

## Greater Norwich Development Partnership

### **Matter 10 Key service centres, Service Villages, and Smaller Rural Communities (policies 14-16)**

*Note: EIP93 sets out the minor changes to the text of JCS1 to address revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy.*

#### **Key service centres (policy 14):**

- A Does the JCS provide sound core strategic guidance for the future planning of these settlements? Does the evidence demonstrate that the key service centres are appropriately listed as such, with no additions/deletions?

1. The JCS is considered to provide sound strategic guidance taking account of the evidence, their place in the hierarchy and differentiated according to the characteristics and location of the settlement.
2. The criteria for their selection are set out in paragraph 6.43 of the submitted JCS.
3. The evidence base for the Housing Market Assessment (H3) identifies housing sub markets based on a number of factors in section 2. Housing sub market areas are defined for a number of key service centres including Long Stratton, Reepham and Wroxham (though the report at paragraph 2.7 notes that almost half of the dwellings in the Wroxham sub area lie in North Norfolk District. Others, in particular Brundall and Blofield in Broadland, Hethersett, Poringland, and Loddon/Chedgrave in South Norfolk lie within the Norwich sub market. Hingham lies within the Wymondham sub market.
4. The Greater Norwich Retail and Town Centres Study (EC4) confirms that the key service centres which are not in the immediate Norwich area generally offer a range of retail facilities to the surrounding rural areas, but below the level of those in the main towns. This is indicated by the data on the make up of the retail offer at paragraphs 9.32 (Reepham) 9.4 (Acle) and 10.72 (South Norfolk rural centres - Hingham and Loddon).
5. The Employment Growth and Sites and Premises Study (EC3) considers rural centres generically in chapter 5

6. Development at Acle and Reepham will be dependent upon the resolution of waste water disposal uncertainties raised at a late stage of the Water Cycle Study that await clarification by updated statements by Anglian Water and The Environment Agency to be submitted prior to the Examination.

B Is the scale of the development for the individual villages soundly based?

1. The scale of growth proposed is explained in the topic paper on the Settlement Hierarchy (TP 7, section 5 commencing on page 20)

2. The criteria for inclusion in this category are set out in para 6.43 of the submitted JCS. This makes it clear that the key service centres with more limited services and no secondary school have housing allocations towards the lower end of the range. These are Brundall and Blofield in Broadland, and Hingham in South Norfolk. Brundall and Blofield are both close to the Norwich urban area, both have a reasonable range of facilities including community halls, primary schools, primary health care, libraries and a limited range of shops, but no secondary school. For the avoidance of doubt it should also be made clear that there is no school and relatively few facilities in Wroxham, (though there is a library) but taking into account the adjacent settlement of Hoveton, separated by the river Bure but linked by a bridge, there is a wide range of facilities including a secondary school, primary care, local employment, convenience and comparison shopping.

3. The scale of development at Acle and Reepham will be dependent upon the resolution of waste water disposal uncertainties raised at a late stage of the Water Cycle Study that await clarification by updated statements by Anglian Water and The Environment Agency to be submitted prior to the Examination.

**The service villages (policy 15):**

C Does the JCS provide sound core strategic guidance for the future planning of these settlements? Does the evidence demonstrate that the service villages are appropriately listed as such, with no additions/deletions?

1. The criteria for the definition of service villages are set out in paragraph 6.57 of the submitted JCS. Given the modest scale of allocation in each village, the strategy is considered to give an

appropriate level of guidance.

2. The topic paper on the settlement hierarchy (TP 7) sets out the considerations underlying the selection of settlements at this level of the hierarchy, including the evolution of the consideration at different stages in the core strategy's preparation within Section 4 of the topic paper. This explains how a broadly consistent approach is adopted while still taking into account the very different natures of the rural parts of the two districts. Within document TP7, Appendix 4/ Table 2 shows overall services totals and the "important services" available in each service village.
3. It should be noted that some villages appear to have a sufficient total number of services to justify a "service village" definition, but are defined in the lower "other villages" category. This reflects their lack of sufficient "important services", lack of easy access to such services, and/or their lack of journey-to-work public transport services. Journey-to-work public transport availability was considered to be the minimum required to promote sustainability. These villages are listed in the footnote to TP7, Appendix 4, Table 2.

D Is the scale of development for the individual villages soundly based?

1. Policy provides broad guidance around a range of development scales to take account of individual circumstances in each village. This approach is considered to be sound for a core strategy.
2. Section 5 of TP7 discusses the different levels of growth assigned to different levels of the hierarchy.
3. The strategy allows for an appropriate scale of housing land allocations in the "service villages" to meet local housing needs and to maintain their continued sustainability and enhanced quality of life.

**Other villages (policy 16):**

E Does the JCS provide sound core strategic advice for the future planning of these villages? Does the evidence demonstrate that the other villages are appropriately listed as such, with no additions/deletions?

1. The JCS is considered to provide sound strategic guidance for the "other villages" based on the criteria set out in paragraph 6.61 of

the JCS and on the basis of the review of the Settlement Hierarchy villages described by the Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper: TP7 (Section 4.6).

2. Topic Paper TP7, Appendix 4, Table 1 confirms the required distributions of services and facilities required to justify the definition of the Other Villages which are considered to be appropriately listed.

**Allowance for development on ‘smaller sites in the NPA’ (policies 9 and 14-16):**

- F Is it clear what mechanism(s) will be used for resolving whether or not ‘*additional development*’ is necessary at any of the key service centres, service villages or other villages ‘*to deliver the “smaller sites in the NPA” allowance*’? To be effective on this point, should the JCS be clearer/more specific about this? What would it need to say?

1. The JCS is considered to be clear. Policy 9 makes it clear that allocations to deliver the smaller sites allowance will be made “in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and local and environmental and servicing considerations”. Paragraphs 6.45 and 6.58 both make clear that the criteria are “having regard to sites which can be made available in higher order settlements as set out in the settlement hierarchy”. The only mechanism for the allocation of land is a DPD, and therefore the only plan making mechanism which can be used to resolve the issue is through the site specific policies DPD. The JCS makes it clear that the search for suitable sites should begin with the higher order settlements. However, the text supporting the policy for the service villages makes clear (para 6.58) that the indicative scale of 20 dwellings may be exceeded where the development of a site can be demonstrated to improve local services or protect those under threat, where it is compatible with the overall strategy, and subject to sustainability considerations.
2. Policy 16 “Other Villages” supporting text paragraph 6.62 also states the exceptional circumstances in which a larger scale of development might be permitted.

- G If the JCS is unsound in relation to any of the above matters, are there any specific changes that would render it sound? [It would be necessary to consider whether these required further consultation or sustainability appraisal.]

1. The JCS is considered to be sound in this respect. Proposed minor changes (JCS2 and EIP93) address drafting errors and provide clarity.