

Broads Local Plan – (June) Bite Size Pieces

Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary:	This report introduces the following topics of the Preferred Options Local Plan: amenity, open space in Ditchingham and Horning, rail stations, future recreation routes, recreation car parking areas and includes proposed amendments to some of the adopted Site Specific policies.
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Recommendation:	Members' views are requested.
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This bite-size piece of the Preferred Options discusses amenity, open space in Ditchingham and Horning, rail stations, future recreation routes, recreation car parking areas and includes proposed amendments to some of the adopted Site Specific policies. The report summarises the proposed policy approach and the detailed documents are attached in Appendices to the report.
- 1.2 Members' views are requested to inform the draft policy approach in the Preferred Options.
- 1.3 It is important to note that this is not necessarily the final text or approach, but is part of the development of the final text. There could be other considerations that come to light between now and the time the final version is presented to Planning Committee in November 2016.

2 Amenity

- 2.1 The current policy is rolled forward and refreshed and included at Appendix A.

3 Ditchingham Maltings Open Space

- 3.1 The current allocation for dwellings, as set out in the Sites Specifics Local Plan, has been completed and built out. This new policy (see Appendix B) seeks to protect the open space, Alma Beck and habitat area, in line with other similar open space policies in the Sites Specifics Local Plan (discussed in Appendix G). Much of the habitat area is within South Norfolk district and their policy team have been contacted regarding the potential for them to allocate the remaining area in their future local plan.

4 Horning Private Open Space

- 4.1 Linked to the tracked changes of the current site specifics, the policy as proposed acknowledges the importance the pub garden makes to the village as well as acknowledging it as private open space for the customers of the pub. The proposed policy is set out at Appendix C.

5 Rail Stations/halts

- 5.1 This new policy seeks to allocate the rail stations or halts in the Broads Authority Executive Area and sets criteria for any proposals to address. The proposed policy is set out at Appendix D.

6 Future Recreation Routes

- 6.1 The current policy which covers Haddiscoe to Beccles Railway Track is rolled forward and amended to include two other disused railway tracks which also have the potential to be recreation routes. The proposed policy is set out at Appendix E.

7 Recreation Car Parks

- 7.1 Because facilities like new footpaths and canoe slipways are often accessed by car, this policy covers the provision of small car parking areas. The proposed policy is set out in Appendix E.

8 Tracked changes to the adopted Site Specific Policies

- 8.1 Many of the principles of the existing policies in the Sites Specifics Local Plan (2014) are still relevant for the new Local Plan, but may require some amendments. Experience of using these policies assists with these judgements. The amendments that are proposed to the existing policies in the Sites Specifics Local Plan (2014) are shown using tracked changes.
- 8.2 It is important to note that not all of the site specific policies are in this month's Planning Committee report. The reasons are set out in the introductory table at Appendix F.
- 8.3 It is also important to emphasise that the policies as set out in the adopted Sites Specifics Local Plan 2014 are in place and the proposed changes are not adopted policy at the moment. Planning applications will be judged against the 2014 Sites Specifics Local Plan and not these amended policies until the new policies are adopted.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 Generally these will include officer time in producing these policies and any associated guidance as well as in using the policies to determining planning applications.

Background papers: None

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Appendices:

- APPENDIX A – Draft Amenity policy
- APPENDIX B – Draft Ditchingham Maltings Open Space policy
- APPENDIX C – Draft Horning Private Open Space policy
- APPENDIX D – Draft Rail Stations policy
- APPENDIX E – Draft Future Recreation Routes policy
- APPENDIX E – Recreation Car Parking Areas policy

APPENDIX F – Draft amendments to current site specific policies
<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/broads-authority/committees/planning-committee/planning-committee-24-june-2016>

Proposed Policy POX - Amenity

All new development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be expected to provide the occupiers/users with a satisfactory level of amenity. Development will not be permitted if it would have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing or potential neighbouring properties or uses.

When assessing the impact of the occupation, operation and construction of a development on amenity, consideration will be given to:

- a) Overlooking of windows of habitable rooms and private amenity space;
- b) Overshadowing of private amenity space;
- c) Loss of daylight and/or sunlight to existing windows of habitable rooms;
- d) Overbearing impact/visual dominance;
- e) Light pollution;
- f) Airborne pollutants;
- g) Odours;
- h) Noise pollution and disturbance;
- i) Vibration;
- j) Insects and vermin; and
- k) Provision of a satisfactory and usable external amenity space to residential properties in keeping with the character of immediate surrounding development.

Where existing amenity is poor, improvements will be sought in connection with any development.

Reasoned Justification

Protecting the amenity of both the future occupiers of new development and the occupiers of existing developments is vital for the sustainability of communities in the Broads. The NPPF says, at Paragraph 17 *'...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings'*.

Amenity can include many factors, such as traffic, smell, loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking. Policy x lists the general issues that should be taken into account by applicants advancing specific development proposals for planning approval and by the Broads Authority in its role as Local Planning Authority, determining planning applications in consultation with local communities and stakeholders.

This policy applies to situations where new development would affect the amenity of an existing land use as well as where a new development may lead to complaints about an existing land use that are not currently an issue because there are not any neighbours.

Proximity to waste management and mineral sites can lead to amenity issues. As such the Authority will liaise with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils for sites that are near to mineral and waste sites in line with Policy CS16 of the Norfolk County Council Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, policy WDM1 of the Suffolk County Council Waste Core Strategy and Policy 5 of the Suffolk Minerals Core Strategy.

Reasonable alternatives

No policy: The alternative option to the policy above is to not include a specific policy on amenity. This approach was rejected as the Authority considers that promoting the principles of amenity is important in the context of the Broads and sustainable development.

Comments received as part of the Issues and Options

None

Sustainability Appraisal Summary

Preferred Option: xx

No policy: xx

Evidence used to inform this section

Monitoring Indicators

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APPENDIX B

Policy x – Ditchingham Maltings Open Space, Habitat Area and Alma Beck

The areas defined on the policies maps (including Alma Beck) shall be protected as open space and habitat area.

The area allocated as open space will be kept open because of ~~for~~ its contribution to amenity, townscape and recreation as well as providing an important pedestrian link from Ditchingham Dam through the site to the crossing of the A143 into Ditchingham.

The habitat area will be conserved and enhanced for its contribution to the landscape, its wildlife and openness.

Reasoned justification

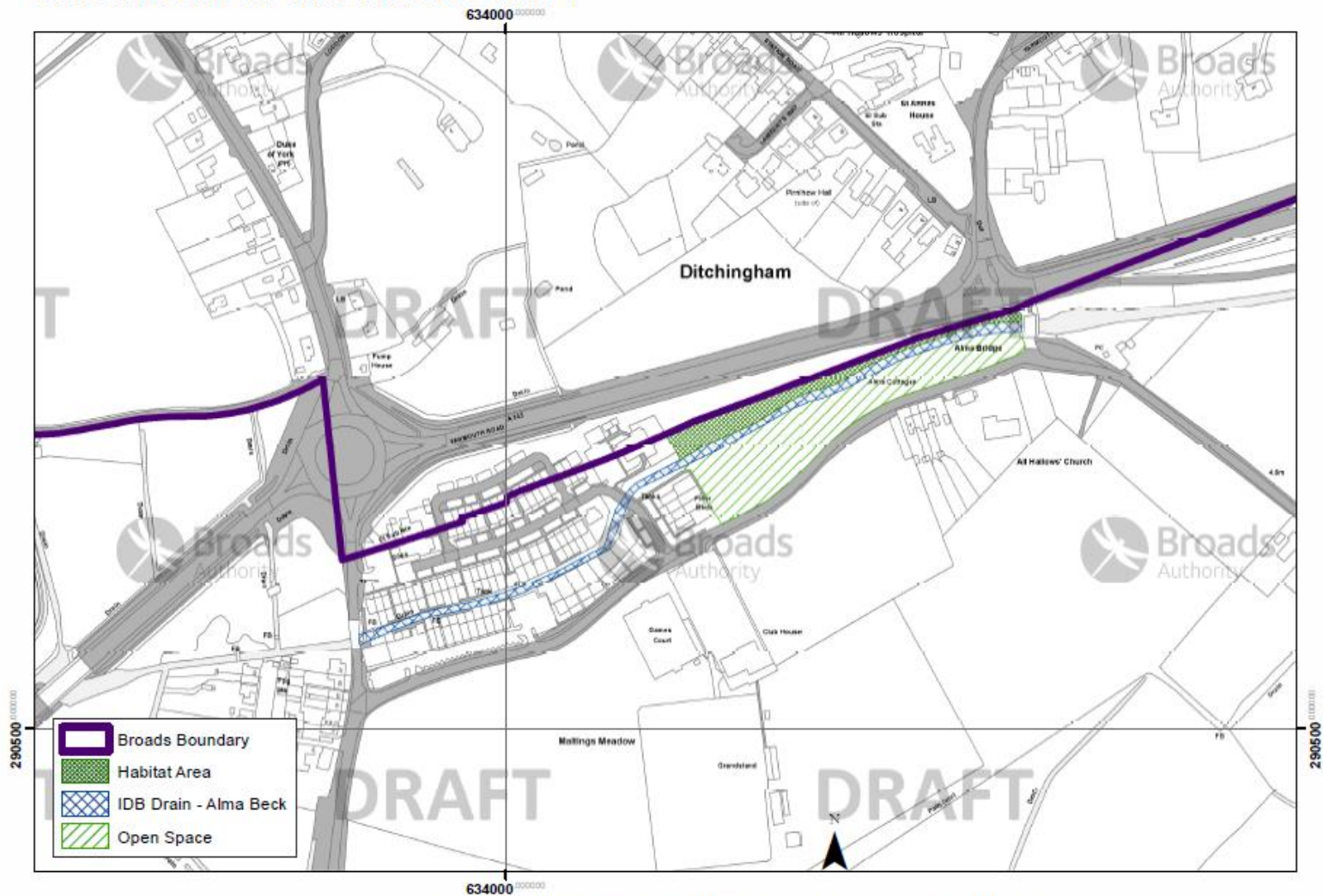
The habitat and open space areas were provided as part of the Ditchingham Maltings major development, completed in 2016.

Both areas contribute to the character of the area, with the open space providing space for residents and visitors to play and use for informal recreation. The open space also acts as an important pedestrian link through the site linking Ditchingham Dam to Ditchingham and the services and facilities the village offers.

The habitat area benefits wildlife on the site by retaining, enhancing and creating habitats and maintaining favourable conservation status of bat species. Much of this habitat area falls s outside of the Broads Authority Executive Area and South Norfolk District Council have been contacted with regards to allocating the rest of the habitat areas in their future Local Plan.

Alma Beck forms part of the open space and habitat area allocation because of ~~offer~~ its contribution to the amenity, recreation and biodiversity value of the area. It is an Internal Drainage Board drain maintained for its drainage function and enhanced for its importance to wildlife.

DITCHINGHAM MALTINGS DRAFT



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APPENDIX C

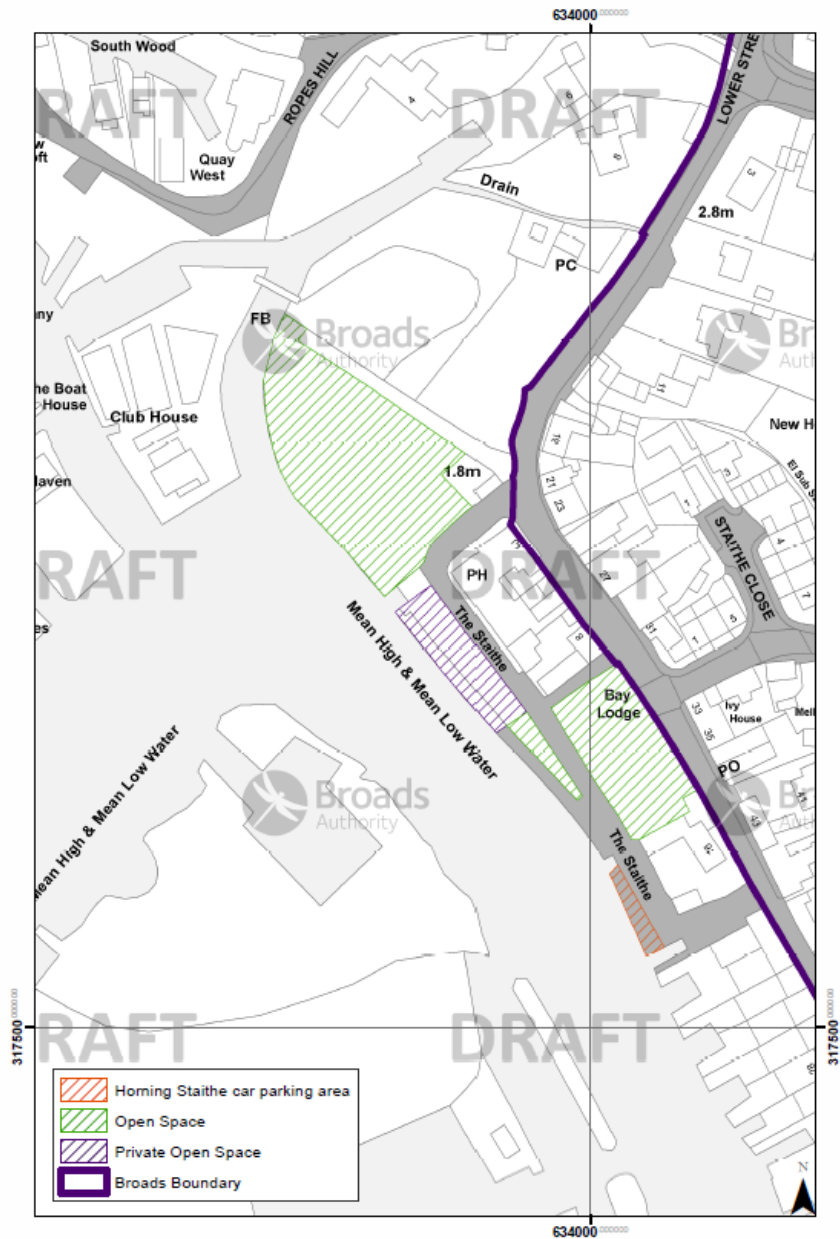
Policy x: Private Open Space

The area marked on the policies map will be retained as private open space for its contributions to the character and appearance of the village.

Reasoned Justification

At the time of writing, this area of Horning was a pub garden. As such, this is not public open space as access onto this private land is only for paying customers of the pub. This landscaped open space does add to the character and attractiveness of the staithe and will be retained in this generally open and attractive state for the benefit of pub users as well as for the quaint appearance of this area to those on both land and water.

HORNING DRAFT



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Policy x – railway stations/halts

Map x

The following railway stations/halts, identified on the Adopted Policies Map, will be protected in their railway station use as key parts of the local railway network:

- Berney Arms rail halt
- Haddiscoe rail halt
- Somerleyton southern platform
- Buckenham Station
- Hoveton and Wroxham Station

The Authority will support appropriate and well-designed proposals which:

- contribute to their continued/improved use
- improve the visual impact
- address light pollution
- aid interpretation of the local area
- provide improved facilities for passengers
- improve access by sustainable modes of transport

Constraints

Flood zone 2 and 3 (EA Mapping) (except Hoveton and Wroxham Station)

Buckenham Station: near to Mid Yare National Nature Reserve, Broadland Ramsar Site, Yare Broads and Marshes SSSI, The Broads SAC, Broadlans SPA.

Berney Arms Halt: Halvergate Marshes SSSI, Breydon Water SPA, Breydon Water Ramsar Site

Reasoned Justification

There are five railway stations/halts (or parts of) within the Broads Authority Executive Area and these are shown on the policies map. These are:

- Berney Arms rail halt
- Haddiscoe rail halt
- Somerleyton southern platform
- Buckenham Station
- Hoveton and Wroxham Station

Whilst some stations are used by more passengers than others, all of them are important to the local community and visitors to the area. The more remote stations/halts offer a unique opportunity for visitors to access the wilder parts of the Broads and to do this without the need for a private car.

The policy seeks retention as railway stops as well as supporting appropriate improvements to the facilities which reflect, but do not impact on, the special qualities of the Broads.

In relation to improving access by sustainable modes of transport, example improvements could include the provision of well-designed and located secure cycle parking facilities and electric charging points for electric vehicles.

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APPENDIX E

Policy X - Former rail trackways

Map – see appendix x

That part of the former railway track beds identified on the Adopted Policies Map will be protected for their potential for walking, cycling, or horse-riding routes. Development which could prevent such a use would not be permitted while use for walking, cycling or horse-riding remains a potential.

Path or route creation must avoid harm to:

- the sensitive designated habitats and species in the vicinity; and
- the landscape

Any route signage or interpretation is expected to be well designed, kept to a minimum and positioned to ensure a minimal landscape impact.

CONSTRAINTS & FEATURES

Flood risk (zones 2 & 3 by EA mapping; zone 3b by SFRA 2007 mapping).

Parts within CWS and adjacent to SPA, SAC and Ramsar site.

Reasoned Justification

The routes are:

- Haddiscoe to Beccles
- Beccles to Ditchingham
- Great Yarmouth to Fritton

The Integrated Access Strategy has identified the potential for remnant disused railway lines to add to the access provision the Broads can offer particularly with regard to improving cycle route links and bridleway routes (there are only 17km of Bridleways in the Broads Executive Area). Lines include the Haddiscoe to Aldeby line, the Beccles to Ellingham line and the Gt Yarmouth to Fritton line. Establishing routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riding on these disused railways which are linked to the rural road network would improve opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the Broads. In the case of cycling, it will help deliver the Government's cycling ambition in the national parks programme which seeks to improve access to and in and around national parks by cycle.

The recreational potential of these routes (or parts of them) have long been noted, and Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils support their protection for these purposes. In view of the importance of recreation to the Broads (including the statutory purpose of enjoyment), and the desirability of developing the tourism and recreational potential of the southern Broads, these routes are protected.

Please note they are no longer protected for future rail use as both County Councils, who are the transport authorities for the area, advise there is no realistic prospect of this happening in the foreseeable future.

It is important to note that there are sections of these routes that are outside of the Broads Authority Executive Area. The relevant authorities have been contacted and asked to

APPENDIX E

consider protecting the routes in their Local Planning Authority areas in a similar way to this policy.

Such routes will benefit from the presence and proximity of various wildlife and habitats associated designations (the line passes through the Beccles Marshes Suffolk County Wildlife Site, and adjacent to SAC, SPA, and Ramsar site), but will need to have regard to their sensitivities in the creation, alignment and management of such routes. Impact of any changes to these routes on the landscape of the Broads is also an important consideration. Furthermore, the provision of signage and interpretation should only be what is necessary to promote and direct along the route, but again not impact on the landscape of the Broads.

Alternative Options

Comments received as part of the Issues and Options:

South Norfolk Council considers that the safeguarding of future recreation routes is important for recreation and connectivity. There are potential links to schemes that impact on South Norfolk e.g. Angles Way, Waveney Valley with the potential to work together under Duty to Cooperate. There is concern about the long term management and maintenance of some routes.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council is sympathetic to the proposal to protect the remaining undeveloped parts of the former railway trackway between Great Yarmouth and Fritton/St.Olaves. The Borough Council is keen to work with the Broads Authority to explore the recreational potential of these routes, and will consider protecting those parts of the route within the Borough Council's planning area in its own future Local Plan documents.

IWA supports safeguarding routes.

Sustainability Appraisal Summary

Evidence used to inform this section

Monitoring Indicators

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Policy x – Recreation Facilities Parking Areas

Proposals for slipways, boat launches and recreation routes are required to consider how users will access these facilities with access by public transport, walking and cycling being preferred where practicable.

If these recreation facilities are to be accessed by vehicles or bicycles, consideration needs to be given to where these vehicles, trailers and bicycles can be safely parked.

Limited provision for parking of cars (including trailers) and bicycles to enable usage of the facility will be supported if proposals adequately address the following:

- Recreation facility is readily accessible from the parking area
- The parking area is of an appropriate **and commensurate** size for the facility it serves
- High quality design of surface, landscaping and boundary treatments
- Safe access and visibility into and out of the parking area can be achieved
- **Avoiding harm to the sensitive designated habitats and species in the vicinity**
- **Avoiding harm to the local landscape**

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Reasoned Justification

In line with policies xxx, facilities should be located where they can be accessed by walking, cycling or public transport.

In order to improve facilities that provide tourism and access benefits there are some circumstances where provision of parking facilities is essential and in others desirable. For example canoes and boats tend to be transported to slipways by a motor vehicle so the canoeist/boater requires somewhere to leave their vehicle and trailer. Equally the provision of a new facility like a footpath (such as the Wherryman's Way) may result in increased car use by people wanting to get to the path as bus services may not drop off near to the access point.

Proposals are required to consider how users will access the facility and consequently where modes of transport will be parked. When deciding on the location of a recreation facility its accessibility by public transport, cycle and walking is a key consideration. If a car needs to be used, opportunities for utilising existing parking in the vicinity of the facility with the agreement of the landowner should be explored.

Parking areas will need to be designed in a way that is acceptable in the Broads. They also do not need to be immediately by the particular attraction. A short walk from the car park to the access point is acceptable. Parking areas will also need to meet the safety requirements of the Local Highways Authority. Of relevance are the policies on landscaping in particular. See policy x.

Please note that it is not intended that parking standards relating to development such as employment or residential land uses are addressed through this policy approach. This section relates more to the location and design of car parking related to slipways and footpaths. The parking design standards of Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils remain in place.

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Alternative Options

Comments received as part of the Issues and Options:

None.

Sustainability Appraisal Summary

Evidence used to inform this section

Monitoring Indicators

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Appendix x: Former Railway Tracks

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