

Submission re: Matter 7

From Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

**Examination of the Joint Core Strategy for
Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk
produced by the
Greater Norwich Development Partnership**

Summary

(i) Redenhall with Harleston Town Council objects to the Core Strategy being approved in its present form because it does not provide sound core strategic guidance for the future planning of the town, for reasons set out in this submission and associated correspondence.

(ii) It is with regret, that the Town Council believes it has been poorly served by the consultation process, which it submits has failed to take account of reasonable representations over strategic issues. These issues are car parking provision and avoidance of flash-flooding, both of which are inextricably connected with future development.

(iii) This deficiency could be remedied simply by variation to the wording in the chart and commentary, which forms part of policy 13 (p76). It is suggested that the section on housing allocations be altered to read '200-300 dwellings (subject to confirming the provision of adequate town centre car parking and addressing town centre flash-flooding)'. An associated commentary will also be required. There is a precedent for such a caveat in the way that the allocation for Aylsham in the same chart is expressed.

(iv) In the Town Council's opinion, no additional consultation would be required.

Introduction

1. My name is Margot Harbour. I am the Town Clerk of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council (the Town Council), the correspondence address of which is The Council Offices, The Leisure Centre, Recreation Ground, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 9DD.
2. I make this submission on behalf of and with the authority of the Town Council.
3. The submission is endorsed by: Cllr Jeremy Savage, Chairman of South Norfolk District Council and a Member for Redenhall with Harleston, and by Cllr Martin Wilby, the representative of the area on Norfolk County Council.

Background

4. In June 2009, the Town Council resolved to make submissions about strategic planning for the town in support of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP). It wished to learn the lessons of past Local Plans, which failed to protect the potential for necessary increase in car parking on which the town critically depends, while allowing significant development. The Town Council also sought to deal with the ever-present problem of not infrequent flash-flooding caused by run off into the town, which acts as a sump in adverse weather. At Appendix 1, a 'perspective' describes the significance of the car parks; a map shows their locations and those of the sites of lost opportunities through poor strategic planning in the past; and photographs depict the flash flooding in the town centre.

5. The GNDP consultation response was delegated to a sub-group to prepare a submission explaining the Council's concerns and requesting a meeting with representatives of the GNDP. A copy of the letter submitted to the GNDP by the Town Council on 12 June 2009 is shown at Appendix 2.
6. No response or acknowledgement to the letter was received. Instead in November 2009 the Town Council received a copy of the published proposed Core Strategy. Prior to this it was assumed that it was still work in progress.
7. On enquiring why the Town Council had not been contacted as requested, it was brought to my attention that all responses had been posted on the GNDP web-site. This was the first the Town Council had been made aware of it.
8. The Town Council, as a representative of a major settlement, pointed out that it had expected to discuss the matter and was nonplussed to find the Strategy completed without any contact being made and that its request for a meeting had been ignored. The Town Council again asked that a meeting be held to explore concerns. A copy of the letter requesting the meeting is shown at Appendix 3. In it, a request was also made that data on which the strategic capacity for traffic and parking decisions had been taken be provided in order to inform the discussion.
9. In February 2010, an officer from South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) representing the GNDP attended a meeting and explained the position. It was apparent that no background data on strategic car parking provision existed. With regard to flash-flooding it was acknowledged that a problem did exist and that South Norfolk District Council was in discussions with Anglian Water.

10. The Town Council suggested that the GNDP could perfect the deficiency in the Core Strategy by appropriate words being inserted to cover flash-flooding and critically, car parking capacity, only to be told that the Strategy could not now be changed. The Town Council based its confidence over the need for the points to be included from the detailed research and analysis of existing car park provision and use and direct knowledge of the geography and dynamics of the town.

11. Appendix 4 shows an analysis of the places of origin of users of the town, derived from a petition about car parks signed by several thousand people, which reveals the extent to which accessibility for parking is vital for the well-being of the community. The summary at the end of the charts shows that more than 50 % come from outside the town itself. This analysis is a small extract from the extensive research carried out by the town in relation to car parks, trading etc two years ago. Appendix 4 also shows the pattern and level of occupancy at the Bullock Fair car park and the daily trading patterns from records at the small supermarket, further demonstrating the limits of capacity and also the dependence on private provision of free parking by the store. Without this, the guaranteed provision of parking by the district/town council would fall short of what is needed, notably at key times of the week. These data were collected before the impact of the recent extensive new building had been felt.

12. It seems extraordinary, in these times of increased encouragement of communities to play a part in shaping their area, that an important settlement effectively has been disenfranchised over pivotal issues. When something could be done to take its views into account no response was received; when a meeting was eventually convened, the Town Council was informed that nothing could be changed. This sequence of events is at best disappointing.

13. In late February 2010 the Town Council received a letter from SNDC setting out a response. This was both far too late and in the Town Council's view took remedying the key issues in question little further. For completeness a copy of the letter is included at Appendix 5.

Request for additional wording

14. The Town Council therefore respectfully requests that a caveat be included at policy 13 (p.76) to the effect that no further development should be planned until the issues of car parking capacity, on which the town critically depends, and flash flooding, which will be exacerbated by run-off into the town centre, have been properly assessed and any needs addressed **before** any further development level is confirmed.
15. A suitable inclusion in the chart under Harleston might read 200-300 dwellings **(subject to confirming the provision of adequate town centre car parking and addressing town centre flash-flooding)**. There is a precedent for such a caveat in the way that the allocation for Aylsham is expressed in the same chart. If such an inclusion is to be made, a short narrative would need to be included, similar to that provided for Aylsham at 6.31 - 6.33. (p76)
16. By doing this, a truly strategic, sustainable well-planned approach can be achieved. The Town Council submits that to not do so is poor planning, as was shown by missed opportunities to anticipate this need in the past, when the ideal site for new parking allocation was needlessly lost. If the car parks become choked through lack of capacity, it will be detrimental to the existing users and tourists from outside the town.
17. Suggestions by the GNDP that encouragement of more walking and cycling (good as it might be) would be an answer in the future is fanciful as a secure solution. Although the Town Council

acknowledges that reduction in car use is desirable, the reality is that without the level of car-borne users, the town would be unsustainable. And while a shift to alternative forms of powering private vehicles is emerging in the pursuit of 'greener' transport, there will still be the need for parking provision. It is therefore vital that the car parks are adequate in relation to the population and can remain free. The character of the community and vibrancy of the town depend on it. The balance is extremely important.

No need for further consultation

18. If the Town Council's request finds favour with you as the Inspector, it is suggested that any alteration made to the Core Strategy would not need further consultation, as there is already demonstrable expression of public concern and support. Evidence for this is shown by the community's response in relation to car parks and housing development contained in the recent Have Your Say Town Plan submissions. A copy of the full questionnaire and a short summary report for relevant parts of the questionnaire from the Have Your Say Steering Group are shown at Appendix 6.

Conclusion

19. Genuine strategic planning over the issues raised will enjoy wide community support. Taking the needs of the town into account 'up-front' rather than 'chancing it' in the hope that they can be sorted out as we go along will mean that residents, through the GNDP process, will truly be helping to shape the future of a sustainable community. This will be in line with Government aspirations for empowering local people. More importantly the community will know and believe that it is listened to. At present this has not happened. I ask that you might give full consideration to the Town Council's concerns.

Thank you for reading this submission.

Margot Harbour. Town Clerk 6 October 2010

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Appendix 1

a) Car parks - a perspective - Map

b) Photographs of flash-flooding

In **Part a)** The narrative describes the importance of the main Bullock Fair car park as a forum for the town; the map shows the locations of Bullock Fair and Broad Street Car Parks and the sites of the two areas which could have provided the necessary parking capacity but which previous Local Plans failed to identify and protect.

In **Part b)** the photographs show the effects of flash-flooding in the town centre

Car use constrained by history and geography

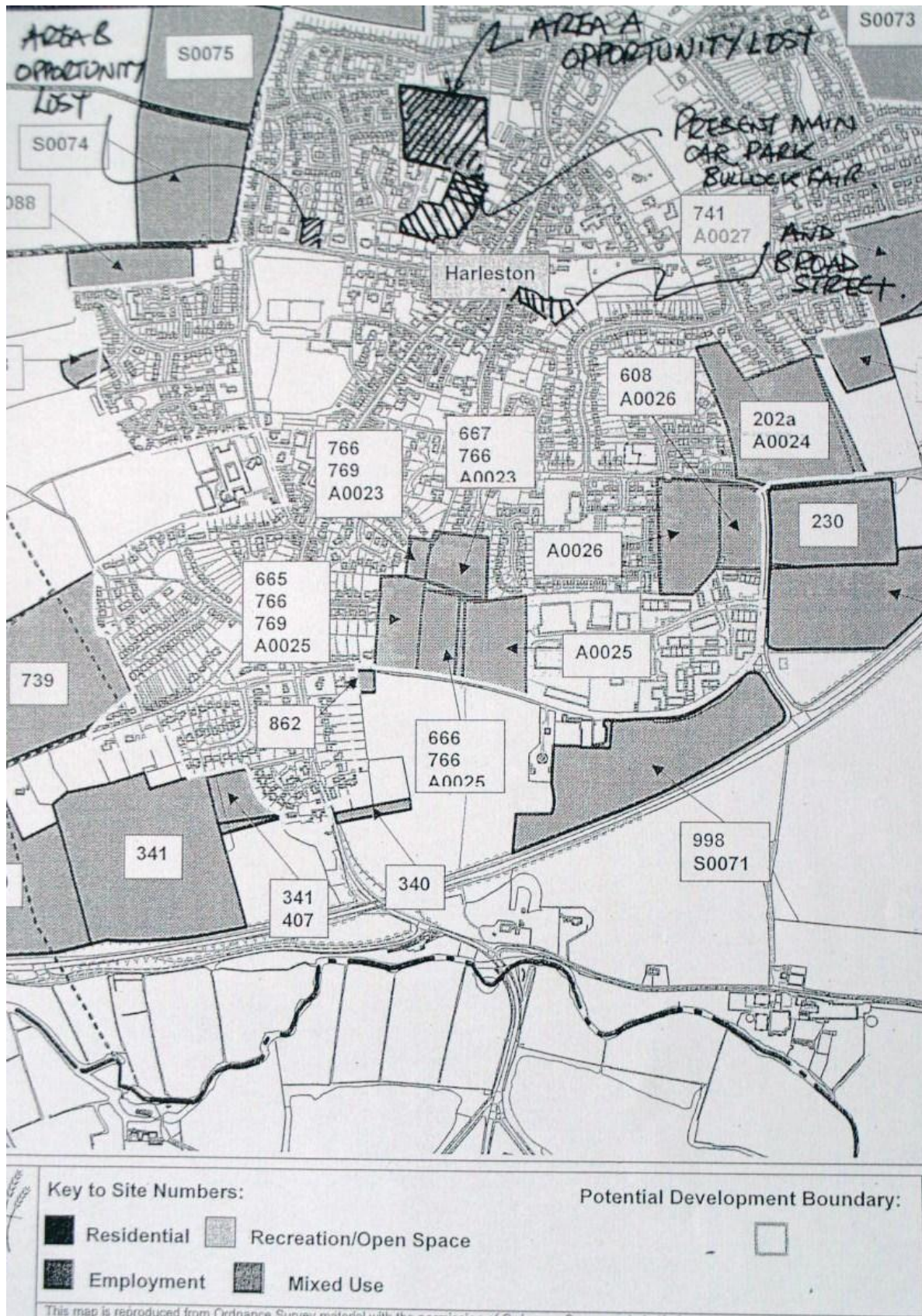
By virtue of its history and geography, vehicular use of Harleston is tightly constrained it has two car parks: Bullock Fair and Broad Street, along with stretches of restricted on-street parking. There are no side streets adjacent to the centre suitable for parking, though some short stretches of residential roads come close to the back of the Bullock Fair car park. Some establishments, for example The Magpie and Swan, have limited car parking, which to varying degrees are used sporadically by people other than patrons.

Bullock Fair car park - a vital hub and forum.

The Bullock Fair car park, effectively the 'Hub' of Harleston, is in split ownership, part being controlled by the South Norfolk Council/Harleston Town Council and the remainder by Budgens an independent supermarket business. The combined car parks form a complex place serving a variety of purposes (doctors' surgery, charity shop, recycling, public toilets, public meeting place, drop-off point, 'bus station' for social mini-bus services) and are a cross-roads for access and other activities.

Both car parks are free and unrestricted in their use and are just of a sufficient scale in relation to the social and economic activity of the town to satisfy most parking needs. Residents and workers who have no other long-stay parking options also use them. Although privately owned, the Budgens car park is universally used as a part of the town's public car park provision in an indivisible way from the Council run area. This happens with the consent of the owners of the business.

The town serves, and is supported by, a wide spectrum of the South Norfolk and North Suffolk community and it has received a number of significant community awards and accolades over recent years. Notably the winner of the EDP Pride in Norfolk Award for 2010 for a town of fewer than 5000 inhabitants. Its thriving shopping centre is populated primarily by independent traders. The medium-sized (Budgens) supermarket retail food outlet complements the other traders and vice-versa, helping to provide a critical mass of retail provision at the heart of the town. It is this solid nucleus of affinity from which Harleston derives much of its energy and character.



Area A was open, privately-owned nurseries and has now been built over.
Area B was owned by the Local Authority but sold for more housing.

Flooding

Harleston town centre lies in a depression through which run-off from all surrounding land and residential areas gathers. Increased run-off from further developments will only exacerbate this situation. The problem is made worse by vehicles driving through the flood and causing bow-waves which run against and under shop doorways.

The Thoroughfare, Harleston June 27th 2009



Appendix 2

Letter to GNDP June 2009

[Covering letter]

Joint Core Strategy for
Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find enclosed Redenhall-with-Harleston Town Council's response to the Public Consultation on the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk.

This is the first opportunity the Town Council has had to assess the proposals for future housing numbers. We have significant concerns over the consequential physical and social impacts, especially with regard to traffic and parking, and the capacity for the town centre to cope. Harleston's central core creates the focus for its character, commercial and social success.

We have not seen any definitive analysis of these matters in your information to date and are therefore requesting that you meet with us as soon as possible to discuss these issues.

It makes sense to address issues at an early stage. Good planning and foresight assisted by local experience ensures that any future difficulties can be avoided.

We will be happy to meet as soon as possible in order not to delay your process.

May we ask that you bring with you the background data/ analysis for Harleston with regard to car parking, traffic movement and surface water drainage?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Margot Harbour
Town Clerk

**Public Consultation:
Response from
Redenhall-with-Harleston
Town Council and request for meeting**

Background

- 1 The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP), comprising Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council and Norfolk County Council is developing a Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, (excluding the Broads Authority Area). This seeks to work towards sustainable communities.
- 2 The GNDP has now published its emerging Joint Core Strategy which has been circulated for Public Consultation. A major part of the Strategy concerns identifying the areas where new housing provision will meet the Government's future housing targets.
- 3 Notably, the Strategy identifies that up to 300 new homes should be built in Harleston, in addition to those already identified to be built through earlier Local Plans and yet to be completed. The consequential significant increase in population both from present allocations of housing and the new proposals has significant implications. If these are not addressed at this stage they could undermine the character of the town, its cohesive community and its physical capacity.
- 4 This document comprises Redenhall with Harleston Town Council's (RwHTC) comments on key points of principle concerned with the potential increase in housing.

Context

- 5 Harleston is renowned for its inclusive atmosphere and special character. These are defined to a great extent by its historic structure, strong sense of affinity from those who live, use and visit the town and small size, relative to a diverse and largely independent retail provision. This gives rise to the opportunity to achieve a sustainable community, rare in rural England and in line with the aims stated in the consultation document. The town's essential character requires respect and understanding if it is not to be compromised and the goal of a fully sustainable and integrated community not achieved.
- 6 Consideration of proposed increase in housing and its location needs to be seen in relation to the impacts, as yet unquantified, of the houses recently completed and those planned to be built and the effects of this and future increases in population on the existing capacities and physical limits of the town.
- 7 With the town depending on a large proportion of users coming from the satellite villages and surrounding areas and many town residents still likely to use their cars to access the centre and schools, car parking capacity and traffic flow at key locations are determining factors in the town's ability to function. Without an increase in parking capacity or a demonstrable lessening of the demand on the car parks and school environs from those who could choose alternative transport, any further increase in population will push the demand beyond manageable levels.
- 8 RwHTC suggests that it would be unwise to embark on significant further increases before having assessed and assimilated the impact of the existing proposed housing. A number of matters need to be addressed to ensure that new and potential residents can

be integrated and absorbed and the 'ground prepared' before agreeing to extend the housing levels

Of especial concern are:

- a. car parking capacity
- b. town centre traffic flow issues
- c. school run parking issues
- d. drainage and flash flood issues
- e. health and dental care capacity:
- f. limited number and range of local jobs
- g. impact on schools
- h. impact on health and dental facilities
- i. limited public transport
- j. risk of sinking into an unsustainable dormitory commuter settlement.

9 It is appreciated that some of these matters can readily be addressed if further resources are made available as population grows, e.g. health care and school capacity. However provision of adequate car parking and improved surface water drainage need much more careful pre-planning and thought. Until these are addressed in detail RwHTC, requests that no decision be made at this stage to increase the housing allotment to the town.

10 The RwHTC appreciates the difficult decisions which the GNDP will need to make and that these are driven by Government targets beyond their control. It supports the work that the GNDP is doing and which has been carried out in an endeavour to address these major issues. The stated long-term aim of sustainable communities cannot be achieved unless the impacts of specific developments and their effects can be identified and

ameliorated. The GDNP risks unwelcome outcomes from additional housing, which could severely undermine the common strategic objectives of a sustainable community.

- 11 In seeking to ensure that the community can thrive, RwhTC believes that there is a need, in the short term at least, to recognise and work within established limits. If the scale of housing exceeds that which can be coped with, the car parking problems and traffic flow issues which will arise could well prevent the town remaining a hub for local surrounding communities and be harmful to its future prosperity and social well-being.
- 12 The RHTC request therefore that any decision to increase the housing levels in Harleston, be postponed, and that representatives of the GDNP meet with representatives of the town council to discuss the complexities and potential knock-on effects deriving from the proposals, so that the GDNP might be more fully informed from local knowledge on the detailed implications.
- 13 If the GDNP does not feel able to do this, the R&HTC requests that any allocation of housing be made in principle only, conditional upon:
 - a. ensuring that further expansion will contribute to the town's environmental, economic and social integrity;
 - b. solving existing, serious drainage and flash flood problems which will be exacerbated by more housing;
 - c. undertaking a major campaign to encourage much higher levels of walk to town/school to relieve car pressure and to absorb the significant increase in housing already in the pipe-line (there has already been a sustained walk to school campaign which has probably reached its potential);
 - d. undertaking a study to assess parking capacity and patterns and identifying where

extra capacity can be found or provided which is not detrimental to the character or amenities of the town.

- 14 The Town Council urges the GNDP to do the above 'up front' so that the lessons of history can be learned.
- 15 The Town Council would, welcome the opportunity to work with the GNDP to ensure that future needs can be met through positive action, making the most of opportunities as a model for sustainable development.

Appendix 3

Letter to GNDP November 2009



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Margot Harbour

Tel/Fax: 01379 854519
E Mail: harlestontc@btconnect.com

Memorial Leisure Centre
Wilderness Lane
Harleston
Norfolk IP20 9DD

Sandra Eastaugh
Greater Norwich Development Partnership Manager
Po Box 3466
Norwich
NR7 7NX

25th November 2009

Dear Ms Eastaugh

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council (RwHTC) was surprised to receive a published copy of the Proposed Submission Document for the Joint Core Strategy as we are still awaiting a meeting with your staff over substantive matters.

We note your statement that comments can only be considered regarding the legal compliance and the soundness of the plan. RwHTC considers the Plan to be unsound; you have failed to properly engage with our not unreasonable request to meet and to share with you our knowledge of important considerations for the sustainable development of this town (see attachment).

It is also most regrettable that no-one has extended the basic courtesy of a reply. Instead we stumbled across a 'response' to our submission, posted on your web site - not at all easy to access - which appears to trivialise our concerns with generalised and non-specific responses. We therefore request once again, that you meet with us. A second failure to engage with RwHTC could only raise grave doubts about the validity of the consultation process.

Strategic concerns

Our main concerns centre on two key strategic points for the sustainability and structure of the town, namely drainage and car parking provision/traffic management.

Flooding

The centre of Harleston floods quite frequently (see photographs) due in large measure to the bowl-effect of run-off funnelling down into and through the main streets. Houses and shops have to place flood guards on their doors and in places fast flowing water can be up to half a metre deep. Anglian Water is aware that there is a significant problem here. It clearly makes sense to address this at the outset.

Car parking provision

Town centre car parking space and the potential to expand it is very limited. It has to be recognised that increasing the level of use by the residents from new developments will have unavoidable implications for the capacity to accommodate residents from surrounding communities with whom the town is interdependent. Adequately dealing with this is strategically vital for the sustainability of Harleston - to leave evolving provision piecemeal as development progresses would be irresponsible. Advance planning to accommodate increase is the only way forward. Previous lack of strategic forethought resulted in the loss of the two most obvious places for additional car parking - the Pitcher's Place (Wharton's) residential development and the site adjacent to the police station. To avoid further seriously compromising the options for the development of the town, this aspect of the Core Strategy needs to be acknowledged now.

Inconsistency

We note that the consultation Reg 25 stated that **up to** 300 new homes should be built in Harleston whilst on p.76 of the present document the number given is a **minimum** of 200-300 dwellings. This is not a minor grammatical inconsistency, but a significant and conscious shift in the approach to potential absolute numbers. A change from a numerical ceiling to a minimum platform materially alters the proposal and thus unacceptably varies the terms on which the original consultation was presented and commented upon. Such inconsistencies diminish confidence in the process as a whole.

Way ahead

Naturally, we wish to support the on-going process and are happy to contribute as fully as possible to assist in the creation of a robust framework to accommodate these needs. We appreciate the complexity of the tasks which the Partners face. In order not to hold up the progress of the Strategy, may we suggest that in the

interim our concerns can be readily and conveniently accommodated simply by including a proviso under the Main Towns Policy to the effect that the Housing allocation for Harleston will be "subject to overcoming present and potential flooding problems and identifying appropriate car parking provision".

There is clearly a precedent for sensible provisos, e.g. in the case of Aylsham, where you recognise that their housing allocation will be subject to "overcoming existing sewage disposal constraints." Including a proviso for Harleston will not hamper maintaining the momentum of your work, but will achieve the necessary safeguards to help secure the long-term well-being of the town and wider communities.

Yours sincerely

Sue Kuzmic
Chairman

Appendix 4

- a) Analysis of Car park users by place of origin
 - b) Examples of length of stay and levels of occupancy
 - c) Trading patterns in town centre supermarket
-

The attached information, gathered in 2007 -2008, shows the importance of accessible and free parking to the town and surrounding communities. The analysis (a) demonstrates the origins of each of the petitioners over the future of the car parks.

The graphs (b) show the occupancy level at critical times of the day. Annotations show the importance of the component which is provided free by Budgens and which is not in the control of the Council.

Trading patterns in relation to car park occupancy is shown at (c).

VILLAGES/AREAS

← EACH OPTIMISE IS A SEPARATE BUNDLE OF RESPONSES.

Sheet 1

Zone	1	2	3	4	5	pet B	Gentys	Sub totals	Percentage
*	Bedisham					2		2	0.0%
*	Coney Beg						1	1	0.0%
*	Knedishall			1				1	0.0%
*	Not given/post code	9		51	21	58	22	161	4.0%
*	Not harleston	3	8	10	5	46	36	114	2.8%
*	Pakenham		1					1	0.0%
*	Pringleford							0	0.0%
*	Shelton		2	1	1	1	4	9	0.2%
*	Southolt	1						1	0.0%
*	Stoke H X	4						4	0.1%
*	Walingworth				1			1	0.0%
*	Winforth				1			1	0.0%
								296	7.3%
A	Alburgh	3	8	10	10	29	22	90	2.2%
A	Aldeburgh			1		2		3	0.1%
A	Brockdish	3	12	8	9	33	21	99	2.4%
A	Denton	2	2	6	7	7	13	49	1.2%
A	Flixton		7	1	1	4	4	17	0.4%
A	Fressingfield	10	13	5	19	16	47	163	4.0%
A	Hardwick	1	1	2		6	4	14	0.3%
A	Homersfield	3	9	3	2	4	6	37	0.9%
A	Hoxne	1	4	5	3	3	9	37	0.9%
A	Mendham	1	14	12	8	7	23	92	2.3%
A	Metfield	1	14	13	8	12	13	98	2.4%
A	Needham	2	14	9	7	3	19	91	2.2%
A	North Green		1			1	1	3	0.1%
A	Pulham		1	2	2	5	14	27	0.7%
A	Pulham mkt	2	10	6	6	25	27	86	2.1%
A	Pulham St mary		12	13	9	7	29	105	2.6%
A	Redenhall		2	4	5	3	5	38	0.9%
A	Rushall		1	6	4	2	12	34	0.8%
A	Shotford					1	1	2	0.0%
								Sub Total unallocated	
									7.3%
									2.2%
									0.1%
									2.4%
									1.2%
									0.4%
									4.0%
									0.3%
									0.9%
									0.9%
									2.3%
									2.4%
									2.2%
									0.1%
									0.7%
									2.1%
									2.6%
									0.9%
									0.8%
									0.0%

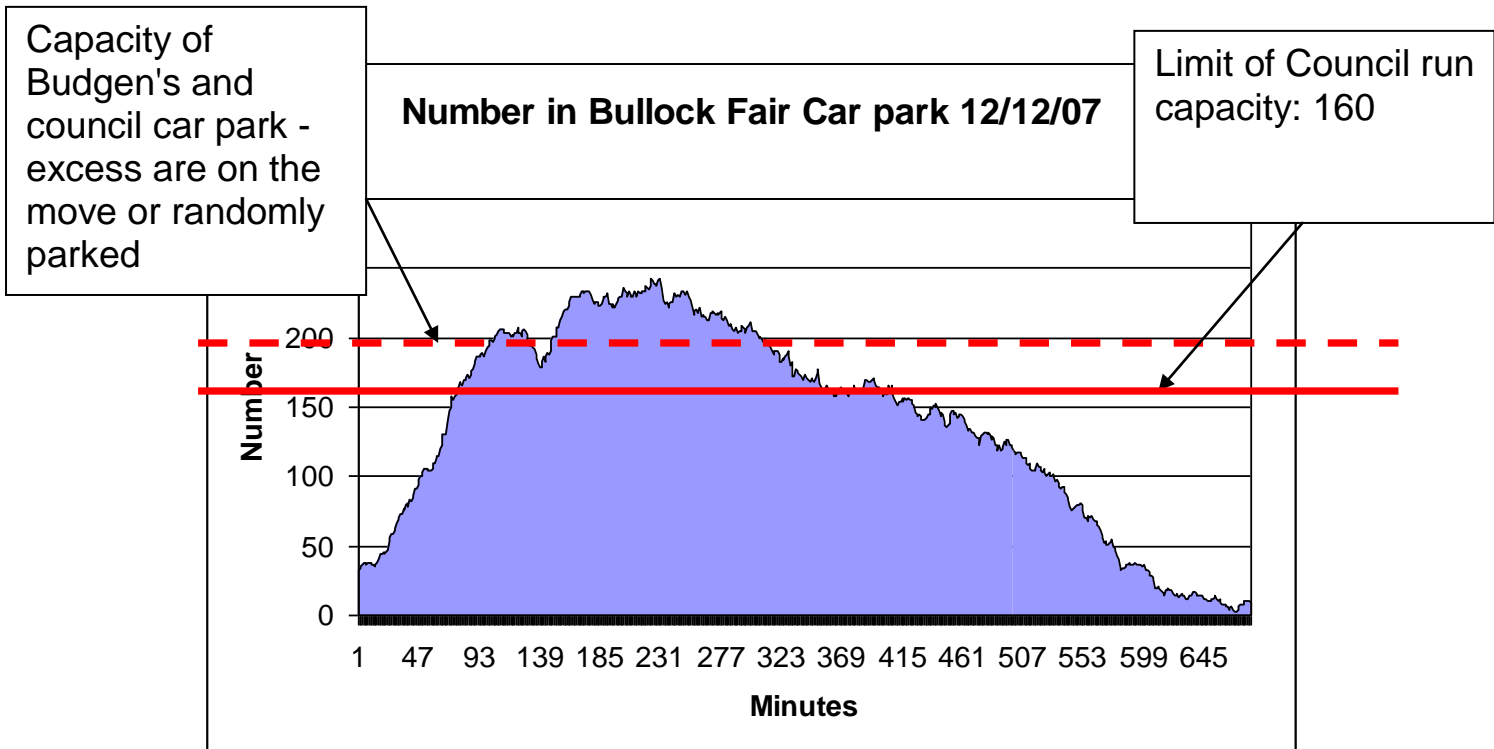
THIS ANALYSIS PRESENTS THE PLACES OF RESIDENCE OF PETITIONERS IN SUPPORT OF CAR PARKING. THE ENTRIES UNDER 'GENTYS' ARE VERY ACCURATE AS ALL ARE 1 CUSTOMER OVER THE PERIOD SIGNED.
 A SUMMARY IS SHOWN AT PAGE 7 OF THIS SEQUENCE

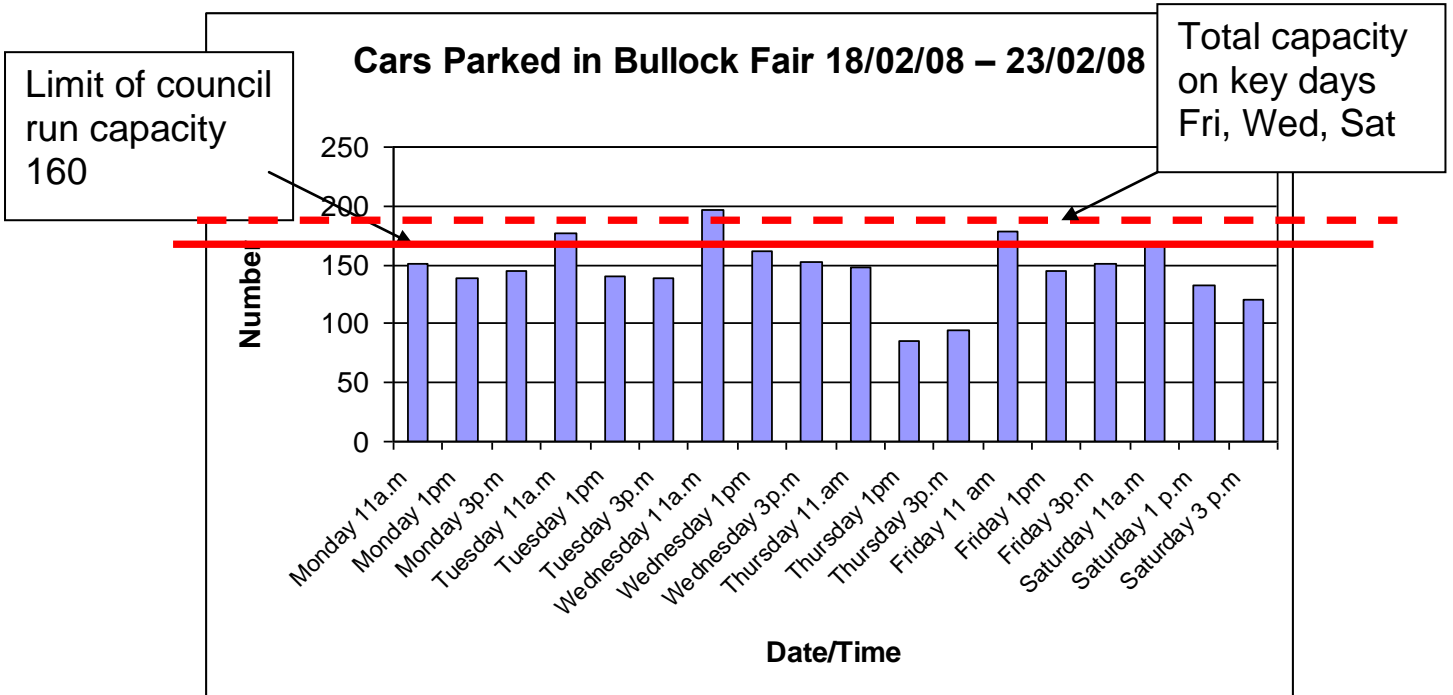
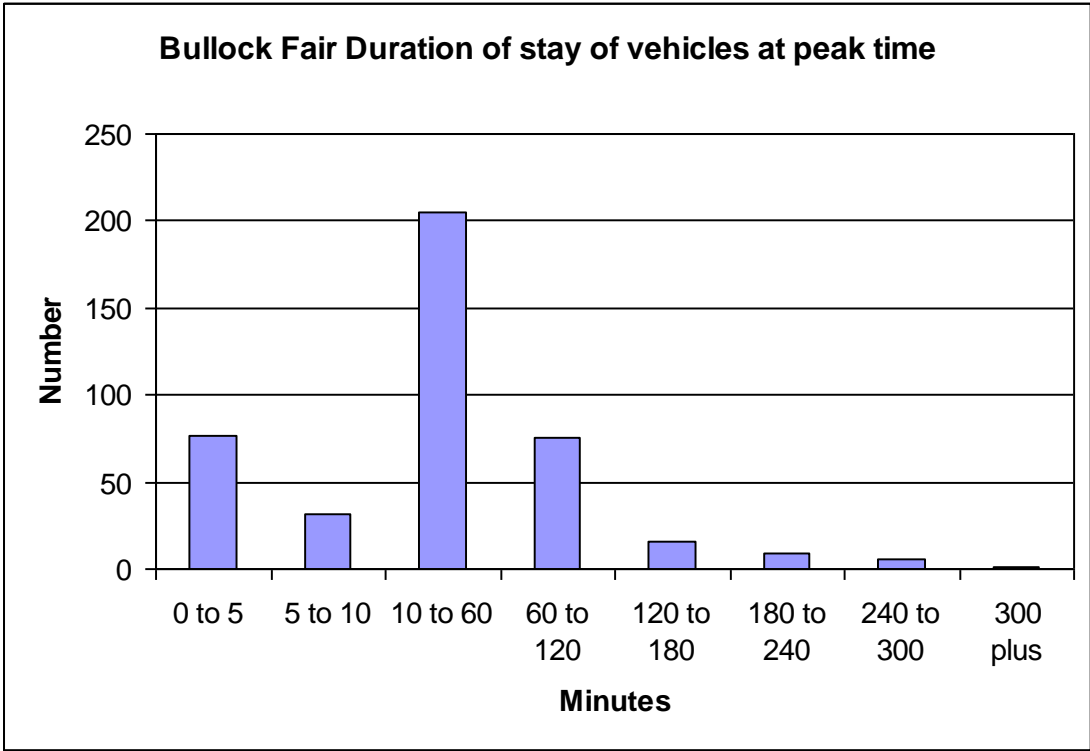
(a)

Sheet1

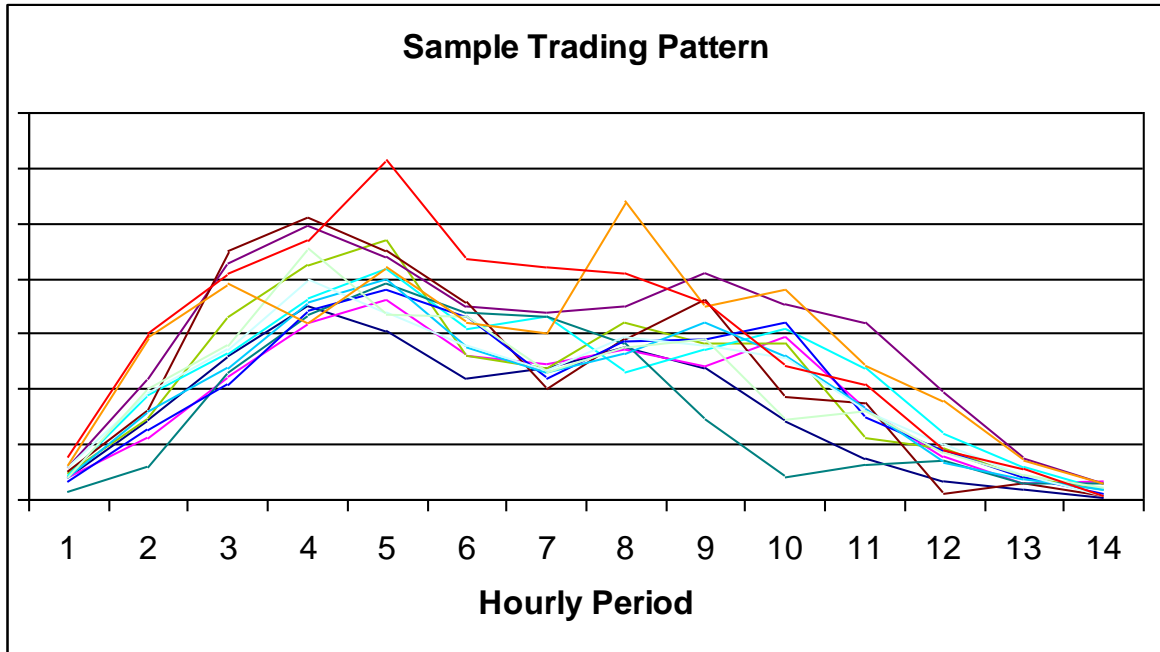
A	St Cross	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	3	11	0.3%	St Cross
A	St James	1	3		3			8		9		24	0.6%	St James
A	St Margaret S.E.	1		1								2	0.0%	St Margaret S.E.
A	St Peters			1	1	1		1				3	0.1%	St Peters
A	Starston	3	10	16	5	8		34		16		92	2.3%	Starston
A	Sth Elmham							2		1		3	0.1%	Sth Elmham
A	Stradbroke		5	2	5	2	2	21		25		60	1.5%	Stradbroke
A	Syleham	1	3	2	1	8		9		16		40	1.0%	Syleham
A	Thorpe abbots		5	1		2		2		7		17	0.4%	Thorpe abbots
A	Weybread	5	11	10	10	10		25		23		94	2.3%	Weybread
A	Wingfield		2	1	3	3		9		20		38	0.9%	Wingfield
A	Withersdale St		5	2		1		2		3		13	0.3%	Withersdale St
A	Woodfarm									1		1	0.0%	Woodfarm
A	Wortwell	3	18	14	18	14		49		28		144	3.5%	Wortwell
												1625	40.0%	Sub Total 5m radius
B	All Saints									2		2	0.0%	All Saints
B	Aslacton				2			3		1		6	0.1%	Aslacton
B	Bedingham				1			1		2		4	0.1%	Bedingham
B	Broome		1	2				8		2		13	0.3%	Broome
B	Bungay	3	15	2	9	2		21		24		76	1.9%	Bungay
B	Burston		1	2				1		2		6	0.1%	Burston
B	Carlton Rode			1								1	0.0%	Carlton Rode
B	Chediston							1		1		2	0.0%	Chediston
B	Cratfield		4	1	4			8		4		21	0.5%	Cratfield
B	Denham							1		1		2	0.0%	Denham
B	Dennington									1		1	0.0%	Dennington
B	Dickleburgh		4	3	4	4		11		15		41	1.0%	Dickleburgh
B	Diss	1	8	1	7	7		21		17		62	1.5%	Diss
B	Ditchingham	1			3			7		8		19	0.5%	Ditchingham
B	Earsham	3	1		2	2		3		5		16	0.4%	Earsham
B	Ellingham	1								5		6	0.1%	Ellingham
B	Eye	1	3	5	1	3		8		4		25	0.6%	Eye
B	Fritton			2				2				4	0.1%	Fritton

(b) The following charts compare Car Park and trading activity in Harleston. On December 12 2007 and the week of 18 – 23 February 2008. These are prior to the full impact of existing additional housing and the extra approved to be built.





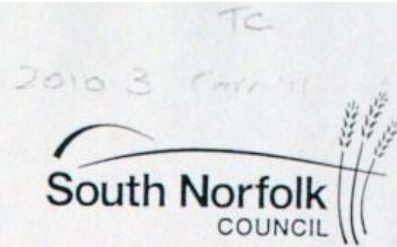
(c) The following comparison shows the trading pattern in the same period, taken from an analysis of the till records of the supermarket, and its close correlation on a daily basis with the occupancy of the car park. Note particularly the mid morning and mid afternoon peaks. It demonstrates that parking is at capacity at key times on principal days on when people want to shop at this location.



Appendix 5

Letter from GNDP/SNDC February 2010

01 MAR 2010



Ms Sue Kuzmic
Chairman Redenhall with Harleston Town Council
Memorial Leisure Centre
Wilderness Lane
Harleston
Norfolk IP20 9DD

Swan Lane
Long Stratton
NORWICH
NR15 2XE

Our ref DSW/07/80/PLA

Tel 01508 533809
Fax 01508 533625
dwillis@s-norfolk.gov.uk

23 February 2010

Dear Ms Kuzmic

Harleston: Joint Core Strategy Growth related issues

Thank you for the useful meeting on Wednesday 10 February. Having been out of the office for most of the time since, this has been my first opportunity to respond regarding the main issues remaining of greatest concern to you. Please see my responses below.

(a) Drainage

Your concerns related to the existing drainage system, and the future growth-related requirements to be resolved through the policies of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and its subsequent Sites Specific Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document. These will provide for growth to 2026, form the proposed Local Development Framework (LDF) and replace the policies of the current South Norfolk Local Plan.

(i) Current drainage problems

The town centre flooding problems such as those affecting The Thoroughfare have resulted from a combination of ground levels in the town and inadequate drains. The town centre drains to the north towards Redenhall Road and Starston Beck via an Anglian Water (AW) surface water sewer that also takes highway drainage. South Norfolk Council has been aware of the problems and is currently working with AW and Norfolk County Council as Highway Authority to investigate possible improvement measures. AW is currently undertaking surveying and modelling work to identify areas of concern and has identified Harleston as an area for future growth where its systems may need to be upgraded to accommodate this growth. Bids for growth in this area are subject to the progress of the South Norfolk LDF.

An ongoing issue also arises from the cumulative drainage impact of new housing development on small sites. As the Environment Agency advises only on development sites of 1 hectare or more (which could each accommodate at least 30 dwellings), SNC is advising on smaller sites and applying planning conditions where necessary to ensure that

developers provide for the appropriate drainage. Overall, SNC considers that the local drainage system cannot accommodate additional water.

(ii) Future development

SNC considers that there should be no additional surface water run off and requires Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for all large scale new development, subject to appropriate ground condition tests to identify the most suitable system. National guidance indicates three preferred drainage options which are in priority order:

- Infiltration (i.e. soakaways, trenches or filter beds)
- Discharge to water courses – but these must be attenuated (such as by having to drain via a ditch or via a pond to slow the flow)
- Discharge to sewers – at present the developer has a right to connect but this is subject to government investigation as this has caused problems due to inadequate systems.

SNC would seek assurances from AW that any proposed surface water discharge to its drainage systems would not exacerbate the existing problems.

With regard to the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) proposed growth of some 200-300 dwellings, JCS Policy 3 "Energy and Water" proposes that both sufficient water infrastructure must be available to accommodate the needs of the new development, while all new development will be expected to meet the water efficiency use criteria related to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 at the time of adoption of the JCS (currently assumed to be by early 2011). Developments of over 500 dwellings must also meet Code Level 6 by 2015. Therefore new housing should both be provided for in advance and use less water than at present through more efficient water use. However the JCS is shortly to be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration at a public examination (expected to take place this summer), and I am aware that the policy to impose Codes 4 and 6 may well be challenged at that examination.

The overall housing growth provisions of the JCS have been the subject of a Water Cycle Study which has shown that the Harleston Waste Water Treatment works can accommodate the needs of some development before needing upgrading to improve certain standards of discharge; that the strategic sewers serving Harleston can accommodate the proposed growth, albeit development other than to the northeast or north west of the town will need to examine capacity through the town itself on a site by site basis through checks with AW; and that water supplies are sufficient.

SNC is aware of site specific drainage issues in Harleston and their solutions will be shared between AW and developers. The Council is concerned about some potential housing sites to the south of the town centre, when drainage will be required to flow in a northerly direction. Developers will be required to convince the Council that they can provide for the appropriate drainage systems without detriment to existing infrastructure and the environment. Existing infrastructure shortcomings will also need to be addressed through the AW five yearly Asset Management Plans (AMP). The current AW AMP has already been adopted for the period 2010-2015. Where not paid for by developers, site specific problems will need to be addressed by the AW AMP for 2015-2020.

In the absence of a surface water disposal agency, the Council has therefore acted and will continue to act as a liaison between the Environment Agency, AW and NCC as Highways Authority to ensure that they are fully informed of local drainage problems.

With regard to the designation of potential development sites, development boundaries and areas for the conservation of the natural and built environment, the Council has commenced work on the production of the Sites Specific Policies Development Plan

Document. It is currently envisaged that this process will be subject to three public consultations which will

- firstly, invite comments about potential development sites that have already been suggested and suggestions of other potential development sites,
- secondly, invite comments regarding other land use designations such as defined town centres, landscape and draft area action plans for certain limited major growth areas
- thirdly, invite comments on draft development land allocations and other designations.

The first and second consultations are expected to take place respectively during April 2010 and towards the end of the year. These consultations will provide Harleston Town Council with several opportunities to comment on potential development land issues.

(b) Car Parking

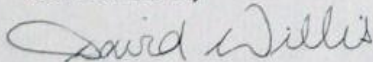
I note your concerns about lost opportunities to reserve land for town centre car parking, and the use of this parking space by vehicle owners living in town centre accommodation increasingly being built without provisions for car parking. Unfortunately the latter situation is not helped by requirements to implement government car parking standards for new development which assume lower parking requirements for such locations.

SNC has no plans at present to expand public off-street car parking in Harleston, but is considering its role in the enforcement of on-street car parking restrictions through the implementation of a proposed joint local authority-run enforcement system from 2011. Norfolk County Council does not appear to have carried out any recent town centre traffic or parking studies for Harleston, and due to its own funding constraints, has a policy of reacting to development proposals to ensure that developers contribute towards access improvements required as a result of new development.

Re the potential for car parking problems, while acknowledging that there are also existing housing commitments not yet built, I suggest that the proposed additional growth of 200-300 new homes in Harleston to 2026 would not place immediate pressures on car parking in the town, as the proposed adoption date for the Sites Specific Policies DPD of 2012 might not result in actual construction for several years from that date. The locations of the recently permitted and potential new development sites would generally be well placed to allow for walking and cycling into the town centre, which could therefore reduce the need for local car trips, while the construction of the new homes might be spread significantly over that time which would dilute any increased parking needs.

With regard to the perceived need for LDF policy provisions, the need for further car parking provision would require supporting evidence including need and the availability of deliverable sites. In this respect, I suggest that you might like to consider making a case which could be based on your own surveys of town centre car parking use and availability, and information on potentially available sites that could meet any concluded need. Such information could be considered as part of your responses to the several forthcoming Site Specific Policies DPD consultations of which you will automatically be notified.

Yours sincerely



David Willis
Senior Planning Officer
Planning and Housing Policy Team

Appendix 6

a) Harleton Have Your Say Questionnaire

b) Section report re: car parks and housing

Part a) shows the Full questionnaire on which the community's views on a range of matters have been gathered. Questions 6,7,15,16,29,30 I and ii and 32 are of particular relevance to the GNDP process.

Part b) presents a part report on the above questions, delivered to the Town Council in August by the Have Your Say Steering Group.

HAVE YOUR SAY

THE NEXT STEP

QUESTIONS 29 + 30 ARE
PRINCIPALS.
OTHER RELEVANT TO SHORT
HAVE YOUR SAY REPORT ARE
Qs 6, 7, 15, 16, 32, 36

The Q UESTIONNAIRE

A Key to
Harleston's
Future

Turn this page...
don't delay...
Do the Q -
Do it Today!

The Questionnaire - have more of a say

Over the past few months, everyone has had a chance to put forward ideas about what they like, don't like and would like to see happen in Redenhall with Harleston.

As we, The Have Your Say Group, promised your ideas have been turned into a Questionnaire so you can have your say on all of the topics raised.

Make your mark

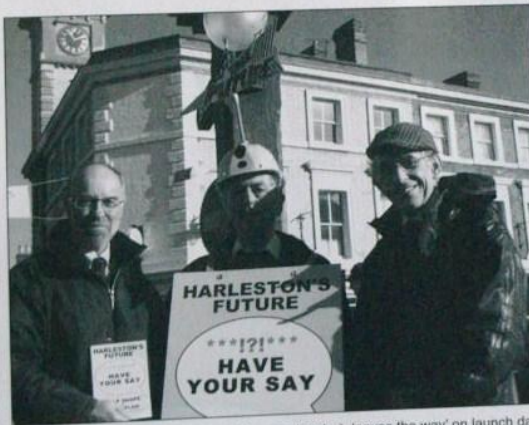
Please take the time to fill this in. What you have to say is **very Important**.

Send it back

Please return in the envelope provided to

Have Your Say Group,
c/o Harleston Information Plus,
8 Exchange Street,
Harleston (off the Market Place)

by 31 July 2010.



Norman (centre) 'paves the way' on launch day

The organisers

Harleston - Have Your Say is run by an **Independent** Group of local people supported by grants from Norfolk Rural Community Council and Redenhall with Harleston Town Council.

Turning Ideas into Action

Your replies will be used to help shape an Action Plan, deciding which ideas are practical to take forward and suggesting who might do what, when and how.

Some Ideas for Action will be simple and affordable. Others may be less easy, needing more time to investigate. Some may **not** be achievable, but could guide other decisions. But, **ALL** will need community support to stand a chance of making a real difference. That's why we would like to know more about what you think.

Ideas you have already given us

The ideas already received will be included automatically as we work towards the Action Plan. But this is **YOUR** chance to comment on the whole range of topics raised by others.

Need help with this Questionnaire?

If you, or someone you know would like help to complete this questionnaire (including translation), please let us know and we will try to assist (see contact number below).

Want to say more?

There is an extra sheet for comments on the inside back cover of this booklet. If you need more copies of the Questionnaire for other members of your household they are available from Harleston Information Plus, 8 Exchange Street and The Library.

For a large print version of this Questionnaire or for help with filling it in please contact Carol Wiles on **01379 853132**


Norfolk RCC

Shops and Businesses

Q1

Our range of shops is

- Acceptable A
 Could be wider B
 No view N

Tick one box for each question.

If you'd like a wider range, what else would you like to see on sale?

.....

Q2

Are our shops, facilities and activities well enough known?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'no', any ideas to improve this?

.....

Q3

The opening hours of our shops

- Should be extended A
 Are fine as they are B
 Should be restricted C
 No view N

If you think they should be changed, how?

.....

Q4

Should we try and make our 'High Street' shopping 'greener'?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'yes', any ideas how?

.....

Q5

Do we need a group to help make stronger links between businesses and also between businesses and the wider community?

- Yes A
 No B
 No Opinion N

If 'yes', any ideas what the group should try to achieve?

.....

Q6

Are local job opportunities

- Good A
 Ok B
 Not Good Enough C

If not good enough, any suggestions on how to improve the situation or what businesses we should try and attract?

.....



Carol makes a point to encourage ideas

Q7

Is a wider range of business activity needed on the industrial estate.

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'yes', what industries/businesses should we try to attract?

.....

Q8

Should more be done to promote and appreciate the importance of the shops, businesses and markets to the immediate community and beyond?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', any suggestions how, or other ideas to help the town's businesses?

.....

.....

.....

Traffic and Travel

Q9

Do you think the speed limits are

- Fine as they are A
Need altering B
No view N

If you feel they need changing, how and where?

.....

.....

.....

Q10

Are the current speed limits adequately enforced?

- Yes A
No B
No View N

Any comment?

.....

.....

.....



Q11

Do you think the road layout, could be improved?

- Yes A
No B
No View N

If 'yes', any ideas?

.....

.....

.....

Q12

How do you rate the condition (not cleanliness) of pavements, footpaths and ways in the town and surrounding areas?

- Satisfactory A
Poor B
No View. N

If you're not happy, any particular concerns?

.....

.....

.....

Q13

Do you think there any problems for pedestrians or other non-car users in town?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', where, what kind of problems and how could things be improved?

.....

.....

.....

Q14

Is car parking and its organisation adequate?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'no' what changes would you like to see?

.....

.....

.....

Q15

How important do you view free car parking to be for the future of the town?

- Very important [] A
- Not Very Important [] B
- Unimportant [] C
- No Opinion [] N

Any reasons why?

.....
.....
.....

Q16

How do you rate the look of the approaches to the town from the by-pass and along the main roads?

- Good [] A
- Satisfactory [] B
- Poor [] C
- No View [] N

What, if any, improvements would you like to see?

.....
.....
.....

Q17

How well does public transport meet your needs?

- Well [] A
- Adequately [] B
- Poorly [] C
- Don't use [] D
- No view [] N

What, if any, improvements would you like to see?

.....
.....
.....

Q18

Are there any other traffic issues which affect you or which you wish to raise?

- Yes [] A
- No [] B
- No view [] N

If 'yes', please give details.

.....
.....

The Town

Q19

How do you rate the general appearance of the town?

- Good [] A
- Acceptable [] B
- Poor [] C
- No Opinion [] N

If 'poor', any things you'd like to see improved?

.....
.....
.....

Q20

How do you rate the condition and appearance of the town centre buildings?

- Good [] A
- Acceptable [] B
- Poor [] C
- No Opinion [] N

What Improvements, if any, would you suggest?

.....
.....
.....

Q21

We were given some interesting ideas for using redundant historical buildings. Any thoughts of your own?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Q22

Should we try to simplify and reduce the number of fixed signs, poles and other street furniture to 'de-clutter' the town?

- Yes [] A
- No [] B
- No view [] N

Q23

There is a rolling programme planned to replace our old street lights. Should we take this chance to look at their locations and how to better meet the current needs of the town.

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Any specific ideas?

Q24

Are the roads and/or paths adequately cleaned?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'no', where and what are the problems?

Q25

Please tick if you have problems with or opinions about some, or all of the following, either at home or around town?

- noise A
light B
smell C
dirt D
untidiness E
other F

Please give details of any issues you may have

Q26

Anti-social behaviour was mentioned by several people. From your personal experience, do you feel

- It's a major problem A
There are a few problems B
Any problems are minor C
There are no problems D
No View N

Please detail the type of any problems experienced.

Q27

Are there any other safety issues (not covered in the traffic and travel section above), which affect your use and enjoyment of the town and its surroundings?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', where, what kind of problems and how could things be improved?

Q28

It has been suggested that some community services (e.g. Library, museum, sports, town council) be re-housed in a single building, in order to give a focus of activity and to economise on running costs.

- Agree A
Disagree B
No View N

If 'agree', any opinions as to which organisations and where?

Q29

What are your feelings about proposals for developments to meet government targets for new houses in the town - at least 300 more in the next 15 years.

- Acceptable A
Unacceptable B
No opinion N

Any comments?

Q30

Do you feel new houses are being built with enough garden space?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Any comment?

.....
.....
.....

... and are their designs appropriate for our historic market town?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'no', what if anything would you prefer?

.....
.....
.....

Q31

Are there any new opportunities for enjoying the countryside around Harleston that you would like to see happen?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', what would you suggest?

.....
.....
.....

Q32

How important is it to protect the setting of the town in the wider area to benefit the quality of life for those who live and work here, as well as to ensuring it remains attractive to visitors?

- Very Important A
Not very important B
Unimportant C
Totally Unimportant D
No Opinion N

Any further thoughts about this matter?

.....
.....
.....

Enjoying our Town

Q33

Should we promote Rednhall with Harleston's history and overseas connections to attract more visitors,

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If you think we should promote the town and parishes' history and connections, how?

.....
.....
.....

Q34

Some have suggested our town shield (on the town sign in the Market Place) is boring and we should use a more colourful but historically accurate version.

- Agree A
Disagree B
No view. N

Q35

Should we better promote the town to people visiting sporting and other events in the vicinity.

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', any particular comments or ideas?

.....
.....
.....

Q36

Would a new tree warden and/or identifying an area to create a community woodland be valuable?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Any comments?

.....
.....
.....

Q37

Do we look after and protect the Parish's green spaces, well enough?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Any comments?

.....

.....

Q38

Would you like new planting, seats and other places to sit and talk?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', what and where?

.....

.....

Q39

Should ways of supplying green energy within or for the community be investigated?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Any comments?

.....

.....

Q40

Would you like a local recycling/waste disposal point?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

As part of this or as a stand alone project would you like a community composting scheme?

- Yes A
No B
No view N



Memories on the wall at our Drop-in Day.

Q41

Do you have any problems with dogs?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes' please give brief details

.....

.....

Is there adequate provision for exercising dogs?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

Are you a dog owner? Yes Y No X

Q42

Does Redenhall with Harleston need to be generally more environmentally aware?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', are there any particular issues that concern you?

.....

.....

Q43

Should opportunities for local food production and supply be explored and promoted?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', any particular ideas?

.....

.....

Q44

Should more be done to benefit wildlife?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', any suggestions as to how or which (if any), wildlife you would particularly like to be helped?

.....
.....
.....

Q45

Do ducks cause you any problems?

- Yes A
No B

If 'yes' please give brief details and the area of the town where the problem occurs

.....
.....
.....

Q46

Should Harlestone twin with (an) other town(s)

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', why and which sort of town(s)?

.....
.....
.....

Q47

How do you rate the Police's role in the town?

- Good A
Acceptable B
Average C
Below Average D
Poor E

Any thoughts based on personal experiences?

.....
.....
.....

Facilities and Events

Q48

Should there be more places of entertainment or sporting venues in the area?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', what would you or your family use?

.....
.....
.....

Q49

How do you rate the recreation ground and it's facilities?

- Good A
Acceptable B
Average C
Below Average D
Poor E

Any specific improvements you would like to see?

.....
.....
.....

Q50

Are there enough community meeting places in the town?

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'no', what would you suggest and for whom?

.....
.....
.....

Q51

Do you think more community events/street fairs should be organised

- Yes A
No B
No view N

If 'yes', what would you suggest?

.....
.....
.....



Fiona applies a little persuasion in The Thoroughfare.

Q52

Would you attend a regular car-boot fair?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

Any comments?

.....

.....

Q53

How do you rate the provision of educational facilities and schools, including pre-school, adult education and wider learning?

- Good A
 Acceptable B
 Average C
 Below Average D
 Poor E
 No view N

Any specific changes you'd like to see?

.....

.....



H'n Man says DO THE QI on a flying visit to the clock-tower.

Q54

From your experience, how do you rate the medical and emergency services?

- Good A
 Acceptable B
 Average C
 Below Average D
 Poor E
 No view N

Any specific suggestions for change or improvement?

.....

.....

Q55

Should new fund-raising initiatives be started to benefit the town?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'yes', any suggestions?

.....

.....

Q56

Should links with neighbouring Councils and Communities be maintained and improved?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'yes', any suggestions?

.....

.....

Q57

Are any extra facilities or changes to existing facilities or services needed?

- Yes A
 No B
 No view N

If 'yes', any suggestions?

.....

.....

H'n Man says

DO THE
Q!
SHAPE
TOMORROW
TODAY.



Please return by
31 JULY to

Harleston - Have Your Say Group,
c/o Harleston Information Plus,
8 Exchange Street,
Harleston (off the Market Place)


Norfolk RCC

Ends IC/8 June

Have Your Say re:

New housing site allocations

Introduction

1. Redenhall with Harleston Town Council has been invited by South Norfolk Council to comment on the site-specific locations for any future housing.
2. The Have Your Say Steering Group has brought forward reporting on relevant questions from its Questionnaire to help the Town Council to reflect local views.
3. This paper sets out an appraisal based on community responses to key questions from the Have Your Say Questionnaire, which are relevant to inform the Town Council's evaluation of the proposed sites and to formulate its response.
4. **Q6 Local Job opportunities (see with Q7 below)**

Are local job opportunities

Good 3% Ok 42% Not Good Enough 39% No view 16%

5. **Q7 Range of business activity on the industrial estate**

Is a wider range of business activity needed on the industrial estate.

Yes 38% No 14% No view 48%

Observations

Less than half of respondents thought the job opportunities not good enough, but with the balance of ages in the responses tilted to the over 50s, perhaps this does not reflect the aspirations of the younger working population. Almost half had no view, again possible reflecting the lack of connection with the industrial estate.

From the responses to questions 6 and 7 there were more than 35 specific ideas. Strong suggestions identified the need for a wider business base, especially the 'Business Park' concept centred on technology and bringing wider-ranging office/IT work, particularly for local people. Coupled with the desire for a 6th form in the secondary school (under other questions), this seemed a particularly valuable idea, as it would academically, socially and commercially broaden the spectrum of opportunities within, and character of, the community, reducing the need for the more academically inclined to leave.

There are very strong and logical views from some respondents that the jobs issue is a priority before any more housing, as to quote: "jobs make houses affordable" and maintain sustainable communities. Without them the town could increasingly descend into being a dormitory for 'drive-to-work' in remote locations. This runs against the principles of sustainable communities.

The highest number of responses for a single idea centred on the need for a Chamber of Trade, but this was countered to an extent by one or two responses, which suggested that this had been tried before and got nowhere.

Recommendation

The Town Council should consider:

- prioritising effort into allocations of suitable land for job creation over new housing (this was to happen on part of the Howard's Rotovators site but the site has unacceptably now been earmarked for housing without real strategic considerations for employment potential or provision of more jobs);

- identifying suitable sites for, and promoting, the Business Park idea in particular to broaden the job opportunity base;

- encouraging more variety, particularly manufacturing on the Industrial Estate

6. Q15 Free car parking

How important do you view free car parking to be for the future of the town?

Very important 90% Not Very Important 5% Unimportant 1%No Opinion 3%

Observations

This attracted the largest single response. At 90% it represents an overwhelming endorsement of the present position. It is also very relevant to ensuring that any future housing development must not overload the town's parking, such that it no longer feels accessible and available.

It is known that the Town Council is seeking to ensure that this aspect is properly taken into account before any approvals for further development are granted.

Recommendations

The Town Council should maintain its approach to ensuring that car parking remains free and that development does not outstrip the ability of the town to cope comfortably with any concomitant demand for parking generated by new developments.

7. Q 16 Appearance of the approaches to the town

How do you rate the look of the approaches to the town from the bypass and along the main roads?

Good 25% Satisfactory 55% Poor 11% No View 7%

Observations

Although by two-to-one respondents thought the approaches satisfactory, when coupled with the responses to Q32 it is clear that there are strong feelings about protecting the character of the approaches to the town and its setting. This is strongly linked to the scale, design, location and relationship to the approaches of new developments and is discussed under Q32 below.

8. Q29 Proposals for at least 300 more houses

What are your feelings about proposals for developments to meet government targets for new houses - at least 300 more in the next 15 years. Acceptable 26% Unacceptable 63% No opinion 11%

Observations

A sizeable majority thought the prospect of this number of new houses unacceptable. They did not want this scale of new development to overwhelm the character of the town, turning it into an anywhere place. The strongest feelings were about the impact on doctors, dentists and schools and, while these aspects can be addressed in future if the resources are available, the residents' experience is that these services are inadequate now and are not being addressed. Therefore already planned new development plus

any further development will only exacerbate an already unacceptable position.

However, many commented that new developments could be acceptable if properly planned, reasonably spaced and that parking and drainage and other issues were addressed properly. Views were expressed by some that the present design of some of the recent developments would lead to the ghettos of tomorrow.

Recommendation

The Town Council adopts a strong stance on strategic forethought and planning, resisting expansion unless there is clear provision of essential infrastructure - guiding and anticipating the needs rather than reacting to problems piecemeal when they come.

9. **Q30 (i) Garden space for new houses**

Do you feel new houses are being built with enough garden space?
Yes 11% No 67% No view 22%

Observations

While a large proportion thought new gardens inappropriately small, many comments were also made that some people did not want larger gardens. Much was also made about inadequacy of space for parking within the properties, given that many households have two cars, and the need for adequate open space.

Recommendations

The Town council should fully investigate and encourage the potential for variations in plot size for housing.

Q 30 (ii)... design of houses

... and are their designs appropriate for our historic market town?
Yes 33% No 36% No view 32%

There was a great mixture of views between ticky-tacky to okay, but recognising that there is a difference on the outskirts to the centre of town, with designs that are lower and more suited to their context. The dense high 3 storey town house came in for particular criticism. The dense uniformity was not liked by many.

Recommendation

Ensure careful attention is paid to the density of housing and design bearing in mind that this is a rural countryside location, not a mews setting in a city or large centre of population. There are at present an increasing number of dreary-looking standard-build houses of no merit whatsoever.

10. **Q32 Setting of the town**

How important is it to protect the setting of the town in the wider area to benefit the quality of life for those who live and work here, as well as to ensuring it remains attractive to visitors?

Very Important 88% Not very important 4% Unimportant 1%
Totally Unimportant 1% No Opinion 7%

Observations

This question drives at the heart of everything concerning development. The responses give full justification to requiring that

all building and other development is carefully thought through with regard to its design, density, location, screening and the effect on the approach roads and the wider setting of the town within the surrounding countryside especially its relation to adjacent settlements and the Waveney Valley. The community requires that this is essential and should be undertaken before any commitment is made to locations for proposed housing.

Recommendation

The Town Council has every justification for setting high standards when evaluating the locations for both industrial/business activity and residential development. It is mandated to maintain the integrity of Harleston and its built environment, and to enhance the quality of its setting commensurate with its role as an attractive place to live and work, as well as for its contribution to the overall quality of the Waveney Valley tourism experience.

11. **Q 36 Warden and community woodland**

Would a new tree warden and/or identifying an area to create a community woodland be valuable?

Yes 60% No 17% No view 23%

Observations

Enhancing the environment is important to the quality of life of residents. It can improve the experience for visitors and also play an important role in community activity and social well-being, particularly for the young and those with disabilities. There is particular enthusiasm for a community woodland, though some identified that it might be abused. Other suggestions included a community orchard

Recommendation

The Town Council should, in the context of the site-specific housing and land-use allocations, seek to identify locations suitable for establishing community green space, especially a woodland or orchard.

12. **Summary**

- i. The community response indicates that any future development must respect the character and setting of the town and its capacity to absorb it.

- ii. Priority should be given to job creation over new residential development to provide a better economic prospect for the present population and to reduce need for car-dependent commuting/use.
- iii. A particular focus should be on a business park bringing a wider range of job opportunity to the local community.
- iv. A(n) area(s) suitable for a community woodland/orchard should be identified.

Ends 24 September 2010