



NORWICH City Council

Committee Name: Cabinet

Committee Date: 08/12/2021

Report Title: Local Development Scheme December 2021

Portfolio: Councillor Stonard, Cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth

Report from: Head of planning and regulatory services

Wards: All Wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

To consider the draft revised Local Development Scheme and any comments made by Sustainable Development Panel. This is the work programme for producing key planning documents, which will form part of the local plan for Norwich. The scheme is attached at Appendix 1 and covers a two-year period to 2023.

Recommendation:

To approve the Local Development Scheme for publication under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011).

Policy Framework

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the people living well, great neighbourhoods, housing and environment and inclusive economy corporate priorities.

This report addresses the following strategic actions in the Corporate Plan:

- Provide means for people to lead healthy, connected, fulfilling lives, particularly those who are most vulnerable
- Maintain a clean and sustainable city with a good local environment that people value
- Ensure our services mitigate against any adverse effects of climate change and are efficient to reduce carbon emissions
- Build and maintain a range of affordable and social housing
- Continue sensitive regeneration of the city that retains its unique character and meets local needs
- Mobilise activity and investment that promotes a growing, diverse, innovative and resilient economy.

This report helps to meet the following objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan:

- Housing, regeneration and development
- Climate change and the green economy

Report Details

1. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) must be prepared as part of the statutory process of plan making. It is the work programme and project plan for the preparation of the various planning policy documents making up the local plan for the city.
2. Preparation and maintenance 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 LDS prior to publication, or to submit it to the government for formal endorsement.
3. The legislation gives local authorities considerable leeway in the form and content of the LDS. However, it requires as a minimum the local planning authority, when publishing the LDS, to make the up-to-date text of the scheme available, provide details of any amendments made to the scheme, and information on its compliance (or non-compliance) with the timetable for the preparation and revision of documents identified within it.
4. The LDS was last reviewed in February 2021 and was intended to cover the period to 2023. Since then, further information has become available surrounding the East Norwich masterplanning exercise, progress on the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), as well as potential neighbourhood planning and design code workstreams. It is considered best practice to update the LDS before the examination of the GNLP. The LDS has therefore been revised to include the most up to date information. Otherwise, the information contained within it is identical to the February 2021 version.
5. The revised LDS will run to Autumn/Winter 2023 and will entirely supersede the version published in February 2021. It will be rolled forward periodically to ensure that it is as up-to-date and flexible as possible.

Updates to the Local Development Scheme

6. The following summarises the changes made to the previous version of the LDS from February 2021:
 - a. No further information is available regarding the Government's consultation on the Planning White Paper and Changes to the Current Planning System documents. This has impacted on the timescales for the review and production of several development plan documents, advice and guidance, details of which are set out below.
 - b. The previous version of the LDS outlined that the Statement of Community Involvement would be reviewed during 2021. The intention is for the SCI to still be reviewed over the coming months, however the

wording has been amended slightly to build some flexibility into the timescales to take account of current workload.

- c. Since the last version of the LDS was adopted a community group has expressed an interest in establishing a neighbourhood forum for the Neighbourhood Area which was designated in 2018. As yet, no formal application has been made to the City Council but this is likely to happen during the lifetime of this LDS.
- d. The revised version of the LDS has been updated to refer to the latest Greater Norwich Annual Monitoring Report.
- e. Paragraphs 4.3-4.4 have been amended to refer to the progress and updated timescales associated with the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). The GNLP was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2021 in accordance with the accelerated timescales outlined in paragraph 4.4 of the LDS. It is anticipated that public examination of the GNLP will commence in early 2022 with adoption of the plan expected by September 2022.
- f. The February 2021 LDS outlined that full review of the Development Management Policies Local Plan was not appropriate at that time given the uncertainty around the changes to the planning system. There have been no formal updates from the Government as to the extent of the changes that will be implemented. The intention is to consider commencement of a review of the DM Policies Plan next year when there is greater clarity on the proposed planning reforms and the on the content of the GNLP.
- g. The LDS has been updated to refer to the latest revision of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) document which was endorsed and adopted by the Norfolk Planning Authorities in early 2021.
- h. An update has been included on the progress of the East Norwich masterplan. Work has been ongoing throughout 2021 for the stage 1 masterplan including consultation and engagement events. The stage 1 masterplan was presented to Cabinet in November 2021 for approval and agreement to move to stage 2. Stage 2 includes the production of a supplementary planning document to support the policy and allocations in the GNLP.
- i. The February 2021 LDS included reference to the production of a Norfolk-wide Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) to be led by Norwich City Council. The production of the LHNA on a Norfolk-wide scale has not continued as a Greater Norwich LHNA was produced as evidence to support the GNLP.
- j. The LDS has been updated to include details of progress made on the production of an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of offices to residential. The direction and notice had been submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. Should the process proceed as envisaged, the direction should be confirmed in December 2021 and will come into force in July 2022.

- k. Following recent retail monitoring, more frequent monitoring of the City Centre is being considered to ensure the Council have regular information on the City's retail sector. This is likely to require existing resource from the Planning Team.

Consideration by Sustainable Development Panel

7. The revised LDS was presented to Sustainable Development Panel at its meeting on 16th November 2021. Members discussed the revised LDS and agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the document be approved for publication under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011).

Conclusions

8. The principal challenges to meeting the aims and timescales set out in the revised LDS remain the uncertainty around changes to national policy, availability of resources (both staff and financial), timescales surrounding local plan production process including the GNLP and a potential Neighbourhood Plan, and the continued joint working with other authorities across Norfolk.
9. In addition, many other aspects of the planning policy team's workload are not included in the LDS (such as monitoring and implementation of local plan policies) which require a significant staff resource. New planning priorities may also emerge during the LDS period, which may impact upon achievement of LDS timescales.
10. Information about the workstreams identified in this LDS and any new priorities will be reported to Sustainable Development Panel and Cabinet as required and will be included in any future revisions to the LDS as appropriate.

Consultation

11. The LDS is prepared with input from both the Planning Policy and Development Management teams, as well as the GNLP and NSPF partners on workstreams that involve joint working.
12. In addition, the relevant portfolio holder was made aware of the contents and updates to the LDS prior to this report being completed.
13. The revised LDS was also reported to Sustainable Development Panel on 16th November 2021.

Implications

Financial and Resources

14. The information contained within the updated LDS is the Planning Policy team's planned workload based on the information available at the current time and have already taken into account both financial and resource implications as part of the planning exercise. Any workloads that have financial or resource

implications over and above the general Planning Policy resource requirements will be subject to review within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Budget.

Legal

15. This is a report for information. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Statutory Considerations

| Consideration | Details of any implications and proposed measures to address: |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Equality and Diversity | This update report does not have any direct implications for the council's equality and diversity considerations. |
| Health, Social and Economic Impact | This update report does not have any direct implications for the council's health, social and economic impacts considerations. |
| Crime and Disorder | This update report does not have any direct implications for the council's crime and disorder considerations. |
| Children and Adults Safeguarding | This update report does not have any direct implications for the council's children and adults safeguarding considerations. |
| Environmental Impact | This update report does not have any direct implications for the council's environmental impact considerations. |

Risk Management

| Risk | Consequence | Controls Required |
|---|---|---|
| Government makes significant changes to the planning system | Many of the workstreams identified in the LDS may not be required any longer and risks undertaking abortive work; new workstreams may be required which will have an impact on timescales and resources | The LDS already highlights areas of work which may be at risk from Government changes to the planning system. The LDS can be revised at any time to take account of changing circumstance. Reporting and sign off via SD Panel and Cabinet will be required for any future revision of the LDS. |
| Timescales for planned workload are brought forward/slip | This may impact on the resources required to ensure the workstreams continue/are completed. | The LDS can be revised at any time to take account of changing circumstance. Reporting and sign off via SD Panel and Cabinet will be required for any future revision of the LDS. |

| Risk | Consequence | Controls Required |
|--|--|---|
| Unknown additional workstreams not currently planned for | This may impact on timescales and resources available for planned-for workstreams. | The LDS can be revised at any time to take account of changing circumstance. Reporting and sign off via SD Panel and Cabinet will be required for any future revision of the LDS. |
| Changes to available resources | This may impact on timescales for planned-for and unknown additional work streams. | The LDS can be revised at any time to take account of changing circumstance. Reporting and sign off via SD Panel and Cabinet will be required for any future revision of the LDS. |

Other Options Considered

16. 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, therefore no other options have been considered.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

17. The recommendation is to agree the Local Development Scheme and recommend that Cabinet approves it for publication to ensure that the Council complies with the requirement of section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011).

Background papers: None

Appendices:

1 Local Development Scheme December 2021

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NORWICH
City Council

**Local Development Scheme
for Norwich**

December 2021

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 development plan documents. An LDS is a project plan which identifies 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 LDS 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, 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 and potential workstreams contributing to documents, which may form part of the LDS.
- 1.4 The LDS was last updated in February 2021. Since the publication of that document, further information has become available surrounding the East Norwich masterplanning exercise, progress on the Greater Norwich Local Plan, as well as potential neighbourhood planning and design code workstreams.
- 1.5 In autumn 2020, the Government consulted on the Planning White Paper: Planning for the Future¹ and Changes to the Current Planning System². These documents propose significant changes to the way the planning system operates as well as the content of local plan documents. The Government is yet to respond to the consultation or make the arrangements formal in any new legislation. However, the Government has also signalled that it is carrying out a review of its proposed planning reforms, and therefore the situation going forward is still uncertain. Therefore, this revision of the LDS, and all the workstreams contained within it, assume a continuation of the current system. Should any changes to the planning system be formalised in future, a further update of the LDS will be prepared as necessary.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>

Summary of progress since the last LDS

- 1.6 Since publication of the last LDS, significant progress has been made on the preparation of the **Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)**, and on the revised **Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF)**, which was endorsed in early 2021. Further details are set out in the main body of this document.
- 1.7 The **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** was fully revised and published in November 2016, and replaces the version published in July 2013. The SCI is the council's code of practice for involving the community in planning issues, including decisions about plan making and on planning applications. A minor temporary update was made to the SCI in 2020 to increase flexibility in planning consultations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest version of the SCI remains in place But is likely to require review over the coming months.
- 1.8 The **Brownfield Register (Part 1)** was last published in November 2020. This includes sites that have been assessed as being appropriate for residential development, such as sites with planning permission and allocations in local plans. The register will be updated at least once a year in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017.
- 1.9 A **Self-build Register** for Norwich was established in 2016 to enable individuals and organisations to register their desire for land for self-build or custom-built housing. The register will enable the council to monitor the demand for self and custom build plots. A local connection test and annual fee were introduced in 2017.
- 1.10 The **River Wensum Strategy** was adopted by Norwich City Council (in June 2018) and by the other partner authorities during summer 2018. The strategy development and ongoing delivery is led by Norwich City Council working in partnership with the Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, the Environment Agency and the Norwich Society. This is a non-statutory strategy aimed at facilitating change and regeneration in the river corridor by helping to change perceptions of the city as a visitor destination and acting as an economic driver to attract investment. It promotes greater use of the river Wensum, in particular promoting improved 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 River Wensum Strategy Partnership group continue to meet and have progressed to the delivery phase of the project, setting out actions for implementation of the strategy. A number of projects identified in the strategy are underway, or have already been completed, such as the installation of canoe portages, an eel pass at New Mills, and Barn Road Gateway public realm and accessibility improvements. The partnership are now working on a Delivery Plan to focus project delivery for the next approximately two years.
- 1.11 In June 2018, the city council's Cabinet formally designated the area that was previously the subject of the Northern City Centre Area Action Plan as a neighbourhood area. This followed applications for designation of a wider area (the Cathedral, Magdalen and St Augustine's Street area - CMSA) as a neighbourhood area and for designation of a forum

for that area. Following a public consultation in early 2018, both applications were refused by Norwich City Council and the Broads Authority (the latter being involved as part of the River Wensum falls within the proposed area) in June 2018. The Localism Act 2011, S61G(5) states that, where a local authority refuses an application for designation of a neighbourhood area because they consider the specified area to be inappropriate as such, they must exercise their powers of designation to secure that some or all of the specified area forms part of one or more areas designated as neighbourhood area.

- 1.12 The designated **Northern City Centre Neighbourhood Area** is already well established as an appropriate area for planning purposes, and development of a neighbourhood plan could help to positively build on the area's significant regeneration potential. Since the last version of the LDS was published, a community group has expressed an interest in establishing a neighbourhood forum for this area. As yet, no formal applications have been made to the City Council, but this is likely to happen during the lifetime of this revised LDS.
- 1.13 The **Affordable Housing SPD** was updated and adopted in July 2019. This SPD replaces the previously adopted version from 2015. The new SPD takes account of changes in the revised NPPF with a view to maximising the provision of affordable housing in the city.
- 1.14 In November 2019, the **Purpose Built Student Accommodation in Norwich: Evidence and Best Practice Advice Note** was adopted by cabinet. Following a significant rise in the number of applications for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) over a number of years, the PBSA advice note was prepared to provide guidance for applicants and decision-makers in the absence of a specific policy in the Local Plan. The council has produced the advice note with the aim of ensuring delivery of high quality PBSA in Norwich. This includes an assessment of the need for purpose-built accommodation and guidance on a range of issues including the location, scale, external and internal design and management of PBSA, and how to encourage an accommodation mix for a wide range of students. The Council is continuing to work with local higher education institutions and their student's unions through PBSA working groups, to monitor and share information to support the provision of good quality and appropriate student accommodation. An update to the PBSA advice note to reflect current need is anticipated in 2022.
- 1.15 A development brief was prepared for Prospect House to guide the redevelopment of this prominent city centre site and was approved by Planning Applications Committee in October 2018. This site was not allocated in the Site Allocations Plan as it was not a development opportunity at that time. The brief will be a material planning consideration in the determination of any planning application that is subsequently submitted for the site.
- 1.16 UEA are looking at a new **Estates Strategy or Campus Redevelopment Programme** to set in place an overarching strategic framework to guide campus activities for the next 40 to 50 years and to be used as part of the evidence base of the GNLP. Findings will be discussed with Norwich City Council.

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 be either 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 and the **Norwich Development Management Policies Local Plan** (the DM Policies Plan), adopted December 2014. The **Northern City Centre Area Action Plan** (NCCAAP) as stated earlier no longer forms part of the local plan, 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 and Site Allocations plan will be replaced by the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), which will run until 2038 and is scheduled to be adopted in 2022.
- 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 and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. 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 **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 DPDs 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 (SPDs)

- 2.7 Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) help to support and explain in more detail how the city council will implement particular policies and proposals in the Local Plan. SPDs 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 SPDs 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 National **Planning Practice Guidance** (PPG) states that SPDs should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. SPDs 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 There are currently five adopted SPDs in place, which support the policies in the JCS and DM Policies Plan. Other planning guidance may also be produced during the lifetime of this LDS (see below).

Other local plan documents

- 2.11 In addition to the progress report provided by this LDS, 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 2019 to March 2020, was published in July 2021³.

Associated documents and initiatives

- 2.14 Although not required to be published as part of the LDS 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 **Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework** (NSPF);
 - 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 <https://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/planning/monitoring/>

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. These documents include the **JCS**, the **DM Policies Plan** and the **Site Allocations Plan**.
- 3.2 As these documents are already in use, they are not part of the formal LDS schedule set out in the Annex, which deals in the main with the new and emerging documents that will be prepared to replace or supplement them. However, they are referred to below in order to provide a complete picture of the planning policy documents that 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. The Duty to Cooperate places a legal duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 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 10.
- 3.5 For the Norwich area, the adopted **JCS** is the primary document at the top of the hierarchy with 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 Norfolk County Council, 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 until it is superseded by the Greater Norwich Local Plan once adopted (see section 4 below).
- 3.6 The **Site Allocation Plan** identifies and sets out policies for 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 **DM Policies Plan sets** out a range of more detailed policies applying throughout Norwich to be used in the council’s assessment of development proposals and to guide future council decisions on applications for planning permission up to 2026. Its 33 policies cover a range of topics, building on the national policy principles for sustainable development set out in the NPPF 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 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. As stated above (paragraph 1.10), a neighbourhood area has been designated for the northern city centre. However, no neighbourhood plans have yet been proposed within the city boundary although a number of neighbourhood plans are now formally in place (“made”) for the adjoining suburban parishes of Cringleford in South Norfolk, and Sprowston, Hellesdon and Old Catton in Broadland. The city council remains open to working in cooperation with community-led groups to produce neighbourhood plans 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.

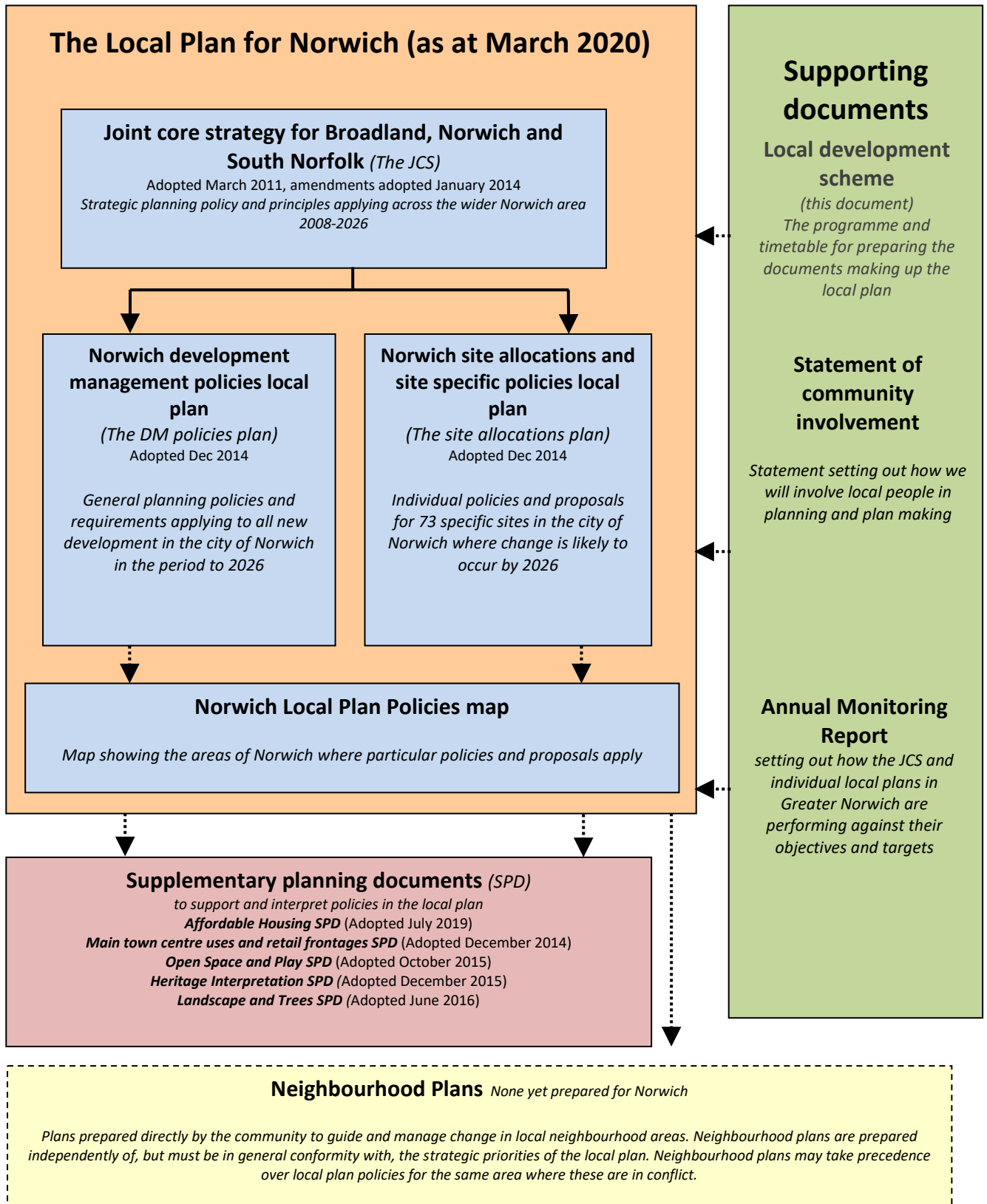


Figure 1: Hierarchy of the local policy context in Norwich

4. Looking forward – the emerging local plan and the 2021-23 LDS programme

- 4.1 The LDS was last reviewed in full in February 2021. This further review is required to make updates to local plan preparation timescales and to provide updates on the progress of workstreams since the last revision. This revision of the LDS 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.
- 4.2 Further detailed information on the GNLP is included in the Key Document Profiles in section 5. The work programme set out for this document may be subject to review dependent on the extent of evidence and resources likely to be required and timescales proposed by the Planning Inspectorate.

New Development Plan Documents

- 4.3 The proposed **Greater Norwich Local Plan**⁴ (GNLP) will be a new statutory local plan for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk to update the present 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 also replace separate site allocations plans for individual districts – in the case of Norwich, the Site Allocations plan. However, the village clusters site allocations policies for the South Norfolk District will be included in a separate South Norfolk Village Clusters local plan which is being prepared alongside the GNLP. Only the overall number of dwellings proposed within these settlements is included within the GNLP itself.
- 4.4 The timetable for the production of the GNLP shown in this LDS has been adjusted to reflect changes in the production timetable and to account for progress over the last 9 months. In July 2020 the Greater Norwich authorities agreed to extend the timescales for GNLP preparation to allow more time to make updates and amendments following the Regulation 18 consultation, to take on board updated evidence, to allow for an additional Regulation 18(d) consultation and to take account of the impacts of COVID-19. In August 2020, the Government published the Planning White Paper and Changes to the Current Planning System documents, which included a revision to the standard methodology for calculating housing need. Following consideration of options by the GNLP Board, the decision was taken to accelerate plan production making use of the transitional arrangements provided by the Government, based on the draft GNLP already consulted upon. In December 2020, the Government announced that the existing standard methodology would be retained meaning that the GNLP would no longer need to proceed through transitional arrangements. However, the Greater Norwich authorities agreed to proceed to the accelerated timescales in order to avoid any further delay in the plan's production and to ensure that plan-making momentum was maintained. In July 2021, the

⁴ <https://gnlp.oc2.uk/>

GNLP was formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Examination is anticipated to begin in early 2022.

- 4.5 In accordance with paragraph 33 of the NPPF and S10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2017, the council undertook a review of the DM Policies Plan and the Site Allocations Plan⁵, to review whether the plans are up to date and respond to changing local needs and circumstances. The review was carried out in October-November 2019 and endorsed by cabinet on 13 November 2019. It concluded that, in general, the local plan policies are fit for purpose at the current time, however it recommends that a full review of the DM Policies Plan should commence following the Regulation 19 consultation of the GNLP. The Regulation 19 consultation of the GNLP took place in early 2021 and therefore the review of the DM policies plan could, in theory, commence.
- 4.6 However, the Government have yet to publish their response to the consultation on the Planning White Paper and Changes to the Current Planning System which was due earlier this year. Therefore, there is still a significant degree of uncertainty surrounding what planning reforms may be implemented which could impact upon any future review of the DM Policies Local Plan. The intention is to consider commencement of a review of the DM Policies Plan next year when there is greater clarity on the proposed planning reforms and the on the content of the GNLP. Once this is clarified, the LDS will be updated to include the programme of work.

Review of the non-statutory Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

- 4.7 The **Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework**⁶ (NSPF) is a non-statutory strategic policy statement setting out 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. The NSPF was revised and endorsed by Norwich City Council in April 2021. It will continue to be reviewed regularly as the Duty to Co-operate requires authorities to work together in an ongoing and meaningful way as the Statement of Common Ground must reflect the most up to date position in terms of joint working across the area.

New Supplementary Planning Documents and planning guidance

- 4.8 Following the cessation of the Britvic/Colmans/Unilever operations at the Carrow Works site, the Council and key partners are about to commission a masterplan for the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area, capable of adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. This will aim to guide the coordinated redevelopment of the site to focus on delivery of transformational change of this key area of Norwich and to inform the Regulation 19 version of the GNLP. Consultants began work on the masterplanning

⁵ https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20199/adopted_local_plan/2494/regulation_10a_review_of_the_local_plan

⁶ https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20022/planning_policy/1194/emerging_local_plan_and_evidence_documents/2

exercise in March 2021 and are nearing the end of stage 1 of the process – a preferred option masterplan, based on a comprehensive evidence base and a process of public and stakeholder engagement. Cabinet will consider approval of the stage 1 masterplan in November 2021 and agreement to move to stage 2 of the masterplan. Stage 2 will involve production of a joint SPD for East Norwich to support the policy and allocations in the GNLP. Timescales are set out in the table in Section 5.

- 4.9 The previous version of the LDS includes a new committed workstream which involved the City Council being the lead authority on a new Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) with partner authorities across Norfolk. This workstream has not progressed as envisaged as a LHNA has now been produced as evidence to support the GNLP. The Greater Norwich HNA was published June 2021⁷.

Other committed and potential workstreams

- 4.10 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 LDS would identify the need for any formal DPDs or SPDs emerging from this work.

Committed

- 4.11 Additional workstreams which are **committed** and form part of the planning service's work programme during this LDS period are as follows:
- Maintenance of the **Brownfield Land Register updates**. The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 require local planning authorities to maintain a statutory Brownfield Land Register. The regulations state that the Part 1 Registers must be updated at least annually so this will form an ongoing commitment. Part 2 of the register is intended to include sites listed in Part 1, which are considered suitable for the granting of planning permission in principle for residential development. There is no intention at this stage to produce a Part 2 Register.
 - The **Self-Build Register** (set up in April 2016) will continue to be maintained in accordance with the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015⁸ (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016).

Potential Additional Work

- 4.12 Additional workstreams which may be progressed, but which **are not firm commitments** in this LDS period, are:

⁷ <https://www.gnlp.org.uk/sites/gnlp/files/2021-07/B22.3%20Greater%20Norwich%20LHNA.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents/enacted/data.htm>

- Potential neighbourhood plan support following the designation of the northern city centre area as a neighbourhood area in June 2018. This will be dependent on a community group gaining designation as a neighbourhood forum, and commencing preparation of a neighbourhood plan. A community group have expressed an interest in taking this forward and it is currently anticipated that an application for a Forum will be submitted before the end of 2021.
- Over the past few years, Norwich has seen a significant reduction in office floorspace. This is largely attributed to the ability to convert offices to residential accommodation under the prior approval process, and without planning permission. The reduction in office floorspace is concerning as it results in less choice of suitable accommodation for businesses and compromises the ability of the city, and the surrounding areas, to thrive economically. In addition, there is no provision within the prior approval process to secure affordable housing on these schemes. In July 2021, Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to officers to make an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of offices to residential within Norwich City Centre. Following this, a copy of the direction and notice has been submitted to the Secretary of State (SoS) for consideration. Should the process proceed as envisaged, the direction should be confirmed in December 2021 and will come into force in July 2022.
- **The Environment Bill**⁹ is due to undergo further scrutiny in Parliament. The current version of the Bill sets out plans and policies for improving the natural environment including waste and resource efficiency, air quality, water quality, nature and biodiversity, the regulation of chemicals etc. It is likely that the Bill will have a number of implications upon the planning system, for example, the formal introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain. Depending upon the final content of the Bill and the timescale for its implementation, the existing local plan documents will likely need to be updated to ensure compliance with the Bill. Currently, no further information is available on the timescales for the introduction of the Bill, however, the formal review of the DM Policies Plan would represent an opportunity to consider the implications of the Bill on the local planning context in Norwich. It may also be necessary to consider the implications of the Bill in context of any future changes to the planning system.
- In 2019, the Government published the first two parts of the **National Design Guide**¹⁰. This document sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms one part of Government guidance aiming to achieve enduring and successful places and forms a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The third part of the design guide includes the provision of a National Model Design Code (anticipated in 2020), which will set a baseline standard of quality and practice across England which local planning authorities will be expected to take into account when developing local design codes

⁹ <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2019-20/environment.html>

¹⁰

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf

and guides, and when determining planning applications. Following the publication of part 3 of the design guide, the council may consider the preparation of a local design guide, as part of the review of the existing DM Policies Plan and preparation of a new Plan. This will be dependent upon timescales and availability of resources, as well as an assessment of in-house expertise. In the absence of a local design guide, the council will be expected to defer to the National Design Guide.

- Following recent retail monitoring, it is intended to undertake more frequent monitoring of the City Centre to ensure the Council have regular information on the City's retail sector. This is likely to require existing resource from the Planning team. This additional monitoring will be used to inform future review of the DM Policies Plan.

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 2038. 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 (the NPPF). 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. This will exclude site allocations in village clusters in South Norfolk. |
| Joint working arrangements (if any) | The plan is being prepared by a joint team comprising officers from Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk district councils with the support of Norfolk County Council. Each council will make independent decisions at key stages in the plan preparation process. |
| 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) a) the Norwich Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Local Plan (adopted December 2014) |
| Production milestones | |
| Commence document production | December 2015 |
| The work includes a “call for sites” (an invitation to put forward specific | |

| Document Title | Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) |
|---|--|
| development sites for inclusion in the GNLP, held in May-July 2016); evidence studies; Regulation 18 stage consultation on issues and options and site proposals held January-March 2018; further Regulation 18 stage consultations on additional sites (October – December 2018), and on a draft plan to include suggested policy options, growth strategy and site allocations (see below). For further details of the timetable for this work see www.gnlp.org.uk . | |
| Regulation 18 draft plan | January – March 2020 |
| Publish pre-submission (Regulation 19) document | February – March 2021 |
| Formal submission of GNLP to Secretary Of State (Regulation 22) | July 2021 |
| Adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan | September 2022 |
| Monitoring and review | Annual Monitoring report and five year housing land supply updates |

The National Planning Policy Framework states that policies in local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such a review will need to determine whether any significant matters have arisen, for example changes to national policy or needs for development, that mean that modifications should be made to the local plan or a new replacement local plan produced. The need for a review of policies in the GNLP will be assessed in due course following on from its adoption.

| Document Title | East Norwich Masterplan |
|--|--|
| Role and content | A supplementary planning document for the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area to support policy in the GNLP for the coordinated redevelopment of the site and delivery of transformational change of this key area of Norwich. |
| Status | Non-statutory supplementary planning document. |
| Geographical coverage | East Norwich sites including the Deal Ground, Utilities Site, May Gurney and Carrow Works identified on East Norwich masterplan map ¹¹ . |
| Joint working arrangements (if any) | A public-private partnership board has been formed to support the delivery of this ambitious and long-term project – The East Norwich Partnership. The partnership is led by Norwich City Council and includes Homes England, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Network Rail and the landowners. |
| Conformity | As a non-statutory document there is no formal requirement for conformity with higher-level national policy statements, however the masterplan will need to align with the principles set out within the GNLP and National Policy. |
| Relationship with adopted local plan(s) | The East Norwich Masterplan will be adopted as an SPD by the Greater Norwich authorities to support policies set out in the emerging GNLP. |
| Production milestones (provisional) | |
| Overall production period | November 2021 – March 2022 |
| Consultation | March 2022 (6 weeks) |
| Adoption | September 2022 (alongside GNLP) |

¹¹ [East Norwich regeneration: Project overview | Norwich City Council](#)

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|--|---|
| Monitoring and Review | Ongoing |
| Document Title | Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) review |
| Role and content | To set out an agreement between Norfolk's local planning authorities insofar as they relate to strategic planning matters, setting out broad strategic targets and priorities to inform and provide a context for the preparation of statutory local plans for individual districts and areas within the county (including the GNLP); to facilitate joint working across district boundaries and help to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate; and to meet the NPPF's requirements in relation to a Statement of Common Ground by regular review of the NSPF. |
| Status | Non statutory strategic document |
| Geographical coverage | The administrative county of Norfolk. |
| Joint working arrangements (if any) | The NSPF review is being 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. Governance: 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. |
| 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. |

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|--|---|
| Relationship with adopted local plan(s) | The NSPF provides a framework for the eventual formal review and replacement of existing local plans, and demonstrates how the Norfolk authorities are meeting the Duty to Cooperate. |
| Document Title | Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) review |
| Production milestones (provisional) | |
| Revision of NSPF/SoCG endorsed | April 2021 |
| Monitoring and Review | Ongoing |

