

Greater Norwich Development Partnership

Topic Paper: Settlement Hierarchy

Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk
November 2009

Jobs, homes, prosperity for local people



NORWICH
City Council



Norfolk County Council

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1. Summary

This topic paper is part of a series which explains how key aspects of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland Norwich and South Norfolk have been developed. This paper describes the basis for the designation of the Settlement Hierarchy. To do this, it will examine National and regional policies which set the context and how the joint core strategy seeks to address these. The JCS has been influenced by three particular strands of work, the evidence base, sustainability appraisal, and results of consultation. For clarity these have been presented separately in this paper, but readers should be aware that the three strands of work progressed simultaneously and were often interconnected.

Please note it does not address the strategy for accommodating major growth in the Norwich Policy Area. That is covered in the relevant topic paper.

2. Purpose of this paper

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides for the growth requirements of The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), known as the East of England Plan, (EEP) to 2021, rolled forward to 2026 to comply with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 3 “Housing”.

The RSS and other government planning policy require the promotion of “sustainable” development through (among other things) the implied designation of a hierarchy of settlements able to accommodate differing levels of growth appropriate to their roles, functions, accessibility and environmental capacities. In the JCS, such places range from the regional centre of Norwich down to market towns, key service centres and relatively small villages.

The JCS settlement hierarchy policies have evolved through the following process:

- The consideration of National Planning Policy
- The requirements of the EEP
- The consideration of background evidence
- The consideration of the Sustainability Appraisal
- Engagement and Consultations undertaken by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP)
 - JCS Policy Issues workshops 2007
 - JCS Issues and Options public consultation (Nov.2007)
 - The consideration of Settlement Hierarchy options
 - JCS Regulation 25 Technical Consultation (August 2008)
 - JCS Regulation 25 Public Consultation (March 2009)
 - A review of the Settlement Hierarchy villages

The following sections describe the outcomes of the process summarised above.

National Planning Policy

The following planning policy statements (PPSs) and guidance (PPGs) require sustainable locations for new development with ease of access to peoples' everyday needs. (The most relevant paragraphs are shown in brackets):

- PPS 1 “Delivering Sustainable Development” (Paras. 5,27,28, 32(ii))
- PPS 1 Supplement (Dec.2007) (Para.24 - second and fourth bullet points).
- PPS 3 “Housing” (Paras. 3, 9 (4th bullet point), 10 (4th bullet point), 30, 36, 38 (7th bullet point in particular).
- PPS 7 “Sustainable development in rural areas” (Paras. 1 (ii), 3, 4, 9, 12, 16, 17
- PPS 12 in general
- PPG 13 “Transport” (Paras. 4, 6 (noting the fourth bullet point), 13-15, 20

The above policy statements refer to the creation of safe, sustainable and inclusive mixed communities with good non-car access to everyday needs, jobs and key services, and to the support of social sustainability in villages, based on the relationships between settlements and support for informal social support networks (PPS3, para 38). In promoting the need for good non-car accessibility to services and facilities, national planning policy also recognises that this may be “more difficult” and “less achievable” in rural areas (PPS1, para.27(iv), and PPG13 para.6, fourth bullet point, respectively).

During the course of the plan’s preparation, emerging Government thinking in the form of the response to the report by Matthew Taylor M. P. and the subsequent draft PPS 4 have also been influential.

Regional Policy – The East of England Plan

The East of England Plan, in its emerging forms, provided the contexts for the consideration of issues in mid-2007 and the Issues and Options public consultation on the settlement hierarchy in 2007/08. The relevant RSS policies have subsequently been finalised in the East of England Plan (May 2008), from which Policies SS3 “Key Centres for Development and Change” and SS4 “Development in Towns other than Key Centres and in Rural Areas” form a major basis for the proposed Settlement Hierarchy. (For details see Appendix 1)

These policies provide for:

- Key Centres for Development and Change (KCDCs), including the designation of Norwich as such a centre to be a focus for development.
- Towns other than KCDCs, selected market towns and other towns with the potential to increase their economic and social sustainability.
- Key Service Centres defined as large villages with a good level of services which might include a primary school and a secondary school

(or the latter easily accessible by public transport), primary health care facilities, a range of shops and services capable of meeting day-to-day needs, particularly for convenience shopping, local employment opportunities and frequent public transport to higher order settlements. Such centres are intended to accommodate development sympathetic to local character and of an appropriate scale and nature in relation to local housing and employment needs.

- Other rural settlements where the aim is to maintain local employment, diversify the local economy, provide housing for local needs and provide support for local services.

The designation of a Settlement Hierarchy is intended to provide for the most appropriate and sustainable distribution of new development to meet the growth requirements of the EEP.

The EEP required provisions for new development were:

- Policy H1 – 37500 new homes across the Greater Norwich area in the period 2001-2021
- Policy N1 – 33000 of the above homes requirement to be provided for in the area closest to Norwich, referred to as the Norwich Policy Area to be defined precisely through the LDF preparation process.
- Policy E1 – an indicative target for the creation of 35000 extra jobs over the same period.

The housing allocation requirements at 2008 taking account of the need to look ahead to 2026, and development completed or committed since 2001, are:

- Total new allocation requirement=21570
- Total Norwich policy allocation requirement=20272
- Rural area allocation requirement =1298

In the submitted strategy this requirement is met as follows:

- Total new housing land allocations proposed 2008 to 2026 = 22650-23700
- Total Norwich Policy Area housing allocations proposed = 21000
- Total housing allocations proposed for outside the NPA= 1650 – 2700

3. Background

These relevant evidence studies were:

- Norwich Sub Region: Retail and Town Centres Study (October 2007)
- Water Cycle Study (Stage 1)
- Water cycle study (Stages 2a and 2b)
- Infrastructure Need and Funding Study (December 2007)

- Infrastructure Need and Funding Study (2009)
- Green Infrastructure Study
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Study (SFRA)
- Greater Norwich Area Employment Growth Study
- Evidence Base for a Housing Market Assessment and Housing Stock and Condition Survey (2006)
- Greater Norwich Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept. 2007)
- Evidence from Norfolk County Council Children's Services

The studies show:

Norwich Sub Region: Retail and Town Centres Study (October 2007):

- there is a need to enhance retailing, services and commercial leisure provisions in Norwich city centre and the market towns, with most potential retail growth in Norwich and some potential growth in Aylsham, Diss, Harleston and Wymondham.

Water Cycle Study Stage 1:

- there is a lack of water resources and/or sewage treatment capacity to accommodate both the (then) existing (at 2006) housing commitments and the need for new housing development to 2021 and 2026 in the Rural Policy Areas, and growth beyond 2021 to 2026 only in the Norwich Policy Area (NPA).
- The NPA is served largely by the Whitlingham Sewage Treatment Works (STW) and locally by the Wymondham STW which have spare capacity but could still result in difficulties in serving other locations distant from Whitlingham.
- There is no current capacity to serve housing growth in Aylsham (no spare sewage treatment capacity) and Harleston (requires a new water supply).
- Constraints apply to Acle, Hingham, Reepham and Wroxham limiting new housing development to between broadly 100-500 dwellings in each place due to a combination of waste water/sewage treatment limits, flood risk and environmental constraints.
- A combination of water supply, flood risk, and environmental constraints limit new housing growth up to 1000 new homes in Diss and 2000 new homes in Loddon.
- Water supply overall is generally less of a problem than sewage treatment, but the network of water mains across the area is assumed to be at capacity so all new development other than infill will require new mains.

Water Cycle Study Stage 2a

- shows how Stage 1 constraints for all potential growth areas can be overcome through investment in new infrastructure which is costed and compared for each growth area
- makes recommendations on the most appropriate locations for growth based on a ranking system covering costs of infrastructure, impact on the environment and flood risk considerations

Water Cycle Study Stage 2b

- provides a detailed strategy for infrastructure upgrades required for the chosen growth areas ensuring environmental protection and the efficient use of water
- concludes that all increases in waste water can be treated at existing works
- concludes that the upgrading of some waste water treatment works will be required and consequently recommends the phasing of new housing development to later in the strategy period at Acle, Aylsham, Loddon, Long Stratton, Reepham and to a slightly earlier date at Wroxham
- finds that new strategic sewers around Norwich will require phasing of development and developer contributions in some locations, including Norwich, Hethersett, Cringleford, Easton and the area to the north east of Norwich.
- Concludes that sufficient water is available to meet the demands of growth provided there is the promotion of water efficiency in new development, increased metering and the provision of new strategic water resources.
- Concludes that ground water should be protected from pollution
- Recommends that all new development should be served by separate surface water and waste water drainage and incorporate Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Infrastructure Need and Funding Study (2007):

This study looked only at the Norwich policy area and examined two hypothetical scenarios to make a high level estimate of infrastructure need to accommodate major growth

- there would be a shortfall in achieving the necessary funding under conventional funding regimes to deliver the necessary services and infrastructure in the Norwich Policy Area, based on two growth scenarios.

Greater Norwich Infrastructure Need and Funding Study (2009)

- reviews the infrastructure requirements associated with the delivery of 57500 new homes(including current commitments and an allowance for windfalls) and associated employment development by 2031
- identifies the necessary costs and reviews the local authorities' ability to raise developer contributions to cover those costs
- recommends that the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) should work with service providers to identify innovative ways of further reducing costs of infrastructure with particular attention to education, potable water and open space provisions
- recommends that the GNDP should develop a funding strategy to further the report's findings and review the issues and options relating to the introduction of a development tariff. A postscript notes that this

might need to be amended in light of the proposed Community infrastructure Levy Regulations.

Green Infrastructure Study:

- proposes a series of measures to establish a multifunctional network of green spaces and links across the Greater Norwich area with measures to protect and enhance existing provision.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Study (SFRA):

- there is significant flood probability in central Norwich (evidence subsequently augmented by a level 2 SFRA for central Norwich), constraints in the Costessey/Easton area, and areas likely to flood in River Bure settlements (such as Buxton, Horstead, Coltishall and Wroxham and places downstream), plus Wymondham and other villages, but no significant risk in Hingham and Reepham. Settlements including areas with a high flood probability, would need to be considered at the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document stage.
- further investigations and analysis will be required regarding the potential for future development north east of Norwich to drain northwards to the River Bure catchment (rather than the River Wensum where flow capacity is constrained in Norwich), and regarding the increased impact on the River Bure.
- differing approaches will be required to sustainable drainage systems throughout the area
- other spring induced flooding/ drainage problems not the subject of detailed considerations by this study are known to affect some areas, e.g. Poringland. These and constraints in other settlements will be considered when producing the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document.

Greater Norwich Area Employment Growth Study:

- the local economy has the capacity to grow and provide slightly more
- than the level of job growth set out in the EEP
- new employment is required but can best be accommodated on existing employment areas with some expansion of the strategic employment areas identified by the East of England Plan.
- 250,000m² of new office space should be distributed between Norwich city centre, the Norwich Research Park and Broadland Business Park with a further 50,000 m² which could be at Longwater, Costessey, other city centre sites or at business parks associated with the proposed large housing allocations.
- there is a continued need for premises for B.2/B.8 uses with current sites generally well suited to this role, including those in the market towns
- the market towns' environment and services play a central role in attracting jobs growth to the rural area which is mainly services based with certain named potential job growth sectors.

- there is a need for greater provision for smaller and start up businesses which could be located in a combination of rural sites, market towns and Norwich city centre.

Evidence base for a housing market assessment and housing stock and conditions survey (June 2006)

- provides the primary evidence of housing requirement that was incorporated into the Greater Norwich Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept. 2007) (see below)
- includes detailed assessments of housing stock condition, households in need and housing mix
- identifies local housing market sub areas

Greater Norwich Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept. 2007):

- there is a need for greater supply of affordable rented housing with a predicted shortfall of smaller properties in the short term.
- the need for affordable housing is most concentrated in Norwich but this need is unlikely to be wholly met there.
- shows that outside the Norwich housing market area, the area is subdivided between a number of local housing market areas, some, especially in south Norfolk, relatively independent of Norwich which implies a need for a wider range of settlements in which to provide for local need and choice of housing in South Norfolk.

Evidence from Norfolk County Council Children's Services

- developments to the north east of Norwich are large enough to support a campus development comprising school(s), health centre, family/community centre and library working in an integrated way with partners such as police community safety officers.
- the favoured option presents the opportunity for new learning and training facilities for 14-19 year olds in key areas in Norfolk,
- developments to the south of Norwich offer similar possibilities.
- proposals for an Academy at Earlham, Norwich, due to open in 2009 will boost the quality and range of provision for young people in the Easton/ Costessey areas.
- other than in the north east development, the remainder of the favoured option may represent opportunities to address organisational issues in some areas subject to the resolution of funding issues.
- overall the proposed developments in the Key Service Centres and Service Villages are welcomed in helping to sustain local schools albeit some will require expansion subject to funding issues.
- development proposed in areas lacking a primary school within two miles would raise transport funding issues, while it could still be unreasonable to expect young children to walk to schools just within that distance.
- advice regarding the precise numbers, types and capacities of schools is reflected in the Joint Core Strategy Implementation Framework (see JCS appendix)

- Norwich and smaller sites to be allocated within the Norwich Policy Area (NPA): it is likely that growth requirements can be managed within existing local schools capacity and if necessary, small scale expansion, subject to knowledge of the precise locations of the proposed new homes.
- Norwich city and NPA proposed major growth locations (i.e. the new and expanded communities): See the JCS Implementation Framework.
- **Main Towns:**
 - Aylsham – growth can be accommodated or capacity is available in the high, junior and infants schools;
 - Diss – high and junior schools will require expansion - infants school might require expansion;
 - Harleston – high school can accommodate growth but the primary school may require expansion;
- **Key Service Centres:**
 - Acle – high school over capacity and will require expansion; primary school may need small scale expansion, therefore suggests growth limited to 100 dwellings
 - Blofield – high school pupils can be accommodated at Thorpe High School while Blofield primary school may need small scale expansion, so could double the growth provisions
 - Brundall – Thorpe High School and Brundall primary schools can accommodate the proposed growth, so could double the growth provisions
 - Hingham – Attleborough High School may need small scale extension while Hingham primary School can accommodate the proposed growth
 - Loddon/ Chedgrave – high school, junior school and infants school all over capacity and may need small scale extensions; the high school also has site constraints on expansion so suggest growth slightly reduced to nearer to 150 dwellings;
 - Poringland/ Framingham Earl – High school can accommodate growth, but the primary school may need small scale expansion;
 - Reepham – high school can accommodate growth but the primary school may require expansion;
 - Wroxham – Broadland High school in Hoveton can accommodate growth but Hoveton St John primary school may need small scale expansion.
- **Service Villages**

The proposed growth can be accommodated by many schools, albeit extension will be required to Acle, Diss and Loddon high schools. Little Plumstead primary school has neither spare capacity nor the potential space for expansion to accommodate further growth within its current buildings, but a new site is proposed as part of a committed development. Other primary schools may require small scale extensions which cannot be quantified at this time, as this is likely to depend on the timing of development in relation to ongoing

demographic changes. If all the development proposed were to be implemented by 2011/12, about 22 primary or infants schools would require small scale expansion.

The Sustainability Appraisal

This supported:

- a settlement hierarchy and suggested mixed use developments in the rural areas to support rural accessibility and community interaction.
- concentrating jobs in the most accessible locations including the allocation of small scale employment sites in the Key Service Centres, and provisions for suitable small scale growth in other villages.
- the promotion of sustainable transport modes, but significant improvements were required to public transport services
- other options to improve rural accessibility such as encouraging local services delivery and restricting development in places lacking good access to jobs and services.
- provisions for affordable housing through rural exceptions sites allocations where journey to work public transport and other services were available.
- the basing of local housing need on a group of villages to enable such need to be more easily met in places with services (generic policies)
- rural employment locations within, adjacent to or within 1km of settlements, for being more accessible and enabling greater use of non-car transport access.

When considering further settlement hierarchy options below the level of Norwich, the only Key Centre for Development and Change, the Sustainability Appraisal looked at 3 options:

- Option “A” – Concentration of development on the Main Towns and Key Service Centres: Would have mixed effects but with negative effects on the people living in the smaller settlements in a predominantly rural area.
- Option “B” – The addition of Service Villages: Would have mixed environmental impacts but social and economic benefits for the population within easy reach of them. Would avoid over concentration on a limited number of settlements and produce more widespread benefits for the rural area.
- Option “C” – The inclusion of “other villages” in the hierarchy: Would have minor environmental benefits in saving some trips to higher order centres, with social and economic benefits of providing some support for local services and meeting local housing and employment needs. However car travel would be significant and the provision of bus services should be a consideration.

4. Engagement and consultations undertaken by the GNDP

Public consultations and engagement exercises with specific bodies took place (as shown below) during the preparation of the strategy in parallel with the evidence gathering and sustainability appraisal work outlined above

4.1 JCS Policy Issues Workshops 2007 and JCS “Issues and Options” public consultation 2007/08.

A series of workshops to discuss the planning issues to be addressed by the Local Development Framework and Joint Core Strategy (JCS) were held during mid-2007. Their outcomes informed the publication of the JCS “Issues and Options” public consultation document in November 2007. This covered among other things, a Settlement Hierarchy and the ranges of services that could be used to define secondary rural settlements.

4.2 The Issues and Options Public Consultation November 2007

This consultation addressed among other things, possible locations for the sustainable development of a high level of new housing growth comprising some eleven potential locations for major housing and ancillary mixed use development, and the following hierarchy of settlements for the accommodation of descending levels of growth based on the above EEP and government guidance:

- Sites in and around Norwich (i.e. based on EEP Policy SS3 provision for Norwich as a “Key Centre for Development and Change”)
- Market towns (Named as Aylsham, Diss, Harleston, Loddon and Wymondham) (i.e. based on EEP Policy SS4)
- Key Service Centres (including larger villages) (i.e. based on EEP Policy SS4 “other key service centres” and the EEP criteria).
- Secondary rural settlements (potentially supporting sustainable local needs/activities in smaller villages) (i.e. based on EEP Policy SS4 “other rural settlements”).
- Limited development elsewhere.

The Issues and Options public consultation also sought views on the basis for the selection of “secondary rural settlements” for relatively limited rural development and suggested a list of some twenty two services and facilities that could form a basis for their selection (see Appendix two)

The responses to the issues and options public consultation are fully summarized in the report of public consultation, but key points relevant to this topic paper included:

- support for the suggested settlement hierarchy subject to concerns about suitable scales of growth, and comments regarding the distinctions between the designations of market towns, “other towns” and key service centres (e.g. Loddon)

- suggestions of some additional settlements for inclusion as market towns or key service centres (but with no overriding support for any of these) and considered the need to take into account the influence of towns outside the Joint Core Strategy area
- agreement to the overall approach to development within Norwich and the urban area including the sequence of preferred sites from the city centre to areas on the edge of the urban area
- support for the need to give priority to brown field sites for development, with some concerns about the impact of “urban sprawl” and the loss of character on some areas around Norwich
- support for the definition of Key Service Centres and the need for good access, certain services, jobs, recreation and other facilities
- support for the definition of Secondary Rural Settlements based on the main preferred “essential” services of journey to work public transport, a community hall, a convenience store/ food shop/ farm shop, and a primary school (see Appendix two, table b)
- some support in principle for the potential grouping of secondary rural settlements to form key service centres where closely co-located with adequate infrastructure, but with concerns about retaining local identity and the need to avoid excessive trips
- differing responses in relation to the villages in that although some people wanted a more flexible approach to support development in villages that maintain and support services, other people wanted to restrain development to avoid damaging their established character
- agreement that development outside the hierarchy of settlements should be controlled but with support for exceptions to allow for development to support settlements with a limited range of existing services
- concern about and support for provisions for local needs affordable housing and local jobs
- support for job growth in Norwich, the market towns, locations with good road and public transport access, on brown field/ disused land, on small scale employment land allocations in Key Service Centres and other villages (i.e. the secondary rural settlements), and the need for easy access to small scale rural commercial (e.g. farm diversification) proposals in or within 1km of settlements.
- support for the re-use and multi-use of existing buildings in the countryside
- support for improved accessibility through better public transport links to the towns and larger villages with services and facilities, and restrictions on new development lacking good access to jobs and services

4.3 The Consideration of Settlement Hierarchy Options

The development of Settlement Hierarchy options in early 2008 reflected the proposed “Preferred Options” stage of the JCS, and an initial approach to the production of the strategy based on policies for a Norwich Policy Area and a Rural Area.

As a result of the revised development plan regulations introduced in June, 2008, the “Preferred Options” stage was removed from the plan making process. In response, the GNDP decided to undertake Regulation 25 engagement on the basis of the work already done to date, in the form of draft policies.

The large amount of new housing growth to be provided for by the JCS was a given quantity so there was no consideration of a “do nothing” growth option. The options examined were based on consideration of the places suitable for accommodating growth, and the distribution of the required housing growth between those places based on their functions, sizes, constraints and service capacities. The options are summarised in Appendix 3. At that stage, housing policies in the plan were being prepared on a 2006 base date.

The Sustainability Appraisal of options (see above) suggested that widespread benefits would arise from an appropriate distribution of housing growth and provisions for economic development spread between a combination of Main Towns, Key Service Centres and Other Rural Settlements, with the latter category subdivided as “Service Villages” and “Other Villages” as described below.

The EEP and the relevant background study had also concluded that there would be a potential for the creation of some 35000 new jobs in the Greater Norwich area to 2021. The EEP identifies some strategic employment locations. The Greater Norwich Area Employment Growth and Sites and Premises Study (referred to above) further appraises potential employment locations and concludes that the main towns in particular, have an important role in providing employment opportunities for surrounding areas. More localized employment opportunities in villages are not strategically significant but do have a local value. This is recognised in the draft policies.

The relevant settlement categories were considered as follows;

(a) Key Centre for Development and Change:

As the EEP was clear regarding the definition of Norwich as the only Key Centre for Development and Change, no options were considered for alternative locations.

(b) Main Towns: (equivalent to the EEP category of “selected market towns and others”)

The Issues and Options public consultation raised issues concerning the designations of the market towns, other towns and the key service centres, due to overlaps in the sizes and functions of such centres and some of the larger villages.

As a result of these considerations, Loddon was redesignated as a Key Service Centre to reflect its relative size, form and functions when compared to the remaining proposed Main Towns. Aylsham, Diss, Harleston and

Wymondham remained designated as the Main Towns with important retail, services and employment centres serving significant rural catchments.

(c) Key Service Centres:

The proposed criteria based on those of the EEP received public support and were met by the settlements of Acle, Blofield, Brundall, Hethersett, Hingham, Loddon/ Chedgrave (grouped to reflect the adjacent locations of the two settlements traditionally considered together for planning policy purposes), Long Stratton, Poringland, Reepham and Wroxham (due to its location adjacent to Hoveton, a significant retail, services and tourism centre within North Norfolk district).

(d) Other Rural Settlements (i.e. “Service Villages” and Other Villages”):

The remaining development location options centred on the “other rural settlements” of the East of England Plan, referred to as “secondary rural settlements” by the JCS Issues and Options public consultation report. Due to the varying sizes, forms and functions of villages in the JCS area, it was deemed appropriate to divide this category of settlements into “Service Villages” and “Other Villages”.

“**Service Villages**” would accommodate a small proportion of the overall housing provisions, with measures to support the local economy, but it was important that the appropriate level of services provision was present to ensure that such settlements were as sustainable as possible. Two potential options were considered based on the Issues and Options consultation public responses, which prioritised the services required to support growth in the secondary rural settlements. These options were places based on:

- the top four essential services (i.e. journey to work public transport, a community hall, a convenience store/ food shop or farm shop, and a primary school), and
- a larger number of services, but fewer than those found in a Key Service Centre.

The first option was preferred. The public transport provisions were based on services that would arrive in Norwich, a Main Town, Key Service Centre and/or equivalent centre adjacent to the strategy area . Services had to be available for at least five days per week and arrive between 07:00-09:00 and depart between 16:00-18:00.

This resulted in some 28 villages or combinations/clusters of villages considered to be appropriate for the development of some 10-20 dwellings per village or cluster over the strategy period, plus small scale employment and services development appropriate to the scale of the village. This was deemed to be a minimum level of housing development that would require the allocation of land and contribute towards the maintenance of services such as public transport. (For the named places see the Regulation 25 Technical Consultation (2008)).

Below this level, it was considered that public concerns about the needs for modest scales of accessible development to prevent the stagnation of villages and provide more modest support for services could be aided by the designation of villages with very restricted services for limited development. These places would comprise a clearly defined group of dwellings with a basic level of services, a village hall and primary school, deemed to be a minimum for a sustainable development location. These places would be identified by a defined development limit, and designated as “Other Villages”.

“**Other Villages**” could accommodate very limited development such as infill and local needs affordable housing that would not contribute towards the current JCS overall housing development provisions, but whose completions would be deducted from the required housing provisions of the review of the strategy. Some 41 villages or combinations of villages were identified on this basis (For the named places see the Regulation 25 Technical Consultation document).

Locations below this level in the hierarchy were designated as being within “The Countryside”, in which provisions would be made for housing for a specific local need as an exception, small scale local employment and service provision such as through farm diversification, small scale commercial enterprises where a rural location could be justified, and limited leisure and tourism facilities to maintain and enhance the local economy.

4.4 Joint Core Strategy Regulation 25 Technical Consultation (August 2008)

The options discussed above would have been the “Preferred Options”, but as a result legislative changes were included as part of a “Regulation 25” Technical Consultation.

The responses to this consultation are set out in the report of consultation, but responses particularly relevant to the Settlement Hierarchy included:

- broad agreement with the aim of the policies for Norwich city centre subject to issues regarding sewer capacity, public transport, traffic, residential development, the protection of the historical environment, cultural activity, community safety and crime.
- broad agreement with the selection of the Main Towns subject to support for the need for housing growth in Aylsham and the means of overcoming its sewerage constraints, and comments regarding school capacities in Diss, sewerage, drainage and flooding issues in Wymondham, and the need for green infrastructure.
- issues concerning the scales of housing provision and their status as minimum or maximum provisions
- queries about the Key Service Centres growth provisions for Brundall, Blofield, Hethersett and lack of a proposed allocation at Poringland; the potential status of Ditchingham, Dickleburgh and Hethersett, and the need for services improvements and/or school provisions/capacities in Acle, Hingham, Loddon/Chedgrave, Reepham and Wroxham.

- Service Villages – comments that there were no significant service requirements for this level of growth but improvements would require the individual assessment of places. Other comments supported the proposed villages but requested additional growth.
- challenges to the designation of Other Villages and suggestions that many should be a Service Village (see below) with greater provisions for new development.
- comments regarding the ambiguity of Trowse being classed as a Service Village while being a Norwich fringe parish.
- a range of comments regarding development in the Other Villages and The Countryside requesting a revision of the status of places not proposed for even limited development, based on their provisions of other services and their links to other places.
- support for provisions in The Countryside with requests for additional development and the reduction of restrictions in a predominantly rural area to maintain and enhance the choice of local housing and jobs.
- suggestions that the designations of the “Service Villages” and “Other Villages” lacked the flexibility to take into account local circumstances. The use of certain limited “essential” services and facilities within a parish to justify housing growth was occasionally shown to have underestimated the ease of access to alternative services nearby, while omitting some places which had some of the “essential” services and a good range of other services.

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (and in particular Members of South Norfolk Council) expressed their concerns about the need for greater flexibility in the selection of villages to accommodate a modest scale of development, and the need to promote rural regeneration as advocated by the Taylor report, “Living, Working Countryside – The Taylor Review of the Rural Economy and Affordable Housing”. This discussed the rural issues of unaffordable homes, low wages and declining services, and recognised among other things, the needs for greater flexibility and the taking into account of less easily quantifiable social sustainability factors.

Particular concerns also reflected the significantly different distributions of population and types of places within the JCS “rural” partner local authority areas of Broadland and South Norfolk districts. Broadland district has a greater proportion of its population within its share of Norwich fringe parishes forming part of the overall Norwich built-up area, a relatively small number of main towns and key service centres, and approximately half of the number of villages found in South Norfolk. South Norfolk district however has a greater number of rural market and other towns serving their own catchments, and larger villages with less of a social and economic dependency upon Norwich.

Evidence from the Greater Norwich Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the JCS area had also shown greater local market dependencies in South Norfolk with identifiable housing rural sub-markets not dependent upon Norwich. Consequently the GNDP requested a review of the village categories of the proposed settlement hierarchy, in the light of the concerns raised in the

Regulation 25 Technical Consultation, subject to the outcome of the Regulation 25 Public Consultation.

4.5 Joint Core Strategy Regulation 25 Public Consultation (March 2009)

This consultation presented similar Settlement Hierarchy proposals to the Technical Consultation of August 2008 with the exception of the redesignation of the status of Long Stratton as a potential Main Town rather than a Key Service Centre to reflect the potential impact of growth on its provisions, and the correction of minor ambiguities.

The responses to this consultation are described in the report of consultation. Comments regarding the Settlement Hierarchy included:

- broad support for the hierarchy, but subject to comments regarding specific places and the need for flexibility related to changing services provisions
- issues regarding provisions in the Norwich Policy Area settlements, the Norwich urban area and the Norwich urban fringe, and the need to protect green field sites.
- Main Towns – requests for growth in Aylsham based on the potential for sewerage improvements; objections to and requests for clarification regarding Long Stratton as a Main Town; support for growth in Diss, and Harleston, but mixed views regarding growth in Wymondham including the need for greater growth to afford the necessary service improvements; concerns about maintaining local distinctiveness.
- Key Service Centres – objections to the scale of growth at Hethersett in particular, and at Reepham and Wroxham; broad support for Acle, Hingham, Loddon/Chedgave, Poringland (including a need for more employment land in Poringland) ; requests for Long Stratton to be a Key Service Centre; suggestions for more growth for Blofield.
- Service Villages –various comments regarding general support; additional places and additional growth in individual places; the lack of environmental assessment of village capacities for growth; inconsistent justification; support for some villages; the need to broaden the areas for growth; the lack of clarification of the impacts of the remaining Norwich Policy Area growth to be distributed.
- Other Villages – requests for a greater dispersal of growth around the villages rather than its concentration and less emphasis on non-car travel in the countryside; the regrading of various individual villages; concerns re the impact of growth on services; support for and concerns about the proposals for additional growth in the Norwich Policy Area;

4.6 A review of the Settlement Hierarchy village categories.

The EEP acknowledges the challenges of providing for new development in villages with limited local services that are dependent on the key service centres, and advocates an examination of the functions of groups of settlements and their services bases to find the best solutions for an area. (Appendix 1, paras 3.18-3.20).

In the light of the concerns raised during the Regulation 25 Technical Consultation and subject to the outcome of the Regulation 25 Public Consultation, Council Members had requested updated information on village services and how these might suggest revisions to the settlement hierarchy in the Regulation 25 documents.

Members of Broadland and South Norfolk district councils and representatives of local strategic partnerships discussed these issues focusing on the following key areas:

- How the identification of necessary services and facilities could be applied with a sufficient flexibility to take account of local circumstances
- The potential to cluster villages to share services and provide for development.
- The definition of infill development.
- The potential for sustainable development in the countryside

In seeking greater flexibility, Members favoured a simplified “menu” of services. The 22 general services/facilities in the JCS “Issues and Options” public consultation in 2007/08 were reduced to a core services menu as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Core services “menu”
Primary education
Secondary Education*
Village hall
Food shop
Pub
Pre-school facilities
Garage
Outdoor recreation
Community groups
Church*
Library*
Employment/ business opportunities
Doctor
Dentist*
Journey-to-work public transport
Journey-to-leisure public transport

Notes:

- Primary education includes first and/or middle schools and infants and/or junior schools where changes have taken place.
- Village halls are assumed to provide potential space for indoor recreation in addition to other social activities.
- “Food shop” includes farm shops (and often provides for the post office).
- Pubs are included as a base for potential ranges of community activity.

- Journey-to work public transport requires services to arrive at a main town, main employment area or key service centre by 09:00 and depart after 16:00 (including equivalent destinations outside the plan area).
- Journey-to leisure public transport requires services to arrive at the above centres between 09:00-12:00 and depart between 14:00-17:00.
- *Services not applied to South Norfolk “Service” and “Other” village assessments as considered to be either generally found in higher order settlements or (i.e. church) universally available.

Broadland and South Norfolk Council Members also wanted to take account of social sustainability, such as that represented by successful community activities and social groups that could support a vibrant community. While there was no control over the people ensuring the success of such activities, the provision of facilities such as a village hall/ community centre and possibly a school, pub, church and shop/post office could provide a focus for them. Therefore they were included in the Table 1 list of services, along with the provisions for “Community Groups”.

(a) “Service Villages”

The above discussions led to a view that Service Villages should normally but not necessarily include the four “important” services that were used to select Service Villages in the Regulation 25 consultations (i.e. a village hall, food shop, journey-to-work public transport and a primary school) provided they had a range of other services or good access to them. A summary of the total numbers of services and the provisions of the “important” services found in these villages is shown in Appendix four.

The revision increases the number of Service Villages from 28 (15 in South Norfolk) in the JCS Regulation 25 Consultations, to 58 villages (43 in South Norfolk) in the JCS submission version. In order to promote sustainability, an exercise to ensure adequate public transport access to all of these villages was also undertaken.

The Broadland District Service Villages are based on a wide range of services based on Table 1 that include the above “Important” basic services, while also including some village clusters.

In South Norfolk district, the designation of Service Villages is based on the presence of six or more services from the list in Table 1, while also taking into account local circumstances and village clusters. However the choice of a services threshold has been sufficiently high to ensure that of the potential 43 Service Villages, 22 have all four of the “important” services, 18 have three, while only 3 have two.

Only three places without a permanent food shop lack a nearby alternative, while most of the places without a primary school generally have easy access to one in immediately adjacent settlements or in locations around 1.6km (1 mile away).

(b) “Other Villages”

These are based on a basic level of facilities generally including a primary school and a village hall, but with regard to the presence of a range of services and their availability in nearby places with easy access. A summary of the services and found in these villages is shown in Appendix four.

In Broadland district, five of the six “Other Villages” have both of the services referred to above. The remaining village lacks a school, but is close to a Service Village and connected to it by a continuous footway.

Villages selected in South Norfolk have some 3-5 general services, but with a shift in the emphasis on the important services, due to many villages with primary schools qualifying as “Service Villages”. Consequently while some 22 of the 33 South Norfolk “Other Villages” have two or three of the above “important” services, seven lack a village hall and twenty lack a primary school. However these have other services and access to alternative village halls and schools within around one mile.

The policy in the submitted JCS includes the 39 “Other Villages” (33 in South Norfolk), compared to 40 in the JCS Regulation 25 Technical consultation (36 in South Norfolk).

(c) Village “clusters”

Government guidance provides for the grouping of settlements to share services and functions.

The definitions of villages shown as linked in Policies 15 and 16 include:

- Settlements with boundaries in common, i.e. contiguous settlements divided by a parish boundary
- Settlements physically linked by footway/ regular bus service
- Settlements combining to provide the required number of services equivalent to a “Service Village” or “Other Village”, within easy access of each other

Easy access has been taken to be generally a distance of up to around 1.6km (1 mile) via a direct route that is easily cycled, or else linked by regular public transport operating for at least five days per week. Any combination of places designated as a “Service Village” is expected to accommodate a combined provision of some 10-20 dwellings only, and not that level of provision for each component village.

In view of the fact that the EEP does not differentiate between “other rural settlements”, this approach has been discussed with EERA which does not consider that it would raise issues of general conformity with the East of England Plan.

(d) Infill Development

The provision of the “Other Villages” category to accommodate very limited development such as infill and local needs affordable housing led to

discussions regarding the appropriate scale of infill development. In view of the current informal County Council policy to provide for up to eight homes off a private drive, and the intention to provide for land allocations for some 10-20 dwellings in the Service Villages, it was considered that provisions for developments of under 10 dwellings in the Other Villages would be broadly compatible and could be accommodated within a defined settlement development boundary, subject to the availability of potential development land and its relationship to the form and character of the settlement. Such sites could provide for infill development including small groups of dwellings. However a precise definition of a number of dwellings has been avoided to retain some flexibility in the definition of settlement development boundaries in relation to the above factors. The potential for such infill development could also be provided for in all categories of settlement within the Settlement Hierarchy, subject to the above factors.

5. The derivation of the settlement housing land allocations

The derivation of individual settlement housing provisions (as summarised in Appendix five) was based on

- an interpretation of the provisions of the East of England Plan
- the consideration of the potential of places to accommodate growth based on their services and facilities provisions and available capacities with regard to schools, water supply and sewerage provisions in particular.
- the iterations in successive Regulation 25 consultations of the new homes totals requiring allocations to 2026, based on the updating of house completion totals.

a) The East of England Plan (EEP)

The Plan (Policy SS3) requires the concentration of new development in the Key Centres for Development and Change (KCDC), to maximise the availability of existing infrastructure and services to provide for sustainable development. The supporting text to EEP Policy SS4 (see Appendix 1) seeks the location of the majority of new development to be in and adjacent to the key centres for development and change. The EEP also recognises the role of the market towns and larger villages in providing employment and services to their rural hinterlands and meeting housing needs.

The Joint Core Strategy has thus concentrated its provisions for most new development in Norwich, the KCDC, and its surrounding rural catchment, i.e. the defined Norwich Policy Area. This area has also been based on the historic Norfolk Structure Plan Norwich policy Area with the minor addition of one parish (Salhouse).

An interpretation of EEP Policy SS4 provides for a hierarchy of settlements to provide for growth that is not to be accommodated in Norwich and the proposed locations for major new or expanded communities in the NPA. The

strategy therefore provides for a hierarchy of locations for progressively reduced provisions for new growth to match the generally decreasing sizes, forms and functions of the places in each category. The overall key is that the levels of growth proposed should support their appropriate economic, housing and community development interests.

b) The impact of services provisions

The quantities of growth to be provided for were initially considered to be dependent upon significant issues such as size and the services capacities of settlements. While size of place could have implied an ability to accommodate growth, the need to provide for sustainable development more importantly emphasised the need to examine accessibility and the provision of services, and in particular, the potential capacities of the most essential services of water supply, sewerage infrastructure and education facilities. Water supply and sewerage information was obtained from the Water Cycle Studies, and education provisions information from Norfolk County Council Children's Services.

Other potential constraints such as the availability of employment land and areas of flood risk were not considered to be overriding constraints as they would be addressed by the subsequent Sites Specific Development Plan Document to maintain the appropriate balance between employment opportunities and housing development, and to avoid areas of flood risk.

Other service provisions such as the availability of shops, health and other community facilities were taken into account in the initial assessments of places suitable for development, but did not influence their total housing growth provisions as it was considered that they could be expanded or replaced in response to development pressures, with the appropriate means of development-related and other funding.

c) Total new housing provisions (Appendix 5)

Norwich, the proposed new or expanded communities and the NPA: The total provisions for new housing growth in the NPA account for some 89%-92% of the total new housing land allocations required to 2026. This share reflects the EEP requirement to focus most growth on Norwich (as the only KCDC) and its surrounding area, and includes the NPA key service centres and service villages. This share of growth reflects the housing provision requirements of the EEP as well as the land availability and service availability considerations among other things that have informed the potential total housing provisions as detailed below.

Norwich: Following the Issues and Options public consultations of 2007, successive iterations of housing requirements revised to reflect updated housing completion totals from 2006 revealed higher than expected completion rates on mainly "brown field" sites in Norwich. This increased Norwich's potential housing capacity for the period 2006-2026, but resulted in a reduction of the residual capacity to accommodate additional dwellings from the 4000 shown in the Regulation 25 Technical Consultation of August 2008,

to some 3000 new dwellings from 2008-2026, as shown in the Regulation 25 Public Consultation of March 2009 and Submission version of the strategy. This reflected the slightly changing position of Norwich as part of the favoured growth option subject to the latter public consultation.

The new or expanded communities: The background to the provisions for the new and expanded communities in the NPA is explained in the JCS topic paper “Locations for Major Housing Growth”. Their chosen levels of growth have reflected the need to provide for accessible new services to create sustainable communities where major new growth areas cannot depend upon the expansion of existing services in existing settlements.

The remaining levels of the Settlement Hierarchy: Outside Norwich and the chosen major growth areas, broadly equal proportions of the total strategy area housing provisions have been allocated to each level of the settlement hierarchy, i.e. the main towns, the key service centres and the service villages. This approach takes into account the geographical spread of the main settlements and their roles in serving rural catchments, while retaining a proportion of growth to be distributed between the smaller rural settlements to retain support for rural services and to promote rural regeneration.

The broadly similar shares of growth exclude the development provisions in places within the settlement hierarchy that double up as locations for major growth. It is assumed that over time, the roles of such places will change, and their positions in the settlement hierarchy will require reassessment in successive reviews of the strategy to reflect their rates of development and changing roles.

The Main Towns: These provide for some 3%-4% of the total housing growth, excluding Wymondham, which is also a location for major growth. The remaining main towns have populations of some 4000-7000 and serve rural catchments in the north and south of the strategy area. The proposed housing provisions for some 200-300 dwellings would expand each town by slightly over 10%, which was considered to be a scale of development that could be accommodated with some flexibility in environmental and access terms.

The major service providers have supported the growth levels proposed, albeit subject to the need for the phasing of development in some cases. The appropriate education facilities can be provided but there are issues to resolve regarding the potential need to phase development in Aylsham to later in the strategy period to resolve waste water treatment works constraints.

The Key Service Centres (KSC): These provide for some 3%-5% of the total housing growth. The proposed housing growth provisions are lower in the NPA KSCs to reflect their greater proximity to Norwich and the major growth locations. The exception is Poringland/ Framingham Earl which is the largest KSC which possesses significant potential development land with good access to services. The KSCs in the Rural Area have generally higher housing provisions to reflect their more isolated locations and to enhance their roles in serving local rural catchments. Again the housing provisions would

expand each settlement by around 10%, which was considered to be a scale of development that could be accommodated with some flexibility in environmental and access terms.

While the development of the strategy has taken into account servicing constraints, the latest advice on education provisions has suggested that new housing development at Acle and Loddon/ Chedgrave should be low down the ranges proposed. Evidence from the Water Cycle Study has suggested the need for development phasing limitations at Acle, Wroxham, Loddon/Chedgrave and Reepham pending improvements to waste water treatment works. Other evidence has shown the need for drainage issues to be resolved in Poringland/ Framingham Earl.

The Service Villages: These provide for around 2.5%-5% of the total housing provisions. Potential provisions of some 10-20 new dwellings were considered to be a minimum level of housing development appropriate to the rural area service villages in particular that would require the allocation of land and contribute towards the maintenance of services such as public transport. Service Villages in the NPA however could form locations for additional growth to provide for the allowance for smaller sites within the NPA.

6. Implications for the proposed JCS total housing land allocations.

As updated to 2008, new housing land allocations are proposed for some 22650 – 23700 dwellings between 2008 and 2026 throughout the JCS area. 58 potential Service Villages developed at 10-20 dwellings each would result in a maximum of 1160 dwellings, or some 5% of that range. .

However most new housing growth will be focussed on the Norwich Policy Area (NPA), i.e. allocations for 21000 dwellings. The preferred growth options in the Regulation 25 Public Consultation (March 2009) provided for 2000 dwellings on small sites in the Broadland district share of the NPA, and 1800 dwellings on small sites in the South Norfolk district share of the NPA in unspecified locations but having regard to the settlement hierarchy. Depending on the availability of sites in the Norwich fringe parishes, and key service centres, larger allocations may be required in service villages in the Norwich Policy Area, unless significant additional allocations can be provided for in the proposed major growth areas.

The opposite situation applies outside the NPA where only 1298 new dwellings are required. The allocations proposed for the “Main Towns” and “Key Service Centres” provide for between 1300 and 1800 new dwellings, leaving a minimal new housing requirement to be met in the proposed “Service Villages”. Therefore the allocation of new development in the “Service Villages” has resulted in a degree of over allocation which is more marked in the South Norfolk RPA villages. This has resulted in total housing land allocations for 1650-2700 new dwellings which are considered to be

justified by the need to support rural regeneration and maintain housing choice in the South Norfolk part of the rural area. This area includes a greater number of larger villages, and a much reduced dependency on the Norwich influenced housing market when compared to the equivalent rural area in Broadland.

7. Conclusion

The relevant location policies have evolved through the assessment of government planning policy guidance, the background evidence studies, the Sustainability Appraisals, responses to consultations on the relevant issues and options, the consideration of options and responses to the "Regulation 25" Technical and Public Consultations, and the consequential review of villages and updating of services information.

While the functions of the larger settlements are largely self evident, a significant issue has been the ability of the proposed policies to provide for the appropriate levels of growth throughout this predominantly rural area to ensure the maintenance and enhancement of the area's overall good quality of life, and to provide for an appropriate choice of accessible locations for new and affordable housing and employment opportunities. The review of village designations has resulted in a significant redistribution of villages towards the Service Villages category, particularly in the more rural South Norfolk district, while the changes made to the Regulation 25 Public Consultation "Other Villages" reflect the availability of updated services information. However the housing provisions in the Service Villages will continue to form a very small proportion of the overall housing provisions, providing for up to one third of the total rural area housing provisions. Most of the rural area housing provisions will therefore continue to be based in the Main Towns and Key Service Centres.

The consultation responses have also raised the issue of the consistency of the Settlement Hierarchy designations of well established settlements which coincide with the choices of areas for major housing and mixed use growth. The view taken is that while such places may well change their sizes and functions as a result of the proposed growth, they should retain their current designations until their functions and provisions of services change significantly as a result of the proposed development. Therefore for this reason, in the submitted Joint Core Strategy, Wymondham is categorized as a Main Town, Long Stratton and Hethersett as Key Service Centres, Costessey and Cringleford as urban fringe parishes, and Easton, and Rackheath as the equivalents to Service Villages. However the roles and functions of Easton and Rackheath in particular will change significantly when their proposed growth is implemented.

The proposed Settlement Hierarchy provides for new housing growth and commensurate provisions for social, economic and cultural development on a scale appropriate to places and their functions, accessibility and surrounding

areas of influence. This is in accordance with the provisions of government planning policy and the East of England Plan. The latter directs most growth to Norwich and the Norwich Policy Area, and to the most sustainable locations elsewhere which have the potential to provide for urban and rural regeneration, affordable housing and new jobs, services and facilities with the greatest ease of access. This is also consistent with the government's response to the Taylor report and emerging thinking as set out in draft Planning Policy Statement 4

The review of the "Service Villages" and "Other Villages" has responded to the consultation responses in providing for greater flexibility while maintaining a high degree of sustainability in providing for additional development in the rural parts of the plan area. The additional provisions for the "Service Villages" have an impact on the housing provisions of the JCS, but to a small degree compared to the total housing provisions of the strategy. The designations of the "Other Villages" are intended to contribute to the maintenance of the quality of life in the countryside and to the objectives articulated in the Taylor Review of the Rural Economy and Affordable Housing (2008).

The consideration of the issue has shown that a single solution is not appropriate in addressing the issues related to the differing distributions and functions of villages in Broadland and South Norfolk. The South Norfolk share contains a greater number of villages which are more self sufficient and not as socially and economically reliant on Norwich, as confirmed also by the conclusions of strategic housing market assessment.

A final issue requiring resolution concerns the potential distribution of growth in the Norwich Policy Area remaining as a residue from the named major growth locations. Again the solutions may differ slightly between Broadland and South Norfolk districts due to the differing types of settlements comprising their respective shares of the Norwich Policy Area. The sequential choices in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy remain the allocation of additional sites in Norwich fringe parishes, attachments to major growth areas, and /or the allocation of additional sites in Key Service Centres and Service Villages, if necessary. The choice of locations is intended to be resolved during the production of the Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document.

Appendix 1: Policy SS3: Key Centres for Development and Change

To achieve sustainable development and the aims of Policies SS1 and SS2 new development should be concentrated at the following locations:

Basildon
Bedford / Kempston / Northern Marston Vale
Bury St Edmunds
Cambridge
Chelmsford
Colchester
Great Yarmouth
Harlow
Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City
Hemel Hempstead
Ipswich
King's Lynn
Lowestoft
Luton / Dunstable / Houghton Regis / Leighton Linlade
Norwich
Peterborough
Southend-on-Sea
Stevenage
Thetford
Thurrock urban area
Watford

Concentrating development at these locations will make the most of existing infrastructure and the potential for improvements or extensions to it. The principal aims for each of the centres are set out in Section 13, Sub-Areas and Key Centres for Development and Change.

The key centres reflect the polycentric nature of the East of England – a region of small and medium sized towns and cities surrounded by more rural areas which look to those towns for employment and higher level services. The main exceptions are Essex Thames Gateway and the London Arc. They are characterised by towns and urban areas which have been strongly influenced by London and which are located close to each other with complex movements between them for shopping, employment, education etc. The key centres are the main drivers of economic growth with potential for continuing growth after 2021. The spatial strategy builds on and reinforces the region's polycentric nature by focusing development on the key centres, including within Essex Thames Gateway and the London Arc, where the strategy looks to strengthen the role of a selected number of the towns.

In responding to household growth and affordability pressures, the further review of the RSS, Policy IMP3 will need to put in place a higher level of housing growth than the current RSS. The same sustainability based

arguments that led to the spatial strategy in the current RSS review focussing development on the key centres imply that the network of key centres will need to play a major role in accommodating the growth required through the further review. The scale of longer term potential will be addressed through the roll forward of this RSS, Policy IMP3. Work on strategic development and transport options for the key centres, particularly in regard to their Core Strategies, should inform the RSS review by considering the potential for further growth towards the latter part of the current plan period and after 2021. Where key centres adjoin or cross local authority boundaries, local planning authorities should work jointly to develop co-ordinated strategies and delivery mechanisms.

Policy SS4: Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas

Local Development Documents should define the approach to development in towns other than those listed in Policy SS3 and in rural areas. Such towns include selected market towns and others with the potential to increase their economic and social sustainability through measures to:

- support urban and rural renaissance;
- secure appropriate amounts of new housing, including affordable housing,
- local employment and other facilities; and
- improve the town's accessibility, especially by public transport.

Local Development Documents should also consider the potential of other key service centres to accommodate development which is sympathetic to local character and of an appropriate scale and nature in relation to local housing and employment needs.

For other rural settlements they should seek to support the viability of agriculture and other economic activities, diversification of the economy, the provision of housing for local needs and the sustainability of local services.

The RSS seeks to locate the majority of new development in and adjacent to the key centres for development and change, and to protect the quality and character of the region's rural areas. However, within that broad approach, Policy SS4 recognises the role of market towns and larger villages in providing employment and services to their rural hinterlands and meeting housing needs.

Key service centres are large villages with a good level of services, which might include:

- a primary school within the settlement and a secondary school within the settlement or easily accessible by public transport;
- primary health care facilities;
- a range of retail and service provision capable of meeting day-to-day needs, particularly for convenience shopping;

- frequent public transport to higher order settlements.

Many villages have very limited local services and are dependent on key service centres, market towns, and main urban areas for everyday needs. The main challenges are securing small-scale local employment opportunities and supporting the needs of agriculture, improving public transport access to higher order settlements, providing housing for the full range of local needs and supporting the sustainability of local services.

The growth of villages has been unable to halt the closure of village services and commuting has increased dramatically. Careful examination of how a settlement or groups of settlements function is required, as well as analysis of the service base to determine the best solutions for each area.

There is an acute shortage of affordable housing in many rural areas. Responding to this challenge is a priority if significant sectors of the community are not to be excluded by high house prices. Effective use should be made of rural exceptions policies to deliver affordable housing. The provision of new homes in market and other towns can increase support for services such as schools, health facilities and shops. In the context of maintaining and improving the self-sufficiency of such towns, local authorities should seek to achieve an improved housing-employment balance to minimise commuting. Other rural settlements, including small villages, may have local housing needs that can best be met at those settlements rather than concentrating all housing at towns and key service centres, but care should be taken to ensure new development is directed to locations where it will have the greatest benefits for rural sustainability.

Appendix 2

Joint Core Strategy: “Issues and Options” public consultation responses to Question 7 regarding services desired in a secondary rural settlement.

Table (a): Total responses

List of services	Essential	Desirable	Not necessary
a. Village Hall / Community meeting place	49	4	4
b. Church / Religious place of worship	23	17	2
c. Public House	19	28	8
d. Pre-School / child care	19	16	5
e. Primary School	39	18	
f. Secondary School	4	18	19
g. Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Journey to work service	49	18	2
h. Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Day time service	34	4	
i. Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Evening service	18	16	4
j. Cycle/pedestrian access	30	16	
k. Library	5	9	20
l. Post Office or bank	29	19	7
m. Convenience store, food shop or farm shop,	44	10	1
n. Newsagent	8	21	4
o. Employment and job opportunities	18	20	1
p. Medical Services (doctor, dentist, residential care home)	22	18	6
q. Indoor recreation facilities	6	23	15
r. Outdoor recreation facilities	17	18	7
s. Mobile / visiting services	11	18	5
t. Garage	13	17	19
u. Social groups e.g. sports, scouts, toddlers etc.	21	8	5
v. Size of population	10	16	5

Table (b): Most essential services in priority order

List of services	Essential	Desirable	Not necessary
Village Hall / Community meeting place	49		
Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Journey to work service	49		
Convenience store, food shop or farm shop,	44		
Primary School	39		
Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Day time service	34		
Cycle/pedestrian access	30		
Post Office or bank	29		
Church / Religious place of worship	23		
Medical Services (doctor, dentist, residential care home)	22		
Social groups e.g. sports, scouts, toddlers etc.	21		
Public House	19		
Pre-School / child care	19		
Public Transport (bus, rail etc.) Evening service	18		
Employment and job opportunities	18		
Outdoor recreation facilities	17		
Garage	13		
Mobile / visiting services	11		
Size of population	10		
Newsagent	8		
Indoor recreation facilities	6		
Indoor recreation facilities	6		
Library	5		

Secondary School	4		
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Appendix 3

Summary of Options for provisions for the required development growth in the Rural Policy Area.

These were based on:

(i) the definitions of the places suitable for accommodating growth

(ii) the distribution of the required housing growth between the identified places based on their functions, sizes and capacities.

(i) The definitions of growth locations

Below the level of Norwich as the one defined Key Centre for Development and Change, the options were:

(a) Most growth in the places suggested by the East of England Plan, i.e. the towns, and key service centres due to their overlapping functions and sizes.

(b) As for option (a), plus a small share of the growth in the “secondary rural settlements” to be known as “Service Centre Villages”. These places would be based on two further sub-options based on the most essential and a wider range of essential services and facilities that the public considers to be necessary to support modest levels of growth that would not harm the form and character of these places.

(c) As for the above options (a) + (b), plus the identification of “Other Villages” for very limited development such as infill and local needs affordable housing.

(ii) The distribution of growth

The options were:

(a) All growth to be spread evenly between only the defined Towns and Key Service Centres in Option (i)a) above.

(b) All growth to be spread between the Towns and Key Service Centres, but with the majority of the housing growth to be distributed in favour of the towns from Option (i)a) above, to reflect those with a more important function and greater potential for growth. The Key Service Centres would accommodate the remainder.

(c) As for option (i)b) above, with an additional small proportion of new development being accommodated in the proposed “Service Centre Villages”, leaving most to be accommodated in the Towns and Key Service Centres.

(d) As for (c) above, but with a more even spread of growth between the Towns, Key Service Centres and Service Centre Villages.

(e) An even spread of growth between all settlements. (NB: This option is discounted as it would conflict with the rationale for a settlement hierarchy as proposed by the East of England Plan and supported by the initial sustainability appraisal of the consultation Issues and Options).

Appendix four

Village services availability by settlement; Broadland and South Norfolk districts – “Other Villages” and “Service Villages”.

TABLE 1: “Other Villages”

South Norfolk Settlement Hierarchy: “Other Villages” with generally three to five services (See Notes to the table re exceptions and other details)							
Places	Total services	Policy Area	“Important services”				Sum “Imp Services
			Village Hall	Primary Education	Food Shop	PT-JTW	
Aldeby	3	RPA	0	0	0	1	1
Bawburgh	6	NPA	1	1	0	0	2
Bressingham	7	RPA	1	1	1	0	3
Brockdish	3	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Burgh St Peter/Wheatacre	6	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Burston	6	RPA	0	1	0	1	2
Caistor St. Edmund	3	NPA	0	0	0	1	1
Claxton	4	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Colton	4	NPA	1	0	0	0	1
Denton	8	RPA	1	1	0	0	2
Flordon	4	NPA	0	0	0	1	1
Forncett St Peter		RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Forncett St Mary (shares Forncett St Peter services)							
Great Melton	3	NPA	1	0	0	0	1
Haddiscoe	4	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Hardwick (Shelton and Hardwick)	4	RPA	1	1	0	0	2
Hedenham	4	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Keswick	3	NPA	1	0	0	1	2
Ketteringham	5	NPA	1	0	0	0	1
Langley Street (Langley with Hardley)	5	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Marlingford (Marlingford and Colton)	3	NPA	1	0	0	0	1
Morley	7	RPA	1	1	0	0	2
Needham	5	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Shelfanger	5	RPA	1	0	0	0	1

Shotesham	7	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Starston	3	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Swainsthorpe	4	NPA	0	0	0	1	1
Tibenham	4	RPA	1	0	0	0	1
Tivetshall St Margaret	5	RPA	1	1	0	0	2
Tivetshall St Mary	6	RPA	0	1	0	1	2
Toft Monks	3	RPA	0	1	0	1	2
Topcroft	3	RPA	1	0	0	1	2
Winfarthing	5	RPA	1	1	0	0	2
BROADLAND "Other Villages"							
Cantley	7	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Frettenham	7	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Hainford	8	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Hevingham	7	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Marsham	6	RPA	1	1	0	1	3
Strumpshaw	7	RPA	1	1	0	1	3

Notes:

- The following villages with three to five services have been clustered with an adjoining "Service Village": Aslacton and Great Moulton; Bracon Ash with Mulbarton; Ellingham with Kirby Cane; Forncett End with Tacolneston. (i.e. mainly places divided by a parish boundary).
- Bawburgh, Bressingham, Burgh St Peter/Wheatacre, Burston, Denton, Forncett St Peter/ Forncett St Mary, Morley, Shotesham, Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary have additional services but lack adequate public transport and/or access to other important services required to justify their designation as "Service Villages".

Table 2: "Service Villages"

South Norfolk Settlement Hierarchy: "Service Villages" based on 6+ services including clusters								
	Places	Total services	"Important services"				Sum "Imp Services"	PT - JTL
			Village Hall	Primary Education	Food Shop	PT - JTW		
1.	Alburgh	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
2.	Alpington/ Yelverton <i>(Village divided by parish boundary)</i> (Cluster)	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
3.	Ashwellthorpe	6	1	0	0	1	2	0
4.	Aslacton (Cluster with Great Moulton)	5	1	1	0	1	3	1
5.	Great Moulton (Cluster with Aslacton)	5	1	0	1	1	3	1
6.	Barford	9	1	1	0	1	3	1
7.	Barnham Broom	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
8.	Bergh Apton	8	1	1	1	1	4	1
9.	Bramerton (NPA)	7	1	0	0	1	2	1
10.	Brooke	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
11.	Broome	6	1	0	0	1	2	1
12.	Bunwell	9	1	1	1	1	4	0
13.	Carleton Rode	9	1	1	1	1	4	0
14.	Dickleburgh	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
15.	Ditchingham	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
16.	Earsham	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
17.	Geldeston	7	1	0	1	1	3	1
18.	Gillingham	9	1	1	0	1	3	1
19.	Hales/Heckingham <i>(Village divided by parish boundary)</i> (Cluster)	8	1	0	1	1	3	1
20.	Hempnall	11	1	1	1	1	4	1
21.	Kirby Cane/ Ellingham <i>(Village divided by parish boundary)</i> (Cluster)	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
22.	Little Melton	10	1	1	1	1	4	1

	(NPA)							
23	Mulbarton (NPA)	11	1	1	1	1	4	1
24	Bracon Ash (Cluster with Mulbarton) (NPA)	5	1	0	0	1	2	1
25	Newton Flotman (NPA)	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
26	Norton Subcourse	7	1	0	1	1	3	1
27	Pulham Market	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
28	Pulham St. Mary	8	1	0	1	1	3	1
29	Rockland St. Mary	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
30	Roydon	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
31	Saxlingham Nethergate	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
32	Scole	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
33	Seething	8	1	1	1	1	4	1
34	Stoke Holy Cross (NPA)	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
35	Surlingham (NPA)	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
36	Spooner Row (NPA)	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
37	Swardeston (NPA)	8	1	0	1	1	3	1
38	Tacolneston (Cluster including adjoining Forncett End)	8	1	1	0	1	3	0
39	Tasburgh (NPA)	9	1	1	1	1	4	1
40	Thurlton	10	1	1	1	1	4	1
41	Thurton/ Ashby St Mary <i>(Village divided by parish boundary)</i> (Cluster)	8	1	1	0	1	3	1
42	Wicklewood	9	1	1	0	1	3	1
43	Woodton/Bedingh am <i>(Village divided by parish boundary)</i> (Cluster)	8	1	1	1	1	4	1
44	Wortwell	7	1	0	1	1	3	1
45	Wreningham	7	1	1	0	1	3	0
	TOTAL = 43 places/ clusters							

NB: Easton would have "Service Village" status albeit forming a JCS major growth location

BROADLAND "Service Villages"							
1.	Blofield Heath (NPA)	6+	1	1	1	1	4
2.	Buxton with Lammas	10	1	1	1	1	4
3.	Cawston	11	1	1	1	1	4
4.	Coltishall and Horstead	13	1	1	1	1	4
5	Foulsham	9	1	1	1	1	4
6	Freethorpe	10	1	1	1	1	4
7	Great and Little Plumstead (NPA)	9	1	1	1	1	4
8	Horsford (NPA)	12	1	1	1	1	4
9	Horsham St. Faith and Newton St. Faith (NPA)	11	1	1	1	1	4
1 0	Lingwood	8	1	1	1	1	4
1 1	Reedham	9	1	1	1	1	4
1 2	Salhouse (NPA)	9	1	1	1	1	4
1 3	South Walsham	8	1	1	1	1	4
1 4	Spixworth (NPA)	12	1	1	1	1	4
1 5	Lenwade (Great Witchingham)	6	0	1	1	0	2

Notes:

- (NPA) = Norwich Policy Area
- "Important services" are those most likely to support the sustainability of a settlement.
- PT-JTW = public transport, journey-to-work (on at least 5 days per week)
- PT-JTL = public transport, journey-to-leisure (daytime services on at least 5 days per week).(Shown for additional information only).
- Excludes villages coinciding with Norwich fringe parishes, proposed major growth locations and key service centres (i.e.Chedgrave, Costessey (Old), Cringleford, Easton, Framingham Earl, Hethersett, Hingham, Loddon, Long Stratton, Poringland and Trowse with Newton)
- Includes the clustering of Yelverton including part of Alington parish, Aslacton and Great Moulton, Bracon Ash and Mulbarton, Kirby Cane including part of Ellingham parish, Forncett End and Tacolneston, Hales including part of Heckingham parish and Woodton including part of Bedingham parish.
- NB: Clusters combine to share the relevant levels of development appropriate to that level of the Settlement Hierarchy.

- 21 potential “Service Villages” lack at least one important basic service but have a range of other provisions and generally reasonable access to alternative basic services in other settlements.
- Bawburgh, Bressingham, Burgh St Peter/Wheatacre, Burston, Denton, Forncett St Peter/ Forncett St Mary (whole Forncett `parish only), Morley, Shotesham, Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary also meet the above general service thresholds but lack adequate public transport and/or access to other important services required to justify their designation as “Service Villages”. These places have been designated as “Other Villages”.

Appendix five

The Joint Core Strategy: Settlement Hierarchy distribution of housing land allocations to 2026 (nos. of dwellings) including proposed new communities.

Settlements and new communities.	Norwich Policy Area (NPA)	Rural Area
1. Key centre for development and change		
Norwich	3000	
2. Locations for new or expanded communities in the Norwich Policy Area		
Broadland smaller sites in the NPA	2000	
South Norfolk: smaller sites in the NPA and possible additions to growth locations	1800	
Old Catton/ Sprowston/ Rackheath and Thorpe St Andrew growth triangle	7000 (to increase after 2026 to 10000)	
3. Easton/ Costessey	1000	
Cringleford	1200	
Hethersett	1000	
Long Stratton	1800	
Wymondham	2200	
4. NPA total	21000	
Main Towns		
Aylsham		300-300
Diss		300-300
Harleston		200-300
(Wymondham)*	(See above)*	
Sub total (exc. NPA)		800-900
Key Service Centres		
Acle		100-200
Blofield	(50-50)***	
Brundall	(50-50)***	

(Hethersett)*	(See above)*	
Hingham		100-100
Loddon/ Chedgrave		100-200
(Long Stratton)*	(See above)*	
Poringland/ Framingham Earl	(100-200)***	
Reepham		100-200
Wroxham		100-200
Sub total (exc. NPA major growth locations)	200-300***	500-900
Service Villages		
NPA: 15 @ 10-20**	(150-300)***	
Rural Area: 43 @ 10-20		430-860
Sub total	(150-300)***	430-860
TOTAL	21000	1730-2660

Notes: * Settlements coinciding with proposed new communities in the NPA.

** Notional totals subject to review to accommodate part of the unallocated

NPA smaller sites.

*** NPA Key Service Centre and Service Villages provisions form part of the Broadland and South Norfolk smaller sites in the NPA allowances and are thus not double counted in the total of 21000 new dwellings.

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Topic Paper: The Settlement Hierarchy

Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk
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