

Report to Sustainable development panel

Item

25 January 2017

Report of Head of planning services

4

Subject Joint Core Strategy Annual Monitoring Report 2015-16

Purpose

To present the 2015-16 Joint Core Strategy Annual Monitoring Report for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk.

Recommendation

To note the publication and content of the 2015-16 Joint Core Strategy Annual Monitoring Report.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority to provide a prosperous and vibrant city and the service priority to implement the local plan for the city.

Financial implications

None directly.

Ward/s: All Wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Environment and sustainable development

Contact officers

Jonathan Bunting, planner (policy) 01603 212162

Mike Burrell, Greater Norwich local plan team manager 01603 222761

Background documents

None

Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the publication of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Annual Monitoring Report 2015-16 (the JCS AMR).
2. In the interests of efficiency, the full JCS AMR, which is a large document, is available on the website [here](https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/3678/amr_2015-16) (https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/3678/amr_2015-16) and is not appended to this report. Key summaries from the JCS AMR of direct relevance to Norwich are appended to this report (see below).
3. The JCS AMR records progress on the implementation of the JCS which provides the overall spatial planning strategy across the whole of the Greater Norwich area to 2026 and sets the context for the more detailed policies included in local plans for the individual districts. Progress is monitored since the base date of the JCS, which is 1 April 2008.
4. The Executive Summary on page 2 of the full JCS AMR document summarises its key findings. It is appendix 1 to this report.
5. Separate monitoring reports for the various district-wide local plans prepared by the constituent authorities are incorporated into the JCS AMR as appendices E (Broadland), F (Norwich, pages 130 to 209 of the full JCS AMR) and G (South Norfolk).
6. The main conclusions from appendix F for Norwich are in appendix 2 of this report. These relate to the Norwich-specific policies in the Development Management Policies Local Plan (the DM policies plan) adopted in December 2014. A monitoring framework¹ forming part of the plan sets out a number of detailed indicators against which its 33 individual policies are being monitored and the success of those policies gauged. This report is the first full year of monitoring of the DM policies plan.
7. This year a number of monitoring indicators for the JCS AMR have been reviewed and updated, both to simplify and streamline the process of monitoring the JCS in the light of reduced local authority resources and to remove any indicators that rely on data from third parties that is no longer collected or published.
8. Appendix A (pages 37-62 of the full JCS AMR) provides information on the current housing land supply position in the Greater Norwich area, assessed against the Government's requirement for local planning authorities to maintain at least a five year supply of specific deliverable housing sites, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and supporting planning practice guidance². It includes tables showing housing completions in Norwich and its adjoining districts on a site by site basis in the last year and projections for future housebuilding on individual sites. The delivery estimates are informed by the most recent evidence on delivery expectations provided by housebuilders and landowners during 2016.
9. In relation to the **five year land supply**, the JCS AMR shows that housebuilding activity is increasing both in Norwich and in the Norwich Policy Area (NPA), which is

¹ See https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20221/development_management_policies_plan Appendix 9.

² National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government 2012: section 6 *Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes*. See <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

the relevant area for calculating Norwich's housing land supply. Whilst the number of deliverable sites and dwellings has grown in comparison to last year, the NPA remains short of a five year supply when assessed against JCS targets. Based on the most recent available estimates, the land supply in the NPA as at April 2016 was **93.9%** of the required figure, or **4.70** years' worth of sites.

10. So long as a five year supply cannot be demonstrated in the NPA, Norwich City Council will need to take a view on how to address the requirements of the NPPF when considering planning applications.
11. Appendix B (pages 63 to 75 of the full JCS AMR) contains details of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts across the three councils. CIL regulations require this report to include details of CIL receipts received over the monitoring period. Norwich City Council's report is on page 69. Details of expenditure from the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Investment Fund is also recorded.
12. Appendix C (pages 76 to 80 of the full JCS AMR) provides information in relation to the statutory Duty to Cooperate and how the Greater Norwich authorities are complying with the duty to plan collaboratively across boundaries. This includes discussion of progress on the Norfolk Strategic Framework which will set the general parameters to inform future local plans across Norfolk.
13. Appendix D (pages 81 to 86 of the full JCS AMR) updates the sustainability appraisal baseline information covering the Greater Norwich area. This will inform the approach to the sustainability appraisal of the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) which will eventually replace the Joint Core Strategy, and of any other subsequent local plans which are dependent on the GNLP.

Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Annual Monitoring Report 2015-16

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides a useful indication of how the Greater Norwich area is performing against the objectives set out in the Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.2 There are many indicators that are currently being met or where clear improvements have been made:
- The number of new employee jobs have increased this year;
 - The number of Lower Super Output areas among the most deprived 20% nationally has shown a relative reduction since 2009/10;
 - Net housing completions have increased from last year and are at the highest level since 2009/10;
 - The proportion of new and converted dwellings developed on Previously Developed Land has met target across the Greater Norwich area as a whole;
 - No planning permissions have been granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence or water quality grounds;
 - The rate of new business registrations has increased;
 - Norwich has maintained its position in the national retail ranking;
 - No listed buildings have been lost or demolished;
 - The unemployment rate of the population aged 16-64 has decreased;
 - Life expectancy has increased;
 - The proportion of people claiming Employment Support Allowance/ Incapacity Benefit has remained stable over time;
 - CO2 emissions per capita have decreased; and
 - The proportion of household waste that is recycled and composted has increased from the last monitoring year.
- 1.3 There are a number of indicators where targets are not currently being met, some of which have been adversely affected by the global economic downturn. There are however a number of indicators which are perhaps less influenced by external factors and these are the areas where the overall focus of action should be placed:
- Although housing delivery has improved in recent years, the number of completions remain well below target;
 - Affordable housing completions are below target in both percentage and absolute terms;
 - Most economic indicators are not on target – in particular the overall number of jobs, office floorspace, and city centre retail floorspace are not growing as envisaged;
 - The continued loss of office space in Norwich City, and the growth of office space in Broadland and South Norfolk is noteworthy, continuing previous years' trends;

- The percentage of the work force employed in higher level occupation has decreased;
 - The total crime level has increased this year, including the number of people who were killed or seriously injured on roads in the Greater Norwich Area;
- 1.4 Even though a 5 year land supply cannot be demonstrated, throughout the monitoring period there has been a significant stock of unimplemented planning permissions for housing. The consistent under delivery of dwellings across the period reflects tough market conditions and housing industry business models that seek to maintain margins rather than necessarily increase supply. The low levels of affordable housing delivery is partly due to developers being able to demonstrate that planning obligation requirements challenge viability.
- 1.5 Similarly, the underperforming economic indicators reflect wider economic conditions. However, there is a strong argument that the ambitious JCS targets for office and retail development reflect older business models and less efficient use of space.
- 1.6 Crime rates and road accidents are among several “contextual” indicators in the AMR. The JCS has, a limited impact on these indicators.

Conclusion and next steps

- 1.7 A range of activities are underway that will have a positive impact on stimulating growth and help deliver against targets over the coming years.
- 1.8 A number of local plan site allocation documents were progressed during the monitoring year in Broadland and South Norfolk and these have since been adopted. These will provide more certainty to developers and investors.
- 1.9 The local planning authorities, working with the County Council and the LEP through the Greater Norwich Growth Board, progressed implementation of the Greater Norwich City Deal agreed with Government in 2013. Working together, the partners support the private sector to deliver in a number of ways, including: making a Local Infrastructure Fund available to developers to unlock site constraints; direct investment in infrastructure such as the NDR and other transport measures; and engagement in skills initiatives to improve the match between labour supply and demand.
- 1.10 The authorities are working with colleagues across Norfolk and Suffolk to negotiate a devolution deal with Government that includes a number of options to stimulate growth, covering areas including housebuilding, economic growth, infrastructure and skills. The LPAs have recently begun to review and roll forward the JCS to produce the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), scheduled to be adopted in 2020. The AMR will inform and be informed by this process.

Appendix 2 Norwich City Council Report against policies in the adopted Norwich development management policies local plan

Summary of Main Findings

The AMR's main findings are set out in the following table:

Issue	Findings
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 365 dwellings were built at sites including Geoffrey Watling Way (adjoining the Football Club, completing that development), Brazen Gate/Southwell Road, the former Lakenham Sports Club, Carshalton Road, Blackfriars Street and Edward Street in the Northern City Centre, Starling Road and Three Score, Bowthorpe (supported care housing for the elderly). There was a wide range of development on smaller sites. • 4181 homes have planning permission in Norwich as at April 2016 (largely similar to the figure a year ago); • Of these 1018 dwellings were granted planning permission in 2015/16 although a significant proportion of these were approval of details, resubmitted or amended schemes on sites where the principle of development has already been agreed. • Of these, 440 homes were office conversions granted prior approval as permitted development which do not have to provide affordable housing and are not subject to the policies of the plan which would otherwise apply, including those in relation to space standards, amenity and outlook, parking and servicing. Monitoring shows that although some of these schemes are being implemented, others have proved to be of marginal viability and are either not being progressed or have stalled before completion; • Work commenced on the long delayed St Anne's Wharf development at King Street, which will provide a total of 437 homes on a key regeneration site. • Minimum internal space standards on permitted housing schemes (superseded during the 2015-16 monitoring period by a national minimum technical standard) have generally encouraged well designed schemes; • New student accommodation was completed at the bus station site, with discussions continuing on a further scheme by the same provider at the former Mecca Bingo site at All Saints Green. A 915-bed student accommodation development at the university was approved in May 2015 (the first phase of which was completed in September 2016); • Due to an increase in the proportion of development in suburban areas, average densities have fallen in recent years in comparison with the early years of the plan period when significant numbers of city centre flats were built.

Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No listed buildings were lost during the 2015-16 monitoring period; • The number of buildings on the Buildings at risk register (28 Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Ancient Monument) has reduced from the situation last year when there were 30 listed buildings and two SAMs.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of green design and wildlife friendly features were negotiated in schemes across the city, including green roofs and bat and bird boxes in smaller schemes and wider green infrastructure initiatives in larger developments. A standard planning condition is now attached to planning permissions to ensure access routes for small mammals are available (via gaps in fences, etc.). • Three applications raised Environment Agency concerns in relation to flood risk: two were approved after negotiation to address these concerns, one application was withdrawn before determination. No applications raised water quality concerns or were refused on those these grounds; • 94.5% of Norwich's County Wildlife Sites are in positive conservation management (an increase over 2014/15) and there were no losses of nature conservation sites to development; • CIL funding has been used for further natural environmental improvements at Danby Wood, Marston Marshes and Earlham Millennium Green in the Yare valley and the Oasis site at Fishergate in the city centre. These sites also benefited from CIL funded spending in 2014/15; • Based on latest published figures (2014/15), air quality monitoring shows that levels of nitrogen dioxide and airborne particulates are largely unchanged from previously reported levels. Average levels across the city centre Air Quality Management Area remain well below the recommended maximum of 40 µg/m³, however, there are areas of hotspots such as Castle Meadow and St Stephens.
Trees and Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very small amount of land in the Yare Valley Character Area (YVCA) was lost to development at Mansfield Lane as a result of a residential extension. As a result of new proposals for public car parking to serve the Sainsbury Centre at the UEA, land in the YVCA to the south of the building approved for temporary use as a car park will be reinstated. • 92 applications were approved for works to TPO trees, 19 of which involved felling. There was however no net loss of trees or hedgerows as a result of development. Financial contributions were committed or received from developers to provide 8 new street trees on sites at Earlham Hall and Starling Road together with a commitment to fund a number of street trees to be agreed

	in association with development at 161 Oak Street.
Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No designated open space was lost in Norwich to development; • New areas of public open space were brought into use at Brazen Gate/Southwell Road and the Bowthorpe Care Village at Three Score, as well as small “Pocket parks” in the city centre at All Saints Green and Mountergate. Delivery of significant new open space is anticipated in association with the ongoing development at St Anne’s Wharf.
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a further recorded loss of employment floorspace on industrial estates largely as a result of one major scheme at Anson Way on the Airport Industrial estate – this involved the conversion of a former hangar previously used by Anglian Windows to an aviation academy: a use accepted in this location as supportive of economic development at the Airport; • Further potential losses of office space in the city centre to housing (amounting to 8881 sq.m) were agreed under the prior approval process introduced following the relaxation of planning rules in 2013, which has since been made permanent. Since 2008, the overall reduction of office stock is just over 29000 sq.m or 8%. This means the JCS target of achieving major office floorspace by 2026 (aiming in particular to increase city centre floorspace by 1000,000 sq.m or about a third) is not on track to be achieved. The number of office to residential schemes coming forward may have peaked, however. Three such schemes were commenced in the 2015-16 monitoring period, two since finished, but one (Bethel Street) was abandoned prior to completion. As previously, the office space involved has mainly been poorer quality stock dating from the 1960s and 70s. Although the best quality office buildings are likely to remain attractive to commercial office tenants, there remains considerable pressure to renegotiate schemes already approved with a significant office element to either reduce or remove the office floorspace entirely in favour of housing. The JCS target thus remains particularly challenging: on the one hand, limited market demand and lack of viability often does not justify developing new offices even if they have planning permission; on the other there are now few planning controls available to prevent the loss of existing office space.
Retailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail vacancies in the city centre have increased slightly since 2015, but remain relatively low in comparison with national averages and have been inflated by the effect of premises being vacated in advance of refurbishment schemes, most notably at Castle Mall (reported in the city council’s separate retail monitoring report). The subsequent closure of three large

	<p>retail units: Castle Mall Post Office, Claes Olsson at Chapelfield and BhS occurred too late to be included in these figures and will impact further on the overall vacancy level in the primary shopping area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hospitality sector in the city centre appears to still be expanding, albeit at a slower rate than last year. The Back of the Inns area and the eastern part of the Lanes both showed increases in the proportion of cafes and restaurants compared to shops and new premises at Timberhill were occupied as a café/bakery. In St Benedict's there was a small increase in the proportion of shops and there are signs of an increase in footfall and retail representation in Westlegate following its permanent pedestrianisation, the effects of which should become more apparent next year. • Changes in government policy continue to affect the ability of local planning policies to directly influence the balance of uses in shopping areas; • Despite a marked increase in vacancy rates in district and local centres, the proportion of non-retail uses in those centres remains almost unchanged from last year. Overall the suburban centres continue to be relatively robust and to offer an appropriate range of local services and facilities, with small food stores being most important to their success; • The majority of permissions granted for main town centre uses were in the city centre and defined centres. 2075 sq.m of floorspace was approved in out of centre locations, the majority of which was accounted for by DIY retail floorspace for Wickes at Hellesdon Hall Road. In accordance with policy this is restricted to the sale of bulky goods only so will not compete directly with the city centre; • 2015-16 saw work completed on the Hall Road District centre. The development, anchored by an ASDA foodstore, also includes smaller shops, leisure and community facilities and business units and has significantly improved the range of convenience shopping to serve day to day and wider needs in the south of the city. It implements a longstanding proposal for district centre development included in both the current and previous local plans.
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 new permissions for community facilities were granted in the 2015-16 monitoring period. These covered a wide variety of uses from healthcare uses and children's nurseries to two major indoor trampolining centres (one in the city centre, one in a former retail warehouse in an industrial estate location) and the Oak Circus Centre in the former St Michael at Coslany Church at Oak Street. • Nine proposals involving new education and training facilities were approved, most of them minor extensions and classroom development for established schools, but

	<p>including business training centres at the Earlham Hall Enterprise Centre and the new Aviation Academy at the Airport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community facilities lost to approved development in the 2015-16 monitoring period included a dental surgery, a church (the former Silver Road Baptist Chapel approved for conversion to housing) and a bowling alley at Plumstead Road, demolished for housing development. An application for the residential conversion of another former church building – St Peters Park Lane Methodist Church and Church Hall – was submitted; • One community pub identified for protection under local plan policy - The Provision Stores, Dereham Road - was permanently lost to office use, with another subject to approved proposals for conversion to housing. Three other pubs subject to the protection policy have closed; • In April 2015 the government introduced a change in national planning rules withdrawing permitted development rights for the change of use of local pubs which are registered as Assets of Community Value. 19 Norwich pubs have been registered with ACV status since then, 13 of them in the 2015-16 monitoring period. One application for ACV status for a local pub was unsuccessful.
Leisure, catering, Evening and Late Night Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted above there was some further growth in catering and hospitality uses in the city centre albeit that this has not been as marked as in previous years; • Only one new hot food takeaway was approved, this being to authorise a pre-existing takeaway use on Aylsham Road. No new takeaways were approved in the city centre; • One significant new leisure use was approved in the city centre leisure area, this being the Gravity Trampoline Park at Riverside, replacing a nightclub. (This is one of two similar facilities approved in the city, the other being “High Altitude” at Whiffler Road). • No new late night uses were approved. August 2015 saw changes to the city council’s licensing policy with the introduction of a Special Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) applying to a sector of the city centre centred on the Late Night Activity Zone. It seeks to restrict the proliferation of such uses where they are likely to contribute to increased crime and disorder.
University of East Anglia (UEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 of the Enterprise Centre adjoining Earlham Hall was completed in July 2015; • The first phase of a 915-bed student accommodation development at the former Blackdale School site commenced during the 2015-16 monitoring period and completed in September 2016. • The UEA have announced plans for a 20% increase in student numbers to 18,000 by 2030 with substantial new

	<p>investment in the campus. The implications of this programme will need to be assessed and new policy approaches developed and agreed through the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan.</p>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development at Hall Road (the new Harford Place district centre) delivered significantly enhanced cycling and pedestrian facilities off-site through a planning obligation. The ongoing Lakenham Sports and Leisure Centre development by Hopkins Homes includes improved pedestrian and cycle links and funding for an extended controlled parking zone (CPZ); • Monitoring showed that cycling levels increased overall in Norwich between 2014 and 2015, continuing a trend evident in previous year, with the proportion of adult residents cycling more than 3 days a week for utility purposes having almost doubled. The number of people passing automatic counter sites increased by 5%. Measurements at the inner and outer ring roads on one day in each year showed a 35% increase in the number of cyclists crossing the inner ring road and a 21% increase crossing the outer ring road cordons. • The £5.7 million pink pedalways project from the Norwich Research Park to Heartsease was largely completed in the 2015-16 monitoring period and formally launched in summer 2016. It included works in the city centre (Magdalen Street/Cowgate contraflow and Tombland/Palace Street junction redesign) and outside the centre at the Avenues, Park Lane/Vauxhall Street/Bethel Street (incorporating a new crossing at Chapelfield Road); Heathgate, Mousehold, Heartsease and Bowthorpe Three Score; • Work commenced on the major programme to enhance the yellow (Airport-Lakenham) and blue (Sprowston-Wymondham) pedalways, involving more than 40 individual projects with £8.4m of government funding as well as specific project funding committed from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Projects were completed on St George's Street, Pointers Field, Taylors Lane and Opie Street. A new toucan crossing was installed on Newmarket Road in Eaton; • The new Rose Lane multi storey car park at Mountergate commenced during the 2015-16 monitoring period and opened in May 2016. The number of public off street parking spaces in the city centre has increased by 833 spaces since May 2014 but remains below the 10,000 space limit imposed by the local plan; • 20mph speed limits have been extended to cover virtually the whole of the city centre and Heartsease as part of a major package of sustainable transport improvements benefiting from government funding. This will be further extended in 2016/17. Work is continuing to implement the extensive programme of city centre traffic management,

	<p>cycle and bus priority measures, pedestrianisation and public realm enhancements under this initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017 further improvements to capacity on the A1074 Dereham Road and A11 Newmarket Road bus rapid transit (BRT) routes are expected to be delivered, with design and feasibility work being taken forward for the A140 BRT corridor. • Four car free and five low car housing schemes were approved during the 2015-16 monitoring period with a further two low car housing schemes agreed in principle.
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