Report to	Cabinet	ltem
	11 July 2012	
Report of	Deputy chief executive (Operations)	7
Subject	Development Management Policies Development Plan Document	1

#### Purpose

This report seeks Cabinet authorisation to publish the draft Development Management Policies DPD for soundness consultation during summer 2012 under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012.

#### Recommendation

a) To note the extensive evidence base that is available in support of the draft Development Management Policies DPD in particular:

- the representations made to date on the emerging site allocations plan and how they have been addressed;

- the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging plan and reasonable alternatives to it;

- the update to the POSe report (May 2012) about the emerging plan.

b) To consider whether to accept any further changes recommended by Sustainable Development Panel (see Annex 3); and

c) To endorse the emerging plan (Annex 1 as proposed to be amended by Annex 2) and policies map [amended if appropriate in the light of b] for pre-submission consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012 and to give delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Development to make consequential and further minor changes for clarity to the draft plan and policies map prior to consultation, and to finalise and publish all relevant supporting information.

#### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority "A prosperous city" and the service plan priority to deliver the Development Management Policies DPD.

#### **Financial implications**

There are no direct financial implications for this report.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Environment and development

## Contact officers

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## **Background documents**

None

# Report

# Introduction

- 1. This report is about the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document ('the DM Policies plan'). It does a number of things:
  - provides an update on policy developments and the development of the evidence base;
  - highlights the key documentation which supports the emerging Plan which is available on the Council's website. This includes:

- the consultation report summarising representations made to council at previous stages in plan preparation and how they have been dealt with;

- the full Sustainability Appraisal Report; and

- an independent soundness check report into the plan produced in Feb 2012 and updated in May by POSe Ltd.

Members should have regard to the above information and reports in their consideration of the proposed DM policies plan. It also seeks Cabinet endorsement for the content of the emerging Plan (attached as Annex 1 as proposed to be amended by annex 2), and requests consideration of further changes recommended by Sustainable Development Panel at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June (attached at Annex 3).

- 2. Members should note that the terminology used to describe local planning documents has recently changed. 'The Local Plan' (rather than 'the Local Development Framework') is now the government's preferred term to describe the suite of policy documents which will guide and manage development at a local level. In addition, the planning regulations which set out the legal requirements for planmaking were reviewed (and renumbered) in 2012. As a consequence, the regulation numbers which apply to the various formal stages of the plan-making process have changed: for example, publication and consultation on the final draft version before it is submitted for examination (the stage now reached for this plan) is the "Regulation 19" stage, rather than "Regulation 27" as it would have been before the regulations were amended.
- The Local Plan for Norwich includes development plan documents (DPDs) which set out detailed planning policies and proposals for the city and the wider area. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk was adopted in 2011, providing the overall strategic framework of policies to guide, manage and deliver development in the greater Norwich area to 2026.
- 4. For Norwich itself, the DM policies plan sets out local policies to guide decisions on planning applications, which will apply to development across the whole city. The Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies DPD (the "Site allocations plan") contains more detailed policies for individual sites where change is anticipated or proposed, and will operate alongside the DM policies plan.

5. Both these documents are being taken forward on the same timescale. They are complemented by the Northern City Centre Area Action Plan (NCCAAP, adopted in 2010) which includes policies and site-specific proposals aimed at the regeneration of the northern city centre.

# **Evolution of the plan**

- 6. The DM policies plan has been in development since late 2009. Details of the planmaking process are set out in Table 1 of the plan at Annex 1.
- 7. A first draft version of the DM policies plan was published for consultation between January and March 2011. 244 individual comments were received, many of them detailed and covering a range of issues in response to a single policy. Since then, the plan has been extensively revised to take account of the wide range of comments made, discussion with other areas of the planning service and officers elsewhere in the council, advice sought from statutory bodies, business and community representatives, independent assessment of the plan by the Planning Officer's Society (POSe) and findings of the sustainability appraisal (see below). Decisions of the Sustainable Development Panel have also helped to inform particular aspects of emerging policy. Further review has been necessary to ensure that the plan is fully compliant with changes in national policy, in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in draft in July 2011 and in its final form in March 2012.
- 8. Over the past year officers have reported periodically to Sustainable Development Panel to update members on the progress of the plan and invite discussion on emerging policy issues. These included:
  - A report to present the representations made at first draft stage and recommend in general terms where change would be necessary to DM policies to address those representations (June 2011)
  - A report to present a number of alternative options for policy DM3 (Design) to address particular member concerns around green design, biodiversity and resilience of development to climate change, and to recommend a preferred policy option (July 2011)
  - Regular reporting on progress made, and emerging evidence supporting the DM policies plan and Site Allocations Plan, as well as related policy issues which will influence their content, such as the emerging draft of the National Planning Policy Framework and the council's response to it.

The representations made at draft stage, and the Council's detailed responses to them, are set out in the Report of Consultation and Publicity available on the city council website (alongside other relevant supporting documentation) at <a href="http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/Pages/PlanningDevelopmentManagementPolicies.aspx">http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/Pages/PlanningDevelopmentManagementPolicies.aspx</a>

9. Following substantial review and redrafting of the DM policies plan, officers presented a draft version - known as the 'pre-submission version', alongside the policies map, for consideration by Sustainable Development Panel on 27 June.

- 10. The version of the plan attached as Annex 1 has been updated to include changes arising from the Sustainability Appraisal process but has not been further updated since the panel.
- 11. Annex 2 details some further changes being recommended by officers and the reasons for them. These are relatively minor in scale and have been produced following the Panel meeting, they were not considered by the Panel.
- 12. Annex 3 details the changes proposed by the panel and the reasons for these. Officers regard these changes as not undermining the overall soundness of the plan. Subject to the inclusion of these changes the Panel recommended endorsing the emerging plan to Cabinet for consultation.
- 13. Given that all the proposed policies are considered to be sound as stated above, any member decision to make further substantive changes to policy at this stage may leave the plan open to challenge through the public examination process, or through a later legal challenge. Therefore, any such decision to change the plan must be fully documented and justified to ensure clarity in the decision-making process.

# Sustainability appraisal

- 14. Sustainability appraisal (SA) of the DM policies plan has been undertaken at two key stages in parallel with the evolution of the plan. SA is a legal requirement of the plan making process to ensure plans and programmes are independently assessed against wider sustainability objectives and that the environmental, economic and social impacts of policies are fully assessed and taken into account, including consideration of reasonable alternative policy options and their predicted outcomes.
- 15. Independent consultants (LUC) were commissioned in 2010 to undertake the SA. The first stage SA report of initial draft DM policies was produced in December 2010 and helped inform aspects of policy for consultation on the first published draft of the plan in January 2011, as well as further refinement of the plan afterwards. A second round of SA was undertaken in May-June 2012, providing a detailed assessment of the final draft policies now proposed for submission.
- 16. The full SA report is available on the Council's website as part of the background documentation.
- 17. The SA report concludes that "It is apparent that the sustainability effects of the DM Policies DPD are generally minor" and in general terms, endorses the proposed policies as the most sustainable options. Consequently, the report makes only a very small number of recommendations for further change. In summary, the report recommends that the plan should include:
  - A requirement to minimise the impacts of new schools development on car travel (in Community Facilities policy DM22);
  - A reference to the potential need to seek advice from Natural England and the Environment Agency on the indirect impact of development at the Airport on internationally protected nature conservation sites and habitats (in policy DM27);

- A reference to the need for the airport master plan to be subject to sustainability appraisal (in policy DM27); and
- An appendix to set out in more detail the matters to be covered by planning obligations (supporting policy DM33).
- 18. It is considered that the first recommendation can be addressed by a minor amendment to the criteria of policy DM22 relating to schools development. The issues raised in relation to policy DM27 for the airport are noted and may be appropriately addressed by references within the supporting text to that policy DM6). An appendix setting out particular matters that may be covered by planning obligations under policy DM33 is likely to be premature pending the formal adoption of CIL, although further guidance either in an appendix to the plan or supplementary planning documents, is likely to be necessary in any case to amplify the policy.
- 19. These recommendations were reported to Sustainable Development Panel on 27 June and members agreed that the plan should be amended in accordance with them. These changes have now been incorporated into the version of the plan attached at Annex 1.

# National planning policy

- 20. The National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, with the content of the framework constituting the government's view of what sustainable development is in relation to planning. To this end, local plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. They must be aspirational but realistic, and should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. This is reflected in the DM policies plan through the general sustainable development and planning positively to deliver it.
- 21. The NPPF sets out detailed policy requirements in a number of key areas, the majority of which are relevant to the DM policies plan and have been taken into account in its preparation. In particular, local planning authorities are required to deliver sustainable development through local policies which:
  - Promote a strong, competitive economy (in this document, DM policies DM16, DM17 and DM19 are most relevant to this objective generally, with place-specific policies to manage the future development of the University DM26 and the Airport DM27);
  - Ensure the *vitality of town centres* (relevant policies DM18; DM20, DM21 and DM25)
  - Promote sustainable transport (relevant policies DM28, DM29, DM30, DM31 and DM32);
  - Support high quality communications infrastructure (relevant policy DM10)

- Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes (relevant policies DM12, DM13 and DM15);
- Attach great importance to good design (relevant policy DM3);
- Promote and plan for *healthy communities* (relevant policies DM8, DM22, DM23 and DM24);
- Meet the challenge of *climate change* (relevant policies DM4 and DM5);
- Conserve and enhance *the natural environment* and it is protected from environmental hazards (relevant policies DM2, DM6, DM7 and DM11);
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment (relevant policy DM9);
- 22. The NPPF also stipulates that plans should be founded on a sound evidence base. Accordingly, the DM policies plan is supported by a broad range of evidence (links to which are provided on the council's website), much of which also informed the preparation of the Joint Core Strategy. A series of topic papers has also been prepared to explain the background to and provide further justification for the approach in particular policy areas.
- 23. Plans are required to be deliverable, therefore both the DM policies in this document and specific proposals in the Site allocations plan should not result (in the NPPF's terms) in *"such a scale of obligations and policy burdens [on developers] that their ability to develop viably is threatened"*. Proposed DM policy DM33 (planning obligations and development viability) deals with this issue in Norwich.
- 24. The government's national policy statement on Planning for Travellers, published concurrently with the NPPF, sets out the considerations to be applied in planning locally for the Gypsy and traveller community. Proposed DM policy DM14 deals with this issue in Norwich.

# Duty to cooperate

25. The NPPF states that public bodies have a duty to co-operate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries particularly in relation to strategic priorities. In the case of the local plan for Norwich, the duty to cooperate is judged to be satisfied by the adopted Joint Core Strategy, which has involved the City Council, Broadland District Council, and South Norfolk Council working together in the Greater Norwich Development Partnership to ensure that strategic priorities across administrative boundaries are properly coordinated.

# **Soundness considerations**

- 26. The DM policies plan has been informed by soundness considerations throughout its preparation. The NPPF identifies four basic tests which local plans have to satisfy to be regarded as 'sound' when independently examined, namely that they should be *justified, effective, consistent with national policy* and *positively prepared.* The four tests are expanded on below in paragraph **Error! Reference source not found.**
- 27. Norwich City Council commissioned independent advice from the Planning Officers Society (POSe) on soundness during plan preparation, for both the Development management policies plan and Site Allocations plan. The purpose of this 'health

check' was to independently assess both emerging plans for their robustness and soundness, enabling issues to be identified at an early stage which might impact on the overall soundness of the plan. The consultant's report of February 2012 (and supplementary comments made in May 2012 following further review of policies) forms part of the background documentation supporting this plan and can be found on the Council's website via the link given in the link above.

- 28. In summary the report finds that the draft plan fits well with the NPPF (which was in draft form at the time of the initial health check) and adopted Joint Core Strategy. The document demonstrates clearly 'how the preferred policies and allocations have been justified by the evidence, generally meet local needs and help realise the community's vision for the city'. However the consultant identified a number of areas for improvement and made a number of recommendations for both plans. These recommendations have all been addressed by the Council as part of the planmaking process and amendments are made to the final version of the plan where appropriate.
- 29. In deciding to press ahead with preparation of Development Management plan regard has been had to the implications of the legal challenge to the adoption of the JCS. As members will be aware the court held that that there had been some procedural flaws in the preparation of the JCS and it is clear that this may have some implications for planning in the City. Notwithstanding the fact that the JCS remains intact and adopted for the City in its entirety the court order issued pursuant to the judgment prescribes a process by which the local authorities must reassess the significant growth proposals in the Broadland part of the Norwich Policy Area and any reasonable alternatives to them.
- 30. Since the "parent" policies in the JCS that guide the Development Management policies remain adopted it is not appropriate to delay preparation of the plan to await this reassessment process.

# **Policies Map**

- 31. A Policies Map illustrating the areas of the city where particular policies will apply has been prepared alongside the plan. This will form part of, the pre-submission version of the DM policies plan for consultation. The map also indicates the extent of site-specific allocations being taken forward through the Site allocations plan. A copy of the map is available via the website and further copies have been placed in each of the group rooms.
- 32. It should be noted that changes to the map may be necessary before publication to reflect the decisions of Cabinet. It should also be noted that with regard to the northern city centre area a further inset policies map will need to be produced to accompany the consultation. This map will illustrate how the policies and allocations in the emerging Development Plan Documents will operate alongside those made in the existing Northern City Centre Area Action Plan which is to be retained.

## **Next steps**

33. Subject to authorisation by Cabinet, the plan will be published for soundness consultation, the consultation period running from August to October 2012. Following this, the plan will be reviewed in the light of the representations received.

It is anticipated that the plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of March 2013, to enable an independent public examination to take place (probably in summer 2013). The role of the Inspector at examination will be to assess whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, accords with legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound.

34. Depending on the outcome of the Examination the earliest the plan is likely to be adopted is in the autumn of 2013.

# Integrated impact assessment



The IIA should assess the impact of the recommendation being made by the report

Report author to complete	
Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	11 July 2012
Head of service:	Graham Nelson
Report subject:	Development Management policies plan pre-submission draft for consultation
Date assessed:	22nd June 2012
Description:	The impact assessment is based on the recommendation to authorise the plan for soundness consultation, and not on the contents of the plan. The Plan itself has been subject of Sustainability Appraisal (including consideration of environmental, social and economic objectives) and has been screened for impacts on diversity considerations.

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)			$\square$	There are some costs associated with conducting the public consultation but this is a statutory requirement. The consultation exercise will be streamlined and will not incur significant costs.
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact				Limited impact on Design Print and Production service which will provide a small number of hard copies of the final plan and supporting documents for consultation, and upload electronic versions on the council's website.
ICT services	$\square$			No impact identified.
Economic development				The consultation will not have a direct impact on economic development.
Financial inclusion	$\square$			No impact identified.
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults				No impact identified.
S17 crime and disorder act 1998				No impact identified.
Human Rights Act 1998				No impact identified.
Health and well being				No impact identified.

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	$\square$			No impact identified.
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	$\square$			No impact identified.
Advancing equality of opportunity	$\square$			No impact identified.
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	$\square$			The public consultation will not have a direct impact on transportation
Natural and built environment	$\square$			The public consultation will not have a direct impact on natural and built environment.
Waste minimisation & resource use	$\square$			The public consultation will not have a direct impact on waste minimisation and resource use.
Pollution	$\square$			The public consultation will not have a direct impact on pollution.
Sustainable procurement	$\square$			No impact identified.
Energy and climate change	$\boxtimes$			The public consultation will not have a direct impact on energy and climate change.

	Impact			
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management				Likely to be neutral impact subject to clear reasons being given if any changes are made to the draft plan.

Recommendations from impact assessment
Positive
No direct positive impacts identified, although the plan once adopted should have many positive impacts through providing locally specific policies that will guide development in Norwich to support the growth promoted through the Joint Core Strategy.
Negative
Minor negative impacts identified however these are considered essential to carry out the consultation which is a statutory requirement.
Neutral
No impact in relation to the majority of issues.
Issues
The key issue is to ensure that risks to the soundness of the draft plan are minimised by clearly documenting the rationale behind any decision by Cabinet to amend the plan.

### EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PANEL MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2012

(These extracts relate to the panel's recommended changes to the Development Management Policies DPDs. Please refer to the minutes of the meeting of the sustainable development panel held on 27 June 2012 for the complete minute.)

During discussion, the panel agreed to consider each of the policies in turn. The planning team leader (policy), head of planning services and the planner (policy) answered members' questions.

### DM3

Councillor Carlo thanked the planning policy team for their work in incorporating biodiversity in the design principles. She referred to policy clause J) a) and said that she welcomed "planting which is climate change resistant" but also said that it should be stipulated that the planting was "beneficial to biodiversity". Discussion ensued in which it was pointed out that clause I) paragraph c) addressed this point but Councillor Carlo considered that J) a) should be stronger. The panel therefore agreed to recommend to cabinet that after the words "climate change resistant" to add "beneficial to biodiversity".

In response to a suggestion that the policy should do more to encourage the use of recycling materials, members were advised that building regulations covered the use of materials and that the DPD went as far as it could. The planning team leader (policy) agreed to clarify this in the text.

#### DM5

Councillor Lubbock referred to the need to clarify the threshold of the number of housing units in an area of critical flood drainage before measures such as a water butt was required.

During discussion the head of planning services explained that in the areas of critical flood drainage there were separate water drainage efficiency policies to prevent flooding and slow down the surface runoff. Policy DM5 requires that all of these measures should be considered.

#### DM8

The planning team leader (policy) explained that the policy was a continuation of a successful policy contained in the Local Plan and that in relation to the protection of the existing open space section the policy could not be proscriptive. He referred to the requirement set out under "Protection of existing open space": clause a) of which stated that development could be accepted where "the proposal would not cause significant harm to the amenity of the biodiversity value of the open space". Judgement would be exercised to assess the significance of any harm on a case by case basis.

Members were advised that child play spaces were calculated from the number of bedrooms of residential units as part of a development. Following discussion members considered that in the fifth paragraph under the heading "Provision of new open spaces", the word "accepted" should be deleted and replaced with "encouraged". Members were advised that allowing for local green spaces to be identified in neighbourhood plans was in line with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 which promoted such plans.

### DM13

The panel discussed the importance of landlords providing low maintenance landscaping for houses in multiple occupation and considered this was beneficial for the amenity of the area. The duty was on the landlord to maintain the grounds but this could not be achieved through planning legislation. The panel agreed to add the word "attractive" to the second paragraph under "Flats, bedsits and larger houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)" as follows:

"Landscaping schemes should be designed to be low maintenance and attractive; and opportunities should be taken ......"

### DM22

The panel was advised that former public houses could be used for class A3, A2 or A1 use under permitted development rights without the need to apply for planning permission.

The head of planning services advised the panel that the community right to challenge and right to buy was outside planning legislation but would run alongside the development management policies DPD. He advised members that work on this would be carried out in the course of this year as the legislation was introduced.

The panel agreed that after the word "permitted" to insert "and encouraged" in the first sentence, under the heading "Provision and enhancement of community facilities".

#### DM29

The principal planner (transport) explained how the level of car parking provision in the city centre had been calculated in the mid 1990s to support relevant policies in the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) and the 2004 Local Plan. The policy "cap" of 10,002 spaces had worked well and would be proportionally less as the city's growth progressed.

In response to questions the principal planner (transport) explained that no off-street car parking was permitted if the 10,000 space cap would be exceeded and that surface parking could be allowed on temporary sites, but the quality of provision should be better than it has been. Members also noted that usage of park and ride had fallen in recent years but considered that there were other reasons that could be attributed to this other than the number of car parking spaces available in the city.

The panel agreed the following amendment to the wording of the policy as proposed by the principal planner (transport) because there was concern that a minimum 500

car parking space requirement for new multi-storey car parks might not always be achievable:

"delete clause b) and replace with:

"b) provides efficient, high capacity parking (generally this will require in the region of 500 car parking spaces minimum, unless a lower capacity can be justified by the configuration, design constraints and location of the site."

#### DM30

The panel discussed whether it would be useful to include the council's aspiration for a 20mph speed limit in all residential areas in the policy. The principal planner (transport) said that the county council's design manual for roads on new estates had designed roads to limit speed. Not everything could be achieved by design as it was necessary on major routes to avoid tight bends so that buses could access them. Members were advised that a 20mph speed limit was to ensure that the road could be used by all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists and it was not necessary to designate space for cyclists when designing new roads through residential areas.

The panel agreed to endorse the insertion of "include measures to limit to speeds to 20mph" to the end of the first paragraph under the heading "Access and highway safety".

#### **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the report and the relevant supporting information including:
  - (a) the proposed submission version of the plan comprising plan text and appendices (annex 1) and policies map;
  - (b) the draft sustainability appraisal of the emerging plan and the reasonable alternatives to it; and,
  - (c) the update to the POSe (what's that in full?) about the emerging plan;
- (2) endorse the emerging plan and recommend that cabinet approves it, as amended by the changes set out in annex 2 and the associated policies map for pre-submission consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and County Planning Regulations 2012 and subject to the following amendments:
  - (a) DM3 to insert "beneficial to biodiversity" to the paragraph J) a);
  - (b) DM3 clarification of threshold;
  - (c) DM3 insertion of additional text with regard to recycling materials;
  - (d) DM5 clarification of threshold;
  - (e) DM8 fifth paragraph under the heading "Provision of new open spaces", fifth paragraph, delete "accepted" and replace with "encouraged";

- (f) DM13 second paragraph under the heading "Flats, bedsits and larger houses in multiple occupation" insert "and attractive" to follow "low maintenance";
- (g) DM22 under the heading "Provision and enhancement of community facilities" to insert "and encouraged" to follow "permitted";
- (h) DM29 deleted clause b) and replace it with:

"b) provides efficient, high capacity parking (generally this will require in the region of 500 car parking spaces minimum, unless a lower capacity can be justified by the configuration, design constraints and location of the site."

(i) DM30 – first paragraph, under the heading "Access and highway safety" to insert "include measures to limit to speeds of 20mph".