



**East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Station Road,
Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 1RT**

Cabinet

Members:

Councillor Steve Gallant (Leader)
Councillor Craig Rivett (Deputy Leader and Economic Development)
Councillor Norman Brooks (Transport)
Councillor Stephen Burroughes (Customer Experience, ICT and Commercial Partnerships)
Councillor Maurice Cook (Resources)
Councillor Richard Kerry (Housing)
Councillor James Mallinder (The Environment)
Councillor David Ritchie (Planning & Coastal Management)
Councillor Mary Rudd (Community Health)
Councillor Letitia Smith (Communities, Leisure and Tourism)

Members are invited to a **Meeting of the Cabinet** to be held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Melton on **Tuesday, 1 November 2022 at 6.30pm.**

This meeting will be broadcast to the public via the East Suffolk YouTube Channel at <https://youtu.be/BOpxKx033Ew>

An Agenda is set out below.

Part One – Open to the Public

1	Apologies for Absence To receive apologies for absence, if any.	
2	Declarations of Interest Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of interests, and the nature of that interest, that they may have in relation to items on the Agenda and are also reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the Meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.	
3	Announcements To receive any announcements.	
4	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2022	1 - 7
KEY DECISIONS		
5	Continuation of East Suffolk Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets ES/1322 Report of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism	8 - 22
6	UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds ES/1323 Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism	23 - 69
7	Partnership Scheme in Conservation Area application and match funding ES/1324 Report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development	70 - 79
8	Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document ES/1325 Report of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management	80 - 268
9	East Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2023/24 ES/1326 Report of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources and the Assistant Cabinet Member for Resources	269 - 274

NON-KEY DECISIONS

	Pages
10 Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy ES/1327 Report of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources	275 - 314
11 Woodbridge Men's Shed ES/1328 Report of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development	315 - 333
12 Exempt/Confidential Items It is recommended that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.	

Part Two – Exempt/Confidential

	Pages
13 Exempt Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). KEY DECISIONS	
14 Romany Lane Traveller Site – future management and investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). 	
15 Mix Tenure Residential Development – Stanley Road, Lowestoft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). 	

Close



Stephen Baker, Chief Executive

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Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the Conference Room, Riverside, on **Tuesday 4 October 2022 at 6:30 pm**

Members of the Cabinet present:

Councillor Norman Brooks, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Maurice Cook, Councillor Steve Gallant, Councillor Craig Rivett, Councillor Letitia Smith

Other Members present:

Councillor Paul Ashdown, Councillor David Beavan, Councillor Peter Byatt, Councillor Linda Coulam, Councillor Louise Gooch, Councillor Mark Jepson

Officers present:

Stephen Baker (Chief Executive), Jason Beck (Principal Planner (Policy & Delivery)), Karen Cook (Democratic Services Manager), Stephanie Duff (Housing Maintenance Manager), Nathan Hodges (Housing Estates Surveyor), Andrew Jarvis (Strategic Director), Nick Khan (Strategic Director), Bridget Law (Development Programme Manager), Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer (Regulatory)), Andrea McMillan (Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services)), Sue Meeken (Labour Political Group Support Officer), Laura Mundy (Principal Planner (Policy & Delivery)), Agnes Ogundiran (Conservative Political Group Support Officer), Lorraine Rogers (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Anthony Taylor (Senior Planner (Policy & Delivery)), Heather Tucker (Head of Housing)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the following Cabinet Members: Councillor Kerry, Councillor Mallinder, Councillor Ritchie and Councillor Rudd.

Apologies for absence were also received from the following Assistant Cabinet Members: Councillor Cackett; Councillor Cloke and Councillor Cooper.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Announcements

There were no announcements.

4 Minutes

It was by consensus

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 September 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy

Cabinet received report **ES/1291** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, the purpose of this report being to recommend the adoption of the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy (the Strategy).

The Leader introduced the report on behalf of Councillor Ritchie, outlining its links to the Council's Strategic Plan and reporting that the purpose of the Strategy was to create safe, coherent, direct, comfortable, and attractive cycling, walking and wheeling environments that would lead to improvements in health and wellbeing, facilitate greater social interaction and play, encourage more environmentally sustainable lifestyles, reduce road congestion, and support economic growth. In order to create these environments, the Strategy identified cycling and walking infrastructure recommendations across East Suffolk including in the Broads Authority Area. The Leader advised that the recommendations were supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Framework that aligned with the Infrastructure Delivery Frameworks appended to the Suffolk Coastal and the Waveney Local Plans.

The Leader outlined the production stages of the Strategy by both an Officer Steering Group and the Local Plan Working Group and detailed the influence on the Strategy's development of comments received from consultations conducted in 2020 and 2021. The Leader confirmed that, if adopted, the Strategy would become a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Cabinet gave its full support to the proposals; the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources commented on the high quality of the Strategy.

Councillor Ashdown praised the Strategy but raised concerns for proposed changes to traffic permitted across the Bascule Bridge in Lowestoft, citing concerns from residents and businesses about the impact this would have. The Leader drew attention to the precise wording in the Strategy regarding these proposed changes and considered it was apparent that these changes would not be implemented should the anticipated improvement in traffic resulting from the completion of the Gull Wing Bridge not be seen. Councillor Gallant was assured that the wording in the Strategy meant this change would not be brought in without this data nor without consultation with residents and businesses in the area.

Councillor Byatt queried the cost implications of the Strategy, should it be adopted, been assessed. The Leader advised that the implementation of proposals in the Strategy would be achieved through a variety of methods and funding, such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 contributions, and that the

Strategy set out the Council's ambitions regarding cycling and walking provision in the district.

Councillor Gooch considered the Strategy to be comprehensive and complimented the team of officers that had put it together. Councillor Gooch said that the Council needed to communicate its ambitions to the public, suggesting adding a dedicated section to its website, and should promote schemes such as Easy Bike Fixers and do more to educate citizens on safe cycle riding. The Leader welcomed Councillor Gooch's points and encouraged Members to liaise with town and parish councils in their Wards and to consider funding cycling and walking projects from the Enabling Communities budgets.

The Leader noted that the report also recommended that, should the Strategy be adopted, a presentation be given to Full Council on the Strategy.

On the proposition of Councillor Gallant, seconded by Councillor Smith, it was by unanimous vote

RESOLVED

1. That the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy, attached as Appendix A to report ES/1291, be adopted.
2. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, be authorised to make any presentational or typographical amendments to the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy prior to it being published.
3. That the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy be presented to Full Council for its information and to ensure Full Council is informed of the Strategy's importance to the district.

6 Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2022/23

Cabinet received report **ES/1292** by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, who stated that the report provided Cabinet with an overview of the Council's projected financial performance for the current financial year as at Quarter 2, in respect of the General Fund, Reserves, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme.

The figures presented in the report, Councillor Cook advised, were published ahead of the Government's 'mini budget' on 23 September and Appendix B was a subsequent addition to the report, to provide a brief update on the announcements and measures that were directly relevant to the Council. In summary, no measures were announced in respect of the Council's key income streams of council tax and business rates, nor any specific details regarding Government departmental spending. One announcement affecting the Council for the remainder of this financial year, was the reversal of the National Insurance Increase of 1.25% from 6 November. For the General Fund this would be a saving in the region of £0.080m for direct staffing costs in the current year. Taking this into account, the General Fund net budget for the current year was projecting a net increase of £1.217m which was primarily due to inflation

estimates and the pending pay award. Both items were presenting financial challenges and uncertainties for the Council, with no indication at this time of additional funding from Government.

Indoor Leisure, Councillor Cook reported, had the greatest exposure to utility price increases. The Council worked closely with its Leisure Partners to monitor performance and presently cost pressures were being managed within existing budgets. This was an area of continued concern and the Council's Leisure operators were awaiting proposed details from Government on support for the industry. The financial implications of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme were being worked on and would be reflected in future budget update reports. Exposure to rising fuel costs was via the Council's Operations Partnership. Presently this cost pressure was mitigated by savings on waste disposal costs.

Staff cost budget pressures, Cabinet was advised, were calculated on the current pay offer. The Council continued to face recruitment difficulties, particularly in areas of specialism, and some agency/contractor support was required. This was giving rise to a £1m underspend on staff costs which would offset the estimated £1.4m cost pressure from the pending pay award.

Overall, income from Fees and Charges was on track, although income from car parking was below budget to date. Subject to further analysis in this area, a reduction to the annual baseline income of £0.200m was currently projected.

There were some positive items to highlight, Councillor Cook reported, which were forecast to alleviate identified budget pressures. This included additional interest rate income of £0.500m and Business Rates income of £0.280m.

Earmarked reserves intended to balance year-to-year fluctuations, such as the In-Year Savings Reserve and the Business Rates Equalisation Reserve, would be utilised if necessary to mitigate any further financial risks arising in the second half of the year, and to ensure that the outturn position was balanced.

Councillor Cook reported that the HRA was currently projecting a reduction on the movement from the HRA Working Balance by £0.961m, which was mainly due to re-phasing of the capital programme works. The budget projections were yet to be updated to reflect ongoing compliance work.

In conclusion, Councillor Cook advised that this financial update continued to show the Council in a strong position in respect of its reserves and balances, and able to manage short-term budget fluctuations over this period of uncertainty. For future years and next year's budget, the Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 – 2026/27 would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 1 November.

The Leader commented on how, at the moment, it was very difficult to say with any certainty what would happen in the future. The Leader congratulated Councillor Cook and officers on their excellent work trying to forecast the future; he added that the forecasting gave an assurance that ESC could continue to deliver the things that it wanted to deliver with some degree of certainty.

Councillor Beavan referred to parking income having fallen and asked why this was. It was confirmed that parking income was substantially down compared to pre-Covid levels. Work was ongoing considering parking and infrastructure within East Suffolk and a report would come to Cabinet in the future addressing the situation. The Leader referred to the way that people chose to use high streets now being different to before, and he referred to the growth in on-line shopping. The reality was that some town centre car parks were not as busy as before.

Councillor Beavan referred to savings on wages being made due to the level of vacancies but expressed concern that this was putting added pressure on existing staff where agency staff were not being used. The Leader gave an assurance that senior management team continued to monitor the situation and provide support for all staff.

A number of questions were asked by Councillor Byatt, and answers were provided; these were not directly related to the report.

On the proposition of Councillor Cook, seconded by Councillor Burroughes, it was by unanimous vote

RESOLVED

1. That the Council's financial position for the period April to September 2022 together with projections of the full year outturn and reserve balances be noted.
2. That the areas of financial risk identified, the impact of which will be reflected in the Draft Medium-Term Financial Strategy due to be considered by Cabinet in November, be noted.
3. That the additional financial commitments approved in the first half of the year and their impact on the General Fund and reserve levels be noted.

7 Exempt/Confidential Items

The Leader reported that, in exceptional circumstances, the Council may, by law, exclude members of the public from all, or part of, an executive decision-making meeting. The Council should, unless there were urgent circumstances, give notice of its intention to do so via the Forward Plan, which was updated and published on its website 28 clear days prior to the meeting.

There were various reasons that the Council, on occasions, had to do this and examples were because a report contained information relating to an individual, information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, or information relating to any consultations or negotiations.

Tonight, the Leader advised, Cabinet had three substantive exempt matters to consider as outlined on the published agenda.

Firstly, agenda item 9 related to debt write-off and recommendations within the report supported the debt write off process within East Suffolk Council's Constitution and meant that the Council could act to reclaim VAT already paid in relation to the debt.

Secondly, the Leader reported, agenda item 10 related to a proposed housing development in Ilketshall. This was an opportunity to deliver seven new homes utilising an area of undeveloped land. The report outlined the options for the future development of the site and made recommendation for the appointment of a main contractor to design and build the new homes.

The Leader concluded that agenda item 11 related to a programme of fire safety works for social housing and the procurement of works for specialist contractors. East Suffolk Council (ESC) was undertaking a programme of essential inspections which was required for properties within the Housing Revenue Account portfolio.

On the proposition of Councillor Gallant, seconded by Councillor Rivett, it was by unanimous vote

RESOLVED

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 Exempt Minutes

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

9 Debt Write Off

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

10 Halesworth Road, Ilketshall Proposed Housing Development

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

11 Programme of Fire Safety Works for Social Housing: Procurement of Works from Specialist Contractors

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting concluded at 7.45 pm.

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Chairman



CABINET

Tuesday, 01 November 2022

Subject	Continuation of East Suffolk Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets
Report by	Councillor Letitia Smith Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism
Supporting Officer	Nicole Rickard Head of Communities Nicole.rickard@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Luke Bennett Partnerships Manager Luke.bennett@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

To seek commitment to continue to support the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board and eight individual Community Partnerships, and the Councillor Enabling Budgets, including by investing the necessary resources and funding to enable their continuation.

Options:

- i) Invest funding and other resources as laid out in this report to further embed Community Partnerships as an effective mechanism for Councillors to engage with their communities and work in partnership with other stakeholders to deliver lasting solutions to local priorities. To continue the Councillor Enabling Communities Budgets.

Advantages:

- Build on the excellent impact Community Partnerships are already having on the ground in East Suffolk Communities as laid out in this report.
- Continue to increase the total value of the match funding and resources levered in by the Community Partnership Board, and the eight individual Community Partnerships, against their core budget.
- Further increase the Council's reputation as an organisation that takes an innovative, collaborative approach to working with its key stakeholders, including East Suffolk communities, to meet its vision and objectives
- Enable Councillors to continue to support small scale grassroots projects emerging within their wards through the Enabling Communities Budgets.

Disadvantages:

- None identified – other than the financial investment

- ii) Continue the Community Partnership Board, Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets but invest a reduced amount of funding and resources than those laid out in this report.

Advantages:

- Reduced investment by the Council.

Disadvantages:

- Reduced impact of Community Partnerships in their communities
- Potential reduction in value for money as match funding reduces.
- Reputational risk amongst communities and partner organisations who have invested time and resources into making the Community Partnerships work.
- Reduced impact at ward level in terms of number of projects funded through Enabling Communities Budgets

- iii) Discontinue Community Partnerships and identify an alternative way/ways for the Council to develop solutions to local issues in collaboration with their communities.

Advantages:

- None identified, during the development of Community Partnerships, extensive work was carried out to identify, and plan in detail, the best model for East Suffolk.

Disadvantages:

- Another solution would need to be developed to address the concerns raised during the consultation on the creation of East Suffolk Council over the combined effect of fewer councillors with larger wards and populations to serve.
- Potential reputational damage amongst communities and partner organisations who have worked with us to invest time and resources into making the Community Partnerships work.
- Loss of momentum and three years of effort to maximise the impact of the Community Partnerships and Board, including through the Covid-19 pandemic
- Loss of impact at grassroots level after four years of investment through Enabling Communities Budgets

Recommendation/s:

That Cabinet recommend to Full Council:

1. That it be agreed to continue to support and enable the Community Partnership Board and the eight Community Partnerships (one for each of the areas shown on the map at Appendix 1 to this report) until the end of March 2027.
2. That it be agreed to continue to support the Enabling Communities Budgets at the current level (£7,500 per Councillor) until the end of March 2027.
3. That £1,064,000 funding per annum be committed for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years from New Homes Bonus, and to fund at a similar level for the following two years subject to the funding being available.
4. That the purpose, remit, governance and structure of Community Partnerships in East Suffolk, as set out in the report, be endorsed and that the impact of the Community Partnerships be reviewed annually through an annual monitoring report.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Cabinet is reminded that during the consultation process on the creation of East Suffolk Council concerns were expressed about the larger wards which were proposed, and the increased populations in each, then averaging 3,670 residents per Councillor, and now 4,552 per councillor. There was also concern about the size of the geographical areas of each ward to be covered by the 55 newly elected Councillors. It was anticipated that it would be a challenge for Councillors to develop and maintain good working relationships with the Town and Parish Councils in their wards, as some would have more than 40 Parish Councils and Meetings to attend.

Therefore, the Constitution and Governance Working Group of the Shadow Authority for the Council, at its meeting on 22/10/19, endorsed the concept of Community Partnerships as an effective means to address these concerns. The Council's Constitution acknowledges the importance of collaboration in assisting it to meet its vision and objectives.

Since their establishment, the Council has been the accountable body for Community Partnerships. The Chair of each Community Partnership is an East Suffolk Councillor, with several Vice Chairs from partner organisations.

A role description has been developed for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of a Community Partnership, to assist them in their role and this can be found in the Council's Constitution. The role description covers Accountability, Purpose and Activity, Governance, Ethical Standards and Relationships. The Community Partnership Chairmen are also entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), which is currently £2,587.57 per year. It is proposed that this allowance should continue.

To facilitate collaborative working and secure maximum buy in from our key partners, it is proposed that Community Partnerships should continue to host interactive and participatory meetings and workshops rather than formal 'area committees'. Meetings will be held in the Community Partnership area in a suitable, accessible venue and/or online.

The Enabling Communities Budgets are administered by the Funding Team, which sits within the Economic Development and Regeneration Service, working closely with the Head of Communities.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

At Paragraph 13 of the Summary of the Council's Constitution, on page 15, under the heading "Partnership Working", ESC acknowledged the importance of collaboration, in assisting it to meet its vision and objectives. It specifically stated that the Council may establish up to eight Community Partnerships which would cover the district.

The first priority of the 'Enabling our Communities' section of the Council's Strategic Plan states: "We will facilitate Community Partnerships, to connect people and places at a local level, encourage collective problem solving and ensure a needs-based approach to delivering local solutions to local issues...enabling East Suffolk voices to be heard."

The Council's Enabling Communities Strategy explains more about how our ambitions around enabling our communities are being delivered through Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets. The Strategy is accompanied by an Enabling Communities Toolkit which has been used by individual Community Partnerships to support problem solving in their Community Partnership area.

Environmental:

To date the eight individual Community Partnerships have generally not identified the environment as a priority, except for the Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership's 'Environmental Care' initiative. Going forward the Partnerships would continue to have the potential to deliver environment impacts and benefits in their communities.

The Community Partnership Board Transport and Travel Programme is helping enable the delivery of East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan's Environment Theme aspirations in several key areas. In particular, the programme is supporting the 'Caring for our environment' pillar of the ESC plan on the 'Lead by example' and 'Protection, education, influence' priorities by improving access to demand responsive public transport in rural areas. This

will help reduce car journeys, supporting Suffolk and the nation's net zero emissions targets.

Equalities and Diversity:

The ambition of the Board and Community Partnerships is to focus on the issues that really matter to local communities, considering and reflecting the needs of all ten local protected characteristic groups. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken when the Community Partnerships were first established, and is still relevant, and EqlAs are undertaken on individual projects developed by the Board and eight Community Partnerships where appropriate.

The Board has funded a rural proofing programme, led by Community Action Suffolk, to ensure benefit across all parts of the District and that all Community Partnerships are thinking 'rural' in commissioning, developing and delivering project activity.

Financial:

The total cost of supporting the Community Partnerships, Board (and associated delivery activity) and the Enabling Communities Budgets at the current level of £7,500 per Councillor for all 55 Councillors is currently £1,064,000 per annum. The total cost of continuing Community Partnerships, the Board and the Enabling Communities Budgets for four years is therefore just over £4.25 million.

It is proposed that this funding should come from the New Homes Bonus (as in the last four years). Whilst there is uncertainty as to whether there will be a further round of NHB funding in 2023/24, there is sufficient funding in the NHB pot to enable the full costs of both Community Partnership and ECBs to be met in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Council's NHB allocation, if any, will be notified in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement due in December 2022.

The CP budgets are/and will continue to be allocated against clear criteria (linked to the ESC Business Plan) designed to ensure that funding is not used for purposes beyond the ESC's powers or indeed the law. A robust assessment of each project is currently, and will be in the future, undertaken by the Funding Team of all projects and this is/will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism for sign off. Monitoring would be undertaken to ensure that each project achieves its intended outcomes.

Similarly the ECB's are allocated by Councillors against clear criteria set out in the guidance notes [ECB-Guidance.pdf \(east Suffolk.gov.uk\)](#) and within the application form which can be found at [ECB-Application.docx \(live.com\)](#).

The proposed funding allocation for four years through the New Homes Bonus is shown below. It is proposed that Cabinet recommend that funding be agreed for FY 2023-24 to ensure that Community Partnerships continue to operate, and each Councillor has an Enabling Communities Budget until the new Council is in a position to decide on funding after that.

	2023/34	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

Community Partnerships [8 x £25,000)	£200	£200	£200	£200	£800
Community Partnership Board	£300	£300	£300	£300	£1,200
Resourcing and Engagement [Partnerships Manager, Lowestoft Communities Officer 0.5FTE, Funding Officer 0.5FTE, Room Hire, VCSE Engagement, Town and Parish Council Engagement]	£152	£156	£160	£164	£632k
Enabling Communities Budgets	£412	£412	£412	£412	£1,648
TOTAL	£1,064	£1,068	£1,072	£1,076	£4,280

Human Resources:

Currently the funding available through New Homes Bonus supports three staff – the Partnerships Manager and two part time roles in the Communities and Funding Teams to provide additional support for the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership area due to its size (almost double the population of other Community Partnerships) and funding processes associated with the Community Partnerships respectively.

ICT:

There are no ICT implications associated with the proposal to extend the Community Partnerships or Enabling Communities Budgets.

Legal:

Legal and Democratic Services are full embedded in the planning and operation of the Community Partnerships and Community Partnership Board. The Head of Service is part of the Community Partnership Delivery Group.

Risk:

The key risk of not continuing to fund and support the Community Partnerships and Enabling Communities Budgets is a reputational one – significant investment of resources has been made into establishing the Community Partnerships and Board, sustaining them through the Covid-19 pandemic and continually seeking to improve the way in which they work and their impact. Particular effort has been made to engage Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in the partnerships, working collaboratively with (and providing funding to enable this) with Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) and Community Action Suffolk (CAS).

The ECBs have operated since 2014 in the Suffolk Coastal area and since the new Council was formed in 2019 across the whole East Suffolk area. More than £1.4 million has been allocated since May 2019. In 2020 all Councillors allocated £1,000 each to the Covid Community Response Fund to enable the response to the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2022/23 almost all Councillors have allocated £1,000 to the Ease the Squeeze programme to mitigate the impacts of the rising cost of living.

<p>External Consultees:</p>	<p>In 2021, a ‘deep dive’ Peer Challenge of East Suffolk Community Partnerships was undertaken in advance of the full LGA Peer Challenge of East Suffolk Council.</p> <p>The Peer Challenge Team consisted of: Steven Pleasant, Chief Executive, Tameside Council & Accountable Officer at Tameside and Glossop CCG Cllr Isobel Darby, Buckinghamshire Council Rachel Joyce, Director of Corporate Affairs, Harrogate Borough Council Rob Gregory, Assistant Director Communities and Neighbourhoods, Stevenage Borough Council</p> <p>And was supported by: James Mehmed, LGA Peer Challenge Manager Rachel Stevens, LGA Project Support Officer</p> <p>The challenge took place over three days 12 – 14 October 2021 and focussed on people, process and outcomes. Feedback from the team was hugely positive, highlighting the ‘scale of opportunity’ for Community Partnerships. See section 1.2 below for the key outcomes of the Peer Challenge.</p> <p>A selection of statements of support from Members of the Community Partnership Board are below:</p> <p><i>"East Suffolk Council showed vision and a desire to take practical action to support local communities by the setting up of the Community Partnership structure covering the whole of the Council area but localised to deliver the vision and financial support through 8 local Community Partnership groups. The 8 groups involve a range of stakeholders and have already promoted a compelling range of practical projects and support for those led by others. Local, especially rural, transport needs are very much on the Community Partnership radar, and I continue to be proud to have been asked to chair the Transport and Travel Group reporting to the CP Board."</i></p> <p>Alexander Nicoll, Board Member and Chair of the Transport and Travel Task and Finish Group</p> <p><i>"From their conception I have always been a huge supporter of community partnerships. They really represent the new way of working in local government by reaching out to communities to understand their concerns and then helping to empower them to find solutions. Through empirical evidence and practical experiences we manage to drill down to get the help where it is needed most. The variety of projects across the district clearly illustrates that no two communities are the same and by allowing the local community partnership autonomy in their decision</i></p>
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	<p><i>making, East Suffolk continues to embed community first into its projects”</i></p> <p>James Mallinder, Chair Woodbridge, Melton and Deben Peninsular CP</p> <p><i>The approach taken by East Suffolk in establishing the Community Partnership model is unique and effective. I know this through involvement in other organisations, such as the East of England Leadership Board of Business in the Community. Several businesses are keen to get further engaged with their local communities and to help tackle the difficult challenges we are experiencing post pandemic and in the cost of living crisis. Many of the ideas generated in the BitC network are already well developed by the CPs and the overall Board. I have raised the CP model here as a perfect way of businesses, local authorities, the voluntary sector and communities working together and identifying efficient and productive ways of making a real difference to those most in need in our local area. After undertaking some research into other districts and boroughs in the six counties of the East of England, no other has adopted such an approach. In my view this means it is harder to coordinate, inform and make a difference. We are lucky to have our Community Partnerships, the full throttled support of councillors and officers. Bravo East Suffolk!</i></p> <p>Tom McGarry, Board Member</p> <p><i>“Community Partnerships cast the widest possible net in order to ensure that every community partner who may have interest and/or involvement is invited to attend. This includes educations, mental health providers, medical providers, and any services that address issues affecting our communities...the more community involvement, through mechanisms like Community Partnerships, the better-quality services communities/families will receive.”</i></p> <p>Tony Cooper, Chair, Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership</p>
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected? <p>Community Partnerships are a specific priority within the Strategic Plan and the breadth of reach of both the Community Partnership/Board and the Enabling Communities Budgets means that they positively impact almost all other priorities in the Strategic Plan, with a particular impact on Health and Wellbeing, Community Pride and Taking Action on What Matters Most. The work of the Community Partnerships had been data-led with each agreeing its priorities for action based on a data pack combined with local intelligence.</p>			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1	Background facts
1.1	<p>The key background information relating to the establishment of the Community Partnerships and overarching Board is set out in the two reports below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report to Cabinet 3 September 2019 on the establishment of Community Partnerships and minutes of the meeting 2. Full Council report September 2019 on the establishment of Community Partnerships and minutes of the meeting
1.2	<p>The key recommendations from the LGA peer challenge of Community Partnerships, undertaken in October 2021, were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take time to reflect, review and reset the compass for Community Partnerships. 2. Celebrate what you have achieved. 3. Manage the transition from virtual meetings to an increased face-to-face format to support relationship building. 4. More effective communication within and across the CPs and the CP Board 5. Further engage with communities of interest e.g. young people 6. Invest in creating increased capacity and capability in the wider system. 7. Create a learning and development plan to support the next phase of delivery. (Chairs, Vice Chairs and Officers) 8. Quick win – Improve communication between CPs and outwards with localities 9. Consider strategic sponsorship of CPs from across the organisation 10. Build stronger linkages through locality teams e.g. economic development and health 11. Ensure all related processes and commissioned support are congruent with your vision for CPs 12. Review grant and funding processes 13. Move away from traditional meeting style 14. Understand how you identify success, impact, and ROI 15. Make the shift to more facilitative problem solving 16. Develop a robust evaluation framework. 17. Strengthen oversight – ensure grip. 18. Engage all stakeholders internal and external on the next steps for Community Partnerships <p>See Community Partnership Board Report on the LGA peer challenge of Community Partnerships for more detail.</p>
1.3	<p>These recommendations have been turned into an Action Plan, which is overseen by the Community Partnerships Delivery Group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism. See Draft Action Plan</p>
1.4	<p>The impact of the Community Partnerships and the Board is highlighted in more detail in the next section but a good overview is provided by the Annual Report 2021-22 presentation to the Community Partnership Board on 13 June 2022.</p>
1.5	<p>As an important part of the Councils approach to enabling communities, the Enabling Communities Budget provide an opportunity for each of the 55</p>

	Councillors to support grassroots projects within their ward which may align with the priorities of the Community Partnership for that area but equally may be for something that is seen as a priority at a very local level. Each Councillor has had an allocation of £7,500 for the initial four years of the Council.
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2 Current position

2.1	<p>Each of the eight Community Partnerships set their own priorities in late 2019 based on the contents of a new data pack for their area and the outcomes of their own community stakeholder workshop. These priorities can be categorised under social isolation and loneliness; mental and physical health and wellbeing; transport, travel and road safety; support and facilities for young people; tackling inequalities, community spaces and environment. The Community Partnership Board has focussed on those issues that gained the most votes across all eight Community Partnership areas through the prioritisation process – social isolation and loneliness, transport and mental health and wellbeing. The Board is now also focussing on tackling inequalities including the current cost of living crisis.</p> <p>Periodically the Community Partnerships have reviewed their priorities considering new data and emerging issues like the Covid-19 pandemic (where the Community Partnerships played a key role in enabling the community response). Currently the partnerships are again demonstrating their agility by responding to issues emerging from the rising cost of living and are actively supporting the East Suffolk 'Ease the Squeeze' campaign and programme of projects.</p> <p>The two key mechanisms by which each Community Partnership have addressed their priorities are by commissioning projects and/or running targeted small grant schemes for community groups and voluntary organisations.</p> <p>In 2021-22, over 120 projects and activities had been funded, with £151,687.15 of CP funding committed to them. Substantial additional funding has been levered in to match these Community Partnership contributions. To illustrate, across all eight partnerships in FY2021-22 there was a total of £373,042.30 match funding which equates to £2.60 for each £1 of Community Partnership funding. The corresponding figures for the Community Partnership Board over the same period are, total Community Partnership Board spend of £163,830.39, with match-funding of £184,000.00 which equates to £1.77 for each £1 spent.</p> <p>A considerable number of the projects and activities Community Partnerships have commissioned or supported have been targeted broadly at the whole community and/or at younger people specifically. Slightly fewer, but still a considerable number, have targeted older people. Some projects and initiatives have been targeted at specific groups – for example, men over 40, those with long Covid symptoms, or families. A significant opportunity remains to target projects at more specific groups in the future.</p> <p>From monitoring information returned, we know that at least 6,000 people have been directly impacted by these Community Partnership projects. In addition, a substantial number of projects and initiatives have been aimed at facilities where participant numbers have not necessarily been monitored (e.g., village hall</p>
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	<p>improvements or provision of play equipment) so the actual number is much higher.</p> <p>There are many examples where Community Partnership have had an impact without any or much budget spend. For example, The Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership has developed a successful local road safety forum with excellent engagement from the parish councils, county and district councils, police, and other stakeholders like Brake, the road safety charity. This collaboration has revolutionised the approach to road safety in the area.</p> <p>Community Partnerships are continually striving to improve the way they measure the impact they have on their area. Currently all eight partnerships are working up even more focused, SMART objectives to support their priorities, which will make their impact more measurable.</p> <p>Each year the Community Partnerships come together to hold a successful annual forum to share good practice and lessons learned. This year's event on 25 March 2022 attracted 211 delegates who participated in a range of discussions (12 x 60-minute workshop / seminar sessions on offer and each delegate attended two). 30 organisations hosted a stall in the 'marketplace' and a further three organisations had their project vehicles on display outside. From delegate feedback 100% respondents found the event useful, 100% respondents found the networking useful, 100% respondents shared information and knowledge on challenges and opportunities in East Suffolk, and 92% respondents will change the way they work because of attending.</p> <p>The funding and resources allocated by Council to both the operation of Community Partnerships and on project delivery is scheduled to end on 31 March 2023 at the end of the initial 3.5 year funding period.</p>
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3 How to address current situation

3.1	The proposed approach is for the Council to continue to fund the eight Community Partnerships, Community Partnership Board and Enabling Communities Budgets at a similar level for the next four years, initially (in 2023/24 and 2024/25) through New Homes Bonus funding.																
3.2	<p>It is proposed to continue eight Community Partnerships to cover East Suffolk, based on their existing geographical groupings of communities (using the ESC ward boundaries as the building blocks). Each Councillor for an area will be a member of their Community Partnership, which means that there will be between 4 and 14 ESC Councillors per Community Partnership. See table below, which also shows the electoral population in each Community Partnership area (latest figures 2020):</p> <table><tr><th colspan="4">Community Partnerships</th></tr><tr><th>Name</th><th>Wards</th><th>Cllrs</th><th>Population</th></tr><tr><td>Lowestoft & Northern parishes</td><td>5, 10, 12, 16, 17, 21</td><td>14</td><td>66,72</td></tr><tr><td>Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth & Villages</td><td>2, 3, 11</td><td>7</td><td>32,08</td></tr></table>	Community Partnerships				Name	Wards	Cllrs	Population	Lowestoft & Northern parishes	5, 10, 12, 16, 17, 21	14	66,72	Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth & Villages	2, 3, 11	7	32,08
Community Partnerships																	
Name	Wards	Cllrs	Population														
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Beccles, Bungay & Halesworth & Villages	2, 3, 11	7	32,08														

	Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold & Villages	6, 15, 25, 29	5	22,742
	Framlingham, Wickham Market & Villages	9, 13, 27	4	17,572
	Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham & Villages	1, 24	4	16,990
	Woodbridge, Melton & Deben Peninsular	7, 19, 22, 28	5	23,514
	Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley	4, 14, 18, 23	8	36,391
	Felixstowe Peninsular	8, 20, 26	8	34,349
3.3	Community Partnerships will continue to be supported to evolve differently in each of the eight localities, within a framework already agreed by Council and partners. The framework is defined in the Terms of Reference that are reviewed and endorsed annually by each Community Partnership and the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism. They will not all be the same because the areas that they cover are not the same in terms of geography, population or needs.			
3.4	The Chair of each Community Partnership automatically joins the Community Partnership Board. This provides an opportunity for the eight Chairs to work alongside strategic partners such as the Police, County Council, Integrated Care Boards, VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations), business sector and other key stakeholders like the Suffolk Community Foundation and Greenprint Forum. This approach enables the development and delivery of collaborative solutions to issues that are common to more than one Community Partnership.			
3.5	It is also proposed that there will continue to be an annual Community Partnership Forum where representatives from the Community Partnership Board and all eight Community Partnerships can come together with community stakeholders, business representatives and other strategic partners to jointly problem-solve, promote their achievements and share examples of good practice. This will further evolve the existing Forum which meets annually at Trinity Park and regularly attracts around 200 delegates.			
3.6	It is proposed to continue to operate the ECB's as currently, subject to the annual review of the ECB guidance notes and application form. The ECB process has been subject to several audits during its lifetime, each of which has resulted in tweaks to the process to ensure that it is as robust but simple as possible for Councillors and community groups to complete and submit an application.			

4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	<p>A commitment was made by Council to develop and deliver Community Partnerships, in response to concerns about a potential democratic deficit caused by the Council having fewer Councillors, covering larger geographical areas, with larger populations than before it was created. A significant amount of time was spent investigating different models at a national level and scoping out the proposed form and function of the Community Partnerships.</p> <p>The model originally proposed has proved to be an exciting, fresh opportunity to engage with our communities and their representatives in an innovative and unique way. It has involved the Community Partnerships in addressing local issues based on data, evidence and insight and in developing solutions, using devolved funding, in exactly the way the Government intended under the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>The model has been externally challenged by the LGA Peer Review Team in October 2021. The Teams general observations were that there is lots of evidence that Community Partnerships are ‘adding value’ and there has been a lot of support to give them a “great start”. They recognised how we have brought people together and used a strong evidence base to identify local priorities (for example around mental health and social isolation). They recognised that the Council have backed up their priority by making a significant investment and they noted great examples of how we are also using the assets across the district. They flagged up the enthusiastic, energetic and committed staff and Members and also the positive feedback from partners describing Community Partnerships as “dynamic” and “innovative”.</p> <p>The proposals contained in this report to continue to operate, resource and fund the Community Partnerships are based on the evidence of impact in the first three and a half years, albeit during the Covid restrictions, feedback from the Peer Challenge and the opportunities that the Community Partnerships provide for co-ordinated activity to address both local challenges and those facing the whole of the district including the cost of living crisis.</p>

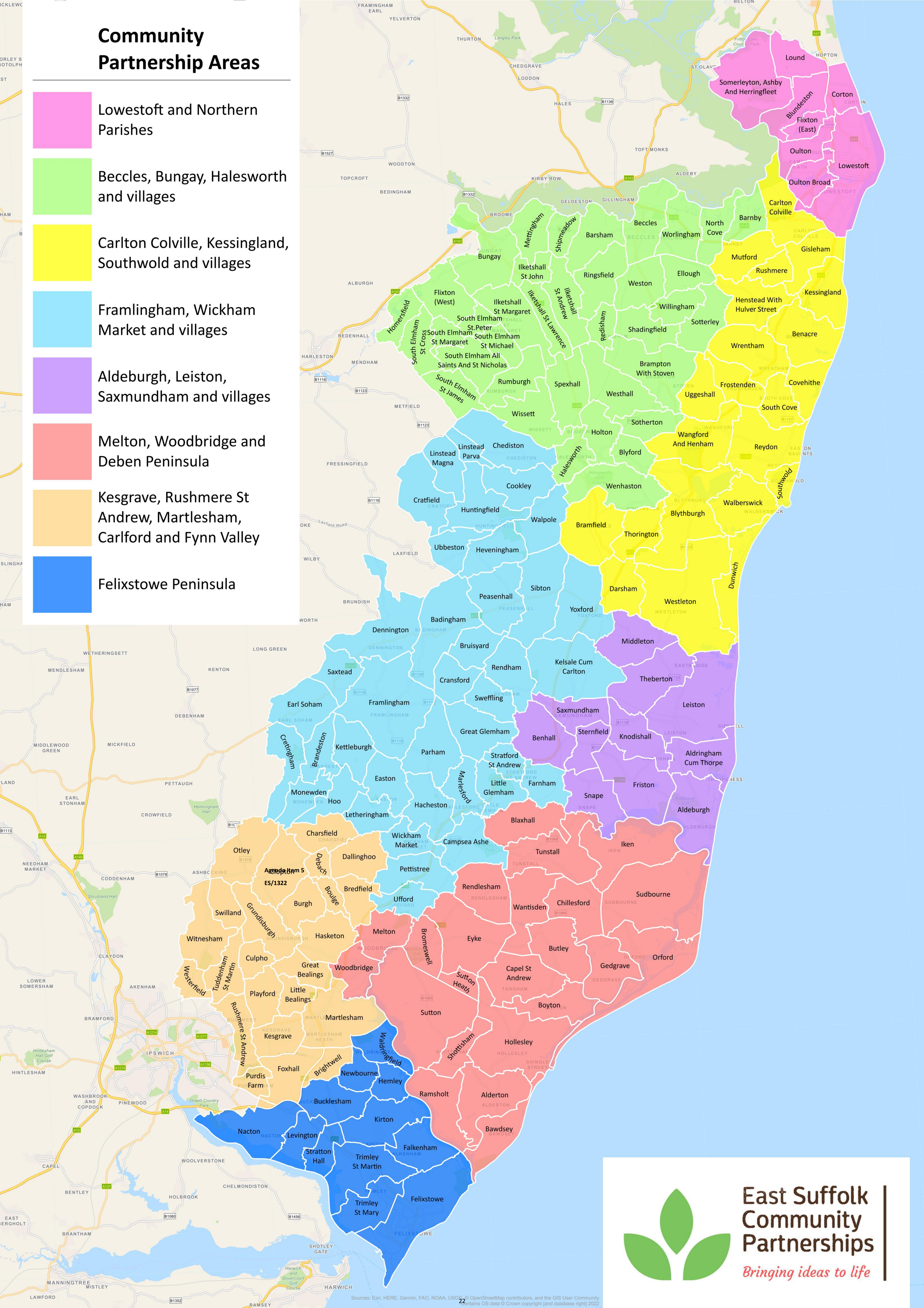
Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Map showing Community Partnership Areas

Background reference papers:		
Date	Type	Available From
October 2022	Community Partnership Board Terms of Reference	East Suffolk Council Website

Community Partnership Areas

-  Lowestoft and Northern Parishes
-  Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and villages
-  Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and villages
-  Framlingham, Wickham Market and villages
-  Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and villages
-  Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula
-  Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley
-  Felixstowe Peninsula





CABINET

Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Subject	UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds
Report by	<p>Councillor Craig Rivett Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development</p> <p>Councillor Letitia Smith Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism</p>
Supporting Officers	<p>Paul Wood Head of Economic Development & Regeneration paul.wood@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 07798 797275</p> <p>Nicole Rickard Head of Communities Nicole.rickard@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 07766 998074</p>

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval from Cabinet to receive £2.75m of funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to deliver a multi-year business support, community development and skills development programme. To further seek approval to implement ESC's UKSPF Investment Plan (see Appendix A) which outlines how these activities will be delivered either directly by ESC or with partners and the anticipated outcomes they will achieve.

In addition, to seek approval from Cabinet to receive £1.13m of funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). This is a capital fund scheme designed to support small businesses and community infrastructure projects within the rural areas of East Suffolk. The REPF delivery programme will be an addendum to the existing UKSPF Investment Plan and will be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for approval by 30 November 2022.

Options:

ESC could choose not to accept its allocations from the UKSPF and REPF however, this would put the district at a distinct disadvantage as it would be unable to deliver the vast majority of business support and skills development programmes that have historically been provided in East Suffolk. Furthermore, it would significantly reduce the council's response to the cost of living crisis via its 'Ease the Squeeze' programme as well as reducing our ability to invest in community infrastructure projects.

This approach would also put our rural areas at a competitive disadvantage as small businesses would not have access to the same level as capital grant funding as other similar rural based businesses and ESC's rural communities would have reduced access to capital infrastructure funding.

Recommendation/s:

1. That the receipt of £2.75m from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund be approved.
2. That the implementation of the ESC UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan be approved.
3. That the receipt of £1.13m from the Rural England Prosperity Fund be approved.
4. That authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Development and the Head of Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism, to finalise the Rural England Prosperity Fund delivery plan and submit to DEFRA by 30 November 2022.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

A Local Partnership Group of local stakeholders will be established to act as an advisory and oversight group on project development and delivery.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

ES Economic Strategy

ES Enabling Communities Strategy

Environmental:

The business support package which forms part of the Investment Plan includes a grant scheme to support small businesses making adaptations to achieve net zero.

Equalities and Diversity:

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA459605152 – see appendix B) has been undertaken in relation to UKSPF Investment Plan, which demonstrates that the programmes within it will have a positive impact on the following protected characteristic groups:

- Age
- Disability
- Deprivation/ Socio-Economic disadvantage

Financial:

Approval of ESC's Investment Plan and subsequent REPF addendum will result in the Council being awarded £3.88m of external grant funding. Several programmes included in the Investment Plan involve delivery via grant schemes, the Council has significant experience in establishing and operating such schemes.

Human Resources:

The delivery and administration of ESC's UKSPF and REPF programme will require additional support within the ED&R team. As a result, recruitment to a vacant post within the Funding Team is being accelerated to ensure adequate capacity is available to successfully implement the activities within the Investment Plan.

ICT:

No impact.

Legal:

The ED team are working closely with the Legal team to ensure that any agreements and schemes established to allow the delivery of the East Suffolk Investment Plan are done so in a manner which protects the Council's interests and also expedites delivery.

Risk:

Deliverability is always a risk with programmes of this nature, however with clear delivery and resource plans these risks can be effectively mitigated. Underlying economic conditions may also pose a risk to the successful delivery of the investment plan and therefore flexibility and adaptability has been built into the programme to reflect the potential changing needs of businesses and our communities over the lifetime of the programme.

External Consultees:	<p>To determine the priorities of the ESC Investment Plan a wide range of organisations across East Suffolk and the region representing business and community interests were surveyed. This included the LEP, business representative groups, community partnerships, VCS groups, MPs, private sector businesses, academia, cultural organisations, and housing bodies. 63 responses were received, and these helped shape the final version of the Investment Plan.</p> <p>To ensure the REPF programme is equally robust a further round of consultations is due to take place with organisations representing the rural economy and rural communities.</p>
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How does this proposal support the priorities selected?

Growing our Economy

Build the right environment for East Suffolk: The investment which will take place in the ES economy and our communities as a result the UKSPF and REPF allocations will enhance the growth potential of our businesses, support start-up enterprises and address social deprivation. In addition, the rural focussed element of the package will address more specific challenges and support improvements to economic and community resilience. Through all these measures opportunities for our residents and businesses will be enhanced.

Attract & Stimulate Inward Investment: The UKSPF investment plan contains an inclusive workforce skills development programme. Having an adequately and appropriately skilled workforce is a key attractor for businesses looking to investment in an area. A skills programme which focuses on our key sectors e.g. clean energy, ports and logistics is particularly valuable in ensuring the growth and competitiveness of these sectors.

Business Partnerships: The delivery of the business support element will partially rely on the use of existing business partnerships. This is clearly an advantage as such partnerships will have first-hand knowledge of the areas where micro and SMEs require support and intervention.

Support and Deliver Infrastructure: The combined UKSPF and REPF allocation provides almost £1.6m of capital funding which will be used to support businesses and communities deliver small scale infrastructure enhancements. This will align well with the larger capital schemes which are being delivered across the district to ensure at the micro and macro level strong investment in our economic and community infrastructure is taking place.

Enabling our Communities

Taking positive action on what matters most: The combined programme will provide support to address the consequences of the cost of living crisis. Specifically, there will be a focus on ensuring access to affordable local produce and providing a practical response to high household energy costs. Furthermore, the rural programme will provide ES communities with the opportunity to invest in community infrastructure that will have a lasting benefit for all residents.

Maximising Health, Wellbeing and Safety in our District: The measures in the programme to address food and fuel poverty will, by their very nature, support improvements to the health and wellbeing of residents in ES.

Maintaining Financial Sustainability

Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities: The UKSPF Investment Plan and subsequent REPF delivery plan have and will be developed/ delivered in such a way to

maximise the number of businesses, community groups and residents that can be supported with truly impactful and beneficial interventions.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) are central pillars of the government's Levelling Up agenda. Combined these programmes provide more than £2.8bn nationally for investment between 2022/23 – 2024/25, with allocations being made to all lower tier councils/ Mayoral Combined Authorities, referred to as Lead Local Authorities (LLA) in the guidance.
1.2	UKSPF is a successor to EU funding, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which, will have ceased by March 2024. However, across Suffolk there is a significant deficit with UKSPF compared to previous ERDF funding, with the latter being around one third less than the former. Combining this deficit with the large range of interventions suggested by government has led to priority setting being strongly evidence based to ensure an impactful programme will be delivered and to provide a clear justification of why certain activities were omitted.
1.3	The REPF succeeds EU funding from the LEADER and the Growth Programme which were part of the Rural Development Programme for England. Integrating rural funding with the UKSPF aligns with government plans to streamline the funding landscape. Funding from the REPF is characterised as a 'top up' to the UKSPF and the associated delivery programme will be an addendum to the existing UKSPF Investment Plan (see Appendix A).

2 Current position	
2.1	<p>The UKSPF has been designed to support the delivery of the following levelling up objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging• Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest• Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost• Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency <p>Additionally, the focus of the REPF is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy																				
2.2	<p>The funds will support these objectives through three investment priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communities and Place• Supporting Local Business• People and Skills																				
2.3	<p>ESC has been allocated £3.88m over the remainder of 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 through both the UKSPF and REPF. This funding will be made available following DLUHC’s approval of the ESC’s Investment Plan and the subsequent REPF addendum. The funding profile is as follows:</p> <table><tr><th></th><th>22/23</th><th>23/24</th><th>24/25</th><th>Total</th></tr><tr><td>Revenue</td><td>£274k</td><td>£431k</td><td>£1,018k</td><td>£1,724k</td></tr><tr><td>Capital</td><td>£60k</td><td>£519k</td><td>£1,580k</td><td>£2,159k</td></tr><tr><td>Total allocation</td><td>£334k</td><td>£951k</td><td>£2,598k</td><td>£3,883k</td></tr></table>		22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Revenue	£274k	£431k	£1,018k	£1,724k	Capital	£60k	£519k	£1,580k	£2,159k	Total allocation	£334k	£951k	£2,598k	£3,883k
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Capital	£60k	£519k	£1,580k	£2,159k																	
Total allocation	£334k	£951k	£2,598k	£3,883k																	
2.4	<p>Two significant programmes, business support and skills development, are currently delivered at a LEP wide and countywide level respectively. These programmes are also currently funded via EU funding which will shortly be coming to an end. Therefore, in parallel to the development of the district level Investment Plan, ESC and the other Suffolk districts and boroughs have been working with the LEP and SCC to maintain a countywide approach for these two critical areas of local economic support. To optimise efficient and effective delivery it is appropriate that these interventions are delivered at this spatial level but with the flexibility to respond to local need. The change in funding source has also provided the opportunity to review and enhance the existing service to reflect the changing needs of businesses.</p>																				
2.5	<p>Discussions are continuing with the other Suffolk districts and County Council to determine if any aspects of the REPF could be better delivered on a countywide basis. As with UKSPF, there will need to be a clear demonstration that such delivery is more effective and efficient than delivering at a district level and also that interventions can be flexible to reflect any differences in local need.</p>																				

3	How to address current situation
3.1	In response to ESC's allocation of £2.75m of UKSPF the ED and Communities teams developed an Investment Plan (see Appendix A) which sets out the district's priorities for investment based on widespread stakeholder consultation, ESC's Strategic Plan priorities around Growing our Economy and Enabling Our Communities and an in-depth analysis of data to identify current economic and community needs.
3.2	ESC submitted its UKSPF Investment Plan on 29 July 2022 and it is anticipated that DLUHC will make a decision on whether to approve or not during autumn 2022. The REPF addendum to the Investment Plan will be submitted to DEFRA by 30 November 2022 and ESC are currently consulting with rural economy and community organisations to determine the priorities and interventions which will be submitted in the rural delivery plan.
3.3	<p>ESC's UKSPF Investment Plan consists of nine programmes based on new or existing schemes to be delivered locally or collaboratively with other Councils in Suffolk. The plan is organised around the three investment priorities as set out by government:</p> <p>Communities and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES High Street Improvement Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three-year programme to improve high streets and town centres across the district ○ Town centre grant programme ranging from £5k - £15k will focus on town centre accessibility, cultural & heritage events, enhanced pedestrian and cycle access and a shop front improvement scheme • Using place to strengthen our local social fabric to address the cost of living crisis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>ES Community Food Network</i>: uniting communities and food producers/ wholesalers to address cost of living crisis, reduce food waste and increase local awareness of benefits of shopping locally and buying local produce ○ <i>ES Warm Rooms</i>: creation of a network of warm rooms for those struggling to pay home energy bills, reduce home energy spend, connect with others and access a range of additional support and advice services and skills development opportunities that will provide benefit to them for the longer term. <p>Supporting Local Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Suffolk wide business support programme</i>: will provide local businesses with free, fully funded, impartial advice and guidance, a small grants scheme to support business growth, funded support for businesses to access and work with a consultancy, and resource to enable collaboration between business hubs and clusters. • <i>Business start-up programme</i>: training packages designed for both new enterprises and those seeking self-employment across Suffolk.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>East Suffolk Small Business Move to Net Zero grant scheme</i>: a small business grant scheme that all sectors can access to help them make net zero adaptations. The grant scheme will open in 2023/24 and run until 2024/25. • <i>East Suffolk capital business and workforce skills grant programme</i>: a grant programme for communities, education providers and business centres that have training spaces that require upgrading in line with local skills needs. This grant programme will be available in year-3, 2024/25. <p>People and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Suffolk wide skills programme</i>: Suffolk authorities will be pooling contributions in 2024/25 to deliver activity across four key areas of intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Youth participation ○ Adult unemployment ○ Apprenticeship support ○ Workforce development • <i>East Suffolk Local economy led skills and community skills programme</i>: during 2023/24 of UKSPF, ESC will carry out a review of the skills needs and requirements of our local economy to fully determine the programme for 2024/25, however we envisage the programme will need to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longer term impacts of the pandemic and economic change ○ Recruitment issues and skills shortages ○ Net zero and decarbonisation skills • <i>Voluntary skills provision</i>: skills provision to support individuals referred in by SCC's 'Early Help Coaches' and 'Young Person Workers' and helping our most vulnerable to transition into education, employment and training.
3.4	<p>The Investment Plan contains a full list of the outputs that ESC intends to achieve through the use of our UKSPF allocation. Key outputs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 850 businesses supported to sustain and grow • Over 250 business start-ups supported • 4,000 people supported through the cost of living programme • Over 50 business premises enhanced in ES high streets
3.5	<p>The East Suffolk REPF programme is currently under development and has four intervention themes. Two of these are the same as UKSPF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Local Business • Communities and Place <p>There are also 2 extra intervention areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas • rural circular economy projects

3.6	<p>Interventions under REPF must be additional to those already planned to take place through the UKSPF Investment Plan. This is to ensure that the additional challenges which specifically impact rural areas are addressed. For the purposes of REPF, rural areas are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> towns, villages and hamlets with populations below 10,000 and the wider countryside market or 'hub towns' with populations of up to 30,000 that serve their surrounding rural areas as centres of employment and in providing services <p>Effectively, this means that all areas of East Suffolk, with the exception of Lowestoft, will qualify as a rural area in respect of this funding.</p>
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4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	<p>Accepting ESC's allocations through the UK and Rural England Prosperity Funds will enable the delivery of a range of new and existing business and community support programmes. The interventions set out in the UKSPF Investment Plan and forthcoming rural addendum represent a combination of investment in business, communities and individuals. These interventions will address current challenges such as the cost of living crisis, the need to support the micro and SME business sector and workforce skills development. In addition, there will be specific support aimed at our rural areas to reflect the particular challenges they face and enable investment in both business and community infrastructure. At a time when both the local economy and local communities are experiencing increasing challenges this funding and the anticipated outcomes it will achieve are to be welcomed.</p>

Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	East Suffolk's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan
Appendix B	Equality Impact Assessment

Background reference papers:	
None.	

Submitted to Submit an investment plan to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in England
Submitted on 2022-07-29 15:38:05

ES/1323

Investment priorities

Navigating your investment plan submission

About your investment plan

Get help

Your location

In which region is the lead authority based?

East of England

Your location: East of England

Select the lead authority

Select the lead authority:
East Suffolk

Your details

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Phone number

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Organisation

Organisation:
East Suffolk Council

Local challenges and opportunities

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority ?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

East Suffolk is predominantly a rural coastal district, with an estimated resident population of 250,373, making it the largest district in the in the UK. The district is bookended by the urban areas (towns) of Lowestoft and Felixstowe, accounting for approximately 43% of the population for the district. The rural area consists of ten market towns, alongside a significant number of villages and hamlets, with each area having its own character and community identity.

East Suffolk has a very diverse local economy, with significant economic assets and growth potential, but also, long-term socio-economic and economic regeneration challenges.

Under the communities and place investment priority the district faces a number of significant challenges, which include:

Deprivation:

East Suffolk faces higher levels of deprivation than the rest of Suffolk – covering families, working age and older people - with significant pockets of deprivation found within Lowestoft (17 of the 20 LSOAs in Lowestoft are within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally, with a further 3 LSOAs falling within the 10% most deprived, IMD 2019).

An estimated 15,400 people in East Suffolk are affected by income deprivation (11.4%, compared to the Suffolk average of 10.2%).

6,350 children are affected by income deprivation (15.2% compared to Suffolk average of 13.6%).

9,160 older people are affected by income deprivation (10.5% compared to Suffolk average 10.2%).

13,200 of working age people are affected by employment deprivation (9.8%), against the Suffolk average of 8.3%.

14.5% of adults were in receipt of Universal Credit in East Suffolk, with Lowestoft being the highest claimant rate in the district at 24.6%, and the lowest in Kesgrave & Martlesham at 6.7%.

12% (31,189) of the overall population fall within the highest IMD quintile (20% of areas in England) for deprivation, with a further 20% (50,447) falling within IMD quintile 2, and 29% (71,601) of the population falling with IMD quintile 3.

The district also has a high number of 'Left Behind' neighbourhoods as identified within the 2019 Local Trust research. East Suffolk has the highest overall need within Suffolk, with Lowestoft identified as having very high average need.

Seven of the 20 MSOAs with the highest needs are located in Lowestoft. Carlton Colville in Lowestoft ranks as having very high needs (among the top 1% in England). East Suffolk and Ipswich have higher levels of need in terms of connectedness with an average rank of more than 1,000 places higher than across other Local Authorities in Suffolk. Lowestoft and Mildenhall perform consistently worse than the national average across all three of the dimensions of community need.

Three MSOAs in East Suffolk have the highest levels of need on each of the domains:

- Felixstowe West is ranked as having the highest needs in Suffolk on the active and engaged communities domain.
- Pakefield North has the highest needs on the connectedness domain.
- Carlton Colville has the highest needs on the civic assets measure and ranks among the top 10% on all three domains of the Community Needs Index.

East Suffolk performs worse than the national average on both the civic assets and the connectedness domains.

East Suffolk has the highest average number of food parcels out of the four Suffolk districts and borough, with 1585 people receiving food parcels in July 2021. East Suffolk also has the highest average number of people helped by foodbanks in Suffolk.

Demographics:

Just under 1 in 6 people in East Suffolk are aged under 16, which is 16.7% of the overall population, compared with the national average of 18.9%.

More than 1 in 4 people are aged 65+, which is 27.7% of the total population, compared with 18.7% nationally. A further 9,947 people are aged 85 and over, which is 4% of the total population, compared with 2.5% nationally. These figures demonstrate the significant ageing population within East Suffolk compared against national averages.

Employment:

Using 2020 ONS data, the gross weekly full-time pay by quintile for East Suffolk is lower than the national average. IMD Quintile 1 shows that weekly gross pay is £21 lower than the national average. The median quintile is even more significant, showing a £48 difference compared nationally. Quintile 5 shows an £88 difference.

The unemployment rate in East Suffolk is currently 3.7%. In 2020/21, 251 (4%) of 16–18-year-olds in East Suffolk were not in employment, education or training.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, unemployment - and in line with this Universal Credit (UC) claimant numbers - have increased. In-work poverty had already increased prior to the inception of the pandemic, however, since the start of the pandemic those claiming UC that are in employment have increased by over 100%.

14.5% of adults are in receipt of Universal Credit in East Suffolk, compared to the Suffolk average of 13.5%. Lowestoft has the highest rates of claimants at 24.6%.

Health:

Whilst the overall life expectancy figures for East Suffolk are comparable with the Suffolk and England averages, the overall figures mask areas of significant concern. For example, life expectancy in Harbour & Normanston Ward, Lowestoft, is almost 5% and 3% respectively below the national average at 75.1 for males and 80.5 for females. There is a gap of 10 / 10.4 years between a ward in Lowestoft and the Melton Ward south of the district for male and female life expectancy.

The prevalence of dementia is higher than the national average among patients at 12 of 25 GP surgeries in East Suffolk (11 similar and 2 lower). Prevalence of depression is also higher than the national average among 8 of 25 GP surgeries in East Suffolk (9 similar, 8 lower).

26.5% of primary school children are overweight or obese in East Suffolk, against the Suffolk average of 27.5%.

Transport Connectivity

Travel across the District is challenging. Transport links are dominated by the A12 which forms a 40 mile north-south connective “spine”, though journeys by car can be slow (often taking 80 minutes) and local rail services can be even slower (with trips from Felixstowe to Lowestoft taking over two hours).

High Street / Town Centre:

Smaller towns within East Suffolk are facing post pandemic revival challenges combined with lower profile and lower footfall than more well-known market / coastal towns. Following a recent survey of town centre users across East Suffolk's principle 12 towns (November 2021 to February 2022), 42% of those surveyed said they visited their town less frequently since the Covid-19 pandemic began and 53% of visitors to town centres visited for less than an hour in duration. In contrast, for many of the smaller market towns, including: Halesworth, Beccles, Bungay, Leiston, Wickham Market and Southwold, the percentage of town centre users that visited for less than hour was higher than the East Suffolk average e.g. Southwold at 72%.

Town centres are struggling, with the retail sector under pressure following the Covid-19 pandemic, exacerbating existing issues. This has been evidence through the recent town survey's completed in East Suffolk, which demonstrated a 39% decrease in those using our town centres for regular shopping trips compared to pre-pandemic. In addition to this, when asked how their business performance was in 2021 as a whole, 37% said their performance over 2021 was a little (18%) or a lot worse (19%) than in 2019. However, when consumers were asked what the key improvement would be to encourage town centre uses, improved variety of shops and more culture and events were in the top opinions. In addition to this, the average visiting party size in East Suffolk town centres was 1.93 people who spent an average of £26.64 per visit in 2021/22 according to the East Suffolk town centre user survey. National research done by the High Street Task Force shows that spend has recovered to 60-70% of pre-COVID levels in 2021 meaning that there is there possible improvement to be had in increasing our average spend across the district (source link). The East Suffolk Retail and Town Centre Survey 2021 reported that there was a total of 257 vacant retail premises across East Suffolk. Lowestoft reported a significant number of vacant properties, with 118 (14%) vacant. The next highest towns were Bungay (25), Woodbridge (18), Beccles (17) and Felixstowe (17). This is coupled with a degradation of buildings, in particular shopfronts and public realm which require repair and restoration.

East Suffolk has a prevalence of second homeowners, particular in towns such as Southwold, negatively impacting upon the sustainability of town centres. East Suffolk has more than 4,000 second homes (Office of National Statistics, n.d.), which is around 3.5% of total households, contributing to a rise in holiday lettings through agencies such as Airbnb (Source: East Suffolk Visitor Economy Strategy 2022). This impacts upon footfall, and ultimately the economic performance of some town centres, particularly within the out of season months. In 2019, 60% of all properties in Southwold were second homes meaning that local footfall in out of holiday season months see a dramatic decrease.

There is an over reliance on the retail sector and a need for diversification within town centres. Surveys conducted by Destination Research UK over the winter of 2021/22 found that 45% of all town centre businesses across the principal 12 towns were classified ‘retail other’ (e.g. clothing store and not including grocery stores). Visitors surveyed during East Suffolk Town Celebrations events in 2021 / 2022, when asked whether the festival-style events would encourage them to visit towns they wouldn't normally visit,

87% agreed; and 80% said that regular monthly events/markets would encourage them to visit the towns more often in the future.

Visitor Economy / Cultural & Heritage Sector:

There is a lack of support grants for culture, heritage and tourism related organisations located within East Suffolk, alongside lower levels of cultural activity and participation. This can be demonstrated by the fact East Suffolk is not a priority place for Arts Council funding (Levelling Up for Culture Places) and nor for National Lottery Funding meaning that local cultural development is lacking significant funding. However, local areas close to our district such as Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk are priority place for Arts Council funding creating local disadvantages across county borders.

East Suffolk suffers from a lack of brand identity, which hinders its wider appeal to visitors from outside of the locality. Visit East of England Destination Marketing Organisation (VEE DMO) have also recognised that there is work to be done to improve the areas identity and has recently developed a brief to enhance the branding of VEE. The branding brief will:

- To continue to develop East Suffolk's visitor offer through enhancing and promoting the unique coastal and marketing towns the district has to offer.
- To build on East Suffolk's community agenda around reduce social isolation by reconnecting people to the heart of their community.

East Suffolk is facing decreased engagement from volunteers in local cultural activities and events and a lack of leadership around cultural development across East Suffolk which combined with the cost-of-living crisis puts cultural activity at risk. The gross disposable income per head in 2019, New Anglia

average: £21,211.81, compared of East of England average of £24,138.58 (Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy). Resulting in communities having less disposable income to spend on leisure and cultural activities leading to social inequalities. In addition to this, only 16% of town centre users surveyed by Destination Research UK is main purpose for visiting was for a 'leisure day out'.

Socio economic imbalances between the north and south of the district means that there is lower spend available for cultural and creative opportunities. Lowestoft community partnership area has the highest percentage of adults in receipt of universal credit (23.8%) in the whole of East Suffolk, compared to 10.7% in Felixstowe.

Pride in Place:

Variable levels of aspiration and pride – in self and in local places. In terms of pride of place, during the East Suffolk town centre surveys completed in 2022, town centre users were asked to 'sum up' their town in one-word. There was a mixture of positive and negative words used as cross the board, with the most common words including:

Sad, Dead, Friendly, Pleasant, Adequate, Average, Boring, Poor, Tired and Outdated.

In addition to this, the previous Waveney area is the 7th worst local authority in England for social mobility.

Access to Services:

Patchy access to, and provision of, services across the area. Rural areas disadvantaged because of (understandable) grouping of services in larger areas such as Lowestoft. Smaller communities don't have the resources, venues or capacity, particularly after Covid-19. Research published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2010 found that rural households had to spend up to 20% more to achieve the same living standards as urban households, with the largest portion of this additional expense (60-100%) required for additional transport costs. For rural households on low income and 'just about managing', the additional costs associated with overcoming poor access to services and opportunities can quickly become unmanageable. This is relevant to East Suffolk due to the prevalence of market and rural towns and villages throughout the district.

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

The following local opportunities have been identified under the Communities and Place Investment Priority:

Visitor Economy:

East Suffolk towns offer a range of unique experiences for visitors with several of our towns being key visitor destinations. East Suffolk has a relatively strong visitor economy, which was worth an estimated £671m to the local economy in 2019, supporting an estimated 11,000 FTE jobs, and accounting for 15% of employment in the district. A variety of distinctive towns and villages offering a rich variety of experiences.

East Suffolk is defined by its rurality, with distinctive towns and villages, and it has an outstanding natural environment alongside linked to walking and cycling and that would appeal to outdoor enthusiasts and engage new audiences. Beauty spots such as the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Carlton Marshes, Sutton Hoo, the Southern Gateway to The Broads National Park, Rendlesham Forest, and Dunwich Heath and Beach offer authentic, uplifting experiences for visitors.

The East Suffolk visitor economy is still heavily seasonal, and there are opportunities to develop a year-round visitor offer

Opportunity to build on the growth of the staycation and provide an experience-based visitor economy. Visit Britain segments domestic visitors into 5 distinct types: aspirational family fun, free and easy mini-breakers, country loving traditionalists, fuss-free value seekers and fun in the sun. Specific data is limited but anecdotal evidence suggests that East Suffolk is particularly attractive to country loving traditionalists and fun in the sun enthusiasts. These 2 segments represent 50% of all tourists in the UK.

Culture & Heritage:

The strength of the wider cultural offer including events such as the Latitude Festival, the Suffolk Show, Fist Light Festival and the Aldeburgh Music Festival at Snape, has established East Suffolk as a destination for cultural events, with capacity to further develop and grow.

East Suffolk's has a strong built heritage offer, with places such as Framlingham Castle, Sutton Hoo, and Landguard Fort. East Suffolk has more than 20 museums, 4 castles, more than 200 churches and assets such as Snape Maltings are indicative of a place steeped in historical significance and interest.

Volunteering:

Opportunities to build upon the volunteering legacy established through Covid-19, providing volunteers with meaningful opportunities to volunteer.

Town Centres / High Streets:

Each of East Suffolk's town centres is different, not least in terms of their particular shopping character, tourism offer and relationships with nearby places. This reflects links and relationships between shopping destinations offering choice and differentiation for shoppers' requirements, mobility and lifestyles.

To expand the geography, learning and work of the two Heritage Action Zones in Lowestoft, with a focus on bringing vacant and neglected buildings back into use

To further enhance opportunities around the East Suffolk Digital Towns Programme, using public Wi-Fi and Geo-sense technology data to monitor footfall and consumer habits, digitally upskilling businesses

To celebrate the high proportion of independent family run businesses in East Suffolk, with 88.9% of businesses in East Suffolk classed as a micro enterprise

To take learning and build upon a place-based approach to economic and community development / regeneration, covering Lowestoft, Leiston, Bungay, Halesworth and Saxmundham.

To continue to build and enhance positive relationships with Town and Parish Council's in East Suffolk, to allow for collaborate working, with local areas taking increased ownership of interventions

Regeneration programmes are having an impact on communities and places e.g. Lowestoft, Leiston and Felixstowe.

It is important that there is a variety of shops and a wide range of services in the towns in order for to remain competitive and continue to attract customers. Sustaining a balance between the different aspects of retail and services ensures that the local population and visitors can spend time and money there, keeping the generated wealth within the local economy. Importantly, it provides local employment and helps to retain local spend rather than lose it to nearby towns.

Markets, like events, can be a major motivating factor for people to come to a town centre. The presence of a regular (albeit temporary) traditional market can add diversity to the retail offer of a town centre and can act as a catalyst for other more specialist markets to come to the area, including farmers' markets, artisan markets, continental markets, Christmas markets and night markets. All this can contribute to the area's diversity of offer, satisfy a wider range of needs and attract local residents as well as visitors from a growing catchment area.

Community:

Strong sense of pride in some communities, with further opportunities to develop place ambassadors.

Community Intervention Team in place working to support the most vulnerable in our communities – providing a bridge into services.

Emerging work around cost of living – with a programme developed with input from key stakeholders

Community Partnership Board and eight Community Partnerships providing place based leadership across the District

Significant investment in enabling our communities through the Community Partnerships and our Councillor Enabling Communities Budgets

Close working relationships with voluntary organisations and community groups as evidenced by the Covid-19 response

Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority ?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

Local businesses in East Suffolk face a number of key challenges, including:

Local Businesses / Entrepreneurs:

Availability of suitably qualified / experienced staff to fill posts associated with high street businesses. 16.7% of jobs in East Suffolk are within retail and wholesale (Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy evidence report, 2022). Anecdotal evidence provided to the East Suffolk Economic Development Team is that there is a continuing struggle for high street businesses to fill vacancies, particularly within the market and coastal towns where public transport links are poorer.

Increases in running costs is a significant issue for local businesses. 8.9% of Suffolk businesses do not survive the first year (Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy), which is further threatened by the cost-of-living crisis including rising energy costs and rent's, particularly for town centre premises.

Wage levels are low, particularly in the north of the district, with more jobs than the national average in lower paying industries. In the former Waveney area, the average weekly earnings according to Nomis is £499 compared to East Suffolk's average of £550.

Lack of skilled workforce in East Suffolk to support businesses. Only 39.4% of the working age population have a NVQ level 4+ qualification compared to the UK average of 43%. Qualifications in STEM subjects is 5% below the England average.

Businesses in East Suffolk face significant climate and environmental challenges, alongside rising energy costs, with the challenge to move to a Net Zero operating basis. Encouraging businesses to make investments during a cost-of-living crisis could potentially prove challenging if cash-flow is adversely impacted.

Lack of innovation support for businesses in non-digital / tech sectors to help them diversify their business and build resilience. Under 40% of Suffolk's businesses are classified as 'innovation active' by a survey conducted by BEIS in 2021 (SODA Understanding Inequalities in Suffolk May 2022). Businesses in East Suffolk are less likely to apply for Innovate UK funding than businesses elsewhere, with the district securing less funding.

Engagement in Research and Development is likely to be impacted during the cost-of-living crisis, resulting in limited investment from businesses.

A lack of suitable / available business premises for small and medium sized businesses, with insufficient existing provision of appropriate space for small businesses, limited move on space, with developers reluctant to build speculatively.

Only 45.9% of SME businesses in Suffolk survive for 5-years, which presented problems for East Suffolk's economy which is largely made of micro and small businesses. 8.9% of businesses in Suffolk do not survive the first year (New Anglia, Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy).

Key employers, such as the local ports and the tourism industry, face labour shortages and find it difficult to recruit the necessary numbers of appropriately skilled local people. This includes the export industry. According to the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy evidence base, 10% of health and social care service businesses had 1 or more skills shortage vacancies in 2019. With 7% of business services and 6% of hotels and restaurants.

Apprenticeships in East Suffolk fell from 430 in 2016 to 299 in 2018. With 29% of all apprenticeships across New Anglia in health, public services and care. In addition to this, job numbers in Suffolk have increased from 191,000 in 2011 to 226,000 in 2021 (increasing at a slightly faster rate than the England average), with employment remaining above national average over the same time (SODA Understanding Inequalities in Suffolk 2022).

Gross disposable income average per head in 2019 in New Anglia: £21,211.81. Compared of East of England average of £24,138.58. According to the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy 2022.

Education and skills training is not closely aligned to the needs of local businesses, resulting in local people not having the required skills to compete for higher value jobs.

Town Centres / High Streets:

Smaller market towns within East Suffolk are facing post pandemic revival challenges combined with lower profile and lower footfall than more well-known market / coastal towns. Following a recent survey of town centre users across East Suffolk's principle 12 towns (November 2021 to February 2022), 42% of those surveyed said they visited their town less frequently since the Covid-19 pandemic began and 53% of visitors to town centres visited for less than an hour in duration. In contrast, many of the smaller market towns, including: Halesworth, Beccles, Bungay, Leiston, Wickham Market and Southwold the percentage of town centre users that visited for less than hour was higher than the East Suffolk average. Including Wickham Market and Southwold at 72%. The average visiting party in East Suffolk town centres consisted of 1.93 people and spent an average of £26.64 per visit in 2021/22 according to the East Suffolk town centre user survey. National research done by the High Street Task Force shows that spend has recovered to 60-70% of pre-COVID levels in 2021 meaning that there is there possible improvement to be had in increasing our average spend across the district (source link). The East Suffolk Retail and Town Centre Survey 2021 reported that there was a total of 257 vacant retail premises across East Suffolk. Lowestoft reported a significant number of vacant properties, with 118 vacant. The next highest towns were Bungay (25), Woodbridge (18), Beccles (17) and Felixstowe (17).

Major Infrastructure:

Whilst the Sizewell C development offers significant opportunities, there will be associated challenges, in particular for the visitor economy. Research undertaken by The Suffolk Coast DMO in conjunction with Suffolk Coast AONB Partnership and a separate survey carried out for DMO, capture the concerns of visitor economy businesses, particularly those operating within a 10-mile radius of the planned construction site.

Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

There are a number of opportunities within East Suffolk under the supporting local business theme, including:

Local Business / Entrepreneurs:

East Suffolk's economy is dominated by micro and small enterprises, and with the right support, SME's could significantly boost economic growth. There are just over 9,500 businesses located within East Suffolk, of which, 88.9% are classed as either micro or small businesses. In addition, there is a high prevalence of self-employment, particularly in the south of the district. This presents opportunities to support and encourage entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, providing the conditions to enable more businesses to establish and grow.

Micro and small enterprises can take many forms, some represented by self-employed individuals, often home-based, and often with restricted ability to grow. Some of these businesses have limited growth potential, whilst others have significant potential, particularly those linked to major knowledge-based assets such as Innovation Martlesham. Many of these businesses face similar challenges and barriers to entry / growth, with opportunities to provide targeted support to tackle knowledge / skills, finding suitable business premises, cashflow / access to finance, and access to a skilled workforce.

Alongside micro and small businesses, East Suffolk has a small, established base of businesses, often family owned, which have grown to at least medium size and act as pillars for local communities, providing local jobs, supporting local supply chains and representing opportunities for sustainable growth. There are opportunities to support these businesses to continue to invest and grow within East Suffolk, working closely with them to better understand their needs and the barriers to growth.

Within East Suffolk there is approximately 25 businesses with more than 250 employees, with a further 120 businesses with between 100 – 249 employees.

Agile business support remains important, but there is a need to ensure it is focused and targeted. The pandemic has shown that all businesses should have access to business support, with more in-depth support available for high growth potential businesses, businesses transitioning to net zero and those investing in innovation.

Encouraging the formation of small businesses and an environment in which they can survive, and growth is a key ambition within the East Suffolk Economic Strategy 2022 – 2027.

Working with partners, work will focus on opportunities including:

Working with the established New Anglia Growth Hub, alongside other established business support providers to ensure it provides high-quality, coordinated support solutions for local businesses, with access to finance (grants), 1-many support on a range of topics, signposting to wider local and national business support interventions

Supporting people to turn ideas into viable business opportunities, by building upon existing business start-up support with access to training, skills and grant funding opportunities

Encouraging provision of space for small businesses across East Suffolk, including incubators and innovation centres as well as more informal space to enable growth

Enabling town centres and high streets to be small business friendly, recognising that high streets need post-Covid19 revitalisation, with opportunities to provide space for businesses, repurposing empty / vacant units

Supporting businesses to address climate / environmental challenges, moving towards net zero status

Creating deeper links with local businesses via an effective key account management programme (CRM) to improve relationship management

Increase businesses awareness and participation with business support

Encourage, influence and facilitate engagement with apprenticeship (and other) programmes

Better understand business infrastructure needs and other priorities, to enable better infrastructure planning and prioritisation

Increase collaboration between innovation hubs and clusters, bringing them together to support businesses to increase productivity through innovation, adoption of digital technologies and strengthen management capacity / capability

Supporting supply chain and procurement development

Focus on the opportunities and potential that exist in East Suffolk's seven key sectors: Agriculture, Food and Drink / Clean Energy / IT, Tech and Digital Creative / Manufacturing and Engineering / Marine and Maritime / Ports and Logistics / Visitor Economy and Cultural

Town Centres / High Streets:

East Suffolk has a diverse mixture of town centres, from larger coastal towns to market towns. There are increasing opportunities to reimagine and diversify the use of town centres and high street, with opportunities around the usage of vacant buildings and public space.

Further develop and deliver the successful East Suffolk Town Centre Revitalisation Programme, building upon pilot projects such as community events and markets to support local businesses. The East Suffolk Town Centre Revitalisation programme was developed following the research carried out by People and Places Partnership, a nationally recognised consultancy firm who have produced guidance for the LGA on how to revitalise town centres using a strategic and evidence-based approach. The research led to the East Suffolk Towns Initiative (ESTI) programme was the culmination of a large-scale town centre revitalisation research project undertaken in 2019 by People and Places Ltd to help understand the issues being faced by East Suffolk's town centres. The project sought to identify strategic priorities and initiatives for the towns and create town centre action plans through which projects could be developed and delivered with the support of both ESC grant aid and officer input.

The original aim of the ESTI programme was set within the context of town centres suffering from a decline due to the increase in out-of-town shopping and online shopping. However, during the rollout of ESTI in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic began exacerbated the existing issues significantly. Combined now with a cost-of-living crisis, the impacts have, and continue to, fundamentally change the reasons why and how people visit and use town centres.

Phase 1 of ESTI provided towns with a grant pot to develop projects linked to the initial 2019 survey work but due to the pandemic, the focus of many projects was centred around galvanising the business community and the themes of place and destination featured throughout. The projects were linked to how could the towns improve their place marketing, destination promotional activity and small-scale improvements to town centre streetscape. This was particularly prominent through 2020/2021 when the rise in staycations meant the towns were seeing a marked increase in visitors, some of whom were in the area for the first time and exploring perhaps the lesser-known locations.

Encouraging and supporting the East Suffolk Digital Towns Initiative to support locally led approaches to social and economic well-being and growth. The programme has included the roll out of free-to-use public Wi-Fi in 11 key market towns along with the installation of geo-sense footfall sensors. The associated data dashboard will help better identify the needs of our town centres and assess the impact of interventions.

Inward Investment:

East Suffolk has a diverse economy, with a number of internationally significant established and emerging assets which are global magnets and centres of excellence, presenting supply chain, sector development, employment and inward investment opportunities. These assets include:

Port of Felixstowe (largest container port in the UK)

Port of Lowestoft (centre for offshore clean energy, project Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility)

Sizewell Nuclear Power Plants (emerging investment into Sizewell C)

Adastral Park and Innovation Martlesham

Freeport East Zone

Lowestoft Gull Wing (third river crossing) and Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Programme (flood defence work)

CEFAS (Defra's Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science in Lowestoft)

Sizewell C represents a significant opportunity, which can be leveraged to encourage businesses involved in its supply chain to establish local bases, whilst also presenting opportunities for local businesses to enter the supply chain. Freeport East can also look to be a significant driver of inward investment activity over the next 5 years. Project LEEF in Lowestoft provides significant opportunities to support the offshore clean energy industry and the development of the East Anglia Offshore Wind (EAOW) array is a major opportunity and when completed, it will be the largest wind farm in the world; Lowestoft is a major hub in relation to it.

Working with partners, work will focus on opportunities including:

Promoting the strengths of the district to stimulate investment, providing a key focus on East Suffolk's key sectors and places

Ensure that businesses locating within East Suffolk are provided access to appropriate support and networks

Visitor Economy and Cultural Sector:

The visitor economy and closely related cultural sector together account for a significant part of the local economy. Whilst these sectors face challenges, the vibrancy of these sectors is what makes East Suffolk a special place to live and work in the area.

East Suffolk has a strong events programme, which has national pull, including the Latitude Festival, the Suffolk Show, First Light Festival and the Aldeburgh Music Festival at Snape. The district also has a strong built heritage including such as Framlingham Castle, Sutton Hoo, and Landguard Fort. East Suffolk has more than 20 museums, 4 castles, more than 200 churches and assets which are significant assets to the visitor economy.

Working with partners, work will focus on opportunities including:

Promotion of local food and drink, harnessing local brands such as Adnams to nurture local supply chains

Working with partners, particularly the Suffolk Coast Destination Management Organisation to define a "year-round offer

Capitalise on the regeneration opportunities and initiatives currently taking place in Lowestoft (Town's Fund) and Felixstowe

Building upon the strengths of the market towns, to define a visitor economy "offer"

Continued investment in key tourist assets, for example, recent investment into both Lowestoft and Felixstowe seafronts

Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

There are a number of ESF funded projects which have resourced interventions with a focus on improving skills and employment levels in Suffolk. Funding allocations are significantly smaller than equivalent sums leveraged through the European Structural Funds. This presents a clear challenge for Suffolk and East Suffolk, limiting the potential to develop new activity to respond as skills and employment related issues arise (with cost of living and inflation the labour market conditions remain subject to change) and to continue delivery of activity that is fulfilling a clear need and has proven to be impactful. With funding for 'People and Skills' not coming online fully until 2024/25, there is likely to be a hiatus in support – such as 'work and health' programme and 'Work Well Suffolk'.

There are also several VCSE organisations such as Lapwing and Community Action Suffolk currently delivering on 'People and Skills' objectives who are currently in receipt of ESIF funding.

East Suffolk faces a number of challenges around people and skills:

Economically Inactive:

3.7% of the working age population is classed as unemployed and the JSA claimant count in March 2022 was 41.9% in East Suffolk which is below the national average at 60.2%. In addition to this, 3,600 of working people are affected by employment deprivation (9.8%) and a further 15,900 people are affected by income deprivation (11.4%) in East Suffolk (East Suffolk Strategic Plan).

Leiston has seen the largest increase in Universal Credit claims since March 2020 compared to any other East Suffolk town – representing a 105.9% increase. This is followed by Woodbridge at 98.8%, Felixstowe at 92.1%, Beccles at 67.8% and Lowestoft at 36.7% (State of the Group report by Department for Work and Pensions, May 2022).

East Anglia has 25,204 people, aged 16-24 years receiving Universal Credit, with 7,660 of these searching for work. This is compared to 120,663 25-49-year-olds across East Anglia that are receiving Universal Credit, with the largest majority of 35,751 in work. There are a further 39,382 over 50's receiving Universal Credit with the largest group of 13,860 with no work requirements (including those in full time education, caring responsibilities, over state pension age, have a child under 1 and those with no prospect for work).

The parliamentary constituency of Waveney, within East Suffolk, is classified by the DWP as a youth unemployment hotspot within the North and East Midlands area, with a claimant count of 540 of those aged 18-24 in April 2022. For over 50's neither Waveney or Suffolk Coastal are not classed as unemployment hotspots, however, both Waveney and Suffolk Coastal are classed as unemployment hotspots for those aged 18-50, with a total of 2,725 in Waveney (April 2022, 6.4% increase on April 2021) and a further 1,275 in Suffolk Coastal (April 2022, 31.4% increase on April 2021), which make up the East Suffolk parliamentary constituencies.

52.6% of all Employment Support Allowance claimants in the North and East Midlands are due to Mental and Behavioural disorders (DWP North and East Midlands State of the Group Report).

Skill Levels:

Skills levels are generally below required levels, particularly in the north of the district. Lowestoft has recorded the highest rates of 16-64s claiming Universal Credit whilst in employment since Covid-19 began (Suffolk Office of Data Analytics). Furthermore, according to the social mobility index, Waveney is ranked as the 7th worst area in England for social mobility.

Data from 2021 shows that over 5% of East Suffolk's population had no qualifications. The qualification levels in East Suffolk in 2021 are as follows: Qualification level obtained for 2021 East Suffolk population ages 16-64

NVQ4+: 39.4%

NVQ3+: 55.3%

NVQ2+: 76.4%

NVQ1+: 90.7%

Other: 3.8%

None: 5.5%

(Source: Nomis)

Workforce Skills:

Education and skills programmes are not appropriately aligned with the needs of business and routes to employment. 10% of health and social care service businesses had 1 or more skills shortage vacancies in 2019, alongside 7% of business services and 6% of hotels and restaurants.

Public transport infrastructure that links to educational establishments and local employers.

There is a lack of sector specific training academies within East Suffolk's key sectors – including tourism and logistics.

Limited higher education provision with a lack of locally available graduates required for business needs. 33.4% of students at the University of Suffolk study business and management, followed by a further 32% studying business studies and 11% studying social sciences. This shows that there is an opportunity to increase graduate training in other sectors such as ports and logistics and other key sectors. In addition to this, apprenticeships in East Suffolk fell from 430 in 2016 to 299 in 2018. With 29% of all apprenticeships across New Anglia in health, public services and care.

Under 40% of Suffolk's businesses were classified as 'innovation active' by a survey conducted by BEIS in 2021, highlighting the need to increase business skills support on how to be flexible and innovative. Improving innovation will be a key to long term growth of our district.

Voluntary Skills:

East Suffolk has seen decreased engagement from volunteers in local activities and cultural events following the pandemic. A recent report from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport found the number of hours given by volunteers aged between 25 and 34 fell by as much as 50% as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report also showed a drop in volunteering by those over 65 and an average decrease of 40% in formal volunteering hours.

Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the People and Skills investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

The following opportunities have been identified under people and skills for East Suffolk:

Existing Programmes:

There are a number of existing programmes which are being delivered in Suffolk as there are many common challenges which are most effectively and efficiently addressed through a coordinated county-wide approach that can be built upon and tailored for East Suffolk against identified place-based needs. This will help ensure that when it comes to support such as employment support or helping businesses upskill, that availability of support won't be adversely affected and helping funding go as far as possible.

Existing funded activity has been analysed and split across four key priority areas. These areas can help the translation from ESF (and other funding) to SPF and other funding across the next three years. The key areas for skills are:

Participation and Youth Employment:

Taking Suffolk County Council's and other partners work with those aged between 16 and 25 and looking at what will be lost from ESF projects and where impacts could be mitigated from Y1& 2 and support new projects in Y3. Project continuation funding in Y1 & 2 FOR Projects such as YES (Youth Employment Service, Aspire, and 'Minding the Gap (Lapwing) are critical in providing targeted NEET prevention and youth employment provision for those furthest from the labour market.

Long Term Unemployed:

Primarily looking at adding value, enhancing the scale and intensity to the projects including 'Work Well Suffolk' to supported through Multiply Y1 & Y2. Also, opportunity to develop Y3 projects to focus on adult re-engagement, social prescribing and linking into national programmes to provide a consistent and coordinated approach for Suffolk.

Apprenticeship Support:

Three key strands, building on opportunities for all ages through apprenticeship training to help enter or progress within the workforce. Support for employers, in particular non-levy paying and micro and small employers to help them benefit from apprenticeships as a route to recruitment and building a skilled, loyal workforce. Support for apprenticeship levy payers to utilise their levy and if applicable transfer it for use by our local smaller businesses.

Progression into and within the Workforce:

Building on existing work to create programmes focusing on Skills Deals, and training funds to encourage employers to co-finance training for employees bring individual and business benefits.

Other programmes include 'Routes to Work and Skills to Connect', which is currently being run by East Coast College. In addition to this, there are opportunities to build upon the recently launched 'Supply Chain Skills Development Fund', which is supporting local businesses upskill their workforce to allow them to participate in supply chain opportunities.

Support to local businesses to help them upskill employees is being provided across East Suffolk through various partners. This includes the East Suffolk Digital Springboard programme which is a fully formed programme for digital support and upskilling to independent businesses.

Other opportunities include:

Supporting access to education and skills development opportunities that enable local people to access employment and create jobs. Over the next 5 years, East Suffolk has a once in a generation opportunity to create prosperity if/as key initiatives such as Freeport East, Project LEEF/Offshore Clean Energy, Towns Fund developments in Lowestoft and Sizewell C projects progress. It is imperative that these opportunities are harnessed to ensure local people and communities' benefit.

Build upon relationships between academics / educators and businesses to help them communicate with businesses and ensure they can be communicated to local people. Opportunities to develop relationships with specialists at Higher Education providers to support business relevant engagement

According to the New Anglia Skills report, released in March 2021, Norfolk and Suffolk has a comparatively older population base compared to the national average. Internal migration data for the UK reveals the region is a particularly popular destination for those aged 45-65. This presents both challenges and opportunities. This age group bring comparably higher earnings and savings, and hold higher levels of attainment and experience, but over time will place increasing demand on the area's health and social care infrastructure. The demand for those qualified in health and social care or medical-related subjects will have to steadily increase to best support the ageing population.

Further within the New Anglia Skills report, the analysis in both our sector skills plans and more recently in our Local Industrial Strategy has indicated an expected increase in jobs in scientific, engineering and technical disciplines (including ICT digital), especially in relation to the golden thread in the area's LIS, in terms of Norfolk and Suffolk becoming a leading location for clean growth.

University of Suffolk (UoS) was originally established as University Campus Suffolk in 2007 and went on to be awarded university status in 2016, making it one of the newest universities in the UK. It is spread over four campuses with a central hub in Ipswich and further franchised partner campuses located in Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth. Health, care and wellbeing is central to UoS's 10-year strategy, and it is working with a wide range of partners to create the UK's first Integrated Care Academy. It will soon be opening the DigiTech Centre located at Adastral Park, BT's global Research and Development centre in Martlesham, near Ipswich. The centre will provide cutting-edge digital skills for people looking to pursue careers in information and communications technology, as well as exploring innovations and research in digital health and smart living.

Norfolk and Suffolk are also home to five Further Education colleges which are passionate about driving the skills agenda and meeting the needs of our population, society and industries. They play an integral part of creating a skills pipeline to meet the current and future skills needs of industry.

Significant research has been undertaken by Norfolk and Suffolk through the Technical Skills Legacy Report which sets out the skill sets required to meet the high levels of infrastructure development planned to take place over the coming years. The report provides data that demonstrates there will be legacy job roles in: Science, Engineering And Tech Professionals, Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades, Skilled Construction and Building Trades, Process Plant and Machine Operatives, and Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives.

Interventions

Interventions: Communities and Place

Does your investment plan meet the Communities and Place investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: Communities and Place

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Jobs safeguarded, Increased footfall, Increased visitor numbers, Reduced vacancy rates, Greenhouse gas reductions, Improved perceived/experienced accessibility, Improved perception of facilities/amenities, Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support, Improved perception of events

Interventions: Communities and Place

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. You can select as many as you like.

E1: Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets, including better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs., E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities. , E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change.

Interventions: Communities and Place

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

Interventions: Communities and Place

Have you already identified any projects which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: Communities and Place

Describe these projects, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.

Describe these projects, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.:

The following provisional programmes will be made available across all of our principle 12 towns and villages. These are:

Lowestoft

Felixstowe

Beccles

Bungay

Halesworth

Leiston

Saxmundham

Woodbridge

Framlingham

Aldeburgh

Southwold

Wickham Market

East Suffolk High Street Improvement Programme:

Building on East Suffolk Towns Revitalisation Programme Phase-1, East Suffolk Council will internally deliver a three-year programme that will offer grants to improve high streets and town centres across the district. Organisations, will be able to apply for grants within the following provisional thematic areas and ESC will commission certain aspects of delivery within these themes:

Year's 1&2:

Town accessibility for those with disabilities and impairments

Culture, arts and heritage enrichments and activities

Improve the visitor offer in towns

Developing cultural events programme to increase town centre footfall

To create visually stimulating and attractive town centres that capitalise on their individual character and assets to enhance their visitor experience through streetscape and public realm improvements

Enhancing pedestrian movement through wayfinding and signage improvements between key areas of the town resulting in an increased footfall to the benefit of all businesses

Strengthening the towns digital presence and connectivity

Exploring opportunities for event development and sustainability linked to the Towns Celebrations concept

Enhancements to and within town centres as well as options for improved access by foot and bicycle to the town centre and pedestrian 'space' in the centres.

In addition to town organisations, cultural, heritage, art and leisure institutions will also be able to apply for grants.

Year 3:

Grant programme focusing on enhancing shopfronts in town centres and high streets

Grants will be eligible for:

Replacement shop front, windows and doors

Reinstatement of traditionally styled shop fronts, sash windows and doors

Painting of existing shop fronts and upper floors (including render)

Replacement gutter and downpipes

Replacement signage

Internal security grilles

Costs associated with planning permission and building regulations fees

Architects' fees

This programme meets the Communities and Place investment priority by strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.

The investment will look to improve sustainability within town centres by building quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to town centres. The overall programme will aim to reconnect local residents to the hubs of their communities.

The programme will be key in supporting us to diversify our visitor economy offer and sustainable our destination towns and places which are vital to our local economy.

Using place to strengthen our local social fabric to support the cost-of-living crisis:

This programme will consist of two key interventions, delivered within town centres and rural communities. Data shows that East Suffolk has high levels of deprivation and social isolation which leads to social mobility challenges. The cost-of-living crisis will exacerbate this further resulting in vulnerable members of our community not being able to afford the basics such as food and heating. The programme is being match-funded by a wider cost-of-living programme supported by the East Suffolk Community Partnership that will address wider need and connect up supporting services. This intervention will closely align with the high street improvement programme, which will improve the high street experience, and further develop this by reconnecting our hardest to reach communities to their local high streets. The programme has the long term aim of improving social enrichment, access to services and reducing the barriers to services and ultimately reducing social isolation. However, the short-term objective is to combat fuel poverty and address immediate cost-of-living impacts.

The key two projects are:

East Suffolk Community Food Network:

The project will seek to unite communities and food producers and wholesalers, to address the cost-of-living crisis as well as reduce food waste, increase local awareness of shopping and buying local produce and benefits of healthy nutritious meals.

The project will look to achieve the following:

Establish a diverse range of sustainable settings for the local community to access cheap, wholesome food, including Your Local Pantries and Community Fridges/Freezers

Increase the supply of fresh, local (and useful other) produce to Community Pantries and Community Fridges as well as existing Food Banks

Promote the food production sector in East Suffolk and link the sector more closely to sustainable food projects

Deliver food sector-specific skills training to disadvantaged groups

Reduce social isolation and loneliness

Drive increased footfall into town centres

Creating a network of Your Local Pantries and Community Fridges:

The number of community pantries and fridges will be significantly increased to give hard-pressed communities access to discounted, wholesome food. The pantry model is more sustainable than food banks as local residents are members and pay a small weekly fee (usually around £3.50) for a number of food items as well as being able to access other donated food items. The pantries will also host free-to-access internet-enabled tablets to help people access a range of additional beneficial services as part of the wider East Suffolk 'Ease the Squeeze' cost of living programme, including access to skills packages. As the majority of pantries will be located in town centres, this will also increase footfall and reconnect people with town centres for when they are ready to spend.

Creating a network of food producers and retailers who will provide excess stock to Community Pantries/Fridges and Food Banks. This will include supermarkets and large producers but, more importantly, will also incorporate small, independent retailers and producers who can donate unsold food on a daily basis. These smaller retailers and producers will then automatically become part of a local Food Heroes scheme where their involvement in the wider initiative to 'Ease the Squeeze' – as well as their complete food offer – will be promoted to local residents, driving increased awareness and sales and enabling them to achieve their CSR ambitions.

Food to Fork projects:

Providing support to enable the development of a wide range of new/repurposed community allotments, gardens, window boxes and planters, with organic accreditation sought where possible. The food produced will be:

Used by the people who've been supported to grow it to reduce their food costs and boost their health

Provided at little or no cost to Community Pantries, Fridges and Food banks to help address the rising cost of food for communities

Sold in pop up shops in a town centre locations to generate awareness of the project and drive revenue to be reinvested in the project

Sold to local hospitality venues who also become part of the Food Heroes scheme (as above)

Supporting people and communities to grow their own food will also provide them with hands-on, practical skills, and will reduce social isolation and loneliness by bringing people together, often from different generations, to work on shared projects. These initial skills can be built on with pathways into additional courses linked to food production and processing. And, hyper-locally produced food will reduce carbon emissions.

Selling the food produced in pop up shops in town centres will drive increased footfall and play a part in reimagining town centres as community spaces. Business support will also be offered to local producers through our UKSPF business support and skills programmes.

Cooking on a budget (and beyond) classes:

These classes will show people how to cook healthy, balanced nutritious meals on a budget. They will use the fresh produce from community allotments and gardens. They will be run by the voluntary sector but will also include professional chefs as volunteers from local hospitality venues. The hospitality venues involved will also become part of the Food Heroes scheme and will be promoted to local residents.

Learning basic cooking skills creates a pathway into further training and entrepreneurship. Participants can progress through to more advanced catering courses and can access support to create their own local food business. A mentor scheme using volunteers from East Suffolk's numerous successful family food businesses will provide key skills and encourage passion for creating the next generation of local food businesses.

Warm Rooms:

Create a network of warm rooms where people struggling to pay their home energy bills can come to get warm, reduce their home energy spend, connect with others and access a range of additional support and advice services and skills development opportunities that will provide benefit to them for the longer term.

Using existing community spaces and utilising available town centre spaces, a network of heated rooms will be created and run by volunteers in local communities. They will be available to access at no cost to residents and will provide a range of benefits:

Free wifi

Free-to-access internet-enabled tablets which will reduce digital exclusion. Existing digital champions will be available to help people safely enjoy the benefits of the digital world.

Regular visits by a range of providers who will leverage the attention of the attendees to offer and explain courses, services and support that can enhance their lives. This will include:

The East Suffolk Financial Inclusion team, who can offer tailored advice to help people manage their finances more effectively

Skills providers who can design pathways into training, education and employment

Mentors, co-ordinated through a new volunteer programme, who will work one-to-one with attendees to understand their needs and build personalised support programmes specifically designed to help people out of the cost-of-living crisis long term

Information regarding other Ease the Squeeze cost of living support programmes

The chance to connect to other people and reduce social isolation and loneliness

While the need for access to heated spaces is a clear, present need, the Warm Rooms initiative will drive benefits beyond meeting that need. They represent a good opportunity to create enduring relationships with communities, who we can support over time with the range of services described above, which have the potential to improve their lives for the long term.

Equally, locating Warm Rooms primarily in town centres will attract hard to reach communities, members of the community who have never had to ask for support before and volunteers into town centres and play its part in recreating town centres as community hubs, driving longer term engagement and increased spend when people's financial situations improve.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

Yes

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed project constitute a subsidy/State Aid and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.:

The projects detailed above are still being designed and where grants are involved, the project / programme will be considered and assessed to determine whether the project constitutes a subsidy to recipients. If a project is deemed a subsidy, it will be assessed under the Subsidy Control principles for compliance. Work will be supported by East Suffolk Council's Legal Team.

Under the East Suffolk high street improvement programme, there may be some subsidy to local cultural, arts and heritage organisations / businesses and the application process will manage this aspect requiring applicants to confirm grants received within a 3-year period if applicable.

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Does your investment plan meet the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Jobs created, Jobs safeguarded, Number of new businesses created, Increased business sustainability, Increased number of businesses supported, Increased amount of investment, Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity, Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes, Greenhouse gas reductions, Number of businesses with improved productivity, Number of businesses engaged in new markets

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. You can select as many as you like.

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks. , E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth by offering a combination of services including account management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to

workspace. , E29: Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. Taking a whole systems approach to invest in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation across energy, buildings and transport and beyond, in line with our legally binding climate target. Maximising existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity. , E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Have you already identified any projects which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Describe these projects, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.

Describe these projects, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.:

Suffolk wide business support programme:

Suffolk Local Authorities have recognised the benefits and the economies of scale that can be achieved through a collaborative business support programme. The county has significant experience of collaborating and delivering on EU skills and business programmes.

Lead local authorities and key partners have worked up proposals for pooling UKSPF funding in these priority areas, which have been supported in principle by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group (Chief Executives of Suffolk Local Authorities).

At this stage, whilst existing delivery partners for business support and skills initiatives have been consulted over the types of programmes that could be run across the county, in particular, extending / continuing ERDF funded projects, further work is needed to scope out the procurement / commissioning process.

The pooled contributions could be used to deliver the following examples of similar initiatives due to the success of these programmes to date:

Growth Hub with scale-up programme:

A team of business advisors who provide free, fully funded, impartial support and advice for businesses who have been trading for over 12 months.

Targeted support through one-to-one engagement proactively engaging companies who would benefit from support in high level innovation, productivity programmes, supply chain development and scale up –with on-going long-term engagement

Provide one to many support, open to all businesses, through a range of events which provide advice on topics all businesses need e.g. net zero, low level innovation, workforce progression, health and wellbeing.

Signposting to wider local and national business support interventions including financial programmes.

Funding for a 21 month programme starting July 2023 and running to March 2025

Small Grants Scheme:

Grants from £1,000 to £10,000 to support business growth whether it's to investing R&D or innovation projects and projects that deliver carbon reductions resulting in improved productivity.

Consultancy Support:

Running from April 2023 - March 2025, funded support for businesses to access and work with a consultancy and start the process of reducing their carbon footprint and working towards net zero through development of action plans or to receive specialist support to help develop further innovation plans.

Connected Innovation:

Drives collaboration between innovation hubs and clusters, with a focus around cross sector innovation, business support and addressing key agendas such as clean growth across Suffolk and Norfolk leading to new innovative activity.

Supports the formation of joint ventures, with the aim to secure innovation investment which in the past has been low.

It currently brings together 16 Innovation centres from across Norfolk and Suffolk enabling collaboration and knowledge transfer. There is opportunity to grow the network.

Challenge led events will be delivered which bring together business, academia and national agencies e.g. Catapults, to consider a challenge and identify solutions

Start-up Programme:

'How to Start a Business' training packages are designed for both new enterprises and those seeking self-employment across Suffolk.

Delivered via a blend of support including, workshops (delivered virtually via Zoom), 1-2-1 sessions & self-led learning, the training is comprehensive, focused and above all completely free of charge to the business.

Starting a business from scratch or transferring your skills to become self-employed, a freelancer or sole trader.

This programme falls under the Supporting Local Business investment priority by ensuring there is a consistent service of business support for local businesses. The programme will create jobs through investments that build on existing industries and institutions through a well-established business support and grant programme.

East Suffolk Small Business Move to Net Zero Grant Scheme:

During 2021, East Suffolk Council ran a 'Plan for the Future' grant scheme as part of their Covid-19 recovery schemes. One of the noticeable sectors that were successful with grant applications were from the visitor economy and there was a clear drive to make net zero adaptations to their businesses to make them more sustainable and efficient. In addition to this, in the recent New Anglia LEP small business net zero grant programme, which has now closed, the interest from East Suffolk businesses exceeded the grant allocation and this has been further demonstrated through our East Suffolk UKSPF prioritisation survey work.

Further to this, East Suffolk Council has recently completed new Economic Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy which has further highlighted the ambition to transition to a net zero economy. East Suffolk Council also recognises the opportunity to work towards a carbon net zero East Suffolk visitor economy.

East Suffolk Council are aware that there are other business grant schemes that come and go and we want to ensure there is a small business grant scheme that all sectors can access that can help them make net zero adaptations. The programme we are proposing will provide additionality to the Suffolk wide net zero consultancy scheme.

East Suffolk Council will consider at the time who is best to deliver the programme, whether this is by a procured provider or in-house due to previous experience.

The proposed small grant scheme will range between grants of £1,000 - £5,000 with a provisional intervention rate of 20%. The grants will be aimed at small businesses with ambitions to reduce their carbon footprint and increase productivity. The scheme will fund the following interventions (as examples):

Capital investments in small adaptations to businesses

Energy efficiency improvements

Changing to a low carbon heating system

Installation of low and zero carbon generating technologies, such as solar PV, biomass or micro-wind

Building fabric upgrades such as insulation, energy efficient lighting and draught-proofing

Purchase of equipment to allow new operating processes, such as a move to digital services, optimisation of resources or enhanced waste management

LED lighting

Energy efficient plant and machinery

Insulation, replacement windows, doors etc. to improve energy efficiency of buildings

Heating e.g., Biomass, ASHP/WSHP etc. but not fossil fuel alternatives

Electric commercial vehicles

Solar Panels (building regs and planning permission may apply)

Creation or enhancement of decarbonisation plans

Further specialist consultancy

Whilst open to all businesses, specific targeting of businesses associated with the visitor economy, retail and hospitality and other sectors that have been previously exempt from similar grant schemes will be encouraged.

The East Suffolk Council Strategic Plan pledges to become a carbon neutral council by 2030, which means environmental benefit(s) are a key consideration. Within the pledge is an outcome to encourage and invest in renewable energy and supporting businesses to care for the environment. The Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy also acknowledges the urgent need to accelerate the economy's transition meeting global, national and regional climate ambitions in order to drive sustainable change within businesses of all sizes.

This programme will meet the needs of the investment priority by supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. It will also maximise existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity. It will also support the development of a carbon net zero East Suffolk visitor economy.

East Suffolk Capital Business and Workforce Skills Grant Programme:

Provisional programme involving direct delivery / grant programme for communities, education providers and business centres (including those owned by East Suffolk Council) that have training spaces that need to be upgraded in line with local skills needs. In order to identify the local skills needs, consultation and further data analysis will be undertaken during the development of the programme specification by East Suffolk Council.

Grants will be between a minimum of £5,000 up to a maximum of £25,000, with a provisional intervention rate of 20% of the cost of the development. However, civil society groups could apply for an intervention rate of up to 50% if suitable evidence is provided and outputs can be achieved.

It is anticipated that grants will be for items such as:

Digital equipment

Upgrading equipment

Modernising facilities

Sector specific needs and technologies

Improved community training facilities and accessibility

Energy efficiency adaptations

The programme will meet the Supporting Local Business investment priority by providing critical and much needed funding for improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise within East Suffolk. Many local training facilities have lacked investment for many years and are out-dated and require investment to keep up with modern technology and expected requirements of local businesses to attract greater use and become key facilities for our local business community. The programme will also provide vital investment in digital infrastructure for local community facilities and further enhance support for basic digital skills to our local communities and residents.

This capital programme will take place in year-3 only and will link closely with the wider skills programme outlined within the people and skills section.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

Yes

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed project constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.:

Subsidy Control will be a key consideration in the design and management of the projects outlined above. The Suffolk-wide business support programme will retain and build upon the former State Aid principles which have been followed under ERDF but updated to align to Subsidy Control principles.

With grants directly delivered by East Suffolk Council, the programmes will be assessed under the Subsidy Control principles and will be managed through the implemented application process.

This will involve requiring applicants to confirm the number and value of external grants and rate they have been in receipt of over the last 3 years. It is likely that aid will be managed under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance provision.

Interventions: People and Skills

Does your investment plan meet the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: People and Skills

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support, Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support, Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF, Number of people in supported employment, Number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL), Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services, Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support, Number of people engaged in job-searching following support, Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services, Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months, Number of people in education/training, Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision, Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support, Number of economically active individuals engaged in mainstream skills education and training

Interventions: People and Skills

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. Select all that apply.

E33: Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps. This provision can include project promoting the importance of work to help people to live healthier and more independent lives, alongside building future financial resilience and wellbeing. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence). *via Multiply., E34: Courses including basic skills (digital, English, maths (via Multiply) and ESOL), and life skills and career skills** provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support detailed above. Supplemented by financial support for learners to enrol onto courses and complete qualifications. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. **where not being met through Department for Work and Pensions provision., E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that are not being met through other provision.

Interventions: People and Skills

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

Interventions: People and Skills

Have you already identified any projects for 2024-2025 which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: People and Skills

Describe these projects for 2024-25, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.

Describe these projects for 2024-25, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.:

Suffolk wide skills programme:

As with the Suffolk wide business support programme, Suffolk Local Authorities have recognised the benefits and the economies of scale that can be achieved through a collaborative skills programme. The county has significant experience of collaborating and delivering ESF funded skills programmes.

The pooled contributions would be used to deliver activity across four areas of intervention:

Youth Participation / Employment:

The aim of this programme will be to provide a county wide youth participation and employment offer. Suffolk County Council (SCC) and other partners work with those aged between 16 and 25.

Although the ratios of those in employment, education or training appears relatively healthy we are seeing an increase in actual numbers of those young people across Suffolk requiring support to prevent them becoming NEET (Not in employment, education or training) or as a result of becoming NEET. The total cohort size for whom we have a statutory obligation to track destinations, has increased 11% since March 2019 and is now 15,733, we have many more young people who are NEET (23% increase in actual numbers), more young people with complex needs or SEND and many more young people going into employment without training at 16.

Adult unemployment:

The overall aim of this programme is to provide additional support - delivered through the Multiply 'employment support' model – dedicated to specific district and borough priorities e.g. support for a particular demographic to move them closer and into work or focus on progression and retention in a certain sector or business cluster.

Relatively low productivity and wages coupled with an ageing population and a rising demand for related services means there is a real need in Suffolk to support all those who can work to move into employment. The past two years has seen rising rates of working age people with health conditions who are outside the labour market (over 10% increase nationally to 2.2million). Of those who are economically inactive, a higher proportion of those in Suffolk are considered long-term sick (27.5%) than the national average (24.6%).

The future of the Work Well Suffolk service – or plans for a replacement - is of pressing concern due to upcoming end of funding. WWS is funded through the European Social Fund up to December 2022. The project looks to address deep seated barriers to work that result in long-term unemployment by working between and integrating the local health, employment, and skills systems. It directly supports some of our most vulnerable residents including those aged 18+ with mental health and musculoskeletal conditions as well as those with learning disabilities to ensure that individuals can gain timely access to relevant therapeutic services, blending in employability support and advice. It receives referrals from the health service through social prescribing, from ACS and DWP among others and helps participants gain basic skills and competencies, preparing them for a job search and, if possible, into employment or self-employment.

A team of geographically placed Navigators, covering the whole county between them, work with referring agencies such as DWP, Social Prescribing, Suffolk Mind, Leading Lives, ACS, CYP and Learning Disability and Autism providers to enrol participants onto the project for support in employability, further education, and training, gaining basic skills and supporting to get closer to being 'job ready'

To date WWS has supported almost 1750 unemployed or economically inactive participants from across Suffolk, this number includes many over 50's, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and single parents with childcare needs. So far 370 participants have gone into sustainable employment and 37 have gone into self-employment (considering we are dealing with those in the 'high need' these are positive outcomes). The retention rate of participants on the project is high (87%) and feedback from participants, referring organisations and delivery partners indicates that this is a high quality and valued service that supports people as individuals including those with a learning disability or Autism. It has become a key part as to how this cohort of residents in Suffolk are offered support.

The project is currently delivered through a combination of direct Suffolk County Council delivery and delivery through the project partners, Realise Futures, Menta and Steadfast Training.

Apprenticeship Support:

The aim will be to provide an 'Apprenticeships Suffolk' offer that looks to drive up the creation and uptake of apprenticeships in line with a focus on enhancing both social mobility and economic growth.

Apprenticeships can provide a vital contribution to providing the talent needed to take the county forward, giving individuals opportunities to progress and raising levels of social mobility across communities. Unfortunately, the number of apprenticeship starts in Suffolk is recovering at a slower rate than the national average (Suffolk has a decline of -7% when comparing Q2 data to pre-pandemic Q2 2019-20, whilst national starts are exceeding pre-pandemic numbers by 3%). Of particular concern is the level of intermediate starts for those in younger age groups.

Apprenticeships Suffolk is an impartial and completely free service being offered by Suffolk County Council as part of their strategic aim to increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships within the county, thereby supporting business and economic growth.

This core component of the 'Apprenticeships Suffolk' service offers support to employers, providers and potential apprentices throughout the process of creating an apprenticeship, thereby addressing one of the key challenges acknowledged by Government to increasing apprenticeship numbers (complexity of system, causes confusion and demotivates both employers and potential apprentices). To date the service has engaged with 224 employers, creating over 120 additional apprenticeship opportunities, and supporting 115 individuals into alternative education, employment and training since September 2020.

Workforce Development:

The aim of this programme will be to support the development, delivery and uptake of training that will develop talent within the local workforce to address skills gaps, foster growth and innovation where it is needed to meet our strategic ambitions (e.g. Net Zero) and ensure that Suffolk residents and businesses are ready to benefit from growth and development in the area.

Increasing levels of innovation and growth in our economy is dependent on developing competencies and skills within our current workforce as well as those entering work for the first time. The pandemic has also seen a large increase in those on benefits in work in Suffolk (at one point this had risen by over 100%). If we are therefore to support individuals to progress in work to levels at which benefits are no longer needed and upwards into roles that then drive progress towards our strategic ambitions, including net zero then we need to ensure that relevant training is available and accessible and encourage take-up and investment. This will also help us capitalise on key opportunities such as SZC and Freeport East – ensuring that skillsets are in place to help our local SMEs, and by extension, our local residents, to benefit.

Skills Deals the Skills Deal programme was funded by ESFA (underspent AEB) and matched by public sector and private co-investment for employers. This project worked with employer/provider partnerships to support sectoral development and create new and innovative training designed by the partnership to meet the needs of the employer and the wider sector. This project offers flexibility in delivery to tailor for industry/sector and locality and provided benefits to participants and a legacy through new training curriculum and funding facilities and resources. Skills Deals Phase 2 ended 31st

March 2022.

SCSDF was created in response to, and in advance of, the unprecedented levels of investment and development due to take place across the region including more than 11 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), the 'SCSDF' project helps equip local SMEs with the workforce capabilities needed to be part of some of the supply chains of key infrastructure development and inward investment opportunities in Norfolk and Suffolk as well as respond to changing requirements such as climate adaptation and mitigation.

Pathways Training Fund supports SME employers not eligible for SCSDF in 5 key areas of training, other than ESF eligibility PTF offers flexibility to the employer as to what training they wish to purchase and then reimburses up to 75% of the cost.

The Suffolk wide programme of activity falls under the People and Skills investment priority with the overall programme seeking to address several of the interventions under this priority, including supporting economically inactive people through intensive and wrap-around support, increasing basic skills, supporting those in employment and meeting local skills needs. The programme addresses gaps in local skills provision, provides stepping stones to innovation for businesses through workforce upskilling and supports those furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work.

This programme of activity is well established in Suffolk, with proven outputs and outcomes, and without funding from UKSPF there is a risk of losing this valuable Suffolk wide programme due to the loss of EU funding.

East Suffolk Local economy led skills and community skills programme:

During year-2 of UKSPF, East Suffolk Council will carry out a review of the skills needs and requirements to fully determine the programme for year-3, however we envisage the programme will need to address:

Longer term impacts of the pandemic and economic change

Recruitment issues and skills shortages

Net zero and decarbonisation skills

Projects could include within this programme:

Life skills development that are transferable to workforce skills

Mentoring and coaching throughout all phases of pre-work

Preparing for the workplace or pre-apprenticeship skills, e.g. volunteering, enrichment and work placements opportunities

Retraining for net-zero associated skills needs

Training for business on how to grow their own staff and sell their business to improve recruitment

Very localised skills shortages – specific training and / or on-the-job training

These themes above were key issues that came out of the East Suffolk UKSPF prioritisation survey and based on the data that shows skills need and where provision is lacking.

This programme would be all inclusive and would cover all economically active age groups, including young people and those over 50.

Both the local capital skills and business grant programme, within the Supporting Local Business intervention, and the local economy led skills and community skill programme will ensure connectivity with the county wide skills programme and link back wherever possible.

By having flexibility within this programme and refining it as the skills needs in year-3 come more apparent, it will allow East Suffolk Council to be responsive to the need and proactively support local funding gaps in provision and provide innovative and supplementary provision to the existing core skills programme within East Suffolk.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

Yes

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy/State Aid and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted. :

Subsidy Control will be a key consideration in the design and management of the projects outlined above. The Suffolk-wide skills programme will retain and build upon the former State Aid principles which have been followed under ESF but updated to align to Subsidy Control principles.

In grants directly delivered by East Suffolk Council, the programmes will be assessed under the Subsidy Control principles and will be managed through

the implemented application process.

This will involve requiring applicants to confirm the number and value of external grants and rate they have been in receipt of over the last 3 years. It is likely that aid will be managed under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance provision

Interventions: People and Skills

Have you identified a local voluntary and community provision at risk as part of this intervention?

Yes

Interventions: People and Skills

Describe the local voluntary and community provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it.

Describe the local voluntary provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it. :

In order to support youth participation and employment within East Suffolk, Minding the Gap (currently provided by Lapwing – voluntary provision) currently provide ESF funded participation support for those furthest from the labour market.

Minding the Gap provides support to individuals referred in by the Suffolk County Council 'Early Help Coaches' and 'Young Person Workers' and helping our most vulnerable to transition through into education, employment and training. They are being increasingly relied on to play an integral role, with caseloads forecast to increase even further maintaining the supplementary support that projects such as Minding the Gap provide is vital if we are to make support available to those that need it and avoid a significant rise in levels of NEET young people.

As ESF winds down to bridge the gap between statutory provision and added value for young people right up to 25 years old, funding to support Minding the Gap is required. Minding the Gap is delivered in partnership with Lapwing, who have confirmed they are seeking new sources of funding post ESF. The Minding the Gap project closes to new referrals on 30 Sep 2022 and delivery partners will cease working with any remaining active participants by 25th Feb 2023.

Loss of this service will leave a significant gap in targeted NEET prevention and youth employment provision across the county for those furthest from the labour market. While unemployment nationally, including youth unemployment, is not currently viewed as a major issue politically, it is important to note that unemployment among disadvantaged groups (care leavers, ethnic minority groups, those with SEND, young offenders, etc.) remains a significant problem for 16-25 year olds.

Provide the European Social Fund Project Name(s) and Project Reference(s) for this voluntary and community provision at risk

Provide the European Social Fund Project Name(s) and Project Reference(s) for this voluntary and community provision at risk:

ESF Project ID: 10293013 / outline ref is NEAN/2/4

Interventions: People and Skills

When do you intend to fund these projects? Select all that apply.

2022-2023, 2023-2024

Interventions: People and Skills

Describe these projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.

Describe these projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including their proposed locations and how they fall under this investment priority.:

During 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, East Suffolk Council will be pooling funds on a Suffolk wide basis with all other districts and boroughs in Suffolk to continue funding the Minding the Gap service to ensure that participation support for young people furthest from the labour market continues. This is further building on the Suffolk wide skills programme, however all outputs and outcomes from both the Suffolk wide skills programme and the voluntary projects will be proportioned per district according to population size.

Minding the Gap provides support to individuals referred in by the Suffolk County Council 'Early Help Coaches' and 'Young Person Workers' and helping our most vulnerable to transition through into education, employment and training. They are being increasingly relied on to play an integral role, with caseloads forecast to increase even further maintaining the supplementary support that projects such as Minding the Gap provide is vital if we are to make support available to those that need it and avoid a significant rise in levels of NEET young people.

A procurement / commissioning process will be undertaken by East Suffolk Council in partnership with Suffolk local Authorities to find the most suitable voluntary provider to continue this service.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted. :

The service will be procured.

Approach to delivery and governance

Stakeholder engagement and support

Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.

Public sector organisations, Private sector organisations, Civil society organisations

If so, describe how you have engaged with these organisations. Give examples where possible.

If so, describe how you have engaged with these organisations. Give examples where possible. :

East Suffolk Council designed and undertook a stakeholder engagement survey to gain the opinions of key stakeholders on what the key priorities should be in East Suffolk to help shape this UKSPF investment plan. The survey allowed respondents to add any specific projects or initiatives that they would like to see funded. The survey was sent to approximately 100 organisations, which included public sector, private sector and civil society / voluntary groups. The organisations included:

East of England Economic Development Leads Network

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce

3x local MPs

EDF

Hutchinson Ports

ABP

BT

Scottish Power Renewables

East Suffolk Community Partnership Chairs

Lowestoft Place Board members

Department for Work and Pensions

Community Action Suffolk

2x CCG's

Federation of Small Business

MENTA

NWES

Princes Trust

Suffolk New College

East Coast College

The Suffolk Coast DMO

Lowestoft Vision

Felixstowe BID

Access Community Trust

Suffolk Community Foundation

Local Police representative

Larger business associations

Town Councils

Inspire Suffolk

Lowestoft Rising

Orwell Housing

Flagship

Local Cultural Education partnerships

Snape Maltings

Marina Theatre

Asset Management - ESC internal team

First Light Festival

Parking and Infrastructure Team – ESC internal team

Sutton Hoo

Jayne Knight – Suffolk Arts Manager

Suffolk County Council Active Travel Team

Leading Lives

Involve

Volunteering Matters

Leisure Team – ESC internal team

East Suffolk NAAME

Innovation Labs

EEEEGR

Orbis Energy Centre

Headteachers High School group

Adnams PLC

Notcutts

Hoseasons

Herrco Cosmetics Limited

Suffolk County Council

NALEP Growth Hub

Suffolk Growth Partnership

DTI

Steadfast Training

Shaw Trust

Realise Futures

Seetec

Moore Networking

SALC

Suffolk Libraries

M&H Plastics

Micropress

Two Magpies

Birds Eye

Stoke Sauces

Africa Alive

Pleasurewood Hills

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Hotel Folk

We Are Radikil

Lowestoft Cultural Hub network / Leadership network

Local chamber of commerce's

Seagull Theatre

CEFAS

The survey opened on Friday, 10 June 2022 and ran for just over 2-weeks, closing at midnight on Sunday, 26 June 2022.

In total 63 responses were received which have been disseminated to help inform this investment plan. The information received back showed clear alignment to local data and East Suffolk Council's / other local and regional strategic priorities.. Below are high-level results the stakeholder survey.

Communities and Place:

Top priorities from the survey:

Cost-of-living

Town centre and high streets

Community and neighbourhood infrastructure

Supporting Local Business:

Top priorities from the survey:

Town centre and high street improvements

Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy

Business support for social enterprises, communities and business cooperatives

Access to business support at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks

People and Skills:

Top priorities from the survey identified:

Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps.

Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.

Green skills courses targeted around ensuring we have the skilled workforce to achieve the government's net zero and wider environmental ambitions.

In addition to the local survey, a Suffolk wide survey was undertaken by Suffolk County Council to identify county wide priorities for joint programmes under business support and skills. The survey received 14 responses, with the following results:

Communities and Place

Within the Suffolk wide survey, the top priorities were:

Community measures to reduce the cost of living

Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets

Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration.

Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups

Supporting Local Business

Within the Suffolk wide survey, the top priorities were:

Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth by offering a combination of services including account management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to workspace.

Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. Taking a whole systems approach to invest in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation across energy, buildings and transport and beyond, in line with our legally binding climate target. Maximising existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity.

Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks.

Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses.

People and Skills

Within the Suffolk wide survey the top priorities were:

Green skills courses targeted around ensuring we have the skilled workforce to achieve the government's net zero and wider environmental ambitions.

Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps.

Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that cannot be met through mainstream funding.

Stakeholder engagement and support

Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up.

Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up.:

East Suffolk Council will establish a Local Partnership Stakeholder Group that will act as an advisory and sounding group on project development, with a particular focus on year-3 skills programme development as we assess the local economic landscape. This group will build on the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board already in existence and will include representatives from:

East Suffolk Council

Community Action Suffolk

Suffolk Police

Suffolk Greenprint Forum

EDF

Police Crime Commissioner

BT

Suffolk County Council

Suffolk Community Foundation

Britten Pears Arts

Suffolk Association of Local Councils

Health organisations

East Suffolk Community Partnership Chairs x 8

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce

Menta

NWES

East Coast College

JCP/ DWP

Local Enterprise Partnership

Dr Dan Poulter MP

Dr Thérèse Coffey MP

Peter Aldous MP

In addition to this, East Suffolk Council will continue to host priority theme working groups that will develop and manage approved projects. To ensure coordination of these working groups, Nick Khan (East Suffolk Strategic Director) will provide Senior Management Team leadership, Paul Wood (Head of Service for Economic Development and Regeneration) and Nicole Rickard (Head of Service for Communities) through an internal delivery group, Kay Bonning-Schmitt (Economic Development Project Officer) providing the programme management function. The working groups include:

Communities and Place working group:

Marie Webster-Fitch: Economic Development Manager

Kay Bonning-Schmitt: Economic Development Project Officer

Joanne Chapman: Economic Development Place Based Lead

Alex Heys: Communities Manager

Plus, a private and voluntary sector sub-group as and when required

Supporting Local Business working group:

Marie Webster-Fitch: Economic Development Manager

Kay Bonning-Schmitt: Economic Development Project Officer

Morag McInnes: Economic Development Business and Enterprise Lead

Simon Charlesworth: Economic Development Sector Development and Trade Lead

Plus, a private sector sub-group as and when required

People and Skills working group:

Marie Webster-Fitch: Economic Development Manager

Kay Bonning-Schmitt: Economic Development Project Officer

Simon Charlesworth: Economic Development Sector Development and Trade Lead

James Chandler: Economic Development Skills and Inward Investment Lead

Sam Kenward: Communities Officer

Have all the MPs covering your lead authority been invited to join the local partnership group?

Yes

Stakeholder engagement and support

Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?

No

Project selection

Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?

Yes

Project selection

Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way

Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way. :

During year-1 of the UKSPF, 2022 – 2023, under the Communities and Place investment priority the East Suffolk High Street Improvement Programme will be selected predominantly through competition for funding. This is due to grants that will be internally delivered directly to applicants including local business associations, BIDs, town councils, town groups and organisations, community groups and cultural, arts and heritage organisations. This is following learning from the Welcome Back Fund and the East Suffolk Towns Revitalisation Programme Phase-1 which involved the distribution of grants to great success, highlighting the need to continue funding for events, culture, arts and town centre improvements to enhance the visitor experience. In addition to this, the local data collated to develop UKSPF priorities and the data from the East Suffolk UKSPF prioritisation survey identified the need to continue town centre and high street improvements and this was one of the top priorities that came out across from the survey results. Local business associations, BIDs, town councils and town groups and organisations have demonstrated a need for direct funding to continue developing their towns plans and progress individual action plans which were developed through People and Places.

The cost-of-living workstream projects will involve a combination of direct delivery, including procurement for a supplier to deliver the food network programme, grant delivery to community groups for warm rooms. The need for grants for the warm rooms to community groups have been identified through East Suffolk Community Partnership Board in which a full programme to address the cost-of-living crisis in East Suffolk has been developed and shown the need to reach the hardest to reach members of our communities through this programme. The need for grants to community groups for this programme has also been identified as a strong theme in the East Suffolk UKSPF prioritisation survey and further developed up through internal Communities and Place UKSPF Working Group.

Project selection for other programmes within the other themes are yet to be decided.

Working with other places: Communities and Place

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority?

No

Working with other places: Supporting Local Business

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

Yes

Working with other places: Supporting Local Business

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.:

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?:

East Suffolk Council is working with Suffolk County Council, and the other four local Suffolk District and Borough Councils', along with advice from New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. This collaboration will continue across the lifespan of UKSPF and appropriate partnership agreements will be put in place.

Working with other places: People and Skills

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

Working with other places: People and Skills

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

E33: Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps. This provision can include project promoting the importance of work to help people to live healthier and more independent lives, alongside building future financial resilience and wellbeing. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence).*via Multiply., E34: Courses including basic skills (digital, English, maths (via Multiply) and ESOL), and life skills and career skills** provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support detailed above. Supplemented by financial support for learners to enrol onto courses and complete qualifications. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. **where not being met through Department for Work and Pensions provision.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.:

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?:

East Suffolk Council is working with Suffolk County Council, and the other four local Suffolk District and Borough Councils'. This collaboration will continue across the lifespan of UKSPF and appropriate partnership agreements will be put in place.

Public sector equality duty

How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan?

How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan ?:

Throughout the development of this investment plan, East Suffolk Council has ensured that the public sector equality duty is designed in throughout.

The Council ensures throughout all of our work that it adheres to the Equality Act 2010, that legally protects people from discrimination in society and the workplace. It states that public services must give 'due regard' to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination

Advance equality of opportunity

Foster good relations

In relation to nine 'protected characteristics'. These protected characteristics are age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. In addition to this, the Council recognises deprivation and socio-economic disadvantage.

Throughout the investment plan development, due regard has been given to protected characteristics in order to ensure there is fair opportunities for all. For example, this has included:

The high street improvement programme will include grant opportunities to make adjustments to town centres to improve accessibility.

The business support programme and the net zero grant scheme will be accessible for all and will not discriminate against any protected characteristics.

The skills programme, in particular the localised economy led skills and community skills programme, will fund programmes that are inclusive and are not for exclusive age groups.

In addition to this, all procured suppliers will be required to adhere to the Council's Equality Policy in order to be awarded the services agreement.

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects ?:

In order to ensure that our public sector equality duty is adhered to when implemented in our programmes and projects, every programme will complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), to help ensure that policies, strategies, services, projects, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not create barriers to participation, or disadvantage for any groups protected in law (the Equality Act 2010). The EqIA will be used to assess the actual or potential impact actions might have on different groups in the community.

EqIA assessment forms and process will be completed per programme and checked and signed-off by East Suffolk Council's Head of Communities to ensure compliance and that all potential barriers to programme access or use have been removed.

Risks

Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?

Yes

Risks

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them:

East Suffolk Council has undertaken a high-level risk analysis on the identified programme / projects, with the key risks as follows:

Ability to find to skilled resources to deliver the programmes. Local Authority procurement processes will be used to increase competition and to widen the reach with potential suppliers.

Rising costs for capital projects. Projects will need that adequate contingency provision has been factored into any capital investments.

Local businesses and community / education organisations may not be able to match fund projects at current intervention levels. Close monitoring of grant take up and the need to factor in the amendment of grant intervention levels accordingly.

Timeframes for year-1 are incredibly tight. A sufficient internal team resource has been attributed; however, this may be affected by local recruitment challenges or take-up of grant programmes.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership currently delivers the bulk of the local business support programmes, however, the proposed opportunities of devolution in Suffolk have raised uncertainty with the future of the LEP. A competitive procurement process to ensure delivery over a 2-year period will be undertaken.

Local skills providers have all seen a significant reduction in core funding due to the end of ESF, with future sustainability an issue. To mitigate this, through a partnership agreement with Suffolk County Council, a robust tender process will be followed and monitored by East Suffolk Council.

Risks

Have you identified any key fraud risks that could affect UKSPF delivery?

Yes

Risks

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them. :

Fraud risks through the proposed UKSPF are yet to be worked through, however, business grant programmes administered externally on a Suffolk-wide basis through the business support interventions will follow best practise established through the existing mechanisms for current ERDF funded schemes. These existing programmes have controls in place to manage potential fraud and have mechanisms in place through grant agreements to clawback funding if required.

Grant programmes delivered by East Suffolk Council will be assessed for any elements of potential fraud and will be worked up in collaboration with colleagues within East Suffolk Council's Audit and Data Protection Team.

Capacity and capability

Team resource

How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?

How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?:
4.5

Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.

Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.:

Leadership Team – providing strategic direction as required, chairing Local Stakeholder Group and reporting to members (all part-time roles):

Nick Khan (Strategic Director – reporting to Corporate Management Team)

Paul Wood (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration – reporting to members and joint chair of the local stakeholder group)

Nicole Rickard (Head of Communities - reporting to members and joint chair of the local stakeholder group)

Marie Webster-Fitch (Economic Development Manager - UKSPF lead for East Suffolk Council)

Overall programme manager (full-time role):

Kay Bonning-Schmitt (Economic Development Project Officer – overseeing progress, ensuring delivery across all programmes, leading procurement, legal processes and monitoring)

Delivery roles (all part-time roles):

Joanne Chapman (Place Based Programme Lead - UKSPF high street programme lead)

Marie Webster-Fitch (Economic Development Manager – overview of Suffolk wide business support and skills programmes)

Morag McInnes (Business and Enterprise Lead – UKSPF business support localised grant programme joint lead)

Simon Charlesworth (Sector Development and Trade Lead - UKSPF business support localised grant programme joint lead)

James Chandler (Skills and Inward Investment lead – UKSPF Skills programme lead)

Adam George (Economic Development Assistant Officer – grant process assistant)

Sam Kenward (Communities Officer – UKSPF skills programme support)

Alex Heys (Communities Manager – UKSPF cost-of-living lead)

Funding Team (all part-time roles):

Ben Porter (Funding Manager – ensuring compliance with the fund regulations, overseeing grant programmes compliance, and financial reporting)

Melissa Williams (Funding Officer – grant programmes delivery support)

Support services (all part-time roles):

Finance Team (providing financial returns as required during the programme)

Procurement Team (providing commissioning and procurement compliance processes)

Legal Team (developing contracts for suppliers, partnership agreements, grant legal paperwork and providing general legal advice)

Data Protection Team (Data Impact Assessments for contracted services and GDPR advice and guidance)

Fraud Team (regulatory fraud checks for grant programmes and service provision)

Team experience and capability

How would you describe your team's current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?

Some experience

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?

Strong capability

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?

Strong capacity

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?

Some capability

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?

Some capacity

Capacity and capability: Communities and Place

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have selected?

Yes

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The key capability challenges under this theme are the ability to work effectively with all town councils, groups and organisations to ensure quick take-up of the grant programme(s) across the principle 12 towns, whilst working with different stakeholders and using negotiation skills to identify and agree each towns key priorities.

The second key challenge under this intervention will be access to a strong volunteer network across the district to deliver programmes such as the food network and warm rooms projects. This will involve close working with the VCSE sector to identify potential providers to deliver the food network programme and work with the third sector to bring forward enough volunteers to deliver and embed the warm rooms initiative.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Capacity and capability: Communities and Place

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Staff resourcing is a key consideration. At this point in time, the Economic Development Team at East Suffolk Council is currently carrying one vacancy – a Town Development Coordinator – which will be a key role to ensuring that the roll out of the high street improvement programme can progress at the rate required for this programme.

In addition to this, town councils, business groups and associations often struggle with capacity due to people often having multiple commitments and high levels of workloads which can lead to capacity issues within towns to projects.

The number and capacity of volunteers to successfully deliver the food network and warm rooms programmes is a key consideration.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Capacity and capability: Supporting Local Business

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have selected?

Yes

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Learning from recent Covid-19 business grant programmes highlighted the need to ensure adequate resources are in place. This covers grant administration, appraisal (fraud and finance) and monitoring requirements.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Capacity and capability: Supporting Local Business

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Staffing capacity and resources is a key challenge under this theme, particularly with the number of programmes currently being delivered / in development across East Suffolk.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Capacity and capability: People and Skills

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have selected?

Yes

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?

Strong capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Timely procurement of providers to deliver within the UKSPF timeframes is a key challenge. Uncertainty in funding post 2025 is another key issue.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Capacity and capability: People and Skills

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?

Strong capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Support to deliver UKSPF

All lead authorities can use up to 4% of their UKSPF allocation to support the delivery of their chosen interventions, but by exception, lead authorities will be able to use more than 4%. Are you planning on using more than 4%?

No

If so, explain why you wish to use more than 4%.

If so, explain why you wish to use more than 4%.:

Approvals

Do you have approval from your Chief Executive Officer for this investment plan?

Yes

Do you have approval from your Section 151 Officer for this investment plan?

Yes

Do you have approval from the leader of your lead authority for this investment plan?

Yes

If you do not have approval from any of these people, explain why this is

If you do not have approval from any of these people, explain why this is : :

Additional documents

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

Yes

Edit your answers

Next steps

East Suffolk - Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA)

Agenda Item 6

ES/1323

EqIA reference: **EQIA459605152**

Service area/Team conducting EqIA: **Economic Development Economic Development and Regeneration**

Officer conducting the EqIA: **Paul Wood**

Officer email address: **paul.wood@eastsuffolk.gov.uk**

Responsible Cabinet member: **Cllr Rivett**

Title of project/policy/initiative/action relating to this EqIA: **UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds**

Is this a new project, policy, initiative or action that directly impacts people: **Yes**

Date of EqIA: **19/10/2022**

Does the project/policy/initiative/action relating to this EqIA have the potential for positive or negative impact on any of the protected characteristics?

Characteristic - Impact

Age: **Positive**

Reason: **The skills development element of the investment plan has a particular focus on supporting young people and unemployed adults gain the skills they need to be fully engaged in the local labour market.**

Disability: **Positive**

Reason: **The projects delivered through UKSPF investment plan will be designed and delivered in such a way so that people with disabilities will be able to access and fully take part in them.**

Gender reassignment: **No impact**

Reason: **This characteristic group will not be treated any differently to other groups accessing the services funded through the investment plan.**

Marriage and civil partnership: **No impact**

Reason: **The services funded through the investment plan will make no distinction between those who are married or in a civil partnership.**

Pregnancy and maternity: **No impact**

Reason: **The services delivered through the investment plan will strive to ensure that pregnant women and those in the maternity period can easily access them.**

Race: **No impact**

Reason: **The services funded through the investment plan will target those groups who are in most of their support regardless of race.**

Religion or belief: **No impact**

Reason: **The services offered will, where possible, build in flexible delivery to take account of religious beliefs and practices.**

Sex: **No impact**

Reason: **The services offered through the investment plan will be equally accessible to men and women.**

Sexual orientation: **No impact**

Reason: **The services offered through the investment plan will be equally accessible regardless of sexual orientation.**

Deprivation/Socio-economic Disadvantage: **Positive**

Reason: **The services offered through the investment plan particularly target those from deprived backgrounds and not engaged in the labour market.**

What evidence or data has been collated or used to support the completion of this EqlA:
Engagement with other internal teams/ departments, Engagement with or information from statutory partner organisations, Engagement with or information from Voluntary and Community organisations

Details for engagement: **ED and Communities worked collaboratively to develop the investment plan. Views from other teams such as Assets, Planning and Regeneration were canvassed to help shape the final programme.**

As a result of undertaking this EqlA do you need to provide information relating to the policy, project, initiative or action to the public in a different language or form and how do you propose to do this: **If this is deemed necessary at the delivery stage, it will be developed in consultation with delivery partners.**

As a result of completing this EqlA, has the Author, Service team, Project manager made any changes or adjustments to the policy/project/initiative/action: **No**

Is the policy/project/initiative/action subject to equality monitoring: **Yes**

How is the data collected/disseminated and where will it be discussed: **Data will be collected by the delivery partners and reported back to ESC's UKSPF project lead. The Community Partnership Board, who are providing the governance for the UKSPF programme, will receive updates on equality monitoring and discuss measures to alter project delivery-based on this data.**



CABINET

Tuesday, 01 November 2022

Subject	Partnership Scheme in Conservation Area application and match funding
Report by	Councillor Craig Rivett Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development
Supporting Officer	Helen Johnson Culture and Heritage Programme Manager Helen.johnson@eastsuffolk.gov.uk 01502 523398

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	Harbour & Normanston

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone, a five-year fixed term project completes in March 2023 and was a partnership, working with, Historic England, Lowestoft Town Council, Lowestoft Vision and East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust. Since the launch in 2018 the partnership has successfully restored/allocated funding to 16 buildings/units equating to £416,088.50 of public funding and £239,241.55 private match. The partnership worked with stakeholders including Norse and Highways to address local issues, implemented new policies (SPD Design Guide and updated Conservation Area Appraisal) and helped establish the Most Easterly Community Group. It also engaged communities and businesses in arts activities to help drive footfall into the High Street.

This report requests approval to apply for a second Partnership Scheme in Conservation Area (PSiCA) from Historic England to continue to repair and restore buildings in the historic High Street, Lowestoft for another five years.

The £350,000 match funding, funded from capital reserves, will be required from East Suffolk Council, over a five-year period once the project has started (April 2023) and will be split between the five years.

Options:

Option 1 – Do nothing: The progress made with the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone will stall and heritage assets within the boundary would continue to deteriorate. No application will be submitted to Historic England, and no match funding required from East Suffolk Council.

Option 2 – Do not proceed with the PSiCA but consider individual grant options for project inventions. Economies of scale would not be achieved, with interventions happening piecemeal. A partnership approach, with Historic England would not be possible and individual grants would probably only be funded by the Council.

Option 3 – The preferred option would be to apply for PSiCA funding and roll out a grant scheme, which would help continue to improve the North Lowestoft Conservation Area which is on the at-Risk Register and attract between £175,000 and £100,000 of private investment.

Recommendation/s:

That £350,000 of match funding over the period of 2023/24 to 2027/28 be approved and that it be agreed to make an application to Historic England for the same amount under the Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA).

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

East Suffolk Council will be the Accountable Body for the funding and therefore will own and manage the risks associated with the project. A process of Governance has already been established through a Heritage Action Zone Board and a Project Delivery Group.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

Waveney Local Plan

North Lowestoft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide SPD

East Suffolk Economic Strategy

Lowestoft Cultural Strategy 'Celebrating Culture on the Edge'

Lowestoft Town Investment Plan

Town Centre Masterplan

Environmental:

Promoting sustainable re-use of buildings and construction materials and conserving embodied energy. The ratio of carbon emissions from rebuilds compared with refurbishment is 70:1 (Value Added PRT)

Equalities and Diversity:

Access to the grant funding will be based on priority buildings and those buildings most in need for repair and reinstatement of original features. The grant scheme will be open to all property owners if their building qualifies for grant intervention. There will be engagement with property owners and assistance to support them in accessing the funding, including support completing the application form, this could include larger print, non-English format and form filling.

Financial:

In 2018 East Suffolk Council agreed to part fund the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone with £583,000 investment attracting an additional £506,198 from Historic England. In 2020, East Suffolk Council agreed to part fund the London Road, Lowestoft, High Street Heritage Action Zone with £337,251 investment (excluding the Post Office) attracting an additional £430,811 from Historic England and a further £90,000 from Historic England Cultural Programme. The new match-funding request of the Council for the next five years is £350,000.

Human Resources:

A 0.5 FTE Project Officer will oversee the scheme and will require Human Resource support.

ICT:

No impact.

Legal:

A legal agreement setting out roles and responsibilities between grant funder (Historic England) and grant recipient (ESC) and grant agreements between ESC as Accountable Body and individual property owners.

Risk:

The grant agreements with the individual property owners will mitigate against liabilities raised against the Council, as the property owners will have overall accountability and responsibility for managing the works to their buildings.

External Consultees:

The Heritage Action Zone Board have been updated on project sustainability and the option to apply for a second PSiCA scheme in the historic High Street. Members include Historic England, Lowestoft Vision, Lowestoft Town Council and East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust.

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How does this proposal support the priorities selected?

P01 Build the right environment for East Suffolk:

The High Street sits within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area which is a Conservation Area 'at risk' and the Towns Fund Historic Quarter. Residential property prices in this location are lower than national averages and the lowest in East Suffolk, with the average house price of £149,485. There is currently no demand for luxury accommodation in the High Street and generally, private developers are only considering one bed flat conversions, seeing this as the only commercially viable option.

Heritage assets and density are important 'pull' factors influencing business location decisions. By enhancing the character and distinctiveness of the High Street through restoration and improvement of heritage assets, the place will become more inviting and helps attract and retain businesses, customers and clients to the area and attract further investment.

Bringing heritage buildings back into use has the potential to create new businesses and homes therefore increasing income through business rates, and council tax to help make the council more self-sufficient. Improvements to the attractiveness and diversity of the High Street will help drive footfall increasing income through car parking revenue.

P02 Attract and stimulate inward investment:

Investing in heritage assets can help support wider regeneration and economic growth by attracting new businesses into the area. Lowestoft's historic High Street is made up of mostly independent shops and had shown great resilience and adaptability during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 12 new businesses opening between March 2020 - November 2021.

P09 Community Pride:

In 2020, an estimated 16,374 people were residing in the Harbour & Normanston Ward, making it the most densely populated ward in Lowestoft. In 2019, the High Street, located in Waveney 007A (Lower-Super Output Area) was identified as the 64th most deprived neighbourhood in England, out of 32,844 LSOA's, where 1 is the most deprived. Waveney 007A LSOA falls within the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

Investing in our built heritage helps enable communities to feel included and proud of where they live. Currently the Conservation Area is 'at risk' and there are a significant number of designated and non-designated heritage assets sitting vacant and at risk of deterioration that are having a detrimental impact on the local streetscape.

P13 Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities:

Investment into a second PSiCA scheme will unlock £350,000 from Historic England and investment from the private sector.

At 65%, eligible repair, private match would be: £175,000

At 80%, eligible reinstatement, private match would be: £100,000

For every £1 of public sector expenditure on grant invention in the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone was matched by £0.57 by private sector investment.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts

- 1.1 North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) was formed in 2018, part funded by Historic England and East Suffolk Council and was designed to support the historic High Street, Scores and Whapload Road using heritage assets to help stimulate economic growth and regeneration in the area.
- The five-year programme was overseen by a partnership board including Historic England, East Suffolk Council, Lowestoft Town Council, Lowestoft Vision and East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust.
- The HAZ encouraged sympathetic and sustainable improvements to the built environment, using architectural evidence and historic records to repair, restore and reinstate original details to improve the character and appearance of the area. The partnership worked with communities to have pride in place and be actively engaged in the area's protection and regeneration. A varied cultural programme of events, activities and exhibitions were also provided across the HAZ, providing more reasons to visit and share the history and culture of the town with the local community, as well as tourists.
- A key element of the HAZ Partnership was the delivery of a grant scheme for the repair and reinstatement of original details in the High Street. The Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) was delivered over four years and successful restored and allocated funding to 14 building/units equating to £292,196.52 of public investment and a further £178,725.57 of private sector investment.
- One of the first grants awarded was repairs to the former Chemist Shop, 59/59a High Street, formally a vacant shop, now being used as a General Store.



Works have nearly completed on 136 and 137 High Street, where modern shopfronts have been removed and replaced with timber frame ones to bring the building in line with the style of adjoining 138 High Street.



As part of the HAZ, the Council has adopted a new SPD, an updated Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and a Masterplan for Scores and Triangle Market.

Through the HAZ Partnership Lowestoft Town Council, supported by ESC secured development funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Architectural Heritage Fund for the Town Hall and £2million from the Towns Fund allocation.

The HAZ Partnership also repaired the collapsed Crown Score Wall enabling open access for the first time since 2015.

1.2 The area sits within Harbour Ward, one of the most deprived in Lowestoft and the country. The area suffers from numerous social problems including anti-social behaviour, shorter life expectancy and low levels of employment and education.

The High Street is largely dominated by independent and specialist retailers, including hair salons, restaurants and cafes, takeaways, second-hand goods stores

	<p>and a bicycle shop. The HAZ area shop vacancy rate is currently 19%, which is higher than the national average (15.6%) but lower than London Road North at 21%.</p> <p>The Conservation Area affords planning protection through an article 4 Direction, yet despite this, the area has suffered from a definable negative change and was placed on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register in 2017.</p> <p>The High Street sits in one of the key character areas defined within the 'Lowestoft Town Centre Masterplan 2020' Historic Quarter and was ringfenced funding through the £24.9million Towns Deal to part-fund the restoration of the Town Hall and public realm improvements to the medieval Scores.</p>
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2 Current position	
2.1	<p>Funding is available from Historic England under their Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) to fund repairs and the reinstatement of original features to buildings. The funding will also fund an Officer to manage the scheme.</p> <p>A funding application can be submitted to Historic England for total project costs but must be matched funded by the applicant by 50%. Historic England have indicated to the Council to apply for a grant in the region of £350,000.</p> <p>£350,000 of match funding will be required from East Suffolk Council, funded from the capital reserves, over a five-year period once the project has started (April 2023). The report requests that this match funding is approved and to submit an application.</p>
2.2	<p>The application will include the costs for a 0.5FTE Project Officer to oversee the delivery of the scheme, however, Council resource will be required for overall management of the project, financial, legal, planning and conservation, communications, and human resource support. The Funding Team within Economic Development & Regeneration will provide administration of the scheme.</p>
2.3	<p>The PSiCA funding is a two-stage application process through Historic England, with the first stage an application form, and the second stage a detailed delivery plan. The application will need to be submitted by 15 November 2022 to be considered at the grants panel in mid-December 2022. Subject to approval, a detailed delivery plan will be prepared over the next few months and if agreed the PSiCA scheme will commence from April 2023.</p>
2.4	<p>The PSiCA is not a Heritage Action Zone scheme and the HAZ in North Lowestoft which was a fixed term five-year project completes in March 2023. Work packages will continue to be delivered by the Council and partners. The Town Hall, as a part of the Towns Fund package of funded projects will continue to progress through a Project Board led by LTC with ESC representation. Solutions to assets on the HAZ Buildings at Risk Register will continue to be explored between Regeneration and Planning Teams. The Scores restoration will be managed by the Regeneration Team and will be funded by the Business Rates and Towns Fund. The Most</p>

	Easterly Community Group are independently constituted community group and will continue to deliver activity.
2.5	Learning taken from the first PSiCA scheme delivered through the HAZ is that engagement with property owners should start as early as possible, as it can take many months to reach application stage. There should be a long list of potential building schemes as not all will come forward to application stage. Property owners often need more support and guidance to bring forward a successful scheme.
2.6	The key objectives of the PSiCA are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boosts the social and economic resurgence of England's urban and rural communities and helps to create safe and sustainable communities. • repairs and brings back into use historic buildings. • is completed to an appropriate standard and that subsequent regular maintenance is carried out. • is sustained by the local authority's policies and actions for the area.
2.7	To qualify for Historic England funding, we must be able to show that our scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is within a conservation area. • can attract partnership funding from the authority and possibly other funding partners. • meets one of Historic England's priorities for our region • will involve a range of work to a number of buildings, structures or spaces within a defined area. • will focus on building repairs. • will require property owners to contribute financially towards grant-funded works to their property.
2.8	Under a PSiCA scheme property owners can apply for 65% of the project costs for repair and 80% of the project costs for reinstatement of original features up to the value of £50,000 per unit/building.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	While the Conservation Area is still 'at risk' and there remains vacant buildings and significant challenges that need addressing, Historic England are positive about the wider regeneration in the town and the role of the HAZ and the Conservation Area is considered to be improving rather than deteriorating. The PSiCA will be a scheme that builds on the momentum of the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone and work undertaken to date in the area.
3.2	Advice received from Historic England is that Lowestoft meets the criteria as North Lowestoft Conservation Area is 'at risk' and that there is significant deprivation in the Harbour Ward/Lowestoft which supports their objectives. Currently Lowestoft is a place of interest for Historic England and a focus for their strategic grant funding. The funding will also provide HAZ sustainability, an approach supported by the HAZ Project Board.

3.3	<p>Purcell Architects Ltd were appointed in September 2022 to undertake a feasibility study on a number of buildings to record condition, identifying repairs, a set of architectural proposals and a summary of the overall costs and proposed next steps. The proposals and conclusions drawn are a starting point for discussion between East Suffolk Council, Historic England, and the property owners and tenants.</p> <p>The cost of repair, reinstatement of original features, fees at 12% and VAT total £2,491,894.</p>
3.4	<p>Not all the buildings can be supported through the funding as the budget available is lower than the total project costs. We have been given a steer from Historic England to apply for grant in the region of £350,000. We do not expect all property owners to come forward and participate in the grant scheme.</p> <p>The total budget is £700,000 over five years, with £350,000 funded by the Council and £350,000 matched by Historic England. Less resource costs there will be £561,100 allocated for works with 12% spent on architectural services.</p>
3.5	<p>Letters have been sent to property owners to make them aware of the condition survey process and to gauge their interest in the grant funding. Property owners will continue to be engaged with the recommendations of the feasibility study for their individual property to help kick start further dialogue. If there is a low uptake in the grant programme from the priority properties, the grant programme will be opened up to all property owners in the High Street if they can demonstrate suitable need.</p>
3.6	<p>Funding can also be spent on Council owned assets, including 87 High Street, for the repairs and reinstatement of original features. Grant approval will be made by Historic England for any assets owned by the Council.</p>

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	That Cabinet approves £350,000 of match funding over the period of 2023/24 to 2027/28 and agrees to make an application to Historic England for the same amount under the Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSiCA).
4.2	That the Councils revenue and capital budgets are updated to reflect the allocation of grant funding and ESC match funding of £350k funded from capital reserves. The supplementary estimate will establish a revenue budget of £200k and a capital budget of £500k over the period of 2023/24 to 2027/28

Appendices

Appendices:

None.

Background reference papers:

None.



CABINET

Tuesday, 01 November 2022

Subject	Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document
Report of	Councillor David Ritchie Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management
Supporting Officer	Ben Wright Planner (Policy and Delivery) ben.wright@eastsoffolk.gov.uk 01502 523082

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD supports the implementation of policies relating to small scale residential development in the countryside in the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan. The policies are:

SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan)

WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan)

The SPD provides guidance including how to identify areas that could be considered as ‘Clusters’/‘Settlements in the Countryside’, the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development, the landscape and characters considerations of such development, the expectations of public engagement on proposals and how SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 relate to other policies in the Local Plans. The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD is appended at Appendix A of this report.

Options:

Adopt the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD. This will mean the Council has an SPD in place to guide the implementation of the affordable housing planning policies.

An alternative option would be to not adopt the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD and continue to implement the planning policies without the additional guidance. However, this would be a missed opportunity to provide further clarification on the requirements of the policies and to ultimately support effective implementation of the relevant Local Plan policies.

Recommendation/s:

1. That the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.
2. That the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning and Coastal Management, be authorised to make any presentational or typographical amendments to the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document prior to it being published.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

No impacts.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD primarily supports the implementation of policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside in the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside in the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (2019).

Environmental:

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD supports the implementation of planning policies relating to small scale residential development in the countryside. The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD contains guidance on consideration of landscape impacts of small scale developments in the countryside. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion (Appendix C) was undertaken and concluded that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be necessary. A Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement (Appendix D) was also undertaken and concluded that the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will not lead to likely significant effects on protected Habitat sites.

Equalities and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion was produced in June 2022 to accompany consultation on the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD (Appendix E). The SPD has also been subject to separate Equality Impact Analysis as part of the production of this report (ref: EQIA448757577) in September 2022. Both assessments concluded no differential negative impacts on those with protected characteristics.

Financial:

The production and adoption of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD is covered by the existing budget of the Planning Policy and Delivery Team.

Human Resources:

No Impacts.

ICT:

No Impacts.

Legal:

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD has been produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations

2004 (Appendix C). It has also been subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Statement, in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Appendix D). An Equality Impact Assessment Screening opinion was produced to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Appendix E).

Risk:

There are no risks envisaged in relation to the implementation of the recommendations.

External Consultees:

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD has been subject to consultation during its preparation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (April 2021). The list of consultees, respondents, summaries of their comments and how these have been responded to can be found in the Consultation Statement which is appended to this report (Appendix B).

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</p> <p>The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD supports the delivery of Strategic Plan priority P01 by providing guidance to support the implementation of policies contained in the Local Plans which support limited, small scale development in the countryside, which will in turn help to address housing needs.</p>			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	The Council has two adopted Local Plans: the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (March 2019) and the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020). These Local Plans both contain policies that support limited development in the countryside, namely SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside in the Waveney Local Plan.
1.2	Planned housing growth in the Local Plans is focused largely upon the urban areas and defined larger settlements and villages. However, as part of those strategies both Local Plans also provide opportunities for some limited housing to come forward in the countryside. The 'countryside' in the context of planning is anywhere, except site allocations, within East Suffolk that is outside of the Settlement Boundaries as defined by SCLP3.3 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and WLP1.2 of the Waveney Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan.
1.3	The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD (Appendix A) provides guidance on a range of topics including how to identify areas that could be considered as 'Clusters'/'Settlements in the Countryside', the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development, the landscape and characters considerations of such development, the expectations of public engagement on proposals and how SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 relate to other policies in the Local Plans.
1.4	The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD does not create new policies but rather seeks to provide guidance that will help with the implementation of relevant policies in the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans. Since the adoption of the Local Plans, a relatively large number of applications have come forward related to these policies, some of which have resulted in appeals. Some communities have also raised concerns about what these policies could mean to their areas.

1.5	The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
1.6	The preparation of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD has involved officers from the Council's Planning Policy and Delivery, Development Management, and Design and Conservation teams. The preparation of the document has been overseen by the Local Plan Working Group.
1.7	The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) require the Council to undertake consultation to inform the production of the SPD and, as a minimum, require that the draft document is published for four weeks and that during that time it is available on the Council's website and that physical copies are available for inspection in the Council offices. The Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (April 2021) also sets out further measures and actions that the Council will undertake when consulting on a draft SPD including publicising via social media sites and making copies of documents available in libraries.
1.8	The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD was subject to two rounds of consultation during its preparation, the details of which are contained in the Consultation Statement (Appendix B). The first was an initial consultation to inform the scope and content of the SPD. The initial consultation was carried out between March and May 2022. This initial consultation took the form of targeted workshops which involved an interactive session, using examples of possible locations where the policy may apply, in which questions, issues and suggestions for the SPD could be raised (see Consultation Statement in Appendix B). A workshop for Agents and Developers was held on the 28 th March (9 attendees), and a workshop for Town and Parish Councillors was held on the 31 st March (22 attendees). A Councillor workshop was also held on the 9 th May (16 attendees). Summaries of the consultation responses, and how they were addressed in drafting the SPD, are contained in the Consultation Statement (Appendix B).
1.9	Consultation on the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD ran for seven weeks from 17 th June until 5 th August 2022. The consultation was advertised on the Council's website, as well as on social media. 4,231 emails and 441 letters were sent out at the start of the consultation to the consultees on the planning policy mailing list which includes town and parish councils, individuals and organisations, including those who were previously contacted or responded to the informal stage of the consultation. In total 55 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation. Between them they made 106 comments.
1.10	The main themes of the comments received are summarised below; however, some of the comments covered very specific matters and it is not possible to summarise all of them here in a succinct manner. The full consultation responses have been published on the Council's consultation website (see - https://eastsuffolk.inconsult.uk/Draft_Housing_Clusters_SPD/listResponses) and are all summarised in the Consultation Statement (Appendix B).
1.11	The main issues raised through the consultation on the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall support from some respondents;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliments on the use of illustrations to explain concepts and considerations; • Some objections to the principle of the policies; • Requests for further references to Neighbourhood Plans and documents from other authorities where relevant; • Suggestions that we should advise applicants to consult with the planning service, including specialist services, when developing proposals; • Respondents asked for clarity as to how existing non-residential uses will be considered as part of a 'Cluster'; • Respondents asked for clarity as to when a permitted dwelling would be considered as part of a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'; • Requests for measurements to be provided that would determine what could be considered a 'clearly identifiable gap'; • Concerns raised over the potential cumulative impacts of proposals and how this will be considered
1.12	<p>Changes have been made to address many of the comments received, where appropriate, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further references to Neighbourhood Plans have been made in the document; • An additional paragraph has been added to the Introduction highlighting the importance of pre-application advice from the Council; • Paragraph 2.6 has been expanded to state that non-residential uses can exist within a 'Cluster' but the main consideration will be the close grouping of existing dwellings. This has also been clarified on Illustration 1; • Paragraphs 2.9 and 3.8 have been amended to state that a permitted dwelling must be under construction to be considered as part of a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'. • Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 have been expanded to provide clearer guidance on how 'Gaps' will be considered and how they relate to the character of the area in which they exist; • Paragraphs 4.7 and 4.12 have been expanded to provide an explanation as to how non-residential uses surrounding potential sites will be considered; • Paragraph 4.12 and 5.9 have been expanded to highlight the importance of considering cumulative impacts; • Illustration 5 has been amended to provide a clearer explanation that it has been developed to show how proposals for more than 1 dwelling would be considered; • Illustration 10 has been created to provide further context and explanation to the considerations of non-residential uses and cumulative impacts.; • Paragraphs 6.1 and 6.5 has been amended to highlight that the consideration of 'Gaps' is covered in chapters 4 and 5; • Paragraph 6.17 has been added to the document reference heritage assets and relevant Local Plan policies; • Paragraphs 6.20 and 6.21 (were 6.18 and 6.19) have been amended to include reference to the Broads Authority and their Dark Skies. References to this have also been added to paragraph 5.8; • Paragraph 6.24 (was 6.22) has been amended to clarify that cumulative impacts will be considered in all cases in the former Suffolk Coastal area under policy SCLP5.4;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 have been added to Chapter 8 about Biodiversity and Landscape policies in the Local Plans; Paragraphs 8.8 and 8.9 (were 8.6 and 8.7) have been amended to specifically highlight the unique character of Newbourne. <p>In addition, further changes have been made to address typographical and grammatical errors and to provide clarity on certain elements of guidance.</p>
1.13	Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 screening was carried out on the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD to determine whether a full Strategic Environmental Assessment would be required. The screening concluded that this was not required. The final Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion is appended to this report (Appendix C).
1.14	Habitat Regulations Assessment screening was also undertaken which concluded that implementation of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD would not lead to likely significant effects on protected Habitat Sites and that it is therefore not considered necessary to undertake an Appropriate Assessment. The final Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement is appended to this report (Appendix D).

2 Current position

2.1	Adopted planning policy on small scale residential development in the countryside is set out in the Council's two Local Plans. The two adopted local plans are the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020) and the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (March 2019). The specific policies in the Local plans are SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside in the Waveney Local Plan.
2.2	There is currently no other guidance to directly support decision making on these specific policies. There are clear benefits in providing additional guidance in terms of providing clarity and, ultimately, achieving appropriate development.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD (Appendix A) provides planning guidance on policies SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside and WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside. It has been prepared to support the implementation of policies contained in the adopted Local Plans.
3.2	On adoption the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	Adoption of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will provide guidance to assist with the implementation of the
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	Council's Local Plan policies SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside and WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside.
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Appendices

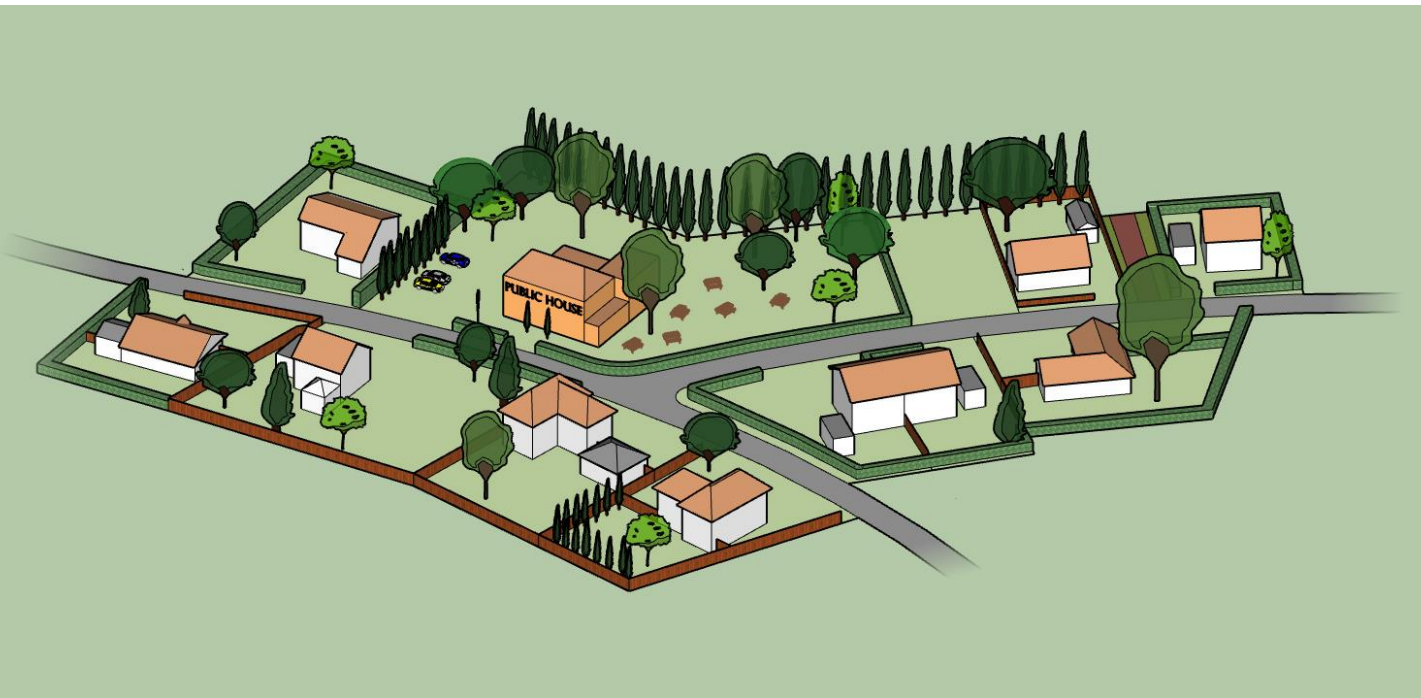
Appendices:	
Appendix A	Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document
Appendix B	Consultation Statement (October 2022)
Appendix C	Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion (June 2022) (produced to accompany consultation on draft SPD)
Appendix D	Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement (June 2022) (produced to accompany consultation on draft SPD)
Appendix E	Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion (June 2022) (produced to accompany consultation on draft SPD)

Background reference papers:		
Date	Type	Available From
March 2019	East Suffolk Council-Waveney Local Plan	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/
September 2020	East Suffolk Council-Suffolk Coastal Local Plan	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/
September 2022	Equality Impact Analysis (EQIA448757577)	Available on request

HOUSING IN CLUSTERS AND SMALL SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

November 2022



Guidance on implementing Local Plan policies

SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside
WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

How to use this document

The document comprises 8 chapters each covering a different topic. The best way to navigate through the document is by using the interactive contents. By clicking on a specific chapter in the contents, it will automatically take you to that part of the document. If you want to go to a different chapter, the easiest way is to click the home symbol in the top right corner of the page which will return you to the contents. There is also a guide on the right-hand side of each page, this will show you which chapter of the document you are currently in and where that sits within the rest of the document. Throughout the document there are hyperlinks in the text that provide links to further information.

What is a Supplementary Planning Document?

Supplementary Planning Documents expand upon policy and provide further detail to support the implementation of policies in Local Plans. Whilst not a part of the development plan, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Local Plan policies, which this SPD provides guidance on, can be viewed on the Council's website: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplan



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1 Introduction

1.1 East Suffolk Council has two adopted Local Plans – the [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan](#)¹ (September 2020) and the [Waveney Local Plan](#)² (March 2019). The Local Plans set out strategies and policies for growth, including housing. Planned housing growth is focused largely upon the urban areas and defined larger settlements and villages. However as part of those strategies both Local Plans also provide opportunities for some limited housing to come forward in the countryside. This includes the opportunities provided by the policies that are the subject of this Supplementary Planning Document:

- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside
- Waveney Local Plan – Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

1.2 Whilst the two policies have similarities, they have differing backgrounds and differences in certain parts of the detailed criteria. The policies are explained below.

SCLP5.4 – Housing in Clusters in the Countryside

1.3 The strategy of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan seeks to focus housing growth towards the Major Centres, Towns, Large Villages and Small Villages (as identified under Policy SCLP3.2 Settlement Hierarchy). This includes applying Settlement Boundaries to those defined settlements and allocating

sites for development in a number of locations. New development within Settlement Boundaries will be acceptable in principle, as per Policy SCLP3.3 Settlement Boundaries.

1.4 Policy SCLP5.3 Housing in the Countryside sets out the limited circumstances where housing would be acceptable outside of Settlement Boundaries and allocated sites, including housing development in ‘Clusters’ in the Countryside. The geography of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area is such that there are many small, dispersed communities and clusters of housing outside of the defined settlements. Such communities do not have the level of services and facilities to support larger scale new housing development (and hence do not have Settlement Boundaries) but a small amount of development may help to meet local housing needs, enable people to stay within rural communities and help to sustain these rural communities and any services and facilities that exist within them. Policy SCLP5.4 therefore provides for a limited amount of housing development to come forward in these locations – referred to as ‘clusters’.

1.5 Other policies in the Local Plan also provide for other circumstances under which housing could come forward in the countryside, such as affordable housing, conversions or rural workers dwellings, however the guidance in this SPD is focused on Policy SCLP5.4.

1.6 The full text of SCLP5.4 is shown below. This should be read alongside the supporting text contained in paragraphs 5.21 – 5.28 of the Local Plan.

¹ [East-Suffolk-Council-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan.pdf \(eastsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Adopted-Waveney-Local-Plan-including-Erratum.pdf \(eastsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#)



Policy SCLP5.4: Housing in Clusters in the Countryside

Proposals for new dwellings within 'clusters' in the countryside will be supported where:

- a. The proposal is for up to three dwellings within a cluster of five or more dwellings;

Or

The proposal is for up to five dwellings within a cluster of at least ten existing dwellings which is well related to a Major Centre, Town, Large Village or Small Village;

And

- b. The development consists of infilling within a continuous built up frontage, is in a clearly identifiable gap within an existing cluster, or is otherwise located adjacent to existing development on two sides;
- c. The development does not represent an extension of the built up area into the surrounding countryside beyond the existing extent of the built up area surrounding, or adjacent to, the site; and
- d. It would not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or, result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape.

Where more than three dwellings are proposed under criterion b) above, applicants must be able to demonstrate that meaningful and

effective community engagement has taken place in the development of the scheme and that the mix of dwellings proposed would meet locally identified needs.

Particular care will be exercised in sensitive locations such as within or in the setting of Conservation Areas and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Consideration will also need to be given to the features of Landscape Character Areas in accordance with Policy SCLP10.4.

The cumulative impact of proposals will be a consideration in relation to the criteria above.

A 'cluster' in the context of this policy:

- Consists of a continuous line of existing dwellings or a close group of existing dwellings adjacent to an existing highway; and
- Contains 5 or more dwellings.



Policy WLP8.7 – Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

- 1.7 The strategy of the Waveney Local Plan largely focuses housing growth towards the larger settlements, including Lowestoft, the Market Towns and the Larger Villages and Smaller Villages, through allocating sites for development in a number of locations and by applying Settlement Boundaries to those locations (see Local Plan Policy WLP1.1, Table 2 and Policy WLP7.1). New development within Settlement Boundaries will be acceptable in principle, as per Policy WLP1.2 Settlement Boundaries. ‘Other rural settlements’ are not defined and do not have Settlement Boundaries.
- 1.8 The strategy of the Local Plan expects that 10% of the plan area’s housing growth will take place in the rural areas and that, in turn, 10% of the housing to be delivered in the rural areas is to be located in settlements within the Countryside (Policy WLP7.1). The Local Plan recognises that small scale developments can support communities by delivering housing types and sizes that are needed locally and provide opportunities for members of the existing community to live nearby and retain their social connections. The Local Plan also recognises that small scale developments can also provide social and economic benefits to the countryside. Policy WLP8.7 is therefore intended to provide for a limited amount of housing in the countryside as part of this strategy.
- 1.9 Other policies in the Local Plan also provide for other circumstances under which housing could come forward in the countryside, such as affordable housing, conversions or rural workers dwellings, however the guidance in this SPD is focused on Policy WLP8.7.
- 1.10 The full text of WLP8.7 is shown below. This should be read alongside the supporting text contained in paragraphs 8.37 – 8.42 of the Local Plan.

Policy WLP8.7 – Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

Small scale residential development in the Countryside of up to three dwellings will be permitted where:

- The site constitutes a clearly identifiable gap within a built up area of a settlement within the Countryside;
- There are existing residential properties on two sides of the site; and
- The development does not extend further into the undeveloped Countryside than the existing extent of the built up area surrounding the site.

Small scale residential development in the Countryside of up to and including five dwellings will also be permitted where:

- There is clear and demonstrable local support;
- The scheme demonstrates meaningful and robust consultation with the Parish Council, local community and other stakeholders;
- Following consultation, it can be demonstrated that any planning impacts identified by the local community have been fully addressed and therefore the scheme is supported by the community;



- The site is adjacent or within the built up area of the settlement within the Countryside; and
- The scheme when considered cumulatively with other developments in the Countryside would not result in a level of development which would be contrary to the strategy outlined in Policies WLP1.1 and WLP7.1.

For all small scale development in the Countryside the design of the scheme will need to respect and reflect the character of the settlement and existing built up frontage including:

- Housing density is reflective of the density in the village and surrounding built up area; and
- The ratio of the building footprint to the plot area is consistent with existing properties nearby which characterise the village.

- 1.11 Both Policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 include a number of criteria. These criteria define in principle locations where development would be appropriate, including appropriate sites, as well as other requirements to ensure new development coming forward under these policies is appropriate to the local area.

Purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document

- 1.12 The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Document is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. This includes

further guidance on how the individual criteria of each policy will be applied and how each of the relevant criteria are to be met for development to be considered acceptable. Guidance is also provided on how policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 relate to other policies in the Local Plans.

- 1.13 The SPD covers the whole of the administrative area of East Suffolk except that part of the former Waveney district lying within the Broads for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority. The guidance relating to SCLP5.4 only will only apply in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area and the guidance applying to WLP8.7 will only apply in the Waveney Local Plan area. The list below outlines which policies the chapters apply to:

- Chapter 2 – SCLP5.4 (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area only)
- Chapter 3 – WLP8.7 (Waveney Local Plan area only)
- Chapter 4 – SCLP5.4 (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area only)
- Chapter 5 – WLP8.7 (Waveney Local Plan area only)
- Chapter 6 – SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7
- Chapter 7 – SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7
- Chapter 8 – SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7

- 1.14 Other policies within the Local Plans cover other various scenarios when development within the Countryside may be appropriate. These policies cover development such as affordable housing in the Countryside, rural workers dwellings, replacement dwellings, residential annexes and conversions. This SPD only relates to policies SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in



the Countryside and WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside.

- 1.15 Proposals submitted relating to SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will also need to meet the requirements of any other relevant policies in the Local Plans. Neighbourhood Plans, where they have been 'made', may also contain policies that proposals will also need to meet. These policies could cover elements such as impacts on landscape, biodiversity and design requirements.
- 1.16 As a Supplementary Planning Document, this document is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

Planning Applications and Pre-application Advice

- 1.17 The Council offers a pre-application advice service for applicants to receive feedback on their proposals prior to submitting a planning application. The Council strongly encourages applicants to seek pre-application advice to ensure the process is as efficient as possible.

Information about the pre-application advice service, including charges, is available on the Council's website at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/pre-application-advice-service/.

Information on submitting a planning application is available at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications-and-enforcement/how-to-submit-a-planning-application/.



2 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policy

SCLP5.4 – What is a ‘Cluster’?

- 2.1 A ‘Cluster’ relates to the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area only (Policy SCLP5.4).
- 2.2 For development to be supported under Policy SCLP5.4, it must be in a ‘Cluster’.
- 2.3 A ‘Cluster’ can only exist outside of a Small Village, Large Village, Town or Major Centre as categorised in the Local Plan and defined by Settlement Boundaries³, i.e. in the Countryside. The overarching purpose of Policy SCLP5.4 is to support a limited amount of development in those locations, recognising that they do not have the range or number of facilities to be classed as a Small Village, Large Village, Town or Major Centre in the Local Plan but that a limited amount of development may support the social sustainability of the rural areas.
- 2.4 Policy SCLP5.4 states:
- A ‘cluster’ in the context of this policy:
- Consists of a continuous line of existing dwellings or a close group of existing dwellings adjacent to an existing highway; and
 - Contains 5 or more dwellings.

- 2.5 [Illustrations 1-3](#) (see pages 10-12) provide examples of what may or may not constitute a ‘cluster’ under the terms of the policy.

Consists of a continuous line of existing dwellings or a close group of existing dwellings adjacent to an existing highway

- 2.6 The dwellings in a ‘Cluster’ as a whole must be closely related (see illustrations [1](#) and [2](#)). As per paragraph 5.25 of the Local Plan, extensive areas of open land should not exist between the dwellings (See illustration [3](#)). Dwellings can be separated by some other features, such as gardens and accesses, and do not need to conjoin. There may also be other uses within the ‘close group’ or ‘continuous line’, for example a public house, however the cluster as a whole should have a residential function as opposed to, for example, an employment area. Non-residential uses within the ‘Cluster’ will be considered as incidental to the ‘Cluster’, with the main consideration being the close grouping of existing dwellings. Dwellings separated by open fields or other extensive open spaces are highly unlikely to form a ‘Cluster’. It is not appropriate to define a specific size of space(s) that would or would not be acceptable in determining whether dwellings are ‘close’ – this will depend on the character of the area and will involve planning judgement. For example, some clusters may be characterised by existing dwellings in large plots whereas others may comprise a more compact pattern.
- 2.7 The dwellings in a ‘Cluster’ must also be adjacent to an existing highway. Suffolk County Council define a highway as any route in which the public has

³ Other than in the case of Newbourne, see chapter 8 of this SPD



a right of way⁴. Therefore, roads such as private driveways will not be considered as highways.

Contains 5 or more dwellings

- 2.8 A 'Cluster' must contain at least 5 existing dwellings. Buildings of other uses can be within the 'Cluster' (see illustration [1](#) and paragraph 2.6 above), acknowledging also that these may contribute to the sustainability of the 'Cluster', however there must be at least 5 dwellings if the application is for 1-3 new dwellings. This increases to at least 10 dwellings if the application is for 4 or 5 new dwellings. There is no maximum number of dwellings for a 'Cluster'.

Other Considerations

- 2.9 Dwellings that are permitted, but not yet constructed, may in some circumstances be able to count towards the 5 or 10 dwellings. Consideration will be given to whether the development has started. Where there is any uncertainty as to whether a development with planning permission will take place it is unlikely that this would be counted as contributing to the cluster. Cumulative impacts will also be an important consideration.

- 2.10 The existing dwellings within 'Clusters' can vary greatly in their design, type, tenure and their building footprint to plot ratio. While dwellings in 'Clusters' must be closely related to each other in terms of location, they do not necessarily need to be of the same or similar design, shape, size or period. In fact, 'Clusters' where they have evolved and developed over time will often show great variation in terms of the types of dwellings contained within them.
- 2.11 The areas of Small and Large villages, as well as Major Centres and Market Towns, have been categorised in the Settlement Hierarchy (Policy SCLP3.2) and defined by Settlement Boundaries⁵ in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (SCLP3.3) which provide opportunities for development to come forward. In addition, such settlements have been the focus for residential site allocations. The purpose of the Clusters policy is to support limited new development outside of these areas to support the social sustainability of the more rural parts of the plan area.
- 2.12 A 'Cluster' must be located entirely outside of the Settlement Boundaries established by policy SCLP3.3, or through a Neighbourhood Plan, to be considered to be entirely within the Countryside.

⁴ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/road-adoption/highways-and-private-roads/>

⁵ Other than Newbourne, see chapter 8 of this SPD



3 Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7 – What is a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’?

- 3.1 For the purpose of this SPD, the term ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ is used throughout to refer to settlements within the Countryside covered by Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7.
- 3.2 A ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ can only exist outside of a Smaller Village, Larger Village, Market Town or the Lowestoft area as categorised in the Waveney Local Plan and defined by Settlement Boundaries, i.e. in the Countryside. The purpose of Policy WLP8.7 is to support a limited amount of development in those locations, recognising that they do not have the range or number of facilities to be classed as a Smaller Village, Larger Village, Market Town or the Lowestoft area in the Local Plan but that a limited amount of development may support the social sustainability of the rural areas.
- 3.3 For the purpose of this SPD, the term ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ has been used to refer to settlements in the Countryside as defined by the Waveney Local Plan where Policy WLP8.7 may apply.
- 3.4 [Illustrations 1-3](#) (see pages 10-12) provide examples of what may or may not constitute a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ under the terms of the policy.
- 3.5 Policy WLP8.7 and its supporting text does not set out specific characteristics which would define a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. Policy WLP8.7 does not specify a minimum numbers of dwellings. However to

function as a settlement there must be multiple dwellings which are closely related (see illustrations [1](#) and [2](#)). Isolated dwellings will not constitute a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ (see illustrations [1](#) and [3](#)). Buildings of other uses can be within the settlement, provided it clearly functions as a residential settlement (rather than a group of employment uses for example), and in fact the presence of other uses may enhance the sustainability of the settlement.

- 3.6 The buildings of a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ as a whole must be closely related and adjacent to each other (see illustrations [1](#) and [2](#)). Extensive areas of open land should not exist between the dwellings and other buildings (see illustrations [1](#) and [3](#)). Buildings and dwellings can be separated by some open areas, such as gardens and accesses, and do not need to be conjoined. However extensive open fields would not form part of the built up area of a Settlement in the Countryside.
- 3.7 The dwellings within a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ can vary greatly in their design, type, tenure and their building footprint to plot ratio. While dwellings in these settlements must be closely related to each other in terms of location, they do not necessarily need to be of the same design, shape, size or period. In fact, settlements in the Countryside often show great variation in terms of the types of dwellings contained within them.
- 3.8 Dwellings that are permitted, but not yet constructed, may in some circumstances form a part of the ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. Consideration will be given to whether the development has started. Where there is any uncertainty as to whether a permitted development will take place it is less likely that this would be counted as contributing to the ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. Cumulative impacts will also be an important consideration.



- 3.9 The areas of Smaller and Larger villages, as well as Market Towns and the Lowestoft area, have been categorised in Policy WLP1.1 Scale and Location of Growth and defined by Settlement Boundaries (Policy WLP1.2) in the Waveney Local Plan which provide opportunities for development to come forward. In addition, such settlements have been the focus for residential site allocations. The purpose of the Policy WLP8.7 is to support limited new development outside of these areas to support the social sustainability of the more rural parts of the plan area.
- 3.10 A 'Settlement in the Countryside' must be located entirely outside of the Settlement Boundaries established by policy WLP1.2, or through a Neighbourhood Plan, to be considered to be entirely within the Countryside.

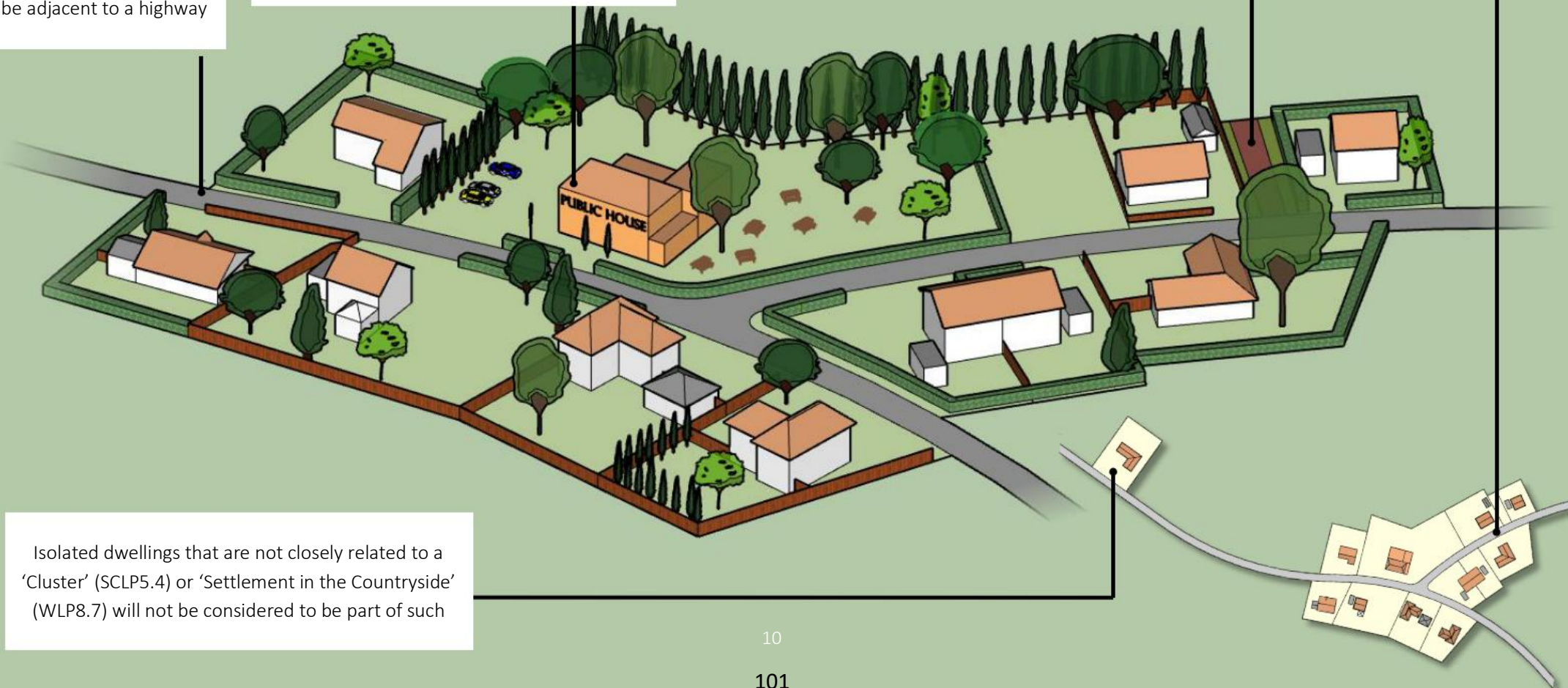
Illustration 1 | Example of features of a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

Non-residential buildings can be located within a 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) alongside residential uses, but the presence of closely related dwellings will be the key consideration to determine if an area is a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

The dwellings within a 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) must be adjacent to a highway

Within 'Clusters' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlements in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) dwellings can be separated by small gaps/features and do not need to conjoin. In this example, a farm access is shown

To be identified as a 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) the dwellings must be closely related to each other



Isolated dwellings that are not closely related to a 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) will not be considered to be part of such

Illustration 2 | Example of a linear 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

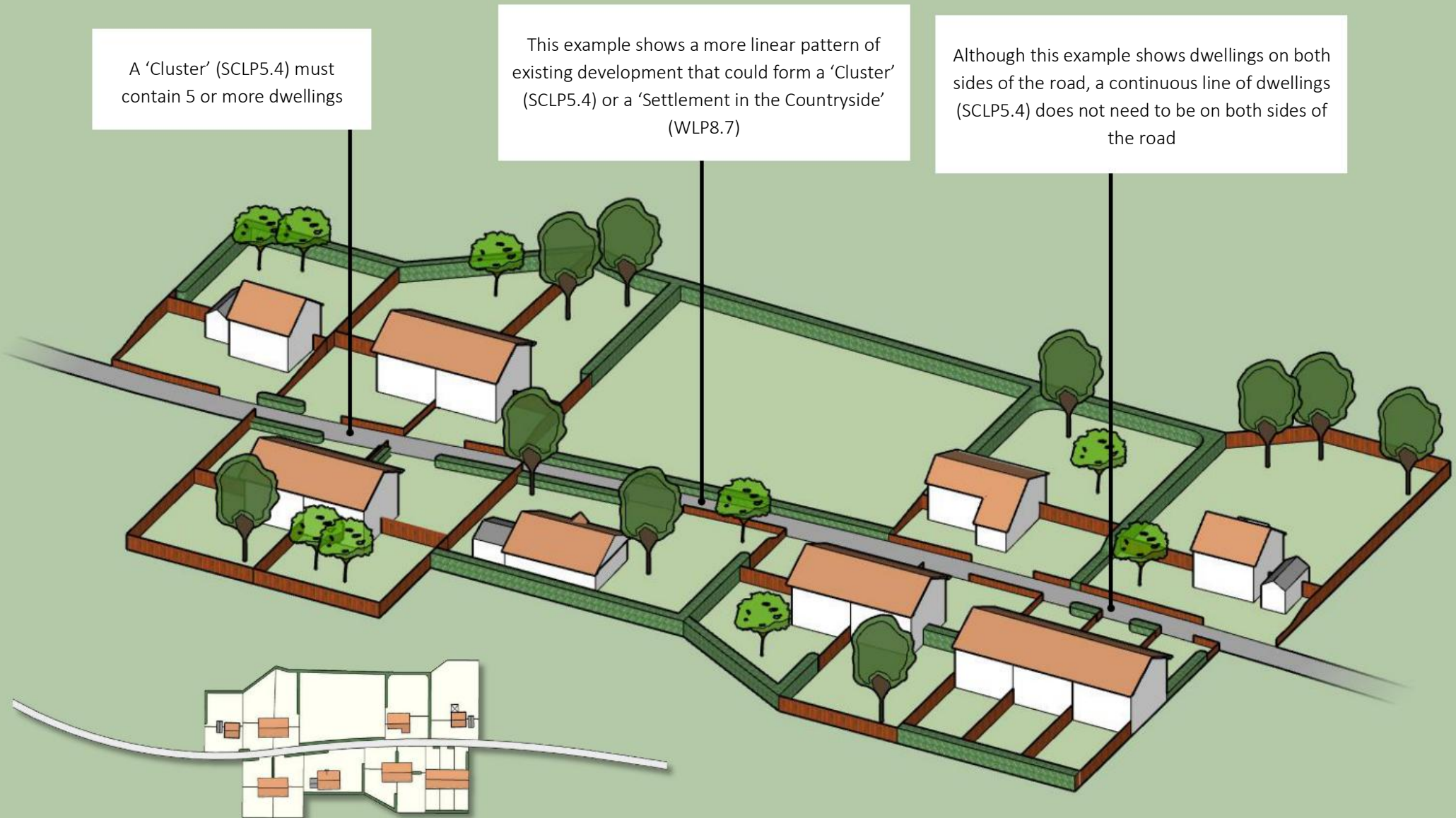
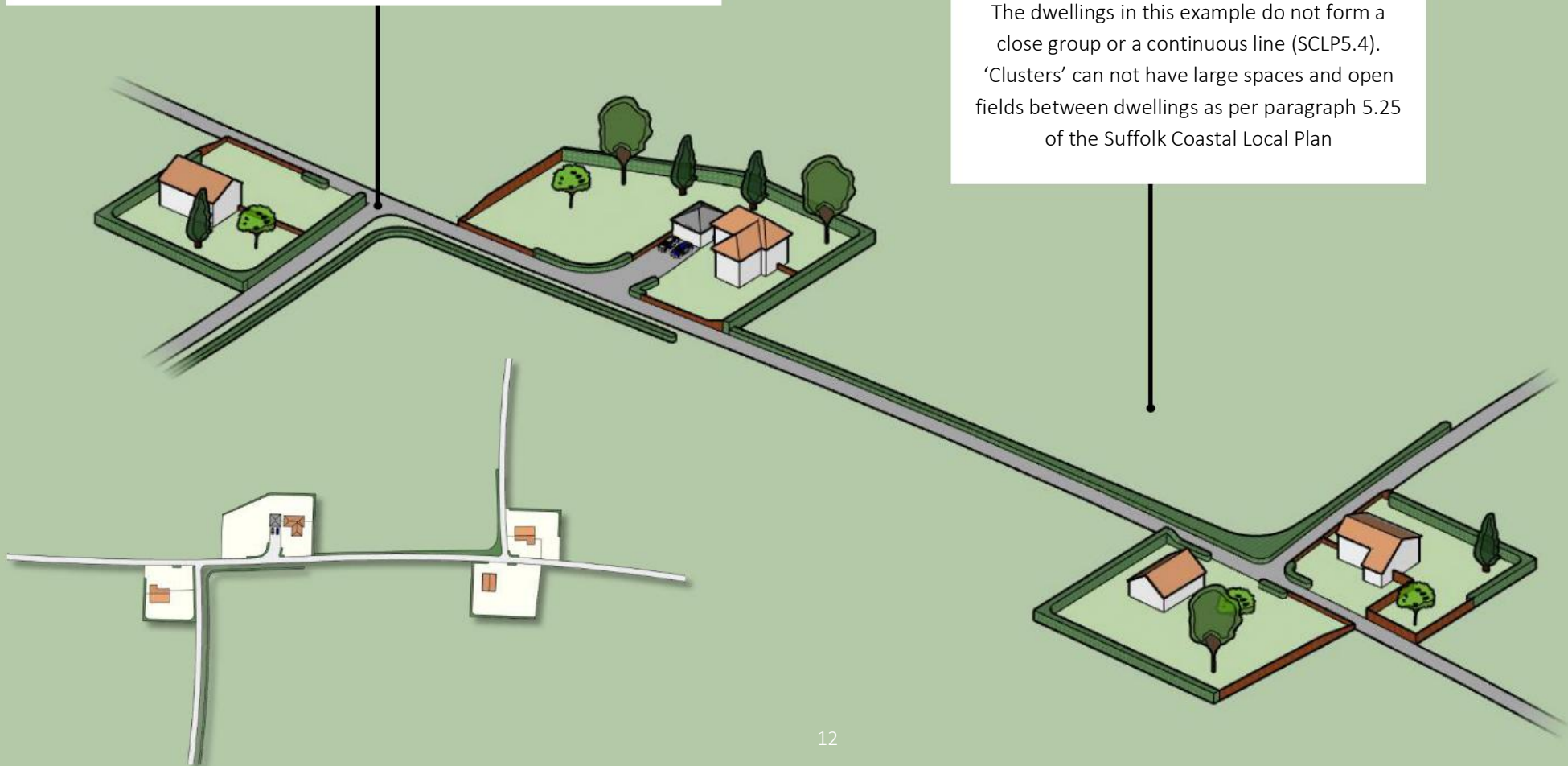


Illustration 3 | Example of an area that would not be considered a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

The dwellings in this example are not well related to each other and would not therefore be considered a 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7)

The dwellings in this example do not form a close group or a continuous line (SCLP5.4). 'Clusters' can not have large spaces and open fields between dwellings as per paragraph 5.25 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan





4 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policy

SCLP5.4 – Site Characteristics

- 4.1 Criteria b), c) and d) of SCLP5.4 are key considerations in identifying whether a site is suitable for housing development in principle under this policy. Further details on criteria b) are set out in paragraph 5.25 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.⁶
- 4.2 **Criterion b)** of Policy SCLP5.4 sets out that development should consist of:
- Infilling within a continuous built-up frontage
 - Is in a clearly identifiable gap within an existing cluster
 - Or is otherwise located adjacent to development on two sides.
- 4.3 The policy allows for up to three dwellings in clusters of at least five existing dwellings and up to five dwellings in clusters of at least ten existing dwellings, and the guidance below applies as appropriate to proposals of between one and five dwellings.
- 4.4 [Illustrations 4 – 10](#) (see pages 18-24) provide examples of what may or may not constitute an appropriate site in a Cluster in terms of the policy.

⁶ Due to an editing error, paragraph 5.25 refers to criterion c), when in actuality the text describes and relates to criterion b).

Infilling within a continuous built-up frontage

- 4.5 A built-up frontage is a continuous line of existing dwellings adjacent to a highway. The dwellings within the frontage do not need to conjoin (see illustration [4](#)). The frontage might include features such as private gardens, driveways, accesses and garages, and potentially land that would comprise an appropriately sized infill plot(s), but must otherwise read as a line of dwellings. These dwellings must be adjacent to an existing highway in order to provide vehicular access. Suffolk County Council define a highway as any route in which the public has a right of way⁷.

Is in a clearly identifiable gap within an existing cluster

- 4.6 A 'gap' is a space between dwellings that is clearly identifiable and therefore distinct from other spaces within the 'Cluster'. It is not appropriate to set a measurement to define what constitutes a 'gap', as this is informed by the character of the 'Cluster' – for example one cluster may be characterised by dwellings in large plots, whereby the large spaces between the dwellings would form part of the character of the area. In another 'Cluster' with dwellings in smaller plots and sitting closer together, the same sized space between dwellings may be distinct and not contribute as significantly or positively to the character, and therefore may appear as a 'gap'. A 'Cluster' can have more than one 'gap' within it.

⁷ <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highway-maintenance/road-adoption/highways-and-private-roads/>



Or is otherwise located adjacent to development on two sides

- 4.7 The site must be surrounded by development on at least two sides. This can include scenarios where the site is separated by existing development by a highway, as per Local Plan paragraph 5.25. The existing development must extend along the entirety of the proposed site, not just a part of it (see Illustration 4). As the site should relate well to the character of the existing dwellings and the residential nature of the area, sites bounded by mostly commercial or agricultural buildings are unlikely to be considered appropriate.
- 4.8 **Criterion c)** states that development must not represent an extension of the built-up area into the surrounding countryside beyond the existing extent of the built up area surrounding, or adjacent to, the site.
- 4.9 The existing built up area must extend along the entirety of the application site. This will mean that the proposed dwelling(s) does not extend further into the Countryside than the existing built development surrounding the application site. The curtilage of the proposed dwelling(s) should also not extend further into the countryside than the curtilage of existing dwellings.
- 4.10 **Criterion d)** states that the proposal must not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or, result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape.
- 4.11 The role of the spaces between existing dwellings should be considered (see illustration 7). These spaces can contribute to the rural character of the area. Due to their role, it should not be seen that all spaces within a 'Cluster'

⁸ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/First-Draft-Local-Plan/SCDC-Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf>

could or should be developed. In considering whether a site is acceptable in principle, consideration should be given to the contribution and value the site, without the development, makes to the character and appearance of the cluster and the surrounding landscape. Consideration should be given to the [Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment \(2018\)](#)⁸ (or any subsequent assessment), as well as any landscape assessments, character appraisals or similar produced by Neighbourhood Plan groups. In Conservation Areas consideration should be given to [Conservation Area Appraisals](#)⁹.

- 4.12 As per paragraph 4.7 above, it must also be considered if a site is appropriate for residential development based on the nature and character of the surrounding uses. The cumulative impact of incremental development may also have an impact on the character (see illustration 10).
- 4.13 The features and character of the cluster or the landscape in which it sits may sometimes mean that it is not possible to mitigate the impacts of a proposal, and therefore a proposal in principle would have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. In these cases, development of the site will not be supported. Specific policy on Landscape Character is contained in Policy SCLP10.4.

Other Considerations

- 4.14 The site, as well as the 'Cluster', must be located completely outside of the Settlement Boundaries established by policy SCLP3.3, or within a

⁹ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/conservation-area-appraisals/>



Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore be completely within the Countryside (see illustration [9](#)).



5 Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7 – Site Characteristics

5.1 Policy WLP8.7 sets out that development will be permitted where:

- The site constitutes a clearly identifiable gap within a built up area of a settlement within the Countryside;
- There are existing residential properties on two sides of the site; and
- The development does not extend further into the undeveloped Countryside than the existing extent of the built-up area surrounding the site.

5.2 [Illustrations 4 – 10](#) (see pages 18-24) provide examples of what may or may not constitute an appropriate site in a settlement in the countryside in terms of the policy.

The site constitutes a clearly identifiable gap within a built-up area of a settlement within the Countryside

5.3 A 'gap' is a space within a built-up area. The 'gap' must be clearly identifiable and therefore distinct from the spaces within the 'Settlement in the Countryside' that form an integral part of its character. It is not appropriate to set a measurement to define what constitutes a 'gap', as this is informed by the character of the 'Settlement in the Countryside' – for example one settlement may be characterised by dwellings in large plots, whereby the large spaces between the dwellings would form part of the character of the area. In another settlement with dwellings in smaller plots and sitting closer together the same sized space between dwellings may be distinct and not

contribute as significantly or positively to the character, and therefore may appear as a 'gap'. A 'Settlement in the Countryside' can have more than one 'gap' within it.

There are existing residential properties on two sides of the site

5.4 The site must be surrounded by residential properties on at least two sides. This can include scenarios where the site is separated from existing properties by a highway. To meet this part of the policy, the existing development should extend along the entirety of the proposed development, not just a part of it (see [Illustration 4](#)).

The development does not extend further into the undeveloped Countryside than the existing extent of the built-up area surrounding the site

5.5 The existing development must extend along the entirety of the application site. This will mean that the application site does not extend further into the Countryside than the existing built up area surrounding the application site. The curtilage of the proposed dwelling(s) should also not extend further into the countryside than the curtilage of existing dwellings.

Proposals for 4 or 5 dwellings

5.6 WLP8.7 also makes provision for sites of 4 or 5 dwellings to come forward, and also for development to take place adjacent to the settlement in certain circumstances. The policy allows for sites of up to 5 new dwellings to be developed adjacent or within the built-up area of the 'Settlement in the Countryside' without necessarily being enclosed by development on two sides, subject to compliance with the relevant criteria in the policy including there being local support for the development. This element of the policy



provides flexibility to allow small scale development in rural areas that may not have the resources to create a Neighbourhood Plan or Development Order, as set out in paragraph 8.39 of the Waveney Local Plan.

Other Considerations

- 5.7 The effect of the principle of developing a site on the character of the settlement and surrounding landscape should also be considered.
- 5.8 The role of the spaces between dwellings should be considered (see illustration [7](#)). These spaces often contribute to the rural character of the area. Due to their role, it should not be seen that all spaces within a 'Settlement in the Countryside' could or should be developed. In considering whether a site is acceptable in principle, consideration should be given to the contribution and value the site, without the development, has to the character and appearance of the settlement and the surrounding landscape. Policy WLP8.35 relates to Landscape Character. Consideration should be given to the [Waveney Landscape Character Assessment \(2008\)](#)¹⁰ (or any subsequent assessment), as well as any landscape assessments, character appraisals or similar produced by Neighbourhood Plan groups. Where relevant to proposals close to the Broads, consideration should also be given to the [Broads Landscape Character Assessment \(2016\)](#)¹¹. Consideration should also be given to the impact of lighting on the dark skies

of the Broads. In Conservation Areas, consideration should be given to [Conservation Area Appraisals](#)¹².

- 5.9 The features and character of the settlement in the countryside and the landscape surrounding it may sometimes mean that it is not possible to mitigate the impacts of a proposal, and therefore the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. In these cases, the development of the site will not be supported. Cumulative impacts on character will also be a consideration, as shown in Illustration [10](#).
- 5.10 The site, as well as the 'Settlement in the Countryside', must be located completely outside of the Settlement Boundaries established by policy WLP1.2, or a Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore be completely within the Countryside (see illustration [9](#)).

¹⁰ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Background-Studies/Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/landscape-character-assessments>

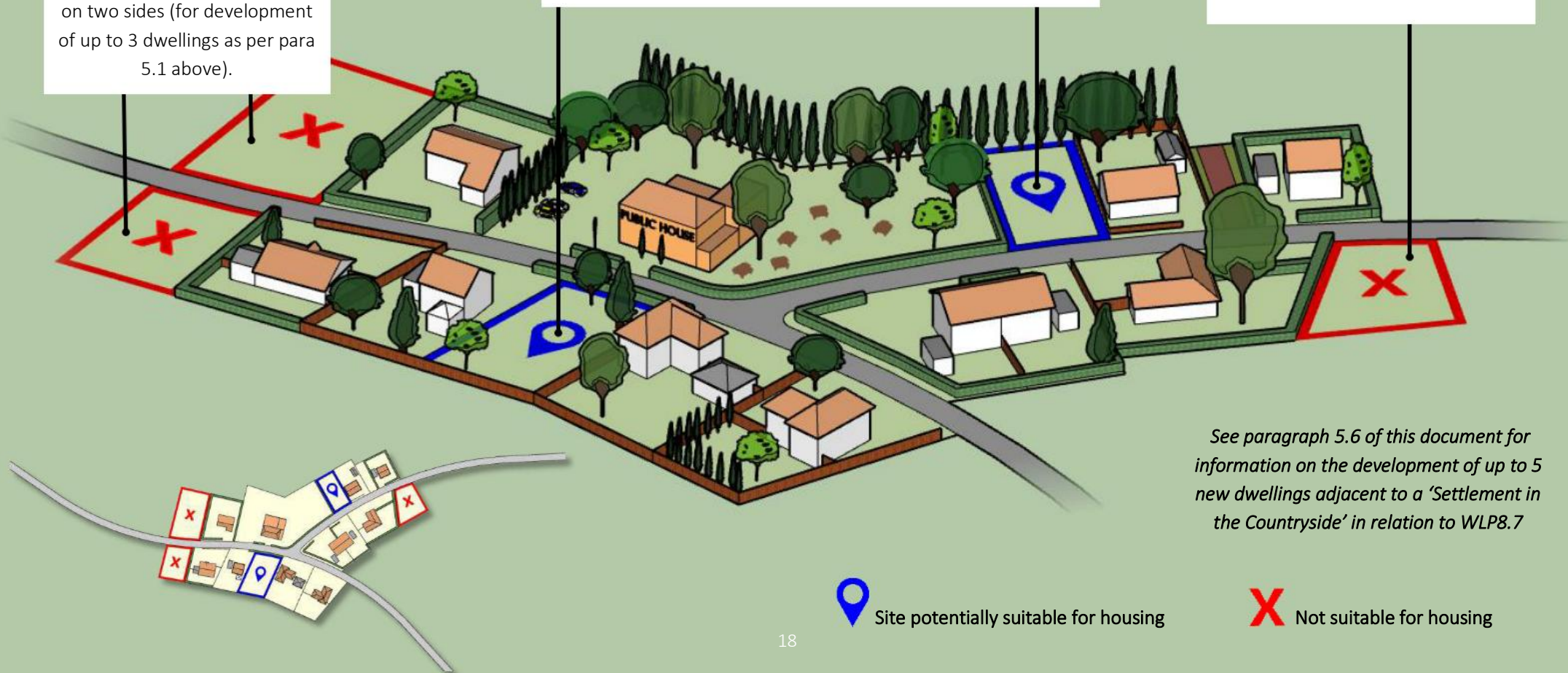
¹² <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/conservation-area-appraisals/>

Illustration 4 | Potential sites in a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

Sites without adjacent existing development on at least two sides will not be appropriate (SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7). Note that for WLP8.7 the policy refers to *residential properties* on two sides (for development of up to 3 dwellings as per para 5.1 above).

Examples of a 'clearly identifiable gap in an existing cluster' (SCLP5.4) or a 'clearly identifiable gap within a built up area of the countryside' (WLP8.7)

The existing adjacent development must enclose the site, ensuring the site does not extend further into the Countryside than the existing development (see also illustration 5)



See paragraph 5.6 of this document for information on the development of up to 5 new dwellings adjacent to a 'Settlement in the Countryside' in relation to WLP8.7



Site potentially suitable for housing



Not suitable for housing

Illustration 5 | Potential sites in a linear 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

Proposed sites must be enclosed by dwellings (WLP8.7) / development (SCLP5.4) on at least two sides and the existing plots should extend across the entirety of the proposed site, meaning the site does not extend into the Countryside

'Gaps' should be clearly identifiable from other spaces within the 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7)



Appropriate sites under both policies can provide space for up to 3 or up to 5 new dwellings if the relevant criteria are met. In this example, this site may not be appropriate for the development of just a single dwelling as this could be detrimental to the character of the area, whereas 3 dwellings may be compatible.

Example of a site enclosed by existing development (SCLP5.4) / dwellings (WLP8.7) on two sides. Paragraphs 5.25 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and 8.38 of the Waveney Local Plan both state that existing development/dwellings can be separated by a highway

See paragraph 5.6 of this document for information on the development of up to 5 new dwellings adjacent to a 'Settlement in the Countryside' in relation to WLP8.7



Site potentially suitable for housing



Not suitable for housing

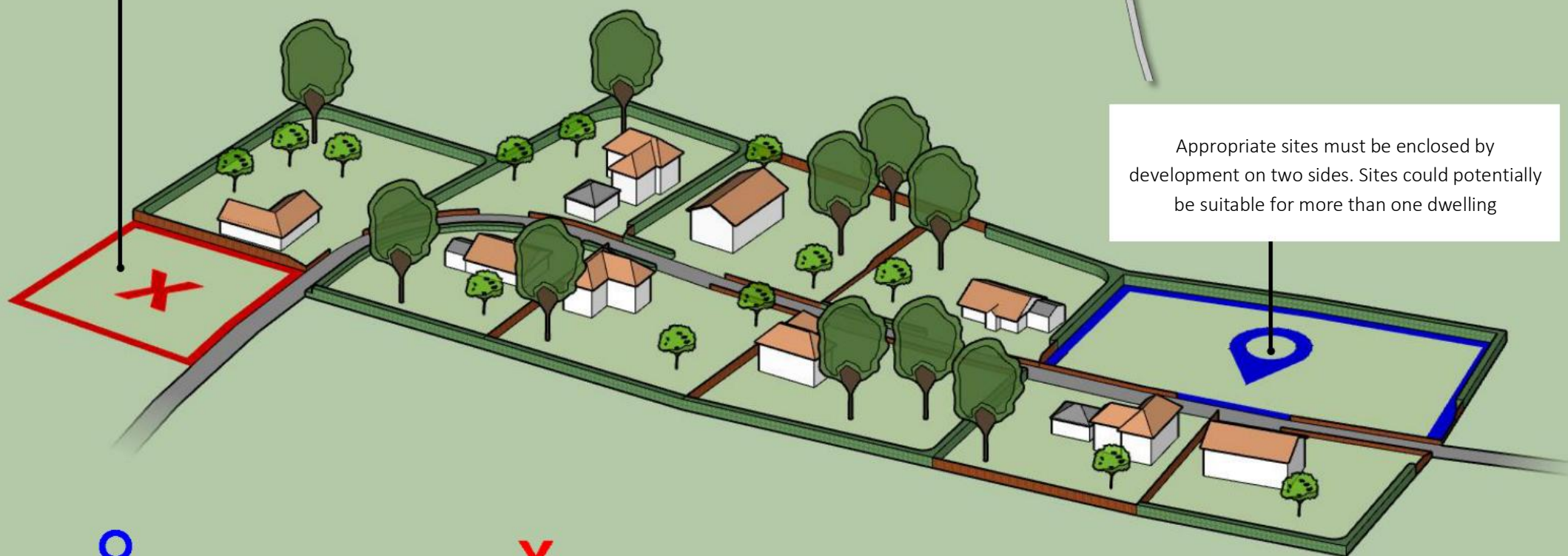
Illustration 6 | Potential sites in a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside' with large plots

A site with existing development on only one side or that does not extend along the entirety of the site will not be supported

See paragraph 5.6 of this document for information on the development of up to 5 new dwellings adjacent to a 'Settlement in the Countryside' in relation to WLP8.7



Appropriate sites must be enclosed by development on two sides. Sites could potentially be suitable for more than one dwelling



Site potentially suitable for housing



Not suitable for housing

Illustration 7 | Potential sites in a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'

In considering whether a site is suitable in principle, consideration should be given to the site's contribution to the character of the 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) in its undeveloped form

Appropriate sites should be within a clearly identifiable gap, enclosed by development on at least two sides and should not extend further into the Countryside. Sites could be suitable for more than one dwelling

See paragraph 5.6 of this document for information on the development of up to 5 new dwellings adjacent to a 'Settlement in the Countryside' in relation to WLP8.7

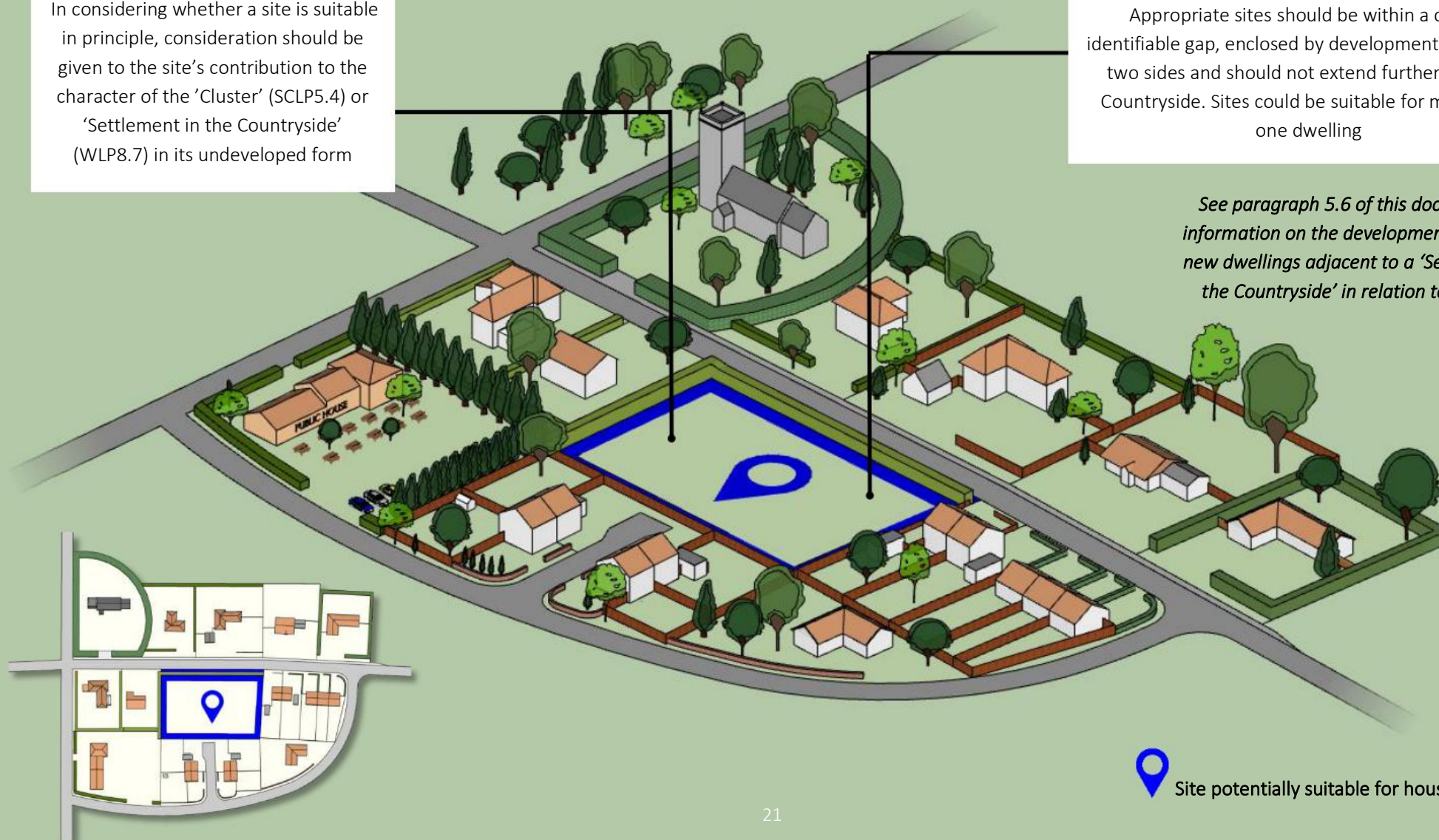


Illustration 8 | Example of a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside' with no 'gaps'



'Clusters' (SCLP5.4) and 'Settlements in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) exist throughout the Countryside of East Suffolk. However, not all will have gaps or spaces that are suitable for development



Illustration 9 | 'Clusters' or 'Settlements in the Countryside' and Settlement Boundaries



While this site is outside of the Settlement Boundary, the 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) is not. Therefore, SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 do not apply. Both the site and the 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) must be located completely outside of the Settlement Boundaries.

 Settlement Boundary
 Not suitable for housing

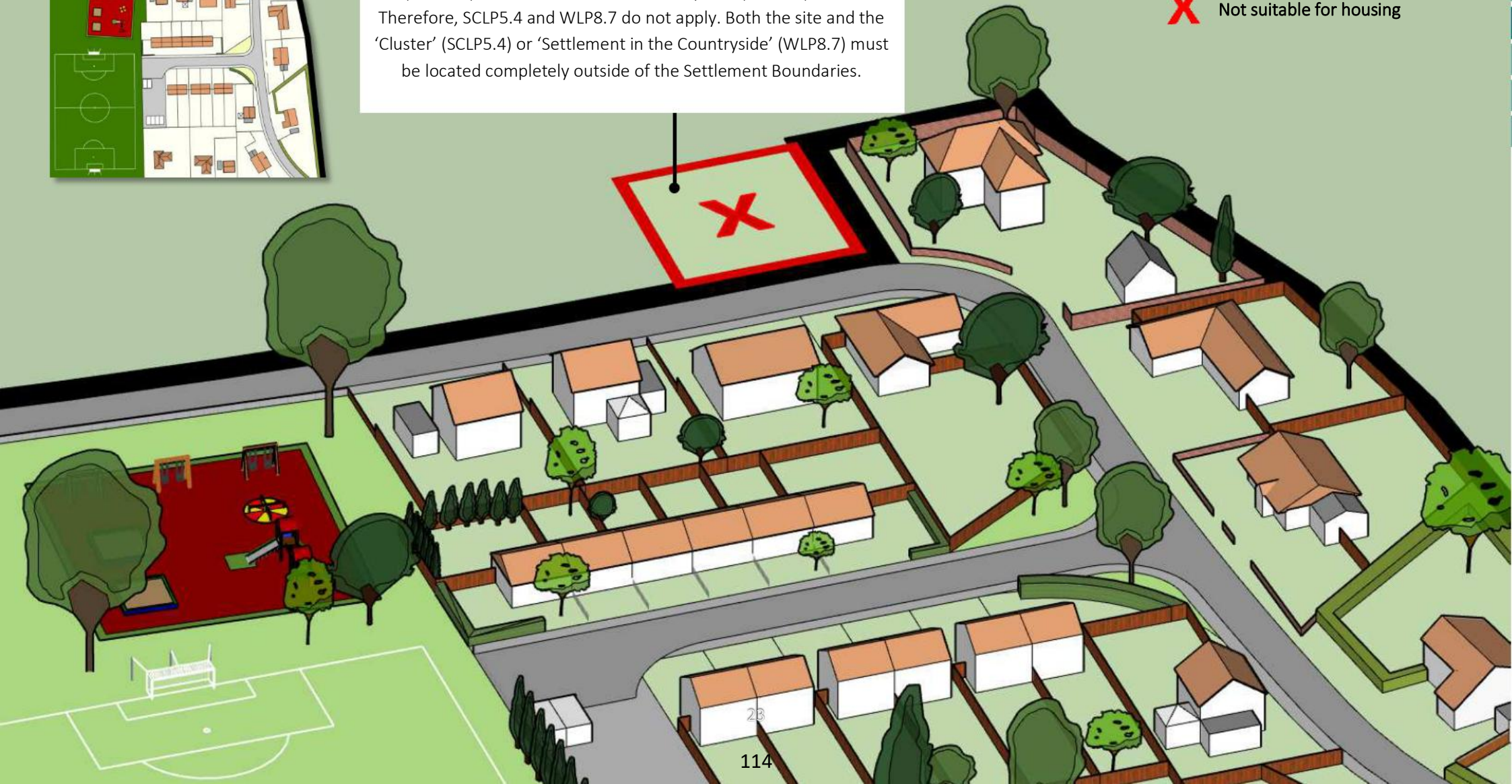
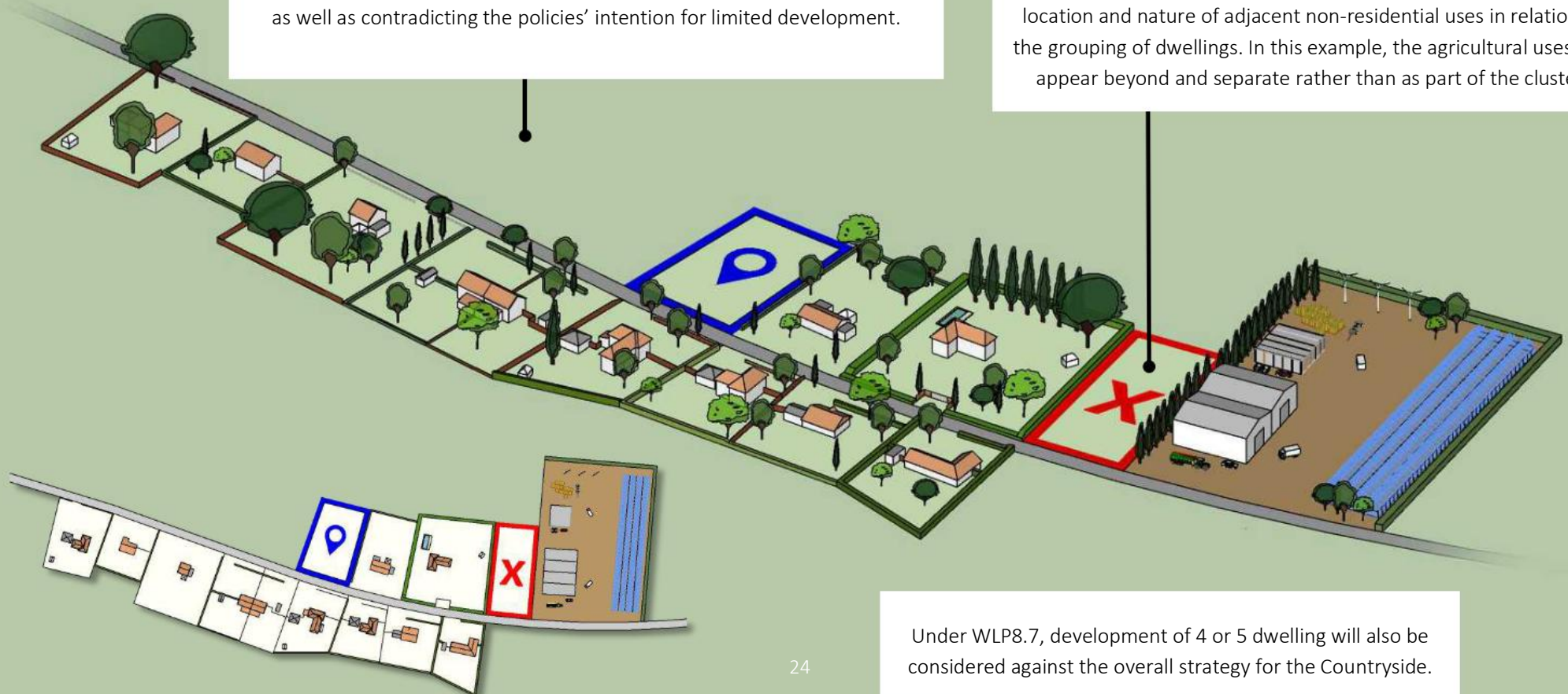


Illustration 10 | Consideration of Cumulative Development and Other Land Uses

Policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 are intended to support limited development. The cumulative impact of continuous applications on the character of the 'Cluster' (SCLP5.4) or 'Settlement in the Countryside' (WLP8.7) and the wider landscape will be an important consideration. If further development in an area would result in a cumulative detrimental impact, it is unlikely to be supported. In this example, further incremental or significant development beyond the 'blue' site could detrimentally impact the character of the area, as well as contradicting the policies' intention for limited development.

Under WLP8.7 sites must be surrounded by dwellings on two sides. Under SCLP5.4 sites must be surrounded by development on at least two sides. However in considering how the proposal assimilates with the character of the Cluster consideration will be given to the location and nature of adjacent non-residential uses in relation to the grouping of dwellings. In this example, the agricultural uses also appear beyond and separate rather than as part of the cluster.



Under WLP8.7, development of 4 or 5 dwelling will also be considered against the overall strategy for the Countryside.

6 Character and Appearance

- 6.1 In rural areas, the development of a small number of dwellings can have a substantial impact on the character of the local area. High quality design can enhance the character of settlements as well as take advantage of modern sustainable methods to reduce the impact on the rural character. However, clear guidance is required to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact on local character. Proposals which harm the character of the local area will not be supported. This chapter focuses on considering the effect of a proposed development on the character and appearance, for example in terms of design and siting, whereas chapters 4 and 5 provide guidance on the principle of development in a gap being acceptable in terms of the character of the Cluster or Settlement.
- 6.2 Criterion d) of Policy SCLP5.4 states that to be supported development should not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape.
- 6.3 Policy WLP8.7 states that for all small-scale development in the Countryside the design of the scheme will need to respect and reflect the character of the settlement and existing built-up frontage including:
- Housing density is reflective of the density in the village and surrounding built up area; and

- The ratio of the building footprint to the plot area is consistent with existing properties nearby which characterise the village.



Figure 1 Proposals under WLP8.7 must be designed to a density with a building: plot ratio that is consistent with the existing dwellings within the 'Settlement in the Countryside'

- 6.4 Proposals will also need to comply with the relevant landscape policies (SCLP10.4 Landscape Character and WLP8.35 Landscape Character) and design policies (principally SCLP11.1 Design Quality and WLP8.29 Design) in the relevant Local Plan. [Neighbourhood Plans](#)¹³ could also include landscape and design policies, or other design guidance or assessments that should be used and referred to where they exist.

¹³ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-the-area/>



- 6.5 'Gaps' within 'Clusters' and 'Settlements in the Countryside' can contribute significantly to the character of these areas. How 'gaps' will be considered are covered in chapters 4 and 5 of this document.
- 6.6 Proposals need to consider the impact on the wider landscape as well as the character of the 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside' in which the site is located.

Character and appearance of the Cluster/Settlement in the Countryside

Design of the proposal

- 6.7 Both of the Local Plans contain policies relating to the design of new development. SCLP11.1 in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and WLP8.29 in the Waveney Local Plan are the main design policies.
- 6.8 The scale and design of any scheme should be appropriate to the existing character and appearance of the 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'. This should include type of dwellings, plot sizes and building footprints and sizes. These characteristics of a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside' can be uniform or varied depending when they were developed and who developed them.
- 6.9 The site being proposed must allow for a suitable layout, orientation and density of new dwellings that is appropriate to the character to the existing development. For example, if a cluster is characterised by dwellings in large plots, a small gap may not provide an option for development that would be appropriate to the character of the 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'.
- 6.10 New dwellings themselves should be of a high-quality design that clearly demonstrate a detailed understanding of local landscape features, the built environment and open space that contribute to the character of the 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'. The proposed new dwellings should respond to these local features through their overall scale, character, height and massing. New dwellings should respond to the overall pattern of development in the local area and should have an appropriate layout on the site based on its position in the 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside' and the surrounding uses. New dwellings should use materials and detailing that are complementary to the local features. All new dwellings, whether they are of a traditionalist, contemporary or innovative style, should be of the highest quality design.
- 6.11 The design and features of the curtilages of the new dwellings must also show an understanding of the existing character of the area. The curtilage and the boundary treatments of the site should help integrate the new dwellings into the area and the wider landscape. Consideration should be given to, for example, appropriate surfacing for driveways that reflects the rural nature of the cluster or settlement.

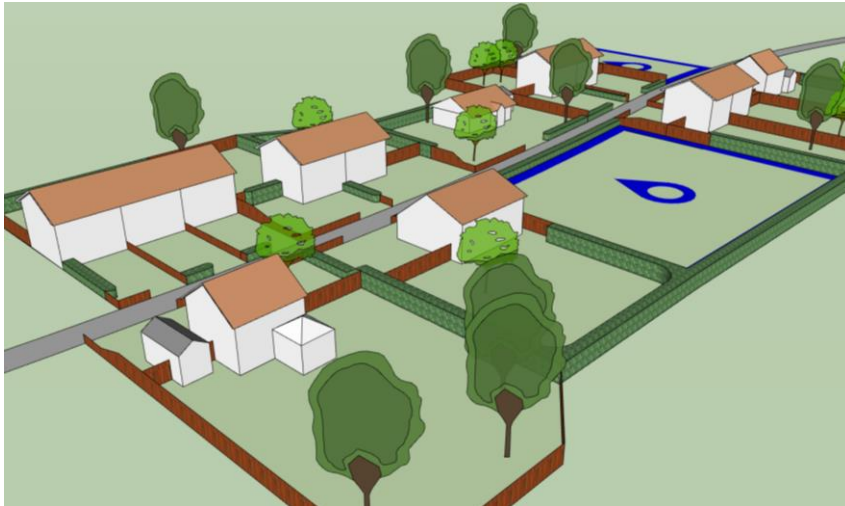


Figure 2 'Clusters' and 'Settlements in the Countryside' can contain various dwelling types and features. New dwellings should respond to the overall pattern of development in the area and respond to the features of the area

Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings

- 6.12 Particular care needs to be taken with development that takes place within or in the setting of Conservation Areas. Conservation Areas and their unique features contribute significantly to the character of their local area and any new development must acknowledge this.
- 6.13 Most Conservation Areas are located in areas with identified Settlement Boundaries, meaning in these cases that development under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will not be applicable. However there are a small

number of Conservation Areas that exist outside of Settlement Boundaries and therefore, potentially, in a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'.

- 6.14 Information on the character and appearance of Conservation Areas are contained within the Council's [Conservation Area Appraisals](#)¹⁴. These should be referenced by the applicant and should inform the proposal. Proposals within or which may affect a Conservation Area will be considered against policies SCLP11.5 and WLP8.39 and the relevant paragraphs in Section 16 of the 2021 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.15 Some 'Clusters' and 'Settlements in the Countryside' may potentially include Listed Buildings. As policies SCLP5.4 and SCLP8.7 relate to development in 'gaps' and adjacent to existing dwellings, there is potential for proposals to affect the setting of a Listed Building. Particular care therefore needs to be taken with development that is in the setting of a Listed Building. Development potentially affecting a Listed Building or its setting will be considered against Policy SCLP11.4 Listed Buildings (in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area) and against the Section 16 of the 2021 NPPF.
- 6.16 Non-Designated Heritage Assets may also be present in 'Clusters' or 'Settlements in the Countryside', and the effect of a proposal on the significance and setting of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account. Policies SCLP11.6, WLP8.38 and paragraph 203 of the 2021 NPPF set out the relevant policy.
- 6.17 Other heritage assets, such as Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens, may also be impacted by development in 'Clusters' or

¹⁴ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/conservation-area-appraisals/>

‘Settlements in the Countryside’ which should be considered. Policies SCLP11.3, SCLP11.8 and WLP8.37 set out the relevant policies.

- 6.18 Further guidance on Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and other heritage assets can be found in the Council’s [Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document](#)¹⁵.

Landscape

- 6.19 Policies SCLP11.4 and WLP8.35 are the key Local Plan policies covering landscape, against which proposals will be considered alongside SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7.
- 6.20 Any development within ‘Clusters’ and ‘Settlements in the Countryside’ should take into consideration the particular features of the Landscape Character Area in which the ‘Cluster’ or ‘Settlement in the Countryside’ is located. Particular care, including design elements such as lighting and consideration of dark skies, will need to be exercised in sensitive locations, such as within or in the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in the setting of the Broads. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how landscape features have been considered.



Figure 3 New development should respond to features that contribute to the landscape character of the area. These can include natural features, such as woodland, and built features, such as key buildings like churches

- 6.21 Information on the features and characteristics of Landscape Character Areas can be found in the [Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment \(2018\)](#)¹⁶ and the [Waveney Landscape Character Assessment \(2008\)](#)¹⁷. The way in which a proposal responds to the landscape and mitigates any potential impacts should be clearly shown through the application. Where relevant, consideration should also be given to the [Broads Landscape Character Assessment \(2016\)](#)¹⁸. In some cases, it may also be appropriate

¹⁵ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Supplementary-documents/Historic-Environment-SPD/Historic-Environment-SPD-reduced.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/First-Draft-Local-Plan/SCDC-Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Background-Studies/Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/landscape-character-assessments>



to consider landscape character assessments of other neighbouring authorities.

- 6.22 [Neighbourhood Plans](#)¹⁹ may also have local landscape character assessments and landscape policies, which may also be relevant to the proposal.

Cumulative Impact

- 6.23 The policies are intended to support limited new development in the Countryside, therefore the consideration of the cumulative impact of new developments permitted under these policies is a key element that will need to be considered as these policies continue to be applied.

Policy SCLP5.4

- 6.24 Paragraph 5.28 of the Local Plan, in the supporting text for SCLP5.4, states that the policy has been designed to support limited new development in clusters and the policy states that consideration will be given to cumulative impacts. When an application comes forward, consideration will be given to whether there is an extant permission or completed development permitted under this policy. The cumulative impact of these permissions and completions on the character of the 'Cluster' and the area in which the 'Cluster' is located will then be considered and if further permissions in the 'Cluster' would be detrimental to the local and wider character (see illustration [10](#) above).

¹⁹ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-the-area/>

Policy WLP8.7

- 6.25 Paragraph 8.37 of the Local Plan explains that the purpose of the policy is to allow limited new development in the Countryside. Policy WLP8.7 states that when development of up to 5 new dwellings is proposed under the part of the Policy which provides for this, the proposal will be considered cumulatively with other developments in the Countryside to ensure it would not result in a level of development that would be contrary to the overall strategy outlined in Policy WLP1.1 and Policy WLP7.1.
- 6.26 Policy WLP7.1 sets out that 10% of the growth in the Waveney plan area will take place in the Rural Areas and that, of that 10%, 10% will take place in other rural settlements in the Countryside.
- 6.27 The amount and proportion of housing growth developed in the Countryside is monitored and is reported annually through the Council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR includes a breakdown of the proportion of new development in each of the areas in the Waveney Local Plan area (Lowestoft Area, Beccles and Worlingham, Bungay, Halesworth and Holton, Southwold and Reydon, Larger Villages, Smaller Villages and Countryside).
- 6.28 Any consideration as to whether further development in the Countryside under Policy WLP8.7 would undermine the overall strategy of the Waveney Local Plan will be based upon the way and rate at which development is expected to come forward over the whole plan period. Such a decision would only be made if sustained trends in the data show this to be necessary



for delivery of the strategy in the Plan, and would be determined through the AMR process.



7 Public Consultation

- 7.1 Where four or five new dwellings are being proposed, applicants are required to engage with the local community under both policy SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7.
- 7.2 This engagement must be meaningful and effective. This means that the scale of the engagement must be appropriate to the scale of the scheme being proposed and that anyone who could be affected in the local area must be given the opportunity to engage. This should not be limited to the Parish Council or Parish Meeting and immediate neighbours to the site. Rural areas can also be home to local businesses, groups and organisations who all have different interests related to the local area.
- 7.3 A variety of engagement methods should be used, including digital methods through the internet, as well as more traditional methods such as but not limited to leafletting and in person events where appropriate. This will ensure that all members of the community have an equal opportunity to be involved. The number and types of methods used should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal.
- 7.4 As part of the planning application, applicants should submit a statement which describes the methods used during the engagement. This statement could form part of the Planning Statement. In this statement, applicants must also show what measures were taken to engage, who was engaged with, what issues were raised, and how the planning issues raised through the engagement have been addressed through amendments to the proposal or by providing reasons why issues have not been addressed.

- 7.5 It is recommended that applicants approach the Parish Council or Parish Meeting for the area to determine the best form of community engagement that will be suitable for the residents of that area.

Local Housing Needs

- 7.6 SCLP5.4 states, in relation to community engagement, that the mix of dwellings being proposed should meet locally identified needs. The assessment of local needs should be based on the collection of primary data, such as through a survey, and should identify the needs of the local area rather than the preferences of the community. Applicants should consider the whole variety of housing types available, including specialist and adaptable housing and when these could be needed. The result of this assessment does not need to dictate what is delivered as some sites may not be appropriate for certain types of housing, however any proposal must show how local needs have been considered.
- 7.7 An assessment of local housing needs and how a proposal will help meet these relating to an application under policy WLP8.7 would also be supported.

Policy WLP8.7 – clear and demonstrable local support

- 7.8 Under WLP8.7, the policy expects there to be clear and demonstrable local support. Applicants should also show that there is genuine support for the proposal from the local community and the Parish Council or Parish Meeting. This does not mean that there can be no objections, or that a single letter of support would be acceptable. The applicant should show that through their community engagement the local community have generally shown support for the proposal. If the community have raised any relevant planning concerns through the engagement, these should be addressed by



the applicant. If there are any planning concerns that have not been addressed in any way, the application will not be supported.



8 Other Policies

8.1 This SPD focuses on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. However, the Local Plans should be read as a whole. Therefore, even if an application is deemed to meet the requirements of SCLP5.4 or WLP8.7, it will still have to meet the requirements of any other relevant policies in the relevant Local Plan and any relevant Neighbourhood Plan. Some key policies that interact with SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 are explained below.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- SCLP10.1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - WLP8.34 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- 8.2 Sites within the countryside may hold particular interests for biodiversity and could include special habitats and species which need to be protected. Any proposal submitted relating to SCLP5.4 or WLP8.7 will also be considered against the requirements of the Biodiversity and Geodiversity policy of the relevant Local Plan (SCLP10.1 and WLP8.34 respectfully). This includes, protecting and enhancing habitats, hedgerows and trees where possible and ensuring that any impacts on the natural environment are avoided, limited or mitigated.

Landscape Character

- SCLP10.4 Landscape Character
- WLP8.35 Landscape Character

8.3 Sites in the countryside are likely to contribute to local and wider landscape characters and development on them may have significant impacts on these characters. Any proposal submitted relating to SCLP5.4 or WLP8.7 will also be considered against the requirements of the Landscape Character policy of the relevant Local Plan (SCLP10.4 and WLP8.35 respectfully). This should involve proposals being informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character area in which the proposal is located and protecting the special characteristics of sensitive areas. Further information on landscape considerations can be found in chapter 6 of this SPD.

Housing Mix

- SCLP5.8 Housing Mix
 - WLP8.1 Housing Mix
- 8.4 Policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 provide opportunities for small scale residential development in rural areas in recognition of the support this can provide to the sustainability of these settlements by providing opportunities for people to stay within their communities. Policies SCLP5.8 and WLP8.1 both provide a focus on smaller dwellings as part of the housing mix in new developments and the mix of dwellings proposed should therefore be informed by these policies.

Self-Build and Custom Build

- SCLP5.9 Self-Build and Custom Build Housing



- WLP8.3 Self-Build and Custom Build

8.5 Proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 could provide valuable opportunities for self-build and custom build dwellings. The Council will support applications for self-build and custom build where they are in compliance with other relevant policies in the relevant Local Plan.

Affordable Housing

- SCLP5.11 Affordable Housing on Exception Sites
- WLP8.6 Affordable Housing in the Countryside

8.6 Policies SCLP5.11 and WLP8.6 provide support in principle for sites to come forward in the Countryside if they are for affordable housing. In these scenarios, the site being proposed for the new dwellings must be adjacent (or well related under SCLP5.11) to an identified Settlement Boundary or an area that could be classed as a 'Cluster' under SCLP5.4 or a 'Settlement in the Countryside' under WLP8.7. The guidance in this SPD (chapters 2 and 3) will apply in defining a 'Cluster' or 'Settlement in the Countryside'.

SCLP5.7 Infill and Garden Development

8.7 Policy SCLP5.7 relates to the details of the design and siting of infill development, rather than to the principle, as per paragraph 5.35 of the Local Plan. It includes specific design criteria to ensure this type of development does not detrimentally impact the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the street scene. Proposals for infill in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area will therefore be considered against SCLP5.7 alongside SCLP5.4.

SCLP11.9 Newbourne – Former Land Settlement Association Holdings

8.8 Newbourne is identified as a Small Village in the Settlement Hierarchy due to the level of services and facilities that it has. However, the area of Newbourne that comprises the Former Land Settlement Association Holdings is unique within the plan area, with a large number of regular shaped plots, some of which still contain commercial scale greenhouses. The spaces between dwellings are especially important to Newbourne and should be protected where they contribute to the character of the area. Due to its unique nature and its widespread ribbon form of development, Newbourne does not therefore have a defined Settlement Boundary.

8.9 This is because it is considered that some types of development, such as backland development and extensive infilling, have the potential to harm the unique character of the area. New development in Newbourne needs to be carefully managed.

8.10 The combination of these factors result in a bespoke approach to consideration of new housing development in Newbourne. Policy SCLP11.9 provides specific criteria for new development in the Former Land Settlement Association Holdings area, including in relation to the principle of housing development. Alongside this, Policy SCLP5.4 (or other policies on housing in the countryside, if relevant) also apply across Newbourne (both within and outside of the area defined as Former Land Settlement Association Holdings).

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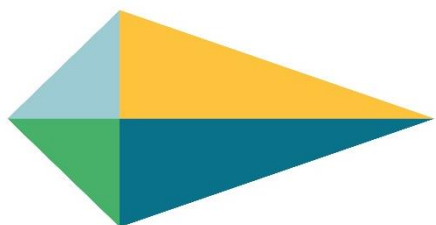
Consultation Statement

Agenda Item 8

ES/1325

Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document

October 2022



EASTSUFFOLK
COUNCIL

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1 Introduction

The draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide guidance on the application of the following policies:

- SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020) and
- WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside - Waveney Local Plan (2019).

The document includes further guidance on how the individual criteria of each policy will be applied and how each of the relevant criteria are to be met for development to be considered acceptable. Guidance will also be provided on how policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 relate to other policies in the Local Plans.

This Consultation Statement was first produced under Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) to accompany the consultation on the Draft SPD which was held between 17th June and 5th August and has subsequently been updated to reflect the consultation responses received during that consultation.

The Council's approach to engagement in the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement¹.

2. Who was consulted?

Consultation was split into two stages: an initial stage that informed the preparation of the Draft Supplementary Planning Document; and a formal stage of consultation that sought views on the Draft SPD.

Initial consultation

The initial consultation was undertaken using online workshops (via Microsoft Teams or Zoom) for specific groups or organisations to provide feedback on their experience of using the policies:

- Town and Parish Councils in East Suffolk (31st March 2022)
- Agents and developers working in East Suffolk (28th March 2022)

¹ [How to get Involved in Local Planning – Statement of Community Involvement \(April 2021\)](#)

- East Suffolk Councillors (9th May 2022)

Discussion to inform the proposed content was also had with a meeting of the Planning Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and with the Local Plan Working Group.

Consultation on the Draft SPD

Consultation on the Draft SPD was held between 17th June and 5th August 2022 (7 weeks). At the formal stage of consultation, all of those registered on the Council's Local Plan and other Policy Documents mailing list were directly consulted. Steps were undertaken to advertise the consultation to others, as set out below.

3. How were they consulted?

There were two stages to the consultation process, which are set out below.

Initial consultation

All Town and Parish Councils in East Suffolk and agents and developers registered on the East Suffolk Local Plan and other Policy Documents Mailing List were invited to attend their respective online workshop:

- Agents and Developers (28th March 2022) – 9 attendees
- Town and Parish Councils (31st March 2022) – 22 attendees

All East Suffolk Councillors were invited to attend the Councillor workshop session on Monday 9th May 2022 (16 attendees).

The format of each workshop included an overview of each of the policies; the scope and timescales of the SPD followed by an interactive session in which questions, issues and suggestions for the SPD could be raised along with discussion around whether particular slides did or didn't show a cluster/settlement in the countryside and whether particular spaces are likely to be suitable. The Members workshop session outlined the feedback from the earlier workshops and sought further feedback on how the SPD could provide further guidance.

Appendix 1 provides a summary of the comments / issues raised through the workshops and how the comments were taken into account in the drafting of the SPD. Appendix 2 lists the consultation bodies invited to the workshops. Appendix 3 provides the presentation slides used at the Town and Parish Workshop on 31 March 2022. Slides of a similar content were also used at the other workshops.

Consultation on the Draft SPD

The Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Development in the Countryside SPD consultation ran for seven weeks from 17th June to 5th August 2022. The consultation documents were made available on the East Suffolk Council website via the pages below:

[Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside - East Suffolk Council, Strategic Planning Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/inconsult/consultations/housing-in-clusters-and-small-scale-residential-development-in-the-countryside)

The consultation was advertised on the Council's website, as well on social media. 4,231 emails and 441 letters were sent out at the start of the consultation to the consultees on the Local Plan and other Policy Documents Mailing List. This includes town and parish councils, and individuals, and organisations including those who were previously contacted at the informal stage of the consultation. Appendix 4 lists the consultation bodies.

The consultation was advertised through the use of posters (provided to Town and Parish Council's, all libraries in the district and the Council's Customer Service Centres at The Marina (Lowestoft) and hosted within Felixstowe and Woodbridge libraries), a press release and social media posts. The poster, press release and social media posts are contained in Appendix 5.

Physical copies of the draft SPD and accompanying Consultation Statement were made available at all libraries in the district and the Council's Customer Service Centres at the Marina, and Felixstowe and Woodbridge libraries.

In total 55 individuals and organisations responded to the consultation. Between them they made 106 comments. Some comments were duplicated, and some were divided to be put into the relevant sections of the document, hence why the comment IDs go up to 113. The summary of comments made and the Council's response to these are in Appendix 6.

Full copies of the responses have been published on the Council's website at [Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside - East Suffolk Council, Strategic Planning Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/inconsult/consultations/housing-in-clusters-and-small-scale-residential-development-in-the-countryside)

Appendix 1: Initial Consultation Summary

The table below provides a summary of the main comments, issues and questions raised in the workshops, which session(s) the comment arose from and how these comments have informed the preparation of the draft SPD.

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
Key areas for the guidance to address (Slide 7)		
Is there any intention to review settlement boundaries?	Town and Parish Councils	The Settlement Boundaries have been determined by policies SCLP3.3 and WLP1.2 of the Local Plans. These can only be reviewed through a review of the Local Plans. The draft SPD does not have the remit to review the Settlement Boundaries.
Will the SPD elaborate on cumulative effects?	Town and Parish Councils	The draft SPD provides further guidance on all elements of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7, including the parts of the policies referring to cumulative effects.
How soon does a property built within a cluster become part of the cluster?	Town and Parish Councils	Chapters 2 and 3 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster' or a 'Settlement in the Countryside'. This includes paragraphs 2.9 and 3.8 which state that a development with planning permission will be considered part of such an area only if there is clear evidence that the permission will be implemented.
What criteria is used to define whether a dwelling is within a cluster or a settlement in the countryside?	Town and Parish Councils	Chapters 2 and 3 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster' or a 'Settlement in the Countryside'. This includes further guidance on the various criteria outlined in both policies to determine whether a dwelling is within a 'cluster' or 'settlement in the countryside' and illustrations are used to show the circumstances where a dwelling could be considered to be part of a cluster or settlement in the countryside.
How will infrastructure be supported i.e. doctors surgeries, schools, social services. If all these clusters are increased there could be a huge cumulative increase in the population.	Town and Parish Councils Members	This draft SPD focusses on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 and does not have the remit to determine how infrastructure will be provided. It should be noted that the quantum of development that will come forward through these policies, when compared to other policies and site allocations, is relatively small. Therefore, the

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
		infrastructure to support development through these policies will likely be delivered through Community Infrastructure Levy.
How much weight is given to an SPD as opposed to policy when it comes to an appeal?	Town and Parish Councils	Once it is adopted, the draft SPD will be a material consideration in determining planning applications. The purpose of the draft SPD is to provide further guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7, therefore the SPD will assist in the decision making regarding these policies. However, the reason for the decision must rely on the policies.
How does SCLP 5.4 relate to industrialisation of the countryside which may have more impact on the landscape character?	Town and Parish Councils	Chapter 6 of the draft SPD provides further guidance on how the potential impact on character should be considered in relation to policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7.
The SPD needs to set out how the policies relate to other policies in the Local Plans.	Developers/agents	Chapter 8 of the draft SPD provides guidance on how SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 work alongside and relate to other policies in the Local Plans.
Question around how the conversion of buildings in the countryside relates to the policies.	Town and Parish Councils	Chapter 1 of the draft SPD explains that there are other policies relating to housing in the countryside such as conversions however this SPD is focused on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7.
Illustrations are useful but to be fully effective must give interpretation to words: 'cluster', 'group', 'gap'.	Members	Following the feedback received during the various workshops, the illustrations have been prepared to make them relatively realistic and to provide representations of various elements of the policies. Annotations have been added to the illustrations to provide further clarity on the content of the draft SPD.
What defines meaningful and effective engagement?	Members	Chapter 7 of the draft SPD outlines the requirements for public engagement on relevant proposals, including what is meant by the community and how it should be demonstrated that planning impacts identified by the community have been addressed (under policy WLP8.7).
What further guidance might assist in considering whether a group of buildings is in a cluster/Settlement in the Countryside? (Slides 9 – 11)		
Do gardens have to be conjoined or can they have farmland between them to be a cluster?	Town and Parish Councils	Chapter 2 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster'. This includes further guidance on the various criteria outlined in the policy to determine the appropriate areas, including how closely related dwellings need to be. Although WLP8.7 does not include such criteria, Chapter 3 of the draft SPD provides

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
		guidance on how dwellings might make up a settlement in the countryside. The draft SPD states and shows through illustrations that dwellings can be separated by small spaces such as gardens and driveways, and therefore do not need to be conjoined. However, extensive open areas such as agricultural fields are not appropriate.
The fundamental aim of the policy is for the infilling of clusters not extending clusters into the countryside. This needs to be maintained in the policy by reinforcement rather than weakening the policy.	Town and Parish Councils	(Note – although raised in this section the comment relates to the appropriateness of a site rather than the identification of a cluster or settlement in the countryside). Chapters 4 and 5 of the SPD outline the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development under the Local Plan policies. These chapters clearly state that sites should not extend further into the Countryside than the existing development. The illustrations in the SPD also provide guidance on this criterion.
It is dependent on scale	Members	The illustrations in Chapters 2 and 3 of the Draft SPD show features that are likely to exist in reality to provide an indication of scale, and provide an example of groups of dwellings that are considered to be close and those which are not.
Illustrations are useful but terms must give full interpretation to words such as 'cluster' and 'group'	Members	The use of annotations show where the illustrations are showing a 'cluster' or 'group'. 'Cluster' is also defined in Policy SCLP5.4.
SCLP5.4 – can a rural cluster have more than one gap?	Developers/agents	Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 of the draft SPD both state that areas can have more than one gap.
SCLP5.4 – is frontage relevant to cluster? For example, round the corner on a side road could also meet the definition. Policy needs clarifying what is considered adjacent to highways.	Developers/agents	Chapter 2 of the draft SPD outlines the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster'. The text and the illustrations show that such an area must be made up of a continuous line of existing dwellings or a close group of dwellings, and that these areas must be adjacent to a highway.
What are the roles of roads and private drives?	Developers/agents	Highways are key features of 'Clusters' and potentially appropriate sites. The draft SPD shows that existing dwellings must be adjacent to a highway and provides a link to the Suffolk County Council website which defines highways.

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
SPD needs to define a 'close group' of dwellings i.e. how to define whether a particular dwelling is or isn't part of a close group (relevant to SCLP5.4).	Developers/agents	Chapter 2 of the draft SPD outlines the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster'. This includes further guidance on what is meant by a 'close group' of dwellings and how the Council will consider these closely related or not. Illustrations have also been included in the draft SPD to interpret this.
'Adjacent on two sides' needs guidance.	Developers/agents	(Note – although raised in this section the comment relates to the appropriateness of a site rather than the identification of a cluster or settlement in the countryside). Chapters 4 and 5 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development under these policies. Both sections provide further guidance on how sites should be surrounded by development on two sides, as well as diagrams to demonstrate these principles.
What further guidance might assist in considering whether a space is a 'gap'? (Slides 12 – 16)		
Is there a maximum number of existing properties [to be considered as a cluster]. Example 4 shows 10 existing properties – if the potential gaps are developed this will become a settlement.	Town and Parish Councils	Chapters 2 and 3 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for an area to be considered a 'Cluster' and a 'Settlement in the Countryside'. Both sections outline that there is no maximum number of dwellings in either case.
If proposed dwellings are affordable homes would that influence whether permission is granted?	Town and Parish Councils	There are situations where policies on affordable housing in the countryside (SCLP11.5 and WLP8.6) could also be relevant alongside these policies. Chapter 8 of the draft SPD provides further guidance on how these policies will be applied in these situations.
Example 5 – if plot 2 was fully opposite the existing dwelling opposite what would be the view on extending a garden? If plot 2 has a sufficiently large garden to the south it could potentially open up another site on the opposite side of the road. There needs to be guidance on whether the existing residential properties should extend along the whole length of the proposed site.	Town and Parish Councils	Chapters 4 and 5 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development under these policies. Both chapters clearly state that sites must be completely surrounded by development on at least 2 sides. The illustration in the draft SPD also provide interpretation on this part of the policies.
Example 5 – if plots 3/4/5 and 6 were all dense woodland and considered a 'wildlife corridor' would they be treated differently?	Town and Parish Councils	Any proposals submitted relating to these policies must also meet the requirements of any other relevant policies in the Local Plans, including

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
		any relating to biodiversity and landscape. This is stated in Chapter 8 of the draft SPD.
What if there is a feature such as a pond or tree in the gap?	Members	Any proposals submitted relating to these policies must also meet the requirements of any other relevant policies in the Local Plans, including any relating to biodiversity and landscape. This is stated in Chapter 8 of the draft SPD.
Infill should be defined	Members	The illustrations in the Draft SPD show sites that may be potentially suitable as infill under the terms of the policies.
What happens with curtilage is an important consideration. How does the nature/features of the curtilage affect the suitability of the site?	Developers/agents	Chapter 6 of the draft SPD provides guidance on considering the potential impact on character. Paragraph 6.10 makes specific reference to the settings of the new dwellings.
Cumulative impact isn't the same in both policies. The Waveney policy (WLP5.4) is worded so the cumulative effect only relates to up to 5 properties.	Developers/agents	Chapter 6 of the draft SPD provide guidance on considering the potential impact on character, which includes guidance on how cumulative impact will be considered for each policy. Paragraphs 6.23 – 6.26 of the draft SPD also provide guidance on how developments coming forward under WLP8.7 will be considered in relation to the strategy of the Local Plan.
How would a site with permission but not built be considered?	Developers/agents	Chapter 6 of the Draft SPD contains guidance on that consideration may be given to these if there is certainty that the site will be developed.
What further guidance might assist in considering if a proposal will impact local character? (Slides 17 – 19)		
Housing needs should be taken into account. A mix of house sizes are needed such as smaller housing to attract younger families who are unable to afford properties in the countryside and for those wishing to downsize. Policy is to meet the needs of the rural area. Big executive houses aren't needed, smaller properties are. Consider the purpose of the policy i.e. to support rural communities.	Town and Parish Councils	The draft SPD acknowledges that the purpose of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 includes supporting smaller rural communities to meet their housing needs and enable people to stay within their communities. Under SCLP5.4 housing needs should be specifically taken into account for proposals of 4 or 5 dwellings. Paragraphs 7.6 and 7.7 of the draft SPD highlight this. Policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 in the Local Plans set out policy on housing mix and place a focus on smaller dwellings.
What about building an extra house in the large garden of a house that is in the cluster?	Town and Parish Councils	Chapters 4 and 5 of the draft SPD outline the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development under these policies. This could include a garden of an existing house if the site and proposal

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
		meets the requirements of SCLP5.4 or WLP8.7, as well as other policy requirements.
Sympathetic design rather than the size of the dwelling. Clusters are much better when there is variation within them, as were built years ago. It is really important that the materials are appropriate to the setting.	Town and Parish Councils	Chapter 6 of the draft SPD provides guidance on considering the potential impact on character. Page 24 specifically highlights considerations relating to the design of new dwellings.
Style, landscaping etc are important as is plot size. Defining character from plot size is only part of the consideration	Developers/agents Members	Following the feedback received during the various workshops, the illustrations have been prepared to make them more realistic and more detailed to provide more accurate representations of all elements of the policies. Annotations have been added to the illustrations to provide further clarity on the content of the draft SPD
Gaps can be an important feature in a Conservation Area.	Developers/agents	Chapter 6 of the draft SPD provide guidance on considering the potential impact on character. Page 25 specifically highlights considerations relating to Conservation Areas.
Other questions and comments		
How much input will the Parish Council have as to whether development in a cluster is acceptable?	Town and Parish Councils	Town and Parish Councils have the opportunity to comment on planning applications that are submitted within their areas. It is not considered necessary to provide further guidance on this in the SPD.
SCLP5.4 – the policy states the proposal is for up to 3 dwellings. Does that mean 1, or 2 or 3?	Developers/agents	Policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 both cover scenarios where the creation of up to 5 dwellings could be appropriate. This means that proposals for either 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 new dwellings could be proposed under these policies. However, in order to be permitted they would need to meet the criteria of the policies, as well as any others in the Local Plans. The guidance in Chapters 4 and 5 of the draft SPD acknowledges that different scales of sites may come forward, up to 5 dwellings.
SCLP5.4 – appears to be some confusion between the supporting text at para 5.25 with the relevant policy criterion.	Developers/agents	A footnote for paragraph 3.1 of the Draft SPD acknowledges an editing error in the Local Plan which means that paragraph 5.25 refers to criteria c), when it in fact relates to criteria b).
The policies state that the concerns of the community are addressed. Who is the community and what constitutes a concern?	Developers/agents	Chapter 7 of the draft SPD outlines the requirements for public engagement on relevant proposals, including what is meant by the community and how it should be demonstrated that planning impacts

Summary of Comment	Workshop session	How comment has been taken into account
I would prefer a legitimate planning concern.		identified by the community have been addressed (under policy WLP8.7).
The SPD could show features that are in / could be in the cluster and those not appropriate to be within the cluster.	Developers/agents	The draft SPD includes a number of diagrams that highlight the features and characteristics that would be considered as part of 'Clusters' and 'Settlements in the Countryside'. The draft SPD also highlights what would not be considered part of such areas, such as isolated dwellings in the Countryside.
General comments on the diagrams within the presentation(s)		
Diagrams are overly simplistic e.g. roads are straight, existing properties are on same/similar sized plots, need more variation of house types e.g. not just detached properties, boundaries shown are too neat.	Parishes Developers/agents Members	Following the feedback received during the various workshops, the illustrations have been prepared to include a number of features and to portray various elements of the policies.
Need for scale / references to distances between buildings.	Town and Parish Councils Members	Following the feedback received during the various workshops, the illustrations have been prepared to make them relatively realistic and to provide representations of various elements of the policies. Annotations have been added to the illustrations to provide further clarity on the content of the draft SPD. Realistic measurements and sizes have been used for all elements of the illustrations, such as the roads and building sizes, to ensure the scale of the illustrations is appropriate.
Examples need to show the cluster's relationship with the surrounding area.	Town and Parish Councils Members	The illustrations in the draft SPD include the use of inset maps to show the surrounding area to provide context to the clusters.
Need to identify which is the main elevation of the existing properties as some may not front onto the highway.	Members	The illustrations in the draft SPD demonstrate the orientation of buildings.
Do other Council's guidance use illustrative top down diagrams or do they use 3D?	Members	The illustrations in the draft SPD are in 3D, with those showing a wider view in 2D.

Appendix 2: Initial Consultation Bodies

The following organisations and groups were invited to attend online workshops at the initial consultation stage:

- Town and Parish Councils in East Suffolk (145 no.)²
- Agents and Developers working in East Suffolk (198 no.)³
- East Suffolk Councillors (55 no.)

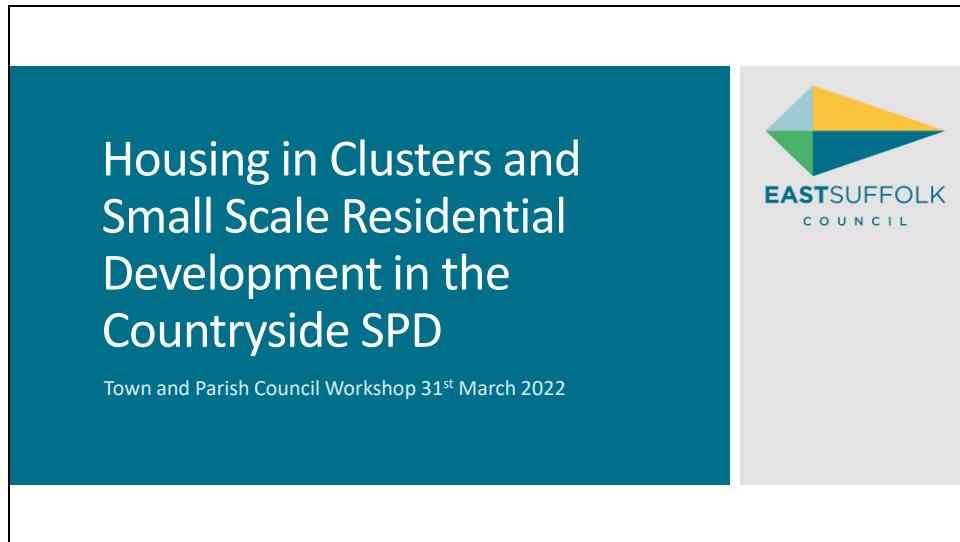
² There are 146 Town Councils and Parish Councils/Meetings in East Suffolk, however Covehithe Parish Meeting does not currently have a correspondent.

³ 194 individuals/organisations from the Local Plan Mailing List identified as planning agents, developers etc. A further four agents were invited as currently working within East Suffolk.

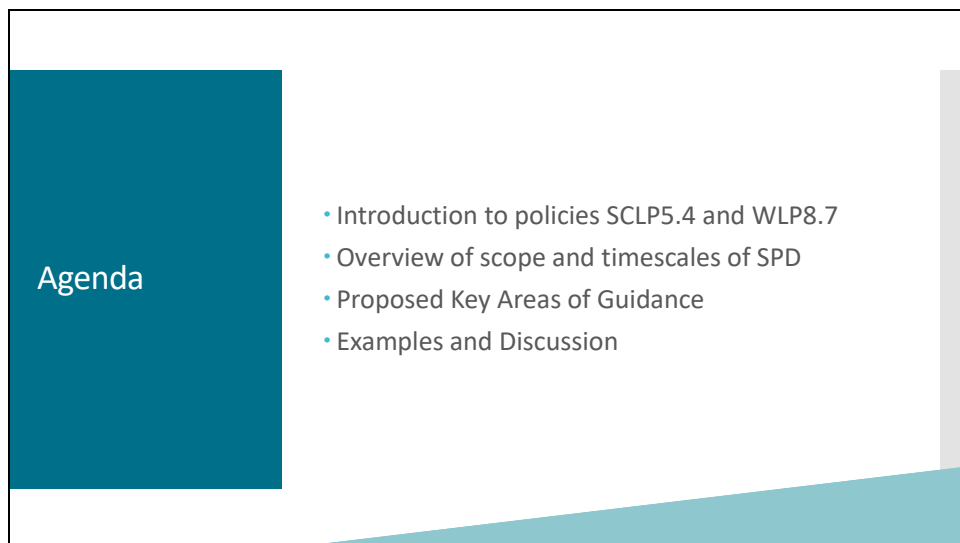
Appendix 3: Initial Consultation Workshop Presentation

Presentation slides from the Town and Parish Workshop held 31 March 2022.

Slide 1



Slide 2



Slide 3

SCLP5.4 – Housing in Clusters in the Countryside

Policy SCLP5.4: Housing in Clusters in the Countryside

Proposals for new dwellings within 'clusters' in the countryside will be supported where:

- a) The proposal is for up to three dwellings within a cluster of five or more dwellings;
- Or
- The proposal is for up to five dwellings within a cluster of at least ten existing dwellings which is well related to a Major Centre, Town, Large Village or Small Village;
- And
- b) The development consists of infilling within a continuous built up frontage, is in a clearly identifiable gap within an existing cluster, or is otherwise located adjacent to existing development on two sides;
- c) The development does not represent an extension of the built up area into the surrounding countryside beyond the existing extent of the built up area surrounding, or adjacent to, the site; and
- d) It would not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or, result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape.

Where more than three dwellings are proposed under criterion b) above, applicants must be able to demonstrate that meaningful and effective community engagement has taken place in the development of the scheme and that the mix of dwellings proposed would meet locally identified needs.

Particular care will be exercised in sensitive locations such as within or in the setting of Conservation Areas and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Consideration will also need to be given to the features of Landscape Character Areas in accordance with Policy SCLP10.4.

The cumulative impact of proposals will be a consideration in relation to the criteria above.

A 'cluster' in the context of this policy:

- Consists of a continuous line of existing dwellings or a close group of existing dwellings adjacent to an existing highway; and
- Contains 5 or more dwellings.

Slide 4

WLP8.7 – Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

Policy WLP8.7 – Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

Small scale residential development in the Countryside of up to three dwellings will be permitted where:

- The site constitutes a clearly identifiable gap within a built up area of a settlement within the Countryside;
- There are existing residential properties on two sides of the site; and
- The development does not extend further into the undeveloped Countryside than the existing extent of the built up area surrounding the site.

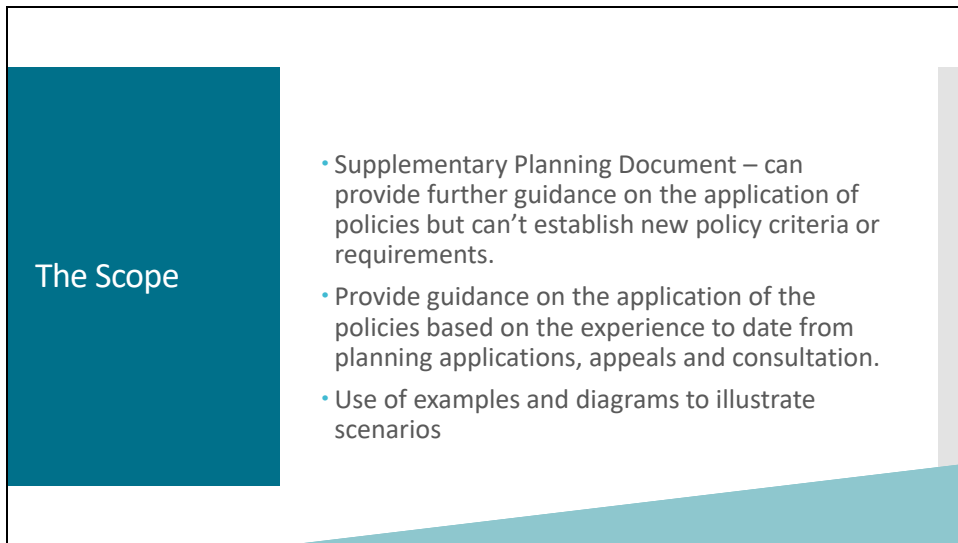
Small scale residential development in the Countryside of up to and including five dwellings will also be permitted where:

- There is clear and demonstrable local support;
- The scheme demonstrates meaningful and robust consultation with the Parish Council, local community and other stakeholders;
- Following consultation, it can be demonstrated that any planning impacts identified by the local community have been fully addressed and therefore the scheme is supported by the community;
- The site is adjacent or within the built up area of the settlement within the Countryside; and
- The scheme when considered cumulatively with other developments in the Countryside would not result in a level of development which would be contrary to the strategy outlined in Policies WLP1.1 and WLP7.1.

For all small scale development in the Countryside the design of the scheme will need to respect and reflect the character of the settlement and existing built up frontage including:

- Housing density is reflective of the density in the village and surrounding built up area; and
- The ratio of the building footprint to the plot area is consistent with existing properties nearby which characterise the village.

Slide 5



The Scope

- Supplementary Planning Document – can provide further guidance on the application of policies but can't establish new policy criteria or requirements.
- Provide guidance on the application of the policies based on the experience to date from planning applications, appeals and consultation.
- Use of examples and diagrams to illustrate scenarios

Slide 6



Timescales

- Initial consultation with Developers and Town and Parish Councils – Early Spring 2022
- Public consultation – Summer 2022
- Adoption – Autumn 2022

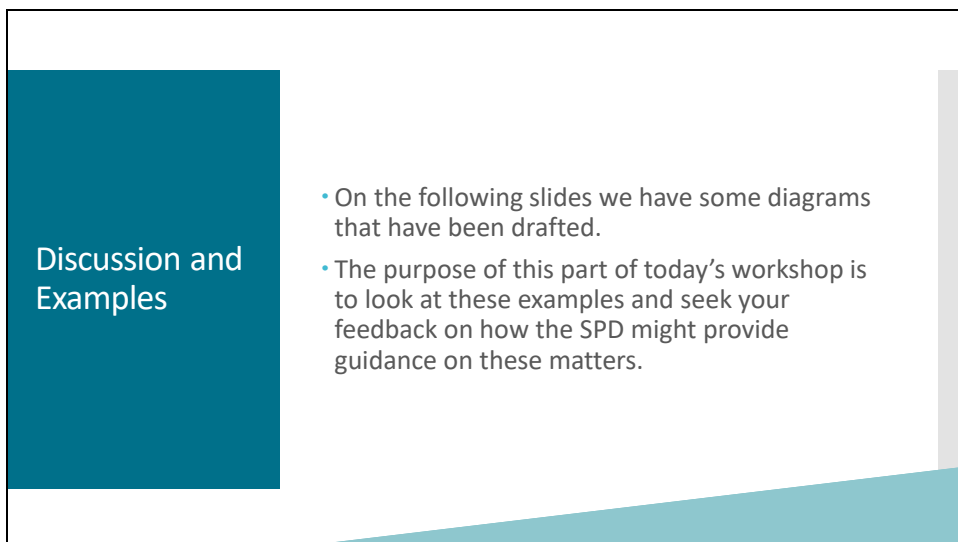
Slide 7



Key Areas for the Guidance to Address

- Some key areas have been identified, such as:
 - What is a 'Cluster'/Countryside settlement?
 - What is a 'Gap'?
 - Relationship with Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside.
 - Relationship with highways and non-residential uses.
 - What is expected from 'meaningful and effective engagement' (SCLP5.4) and 'meaningful and robust consultation' (WLP8.7)?
 - Consideration of impact on local character and landscape.
 - Relationships with other policies, e.g. Strategy for Newbourne (SCLP11.9) and other Countryside policies.
- Are there any key areas of guidance it would be useful to include?


Slide 8



Discussion and Examples

- On the following slides we have some diagrams that have been drafted.
- The purpose of this part of today's workshop is to look at these examples and seek your feedback on how the SPD might provide guidance on these matters.

Slide 9

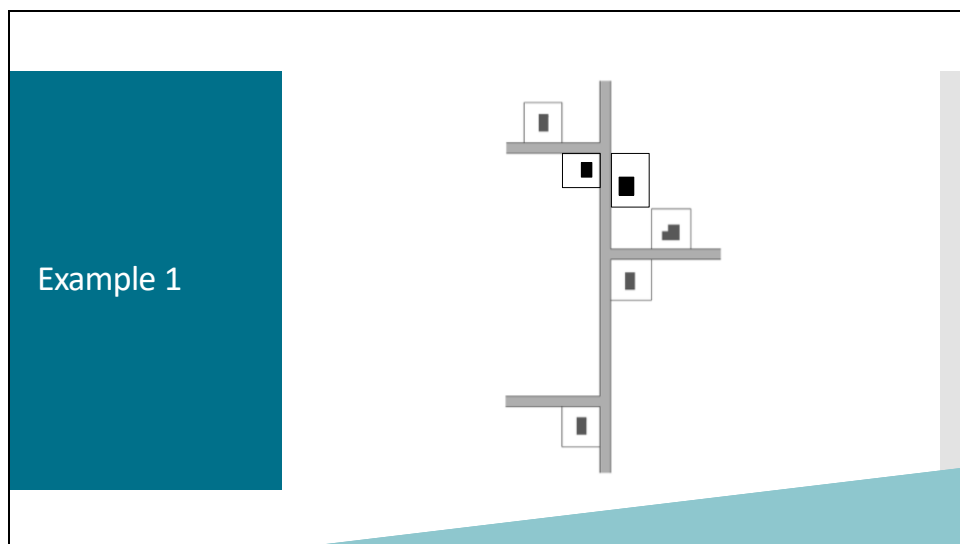


Question

What further guidance might assist in considering whether a group of buildings is a cluster/countryside settlement?

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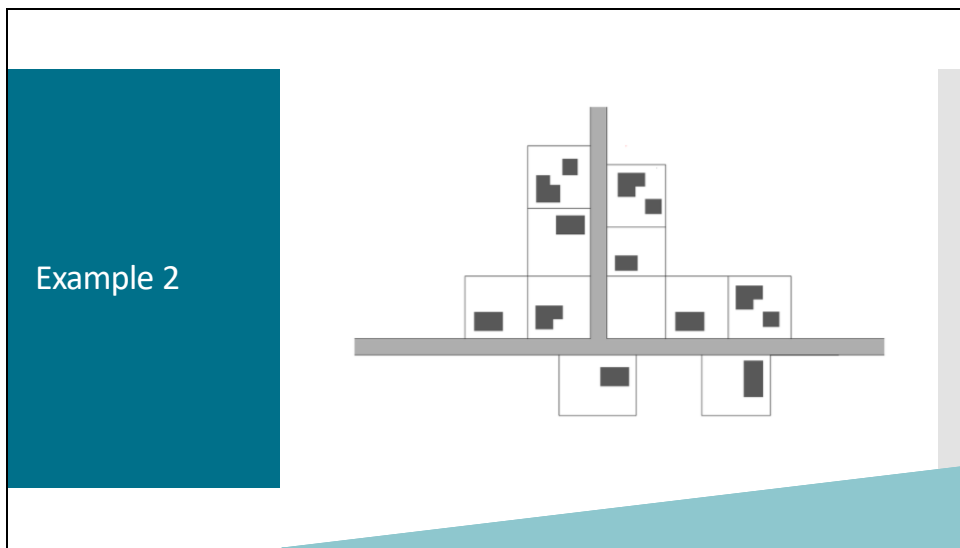
Slide 10



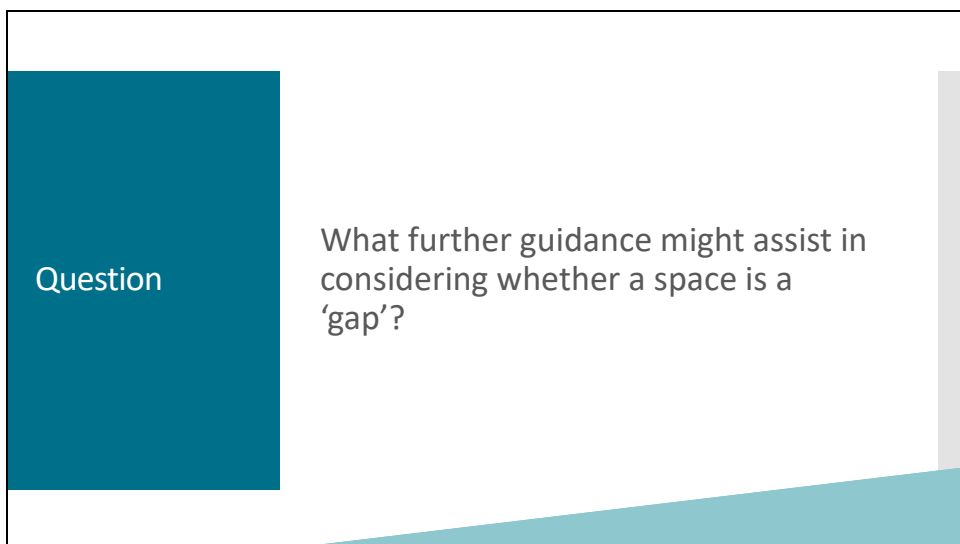
Example 1

This slide features a teal header box on the left containing the text "Example 1". The main content area is white with a light blue gradient at the bottom. It displays a diagram of a building cluster. A central vertical grey line represents a road or path. Several small white squares, representing buildings, are arranged along this line and on short horizontal grey lines branching off it. The buildings are clustered in the upper half of the diagram, with a few scattered in the lower half.

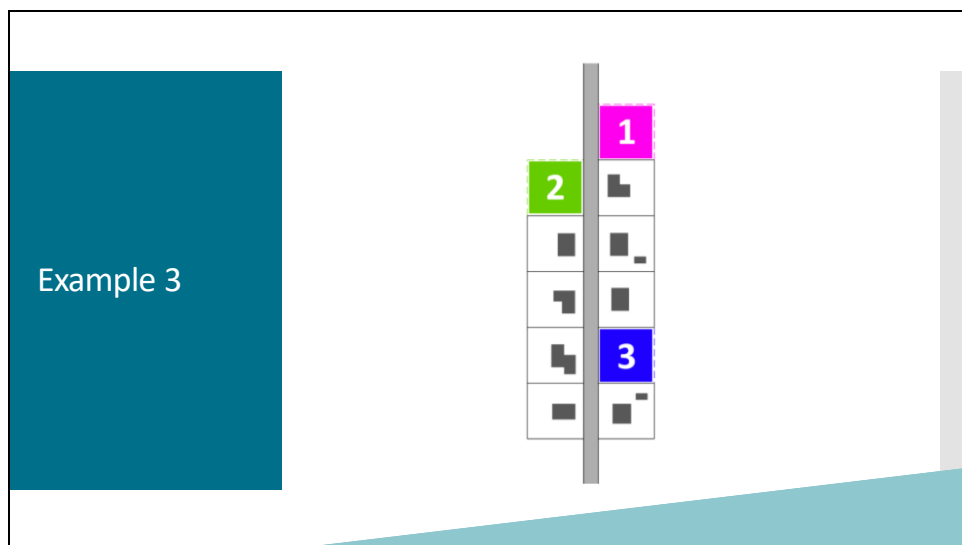
Slide 11



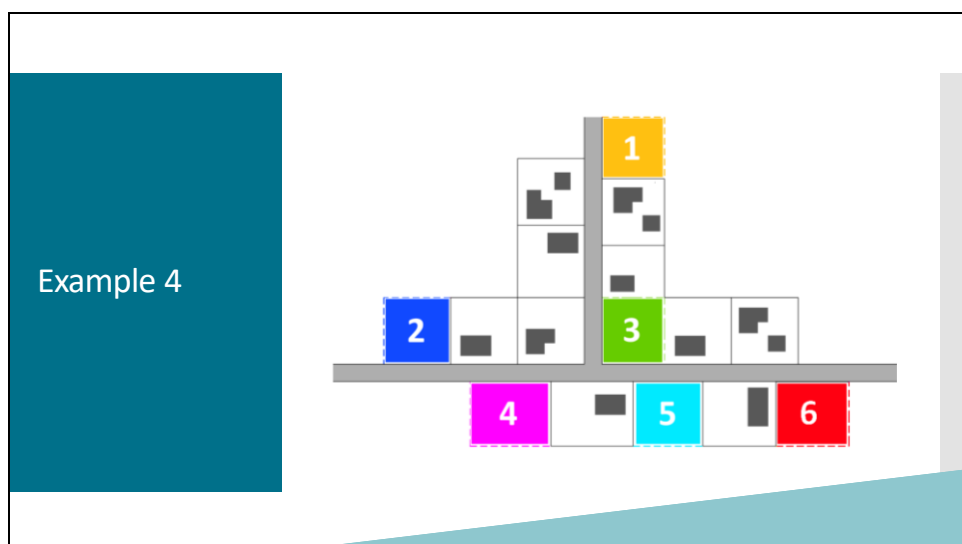
Slide 12



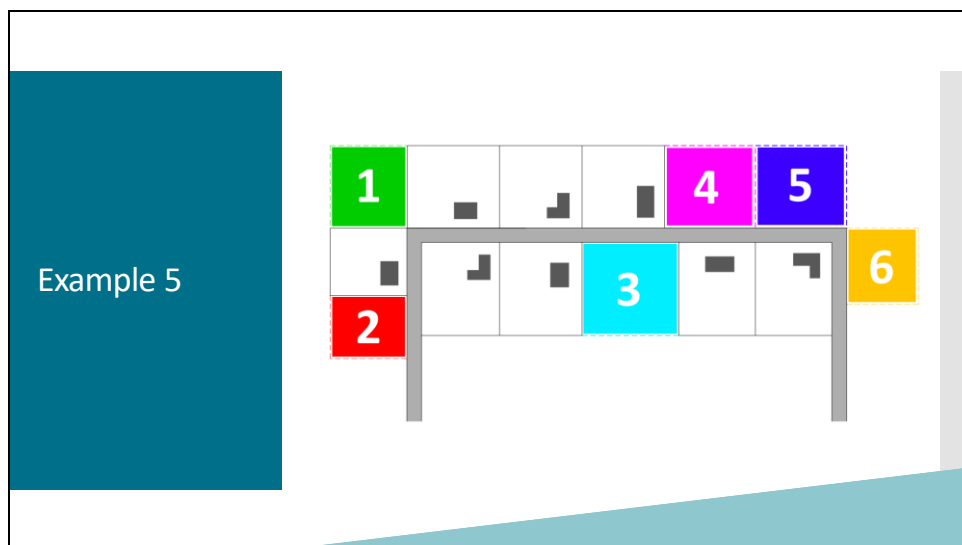
Slide 13



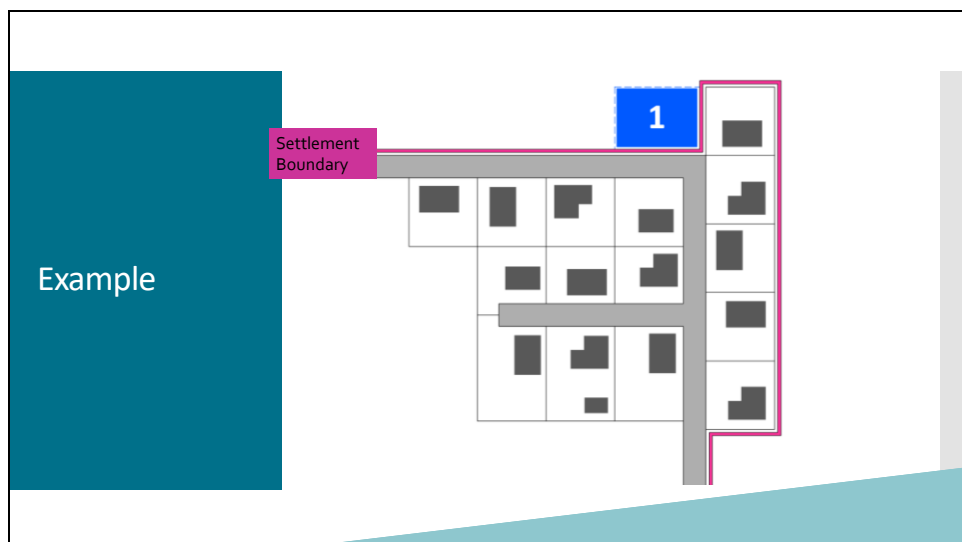
Slide 14



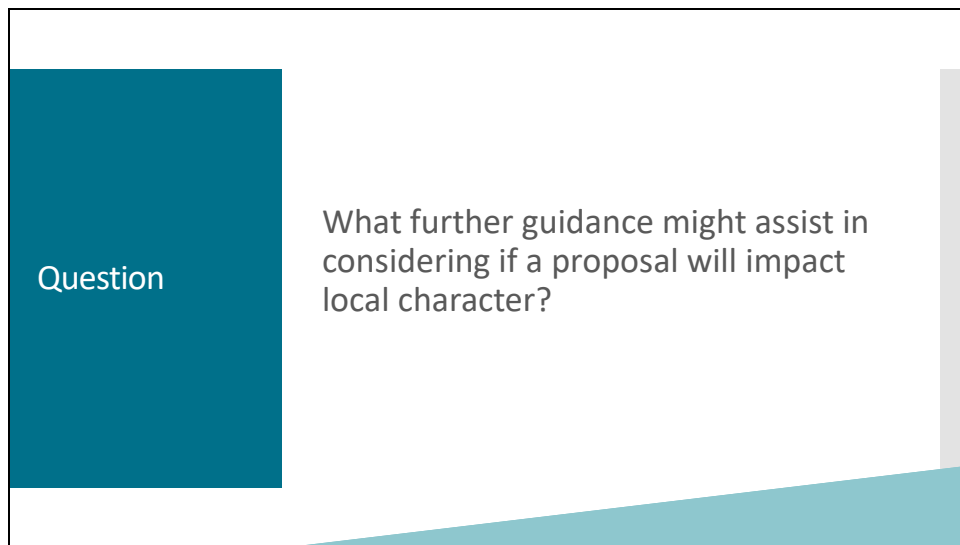
Slide 15



Slide 16



Slide 17

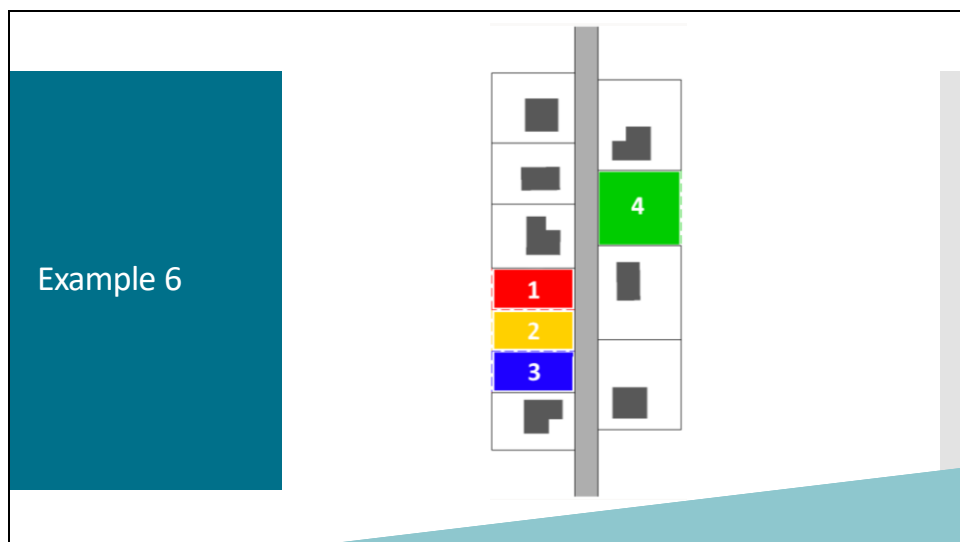


Question

What further guidance might assist in considering if a proposal will impact local character?

This slide features a teal rectangular box on the left containing the word "Question". To its right, the text "What further guidance might assist in considering if a proposal will impact local character?" is displayed. The slide has a light blue gradient at the bottom and a grey vertical bar on the right.

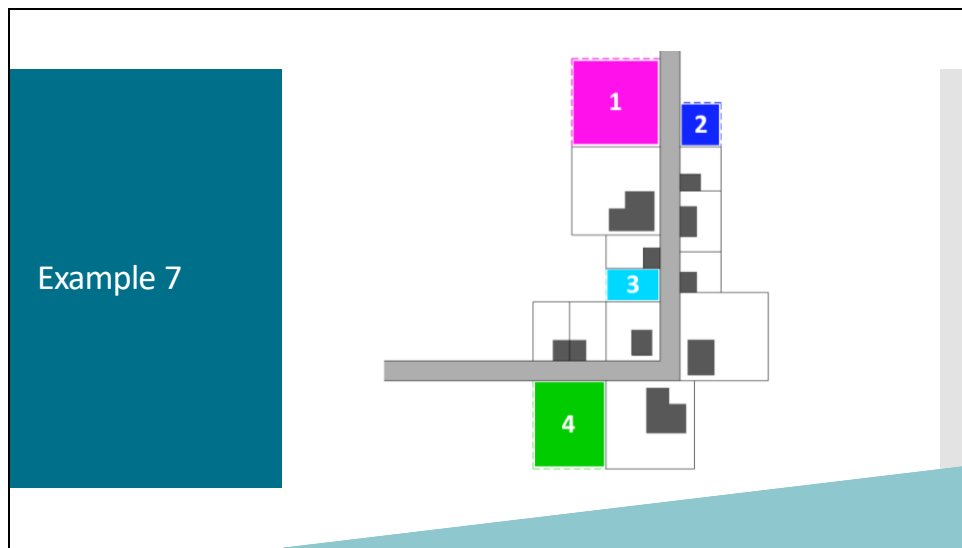
Slide 18



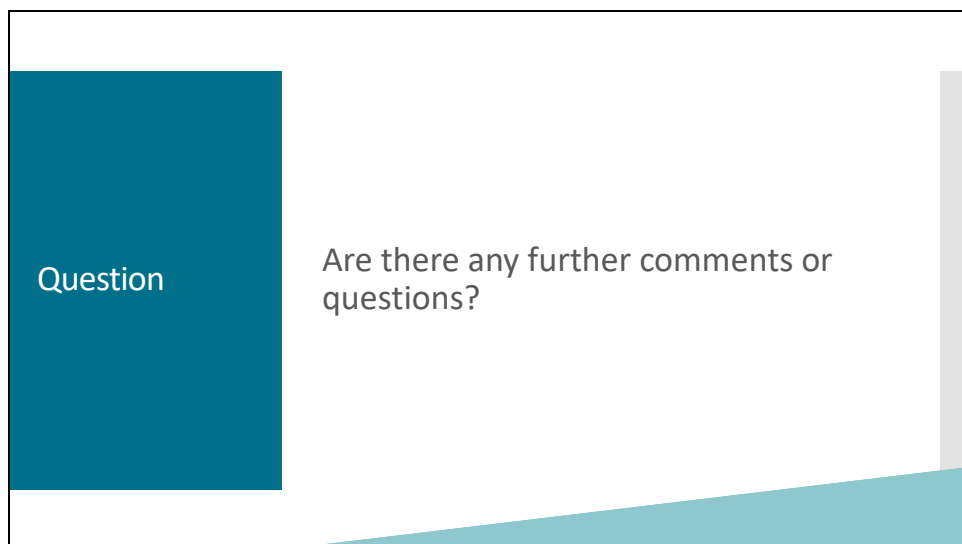
Example 6

This slide illustrates a housing layout example. On the left is a teal box labeled "Example 6". To its right is a diagram showing two rows of housing units separated by a vertical grey line. The left row contains five units, with the bottom three highlighted in red (1), yellow (2), and blue (3). The right row contains four units, with the top one highlighted in green (4). Each unit is represented by a grey silhouette of a house. The slide includes a light blue gradient at the bottom and a grey vertical bar on the right.

Slide 19



Slide 20



Appendix 4: Draft Consultation Bodies

The following organisations and groups were consulted during the preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document:

- Elected members
- Developers / landowners / agents
- Suffolk County Council
- Broads Authority
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Members of the public

Specific consultation bodies

- The Coal Authority
- Environment Agency
- English Heritage
- Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Highways Agency
- Suffolk County Council
- Parish and Town Councils within and adjoining East Suffolk
- Suffolk Constabulary
- Adjoining local planning authorities – Ipswich Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Broads Authority, South Norfolk District Council
- Anglian Water
- Essex and Suffolk Water
- Homes England
- Electronic communication companies who own or control apparatus in the Suffolk Coastal District
- Relevant gas and electricity companies
- NHS England
- Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group
- Great Yarmouth and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group

General consultation bodies

- Voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the District
- Bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the District
- Bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the District
- Bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the District
- Bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the District
- Bodies which represent the interests of environmental groups in the District

Other individuals and organisations

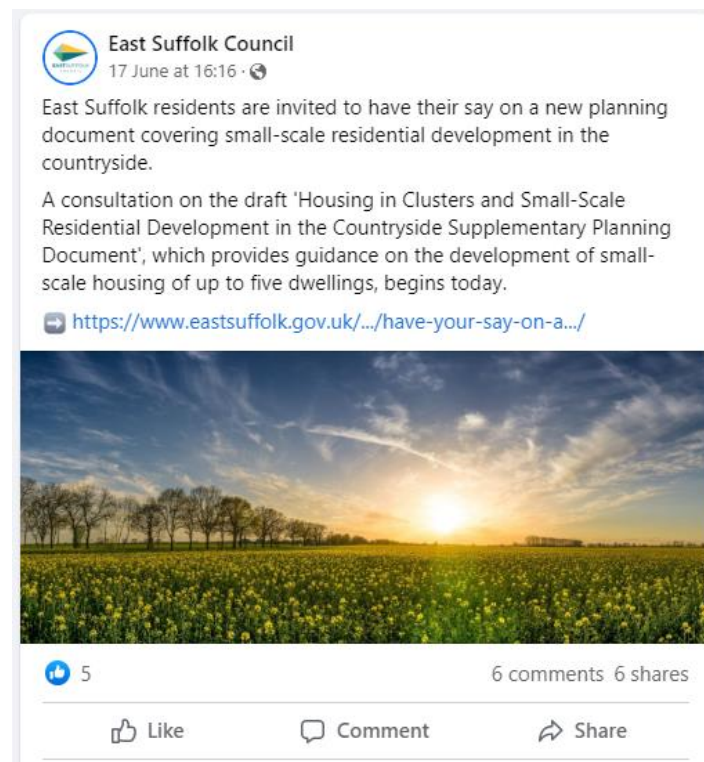
Includes local businesses, individuals, local organisations and groups, planning agents, developers, landowners, residents and others on the Local Plan mailing list.

Appendix 5: Draft Consultation Promotion Material

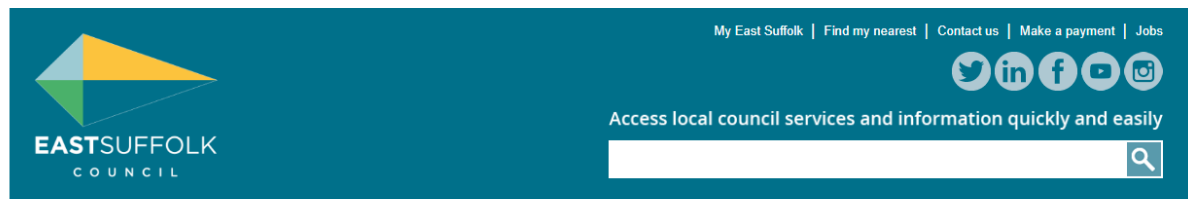
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Have your say on a new planning document

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East Suffolk residents are invited to have their say on a new planning document covering small-scale residential development in the countryside.

A consultation on the draft Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides guidance on the development of small-scale housing of up to five dwellings, begins on Friday 17 June.

The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and the Waveney Local Plan each contain a policy which allows for a limited amount of new housing in the countryside. The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides further guidance on the application of these policies:

- Policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020)
- Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan, 2019)

The draft SPD covers a range of topics including an outline of the necessary characteristics for sites to be appropriate for development, considerations on the potential impact on character of the area, the requirements for public engagement and how these policies relate to other policies in the Local Plans.

Cllr David Ritchie, Cabinet Member for Planning and Coastal Management said: "We welcome any feedback on this new Supplementary Planning Document which will enable us to make decisions on future developments in rural areas."

Comments on the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document must be submitted by 5pm on Friday 5 August 2022.

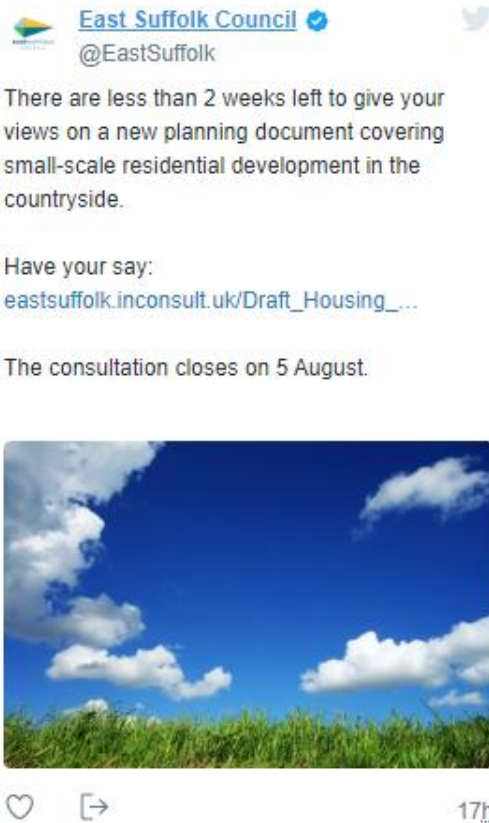
[View and comment on this consultation.](#)

Comments can also be emailed to planningpolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk or sent to East Suffolk Council, Planning Policy and Delivery Team, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0EQ.

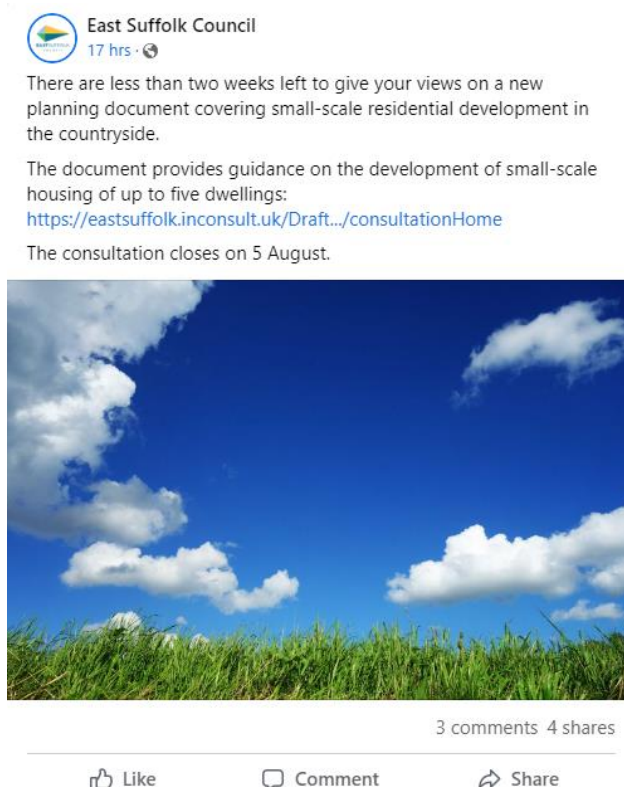
Paper copies of the draft Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Consultation Statement have been made available for inspection at all libraries in the district and the Council's Customer Service Centres. For information on locations and opening hours please see www.suffolklibraries.co.uk and www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/contact-us/customer-services/.

All comments received will be considered and taken into account when finalising the Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD, which will be adopted later in 2022. Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Twitter – 27th July 2022



Facebook – 27th July 2022



Consultation Poster



Have your say

Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document

Consultation period
Friday 17th June to 5pm Friday 5th August 2022

What are we doing?

East Suffolk Council is inviting comments on a new planning document which provides guidance on the development of small scale housing, of up to five dwellings, in the countryside.

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides further guidance on the application of Local Plan policies SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020) and WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan, 2019).



How can you get involved?

GIVE YOUR VIEWS

Visit the website below to view and comment on the draft document. Paper copies of the draft SPD and Initial Consultation Statement are also available to view in libraries and the Council's Customer Service Centres. Please contact us if you need any assistance in viewing the documents.

All comments received will be considered and taken into account when finalising the SPD, which will be adopted later in 2022. Once adopted the SPD will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.



HOUSING IN CLUSTERS AND SMALL SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
June 2022

Guidance on implementing local plan policies
SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside
WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside

Find out more and give your views:
[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/
planning-policy-consultations](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning-policy-consultations)

Alternatively, please send comments to:
East Suffolk Council, Planning Policy & Delivery Team, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0EQ

✉ planningpolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk
☎ 01394 444557 / 01502 523029

Appendix 6: Draft Consultation Responses

Please note that in the Comment Summary column any page and paragraph numbers relate to the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (June 2022)

Please note that due to a technical issue respondents who submitted their comments online before 22nd June were not requested to submit their name and contact details, and these respondents appear as 'anonymous'.

General Comments				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Health and Safety Executive	54	The HSE is not a statutory consultee for local and neighbourhood plans. HSE has provided Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) with access to its LUP Web App https://pa.hsl.gov.uk/ and downloadable GIS consultation zones. These tools alongside HSE's published methodology (http://www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/) can assist you in ensuring that land allocations do not conflict with major hazard sites and pipelines, licenced explosives sites and nuclear installations. Your attention is drawn to the planning policy guidance provided by your central planning departments in England, Scotland and Wales. For England: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hazardous-substances in particular paragraphs 65 to 69 which explain an LPAs responsibilities when taking public safety into account in planning decisions and formulating local plans.	Comments noted.	None.
Environment Agency	57	Thank you for consulting us on the below consultation. We have reviewed the document as submitted and can confirm that we have no formal comments to make on the SPD and its contents. We trust this is useful.	Comments noted.	None.
Felixstowe Town Council	36	Having considered the draft document, Members welcome this SPD. We feel that it provides a succinct but valuable interpretation of policy SCLP 5.4 which has proved difficult to interpret in the past.	Comments noted.	None.
Cretingham, Monewden and	21	While allowing limited development is understandable, plans need to be tightened to	Comments noted. The purpose of the SPD is to provide	SPD has been clarified in respect of cumulative effects, in paragraph 6.24

Hoo Parish Council		prevent overdevelopment. SCLP policy does not allow for consideration of cumulative development except in AONB which should be changed. Should be a limit on number of houses that can be developed based on current housing numbers for each settlement. Should be restrictions on how far large areas can be subdivided. SCLP should slow down development if too many come forward in Countryside. Finally, should also be restrictions on who can buy the houses, namely full time residents who live locally.	guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The changes proposed would constitute policy and the SPD cannot make changes or add additional requirements for applications. Consideration of cumulative effects can be considered outside of AONBs and the SPD has been clarified in this respect, in paragraph 6.22 and new Illustration 10.	and new Illustration 10 as well as throughout the document.
Carl Eastwood	35	I am completely opposed to the concept. Policies have potential to ruin unspoilt countryside. What about the environmental impacts? How are you planning to control the numbers of new developments? Has the potential to spiral out of control. Even small developments can have huge environmental impacts, such as damage to habitats and more traffic. Should focus on existing areas not the countryside.	The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals approved under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be considered and monitored. Both policies include controls to determine when development could have a detrimental impact on the countryside, and these will be applied by the Council. Any proposals will also need to meet the requirements of the relevant biodiversity and landscape policies in the Local Plans.	None.

Saxtead Parish Council	52	Subject is difficult and complex to understand. Provision of housing and protection of heritage assets vitally important. Object to policy due to ESC failing to consider housing needs of lower and average income households. There is an Exceptions Policy where land in small clusters can be given planning permission provided it is supplied below market value and meets the needs of the local community. It is my opinion that land given planning permission in attractive villages in small clusters will be sold at premium values as highly desirable. This seems to negate the Exceptions Policy as no one will be willing to sell at below market value to address housing needs when all small clusters are likely to attract premium values.	Comments noted. The purpose of this SPD is to provide further guidance on the application of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. The SPD does not have the remit to change or remove the use of these policies. Section 7 of the SPD sets out guidance relating to an assessment of local housing need, which would be relevant to proposals for 4 or 5 dwellings under policy SCLP5.4. The Local Plans do provide opportunities, under other policies, for affordable housing development in the Countryside to help meet local housing needs.	None.
Norfolk County Council	58	No specific comments on ecology and support conclusion of SEA Screening Opinion that a full SEA is not required. We are supportive of the policy approach to landscape impacts. Any proposals close to other authorities should consider the Landscape Character Assessments of those areas. Where development is close to other areas, consideration should be given to the impacts on infrastructure and appropriate consultation should be undertaken with neighbouring authorities.	Comments noted. Section 6 of the SPD outlines the considerations relating to impacts on landscape and the wider area.	Paragraph 6.20 has now been expanded to include reference to neighbouring authority landscape character assessments where this is relevant.
Reydon Parish Council	22	This guidance, although unlikely to apply in Reydon, seems helpful and well thought out guidance on the two Local Plan policies and balances the need to protect the countryside with the need for more rural housing.	Comments noted.	None.

Peter Webb	69	Grammatical errors: Capital letters should not be used for common nouns and adjectives (major centres, towns, large villages, small villages, landscape character, countryside, settlement boundaries).	Comments noted. The use of capital letters in the SPD reflects the use of proper nouns in the Local Plans.	None.
Parham Parish Council	75	Primary concern is that local planning officers pay no attention to our comments. Our local knowledge was ignored during a recent application where information was provided on the sites previous use and flooding risks. Recent comments were also ignored on housing need and the impact on local infrastructure. Our suggestions to limit vehicular access to the village from local commercial premises at certain times were also ignored. In order to support this document we would need to feel our voice was being heard. Do planners not appreciate the spaces between buildings are just as important as the buildings themselves? The SPD also states that applicants must show how planning concerns from the community have been addressed. We wonder how this will be interpreted as we will not be asked if we agree.	Comments on applications are considered by planning officers and included in the decision report. In relation to the SPD, sections 4 and 5 of the SPD outlined how spaces or 'gaps' within areas will be considered, including needing to consider the spaces contribution to the character of the area and its use, as highlighted by illustration 9. Section 7 outlines how the Council expects applicants to engage with the local community in relation to the development of 4 or 5 new dwellings. The SPD provides details on what applicants will need to provide in order to show they have met the criteria in the relevant policy. This will likely need to be provided through a Planning Statement.	Guidance on the consideration of spaces within 'Clusters' and Settlements in the Countryside' has been expanded in sections 4 and 5 of the SPD. Reference has also been made to the importance of spaces to elsewhere.
Dennington Parish Council	33	Councillors complimented the document for showing clarity on what would and wouldn't get permission under the scheme. The visuals provided an excellent way of showing the policy and it is	Comments and support noted.	None.

		hoped ESC will continue with this approach with future policies.		
National Highways	49	No comments.	Noted.	None.
Mutford Parish Council	61	Clearer definition of 'Countryside' is needed to avoid extending settlement boundaries. A minimum distance between proposals and settlement boundaries should be set. SPD should be renamed to state 'Open Countryside'. SPD could be at odds with Neighbourhood Plan in that it could allow development that would cause coalescence and erode rural identity. Development that could harm Listed buildings and the AONB should be avoided. There also needs to be further definition on what is a 'gap'. The Parish Council also does not have the resources to appoint agents to guide us and would require further resources from the Council to do this.	Paragraph 3.2 of the SPD defines what constitutes the 'Countryside' according to the Waveney Local Plan. It states that both a proposed site and the 'Settlement in the Countryside' it relates to must be located entirely outside of Settlement Boundaries. The SPD is unable to change or add additional requirements to WLP8.7, therefore a distance from Settlement Boundaries cannot be added. The term 'Countryside' has been defined by the Local Plan, therefore it is not appropriate to change this for this SPD to state 'Open Countryside', as this may be considered differently. Any proposals under policy WPL8.7 that are put forward in the Mutford Neighbourhood Plan area would also be considered against any relevant policies in the Mutford Neighbourhood Plan as part of the development plan for East Suffolk. This also applies to other policies in the	Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 have been expanded to provide further clarity on how 'gaps' will be considered.

			Waveney Local Plan including Design (WLP8.29) and Landscape Character (WLP8.35). Section 5 of the SPD outlines what constates a 'gap' according to WLP8.7. The SPD does not have the remit to add further requirements such as minimum or maximum sizes of 'gaps'. Section 7 outlines the requirements for public engagement where relevant.	
Martlesham Parish Council	48	The Parish Council welcomes this guidance. The Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan resists development outside Settlement Boundaries unless they are in accordance with other polices in the Local Plan and development is directed to appropriate areas. The SPD should make specific reference to the importance of Neighbourhood Plans. While it is important to consider the cumulative impacts on sensitive areas, shouldn't this be the case in all proposals? The Parish Council would like to see a more restrictive approach than the SPD currently has and further elaboration on detrimental development would be appreciated. Consideration should also be given to the cumulative impact of major development.	Comments noted. Neighbourhood Plans are referenced throughout the SPD. The SPD does not have the remit to add further requirements than those already included in the policies. Section 6 of the SPD outlines what is expected from development and how detrimental development would be considered. The SPD focusses on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7, it is not the correct arena for considering the impacts of major development.	A new paragraph has been added to the Introduction of the SPD to highlight the importance of Neighbourhood Plans and how these could include policies that may be relevant to applications under SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. Paragraph 6.24 has been expanded to include reference to paragraph 5.28 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. This reference highlights that cumulative impacts will be considered in all applications/locations, not just those in sensitive areas.
Easton Neighbourhood Plan	34	The Parish Council considers that the SPD imparts greater detail to underpin Local Plan policies.	Comments and support noted.	None.

Ufford Parish Council	51	The Parish Council support the document and have no specific comments to make.	Comments and support noted.	None.
Natural England	50	Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment.	Comments noted.	None.
Suffolk Wildlife Trust	62	While there are references to impact on landscapes, there are no equivalent references to biodiversity. Biodiversity policies should be referenced in the SPD. Such developments could have significant impacts on priority species and habitats as gaps could have been shielded from agricultural practices. The Environment Act 2021 introduces Biodiversity Net Gain and this should be referenced.	Comments noted. The Council will add references to the impacts and considerations for biodiversity. It is not appropriate to include specific guidance on implementing biodiversity net gain in this SPD. This will be a national requirement that is set to be introduced in 2023. As it is not yet a requirement, the SPD cannot include this.	Section 8 of the SPD, relating to other relevant policies in the Local Plans, now includes references to the Biodiversity and Geodiversity policies in the Local Plans.
Norfolk and Waveney NHS Integrated Care System	74	Support the SPD in principle. We would welcome a statement saying that the Council will support the ICS in ensuring suitable and sustainable provision of healthcare services for their residents through CIL contributions should the need arise.	Comments noted. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be monitored. Both policies include controls to determine when development could have a detrimental impact, and these will be applied by the Council. Proposals submitted under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 may be liable for CIL which will be used to provide	None.

			infrastructure to support development.	
Otley Parish Council	46	Has appropriate parking been considered within Clusters as on road parking can bring drastic changes; Policies do not mention paved footways;	Comments noted. The SPD provides guidance specifically on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. Parking standards will be applied through the relevant design and transport policies in the relevant Local Plan. The sustainable transport policies in the Local Plans will also be a consideration when determining the need for paved footways.	None.
Dennington Parish Council	56	The illustrations in this planning document are excellent and provide clear examples of what would, and would not, be acceptable under this proposal. These illustrations should be retained in the final document, and we would encourage the further use of these types of illustrations in other planning documents.	Comments and support noted.	None.
Wendy Thomas	53	The definition of 'countryside' is rural open space and farmland with low density population. Joining up groups and ribbon development will be detrimental to this. Rural living relies on private transport and closed businesses unlikely to reopen due to lack of footfall. Rural highways largely single track and other infrastructure had limitations. How can we guarantee that homes will not become holiday homes?	Comments noted. The definitions used in the SPD are defined by the Local Plans and cannot be changed by the SPD. The purpose of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 is to provide opportunities for limited development in the countryside to meet local housing needs and sustain rural communities. The SPD provides guidance on	None.

			<p>how impacts on landscape and character will be considered. The amount of growth through these policies will be relatively limited and the SPD outlines how the cumulative impacts of these will be considered to ensure the distribution of growth is not detrimental to the character of the area (SCLP5.4) or undermine the overall strategy of the Waveney Local Plan (WLP8.7). The purpose of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 is to provide development opportunities for rural areas to retain residents and remain sustainable. Without these opportunities, residents could be priced out of areas due to rising values and possible increases in second homes and holiday homes. The Local Plans do not include policies requiring new dwellings to remain as main residences as this is not appropriate to apply to the whole district. However, where this is required as part of neighbourhood Plans this will be enforced.</p>	
Alan Williams	64	I am responding on behalf of Aldringham-cum-Thorpe Parish Council. The council are happy that	Comments and support noted.	None.

		this document reflects most of the feedback from the online preparation meeting and will help to clarify some of the ambiguity in the original Policy.		
Fiona Cramb	68	Concern that 'clusters' could include farm developments. Conversions could see these areas meeting the requirements. Would need to rigorously enforce criteria relating to impacts on character. SPD does not make reference to affordable housing. The definition of a highway could include bridleways and public footpaths which are not suitable for large volumes of traffic. Why does there need to be development in countryside when it could be accommodated on edge of towns?	Sections 2 and 3 of the SPD outline when areas could be considered as 'Clusters' or 'Settlements in the Countryside', including the minimum requirement for 5 dwellings. The SPD does not provide guidance on conversions as these are covered by other policies in the Local Plans and in some instances by Permitted Development rights. Development of affordable housing is also covered by other policies, although section 8 of the SPD does cover situations where these policies cross over with SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. The definition of a highway is provided by Suffolk County Council as the highway authority, however the SPD does specify that this must provide vehicular access. The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to meet local housing needs and sustain rural	None.

			communities. Other policies in the Local Plans cover situations for development in more urban areas.	
Kettleburgh Parish Council	85	The SPD in many places implies subjective assessments by planning officers, in relation to character and how value of the contribution may be afforded to the area by any new development. It is imperative that parish councils are consulted to inform planning officers when no neighbourhood plans exist.	Comments noted. Parish Councils have the opportunity to comment on planning applications. Section 7 of the SPD also details what is expected from applicants when public engagement is required and encourages engagement with the community in determining local housing needs.	None.
Aldeburgh Society	77	The document would seem to propose an eminently sensible and practical addition to existing policies giving helpful guidance and advice not only to owners of properties in such rural areas, but also to potential developers who will be left with little doubt as to the acceptability or otherwise of their ideas or aspirations. The Society also commends those responsible for the preparation of the draft policy for its thoroughness and clarity.	Comments and support noted.	None.
Sweffling Parish Council	78	Whilst new development may help local housing needs, there are currently no such identified requests made known to Sweffling Parish Council. Importantly, there are no facilities or services within 3 miles that would sustain any further development. We are very much 'Open Countryside' and feel no need to make any changes to the Parish of Sweffling. In the past our	Comments noted. The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to help to sustain rural communities, whilst respecting the character of rural areas. This includes protecting	None.

		views have not been recognised and we do not want more heritage assets to be lost.	heritage assets as outlined in section 6 of the SPD.	
Henstead with Hulver Street Parish Council	79	The Parish Council were concerned that the SPD would change the current policies, however after discussion with the Council it was confirmed that this is not the case.	Comments noted.	None.
Kettleburgh Parish Council	82	The SPG is not particularly meaty, is repetitive and refers back to policy for most of its substance. It is still quite un-prescriptive in relation to design and consultation.	The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It is not appropriate to be prescriptive in relation to design given that the policies apply across the whole of East Suffolk and the character of settlements varies. Likewise in relation to consultation, it is not appropriate for the SPD to be prescriptive as different methods may be appropriate in different locations, however examples are included in chapter 7.	None.
Durrants	100	Both the SCLP and WLP contain instructive and clear policies on rural housing development. These have been adequate bases for numerous applications to be made for homes in the countryside. It is our view that the local authority's interpretation and formed 'Policy Position' of the policies has caused inconsistent decisions, necessitating the SPD by way of explanation. The SPD seeks to provide clarity and guidance on the interpretation of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. Whilst this	Comments noted. Responses to detailed comments are set out elsewhere in this schedule.	None.

		is certainly successful in certain areas of the draft, the document has also left some issues unresolved, adding layers of interpretation to formerly objective elements of the policies.		
Sue Seabon	99	The illustrations of acceptable, and unacceptable, gaps in clusters is very clear and helpful. We consider the clarification provided by the SPD to be beneficial. The SPD recognises that some sites add to the character of an area by being undeveloped and should remain so. Ancient character of the land needs to be preserved and can be a special feature of the area. While there are limited services, many accept this for the peaceful lifestyle. Could planning conditions be included to ensure new dwelling remain as a main residence?	Comments and support noted. The purpose of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to sustain rural communities. The purpose of SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 is to provide development opportunities for rural areas to retain residents and remain sustainable. Without these opportunities, residents could be priced out of areas due to rising values and possible increases in seconds homes and holiday homes. The Local Plans do not include policies requiring new dwellings to remain as main residences as this is not appropriate to apply to the whole district. However, where this is required a spart of neighbourhood Plans this will be enforced.	None.
Waldringfield Parish Council	97	We consider this to be a well written and very helpful document – the illustrations are of particular value. We would suggest that a similar SPD document is produced to cover “non-	Comments and support noted. Other policies in the Local Plans determine where new employment development can occur, which include specific	None.

		residential” such as commercial/employment development in clusters in the countryside.	requirements for new development in the Countryside. It is not currently considered necessary to prepare an SPD for this issue.	
Anonymous	2	Where is the detail on soil neutrality issues which may impact on these proposals?	The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. Any proposals put forward under these policies will also need to meet the requirements of any other relevant policies in the Local Plans, which include the policies relating to the natural environment. SCLP10.3 states that proposals within the Suffolk Coastal local Plan area will be considered in relation to their impacts on the loss of agricultural land.	None.
S Browns	11	Any development must bring a positive continuing contribution to the local community and NOT second homes, but homes for local people.	The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The SPD does not have the remit to change to policies or add additional requirements to them. Therefore, the Council is unable to require that homes be bought by local people. For	None.

			proposals of 4 or 5 dwellings, SCLP5.4 expects development to meet a locally identified need, however this would not amount to an occupancy restriction being imposed.	
David Burns	15	<p>I hope that some notice will be taken of the opinions of local people who East Suffolk District Council represent with regard to this planning policy. The opinions of local people and Parish Councils have no effect whatever on planning decisions.</p> <p>This policy will, if implemented, advance the destruction of the countryside. Additional housing permissions will add to environmental damage and will be used by developers as 'Trojan horses' to enable further damaging housing development.</p> <p>The often repeated 'housing for local need' from the District Council and the 'affordable housing' justifications are insulting. Few of these houses are being bought by local people and built houses are being bought as second homes. Most developers seem to avoid the 'affordable homes' requirement by manipulating the numbers of houses being built in developments and other means.</p>	<p>Section 7 of the SPD outlines how the Council expects applicants to engage with the local community in relation to the development of 4 or 5 new dwellings under SCLP5.4. The SPD provides details on what applicants will need to provide in order to show they have met the criteria in the relevant policy. This will likely need to be provided through a planning statement. Parish Councils and local residents are also able to comment on planning applications.</p> <p>The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to help to sustain rural communities. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be considered and monitored.</p>	None.

			<p>Both policies include criteria to determine when development could have a detrimental impact on the countryside, and these will be applied by the Council.</p> <p>In relation to the SPD, section 8 outlines how the affordable housing policies interact with SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 and where opportunities for affordable housing development in the Countryside may exist. The scale of developments that could be supported under SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 would not trigger the need for affordable housing to be provided.</p>	
Homersfield Parish Council	24	<p>Councillors are the Homersfield Parish Council Meeting on 5th July 2022 resolved to make:</p> <p>‘NO COMMENT’ on the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Consultation.</p>	Comment noted.	None.
Cookley and Walpole Parish Council	25	The Parish Council would not support up to five home infills whilst there is inadequate local infrastructure.	Comment noted. Proposals submitted under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 may be liable for CIL which will be used to provide infrastructure to support development.	None.

Cratfield Parish Council (Sally Chapman)	26	At Cratfield Parish Council's meeting on Tuesday 12 th July 2022 at 7:30pm Councillors discussed and agreed unanimously 'No Comment' to this Consultation.	Comment noted.	None.
Three Saints South Elmham Parish Council	27	Councillors at the Three Saints Parish Council Meeting on 13th July 2022 resolved to SUPPORT the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Consultation.	Support noted.	None.
Melton Parish Council (Pip Adler)	29	Melton Parish Council has two concerns. 1. The definition of a highway. The Council believes that it should be one that currently provides vehicular access. 2. The guidelines need to be clear that this doesn't allow urban sprawl, and that the cumulative effect should be considered with each cluster.	Comments noted. The term 'highway' is defined by Suffolk County Council as the highway authority as any route in which the public have right of way. This is stated in the SPD and a link to the definition is included in the footnotes. Section 6, paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28, outlines how cumulative impact will be considered as these policies continue to be applied. This has been expanded in response to consultation comments.	Guidance on considering cumulative effects has been expanded, including the addition of Illustration 10.
C Hoy	37	Comment redacted on advice of ESC legal services.	N/A	None.
Dennington Parish Council	55	The Supplemental Planning Document provides useful clarification for assessment of planning applications outside of village physical limits.	Support noted. Policy SCLP5.4 is already adopted policy.	None.

		<p>Dennington contains 2 hamlets outside of the village, plus other clusters, to which this policy document would apply.</p> <p>Dennington Parish Council supports the proposed wording of SCLP 5.4</p>		
L Fincham	59	<p>I am concerned by these plans. Once additional buildings are approved there will be nothing to prevent landowners for continuing to “bolt on” additional buildings. These properties will only be accessible via car adding to traffic and pollution. These properties will not solve the housing crisis. They are likely to be holiday dwellings. Affordable housing needs to be close to public transport and facilities.</p> <p>ESC should protect the countryside. Allowing countryside developments is not consistent with the stated aim to protect the countryside. Objections by local people seem to carry little weight, in some cases local residents don’t even get a reply.</p> <p>Please build needed homes in existing towns where there are proper facilities.</p>	<p>The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to help to sustain rural communities. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be monitored. Both policies include criteria relating to managing the impact on the countryside (such as landscape), and these will be applied by the Council.</p> <p>In relation to the SPD, section 7 outlines how the Council expects applicants to engage with the local community in relation to the development of 4 or 5 new dwellings. The SPD provides details on what applicants will need to provide in order to show they have met the criteria in the relevant</p>	None.

			<p>policy. This will likely need to be provided through a Planning Statement. Residents would not receive an individual reply to comments on a planning application, however these would be considered in the planning officer's report.</p> <p>Most of the development planned in the Local Plans is for the more urban areas, however part of the strategy of the Local Plans is to also support some limited development in the countryside.</p>	
Norfolk and Waveney NHS Integrated Care System	71	<p>We identify and support the extent to which the SPD supports the policies within the adopted Waveney Local Plan.</p> <p>We specifically welcome the statement in the Local Plan page 211 (8.40).</p> <p>One of the concerns is what the cumulative impact of all small-scale residential developments would likely have on local infrastructure, there are a number of GP practices in the Waveney area that currently have constraints, this is without considering known large scale developments. The inclusion of small-scale rural clusters may exacerbate this further.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Proposals submitted under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 may be liable for CIL which will be used to provide infrastructure to support development.</p>	None.

		It is also noted that the Initial Consultation statement indicates that Town and Parish Council members queried how infrastructure such as GP surgeries will be supported given the potential cumulative increase in population.		
Sutton Parish Council (Linda Gunson)	76	<p>Sutton is currently classified as an “other village” and is wholly contained within an AONB. As such the village has special characteristics and values its status as countryside strongly.</p> <p>Whilst understanding the need for guidance for small villages and above, Sutton Parish Council feel that due to our individual character and size, we are best placed to make planning decisions. Any presumption that “cluster” or “infill” development is automatically acceptable should not be taken, unless contained within a formal adopted Development Plan for the relevant Parish.</p>	Sutton is in the ‘Countryside’, but was formerly an ‘other village’ in the superseded Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2013). The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. Applications submitted under these policies will be considered against all of the requirements of the relevant policy as well as the requirements of any other relevant policy in the Local Plan.	None.
Henstead with Hulver Street Parish Council	81	SPD states that new development will be limited. Further discussion with the Council has made it clear that the SPD cannot change the policies and that the SPD does not allocate further development. The Parish Council are therefore satisfied that the SPD should give clearer guidance on small developments in the Countryside.	Comments noted.	None.
Anonymous	6	There must be tight supervision to ensure that these policy’s are followed to the letter anyone	Comments noted. The purpose of this SPD is to provide clarity on how policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be applied. The	None.

		that does not follow this must be made aware that the property will be removed!	policies will be considered in determining whether a proposal is acceptable. Enforcement action could be taken against any building works that are not in accordance with a permission or for which permission was not obtained.	
Anglian Water	66	Our concerns relate to the long term sustainability of new development in very rural locations considering climate change. The imbedded and operation carbon of dispersed housing in rural locations is likely to be higher. Potential risk of flooding and the need to manage run off may make rural development less and less sustainable over time. Some areas may not be in reasonable proximity to connect to the water recycling network, which may require the necessary permits for sewerage treatment from the Environment Agency. There may also be issues with private water supplies and local water stress.	Comments noted. The purpose of this SPD is to provide further guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 specifically. These policies provide opportunities for limited new development in the Countryside to help sustain rural communities. While it is acknowledged that these areas rely more on carbon heavy activities such as private car transport, the policies have been prepared to ensure the amount of development being delivered is limited. Other policies in the Local Plans cover issues such as climate change and flooding, and applications will need to meet the requirements of these where relevant.	None.
Martlesham Parish Council	47	We note that policy SLP5.3 recognises that there are many small communities and clusters of housing outside settlement boundaries and in the	Comments noted.	None.

		countryside and that SLP5.4 provides for limited development to come forward in these locations.		
Kettleburgh Parish Council	86	<p>Could the Council confirm if SCLP10.4 has ever been used as a reason for refusal? Our experience has shown this policy being disregarded over the need for housing.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The Council applies all relevant policies when determining planning applications. SCLP10.4 and SCLP5.4, of all of the applications that have been submitted under these, have both been used as reasons to refuse applications in the past (94 and 34 respectfully since the Local Plan was adopted in September 2020). However, other applications have been approved under these policies.</p>	None.
Bromeswell Parish Council	60	<p>Bromeswell has a Village Plan, and within that plan the villagers wish to preserve the nature of this small village.</p> <p>Any potential increase in traffic resulting from small scale residential developments in the village would be detrimental to village life in terms of road safety, and use of the lanes for leisure activities. Such developments would need to be considered in great depth before any permissions are granted.</p> <p>When will infrastructure requirements be assessed?</p>	<p>Transport and movements related to any new development would form part of the consideration of a planning application, however the scale of these developments is unlikely to result in high traffic volumes.</p> <p>Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be monitored. Both policies include controls to determine</p>	None

		<p>How much input will a Parish Council have when it comes to a decision around the type of housing and the size of cluster?</p>	<p>when development could have a detrimental impact on the countryside, and these will be applied by the Council.</p> <p>Sections 4 and 5 outline the requirements that sites will need to meet in order to be considered appropriate for development. It is not appropriate for the SPD to define a set distance between buildings as this will be dependent on the character of the area.</p> <p>Infrastructure requirements are considered as a whole considering the growth allocated in the Local Plans. Proposals submitted under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 may be liable for CIL which will be used to provide infrastructure to support development.</p> <p>Section 7 of the SPD outlines when consultation/engagement by an applicant with the local community, including the Parish Council, is required. A Parish</p>	
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			Council will also have the opportunity to respond to planning applications.	
North Cove Parish Council	65	<p>The proposals in the document are at odds with concerns about climate change, reducing emissions, and many other policies for the following reasons –</p> <p>No local employment so car commuting will be the normal transport method.</p> <p>Most of the housing is bought by people from higher value areas. They find access to medical services poor. Some people have returned to their previous home areas where they have maintained access to their old dentist. (Not conducive to reducing emissions).</p> <p>Access onto the highway is allowed even when dangerous and goes against Suffolk County Council highway visibility requirements. Highways visibility splays required are thus ignored. Parking and turning requirements for house extensions where number of bedrooms increases are ignored resulting in cars reversing out blindly.</p> <p>Light pollution is ignored.</p> <p>Surface water flooding risk is ignored.</p>	<p>The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to sustain rural communities.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that rural areas rely on private transport more than urban areas, however a limited amount of development in rural communities will help meet local needs. Both Local Plans do include policies on Sustainable Transport (SCLP7.1 and WLP8.21) which will be considered. Some small rural communities do also have employment uses and a small amount of development may in turn help to sustain these.</p> <p>Any proposals will need to meet the requirements of Suffolk</p>	None.

		<p>East Suffolk is a very low rainfall area. farmers are struggling to irrigate crops. More housing to use water is not sensible.</p> <p>Houses are being destroyed in fires We are a drought area!</p> <p>Much of the area is low lying and prone to surface water flooding in heavy rainfall. Green areas are needed to absorb carbon not built on using valuable resources.</p> <p>This consultation document totally contradicts East Suffolk's policy aims to become carbon neutral in the declared climate emergency (declared in June 2019).</p>	<p>County Council as the highway authority to ensure access is safe.</p> <p>Any proposals will also need to meet the requirements of any flooding policies and sustainable construction policies in the Local Plans.</p> <p>The policy forms one part of the strategy of the Local Plan. The Council must, in accordance with national policy, set out policies in its Local Plan to meet its housing need. However, the Local Plan also contains policies aimed at addressing climate change such as WLP8.28 on Sustainable Construction. The Council also recently adopted a Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document which can be viewed at Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance » East Suffolk Council.</p>	
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Introduction				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Anonymous	3	This would appear to be a more appropriate mode of building in the countryside. Could SCC comment as to how this is compatible with their Lowestoft Garden Village?	Comments noted. This SPD relates specifically to policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 and does not have the remit to provide guidance on other policies or site allocations in the Local Plans. The North of Lowestoft Garden Village is a key part of the strategy of the Waveney Local Plan, and provision for a limited amount of development in the countryside also forms part of the strategy, as explained in paragraph 1.1 of the SPD.	None.
Anonymous	5	This looks very sensible. Allows villages to grow a little and not die but stops any large development where it is unsuitable either aesthetically or because the infrastructure is not adequate.	Comment noted.	None.
Anonymous	8	Policies leave opportunity for ribbon development which can considerably extend a small village and open up areas which then become vulnerable to major development. LPA's will need to take a 'long' view on each application to ensure this does not happen.	Comments noted. The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The SPD cannot make changes or add additional requirements for applications e.g. by limiting the number that can come forward in each cluster or on each site. SCLP5.4 does state that applications should not cause	Additional guidance on cumulative impacts has been added throughout the document, including new Illustration 10.

		Add in each policy that only 'one' of these types of development could ever happen within each cluster or site.	undue harm to the character of the area, therefore inappropriate development will not be supported. Applications will also need to meet the requirements of any other relevant policy in the Local Plan.	
Anonymous	9	We are now supposed to be discouraging car use and encouraging sustainable transport methods. Will the availability of public transport for the proposed developments be a consideration as to whether they are appropriate? If public transport is not convenient, it would still be unwelcome additional driving contribution to emissions.	The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans.. Both Local Plans do include policies on Sustainable Transport (SCLP7.1 and WLP8.21) which relevant proposals will need to be considered against, however the purpose of these policies is to help to support smaller rural communities and it is therefore acknowledged that some car use would inevitably take place.	None.
Wyndam Bucknell	10	This sounds like a very sensible proposal – many of the parishes around here are scattered and low-key sensible development of new houses will allow them to grow. We have an acute housing shortage and it is very difficult for local people to find homes in their local areas and many do not want to move from the villages to the countryside.	Support and further comments noted.	None.
Philip Chadwin	14	I own, purchased and have land deeds for a 4000sq ft plot at Southwold	Comment noted. However the SPD is not a mechanism for marketing sites.	None.

		which I would be willing to sell for small scale development.		
Cretingham, Monewdon and Hoo Parish Council	16	<p>Policy SCLP5.4 states the cumulative impact of proposals will be a consideration in respect to the criteria above. It is important that the cumulative impact of proposals in all cases including areas outside AONB. There could be settlements with a large number of infill gaps resulting in overdevelopment. A limit per settlement should be included under this scheme. Such a limit could be based on the number of dwellings prior to the SPD being adopted.</p>	<p>The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The SPD cannot make changes or add additional requirements for applications such as setting a limit per settlement. Amendments to paragraph 6.24 (was 6.22) clarify that cumulative impact is relevant outside of the AONB too under SCLP5.4.</p>	<p>Paragraph 6.24 (was 6.22) has been amended to clarify that cumulative impact is relevant outside of the AONB under SCLP5.4.</p>
Christopher Stratton	23	<p>The title of policy SCLP 5.4 is misleading and could be misinterpreted. A re- wording - "<u>Housing clusters adjoining and within existing towns and villages</u>" would be clearer.</p> <p>5 or more dwellings is open to abuse and should be more specific as to what number would be acceptable and within what time frame.</p> <p>The terms "Well related" is vague and open to misinterpretation. "Without adverse impact" is preferable.</p>	<p>The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the local plans. The SPD cannot make changes to the policies or add additional requirements, such as changing the title of the policy or prohibiting development outside of Settlement Boundaries. The policy is specific that a cluster should have five or more existing dwellings (for development of up to 3 new dwellings) – it wouldn't be appropriate to set a maximum however the policy only applies to settlements that are not defined as</p>	<p>None.</p>

		<p>To suggest that every "Identifiable gap" could be filled would be promoting "Town cramming" and make open spaces more vulnerable.</p> <p>It would be preferable to make any additional housing in minor settlements an exemption and restrict new housing there to affordable or up to five dwellings. It is important to prohibit new housing within the countryside outside settlement boundaries.</p> <p>These amendments would ensure that the Plan is more sustainable and will result in less pressure on rural services, biodiversity and the landscape.</p>	<p>Small Villages, Large Villages, Market Towns or Major Centres.</p> <p>Illustrations in chapter 4 provide examples of 'well related' (and not 'well related').</p> <p>Ch4 makes it clear that not every gap would necessarily be suitable as consideration needs to be given to the character of the settlement.</p> <p>The policy does set a limit of up to five dwellings for each development, and guidance on cumulative impacts is set out in Ch6.</p> <p>The purpose of the policy is to help to sustain rural communities by allowing some limited development.</p>	
Three Saints South Elmham Parish Council	30	<p>Councillors at the 13th July 2022 Meeting discussed and agreed unanimously to Support this Consultation.</p>	Support noted.	None.

Waldringfield Parish Council	89	<p>Below are our comments for your consideration, which we hope you find useful:</p> <p>Section 1 Useful introduction and background information.</p>	Comments noted.	None.
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Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policy SCLP5.4 – What is a ‘Cluster’?				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Little Bealings Parish Council	28	The Parish Council considers that in paragraph 2.7 in respect of Clusters being adjacent to an existing highway, ‘which carries public vehicular rights’ should be inserted after ‘highway’.	Comment noted. The term ‘highway’ is defined by Suffolk County Council as any route in which the public have right of way. This is stated in the SPD and a link to the definition is included in the footnotes.	None.
Otley Parish Council	38	Relationship of policies with Settlement Boundaries and if they will remain; Understanding role of non-residential uses in a cluster	Paragraph 2.12 of the SPD states that the site and the ‘Cluster’ must be entirely located outside of Settlement Boundaries. The Settlement Boundary policy will remain in place. Section 2 of the SPD outline the requirements for areas to be considered ‘Clusters’ and states that non-residential uses can exist within them, however the area as a whole must have a residential function (Paragraph 2.6)	Paragraph 2.6 and Illustration 1 have been modified to provide further context as to how non-residential uses in ‘Clusters’ and Settlements in the Countryside’ will be considered. Paragraph 4.7 has also been amended to provide guidance on how non-residential uses could affect if a site is appropriate for development. This has also been expanded through new paragraph 4.12. A new illustration (illustration 10) has also been added to provide further guidance on the consideration of non-residential uses.
Durrants	104	No clarity on when permitted but not constructed dwellings will form part of a cluster or settlement. Would suggest that once an application is approved the principle of development should be accepted. It is not necessary in our view to consider deliverability or commencement.	Paragraph 2.9 outlines how dwellings that are permitted but not yet constructed will be considered when determining whether a location is a ‘Cluster’ or ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. The Council considers that there needs to be clear evidence that the new dwelling or dwellings will be delivered in order to appropriately consider them as part of the	Paragraphs 2.9 and 3.8 have been amended to provide clearer guidance on the expectations of the Council as to the evidence that is needed to show that a permitted dwelling will be delivered.

			‘Cluster’ or ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. Without this the Council cannot be certain that the dwellings will come forward. No evidence or reasons have been given as to why this is not necessary.	
Waldringfield Parish Council	90	Section 2 is clearly written, as are the illustrations. However, it would be helpful if illustrations were inserted into the relevant paragraphs.	Comments noted. The Council considered how to appropriately display the various illustrations during the preparation of the SPD. It was considered that they should be placed on individual pages in order to maintain their level of detail. Also, the illustrations represent various aspects of both policies, therefore placing them in one section would not be appropriate.	Hyperlinks have been included in the text of the SPD that link to the illustrations.
Woodbridge Town Council	108	It is unclear if SCLP5.4 only considers existing housing in the Countryside. Criteria a, b, c and d do not clearly state this. In Woodbridge there are locations where houses lie within the settlement boundary but the immediate countryside has a house discrete from those houses and thus in considering whether a cluster principle applies would you include the houses that are not in the countryside i.e. those within the settlement boundary. Further in places the settlement boundary is the highway and thus	Section 2 of the SPD outlines how an area would be considered a ‘Cluster’ according to SCLP5.4. Paragraph 2.12 states that the entire ‘Cluster’ and the proposed site must be outside of Settlement Boundaries, i.e. in the Countryside. Anything within Settlement Boundaries’ cannot be considered under policy SCLP5.4.	None.

		houses to one side are in the countryside and the other in the settlement. Does the cluster principle in those cases include the house within the settlement boundary?		
Woodbridge Town Council	109	In Woodbridge there is housing that abuts Manor Road and Russell Close, however a significant portion only abuts a private road, Prentice Lane. Paragraph 2.7 confirms that Clusters can only be where existing housing directly abuts a highway. Development however has been approved in 2017 (DC/17/1302/FUL) on Prentice Lane and did not even meet the criteria of being surrounded by development on two sides. How will this be dealt with in the future?	Comments noted. This SPD is not the appropriate arena to discuss previous approvals. However, the referenced application was granted before the adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and therefore before SCLP5.4 was being used. The purpose of this SPD is to provide further guidance on the application of this policy.	None.
Bromeswell Parish Council	112	How soon does a property built in a cluster become part of that cluster? Where is the guidance on distances between buildings in large gardens when considering allowing building clusters and small scale residential developments in the countryside?	Comments noted. Paragraph 2.9 of the SPD outlines when an approved but not yet built dwelling will be considered as part of a 'Cluster'. The Council will need strong evidence that the dwelling will be delivered to be considered. Sections 4 and 5 also provide guidance on the requirements for sites to be considered appropriate for development.	Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 have been expanded to provide further clarity on how 'gaps' will be considered.

Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7 – What is a ‘Settlement in the Countryside’?				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Henstead with Hulver Street Parish Council	80	SPD states that new development will be limited. Further discussion with the Council has made it clear that the SPD cannot change the policies and that the SPD does not allocate further development. The Parish Council are therefore satisfied that the SPD should give clearer guidance on small developments in the Countryside.	Comments noted.	None.
Durrants	105	No clarity on when permitted but not constructed dwellings will form part of a cluster or settlement. Would suggest that once an application is approved the principle of development should be accepted. It is not necessary in our view to consider deliverability or commencement.	Paragraph 3.8 outlines how dwellings that are permitted but not yet constructed will be considered when determining whether a location is a ‘Cluster’ or ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. The Council considers that there needs to be clear evidence that the new dwelling or dwellings will be delivered in order to appropriately consider them as part of the ‘Cluster’ or ‘Settlement in the Countryside’. Without this certainty, the Council will not be able to consider the overall impacts on development that has occurred, which is a key consideration of both policies. No evidence or reasons have been given as to why this is not necessary.	Paragraphs 2.9 and 3.8 have been amended to provide clearer guidance on the expectations of the Council as to the evidence that is needed to show that a permitted dwelling will be delivered.

Waldringfield Parish Council	91	Section 3 not applicable to Waldringfield.	Comments noted.	None.
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Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policy SCLP5.4 – Site Characteristics				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Otley Parish Council	40	Clearer guidance needed to determine what is a 'Gap'	Section 4 of the SPD provides guidance on what potential development sites must include to be considered for development within 'Clusters'.	None.
Durrants	102	Further clarity over the meaning of a 'gap' would be welcomed. The SPD resists quantifying large and small. One could argue illustration 2 shows a large open field. Also appears to be resistance of gaps of agricultural nature with no justification. The SPD also contradicts the requirement for development on two sides as this could mean any size.	Section 4 of the SPD goes into great detail as to how the Council will consider if a proposed site is a clearly identifiable gap. Due to varying nature of 'clusters', it is not possible to quantify the size of a 'gap' as some areas may have larger gaps between dwellings than others that form part of the character of an area. Illustration 2 was designed to show how a site could potentially include more than one new dwelling. The SPD does not state that 'gaps' of an agricultural nature will be resisted. The use and nature of the 'gap' must be considered as it may contribute to the character of the area or may be used by the community for a specific purpose. However, the SPD does not resist the use of agricultural areas.	Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 have been expanded to provide further clarity on how 'gaps' will be considered. The annotations on Illustration 5 (which expands on Illustration 2) have been expanded to explain that this illustration shows when a site may be appropriate for more than a single dwelling.
Waldringfield Parish Council	92	Section 4 – would suggest that illustrations are embedded in text.	Comments noted. The Council considered how to appropriately display the various illustrations during the preparation of the SPD.	Hyperlinks have been included in the text of the SPD that link to the illustrations.

			It was considered that they should be placed on individual pages in order to maintain their level of detail. Also, the illustrations represent various aspects of both policies, therefore placing them in one section would not be appropriate.	
Anonymous	7	It is not made clear if there is an existing line of buildings on one side whether the other side could be developed.	Comments noted. SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 state that sites must be surrounded by development on at least two sides. If this criteria is not met, then the proposal will not be considered acceptable.	New illustration 10 provides some further guidance on the potential effect on the character and from cumulative development where the existing dwellings are along one side of the road in a linear form.
Durrants	110	We would like to draw your attention to a recent appeal (3277322) which overturn the Council's refusal for 3 new dwellings. It was concluded by the Inspector that the site was bounded by development on two sides (North and West). Therefore no further guidance is required as the Inspector was able to draw his conclusion using the policies alone.	Appeal decisions referring to policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 did form part of the initial scoping of this SPD. It was concluded that this SPD was needed to show how all aspects of the policies will be applied. The SPD, when adopted, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and provide clarity and certainty as to the Council's (rather than an Inspector's) position.	None.

Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7 – Site Characteristics				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Broads Authority	31	Section 5.8 needs to reference the Broads here as well as there could be schemes that affect the Broads. Needs to refer to Broads Landscape Character Assessment. Also needs to refer to impact on the Broads and setting of the Broads. Needs to refer to dark skies and lighting and impact on the dark skies of the Broads.	Comments noted.	Paragraph 5.8 has been expanded to include reference to the Broads Landscape Character Assessment and to the dark skies of the Broads. General references to lighting and dark skies have also been added to paragraph 6.20.
Durrants	103	Further clarity over the meaning of a 'gap' would be welcomed. The SPD resists quantifying large and small. One could argue illustration 2 shows a large open field. Also appears to be resistance of gaps of agricultural nature with no justification. The SPD also contradicts the requirement for development on two sides as this could mean any size.	Section 4 of the SPD goes into great detail as to how the Council will consider if a proposed site is a clearly identifiable gap. Due to varying nature of 'clusters', it is not possible to quantify the size of a 'gap' as some areas may have larger gaps between dwellings than others as this forms part of the character of an area. Illustration 2 was designed to show how a site could potentially include more than one new dwelling. The SPD does not state that 'gaps' of an agricultural nature will be resisted. The use and nature of the 'gap' must be considered as it may contribute to the character of the area or may be used by the community for a specific purpose. However, the SPD	Paragraphs 4.6 and 5.3 have been expanded to provide further clarity on how 'gaps' will be considered.

			does not resist the use of agricultural areas.	
Waldringfield Parish Council	93	Not applicable to Waldringfield.	Comments noted.	None.
Durrants	106	We would like to draw your attention to a recent appeal (3277322) which overturn the Councils refusal for 3 new dwellings. It was concluded by the Inspector that the site was bounded by development on two sides (North and West). Therefore no further guidance is required as the Inspector was able to draw his conclusion using the policies alone.	Appeal decisions referring to policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 did form part of the initial scoping of this SPD. It was concluded that this SPD was needed to show how all aspects of the policies will be applied. The SPD, when adopted, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and provide clarity and certainty as to the Council's (rather than an Inspector's) position.	None.
Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough Joint Parish Council	98	Concern that the current wording opens a 'back door'. Regarding sites of 4 or 5 dwellings, the reference to a site being adjacent to a settlement seems to give developments of dwellings outside of settlements.	Comments noted. The purpose of this part of WLP8.7 is not to allow exponential growth of 'Settlements in the Countryside' but provide opportunities for growth in the Countryside. Any proposal will still need to meet the other criteria in the policy as well as other policies in the Waveney Local Plan.	None.

Illustration 6				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo Parish Council	17	Many areas in the countryside have several houses on one side of the road with a single house opposite which would open up large amounts of land to potential development. In such cases it may be that landowners could release the land in several tranches resulting in overdevelopment in the settlement. In this case the area could be split in two with the first tranche having 3 houses and then the second tranche having another 3 houses. This is not what is intended by the planning document but there does not seem to be anything to prevent this from happening.	Comments noted. The Council acknowledges that there will be situations like those presented in Illustration 6 where there could be potential for multiple homes to be delivered. When this occurs, the Council will consider the impact on the local character such as density to determine if the number of dwellings being proposed is appropriate. Section 6 of the SPD provides guidance on the consideration of cumulative impacts.	A new illustration (Illustration 10) has been prepared to provide further context on how cumulative impacts and incremental growth will be considered by the Council. Further guidance on cumulative development has also been added throughout the document.

Illustration 9				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Durrants	101	Neither development plan contains any policies which allow rural settlements with development boundaries to grow. While the policies apply to areas outside the Settlement Boundaries, it would be beneficial for policies to allow development adjacent to them. Illustration 9 shows this situation when a site outside the Settlement Boundary is prejudiced for being outside, when a site within the Settlement Boundary would benefit. Given development within a Settlement Boundary is acceptable in principle, as is a site within a cluster, sites adjacent to Settlement Boundaries should be doubly compliant.	The purpose of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to help sustain rural communities. These policies have not been prepared to allow the growth of larger settlements. Larger settlements have been considered in principle appropriate for growth through the strategy of the Local Plan, through Settlement Boundaries and site allocations. To enable some limited development to come forward in the countryside, policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 form a further part of that strategy to support these rural locations. Allowing development adjacent to Settlement Boundaries would not meet this aim. This is the strategy of the adopted Local Plans and the national policy supports a plan-led approach to development.	None.

Character and Appearance				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo Parish Council	18	SCLP5.4 only considers cumulative impact only considered in sensitive areas. This should be extended to the entire countryside. Many areas have large number of sites that could be developed which could destroy the character if not controlled.	Comments noted. The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. Paragraph 5.28 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan states that as SCLP5.4 has been prepared to support limited growth, consideration should be given to cumulative impacts. This does not specify that this will only occur for sensitive areas. The SPD has been edited to reflect this.	Paragraph 6.24 (was 6.22) now clarifies that cumulative impacts will be considered outside of sensitive areas as well as within them.
Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo Parish Council	19	SCLP5.4 seems to have fewer restrictions than WLP8.7. SCLP5.4 should include these restrictions if too many applications come forward.	Comments noted. The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The SPD cannot make changes or add additional requirements to policies.	None.
Broads Authority	32	Section 6.18 needs to mention the Broads and its setting. Section 6.19 Needs to refer to Broads Landscape Character Assessment.	Comments noted.	Paragraphs 6.18 and 6.19 have been expanded to include reference to the Broads and the Broads Landscape Character Assessment.
Otley Parish Council	41	In relation to WLP8.7, how is footprint : plot ratio considered in a varied area; Consideration on potential impact on character and landscape;	Comments noted. Section 6 provides guidance on the impact on the character of areas. The parking requirements for applications will be determined through the design	None.

		Will consideration be given to vehicle parking and how will plots be monitored and measured.	and transport policies in the Local Plans.	
Historic England	70	Welcome section on Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, however we recommend that the section is expanded to include Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens. Assessing impacts should not be limited to distance or intervisibility as there could be opportunities for enhancements and sites some distance away can still cause harm. Strongly advise applicants seek advice from Councils Design and Conservation Team. These comments do not affect our obligation to provide further advice.	Comments and support noted.	A new paragraph has been added to the Introduction of the SPD to highlight the importance of consultation with the Council's planning service. This includes references and links to the Councils pre-application advice service. Paragraph 6.17 (was 6.15) now includes references to Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens.
Suffolk Preservation Society	63	SPS welcomes the references to heritage and landscape considerations. Sites which might otherwise meet the criteria of an infill site may contribute to the character of the cluster or to the setting of a heritage asset in their undeveloped state.	Comments noted. Paragraphs 4.11 and 5.8 of the SPD make reference to considering the existing uses and values of spaces before they can be considered for development.	None.
Kettleburgh Parish Council	87	Paragraph 6.3 only deals with density and ratio. This should include respecting height and skylines. Who defines if a scheme is 'appropriate'? Section on character is particularly non	Comments noted. Paragraph 6.3 directly quotes policy WLP8.7. The SPD does not have the remit to make changes to the policy. The Council will determine if the various	None.

		prescriptive and should encourage contemporary design within a defined design style that works with existing character, provision of affordable 4+ bedroom homes, best practice in eco-friendly building technologies and methods and climate friendly 'passive heating' and cooling.	elements of the design and scale of any scheme is appropriate based on the policies in the relevant Local Plan. Paragraph 6.9 of the SPD details that any scheme, whether they are traditionalist, contemporary or innovative should be of the highest quality design. Affordable housing and sustainable design are subject to other policies in the Local Plans. The Council cannot require that homes that comes forward under SCLP5.4 meet the definition of 'affordable', but there is provision under Policy SCLP5.11 for affordable housing to come forward on 'exception sites' outside of adjacent or well related to Settlement Boundaries or Clusters.	
Waldringfield Parish Council	94	Section 6 is clearly laid out and cross referenced to the relevant Local Plan Policies.	Comments and support noted.	None.
John Cary	12	Important to think of maximum support and least harm for wildlife, rainwater drainage and management, minimal hard standing, countryside darkness, minimal visual impact on surroundings, barring things like solar panels, preserve trees and hedgerows, and favour applications that will have a positive impact on wildlife and plant life. Should not exclude applications	SCLP5.4 states that to be supported, development should not cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the cluster or, result in any harmful visual intrusion into the surrounding landscape. WLP8.7 states that for all small-scale development in the Countryside the design of the scheme will need to respect and	None.

		for small housing as this may be affordable for local young people while not appealing to the second home market.	reflect the character of the settlement and existing built-up frontage. Section 6 of the SPD provides further guidance on these issues. Any proposals will also need to meet the requirements of the relevant biodiversity and landscape policies in the Local Plans.	
Badingham Parish Council	13	Badingham are concerned about small scale developments i.e. clusters turning into larger developments. We currently have an approved site for 3 dwellings which we opposed and fear this will then increase into 5 or more houses once the initial 3 houses are built. We have to consider small villages and the people who live in them when looking at planning applications.	The purpose of these policies is to provide opportunities for limited development in rural areas to meet local housing needs and sustain rural communities. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be considered and monitored. Both policies include controls to determine when development could have a detrimental impact on the countryside, and these will be applied by the Council.	None.
Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System	72	WLP8.7 states that when the overall strategy is met the Council will not support further development which cumulatively would undermine the overall distribution of development. It should be noted that the quantum of development delivered by this policy will be relatively small, therefore infrastructure is likely to be delivered through Community Infrastructure Levy.	Comments noted. Paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 outline how the cumulative impact of the proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be considered and monitored. Both policies include controls to determine when development could have a detrimental impact, and these will be applied by the Council. Proposals submitted under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 may	None.

			be liable for CIL which will be used to provide infrastructure to support development.	
North Cove Parish Council	113	Maintaining green corridors are usually ignored, as is tree and hedge retention. The houses are huge and do not fit into the local scene at all.	Section 6 of the SPD outlines how proposals should respond to local built and natural characteristics and reinforces that proposals will need to meet the requirements of relevant policies in the Local Plans, including on landscape and biodiversity and lighting.	None.

Public Consultation				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Cretingham, Monewden and Hoo Parish Council	20	Concern amongst residents that new dwellings would become second homes. Should be provision that new houses are for full time residents with local connections.	Comments noted. The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance on the application of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 as they are written in the Local Plans. The SPD cannot make changes or add additional requirements to policies, including imposing a local occupancy restriction.	None.
Otley Parish Council	44	What is expected from engagement or consultation How will engagement be considered under SCLP5.4?	Section 7 of the SPD provides guidance on what the engagement the Council would expect to see from applicants. This includes the potential need for planning statements to show how comments have been considered.	None.
Kettleburgh Parish Council	88	Paragraph 7.5 – it is recommended to approach Parish Councils to determine consultation but is not required. Past experience shows that early engagement with the Parish Council is beneficial. It would be our preference that this is required. Climate change factors must be included, as well as impacts on drainage and sewerage.	The policies do not require consultation with Parish Councils in all cases, however this would be encouraged. Sustainable construction and drainage and sewerage issues are covered by other policies in the Local Plans, the requirements of which proposals under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will need to meet where relevant.	None.
Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and	107	Robust consultation may invite applicants to confront Parish Councils and there is no indication that support from the Parish Council is needed.	The SPD provides guidance on what is expected from applicants to show that robust consultation, as specified by policy WLP8.7, has	None.

Ellough Joint Parish Council		Robust has many definitions and may just result in the exchange of conflicting views. Putting such wording in is contrary to creating a coherent framework. Section referring to up to and including 5 dwellings should be deleted.	taken place during the preparation of a relevant planning application. An SPD cannot change the policy wording or add/remove criteria. WLP8.7 specifies that clear and demonstrable local support is needed for proposals for 4 or 5 dwellings. This can therefore not be required for proposals of 3 or less.	
Waldringfield Parish Council	95	Section 7 gives a clear description of the evidence of community engagement required within application documents.	Comments and support noted.	None.
Kettleburgh Parish Council	83	SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document the Countryside doesn't make consultation with Parish council a requirement, whereas WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside does.	Public engagement is required under both policies where 4 or 5 new dwellings are being proposed. This is stated in paragraph 7.1 of the SPD.	None.
Bromeswell Parish Council	111	Another broader consideration is that villages need houses that are marketed at affordable prices for youngsters to be able to stay local. There seem to be plenty of 3-5 bed houses when there is the need for 2-bed semi-detached properties.	Comments noted. Section 8 outlines how the affordable housing policies interact with SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 and where opportunities for affordable housing development in the Countryside may exist. Paragraph 8.2 of the SPD explains that Policies SCLP5.8 and WLP8.1, both titled 'Housing Mix', of the	None.

			<p>Local Plans provide a focus on smaller dwellings.</p> <p>Section 7 of the SPD outlines when consultation/engagement with the local community, including the Parish Council, is required. However, the Council will encourage this for all applications.</p>	
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Other Policies				
Respondent Name	Comment ID	Comment Summary	Council Response	Action
Anonymous	4	The policies are missing opportunities for affordable housing. Developers tend to build large houses and add nothing to the locality except additional cars etc. It would be good to see the local authority supporting young people remaining in villages. It would also be good to see some sustainability requirements.	The purpose of this SPD is to provide clarity on how policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 will be applied. WLP8.7 does include opportunities for affordable housing to be developed on the edge of Settlements in the Countryside. SCLP5.4 also highlights the need to consider local housing needs for proposals of 4 or 5 dwellings. The Local Plans contain other policies that support the development of affordable housing as 'exception sites' in the countryside (SCLP5.10 and WLP8.6).	None.
Otley Parish Council	45	How policies relate to other policies in the Local Plans; Can we assume SCLP10.5 Settlement Coalescence remains in place?	Section 8 of the SPD provides guidance on other Local Plan policies that could be directly relevant to policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. All other policies within the Local Plans will still be applied where relevant.	None.
Waldringfield Parish Council	96	Section 8 is clearly laid out and cross referenced to the relevant Local plan policies.	Comments and support noted.	None.



Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion

Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document

June 2022

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1. Introduction

The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being produced by East Suffolk Council. The SPD will apply to the whole of the East Suffolk Council area, excluding the parts of East Suffolk that are within the Broads National Park, for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority.

In some circumstances a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) could have significant environmental effects and may fall within the scope of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and so require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

This screening report is designed to test whether or not the contents of the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The legislative background below outlines the regulations that require the use of this screening exercise. Section 4 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the SPD and the need for a full SEA.

The assessment has been carried out at an early stage, prior to full drafting, but based the proposed content of the SPD.

2. Legislative Background

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the Environment'. This document is also known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (or SEA) Directive. European Directive 2001/42/EC was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended, including through EU Exit legislation).

The SEA Regulations include a definition of 'plans and programmes' to which the regulations apply. SEA requirements relate to plans or programmes which

are subject to preparation or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level, which includes those prepared for town and country planning and land use. SEA is required where the plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects. It is therefore necessary to screen the SPD to identify whether significant environmental effects are likely. Where screening identifies significant environmental effects, a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.

3. Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC

The preparation of the SPD triggers a requirement to determine whether it is likely to have a significant environmental effect. This requirement is discharged by the 'responsible authority' being the authority by which or on whose behalf the plan is prepared. Before making a determination, the responsible authority shall: -

- a) Take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Regulations;
and
- b) Consult the consultation bodies.

The consultation bodies are defined in section 4 of the SEA Regulations. The opinions from the statutory consultation bodies: Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England, are therefore to be taken into account. The Council consulted with the three consultation bodies and provided five weeks for a response. Responses were received from Historic England and Natural England and these are contained in Appendix 1.

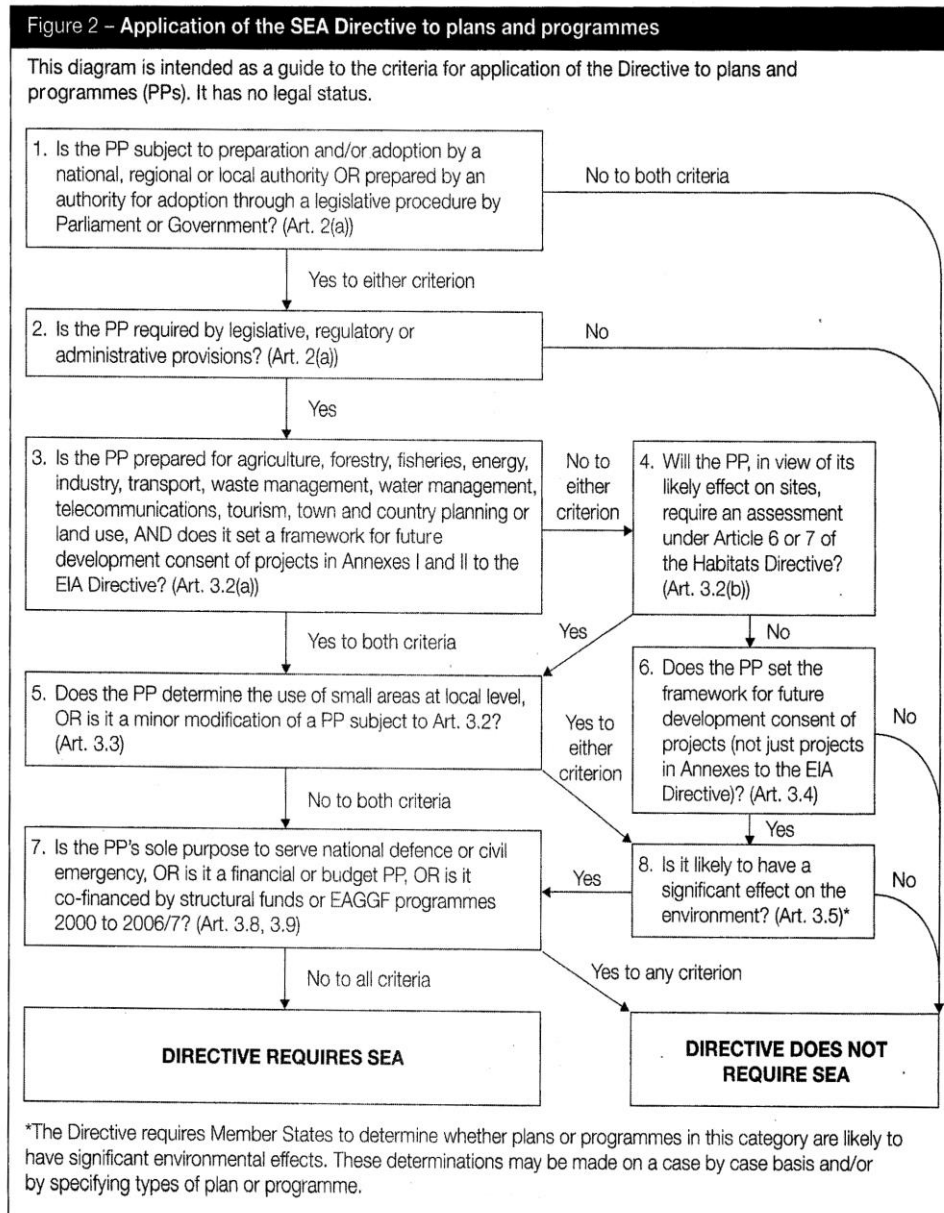
Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining likely significant effects as follows:

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regards, in particular to:

- a. The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.
 - b. The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.
 - c. The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.
 - d. Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.
 - e. The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
- a. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.
 - b. The cumulative nature of the effects.
 - c. The trans boundary nature of the effects.
 - d. The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).
 - e. The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
 - f. the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - i. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
 - iii. intensive land-use; and
 - g. the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

4. Assessment

The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required.



Source: *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive* (2005)

The following assessment applies the questions from the preceding diagram. The answers determine whether the SPD will require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))

Yes. The preparation and adoption of the SPD is being carried out by East Suffolk Council. The SPD is being produced in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))

Yes. The production of the SPD forms part of the delivery of the statutory Development Plan and the process for preparing SPDs is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 and relates to the administration of the Council's planning service.

3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))

The SPD is prepared in support of the delivery town and country planning and land use policies.

The SPD will not set a framework for the future consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive.

4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))

A separate screening exercise has been carried out under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended). This has determined that a full Appropriate Assessment is not required.

5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)

Not applicable (based on the responses to questions 3 and 4 above).

6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3(4))

Yes. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and will be applied alongside the policy framework provided by the Local Plan.

7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)

No. Not applicable.

8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3(5))

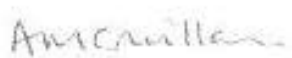
No. The guidance contained in the Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document will provide information and advice concerning the implementation of the Council's Local Plan policies. The SPD will provide guidance principally on Policy SCLP5.4 Housing Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan) and Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan). It is unlikely that the SPD will have a significant impact upon the environment. All policies within both Local Plans have been subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating the requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment.

5. Conclusion

The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document seeks to reflect and implement policies in the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans which have both been subject to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It is considered by East Suffolk Council that it is not necessary for a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken of the SPD to ensure compliance with SEA legislation.

Signed:



Dated: 14/06/2022

Andrea McMillan

Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery & Specialist Services)

East Suffolk Council

Appendix 1: Responses from Statutory Consultees

Environment Agency

Natural England

Date: 31 May 2022
Our ref: 390546
Your ref: SPD.

Ben Wright
East Suffolk Council
Ben.Wright@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY



Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ben Wright

Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – SEA and HRA

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 28 April 2022, which was received by Natural England on 28 April 2022.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.

Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment.

Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment

A SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment only in exceptional circumstances as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance [here](#). While SPDs are unlikely to give rise to likely significant effects on European Sites, they should be considered as a plan under the Habitats Regulations in the same way as any other plan or project. If your SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment, you are required to consult us at certain stages as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Please send all planning consultations electronically to the consultation hub at consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Salt
Consultations Team

Historic England



Mr Ben Wright
East Suffolk Council
Riverside
4 Canning Road
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR33 0EQ

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00773202

31 May 2022

Dear Mr Wright

**Re: Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the
Countryside SPD - SEA**

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the Strategic Environmental Assessment draft screening opinion relating to the Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document. Having reviewed the report I can confirm that we support the conclusion that it is not necessary for a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken. I would be grateful if you would confirm receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

|
Andrew Marsh
Historic Environment Planning Adviser, Planning Group
andrew.marsh@historicengland.org.uk



Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

**Draft Housing in Clusters and Small
Scale Residential Development in
the Countryside
Supplementary Planning Document**

June 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) provide protection for sites that are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species. The network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Both types can also be referred to as European Sites. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Ramsar sites should be afforded the same level of protection and refers to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites as 'Habitat Sites'.

1.2 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of plans and projects is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended).

1.3 Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) states:

'Where a land use plan:

(a) Is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, The plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.'

1.4 The HRA is therefore undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy would adversely affect the integrity of any sites.

Stage 1: Determining whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This needs to take account of the likely impacts in combination with other relevant plans and projects. This assessment should be made using the precautionary principle. The screening assessment must reflect the outcomes of the 2018 judgement of the Court of Justice of the European

Union¹, which has ruled that where mitigation is necessary this must be identified through an Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 2: Carrying out Appropriate Assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity. The effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of sites should be assessed, to ascertain whether the plan has an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site.

Stage 3: Identifying mitigation measures and alternative solutions. The aim of this stage is to find ways of avoiding or significantly reducing adverse impacts, so that site integrity is no longer at risk. If there are still likely to be negative impacts, the option should be dropped, unless exceptionally it can be justified by imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

- 1.5 The draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being produced by East Suffolk Council. The SPD will apply to the whole of the East Suffolk Council area, outside of the Broads. This report considers whether there are likely to be significant effects on protected Habitat sites and where a full Appropriate Assessment may be required.
- 1.6 East Suffolk (outside of the Broads) is covered by two Local Plans, the East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan adopted September 2020 and the Waveney Local Plan adopted March 2019.
- 1.7 Both Local Plans were subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment as part of their production. Where screening identified a likely significant effect, Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and the mitigation measures identified were incorporated within the Plans, resulting in conclusions that the plans will not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of the (then) Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Districts. Both Appropriate Assessments identified recreational disturbance particularly from dog walkers as a significant effect. The Council has subsequently produced a Recreational

¹ C-323/17 – People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta

Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and requires payment towards mitigation from residential developments within 13km of the protected Habitat sites.

2. Protected sites covered by this report

- 2.1 Sites included in this assessment are listed in Table 1. This includes all sites that are within 20km of East Suffolk Council. The locations of the sites are shown on maps in Appendix 2 and the Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives of the sites are contained in Appendix 3, along with a summary of the pressures and threats as documented in the Appropriate Assessments for the Local Plans.

Table 1: Relevant Habitat sites

Name
Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC,
Alde-Ore Estuary SPA, Ramsar
Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA
Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons SAC
Breydon Water SPA, Ramsar
Broadland SPA, Ramsar
Deben Estuary SPA, Ramsar
Dew's Ponds SAC
Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA
Haisborough, Hammond and Winterton SAC
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths & Marshes SAC
Minsmere – Walberswick SPA, Ramsar
Norfolk Valley Fens SAC
Outer Thames Estuary SPA
Orfordness – Shingle Street SAC
Sandlings SPA
Southern North Sea SAC
Staverton Park and The Thicks, Wantisden SAC
Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA, Ramsar
The Broads SAC
Winterton-Horsey Dunes SAC

3. Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD

- 3.1 This HRA report reviews the scope of the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document.
- 3.2 The draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document will provide focused guidance to support the implementation of Policy SCLP5.4 Housing Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan) and Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan). The SPD, when adopted, will be a material consideration in determination of applications for planning permission. The SPD will not cover parts of East Suffolk that are within the Broads, for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority.
- 3.3 The assessment has been carried out at an early stage, prior to full drafting, but based the proposed content of the SPD. The first section of the SPD will set out the policy context and purpose of the SPD. This section will be descriptive and therefore has not been included in the screening table in Section 5 of this report. The remaining sections of the draft SPD will provide guidance on specific criteria in each of the policies, including :
- Guidance to help determine what is a 'Cluster'/Countryside settlement;
 - Guidance to help determine what is a 'Gap';
 - Guidance on the relationship of the policies with Settlement Boundaries, which identify land (settlements) that is not in the Countryside;
 - Guidance on the definition of 'highway';
 - Guidance on the role/presence of existing non-residential uses in a Cluster;
 - Guidance on what is expected from engagement or consultation where required as part of the policies;
 - Guidance on considering potential impact on local character and landscape, and on design considerations;
 - Guidance on how the policies relate to other Local Plan policies including policies for housing in the countryside, other housing policies such as

housing mix, design and landscape policies and Policy SCLP11.9 Strategy for Newbourne in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan; and

- Guidance on Permitted Development rights.

These elements have all been considered in the screening table in section 5.

4. Other Plans and Projects

- 4.1 Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations requires consideration to be given to whether a Plan will have an effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 4.2 As noted in the introduction, the other key plans are the Local Plans. The Local Plans set out the broad scale and distribution of development across the area of East Suffolk formerly covered by Suffolk Coastal District and Waveney District.
- 4.3 The draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document will add detail to policies within both the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and the Waveney Local Plan, specifically policy SCLP5.4: Housing Clusters in the Countryside of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and policy WLP8.7: Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside of the Waveney Local Plan.
- 4.4 A screening process considered each policy in the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans and concluded whether significant effects were likely and if Appropriate Assessment was therefore needed. The Appropriate Assessments of the Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Local Plans considered the following themes:
- Recreation pressure,
 - Air quality and traffic emissions,
 - Biodiversity net gain,
 - Urbanisation,
 - Water quality, resources and treatment, and
 - Flood risk and coastal erosion.
- 4.5 Mitigation measures were identified within the Appropriate Assessments and incorporated within both Local Plans, resulting in a conclusion that neither plan would lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of the (then) Suffolk Coastal and Waveney Districts.

5. Assessment of likely significant effects of the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD on Habitat Sites

- 5.1 Table 3 below considers each relevant likely element of the draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on protected Habitat sites. This assessment has been carried out at an early stage, prior to full drafting, but based the proposed content of the SPD. This constitutes Stage 1 as set out under paragraph 1.4 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the protected sites. The relevant elements are considered within the context of the Local Plan policies from which they hang and which have themselves been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 both concluded no likely significant effects. Both Local Plan Appropriate Assessments did, however, consider the general housing growth promoted by the Plans and identified recreational disturbance as a likely significant effect. To mitigate this effect the Council has subsequently produced a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and requires payment towards mitigation from residential developments within 13km of the protected Habitat sites.

Table 3: Likely significant effects of the Draft Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
Guidance to help determine what is a 'Cluster' / Countryside settlement	<p>This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by clarifying the definitions of 'cluster' and 'countryside settlement'. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>	None	None	No
Guidance to help determine what is a 'Gap'	This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by clarifying the definition of	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	<p>‘gap’ in context of criteria b) of SCLP5.4 and the first bullet point of WLP8.7. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			
Guidance on the relationship of the policies with Settlement Boundaries	This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by providing further explanation of relationship between policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 and other policies in the Local Plans which define settlement boundaries. This focused	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
which identify land (settlements) that is not in the Countryside	<p>guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			
Guidance on the definition of 'highway'	This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by clarifying the definition of 'highway' in context of the penultimate bullet point of SCLP5.4. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	<p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			
Guidance on the role/ presence of existing non-residential uses in a Cluster	<p>This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by clarifying consideration of non residential uses in defining a cluster. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely</p>	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan. This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.			
Guidance on what is expected from engagement or consultation where required as part of the policies	This section will set out the Council's expectations in relation to engagement and consultation as required by both policies. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development. The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.			
Guidance on considering potential impact on local character and landscape, and on design considerations;	<p>This section will provide detailed guidance clarifying how character and landscape impacts will be considered in the determination of planning applications in where policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 are a factor. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
Guidance on how the policies relate to other Local Plan policies including policies for housing in the countryside, other housing policies such as housing mix, design and landscape policies and Policy SCLP11.9 Strategy for Newbourne in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan	<p>This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by setting out the relationship between policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.4 and other relevant policies in the Local Plans. This focused guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>	None	None	No
Guidance on Permitted Development rights	This section will provide detailed guidance to aid the determination of planning applications by explaining current permitted development rights in the context of SCLP5.4 and WLP87. This focused	None	None	No

Topic	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
	<p>guidance is qualitative and will not in itself promote development.</p> <p>The guidance in this section builds on policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 of the Local Plans. The Habitats Regulation Assessments of both these policies concluded no likely significant effects. Overall housing growth was considered through the Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan and the necessary mitigation incorporated into the Plan.</p> <p>This guidance in this section will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites.</p>			

6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will provide additional technical guidance to inform the determination of planning applications alongside the Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Local Plans. The SPD will provide focused guidance to support the implementation of Policy SCLP5.4 Housing Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan) and Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan). The guidance contained in the draft SPD will assist in the implementation of Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies for East Suffolk. The SPD, when adopted, will be a material consideration in the determining of applications for planning permission.
- 6.2 Implementation of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will not lead to likely significant effects on protected Habitat sites.
- 6.3 Natural England were consulted on a draft of this Screening Statement as statutory nature conservation body. Their response is contained in Appendix 4.

Signed:



Dated: 14/06/2022

Andrea McMillan

Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services)

East Suffolk Council

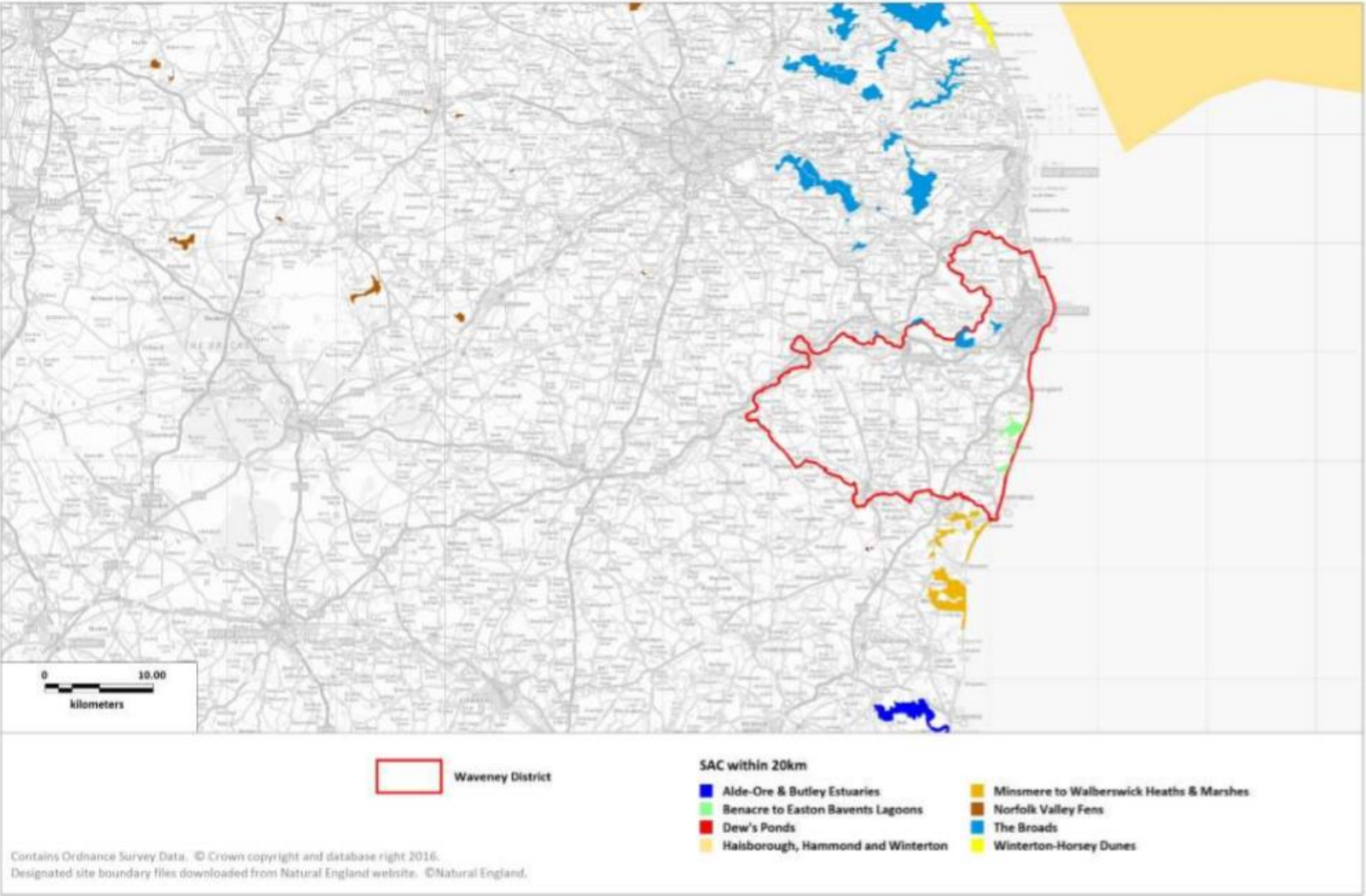
Appendix 1: Sources of background information

- East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020)
- East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (March 2019)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan stage (incorporating Main Modifications) (May 2020)
- The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Waveney Local Plan (December 2018)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for Ipswich Borough, Babergh District, Mid Suffolk District and East Suffolk Councils (May 2019)

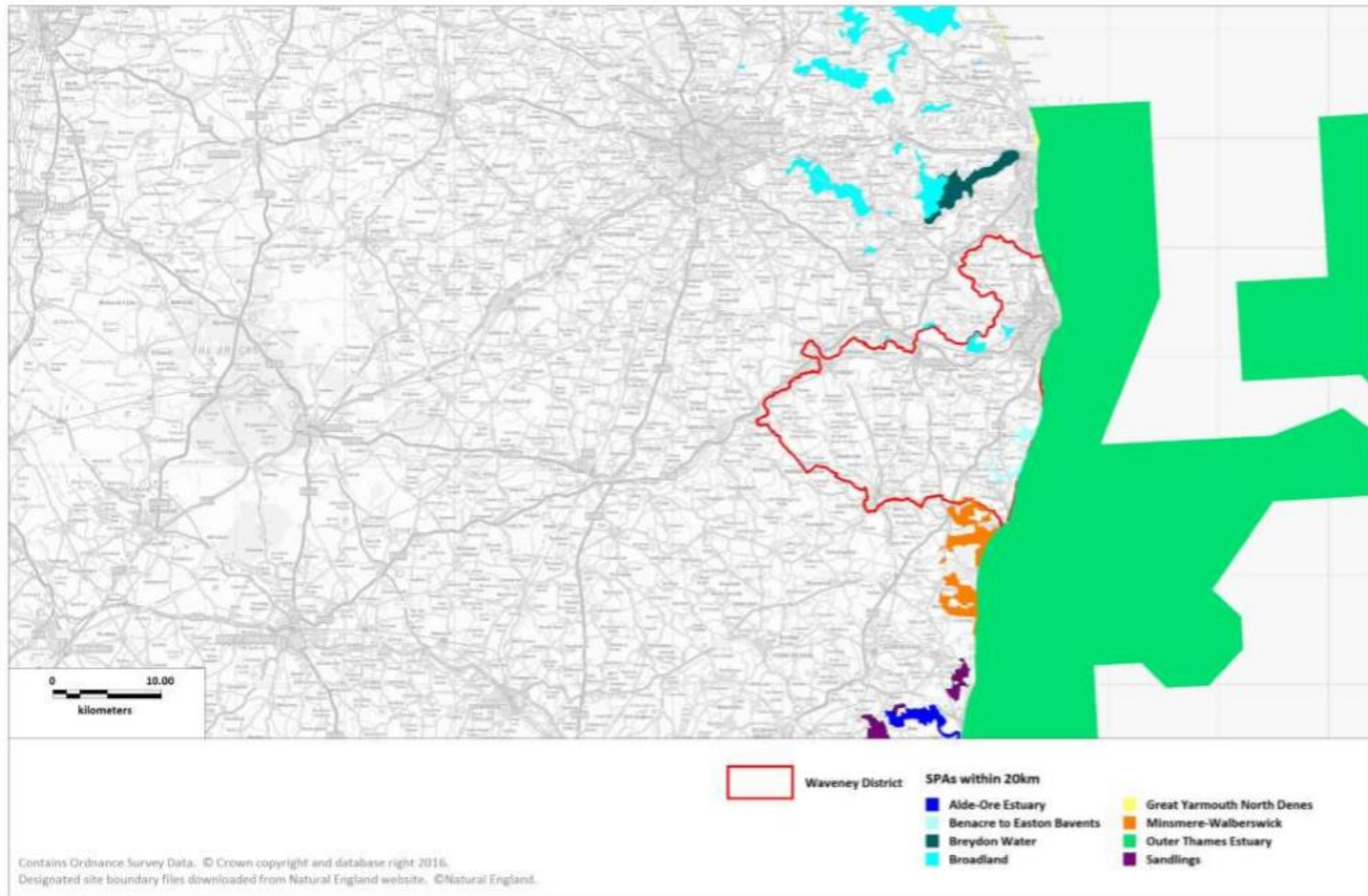
Appendix 2: Locations of Habitat sites

Habitat sites within 20km of the East Suffolk Council- Waveney Local Plan Area

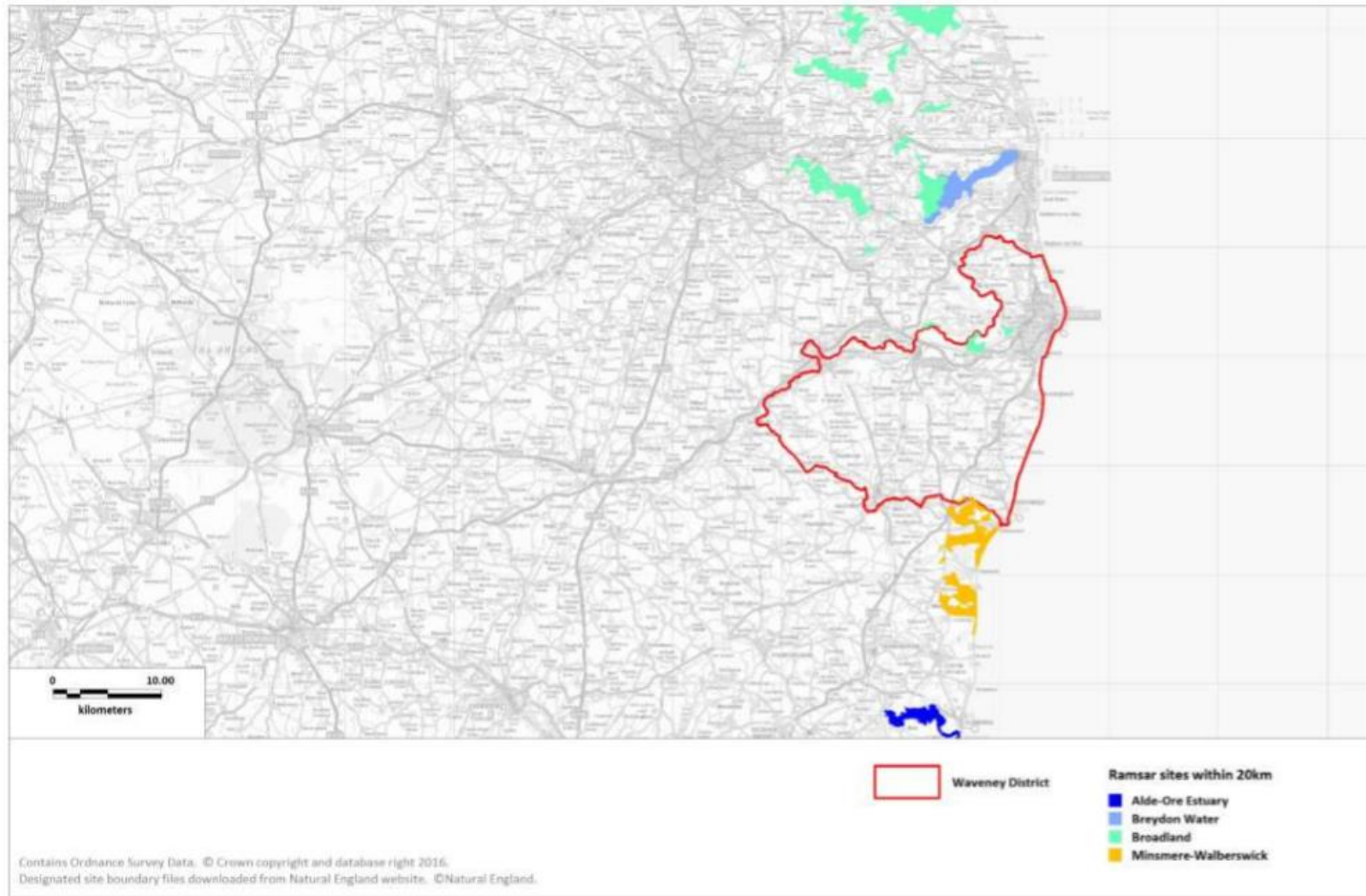
Map 1: SACs



Map 2: SPAs

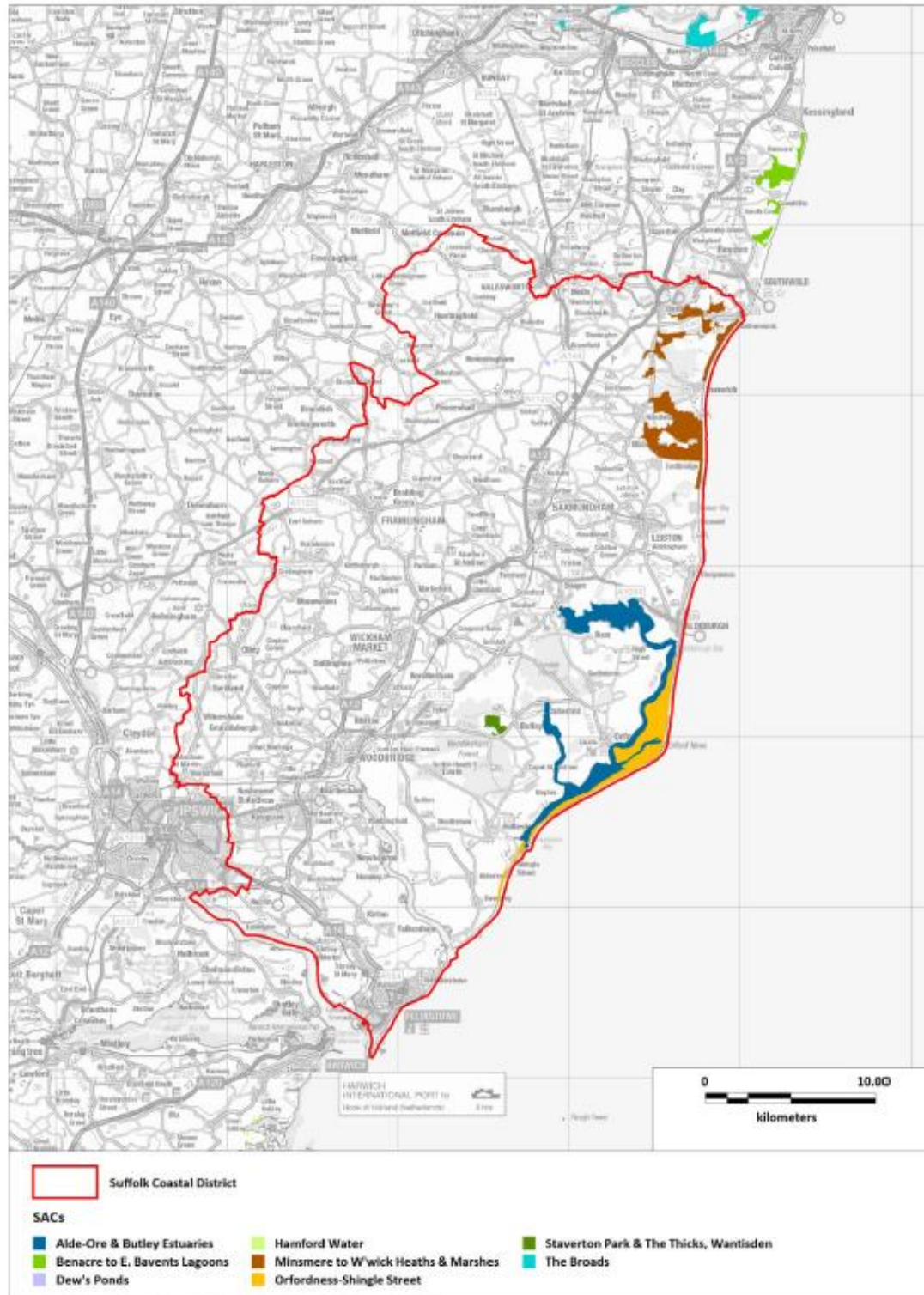


Map 3: Ramsar Sites



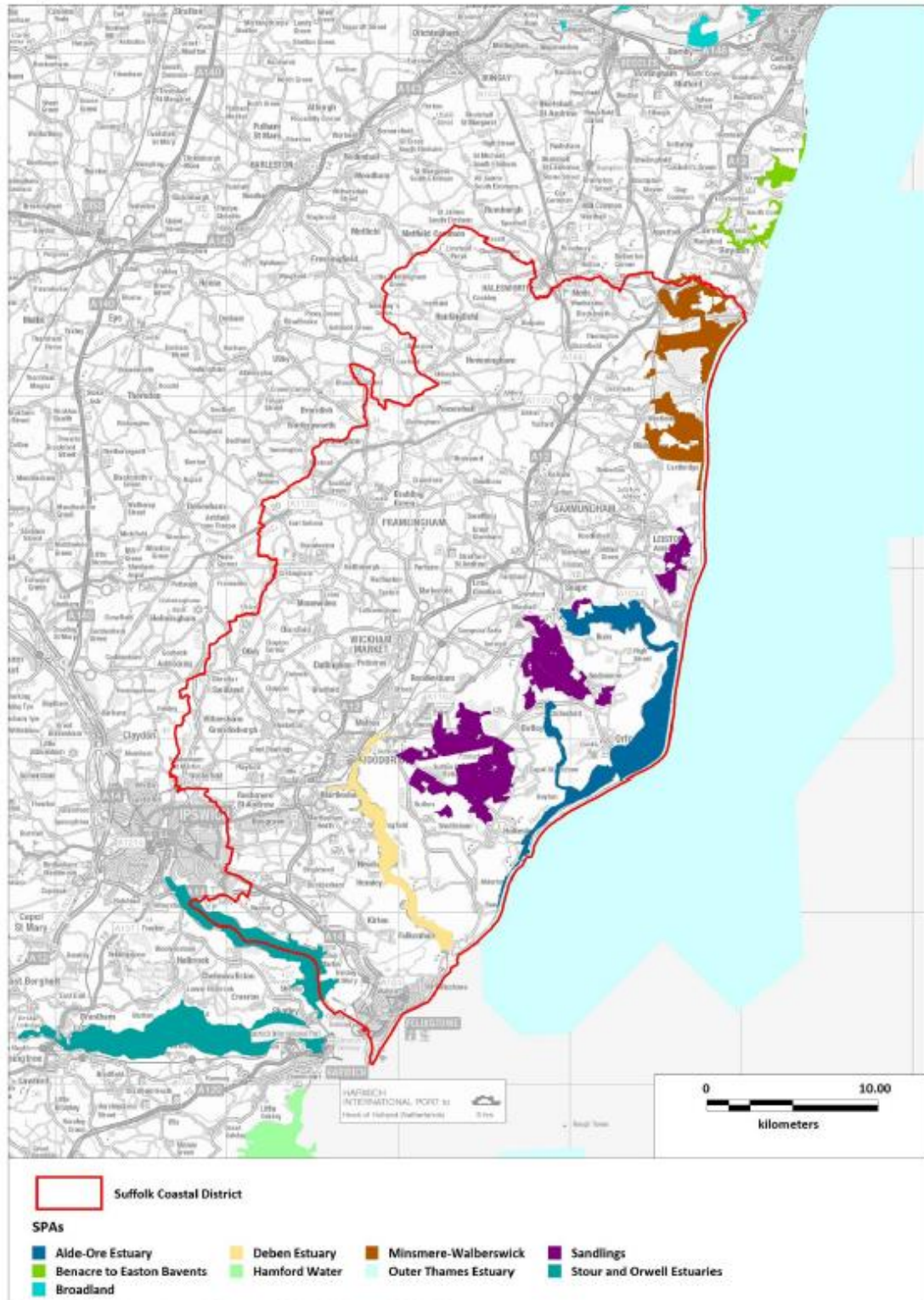
Habitat sites within 20km of the East Suffolk Council- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Area

Map 1: SAC sites where boundary within 20km of Suffolk Coastal District

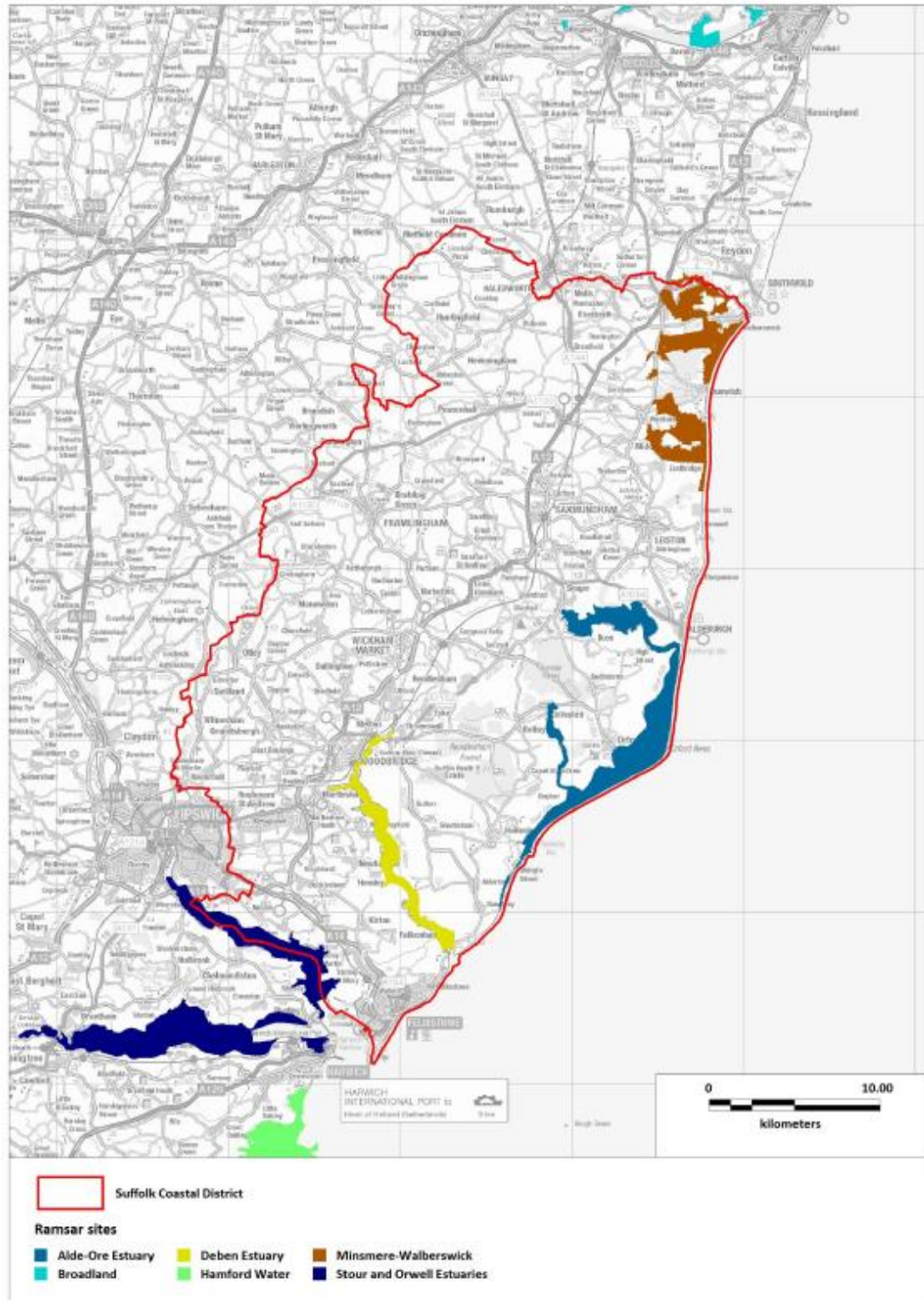


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Map 2: SPA sites where boundary within 20km of Suffolk Coastal District



Map 3: Ramsar sites where boundary within 20km of Suffolk Coastal District



Appendix 3: Relevant Habitat sites

Name	Qualifying features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan at Final Draft Plan Stage (December 2018))
Special Areas of Conservation			
Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries	H1130:Estuaries H1140: Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats H1330: Atlantic salt meadows	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats; The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine) (Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC and Alde-Ore SPA)
Benacre to Easton Barents Lagoons	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats,	Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).

		The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	
Dew's Ponds	S1166 Triturus cristatus: Great crested newt	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	None identified
Minsmere to Walberswick Heath and Marshes	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) Anas crecca: Eurasian teal A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats,	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

	<p>A082(NB) <i>Circus cyaneus</i>: Hen harrier</p> <p>A224(B) <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>: European nightjar</p> <p>A056(B) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler</p> <p>A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler</p> <p>A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall</p> <p>A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall</p> <p>A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>: Pied avocet</p> <p>A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i>: Little tern</p> <p>A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons</i>: Greater white-fronted goose</p>	<p>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and,</p> <p>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>	
Orfordness – Shingle Street	<p>H1150: Coastal Lagoons</p> <p>H1210: Annual vegetation of drift lines</p> <p>H1220: Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features by maintaining or restoring:</p> <p>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats;</p> <p>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; and</p> <p>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.</p>	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA.

Staverton Park and The Thicks, Wantisden	H9190: Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains; Dry oak-dominated woodland.	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats; The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; and The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	Woodland management, disease, atmospheric pollution.
The Broads	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin's whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely,	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party

	<p>H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp</p> <p>H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation</p> <p>S1355 Lutra lutra: Otter</p> <p>S1903 Liparis loeselii: Fen orchid</p> <p>S4056 Anisus vorticulus: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail</p>	<p>The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</p>	
Special Protection Areas			
Alde-Ore Estuary (also Ramsar site)	<p>A081: Eurasian marsh harrier (breeding)</p> <p>A132: Pied avocet (non-breeding)</p> <p>A132: Pied avocet (breeding)</p> <p>A151: Ruff (non-breeding)</p> <p>A162: Common redshank (non-breeding)</p> <p>A183: Lesser black-backed gull (breeding)</p> <p>A191: Sandwich tern (breeding)</p> <p>A195: Little tern (breeding)</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <p>The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)</p> <p>(Alde-Ore and Butley Estuaries SAC and Alde-Ore SPA)</p>
Benacre to Easton Bavents	<p>H1150# Coastal lagoons,</p> <p>A195(B) Sterna albifrons: Little tern</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to</p>	<p>Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes</p>

	A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> : Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> : Eurasian marsh harrier	achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
Broadlands (also Ramsar site)	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin's whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and,	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party

	H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with Magnopotamion or Hydrocharition-type vegetation S1355 Lutra lutra: Otter S1903 Liparis loeselii: Fen orchid S4056 Anisus vorticulus: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail	The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	
Deben Estuary (also Ramsar site)	A046a: Dark bellied brent goose (non-breeding) A132: Pied avocet (non-breeding)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features; The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; The population of each of the qualifying features; and The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	Coastal squeeze, disturbance to birds, water and air pollution.
Outer Thames Estuary	A001: Red-throated Diver (Non-breeding) A195: Common Tern (Breeding) A193: Little Tern (Breeding)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA. SIP identifies fisheries.

		<p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; The population of each of the qualifying features; and The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	
Minsmere to Walberswick (also Ramsar site)	<p>H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) <i>Anas crecca</i>: Eurasian teal A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>: Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) <i>Circus cyaneus</i>: Hen harrier A224(B) <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>: European nightjar A056(B) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i>: Northern shoveler A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i>: Gadwall</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)</p>

	A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> : Pied avocet A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons</i> : Greater white-fronted goose		
Outer Thames Estuary	A001 (W) <i>Gavia stellata</i> Red-throated Diver A195 (B) <i>Sterna hirundo</i> Common Tern A193 (B) <i>Sternula albifrons</i> Little Tern	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	Not identified in Suffolk Coastal Final Draft Local Plan HRA. SIP identifies fisheries.
Sandlings	A224: European nightjar (breeding) A246: Woodlark (breeding)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;	Changes in species distributions, inappropriate scrub control, deer, air pollution, public access/disturbance.

		<p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	
<p>Stour and Orwell Estuaries (also Ramsar site)</p>	<p>A046a: Dark bellied brent goose (non-breeding)</p> <p>A054: Northern pintail (non-breeding)</p> <p>A132: Pied avocet (non-breeding)</p> <p>A141: Grey plover (non-breeding)</p> <p>A143: Red knot (non-breeding)</p> <p>A149: Dunlin (non-breeding)</p> <p>A156: Black-tailed godwit (non-breeding)</p> <p>A162: Common redshank (non-breeding)</p> <p>Waterbird assemblage</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <p>The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p>	<p>Coastal squeeze, disturbance to birds, air pollution and new development.</p>

Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Response

Date: 31 May 2022
Our ref: 390546
Your ref: SPD.

Ben Wright
East Suffolk Council
Ben.Wright@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY



Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ben Wright

Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – SEA and HRA

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 28 April 2022, which was received by Natural England on 28 April 2022.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.

Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not appear to relate to our interests to any significant extent. We therefore do not wish to comment.

Should the plan be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then, please consult Natural England again.

Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment

A SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment only in exceptional circumstances as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance [here](#). While SPDs are unlikely to give rise to likely significant effects on European Sites, they should be considered as a plan under the Habitats Regulations in the same way as any other plan or project. If your SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment, you are required to consult us at certain stages as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Please send all planning consultations electronically to the consultation hub at consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Salt
Consultations Team

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

Draft Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale
Residential Development in the Countryside
Supplementary Planning Document

June 2022

Introduction

1. It is the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to undertake an Equality Impact Analysis at the time of formulating a decision, drafting a report, designing or amending a policy. This will ensure that the Council is considering and taking positive action where possible to promote access to services for all their communities, including their wider communities. The Equality Impact Assessment Screening Assessment will assess whether there is any impact upon any of the groups with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act, which are listed in the table below. If an adverse impact upon any of these groups is identified, then a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be required.
2. The Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) seeks to provide guidance about the following Local Plan policies:
 - Policy SCLP5.4 Housing in Clusters in the Countryside (Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020)
 - Policy WLP8.7 Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside (Waveney Local Plan, 2019)
3. The document is subdivided into chapters, which are summarised below.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

4. This chapter provides an overview of the Local Plan policy context that informs the Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD. It summarises the two Local Plan policies that the SPD relates to: Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy SCLP5.4 (Housing in Clusters in the Countryside) and Waveney Local Plan policy WLP8.7 (Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside).

Chapter 2 – Suffolk Coastal Policy SCLP5.4: What is a Cluster?

5. This chapter explains what is meant by a cluster in Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy SCLP5.4 (Housing in Clusters in the Countryside). A cluster is a group of closely related houses (at least five) located outside of settlement boundaries, in other words in the Countryside. For the proposal to be applicable it should be located within a cluster. The purpose of this policy is to support a small amount of development in rural locations that do not benefit from the range of services found in defined towns and villages. This is to support the sustainability of

rural areas. Chapter 2 provides guidance about the number of buildings within a cluster, how closely related to each other they should be.

Chapter 3 – Waveney Local Plan WLP8.7: What is a Settlement in the Countryside?

6. This chapter explains what is meant by settlement in the countryside under Waveney Local Plan Policy WLP8.7 (Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside). The policy does not specify the number of dwellings within a settlement in the countryside, but states that there should be multiple dwellings that are closely related. An isolated dwelling would not qualify as a settlement in the countryside. The aim of this policy is to allow a limited amount of development in the countryside and so help to ensure the sustainability of rural locations. Chapter 3 provides guidance about how closely related to each other buildings should be.

Chapter 4 - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan SCLP5.4 Site Characteristics

7. This chapter provides more detail about when a site would be classified as part of a cluster and could be suitable for development under the Local Plan policy.

Chapter 5 - Waveney District Council Local Plan WLP8.7 Site Characteristics

8. This chapter provides more detail about when a site would be classified as being part of a settlement in the countryside and could be suitable for development under the Local Plan policy.

Chapter 6 - Character and Appearance

9. This chapter provides guidance about how proposals for cluster developments and settlements in the countryside can be designed and built so as to have an acceptable impact upon the surrounding area. This includes guidance about ensuring that development has an acceptable impact upon the landscape, the design of the proposal and minimising cumulative impact.

Chapter 7 - Public Consultation

10. This chapter provides guidance on public consultation requirements for housing clusters and small-scale residential development in the countryside. Key policy considerations are policy SCLP5.4, which states that proposals should meet local housing need and WLP8.7, which states that there should be demonstrable public support for the proposal.

Chapter 8 - Other Policies

11. This chapter provides guidance on other policies that may cross over with SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7 in certain situations. Although the Housing in Clusters and Small - Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD focuses on the requirements of Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policy SCLP5.4 and Waveney Local Plan policy WLP8.7, the Local Plans should be read as a whole. This means that there are other policies that should be considered when planning and deciding a residential development in the countryside. Of particular relevance other Local Plan policies that may need to be considered, depending on the circumstances, include those which relate to self-build and custom build housing, affordable housing, infill and garden development and former Land Association Settlement Holdings in Newbourne.
12. The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation. East Suffolk Council has added a tenth characteristic, socio-economic deprivation, in addition to the nine protected characteristics listed in the legislation. This reflects that pockets of deprivation that exist across East Suffolk.

Screening of impact on different groups

	Groups	Likely Impact (positive/negative/no impact)	Reason for your decision
a	Age (Includes safeguarding issues)	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will

			therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different age groups.
b	Disability	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those with a disability.
C	Gender reassignment	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents

			will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who have undergone gender reassignment.
D	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are married or in a civil partnership.
E	Pregnancy and maternity	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents

			will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.
F	Race	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different racial groups.
G	Religion or Belief	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries

			and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those from different religions or beliefs.
H	Sex	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual identify.
I	Sexual orientation	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer

			service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate in terms of sexual orientation.
J	Socio-economic deprivation	No impact.	The Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD provides guidance about small scale housing development in the countryside, which is located outside of towns and villages and specifically that which may come forward under policies SCLP5.4 and WLP8.7. It will therefore not discriminate against this group. Consultation documents will be available online, in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres and the Council has offered assistance in its publicity material. The consultation will therefore not discriminate against those who are experiencing social or economic deprivation.

Consultation and Engagement

There was an initial process of consultation that guided the preparation of the Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD. The initial consultation was undertaken using online workshops for specific groups and organisations to provide feedback on their experience of using the policies:

- Town and Parish Councils in East Suffolk (31st March 2022)
- Agents and developers working in East Suffolk (28th March 2022)
- East Suffolk Councillors (9th May 2022)

Invitations were sent to all Town and Parish Councils in East Suffolk and agents and developers registered on the East Suffolk Local Plan Mailing List. The number of

representatives was limited to one per Town or Parish Council or one per organisation (agents & developers) to ensure all attending had the opportunity to express their views. Workshops were held via Microsoft Teams.

All East Suffolk Councillors were invited to a workshop session on Monday 9th May 2022 (6-8pm) held via Zoom.

The format of each workshop included an overview of each of the policies; the scope and timescales of the SPD followed by an interactive session. The Councillors session outlined the feedback from the earlier workshops and sought further feedback on how the SPD could provide further guidance.

A formal public consultation will take place from 17th June to 5th August 2022 on the Draft Housing Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD. This consultation will last a total of seven weeks. An extra week has been added to the duration of the consultation to take account of the latter part of the consultation overlapping with the summer holidays. Consultation letters and emails will be sent to consultees on the Council's planning policy mailing list. A press release will be released covering the consultation. The planning policy mailing list includes Town and Parish Councils, Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Councillors, neighbouring district Councils including the Broads Authority, developers, agents, landowners, business associations, civic societies, infrastructure providers, and members of the public.

Copies of consultation documents will be available online, and hard copies made available for inspection in libraries and in the Council's customer service centres.

Anyone who is unable to view the consultation documents online, in libraries or in the Customer Service Centres can contact the Planning Policy and Delivery Team, and the publicity material provides contact details and an offer of assistance.

Presentation in Different Languages

As part of a seven-week period of formal consultation, the document will be published on the Council's website, with hard copies available on request for those unable to access it online. The document may be requested in a different language. When such requests are received the Customer Services Team will be involved with ensuring this request is actioned.

Proposed Changes

The Council will analyse responses received during the public consultation and will make any appropriate changes as a result of comments received.

Conclusion

This EQIA screening exercise shows that the Housing Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD will not negatively impact upon any protected group or those experiencing socio-economic deprivation. Therefore, a full EQIA assessment is not considered necessary.



CABINET

Tuesday, 01 November 2022

Subject	East Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2023/24
Report by	Councillor Maurice Cook Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources Councillor Edward Back Assistant Cabinet Member for Resources
Supporting Officer	Brian Mew Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer Brian.mew@eastsuffolk.gov.uk Adrian Mills Head of, Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Adrian.Mills@angliarevenues.gov.uk 01842 756491

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to review the 2022/23 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) and consider options for the scheme for 2023/24.

Options:

Each year the Council is required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) have carried out the annual review of the 2022 scheme. In recent years, a number of technical changes to streamline the process and improve the customer journey have been implemented. No further changes of this nature are currently proposed in respect of 2023/24.

Where it is determined to retain the existing scheme, this must be decided by 11 March of the preceding financial year. Retention of the existing scheme with no changes is a decision that can be taken by Cabinet, and does not require external consultation.

The current East Suffolk Working Age LCTRS scheme provides a maximum benefit of 91.5% for working age claimants and the scheme also fully protects War Pensioners. An option that has been reviewed but which is not recommended in this report is to increase the maximum benefit for working age claimants to 100%, i.e. working age claimants would not have to contribute 8.5%.

Changes to the scheme require both a period of external consultation and a final decision by Full Council.

Recommendation/s:

That it be approved that no change be made to the East Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2023/24.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

None arising directly from this report.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

East Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS)

Environmental:

None arising directly from this report.

Equalities and Diversity:

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is not required in respect of retention of the existing scheme.

Financial:

None arising directly from the recommendation in this report. The financial implications of increasing the maximum benefit for working age claimants to 100% are outlined in paragraph 3.4.

Human Resources:
None arising directly from this report.
ICT:
None arising directly from this report.
Legal:
None arising directly from this report.
Risk:
None arising directly from this report.

External Consultees:	The recommendation in this report does not require a consultation period to take place.
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected?			
The LCTRS provides important support to people in East Suffolk, directly contributing to the key theme of Enabling our Communities.			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	This is now the ninth year of LCTRS; a locally set scheme that replaced the nationally set Council Tax Benefits (CTB) scheme from April 2013. In 2013/14 a one-off Government grant compensated in part for the reduction in Government funding for the Working Age scheme that year. This meant that the maximum LCTRS awarded was 91.5%. This scheme, adopted by both Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils, has basically been maintained since, and the current East Suffolk LCTRS scheme provides a maximum benefit of 91.5% for working age claimants and the scheme also protects War Pensioners. The aim in designing the scheme was to achieve a balance in charging an amount of Council Tax to encourage customers back into work whilst setting the amount charged at an affordable and recoverable level.
1.2	By setting the amount payable at 8.5% of the charge, in most cases, where a customer is not paying, we can affect recovery through attachment to benefit within a year and so the charge with costs is recoverable. If the amount payable was set higher, then it is possible the debt would not be recoverable and possibly create a culture of non-payment of Council Tax.
1.3	For 2014/2015 to 2017/18 the original scheme was retained, except that allowances and premiums (the amounts of income from state-administered benefits such as Jobseekers' Allowance) were increased in line with other benefits such as Housing Benefit.
1.4	For the 2018/19 scheme there was a consultation on a proposal to harmonise the scheme to DWP welfare reforms introduced for Housing Benefit and LCTRS for Pensioners and introduce closer links to Universal Credit data share for claims, thereby removing the stipulation to make a separate claim. This was subsequently approved and introduced.
1.5	For 2019/20, East Suffolk Council kept the same scheme as its predecessor councils had operated for 2018/19.
1.6	For 2020/21 the only change, after consultation, was to introduce a fluctuating earnings rule to the treatment of Universal Credit. A weekly tolerance level of £15

	(£65 monthly) was introduced to reduce the number of monthly reassessments impacting customers every time a revised Universal Credit notification is received.
1.7	Against the uncertain background of the Covid-19 pandemic, Cabinet agreed that there would not be any changes to the LCTRS for 2021/22.
1.8	<p>For 2022/23, four amendments were made to the scheme, principally focussed on improving the customer journey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The capital threshold was reduced from £16,000 to £10,000 and tariff income was abolished for those with under £10,000. - A fixed rate non-dependent deduction of £7.40 was applied. - The Council Tax Support application process was streamlined by signposting customers to claim Universal Credit and Council Tax Support at the same time. - The Universal Credit income variation rule was increased from £65.00 to £100 each month.

2 Current position

2.1	Councils are required to review their LCTRS schemes annually and consider whether any changes need to be made. Where it is determined to retain the existing scheme, this must be decided by 11 March of the preceding financial year.
2.2	Where councils decide that they wish to amend their schemes they need to consult preceptors and stakeholders and undertake a wider consultation to inform a final scheme design by 28 February of the preceding financial year.
2.3	The current East Suffolk Working Age LCTRS scheme provides a maximum benefit of 91.5% for working age claimants and the scheme also fully protects War Pensioners. The aim in designing the scheme was to achieve a balance in charging an amount of Council Tax to encourage customers back into work whilst setting the amount charged at an affordable and recoverable level during the year.
2.4	A statutory scheme applies to Pensioners who can receive up to a maximum 100% reduction of their Council Tax bill.

3 How to address current situation

3.1	ARP have undertaken the annual review of the scheme. Given the range of changes made in recent years, no further technical changes are proposed to the scheme at this stage.
3.2	In the current economic climate, a more fundamental policy option is to increase the maximum benefit for working age claimants to 100%, i.e. working age claimants would not have to contribute 8.5%.
3.3	Decreasing the contribution rate from 8.5% to 0% would add to the support to low-income households. Based on current caseloads, it is estimated that around 8560 households would benefit from this measure, by an average of around £99.90 for the year.
3.4	However, decreasing the contribution rate in the LCTRS financially impacts on precepting authorities by way of reducing the council tax base of the area. It is estimated that the financial impacts of this measure on the precepting authorities in 2023/24 would be as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suffolk County Council £660k - Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner £114k - East Suffolk Council £81k
3.5	These impacts would have implications for local authority financial sustainability against a background of significant inflationary pressures and a likely stand-still local government finance settlement. These pressures could contribute towards councils not being able to undertake targeted interventions in respect of the cost of living crisis, particularly for those just outside the benefits system, such as in the Council's own Ease-the- Squeeze campaign.
3.6	<p>In addition, a wide range of support measures have been, and will continue to implemented for groups of residents including those entitled to LCTRS, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Council Tax energy rebate: main scheme of £150 rebate for all those paying council tax in bands A - D o Council Tax Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund: for a wider group who may be paying rent and bills, but not council tax, with priority for those in receipt of Universal Credit/Housing Benefit; o Household Support Fund: for housing related costs o Referrals through the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme o Making best use of the Discretionary Housing Payment budget to support relevant groups o Working alongside the County to support Tackling Poverty and Foodbank work o Delivering DFE funded Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programmes at Easter, Summer and Christmas

4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	It is recommended in this report that no change be made to the East Suffolk Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2023/24. The option of increasing the maximum benefit for working age claimants to 100%, i.e. working age claimants would not have to contribute 8.5%, has been identified in this report, but has not been recommended in the light of the impact of this measure on local authority finances, which could in itself impinge on the ability of authorities to assist in the cost of living crisis. In addition, a wide range of other measures have been, and will continue to be, put in place to support affected households.
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Appendices

Appendices:

None.

Background reference papers:

None.



CABINET

Tuesday, 01 November 2022

Subject	Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy
Report by	Councillor Maurice Cook Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources
Supporting Officer	Brian Mew Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer brian.mew@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	All Wards

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

To approve an updated draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), taking account of new and revised risks in order for the Council to set a balanced budget that delivers its priorities for the period under review 2022/23 (revision of the current year budget) to 2026/27.

Options:

The consideration of the MTFS by members at an early stage of the budget process is essential, especially in order to commence actions to achieve a balanced budget and sustainable medium-term position. Setting a balanced budget for the coming year is a statutory requirement, therefore no other options are considered appropriate.

Recommendation/s:

1. That the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy attached as Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. That it be approved that Members and officers develop proposals to set a balanced budget for 2023/24 and beyond.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

The draft MTFS provides the framework for initial detailed budget discussions for the forthcoming financial year. This builds towards securing a balanced budget for 2023/24 which will be considered by Full Council at its meeting on 22 February 2023.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

- East Suffolk Strategic Plan
- East Suffolk Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Capital Programme
- Housing Revenue Account
- East Suffolk Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Policy
- Annual Governance Statement
- Financial Management Code

Environmental:

There are no environmental impacts related to this report.

Equalities and Diversity:

An Equality Impact Assessment is not applicable at this stage of the draft MTFS. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the MTFS as of November 2022. This assessment will be complete on the finalisation of the budget for approval in February 2023 and the results taken into consideration.

Financial:

The MTFS was last updated in February 2022. A summary analysis of the updates as of November 2022 is shown in the following table. This table is supported by **Appendix A2**.

MTFS Updates	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Additional Cost	3,383	3,613	3,788	3,429	3,949
Additional Income	(764)	(6,086)	(5,068)	(73)	(594)
Reduced Income	1,400	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300
Saving	(970)	(2,132)	(2,112)	(2,118)	(2,067)
Use of Reserves	(355)	(345)	(245)	0	0
Net Total	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588

As result of the above updates, the latest MTFS position shows a budget gap remaining for 2023/24 and beyond.

MTFS Position	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS February 2021 Budget Gap/(Surplus)	0	4,908	5,805	5,457	5,417
Net Total of MTFS Updates	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588
MTFS November 2022 Update Budget Gap/(Surplus)	2,694	1,358	3,468	7,995	8,005

The budget gap for next financial year has reduced significantly from £4.9m to £1.36m, predominately due to the assumed deferral of Business Rates system changes until 2025/26 at the earliest. East Suffolk is in an advantageous position under the current system and deferral of the reform by another year should enable the Council to benefit by £3m in 2023/24 and 2024/25. However, the current economic situation is extremely volatile and the local government finance position is very uncertain at this stage.

Human Resources:

There are no HR implications directly arising from this report.

ICT:

There are no ICT implications directly arising from this report.

Legal:

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a personal duty on an authority's "Chief Financial Officer" to make a report to Council about the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the Council Tax calculations and the adequacy of financial reserves and balances.

The provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 set out what the Council has to base its budget calculations upon and require the Council to set a balance budget with regard to the advice of its Chief Finance Officer (Section 151).

Risk:

Part of the process of delivering a robust medium-term strategy to enable the Council to manage its affairs soundly, is to have regard to both external and internal risks, and to

identify actions to mitigate those risks. MTFs key principles and a risk analysis together with mitigating actions are provided in **Appendix A1**.

External Consultees:	Budget-related consultation questions now form a standing part of the permanent residents survey which is live via the ESC website, and via other channels. This will be promoted again in the Autumn edition of the residents magazine, and there will also be increased promotion to businesses. A summary of responses as at early December will be reported to Cabinet as part of its consideration of the draft budget in January 2023.
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Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected? By ensuring the robustness of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and adequate reserves and balances the Council. The MTFS underpins and supports the delivery of the East Suffolk Strategic Plan.			

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	The MTFS sets the strategic financial direction for the Council. It sets out the key financial management principles, budget assumptions and service issues.
1.2	<p>The MTFS provides a framework for the detailed budget setting process to ensure that resources are managed effectively and are able to deliver the aspirations of the Council as set out in the Strategic Plan. It provides a sound basis for planning and decision making, and is reviewed and updated at the following key points in the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November/December – as a framework for initial detailed budget discussions for the forthcoming financial year. • January – an update to include additional information received at a national level and corporate issues identified through service planning and the detailed budget build. • February – with the final Budget for the new financial year.
1.3	<p>The key underlying principles of the MTFS are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • securing a balanced budget with reduced reliance on the use of reserves and general balances to support its everyday spending; • setting modest increases in Council Tax when appropriate; and • delivering service efficiencies and generating additional income where there are opportunities to do so.
1.4	The introduction of the Local Business Rates Retention System in 2013/14, together with the Government's programme of fiscal consolidation since 2010, have combined to both reduce the level of funding available to the Council, and to shift the balance of funding significantly away from central to local sources.

2 Current position	
2.1	<p>Economic Outlook:</p> <p>The national economic background affects the costs the Council incurs, the funding it receives, and contributes to the demand for services as residents are affected by economic circumstances. The inflation rate impacts on the cost of services the Council purchases, as the Council delivers much of its service provision through contractual arrangements where inflationary pressures must be negotiated and managed. Specific contractual inflation has been incorporated into the Council's financial position, where appropriate, based on the actual contractual indices.</p>

	<p>Following the pandemic, the UK economy is being impacted by a series of other events, including rising energy costs, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a labour shortage, and UK fiscal policy and financial market turbulence. The OBR economic and fiscal outlook and forecast to be published on 31 October will provide an independent judgement about the economic and fiscal prospects and impact of the Government's policies.</p> <p>The next publication of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) projections is on 3 November 2022. The outlook for the economy continues to be affected by the evolving situation of the pandemic. It will also depend on how governments, households, businesses and financial markets response to those developments.</p>
2.2	The UK unemployment rate fell to 3.5% in the three months to August 2022 compared to 3.8% in the previous three months. This latest figure is also 0.5 percentage points below pre-pandemic levels and the lowest level since February 1974.
2.3	Twelve-month CPI inflation rose from 9.9% in August to 10.1% in September, mainly driven by rising food prices. The Bank of England projects for CPI inflation to peak at 11% in October and to remain above 10% for the following few months. It expects inflation to fall to the official target of 2% in around two years.
2.4	At its 21 September 2022 meeting, five members of the MPC voted to increase the bank rate by 0.5% to 2.25%. Three members preferred an increase of 0.75% to 2.5% and one member preferred an increase of 0.25% to 2%. The Committee voted to increase the bank rate to 2.25% after taking into consideration the CPI inflation rate and the labour market. This is the highest level in 14 years.
2.5	<p>Local Government Finance:</p> <p>Following the Chancellor's Mini Budget/Growth Plan 2022 in September and the Medium-Term Financial Plan measures brought forward on 17 October, it is unlikely that there will be additional funding for local government for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This includes funding for inflationary pressures, with the possible exception being social care. The worse-case scenario would be for cuts to be made to the Spending Review 2021 funding allocations.</p>
2.6	The publication of the Chancellor's full Medium-Term Fiscal Plan at the end of October should provide some further indications of any change to funding allocations for local government and how a two-year settlement may be presented. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is anticipated in early / December. Local government funding reforms are now not expected until 2025/26 at the earliest.
2.7	<p>Business Rates:</p> <p>Together with deferral of funding reforms, there is also unlikely to be a Business Rates baseline reset before 2025/26 at the earliest. A delay to the reform of the Business Rates system is of financial benefit to the Council, with each year of remaining under the current regime resulting in estimated income of £3m plus Pooling Benefit.</p>
2.8	<p>Council Tax:</p> <p>For Shire District Councils in two-tier areas, the referendum limit for 2022/23 was the higher of 2% or £5 and this is expected to remain for 2023/24. Details of referendum limits for next year are expected to be confirmed as part of the Provisional Settlement.</p>
2.9	The increase in the tax base for East Suffolk is currently estimated to be 1,186.55 (1.33%) Band D equivalent properties, increasing the overall tax base for East Suffolk from 89,023.43 to 90,209.98 for 2023/24. This equates to around £0.209m of additional Council Tax income to the Council based on the current District Band D Council Tax of £176.22.
2.10	<p>MTFS Forecasts 2022/23 to 2026/27:</p> <p>As of November 2022, key areas of the budget that are yet to be finalised include;</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment (staffing) costs• Utility costs• Partnerships• Revenue implications of the capital programme• Business rates income• Council Tax income• Fees and Charges income• Announcement of the Local Government Settlement for 2023/24• Use of reserves.																								
2.11	<p>As at November the current budget gaps are set out below:</p> <table><tr><th>MTFS Position</th><th>2022/23 £'000</th><th>2023/24 £'000</th><th>2024/25 £'000</th><th>2025/26 £'000</th><th>2026/27 £'000</th></tr><tr><td>MTFS February 2021 Budget Gap/(Surplus)</td><td>0</td><td>4,908</td><td>5,805</td><td>5,457</td><td>5,417</td></tr><tr><td>Net Total of MTFS Updates</td><td>2,694</td><td>(3,550)</td><td>(2,337)</td><td>2,538</td><td>2,588</td></tr><tr><td>MTFS November 2022 Update Budget Gap/(Surplus)</td><td>2,694</td><td>1,358</td><td>3,468</td><td>7,995</td><td>8,005</td></tr></table>	MTFS Position	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	MTFS February 2021 Budget Gap/(Surplus)	0	4,908	5,805	5,457	5,417	Net Total of MTFS Updates	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588	MTFS November 2022 Update Budget Gap/(Surplus)	2,694	1,358	3,468	7,995	8,005
MTFS Position	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000																				
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MTFS November 2022 Update Budget Gap/(Surplus)	2,694	1,358	3,468	7,995	8,005																				
2.12	Section 5.2 of Appendix A1 highlights areas that may have significant financial impact but cannot yet be quantified or quantified with a degree of certainty. This includes national pay awards, workforce pay pressure/grade inflation and partnerships.																								
2.13	The total balance of General Fund Earmarked Reserves was £57.6m (excluding Port Health) as of 1 April 2022, and the current projected balance at the end of the MTFS period is £46m. This does not yet included any revisions to capital reserves or use of reserves to fund updated budget gaps presented in this report. The General Fund balance remains at £6m, with no planned use over the MTFS period.																								
2.14	The Covid reserve will be used further in 2022/23 to deal with accounting timing differences related to the pandemic impact on business rates, and to fund post pandemic grant work and recovery initiatives. There is currently in the region of £1m of the Covid support grant being held in the reserve. The balance of this funding will be monitored and transferred to an appropriate reserve at the end of the year if no longer required for post pandemic recovery work.																								

3 How to address current situation	
3.1	The Council has a statutory duty to deliver a balanced budget for the forthcoming year and Full Council will consider this budget at its February 2023 meeting.
3.2	As mentioned in 2.11 a budget gap currently remains for 2023/24 and there are areas still to be finalised which will impact on the final position.
3.3	The Finance team continue to work with Officers and Members throughout the budget setting process which will lead to continual updating of the MTFS for the Council until a balance budget is achieved.
3.4	The use of reserves will be taken into consideration as necessary to achieve a balance budget position for 2023/24 whilst ensuring a financially sustainable and robust level of reserves is maintained.

4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	To approve an updated draft MTFS, taking account of new and revised risks in order that the Council will be able to set a balanced budget that delivers its priorities for the period under review 2022/23 (revision of the current year budget) to 2026/27.

Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Medium Term Financial Strategy (November 2022 update)
Appendix A1	MTFS Key Principles and Risk Analysis
Appendix A2	MTFS Changes November 2022
Appendix A3	MTFS Changes by Strategic Theme/Other Factors
Appendix A4	Caring for Our Environment Budgets
Background reference papers:	
None	



EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY
2023/24 – 2026/27**

NOVEMBER 2022

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The **Medium Term Financial Strategy** (MTFS) sets the strategic financial direction for the Council. It sets out the key financial management principles, budget assumptions and service issues.
- 1.2 The MTFS provides a framework for the detailed budget setting process to ensure that resources are managed effectively and are able to deliver the aspirations of the Council as set out in the Strategic Plan. It provides a sound basis for planning and decision making, and is reviewed and updated at the following key points in the year:
- November/December – as a framework for initial detailed budget discussions for the forthcoming financial year.
 - January – an update to include additional information received at a national level and corporate issues identified through service planning and the detailed budget build.
 - February – with the final Budget for the new financial year.
- 1.3 The vision of the East Suffolk Strategic Plan is to “deliver the highest quality of life possible for everyone who lives in, works in and visits East Suffolk”. The MTFS underpins the new plan and vision for East Suffolk, focussing on five key themes.
- Growing Our Economy
 - Enabling Our Communities
 - Remaining Financially Sustainable
 - Delivering Digital Transformation
 - Caring For Our Environment
- 1.4 The MTFS provides an integrated view of the Council’s finances, recognising that the allocation and management of its human, financial and physical resources play a key role in delivering its priorities and ensuring that the Council works effectively with its partners locally, regionally and nationally.
- 1.5 The key underlying principles of the MTFS are:
- securing a balanced budget with reduced reliance on the use of reserves and general balances to support its everyday spending;
 - setting modest increases in Council Tax when appropriate; and
 - delivering service efficiencies and generating additional income where there are opportunities to do so.
- 1.6 Part of the process of delivering a robust MTFS to enable the Council to manage its affairs soundly, is to have regard to both external and internal risks, and to identify actions to mitigate those risks. MTFS key principles and a risk analysis together with mitigating actions are provided in **Appendix A1**.
- 1.7 Sections 2 to 4 provide an update on the financial challenge facing the Council, taking into account the economic factors, the local government finance environment, and the Council’s key funding streams. Sections 5 to 7 outline how the Council will respond to the challenges, as expressed in terms of its Budget and strategies towards reserves and capital.

2 PUBLIC FINANCES

- 2.1 On 23 September 2022 the Chancellor delivered a Mini-Budget/Growth Plan 2022. There were also a number of other policy announcements that are relevant to the Council's financial position, including the reversal of the National Insurance increase, Energy Bill Relief Scheme and Investment Zones. No measures were announced in respect of the Council's key income streams of council tax or business rates, nor on any specific details regarding Government departmental spending, of which local government finance forms a part.
- 2.2 A statement by the Chancellor on 17 October 2022, reversed some of the measures announced in the Mini Budget, and brought forward a number of the measures from the Medium-Term Fiscal Plan scheduled for 31 October, to support fiscal sustainability. There were no announcements which changed the Council's financial position.
- 2.3 On the 31 October, the Chancellor will deliver the full Medium-Term Financial Plan alongside the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast.

3 ECONOMIC INDICATORS

- 3.1 The national economic background affects the costs the Council incurs, the funding it receives, and contributes to the demand for services as residents are affected by economic circumstances. The inflation rate impacts on the cost of services the Council purchases, as the Council delivers much of its service provision through contractual arrangements where inflationary pressures must be negotiated and managed. Specific contractual inflation has been incorporated into the Council's financial position, where appropriate, based on the actual contractual indices.
- 3.2 Following the pandemic, the UK economy is being impacted by a series of other events, including rising energy costs, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a labour shortage, and UK fiscal policy and financial market turbulence.
- 3.3 The OBR economic and fiscal outlook and forecast to be published on 31 October will provide an independent judgement about the economic and fiscal prospects and impact of the Government's policies.
- 3.4 The next publication of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) projections is on 3 November 2022.

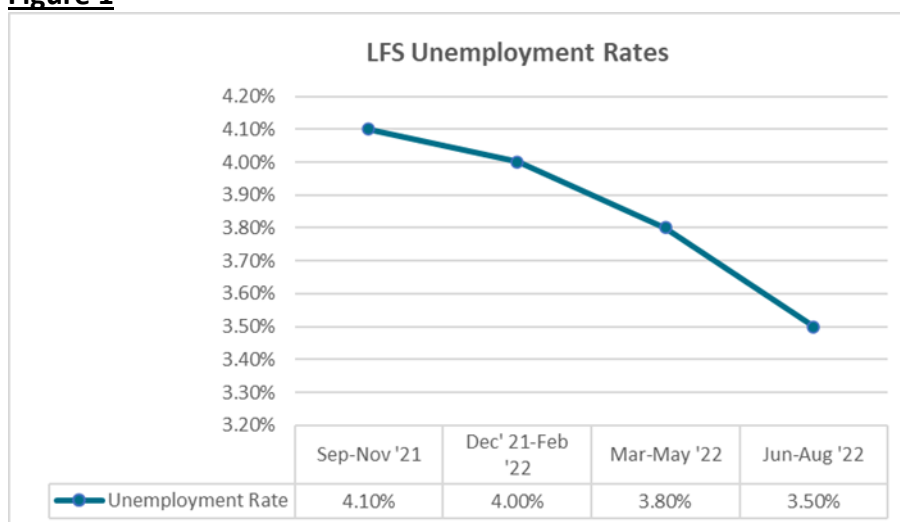
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

- 3.5 Data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), estimates GDP to have fallen by 0.3% in August 2022, after growth of 0.1% in July and a fall of 0.6% in June. This latest figure for August strengthens predictions that the UK economy will fall into recession.

Unemployment

- 3.6 As per the ONS Labour Force Survey (LFS), the UK unemployment rate fell to 3.5% in the three months to August 2022 compared to 3.8% in the previous three months. This latest figure is also 0.5 percentage points below pre-pandemic levels and the lowest level since February 1974. **Figure 1** below show the three months LFS since September 2021 to August 2022.

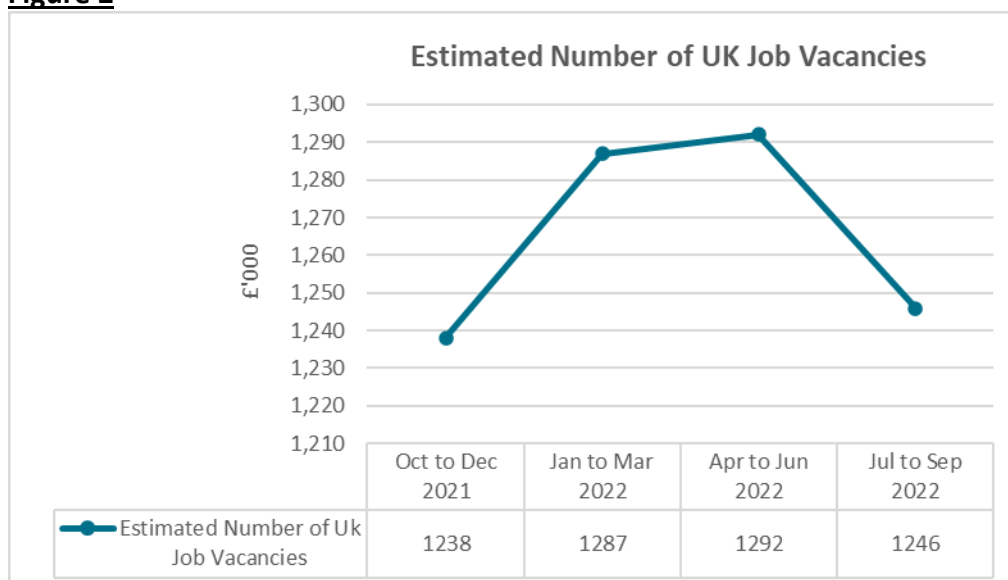
Figure 1



Source: ONS October 2022

- 3.7 As per the ONS, in July to September 2022 the estimated number of job vacancies in the UK was 1,246,000. Compared to April to June 2022, this was a decrease of 46,000. July to September 2022 vacancies were 450,000 above the pre-pandemic level (January to March 2020) and near to 117,000 above the level one year ago. This is illustrated in **Figure 2** below.

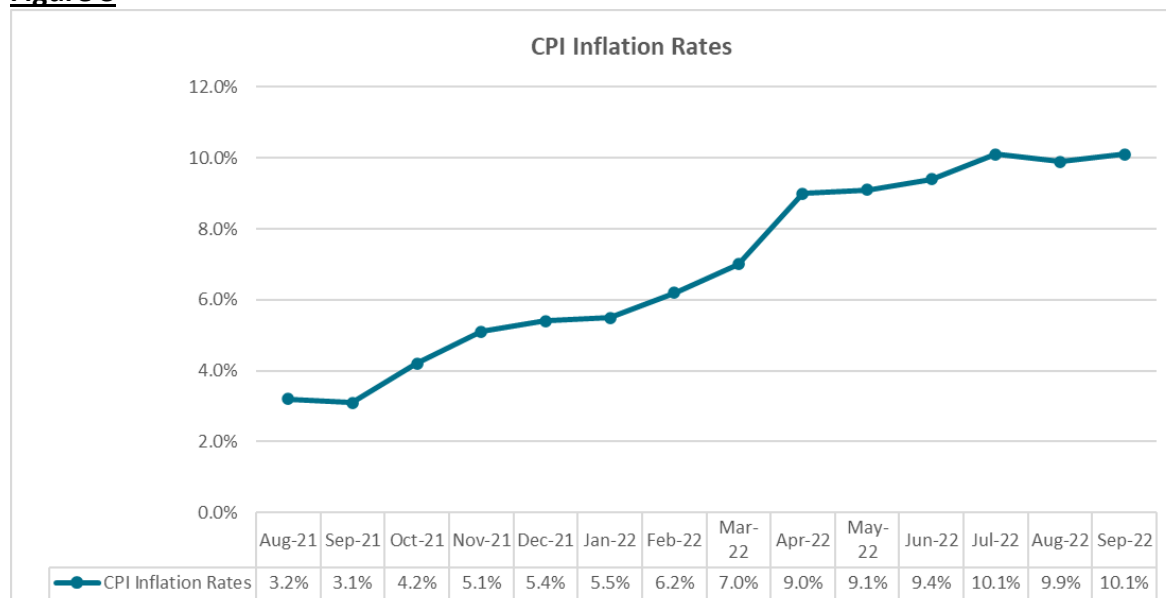
Figure 2



Source: ONS October 2022

Consumer Pricing Index (CPI)

- 3.8 Twelve-month CPI inflation rose from 9.9% in August to 10.1% in September, mainly driven by rising food prices. The Bank of England projects for CPI inflation to peak at 11% in October and to remain above 10% for the following few months. It expects inflation to fall to the official target of 2% in around two years. **Figure 3** below shows the CPI rates from August 2021 to date.
- 3.9 The Governments inflation target for the bank of England currently remains at 2%.

Figure 3

Source: ONS October 2022

Bank Interest Rate

- 3.10 At its 21 September 2022 meeting, five members of the MPC voted to increase the bank rate by 0.5% to 2.25%. Three members preferred an increase of 0.75% to 2.5% and one member preferred an increase of 0.25% to 2%. The Committee voted to increase the bank rate to 2.25% after taking into consideration the CPI inflation rate and the labour market. This is the highest level in 14 years. The next meeting of the MPC to review the bank rate is 3 November 2022.

4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- 4.1 The introduction of the Local Business Rates Retention System in 2013/14, together with the Government's programme of fiscal consolidation since 2010, have combined to both reduce the level of funding available to the Council, and to shift the balance of funding significantly away from central to local sources.
- 4.2 The Spending Review 2021, which covered 2022/23 to 2024/25 was broadly positive for local government, with funding better than expected. Increased funding was largely front loaded with growth in grant funding in 2022/23 and no further general increases in the following two years.
- 4.3 There were various smaller allocations within the core funding announcement, including £200m for the "cross-government Supporting Families programme", £37.8m for cyber security and £34.5m for "strengthen local delivery and transparency".
- 4.4 Following the Chancellor's Mini Budget/Growth Plan 2022 in September and the Medium-Term Financial Plan measures brought forward on 17 October, it is unlikely that there will be additional funding for local government for 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the exception being social care. The worse-case scenario would be for cuts to be made to the Spending Review 2021 funding allocations.
- 4.5 In June 2022, the then Secretary of State, Michael Gove, announced at the LGA Conference a two-year settlement from next year. A consultation was due to be launched soon after, but this has been delayed. This delay is not expected to change the outcome and funding reforms are now most likely for 2025/26 at the earliest.

- 4.6 It is unlikely that there will be any additional support for inflationary pressures.
- 4.7 The Chancellor's publication of the full Medium-Term Fiscal Plan at the end of October may provide some further indications of changes to funding allocations for local government and how a two-year settlement may be presented.
- 4.8 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is anticipated in early December.
- 4.9 **Core Funding Streams** – this includes the Revenue Support Grant and the Rural Services Delivery Grant.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 4.10 For the purpose of update the MTFS, it will be assumed that the grant will continue on the basis as in the current MTFS (2% annual increase) until further information is available.

Revenue Support Grant	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS (February 2022)	(340)	(346)	(353)	(360)	(360)
MTFS (November 2022)	(340)	(346)	(353)	(360)	(360)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	0	0	0	0

Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG)

- 4.11 The Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) is a government grant recognising cost pressures associated with service delivery in rural sparse areas. A continuation of the grant as per the current MTFS will be assumed until further information becomes available.

Rural Services Delivery Grant	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS (February 2022)	(260)	(266)	(271)	(276)	(276)
MTFS (November 2022)	(260)	(266)	(271)	(276)	(276)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	0	0	0	0

- 4.12 **Non-Core Funding Streams** - the below grants are non-core funding streams and they are usually seen as temporary or one-off. This potentially gives the Government scope to make changes to funding distributions.

Lower Tier Services Grant (LTSG)

- 4.13 The Lower Tier Service Grant (LTSG) was referred to as a one-off grant in 2021/22 to support local authorities with the pressures of Covid. However, it did continue into 2022/23 but at a reduced amount, £0.311m from £0.389m. Continuation of the grant under this heading is unlikely from 2023/24 but this funding should continue in some form when the local government finance system is reformed. Consequently, it has been assumed in the MTFS that the grant will continue at the lower allocation from 2023/24 onwards, with no annual increase. No update is proposed to the MTFS at this time.

Lower Tier Services Grant (LTSG)	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS (February 2022)	(311)	(311)	(311)	(311)	(311)
MTFS (November 2022)	(311)	(311)	(311)	(311)	(311)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	0	0	0	0

Services Grant/Transition Funding

- 4.14 For 2022/23 the Local Government Finance Settlement included a new one-off Services Grant. The Council received £0.477m. The Government says that the new grant will provide funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services, including social care, delivered at every level of local government. It also includes funding for local government costs for the increase in Employer National Insurance Contributions (now to be reversed from 6 November 2022). At the time the Government said it would work closely with local government on how to best use this funding from 2023/24 onwards, but this has not yet happened.
- 4.15 As with the LTSG, although this funding would not appear under this name, it could be expected to figure in some form when the local government finance system is reformed. Consequently, it has also been assumed in the MTFS that grant funding at the 2022/23 level would be available from 2023/24 onwards. Until further details are announced from Government on the funding settlement, there are no changes proposed to the MTFS at this time.

Services Grant/Transition Funding	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS (February 2022)	(477)	(477)	(477)	(477)	(477)
MTFS (November 2022)	(477)	(477)	(477)	(477)	(477)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	0	0	0	0

Business Rates – Business Rates Retention and Fair Funding Review

- 4.16 In its 2015 Spending Review, the Government announced proposals for Councils to retain all locally raised Business Rates by the end of the decade, and to end the distribution of core grant from central Government. In December 2017, the Government announced proposals for the proportion of business rates income to be retained by the local authority sector to be increased from the current 50% to 75% from April 2020, a development which does not require primary legislation, unlike the move to 100% local retention. Due to Covid-19, this was also delayed, and it has now been announced that this move to 75% retention has been abandoned.
- 4.17 The Government also announced a Fair Funding Review in February 2016, which will affect how funding is allocated and redistributed between local authorities. Implementation of this review was also delayed and as referred to above is now likely to be implemented until 2025/26 at the earliest.
- 4.18 Implementation of the Fair Funding Review is likely to include a 'reset' of the business rates system, which would involve assigning a new baseline funding level and subsequent new tariff or top-up values. Reset of the system and the establishment of new funding formulae could result in East Suffolk losing some of the financial advantage that it has under the current system. As a result of the delay in implementing Business Rates reforms, the Council has benefited from additional years under the current regime including 2022/23. As referred to above, 2022/23 is a roll forward year with no changes or reset of the system, with these changes, and as a base assumption it is now assumed that this roll forward position will extend to 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Business Rates

- 4.19 Since 2013/14, business rates income has tended to be characterised by a high degree of volatility and uncertainty. Variances between estimated and actual business rate income are realised in the form of deficits or surpluses on the business rates element of the Collection Fund. For each year, the amount of business rates income credited to the General Fund is the amount estimated on the National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR1) return to Government submitted in January in the preceding year, including a calculation of the estimated Collection Fund deficit or surplus to be charged to the General Fund. As a result, in practice, variances between business rates estimates and actual figures are reflected as an element of the Collection Fund deficit or surplus two years after they take place.
- 4.20 **Business Rates Collection Fund** - As a result of Covid-19, there was a considerably larger-than-normal deficit on the 2021/22 Collection Fund for Business Rates as changes to Retail and Nursery relief were announced after the NNDR1 was submitted in January 2021. These reliefs were paid to precepting authorities in the form of additional Section 31 Grant in 2021/22. Local authorities estimated the deficit in January 2022 and budgeted for it in 2022/23. In addition, additional reliefs for businesses were awarded in respect of 2021/22 under the Covid Additional Restrictions Fund (CARF), which was funded by Section 31 Grant amounting to around £7.9m.
- 4.21 On 5 November 2020 the Local Authorities (Collection Fund: Surplus and Deficit) (Coronavirus) (England) Regulations 2020 were laid before Parliament and came into force on 1 December 2020. The regulations implement the announcement made by the Secretary of State on 2 July 2020 that “the repayment of collection fund deficits arising in 2020/21, will be spread over the next three years rather than the usual period of a year, giving councils breathing space in setting budgets for next year.” Therefore, the final third of that deficit is shown in 2023/24.
- 4.22 The Business Rates Collection Fund position over the past couple of years has been complicated by a range of measures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and timing differences relating to grant funding in respect of these. The Government funded a range of reliefs by Section 31 Grant, which was accounted for by the Council in 2021/22, but the Collection Fund deficit impacted on the Council’s own budget in 2022/23. Consequently, the Council’s share of this Section 31 Grant, was contributed to the Covid Reserve in 2021/22, enabling the Council to meet its share of the deficit in 2022/23. This position is illustrated in the table below. These deficits will be entirely funded from the Covid Reserve, i.e., the associated Section 31 Grant received and transferred to the reserve.

Business Rates Collection Fund – Deficit/(Surplus)	2022/23 £’000	2023/24 £’000	2024/25 £’000	2025/26 £’000	2026/27 £’000
MTFS (February 2022)	6,393	785	0	0	0
MTFS (November 2022)	6,393	391	0	0	0
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	(394)	0	0	0

- 4.23 **Suffolk Pool** – In October all Suffolk councils agreed to continue a pooling arrangement for 2023/24, which would allow them to retain a larger proportion of their share of growth by reducing the overall levy rate for Suffolk to nil. The updated MTFS includes a Pooling Benefit estimate for 2022/23 of £2.035m based on current monitoring and estimates of £2.000m for the following two years. The estimate for 2023/24 will be confirmed after January when Suffolk County Council, as the administering authority for the Pool, collates the NNDR1 returns of all of the Suffolk authorities.

- 4.24 Business Rates income for 2023/24 is based on the NNDR1 return. All Business Rates estimates included in the MTFS will be updated following the completion of the return at the end of January 2023. This will include the split between Section 31 Grant and actual rates income.
- 4.25 As referred to earlier, the Business Rates system may be subject to reform in 2025/26. The approach taken in the table below and the MTFS is to only include estimates of Baseline income and Section 31 Grant from 2025/26. The MTFS assumption is that the Council will continue to retain 100% Business Rates income from Renewables, and this has been reflected in the table below. It is also worth noting that even if the current treatment of existing Renewables is revised, new Renewable hereditaments are coming online during the MTFS period.

Business Rates Income	Original 2022/23 £'000	Revised 2022/23 £'000	Estimate 2023/24 £'000	Estimate 2024/25 £'000	Estimate 2025/26 £'000
Business Rates Income	(6,158)	(6,158)	(7,205)	(7,349)	(7,496)
Business Rates Renewables	(1,203)	(1,203)	(1,253)	(1,278)	(1,303)
Total Business Rates Income	(7,361)	(7,361)	(8,458)	(8,627)	(8,799)
Share of Pooling Benefit	(1,861)	(2,035)	(2,000)	(2,000)	0
Section 31 Grant	(8,655)	(8,655)	(7,466)	(7,555)	(4,647)
Total Income Relating to Business Rates	(17,877)	(18,051)	(17,924)	(18,182)	(13,446)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	(174)	(5,000)	(5,000)	0

Council Tax

- 4.26 Council Tax is one of the Council's most important and stable income streams, funding approximately 50% of the net budget requirement of the Council. For Shire District Councils in two-tier areas, the referendum limit for 2022/23 was the higher of 2% or £5 and this is expected to remain for 2023/24. Details of referendum limits for next year are expected to be confirmed as part of the provisional settlement.
- 4.27 **Council Tax Base** – The CTB1 Council Tax Base Return was submitted to Government on 5 October 2022.
- 4.28 The increase in the tax base for East Suffolk is currently estimated to be 1,186.55 (1.33%) Band D equivalent properties, increasing the overall tax base for East Suffolk from 89,023.43 to 90,209.98 for 2023/24. This equates to around £0.209m of additional Council Tax income to the Council based on the current District Band D Council Tax of £176.22.
- 4.29 The Council Tax Base will be reported for approval to Cabinet on 6 December 2022.
- 4.30 **District Band D Council Tax 2023/24** – An increase of £4.95 for 2023/24 would equate to a District Band D Council Tax for East Suffolk of £181.17 and generate approximately £0.447m of additional income for East Suffolk. Total income to the Council from Council Tax would be £16.3m.
- 4.31 Based on the above data, the table below sets out the estimated Council Tax income and current assumptions on Council Tax as included in the current update of the MTFS.

Council Tax Income	2022/23 £'000	Estimated 2023/24 £'000	Estimate 2024/25 £'000	Estimate 2025/26 £'000	Estimate 2026/27 £'000
Council Tax Income - Base	(14,959)	(15,688)	(16,344)	(16,857)	(17,375)
Growth in Tax Base	(288)	(209)	(65)	(67)	(69)
Council Tax Increase	(441)	(447)	(448)	(450)	(452)
Total Council Tax Income	(15,688)	(16,344)	(16,857)	(17,374)	(17,896)
Council Tax Band D	£176.22	£181.17	£186.12	£191.07	£196.02
Council Tax Base	89,023.43	90,209.98	90,570.82	90,933.10	91,296.84
Growth/Reduction(-) in Tax Base	1.93%	1.33%	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%
Council Tax Increase £	£4.95	£4.95	£4.95	£4.95	£4.95
Council Tax Increase %	2.89%	2.81%	2.73%	2.66%	2.59%

Assumptions from 2023/24: Council Tax increases of 2% or £5, whichever is the higher.

- 4.32 The February 2022 MTFS for 2023/24 had assumed growth to the tax base of 0.92% compared to the current estimate of 1.33%. This additional growth of 0.41% is just under £0.070m of additional income. From 2024/25 a cautious approach continues to be taken to growth in the overall tax base and this is forecast to fall for the remainder of the MTFS period. This is a combination of completion of development sites levelling off, and prudent assumptions regarding LCTRS reliefs and collection rates. The below table shows the November update to the MTFS.

Council Tax Income	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Estimate 2024/25 £'000	Estimate 2025/26 £'000	Estimate 2026/27 £'000
MTFS February 2022	(15,688)	(16,277)	(16,789)	(17,302)	(17,302)
MTFS November 2022	(15,688)	(16,344)	(16,857)	(17,375)	(17,896)
MTFS Update (November 2022)	(0)	(67)	(68)	(73)	(594)

- 4.33 **Council Tax Collection Fund** – The current estimate for the Council Tax Collection Fund for 2023/24 is a surplus of £2.64m, with East Suffolk's share equating to £0.343m. The remaining balance of the surplus is shared by Suffolk County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk.
- 4.34 Regulations were implemented on 1 December 2020 that the repayment Collection Fund deficits arising in 2020/21, will be spread over three years from 2021/22 to 2023/24 rather than the usual period of a year. Both the 2022/23 and 2023/24 figures include a deficit figure of £0.032m - the Council's share of the deficit.
- 4.35 The Council's share of the Council Tax Deficit for 2021/22 and 2022/23 is profiled over the MTFS as follows;

Council Tax Collection Fund – Deficit/(Surplus)	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Deficit/(Surplus) (February 2022)	(223)	32	0	0	0
Deficit/(Surplus) (November 2022)	(223)	(343)	0	0	0
MTFS Update (November 2022)	0	(375)	0	0	0

- 4.36 The Collection Fund is monitored closely throughout the financial year and the Collection Fund position will be confirmed in January 2023.

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 4.37 The Government established the New Homes Bonus (NHB) in 2011 to provide an incentive for local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. NHB is funding allocated to councils based on the building of new homes and bringing empty homes back into use. The intention for the New Homes Bonus is to ensure that the economic benefits of growth are returned to the local authorities and communities where growth takes place. Over the past few years, NHB has become an extremely important source of incentivised income.
- 4.38 In recent years there has been much uncertainty as to the future of NHB, with the last three years (2020/21 to 2022/23) being a one-year settlement.
- 4.39 There has been no announcement following a consultation paper in early 2021 and the Spending Review 2021, gave no indication as to its future and whether it will disappear completely within the next two years or continue in some form. For the purpose of updating the MTFS, it is assumed no new NHB allocations for 2023/24 and beyond, but this position is expected to be clarified in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. The table below shows the remaining legacy payment ending in the current year.

NHB	2022/23 £'000
Year 7	0
Year 8	0
Year 9	(525)
Year 10	0
Year 11	0
Year 12	(1,124)
Total	(1,649)

- 4.40 The Council uses NHB funding to support specific community related projects and initiatives across East Suffolk. This is balanced against the overriding need to retain financial sustainability. NHB funding is transferred to the NHB reserve and released when required.
- 4.41 The current position on the NHB Reserve over the MTFS period is summarised in the table below.

NHB Reserve	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Opening Balance	(5,580)	(5,572)	(3,672)	(3,272)	(2,972)
Add: Allocation Received	(1,649)	0	0	0	0
Less: Proposed Use	1,657	1900	400	300	200
Closing Balance	(5,572)	(3,672)	(3,272)	(2,972)	(2,772)

5 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION

MTFS Forecasts 2022/23 to 2026/27

- 5.1 The Finance team works with Service Areas to review their budget requirements and budget monitoring is an ongoing process between Finance, Service Areas, and the Corporate Management Team. This work leads to continual updating of the MTFS for the Council. As of November 2022, key areas of the budget that are yet to be finalised include;
- Establishment (staffing) costs
 - Utility costs
 - Partnerships
 - Revenue implications of the capital programme
 - Business rates income
 - Council Tax income
 - Fees and Charges income
 - Announcement of the Local Government Settlement for 2023/24
 - Use of reserves.
- 5.2 At the October 2022 Cabinet meeting the Quarter Two Financial Performance Report was presented. The report highlighted items as having potential revenue budget implications for this financial year and over the MTFS period. Some areas cannot yet be quantified or quantified with a degree of certainty, i.e., figures are currently being worked on and/or insufficient information available.
- 5.3 The below list has been updated since the Quarter 2 review. More information has become available on the Triennial review of the Pension Fund, and it is now possible to quantify its impact. This is now covered in sections 5.16 and 5.17. New areas have been added, including non-core Government funding and fees and charges income from discretionary services.

Budget Area to be Monitored	Areas Impact	Nature of Impact	Timing of Impact
Fuel cost inflation.	Operations partnership fee.	Increased partnership fee. This cost is currently mitigated within the existing partnership budget due to savings on waste disposal costs.	Current year and potentially the following two years.
Utility Cost inflation.	Council owned property, in particular the Leisure Centres.	Increased running costs of Council property. Energy costs for Leisure Centre Operators are being closely monitored. Current year estimate is £0.250m.	Current year and potentially the following two years.
National pay award for 2022/23 is not yet agreed.	Council staffing costs and its Operations partner.	The Original budget assumption was a 2% increase for Council staffing. Net impact for the General Fund is currently estimated	Current year and future years.

		at £1.1m for direct staffing, £0.5m via the Operations Partnership.	
Other inflationary pressures on materials, supplies and services, and supply shortages.	Operations Partner and Council contracts (revenue and capital).	Increased contract cost and supplies and services across the Council.	Current year and potentially the following two years.
Workforces pay pressure/grade inflation.	Council staffing costs and Operations partner.	Increased staffing costs.	Impact being seen in the current year.
Recruitment difficulties.	Particularly areas of specialism.	Agency/contractor support has been required which can be more costly. Current year is estimated at £0.600m additional cost to the General Fund.	Impact being seen in the current year.
Planning applications	Planning fee income	Reduced income due to economic climate.	Current year is running in line with the budget for the year to date.
Demand for discretionary services.	Fees and Charges income for discretionary services	Reduced fee income to the Council. Baseline reduction to car parking income of £0.200m. Green waste income currently down by £0.100m in the current year.	Impact being seen in the current year.
Non-core Government funding, e.g., Lower Tier Services Grant and Services/Transition Grant.	General Fund.	Loss or reduction of non-core funding which will impact the General Fund. This may not be confirmed until the provisional settlement.	Impact from 2023/24.
Felixstowe Dock strike action.	Port Health Account.	Loss of income. Currently estimated at £0.014m per strike day, can be funded from the Port Health Reserve.	Impact in the current year.

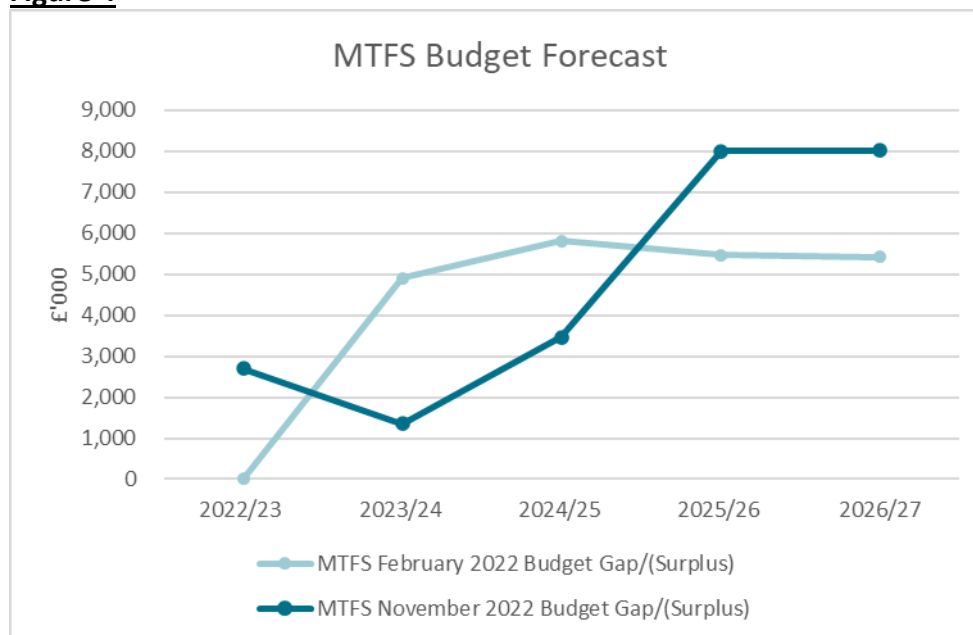
5.4 The MTFS was last updated in February 2022. A summary analysis of the key movements as of November 2022 is shown in the following table. This table is supported by **Appendix A2**. As noted in paragraph 5.1 above, there is continual updating of the MTFS and there are key areas of the budget still to be finalised which are not included in this update.

MTFS Updates	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Additional Cost	3,383	3,613	3,788	3,429	3,949
Additional Income	(764)	(6,086)	(5,068)	(73)	(594)
Reduced Income	1,400	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300
Saving	(970)	(2,132)	(2,112)	(2,118)	(2,067)
Use of Reserves	(355)	(345)	(245)	0	0
Net Total	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588

5.5 **Appendix A3** provides a visual analysis of the updates across the MTFS period by Strategic Theme/Other Factor that has primarily required the MTFS to be updated.

5.6 The updated MTFS position resulting from these movements as of November 2022 is shown below in **Figure 4**. The budget gap for the next financial year has reduced from £4.9m to £1.2m, predominately due to the deferral of the Business Rates system for at least one more year. East Suffolk is in an advantageous position under the current system and deferral of the reform by another year will enable the Council to benefit from this delay in 2023/24 and 2024/25 - £3m additional income in Business Rates income and £2m Pooling Benefit.

Figure 4



MTFS Position	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
MTFS February 2021 Budget Gap/(Surplus)	0	4,908	5,805	5,457	5,417
Net Total of MTFS Updates	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588
MTFS November 2022 Update Budget Gap/(Surplus)	2,694	1,358	3,468	7,995	8,005

Budget Planning Assumptions

5.7 The Council's financial planning assumptions are summarised below:

Budget Area	Assumption
Inflation	
<i>Goods & Services</i>	Met within existing budgets (exception is contract).
<i>Utilities (Gas & Electricity)</i>	2023/24 50% increase , 2024/25 maintain at 2023/24 budget, 2025/26 20% reduction, 2026/27 maintain at 2025/26 budget.
<i>Utilities (water & Sewage)</i>	2023/24 13% increase, 204/25 8.4%, 2025/26 0.9%, 2026/27 0.3%. Commercial rates are set in April. Assumptions based on the CPI forecasts as per the Bank of England Monetary Policy Report August 2022.
Fees & Charges	5% increase is applied were appropriate.
Staffing Costs	2022/23 Current offer of an additional £1,925 on all SCP 1 and above, 2023/24 4% increase, plus incremental progression, 2024/25 3% increase, plus incremental progression, 2025/26 onwards 2% increase, plus incremental progression. 2% per annum of staffing costs for vacancy allowance
Investment Income	1.37% Term Investments (average as of September 2022) 2.15% Call Account (September 2022) 1.73% Money Market Fund (September 2022) 3.40% Property Fund (September 2022) 4.05% Diversified Income Fund (September 2022)

Goods & Services – Inflationary Pressures

- 5.8 The Council's financial strategy assumes that any inflationary pressures incurred on goods and services expenditure are contained within existing budgets, or through more efficient spending. As mentioned in Section 3, there is an expectation for inflation to be at 10% for the next few months. The impact of this is most likely to be realised in the Capital Programme and our Partnerships, with the latter directly impacting on the Council's revenue budgets. This will be kept under review to ensure this planning assumption remains adequate. This does not impact on inflation for specific contracts where the budget planning assumptions reflect specific contract increases.
- 5.9 Contracts have been inflated based on the specified inflation indices within each individual contract. Additional negotiation has taken place with contractors to determine how these cost increases can be reduced where possible. This negotiation and retendering of contracts is part of the Council's strategy for cost reduction and will continue over the medium-term.

Fees and Charges

- 5.10 Fees and Charges are based on the Council's agreed principles of increasing existing fees and charges on a market forces basis whilst having regard to the Council's policies and objectives. The usual approach of the Council is for fees and charges to be increased by price inflation as a minimum. However, given the current level of inflation, this approach was not applied for the review of 2023/24 fees and charges. The Council will also review opportunities to introduce new fees as appropriate. Proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 will be considered by Cabinet on 3 January 2023.

Interest Payable and Receivable

- 5.11 **Interest Payable** - The budget for debt interest over the current MTFS period totals £1.587m. This has not been revised in this update of the MTFS. The existing loans are all fixed rate loans and therefore not susceptible to market increases. Where the capital programme requires future additional borrowing, the budget will be updated as and when projects are completed and actual borrowing is known.
- 5.12 **Interest Receivable** – The total budget for investment income over the MTFS period is over £3m and is based on the current investment portfolio of short and long-term investments. Whilst the Council is benefiting from higher investment rates as a direct result of the Bank of England increases in base rate since December 2021 as it tries to grapple with high inflation it is difficult to predict what will happen to rates over the next 6 to 12 months as the cost-of-living bites during the winter months. In the event of the economy entering a recession we may well see a sharp decline in base rate which would result in lower investments rates available.

Establishment Costs

- 5.13 Establishment costs total approximately are the single largest revenue cost for the Council and represents 50% of its total direct expenditure.
- 5.14 **Public Sector Pay** –The 2022/23 pay offer by the National Employers is a £1,925 increase on all pay points 1 and above. This is yet to be agreed but has been incorporated into this update of the MTFS. The pay award assumption for 2023/24 and 2024/25 has also been increased from 2% to 5% and 3% respectively. A 1% pay award represents an increase of approximately £0.370m to the General Fund.
- 5.15 **National Insurance Contribution Increase** – Also referred to as the Health and Social Care Levy, the Government increased the Employer National Insurance Contribution by 1.25% from April 2022. However, in the Chancellor's Mini-Budget announcement, the Government has reversed this increase from 6 November 2022. The reduction in employer NICs will produce savings against the General Fund budget in the current year of £0.080m and £0.200m in subsequent years. However, it should be noted that local government received funding of around £400m for the employer NICs increase through the 2022/23 local government finance settlement, although the actual amounts for local government, either collectively or individually, were never explicitly confirmed. If this funding is going to be removed from local government, then the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) or Services Grant would have to be reduced in 2023/24 and 2024/25. If this is the case, there may consequently be some offset to these forecast savings, although it will probably be difficult to ascertain the quantum of this from the settlement. No offsetting has been assumed at this time.
- 5.16 **Actuarial Valuation** - The latest triennial actuarial valuation of the assets and liabilities of the Suffolk County Pension Fund was completed on 31 March 2022. The Fund's Actuary have reported the actuarial funding position for the Pension Fund of 107%, an increase of 8% since the last valuation exercise in 2019. This is the first time that the Fund has reached 100% funding.
- 5.17 The Pension Fund specially relating to East Suffolk Council is 110% funded, an increase from 99% at the time of the last review on 31 March 2019. The triennial review also sets the employer contribution rates for the next three years – 2023/24 to 2025/26. This is currently out for consultation until 30 December 2022. The Council currently pays an employer contribution rate of 32% and the lowest rate allowed by the actuary for the next

three years is 19%. The Council is proposing a reduction of 7% to 25%. This would provide 88% probability of success that over 20 years the Pension Fund will remain or achieve 100% funded. This level of reduction results in a significant annual saving to the General Fund of £1.4m and has been built into this MTFS update.

Other Pressures

- 5.18 In formulating its detailed spending plans, the Council has also taken account of past performance and the previous year's outturn position.
- 5.19 Ranging from increased demand for services or changes in national policy, the Council's MTFS will be adjusted to reflect the financial implications of these changes. The budget monitoring work is ongoing with the Finance Team working with service areas to review their budget requirements. This work will continue to update the MTFS over the coming weeks.

Operations Partnership (Norse)

- 5.20 The current MTFS does not take into consideration any financial implications associated with the contract with Norse coming to an end in July 2023.

Green Agenda - Caring For Our Environment

- 5.21 The Council has pledged to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 and the Council's Strategic Plan includes the theme of 'Caring For Our Environment'. To delivery on these ambitions and priorities of the Council, inevitable requires investment without necessarily generating savings or additional income. That being said, the use of technology for homeworking and remote Committee meetings over the last two years, has reduced the need for staff and Members to travel and resulted in a continued saving of £0.200m per annum compared to pre-pandemic levels.
- 5.22 **Appendix A4** includes details of budgets and reserves specifically provided to assist with the delivery of the Council's Green Agenda.

6 RESERVES AND BALANCES

- 6.1 In order to manage its financial affairs soundly, the Council needs to hold an appropriate level of reserves and balances. These allow it to:
- a) manage its cash flows economically and avoid temporary borrowing pending receipt of income due during the year;
 - b) deal promptly and efficiently with emergencies if they occur, as this year;
 - c) take previously unseen opportunities to secure benefits that may arise during the year;
 - d) mitigate reliance on volatile sources of funding;
 - e) set money aside for known events but where the timing or precise amount required is not yet certain; and
 - f) accumulate monies to meet costs that it would be unreasonable for taxpayers to meet in a single year.
- 6.2 In addition to the General Fund Balance, the Council keeps a number of earmarked reserves on the Balance Sheet. Some are required to be held for statutory reasons, some

are needed to comply with proper accounting practice, and others have been set up voluntarily to earmark resources for future spending plans or potential liabilities.

- 6.3 The Council has continued to develop its prudent financial management arrangements, through the development of earmarked reserves to mitigate potential future risks. As issues arise, the potential requirement for an earmarked reserve is considered. New earmarked reserves are formally considered as part of the detailed budget process, to ensure that risks identified are adequately mitigated, and throughout the annual budget monitoring process as risks arise or become clearer.

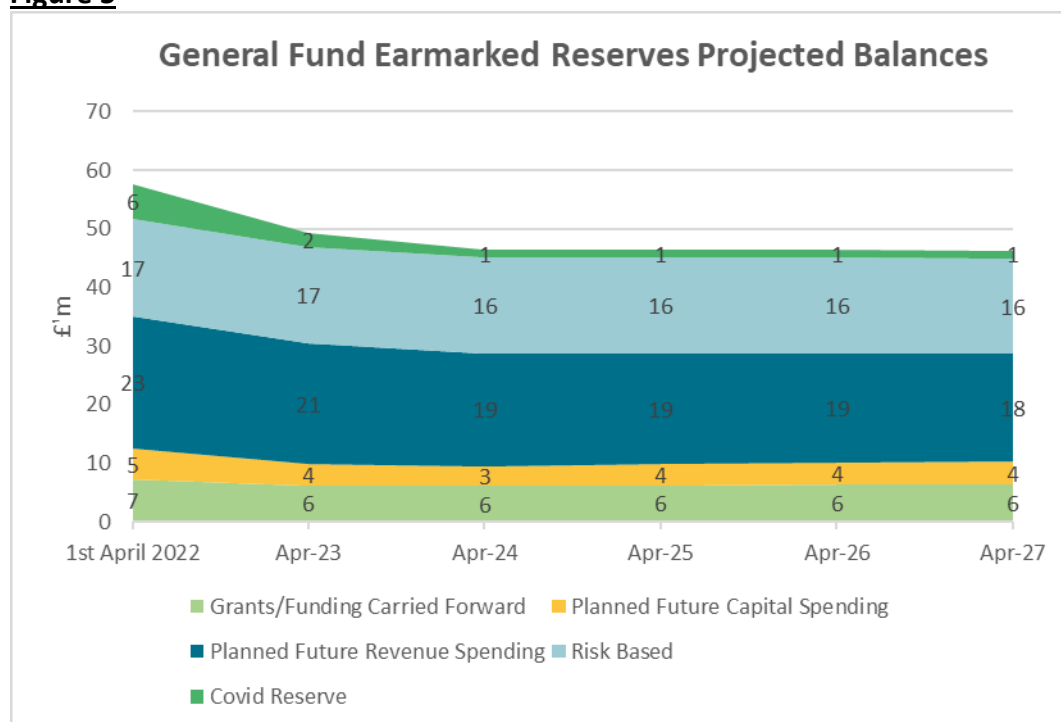
General Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves

- 6.4 The detailed budget process includes an assessment of risk, the adequacy of General Fund Reserves and a review of earmarked reserves. This review evaluates the need to create and/or change earmarked reserve levels and to also release reserves which are no longer required, thereby becoming a one-off resource for the Council. A risk assessment of the General Fund Balances informs the Chief Finance Officer's view of the adequacy of reserves to provide assurance to the budget. Having regard to the financial risks surrounding the budget planning process; the Council maintains the level of General Fund balances at around 3%-5% of its budgeted gross expenditure (in the region of £130 million for East Suffolk). This would equate to maintaining a General Fund balance for East Suffolk, in the region of between £4m and £6m. As of 1 April 2022, the opening General Fund balance of East Suffolk stood at £6m.
- 6.5 Further use of the General Fund balance will be evaluated against an assessment of risk, to ensure financial sustainability for the Council is maintained, whilst supporting the strategy direction and ambitions of the Council. The current update of the MTFS does not include any use of the General Fund balance.
- 6.6 One of the key underpinning financial principles of the MTFS is to not use the Council's Reserves (and other one-off resources) as a primary method to balance the ongoing pressures in the budget. Earmarked reserves are used for specific one-off purposes to support the delivery of corporate objectives and to mitigate risks.
- 6.7 The opening balances for 2022/23 are subject to conclusion of the external audit review for 2021/22.
- 6.8 The total balance of General Fund Earmarked Reserves was £57.6m (excluding Port Health) as of 1 April 2022. Earmarked Reserves are categorised into the following groups;
- **Grants/Funding Carried Forward** – this is external funding the Council has received for specific purposes and is drawn down from reserves when spend is incurred.
 - **Planned Future Revenue Spending** – Council funding has been set aside for specific service areas and/or projects.
 - **Planned Future Capital Spending** – this is revenue funding set aside to provide funding for the capital programme.
 - **Risk Based** – Council funding has been set aside for unforeseen budget pressures and fluctuations in budget areas of volatility. The Business Rate Equalisation Reserve is the main reserve within this group. This reserve is held to manage fluctuations in Business Rates income, due to the timing of accounting treatments. The balance on this reserve as of April 2022 was £15.2m.

- **Covid Reserve** – Mainly consisting of Section 31 Grants to fund Covid related Business Rate Reliefs and the Local Authority support grant.

6.9 The projected balances on reserves will continue to be reviewed and updated throughout the budget process. **Figure 5** below shows the current projections for the General Fund Earmarked Reserve over the MTFS, categorised as above. This summary does not include use of reserves to address the updated budget gaps as presented in **Appendix A2**. If the budget gaps identified at this early stage of the MTFS for the current year and 2023/24, are still present at the end of the budget process, then use of the In-Year Savings Reserve and the risk based reserves will be made to balance the budgets.

Figure 5



- 6.10 The Covid reserve will be used further in 2022/23 to deal with accounting timing differences related to the pandemic impact on business rates, and to fund post pandemic grant work and recovery initiatives. There is currently in the region of £1m of the Covid support grant being held in the reserve. The balance of this funding will be monitored and transferred to an appropriate reserve at the end of the year if no longer required for post pandemic recovery work.
- 6.11 The Planned Revenue Spending group of reserves contains some key individual reserves to highlight which are used to fund future budget gap pressures and projects and initiatives to support the delivery of the Strategic Plan. These are set out in the table below and currently show balances declining with no further contributions to increase available funds over the current MTFS. This position will be reviewed and updated as the budget setting progresses.

	April 2022 £'000	MTFS April 2023 £'000	MTFS April 2024 £'000	MTFS April 2025 £'000	MTFS April 2026 £'000	MTFS April 2027 £'000
Reserves						
Better Broadband	7	7	7	7	7	7
Business Rates Pilot	1,385	747	710	673	636	599
In-Year Savings	3,572	4,121	4,121	4,121	4,121	4,121
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	5,580	5,572	3,672	3,272	2,972	2,772
Transformation - Digital	296	243	209	229	249	269
Transformation - Environmental	500	483	483	483	483	483
Transformation - Financial Sustainability	2,769	1,758	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525

7 CAPITAL STRATEGY

7.1 The Capital Strategy gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services in East Suffolk, along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. The Capital Strategy for the period 2023/24 to 2026/27 will be considered by the Audit & Governance Committee and Cabinet before approval by Full Council in February 2023. Capital planning is about financial investment on the purchase of new assets, the creation of new assets and enhancing and/or extending the useful life of existing assets. The Council aims to achieve the optimum balance between the future needs of East Suffolk, including the need to drive growth, whilst ensuring affordability in the short and long term. Key principles include:

- Developing asset and capital strategies that facilitate a long-term approach to decision-making.
- Ensuring that assets are only held as needed to achieve Council objectives.
- Maximising efficiency in the management and use of assets.
- Ensuring that pressure to achieve short-term savings does not compromise the value of assets through lack of investment.
- Ensuring that capital investment is targeted where it will achieve the greatest long-term benefit.

7.2 Enhancing the management of the Council's existing asset base and looking beyond the traditional medium-term financial planning horizon is a major priority. The current Asset Management Strategy was approved in July 2019, broken down into four key components:

- Administrative Improvements
- Compliance and Sustainability
- A strategic approach to assets
- Reducing expenditure and increasing income

7.3 For the purposes of setting the budget for 2023/24 and medium-term financial planning, the current rolling Capital Programme is being updated to reflect existing projects and the latest capital investment plans for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 are included.

Capital Programme

- 7.4 The Capital Programme including both General Fund and HRA elements is subject to the scrutiny process and formally adopted by Full Council each year. The decision to accept individual projects onto the Programme is driven by the overriding requirement to support the priorities communicated in the East Suffolk Strategic Plan, providing they are affordable.
- 7.5 As well as adequately maintaining the asset base, a range of other important factors are considered when deciding upon the allocation of General Fund resources. Consideration is given to:
- Legislation – the need for capital investment due to changes in legislation, including those with health and safety implications.
 - Resource Availability – the sustainability of the Capital Programme is a primary consideration and integral to the MTFS.
- 7.6 Where required, capital projects are supported by a detailed business case, which demonstrates a set of clear objectives and measurable benefits, as well as detailed financial implications. This includes the on-going revenue implications of a capital project, to ensure these are built into the MTFS revenue assumptions.
- 7.7 Major capital projects are delivered by dedicated project managers within the Council, with leadership and oversight provided by the Senior Management Team.
- 7.8 Due to the economic climate and significant changes to major schemes in the current Capital programme for 2022/23 to 2025/26, a mid-year revised General Fund Programme was presented to Cabinet and approved by Full Council in September 2022.
- 7.9 The 2022/23 to 2026/27 Capital Programme is continuing to be reviewed and revised as part of the normal budget setting process. An updated Programme for the MTFS period will be presented to Cabinet on 3 January 2023, Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2023, and then Cabinet and Full Council on 7 and 22 February 2023 respectively.

EAST SUFFOLK MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY - KEY PRINCIPLES

1 PRIORITIES, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 The **East Suffolk Strategic Plan** provides the overarching vision for East Suffolk. In fulfilment of the Plan, the Council makes use of significant resources to achieve its aims including money, people, property and technology. In order to allocate resources to competing demands, achieve effective and efficient use of its resources, best value and ultimately achieve its vision, the Council has several strategies and plans which give a clear sense of direction and underpin the deployment of those resources. The Long Term and **Medium Term Financial Strategies** sit under the **Strategic Plan**, and combined with other strategies and plans, they support and embrace the strategic direction of East Suffolk.

2 STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Council's MTFS aims to ensure the provision of the best quality services possible within the resources available. To do so it must maximise the use of its resources to ensure they are used efficiently and effectively to support the development of longer term sustainable objectives.
- 2.2 The specific objectives of the MTFS are to:
- a) ensure that the Council sets a balanced, sustainable budget year by year, so that forecast spending does not exceed forecast resources available to it;
 - b) plan for a level of Council Tax that the Council, its residents and Government see as necessary, acceptable and affordable to ensure that it has the financial capacity to deliver the Council's policies and objectives;
 - c) redirect resources over time to adequately support and resource the priorities of the both the Council and the wider community; and
 - d) maintain sufficient reserves and balances to ensure that the Council's long-term financial health remains sound.

3 STRATEGY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The principles set out below provide a framework within which the Council will develop its detailed financial plan over the medium term.

General

There are a number of overarching principles that will apply across the Council's detailed financial accounting, planning and monitoring:

- a) that the Council's budgets, financial records and accounts will be prepared and maintained in line with approved Accounting Standards, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Government Accounting, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the relevant sections of the Council's Constitution and Finance Procedure Rules;
- b) prior to setting a budget, the Council will always analyse potential risks and ensure these are minimised in line with its Risk Management Strategy;

- c) that the Council's Corporate Management Team will review the budget proposals for reasonableness and adherence to corporate policies and objectives prior to the budget being submitted to Cabinet;
- d) the Council will monitor its revenue and capital budgets effectively. Monitoring will be undertaken quarterly by Heads of Service together with their portfolio holders, and integrated quarterly monitoring reports will be reported to Cabinet. In cases where significant financial and service performance deviates from that planned, action plans setting out corrective action will be drawn up by Heads of Service / Portfolio Holders and reported to Cabinet as appropriate;
- e) that the Council's Corporate Management Team will take appropriate steps to continue to maintain and improve the accuracy and quality of data that it uses throughout the Council thereby ensuring that budget and other decisions are taken on a sound basis; and
- f) the Council will seek to maximise external contributions towards revenue and capital spending for example through bidding for specific grants, attracting levered funding, participating in new funding streams and engaging in further strategic partnering opportunities where appropriate.

General Fund (Revenue)

3.2 In relation to its revenue budgets the Council will:

- a) set a balanced budget each year that will be constructed to reflect its objectives, priorities and commitments. In particular, the budget will influence and be influenced by the Strategic Plan, the Organisational and Development Strategy, Capital and Asset Management Strategies, the Risk Management Strategy, its Comprehensive Equality Scheme and its Consultation and Engagement Strategies;
- b) within the constraints of the resources available to it, set a sustainable budget each year that meets on-going commitments from on-going resources. The Council will continue to aim to maintain its level of general balances when it sets its revenue budget each year now that a prudent level of balances has been achieved;
- c) seek to identify annual efficiency savings through business process improvement, shared service initiatives, service best value reviews and benchmarking and strategic partnering opportunities within and across county borders;
- d) review the appropriateness of service delivery between the Council, parishes and other partners;
- e) increase existing fees and charges on a market forces basis whilst having regard to the Council's policies and objectives. As a minimum fees and charges should be increased by price inflation. The Council will also review opportunities to introduce new fees as appropriate; and
- f) within Government guidelines, set a level of Council Tax that the Council, its residents and Government see as necessary, acceptable and affordable to deliver the Council's policies and objectives.

Capital

- 3.3 When considering capital investment, the Council will:
- a) maximise the generation of capital receipts and grants to support its planned investment programmes
 - b) enhance its capital investment by applying specific grants and contributions, capital receipts, earmarked reserves and revenue contributions, with any balance being met by external borrowing
 - c) not recognise capital receipts until there is certainty that the receipt will materialise, and these will not be earmarked against specific developments without express Cabinet approval
 - d) allocate its capital resources in line with its Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan whilst recognising that other priorities may emerge that may require those plans to be amended and resources to be diverted
 - e) annually review and prioritise capital schemes in accordance with Council objectives having regard to:
 - i) the business case for any given project; asset management planning
 - ii) affordability in line with the application of the Prudential Code.

Balances and Reserves

- 3.4 In relation to its balances and earmarked reserves, the Council will:
- each year maintain the level of General Fund balances at around 3% - 5% of its budgeted gross expenditure. This would lead the Council to maintain a General Fund balance in a range of around £4m to £6m.
 - have regard to the financial risks surrounding the budget planning process, including those associated with the structural deficit, inflationary pressures, interest rates, partnerships, the treatment of savings, new burdens and demand led expenditure.
 - review its earmarked reserves, which have been established to meet known or predicted liabilities, to ensure that the level of those reserves are still appropriate; and
 - return reserve balances no longer required to the General Fund as appropriate.

Treasury Management and Investment

- 3.5 The Council will:
- a) having regard to risk, maximise investment income and minimise borrowing costs within the overall framework set out in the Council's annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy; and
 - b) secure the stability of the Council's longer-term financial position rather than seeking to make short-term one-off gains which may lead to higher costs in the long term.

- c) having regard to risk, seek to diversify its investment portfolio; maximise investment income; and deliver economic development objectives through the Asset Investment Strategy (in development).

4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Council's spending will have regard to:

- a) the base budget position for the current financial year, adjusted for in year grant changes;
- b) the Council's medium term priorities;
- c) the refocusing of service expenditure through transactional, shared services and other efficiencies to support the achievement of its medium term priorities and satisfy Government funding changes;
- d) demographic and welfare changes;
- e) the impact of the current pandemic;
- f) consultation outcomes;
- g) fiscal matters including:
 - price inflation.
 - the effect on the level of General Fund balances and reserves.
 - the impact of any changes to the capital programme on the potential costs of borrowing.
 - triennial revaluation of the pension fund.
 - ongoing commitments, arising in part, from initiatives that have previously been funded from specific grants.
 - achieving budgeted savings from outsourcing, shared services and service reviews.
 - the likely passporting of some Government departmental savings targets to councils.

RISKS	PROBABILITY HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	IMPACT HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	MITIGATING ACTIONS
<p>Strategic Risks</p> <p>The absence of a robust Medium Term Financial Strategy could adversely affect the Council's budget and resource planning and projections.</p> <p>Failure to understand changing community needs and customer expectations can result in the Council providing levels of service which are not appropriately aligned to the needs of communities and customers.</p> <p>Local Government funding is under continuous pressure and review. Failure to respond to these funding pressures may adversely impact on the Council's ability to service delivery.</p> <p>Budget pressures arising from housing, economic, social and other demographic changes.</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Uncertain medium term sustainability of incentivised income areas subject to Government policy, economic factors, and revaluation e.g. Brexit, business rates and New Homes Bonus.</p>	<p>L</p> <p>M</p> <p>H</p> <p>H</p> <p>H</p>	<p>H</p> <p>H</p> <p>H</p> <p>H</p> <p>H</p>	<p>Continually monitor and refine the strategy in line with changing influences. Update Corporate Management Team and Cabinet.</p> <p>Continuously engage with key stakeholders and take advantage of existing consultation methodologies. Continue to monitor and more closely align service levels to demand and need.</p> <p>Take advantage of the Council's growth opportunities to reduce dependency on government funding. Align service delivery to funding levels, improve exist strategy to minimise risk.</p> <p>Take advantage of technological advancements to understand and reduce unit costs, monitor demand for services and proactively manage resourcing requirements, invest in schemes to promote skills and developments.</p> <p>Constantly monitor information and update risk appraisals and financial projections. Provide timely briefings and updates to Members/ key stakeholders to facilitate decision making. Adopt prudent budgeting approach not placing undue reliance on uncertain funding sources.</p>

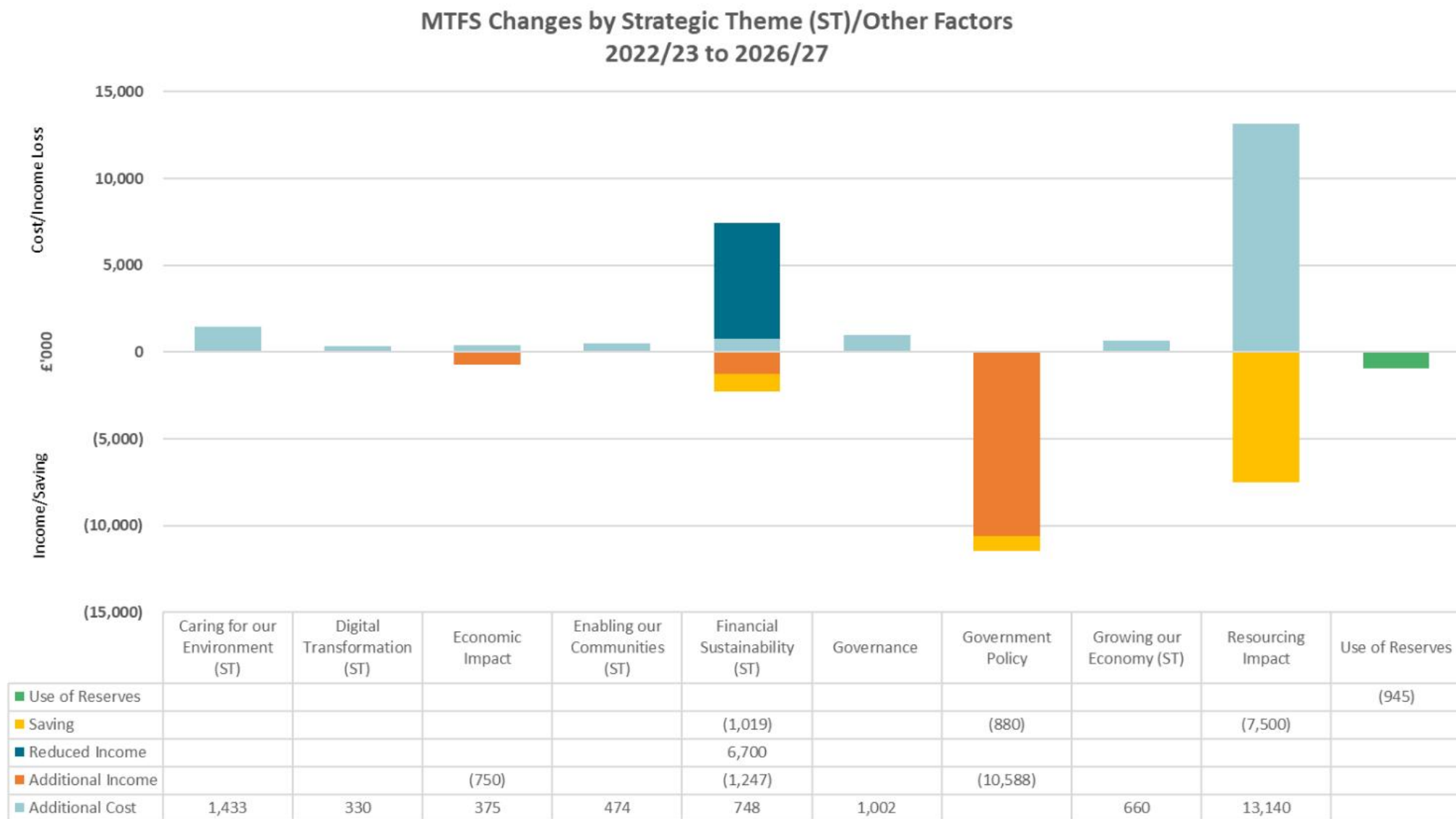
RISKS	PROBABILITY HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	IMPACT HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	MITIGATING ACTIONS
Uncertainty surrounding the Government's change agenda including, business rates and welfare reform over the medium term.	H	H	Constantly monitor information from Government and update risk appraisals and financial projections. Provide timely briefings and updates to Members/ key stakeholders to facilitate decision making. Lobby through the LGA as appropriate.
Budget pressures from demand led services and income variances reflecting the wider economy.	H	H	Monitor pressures throughout the budget process and take timely actions.
Costs arising from the triennial review of the Local Government Pension Scheme.	L	L	Review and monitor information from Government and actuaries. Update forecasts as necessary.
Interest rate exposure on investments and borrowing.	H	M	Review cash flows, ensuring the Council has a flexible and forward looking Treasury management policy.
Information			
The Council itself has no influence over the outcome of some of the other bigger assumptions such as formula grant, national pay awards, interest rates, inflation and statutory fees and charges.	H	M	Key assumptions made are regularly reviewed from a variety of sources. Forecasts are updated as necessary.
Operational			
The Council has entered into strategic partnerships and contracts and is therefore susceptible to economic, social and demographic changes	L	M	Effective negotiation, sound governance arrangements and reviews of partnerships performance.
There is a potential risk to the Council if there is a financial failure of an external organisation, providing services to the public on behalf of the Council.	L	M	Ensure rigorous financial evaluations are carried out at tender stage. Consideration of processes to ensure annual review of the successful organisation and review any external auditor comments.

RISKS	PROBABILITY HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	IMPACT HIGH (H) MEDIUM (M) LOW (L)	MITIGATING ACTIONS
<p>People</p> <p>Loss of key skills, resources and expertise.</p>	H	M	Continue to invest in staff developments, service continuity measures. Monitor succession planning. Keep staff consulted and informed. Ensure employment terms and conditions are competitive and development needs identified through 'My Conversation' programme with staff are satisfied.
<p>Regulatory</p> <p>Changes of responsibility from Government can adversely impact on service priorities and objectives.</p>	L	L	Sound system of service and financial planning in place. Lobby as appropriate.
<p>Reputation</p> <p>Loss of reputation if unforeseen resource constraints result in unplanned service reductions.</p>	L	H	Identify and implement robust solutions in response to changes. Consult widely. Seek to achieve a prudent level of balances and reserves.

MTFS CHANGES BY STRATEGIC THEME/OTHER FACTORS

MTFS Update	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	Total over MTFS period £'000	Strategic Theme/Other Factors	Comments
Additional Cost								
Freeport East	80	80	0	0	0	160	Growing our Economy	Approved growth for upfront funding to support the delivery of objectives. Funded from reserves.
First Light Festival	180	170	150	0	0	500	Growing our Economy	Approved growth for match funding over three years to 2024/25. Funded from reserves.
Trial programme to tackling long-term empty properties	95	95	95	0	0	285	Enabling our Communities	Approved growth for additional resourcing to support the trial programme.
Data analytical capacity	66	66	66	66	66	330	Digital Transformation	Approved growth for data analyst resourcing to meet the needs of the organisation.
Increasing Strategic Management capacity	38	151	151	151	151	642	Governance	Approved growth following outcome from recent Corporate Peer Review.
Parking Services Resourcing	21	42	42	42	42	189	Enabling our Communities	Approved growth for resourcing to support the review and implementation of changes to parking management regulations.
Environmental Services Resourcing	153	320	320	320	320	1,433	Caring for our Environment	Approved growth for additional capacity to respond to new legislative requirements, to support the Planning team in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure (NSIP), to deliver the Environmental aspirations of the Council's Strategic Plan and to expand and develop new income opportunities has been recognised for some time.
National Employers pending pay award for 2022/23 - Operations Partnership	500	0	0	0	0	500	Financial Sustainability	Based on current offer by National Employers.
National Employers pending pay award for 2022/23 - Council Direct Staffing	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	7,000	Resourcing Impact	Based on current offer by National Employers.
Future year pay award assumptions	0	760	1,140	1,160	1,680	4,740	Resourcing Impact	Assumptions for pay awards from 2023/24 increased from 2% to 5% in 2023/24 and to 3% in 2024/25.
Agency/Contractor costs	600	200	200	200	200	1,400	Resourcing Impact	Cover for staffing vacancies, particularly in areas of specialism. Increase annual budget to prior years average.
External audit fees	0	90	90	90	90	360	Governance	PSAA announcement of procurement outcome for appointment of external auditors for 2023/24 to 2027/28 (national scheme). Public bodies have been advised of a 150% increase on top of the 2022/23 fee.
ARP partnership contribution	0	114	134	0	0	248	Financial Sustainability	Increased staffing costs due to pay awards.
Inflationary pressures - utilities	250	125	0	0	0	375	Economic Impact	Estimate for the impact of inflation on utility costs, particularly on Leisure Centres.
	3,383	3,613	3,788	3,429	3,949	18,162		
Additional Income								
Housing Benefit Admin grants	(20)	0	0	0	0	(20)	Government Policy	Additional grant received above provisional estimate.
Beach Hut and Yacht Stations	(70)	0	0	0	0	(70)	Financial Sustainability	Over achieved on income compared to the budget.
Business Rates Pooling Benefit	(174)	(2,000)	(2,000)	0	0	(4,174)	Government Policy	Current year increased based on in-year monitoring. The update for the following two years is due to reform of the funding system being delayed to 2025/26 at the earliest.
Business Rates Income	0	(3,000)	(3,000)	0	0	(6,000)	Government Policy	Delays to funding reform to 2025/26 at the earliest.
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	0	(394)	0	0	0	(394)	Government Policy	Updated estimate of the year end deficit on the Collection Fund.
Council Tax income	0	(67)	(68)	(73)	(594)	(802)	Financial Sustainability	The growth in the tax base has been better than originally forecast.
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	0	(375)	0	0	0	(375)	Financial Sustainability	The growth in the tax base has been better than originally forecast.
Interest income	(500)	(250)	0	0	0	(750)	Economic Impact	Higher investment rates as a direct result of the Bank of England increases in base rate since December 2021.
	(764)	(6,086)	(5,068)	(73)	(594)	(12,585)		
Reduced Income								
Parking services	500	500	500	500	500	2,500	Financial Sustainability	Recognising a reduction in baseline income for parking services. Further analysis to be done.
Green waste	100	100	0	0	0	200	Financial Sustainability	A reduction in green waste subscriptions the current year.
Waste recycling credits	800	800	800	800	800	4,000	Financial Sustainability	Correction to baseline budget.
	1,400	1,400	1,300	1,300	1,300	6,700		
Savings								
Direct staffing vacancies	(700)	(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)	(1,900)	Resourcing Impact	Staffing costs underspend, over and above vacancy saving budget (c£600k). Some areas are facing recruitment difficulties.
Health & Social Care Levy	(80)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(880)	Government Policy	Reversal of the Employer National Insurance increase (1.25%) introduced from 1 April 2022. The reversal is to take effect from 6 November 2022.
Employer superannuation rate	0	(1,400)	(1,400)	(1,400)	(1,400)	(5,600)	Resourcing Impact	Triennial review of the pension fund. The employer contribution rate for the next three years from 2023/24 is to reduce from 32% to 25%.
Leisure contracts	(190)	(232)	(212)	(218)	(167)	(1,019)	Financial Sustainability	Savings generated on costs compared to the budget and income exceeding original budget(cautious budget estimates for post-pandemic recovery).
	(970)	(2,132)	(2,112)	(2,118)	(2,067)	(9,399)		
Use of Reserves								
In-Year approved use of reserves	(355)	(345)	(245)	0	0	(945)	Use of Reserves	
	(355)	(345)	(245)	0	0	(945)		
Net Total of MTFS Updates - November 2022	2,694	(3,550)	(2,337)	2,538	2,588	1,933		

MTFS CHANGES BY STRATEGIC THEME/OTHER FACTORS



FINANCIAL PROVISION TO SUPPORT THE COUNCIL'S GREEN AGENDA – CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

General Fund Revenue Budgets

Budget Area	Budget 2022/23 £'000	Budget 2023/24 £'000	Budget 2024/25 £'000	Budget 2025/26 £'000	Budget 2026/27 £'000	Comments
Environmental challenge/sustainability/climate change resourcing	127	131	135	139	142	Resourcing to help coordinate and support the delivery of the Council's environmental and climate change commitment.
Fleet decarbonisation, move to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel	174	174	174	174	174	Additional budget provision for investing in alternative fuel. Migration of a significant element of the Council's diesel fleet from fossil-fuel derived diesel to HVO.
Green Print	3	3	3	3	3	Annual contribution to the Green Print Forum.
Green Print – Nature Small Grants Scheme	10	0	0	0	0	Funded from the Climate change Reserve.
Green Print – Sustainable Travel	40	0	0	0	0	Project related to quiet lanes funded from the Climate Change Reserve.
Green Print – Plastic Action	1	0	0	0	0	Funded from the Climate Change Reserve.
Local Air Quality Management (LAQM)	25	25	25	25	25	Budget for Air Quality Management works.
ESH Green Space Maintenance	10	10	10	10	10	Environmentally friendly planting for bees/wildlife corridors.
Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership	17	0	0	0	0	Funding to support the partnership.
Design & Conservation Team Resourcing	133	138	144	147	150	Design and conservation Team –(one existing post and one new post) which look at the environmental impact of planning applications.
Total	540	481	491	498	504	

FINANCIAL PROVISION TO SUPPORT THE COUNCIL'S GREEN AGENDA – CARING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

Reserves

Reserve Name	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000	Balance 31 March 2024 £'000	Balance 31 March 2025 £'000	Balance 31 March 2026 £'000	Balance 31 March 2026 £'000	Purpose of Reserve
Transformation Reserve – Environmental Theme	500	583	583	583	583	583	Funding set aside in the Transformation Reserve to support Initiatives under the 'Caring For Our Environment' Strategic theme.
Air Quality Reserve	80	80	80	80	80	80	Funds held for large scale projects that may require Air Quality works to be carried out.
Climate Change	63	23	23	23	23	23	climate change related projects.



CABINET

Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Subject	Woodbridge Men's Shed
Report by	<p>Councillor Letitia Smith Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism</p> <p>Councillor Craig Rivett Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development</p>
Supporting Officer	<p>Julia Catterwell Communities Officer</p> <p>Julia.catterwell@eastsuffolk.gov.uk</p>

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
Wards Affected:	Woodbridge

Purpose and high-level overview

Purpose of Report:

To agree to the future use of land owned by East Suffolk Council (ESC), adjacent to the Deben Water Sports Centre, near the boat pond and tea hut in Woodbridge.

For ESC to offer a 20-year concessionary ground lease with permission for the Woodbridge Rotary Club to construct a hut (Men's shed) to a specification agreed by ESC planners and ESC assets.

Options:

Not to enter into lease. Not to enter into a lease would limit the men's shed aspirations

Recommendation/s:

That Woodbridge Rotary be offered a new 20 year ground lease of the land, outlined red on the attached plan at Appendix C of the report, at a peppercorn rent and given a licence to construct a men's shed to a specification agreed by East Suffolk Council Planning and Asset Management.

Corporate Impact Assessment

Governance:

Compliance by the Woodbridge Men's Shed to maintain the site that is leased to them.

ESC policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:

ESC Asset Management Plan.

Environmental:

No environmental implications. Any new build will require appropriate surveys.

Equalities and Diversity:

No Equality and Diversity Impact survey has been carried out at this stage. Any future building will be required to be assessed.

Financial:

Marginal as ESC do not currently receive rent for lease of this land. Minor saving in maintenance of the land.

Human Resources:

None noted

ICT:

None

Legal:

Each part to bare own costs.

Risk:

Minor. Men's club could default/fail

External Consultees:

Cllr Kay Yule, Woodbridge Town Council, Neighbour stakeholders, Woodbridge transition.

Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the Strategic Plan which are supported by this proposal: (Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
T01	Growing our Economy		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T02	Enabling our Communities		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T03	Maintaining Financial Sustainability		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T04	Delivering Digital Transformation		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
T05	Caring for our Environment		
P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	Governance		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How does this proposal support the priorities selected? ENABLING OUR COMMUNITIES - Working together, we will enable our communities to identify opportunities and challenges, we will empower them to make a difference; we			

will support our communities to enhance the places we live and work for the well-being of all. Good estate management.

Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	In 2015, This land was previously leased by ESC to the Deben Rowing Club, but they chose to terminate that lease, due to lack of use. This land is currently overgrown and fenced off.
1.2	The Woodbridge Men's Shed, care of Woodbridge Rotary has joined the UK men's shed association (580 in the UK). Woodbridge Rotary will assist with advice and support in the development of this project.
2 Current position	
2.1	Woodbridge Rotary has formed a Constitution for Woodbridge Men's Shed and hope to form as a charity further down the line. A partnership group have been meeting regularly to take this project forward. The group is seeking a long-term base for their activities.
2.2	The partnership group is in discussion with businesses locally regarding equipment and funding for the protect .
3 How to address current situation	
3.1	ESC owns the area of land as shown red on the attached plan adjacent to Woodbridge boating lake. This area is fenced as it was formally used as a boat store. The former use ceased and is not ideal for that use due to the number of trees in the area. Any new shed or other building will be required to be on pillars due to the low-lying nature of the ground. Asset management believe the site has very limited alternative uses and therefore feel it would be well suited for the proposed use.
3.2	The intention is to provide the Rotary club with a new 20-year ground lease of the area and subject to relevant planning give them permission to build a base for their activities. The lease would be on a peppercorn basis (£1 if demanded). Each party would be responsible for their own legal and other costs. The tenant will be responsible for all outgoings associated with build and the land on which it stands, including boundaries. The lease will not be available for assignment and will revert to ESC in the event the Men's Club folds. Other terms and condition will be as agreed through asset management. Due to the low-lying land no parking on site will be allowed.
4 Reason/s for recommendation	
4.1	To provide good estate management and use of assets to support the local community. To minimise costs to ESC in maintaining the land.

4.2	This supports the aims and objections of a Men's shed in Woodbridge as outlined in the attached appendices. This supports both the Community Partnership and the ESC Strategic Plan 2020- 2024.
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Appendices

Appendices:	
Appendix A	Constitution of Woodbridge Men's Shed
Appendix B	Men's Shed Report
Appendix C	Lease plan

Background reference papers:		
Date	Type	Available From
August 2022	Report via Age UK website	Age Uk study

Constitution of Woodbridge Men's Shed

ES/1328

Date of adoption: 27 June 2022

1.0 NAME

- 1.1 The name of the Men's Shed is Woodbridge Men's Shed, an unincorporated organisation, herein referred to as 'the Shed'.

2.0 OBJECTS

- 2.1 The aims (objects) of the Shed are to create a social environment by:

(a) To promote social inclusion for public benefit through the provision of a facility particularly for, but not exclusively for, men at risk of being socially excluded.

(b) To prevent social exclusion by promoting the opportunity for friendships, social engagement and skill sharing in a safe and enjoyable environment, in which members can meet and carry out creative projects acceptable to the Shed and of their own choosing, individually, jointly and for the benefit of the wider community.

(c) To promote good health and wellbeing to its members through active participation and, from time to time, providing opportunities for relevant health organisations to raise awareness of good health strategies for the benefit of the Shed.

3.0 POWERS

- 3.1 The Shed has power to do anything which is lawful and considered to further its Objects or is conducive to doing so. In particular, the Shed has power to:

(a) Raise, collect and obtain funds, receive grants and donations

(b) Use funds to carry out and in furtherance of the work of the Shed

(c) Acquire and manage buildings

(d) Cooperate with local authorities, other organisations, charities and community residents of Woodbridge and the surrounding area in a common effort to achieve the Objects of the Shed and exchange knowledge and information

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 Those 18 years of age and over who would benefit from the Shed may apply to join as Individual Members irrespective of religion, political views, nationality, disability or race
- 4.2 Membership lasts for one year and must be renewed annually at the price set by the Management Committee for that year
- 4.3 The Management Committee may create a membership in addition to Individual Members (voting members) at any time, should they wish, to allow people to support the Shed without attendance. Such members shall be called 'Friends of the Shed' and will have no voting rights at general meetings.
- 4.4 Members may wish to give individual, additional donations to support the Shed. The amount of any donation will be at the member's discretion. Personal details may be requested by the Management Committee in order to claim Gift Aid.
- 4.5 The Management Committee reserves the right to reject or terminate any membership, giving full written reason, should they unanimously agree it is in the best interests of the Shed. The member has the right to have their opinion heard before any decision and should have a witness, chosen by them, present.
- 4.6 Members must read and agree to the terms of this constitution on joining and must read and sign the Shed's Code of Conduct and any other documents and policies deemed necessary by the Management Committee.
- 4.7 Individual Members are entitled to vote at General Meetings.
- 4.8 The Management Committee will adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 when keeping records of memberships.

5.0 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 The Management Committee shall meet not less than three times per annum and shall consist of not less than three members at any one time including the Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary – the Officers.
- 5.2 Decisions at Committee meetings must be voted on and only matters with a majority vote will be considered approved.
- 5.3 Members of the Management Committee must be elected at Annual General Meetings AGM.

- 5.4 Should the number of members on the Management Committee be less than three and no more than five at any time, interim members can be appointed to the Management Committee, but must step down and stand to be elected at the next AGM.
- 5.5 Nominations from Individual Members of the Shed to appoint a member to the Management Committee must be in writing and given to the Secretary no later than seven days prior to an AGM. Should the number of nominations be less than the number of vacancies then verbal nominations shall be accepted at the AGM and elected at the discretion of the voting members.
- 5.6 The Management Committee elected at an AGM shall have the power to co-opt further members to the Committee, provided that the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one third of the total membership of the Management Committee. Co-opted members shall have the right to vote.
- 5.7 Any member of the Management Committee that fails to attend three consecutive Committee meetings without reasonable excuse shall lose their place on the Management Committee. Any position resulting from failure to attend may be filled by co-option in accordance with clause 5.6.
- 5.8 The office of Chairperson shall not be held by any one person for more than three consecutive years. Other members of the Management Committee shall not hold their position for more than five consecutive years.

6.0 FUNCTION OF THE COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The Committee shall make such decisions and regulations as its members consider appropriate for the efficient conduct of the Shed.
- 6.2 The Committee may appoint sub-committees, advisory groups or working parties of its own members and other persons as it may from time to time decide necessary for the carrying out of its work and may determine their terms of reference, duration and composition. All such sub-committees shall make regular reports on their work to the Committee.

7.0 CHAIRING MEETINGS

- 7.1 All meetings of the Committee or of any of its sub-committees shall be presided over by its Chairperson. If the Chairperson is not present, those present may elect one of their number to take the Chair. The Chairperson of any meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

8.0 GENERAL MEETINGS

This template has been produced by UK Men's Sheds Association exclusively for UK Men's Sheds Association member Sheds. The information enclosed herewith is for general interest on the given topic only. Users should not regard any of the information as constituting legal advice.

- 8.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held every year, with 21 days' notice given to all members, notifying them of the date, venue, and agenda.
- 8.2 Minutes must be kept of each AGM, made available in draft form to all members within four weeks of the meeting and agreed at the following AGM.
- 8.3 Every Individual Member has a vote
- 8.4 Extraordinary General Meetings may be called at any time felt reasonable by two thirds of the Management Committee should they need members to vote on matters concerning the alteration of this constitution.
- 8.5 The quorum at General Meetings shall be 10%.

9.0 FINANCE AND PROPERTY

- 9.1 Any money or property obtained by the Shed shall be used only for the benefit of the Shed and its members, and in the furtherance of its Objects.
- 9.2 Any bank account opened for the Shed shall be in the name of the Shed.
- 9.3 Any cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and one other member of the Management Committee.
- 9.4 Members of the Management Committee shall not receive money from the Shed, except to reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses.
- 9.5 A record of all monetary transactions shall be kept by the Treasurer and an overview presented at each Committee meeting. Annual accounts must be produced for the AGM and available to view by any member at any time once produced.

10.0 DISSOLUTION

- 10.1 The Shed may be wound up at any time if agreed by two-thirds of the members present and voting at any General Meeting.
- 10.2 In the event of dissolution, any assets remaining after all debts have been paid shall be given to another organisation with similar aims.

This template has been produced by UK Men's Sheds Association exclusively for UK Men's Sheds Association member Sheds. The information enclosed herewith is for general interest on the given topic only. Users should not regard any of the information as constituting legal advice.

11.0 INDEMNITY

The Shed shall indemnify and keep indemnified every officer, member and volunteer from and against all claims, demands, actions and proceedings (and all costs and expenses in connection therewith and arising therefrom) made or brought against the Shed in connection with its activities, the actions of its Officers, members or volunteers, or in connection with its property and equipment. This indemnity shall not extend to wilful and individual fraud, wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the officer, member or volunteer sought to be made liable. The Treasurer shall effect a policy of insurance in respect of this indemnity.

SIGNED BY:

PRINT NAME:

(Chairperson) Geoffrey Springett

(Treasurer) Robin James Pivett

(Secretary) Simon King

DATE SIGNED: 27th June 2022

Woodbridge Men's Shed

Sharing an overview of the Woodbridge Men's Shed;

A. Purpose

B. Activities

C. Location and Construction

D. Benefits for local men and for the wider Community

E. Coproduction and Leadership

F. Funding to establish and sustain

G. Contacts

A. Purpose

The UK Men's Shed Association <https://menssheds.org.uk> describes Men's Sheds as: 'They're community spaces for men to connect, converse and create. The activities are often similar to those of garden sheds, but for groups of men to enjoy together. They help reduce loneliness and isolation, but most importantly, they're fun'.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed has joined the UK Men's Shed Association, which already recognises 580 'Open Men's Sheds in the UK'. The Association is providing a helpful, tried and tested, toolkit for establishing a Men's Shed, including the template for the Woodbridge Men's Shed's Constitution.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed is for men of 18 years of age and over. If someone needs help from their Carer, they'll of course be welcome. The Woodbridge Men's Shed will have a membership, and very much a welcoming and 'open door' ethos for visitors.

B. Activities

The Woodbridge Men's Shed will provide a social space for men to chat, to be making and doing, together.

What may happen in the Woodbridge Men's Shed is largely the choice of the members. Activities could be, for example; carpentry, making and mending, playing board games, drinking a mug of tea whilst having a chat, growing vegetables or perhaps some tall sunflowers.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed will offer a place where men can find company whilst enjoying a hot drink. Rather than be on their own in a shed or garage at home (if they have a shed at home), they can be alongside others, sharing ideas, chatting and perhaps learning some new skills from each other along the way.

C. Location and Construction

The Woodbridge Men's Shed needs a place to be, at a location which men can readily get to. A preferred piece of land has been identified adjacent to the Deben Water Sports Centre, near the Boat Pond in Woodbridge. On the map (page 3), sourced from HM Land Registry in May 2022, this now abandoned area of land is shown with a blue boundary and containing a blue number 2.

This land was leased out by East Suffolk Council (ESC) as recorded in the 'Charges Register' of the Title Register, on the 29.01.2015. The Lessee's Title is recorded as: SK358672.

We recognise the land in this area is known to be often very wet, hence the two large adjacent sheds used by the Deben Water Sports Centre are raised off the ground. Taking the same approach, the Woodbridge Men's Shed would be raised off the ground, with access by way of low steps, and with a wheelchair friendly ramp.

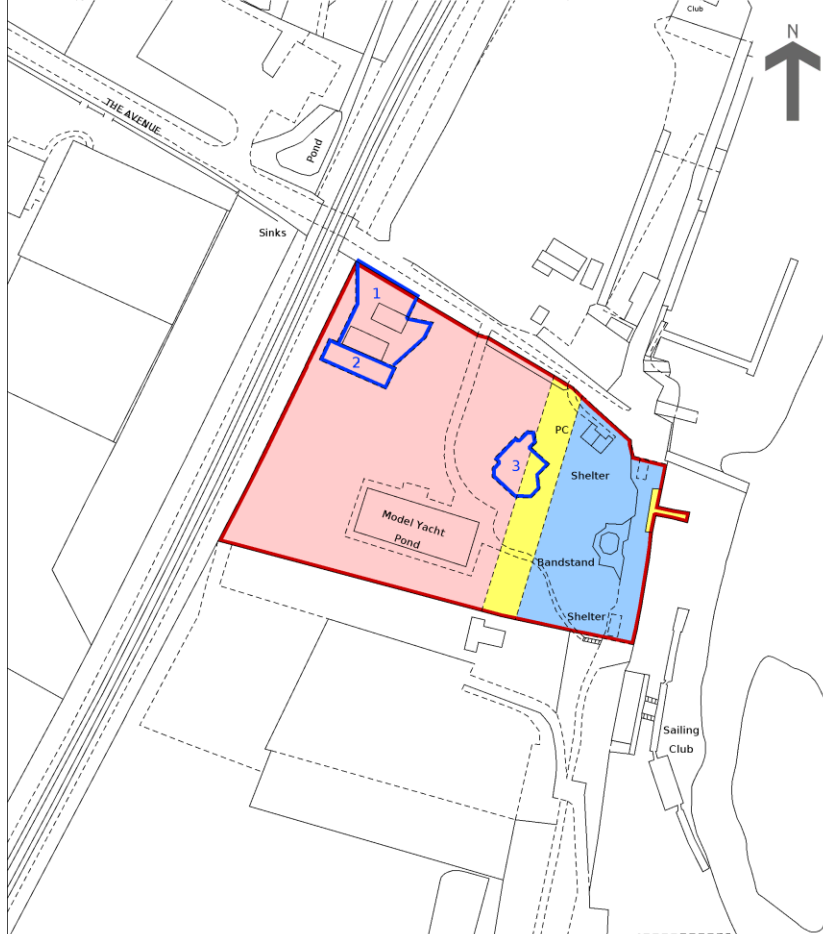
Our initial enquiries, including visits to the location by some folk with considerable experience in construction, suggest this site is viable. A Men's Shed could utilise the site and would improve its appearance.

HM Land Registry
Current title plan

Title number **SK290942**
Ordnance Survey map reference **TM2748SW**
Scale **1:1250 enlarged from 1:2500**
Administrative area **Suffolk : East Suffolk**



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This is a copy of the title plan on 16 MAY 2022 at 19:44:10. This copy does not take account of any application made after that time even if still pending in HM Land Registry when this copy was issued.

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This title is dealt with by HM Land Registry, Kingston upon Hull Office.

The land, labelled 2 on the above map, was leased by ESC to the Deben Rowing Club (DRC) in 2015. This land is now overgrown in a perimeter of green fencing. The DRC have confirmed they chose to terminate that lease some time ago, which was handled by their solicitor. The DRC have also confirmed that they've no further interest in this land.





The adjacent shed, which is used as a classroom by the Deben Water Sports Centre, is approximately 20' wide and 30' deep. A similar size of Shed is envisaged for the new Woodbridge Men's Shed, likewise with an area of decking to the front aspect. This would provide space inside for a social area, a making and mending carpentry area, and for storage. Nearby there are public toilets, including an accessible toilet.

We envisage there would be some ground within the perimeter, at the front of the shed, for some light gardening. An activity many men enjoy, and rather than garden on their own at home, at the Shed they could enjoy this activity, which is helpful to both emotional and physical wellbeing, in the company of others.

D. Benefits for local men and for the wider community

The opportunity to have social contact, to be in the friendly company of others, can be a lifeline for men, especially at a time when they are feeling lonely, and this holds true for men across all ages.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed will be an asset to the community at grassroots, a place where men can share their laughter and to give and gain support from their fellows. To be sharing their skills and their stories.

"It is great to hear about the Men's Shed in Woodbridge and I wish you well with this venture, as they are an excellent initiative to support men. We are currently exploring offering Suicide First Aid (SFA) Training to Men's Shed Members in Suffolk and North East Essex." Louise Biddiscombe

Suicide Prevention Project Officer, Public Health Suffolk

Other Men's Sheds often are found to be helping others, across the whole community, using their making and mending skills in helpful ways. Once established the Woodbridge Men's Shed would become a hub for men to socialise, and a friendly asset to the wider community.

The East Suffolk Community Partnership Annual Forum 2022 brought participants together from the eight locality Community Partnerships, including from the local Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/nalc-blog/>

The issues explored within the Forum included:

- Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness
- Improving Mental health and Wellbeing
- Supporting our most vulnerable communities and people

The Woodbridge Men's Shed will help to tackle social isolation and loneliness, contributing to improving mental health and wellbeing, and offering a friendly, safe and social space, for men. The informality

and friendliness may appeal to many men. A place to be themselves and to have their individual character, experience and skills valued.

E. Coproduction and Leadership

The Woodbridge Men's Shed is being developed and run applying the ethos of co-production, encouraging local men to share in shaping together how the Shed develops, with views and ideas being valued.

A committee shall take care of the necessary roles and follow the constitution, ensuring there are the necessary Policies and practice to be offering a very accessible, fair and safe, meeting place.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed has the support of the Woodbridge Rotary Club, some of whose members took the initiative in the Spring of 2022 to reach out to the local community, offering an open invitation for other men to join them in forming a working group. This group, drawing also on the skills and experience of their friends and colleagues, are now taking the Woodbridge Men's Shed from being a wish to becoming a reality.

The Woodbridge Men's Shed shall be run on a not-for-profit basis, the day to day running will be looked after by volunteers.

F. Funding to establish and sustain

The Woodbridge Men's Shed will have initial start-up costs and then some modest running costs.

A community bank account will hold its funds, in keeping with its Constitution and with best practice. Accounts shall be maintained to clearly show all incoming and outgoing funds.

To help ensure the Woodbridge Men's Shed is accessible to as many people as possible, any membership fee shall be modest, and there

would be a method for seeking dispensation for anyone facing financial hardship, not least because anyone in that position may well be someone who needs companionship most of all.

It's envisaged that the skills within the Men's Shed group shall help to alleviate some of the costs that would arise if the labour for all tasks in fitting out a new Shed had otherwise to be purchased. Thankfully, within the local community we have kind and skilled people.

Funding from Charitable and Statutory sources shall need to be applied for. The clear intention is to make choices relating to construction of a strong Shed that's fit for purpose, on sound groundworks, that ensure the building and fitting out of the Shed is affordable, is doable.

G. Contacts

Primary contacts for the Woodbridge Men's Shed:

- Geoffrey Springett: Geoff.springett@gmail.com
- Robin Pivett: r.pivett128@btinternet.com
- Simon King: king-simon5@sky.com

The Woodbridge Men's Shed is liaising with:

- Douglas Mizon - UK Men's Shed Assn. Ambassador for East Suffolk & Halesworth Men's Shed: douglas.mizon@uwclub.net
- Deben Rowing Club: secretary@debenrowingclub.com
- Adrian Slim, Deben Water Sports Centre: enquiry@dwsc.org.uk
- Julia Catterwell - East Suffolk Council's Communities Officer for Woodbridge: Julia.Catterwell@eastssuffolk.gov.uk
- Jonny Wood - Community Action Suffolk, Officer for Men's Sheds: jonny.wood@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk
- Louise Biddiscombe - Public Health Suffolk, Suicide Prevention Project Officer: Louise.Biddiscombe@suffolk.gov.uk

v.7 28th June 2022

