that further information was provided in the council's Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report 2015-17.

During discussion the environmental strategy manager referred to the report and answered members' questions. The panel commended the environmental strategy manager and officers for the successful outcomes of the Cosy City programme. Members noted that the programme had provided external funding for 40 families to assist the replacement of broken or inefficient boilers. Some of these families now had heating for the first time in several years. Members also noted that solid wall insulation was expensive and that a grant for around half the cost made it more affordable for many householders. The panel also noted that high fuel costs made it more difficult for people to fund energy efficiency measures and therefore reduce their energy consumption. In reply to a question, the environmental strategy manager, confirmed that part of the loft installation service was the offer to clear people's lofts and then return items to the loft on completion of the works.

The panel commented on central government's disconnect with its aspirations to achieve greater energy efficiency savings and its decision to axe funding for home improvements in its Autumn Statement. The panel noted that the Green Deal had offered loans at a 10% interest rate which made it unattractive as extending a mortgage worked out as a cheaper loan. The panel commented on options to fill this funding gap in 2016-17, such as crowd source funding and a member suggested that there was potential to provide loans to residents from the council's reserves. The chair referred members to the concluding paragraphs of the report and advised the panel that the Cosy City project would continue to work with its partners and the End Fuel Poverty Coalition. The chair also suggested that members contacted the Norwich Members of Parliament to inform them of their concern about the impact of

the government's withdrawal of funding and the effect that it had on reducing the cycle of fuel poverty.

Discussion ensued on improving the private housing stock. Members noted that the number of Passivhaus dwellings was too small a percentile of the total housing stock to register as an A category on the list. Private sector housing in the city had a lower standard assessment procedure (SAP) rating than social housing and 90 per cent of the private sector housing was below grade C.

Discussion ensued on how the schemes were promoted. The council had notified the building and construction trades of the schemes available and would continue to target the owners of properties undergoing improvements or renovation when further funding became available.

RESOLVED to note the progress of the Cosy City project.

4. Integrated waste management strategic objectives: Progress report

The chair introduced the report and explained that he had been invited to speak on local radio that morning about the proposed changes to the recycling collection vehicles and service in the city.

The environmental services manager presented the report and answered members' questions. It was noted that the city council had lowest level of residual waste per household. The panel also noted that the county council was currently sending residual waste to The Netherlands for incineration, as an interim measure until a sustainable solution could be identified. The panel noted the progress on the service action plan against the strategic objectives set in 2014.

During discussion members commented on the report. Members considered that there should be greater publicity about the waste management's performance, changes to the service and promote recycling. The panel discussed how recycling could be encouraged and noted that some plastics were currently collected and pulled out because of a collapse in the market. A member suggested that the public should be informed about this so that when shopping they could select goods in packaging that could be recycled. The environmental services manager cautioned about giving the public such advice because of the changeable market and the expectation that these materials would be recycled in the future. The county council had the resources and experience to talk to major retailers about preventing waste through the reduction of packaging.

Discussion ensued in which members considered how recycling could be promoted and food waste champions and recycling champions in a block of flats for instance. The panel commented on how private landlords could encourage their tenants to recycle. In reply to a suggestion that the landlord accreditation scheme should be used to require the provision of recycling facilities, the chair said that the scheme was not yet in operation and the priority was to improve the condition of private rented properties. The environmental services manager said that it was difficult to engage private landlords and pointed out that there was a cost to the landlord to maintain communal bins (cleaning, etc). The panel noted that the use of stickers on bins that were used incorrectly would change environmental behaviour because people liked to conform to social norms. The environmental services manager

explained that it was difficult to ensure that the right amount of information was included on the calendars and that there had been a lot of discussion with other organisations about its design so that it could hang on a bin and its content. The panel then considered the use of red cards when the wrong items had been placed in a bin and were advised that management were aware that some collection teams issued around 400-500 red and yellow cards a week whilst others issued very few and that this would be addressed by educating the teams. Residents who received a red card would be followed up. It was often the case that people did not understand what could be placed in the different bins and just needed to have it explained.

Discussion ensued on the use of compostable bags to encourage food waste collection and reduce residual waste. It was estimated that the provision of compostable bags would be an additional cost to the council of around £100,000 per annum. Members were opposed to the use of ordinary plastic bags, which would be removed during the recycling process, as it would encourage the use of plastic bags and encourage people to purchase them.

The panel discussed kerbside collection of textiles and small items of waste electrical and electrical equipment (WEEE) and the use of new vehicles which made it possible to collect these items. It was pointed out that this could have an impact on charities which relied on the revenue from recycling old clothes and other textiles.

In conclusion, the environmental services manager referred members to the county council's website and its list of items which could be recycled.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR

Report to	Sustainable development panel	Item
	24 February 2016	
Report of	Executive head of regeneration and development	4
Subject	One Planet Norwich Festival 2016	

Purpose

This report informs members of the arrangements for the second One Planet Norwich Festival in 2016.

Recommendation

To note the report.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priorities of as safe, clean and low carbon city

Financial implications

Within existing budgets.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner, environment and sustainable development

Contact officers

Dave Moorcroft, Executive regeneration and development	01603 212226
Richard Willson, Environmental strategy manager	01603 212312
Claire Tullett, Environmental strategy officer	01603 212545
Chloe Robison-Smith, Environmental communications coordinator	01603 212630

Background documents

None.

Report

1. The second One Planet Norwich festival will build on from the successes of the first year and promises to be buzzing weekend full of fun activities for all the family, and a whole wealth of information about how we can all work together to live in a more sustainable way.
2. Currently all stallholders are fully booked and we have a large variety of activities happening over the weekend. All time slots for talks are taken and films have been allocated for each day. We are working in collaboration with Norwich Fashion Week, Norwich Castle Museum, Norwich Cathedral, British Science Week, Desira Nissan and Norfolk County Council on a variety of initiatives to deliver some engaging and sustainable activities.
3. A new strand of the Festival (and new to Norwich!) is the Norwich Fashion Jam. We are working with Norwich Fashion Week to bring the 24 hour Norwich Fashion Jam to The Forum. It involves students, bloggers, stylists, and designers to create brand new catwalk collections solely from charity shop garments, donated by Age UK Norwich.
4. Another new element to our festival is working with Norwich Cathedral to cross-promoting our festival with their science fortnight. There will be a children's Eco Trail to link the two events together. 'Stamp stations' will be located on stallholders at both festivals to encourage visitors to each stand, and once all stamps are collected they will receive prizes of a sticker and pens/pencils for children, as well as a week-long test drive of a Nissan LEAF for a family, curtesy of Desira Nissan who is sponsoring the Eco Trail.
5. This year we have a growing online presence with the addition of a Facebook page. The page is a great way of connecting and communicating up to date information to visitors, fans, stallholders and partners. We have some exciting and exclusive competitions planned for our Facebook fans, where we are collaborating with local businesses to provide prizes and cross-promote to encourage local trade.
www.facebook.com/oneplanetnorwich

One Planet Norwich Festival 11-13 March 2016

Programme of activities:



Date

Programme

Friday 11

11am
Chapelfield Gardens (corner
opp. the Garage)

Tree planting

Planting the One Planet Norwich Oak tree to launch the festival. Lord Mayor to plant the tree.

6.00pm (through to 6.00pm
Sat)
The Forum, The Gallery
space

Fashion Jam

Collaboration with Norwich Fashion Week, where students upcycle charity clothes donated by Age UK to form new outfits in a 24 hours. These items will be showcased on a cat walk on the Monday.

Saturday 12

10am – 4pm
The Forum

One Planet Norwich

A fun day full of stalls, talks, films and activities, including a pedal powered smoothie maker, science experiments and bucket drums comedy and tunes. A reduce, reuse, recycled themed day.

6pm
The Forum

Fashion Jam finishes

Klaxon to end the event, along with VIP attending – invitation only.

7pm – 9:30pm

Norwich and Norfolk Eco Awards

A private event celebrating environmental achievements in the County. Invitation only.

Sunday 13

10am – 4pm
The Forum

One Planet Norwich

The second day full of stalls, talks, films and activities, including a pedal powered Scalextric and cycling activities. A sustainable transport themed day.

Report to Sustainable development panel
24 February 2016
Report of Head of planning services
Subject Local Development Scheme 2016-17

Item
5

Purpose

To present the draft revised Local Development Scheme, which is the work programme for producing key planning documents which will form part of the local plan for Norwich. The Local Development Scheme is attached at Appendix 1 and covers the period to mid-2018.

Recommendation

That members agree the Local Development Scheme and recommend that cabinet approves it for publication under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011).

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priorities for a prosperous and vibrant city, a safe, clean and low carbon city and a healthy city with good housing. Although no longer specifically identified as a planning service priority, the preparation and regular review of the Local Development Scheme is a statutory requirement.

Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Environment and sustainable development

Contact officers

Mike Burrell, planning team leader (policy) 01603 212525

Jon Bunting, planner (policy) 01603 212162

Background documents

None

Report

Introduction

1. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) must be prepared as part of the statutory process of plan making. It is essentially the work programme and project plan for preparation of the various planning policy documents making up the local plan for the city.
2. Preparation of an LDS is required by section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act has amended procedures for LDS production: a local planning authority has only to make a formal resolution to adopt the scheme and publish it on their website in order for it to take effect. There is no requirement to consult on the local development scheme prior to publication, or to submit it to the government for formal endorsement. The amended procedures focus on the need to provide timely and relevant information to the public about progress on the local plan and adherence to its timetable.
3. The streamlined arrangements simplify the process of review if the detail of the scheme has to be changed. Local authorities have considerable leeway in the form and content of the LDS – in particular it no longer has to cover a prescribed three year period – although the legislation still requires the following details to be made available to the public when publishing it:
 - the up-to-date text of the scheme,
 - a copy of any amendments made to the scheme, and
 - up-to-date information showing the state of the authority's compliance (or non-compliance) with the timetable for the preparation and revision of documents identified within it.
4. The revised Norwich LDS will run until summer 2018 and will entirely replace the version published in July 2014. It will be rolled forward periodically to ensure that it is as up-to-date and flexible as possible.

Progress since the previous Local Development Scheme

5. Since the last LDS was published in July 2014, the two statutory local plan documents specific to Norwich, the *Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan* (the site allocations plan) and the *Development Management Policies Local Plan* (the DM policies plan) have been completed. Both were adopted simultaneously by the city council and came into effect on 1 December 2014. Alongside the adopted *Joint core strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk* (the JCS) they provide a comprehensive and up-to-date statement of planning policy in Norwich between now and 2026 which informs, and provides the basis for, all the council's decisions on planning applications for development. Details of the adopted local plan documents making up the existing local plan for the city are set out in chapter 3 of the LDS document (attached at Appendix 1). Three of the four supplementary planning documents listed in the previous LDS programme have also been completed and adopted.

The revised LDS – looking forward

6. The revised LDS focuses primarily on an emerging review of strategic, high level planning policies and site allocations for Norwich in the next local plan looking forward to 2036. This will involve two main strands of work for the planning policy service which must be included in the planning service plan for the coming year.
7. The first will be a new local plan for the Norwich area to roll forward and replace the JCS (to be known as the **Greater Norwich Local Plan**, or GNLP). It will have the status of a statutory development plan document and will be prepared, like the JCS, jointly with Broadland and South Norfolk districts, with support from Norfolk county council. Its expected adoption date is October 2020. The decision to prepare a joint local plan on this basis was agreed by resolution of the Greater Norwich Growth Board at its meeting of 24 September 2015.
8. Unlike the JCS, the GNLP will include site-specific housing and employment allocations and policies, which historically have been taken forward through lower level district-wide plans such as the Site allocations plan for Norwich. National planning deregulation is expected to further reduce the influence local planning authorities can exercise over the precise use of land and premises and the precise form of development. Government advice is that local plans should be streamlined, short and focused, providing certainty for developers as to the broad locations where development will and will not be allowed and ensuring that policies and proposals are viable and deliverable. Notwithstanding the shorter format of these new generation plans, the work involved in assembling the technical evidence to underpin the plan will still be considerable. Members should note that all three participating authorities are in the process of reviewing and agreeing revisions to their respective Local Development Schemes to enable consultation on the GNLP to commence formally. It has also been necessary to review and align the Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) for each authority to ensure that arrangements for public consultation on the GNLP are consistent. A revised SCI for Norwich will be presented to a future meeting of the panel with a view to carrying out public consultation in May.
9. The second major document is the non-statutory **Norfolk Strategic Framework** (NSF), proposals for which were previously reported to sustainable development panel and agreed by cabinet in 2015. The NSF will set the general strategic principles and priorities to inform spatial planning and future local plan preparation in the whole of Norfolk, establishing the overall requirements for housing, employment, transport and infrastructure (including green infrastructure) across the county. As a document which provides the context for a review of planning policy, rather than setting policy itself, the NSF will be subject to public consultation but will not need to satisfy all the legal and procedural requirements of a statutory development plan document, in particular not requiring a formal sustainability appraisal. Accordingly it can be prepared on a relatively short timescale and is currently envisaged to be in place by April 2017, to inform the content of the GNLP and other local plans.
10. Further details of these documents are included in chapter 5 of the LDS document at Appendix 1.

Supplementary planning documents

11. As previously, the proposed LDS also lists supplementary planning documents (SPD) as part of the work programme. These are not required to be included in an LDS but it

is considered helpful to include them as they are part of the general programme of plan preparation in the planning policy team plan and will contribute to the implementation of planning policies. Two SPDs are included: the **Trees and Landscape SPD** and the **Bethel Hospital Planning Brief**. The latter is a new SPD, the need for which has been identified to guide future development and regeneration of this important but neglected complex of historic buildings on the Heritage at Risk Register.

Other committed and potential workstreams

12. The LDS also identifies other workstreams for the planning policy service which will be necessary in order to satisfy emerging new national policy requirements signalled in the Housing and Planning Bill and elsewhere, to respond to further national planning deregulation or to progress other local projects and initiatives. While some of these workstreams are already in progress or committed, others are aspirational and depend on identifying additional resources to deliver them. Members should be aware that resources in the planning policy service are limited and capacity to undertake further work in this category is constrained by the need to prioritise core planning work around the statutory Greater Norwich Local Plan and the NSF.
13. Aside from the completion of the Statement of Community Involvement referred to above, the committed workstreams identified in the document are:
 - Compiling a statutory **Brownfield Sites Register** of all sites suitable for housing and capable of accommodating 5 dwellings and over, including sites already allocated in local plans. It is envisaged that a new type of permission, *planning permission in principle* would be granted automatically for any site included on the register, with any further planning submissions limited to application for approval of technical matters (called *technical details consent*). It is not yet clear how this regime would operate in practice nor how sites which are allocated in a local plan for a mix of residential and commercial uses – of which there are many in Norwich – might be handled.
 - Ongoing work on the **River Wensum Strategy**, being taken forward in partnership with other organisations and agencies. A separate progress report on the RWS is being presented to this meeting.
 - Work arising from the forthcoming statutory requirement for a **Self-build and custom build housing register** to record requirements for land for self-build projects, alongside a statutory obligation on local authorities under the Community Right to Build to offer suitable land to anyone on that register;
 - An interim progress report in relation to **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** following public consultation on future policy options in late 2014 and a commitment to review the issue again in 2017. This report is expected to be presented to the next meeting of the panel in March.
14. The potential workstreams which are included, and which depend on resources being identified, are:

- The possibility of a new multi-agency **City Centre Strategy** to ensure that investment to maintain the attractiveness, viability and vitality of the city centre can be effectively targeted;
- Legacy work arising from the imminent expiry of the **Northern City Centre Area Action Plan**. This may include, subject to resources, preparation of planning briefs or guidelines for the Anglia Square area and other key regeneration sites, a dedicated Neighbourhood Plan or prioritising sites in this area for inclusion on the brownfield sites register. It should be noted that the ability to do site specific work will depend on the ability to secure funding.

Ongoing challenges from the national planning agenda

15. Consultation has recently concluded on a review of the overarching National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which, once in place, will change the national context for emerging local policies and further reduce the extent to which local planning authorities can directly intervene in and influence development and change. Consequently, there may be other work not identified in this LDS resulting from as yet unimplemented legislative and regulatory reforms.
16. In particular, local planning authorities are urged to accelerate the delivery of housing on underused brownfield land, supported by a proposed statutory requirement to include a proportion of low cost starter homes on all suitable sites in local plans. The government's increased emphasis on promoting discounted home ownership at the expense of affordable rented and social rented housing means that the national definition of "affordable housing" itself is now proposed to be changed. Notwithstanding this, evidence suggests that the great majority of affordable housing need in Norwich will continue to be for rented accommodation. The impending national policy changes will have implications for many local planning authorities whose affordable housing policies are founded on evidence which does not take full account of the need for these types of housing. This and other national policy shifts will inevitably need to be taken into account when housing policies are eventually reviewed in the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

Conclusion

17. The revised Local Development Scheme to the summer of 2018 prioritises a review and roll forward of planning policy through the statutory Greater Norwich Local Plan and non-statutory Norfolk Strategic Framework. Aside from the completion of SPD already commenced and committed, it is likely that the majority of policy staff resources will need to be directed to the emerging new plan framework in order to deliver them to the timescales proposed. Consequently there is less scope than in previous years for additional items in the LDS work programme. Some of these, like the City Centre Strategy, are highly desirable to include but may have to remain aspirational unless additional resources can be identified to take them forward.
18. Additional anticipated/potential workstreams for the planning policy team are associated mainly with government initiatives resulting from ongoing changes in national legislation and policy. Workstreams around the Brownfield Sites Register and Self-Build Register are identified as commitments in the LDS, but a lack of clarity and detail as to how these are proposed to be implemented means that their timing and impact on the work programme are uncertain. Further information about these

areas of work will be reported to sustainable development panel as details emerge and will be included in future revisions to the LDS as appropriate.

Local development scheme for Norwich

2016-18

Revised

March 2016



NORWICH
City Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Local development scheme (LDS) must be prepared under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). It must identify the documents that will be prepared to set out the strategy for the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area – collectively called *local development documents*. Essentially, an LDS is a project plan which identifies (among other matters) the documents which, when prepared, will make up the Local Plan for the area. It must be made publicly available and kept up-to-date. It allows the public and stakeholders to find out about planning policies in their area, the status of any emerging policies in the development plan, and the details of and timescales for production of all relevant documents.
- 1.2 This Local development scheme applies only to the area of the city for which Norwich City Council is the local planning authority. It should be noted that part of the administrative area of Norwich (namely the tidal river Wensum downstream of New Mills and an area of land at Cremorne Lane) falls within the planning jurisdiction of the Broads Authority, which is subject to a separate local plan and LDS.
- 1.3 In addition to providing information about the main *development plan documents* in preparation (which legislation requires to be included), this LDS also provides detail about the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other informal planning guidance and adopted local development documents, to provide a full account of the planning policies that will operate in Norwich. This document also refers to committed workstreams contributing to documents which may in due course form part of the Local development scheme.
- 1.4 This LDS was approved by the council's Cabinet on 9 March 2016 following consideration by Sustainable Development Panel on 25 February. It replaces the previous LDS which was published in July 2014. It will take effect from 10 March 2016.

Summary of progress since the last LDS

- 1.5 The previous Local development scheme was published in the run-up to adoption of two emerging local plan documents for Norwich, the **Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan** (the Site Allocations Plan) and the **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan** (the DM Policies Plan). Programmed for adoption in November 2014, they were approved on schedule by a full meeting of the city council on 25 November 2014 and were formally adopted on 1 December 2014.
- 1.6 The 2014 LDS also included details of proposed Supplementary Planning Documents to support the newly adopted local plan. The following supplementary planning documents in the previous LDS programme have been approved since July 2014:
 - [Main Town Centre Uses and Retail Frontages Supplementary Planning Document](#) (adopted December 2014)
 - [Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document](#) (adopted March 2015)

- 1.7 The following three documents were included in the 2014 LDS as prospective informal policy advice notes, originally intended to be published alongside, or shortly after, the adoption of the local plan. Since the documents may involve binding financial obligations on developers, the decision was made to progress these to adoption as full SPD, with a longer production timescale consequent on the need for formal public consultation and adoption.
- [Open Space and Play Supplementary Planning Document](#) (adopted October 2015)
 - [Heritage Interpretation Supplementary Planning Document](#) (adopted December 2015).
 - *Trees and Landscape Supplementary Planning Document*, adoption now scheduled for May 2016.

2. Scope of the Norwich Local development scheme

2.1 The Local development scheme covers the following types of documents:

Development plan documents (DPDs)

- 2.2 Development plan documents or DPDs are the formal policy documents which make up the statutory development plan (the *local plan*) for Norwich. Once adopted, these have full legal weight in decision making. The council's decisions to approve or refuse any development which needs planning permission must be made in accordance with the local plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The local plan may either be a single document or a number of separate related documents.
- 2.3 The adopted local plan for Norwich comprises the *Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk* (the JCS) adopted in March 2011, amendments adopted January 2014; the *Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan* (the Site Allocations Plan), adopted December 2014; the *Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan* (the DM Policies Plan), adopted December 2014; and the *Northern city centre area action plan* (NCCAAP) for part of Norwich city centre, adopted March 2010. The NCCAAP runs only to the end of March 2016, although policy 11 of the JCS remains adopted and requires regeneration of the northern city centre in accordance with NCCAAP principles. Accordingly a commitment to regenerate the northern city centre will remain a material consideration in determining planning applications in that area.
- 2.4 The JCS will be replaced by the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), which will run until 2036 is scheduled to be adopted in 2020.
- 2.5 Each document must be prepared in accordance with a nationally prescribed procedure set out in the national Local Planning Regulations for England, which were last reviewed in 2012. At key stages of plan-making there is an opportunity for the public to comment on emerging planning policies and proposals in the documents. At the end of the process, development plan documents must be submitted to the Secretary of State and independently examined by a government appointed inspector to assess their soundness and legal compliance before they can be *adopted* by the city council and come into force.
- 2.6 Certain other documents must be published alongside each DPD, including:
- the independently prepared *sustainability appraisal (SA) report* of the plan at each stage (a *sustainability appraisal scoping report* is prepared and consulted on at the start of the process to set out what sustainability issues and objectives the SA should cover and what evidence it will use);
 - A *habitats regulations assessment (HRA)* if policies and proposals in the plan are likely to have impacts on important natural and wildlife habitats protected by national and international legislation. This is also known as the "Appropriate Assessment".

- a *policies map*, setting out the DPD's policies and proposals on a map base (if relevant);
- a *statement of consultation* summarising public representations made to the plan and how they have been addressed (called the "Regulation 22(c) statement");
- copies of any representations made;
- any other supporting documents considered by the council to be relevant in preparing the plan;
- an *adoption statement* and *environmental statement* (when the plan is adopted).

Supplementary planning documents (SPD)

- 2.7 Supplementary planning documents (SPD) help to support and explain in more detail how the city council will implement particular policies and proposals in the local plan. SPD can also take the form of master plans, detailed design briefs or development briefs for sites identified for future development ("allocated") in the plan, as well as for other emerging sites.
- 2.8 SPD can be reviewed frequently and relatively straightforwardly to respond to change, whereas a review of the policies in the plan is a longer and more complex process.
- 2.9 The *National planning policy framework* (NPPF) and national *Planning practice guidance* (PPG) state that supplementary planning documents should be used "where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery", and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. SPD should not introduce new or include excessively detailed policy guidance, but ought to be used only where it can clarify and amplify existing policy and set out how it will help to bring forward sustainable development.
- 2.10 As set out in paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7, a number of supplementary planning documents have so far been prepared to support adopted policies in the JCS and DM Policies plan. This Local development scheme makes provision for the completion of work on the emerging *Trees and Landscape SPD* and preparation of a planning brief for the Bethel Hospital, which will have the status of formal SPD.

Other local plan documents

- 2.11 In addition to the progress report provided by this Local development scheme, a number of other documents must be prepared alongside the local plan, but do not form part of it.
- 2.12 A **Statement of community involvement** (SCI) must show how the council intends to involve the community in plan preparation and planning decision making. It is not a local development document but legally it must set out how documents specified in the LDS will be consulted on.

- 2.13 To ensure that plans and policies are effective, an **Annual monitoring report** (AMR) must also be prepared to record progress on implementing the local plan and how new development and change taking place in the previous year has contributed to achieving its targets. From 2011, the AMR for Norwich has been incorporated within a combined monitoring report for the JCS prepared jointly by Norfolk county council and the three district authorities covering greater Norwich. The most recent JCS AMR, for the monitoring period April 2014 to March 2015, was published in December 2015.

Associated documents and initiatives

- 2.14 Although not required to be published as part of the Local development scheme programme, the following additional documents and initiatives are listed in this LDS for information, as they will inform the preparation of future statutory development plan documents and/or provide a wider context for their implementation.
- a) **Non-statutory strategic guidance** including the emerging *Norfolk Strategic Framework* (NSF) and provision for a future *City centre strategy*;
 - b) Other **potential and anticipated workstreams** arising from ongoing national and local policy changes. The scope and extent of the work that may be undertaken depends on resources available to the council and (in some cases) further clarification from central government about how proposed new planning measures would operate in practice. For that reason no detailed timescales can be specified for future informal local guidance and other work items in this category.

3. The existing local plan

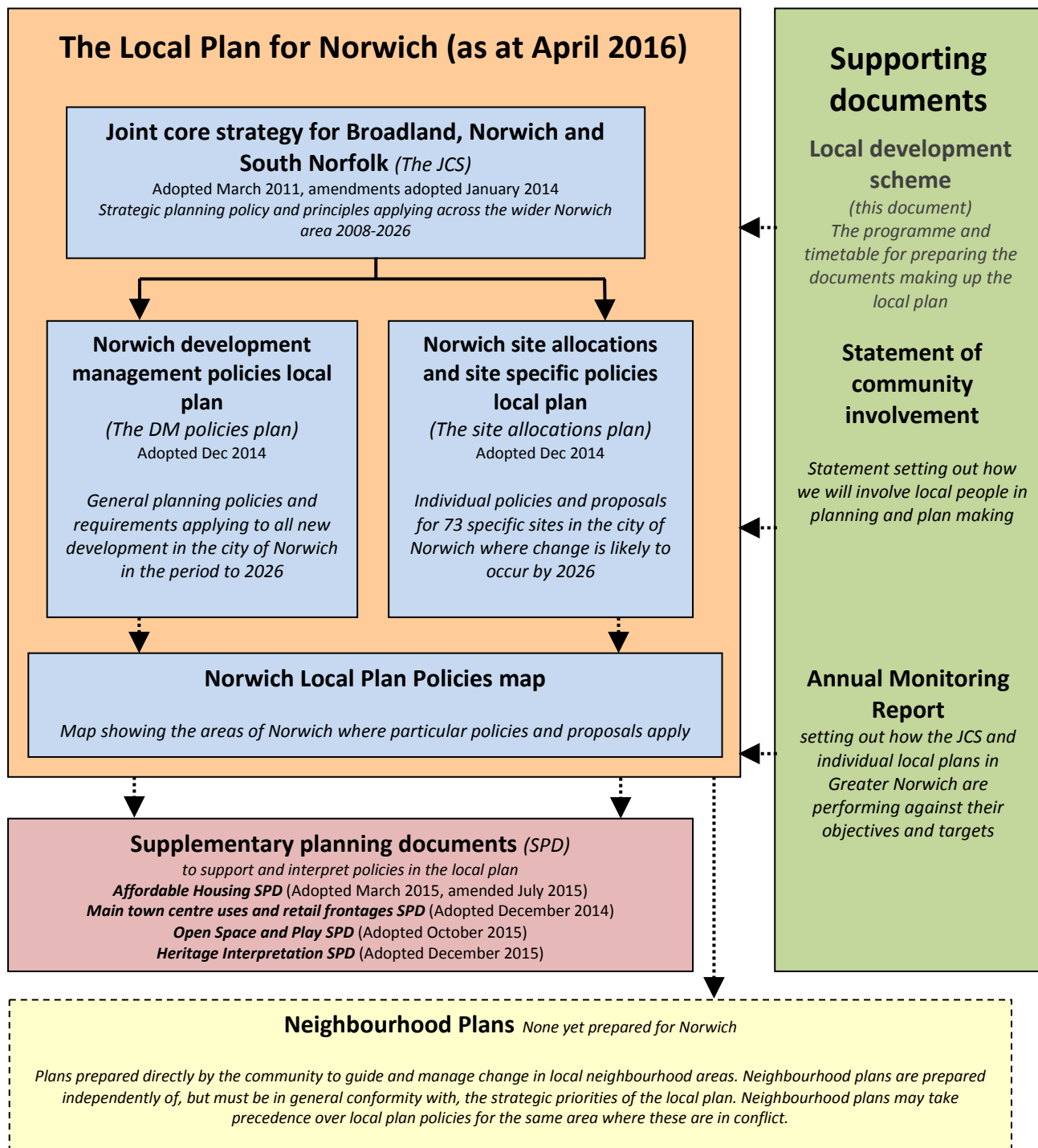
- 3.1 A number of planning documents are already in place to guide the council's decisions on planning applications. Together these form the existing adopted local plan for Norwich, which has been through a formal process of consultation and independent examination before adoption.
- 3.2 As these documents are already in use, they are not part of the formal LDS schedule set out in Annex 1, which deals in the main with the new and emerging documents that will be prepared to replace or supplement them. However they are included below in order to provide a complete picture of the planning policy documents which apply in Norwich.
- 3.3 The documents making up the local plan must conform to national planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), supported by national planning practice guidance (PPG). In preparing its local plan the council must show that it has met the statutory *Duty to Cooperate* with adjoining authorities and other relevant bodies.
- 3.4 The local plan documents fit into a hierarchy with broad strategic policies at the top and more detailed policies interpreting the strategic approach at a district and small area level. This is illustrated in Figure 1 on page 8.
- 3.5 For the Norwich area, the adopted ***Joint core strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk*** (JCS) is the primary document at the top of the hierarchy to which other development plan documents prepared by individual districts should conform. The JCS was adopted in March 2011, with amendments adopted in January 2014. It is a strategic planning document prepared jointly by the three constituent districts in Greater Norwich and provides the long term vision, objectives and spatial strategy for development of Norwich and its surrounding area for the period to 2026. The JCS is therefore at the heart of the present local plan for Norwich.
- 3.6 The ***Site allocations and site specific policies local plan*** (the Site Allocations Plan) identifies and sets out policies for 73 individual sites in Norwich city where development is proposed or expected to occur between now and 2026. It responds to the requirement of the JCS to identify additional sites for 3000 new homes in the city by 2026 over and above existing housing commitments. It also identifies opportunities to accommodate the overall levels of growth in jobs and services anticipated over that period and to ensure that these can be delivered and located sustainably, with a particular focus on expanding office employment and retail and leisure uses in the city centre. It will also help to deliver the community facilities and green infrastructure and elements of the sustainable transport network required to support new development as it occurs, in accordance with the JCS. The Site Allocations Plan was adopted in December 2014.
- 3.7 The ***Development management policies DPD*** (the DM Policies Plan) sets out a range of more detailed policies applying throughout Norwich which will be used in the council's

assessment of development proposals and to guide future council decisions on applications for planning permission up to 2026. 33 policies cover a range of topics, building on the national policy principles for sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the strategic policies and objectives of the JCS. In certain cases the policies also set out local criteria and standards for different kinds of development. The DM Policies Plan was also adopted in December 2014.

- 3.8 The ***Northern city centre area action plan*** (NCCAAP) covering the key regeneration priority area in the northern part of Norwich city centre, was adopted in March 2010. Working to a base date of 2006 and covering the period to March 2016, its policies were prepared and consulted on in the context of the Replacement Local Plan 2004, which the adopted DM Policies Plan and Site Allocations Plan have now replaced. The Northern City Centre Area Action Plan is at the end of its ten year period and any remaining site specific proposals which are included in the NCCAAP but which have not yet been implemented by its end date of 31 March 2016 will no longer form part of the local plan. Proposals within the area would still need to be considered in the context of the strategic priority to secure regeneration of the northern city centre and promote major mixed use development at Anglia Square, as set out in JCS policy 11. This would continue to be a material consideration when assessing planning applications for development in the former NCCAAP area.
- 3.9 The Localism Act 2011 allows for community led ***neighbourhood plans*** to be brought forward to complement the adopted local plan, and this is reflected in Figure 1. No such plans have been proposed within the city boundary although neighbourhood plans are now formally in place (“made”) for the adjoining suburban parishes of Cringleford in South Norfolk and Sprowston in Broadland. The city council remains open to working in cooperation with community-led groups to produce neighbourhood plans for individual parts of Norwich where these help to promote beneficial development, regeneration or neighbourhood enhancement in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the general principles set out in the NPPF.

Evidence base

- 3.10 A Local Plan must be supported by a robust **evidence base**. The extensive library of documents which have informed the preparation of the DM policies and site allocations plan can be viewed on the city council’s website [here](#). The JCS documents library can be searched from the Greater Norwich Growth Board website [here](#).



4. Looking forward – the emerging local plan and the 2016-17 LDS programme

- 4.1 The Local development scheme was last reviewed in 2014, anticipating the adoption of new local plan documents for Norwich in December that year. With that milestone now achieved, this revision of the Local development scheme outlines the programme of documents and associated workstreams that will contribute to the replacement and review of the local plan. These will include the statutory and non-statutory planning documents detailed below.

New Development Plan Documents

- 4.2 The proposed **Greater Norwich Local Plan** will be a new statutory local plan for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk to update the present Joint Core Strategy (JCS). This will, similarly, set out a statement of strategic planning policy for the wider Norwich area but, unlike the JCS, will also include policies and proposals for individual sites. As such, the GNLP will eventually also replace separate site allocations plans for individual districts. It is the only formal development plan document in the current programme.

A new non statutory planning framework

- 4.3 The proposed **Norfolk Strategic Framework** will be a non-statutory strategic policy statement which will set broad strategic targets and priorities for the next round of statutory local plans for individual local planning authorities in Norfolk, facilitating joint working across district boundaries and helping to fulfil the statutory Duty to Co-operate.
- 4.4 Both the above documents will cover the period to 2036. Further information on each of the documents is given in the Key Document Profiles section at the end of the LDS which also includes the proposed production timetable for each document. The work programme set out in this LDS may be subject to review dependent on the extent of evidence likely to be required.

New Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.5 A number of supplementary planning documents are currently in place to support the adopted local plan, as detailed in section 1. The programme of SPDs proposed in the 2014 LDS is now largely complete, alongside those additional documents previously identified as informal advice notes which were taken forward as full SPD. The following supplementary planning documents are proposed for completion over the period of this LDS.

- **Trees and Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (scheduled to be adopted in May 2016).** The Trees and Landscape SPD will help to implement various strategic planning policies in the Joint Core Strategy requiring high quality landscaping to create a strong sense of place in new development, promoting expansion and improvement of the city's green infrastructure networks and providing and maintaining green open spaces to secure sustainable development. It also

supplements more detailed policies in the DM policies plan. By promoting a consistent approach to dealing with landscape and tree issues in development, planning applications can be processed more efficiently, helping to speed up the delivery of sustainable, high quality development for Norwich.

- ***Bethel Hospital Planning Brief.*** The largely disused Bethel Hospital is a prominent and highly significant complex of listed buildings in Norwich city centre; one of five priority buildings in Norwich on the Heritage at Risk Register which are considered to be in the most urgent need of repair and restoration. The Bethel Hospital was acquired many years ago for conversion by a local investment company and a consented scheme was partly implemented but subsequently abandoned. Substantial areas of the building have now fallen into disrepair after an extended period of neglect. The brief is intended to set planning and design principles/policies to guide future development of the site and assist in securing its beneficial repair, re-use and regeneration.

Other committed and potential workstreams

4.6 The following paragraphs refer to committed and potential workstreams which are or may be part of the Council's work programme, although in many cases the status and timescales for production of these have yet to be confirmed. None are formal development plan documents or supplementary planning documents but are included in the LDS for completeness. Subsequent revisions to the Local development scheme would identify the need for any formal DPDs or SPD emerging from this work.

a) Committed

4.7 Additional workstreams which are **committed** and form part of the planning service's work programme during this LDS period are as follows:

- A review of the ***Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)***. Under Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all local planning authorities in England and Wales must prepare a *Statement of community involvement* (SCI) and must carry out planning consultations in accordance with it. The SCI is a 'code of practice' setting out how the council intends to involve people in planning decisions. This can include both decisions about planning policy documents including those listed in this LDS (plan-making) and decisions on planning applications. Consultation on an updated SCI is expected to take place from May 2016.
- ***Brownfield Land Register.*** The government's emerging proposals for local planning authorities to maintain a statutory Brownfield Land Register would grant automatic planning permission in principle (PiP) for sites on the register. Any subsequent permissions granted on sites on the register would be limited to approval of technical matters, called *Technical Details Consent* (TDC) which, alongside permission in principle, would constitute a full permission to build. The government has not clarified how brownfield registers and local plan allocations are intended to interact in practice. There will be a need to investigate whether the register will

assist in promoting the development of sites which will no longer be allocated in the Northern City Centre Area Action Plan after the plan expires in March 2016, as well as other key sites for which early development is a priority.

- **River Wensum Strategy.** A non statutory strategy to promote use of the river Wensum, in particular promoting better access/signage to the river, increasing activity on the river, enhancing its function as a key piece of green infrastructure and contribution to biodiversity, and increasing its attractiveness to tourists and visitors. The strategy is being prepared in partnership with the Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, the Environment Agency and the Wensum River Parkway Partnership. This has been identified as an immediate priority.
- The government's new statutory requirement for local authorities to maintain a **Self-Build Register** under the community right to build (operating from April 2016) will potentially involve identifying opportunities for self-build and custom built housing on sites in Norwich to match demand, whether already allocated for housing or not. Draft national planning practice guidance¹ was issued in February 2016.
- A number of options for the city council's future policy approach to **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)** were identified in a report to members in March 2015 following public consultation on the issue at the end of the previous year. A commitment to review the situation after two years (and members' request to prepare an interim progress report in March 2016) means that further work in relation to HMOs is anticipated over the period of this LDS.

b) Potential additional work

4.8 Additional workstreams which **may be progressed**, subject to the availability of resources, but which are not firm commitments in this LDS period, are:

- **City Centre Strategy.** The need to develop a coordinated strategy for Norwich city centre has been identified partly as a result of ongoing national planning deregulation, which has reduced or removed the ability of the city council to fulfil its responsibilities under the NPPF to support town centres through direct exercise of its planning powers. Such a strategy would need to focus on maintaining the strength of the centre as a retail destination, managing change in shopping areas and addressing the impact of loss of offices and other commercial premises to residential use which cannot be achieved through planning policy (because many of these changes no longer require planning permission). The aim of the strategy would be to work with partners such as Norwich Business Improvement District, the Chamber of Commerce and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to cover the main issues affecting the city centre (e.g. housing, retail, leisure, offices, public realm, transport) promote development, access funding opportunities and target

¹ [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding - Draft planning practice guidance](#). Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2016,

investment to further improve the attractiveness of the city centre as a place to shop, work, live and do business in.

As a corporate and collaborative initiative, the City Centre Strategy would inform the development of specific planning documents but would not itself be a statutory document.

- **Northern City Centre Area Action Plan legacy work.** Once the NCCAAP expires, a formal brief interpreting JCS policy for Anglia Square could be produced, whilst there may be a need for additional site specific briefs, guidelines and masterplans in the LDS period, potentially to assist the delivery of housing and mixed use development on sites previously allocated by the NCCAAP and to support other regeneration opportunities elsewhere in the city. The detail to be produced by government on the role of the Brownfield Register is likely to determine the best approach. Until that detail is forthcoming, it is not practical to commit to any particular approach or include specific documents in the LDS.

However, due to limited resources and to promote partnership working, the potential for working with external groups and organisations would need to be investigated. The potential for a Neighbourhood Plan and the role of the Brownfield Register will also be considered.

- 4.9 The need for a potential **Gypsy and Traveller Single Issue Review** was identified in the 2014 LDS as a potential workstream. If no specific Gypsy and traveller site or sites could be identified through grant funding to meet identified needs to 2026, there is a commitment in Policy DM14 of the adopted DM policies plan to produce a short focused local plan by the end of 2016 to address the issue. It is not anticipated that such a plan will now be necessary, as any residual provision on an identified site and any longer term provision elsewhere can be covered in the Greater Norwich Local Plan and/or identification of appropriate sites on the Brownfield Land Register.

5. Key document profiles

Document Title	Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)
Role and content	To provide the strategic vision, objectives and strategy for future development of the greater Norwich area, to accommodate objectively assessed needs for growth and to identify specific sites for development in the period to 2036. The GNLP provides the strategic context for the preparation of lower level policy documents prepared by the three constituent district planning authorities.
Status	Statutory Development Plan Document (DPD)
Conformity	The document must conform with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (the NPPF) and with any subsequent review of the Framework. It should also accord with standing advice in national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
Geographical coverage	The three districts of Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, excluding the parts of those districts falling within the Broads Authority area.
Joint working arrangements (if any)	The plan will be prepared jointly with Broadland and South Norfolk district councils with the support of Norfolk County Council.
Relationship with adopted local plan(s)	The GNLP will supersede <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (adopted March 2011, amendments adopted 2014) b) the Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan (adopted December 2014)
Evidence required <i>May include selective reviews of the evidence base already in place for the JCS and new and/or updated studies where necessary, dependent on the eventual scope and coverage of the plan.</i>	This is likely to include (but not be limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The published <i>Central Norfolk Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)</i> 2016, and future updates which may be integrated into a combined Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA); - The emerging <i>Norfolk Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)</i>;

Document Title	Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An economic growth study (if not part of the HEDNA); - An infrastructure study; - A new or updated strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA); - An updated retail study; - A new or updated water cycle study; - A new or updated green infrastructure study; - A new or updated open space study; <p>The plan must be accompanied by an independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) which will draw on, and themselves be part of, the evidence base.</p>
<p>Production milestones</p> <p>Commence document production</p> <p>Publication of Local development scheme</p> <p>Review, consult on and revise (where necessary) the Statements of Community Involvement for participating districts</p> <p>Call for sites – invitation to put forward specific development sites for inclusion in the GNLP Commission, prepare and publish evidence studies required to support the GNLP</p> <p>Complete and publish draft (Regulation 18) plan for consultation: to include issues and policy options and shortlisted development sites</p> <p>Complete and publish pre-submission draft (Regulation 19) plan for consultation: to include agreed strategic policies, sites and site-specific proposals.</p> <p>Assess representations in response to Regulation 19 draft, prepare all formal submission documents</p> <p>Formal submission of GNLP to Secretary Of State (Regulation 22)</p> <p>Examination in public</p> <p>Consultation on inspector’s proposed main modifications</p> <p>Publication of Inspectors’ Report</p> <p>Adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan</p>	<p>December 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>by Summer 2016</p> <p>March – May 2016</p> <p>March 2016 – May 2017</p> <p>June-August 2017</p> <p>May-July 2018</p> <p>August 2018-January 2019</p> <p>April 2019</p> <p>September-October 2019</p> <p>February-March 2020</p> <p>July 2020</p> <p>October 2020</p>
<p>Monitoring and review</p>	<p>Annual Monitoring report and five year housing land supply updates</p>
<p>Governance and Resources</p>	<p>Resources</p> <p>Greater Norwich strategic planning officer group, other officer input, some use of</p>

Document Title	Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)
	Greater Norwich Delivery Board. Governance To be determined.

Document Title		Norfolk Strategic Framework (NSF)
Role and content		To set out an overall vision, strategic development principles and indicative housing and employment numbers and distribution for Norfolk in the period to 2036; to address relevant cross-boundary planning issues; to inform and provide a context for the preparation of statutory local plans for individual districts and areas within the county (including the GNLP).
Status		Non statutory strategic policy document
Geographical coverage		The administrative county of Norfolk. (The Broads Authority will be involved in the production of the document but it is not intended to include separate housing or employment targets for the Broads area).
Joint working arrangements (if any)		The NSF will be prepared jointly by the district planning authorities within Norfolk working with Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority and with the involvement of the Greater Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and other key stakeholders.
Conformity		As a non statutory document there is no formal requirement for conformity with higher level national policy statements, however the framework will need to follow the general principles of national policy and guidance.
Relationship with adopted local plan(s)		This will be a new document providing a framework for the eventual formal review and replacement of existing local plans.
Evidence required		Evidence required on housing, economic development, infrastructure and delivery. This will tie in with local plan evidence requirements.
Production milestones (provisional)		
Commence document production		January 2016
Prepare draft framework		Spring-Summer 2016
Public consultation on draft framework		October-December 2016
Revise and finalise content		Early 2017
Agree and sign off document for approval by constituent councils		Spring 2017
Completion		By April 2017
Governance and Resources		Resources: Officers working through steering groups extended to include representation from all

	<p>Norfolk districts and the county council along with representatives of key stakeholder groups and organisations such as the Environment Agency and the Local Enterprise partnership (LEP).</p> <p>Governance:</p> <p>The Duty to Cooperate member forum has been established as a non-decision making body which officers report to. Decisions are made by the constituent authorities' cabinets or equivalents.</p>
Monitoring and Review	<p>Annual Monitoring report and five year housing land supply updates of constituent authorities.</p>

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR NORWICH, 2016-17 KEY DOCUMENT PROGRAMME

Document	2015			2016												2017												2018											
	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S			
Preparation of Local Development Scheme																																							
ADOPTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS IN USE																																							
Joint Core Strategy for Broadland Norwich and South Norfolk																																							
Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan																																							
Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan																																							
Northern City Centre Area Action Plan (NCCAAP)																																							
Policies Map (+updates)																																							
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS																																							
Greater Norwich Local Plan																																							
PROPOSED NON STATUTORY DOCUMENTS																																							
Norfolk Strategic Framework (Joint with other Norfolk councils)																																							
PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS																																							
Open Space and Play SPD																																							
Heritage Interpretation SPD																																							
Trees and Landscape SPD																																							
Bethel Hospital Planning Brief (SPD)																																							
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (Review)																																							

KEY

General

LDS production/review	
Resolution to bring LDS into effect	R
Commencement of this LDS period	
Commencement of individual document production	*

Adopted development plan documents

Adopted DPDs (local plans) in use	
Adopted DPD (local plan) expiry	E
Policies map update (to delete redundant NCCAAP policies)	&

Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)

Call for sites	
Preparation of draft Regulation 18 plan and supporting evidence	S
Reg 18 draft consultation stage	18
Assessment of responses/preparation of Reg 19 pre-submission plan	
Reg 19 publication (pre-submission) stage	19
Assessment of responses/preparation of Reg 22 submission document	
<u>Subsequent statutory GNLP milestones not included in this LDS period</u>	
Submission to Secretary of State	April 2019
Examination in Public	September/October 2019
Consultation on inspectors' proposed modifications	February/March 2020
Adoption	October 2020

Norfolk Strategic Framework (NSF)

Evidence gathering and production of draft framework	
Consultation on draft framework	
Production of final framework	C
Adoption of NSF by constituent Norfolk councils	
Provisional timetable - may be subject to change.	A

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

SPD production	
SPD Consultation - draft (Regulation 12)	12
SPD adoption	A

Statement of community involvement review (for info)

Consultation on revised SCI	C
Adoption of revised SCI	A

Report to Sustainable development panel
24 February 2016
Report of Head of planning services
Subject River Wensum Strategy update

Item

6

Purpose

To update members on progress made to date by the River Wensum Strategy Partnership with preparation of a strategy for the River Wensum in Norwich, and to provide an overview of key themes and emerging proposals.

Recommendation

To consider the progress made to date and comment on the direction being taken by the emerging strategy.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the council's corporate priority for a safe, clean and low carbon city, and a prosperous and vibrant city.

Financial implications

None

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet members: Councillor Bremner, environment and sustainable development
Councillor Stonard, resources and income regeneration

Contact officers

Graham Nelson – Head of planning 01603 212530

Judith Davison – Planning team leader - projects 01603 212529

Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. The River Wensum is a key but under-utilised asset for Norwich with the potential to contribute significantly to the city's regeneration. However this potential is currently not being realised. Despite creation of significant stretches of riverside walk over the past few decades and provision of new bridges, much remains to be achieved in terms of promoting better access / signage to the river, increasing activity on the river, enhancing its function as a key piece of green infrastructure and its contribution to biodiversity, and increasing its attractiveness to tourists and visitors. The complex range of responsibilities for management of the river and its environs (split between the city council, Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council and Environment Agency) poses a key challenge to effective management of the river corridor and delivery of change.
2. The River Wensum Strategy Partnership was created in December 2014 to develop a strategy for the River Wensum in Norwich to maximise its potential for regeneration, in particular by encouraging greater access to and activity on the river, enhancing its environment and biodiversity value, and by stimulating leisure and business opportunities. Members will recall that the background to establishing a partnership body was discussed in a planning update report to sustainable development panel in January 2015. In considering options for developing a wider strategy, the council favoured a partnership - rather than a corporate - approach, as being more likely to lead to sustainable regeneration of the river and its environs, to ensure effective liaison between the authorities on river related issues, and to be an effective vehicle for overseeing strategy development and future implementation, capable of reconciling potentially conflicting priorities of stakeholders.
3. The River Wensum Strategy Partnership is led and project managed by the city council, and the strategy is being developed in partnership with the Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council (also representing the Greater Norwich Growth Board), the Environment Agency, and the Wensum River Parkway Partnership (also representing the Norwich Society). The partnership board is chaired by Councillor Stonard.

Roles and responsibilities

4. Most of the partner organisations have statutory responsibilities for different aspects of the river and its environs. These include Norwich City Council's role as local planning authority and its ownership of a large part of the river bed and other land including New Mills Yard and the Norwich Yacht Station. The Broads Authority is both navigation authority and harbour authority and is also the local planning authority with responsibility for planning matters relating to water, including the tidal section of the river downstream of New Mills Yard. The Environment Agency is responsible for the non-tidal reaches of the river upstream of New Mills, and has a number of other regulatory and monitoring responsibilities. Norfolk County Council has responsibilities for public health, transport and economic development as well as coordinating and delivering strategic green infrastructure within the GNGB area. The county council also manages the Norfolk Trails network which includes the Marriott's Way, Wherryman's Way and the Boudicca Way all of which connect with the River Wensum parkway within the city.

5. The Wensum River Parkway Partnership (WRPP) is also a key member of the partnership given its role as an umbrella stakeholder group focused on river issues. Its involvement helps to ensure ongoing stakeholder input into the developing strategy.
6. The development of this strategy provides an opportunity to address the complex range of statutory roles and responsibilities and ownership issues to encourage more effective joint working between partners on a range of river issues including mooring, enforcement, navigation, and conflicting uses.

Progress to date

7. The early work of the partnership, in winter / spring 2015, included gathering of background information about the river including mapping of land ownership, topographical details, and existing river infrastructure, and the development of a stakeholder database of all those with an interest in the river and its environs. The database includes special interest groups (covering a range of leisure, conservation, and environmental interests), local authority members and officers, landowners, businesses, charities, residents' organisations, and interested members of the public, and will be added to throughout the development of the strategy.
8. A key element of the early work also included discussions in early 2015 within each partner organisation to identify issues and opportunities relating to the river, in order to ensure that the strategy builds upon the wealth of expertise and experience that already exists within these organisations. A wide range of service areas was consulted within Norwich City Council including Planning, Transportation, City Development, NPS, Leisure, Housing, Communities and Neighbourhood teams, Parks and Open Spaces, Environmental strategy, Environmental health, and Culture and Event Management.
9. Following this, the first stage of consultation on the River Wensum Strategy took place in June – July 2015. This was an Issues and Opportunities consultation, seeking to identify issues to be addressed by the strategy and potential opportunities.
10. There was great public interest in the consultation event (held in Blackfriars Hall on 24 June) and in the online consultation which ran to 24 July. Over 160 individuals responded, with a total of over 800 individual comments. The report of consultation summarises the comments which include many leisure related issues and opportunities related to improved river infrastructure, improved access, better signage, and opportunities for enhancement for specific sites, eg. New Mills, and environmental issues and opportunities including opportunities for enhanced biodiversity, and green infrastructure enhancements (see further references below.) The issues and opportunities raised demonstrate a high degree of consensus with those identified by internal discussion within the partner organisations earlier in the year.

Strategy development

11. The draft strategy and action plan is currently being developed, taking into consideration the comments made through the public consultation exercise and input from the partner organisations. The strategy will include policies and proposals, with an action plan of projects capable of implementation in the short to medium term, which will be illustrated on a strategy map. The strategy will cover an approximately 10 year period.
12. Given the complexity of responsibilities and the cross-cutting nature of many of the emerging projects and proposals, development of the strategy requires discussion and coordination between the partner organisations in their various capacities, and with relevant stakeholders as appropriate. As the intention is to produce a strategy that is focussed and deliverable, the process of developing proposals also includes investigation of feasibility and of funding sources where relevant.

Strategy scope

13. The scope of the strategy was subject to consultation and although comments were largely supportive, some amendments are proposed in response to comments raised.
14. The proposed vision is 'to breathe new life into the river corridor by enhancing it for the benefit of *all* [rather than for 'a variety of groups'] and increase access to, and greater use of, this important asset. The river will once again play an important part in the growth and vitality of the city'.
15. The proposed strategy area remains unchanged and includes the Wensum corridor in Norwich, from Hellesdon Mill to Whitlingham Country Park (see plan at Appendix 1).
16. The objectives are proposed to be amended to reflect greater emphasis on biodiversity, and the need to tackle social deprivation and reduce inequalities:
 - Management of the river and its surroundings for the benefit of the city, residents of the wider Norwich area, and visitors
 - Increased access to, and use of, the area by all
 - Enhanced economy, particularly boosting leisure and tourism
 - Enhanced natural environment and biodiversity
 - Enhanced heritage
 - Address social deprivation and inequalities
 - Identify potential income and funding opportunities.

Emerging themes and proposals

17. An overview of the key themes and a flavour of the emerging proposals is summarised below. Some of the proposals mentioned are existing priorities but it is considered appropriate to repeat them here where their delivery will help meet strategy objectives.

Access

18. The river is a major piece of green / blue infrastructure with the potential to link to existing and proposed green infrastructure and with walking and cycling networks. It will help support the green infrastructure requirements of new and anticipated development in the city centre and east Norwich in particular. Emerging proposals include:
- Completion of missing links of the riverside walk. There are key missing links in the vicinity of the Playhouse between St George's Bridge and Duke Street bridge, and on Fishergate between Fye Bridge and Whitefriars;
 - Accessibility improvements to the existing riverside walk to replace steps where feasible and make it more accessible for those with mobility difficulties;
 - Wider connectivity improvements, for example linking the riverside walk with the Marriott's Way and Wherryman's Way;
 - Improved signage and promotion, to link the river to the cultural and visitor offer and the city centre; and
 - New bridge links in east Norwich including over the Wensum (to be delivered through new development) and the Yare (an existing Green Infrastructure Strategy priority).

Leisure

19. One of the key objectives of the strategy is to encourage greater activity on the river by a variety of small craft. The lack of activity on the river is evident to anyone walking along the riverside walk and there is potential to increase this to deliver a vibrant and attractive river corridor. One of the barriers to this is the relative lack of existing river infrastructure suitable for use by canoes and small boats in a range of locations (with parking provision where appropriate), and the need for more moorings in suitable locations. It is also important to understand the Broads Authority's legal responsibility to maintain the navigation of the river which can impinge on location of pontoons or other means of accessing the river.
20. Emerging proposals include:
- Improved new river infrastructure including new canoe launch points, upgrades to existing infrastructure to increase its use, and improved mooring facilities;
 - The strategy map will address conflicting uses where possible, for example by clarifying areas of the riverbank for use as moorings and those for anglers, and also those which need to be kept free for navigation purposes.
 - There is potential for events based on and around the river, to raise its profile and encourage greater use.

Environment

21. Environmental issues raised in the consultation process include biodiversity, flood and water management issues, the need for general environmental enhancements including litter reduction, and encouragement of renewable technologies. It is important also that the strategy reflects the differing character of the river environment, particularly upstream and downstream of New Mills.
22. Emerging proposals include:
- Biodiversity enhancements including habitat creation. This could focus on local nature reserves and county wildlife sites upstream of New Mills but also on sites in the city centre. Habitat enhancements could also include floating planters attached to pontoons.

- Naturalising of edges of the river where appropriate to maximise natural water storage and reduce flood risk.
- Work with relevant authorities including Anglian Water to improve water quality.
- Investigate the potential for renewable energy generation, particularly water source heat pumps.

Site specific proposals

23. A number of key sites in the city offer the potential for development or enhancements that could meet strategy objectives and contribute to regeneration of the river corridor. Given that the feasibility of a number of specific proposals is currently being explored, it would be premature to refer to them at this stage, but a number of these proposals will be included in the draft strategy which will be produced for consultation later in the year.

Management

24. As noted earlier the management and ownership of the river corridor is split between a number of bodies and this complexity poses a challenge to effective joint working. The strategy will address this through providing clarification of roles and responsibilities for all river related activities of partners including enforcement and maintenance. It will also signpost all relevant policy and guidance, for example planning policy of the relevant authorities within the strategy area and BA published guidance, so that members of the public, developers, and those authorities discharging their statutory responsibilities will have a 'one stop shop' resource for the whole range of policy/guidance relating to the river.

25. The strategy will promote joint working with relevant bodies or partnerships, for example Norfolk Trails, and health authorities, where they share common objectives, which could assist with funding bids and project delivery.

26. The strategy will also consider future delivery arrangements, which is likely to involve a delivery board made up of representatives of the partner organisations, to oversee delivery of the strategy and monitor outcomes.

Funding

27. The action plan referred to earlier in the report will act as a basis for funding bids. Potential sources of funding include Community infrastructure levy (CIL) funds for green infrastructure, and the CIL neighbourhood fund. Other sources of funding will be explored as part of individual project development and may include Heritage Lottery Funding, and LEP funding where appropriate. Other funding sources may also become available as the strategy progresses.

Next steps

28. Once complete, the draft strategy will be subject to a further public consultation, anticipated to be in summer 2016, to give the public and stakeholders an opportunity to comment on its proposals. As part of the consultation process, the draft strategy will be reported to sustainable development panel during the consultation period (as well as to key committees of the partner bodies) to seek member input at this key stage.
29. Following the consultation, a final version of the strategy will be produced, anticipated to be in late 2016. The strategy will be reported to sustainable development panel and cabinet (and by the partners' relevant committees), prior to adoption by each of the partner organisations, anticipated in early 2017. The adopted strategy will not only set out policies and proposals for the river corridor but will provide a framework for delivery and will support funding applications for specific improvement projects.

Further references

River Wensum strategy – Issues and opportunities consultation June – July 2015: summary of responses:

<http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/PlanningPolicy/Documents/RWSPPublicConsultationReportOct15.pdf>

