

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

REPORT NO: 313

LOCAL PLAN ISSUES REPORT – REPORT OF CONSULTATION

1.0 **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 At the Forward Planning & Economic Development Committee on 15 March 2001 Members approved the Forest Heath Local Plan Issues Report (May 2001) for consultation purposes as the first stage in reviewing the adopted Forest Heath Local Plan (1995).

1.2 Consequently, a period of six weeks was set aside for the receipt of comments. The consultation period, which ran from 11 June 2001 to 23 July 2001, was advertised in the “Bury Free Press”, “Newmarket Journal” and the “London Gazette”. Approximately 250 copies of the Issues Report, together with the accompanying consultation questionnaire form, were made available at all Council Offices and Libraries throughout the District. From a database of interested parties, approximately 400 Issues Reports were dispatched directly to a wide variety of organisations, including government organisations, neighbouring authorities, developers, consultants and individual members of the public. A total of 83 responses have been received, and a list of their names and the organisations, if any, they represent is attached as part of the working paper to this report.

2.0 **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

2.1 The consultation questionnaire contained a total of 27 questions and consultees were advised that they did not have to answer all the questions unless they so wished to, but could just concentrate on those issues that interested them. Not surprisingly most respondents only answered selective questions.

2.2 Most of the questions involved a yes/no choice, and most questions gave the respondents the opportunity to make more detailed comments. A copy of the questionnaire showing the differing number of responses to each part of the questions is attached as part of the Working Paper to this report.

2.3 Given the varied format and length of the detailed comments received, all have been summarised according to the order of the consultation questionnaire form. The resulting summaries are reproduced as part of the Working Paper to this report. The original responses are available for Members to view and copy from the Forward Planning and Implementation Section.

3.0 **ANALYSIS OF THE PUBLIC RESPONSES**

3.1 The remainder of this report analyses the key trends of the public responses under main subject headings, including your officers’ response to these public views and comments.

3.2 **A Strategy for Forest Heath**

The majority (74%) of those that responded to the question agreed with the principles of sustainability outlined in the Issues Report.

The Government Office for the East of England (GO-East) indicate that the Local Plan should set out a vision of the kind of place Forest Heath should be and how this will be delivered.

Officer response.

The vision can be expressed as a series of aims and objectives set within the context of sustainability. It must be remembered, however, that a Local Plan is essentially a land use planning policy document and the “vision” should reflect this.

3.3 Rural Life

There was more-or-less an even split between those who agreed and those that disagreed that the existing Local Plan provides the right balance between protecting the countryside and promoting a healthy rural economy.

Of those respondents who gave more detailed comments, concern has been expressed regarding the future viability of rural communities with the suggested solution to this being to lessen the restriction on development in villages so that these may grow in an organic way thus maintaining existing facilities and services.

Officer response.

The overall response suggests that the existing Local Plan has got the balance about right.

The Local Plan will need to consider any growth in villages very carefully in order to minimise conflict with other aspects of sustainability such as, concentrating future development in the main towns and larger villages in the District, and protection of the countryside, as outlined in national planning guidance and the recently adopted Suffolk Structure Plan 2001.

The Countryside Agency wish to see the new Local Plan give encouragement to economic development that brings clear benefits for both communities and the countryside – a net gain to the community should accrue from any development.

Officer response.

Recent amendments to PPG Note 7 “The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development” now indicate that when preparing their development plans local planning authorities need to “encourage rural enterprise, including the diversification of farm businesses” (paragraph 2.8). Furthermore, Policy 12 of Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia to 2016 (RPG 6) deals with Rural Areas and sets out a number of aspects, which development plans should address.

3.4 Housing

The majority (88%) of respondents thought that the main towns should continue to accommodate most of the growth for the District. Similarly, 81% of respondents agreed that it is appropriate to maintain strict limits on growth in villages and rural areas.

Of those respondents who gave detailed comments, a few people expressed concern about further growth in Brandon because of the existing problems with traffic congestion and a lack of medical facilities.

Most respondents thought that high-density residential development would be appropriate in the towns, particularly on town-centre or brownfield sites. All respondents (100%) agreed that there should be a greater mix of housing types to meet the future needs of all households.

Officer Response

The vast majority of respondents support the existing Local Plan settlement policy, which directs growth to the three main towns and some larger villages.

Future housing allocation sites will be a mix of urban brownfield sites, and greenfield sites adjoining built-up areas which are linked, or capable of being linked to shops, employment areas and community facilities by short trips on good quality public transport, walking and cycle routes. This approach is in accordance with the latest Government guidance and Suffolk Structure Plan policy, and recognises the issue of infrastructure concerns as expressed by some residents/organisations in Brandon. The housing allocation sites will be determined by what the Government define as an "urban capacity study", and a Suffolk-wide interpretation/methodology has been agreed jointly by all the Suffolk Planning Authorities .

A total of 41 requests have been made to allocate various areas of land for residential development. The suggested sites are listed in Appendix 1. (Further details for example, site plans, where submitted by respondents, are available for reference in the Forward Planning and Implementation Section).

Officer response.

All these sites will need to be assessed as part of the Urban Capacity Study and the Sustainability Appraisal.

Queries were raised concerning the table on page 9 of the Issues Report. In particular, the figure of 707 for new allocations was questioned as being too low, especially considering the apparent reliance placed on Red Lodge to deliver a substantial proportion of the overall Structure Plan Requirement.

Officer response.

The deliverability of allocated sites during the life of the Local Plan will be a significant feature of the Government's "Plan, Monitor and Manage" approach to housing requirements and the ways in which they are to be met (paragraph 8 of PPG Note 3 "Housing").

All existing unimplemented housing allocation/permissions, including Red Lodge, are required to be reassessed against the latest Government and Structure Plan guidance, and de-allocated if necessary.

3.5 **Affordable Housing**

A significant number of respondents expressed concern about a lack of affordable dwellings for local people, particularly in the villages.

Officer response.

Policy guidance in the reviewed Local Plan will refer to and reflect the Forest Heath Housing Needs Survey Report 2000, which quantifies the need for additional affordable dwellings in the District.

3.6 **The Economy**

The majority, (85%), of respondents agreed that most employment growth should be concentrated in the three main towns. However, 93% of respondents also thought that some employment growth should be encouraged in rural areas. The vast majority (95%) of respondents agreed that there is a need to increase the range of employment opportunities in the District, and most respondents agreed that this was best achieved by encouraging clusters of high technology businesses to form in the area.

The majority (88%) of respondents would appear to support the principle of creating a satisfactory mix of residential and small-scale commercial and employment uses, judging from the wide variety of suggested comments to encourage such mixed-use development.

The "Newmarket (Plan 1)" on page 39 of the Issues Report indicates an area of land adjacent to the A14 (Site 1) as a possible location for mixed-use development. The owner of Hatchfield Farm, Newmarket, confirming that it is considered to be suitable for Housing/High-Tech Business/Hotel Development, supports this suggestion. One respondent suggested that the proposed dualling of the A11 is an opportunity to locate road freight distribution centres and other commercial development.

Officer response

The existing Local Plan does allow the principle of small-scale employment uses in the villages and rural area subject to environmental safeguards. Encouragement is given to the reuse of redundant rural buildings for employment/tourism use.

The existing Local Plan policy is to resist the development of large-scale warehouses and haulage depots in the District, and restrict such uses to small-scale local enterprises.

On the other hand, the loss/redevelopment of existing employment sites/allocations has been raised as an issue. Representations have been made in respect of existing employment areas at Brandon, Kennett and Mildenhall. Land at Fengate Drove, Brandon, is suggested as suitable for redevelopment for housing purposes and is also being proposed as such in a current planning application (ref: F/2001/415). The existing industrial units on Station Way, Brandon are suggested for demolition to be replaced by executive housing. Land at Moulton Road, Kennett is also being suggested for housing purposes as is the existing Bridge Farm Dairies premises at Worlington Road, Barton Mills. A representation has also been made concerning part of the Employment allocation to the south of the Brandon Industrial Estate off London Road (Policy 5.5 of the adopted Local Plan). Again, this land is suggested for residential use.

Officer response.

All these existing employment sites will need to be assessed as part of the Urban Capacity Study and in the light of assessments of Employment Land Supply and Demand.

A number of respondents were concerned about employment in villages and the rural area generally. They expressed support for the creation of local employment opportunities, especially via the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings.

Officer response.

The encouragement of new employment in the rural areas will need to be assessed against such matters as the objective of seeking a reduction in the number of vehicle movements generated by business, particularly HGVs using narrow rural roads.

3.7 **Town Centres and Shopping**

The majority, (74%) of respondents agreed with the approach to the protection and enhancement of town centres and the retail development of the three towns suggested in the Issues Report. 85% of respondents thought there should be proposals in the reviewed Local Plan for environment, access or parking improvements to one or more of the three towns. Virtually all the respondents who gave detailed comments suggested parking and/or transport related improvements. Five of the comments were specific to Brandon, three to Newmarket and one to Mildenhall.

Three respondents have indicated that it would appear to be necessary to carry out a Retail Study to assess the capacity and need for further retail development in Newmarket, Mildenhall and Brandon.

Officer response.

Such a retail study would need to be carried out by consultants and is likely to cost at least £15,000 to £20,000. Whilst it would be preferable to undertake such a study, at this stage it is not clear that it is absolutely necessary. The District Council does carry out some limited monitoring of retail indicators on an annual basis. The Waitrose application contains a retail impact assessment of convenience shopping in Newmarket, and the District Council will need to appoint a retail consultant to assess that study. It is intended to rely on the existing monitoring and the assessment of the Waitrose application for the preparation of the Deposit Draft of the reviewed Local Plan.

Some respondents commenting on town centre parking suggest additional car parking areas should be provided.

Officer response.

Government advice in PPG Note 13 “Transport”, encourages local authorities to introduce measures to reduce car dependency by restricting the amount of car parking spaces and managing those that remain, possibly through for example charging mechanisms.

Parking issues need to be assessed within the overall context of the vitality and viability of the three market towns, together with such factors as the extent to which realistic alternatives to car use are likely to be available during the plan period.

3.8 **Tourism**

The majority, (76%), of respondents agreed with the approach to tourism being suggested in the Issues Report.

Detailed comments were made relating specifically to the following settlements; Brandon, Lakenheath, Mildenhall, Newmarket and West Row.

3.9 **The Horse Racing Industry**

The majority (82%) of respondents agreed with the District Council's current policies to safeguard the horse racing industry.

Of those who did not agree with the current policies, requests were made for alternative uses on the following sites: - Queensbury Lodge Stables, High Street, Newmarket; Land between Black Bear Lane, Rowley Drive and High Street, Newmarket; and Coronation Stables, Station Approach, Newmarket.

Officer response.

The current policy stance is to resist change of use proposals and demands for site sub-division in order to safeguard the long-term interests of the horse racing industry.

3.10 Built Environment

The vast majority (96%) of respondents agreed that the Local Plan should be seeking to achieve a high standard of design for new development.

Many respondents, (12), mentioned local distinctiveness/local materials as being the most important element of design to achieve.

Officer response.

A policy requiring the submission of Design Statements to all proposed schemes other than changes of use is being considered. The continued publication of site specific design briefs as supplementary planning guidance is seen as a vital means by which the District Council can improve the design standards of development in the District.

Few respondents were keen to see more Conservation Area Designations within existing settlements. Gazeley and an extension of Barton Mills were the only such suggestions. Other suggested areas related to landscape features and the natural environment rather than the build environment.

3.11 Natural Environment

The majority (63%) of respondents agreed that the existing plan policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment are adequate.

However, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the RSPB, The Environment Agency and The Countryside Agency all consider that the existing plan policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment are inadequate. This is largely because of new policy guidance and legislation on wildlife and landscape issues, plus additional nationally important wildlife designations within the District since the existing Local Plan was adopted.

The Countryside Agency advocates the use of 'Landscape Character Assessments' (LCA) as being a more effective way of conserving the wider countryside, particularly that outside nationally designated landscapes. LCA should be used to justify non-statutory landscape designations and preferably to replace them.

Officer response.

It is acknowledged that the existing Local Plan needs to be updated to take account of Biodiversity Action Plans and other policy and legislative changes relating to wildlife and landscape issues.

Further consideration needs to be given to the use of 'Landscape Character Assessments' ahead of the publication of the Initial Deposit version of the Local Plan Review.

3.12 Other Environmental Issues

There was a roughly equal split between the number of respondents who thought the existing plan policies on wider environmental issues were adequate, and those who did not.

The following were the main issues which respondents considered required more policy guidance;

- Renewable energy/energy conservation
- Water resources
- Flood risk
- HGVs using country roads
- Light pollution

Officer response.

New Government and Suffolk Structure Plan guidance on the above issues have emerged since the existing Local Plan was adopted, and the reviewed Plan will need to reflect the latest guidance where appropriate.

PPG Note 22 “Renewable Energy” indicates that “each local authority should consider the contribution their area can make to meeting the need for renewable energy on a local, regional and national basis”.

3.13 Transport

The questionnaire asked how the Plan can best encourage less car use and more use of public transport, cycling or walking. The main responses were as follows;

- Better public transport
- More cycle paths and other cycle facilities
- Concentrate development/growth in those areas best served by public transport, community facilities and with good cycleway/pedestrian links.

There were specific comments relating to Barton Mills, Brandon, Elveden, Mildenhall, Moulton, Newmarket and West Row.

The majority, (90%), of respondents were in favour of the Local Plan safeguarding the bypass routes for Brandon and Mildenhall. The County Council has indicated that there is no route for a proposed Mildenhall bypass. English Nature’s response is one of objection due to the likely damaging impact the scheme would have on designated nature conservation sites. The RSPB express similar concerns as both bypass routes are within the proposed Breckland Special Protection Area.

Officer response.

The Suffolk Local Transport Plan for the period 2001 – 2006 makes no reference to the possibility of a bypass for Mildenhall. As the Local Plan Review looks forward to 2016, consideration needs to be given to rolling forward Policy 6.2 of the adopted Local Plan, in the context of the expressed environmental objections against such a scheme.

The majority (80%) of respondents agreed that priority in public car parks should be given to the needs of shoppers and other short stay visitors over those of long stay commuters.

Officer response

There would appear to be a problem in finding space during the day in some Newmarket car-parks because of long-stay parking, eg All Saints Road car-park. This is likely to have an adverse effect on the vitality of the town, particularly as there are tourist facilities/attractions in this locality, with plans for further such development.

3.14 Utilities and Infrastructure

There was a more-or-less even split between those who thought the existing plan guidance on mobile telephone masts and electricity pylons adequate and those who did not. Some respondents were keen to see greater controls imposed on the development of telecommunications equipment.

Officer response.

The current planning guidance is provided by PPG Note 8 “Telecommunications” and Circular 9/95 “General Development Order Consolidation”. Additional controls are likely to entail changes to legislation.

The Environment Agency are keen to see the Local Plan paying full attention to the issues of surface water quality, flooding and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

Officer response.

Measures to ensure good quality surface water and the introduction of SuDS in development schemes can be addressed in the Local Plan in general terms, with more detail being set out in site specific development briefs. PPG Note 25 “Development and Flood Risk” (July 2001) provides new guidance on the issue of flooding, which the Local Plan will need to take on board.

3.15 Recreation

The majority (66%) of respondents agreed that the existing Plan guidance on the provision of leisure facilities is adequate. However, a small majority (56%), of respondents consider that additional walks or rides in the countryside are needed.

Specific comments were made relating to Brandon, Newmarket and West Row.

Officer Response

Recreational/leisure facilities will be co-ordinated by the District Council's forthcoming Cultural Strategy being prepared by Leisure Services and due by March 2002. Any land-use requirements of that Strategy will be covered by the reviewed Local Plan.

3.16 Community Facilities

The questionnaire asked what community facilities the Plan should be making provision for. There was a wide range of responses, with schools and community-centres/villages halls being the most mentioned facilities. Specific comments relating to Brandon, Lakenheath and Newmarket were received.

The majority (87%) of respondents thought that developers should be required to provide community facilities as part of large housing development.

Officer response

Some aspects of the responses will be covered in the Cultural Strategy referred to above in the officer response to recreation. There is clear support for a requirement for developers to provide or contribute to community facilities as part of the large housing developments. In order to achieve this the cost of the provision needs to come from the value of the land, but if demands are too onerous land value will be negative or so low that it is unlikely that any development will take place.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The public consultation responses represent the views of key organisations, some of which are statutory consultees in the remainder of the Local Plan review process, plus individuals such as landowners with a specific interest in particular aspects of land-use planning in the District. These interests range from specific towns or Parishes, specific issues down to specific sites.
- 4.2 The purpose of the consultation is to give the District Council an indication of the issues that should be taken into consideration when preparing the first Deposit Draft of the reviewed Local Plan. Your officers will take into account all of the comments received to the Issues Report when preparing that Deposit Draft, particularly the main trends of the responses analysed in section 3 of this report and the views of the statutory consultees.
- 4.3 It is hoped to produce the Deposit Draft of the reviewed Plan for Members consideration by April/May 2002.
- 4.4 All organisations/individuals who commented on the Issues Report will be directly informed when the Deposit Draft of the Local Plan is published.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members agree the officer responses outlined in this report as a basis for the preparation of the first Deposit Draft of the reviewed Forest Heath Local Plan.

TONY PIERCE BSc DipTP MIMBM

STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

5 September 2001

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Plan Issues Report, May 2001.

Forest Heath Local Plan 1995.

CONTACT OFFICERS

John Smerdon, Andy Durbar, David Beale.

APPENDIX 1: Sites/locations suggested by respondents as being suitable for residential development.

- Land adjoining Barton Mills village.
- Land east of Bell Lane and north of Newmarket Road (former A11), Barton Mills.
- Bridge Farm Dairies (Mildenhall), Worlington Road, Barton Mills.
- Land south of the caravan site, Aspal Lane, Beck Row.
- Land to the east of Rookery Drove and south of Skeltons Drove, Beck Row.
- Land between the Smoke House Inn and Skelton's Drove, Beck Row.
- Land to the west of Brandon and north of A1065 (Site 1 on "Brandon (Plan 3)" in the Issues Report).
- Land south of Green Road, Brandon.
- Land at Fengate Drove, Brandon (existing Employment Area).
- Land at Station Way, Brandon (existing Employment Area).
- Land south of London Road, Brandon (existing Employment Area/Employment Allocation).
- Land at Green Road, Bury Road, Gas House Drove and Lode Street, Brandon.
- Land at and to the rear of the "Ram Hotel", Bridge Street, Brandon.
- Estates Yard, Dalham.
- Land off Burwell Road, Exning.
- Land at Freckenham House, Freckenham.
- Land at Cherry Tree Nursery, Cherry Tree House and to the rear of Bovill's Hall Farmyard, Gazeley (for residential/employment/open space).
- Employment/residential development in the village of Higham.
- (Former) Pet Nutrition Centre, Moulton Road, Kennett (existing Employment Area).
- Land north of Bury Road, Kentford.
- Land fronting Meddler Stud, Kentford.
- Land at South Road, Lakenheath.
- Land at Lakenheath Air Base and Lakenheath Village.
- Land at Mildenhall Air Base.
- Land at Lark Road, Mildenhall.
- Land to the east of College Heath Road, Mildenhall (Policy 4.7 in the adopted Local Plan).
- Land between Brandon Road and Thetford Road, Mildenhall (Site 2 on "Mildenhall (Plan 2)" in the Issues Report).
- Old railway station site, Mildenhall.
- Land east of The Street and south of Bridge Street, Moulton.
- Queensbury Lodge Stables, High Street, Newmarket.
- Land between Black Bear Lane, Rowley Drive and High Street, Newmarket.
- Coronation Stables, Station Approach, Newmarket.
- Hatchfield Farm, Newmarket (for housing/high-tech business/hotel development).
- Land off Green Road, Newmarket.
- Land at Studlands Park, Newmarket.
- Balaton Lodge, Snailwell Road, Newmarket.
- Infill development in Newmarket e.g., rear of Palace House Stables.
- Red Lodge.
- Land at Gravel Gardens, West Row (site for proposed holiday home).
- Land adjoining West Row village.
- Infill development in West Row village.

LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO LOCAL PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

1	Mr M Finch	
2	Mrs W Goult	
3	Railtrack PLC	Railtrack PLC
4	Mrs M Armstrong	
5	Giles De Lotbiniere	Lignalite Ltd.
6	Nicholas Sibbett	English Nature
7	Norman S Silver	
8	N. Brigham	Sustrans
9	Mr Tim Leedham	Inorgtech Ltd.
10	G Smith	
11	Mr H C Clarke	Brandon Residents Association
12	Mrs A Birkitt	Santon Downham Parish Council
13	L Sherer	Newmarket Town Council
14	Paul Hammett	
15	J W Arnold	
16	Neville Walter Peachey	
17	Mary Crane	Rowheath Ward
18	Paul E Fincham	
19	Roger Crane	Lakenheath Village
20	Philip Raiswell	Sport England (East region)
21	W B Leach	W B Leach Holdings Ltd.
22	Mr M Sillis	
23	Mr G Ball	
24	Dr Simone Bullion	Suffolk Wildlife Trust
25	Keith Lardner	Suffolk Preservation Society (Forest Heath Sub-Group)
26	Mary Crane	Eriswell Parish Council - Clerk
27	Andrew Roberts	
28	Peter Walder	
29	Mrs C F J Lynch	
30	Rob Lucking	RSPB
31	Terence O'Rourke PLC	On behalf of ETSU (for the DTI)
32	Pru Khimasia	The Environment Agency
33	David Lindsay	Mildenhall Parish Council - Clerk
34	Neil Osborn	Pubmaster Ltd.
35	F P D Savills	The De Lotbiniere Family Trust
36	R Sellwood	The Earl of Derby
37	Alwyn Moss Ltd	
38	Carter Jones	Trustees of the F V Kiddy dec'd Will Trust
39	Campbell Mead	Omar Homes Limited
40	N W Mayes	Mrs J Thomason
41	Sheila Malham	Newmarket Business Association
42	Mr E Keymer	Oftenfact Limited.
43	Mr E Keymer	TAP Investments Ltd.
44	Mr R Hopwood	C Sperrink Esq, J Charles Esq, R Claydon Esq
45	Mr R Hopwood	Moulton Paddocks Estates Ltd
46	P J Symonds	Trustees of the George Lambton Playing Field
47	Neil Warren	East of England Tourist Board
48	Mr A J Fowler	
49	Caroline Rawlings	Brandon Parish Council - Clerk
50	Fuller Peiser	Friskies Petcare (UK) Ltd.

51	Mr M Douglas	Elveden Farms Ltd.
52	Nicholas Woolley	Mr & Mrs David Ball
53	Nicholas Wooley	Self and Brian Rutterford (see address below)
54	J W McLarly	Bridge Farm Dairies (Mildenhall).
55	David Bremner	Dalham Parish Council
56	Kathy Baldwin	Cambridgeshire County Council
57	Robert Turley Associates Ltd	John Lewis Partnership
58	R M Lewis	Barton Mills Parish Council
59	Mr R C English	
60	Simon Butler-Finbow	Bellway Estates
61	Januarys Chartered Surveyors	The Fairfield Partnership
62	B A F Swayne	The Trustees of the Higham Estate.
63	Helen Phillips	House Builders Federation
64	D Saltmarsh	Moulton Parish Council
65	Mr N A Graham	
66	Mr D Arnold	Brandon & District Chamber of Trade.
67	Messrs G and M Clements	
68	Paul Rought	
69	Gary Chisman	
70	Roger Sargent	Animal Health Trust
71	The Countryside Agency	
72	Jennifer Burns	Environment & Transport, Suffolk County Council
73	P Wood	W M Morrison Supermarkets Plc.
74	Keith R Hutchinson	Mr T Carpenter
75	G R Planning Consultancy	Budgens Stores Ltd
76	Richard Walters	British Telecommunications Plc.
77	Bond Pearce	British Wind Energy Association.
78	G Robinson	The Voluntary Network
79	David Potter	Exning Parish Council
80	R Gillington	Freckenham Parish Council
81	Lorraine Stone/Bruce Rutterford	Lakenheath Parish Council
82	Mr A T Warin	
83	Government Office for the East of England	

RESPONSES TO Q1 – Do you agree that the principles outlined within the Issues Report would ensure that development in the District would be sustainable? – Do you have any other suggestions?

Response: No

Housing

The number of proposed homes over the plan period is inadequate, as many planning permissions are never taken up. Town development could cause problems e.g. parking facilities. (40)

Specific Settlements - Brandon

Not in Brandon. The town is over-populated already, there is gridlock every morning and the traffic problems are getting worse. Also insufficient medical care i.e. doctors, dentists. (11)

With the sites in Thetford Road and London Road building more houses, the traffic problem in Brandon will be increased. (22)

Specific Settlements – Red Lodge

Red Lodge is miles behind; Section 106's I don't imagine have yet been signed. (21)

Specific Settlements – West Row

Concerning West Row only: There are many plots within the village area that could be developed to provide individual houses, this would benefit village life. (16)

Sustainability

Need to create a better balance by tidying-up the outer perimeters (1)

Encourage the development of a transport system that provides easy and safe access in an environmentally sustainable way and by discouraging less sustainable means. (8)

As new housing developments are built they need to be supported by the appropriate amenities. In Brandon the elderly & infirm have to walk up to 1/2 mile & then queue for unacceptable lengths of time due to the lack of amenities in the town. (27)

Make more use of LA21 village studies/Rics and Environment Agency "Comprehensive Project Appraisal - Towards Sustainability", to achieve sustainability goals. (52 & 53)

A much higher profile needs to be given to Crime and its causes; local plans must recognise that the built environment can have an effect on crime and disorder. To achieve sustainable communities these issues must be fully addressed. (59)

A sustainability audit should be undertaken to inform the production of the local plan, forming the basis of an annual monitoring exercise. (NB Issues covered by the audit are set out on a submitted list, 'Indicators of Sustainable Development.' (60)

Villages

The rural economy and communities need help in the form of careful development. There should be one definition for inner cities and one for rural areas. (48)

Response: Yes

Housing

In general I agree but am concerned about higher density developments, knowing the area and its historic evidence of houses here, the issues of limiting new housing in the countryside should be considered. (19)

If implemented properly by ensuring a realistic assessment of committed/outstanding housing allocations, contribution from 'windfalls', consideration of 'brownfield' development opportunities & assessing the ability of locations to absorb extra growth. (61)

Sustainability

Must seek to retain flexibility (4)

As well as ensuring new development doesn't harm the environment, there should be opportunities for enhancement of the biodiversity within the planning process. (24)

The overall objectives are admirable but more detail on the specifics is required. (25)

Must ensure integration of services and facilities in all new developments. (33)

More mixed-use development.

Housing close to jobs to reduce the need to travel.

Environmentally friendly building techniques.

Rented accommodation for single people. (41)

New development should have due regard to existing landscape character. New landscaping should reflect local character. The plan should positively encourage development that makes a contribution to the environment and sustainability of existing communities.

Re: 'Planning for Housing': Refer to Structure Plan Table 2. The numbers of commitments and windfalls expected to be implemented should be reassessed. The location of any Greenfield allocations should be determined in accordance with the locational strategy in Policy CS3.

Re: 'Housing in Towns': The suggested approach of withholding consent to develop Greenfield sites for the first 5 years of the plan period, or until the supply of Brownfield sites has been exhausted could be contrary to the advice in PPG3 and Structure Plan CS7. Must consider the effect Brownfield development may have on local schools. (72)

However, "maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth" is not in accordance with the concept of sustainable development set out in the 1990 Environment White Paper. Add reference to the need to ensure that job opportunities will be created and goods and services produced in a way, which considers the impact on the environment and the future supply of environmental resources. (77)

Towns

Housing development should be allocated in Mildenhall, Newmarket and Brandon. (39)

Villages

The provisions of village plans should be taken into account. E.g. the control of traffic to reduce air and noise pollution. Also, balance the needs of the parish with those of industry. (2)

The argument restricting development ONLY to villages with facilities not always compelling. Development in environmentally sensitive locations - restricted not avoided. Sustainable (car/vehicle) transport rarely achievable in rural areas. (14)

Housing and mixed development in small villages is needed to promote the self-sustainability of such settlements. (44 & 45)

Should express principles in positive terms, e.g. avoid 'restricting development in rural areas', '...strong policy of limiting new housing.'. Include the objective of the 'conservation of local distinctiveness and character.' (71)

re: para 69 of PPG3, the plan should recognise that a limited amount of housing could be accommodated in expanded villages by infill development or peripheral expansion. A review of existing defined village limits should be undertaken (74)

Need to fully recognise the changes that have taken place in the rural areas over the past 20 years or so. The plan should encourage Housing Associations to build in the villages to retain young people in the community. (80)

Response: No answer

Sustainability

Adequate services & facilities are also required to sustain existing settlements. (17)

I have reservations (28)

The fundamental issue of employment needs to be considered and integrated with housing and transport policies through a Sustainability Appraisal, which should be the subject of proper consultation. (54)

The local plan must have a vision of the kind of place Forest Heath should be and a strategy for delivery. The vision should draw on the development strategy set out in RPG6 including, urban renaissance; the role of design quality; the knowledge-based economy and clusters; the rural economy. (83)

Specific Settlements - Newmarket

Must consider the emerging strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region, which includes Newmarket. The role of Newmarket and Red Lodge in the balanced provision of homes and employment should be fully considered. New developments should contribute to transport and other infrastructure requirements, which may need to be assessed for their wider impact on the Sub-Region. (56)

RESPONSES TO Q2 – Do you feel that the existing Local Plan provides the right balance between protecting the countryside and promoting a healthy rural economy? – If no, what amendments would you suggest?

Response: No

Comments for promotion of a healthy rural economy

The plan should provide for more support for small communities. (2)

More individual development is needed as opposed to estate developments. (16)

More development in villages. Small development schemes in villages would help to support local facilities, businesses and services. (40)

Affordable, rented accommodation (with no right to buy), especially for single people.

Mobile workforce.

Frequent public transport.

Long-term investment. (41)

Rural planning must not be neglected in favour of concentrating on urban planning issues. (44 & 45)

Rural development should be the major focus. (48)

No. Policies 8.1 and 8.2 of the adopted local plan place an unreasonable burden on agriculture. The Special Landscape Area designation should be limited to those areas intended to be protected under Policy ENV8 of the County Structure Plan and justified by a landscape appraisal. The new local plan should adopt flexible policies, which will allow essential development within the SLA where visual impact is minimised through design, landscaping or siting of buildings. (51)

Villages must be allowed to grow organically to meet their genuine future needs. (52 & 53)

Government guidance in the Rural White Paper should form the basis of any policy approach towards the countryside and rural economy. Set up working groups with ACRE, NFU etc. to ensure policies are capable of implementation. (60)

Encourage more flexible, less restrictive/protection policies towards the countryside. Promote a healthy rural economy - encourage small-scale residential & industrial/commercial development as part of a comprehensive approach to a settlement. (62)

Comprehensive policy statement for rural areas e.g. Policy 12 of RPG 6, para 2.8 of PPG 7. Encourage economic development that brings clear benefits for communities & the countryside, a net gain to the community will result from the development. (71)

Policies to enable the redevelopment and conversion of properties in the rural area for new uses. (76)

Encourage Housing Associations to develop on the edge of rural communities. The plan should be more flexible to allow development in villages. Existing village boundary is too restrictive. (80)

Beck Row

Development, for low-cost housing for local needs, of part or all of 4.0 ha (10.0 acres) of land to the east of Aspal Lane, Beck Row - south of the caravan site. (67)

Brandon

Any building in Brandon will lead to increased traffic - hazard to health & safety. (11)

Before any more planning is agreed, lets get the Brandon bypass. (22)

More executive housing especially at the High Street end of Brandon, would help support and possibly increase retail trade in the town centre. (66)

Red Lodge

Red Lodge contravenes the governments' Brownfield legislation. (21)

Newmarket

A higher proportion of the residual housing provision should be allocated to Newmarket. (36)

Response: Yes

Comments for promotion of a healthy rural economy

The Local Plan should help to address the massive reduction in farm labour with positive policies to promote rural employment, re-use of redundant buildings, new buildings for farm & rural diversification, and positive policies to attract food processes for a more integrated and sustainable food chain. (14)

Rural communities must be protected while at the same time small rural businesses encouraged. In town centres there should be less building societies, banks and estate agents in prime High Street positions. (25)

But must encourage integrated activities e.g. Pub/Post Office/ Village Store/ Library/ Community Centre/ Primary Health Provision. (33)

Response: No answer

Comments for promotion of a healthy rural economy

I agree that serious consideration should be given to small industrial/commercial sites in the large rural settlements in the same way that major employment uses are proposed for Red Lodge. (17)

Q3 – Should the main towns continue to accommodate most of the growth for the District?

Response: Yes

On the whole, but there can be exceptions. (18)

With the exception of Newmarket. (29)

Including Red Lodge. (33)

Subject to Newmarket as the main focus; Mildenhall & Brandon for own needs and Red Lodge proposals being reviewed. (60)

Response: No

Not in Brandon. (11)

Q4 – Is it appropriate to maintain strict limits on growth in villages and rural areas?

Response: Yes

But I do feel that there can be exceptions when appropriate. (18)

Restricting development to villages that have already got facilities. (58)

But the existing approach is too rigid and inflexible. Policies that are based on a starting point of 'strict limits' are too negative. Criteria-based policies would give applicants scope to justify their proposals on the basis that they would help strengthen the rural economy. (62)

Response: No

Suggestion that the limits be 'rational' instead of 'strict'. (23)

Village appraisals should influence the level of growth in the rural areas. (60)

Local community to prepare 'Village Design Statements', which should be adopted by local planning authorities as supplementary planning guidance. (71)

RESPONSES TO Q5 – In what locations or sites would high-density residential development be appropriate?

Towns

Major Towns (2)

Brownfield areas within towns e.g. adjacent to railway, Green Road, Newmarket. (4)

Town centres: via conversion of existing buildings into flats etc (5)

In the towns (9)

Near to towns (16)

Brownfield sites in, or adjacent to towns. (19)

Brownfield Sites in the town centres, which are close enough to facilities. More rental accommodation is needed. (25)

Only within towns and with discretion. (33)

Potential development opportunities within the towns. (34)

Most new allocations should be directed to Newmarket.

Hatchfield Farm, Newmarket should be allocated for mixed-use development. (36)

Appropriate sites within Mildenhall, Newmarket and Brandon. (39)

Town Centres (42 & 43)

Main towns close to good public transport. Need for mixed density housing in rural areas including affordable housing. (44 & 45)

Bridge Farm Dairies premises, Worlington Road, Mildenhall. (54)

Brownfield sites within existing towns with adequate services. Avoid boxes and build units that blend in with the local character. (55)

Within towns at good public transport nodes. (60)

On sites well related to towns and all their services, facilities, jobs etc. e.g. land at Fengate Drove, Brandon. (61)

Urban/central (63)

Town Centre and mixed-use areas. (70)

Make the most efficient use of land in urban areas provided the quality of urban life is not prejudiced. (71)

Areas near the urban core, closer to good public transport and services, away from the rural fringes of the developed area. Must have regard to availability of school places and ability to meet any additional needs. (72)

Towns & Larger Villages

In areas where the Greenfield land is not valuable agricultural land or of conservational interest e.g. poor, sandy land on edge of Mildenhall, Red Lodge and Beck Row. (18)

Mildenhall, Beck Row and Brandon (21)

Between Lakenheath & Mildenhall for USAF and Allied services.
Newmarket. (48)

Mainly in large settlements where the infrastructure can cope, or be adapted. (80)

Acceptable in the larger villages so as to support the retention of village shops. (81)

Not in Brandon

No more in Brandon (11)

None in Brandon until more doctors and a better bus service are implemented. (22)

Other Comments

Would need to see the proposed sites in order to comment. (12)

Brownfield or infill sites only. Definitely not appropriate in Green belt, countryside or destroying small villages by throwing in huge new town developments. (13)

Mixed (15)

In Brownfield sites such as those we have in the District. (23)

High density cannot be right - people need space to develop (i.e. a garden). Increased densities could result in greater social problems. (26)

High-density residential development can cause stress within a community if appropriate infrastructure is not provided. Brandon already has a lack of police, doctors, schools and shops. (28)

Red Lodge, Newmarket must only grow in a sympathetic manner to reflect the horse racing industry and the nature in which it works. (29)

If the design and planning brief is good enough, it can go anywhere; but must include employment, shopping and other needs. (41)

High-density housing areas are potential ghettos. OK for retirement flats with a warden. (66)

Re: Affordable Housing - the threshold of sites larger than 1 ha or 25 dwellings should be applied to Newmarket and Mildenhall, unless a lower threshold is justified by exceptional circumstances (see Spelthorne High Court Case) (76)

Q6 – Should there be a greater mix of housing types to meet future needs of all households?

Response: Yes

The council should comply with circular 6/98 and PPG3 when devising policies on affordable housing. (3)

I see nothing wrong in allowing large extensions on large sites, it may attract industrialist's etc and entrepreneurs of large houses are a possibility. Most settlements of 3000 + could probably sustain very sheltered housing units. (17)

But careful thought is needed, high and low quality housing on the same sites often does not work. (28)

There is a need for more affordable housing (inc. starter homes, housing association schemes) in Barton Mills. (58)

Subject to an appropriate audit of housing stock. (60)

Especially affordable, but not necessarily social housing. (78)

To create mixed communities. Must ensure that rural affordable housing needs are properly identified and a higher proportion of housing provided in rural areas is affordable. Need to assess whether the lower thresholds of Circular 6/98 re: affordable housing should be applied within the Cambridge Sub-Region. (83)

Response: No

None

Response: No answer

None

RESPONSES TO Q7 – Do you consider that there are any other sites capable of providing for future housing growth? – Which sites?

Response: Yes

Brandon

Land at the rear of the Ram Hotel, Brandon. (1)

West of Brandon and north of A1065. (5)

The Ram Hotel, Bridge Street, Brandon together with adjoining land to the west and north west. (34)

Land to the North of Manor Road, Brandon - identified in the Issues Report as Site 1 on Plan 3. (35)

Existing long-term allocation south of London Road, Brandon. (39)

Green Road and Bury Road, Brandon. (48)

1.5 ha (3.7 acres) of land south of Fengate Drove, Brandon. (NB Januarys have submitted a detailed statement in support of the requested land allocation. The statement is very critical about the preliminary timetable for plan preparation – set out on page 3 of the Issues Report; the statistics and assumptions made in ‘Planning for Housing’ – pages 8/9 and questions the approach to employment land provision – page 17. (61)

Green Road (north side); Gas House Drove (north side) Brandon - for executive housing.

Land off Lode Street, Brandon - for retirement housing.

Station Way, Brandon - redevelop industrial area for executive housing. (66)

Land bounded by Green Road, Bury Road and the 'preferred route of Brandon bypass', Brandon. This land is fairly poor farming land and could provide good development potential. The arable portion will be severed by the bypass route, making farming even more difficult. (68)

Mildenhall

Land to the East of College Heath Road, Mildenhall (adopted Local Plan allocation).

Land between Brandon Road and Thetford Road (site 2, Plan 2 of the Issues Report). (33)

Approx. 2.0 ha (4.96 acres) of land at Worlington Road, Mildenhall, comprising Bridge Farm Dairies premises. (NB Strutt & Parker have submitted a detailed statement in support of the requested land allocation.) (54)

Lark Road, Mildenhall (72)

Old Railway Station site, Mildenhall. (80)

Newmarket

Adjacent to railway, Green Road, Newmarket and Falmouth St./Doris St. area, Newmarket. (4)

The area marked 1 on Newmarket Plan 1. Part residential, part business. (25)

More infill e.g. paddock at the rear of Palace House Stables, Newmarket to provide rented bedsits/studio flats for racing industry workers and a town park. (41)

Queensbury Lodge Stables, Newmarket. This redundant Brownfield site, with its listed buildings should be allocated for a mixed residential/commercial development by conversion of the existing buildings. (NB Keymer Cavendish's supporting statement indicates that "land at Queensbury Lodge is a previously developed site that is both available and suitable for housing development. Located in central Newmarket, it is close to jobs, shops and services by modes of transport other than the car. With a national target that requires 60% of new housing to be built on previously used land, the site could help make an important contribution towards attaining this goal.") (42)

3.15 ha (7.8 acres) of vacant land at Rowley Drive/Black Bear Lane, Newmarket. (NB Keymer Cavendish's supporting statement suggests Newmarket should accommodate 325 new homes and Brandon/Mildenhall, 100 each. At about 40 dwellings/ha, this would require Newmarket to find approx. 8.0 has of land for new housing. Larger sites can also make a useful contribution to meeting affordable housing needs.) (43)

1.5 ha (3.7 acres) of land fronting Fordham Road, Newmarket (former Animal Health Trust premises, Balaton Lodge). (NB RPS Chapman Warren, on behalf of the Animal Health Trust, have submitted a detailed statement in support of the requested allocation.) (70)

Studlands Park, Newmarket. (72)

Air Bases

Mildenhall & Lakenheath Air Bases if the American population returns to the USA. (26)

Barton Mills

Barton Mills along A11. (48)

Barton Mills Parish Council supports limited small-scale development within Barton Mills to ensure the village develops and does not stagnate, providing Barton Mills does not become joined to Mildenhall and new development is through infill schemes. (58)

Land adjoining Barton Mills village (72)

The village limit of Barton Mills should be revised to a) incorporate new housing along the Bell Lane frontage, and b) land to the east adjacent to the former A11 to enable a satisfactory rounding-off of development. (74)

Beck Row

I have already notified you of our desire to have 11 acres of fallow sandy land included in the next plan. It lies east of Rookery Drove & south of Skeltons Drove in Beck Row. Already fully built on 2 sides and in a position natural for residential building. If included, it would be ideal for a first-time buyer development. (18)

As well as requesting that the settlement boundary of Beck Row be amended to reflect the construction of 100 dwellings to the northwest of the Smoke House Inn, additional land off Skeltons Drove, Beck Row should be allocated for residential development. (The respondent has also requested that he be supplied with copies of any amendments the Council may propose regarding the settlement boundaries for Beck Row, West Row, Mildenhall and Barton Mills. (82)

Dalham

Estates Yard, Dalham. (10)

Exning

Land off Burwell Road, Exning. (40)

Freckenham

Proposed extension to village envelope of Freckenham - land between M'hall Rd & Elms Rd. Within this extension, a single infill house of high quality is proposed (adj. Freckenham House), including the provision of a footway linking M'hall Rd to The Street. (Detailed comments have been submitted in support of the proposal.) (52)

Gazeley

Land at Cherry Tree Nursery,
Cherry Tree House,
Rear of Bovill's Hall Farmyard, Gazeley.

2.53 has (6.26 acres) for mixed residential, employment and recreational open space. (44)

Higham

Various unspecified buildings & vacant sites within Higham, owned by the trustees of the Higham Estate, to provide 'affordable housing' and 'market housing' along with employment opportunities through the conversion or re-use of existing farm buildings, environmental improvements & the maintaining areas of open space. (62)

Kentford

Front of Meddler Stud, Kentford. (21)

Land to the north of Bury Road, Kentford for private housing, affordable housing and additional playing field provision. (38)

Kennett

The former Pet Nutrition Centre, Moulton Road, Kennett. A 6.6 ha (16.3 acre) site allocated as 'Employment Area' in the adopted Forest Heath Local Plan 1995. Suggest that 4.77 ha (11.8 acres) of the site be allocated for residential development with the remaining 1.83 ha (4.5 acres) retained for employment purposes. (NB In support, Fuller Peiser have submitted a detailed report 'Appraisal of Office and Industrial Provision in the Forest Heath District.') (50)

Lakenheath

Land at South Road/Caudle Avenue, Lakenheath. (53)

Infill sites in Lakenheath (81)

Moulton

Land east of The Street and south of Bridge Street, Moulton. Amendment to Inset boundary would recognise all land and buildings in this vicinity. (45)

Red Lodge

Red Lodge. (48)

West Row

Land adjoining West Row village (72)

Other Comments

Large villages with the facilities and infrastructure to maintain growth. (2)

Cambridge City Brownfield Sites. (13)

Close to existing rural railway stations. (15)

As it is considered that the delivery of commitments & the availability of windfall sites will be far less than 95% & 85 units respectively, there will be a need for new allocations e.g. Lakenheath Village & Air Base - the Base should be recognised as a sustainable community & should not be designated as a 'Rural Area'. (51)

Response: No answer

Newmarket

With regard to site 1 on Plan 1 – Newmarket; the extent of the proposed housing provision and business use may result in a significant increase in the amount of traffic accessing the A14 at the A142 junction – the agency would object if access were sought directly onto the A14. No objection would be raised if it can be shown that the A14/A142 junction could accommodate the anticipated future traffic flows from the development, and increases in background traffic, 15 years after the development opens, and the capacity of the trunk road upstream and downstream of this point would be no worse with the development than without; or should any infrastructure works be needed that these be funded by the developer. (69)

Red Lodge

Red Lodge is already planned for. (29)

Other Comments

The plan should be based on an assessment of development capacity (see Policy 2, RPG6). (83)

Response: No

None

RESPONSES TO Q8 – Is the proposed approach of concentrating most employment growth in the three main towns appropriate?

Response: Yes

But need to consider Lakenheath and Red Lodge. (33)

In particular support is expressed for the retention of the allocation of the George Lambton Playing Field as a business/science park. (Policy 5.4 of the adopted local plan.) (46)

Focus on the role of regeneration in providing jobs for local residents. Demand for employment land should not be assessed on past rates of development – take-up should also analyse planning applications for relevant use classes. (72)

Response: No

None

Response: No answer

Eriswell Parish Council has divided opinions on this issue. (26)

RESPONSES TO Q9 – Should some employment growth be encouraged in rural areas? – If yes, what extent and what types of employment?

Response: Yes

Agricultural

Employment associated with agriculture, in converted farm buildings or on Brownfield sites associated with existing businesses wishing to expand. (5)

Agricultural only to rejuvenate the countryside and rural villages. Factories are singularly inappropriate as are high-tech business parks etc. Such industries need to be kept near cities where they can fully develop companies. (13)

Ancillary to agriculture, higher commercial type. (29)

Agricultural Services. (41)

Agricultural training/services/development. (48)

Policies 9.3 and 9.4 of the adopted local plan should be replaced with policies to positively encourage agricultural development. (51)

Local Needs

Rural economic diversification to enable local people to walk or cycle to work. E.g. business uses, officing, storage, tourism, workshops, e-commerce. (44 & 45)

Appropriate to the locality; meet local employment needs; contribute to strengthening local economies and social frameworks and enhance the local environment. The Countryside Agency opposes a blanket policy that seeks to restrict new rural employment opportunities to a few larger villages. (71)

Provide for local needs. Supported by green travel plans. (72)

Redundant Rural Buildings

Convert redundant farm buildings into small businesses and workshops etc. (25)

By the re-use of redundant rural buildings. (39)

Positively encourage re-use of redundant buildings to promote rural employment. (51)

Small manufacturing in existing redundant buildings. (55)

Policies should support the provision of rural employment primarily through the conversion of existing buildings. (62)

Provided it is via the re-use of existing vacant (farm) buildings and adequate access for traffic is available. (79)

Small-scale

Low-level, non-industrial and only if the pollution impacts of transport can be managed. (2)

Small, self-employed business units. (16)

Small-scale development should be encouraged, especially if it is of a rural nature. (18)

Cottage Industries, use of small-scale disused farm buildings. (19)

Small-scale farming with good support services. (41)

Small-scale development through conversion of redundant buildings and appropriate new-build. High-tech uses in harmony with surroundings. (52 & 53)

Small light industry of an appropriate nature to reflect the locality. (64)

Small-scale light industrial, commercial, shopping, farming and farm produce. Provide financial incentives to start-up businesses in rural communities. Relax village settlement boundaries. Promote re-use of redundant farm buildings. (80)

Small-scale, light industry (81)

Tourist related

Tourist accommodation (23)

Small gift shops, scenic pubs, garden centres etc. would enhance the character of Tuddenham, Barton Mills etc. (27)

Not industrial. Perhaps hotels, B&B's and leisure. (28)

Tourism should be specifically identified as an appropriate re-use of redundant buildings. (47)

Tourist attractions/visitor centres (55)

Leisure industry based on the Forest and River (e.g. Marina) (66)

Comments relating to Brandon

Tourism development related to Brandon Lock. (1)

Comments relating to Newmarket

Slight expansion of tourist industry based on the historic aspects of Newmarket. (4)

Other Comments

Information based employment should be encouraged in rural areas. (9)

When people wish to work from home. (10)

As much as possible, in order that rural communities thrive, all types of employment need to be considered. (12)

Types of employment that are sensitive to the area and related to the current use. (21)

Self-employment,
IT based,
Arts/crafts/ studio support. (23)

Appropriate roads and transport services are necessary. (33)

In the larger villages. (39)

Rented telecottages.
Village shops and post offices (subsidised?).
Craft studios with housing.
Countryside Management. (41)

Crafts.
Unit factories/workshops. (48)

Existing policies need to be reviewed in the light of paragraphs 3.4A and 3.4B of PPG7. Settlement boundaries, which currently exclude neighbouring agricultural buildings, should be reviewed to allow for limited redevelopment without any harmful landscape impact. (51)

Craft; High-tech related to Ipswich and Cambridge; All within the context of retaining and enhancing the character of rural areas. (55)

Light industrial (78)

Against the background of the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP), the plan should include policies, which would help the farming and rural economy as a whole to become more flexible and diverse. (83)

Response: No

Comments relating to Brandon

The problem of increased employment in Brandon would add to the traffic congestion problem – the roadway system cannot cope with any more increases in traffic. Consideration should be exercised for the residents who absorb the pollution of these increases in traffic. (11)

There are still empty units on the Brandon Industrial Estate, lets use these first before building more in the area. (22)

Response: No answer

Other Comments

Traffic generation should not be used as an obstacle to rural business opportunities. The stated transport options would automatically prohibit employment opportunities in the countryside, which should be helped, not hindered. (14)

Working groups with ACRE, NFU etc. should generate a clear picture of rural employment needs. A clear strategy should then be devised to balance conservation and rural employment growth. Seek advice from e.g. EEDA. (60)

RESPONSES TO Q10 – Do you agree that there is a need to increase the range of employment opportunities in the District? – If yes, how can the plan encourage clusters of high technology businesses to form in the area?

Response: Yes

Brandon

I would rather see some of the shops in Brandon High Street that have been boarded up, opened again before considering high technology businesses. (27)

As far as Brandon is concerned, in Area 2 (28)

Comments either opposing hi-tech industry or suggesting alternative employment types

High technology business clusters are not what is needed, expansion of employment opportunities based on nature reserves, bird sanctuaries and small light industries. (4)

Whilst high-tech should not be relied upon, provide starter workshops and adjacent accommodation along the A11 corridor, west of Newmarket. (48)

Land should be made available for rural freight distribution centres and other commercial development in association with the dualling of the A11. (51)

But not necessarily high tech. (78)

Good Housing, Facilities and Infrastructure

Adequate accommodation, by allowing people more freedom to develop their own skills and businesses. (16)

By providing high quality working environments and by improving access to the area. (17)

High Tech businesses attract professional people; there must be the houses and infrastructure to accommodate this type of people. (19)

Educational facilities and better results from the schools are ongoing issues. You have to have one to get the other. (26)

Better quality (executive) housing and leisure facilities. (66)

Financial Incentives

Provision of adequate communication links and entrepreneurial grants. (2)

By use of tax breaks. (7)

Lower business rates. (16)

The only way I can think of is to give some form of incentive to set up in the area e.g. low rental costs for the first few years until the company has established itself. (18)

Via the use of grants.

FHDC appointments to support in particular areas of expertise. (23)

Tax/financial incentives for small business parks with affordable housing and leisure facilities nearby. (80)

Mildenhall

Find the funding for the Mildenhall Relief Road. (9)

Newmarket

There is plenty of opportunity on Studlands Park, Newmarket, which is already, an industrial park and which would benefit from more business initiatives. (13)

High tech businesses are attracted by quality environments and good communications, e.g. at Newmarket.

Hatchfield Farm, Newmarket - appropriate site for prestige, flagship development; with the George Lambton Playing Fields, Newmarket being allocated as a general employment site. (36)

In the case of Newmarket, there is a need to seek opportunities to establish closer links with Cambridge clusters, which would be in line with RPG6. Spreading the benefits of these clusters and enhancing the economic and social role of market towns is likely to be promoted through the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan. This would lead to a more sustainable pattern of development and could help to reduce the number of commuters from Newmarket to Cambridge. (56)

Make use of Newmarket's geographical advantages to attract R&D/ICT business. (60)

Other Comments

Enhance tourism by encouraging more boats on the River Little Ouse. (1)

By providing help with planning issues for new businesses. (5)

Via wider consultation with all types of organisations. (12)

Keep in touch with Silicon Valley, California. (21)

An area should be set aside by the Council (similar to the Cambridge Science Park) for high technology businesses. Encouragement should also be given to prospective tenants. (25)

The encouragement of a number of employers should lead others to follow. (33)

Build units to match the specifications of high-tech companies.
Ensure supply of suitable staff, entrepreneurs and funding. (41)

High specification accommodation via barn conversions. (44 & 45)

In rural villages. (52 & 53)

High-tech: Find several firms prepared to move in to build-up reputation to attract others.

Non high-tech: to avoid dependence on one type. (55)

By ensuring a high quality environment in areas with potential for growth (Structure Plan Policy/ECON 7). (72)

The plan should implement RPG6 policies for the Cambridge Sub-Region and help to spread the benefits of the Cambridge Phenomenon. The Plan should consider the need to identify additional development opportunities to facilitate the extension of clusters of research & technology industries from Cambridge to the Newmarket area. (83)

Proximity to Cambridge

We are perfectly placed to capitalise on the Cambridge/High tech industry with excellent road systems. (29)

Emphasis on A14/A11 growth corridor for development with a Cambridge focus. (51)

Capitalise on the proximity to the Cambridge high-tech area (81)

Response: No

None.

Response: No answer

None.

RESPONSES TO Q11 – How can the plan encourage a satisfactory mix of residential and small-scale commercial and employment uses?

Comments relating to Brandon

What has happened to the planned Brandon Bypass? this would solve most of the problems in Brandon, making it a healthier and less-congested place. (11)

In the case of Brandon, the redevelopment of the existing Omar Homes site (5.7 ha, 14 acres) for residential development, together with the relocation of Omar Homes to land allocated for employment purposes to the south of the existing Industrial Area (land owned by Forest Enterprise). (39)

This describes Brandon today. Unfortunately, past planning (or lack of it) has mixed residential and commercial unnecessarily. (66)

Comments relating to Newmarket

By locating small light industrial units on existing sites at Depot Road/Craven Way, Newmarket (4)

Concerns relating to mixed-use

Very carefully so as not to cause distress or inconvenience to residents in their homes. Any commercial venues should be quite separate from residential areas and should be screened off from view and noise kept to a minimum for residents. (13)

Not convinced that a mix of residential and commercial/employment uses is to be encouraged. (33)

Suggested Encouragement

Small commercial businesses related to boating activities, tourism would support hotel facilities. (1)

Partnership deals with developers and potential enterprises. (2)

Through the planning process. (5)

Through contacts of Economic Development Officer. (9)

By opening up the road system to enable safe and healthy travel. (11)

Not sure, but this should be an aim of all developers. (12)

By not dismissing small-scale developments. (21)

Incentives could be given by the Council i.e. rate relief to commercial occupiers. (25)

To try and keep the Council Tax down and consistently monitor Best Value. (26)

Strong and clear local plan policies. (36)

A flexible planning system. (41)

Have flexible policies.

Allocate mixed-use sites in rural and urban areas. (44 & 45)

Commercial i.e. retail properties should be retained and expanded. (48)

Mix determined by LA21 studies for particular communities. (52 & 53)

Small commercial/industrial units on Brownfield sites adjacent to communities. (55)

Refer to PPG3 guidance re mixed-use developments and commercial agents re; the market for small-scale employment uses e.g. 'live/work units'. (60)

By the provision of more positively worded and encouraging policies towards the development of small-scale housing and employment in rural locations - this would enable a single landowner to pursue a 'package of proposals' on a comprehensive basis with the primary aim of encouraging the viability of a rural community. (62)

More flexibility to allow diversification and to account for changes in various demands and technological innovations. (80)

RESPONSES TO Q12 – Do you agree with the suggested approach to the protection and enhancement of town centres and the retail development of the three towns? – If no, what amendments or additions would you suggest?

Response: No

Comments relating to Brandon

Specific plans for 'retaining & developing a wide range of shops and services.'
Allocate additional sites in Brandon. (33)

Small-scale non-food retail parks on Omar Homes Limited site at London Road, Brandon. (39)

Comments relating to Mildenhall

Specific plans for 'retaining & developing a wide range of shops and services.'
Allocate additional sites in Mildenhall. (33)

Comments relating to Newmarket

Not sure that Newmarket needs another 23,500 sqft of food sales floorspace, need to avoid unsympathetic changes to shop fronts and signs, plant more trees in the towns.
Restrict development of hot food takeaways, use of individual signs, upgrade Rookery Centre, promotion of factory clearance shops. (4)

Ensure any 'retail warehouses' at Newmarket are high quality developments.
Specific plans for housing off shopping streets and above shop units. (33)

Discourage out-of-town retailing/encourage town centre vitality (PPG6)

Discourage out-of-town retail sites and chain retailers. (9)

PPG 6 guidance should be clearly adhered to. Residential development should also be provided in town centres to add vitality. (60)

In the context of convenience supermarket/superstore provision, the plan must have regard to competition: need: the sequential approach: scale: the approach to car parking. (see paras 1.5, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13 to PPG6 and Ministerial Statement Feb 99). The plan must recognise that retail development comprises 'employment generating development.' (73)

Parking Issues

Need to consider shopper versus commuter parking in town centres. (2)

Response: Yes

Comments relating to Newmarket

Insofar as this focuses on the need to protect and enhance this district's towns. Support the recognition of the need for additional convenience retail floorspace in Newmarket and the proposal by Waitrose to address this need. Support the identification of the site off Fred Archer Way for a

food store. However, an element of flexibility is needed in relation to the re-use of the existing Waitrose foodstore to cater for a range of appropriate town centre uses. It is questionable whether it is necessary to provide a specific policy unless redevelopment is the most likely option – currently this seems not to be the case. (57)

Discourage out-of-town retailing/encourage town centre vitality (PPG6)

But emphasis should be placed on small retail shops in town centres and no more expansions of the big retailers i.e. supermarkets. (25)

Parking Issues

But too many double yellow lines and not enough parking in town centres. (21)

Response: No answer

Comments relating to Brandon

Build a bypass in Brandon. (11)

Tescos is good for Brandon and it does work well with the High Street as long as the High Street shops provide what Tescos doesn't. (28)

Comments relating to Mildenhall

Support the view that there is no need to allocate further retail sites in Mildenhall. However, any proposed foodstore allocations should be based on assessments of need and likely impact on existing town centres (PPG6). Need clear criteria-based policies for considering applications for new retail development (PPG6). Proposals should be subject to full consultation with local businesses. (75)

Comments relating to Newmarket

The plan should be based on an assessment of retail needs. If the plan allocates a site for an edge-of-centre supermarket in Newmarket this must be justified by setting out the need for the facility and the sequential approach to site selection. Regardless of the format for comparison and convenience shopping preference will always be for town centre sites first. (83)

Discourage out-of-town retailing/encourage town centre vitality (PPG6)

Encourage development of suitable sites for town centre shopping to discourage/restrict out-of-town shopping. (79)

RESPONSES TO Q13 – Do you think there should be any proposals in the plan for environmental, access or parking improvements in any of the three towns? – If yes, what suggestions do you have?

Response: Yes

Brandon

More parking in Brandon High Street area, pedestrianisation of Brandon High Street following the bypass! offloading restrictions to HGVs in High Street during peak times. (5)

Build a bypass in Brandon, get rid of the heavy transport and congestion. (11)

Better parking is needed at the top end of Brandon High Street. Have to drive down the High Street just to park is a pain and is off putting. (28)

Provide vehicular access from the Santon Downham Road, Brandon to serve the Beechfields Estate, to relieve The Paddocks and Downham Way of traffic. (66)

Newmarket

Good parking is essential and Newmarket needs more. Suggest the Waitrose site be partly used for a multi-storey car park. Perhaps more charging for parking is becoming necessary. (25)

If tourism picks up in Newmarket and beyond - further car parking will be required. (29)

Parking and Transport Issues

Improve accessibility of town centres.
Provision of adequate and low-cost parking.
Improved local transport. (2)

A parking policy designed to deter commuting and that encourages people to live and work in the towns. (8)

By greater discouragement of short car journeys (9).

Greater parking provision, access for the elderly and disabled. (12)

More parking in the town centres, underground if necessary. (21)

The provision of public car parks must incorporate security and personal safety measures designed to the Association of Chief Officer's Secured Car Park Standard. (59)

The approach to car parking provision should not disadvantage new retail developments compared with existing retail outlets, which have large car parks. (73)

Continue to provide free parking in town. (79)

Brandon bypass. Improve Rookery Car Park, Newmarket. Expand long stay car park in Newmarket. Spend commuted sum payments on extra car parking provision. Expand existing dial-a-ride bus service. (80)

Carefully consider the need for more car parking facilities. (81)

Other Comments

Proposals that are capable of being enforced. (33)

An integrated programme of environmental, access and parking improvements for all 3 towns via the Countryside Agency's 'Market Towns Initiative' commencing with Brandon. (71)

Response: No

Newmarket

Answer no, relates only to parking in Newmarket. (4)

Response: No answer

Brandon

The transport and vehicle problems in Brandon are enormous, will there ever be a bypass? in the right place? Will NCC co-operate? To talk about 2016 is disheartening. The traffic pollution adds to health problems, this needs addressing. (7)

Mildenhall

Parking in Mildenhall is good. (16)

Other Comments

All proposals should be subject to full consultation with local businesses. (75)

RESPONSES TO Q14 – Do you agree with the approach to the promotion of tourism being suggested? – If no, what amendments or additions would you suggest?

Response: No

Brandon

Need to capitalise on the provision of the lock on the River Little Ouse at Brandon. (1)

Newmarket

Need to establish year-long demand to support any increase in number of bedspaces. Promote Newmarket as a conference centre? (41)

The strategy should be District-wide, not just for Newmarket. Policy on tourism in the countryside - encourage farm diversification. (44 & 45)

Other Comments

Encourage expansion of small B&B's by support/grant aid. Encourage landowners to provide better access/maintenance to footpaths and bridleways. Advice to parishes re encouragement of tourism. (2)

We need more marketing of tourism - in USA in many cities they have in real terms very little to offer, but market in such a way that visitors become enthused. (29)

Provide facilities in the rural area in association with farm diversification or farm building redevelopment/conversion projects. (51)

Address the concept of 'green tourism' e.g. new attractions should be accessible by public transport. (72)

West Row

Provision of a new holiday home on land at Gravel Gardens, West Row to serve as a fishing holiday residence or accommodation for horse racing visitors. (37)

Response: Yes

Brandon

In addition open up and develop the River Little Ouse in Brandon. (5)

But more self-catering tourist accommodation is needed in Brandon. (66)

Lakenheath

But need to further promote the RSPB reserve at Lakenheath and the recreational development of Lakenheath Warren. (81)

Mildenhall

But do not overlook Mildenhall. (33)

Newmarket

Apart from the fact that the idea of a Horse Racing Heritage Centre at Palace House Stables, Newmarket will not work. No serious trainer would allow the public to wander round his stables whilst horses are in residence. The yards (Charles II) could be preserved as a museum and the paddocks etc. at the rear, put to some community use such as gardens or memorial site etc. (25)

But suggest Hatchfield Farm, Newmarket as a site for high-tech businesses/housing/hotel. (36)

Other Comments

Any increase in tourism should not affect the chief attraction - rural ambience. (4)

Biodiversity – the future of the River Little Ouse – Transnational Ecological Network Project. (17)

But greater recognition should be given to the potential of tourism in the town centres. The plan also needs to address the issue of the provision of visitor accommodation. (47)

Response: No answer

Brandon

The forest is Brandon's best attraction and must bring a lot of people into the area but doubt that it helps the centre of town. (28)

RESPONSES TO Q15 – Do you agree with the District Council’s current policies to safeguard the horse racing industry? – If no, what changes would you suggest?

Response: No

Period buildings should not be allowed to deteriorate, e.g. Palace House Stables, antique shop, Newmarket. They should be renovated and preserved with planning permission given for these sites to have other uses. (10)

Why should the Stud owners be penalised by the Newmarket Charter? Especially after the Jockey Club has sold so much land next to Hamilton Road for housing. (21)

More flexible policy to allow construction of low-cost rented accommodation, and development of other industries in the town, e.g. high-tech manufacturing, conference sector. (41)

Blanket policies do nothing to protect the racing industry. Current policies should be reviewed to allow more flexibility. In the case of Queensbury Lodge, it is no longer practical for a training establishment to be operated satisfactorily from the site. Queensbury Lodge Stables are of historic and archaeological importance and they occupy a prominent location on the main road. They are however in poor condition and in need of renovation and the only way that this refurbishment will take place is in the context of finding a new economic use for the site. FHDC should follow the advice in para 2.18 of PPG15 and accept that new uses may often be the key to a building/area’s preservation. (42)

The long established planning policies, which have sought to safeguard Newmarket’s racing industry should be applied more sensitively with the intention of preserving Newmarket as an entity, not proliferating peripheral growth. The existing racing policies are too restrictive and should be modified to permit this unique town centre site to meet the residential needs of the community. (See Q7) (43)

A review should be undertaken to ensure that what is currently safeguarded is still worthy of protection, otherwise appropriate development will be stifled. (60)

The policy should permit the redevelopment of those establishments, which are unsuited to today’s conditions. E.g. racing yards without direct access to the Heath or via horsewalks are no longer viable due to the dramatically increased traffic in Newmarket. The location of Coronation Stables, off Station Approach, in the middle of a built-up area leaves the yard impractical and unviable to use as a working racing yard as the only access to the Heath is via roads, which are too busy and dangerous. From a health and safety point of view this yard is unsafe for both horse and rider. The case for redevelopment of this yard will not set a precedent because of the exceptional circumstances. (65)

Response: Yes

But more frequent open days and greater access to the horses could enhance tourism and more business. (2)

In exchange for this industry contributing more to local amenities. (7)

The strict policy adopted could be eased to allow some suitable development of the redundant stables in the town centre without opening the floodgates. (25)

The importance of this cannot be over-emphasised. It is important that a range of training establishments is available within the town to accommodate starter trainers through to the very top. Only this will ensure the long-term vitality of Newmarket. (29)

But there is a need for the provision of high density, low cost residential accommodation. (48)

But this should not prejudice the potential of any business or uses which are associated with – but not essential to – the industry, such as redundant research and clinical facilities. (70)

But former racing stables should not be left to fall into dereliction. This detracts from a vibrant image of the town. (78)

Response: No answer

None.

RESPONSES TO Q16 – Do you agree that the Local Plan should be seeking to achieve a high standard of design for new development? – If yes, what elements of design and local character are the most important to achieve?

Response: Yes

Barton Mills

Special emphasis in Barton Mills on the high quality of design of new housing. (58)

Brandon

Do not allow poor quality signs to be displayed, the Club in London Road, Brandon is a good example of this type of low image. (28)

Energy efficiency

FHDC should be more active in promoting sustainable energy, i.e. policies in new housing developments. Ditto for the promotion of central government policies in this area. (23)

Energy efficient measures. (48)

Flint

Traditional flint etc. should be incorporated. There are too many developments that are losing the character of East Anglia. (12)

Occasional use of flint or flint-faced blocks. (66)

Local distinctiveness/materials

More extensive use of local materials. (2)

Local distinctiveness, which could be achieved by increasing the use of flint, thatch and pantiles. (4)

Use of local materials but also allowing modern designs in their place. (5)

Designs which reflect the best traditions of development in Forest Heath. (36)

Low-rise properties.

Local vernacular e.g. plaster, timber frames, subtle wall colours. (41)

Local distinctiveness.

Protection of the environment. (47)

Measures to give proper regard to local distinctiveness and quality design are supported. (51)

Avoid development that is a pastiche of traditional buildings. Use traditional materials from the locality. With proper attention to what has gone before new designs can reflect the evolution of vernacular features. (52 & 53)

Local materials.

Overall composition of different building styles and associated spaces.

Setting of a building and its relationship with other buildings. (70)

Newmarket

A design article is appropriate to Newmarket as a Racing Town and the Headquarters of Racing in the UK. (25)

Other comments

'Landscaping' should include provision for rare species to live within areas of development and should provide a high proportion of semi-natural habitat within these 'landscaping' areas. (6)

Renovation of buildings instead of demolition. (9)

The quality. (15)

Prevention of buildings that could lead to a 'shanty town' appearance is important. (17)

New developments should be in keeping with existing, acceptable styles. Use of landscaping is important. A variety of compatible styles rather than all similar. (18)

A mix of old and new designs and not a bland vision of similar buildings e.g. Bungalow estates (19)

Try not to increase the density of housing. (26)

New buildings should blend into the present.

Designing to prevent crime and vandalism. (33)

Design advice should not be too prescriptive; need a flexible approach not rigid design policies. (44)

Must ensure provision of services/facilities (e.g. doctors, hospitals, shops, and schools) as part of development proposals. (48)

Within housing layouts, on plot parking must be the first consideration. A reduction of car parking facilities will lead to increased on-street parking, which in turn will increase opportunist crime and neighbour disputes. (59)

Materials,

Scale,

Proportions. (62)

Yes, but must be realistic/viable (63)

Design objectives encompassing the visual appearance & sustainability of development proposals should be in the plan. Village Design Statements let the local community shape development. Need to change from 'Is it bad enough to refuse?' to 'Is it good enough to approve?' (71)

Subject to achieving affordable housing costs. (80)

Suffolk Design Guide

Refer to the provisions of the Suffolk Design Guide. (60)

Refer to Suffolk Design Guide review. (72)

West Row

Not applicable in West Row as there is no traditional design. (16)

Response: No

None.

Response: No answer

Other comments

Increasing densities does not necessarily mean poor design quality. The Council is encouraged to seek Design Statements as an accompaniment to planning applications. (83)

**RESPONSES TO Q17 – Should any more conservation areas be designated? –
If yes, where?**

Response: Yes

Barton Mills

Extension of Barton Mills Conservation Area, or an increase in the controls within the existing conservation area. (58)

Brandon

I am biased, but the private woodland near Walton Way, Brandon should be retained. If this is destroyed by an infill of 31 houses it will open up the floodgates for poor quality developments. (28)

Gazeley

Gazeley (4)

Gazeley (55)

Lark Valley/River Lark

Lark Valley parishes. (2)

Areas alongside the River Lark. (16)

Little Ouse River Corridor

Riverbanks of the Little Ouse between Lakenheath and Thetford. (48)

Newmarket

Exning Road. As a resident of Exning Rd, Newmarket I am envious of the trees, grass verges and hedges bordering Bury Rd, Fordham Rd, Snailwell Rd, Hamilton Rd and Edinburgh Rd, Newmarket etc. I have recently noticed new beech hedges and trees in Bury Rd, Newmarket (15)

Other comments

Not sure. Further investigation would be necessary, 'save what we have'. (12)

If not already done, a survey of the District should be done and the potential areas identified, then the local people can be consulted. (19)

Areas should be continually reviewed. (29)

RESPONSES TO Q18 – Do you think that the existing plan policies for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment are adequate? What areas and habitats need additional or amended guidance?

Response: No

Landscape

Additional trees should be planted in the three towns, villages and other rural areas. (4)

The river in Brandon needs opening up (5)

Screening/landscaping of unattractive developments/areas. (66)

The use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a more effective way of conserving the wider countryside; particularly that outside nationally designated landscapes. LCA should be used to justify non-statutory landscape designations and preferably to replace them. (71)

Need for stronger landscape policies especially within the Brecks area. Preparation of 'Landscape Character Assessment' should be a high priority and adopted as supplementary planning guidance. (72)

There should be more incentive to Parish Councils and farmers to develop public rights of way, hedgerows, tree planting etc. (80)

Traffic

I have seen Exning Rd, Newmarket deteriorate with tree loss and numerous intrusions over recent years. The B1303 is becoming a trunk road, which is very unfriendly to cyclists and would benefit in the combination of extra, suitable trees with traffic calming measures and by enforcing a standard speed limit. (15)

Too much through traffic in Brandon, the town is being polluted from the noise and exhaust fumes. (22)

Need to redress the damage caused by heavy vehicles. Lorry movements must be restricted. (55)

Wildlife

There should be integration of the UK Biodiversity process into the new Local Plan. New guidance is likely to be available through the revision of PPG9. (24)

Policy 8.6 of the adopted local plan needs to be amended to take into account the designation of the Breckland Special Protection Area and a number of Heathland & Wetland Special Areas of Conservation. (30)

There needs to be a clear separation between the rationale behind SPA designation & the policy direction for SLA's and for SSSI's. These designations cover most of the Elveden Estate & have expanded since the last Local Plan. More support needs to be proposed for agricultural related developments. (51)

Wildlife & Landscape

It is recommended that land is provided between the watercourses and any proposed development to permit the conservation of any notable species, allow for access, promote recreational uses and preserve visual amenity. (32)

Must retain amenity areas.

Nature conservation sites should be specified including suitable maps.

Policies must be clearly set out and enforced. (33)

Response: Yes

Landscape

But more enforcement/encouragement of landowners regarding maintenance of hedgerows and footpaths. Landowners should be made aware of the effects of their agricultural practices on neighbouring villages. (2)

As long as the natural existing woodlands and green fields around Brandon are retained. (28)

Wildlife

But Railtrack consider that nature conservation designations should not include the railway lines or the areas adjoining the railway lines. (3)

But the policies need updating to include the provisions of Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 and related SI's and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 need a separate policy. PPG9 is also an important reference. Since the 1995 plan was written, there are now SACs in Forest heath and a big proposed SPA. (6)

But features should not necessarily be 'preserved at all costs'. Offset some losses through development by requiring the creation of new habitats, wildlife refuges and 'green lungs' for the community. (52 & 53)

But seek, in conjunction with e.g. Suffolk Wildlife Trust, further nature conservation area designations. (81)

Other Comments

It is important to differentiate between sites of European importance at one extreme and local importance at the other in terms of planning restraint in those sites. (14)

But one should always be vigilant. (19)

Response: No answer

Other Comments

Barton Mills Parish Council would support any schemes to retain trees and hedgerows within Barton Mills. (58)

RESPONSES TO Q19 – Are the existing plan policies on wider environmental issues adequate? – If no, what amendments or additions would you suggest?

Response: No

Agricultural Land

PPG7 maintains the need to protect the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a). Land quality should be assessed at the earliest opportunity. (83)

Contaminated Land

Specify contaminated sites. (33)

Crime

There should be more thought given to reducing the opportunities for crime through the design of the built environment. Planning applications should be assessed in order to determine the scheme's ability to reduce the risk of criminal activity, trespass and vandalism through the adoption of appropriate measures at the design stage. (See DoE Circular 5/94 "Planning Out Crime") Close regard should be given to FHDC's 'Community Safety Strategy'. (59)

Flood Risk

It must be recognised that as well as the Environment Agency, the Internal Drainage Boards and District Councils also have a role in flood issues. Flood risk is considered a material planning consideration and will influence the location & design of future development. It should be made clear that the building of flood defences will only be tolerated where they are vital i.e. in areas where development 'is essential'. (32)

Recognition of Jubilee Fields, Woodlands Way and Mildenhall Upper School grounds as flood risk areas. (33)

No building on flood plains. (55)

Existing commitments should be reviewed against the risk-based sequential approach to flood risk (PPG25). The plan must take account of the likely impacts of climate change on the future nature and frequency of flooding. (83)

Light Pollution

A Policy is needed on outdoor lighting to ensure there is no adverse impact upon wildlife sites or disturbance to protected species (as well as other provisions). (24)

Prevention and control of lighting impacts in the countryside. (71)

Pollution

Must address issues of air, light and noise pollution (52 & 53)

Renewable energy/energy conservation

Recognition of the provisions of PPG22 is needed; reference to the government's target for renewable energy generation by 2010; awareness of potential renewable resources in the local plan area; reference to regional renewable resource studies; recognition of striking a balance between renewable energy benefits and any adverse effects on local amenity; clear criteria-based policy against which proposals for renewable energy developments will be permitted – these policies to apply to the development of all renewable energy technologies. (31)

Proposals for renewable energy sources. (33)

More promotion of energy and resources conservation. (41)

Must address issues of energy efficiency (52 & 53)

Alternative energy (55)

To maximise the social, environmental and economic benefits of renewable energy developments in a sustainable way. i.e. there is a need for parts of the countryside to provide experiences of wildness and tranquillity. (71)

Policies to encourage the development of renewable energy sources where their impact on the local environment is acceptable.

Reference to regional targets for the contribution of renewable energy sources to electricity supplies (Government target of 10% by 2010) (77)

The plan must address renewable energy opportunities in a holistic way. (83)

Traffic

Some way of prohibiting HGVs from taking shortcuts through villages. (4)

Take measures to reduce traffic pollution in Brandon. The plan suggests relief roads, but even with these pollution will still be a problem - we need a bypass. (11)

Monitor HGV use of rural road network and remedy any problems arising therefrom. (80)

Water Resources

The water deficit can be helped by prudent installation of farm reservoirs, which are environmentally sustainable - surplus water in winter used during summer. A positive local plan policy is needed. Farm reservoirs should not be handicapped by conditions that turn them into wildlife sites. "Drought resistant plants" are wholly inappropriate, at least in the life of this local plan. (14)

There is a need to address the issue of surface water quality through policies that:

- Maintain and improve surface water
- Resist development that poses a threat to water quality and
- Ensures adequate pollution measures are incorporated into any development

Initiatives aimed at reducing water use, e.g. encouraging developers to explore the issue of efficient use of water in the home with the supplying Water Company are needed. The section on 'Utilities and Infrastructure' should include detailed reference to sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). (32)

Must address the issue of water availability (especially for agriculture & associated industries) and incorporate e.g. grey water supply systems; sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). (52 & 53)

Water conservation (55)

Land quality issues should take account of the availability of irrigation water. Criteria need to be established to assess the importance of agricultural land & the protection that it should be afforded. Further consideration re: impact of climate change/water supply & quality/demand for irrigation by agriculture. (72)

Water resource management is an important issue for the plan. Need policies to promote increased water efficiency and recycling (see Policy 55, RPG6). Adopt a positive approach to on-farm water storage and management. (83)

Wildlife

The revised local plan should be explicit in its support for the Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan and should commit FHDC to helping achieve biodiversity action plan targets in the District. (30)

Response: Yes

Flood Risk

But there is a need to address the increasing problem of flooding from run-off water as well as from rivers. (2)

Renewable energy/energy conservation

Wind turbines should be considered. (26)

Other Comments

But one should always be vigilant. (19)

Response: No answer

Pollution

Barton Mills Parish Council would support special measures to reduce the effects of noise pollution from the A11 on any new developments in Barton Mills. (58)

Water Resources

Water conservation measures – may encourage but do not require. There are many technical/health/practical/adoption issues yet to be resolved. (63)

RESPONSES TO Q20 – How can the plan best encourage less car use and more use of public transport, cycling or walking?

Responses: All

Barton Mills

The Parish Council would support any schemes to preserve and enhance public transport. To encourage walking for journeys of less than 2 km. The 'bridges' footpath between Barton Mills and Mildenhall must be improved by addressing the poor condition of the bridges and the lack of lighting. (58)

Brandon

Build a bypass, which will enable the residents of Brandon to use their bicycles or walk safely. (11)

If the through traffic in Brandon was decreased, cycling would be possible. Other suggestions would be a park and ride scheme through Brandon to Mildenhall & Lakenheath, or a shared car policy. (22)

Because Brandon has such poor facilities and is so small, a car gets you to the larger centres and also the forest sites. (28)

By allocating sustainable development sites, especially for housing. e.g. Land at Fengate Drove, Brandon. (61)

Elveden

Reference to Elveden Bypass should be updated. (33)

Mildenhall

NB The 'walking bus' no longer operates at St Marys School, Mildenhall. (33)

Moulton

Local initiatives, such as the 'walking bus' are not always appropriate. A majority of pupils at the local Moulton Primary School do not live in the village and therefore parents have to deliver their children by car. (64)

Newmarket

With reference to Exning Rd, Newmarket: Combination of traffic calming measures with cycle provision, NOT using the cyclists as a way of traffic calming as at present. The width of this road would allow such measures and with careful planning would also accommodate car parking. Have you tried walking/cycling from Tesco/Studlands Park to Plantation/Snailwell Rd – that's a challenge. (15)

West Row

From my experience, footpaths and bridleways in this area are unusable due to overgrowth of nettles, weeds etc. The bridleway/cycle path from West Row to Mildenhall would be a huge asset if it was maintained properly (A link between here is a necessity). West Row needs more cycle routes as roads are very busy. Public transport is too difficult to co-ordinate. (16)

Other Comments

Need to consider river transport. (1)

Provision of link from A11 to A14 to relieve A1101 of HGV's.

Ensure rural industries are accessed other than by village streets.

Restriction of industrial traffic using village streets to working hours only.

Provide more frequent or flexible public transport. (2)

There should be a fundamental link between transport and land-use planning policies. The role of the public transport network in securing brownfield regeneration & sustainable development should be made explicit. The plan should be the subject of a sustainability appraisal to establish the relationship between development & public transport accessibility. (3)

By making improvements to public transport, by providing more cycle parking facilities (small 'parks' within existing car parks) and additional facilities for lorries. (4)

By ensuring that there IS more public transport. (7)

By encouraging the widespread introduction of homezones and 20mph zones, by encouraging the provision of convenient and attractive routes for walkers & cyclists and by restrictions on car parking. (8)

By well maintaining existing cycle paths and pathways.

By clear publicity and signage of bus timetables. (9)

Cars are essential for those living in villages. (10)

By providing good public transport at affordable prices. (12)

By making public transport safer, (especially for women travelling alone), cleaner and on time. Public buses and trains are not safe for women even during daylight. Put more police/inspectors on trains and buses. (13)

Farm produce must unavoidably be carried on roads. Bigger lorries to reduce the number of trips. (14)

Provide ways of safer cycling and walking. (17)

There should be facilities for cyclists to be able to leave and lock up their cycles safely. (18)

Make better provisions for public transport, provide cycle ways and encourage people in towns to walk to work. (19)

Ensure that all major development proposals are considered with regard to advice contained within PPG13.

Ensure Local Plan policies are consistent with advice within PPG13. (20)

Impossible if you live in the country. (21)

A better rural transport service is needed, along with more cycle tracks and more clearly defined footpaths. (25)

Provision of better bus services.

Provision of cycle paths and monitoring of the footways already in situ. (26)

By providing more shops in new housing estates. Recycling could be encouraged by setting local or national businesses to give gift vouchers in exchange for a certain amount of recycled goods?? (27)

We need more SAFE cycle routes. (29)

By supporting the re-introduction of 'bus regulation'. (33)

By allocating mixed-use sites within and on the periphery of the major towns. (36)

Encourage a mix of residential and small-scale commercial and employment uses and comprehensive planning of larger development areas. Mixed development concentrated within towns can achieve sustainability. (39)

Insist on the provision of cycle storage facilities in all new buildings.

Create a network of cycle routes from villages to towns and between villages. (41)

By allowing residential and mixed-use developments in rural areas to encourage settlements to be self-sustainable. (44 & 45)

Whilst EETB support reducing reliance on cars it recognises that, in tourism, there are many cases when rural location is a key aspect of the 'product' being sold. The insistence that development is in locations accessible to public transport could conflict with the promotion of rural tourism. The recreational dimension of cycling should be recognised. (47)

Introduce cycleways as a priority.

More bus routes/better services and information. (48)

Via mixed-use development. (52 & 53)

Restrict the movement of HGV's along unsuitable rural road network. Produce Countywide Lorry Management Plan. Create 'quiet lanes' as per Rural White Paper. Innovative public transport systems to offer an alternative to car dependency e.g. 'taxis' on demand. (55)

Only by adopting a phased 'carrot and stick' approach to e.g. public transport provision versus car dependency; changes to car parking provision. (60)

Integration of bus and train services.

More cycle tracks.

More provision for the carriage of cycles on trains. (66)

The Plan should explain the relationship between land use and transport policies & integrate them at both strategic & local levels.

Should produce a specific 'Countryside Traffic Strategy.'

Transport in rural areas should be addressed reflecting the need for equitable accessibility to services & effects of traffic growth on countryside character. (71)

Road traffic in Suffolk is growing about 1% p.a. SCC has not set a target of reducing this annual growth on roads to 0% or less by 2006. By a fully integrated approach to land use/transport planning through the Structure Plan, Local Transport Plan and other development plan policies. (72)

It is unrealistic to expect a shift away from car-borne trips with the weekly bulk shopping trips. Despite the advice in PPG13 (Annex D), which suggests max. Car-parking standards, the plan should consider allowing parking in addition to national maximum standards at 'in' or 'edge-of-centre' sites provided facilities will serve town centres as a whole (73)

The plan should pay more attention to community transport/community car schemes as these are vital to clients who are unable to cycle or walk. (78)

By maintaining good surfaces on footpaths outside residential areas to be used for cycles. (79)

Provide safe footways in and around communities for walking/cycling; cycle routes away from main roads; frequent village/town bus services. (80)

More cycle paths.

Better public transport. (81)

Improving rural accessibility is a major challenge. Major new development should be located in public transport corridors & around interchanges. The plan should set out how the planning system will be used to help improve bus & train services, improve facilities for cyclists & pedestrians & identify sites for new infrastructure. Car parking standards must be compatible with PPG13. (83)

RESPONSES TO Q21 – Should the plan safeguard bypass road routes for Brandon and Mildenhall?

Response: Yes

Very important. (25)

Higher priority should be given to the Brandon bypass – 2016 is unacceptable. A bypass is imperative to the future vibrancy and vitality of this historic market town. (49)

Insufficient regard has been given to A11 improvements. (51)

For Brandon; there is no route for Mildenhall. (72)

Re: Mildenhall. The plan must set out a clear strategy for this proposal with a firm commitment to full consultation with local businesses. (75)

Response: No

The Mildenhall Relief Road and proposed Brandon bypass are within the Breckland Forest SSSI (notified in November 2000) and Breckland pSPA. This directly conflicts with nature conservation policies and so these alignments should not be presented as attractive options. (6)

Response: No answer

Both routes are within the proposed Breckland Special Protection Area. It is therefore possible that the bypass proposals may be inconsistent with environmental policies. (30)

RESPONSES TO Q22 – Should priority in public car parks be given to the needs of shoppers and other short stay visitors over those of long stay commuters?

Response: Yes

And more disabled parking. (12)

But there should also be provision for the long stay motorist. (18)

Response: No

Should be equally balanced. (4)

Response: No answer

Both are required. (17)

Both. (23)

The choice needs very careful thought. (41)

RESPONSES TO Q23 – Is the existing plan guidance on mobile telephone masts and electricity pylons adequate? – If no, what amendments do you suggest?

Response: No

Telecommunication masts as part of the rail business should be acknowledged, encourage realistic opportunities for site sharing of masts and structures, especially in sensitive areas. (3)

No masts should be erected adjacent to schools, public buildings or private residences. (7)

Telephone masts/electricity pylons should be subject to the same procedures that buildings are. (9)

More consultation with local councils and residents is needed as soon as these applications are lodged with FHDC. (13)

More control is needed over the erection of mobile phone masts and electricity pylons, which litter the countryside and spoil rural views. (25)

Nowhere in the Issues Report does it really explain what the existing guidance is. Mobile phones and masts are harmful to health and masts should be situated as far from town centres & residential areas as possible. The use of mobile phones should be actively discouraged except in emergencies. (27)

We need better direction from central government on safety issues. (29)

Current legislation needs to be changed especially the presumption that approval will be given for the erection of mobile phone masts. (33)

Need more information on the potential risks to health. (41)

Development pressures must be resisted. (48)

Adopt the Scottish system of control. (55)

Positive policy re: telecommunications, in accordance with the provisions of PPG8 & which recognises the operational requirements of the technology & the need to balance the benefits of the development against any potential harm to visual amenity. Should also consider details of the Scott Report (re: risks to health) (76)

Needs much closer consideration. (81)

Response: No answer

- Both should be kept well away from all residential properties. (28)
- Site sharing on appropriate sites where there this will not unduly raise radiation levels near to sensitive land uses. (72)

Response: Yes

None.

RESPONSES TO Q24.1 – Is the existing plans' guidance on the provision of leisure facilities adequate? – If no, what additional facilities should the plan make provision for?

Response: No

Brandon

River activities associated with Brandon Lock. (1)

A play area on the Peldon Estate, Brandon. (7)

A swimming pool for Brandon. (22)

More public tennis courts and a marina for Brandon. (66)

Newmarket

This rich district should have budgeted for a new swimming pool in Newmarket years ago. (15)

More provision for 11-17 year olds in Newmarket. (78)

Other Comments

The emphasis in this area has always been focused on young people, and paid for by the taxpayer. What about the pensioners who have spent all their life paying taxes? there are no 'free' leisure facilities for them. There should be a subsidised centre (as the youth centre). (11)

Policy on protection of playing fields should complement, Sport England's Policy Objective 9 within our policy statement 'Planning Policies for Sport' as closely as possible. Other Policy Objectives within the above document that are relevant to Forest Heath District Council are PP011 (use of planning obligations), PP013 (dual use of facilities), PP019 (rural communities), PP025 (floodlighting), PP026 (STP's), PP029 (noise-generating sports), PP030 (watersports). A copy of this document is enclosed for information/reference. (20)

There must be more local facilities for the young teenager. Areas for 'hanging out', such as teen shelters, are needed in order to direct young people away from creating nuisances and disturbances to residents. These should be located at the edge of a development away from housing to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour. (59)

Response: Yes

Brandon

Brandon is lucky but the management of the Playing Fields area needs to be improved. (28)

Newmarket

However, this must include the proposed new Newmarket Leisure Centre Complex and children's play area. (25)

But the cross reference of policy 5.4 with policy 10.4 and paragraph 10.5 of the adopted local plan re: the George Lambton Playing Field and land to the west of Exning Road, Newmarket, should be deleted. (46)

Other Comments

Assistance to parish councils for the provision of play facilities in rural communities would be welcomed. (2)

Yes, but ensure the retention of 'amenity areas'. (33)

Yes, but transport should be provided for young people to travel from rural communities to leisure areas, especially in the evenings. (80)

Response: No answer

West Row

West Row is quite well served with Leisure facilities, however a new village hall would be an asset to the area. (16)

Other Comments

Access to leisure facilities must be guaranteed, i.e. forms of transport that village sports clubs and playing fields associations must support. (17)

Important to appoint an Arts Officer to work through agencies (regional and national) to promote the arts. (23)

Improving children's play areas in association with small-scale developments. (58)

The plan should be based on an assessment of leisure needs. (83)

RESPONSES TO Q25.1 – Do you consider that additional walks or rides in the countryside are needed? – If yes, where should they be routed?

Response: Yes

Brandon Lock area. (1)

The Lark Valley. (2)

The major emphasis should be on establishing high quality attractive links between the town centres and the countryside for walkers, cyclists and where possible, horse-riders. All three towns would benefit from this. (8)

All towns and villages should be suitably linked, using farm tracks where necessary. (15)

Each parish should be consulted, I am certain that there are walks/rides that could be added to the existing ones. (19)

Generally speaking, Sport England supports improvements to the PROW system in rural areas, to provide improved opportunities for formal and informal recreation in the countryside. (Refer to Planning Policy Objectives 20 and 21) (20)

On clearly defined Bridleways and footpaths. (25)

Eriswell Parish Council have divided opinions on this issue, 2 to 1 in favour of yes. (26)

Wherever they can be safely provided. (29)

Under the provisions of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act, areas of heathland will be mapped for possible open access, whilst the RSPB supports, in principle, more access to the countryside, in some areas additional disturbance may impact on rare breeding species. RSPB recommend that until the mapping has been carried out, no new routes be established in areas supporting nesting stone-curlews on heathland or arable farmland. (30)

The existing network should be de-fragmented but not at the expense of land and livestock management. (41)

Improving links between town and country.

Better access to the countryside for disabled people and ethnic minorities. (71)

Around the outskirts of villages. (79)

To be determined by individual parishes. (81)

Response: No

The forestry people do a good job. I only hope that the government does not get involved. (28)

Response: No answer

- Walks and rides should be provided (if demand is sufficient) only after full consultation with local landowners. (14)
- Existing footpaths and bridleways in the area are in a disgraceful condition, most are unusable. Riverside walks can only be used in winter. Those that we have need to be in good condition before we think about new ones. (16)

RESPONSES TO Q26 – What community facilities should the plan be making provision for?

Response: All

Brandon

Sports & Leisure facilities centred on the River in Brandon. An activity centre for the young, particularly in the evenings in Brandon. (5)

Medical facilities are needed above all; health provision in Brandon is near collapse. (7)

There is a need for a wider range of facilities/activities for the elderly in Brandon. There is only the community centre where the fees are always increasing. Many groups have folded during the last 2 years due to these fee increases e.g. country dancing/Tuesday club. There is a need for more subsidised leisure activities for the elderly. (11)

Concerned to ensure that the site at Manor Road, Brandon allocated for cemetery purposes in the adopted Local Plan, be retained. (49)

Lakenheath

The plan should designate the fields adjacent to the playground off Eriswell Rd, Lakenheath as amenity land and they should be developed as football fields and an extension to existing leisure facilities. Allocate land in the Station Rd area of Lakenheath for play/leisure facilities. (81)

Newmarket

Newmarket swimming pool. (15)

A range of facilities centred on Newmarket. (36)

Youth facilities in Newmarket.

Substance Misuse 'drop-in' centre in Newmarket. (78)

Re: Newmarket Plan 1: The development of site 1 will require improvements to the A14/A142 junction. (79)

Other Comments

Boating. (1)

Social and educational facilities within rural communities via support to Parish Councils. Support provided for village shops, post offices and rural banking facilities. (2)

Foster partnerships between churches and village halls to serve the local community. (4)

More for the elderly, our senior citizens are often overlooked. (12)

The leisure centre plans already on the 'drawing board' would seem to be adequate at this time. Please press on as quickly as possible as the existing swimming pool is inadequate, small, tatty and does not encourage clients. (13)

Ensure that each settlement has a central meeting place with modern facilities; Drop in centres for the young and day care facilities. (17)

Adequate school places, community centres, modern village halls. (18)

The ultimate would be for every settlement to be self-sufficient. But the minimum would be at least a community centre which could be used by all e.g. library, IT centre, by the elderly and by the young and also as a recreational facility. Also there should be means of transport (minibus etc) to get to larger venues i.e. sports centres. (19)

Adequate provision of sports facilities should be secured on any major new residential development - through Section 106 obligations to provide on-site or off-site provision, or commuted sums for smaller developments. A lottery application has been submitted for the new swimming pool/ATP facility in Newmarket. (20)

More money for modern homes for the aged, look at Denmark. (21)

Arts Officer. (23)

Space for playing fields and a Community Hall for special events in the villages. (25)

Youth clubs, social clubs, tea rooms, other small shops. (27)

Schools, doctors, dentists, police, support services and good all-round access. (28)

Pubs, Post Offices, Village Stores, Libraries, Community Centres and Primary Health Provision. (33)

More physical activity spaces for young people, with good access to residential areas, but carefully designed to minimise potential crime and nuisance. (41)

Need to increase community facilities and activities in rural settlements. Further housing and employment in rural settlements will generate community activity. (44 & 45)

Those identified through the LA21 process and the Comprehensive Project Appraisal - Towards Sustainability', and delivered in such a way that best meets community needs at the same time as producing profitable schemes. (52 & 53)

The plan should address how the council is to enhance community facilities in villages. The plan should support the preparation of 'parish plans'. (55)

An audit of existing provision, from indoor sports halls to allotments is required. Blanket protection of existing provision should not be applied if appropriate development can deliver improved recreation/leisure facilities. (60)

One-stop-shops for all social requirements.

Up to date signboards on all industrial estates.

Children's playgrounds on all housing estates.

Mini road layouts to teach children road use as pedestrians and cyclists. (66)

Provision of school places/new school sites/extension to existing sites as part of new housing developments via Section 106 obligations. (72)

Transport. (80)

RESPONSES TO Q27 – Should developers be required to provide such community facilities as part of large housing developments?

Response: Yes

They should help to. (15)

Developers should provide all necessary facilities consistent with the guidance in Circular 1/97. (36)

If the deficiency is reasonably related to the proposed scheme. (60)

But only where complies with C. 1/97 advice i.e. direct relationship. (63)

Response: No

It would make housing too expensive. (21)

Response: No answer

None.