



South Norfolk Local Development Framework



Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05

December 2005

SOUTH NORFOLK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2004/05

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Monitoring Report

- 1. Introduction**
 - 2. Local Development Scheme implementation**
 - 3. Analysis of the implementation of saved policies**
(Includes analysis of South Norfolk Local Plan policies and ODPM Core Output Indicators with a summary of key findings and suggestions for action/change)
 - 3.1 Landscape and Biodiversity**
 - 3.2 Housing**
 - 3.3 Employment**
 - 3.4 Leisure**
 - 3.5 Communications**
 - 3.6 Utilities and Community Development**
 - 3.7 Built Environment**
 - 3.8 Tourism**
 - 3.9 Shopping**
-

Appendices

- 1. South Norfolk Local Plan Strategic Principles**
- 2. Housing Trajectory Figures**
- 3. Retail development planning decisions 1/4/04 – 31/3/05 (Use Class A1 plus vehicle sales outlets)**
- 4. List of ODPM Core Output Indicators**
- 5. Glossary**

Executive Summary

A. Conclusions on operation of policies

Landscape and Biodiversity

We are maintaining the integrity of the **'open land' separating settlements in the Norwich area**. Any approvals are small scale, and refusals are mainly for development outside of settlements. There has been continuing pressure for development in **river valleys**. Again we have successfully resisted these proposals, allowing only 'appropriate' development, however vigilance is required. The majority of applications in the **'Norwich Southern Bypass Landscape Protection Zone'** have been able to be approved, as they do not adversely affect the designated area. There is need to develop a list of **priority species** for South Norfolk to aid protection, and work is being done with the Norfolk Biological Records Centre to this end. Current processes for consultation on **important sites for nature conservation** are working well. Important issues are picked up leading to mitigation measures or additional survey work to focus on the impacts.

Housing

In terms of the **use of brownfield land** in South Norfolk only 27% of completions took place on such sites, lower than our target of 38%. Given that the majority of new development in future years is planned to be on Greenfield sites this figure is unlikely to improve, although our Urban Capacity Study will explore other possibilities. **Densities** are also low for the majority of development; this indicates stronger policies are needed. There is a lack of **affordable housing** coming forward, linked directly to the slow pace of development on new market housing sites. This issue of deliverability needs to be considered carefully in the LDF. We have been successful in restricting new developments to within **development boundaries**; only 14% were outside, with the majority of these being conversions.

The **'housing trajectory'** i.e. the assumption about housing completions is a key element of the AMR. We are not reaching the average levels of completions necessary to fulfil the targets in the Structure Plan or the draft East of England Plan. There are signs that sites with planning permission are beginning to come forward, but this is an area we need to watch carefully. Given the stage we have reached in preparing our Core Strategy and Site Specifics Local Development Documents we can establish what additional steps we need to take in those policy documents above and beyond current policies to ensure continuing supply of housing land.

Employment

There has been very little new take up of **allocated land** in the monitoring period, although development has taken place following from earlier commitments. The amount of land available remains healthy. In the LDF we need to consider carefully the types and location of land to match the demand. Over the monitoring period the majority of **employment proposals** were approved in accordance with the criteria in Local Plan policies. The figures do not seem to demonstrate any particular pressures for employment land either inside or outside settlement boundaries.

Leisure

Four housing developments totalling nearly 1000 houses were approved with **agreements to provide open space**. These will be met through either on site / off site provision, and the largest development will provide a community building as well. There has been no recorded loss of open space. Our **Open Space Study**, jointly commissioned with Broadland DC will give valuable inputs to LDF preparation.

Communications

Accessibility continues to be improved through developer contributions to **walking and cycling facilities**. The work of the South Norfolk Cycling Forum aids the Council in this regard. Similarly we have been able to ensure **public transport provision** through developer contributions in new housing developments. Significant traffic management and pedestrian safety improvements have been completed in Diss and Loddon. Significant progress has been made to ensure adequate car parking facilities at the Station in Wymondham. **New road proposals and improvements** are important to South Norfolk, but whilst permission was given for the Long Stratton Bypass the funding for construction is less certain. The A11 to Colney Lane link was completed in the period. In terms of **accessibility** of new development to important services and facilities, the measurements now being recorded to show % within 30 minutes of these will be a valuable comparator in future AMRs.

Utilities and Community Development

No applications received were deemed to have had an adverse effect on **water quality**. Those applications affecting the **flood risk areas** have been dealt with by negotiating a revised scheme, mitigation or through the use of planning conditions. No Environment Agency objections were outstanding. Continuing liaison with the Environment Agency is important, and our strategic flood risk assessment commissioned jointly with Broadland DC will be important for our LDF work. **Section 106 agreements** have proved a successful method for securing developer contributions arising as a result of new development so that service providers e.g. Norfolk County Council or Town/Parish Councils can address any shortfall in service provision. The Council is aware of 50 other **renewable energy developments** (which did not require planning permission) during the monitoring period. 47 properties in the district received grants towards the installation of solar water heating systems, which equates to 61.1 MW. 3 properties installed ground source heat pumps.

Built Environment

Conservation areas perform a valuable function in preserving the unique character of parts of South Norfolk. Conservation Area Character Appraisals provide useful information that helps inform the interpretation of Local Plan policies. We are investigating the possible inclusion of a policy in the LDF relating to 'protection of non-listed buildings of townscape significance'.

Tourism

We are supporting and delivering tourism related development through the **re-use and adaptation or conversion of existing buildings** in the countryside, thus avoiding the need for new building with the potential detrimental effect on the rural character of the District. 40 new units of accommodation were permitted.

Shopping

Overall the shopping policies of the Plan appear to be resulting in **new development** being provided in the preferred locations within the context of government planning guidance. The exceptions have been justified by local need, a lack of preferred sites, a lack of adverse impact and lawful development rights. Overall three times as many new shops and extensions have been permitted than permitted to change use to other uses. This is a significant and encouraging reversal of recent trends. There are a number of **pointers to follow up in the LDF** including a review of shopping areas; the investigation of potential edge of centre retailing sites in Harleston and Wymondham, and improved provisions for retailing in rural areas.

B. Core Output Indicators

A list of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister defined Core Output Indicators is given in Appendix 4 to the main report. This Appendix gives the location of the section in the main document where discussion of the individual COI can be found. It should be borne in mind that the COI are new indicators and it has not been possible to give a value for each one in this first AMR. In subsequent versions of the AMR it should be possible to give a commentary on the direction of travel of the indicators and to give a view on the success or otherwise of the policies and allocations concerned.

C. Outline of changes necessary to the Local Development Scheme

Norwich Research Park Development Brief - Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Due to the need to carry out additional work relating to transportation and access that was not originally anticipated, work on the main brief has been delayed. The public consultation stages for the main SPD should now commence in February, subsequent stages will also be affected. It would be appropriate to acknowledge these slippages in the LDS and make formal amendments to the proposed scheme timetable. Target for adoption is May 2006.

Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies and Allocations LDDs (Local Development Documents) - Our published intentions in the LDS suggest the Preferred Options consultations stage will be April / May 2006. Indications are that we should at least wait until the Regional Spatial Strategy Enquiry in Public (RSS EiP) Panel publishes its recommendations before committing the Council to particular preferred strategies. We can then take a view on the implications for South Norfolk. One reason for being cautious is the debate initiated by the RSS process about levels of housing growth in Norfolk. Some organisations suggest that additional growth may be appropriate, and the Norwich Area as the current focal point for the county's allocations is an obvious target. There are clear implications for South Norfolk in this scenario. In view of these significant uncertainties it is proposed to postpone consultation on Preferred Options for these from April / May 2006 to October 2006. Subsequent stages will also need to be amended to reflect this change.

Development Control policies LDD (Local Development Document) - The Core Strategy is clearly a key document in the LDF for South Norfolk. The provisions will necessarily influence the other documents we propose to prepare; indeed they will

need to conform to the principles set out within it. As such there is a knock on effect from delaying the production of the Core Strategy. The Development Control Policies document is due for a consultation on Issues and Options in April. Depending on the outputs from the Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies and Allocations document consultation it may be appropriate to delay this by 3 months to July and allow the implications of comments to be assessed and appropriate responses included.

Validation of Planning Applications Supplementary Planning Document - In March 2005 the Office of Deputy Prime Minister published 'Best Practice Guidance on the Validation of Planning Applications'. It recommends that a 'Validation Checklist' should be the subject of consultation with a view to its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). In view of this the Council would wish to add this document to the Local Development Scheme for preparation. An LDD dealing with Development Control Policies is scheduled for its first stage of consultation in March 2006 (NB see above for comment on timescale), it would be appropriate to give consideration to the Validation SPD at this time.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to AMR requirement

When the Government introduced the new planning system (initiating the preparation of Local Development Frameworks [LDFs]) in the Planning and Compensation Act 2004, great emphasis was placed on implementation of planning policies and allocations, and with it the monitoring tools to track the progress of preparing local development documents (LDDs) and the outcomes policies are designed to achieve. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is envisaged as a regular check, and opportunity to adjust policies as appropriate in new or amended LDDs. It also offers the opportunity to revise the programme (the Local Development Scheme, or LDS) of preparation of LDDs in the light of circumstances.

Broad content of AMR

Advice on the content of AMRs is given in the ODPM publication 'Local Development Framework Monitoring: A good practice guide'. The following extracts indicate the main elements to be included:

- the report should present an analysis, in particular taking account of the core output indicators set out in section four of the LDF monitoring guide, of existing (i.e. 'saved' South Norfolk Local Plan) policies. It is noted that information should be presented on as many as possible of the core output indicators and where not the AMR should explain how it is intended to address the gap or gaps in the future;
- In relation to the monitoring of local development document preparation, all AMRs should refer to the local development scheme (LDS, i.e. our project plan) and the milestones contained within that scheme. Authorities should give an indication of progress and note if any adjustments to the scheme are considered necessary since the most recent version has come into effect. (Our version was published in April 2005);
- An executive summary of the key findings that the public can understand;
- A summary of the monitoring framework – principles/methodology being followed. This could include; how data was being collected, by whom, and how it was being used in analysis, in relation to the core and other indicators;
- A report on progress in the delivery of net additional dwelling provision set in the context of housing trajectories to demonstrate how policies are on track to deliver the necessary dwellings in the area.

1.2 Previous South Norfolk monitoring

The Council has prepared monitoring reports on the implementation of policies in the South Norfolk Local Plan (SNLP). The latest version was published in June 2005 and covered the period December 2001 to June 2004. It was the fifth in a series. The remit set for the document was to assess the effectiveness of the policies in the Plan and suggest changes to be considered (in the latest round) for the LDDs in preparation.

1.3 Timescales for this AMR

The AMR is a statutory requirement, and is to be submitted to the Secretary of State (through Government Offices) by 31 December each year, covering the previous financial year. As this is the first AMR since the new planning system commenced in October 2004, it need only cover the period October 2004 to March 2005. However, as we recently monitored until June 2004, we are able to give the whole financial year coverage.

1.4 Characteristics of South Norfolk

Key Points

- South Norfolk is mainly rural, although it is influenced by Norwich to the north
- The population is ageing, with the number of those over 65 expected to increase substantially
- The population is generally healthy
- The economy is buoyant, especially in the services sector
- Deprivation is a serious issue in only a few wards, although isolation is a problem
- House prices have risen rapidly in the last four years
- The housing stock is generally newer than the English average
- 85% of homes in South Norfolk are detached or semi-detached houses

The nature of South Norfolk

South Norfolk Council serves a predominantly rural and relatively affluent area, which does not have the significant issues of unemployment or deprivation of more urban areas. Some residents do experience issues associated with low income (the national minimum wage), and in obtaining access to services, especially in the more remote parts of the district.

The City of Norwich, on the northern edge of the district, is the location for much of the industry, commerce, education and leisure activity for this part of Norfolk. It is the focus for much of the transport network, and most of South Norfolk is within its travel-to-work area. The dominance of Norwich also creates a social attraction, with South Norfolk residents (especially the young) moving to the city.

Population

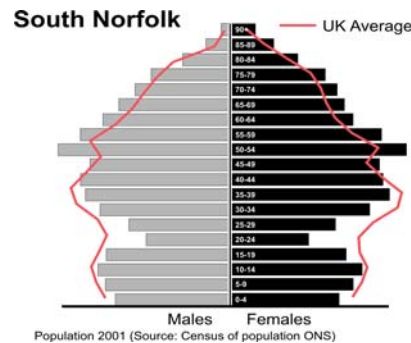
South Norfolk District has a population of 114 500 (NCC estimate 2004), of whom about 35% live in rural locations whilst the remainder live in the main market towns of Wymondham, Diss and Harleston or on the fringes of Norwich at Costessey. With this population in a large area (906 sq km/350 sq mls), there are only 1.2 people per hectare, compared with an average of 3.4 for England and Wales.

The graph (below) compares the population profile of South Norfolk with the national average.

The most significant aspects of population data are:

- The number of older people exceeds the national average and will increase
- The 50-59 age group is substantially bigger than the national average. This is a potential problem for the second quarter of the century when they are aged over 80.

- The number of people between 20 and 29 is much lower than the national average.



Population 2001 (Source: Census of Population ONS)

Over the last 10 years, there have been significant population changes that have implications for services in South Norfolk. For example, although small in number, there has been an 81% rise in the last 10 years in the number of people aged 90 or above who live in the District (481 to 869). Of more significance is the increase in the 50 - 54 age group where we have seen an increase of 48%. For each of the age ranges above the age of 45 there is a percentage increase above the overall percentage increase in the District. In contrast, between 1991 and 2001 there have been reductions in the younger age groups: 15-19 down 5.5%, 20-24 down 30.6% and 25-29 down 16.1%.

Ethnic profile

The ethnic profile shows that only 1.1% of the population is non-white. The area is not ranked highly in the official index of deprivation (ranking 291 out of 354), although there are some pockets of deprivation and the District's rural character gives problems of rural sustainability and accessibility. That means there are some groups that are particularly hard to reach, an issue which we are addressing through our review of access to services and information. The ethnic profile shows that only 1.1% of the population is non-white. The largest majority ethnic group is Chinese (0.2%). Although only some comprise a distinct ethnic group, travellers form a significant minority in South Norfolk.

Health

The residents of South Norfolk are some of the healthiest in the country. If present trends continue, South Norfolk is the only district in Norfolk expected to achieve all 4 'Our Healthier Nation' targets by 2010.

Crime

Crime levels in South Norfolk are low and certainly lower than the national averages, and fear of crime is also relatively low.

Employment and educational achievement

Educational achievement is higher than the national average, with over 65.9% of 15 yr olds achieving 5 or more grades A*- C compared to 50.5% nationally (2004).

The key employment sectors are retail and services, health (particularly for women), and manufacturing, especially of automotive and electrical parts. The District is heavily influenced by Norwich, where over 50% of South Norfolk's employed people work. In the south of the District most of the land is used for agriculture and food related industry, giving this sector great influence despite employing only 15% of the workforce. The area attracts a significant number of tourists, with 2.7 million day visits per year.

The unemployment rate of 2.4% is low when compared with the national average of 4.5%. Average adult earnings are 95% of the national average earnings (In 2004 £21000 in South Norfolk and £22000 for UK). However a third of the workforce has no qualifications. The majority of employers are small, with only 5% employing more than 25 people.

The economy in the Greater Norwich area is generally buoyant, and South Norfolk has benefited from this. The percentage of people who are employed is 64.1%, higher than the Norfolk average of 60.4%.

According to the Annual Business Inquiry of the Office of National Statistics, the main employment sectors in South Norfolk are: distribution, hotels and catering (24.6%); public administration, education and health (20.7%); banking, finance and insurance (15.5%); and manufacturing (13.9%). Despite the rural nature of the district, agriculture and fishing account for only 6% of employment. Within South Norfolk, the biggest employers are Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Lotus Cars (Wymondham) and those on the science research park at Colney (adjacent to the University of East Anglia). Many of those employed in banking, finance and insurance work for Norwich Union in Norwich.

Employment in Norfolk is expected to grow by 9% between 2000 and 2010. Most growth is anticipated in the following sectors: hotel and catering; banking and insurance; other financial services; business sectors; and retailing. As part of this countrywide picture, it is clear that the economy of South Norfolk is moving from traditional agriculture and industry to an office based economy.

Deprivation

The governments Index of Deprivation (based on 2001 Census data) ranks the 8.414 wards in England and Wales in order of deprivation (1=most deprived). Note: the ward boundaries are defined as they were in 2001.

- **Old Costessey** is the most deprived ward in South Norfolk, ranking 2, 522 nationally. It is the most deprived ward in South Norfolk with regard to income, employment, housing and child poverty.
- **Diss Town** shows as among the three most deprived wards in South Norfolk with regard to income, education and child poverty.

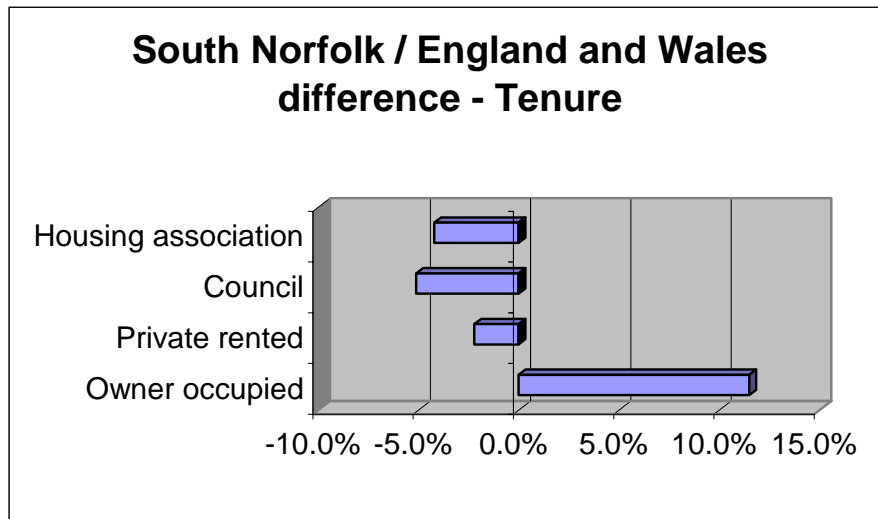
Five wards are among the thousand most deprived in terms of access to services:

- **Long Row** (209) – Burston, Gissing, Shelfanger, Tibenham, Winfarthing
- **Springfields** (251) – Bunwell, Carleton Rode
- **Marshland** (657) – Aldeby, Burgh St Peter, Gillingham, Toft Monks, Wheatacre
- **Clavering** (747) – Haddiscoe, Hales, Heckingham, Norton Subcourse, Raveningham, Thurlton
- **Wodehouse** (819) – Barford, Barnham Broom, Kimberley, Runhall, Wrampingham

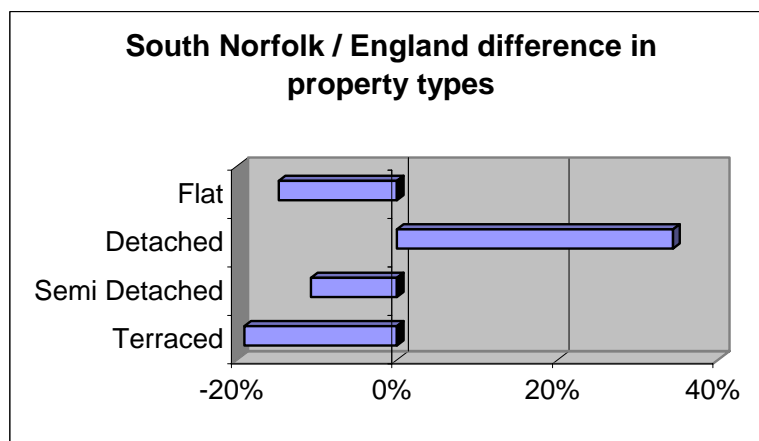
Housing

The number of dwellings in 2001 was 48, 505. The average household was 2.34 people (compared with 2.36 for England and Wales). Overcrowding is not a serious problem in South Norfolk. Only 2.3% of households are overcrowded, compared with a national figure of 7%.

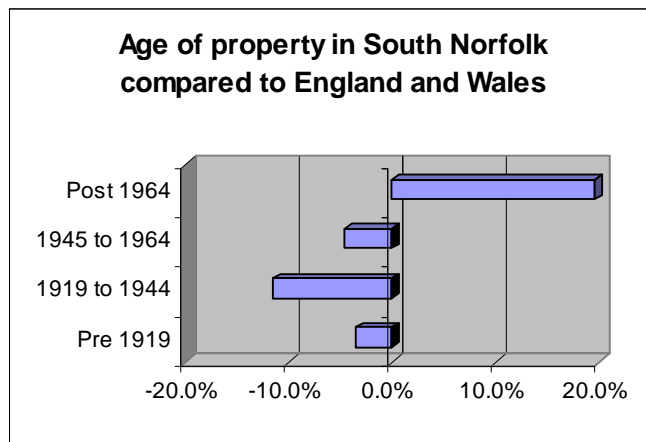
House prices have increased rapidly during the last four years. The type of properties in South Norfolk reflects the rural nature of the district. The nature of the housing sectors can be summarised as: -



South Norfolk / England Difference - Property Type



In terms of the age of property in the District the split shows: -



Relevant visions and objectives

The 2003 South Norfolk Local Plan contains a series of Strategic Principles that are relevant to all aspects of the Local Plan. SP 1 relates to sustainable development, and provides an overarching context. This is outlined below. The other Strategic Principles are contained in Appendix 1.

Strategic Principle 1: Sustainable development

In making due provision for development, the principal aim is to protect the essential character of the District, its biodiversity and the wealth of its main environmental assets. These include the historic character and setting of the built and unbuilt environment of towns and villages, environmentally sensitive areas such as historic parkland and river valleys, and areas of nature conservation value. Development should seek to conserve, and use efficiently, natural resources (including the utilisation of renewable energy and the efficient use of water). Wherever possible, the optimum use of existing infrastructure, including redundant and under-utilised sites, will be sought.

We have developed, through our previous monitoring work, a set of policies from the Local Plan which are used as indicators of the success or otherwise of the Plan overall. They reflect major themes in the Plan, and mirror the subjects addressed by the Strategic Principles. These Strategic Principles are framed as 'objectives' and the results of monitoring provide a commentary on achievement.

2. Local Development Scheme implementation

The table below outlines major elements of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) due for completion in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) period (April 2004 to March 2005) and provides a commentary on current and anticipated progress in respect of those elements defined in the LDS beyond the AMR period.

<i>Item / Milestones</i>	<i>Target date</i>	<i>Comment / Action required</i>
Statement of Community Involvement		
Informal consultation	October 2004	On target, undertaken as envisaged
Regulation 25 consultation	February / March 2005	On target, undertaken as envisaged
Regulation 26 consultation	April to June 2005	On target, undertaken as envisaged
Submit SCI to Secretary of State and invite representations	September / October 2005	Submit to Secretary of State in January – delayed slightly due to public consultation on Issues and Options for the Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations and Policies.
Sustainability Appraisal		
Establish mechanisms for appraising policies and proposals	December 2005	The SA framework needs to be in place to use when assessing potential options – late 2005 / early 2006. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report to be circulated for comment to relevant bodies in December.
Annual Monitoring Report		
Preparation of document to submit to secretary of state	December 2005	Submission December 05. On target for submission.
Diss - South of Park Road Area Action Plan		
Background work, evidence gathering	December 2005	June to December 05 – Diss Development Partnership has produced discussion document on town issues. SN officers assessing.
Core Strategy		
Production of draft documents for consultation	October 2005	October 2005 – complete.
Consultation exercise	October 2005	October to mid December – on target.
Preferred Options stage	Currently planned for April / May 2006	A risk was identified in the LDS (April 05) that delays in the preparation of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) could impact on the preparation of the Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies and Allocations LDDs. It was anticipated that the RSS Examination Panel's report would be available in February 06, but this will not now happen until mid 06. Given the potential impacts for the Norwich Area it would be inappropriate to proceed with the Core Strategy in advance of the Panel's report. A delay in publication of the Preferred Options until October 06 is suggested.
Site specific policies and allocations		
Production of draft documents for consultation	October 05	As above

Consultation exercise	October 05	As above
Preferred Options stage	As for Core Strategy above.	As for Core Strategy above.
Development Control policies		
Background work, evidence gathering	February 06	To February 06 – Will use outputs from Core Strategy etc work to feed into DC policies early stages.
Norwich Research Park Supplementary Planning Document		
Preparation of Brief	July 05 (Rev January 06)	July 05 – Anticipated public consultation stage. This has been delayed due to NCC rethink on access strategy for the NRP. Work is on hold until Transportation Assessment completed and an option agreed. Anticipated February 06 to recommence work on development brief.
Main issues to be resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise SA Scoping Report • Appointment of Temporary Planner to strengthen Team resources. 	
Major risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to proceed in tandem with the Regional Spatial Strategy (given that major issues of housing growth are to be discussed) NB Regional EIP start delayed by 6 - 8weeks. EIP reporting delayed 5 months until mid 2006. This is a cause for concern, these items should be rescheduled in the LDS. • Consultation overload on outside bodies. 	

Conclusions

Issues emerging at this stage

2.1 Production of the Core Strategy and Site Specific LDDs

The Council set itself a challenging timetable for the production of the Core Strategy and Site Specific LDDs. This was in part dependent on the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) passing through the Examination in Public (EiP) stages, and having the Secretary of State giving views on the modifications felt necessary to the RSS; it was originally planned that these would be available in mid 2006. This will not now be the case as the RSS EiP will not itself report until mid 2006 and the Secretary of State will only then consider the Government position. It will be very difficult for us to finalise our preferred strategy(s) until we know the direction of the RSS from the Government. Our published intentions in the LDS suggest the Preferred Options consultations stage will be April / May 2006. Indications are that we should at least wait until the EiP Panel publishes its recommendations before committing the Council to particular preferred strategies. We can then take a view on the implications for South Norfolk. One reason for being cautious is the debate initiated by the RSS process about levels of housing growth in Norfolk. Some organisations suggest that additional growth may be appropriate, and the Norwich Area, as the current focal point for the county's allocations, is an obvious target. There are clear implications for South Norfolk in this scenario.

It may even be necessary to wait until the Government publishes proposed changes in late 2006 before we can finalise our preferred strategy if the current policy

directions change from those currently anticipated. The final RSS is due for publication in early 2007. In view of these significant uncertainties it is intended that we postpone our consultation on Preferred Options for the Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies and Allocations LDDs from April/May 2006 to October 2006. Subsequent stages will also need to be amended to reflect this change. This will necessitate a formal alteration to the published LDS, and needs to be notified to the Government Office. (If however there are no significant implications arising from the Panel's report in mid 2006 we can then proceed at an earlier date).

2.2 Norwich Research Park Development Brief

We are working on a Norwich Research Park Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was due to enter the public consultation phase in July 2005. Due to continuing discussions about a transportation access strategy we are still not in a position to carry out that consultation. Uncertainty about improvements to the B1108 Watton Road has meant a subsidiary assessment of access to elements of the Research Park had to be undertaken, itself needing to contain opportunities for public consultation. This will now take place shortly (December 2005), and therefore the public consultation stages for the main SPD should commence in January 2006, subsequent stages will also be affected. It would be appropriate to acknowledge these slippages in the LDS and make formal amendments to the proposed scheme timetable.

2.3 Effects of delay on other LDDs

The Core Strategy is clearly a key document in the LDF for South Norfolk. The provisions will necessarily influence the other documents we propose to prepare; indeed they will need to conform to the principles set out within it. As such there is a knock on effect from delaying the production of the Core Strategy. The Development Control Policies document is due for a consultation on Issues and Options in April 2006. Depending on the outputs from the Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies and Allocations document consultation it may be appropriate to delay this by 3 months to July and allow the implications of comments to be assessed.

2.4 Other issues not covered in current LDS

In March 2005 the Office of Deputy Prime Minister published 'Best Practice Guidance on the Validation of Planning Applications'. It recommends that a 'Validation Checklist' should be the subject of consultation with a view to its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). In view of this the Council would wish to add this document to the Local Development Scheme for preparation. An LDD dealing with Development Control Policies is scheduled for its first stage of consultation in March 2006 (NB see above), it would be appropriate to give consideration to the Validation SPD at this time.

2.5 Commentary on risks / issues identified

- **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report** – Comments made in Table above.
- **Appointment of additional resources** – Recruitment process completed.
- **Relationship to RSS process** – Comments made in Table above.

- **Consultation overload** – Attempts are made in communicating with consultees to simplify processes and opportunities for comment, combining stages if appropriate. However the volume of subjects being dealt with, and self-expressed interest by consultees does not aid the situation. Other (non planning) consultations also add to the potential overload. There is clearly a need for care and co-ordination, and the Council does keep a schedule of its own consultations to try and manage the outputs.

3. Analysis of the implementation of saved policies (Includes analysis of South Norfolk Local Plan policies and ODPM Core Output Indicators with a summary of key findings and suggestions for action/change)

3.1 Landscape & Biodiversity

Areas of open land which maintain a physical separation between settlements in the Norwich area

- **Policy ENV 2**

The wording and extent of policy ENV 2 was finalised in March 2003 with the adoption of the South Norfolk Local Plan. Policy ENV 2 is derived from policy N.6 of the Norfolk Structure Plan and is intended to protect and conserve the local landscape character, the setting of urban areas, towns and villages and the historic setting of the city of Norwich by preventing ‘inappropriate development ‘ in areas of open land that maintain a physical separation between settlements in the Norwich area.

ENV 2:	Areas of open land which maintain a physical separation between settlements in the Norwich Area									
	Residential		Commercial		Agricultural		Other		Minor	
	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF
1 April 2004 - 31-Mar-05	3	2	7	1	0	0	1	0	6	0
Total	3	2	7	1	0	0	1	0	6	0

AP - Approved RF - Refused

The information gathered shows a relatively low number of applications where policy ENV 2 was a consideration during the monitoring period. However, despite this low number, some of the applications were for major development proposals with the potential to significantly impact upon the areas of open land defined by the policy. Residential approvals were either for replacement dwellings or on sites allocated for residential development, where the structural landscaping of the application adjoined/slightly encroached into the extent of ENV 2, triggering the need for its consideration as part of the application. Residential refusals were for applications outside of any defined settlement boundary and within the extent of policy ENV 2, that were adjudged to be contrary to SNLP and thus refused. Upon first inspection the number of approvals for commercial development may appear high. However, whilst the commercial category includes 2 waste and mineral approvals, 1 variation of condition, 1 conversion of an existing building to commercial use and 2 approvals for the further extension/alteration of existing sites only one application, for a new hotel

associated with the Norfolk Showground raised significant policy issues. The lack of alternative accommodation nearby, travel reduction benefits and intensification of an existing use, were held to warrant a development within the extent of ENV 2. Minor applications include 4 applications for advertisement consent, a renewal of a temporary permission and a telecommunications approval.

Conclusion

During the monitoring period there have been a steady number of planning applications within the areas defined as “open land which maintain a physical separation between settlements in the Norwich area”.

New development and the intensification and further extension of existing uses requires continued careful control to ensure that it does not result in the loss of openness or begin a process of coalescence. It is important that any development activity that could impact upon the objectives of the policy continue to be identified and rigorously assessed when determining planning applications.

Points for action

The LDF Core Strategy and Site Specific Policies Issues and Options consultation raises the issue of “areas of open land which maintain physical separation....”, responses received will fed into the preparation of preferred options. It is also important to continue to monitor the number and type of applications where policy ENV 2 is a consideration in order to assess whether the policy is effective or whether monitoring reveals the need for revision during the Local Development Framework process.

River valleys

- **Policy ENV 3**

SNLP policy ENV 3: River Valleys defines, in accordance with the advice in PPS 7 and in the context of the Norfolk Structure Plan, a number of river valley local landscape designations in order to protect and enhance the distinctive character of the Yare, Wensum, Waveney, Tas, Tud and Tiffey valleys. The river valley extents of ENV 3 were finalised in March 2003.

Monitoring impacts on landscape character can be problematic, as there exists an element of subjectivity and interpretation in any assessment. Numerous factors can have both a positive and negative influence upon landscape character. For example it is possible that sympathetic and innovative landscaping schemes and/or careful siting can mitigate potentially harmful impacts. Whilst poorly conceived or inappropriate landscaping can have a detrimental effect on character. Alternatively, it is also possible that some development proposals may result in an enhancement to the identified character assets of an area.

ENV 3: River Valleys	Norwich Policy Area									
	Residential		Commercial		Agricultural		Other		Minor	
	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF
Dec 2001 - End June '04	13	1	27	2	3	1	6	0	20	0
Total	13	1	27	2	3	1	6	0	20	0

AP - Approved RF - Refused

NB: Note date range. Later information not available due to technical difficulties

ENV 3: River Valleys	Rural Policy Area									
	Residential		Commercial		Agricultural		Other		Minor	
	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF
Dec 2001 - End June '04	23	13	24	11	13	5	16	1	45	5
Total	23	13	24	11	13	5	16	1	45	5

AP - Approved RF - Refused

NB: Note date range. Later information not available due to technical difficulties

Comparison between the two policy areas shows a fairly constant range of applications both in terms of type and number, with a higher level of activity in the Rural Policy Area. Whilst there is some variation in terms of approvals and refusals before and after adoption of the South Norfolk Local Plan, analysis of the data does suggest a consistent approach towards development within the river valley landscape.

There is continuing pressure on river valley landscapes from residential and commercial applications. The majority of commercial approvals, 23 in total, were for the alteration or extension of existing premises/operations there were also 6 minerals and waste related applications, 6 conversions, 6 new schemes and 10 related to telecommunications development. The grant of residential permissions has tended to be for conversions, sub-divisions, replacement or restricted occupancy dwellings that accord with Local Plan policy. It is noted that there is continuing pressure for development with the river valley and a renewal approved despite changing policy circumstances and a brownfield redevelopment for seven units in the open countryside on the edge of a river valley highlight the continuing need to protect these important and distinctive areas of South Norfolk landscape.

Conclusion

It would appear that, for this monitoring period, there is a continuing pressure for development within the river valleys. Policies ENV 3 – 'River Valleys' and ENV 8 – 'Development in the open countryside', appear to be successful in limiting approvals to appropriate forms of development e.g. conversions, replacement dwellings and the extension of existing activities that are held to protect and enhance distinctive character of the river valleys whilst unsuitable and/or unjustified proposals continue to be refused.

Points for action

Continue to monitor the number and type of applications where policy ENV 3 is a consideration so that any applications or trends that may threaten the character of river valleys can be identified. As part of the background work for the Local Development Framework the Council commissioned Land Use Consultants to detail the Landscape Character Areas of the Rural Policy Area to finalise the South Norfolk Landscape Assessment. Monitoring information, identified trends and the Landscape Assessment study will be used to inform the development of landscape and river valley policy in the South Norfolk Local Development Framework.

Areas which contribute to maintaining the landscape setting of the Southern Bypass of the City

- **Policy ENV 6**

Policy ENV 6: Areas which contribute to maintaining the landscape setting of the southern bypass of the City takes its origins from policy N.6 of the Norfolk Structure Plan. As with other policies in this section concerned with protecting the environmental assets of the district its detail and extent were not finalised until the adoption of SNLP in March 2003.

ENV 6:	Areas which contribute to maintaining the landscape setting of the Southern Bypass of the City									
	Residential		Commercial		Agricultural		Other		Minor	
	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF	AP	RF
1 April 2004 - 31 March 2005	4	3	19	1	1	0	4	0	10	1
Total	4	3	19	1	1	0	4	0	10	1

AP - Approved RF - Refused

Policy ENV 6 seeks to maintain the landscape setting of the bypass but excludes from its extent a number of development limits and village boundaries along its length including the settlements of Bawburgh, Costessey, Cringleford, Easton, Little Melton, Trowse and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Norwich Research Park and Longwater employment park. Whilst the number of commercial approvals appears to be high only one application, for a new hotel associated with the Norfolk Showground raised significant policy issues. The lack of alternative accommodation nearby, travel reduction benefits and intensification of an existing use, were held to warrant a development within the extent of ENV 6. The other commercial approvals related to conversions, renewals, the extension or intensification of existing permitted uses and mineral and waste development activity in the Longwater area. Residential applications that triggered ENV 6 considerations included two conversions and two sites where ancillary domestic curtilage and off site landscaping encroached into the extent of ENV 6. Minor development included five advertisements a telecommunications, renewal and extensions to domestic gardens.

The vast majority of the approvals accord with the requirements of ENV 6. Monitoring has revealed a relatively high level of proposals affecting areas that contribute to maintaining the landscape setting of the southern bypass, of which the vast majority are for existing uses/premises or for conversion opportunities and as such do not raise any significant policy issues. It should also be noted that agricultural practices

and large-scale tree planting schemes have the capacity to influence the landscape, although the control of these often lies outside of the planning system.

Conclusion

The information gathered for this and previous monitoring reports suggests that the areas which contribute to the landscape setting of the southern bypass are likely to continue to experience a high level of development pressure for a variety of uses.

Points for action

ENV 6 plays an important role in focussing development within existing development limits and village boundaries, whilst preserving the landscape setting of the southern bypass and the historic setting of the City of Norwich. The emerging South Norfolk Local Development Framework includes a number of questions regarding the role and extent of policy ENV 6. The number of applications where policy ENV 6 is a consideration should continue to be closely monitored in order to maintain a clear picture of the level of development pressure affecting the area.

Biodiversity

- **Policies ENV 11 to 15**
- **Core Output Indicator 8**

The adopted South Norfolk Local Plan contains several policies whose collective aim is to protect and enhance biodiversity. Policies ENV 11-15 seek to protect sites designated at international level down to sites of local importance. The continuing need to protect biodiversity is recognised by numerous organisations and authorities across the County, many of whom are members of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership (NBP). The NBP was instrumental in producing the Norfolk Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (NBSPG), aimed at providing further guidance on incorporating biodiversity for developers, members of the public and planning officers. The NBSPG was adopted by South Norfolk in July 2004.

Change in areas or populations of priority habitats and priority species

- **Core Output Indicator 8 (i)**

Priority Habitats

It is extremely important to monitor the areas and populations of priority habitats and species. However, there is as yet no centralised database for dealing with habitat information in Norfolk. The NBP are investigating the best way to strengthen the role of the Norfolk Biological Records Centre (NBRC) in co-ordinating, standardising and prioritising information gathering across the County.

The NBRC are also helping to develop a list of all the priority species in the district although this may well not be completed until the next Annual Monitoring Report. The first step will be to develop a list of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in South Norfolk and to then prioritise them in terms of information gathering. Inputs will also be sought from Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Broads Authority and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds regarding the status and any change in status of their sites, reserves for any survey information.

Priority Species

As with habitats there is a need to develop a list of all the priority species in South Norfolk. NBP have suggested the following species as a useful starting point that could be refined down based upon their importance in South Norfolk, degree of threat and availability of information.

- Amphibians: Great crested newt.
- Mammals: Water vole and otter.
- Birds: Skylark, linnet, spotted flycatcher, turtle dove, grey partridge, bullfinch, marsh tit, lesser spotted woodpecker and hawfinch.
- Plants: Shepherd's needle, greater water parsnip, small-flowered catchfly and sulphur clover.
- Lichen: Orange-fruited elm lichen.
- Molluscs: Depressed river mussel.
- Moths: White spotted pinion and pale shining brown.

Change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value (including International, national, regional, sub-regional and locally significant sites)

• **Core Output Indicator 8 (ii)**

South Norfolk includes a range of sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value. There are a number of internationally important sites such as the River Wensum, The Broads and the Norfolk Valley Fens that are designated as Special Areas of Conservation. South Norfolk also contains 26 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) covering over 1289 hectares and almost 250 locally significant County Wildlife Sites within the district.

Policies ENV 11 - 15 seek to protect international, national and locally important sites within South Norfolk. If an application is received that could possibly affect one of these sites the Council is required to consult with English Nature or Norfolk Wildlife Trust. The current procedure of identification and consultation has led to several schemes either being refused due to adverse impact upon the designated site or amended to incorporate mitigation measures enabling the development to proceed without detriment to the nature conservation interest. Examples of such amendments include additional safeguards for protected species, native planting schemes and further survey work, these are often imposed by way of a condition attached to any planning permission.

In 2005 English Nature assessed 32% of land designated as SSSI to be in a favourable condition (Core Output Indicator 8 (ii)), which is only just above the bottom quartile.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust is currently working with the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership to develop information on Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and the condition of County Wildlife Sites across South Norfolk and the County. This information, when available, will be very useful in helping to inform future monitoring with regard to the change in condition of environmentally significant sites. At present there are 1782.4 hectares of land designated as County Wildlife Sites in South Norfolk.

Conclusion

There are many activities outside of the planning system that can impact upon designated sites and give rise to only 32% of SSSIs in South Norfolk being assessed

as in a favourable condition. However, with reference to new developments that might affect such designated sites the current consultation arrangements with English Nature and Norfolk Wildlife Trust are working as intended to ensure that designated sites within South Norfolk are protected from any adverse impacts as a result of new development.

Points for action

Continue monitoring applications affecting sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value in order to ensure that consultation arrangements are working effectively and that high levels of protection are maintained. The Council will also seek to assist any schemes aimed at improving the condition of designated sites within the district.

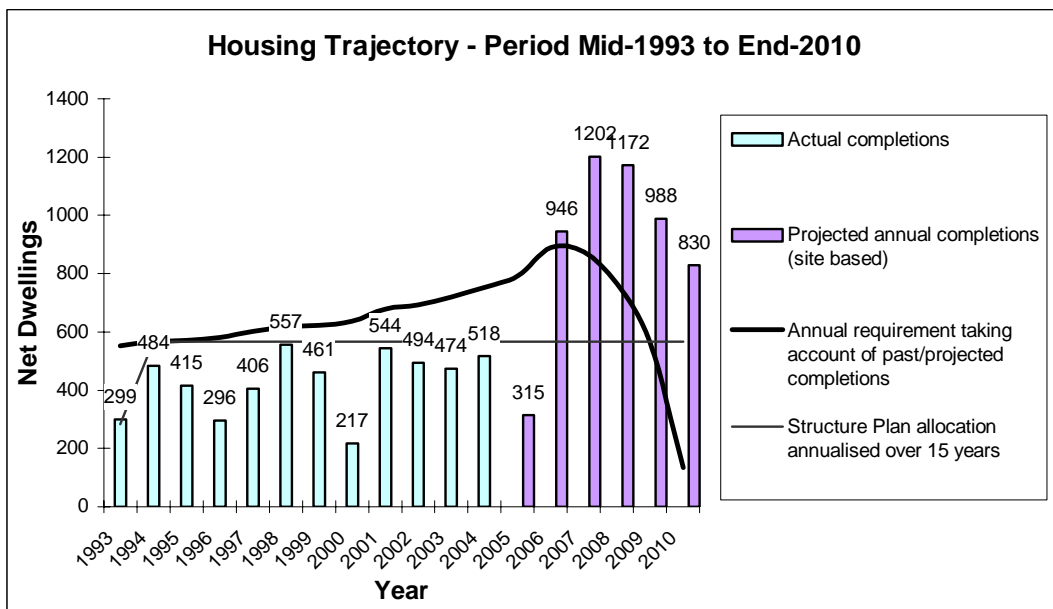
3.2 Housing

Housing land provision and Local Plan housing allocations

- Policies HOU 1, HOU 2 and Housing allocations
- Core Output Indicators 2a (Housing Trajectory), 2b (Previously Developed Land) and 2c (Density)

The housing numbers in the South Norfolk Local Plan derive primarily from the Norfolk Structure Plan 1993, with the Norwich Policy Area/Rural Policy Area split taken from the Secretary of State’s Notice of Approval of the Norfolk County Structure Plan Review.

Core Output Indicator 2a looks at how the Council has performed against the Structure Plan requirement and what the projected performance will be over the rest of the Structure Plan period. Future trajectories will use the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) period of 2001 – 2021, because by mid-2006 the RSS Enquiry in Public will have finished and the Government’s proposed changes published.



The background data for the trajectory can be found in Appendix 2. The 'Annual requirement taking account of past/projected completions' shows the number of completions that would be needed each year from that year onwards, in order to meet the Structure Plan target; the amount has been steadily rising since 1994 because completions have never reached the annual Structure Plan target. Between 2007 and 2010 the trajectory shows a rapid increase in the number of expected completions; these estimates are based on figures provided by developers (see Appendix 2) for the sites allocated in the SNLP and any windfall sites above 50 units¹. A number of large-scale sites have been progressing along broadly similar timetables meaning that completed units will start materialising a similar times.

A number of issues have emerged as contributing to the delay these larger sites, including:

- the complexity of the largest sites, particularly the three sites that include an element of Strategic Land Reserve for development beyond 2006, and the lengthy negotiations over the Section 106 Agreements; and
- the imposition of Article 14 Directions by the Highways Agency whilst issues over the impact on the trunk road network were resolved, again affecting a number of major sites.

It should be noted that by 2010 the figures show that we would be almost 700 homes ahead of the Structure Plan target; therefore even if developer's assessments are optimistic, there is some scope for slippage. It is also important to note that the other parts of the Norwich Policy Area (Norwich City and part of Broadland District) have performed strongly in recent years; with Norwich in particular providing sequentially preferable sites.

The Core Output Indicators also ask us to look at the proportion of new dwellings completed on previously developed land and the densities of development.

27.2% of homes were completed on previously developed, 'brownfield', land. The Council's Best Value Performance Indicator target for 2005/6 is for 38% of completions to be on brownfield land. The Council's main challenge is that although a higher percentage of windfall sites are brownfield, the vast majority of allocations are greenfield sites because of the lack of suitable brownfield land. As the housing trajectory above shows, there are expected to be a large number of completions on the allocations over the next 4-5 years, meaning that there is unlikely to be a significant improvement in the proportion of completions on previously developed land.

Density of Completions	
Less than 30 dwellings per hectare	72.8%
30 to 50 dwellings per hectare	24.2%
Over 50 dwellings per hectare	3.0%

The relatively low densities in South Norfolk over the monitoring period are due to a number of factors including:

- the high proportion of windfall sites, particularly garden plots and conversions, where high densities are difficult to achieve due to the layout of the site and the character of the locality;

¹ For windfall sites below 50 units an annual rate of 175 units per year is estimated, based on average annual completions for 2001 – 04.

- allocations in the current Local Plan made at densities of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) in the Norwich Area and 27 dph in the Rural Area,
- areas of open space being excluded from the SNLP density calculations on allocations, which under PPG 3 guidance should be incorporated.
- current site measurements not being sophisticated enough to include existing properties within the site or exclude elements such as strategic landscaping.

The Council needs to consider the inclusion of stronger density guidelines in the LDF and a question on density has been included in the Core Strategy Issues and Options.

Affordable Housing

- **Policies HOU 12 and HOU 13**
- **Core Output Indicator 2d (Affordable Housing)**

During the monitoring period 6 additional affordable dwellings have been completed, these comprise 4 units at Gunton Road, Wymondham, secured through a Section 106 Agreement, and 2 units proved in conjunction with the charity BREAK at Long Stratton. An additional 18 units were purchased from the open market by housing associations, principally to accommodate Key Workers.

The lack of affordable units coming forward from larger sites, under Policy HOU 12, is directly linked to the general problems with housing delivery noted above. On these sites the start of the affordable housing will be triggered after a proportion of the general market housing has been built, meaning that the affordable units are further delayed.

During the monitoring period no units were completed on exceptions sites under Policy HOU 13, however a number of units were granted permission, including 8 at Ellingham.

Housing Outside Development Limits & Village Boundaries

- **Policies HOU 8 and HOU10**

The previous Monitoring Report, published June 2005, looked at the permissions given inside and outside settlement limits – as the Core Output Indicators seek information on completions the assessment below is based on completions in the monitoring period. The pattern of completions outside development limits is broadly similar to the permissions in the last monitoring report. 14.0% of completions (37 units) were outside Development Limits and Village Boundaries; of these the majority (54.1%) were for the conversion of existing rural buildings under Policy HOU 10. The remaining permissions included sites that were inside the limit/boundary at the time application was determined, redevelopment of un-neighbourly brownfield uses, removal of agricultural occupancy conditions and conversions of annexes to separate dwellings.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

- **Policy HOU 23**
- **Local Output Indicator**

GO-East has indicated that Gypsy and Traveller issues are of 'sufficient regional relevance' to need monitoring in this report.

1. Number of authorised public and private sites (both permanent and transit) and numbers of caravans on them over the period monitored, and any changes during the period.	One public site with 18 plots (up to 3 caravans per plot). 2 x one plot private sites (with 3 caravans per plot).
2. Number of unauthorised sites and numbers of caravans on them	13 unauthorised sites used during year with up to 74 caravans in total.
3. Details of any permissions granted for new public or private sites, or expansion of existing sites, during the monitoring period; and any other unimplemented permissions outstanding at the end of the period.	Nil.
4. Progress of any work to assess the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers in accordance with the requirements of housing legislation and planning policy.	Accommodation need assessment programmed for December 2006.
5. More generally, an assessment of the use and performance of existing development plan policies on this issue.	Although no applications for sites were approved during the monitoring period, further progress on the provision of sites following the dismissal of the appeal at Denton will form part of the next monitoring report.

Points for Action

- As part of the changes to the planning system the Council will undertake greater consultation at the early stages in the process of producing the different elements of the LDF – we will need to ensure that this consultation clearly addresses any barriers to the deliverability of potential allocations so as to facilitate more consistent delivery of houses across the plan period.
- Assess the implications of the Urban Capacity Study in terms of increased densities, increased use of garden land, redevelopment of sites etc. and how this might be addressed in Policy.
- Address the issue of meeting the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

3.3 Employment

This chapter monitors the overall development and availability of employment land on both allocated and unallocated sites in line with the Government's Core Output Indicators. It then looks in more detail at the take up of land on allocated employment sites and the overall pressures for employment development inside and outside settlement boundaries. This report should be considered in association with the Council's Economic Strategy and the Employment Land Monitor produced by Norfolk County Council to build up a full picture of the South Norfolk Economy.

The overall development and availability of employment land on both allocated and unallocated sites

- **Core Output Indicators 1a to 1f**

Most of the information for this Indicator has been supplied by Norfolk County Council from their 04/05 Employment Land Monitor.

Core Output Indicator	Description
1a	Amount of floor space developed for employment by type
	B1 = 6320 sq m (at Framingham Pigot) B1/B8 = 12000 sq m (at William Frost Way, Costessey) B2 = 27880 sq m (at Uniglaze, Longwater, Costessey) NB. Floor space figures are estimates at 40% of site areas as agreed between NCC & the Region
1b	Amount of floor space developed for employment by type, in employment or regeneration areas
	B2 = 27880 sq m (at Uniglaze, Longwater, Costessey)
1c	Amount of floor space by employment type, which is on previously developed land
	B1/B8 = 12000 sq m (at William Frost Way, Costessey)
1d	Employment land available by type
	Total available land = 152.89 ha, of which: i) 86.06 ha is defined and allocated in the South Norfolk Local Plan for B1, B2 & B8 uses (including 35 ha allocated specifically for B1(b) uses at the Norwich Research Park, Colney) ii) 66.83 ha has planning permission (41.60 ha outline, 25.23 ha full)
1e	Losses of employment land in (i) employment/regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area
	None NB. Completions data not reliable at the moment, better collection methods will be investigated for future AMRs
1f	Amount of employment land lost to residential development
	None NB. Completions data not reliable at the moment, better collection methods will be investigated for future AMRs

The take-up of allocated employment land

- **Policy EMP 1**

Policy **EMP 1** from the adopted South Norfolk Local Plan (March 2003) allocates approximately 140 hectares of land for employment development in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 across the District. Of this, approximately 102 hectares is in the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) and 36 hectares in the Rural Policy Area (RPA).

Take up of allocated employment land

Site	Total Ha allocated	Ha committed 30/06/2004	Ha committed between 01/07/04 & 31/03/05	Remaining land available (Ha)
Norwich Policy Area				
Norwich Research Park, Colney	35 ha	-	-	35 ha
Longwater, Costessey	37 ha	14 ha	-	23 ha
Ipswich Road, Long Stratton	5 ha	-	-	5 ha
Ivygreen Villa, Wymondham	3.65 ha	3.65 ha	-	0 ha
Gateway 11 (Harts Farm), Wymondham	18.36 ha	9 ha	-	9.36 ha

Bridge Industrial Estate, Wymondham	1.3 ha	-	-	1.3 ha
Spur Industrial Estate, Wymondham	0.18 ha	0.09 ha	-	0.09 ha
Cemetery Lane, Wymondham	1.21 ha	-	-	1.21 ha
Stanleys Lane, Wymondham	0.70 ha	0.70 ha	-	0 ha
NPA Total	102.4 ha	27.44 ha	0 ha	74.96 ha
Rural Policy Area				
Sandy Lane/Sawmills Farm, Diss	15.2 ha	15.2 ha	-	0 ha
Mission Road, Diss	7.1 ha	7.1 ha	-	0 ha
Norwich Road, Hingham	2.5 ha	2.5 ha	-	0 ha
East of Low Bungay Road, Loddon	6.5 ha	-	-	6.5 ha
Spirketts Lane, Harleston	3.6 ha	-	-	3.6 ha
Eastern end of Howards Rotavators Yard, Harleston	1.0 ha	-	-	1.0 ha
RPA Total	35.9 ha	24.8 ha	0 ha	11.1 ha
TOTAL	138.3 ha	52.24 ha	0 ha	86.06 ha

Conclusion

Monitoring information from July 2004 – April 2005 shows that there has been no further new take up of land on allocated sites and there remains approximately 86 hectares of allocated employment land available. This indicates that there is a good supply of employment land available in South Norfolk. Any applications that have been determined on allocated sites within the monitoring period are on land that has already been committed through an earlier application. There have been new applications submitted at Gateway 11 in Wymondham (for a A1 non food DIY retail store/garden centres and industrial units) but these were outside the current monitoring period and have yet to be determined. There has also been an application determined on the Howards Rotavators Yard in Harleston but again this was outside the monitoring period.

Points for action

As part of LDF preparation a thorough assessment of employment land requirements will have to be undertaken. Following the ODPM guidance on 'Employment Land Reviews' the Council will have to make an assessment of the outstanding allocated sites to decide which should be carried forward into the LDF and which should be released or developed for other uses. It will also be necessary to consider whether more employment land needs to be allocated in the new Plan and if so, where the most suitable locations in sustainability terms may be.

Employment development pressures inside and outside settlement boundaries

- **Policies EMP 2 to EMP 4**

Policies **EMP 2**, **EMP 3** and **EMP 4** of the adopted Local Plan provide for employment growth on unallocated sites. **EMP 2** allows for new employment related development on unidentified sites within Development Limits and Villages Boundaries, **EMP 3** is concerned with the adaptation and re-use of rural buildings for employment purposes and **EMP 4** is a restrictive policy dealing with general employment development outside settlement boundaries. The following section

monitors the effectiveness of these policies by looking at pressures for development across the District, both inside and outside settlement boundaries.

Use class B1 (Offices, research & development, light industry)

Due to the change in computerised planning systems part way through the monitoring period, analysis for this section is based on permissions granted for office use (April 2004 – October 2004) and permissions granted for B1 uses (November 2004 – March 2005).

Over the monitoring period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005 there were 43 applications determined for B1/office development. Of these 32 were approved, 4 were refused and 7 were withdrawn. Of the 43 applications, 20 (47%) were inside Development Limits/Village Boundaries and 23 (53%) were in the open countryside.

a) B1/Offices inside Development Limits/Village Boundaries

Of the 20 applications determined within settlement boundaries 17 were approved, 1 was refused and 2 were withdrawn.

Of the 17 approvals the majority of these (10 applications) were for the extension/alteration of existing businesses. 6 applications were approved for change of use or conversion of existing employment related buildings. Only 1 application was for a new employment use, this was a coach depot/MOT centre for Simonds coaches in Diss, located on an existing employment allocation.

The 1 refused application was for the conversion of a garage to office with a car parking area.

b) B1/Offices outside Development Limits/Village Boundaries

Of the 23 applications in the open countryside 15 were approved, 3 were refused and 5 were withdrawn.

Of the 15 approvals, 9 of these were for the conversion/adaptation of a rural building for employment use or extensions to existing business premises. The remaining 6 approvals were for new buildings but all bar one of these were agricultural/nursery related developments. The only application granted contrary to policy was for the erection of 2 temporary timber buildings next to the Council offices in Long Stratton for the South Norfolk Housing Partnership (since renamed Saffron Housing Trust). This application was permitted on a temporary basis until January 2010, and although it is outside the Development Limit there is a valid permission for an office on the site and a temporary building was permitted to provide sufficient office accommodation until a permanent building can be constructed.

The 3 refusals were all change of use applications. One from residential to stabling and livery, one from residential garage to the maintenance and repair of motocross bikes and the last agricultural land to touring caravan site.

Use class B2 (General industrial)

As above the change in computerised planning systems part way through the monitoring period means that analysis for this section is based on permissions granted for manufacturing use (April 2004 – October 2004) and permissions granted for B2 uses (November 2004 – March 2005).

Over the monitoring period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005 there were 20 applications submitted for B2/manufacturing development. Of these 14 were approved, 3 were refused and 3 were withdrawn. Of the 20 applications, 5 (25%) were inside Development Limits/Village Boundaries and 15 (75%) were in the open countryside.

a) B2/manufacturing development inside Development Limits/Village Boundaries

Of the 5 applications determined within settlement boundaries, 4 were approved and 1 was withdrawn.

Of the 4 approvals, one was a new factory unit on an existing employment estate and the other 3 were alterations to existing business premises.

b) B2/manufacturing development outside Development Limits/Village Boundaries

Of the 15 applications determined outside settlement boundaries, 10 were approved, 3 were refused and 2 were withdrawn.

Of the 10 approvals 2 were certificates of lawful existing use, 4 were alterations or extensions to existing business premises, 1 application was granted permission under EMP 4 as being a suitable business for location outside a Development Limit/Village Boundary, 1 was a County Matter application for minor alterations to a quarry plant and the remaining application was a farm diversification scheme permitted under EMP 8. The other approval was for the Jarrolds print works at Wymondham. This application was granted contrary to policy due to the lack of an alternative site, the locational advantages of the site and the economic benefits to the District and the town of Wymondham.

Conclusion

The above figures show that over the monitoring period the majority of employment permissions were approved in accordance with Local Plan policy. The figures do not seem to demonstrate any particular pressures for employment land either inside or outside settlement boundaries.

Points for Action

This analysis shows that employment policy to focus new employment development within Development Limits and Village Boundaries and limiting development outside boundaries is broadly working effectively and should be continued in the LDF.

3.4 Leisure

Provision of Public Open Space

- **Policy LEI 5 and LEI 7**
- **Core Output Indicator 4c**

Core Output Indicator 4c asks for 'amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard'; at present 100% of open spaces within urban areas are managed to this standard and, although a percentage is not currently available, the Council is working towards the same goal in the rural areas.

Four sites of over 15 units (the threshold size above which open space contributions are required by Policy LEI 5) were approved during the monitoring period. These were for 750 homes at Cringleford, 120 at Mendham Lane Harleston, 96 at Myrtle Road, Hethersett and 20+ dwellings at Parklands Way, Harleston. The permissions for all of the sites require them to meet at least the minimum standards, either through on- or off-site provision, with the largest site at Cringleford also due to include a community building.

A new play area was approved at Barnham Broom.

Protection of Public Open Space

- **Policy LEI 8**

There has been no recorded loss of open space as a result of planning permissions; unfortunately it is not currently possible to monitor refusals of permission that *would* have resulted in loss of public space.

Provision of New Leisure Facilities

- **Policies LEI 4 and LEI 6**

A number of applications for new leisure facilities have been approved, principally involving replacing and improving pavilions, changing rooms and equipment at existing leisure sites.

Royal Norfolk Showground

- **Policy LEI 13**

One application was approved for the continued use of the Showground for flying radio controlled model helicopters. This is against the Local Plan policy LEI 13, but the use has been monitored through the earlier temporary permission and deemed acceptable.

Open Space Allocations

- **Policies DIS 13, DIS 14, HET 3, POR 3, HAR 9 & WYM 14**

No progress or applications made on any of these sites during the monitoring period.

Points for Action

- Take into account the outcomes of the Open Space study commissioned jointly with Broadland Council in relation to: identifying any shortfalls in provision and consequently allocating/de-allocating sites; best practice in terms of long-term management/maintenance of sites; in what circumstances areas of land could be released for other uses.
- Review site-specific policies, including the LEI 13, Royal Norfolk Showground, to assess whether they are still appropriate.

3.5 Communications

The Plan area is served mainly by road including major links radiating out from Norwich. The area's dispersed rural nature has resulted in poor public transport and consequently above average car ownership. East-west road links in particular remain poor and accessibility to services remains a major issue. The council seeks to concentrate most new development in highly accessible locations, encourage walking, cycling, public transport and access improvements through developer funding and the County Council's Local Transport Plan, while also promoting enhanced accessibility through the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy and the Norfolk Rail Policy Group.

Accessibility

- a) **Walking and cycling**
 - **Policies TRA 1 to TRA 3**

Re Policies **TRA 1 and TRA 3**, improved links continued to be implemented through developer requirements tied to some twelve housing land allocations of which three were completed during the monitoring period at Long Stratton, Trowse and Wymondham (Harts Farm). The spine road designed to serve the (yet to be started) Cringleford housing land allocation and the new Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital was also completed, albeit it awaits the addition of its walking and cycling provisions. The provisions of **Policy TRA 2** appeared not to have been tested.

South Norfolk Council also continued to encourage cycling through its own initiatives including the South Norfolk Cycling Forum, whose members continued to provide valuable feedback regarding the quality of cycle links serving new developments.

- b) **Public Transport**
 - **Policies TRA 4 to TRA 7**

(i) **Bus Services and Park and Ride**

Re **Policy TRA 4**, three of the seven of the proposed housing land allocations that provide for enhanced bus access were completed at Long Stratton, Trowse and Wymondham. Re **Policy TRA 5**, the Costessey and Harford Bridge Park and Ride sites opened prior to this monitoring period, the Cringleford site (actually located at Thickthorn in Hethersett parish) was completed during it, while the Trowse site still awaits a County Council commitment. There were no development proposals for the latter site during the monitoring period.

(ii) **Rail facilities provision – protected rail routes and freight depot sites**

Re **Policy TRA 6**, two proposed changes of use of a warehouse were permitted on the Ashwellthorpe Industrial Estate (ex-station site on the ex-Wymondham to Fornsett route), plus limited development on the Barretts Car Spares site at Aldeby (on the ex-Haddiscoe to Beccles route). Both of these sites were long established uses prior to the current policy. No alternative transport uses were proposed.

Policy TRA 7 was not tested during the monitoring period. The protection of the potential rail freight terminal sites has been further justified by the publication in 2004 of the Norfolk County Council rail freight strategy for Norfolk, "On the Right Lines".

c) Car Parking

- **Policies TRA 18, HAR 10, HAR 18. HET 5, HET 6, LOD 6, WYM 10 & WYM 11**

The council carried out a car parking “Best Value” review in 2001 and approved a comprehensive improvement plan to provide for up to June 2006. A district-wide car parking review scoping report was to be prepared at the end of the monitoring period. At the time of monitoring, progress with the policies of Part 2 of the Plan to improve car parking in Harleston (Policies HAR 10 and HAR 16), Hethersett (Policies HET 5 and HET 6), Loddon (Policy LOD 6) and Wymondham (Policies WYM 10 and WYM 11) had been made as follows:

- HAR 10 (Harleston) – the ex-bus station site car park had opened 2001.
- HAR 16 (Harleston) – no progress due to the lack of a town council response.
- HET 5 (Hethersett) – a Great Melton Road car park study had concluded that a smaller car park allocation would suffice.
- HET 6 (Hethersett) – no CBA (Central Business Area) off-street parking had been provided and its requirement was dependent on the outcome of the district car parking review.
- LOD 6 (Loddon) – there were no Broads Authority proposals to extend the car park at the Staithe.
- WYM 10 (Wymondham) – the proposed car and coach park appeared to have already been provided by the council as an informal car and lorry park. However two issues required resolution – a lack of coach parking in Wymondham and a replacement for the Harts Farm employment area lorry park that will no longer be developed as described under Policy WYM 11 below.
- WYM 11 (Wymondham) – the Harts Farm employment land lorry and coach park was not to be developed under the terms of the development’s 1995 Section 106 agreement as it was time expired and a need had not been established. General car parking on the Harts Farm employment area may be a problem in view of the recently constructed police headquarters needing to rent car parking space nearby.

d) New road construction and improvements

- **Policies TRA 9 to TRA 11, COL 3, HAR 12, LON 8 & WYM 5**

Re **Policy TRA 9**, the government verified the County Council’s planning permission for an A140 Long Stratton bypass in early 2005. Funding will be applied for through the latest review of the Norfolk Local Transport Plan but the latest news is that the scheme has not been given priority for government funding by The East of England Regional Assembly’s regional planning panel. This is a cause for concern. **Policies TRA 10 and TRA 11** were already obsolete due to the construction of the Broome bypass and Bowthorpe to B1108 link road prior to this monitoring period.

Further to the policies of the plan, the County Council had proposed a Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NNDR) and has since adopted a “three quarter route” option to run eastwards from the A1067. While this route does not cross the plan area, the current and NNDR-associated traffic problems in the Costessey/ Easton areas between the A47 and the A1067 will require resolution with implications for development provisions in the new Local Development Framework (LDF). South Norfolk Council also continued to support the dualling of the A47 to improve accessibility and the local economy.

Associated Part 2 policy progress was made as follows:

- COL 3 (Norwich Research Park transportation provisions) – some footway, cycle links and public transport provisions associated with the new hospital had been implemented prior to the monitoring period, but funding discussions have delayed the proposed improvements to the B1108. (A second access to the hospital via the Cringleford housing allocation spine road was also completed).
- HAR 12, LON 8 and WYM 5 (Rear servicing of commercial premises in Harleston, Loddon and Wymondham) – no progress.

Highways and Pedestrian Safety

- **Policies TRA 16, DIS 8 & 9, HET 7, LOD 5, HAR 11 & 13**

Progress with the policies providing for traffic management, access and pedestrian provision improvements in Part 2 of the plan was as follows:

- DIS 8 (Diss) – Sandy Lane/Mission Road measures had been completed prior to this monitoring period.
- DIS 9 (Diss) – County Council walking and cycling studies had been completed prior to this monitoring period and have formed a basis for subsequent improvements and development control advice. Other improvements had already been implemented through the South Norfolk Council Diss Heritage Environmental Regeneration Scheme (HERS), which ended in April 2005.
- HET 7 (Hethersett) – no provisions in the County Council's Local Transport Plan and thus no progress was made.
- LOD 5 (Loddon) – traffic calming measures had been implemented prior to the monitoring period.
- HAR 11 (Harleston) – town centre enhancement works had been completed prior to the monitoring period.
- HAR 13 (Harleston) – no provisions in the County Council's Local transport Plan as it does not consider there to be a problem, hence no progress made.

Core Output Indicators 3a) & 3b): transport and accessibility

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has required the monitoring of

- 3a) the amount of completed non-residential development within Use Class Order classes A, B and D complying with the car parking standards set out in the Plan
- 3b) the amount of new residential development within 30 minutes travel time by public transport of a defined range of services as set out below.

Output indicator (3a): all planning permissions granted since 1/4/99 have been in accordance with the relevant County Council car parking standards as supported by the policies of the Plan. By implication therefore, all developments as defined by the government indicator have also been in accordance with those standards.

Output indicator (3b): the relevant information is shown below.

Service/ facility	% dwelling completions in accessible locations 2004 –2005 (i.e. within 30 minutes by public transport)
GP	59%
Hospital	4%
Major food store	16%
Primary school	100%
Secondary school	36%
Further education	11%
Workplace	66%

It is assumed that the measurement of these indicators over time should show a gradual increase in new housing development within a 30 minutes travel time to show the impact of sustainable development. Further conclusions cannot be made in the absence of past time series information.

Conclusions

Developer funded non-car transport improvements continued to be provided and a new park and ride site opened at Thickthorn (Policy TRA 5). Very limited new development was permitted on two protected rail routes on long established industrial sites. The developer requirement to contribute towards the Wymondham Harts Farm employment land lorry and coach park had expired and a need had not been established. However a need for coach parking and a lorry park in Wymondham in general still appeared to have been identified. Access improvements to the prestige Norwich Research Park had not been completed and remained an issue.

The plan continued to provide for improved sustainable transport provisions and accessibility improvements in accordance with government guidance. Developer contributions to improved non-car access will increase as the current development land allocations progress. Development provisions in the proposed LDF for Costessey and Long Stratton may be affected by the implementation of the NNDR and the Long Stratton bypass (the latter possibly being in the balance), while the expansion of the Norwich Research Park could be affected by delays to the implementation of an improved B1108. Detailed points for action are shown below.

Points for action

- To consider qualifications to Policy TRA 3 to improve the design and landscaping of cycle paths.
- To review Policy TRA 5 provisions for the Trowse Park and Ride site.
- To revise Policies TRA 9 – 11 provisions for new road schemes and associated Part 2 policies, including access to the Norwich Research Park and the implications of the County Council-preferred NNDR route and Long Stratton bypass funding decision.
- To review Policy TRA 16-related Part 2 traffic and pedestrian schemes.
- To review Policy TRA 18-related provisions for off-street parking (including in particular coach and lorry parking in Wymondham; Harts Farm, Wymondham general parking and lorry parking in Harleston)

3.6 Utilities and Community Development

Flood Protection and Water Quality

- Core Output Indicator 7

The Council, through the policies in SNLP and in consultation with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Boards seeks to prevent any development in areas at risk from flooding unless appropriate flood protection and mitigation measures are included as part of the proposal. It also seeks to preserve the quantity and quality of ground and surface water.

During the monitoring period no applications were received that were deemed to have an adverse effect on water quality but a number were received in areas identified as being at risk from flooding. Many of these proposals were for minor/ancillary development, changes of use or development otherwise unlikely to have an adverse impact upon flood risk. Where an application was submitted within an identified flood risk area or had the potential to affect water quality the Council consulted the Environment Agency. The Agency responds either supporting or objecting to the development and often includes advice on additional information or mitigation measures required. During the monitoring period the Environment Agency objected to four applications on flood risk grounds. However, through a mixture of negotiation, amendments, additional research (e.g. submission of a flood risk assessment of the development proposal) and/or conditions attached to the decision notice the concerns of the Agency were addressed so that, in all cases, the objections were withdrawn and the applications approved with no objection from the Environment Agency.

The Council is aware of at least one location where the lack of capacity of foul and surface water sewers is causing considerable problems to existing properties where uncertainty over the nature and timescale of the necessary improvements is causing delays to the approval of major developments in the locality. The Council is liaising closely with the relevant organisations to improve data on the quality and capacity of the network in order to inform LDF choices and future planning decisions.

Conclusion

Through close liaison with the relevant bodies the Council has been able to successfully influence/amend development proposals so that they are acceptable in terms of flood risk and water quality.

Points for Action

The Council will continue to liaise closely with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Boards to ensure that new development does not adversely affect water quality and where it is in an area at risk from flooding that the appropriate flood protection and mitigation measures are in place to protect the development and to ensure it does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. A strategic flood risk assessment is also being undertaken to inform the LDF process to ensure any decisions about the future development of South Norfolk take strategic flood risks into account.

Developer Contributions

It is important that all occupiers of new development have access to an adequate level of services. The South Norfolk Local Plan seeks to co-ordinate this provision of services by ensuring that

(a) existing infrastructure can cope with the additional pressure,

or if it cannot; then

(b) by seeking contributions from developers towards service improvements that are required as a result of the new development and would not otherwise have been necessary e.g. contributions towards highway improvements to satisfactorily access the new development, improvements to community facilities/education in order to adequately serve the expanded community. Developer contributions are secured through the use of section 106 agreements.

All of the policies allocating land for residential or employment development in SNLP set out a range of requirements that are necessary to ensure the development is properly serviced e.g. open space provision, affordable housing and so on. The Council completed numerous section 106 agreements during the monitoring period. These ranged from restrictions on the occupancy of dwellings, stopping previous use, requiring the removal of buildings, controlling the range of goods sold to contributions towards educational, highway and community facility improvements. Details of the contributions agreed during the monitoring period towards the improvement of educational, community and library facilities is set out in the table below. Highway and affordable housing provision/contributions are discussed in the appropriate sections of this monitoring report.

Section 106 developer contributions (£)			
Development, site & parish	Education contribution	Community Facilities	Library improvements
Residential development at Myrtle Road, Hethersett	206,994	41,250.65	4,800
Residential development north of the River Tud, Costessey	2,420,000 (+136,800 for school transport)	Provision of Community Centre (max cost 500,000) and Country Park (max cost 250,000)	46,410
Residential development north of Newmarket Road, Cringleford	2,055,196	Provision of Community Centre (max cost 500,000)	25,500
Residential development on the former Harleston Foods site	Not required	26,900	2,300
Total	4,818,990	1,318,150.65	79,010

Conclusion

It is essential that adequate services are available to service new development. Section 106 agreements have proved a successful method for securing developer contributions arising as a result of new development so that service providers e.g. Norfolk County Council or Town/Parish Council can address any shortfall in service provision.

Points for action

Continue monitoring the number and type of developer contributions delivered. It is important to maintain up to date information on the availability of services within settlements i.e. through background work such as housing needs survey, open space survey etc. so that any potential developer requirements can be included within the South Norfolk Local Development Framework at the appropriate time. The Issues and Options consultation includes a question about the scope and priority to be given to developer contributions, the results of which will feed into the preferred options stage.

Renewable Energy

• Core Output Indicator 9

SNLP policy UTL 13 sets out the Councils positive criteria based policy approach towards renewable energy proposals. There are a number of small-scale schemes (e.g. 15m high turbines) with planning permission across the district but where development has not yet commenced. The Council continues to receive enquiries, screening and scoping opinions regarding renewable energy proposals but to date the actual number of schemes progressing to application stage or installation has been modest.

The Council are aware of 50 other renewable energy developments (which did not require planning permission) during the monitoring period. 47 properties in the district received grants towards the installation of solar water heating systems which equates to 61.1 MW and 3 properties installed ground source heatpumps (no information on energy capacity available).

Conclusion

There are a number of renewable energy projects either in development or yet to commence. It is therefore important to continue to monitor both large and small-scale renewable energy developments in the district in order to gauge if this is an increasing trend.

Points for action

As part of the background work for the LDF the Council has commissioned further research on landscape character areas and the visual impact of large-scale wind turbines. These studies will feed into the consultation and policy development for the renewable energy policy in the South Norfolk LDF.

3.7 Built Environment

Conservation Character Appraisals

There are 51 conservation areas either wholly or partly within South Norfolk. Conservation areas are defined on the basis of their architectural, historic or landscape value so that their distinctive character can be protected and enhanced.

In accordance with the advice given in PPG 15 “Planning and the Historic Environment” the Council has produced Conservation Area Character Appraisals for 47 out of the 51 conservation areas (19 completed 28 draft). Of those outstanding, the Council was denied access to carry out the appraisal for 1 conservation area whilst only a small proportion of the remaining 3 are within South Norfolk so the relevant adjoining authorities will be responsible for their production.

Conclusion

Conservation areas perform a valuable function in preserving the unique character of parts of South Norfolk. Conservation Area Character Appraisals provide useful information that helps inform the interpretation of Local Plan policies IMP 16 – 18.

Points for action

Continue monitoring development in and affecting conservation areas. The Conservation Area Character Appraisals include reference to ‘buildings of townscape significance’. These are unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area. The Issues and Options consultation for the Site Specifics Policies Local Development Document includes questions regarding the built environment, design and the possible inclusion of a policy relating to ‘protection of non-listed buildings of townscape significance’.

3.8 Tourism

The popularity of South Norfolk as a tourist destination stems partly from its proximity to the Broads and also from its own attractive rural landscape populated with a number of historic market towns. Tourism and tourism related development is an important component of the South Norfolk economy. It helps to widen the employment base, provides useful opportunities for agricultural diversification and can give new life to redundant rural buildings as holiday accommodation. The Council is keen to encourage tourism related development, especially when it is sustainable in nature and does not undermine the rural character of the district upon which it is based. Attractions such as Whitlingham Country Park, Caistor Roman Town, Wherryman’s Way and Boudica’s Way seek to promote the unspoilt countryside and history found in South Norfolk.

During the monitoring period 50 applications relating to holiday accommodation were received of which 46 were approved. All but two of the applications were for the conversion or extension of existing buildings/premises with only 2 applications relating to new build.

Conclusion

The re-use and adaptation of existing buildings either through conversion or extension demonstrates the success of policies TOU 6 and 7 (self-catering holiday accommodation and conversion to self-catering accommodation in the open countryside) in reducing the demand for new buildings in the countryside and thus also helping to protect the appearance and rural character of the countryside whilst also supporting and delivering tourism related development. During the monitoring period planning permission was granted for 40 new units of holiday accommodation, which demonstrates the importance of the tourist industry in South Norfolk and also the Council's commitment to supporting appropriate tourism related development.

Points for action

Continue to monitor the level of tourism related applications in order to examine whether there are any trends or changes in demand that the emerging South Norfolk Local Development Framework should take into account.

3.9 Shopping

The South Norfolk Local Plan Monitoring Report 2004 showed that most retailing development pressures had been taking place around the Norwich fringe and in Diss, with other lesser pressures in Harleston and Wymondham. While more new shops had been resulting from conversions of other uses than from new developments, there had been concern at the numbers of shops being lost through changes of use to dwellings and Class A2 and A3 uses. These trends have been updated and the following sections outline development changes for the year 1/4/04 to 31/3/05 based on the statistics shown in Appendix 3.

3.9.1 Major Retailing Development

- **Policies SHO 1 to 3**

The major stores are concentrated mainly in the three largest market towns of Diss, Harleston and Wymondham and around the Norwich fringe. Pressure for major **new convenience goods stores** has been maintained within the central business area of Diss, i.e. approval for the Tesco redevelopment of the Co-op Rainbow/ Godfreys stores plus the consideration of an application for an extension to the Morrisons supermarket. The remaining large store permission was for the extension of the Sainsbury's store at Longwater, based on need and lack of adverse local impact.

New comparison goods store pressures have continued in Diss and Harleston, but on sites outside the defined CBA (Central Business Area) due to the apparent (at the time) lack of availability of the SNLP retail land allocation in Diss and the general lack of suitable sites within Harleston town centre. The Harleston proposals were also permitted for having a lack of adverse impact on the town centre, while the Diss proposals (for an out-of-centre DIY store) have been withdrawn since this monitoring period following the Council's proposed refusal on the grounds of inadequate need and sequential test). Other pressures have been for the subdivision and installation of mezzanine floors in the retail warehouses comprising the Norfolk Retail Park at Longwater, Costessey. The latter were permitted as lawful development but nevertheless when implemented will amount to a significant additional floor space on an out-of-town site, albeit within a defined development limit.

3.9.2 Town centres, smaller scale development and shop losses

- **Policies SHO 4,5,8 & EMP 7**

This section refers to the council's general provisions to enhance facilities within the defined central business areas while providing for or maintaining local shops and services elsewhere.

Significant numbers of further new **convenience goods** stores have been permitted as changes from other uses in mainly Diss, while smaller new convenience store proposals and extensions have also been permitted elsewhere within development limits at Ditchingham, Hethersett, Mulbarton and Costessey. The limited exceptions permitted outside development limits have been for farm shop extensions at Pulham Market and Tharston.

Apart from the SHO 1 proposals, there have been no proposals for smaller **comparison goods** stores, albeit proposals outside central business areas for car and motorcycle sales outlets (Harleston and Wymondham) and a single proposal outside a development limit for a timber goods manufacturer/ retailer (in Needham) have been permitted on the basis of a lack of more suitable sites in preferred locations. The motor vehicle showrooms permitted outside central business areas had limitations imposed to remove their then current permitted development rights to become general shops, but such rights have been removed since by the Use Classes Order 2005.

Within the existing CBAs, relatively few (but generally large) stores have been proposed, but steady numbers of smaller new shops have been provided through conversions from other uses. Significant numbers of smaller shops have also been permitted within defined development limits in general in line with Policy SHO 8. The gains in new shops continued to outnumber the losses of shops.

Previous monitoring had raised concerns about the losses of shops in the district to dwellings and other uses. This trend appears to have slowed, but a small number of shops still changed use to mainly Class A2 uses within CBAs, with marginally larger pressures for such changes occurring in Wymondham. Despite the wording of Policy SHO 5 arising from the South Norfolk Local Plan Inquiry, subsequent appeal experience has led to an interpretation that ground floor shop changes to other commercial (e.g. Class A2 and A3) uses within the Primary Shopping Area may be considered provided that there is a lack of adverse impact and that shops remain the predominant (i.e. majority) use with that area.

3.9.3 Core Output Indicator 4a) and 4b): Local Services

Information is required about the amount of completed services development during the monitoring period in relation to

- 4a) The amount of completed office (Classes B1a and A2), retail (Class A1) and leisure (Class D2) development
- 4b) The percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres.

(As this only partly overlaps the remit of the shopping policies of the Plan, this section may be relocated in future in another part of this report).

Neither the Council's planning decisions analysis nor building control computer systems had been designed to store planning permissions or completions information by Use Classes Orders for the monitoring period. Modifications have been made very

recently to the way in which planning decisions have been recorded which may assist this task in the future, but this may be more realistically achieved after the second monitoring report, subject also to improved information input. The comparison of all broadly relevant planning permissions granted for the monitoring period and the previous five years with building control site records to identify the completions monitoring information required has shown that the building control records are inadequate.

As a result, it has not been possible to establish the required retrospective completions information, with the exception of County Council-derived on-site survey information regarding the major Class B1 uses (see Section 3.3 and Core Output Indicators 1a and 1c). However on the basis of the planning permissions granted, a small number of new retail, office and leisure developments may have been completed, whereas many new uses in all of the above use classes could have been implemented in existing buildings through permitted changes of use. Overall new information gathering systems will be required to establish the implementation of the required completions information.

3.9.4 Summary of trends

Overall three times as many new shops and extensions have been permitted than permitted to change use to other uses. This is a significant and encouraging reversal of recent trends. Only 11% of new shop proposals were refused planning permission, due largely to their unsuitable locations outside settlement development limits. The locations of new provisions were also fairly evenly divided between CBAs and elsewhere within development limits. The latter reflected mainly a lack of sequentially preferred sites for certain larger proposals within Harleston and Wymondham, the numbers of retail unit mezzanine floors permitted as lawful development at the Norfolk Retail Park, Longwater, plus a limited number of new local shops.

Comments cannot be made about trends in the “core output indicators” at this time due to the lack of available information.

Conclusion

Overall the shopping policies of the Plan appear to be resulting in new development being provided in the preferred locations within the context of government planning guidance. The exceptions have been justified by local need, a lack of preferred sites, a lack of adverse impact and lawful development rights. The latter have provided for the significant mezzanine floor extensions at the Norfolk Retail Park at Longwater, which when linked to the permitted extension to the adjacent Sainsbury food store and the proposed housing development to the north of the River Tud (Queen’s Hill) raise issues about the consideration of the future function of the general Longwater retailing area.

Conclusions will be drawn in future monitoring reports on the “core output indicators” when appropriate information becomes available.

Points for Action

Development pressures over this limited monitoring period and the preceding monitoring period have shown the need for

- a review of the currently defined CBAs and primary shopping areas,
- the examination of potential new edge-of-centre sites for larger types of retail development in Harleston and Wymondham (within the context of potential identified by the South Norfolk Retail Study),
- the consideration of a definition of “appropriate scale” re Policy SHO 8 to avoid excessive shop extensions that could generate adverse retail and traffic impacts in otherwise unsustainable locations (e.g. farm shops),
- the expansion of Policy EMP 7 to retain rural employment opportunities to provide for the consideration of all proposed potential closures of shops and services,
- the production by the council of an explanatory note to ensure the appropriate interpretation of Policies SHO 1, SHO 2 and government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6) regarding the interpretation of larger scale developments and their need, sequential test and impact,
- the consideration of the future function of the Longwater, Costessey general retailing area,
- the production by the council of an explanatory note to ensure the appropriate interpretation of Policy SHO 5 regarding the definition of a “predominance” of shops when considering pressures for the change of use of shops to other service uses within a town centre. (This has been drafted subject to officer discussion).

Other policy modifications may also be required to reflect the latest provisions of PPS 6 regarding, for example, the definitions of major travel generators and the production of indicative limits for the scale of floor space likely to be permissible in particular settlements.

Appendix 1 - South Norfolk Local Plan Strategic Principles

Strategic Principle 2: High standard of design

A high standard of design will be sought in all new development, to maintain the quality of the District's environmental heritage and improve the quality of life of residents, and to maximise energy conservation.

Strategic Principle 3: Location of growth

A major element of growth in the Norwich Policy Area to 2006 is to be accommodated in the Norwich Area of South Norfolk, and elsewhere in the District growth is to be on a moderate scale in line with the policies in the Approved Norfolk Structure Plan. Subject to environmental and infrastructure conditions, development is accordingly to be located:

In the Norwich Area

- In locations selected because they will minimise the need for travel, and which have good access by public transport, cycling and walking

In the Rural Area

- At selected locations along strategic routes (A11, A47, A140)
- At selected towns, commensurate with their role as local employment centres
- As small scale growth, in selected rural villages chosen on the basis of their existing scale and character, range of facilities, and the ease of exploiting their potential for contributing to the achievement of a sustainable pattern of development.

Strategic Principle 4: Impact on infrastructure

Development likely to place strains on existing public and social infrastructure or community facilities will be expected to incorporate suitable measures to meet the additional service needs generated.

Strategic Principle 5: Housing land supply

Sufficient housing land will be made available to ensure that the Structure Plan housing requirement is met and that a 5 year supply of housing land is maintained.

Strategic Principle 6: Main objectives for employment

The main objectives of the Local Plan for employment are:

- Provide alternatives to commuting into Norwich and other large towns outside the District in the interests of convenience and sustainability.
- Sustain and promote small businesses and the self-employed, which provide the predominant sources of work opportunities for local people
- Identify sites likely to attract modern growth industries, to redress the high proportion of employment in declining industries
- Address localised unemployment problems in the eastern Waveney Valley, Costessey and Wymondham.

Strategic Principle 7: Main objective for shopping

The main objective of the Local Plan for shopping is to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres and village shops and sustain rural services.

Strategic Principle 8: Main objective for tourism

The main objective of the Local Plan for tourism is to support and promote tourism development in the District in recognition of its contribution to the local economy, diversifying the employment base of the District and off-setting the loss of jobs and income from agriculture, while protecting the qualities of the District which make it an attractive tourist destination.

Strategic Principle 9: Main objective for recreation and leisure

The main objective of the Local Plan for recreation and leisure is to encourage the provision of a range of facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Strategic Principle 10: Main objective for transport and movement

The main objective of the Local Plan for transport and movement is to ensure the safe and free movement of traffic and promote the principles of sustainable development.

Appendix 2 - Housing Trajectory Figures

Period 1993 - 2010	COMPLETIONS												PROJECTIONS							
	1993 (July - Dec)	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		
Actual completions	299	484	415	296	406	557	461	217	544	494	474	518								
Projected annual completions (site based)													315	946	1202	1172	988	830	10618	
Annual requirement taking account of past/projected completions	551.3	566	571	582	602	617.2	622	637	679	694	719	754	793	889	874	765	562	135	-695	
Structure Plan allocation annualised over 15 years	284	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	567	9923	9923

Data

Completions 1993-2004
Projected Completions

Source

South Norfolk Council Data
Estimates provided by site owners/developers & District Council estimates

Background data for Projected Completions 2005 to 2010

1. The data should be entered into the template for known sites (allocated in an adopted plan or plan review) in the following order:

1. under construction	5. where full, outline or reserved matters at post committee resolution subject to S106 negotiations
2. with planning permission (full or reserved matters covering whole site)	6. with application submitted
3. with outline permission with part(s) covered by reserved matters	7. with pre-application discussions occurring
4. with outline only	8. allocation only

2. The data/assumptions for windfall sites should be entered separately in the last row in the table.

Site Name/ Address (Category 1 to 8 in brackets)	Site Area (hectares)	Site in adopted Local Plan (A) or unadopted plan review (B) or not allocated (N)	Estimated Total Units to be Built (No. of units)	Completions as at 31/12/04 (No. of units)	Total No. of Units/Year (Estimated for year of completion 1 Jan to 31 Dec)						FURTHER COMMENTS e.g. stage reached, estimate of when next stage will be reached, risks to projected nos/ timing of completions + Greenfield or Brownfield
					2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Mulbarton: Cuckoofield Lane (1)	15.0	N	362	72	50	84	50	50	50	6	29 units completed in first 6 months of 2005. Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.
Easton: Bawburgh Road (1)	4.85	A	105	15	25	25	25	15	-	-	10 units completed in first 6 months of 2005. Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.
Hethersett: Myrtle Road (1)	2.92	N	96	-	3	40	40	13	-	-	Site preparation in progress. Figures provided by the developer Feb '05.
Wymondham: Preston Avenue (1)	2.06	A	73	-	-	39	34	-	-	-	Units under construction. Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.

Poringland: The Street (1)	24.0	A	850	-	-	75	75	100	86	86	First phase of the development (103 units) completed. Units under construction on second phase. Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.
Costessey: Lodge Farm (2)	11.0	A	488	-	-	60	120	120	120	68	Figures provided by the developer's agent Nov '05.
Wymondham: Greenland Avenue (2)	13.94	N	375	-	-	30	60	60	70	70	Figures to 2009 provided by the developer Feb '05.
Costessey: North of the River Tud/Queens Hills (4)	45.5	A	1440	-	-	150	225	225	225	225	Outline permission for the whole site. Detailed permission for some infrastructure. Reserved matters/detailed applications under consideration for various phases. Figures confirmed by the developer Dec '05.
Cringleford: North of the A11 (4)	25.0	A	750	-	-	130	150	150	160	160	Outline permission for the whole site. Access road & some offsite infrastructure approved & constructed/ under construction. No detailed/reserved matters housing applications. Figures confirmed by the landowner's agent Nov '05.
Wymondham: Silfield Road (5)	1.80	A	65	-	-	-	20	30	15	-	Figures provided by the landowner's agent Feb '05.
Wymondham: Sale Ground (5)	1.30 (Mixed use)	N	See notes	-	-	10	50	50	-	-	Mixed use proposal, various scenarios proposed – figures provided by the prospective developer of the site Nov '05.
Long Stratton: Lime Tree Avenue (7)	2.25	A	60	-	-	20	20	20	-	-	Figures provided by the owner/prospective applicant Nov '05.
Wymondham: Friarscroft Lane (8)	1.0	A	19	-	-	-	-	19	-	-	Figures provided by the landowner Nov '05.
Costessey: Dereham Road (8)	1.15	A	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Landowner has indicated that he is not interested in redeveloping the site in the foreseeable future.
Norwich Area Major Sites Sub Total	-	-	-	87	78	663	869	852	726	615	

Diss: Mission Road/Sandy Lane (1)	7.1 (Mixed use)	A	177	-	62	70	45	-	-	-	Under construction. Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.
Ditchingham: Simpsons Maltings (2)	3.46	N	118	-	-	-	-	39	39	40	No plans to progress the development in the immediate future, estimated figures.
Harleston: Former Dowdeswell Site, Mendham Lane (4)	5.96	N	120	-	-	12	50	58	-	-	Figures provided by the developer Nov '05.
Diss: Frenze Hall Lane (5)	4.8	A	143	-	-	-	47	48	48	-	Estimated figures, following discussion with landowner's agent Dec '05.
Chedgrave: Hurst Road (6)	0.96	A	32	-	-	16	16	-	-	-	Estimated figures.
Burston: Audley Close (8)	0.4	A	10	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	Figures provided by the landowner Nov '05.
Harleston: Limes Close (8)	1.0	A	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Greenfield allocation, refused planning permission on PPG 3 grounds, as alternative brownfield sites had become available.
Harleston: Mendham Lane (8)	4.04	A	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Greenfield allocation, refused planning permission on PPG 3 grounds, as alternative brownfield sites had become available.
Rural Area Major Sites Sub Total	-	-	-	0	62	108	158	145	87	40	
District-wide Windfalls	-	-	-	-	175	175	175	175	175	175	Based on average annual completions between 2001 & 04 on all non-allocated sites below 50 units.
Grand Total	-	-	-	87	315	946	1202	1172	988	830	

**Appendix 3 - Retail development planning decisions 1/4/04 –
31/3/05 (Use Class A1 plus vehicle sales outlets)**

Location	New shops & *extensions		c/u other uses to shops		c/u shops to dwellings		c/u shops to A2/ A3 uses		c/u shops to other shops	
(See notes)	App	Ref	App	Ref	App	Ref	App	Ref	App	Ref
Settlements with defined TC (CBA)										
Diss TC	1+1*	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O-O-C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harleston TC	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
O-O-C	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hethersett TC	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
O-O-C	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hingham TC	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O-O-C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loddon TC	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
O-O-C	0	0	1(vs)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Long Stratton TC	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0
O-O-C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wymondham TC	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0
O-O-C	1 (vs)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Other settlements within Dev't. Limits	4+8*	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
Outside Dev't. Limits	1+2*	1	1(vs)	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
TOTALS										
TCs/CBAs	2+1*	0	8	0	0	1	7	2	1	0
Elsewhere in Dev't. Limits	7+8*	0	1+1(vs)	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Outside Dev't. Limits	1+2*	1	1(vs)	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	10+11*	1	9+2(vs)	0	1	3	9	2	2	0

Notes:

- c/u = change of use
- App. = approved
- Ref. = refused
- TC = town centre/ equivalent to defined central business area (CBA)
- O-O-C = out-of-centre sites within a defined development limit
- Dev't. Limit = development limit
- vs = vehicle sales

Appendix 4 - List of ODPM Core Output Indicators

Business Development

- 1a** Amount of land developed for employment by type
- 1b** Amount of land developed for employment, by type, which is in development and/or regeneration areas defined in the local development framework
- 1c** Percentage of 1a, by type, which is on previously developed land
- 1d** Employment land supply by type
- 1e** Losses of employment land in i) development/regeneration areas and ii) local authority area
- 1f** Amount of employment land lost to residential development

(See section 3.3)

Housing

- 2a** Housing trajectory showing:
 - i) net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, which ever is the longer
 - ii) net additional dwellings for the current year
 - iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption, which ever is the longer
 - iv) the annual net additional dwelling requirement and
 - v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances
- 2b** Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land
- 2c** Percentage of new dwellings completed at:
 - i) less than 30 dwellings per hectare
 - ii) between 30-50 dwellings per hectare
 - iii) above 50 dwellings per hectare
- 2d** Affordable housing completions

(See section 3.2)

Transport

- 3a** Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car parking standards set out in the local development framework
- 3b** Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre

(See section 3.5)

Local Services

- 4a** Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development
- 4b** Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres
- 4c** Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard

(See section 3.9)

5 & 6 refer to Minerals and Waste Planning which is a County Council responsibility

Flood Protection and Water Quality

- 7 Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality

(See section 3.6)

Biodiversity

8. Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including:
- i) Change in priority habitats and species (by type) and
 - ii) Change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub regional significance

(See section 3.1)

Renewable Energy

- 8 Renewable energy capacity installed by type

(See section 3.6)

Appendix 5 - Glossary

Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) – Authorities will need produce AMRs setting out the progress in terms of producing LDDs and in implementing policies.

Area Action Plans (AAPs) – used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. A key feature of area action plans will be the focus on implementation.

Core Strategy (CSs) – Sets out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the spatial development of the LPA area.

Development Plan – The DPDs prepared by District and County Councils which together with the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) form the statutory Development Plan.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Subject to independent testing and have the weight of development plan status. Includes:

- Area Action Plans (AAPs)
- Core Strategy (CSs)
- Proposals Map (with Inset Maps, where necessary)
- Site specific allocations of land

Local Development Documents (LDDs) – Two types:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs)
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Local Development Framework (LDF) – The name given to the portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs), also includes:

- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
- Local Development Scheme (LDS)

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – Sets out details of each of the LDDs to be produced and the timescales and arrangements for production.

PINS – Planning Inspectorate

Proposals Map (with Inset Maps, where necessary) – illustrates all the policies and proposals contained in development plan documents

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – Replaces old Regional Planning Guidance and sets a regional framework that addresses the ‘spatial’ implications of broad issues like healthcare, education, crime, housing, investment, transport, the economy and environment (may include sub-regional level policy).

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – Specification of how it is intended to involve stakeholders and communities in the process of producing LDDs. SCI is subject to independent testing but is not a DPD.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – An assessment of the environmental effects of a draft plan or programme, which is open to public consultation.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Not subject to independent testing and do not have development plan status. However, they should be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – All policies and proposals in DPDs will be subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to ensure they reflect sustainable development principles.