Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

Shared Spatial Objectives and Statement of Common Ground for a Growing County

September 2025

Signatories

- Breckland District Council
- Broadland District Council
- Broads Authority
- Great Yarmouth Borough Council
- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
- North Norfolk District Council
- Norwich City Council
- South Norfolk Council
- Norfolk County Council
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Active Norfolk
- Water Resources East

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the following organisations for their support in the production of this document:

- Breckland District Council
- Broadland District Council
- Broads Authority
- Great Yarmouth Borough Council
- Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
- North Norfolk District Council
- Norwich City Council
- South Norfolk Council
- Norfolk County Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
- East Suffolk Council
- West Suffolk Council
- Fenland District Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council
- South Holland District Council
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Anglian Water
- UK Power Networks
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Norfolk and Waveney CCG
- NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Estates for Norfolk and Waveney
- Mobile UK
- Water Resources East
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)

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Summary of Formal Agreements within the Statement of Common Ground

Please Note: 'Norfolk Planning authorities' and 'Norfolk Authorities' refers to the 7 district authorities that make up Norfolk (see section 1.4), the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council.

Agreement 1 - That when preparing new Local Plans, the Norfolk Planning Authorities will produce documents which provide for the development needs of their areas until at least 2041.[1]

Agreement 2 - In preparing their Local Plans the Norfolk Planning Authorities will seek to positively contribute towards the delivery of the following vision. (See section 2.2 for Vision)

Agreement 3 - By the end of the local plan period, through co-operation between the Norfolk Authorities and preparation of development plans, Norfolk will seek to maximise the delivery of the following objectives (in no particular order):

- **To realise the economic potential of Norfolk and its people***
- **To reduce Norfolk's greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality as well as reducing the impact from, exposure to, and effects of climate change***
- **To address housing needs in Norfolk***
- **To improve the quality of life and health for all the population of Norfolk***
- **To improve and conserve Norfolk's rich and biodiverse environment***

***Full details of each objective are in section 2.3 of this document**

Agreement 4 - That Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn and West Norfolk will each continue to prepare separate Local Plans for their areas.

Agreement 5 - That Breckland and North Norfolk will continue to prepare separate Local Plans for their areas whilst Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council will implement the Greater Norwich Local Plan (adopted March 2024) and various other existing Local Plan documents in this area, whilst also considering how best to address national changes to local plan making.

Agreement 6 - That, in view of the very distinct issues facing the Broads Authority Area, spatial planning matters will continue to be best addressed by way of a standalone Broads Local Plan.

Agreement 7 - The list of locations in Section 5 are the Tier One Employment sites and should be the focus of investment to drive increasing economic development in key sectors and protected from loss to other uses.

[1] Applicable to plans submitted for examination after Jan 2025

Agreement 8 - The recently adopted and emerging Local Plans for the area will include appropriate policies and proposals to recognise the importance of the cross-boundary issues and interventions in section 5.4.

Agreement 9 - When determining their respective Local Plan housing targets each Norfolk Authority, working together where desirable, will aim to deliver at least the local housing need as identified in the most up to date evidence (Table 9). Where this would result in unsustainable development, agreement will be sought with other authorities, initially within the same Housing Market Area, to ensure sufficient homes are provided to meet identified needs and demands in the area until at least 2041.

Agreement 10 – The Broads Authority will meet its calculated portion of the wider housing requirement as far as is compatible with the protection of the Broad's landscape and special qualities.

Agreement 11 - South Norfolk, Norwich City, Broadland, North Norfolk, and Great Yarmouth Councils will seek to include appropriate provision within their Local Plans to address the housing needs arising from the parts of the Broads Authority area overlapping their administrative boundaries if these cannot be met within the Broads Local Plan.

Agreement 12 - The Norfolk Planning Authorities will quantify the need for, and plan to provide for, the specialist accommodation needs such as elderly, students, gypsy and travelling Show People, and those residing in other specialist types of accommodation and working together will ensure that the distribution of provision responds to locally identified needs.

Agreement 13 - All Norfolk Planning authorities will produce their Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments to the standard Norfolk methodology.

Agreement 14 - To minimise the risk of slow delivery over the next plan period, where it is sustainable to do so, the following will be done:

- **Housing strategies will seek to allocate a range of different sizes of sites, where such sites are available and would result sustainable development.**
- **Clear evidence and demonstration of ability to deliver development will be required prior to the allocation of larger sites for development.**

Agreement 15 - Norfolk authorities agree to consider matters relating to healthy environments and encouraging physical activity and fully integrate these into local design codes (which will inform planning application decisions, local plans and neighbourhood plans), drawing on key guidance such as Building for a Healthy Life and Active Design.

Agreement 16 - Norfolk authorities agree to endorse updates to the Planning in Health: An Engagement Protocol Between Local Planning Authorities, Public Health and Health Sector Organisations in Norfolk and undertake its commitments.

Agreement 17 - Norfolk Planning Authorities agree that climate change is an urgent, strategic cross boundary issue which will be addressed at the heart of Local Plans. To do this, the Authorities agree to give consideration to the approaches in the NSPF Climate

Change research Paper of this report when the relevant policies are next being reviewed and updated as part of the Local Plan process and their appropriateness considered against local factors including viability of developments. Norfolk Planning Authorities agree to collectively review the latest evidence and advice on a regular basis and to update this research to ensure that the most appropriate actions are being undertaken to support climate change initiatives.

Agreement 18 – Norfolk Authorities will remain members of WRE and will work collaboratively with its other members in the development of the Norfolk Water Strategy Programme to ensure the project delivers the best outcomes for the county. Norfolk Authorities will also work collaboratively as part of WRE to support delivery of WRE's Regional Water Resources Plan and develop future iterations of the plan.

Agreement 19 – Norfolk is identified as an area of serious water stress; the Norfolk Planning Authorities have agreed that when preparing Local Plans to seek to include the optional higher water efficiency standard (110 litres/per person/per day) or lower residential development.

Agreement 20 – The Norfolk Authorities, Anglian Water and Essex and Suffolk Water have agreed to provide regular and timely updates to each other on the delivery of development sites and proposed utility projects to ensure that development is aligned with water and wastewater infrastructure.

Agreement 21 - To maximise the speed of rollout of 5G telecommunications to Norfolk, Norfolk Planning Authorities will continue to engage with Mobile Network Operators and Mobile UK on their 5G rollout plans for Norfolk. When reviewing Local Plans and updating relevant policies, Local Planning Authorities agree to have regard to the shared objectives for extending 4G coverage and the rollout of 5G infrastructure in Norfolk produced by the technical group, taking into account material planning considerations.

Agreement 22 - Norfolk Planning authorities will continue to work closely with the County Council and school providers to ensure a sufficient supply of school places. This includes making provision for those with Special Educational Needs (SEND), providing land for school expansion or new schools and/or where no suitable solution for sustainable access to schools exists, appropriate contributions for home to school transport. S106 and / or Community Infrastructure Levy funds will be used to deliver additional school places and/or contributions to home to school transport, where appropriate. The County Council's Planning Obligations Standards will be used to inform any S106 payments or bid for CIL funds needed to mitigate the impact of housing growth on County Council infrastructure. The authorities agree to support Norfolk County Council in securing contributions towards infrastructure where justified and, in the case of planning obligations, suitably evidenced as being in compliance with S122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

Agreement 23 - Norfolk Planning Authorities and the MMO agree that there are currently no strategic planning issues remaining to be identified and that there is no conflict at a strategic level between the NSPF and adopted Marine Plans. Both parties agree to continue to work together in the preparation of Local Plans being brought forward in Norfolk and any review of the MMOs Marine Plans. Both parties have identified the following areas of common strategic issues:

- **Aquaculture**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Cabling**
- **Climate change**
- **Coastal erosion and coastal change management**
- **Coastal management, including defence, inundation, and Coastal Change Management Areas**
- **Co-existence**
- **Defence**
- **Displacement**
- **Dredging and disposal**
- **Energy – offshore wind and oil and gas**
- **Fishing**
- **Governance**
- **Heritage**
- **Historic environment**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Landscapes and seascapes**
- **Marine aggregates**
- **Marine and coastal employment**
- **Marine Litter**
- **Marine net gain**
- **Marine protected areas**
- **Marine related renewable energy**
- **Natural capital**
- **Non-native species**
- **Oil and Gas**
- **Port and marine infrastructure and employment**
- **Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in small harbour towns**
- **Sustainable port development**
- **Tidal Energy**
- **Tourism and recreation**
- **Underwater noise**
- **Water quality/water supply and sewerage**

Agreement 24 - In recognition of:

a) the importance the Brecks, the Broads and the Norfolk Coast National Landscape, together with environmental assets which lie outside of these areas, brings to the county in relation to quality of life, health and wellbeing, economy, tourism and benefits to biodiversity;

b) the pressure that development in Norfolk could place on these assets; and

c) the importance of ecological connections between habitats.

Norfolk Planning Authorities will work together to complete and deliver the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy which will aid Local Plans in protecting and where appropriate enhancing the relevant assets.

Agreement 25 -

It is agreed that:

1) It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will therefore enable Norfolk to continue to be self-sufficient in the production of sand and gravel, whilst making an important contribution to the national production of silica sand.

2) As the Mineral Planning Authority, Norfolk County Council will plan for steady and adequate supply of minerals to support sustainable economic growth through allocating sufficient sites to meet the forecast need for sand and gravel, carstone, as well as allocating sites and providing a criteria-based policy to assess applications to meet the forecast need for silica sand in the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

3) Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. Resources of sand and gravel, carstone and silica sand within defined Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be safeguarded from needless sterilisation by non-mineral development. Infrastructure for the handling, processing and transportation of minerals will also be safeguarded from incompatible development. Defined waste management facilities and water recycling centres will be safeguarded from incompatible development.

4) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan policies will enable the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste in Norfolk to increase, thereby reducing the quantity and proportion of waste arising in Norfolk that requires disposal, in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy.

5) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will enable Norfolk to be net self-sufficient in waste management, where practicable and to enable sufficient waste management infrastructure to be provided in order for Norfolk to meet the existing and forecast amount of waste expected to arise over the Plan period.

6) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will direct new waste management facilities to be located in proximity to Norfolk's urban areas and main towns using criteria-based

policies. Priority for the location of new waste management facilities will be given to the re-use of previously developed land, sites identified for employment uses, and redundant agricultural and forestry buildings and their curtilages.

7) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will contain policies to ensure that minerals development and waste management facilities will be located, designed and operated without unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of local communities, the natural, built and historic environment, the landscape and townscape of Norfolk and surrounding areas.

Agreement 26 - In recognition of the benefits gained by co-ordinating and co-operating on strategic planning activities the Norfolk Planning Authorities agree to support the activities of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum and to continue to appropriately resource joint planning activity.

Agreement 27 - Norfolk Planning Authorities with support of the signatories of the document agree to maintain this statement of common ground.

Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Document

Norfolk's Local Planning Authorities (including Norfolk County Council) have a long track record of working together to achieve shared objectives. In early 2015 they, working through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum, agreed to formally cooperate on a range of strategic cross-boundary planning issues through the preparation of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF).

The aim of producing the framework is to:

- Agree shared objectives and strategic priorities to improve outcomes for Norfolk and inform the preparation of future Local Plans;
- Demonstrate compliance with the duty to co-operate (or any successor approach requiring strategic cooperation) and consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework;
- Find efficiencies in the planning system through working towards the establishment of a shared evidence base;
- Influence subsequent high-level plans such as Local Economic and Infrastructure Strategies and;
- Maximise the opportunities to secure external funding to deliver against agreed objectives.

The previous version of the NSPF was endorsed by all Norfolk Local Planning Authorities in May 2021. This version updated version of the NSPF (2025) considered the plan making requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024[2]. It is clear that Norfolk's local planning authorities needed to continue to work closely together to address strategic planning matters and therefore the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member forum agreed to continue to formally cooperate on strategic planning activities and to update the NSPF.

This document continues to fulfil the requirement for Norfolk Local Planning Authorities to produce a statement of common ground setting out the effective and on-going joint working across the county on strategic planning matters. It addresses key cross-boundary issues and progress in cooperating to address these.

For further information on the work of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum and the process for updating this framework please see the Forum's website: Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf

This document is intended to be strategic in nature. It provides only an overview of background information and shared research. A wealth of information has been produced by working groups used to produce much of this evidence; however, a decision has been made to keep this document concise and to concentrate on the matters where there is a clear need for agreement between the Local Planning Authorities. We acknowledge that not all factors have been considered, but where

[2] See National Planning Policy Framework - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

appropriate, relevant additional information has been highlighted. The absence of certain issues does not diminish their importance or value.

In December 2024 the government published the English devolution white paper[3]. This sets out an enhanced Devolution Framework for all of England to benefit from devolution. At the time of updating the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework it is unclear how Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will impact on the local government structure in Norfolk; however, it is likely to result in changes to local plan coverage with the creation of new unitary authorities. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill introduces the requirement to develop a spatial development strategy (SDS), this will be the responsibility of a new Mayoral Combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk.
A new standard methodology for assessing housing need is also introduced by the new NPPF, further details are set out in section 6, but this significantly increases the level of new housing that needs to be delivered in Norfolk.
As a result of these changes any future iterations of this document or the SDS will need to consider the how this level of growth is best delivered over the county, and the most sustainable spatial distribution will need to be agreed within the relevant authorities created by devolution.

Details of the current lead contact in each Local Planning Authority on strategic planning matters are included in Appendix 1.

1.2 Governance Arrangements for the creation of this document

Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum

The development of this Framework is overseen by the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum. This consists of one Member from each of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Breckland District Council, Broadland District Council, Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council and Norfolk County Council. The membership of the group will be determined by each authority via annual nomination preferably of the Planning Portfolio Member or equivalent for each authority. The operation of the Member Forum and officer support group is governed by formal terms of reference available from the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum web page - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf.

Chairmanship is determined by the Forum and reviewed each year. The meetings of the Forum are held every three months and held in public. An agenda and papers are circulated in advance of each meeting and informal action notes are taken and published on the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework website. The Member Forum oversees the production of this document and then each authority endorses it through their relevant committees or cabinets.

Norfolk Strategic Planning Officers Group

The Norfolk Strategic Planning Officers Group consists of key planning policy officers from each Planning Authority in Norfolk as well as other key statutory agencies. Through the update process, the group has reviewed the progress of document production on a monthly basis. The group have ensured that the document progresses to the timetable and meets any government and legislative requirements.

[3] English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper

The Steering Groups

A steering group has been responsible for the creation of the document.

Technical Sub Groups

The Technical Sub Groups have provided technical evidence and recommendations in relation to the document to the Steering Group. They consist of officers from the Authorities involved in the production of the document and a range of bodies who have expertise and interest in matters related to the group's subject.

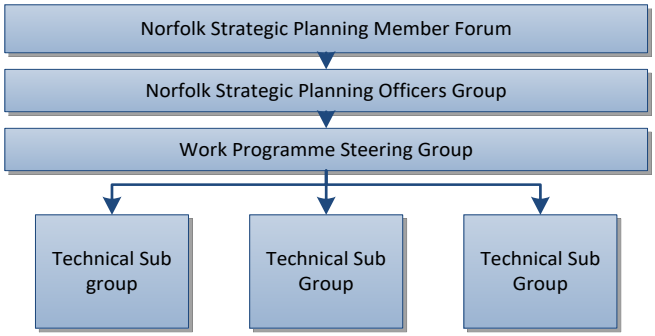

Figure 1: Governance arrangements for the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

1.3 Changes to the document

In updating this document Norfolk's local planning authorities sought to ensure the NSPF is up to date with all relevant information and legislation. The document has been updated after the completion of a number of county wide studies looking at:

- A review of the Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance Mitigation Strategy following the introduction of a county wide tariff to mitigate against the impact on existing Natura 2000 sites in March 2022
- A review of the health section and Health Protocol to highlight the importance of health provision and health living as a strategic cross boundary issue
- Updates to remaining sections to take account of new or updated information
- The growing e Evidence base following the introduction of Nutrient Neutrality requirements in Norfolk from March 2022, including mitigation strategies

1.4 Timescale for and coverage of the Document

This document relates to the whole of Norfolk and all Norfolk Local Planning Authorities which are:

Breckland District Council, Broadland District Council, Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Norwich City Council, North Norfolk District Council, South Norfolk Council and Norfolk County Council.

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared with the understanding that the signatories undertake their statutory duties in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and guidance; and in the context of other relevant Statements of Common Ground, Memoranda of Understanding and Position Statements which they are party to.

All Norfolk Local Planning Authorities have agreed to plan to at least 22041 in their next generation of local plans. This is reflected in the evidence base for this framework insofar as it seeks to provide

statistical information looking ahead to this period. This is also the date by when objectives are to be achieved. However, in parts, notably the vision, it is necessary for the document to take a longer-term view.

Agreement 1 - That when preparing new Local Plans the Norfolk Planning Authorities will produce documents which provide for the development needs of their areas until at least 2041.[4]

[4] Applicable to plans submitted for examination after Jan 2025

Section 2 – Vision and Objectives

2.1 Introduction

Norfolk is a diverse county. It covers a land area of 5,370 sq. km (2,074 sq. miles) and has a population of 916,120[5]. It is a largely rural county with a relatively low population density, although over half of the population lives in the built-up areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, King's Lynn and a number of market towns[6]. These built-up areas have a very considerable stock of historic assets and can offer a very attractive quality of life to residents.

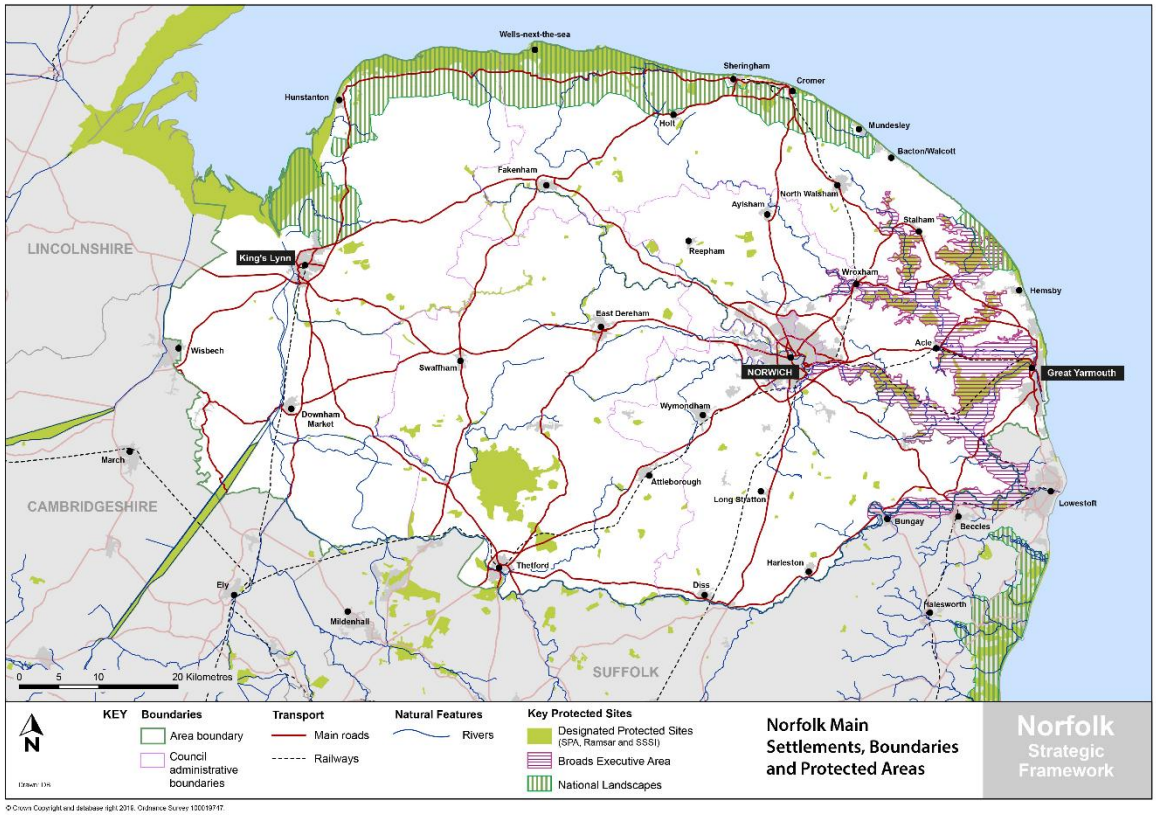

Figure 2: Map of Norfolk's main settlement, Authority boundaries, major transport routes and land-based protected areas. ***2021***

Norfolk borders Suffolk to the south, Cambridgeshire to the southwest, and Lincolnshire to the west. It also has a long coastal boundary stretching from The Wash to the south of Great Yarmouth which is covered by the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan[7]. Norfolk contains many environments which are highly valued for their landscape and seascape, and for their biodiversity and/or geodiversity interests. In particular, the Norfolk Coast National Landscape, the Brecks and the Broads, which is a

[5] Based on 2021 Census see Norfolk Insight web page - http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/population

[6] The 21 largest others centres are Attleborough, Aylsham, Cromer, Dereham, Diss, Downham Market, Fakenham, Harleston, Holt, Hunstanton, Loddon, Long Stratton, North Walsham, Sheringham, Stalham, Swaffham, Thetford, Wroxham/Hoveton, Wymondham, Watton, Wells-Next-The-Sea

[7] See East Inshore Marine Plan - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/312496/east-plan.pdf

unique network of protected rivers and lakes that extends partly into Suffolk and has the equivalent status to a National Park.

Norfolk's economy is also diverse. It is home to a number of world class industries on sites such as the Norwich Research Park and the offshore energy sector in Great Yarmouth. Employment levels are growing; there is a highly skilled and versatile population with good graduate retention rates and improving links to the thriving markets of Cambridge, London and the wider South East. However, it is not without challenges; there are high levels of deprivation especially in urban areas and skill levels in the workforce are relatively low[8]

Norfolk's infrastructure is under developed compared to many other parts of the wider South and East of England. For many years Norwich was the largest city in England not connected to the motorway network by a dual carriageway. Cross county trips tended to be slow and unreliable and rail journey times from London were comparable to places in the north of England such as York and Warrington. However, the dualling of the A11 and the completion of the Broadland Northway (previously known as the Northern Distributor Road) have improved travel time and connectivity considerably, and both A47 upgrades, and Greater Anglia rail franchise changes have improved this further. Norwich Airport offers regular flights to various destinations in the UK and Europe. Many of the key road and rail links connecting Norfolk to the rest of the UK are still in need of improvement as are many of the links within the county. The need to enhance the capacity of infrastructure networks can add considerable costs and increase delays to development.

Patchy mobile coverage is a continuing frustration to residents and businesses[9] with Norfolk ranked 83rd out of 96 areas in the UK for mobile coverage. Thanks to the work of Norfolk County Council, the picture regarding superfast broadband coverage has improved; currently 96% of the county's homes and businesses are able to access super-fast broadband, up from 41% in 2011[10].

Through working together and with government, businesses and residents, Norfolk's Local Authorities hope to successfully address the challenges faced and maximise the potential of the county. As a basis for guiding this shared endeavour, the following shared vision and objectives have been agreed by the Strategic Planning Member Forum. For further information on the background to this material please see the papers previously considered by the Member Forum[11].

2.2 Proposed Spatial Vision

Agreement 2 - In preparing their Local Plans the Norfolk Planning Authorities will seek to positively contribute towards the delivery of the following vision.

"By the middle of the 21st century Norfolk will be increasingly recognised nationally for having a strong and vibrant economy providing high quality economic opportunities for residents in urban and rural areas. Its settlements and key infrastructure will be physically resilient to the impacts of climate change. The natural, built and historic environments will be enhanced through the regeneration of

[8] New Anglia LEP Economic Strategy - https://newanglia.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/FINAL-Norfolk-and-Suffolk-economic-strategy-Jan-2022.pdf
[9] See Mobile coverage in Norfolk for EE, O2, Three, Vodafone | Signalchecker.co.uk
[10] See Hundreds of public buildings in Norfolk upgraded to ultrafast broadband - Norfolk County Council)
[11] See papers for the 13th October 2016 Member Forum at www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf

settlements, safeguarding and enhancement of current assets and networks, improving both biodiversity and the quality of life and health for residents. Housing needs will be met in full in socially inclusive communities. The county will be better connected by having good transport links to major cities in the UK and Europe and excellent digital connectivity. A good relationship between homes and jobs will help minimise the need to travel and residents will have choice about how they meet their demand for local travel."

2.3 Proposed Shared Objectives

Agreement 3 - By 2the end of the local plan period, through co-operation between the Norfolk Authorities and preparation of development plans, Norfolk will seek to maximise the delivery of the following objectives (in no particular order):

To realise the economic potential of Norfolk and its people by:

- facilitating the development and infrastructure needed to support the region's business sectors and clusters, driving economic growth through the enhancement of productivity, skills and education to provide widening opportunities;
- fully exploiting the economic opportunities offered by the economic success and global reputation of Cambridge;
- providing for job growth broadly matching increases in housing provision and improving the alignment between the locations of workplaces and homes;
- ensuring effective and sustainable digital connections and transport infrastructure between and within Norfolk's main settlements and across county boundaries to strengthen inward investment;
- strengthening Norfolk's connections to the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond by boosting inward investment and international trade through rail, road, sea, air and digital connectivity infrastructure;
- strengthening Norfolk's competitiveness through the delivery of well-planned balanced new developments providing access to a range of business space as well as high quality residential, well serviced by local amenities and high quality educational facilities;
- recognising the role of our city centre and the need to re-examine and revitalise the role of town centres as a focus for investment and enhancing the quality of life for residents;
- recognising that the long-term conservation, investment in and enhancement of Norfolk's natural environment and heritage is a key element of the county's competitiveness and contributor to the Norfolk economy;
- ensuring a healthy workforce through well planned sustainable communities where people can walk and cycle to work or use public transport or work effectively from home;
- recognise that high quality housing underpins economic growth;
- Maximising opportunities that a clean/green economic recovery presents for the region and the new jobs which will be required to achieve the Government's net zero target

To reduce Norfolk's greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality, as well as reducing the impact from, exposure to, and effects of climate change by:

- locating development so as to reduce the need to travel;
- reducing unnecessary car use and supporting the roll out of new technologies (such as electric vehicles and alternative fuels e.g. hydrogen) and Sustainable and active modes of travel including public transport, walking and cycling;
- maximising the energy efficiency of development and promoting the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources; and

- managing and mitigating against the risks of adverse weather events, sea level rise and flooding by reducing the impacts on people, property and wildlife habitats.

Together these measures will help create healthier more sustainable communities.

To address housing needs in Norfolk by:

- providing for the quantity of housing growth which will support the economic prospects of the county and address in full the identified need for new homes ;
- ensuring that new homes built are of the right sort in terms of size, type, and tenure to contribute positively towards addressing identified needs including for affordable homes, homes for the elderly and students, and other groups in society requiring specialist living accommodation;
- Ensuring that new homes are served and supported by adequate social infrastructure, including schools, health services, libraries, fire service provision; play space and green infrastructure provided through developer funding (e.g. through S106 agreements and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy);
- contributing towards sustainable patterns of development including improving the relationship between homes, jobs and other key day to day services;
- delivering high quality, energy efficient homes in attractive communities which make a positive contribution to the health and well-being of communities; and
- ensuring that homes are delivered at the right time to address identified needs.

To improve the quality of life and health for all the population of Norfolk by:

- promoting development and design which seeks to actively improve health, prevent ill health and tackle widespread health inequalities;
- ensuring new development fulfils the principles of sustainable communities, providing a well-designed and locally distinctive living environment adequately supported by social and green infrastructure;
- promoting social cohesion by significantly improving the educational performance of our schools, enhancing the skills of the workforce and improving access to work, services and other facilities, especially for those who are disadvantaged;
- maintaining cultural diversity while addressing the distinctive needs of each part of the county;
- ensuring all our communities are able to access excellent sporting facilities, healthy active lifestyles and opportunities for informal recreation;
- promoting regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas; and
- increasing community involvement in the development process at the local level.

To improve and conserve Norfolk's rich and biodiverse environment by:

- meeting environmental challenges including those set out in new legislation such as the 2021 Environment Act; e.g. habitat mitigation, achieving Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and addressing issues of Nutrient Neutrality affecting the River Wensum and Broads Special Area of Conservation/ Ramsar sites;
- ensuring the protection and enhancement of Norfolk's environmental assets, including the built and historic environment, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected landscapes, the Broads, the Brecks and the coast;
- protecting the landscape setting of our existing settlements and preventing the unplanned coalescence of settlements;

- maximising the use of previously developed land within our urban areas to minimise the need to develop greenfield land;
- minimising development on the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- maximising the environmental benefits where the development of greenfield sites is needed;
- protecting, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity through the conservation of existing habitats and species, and by creating new wildlife habitats through development;
- providing a coherent connected network of accessible multi-functional greenspaces;
- reducing the demand for and use of water and other natural resources;
- protecting and enhancing water, air, soil and other natural resource quality where possible; and
- leaving the environment in a better state for future generations.

Section 3 – Understanding the County

3.1 Administrative Boundaries

Within Norfolk there are seven separate district council areas[12] (as shown in Fig.2), each of which is a local planning authority. Overlying parts of five of these areas (and also part of East Suffolk district in Suffolk) is the Broads Authority which is the local planning authority for its area rather than the district councils. The Broads Authority Executive Area (in which the Broads Authority are the planning authority) overlays these administrative areas and is illustrated in the figure below.

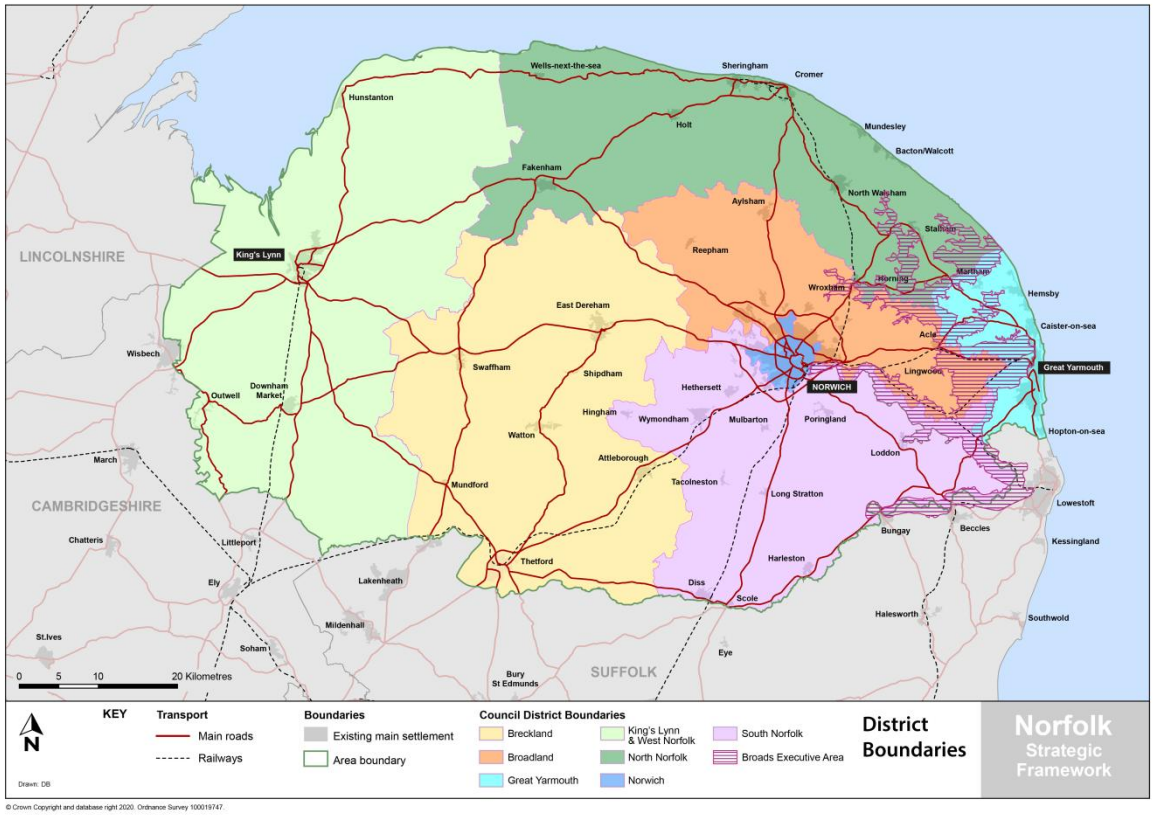

Figure 3: Map of Norfolk district boundaries and the major transport connections. *2021*

In addition to the eight local planning authorities the county council are also a local planning authority responsible for minerals and waste planning as well as certain operational developments related to their functions (most notably as highways authority, Lead Local Flood Authority and educational development). The Marine Management Organisation (MMO is relevant to the coastal parts of the area as well as some inland waters. The 25 Year Environment Plan[13] requires that marine plans are adopted by 2021. The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides the domestic legislative basis for the marine planning system. The Marine Policy Statement was adopted by all UK Administrations (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) in March 2011, which provides the policy framework

[12] Breckland District Council, Broadland District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council - collectively, these are referred to as 'the districts' locally.

[13] 25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan

for the preparation of all UK marine plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment. It has been prepared and adopted for the purposes of section 44 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. It contains a range of high-level policy objectives and considerations, which provide the context for the development, monitoring and amendment of national and sub-national marine plans .

Marine plans translate the Marine Policy Statement into detailed policy and spatial guidance for each marine plan area. Section 58 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 states that all public bodies making authorisation and enforcement decisions which affect or might affect the UK marine area, must do so 'in accordance' with the relevant adopted marine plan. All other decisions must 'have regard' to the marine plan, for example, when a public or local authority creates or reviews a local plan.

Under delegation from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is the marine planning authority for England and is responsible for preparing marine plans for English inshore and offshore waters. The MMO is a prescribed body as set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the MMO is listed in Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as a body which is subject to the duty to co-operate. The East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans, which cover the area from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe, will inform and guide decision-makers on developments which may have an impact on the marine and coastal environment. At its landward extent, the East Inshore Marine Plan applies up to the mean high water springs mark, which includes the tidal extent of any rivers. The East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans will therefore overlap with terrestrial plans which generally extend to the mean low water springs mark. On 2 April 2014 the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans were published, becoming a material consideration for public authorities with decision making functions, and providing guidance for sustainable development from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs agreed with the MMOs recommendation made in 2022 to replace the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans with a new 'East Marine Plan', which will be the first of a second generation of plans for English waters. The new document will be referred to as the 'East Marine Plan'.

Social, economic and environment considerations are neither determined by, nor constrained to, the administrative boundaries of the various planning authorities. Some issues affect single authorities, others are universal to the whole of the county, and across the area there are strong functional relations between places administered by neighbouring authorities. Indeed, some settlements straddle the boundaries of planning authorities (for example, some settlements are partly in the Broads Authority planning area and partly in the relevant district, such as Horning, Loddon and Brundall) and some settlements are very close to each other, but in different local planning authority areas (namely Hoveton and Wroxham with Wroxham being in Broadland Council area and Hoveton in North Norfolk area with the Broads Authority also being the Local Planning Authority for part of the two settlements), as does the infrastructure which is necessary to support development.

The economic geography of Norfolk is complex as it reflects a multicentric area and boundaries tend to be fuzzy. Overall, the county has a relatively high level of self-containment as the vast majority of the resident workforce stay in Norfolk for work, although there are some strong functional cross county boundary linkages. The linkages between Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft; the settlements in the Waveney Valley; and between King's Lynn and the Fens and Cambridge being particularly important

Within the county the three larger urban areas of Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth have a considerable influence providing jobs, retail, health care and a broad range of services and facilities as

well as homes for a significant proportion of the county's population. These three centres are located in the east, west and centre of the county and have relatively limited functional connection with one another, notwithstanding the A47 linking all three.

3.2 Housing Markets

Housing Market Areas (HMAs) are defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. In defining them, regard is given particularly to house prices and rates of change in house prices; household migration and search patterns; and contextual data (for example travel to work area boundaries, retail and school catchment areas). They tend to represent *"...the geographical area in which a substantial majority of the employed population both live and work and where those moving house without changing employment choose to stay"*[14]. All areas need to be identified as being within a housing market although housing market areas can overlap. Norfolk HMAs can be seen in Figure 4.

Prior to the introduction of a new housing methodology in the revised National Planning Policy Framework, the Norfolk Districts and the Broads Authority had produced Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs) which covered the entire County[15]. Within the Central Norfolk SHMA area (comprising of Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council) a case can also be made for the identification of a core area based around Norwich and its immediate environs including parts of both South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils. Outputs from the Central Norfolk SHMA include separate conclusions in relation to this core area.

The boundaries of Housing Market Areas will rarely correspond with the administrative boundaries of Local Authorities (Fig.3). In Norfolk there are three distinct HMAs centred on Norwich, King's Lynn, Yarmouth and their surrounding hinterlands. However, there are some areas of the County which are distant from any of these centres; functional links are less apparent, and the case for inclusion within one HMA rather than another is less compelling. To ensure comprehensive coverage the Norfolk Authorities have agreed that the boundaries of the Housing Market Areas should be co-terminus and because housing targets will be set for each Planning Authority area the boundaries of HMAs should be 'snapped to' Authority boundaries.

[14]Local Housing Systems Analysis: Best Practice Guide. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes

[15] See Central Norfolk SHMA - https://www.norwich.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3993/shma_-_june_2017.pdf
KLWN HNA - https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6252/2020_housing_needs_assessment.pdfKLWN HNA - https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6252/2020_housing_needs_assessment.pdf
Great Yarmouth SHMA - https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1241

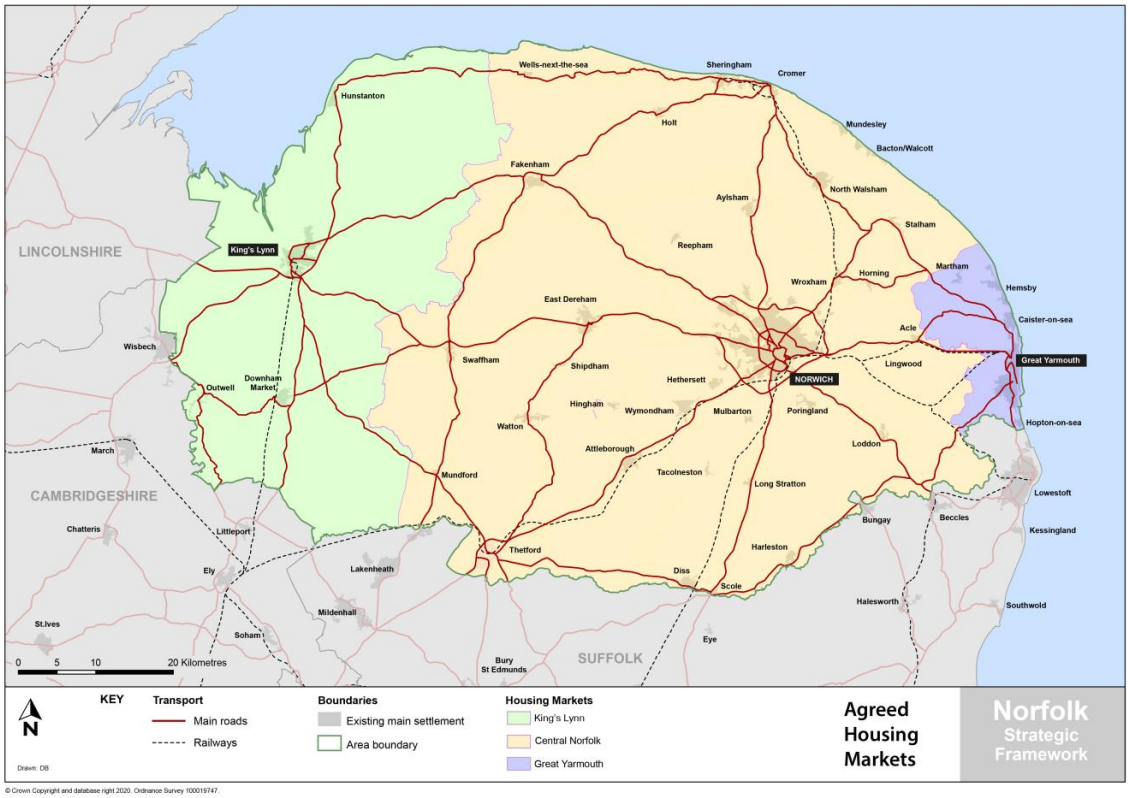

Figure 4: Map of Norfolk Agreed Housing Market Areas. *2021*

The housing needs of the Broads Authority Area are included within the Local Housing Needs Assessment for Great Yarmouth[16] and the related addendum[17] . The Broad Authority have also assessed the need for residential Moorings[18]. The new Government methodology cannot be used to calculate the housing requirements within the Broads area, therefore there remains a requirement for the Broads Authority to calculate a separate housing need when it reviews its local plan.

Local planning authorities are also expected to plan for the right mix of home types and tenures to reflect local needs. The evidence base for such planning is only currently available from the local SHMAs and HMAs.

[16] See Great Yarmouth Borough Council and The Broads Authority: Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 Version 2 - https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/432476/Great-Yarmouth-and-The-Broads-Authority-LHNA_Final-Version-2.pdf

[17] https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/569329/Local-Housing-Needs-Assessment-Addendum-March-2025.pdf

[18] See Broads Authority Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment - https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/439075/Broads-Authority-BDAA-Report-August-2022.pdf

To help understand for the right mix of home types and tenures King's Lynn and West Norfolk have commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment in 2020[19], North Norfolk has commissioned a SHMA update in 2019[20], Great Yarmouth commissioned a SHMA update in 2022. and Breckland commissioned a Housing Needs and Economic Development Assessment in 2023[21], which was further updated in 2025

3.3 Strategic Functional Economic Market Areas

Government guidance recognises that since patterns of economic activity vary from place to place, there is no standard approach to defining a functional economic market area. However in recognising these areas it is possible to define them by taking account of factors including:

- extent of any Local Economic Strategies within the area;
- travel to work areas;
- housing market area;
- flow of goods, services and information within the local economy;
- service market for consumers;
- administrative area;
- catchment areas of facilities providing cultural and social well-being; and
- transport networks.

Boundaries of Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) are illustrated over the page in Figure 5. Information on retail matters are captured within the existing evidence base supporting Local Plans[22]. Both these sources suggest that whilst Norwich is a major Regional Centre and draws trade from an extensive catchment across Norfolk and the wider region, both King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth retain a sufficient degree of self-containment to be considered in different functional economic market areas for most purposes.

It should also be noted that there are some very strong and significant cross boundary functional economic relationships. Great Yarmouth has particularly strong links with Lowestoft to the South. Within the Waveney Valley there are strong relationships between settlements on both sides of the County boundary. In the West of the County, King's Lynn in particular has functional economic linkages to the Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire Fens. Settlements such as King's Lynn, Downham Market and Thetford also benefit to some extent by good access to the Cambridge economy.

The position within the Central Norfolk area is again more complicated as for certain economic functions (such as higher order retail and cultural activities) the catchment area extends over the whole of Central Norfolk areas; there are far weaker connections in other areas of economic activity. In outer parts of the Central Norfolk area there is little functional connection for convenience shopping

[19] See West Norfolk Housing Needs Assessment - https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6252/2020_housing_needs_assessment.pdf

[20] See North Norfolk Housing Needs Assessment - https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/5528/shma-local-housing-needs-assessment-2019.pdf

[21] HEDNA-Final-Report May 2024 - https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/21638/HEDNA-Final-Report/pdf/Breckland_HEDNA_Final_Draft_Report_31.05.24_-_Clean_-_PDF.pdf

[22] See in particular the Employment, Town Centre and Retail Study for the greater Norwich Local Plan - https://gnlp.oc2.uk/document/14/4552#d4552

and the proportion of working residents who work in the Norwich urban area is very low[23]. Both Thetford and Mildenhall and Cromer and Sheringham are still regarded as being distinct Travel to Work Areas. These are illustrated below.

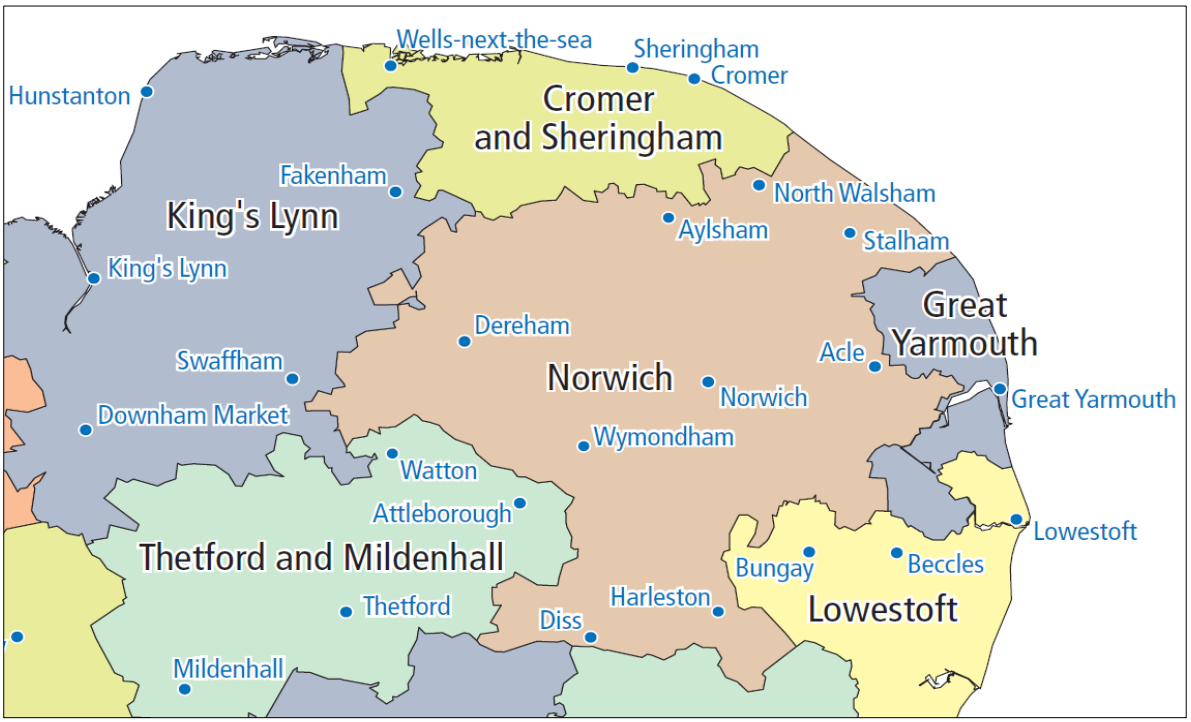

Figure 5: Norfolk's 2011 travel to work areas (TTWAs). Source: *ONS 2015*

The information available, including particularly the TTWAs and the higher retail analysis, suggests that the boundaries of strategic functional market areas are likely to be similar to the Housing Market Areas described above albeit, for many purposes significant sub-areas within these strategic areas will exist for a number of economic functions, especially within the Central Norfolk area.

3.4 Implications of Changing Infrastructure on Market Areas

Norfolk has benefitted from a number of significant improvements to its transport infrastructure. It is arguable that these, and others expected to be built over the next few years, have had, and will continue to have some effect on the functionality of the housing and economic markets. For example, the dualling of the A11 (Fiveways to Thetford) was completed and opened in December 2014, significantly improving the road connectivity between much of the County, Cambridge, the wider South East and the Midlands. The Third River Crossing at Great Yarmouth, which opened in February 2024, and the A47/A143 link road, which opened in December 2015, now better connect the A47 trunk road to the port and the southern peninsula of the town, and Great Yarmouth's Enterprise Zone at Beacon Park to further growth areas. The Broadland Northway, which was completed in Spring 2018, was a key part of the former Norwich Area Transportation Strategy, now reviewed and replaced by the Transport for Norwich Strategy which also includes proposals for a range of other

[23] The Central Norfolk SHMA identified the following settlements within the area of the 5 Central Norfolk Districts as having less than 10% of their resident workforce working in Norwich: Diss, Harleston, Sheringham, Swaffham, Thetford, Watton and Wells.

improvements across Norwich[24]. The county is served by two trunk roads, the A47 and A11. Government identified the Major Road Network, a category of the road network comprising the country's busiest and most economically important A class roads in local-authority control, which includes the A17, A140, A10, A134, A1270 and A146, all serving longer-distance trips.

The Government's most recent Roads Investment Strategy contains a number of improvement schemes for the A47 as part of the trunk road programme. These were due to be delivered by 2025, although this was delayed by a legal challenge which has now been dismissed:

- A47 Vauxhall and Gapton Roundabouts, Great Yarmouth
- A47 Blofield to Burlingham Dualling
- A47 Easton to Tuddenham Dualling
- A47/A11 Thickthorn junction

The Blofield and Easton schemes have started on site, Thickthorn is due to start in 2025, whilst the Vauxhall improvement scheme was cancelled in government's 2024 budget announcement.

Additionally further improvement to the main road network of the County will be delivered by the Long Stratton bypass which commenced in 2024.

The majority of rail services in Norfolk are operated by Greater Anglia. The nine-year franchise, which commenced in October 2016, has delivered a variety of improvements) including the following that are of particular significance for Norfolk:

- Replacement of the entire fleet of trains;
- More services and faster journeys across the network, including 'Norwich in 90' trains;
- Norwich to Cambridge services extended to Stansted Airport;
- Work with Network Rail to implement specific schemes to drive up performance and reliability throughout the franchise;
- Increase in seats into London in the morning peak period, and an increase of more than 1,000 seats per week on the franchise network; and
- Various other improvements including improvements to WiFi, stations and ticketing systems.

The Greater Anglia franchise will be brought under public control by autumn 2025. East Midlands Railway operates Norwich to Liverpool services whilst Great Northern operate King's Lynn, via Cambridge, to London services.

Priorities include improvement of the Cambridge to Norwich services to half hourly frequency, and construction of East West Rail, which would open up destinations such as Bedford, Oxford and Milton Keynes with direct rail services.

Whilst the recently delivered and announced infrastructure enhancements are welcomed and cumulatively will assist the County in reaching its economic potential it is not considered likely they will result in any significant change to the functional geography of the County in the immediate future with regard to either housing or economic markets. East/West travel across the County will remain relatively slow and lack reliability, therefore it is likely that both King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth will retain similar levels of self-containment in housing and economic matters as present. The functional

[24] See Transport for Norwich Strategy https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/media/21800/Transport-For-Norwich-Strategy-2021/pdf/51transport-for-norwich-strategy-2021.pdf for further information

geography of the County will remain broadly as it is at least for the period of the preparation of the next round of Local Plans.

In the revised NPPF the government retained the requirement to produce a Statement of Common Ground (SCG) over the housing market area or other agreed geographical area where justified and appropriate.
In light of this requirement and the above analysis of our functional economic geography it is the view of the Norfolk Local Planning Authorities that there is a strong case to produce a single statement of common ground across Norfolk rather than seeking to produce three separate ones based on one large and two small Housing Market Areas. The reasons for this are:

- The recognised desire of the government not to disrupt existing joint working arrangements where these are effective;
- The high overall rate of self-containment of the Norfolk economy;
- The somewhat weak functional relationship between the outer areas of the Central Norfolk Housing Market Area and its core and the similarity of the strategic issues faced by these outer areas with the adjoining coastal and rural areas of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and Great Yarmouth Boroughs; and
- The way in which the Broads Authority area overlaps both the Great Yarmouth and Central Norwich Housing Market Areas and five of the District planning authority areas which are signatories to this Framework.

Furthermore the shared understanding of economic geography has led to a number of agreements being reached about appropriate Local Planning areas for Norfolk.

Agreement 4 - That Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn and West Norfolk will each continue to prepare separate Local Plans for their areas.

With regard to Central Norfolk, the evidence does suggest that there may be some possibility for some of the growth pressures evident within the five Districts of Central Norfolk to be met within the different administrative areas of Central Norfolk. These five District authorities (Breckland, Broadland, North Norfolk, Norwich City and South Norfolk, along with the Broads Authority that partly overlaps 4 of their administrative areas) already co-operate closely. However, as noted above the Central Norfolk Housing Market Area is broad and contains places that have little relationship within one another and a weaker relationship with Norwich at the centre of the area. In the light of this the Local Authorities have reached agreement that whilst it will be necessary to closely co-operate on strategic planning matters and shared evidence, it is considered appropriate to seek to plan jointly over the area closer to Norwich with much stronger functional connectivity.

Agreement 5 - That Breckland and North Norfolk will continue to prepare separate Local Plans for their areas whilst Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council will implement the Greater Norwich Local Plan (adopted March 2024) and various other existing Local Plan documents in this area, whilst also considering how best to address national changes to local plan making. The issue of whether it is appropriate to define any sub market areas or not will be a matter for those Plans. This approach does not preclude the possible redistribution of growth across the Central Norfolk area should this be supported by evidence and agreed by the relevant planning authorities.

Furthermore, the Broads Authority Area overlaps functional housing and travel to work areas of Central Norfolk, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Agreement 6 - That, in view of the very distinct issues facing the Broads Authority Area, spatial planning matters will continue to be best addressed by way of a standalone Broads Local Plan.

For further information on the current Local Plans in the County and the timetable for review please see the latest minutes of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum[25].

3.5 Other Joint Initiatives and Neighbouring Strategic Partnerships

Given the high degree of self-containment in relation to the housing market and travel to work areas the framework relates principally to the county of Norfolk although where appropriate cross boundary initiatives are in place. For example, planners from all of the Norfolk and Suffolk coastal local planning authorities, including the Broads Authority have worked together to produce a separate 'Coastal' Statement of Common ground [26] and have also produced a coastal adaption Supplementary Planning Document. Other joint working arrangements include a Statement of common ground between Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk and the Cambridge Norwich Tech corridor; further details of cross boundary initiatives are in appendix 2.

Norfolk is bounded by Suffolk to the south and Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire to the west. Strategic partnerships are being developed in these neighbouring areas in response to national objectives for additional homes, jobs and enhanced infrastructure.

Following the formation of the Combined Authority (CA) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the CA produced the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Spatial Framework[27] in March 2018 which brings together the current growth ambitions of the area, and how the Combined Authority can support local jobs and housing growth ambitions. The Combined Authority are engaging with its partners and other stakeholders to continue to develop the second half of the Strategic Spatial Framework.

In Suffolk, the Suffolk's Inclusive Growth Framework [28] has been refreshed and relaunched by the Suffolk Growth Partnership in November 2020. The Framework brings together the shared growth work that is being taken forward across Suffolk into a single, cohesive programme.

The Framework:

- Presents the starting point and ambitions to allow local authorities to engage with communities, partners and Government with a clear and consistent message
- Sets out a single, concise summary of the work being taken forward to plan, coordinate and deliver growth across Suffolk

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[25] See Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf

[26] See Statement of common ground coastal zone planning report - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/partnerships/strategic-member-forum/nspmf-statement-of-common-ground-coastal-zone-planning-report-180712.pdf

[27] See Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Spatial Framework - https://stneotsmasterplan.co.uk/reports/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-spatial-framework/

[28] See Suffolk's Inclusive Growth Framework - https://27ea8bdd-fa24-451b-baf1-35bcfe30437b.filesusr.com/ugd/43f74e_988022cc644f4ac79d4bf0743468fa32.pdf f

- Enables connections between programmes of work across the public sector, thereby minimising duplication and ensuring greater benefit is delivered through our investments

To the west of Norfolk, the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan[29] was adopted in March 2019 by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee is a partnership of Boston Borough, South Holland District and Lincolnshire County Councils who are working together to plan the future of South Holland District and Boston Borough.

Across the wider region Norfolk is represented at the East of England Local Government Association and on the East of England Planning Officers' Group (EEPO) The role of the latter is to coordinate technical and policy work relevant to councils in the East of England on strategic economic, planning and infrastructure challenges, with a particular focus on engagement with London and the Wider South East.

Norfolk Authorities will continue to work with authorities in the region through their strategic partnerships and national initiatives to ensure a complementary, integrated approach to growth and to optimise investment opportunities to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

[29] See South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - http://www.southeastlincslocalplan.org/adopted-plan/

Section 4 – Projections of growth

As a baseline for planning activity published projections for the County must be considered, including projections regarding population, households and employment. These are summarised below. However, it should be recognised that these are statistical projections and tend to be very heavily based on the extrapolation of past trends. In forward planning it is essential that other factors are given due weight. This is done in subsequent sections of this document and these projections are only produced for information.

4.1 Population Projections

The most recent set of national population projections were published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in March of 2020[30]. These show an increase in the rate of overall population growth from the 2016 ONS figures, Table 1 shows a growth in population levels of 13-14% over the period from 2018-2041 and 2042. Districts are projected to see a significant variation in levels of population growth of between 5% in King's Lynn and West Norfolk and 28% in South Norfolk.

Table 1: Current and projected population numbers for Norfolk Districts 2018 based. ***Source: ONS,***

District	2018 (000's)	2041 (000's)	Population growth 2018-204 (%)41	2042 (000's)	Population growth 2018-2042
Breckland	139.3	162.8	17	163.6	17
Broadland	129.5	149.4	15	150.2	16
Great Yarmouth	99.4	106.1	7	106.5	7
King's Lynn And West Norfolk	151.8	159.4	5	159.8	5
North Norfolk	104.6	117.2	12	117.7	13
Norwich	141.1	151.7	8	152.0	8
South Norfolk	138	174.9	27	176.0	28
Norfolk	903.7	1,021.7	13	1,025.8	14

It should be noted that these projections do not take into account existing planned growth. This would suggest a somewhat different distribution of population growth between the Greater Norwich authorities.

The population projections also contain considerable information of the age profile of the population. This is potentially of considerable strategic significance for Norfolk which will have major implications for Local Authority services and will need to be considered in Local Plans. The projected age profiles are set out in the Table 2 and 3 over the page.

[30]Available at ONS population projections - https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2

Table 2: Existing population numbers (000s) and % by age quartiles (2018) and projected population numbers and % by age quartiles (2041) of Norfolk Districts. *Source: ONS*

	2018				2041			
District	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**
Breckland	139.3	29.5 (21.2)	75.3 (54.1)	33.5 (24)	162.8	31.1 (19.1)	79.9 (49.1)	51.7 (31.8)
Broadland	129.5	26.4 (20.4)	69.9 (54)	33.2 (25.6)	149.4	28.5 (19.1)	74.8 (50.1)	46.1 (30.9)
Great Yarmouth	99.4	22 (22)	53.4 (53.7)	24 (24.1)	106.1	20.5 (19.3)	52.2 (49.2)	33.5 (31.6)
King's Lynn And West Norfolk	151.8	32.2 (21.2)	80.4 (53)	39.1 (25.8)	159.4	30.5 (19.1)	76.5 (48.0)	52.4 (32.9)
North Norfolk	104.6	18.1 (17.3)	52.2 (49.9)	34.3 (32.8)	117.2	17.4 (14.8)	52.4 (44.7)	47.4 (40.4)
Norwich	141.1	31.7 (22.5)	88.5 (62.7)	21 (14.9)	151.7	31.0 (20.4)	92.8 (61.2)	27.9 (18.4)
South Norfolk	138	30.6 (22.2)	74.3 (53.8)	33.1 (24)	174.9	35.9 (20.5)	88.7 (50.7)	50.3 (28.8)
Norfolk	**903.7**	**190.5 (21.1)**	**494 (54.7)**	**219.3 (24.3)**	1,021.7	**195.1 (19.1)**	**517.3 (50.6)**	**309.4 (30.3)**

Table 3a: Existing population numbers (000s) and % by age quartiles (2018) and projected population numbers and % by age quartiles (2042) of Norfolk Districts. *Source: ONS*

	2018				2042			
District	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**
Breckland	139.3	29.5 (21.2)	75.3 (54.1)	33.5 (24)	163.6	31.4 (19.2)	80.3 (49.1)	51.9 (31.7)
Broadland	129.5	26.4 (20.4)	69.9 (54)	33.2 (25.6)	150.2	28.7 (19.1)	75.2 (50.1)	46.2 (30.8)
Great Yarmouth	99.4	22 (22)	53.4 (53.7)	24 (24.1)	106.5	20.5 (19.2)	52.3 (49.1)	33.6 (31.5)
King's Lynn And West Norfolk	151.8	32.2 (21.2)	80.4 (53)	39.1 (25.8)	159.8	30.6 (19.1)	76.7 (48.0)	52.5 (32.9)
North Norfolk	104.6	18.1 (17.3)	52.2 (49.9)	34.3 (32.8)	117.7	17.5 (14.9)	52.6 (44.7)	47.6 (40.4)
Norwich	141.1	31.7 (22.5)	88.5 (62.7)	21 (14.9)	152.0	31.2 (20.5)	92.9 (61.1)	27.9 (18.4)
South Norfolk	138	30.6 (22.2)	74.3 (53.8)	33.1 (24)	176.0	36.2 (20.6)	89.3 (50.7)	50.5 (28.7)
Norfolk	**903.7**	**190.5 (21.1)**	**494 (54.7)**	**219.3 (24.3)**	1,025.8	**196.1 (19.1)**	**519.5 (50.6)**	**310.3 (30.2)**

Table 4: Change in 000s between 2018 and 2041. Difference between 'All People' for each district between 2018 and 2041 in %. *Source: ONS*

		Difference between 2018 and 2041		
District	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**
Breckland	23.5	1.6 (-2.1)	4.6 (-5)	18.2 (7.8)
Broadland	19.9	2.1 (-1.3)	4.9 (-3.9)	12.9 (5.3)
Great Yarmouth	6.7	-1.5 (-2.7)	-1.2 (-4.5)	9.5 (7.5)
King's Lynn And West Norfolk	7.6	-1.7 (-2.1)	-3.9 (-5)	13.3 (7.1)
North Norfolk	12.6	-0.7 (-2.5)	0.2 (-5.2)	13.1 (7.6)
Norwich	10.6	-0.7 (-2.1)	4.3 (-1.5)	6.9 (3.5)
South Norfolk	36.9	5.3 (-1.7)	14.4 (-3.1)	17.2 (4.8)
Norfolk	**118**	4.6 (-2)	23.3 (-4.1)	90.1 (6)

Table 5a: Change in 000s between 2018 and 2042. Difference between 'All People' for each district between 2018 and 2042 in %. *Source: ONS*

		Difference between 2018 and 2042		
District	**All people (000s)**	**000s aged 0-19 (%)**	**000s aged 20-64 (%)**	**000s aged 65+ (%)**
Breckland	24.3	1.9 (-2)	5 (-5)	18.4 (7.7)
Broadland	20.7	2.3 (-1.3)	5.3 (3.9)	13 (5.2)
Great Yarmouth	7.1	-1.5 (-2.8)	-1.1 (4.6)	9.6 (7.4)
King's Lynn And West Norfolk	8	-1.6 (2.1)	-3.7 (-5)	13.4 (7.1)
North Norfolk	13.1	-0.6 (2.4)	0.4 (5.2)	13.3 (7.6)
Norwich	10.9	-0.5 (2)	4.4 (1.6)	6.9 (3.5)
South Norfolk	38	5.6 (1.6)	15 (3.1)	17.4 (4.7)
Norfolk	**122.1**	5.6 (-2)	25.5 (4.1)	91 (5.9)

These tables show that whilst the overall population of the County is projected to grow steadily at a relatively modest rate, the change in the age profile is more significant with nearly 80% of the total increase being accounted for by growth in the over 65s[31]. Between the ages of 20 and 64 population growth is projected to be slow, with only a 4.7% growth rate over the 23 year period, whilst the numbers of 0-19 years olds are projected to grow very slowly by just 2.4%.These numbers do vary

[31] Total growth in population age 65 plus is 78,200

somewhat between individual districts (with Norwich being notably less affected by an ageing population) but the growth in the elderly population is projected to affect most parts of the County and will create significant issues given current models for funding social care and education provision. These issues are not considered further in the framework but the issues relating to housing are considered further in the housing section.

The 2021 Health profile for England[32] suggests:

- In the decade prior to the pandemic in England, improvements in life expectancy had slowed down. The very high level of excess deaths due to the pandemic caused life expectancy in England to fall in 2020, by 1.3 years for males and 0.9 years for females..
- The number of years spent in poor health is increasing. This will impact the need for particular housing, transport and service delivery solutions

Deprivation and inequality continue to be key and enduring factors in poor health outcomes and so need addressing. Consequently, access to housing and employment and the impact of spatial and economic planning on these factors needs consideration.

4.2 Household Projections

The most recent set of household projections were published in June 2020[33]. Similar patterns of growth are shown as for population, but it should be noted that these projections do not take into account growth planned in existing Local Plans which may influence the scale and distribution of the growth in households. The new household projections also show greater growth in the more rural districts compared to previous versions of the projections.

Table 6: ONS 2018 household projections. ***Source: ONS***

District	2011	2018	2041	Household growth 2018-(%)2041	2042	Household growth 2018-2042(%)
Breckland	54,522	58,612	72,054	23	72,551	24
Broadland	53,343	55,676	66,619	20	67,041	20
Great Yarmouth	41,988	43,350	49,339	14	49,576	14
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	62,928	64,461	71,019	10	71,313	11
North Norfolk	46,033	48,049	57,111	19	57,448	20
Norwich	59,587	62,616	69,419	11	69,612	11
South Norfolk	52,825	58,973	78,565	33	79,213	34
Norfolk	**371,225**	**391,737**	**464,126**	**18**	**466,813**	**19**

[32] Health Profile for England 2021 (phe.org.uk) https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profile-for-england/hpfe_report.html

[33] See Household projections for England - Office for National Statistics- https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/householdprojectionsforengland

4.3 Employment Projections

Until recently East of England Local Authorities have used the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM) to better understand the development needs of their area. The last run of this model was completed in 2017 and since then individual Local Authorities have commissioned data as it has been required for local Plans. But to help aid planning going forward Norfolk authorities agreed to commission a county wide set of economic data projections through Oxford Economics. These projections provide a set of baseline forecasts designed to facilitate the setting of consistent housing and jobs targets.

Table 5 sets out the headline results for Norfolk Districts from the data projections produced in 2024. As with any projections, these results need to be treated with a degree of caution. They are "policy neutral" and assume that policy context in the future remains broadly as it has in the past. They cannot reflect the impact of any recent or future interventions that may be made through infrastructure investment, Economic Strategies or Local Plans. In addition, the reliability of a number of the underlying datasets decreases at smaller scales, and economic activity is not limited by council boundaries, so individual sector and District forecasts should be treated as being broadly indicative.

Overall, the model shows that without additional intervention total job levels in the Norfolk economy are projected to grow at relatively modest rates over the next 25 years with most of the growth projected taking place within Greater Norwich.

Table 7: Total Job based employment by district. ***Source: Oxford Economics 2024***

Districts	Total employment (000's)				2016-2041 growth (000's)	2016-2042 growth (000's)
	2011	**2016**	**2041**	**2042**		
Breckland	50.7	58.6	63.6	63.6	5	5
Broadland	55.1	55.4	68.7	68.9	13.3	13.5
Great Yarmouth	42.6	43.9	44	44	0.1	0.1
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	63.1	68.7	78.2	78.3	9.5	9.6
North Norfolk	39.6	42.8	46.3	46.3	3.5	3.5
Norwich	91.6	99.3	110.2	110.7	10.9	11.4
South Norfolk	56.5	60.9	87	87.7	26.1	26.8
Greater Norwich*	203.7	215.7	265.9	267.3	50.2	51.6
Norfolk	399.2	429.6	498	499.4	68.4	69.8

*Broadland, Norwich & South Norfolk

Note: The Broads does not have its own jobs figures but any jobs delivered contribute to district target.

Section 5 – The Economy

Strategic Economic Objectives

To realise the economic potential of Norfolk and its people by:

- facilitating the development and infrastructure needed to support the region's business sectors and clusters, driving economic growth through the enhancement of productivity, skills and education to provide widening opportunities;
- fully exploiting the economic opportunities offered by the economic success and global reputation of Cambridge;
- providing for job growth broadly matching increases in housing provision and improving the alignment between the locations of workplaces and homes;
- ensuring effective and sustainable digital connections and transport infrastructure between and within Norfolk's main settlements and across county boundaries to strengthen inward investment;
- strengthening Norfolk's connections to the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond by boosting inward investment and international trade through rail, road, sea, air and digital connectivity infrastructure;
- strengthening Norfolk's competitiveness through the delivery of well-planned balanced new developments providing access to a range of business space as well as high quality residential, well serviced by local amenities and high quality educational facilities;
- recognising the role of our city centre and the need to re-examine and revitalise the role of town centres as a focus for investment and enhancing the quality of life for residents;
- recognising that the long term conservation, investment in and enhancement of Norfolk's natural environment and heritage is a key element of the county's competitiveness and contributor to the Norfolk economy;
- ensuring a healthy workforce through well planned sustainable communities where people can walk and cycle to work or use public transport or work effectively from home;
- recognise that high quality housing underpins economic growth;
- Maximising opportunities that a clean/green economic recovery presents for the region and the new jobs which will be required to achieve the Governments net zero target

5.1 Strategic Priority Areas

It is clear that Local Authorities will need to continue to work collaboratively with one another and businesses in order to deliver the step change in economic performance that is necessary to deliver the shared objectives. The Norfolk Economic Strategy is an overarching document outlining the county's approach to economic growth over the next period of 2024-2029. The strategy has been developed based on a comprehensive evidence base and through 17 engagement sessions across the county, with over 500 organisations engaged. The strategy aligns with district council local plans, which are included in the evidence base. As part of the process, Norfolk district councils reviewed the draft document, to feedback and request amendments/additions to the document, which were then incorporated. The Norfolk Economic Strategy provides an overview of Norfolk's economy and key priority areas of focus to address economic growth, which is also inclusive and sustainable growth, aligned to the needs of urban, rural and coastal areas of Norfolk. Strengths, opportunities and challenges for growth are listed against the main pillars of the strategy; key priorities are highlighted with actions listed under each priority and measures of impact. The headline key priority areas within the strategy, are as follows:

Priorities for local businesses

- Support businesses in high-value clusters to grow, innovate and generate more local value
- Grow, strengthen and future proof our business base, targeting needs of SMEs
- Ensure businesses in all places across Norfolk can succeed, prioritising growth in strategic sites and areas
- Support businesses to provide quality jobs, wages and conditions

Priorities for People and Skills

- Inspire life-long learning and workforce training
- Build the talent and supply of appropriately skilled new entrants to the workforce
- Equip and future-proof the Norfolk workforce to take advantage of digital and emerging green technologies
- Supporting collaboration, efficiency and skills system leadership

Priorities for Infrastructure

- Ensuring the enabling infrastructure is in place to support growth across Norfolk
- Improving transport connectivity
- Sustainable development, decarbonisation and climate change adaptation

Priorities for Placemaking and Communities

- Support all places across Norfolk to provide a high quality of life
- Strengthen communities and social infrastructure, support resident wellbeing and increase pride of place
- Promote Norfolk as a place to live, work, visit and invest
- Protect and enhance Norfolk's environment, heritage and cultural assets

5.2 Context

Norfolk is a £20bn economy with globally important research strengths. Employment and levels of trade are both higher than the East of England average. Norwich, a fast growing city with two universities, combines its rich cultural, social and architectural heritage with a dynamic, modern and creative business base which is accompanied by world class education and research centres. King's Lynn plays an anchor role as a major employment and education centre for the west of the county. Market towns are important centres of innovation, employment and culture, including the expansion of the market towns of Attleborough and Thetford, benefiting from the A11 tech corridor . On the coast, Great Yarmouth is at the forefront of both social and physical regeneration and the UK's offshore energy sector.

There is still work to do though. Earnings and skills levels in Norfolk are lower than in the country as a whole. Norfolk also has communities, both rural and urban, facing barriers to employment and experiencing health inequalities.

Norfolk's communities and businesses have proved resilient in the face of recent economic pressures, sustaining relatively high levels of employment and a high quality of life. But the cumulative pressures of increasing costs and uncertainty in the wider economic and investment outlook have created real difficulties for local people. This has exacerbated long term inequalities within Norfolk in wages, healthy life expectancy and business' ability to grow and succeed.

Overall, Norfolk's economic growth rate and productivity has remained below that of the UK. This increases pressure on wages, limits business' ability to invest and reduces opportunities for our communities. While this Strategic Framework addresses development matters (broadly speaking, building and changes in the use of land), it is recognised that to be fully effective this needs to be

complementary to other programmes and measures at the district, county, regional and national levels. In the light of the factors mentioned above, endeavours to promote 'inclusive growth' are especially relevant such as developing skills, community aspiration and capacity; recognising and nurturing the contributions of voluntary and community sectors; the quality of job opportunities, etc.

Whilst many districts have their own economic development strategies, the importance of working collaboratively across district boundaries is recognised. This Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework provides one of the foundations for cooperation as does the Norfolk Economic Strategy.

The Government published Invest 2035: the UK's modern industrial strategy in October 2024 for consultation. The industrial strategy is the UK government's proposed 10-year plan for the economy. It aims to deliver the certainty and stability businesses need to invest in the high-growth sectors and drive long-term economic growth.

This will underpin how Norfolk can target local needs and priorities whilst aligning with government strategy which is prioritising growth in certain sectors with high potential. The ambition is for Norfolk to become a national example of how to develop a new model for growth, that builds on the important work of the former Local Enterprise Partnership, in supporting and developing key sectors and maintaining a powerful business voice. Combined with a wider focus on place, skills and regeneration, it can take an integrated approach, driving new investment in businesses and communities. Norfolk partners are committed to addressing and mitigating the impact of climate change, led by the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership. All of the Norfolk Districts have formally endorsed the Norfolk Economic Strategy and there is a good record of collaboration on specific economic development projects.

The Norfolk Local Authorities are committed to strengthened collaboration and focus on new initiatives and interventions to help nurture economic growth in higher value, knowledge based sectors across Norfolk.

5.2.1 Climate Change

In November 2020 the government set out ambitions for investment in clean energy, transport and energy efficiency, designed to support the country's 2050 net zero emissions target and to support up to 250,000 new jobs. The 10-point plan[34] includes commitments on offshore wind, low carbon hydrogen production, electric vehicles and nuclear. Ten Point Plan are:

1. Advancing Offshore Wind
2. Driving the Growth of Low Carbon Hydrogen
3. Delivering New and Advanced Nuclear Power
4. Accelerating the Shift to Zero Emission Vehicles
5. Green Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
6. Jet Zero and Green Ships
7. Greener Buildings
8. Investing in Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage
9. Protecting Our Natural Environment
10. Green Finance and Innovation

[34] See The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/936567/10_POINT_PLAN_BOOKLET.pdf

5.2.2 Norfolk's Key Economic Sectors

There are significant geographic clusters of existing business activity that anchor the Norfolk economy, with a number of these offering significant potential for growth. The Norfolk Economic Strategy identifies 6 key high growth and emerging sectors:

- Clean Energy
- Agri-Tech and Food Tech
- Life Sciences
- Financial Services and Insurance
- Digital Tech
- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering

Clean Energy

Norfolk is a global leader for offshore wind with £39bn of clean energy investment forecasted over the next 20 years. The Southern North Sea offshore wind market is poised to increase significantly in both pace and scale to meet expectations around Net Zero. The Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone will produce clean power for over four million homes across the UK. Norfolk's energy sector has a GVA per head of £153.9k, which is the highest of all sectors and will help to raise average wage levels in Norfolk.

With some of the world's biggest wind farms and a major Operations and Maintenance Campus, Great Yarmouth generates over £1.8bn GV. Bacton Gas Terminal in North Norfolk manages around 30% of UK gas supplies and offers significant opportunities to deliver carbon capture, utilisation and storage.

The key challenge is to ensure that local people in severely deprived communities benefit from jobs and new skills, so that it can maintain a lasting legacy for the local economy from these key nationally significant infrastructure projects.

Life Sciences

Norwich Research Park (NRP) is a world-leading research base, at the forefront of global food and health research. It is Europe's largest single site hub of research, training, education, and enterprise in food and health. It has four research institutes, a University Hospital and over 30 companies. The growing site has approximately 30,000 talented people - 12,000 of whom are scientists (including 3,000 researchers and clinicians) and continues to grow.

The Research Park is set to be a key centre for Life Sciences, a sector which the government has decided to prioritise in their Modern Industrial Strategy. This exciting industry is leading to spin outs and commercialisation of research, significantly enhancing Norfolk's innovation ecosystem.

.**Agri-Tech and Food Tech**

Norfolk's Agri-Food and Agri-Tech cluster is a major asset in both expertise and scale. It is central to the nation's challenges around food security and climate change, home to globally leading research and innovation at Norwich Research Park (NRP) that is supporting Agri-Tech, agribiotech and food tech, as recognised by the £7.5m Innovate UK Launchpad.

Norfolk also has a growing environmental services sector spearheaded by projects at Gressenhall and Shropham providing nature-based solutions to environmental challenges which work alongside agriculture and food production, whilst supporting development across the County.

Financial Services and Insurance

Financial Services is a significant sector for Norfolk, with specialisms in insurance and Insurtech. Financial services and insurance represent Norfolk's second highest sector in terms of GVA per head at a value of £136.8k.

Financial services, one of the eight growth-driving sectors listed in the government's Modern Industrial Strategy, and insurance generate 20% of Norwich's total GVA. If current momentum is built on, and Norfolk's GVA per capita approaches the average for England, this sector could generate a net additional £5bn per year (a 25% increase). This requires a multi-pronged effort to create and expand new businesses and jobs, attract more large companies to Norfolk and smartly leverage major investments like offshore wind. In addition to Norwich, Broadland Gate Business Park presents another growth opportunity for financial and professional services. Its key location gives businesses access to the city and to major transport routes and is a catalyst for inward investment into the region. It has played a significant role in the high levels of growth seen in Broadland in recent years: in 2021 it had the highest GVA of £3.9bn across all industries, including a peak for financial and insurance activities of £1.7bn.

Digital Tech

Norfolk is home to a fast-growing digital tech economy with a current GVA of £450m and around 9,000 employees and is increasingly important across a range of sectors and in its own right. Digital Tech, a priority sector in the government's Modern Industrial Strategy, is a nationally important industry. There are a number of locations in Norfolk that are supporting the incubation of early-stage tech companies and providing access to much needed early-stage support.

Advanced Manufacturing and engineering

Norfolk is home to 2150 advanced manufacturing and engineering companies, with an even distribution across the

county, generating GVA of £2bn (10% of Norfolk's total GVA). There are multiple specialisms within Norfolk - including food and drink, automotive, aerospace, pharmaceutical, safety equipment and civil engineering -benefiting from the A11 tech corridor between Norwich and Cambridge incorporating Snetterton Commercial Hub and the two urban extensions at Attleborough and Thetford. This makes the county an important centre in this sector identified by the government as a priority. Opportunities also exist across the clean energy supply chain.

5.2.3 Norfolk's Foundational Economic Sectors

The Norfolk Economic strategy also sets out the Foundational economy which provides a high number of jobs, contributes to GVA and supports Norfolk's residents:

- Culture, Heritage and Visitor Economy
- Construction
- Health and Social Care

Culture, Heritage and Visitor Economy

The Economic Strategy looks to build on Norfolk's rich heritage and culture, while enhancing tourism opportunities and bringing our local communities together. Culture, heritage and visitor economy is a place-centered concept which describes the assets, infrastructure and services - including hospitality, retail, attractions and events - which support visitors and tourists. It is one of Norfolk's largest economic sectors and makes up close to 20 per cent of all jobs in the county – many of them in the most deprived coastal areas. In 2022, tourism trips alone provided the Norfolk economy with a total value of £3.4bn. Norfolk has a wealth of visitor amenities and tourist attractions. Norwich is a Medieval city, boasting a Norman cathedral and refurbished castle, with an internationally significant art gallery and historic market place. Coastal locations from Great Yarmouth, through Cromer and Holt, round to Hunstanton are long-established and much-loved holiday destinations, with stunning beaches such as Gorleston on- Sea. Equally well loved are Norfolk's distinctive market towns, with their rich heritage and thriving centres.

The natural environment boasts a range of amenities including the Broads which has a status equivalent to a National Park, the Brecks and the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape. Collaboration with partner organisations, including Visit East of England, will be essential for the continued success of the sector. All these organisations have important local knowledge and networks and are already delivering so much for the county in this sector. There is also the opportunity for further investment around under-utilised heritage assets (such as the Guildhall in King's Lynn) and in the upkeep of existing assets like the Winter Gardens in Great Yarmouth or Cromer Clifftop Gardens.

Construction

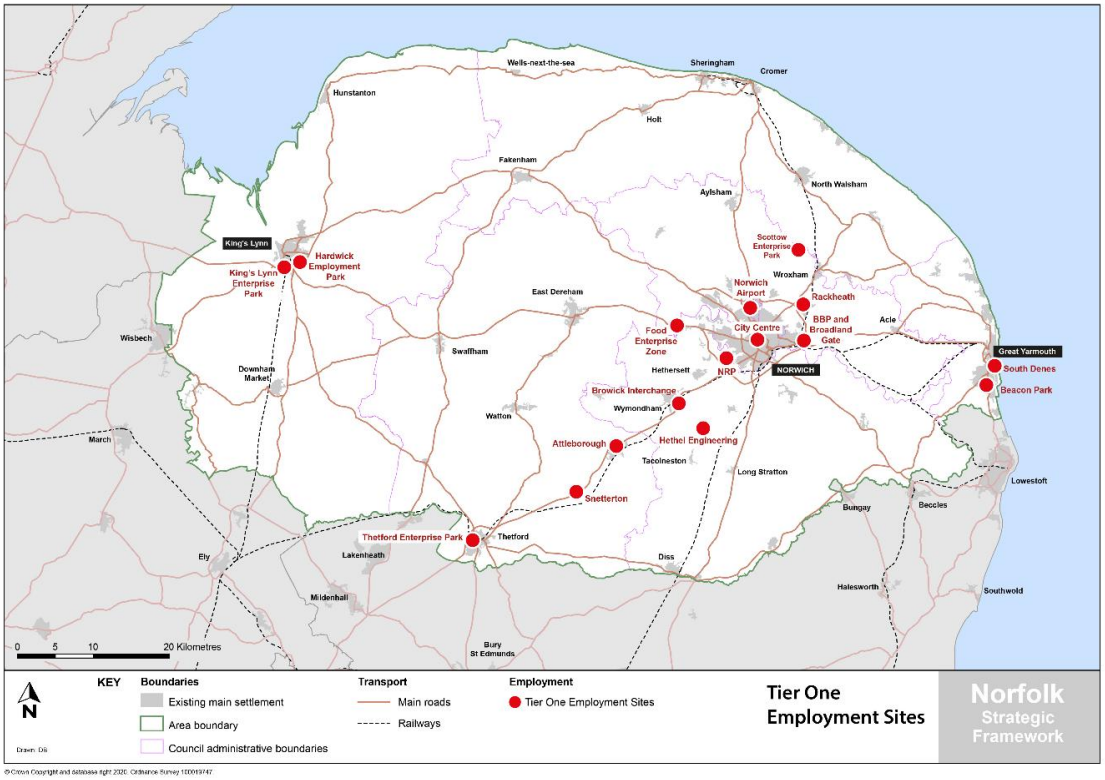
The Construction sector is a key part of the Norfolk economy and is a regional specialism for the East of England. It is currently responsible for £1.36bn of Norfolk GVA and employs a workforce of 25,361. Jobs growth in the sector is forecasted to be 12.7% between 2022 and 2033, the highest of any foundational sector.

Health and Social Care

Health and Social care is a significant sector for Norfolk, employing over 60,710 people and contributing £2.1bn in GVA. It is important to future proof this sector, with an ageing population there will be a high demand for Health and Social care provision. Norfolk currently has a market of over 500 providers of care services but needs to do more to keep up with the increasing demands for the sector. To meet government targets of reducing waiting times for appointments and to create further appointments in the NHS, further investment is required in the training and development of healthcare professionals. The UEA Dentistry School and the College of West Anglia Nursing School will enhance skills and development in their respective areas and help to attract healthcare professionals to Norfolk.

5.3 Strategic Employment Sites

Strategic employment sites have been agreed through joint activity on economic development and inward investment. They are all located in the growth locations identified in the Norfolk Economic Strategy and are targeted at the Norfolk Economic Strategy's key sectors.



Together they form a package of sites that provides a comprehensive offer for inward investment and strategic growth, a number of which have Enterprise Zone status. The number and availability of these sites gives Norfolk an economic advantage in attracting certain types of inward investment. In addition, as a result of their scale and type, these sites have additional potential through existing and planned close cross-boundary working. By their nature some of these sites form part of wider functional economic areas which span district/county boundaries, increasing potential for joint collaboration to enhance economic growth.

Agreement 7 recognises that these Tier 1 sites[35] should be protected from loss to alternative uses such as housing which is consistent with government policy which proposes that employment sites identified as "strategic" will not be subject to reduced protection from residential development. It is therefore proposed that the Tier 1 employment sites identified in Table 8 are formally recognised as "strategic" employment sites within Agreement 7.

[35] Tier 1 Employment sites are site identified by local authorities as significant in size (greater than 10 Hectares), Support key strategic sectors and support key growth locations.

Table 8: Tier one employment sites, sector, location and size. *2024*

Site	Supports N&S Economic Strategy's Key Sector(s)	N&S Economic Strategy's Growth Location	Land available (approx.)
Attleborough	Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Tech Corridor	10 ha
Broadland Business Park area - plots on existing BBP - BBP Laurel Farm - St Andrews northside, - Broadland Gate	Financial services ICT & Digital Creative	Greater Norwich	55ha
Browick Interchange (Wymondham)	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering. ICT and Digital	Tech Corridor	20 ha
Food Enterprise Zone Honingham/Easton	Food, Drink & Agriculture	Greater Norwich / Tech-corridor	10 ha
Great Yarmouth Enterprise Zone and Energy Park sites: - Beacon Park (EZ) - South Denes (EZ & EP)	Energy	Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft	13.5ha 25ha
Hardwick extension (King's Lynn)	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering ICT and Digital Creative	King's Lynn and Downham Market (A10)	27 ha
Hethel Engineering Centre and Technology Park	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering	Greater Norwich Tech Corridor	20ha
King's Lynn Enterprise Park (part EZ)	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering ICT and Digital Creative	King's Lynn and Downham Market (A10 corridor)	17 ha (EZ)
Norwich City Centre	ICT and Digital Creative Financial Services Tourism and Culture	Greater Norwich	Multiple Sites
Norwich Airport - Aeropark - Southern area (around Hurricane Way) - Airport business park	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering	Greater Norwich	75ha+
Norwich Research Park (part Enterprise Zone)	Life Sciences Food, Drink & Agriculture	Greater Norwich Tech Corridor	40ha (EZ 25ha)
Rackheath	Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Greater Norwich	25 ha
Scottow Enterprise Park	Logistics Energy	Greater Norwich/ North Norfolk	26 ha
Snetterton	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering	Tech corridor	68ha
Thetford Enterprise Park	Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Food, Drink & Agriculture	Tech corridor	18ha

Agreement 7 - The above list of locations are the Tier One Employment sites and should be the focus of investment to drive increasing economic development in key sectors and protected from loss to other uses.

This list will need to be kept under review in the light of emerging Economic Strategy priorities and the progress on Local Plans.

5.4 Key Cross-Boundary Economic Issues and Interventions

This section identifies the principal strategic economic matters and other matters which can only be fully addressed through development plans in (or across) more than one local planning authority area. It therefore does not include a wide range of matters which whilst they are recognised as very important, but which do not meet the specific definition of strategic development 'Duty to Cooperate' matters laid down by the Localism Act. These include the generality of

- rural economy (including agriculture);
- tourism and recreation;
- development of market towns;
- Coastal Change.

Development associated with and supporting these is addressed through individual local plans and informal joint working between local planning authorities, and these issues are addressed more widely through economic and other strategies. Neither is this section intended to include every economic issue that requires cross-boundary working, but just those of an extensive or special significance from a Norfolk wide perspective.

5.4.1 The role of Greater Norwich

Norwich and its immediate hinterland is the prime economic generator in the County. Its influence, and the policy measures required to make the most of this extend well beyond both the City Council's boundaries and the existing urban area.

A large part of the county depends upon the vibrancy of the city for employment, services, higher order retail, culture and leisure. It also has an economic importance as a public transport hub. The vibrancy and focus of activity in the city centre also attracts significant numbers of visitors and helps make the wider area an appealing place to live, work, invest and locate businesses. The economy of this wide area of influence will benefit from ensuring that the city is accessible; the centre continues to thrive and is attractive to inward investment; and out of centre development complements the overall offer.

The Broadland Northway supports the delivery of planned housing and jobs to the north and north-east of Norwich and has improved strategic access to a wide area of Broadland and North Norfolk. Realising the full range of economic opportunities will benefit from cooperation. The Airport supports the economy of the area including the off shore energy sector.

Broadland, Norwich, and South Norfolk, with Norfolk and the Broads Authority are working through the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) on the planning of the area.

The Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan[36] identifies the projects from the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan[37] the delivery of which is considered to be a priority for achieving the economic growth targets, as set out in the Joint Core Strategy and the Greater Norwich City Deal. The Greater Norwich Growth Programme identifies infrastructure schemes to be prioritised for delivery and development within each financial year, using pooled CIL funding.

Transport for Norwich Strategy[38] The Transport for Norwich strategy sets out transport policy focussed on Norwich, covering the full extent of the Strategic Growth Area as expressed through the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) together with consideration of the longer distance trips from the county and beyond. This is an ambitious strategy, putting carbon reduction and better air quality at the heart of the aim to support a growing economy, strengthen communities and reducing impact on the environment. East Norwich, which sits across a number of sites, including the former Carrow Works site, represents one of the most significant opportunities for the regeneration of this area

and the wider city. It is an ambitious project to create a sustainable new urban quarter for the city, supported by the preparation of a masterplan for East Norwich and a commitment to substantial future investment. The masterplan shows a mixed use for commercial, housing, tourism and environmental activities. In addition to housing and industrial opportunities, the site will specifically capitalise on the beautiful waterfront and presents a significant opportunity for recreational, tourism and heritage activities. The site will generate significant jobs and investment for the city.

5.4.2 Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor

Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor (CNTC) is home to world-leading universities, research institutes and science parks, complemented by an ecosystem of knowledge-intensive businesses and networks to support innovation through to commercialisation and manufacturing. There is significant opportunity for site development, attracting inward investment into the county. The corridor from Norwich to Cambridge includes a number of important existing and emerging clusters and strategic employment sites. It provides the potential for significant economic development, particularly as connectivity has improved with full dualling of the A11 between Norwich and Cambridge. The corridor also benefits from the Norwich to Cambridge railway line, direct trains between Norwich to Stansted airport and an increased number of internal (UK) and external routes from Norwich Airport. These opportunities need to be supported and exploited to maximise economic benefits.

In Norfolk the tech corridor extends through Norwich, South Norfolk and Breckland, and then into Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.

5.4.3 A47 Growth Corridor

The A47 crosses the county and, directly or indirectly, affects all Norfolk's districts, and parts of Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The current limitations of the A47 act as a brake on economic growth, hindering investment, adding business and commuter costs, cause disproportionate accident and safety issues and contribute to the 'peripheral' image of Norfolk. Improvements to the road will unlock jobs, increase GVA and attract additional private investment all along its length. The A47 Alliance comprises

[36] https://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/dmsdocument/2920
[37] Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan 2024 - https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/ccd0719bafb44d5eb29f01435bfe496b
[38] Transport for Norwich Strategy - Norfolk County Council - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/39828

representatives from all Local Authorities, the business community, MPs and stakeholders along the whole of the trunk road route between Peterborough and Lowestoft. The Alliance is working to make the case for improvements and to secure the necessary investment to implement these. Partners will need to consider how best to cooperate to realise the economic potential of improvements.

Currently there are two A47 road improvement schemes under construction by National Highways:

- Dualling the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton
- Dualling the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham

Another scheme, to improve the A47/A11 Thickthorn Junction, is currently subject to the government's infrastructure spending review. These A47 road improvements have the potential to support growing the corridor's economy.

5.4.4 Clean Growth Coast / Ports of Great Yarmouth & Lowestoft

The ports of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft are successfully developing their role in the huge growth in offshore wind generation and major planned gas field decommissioning in the southern North Sea, building on 50 years' experience in offshore energy. These ports also serve trade, fisheries and transportation sectors of the economy.

These two ports, in close proximity, together form a strategically significant economic (and infrastructure) resource, generating employment and supply chains of regional significance. The sector is also supported by businesses and facilities, such as Norwich Airport, in Greater Norwich. The critical mass of facilities, infrastructure and businesses helps the area compete with areas elsewhere, including on the other side of the North Sea.

There is a long and continuing history of collaboration between Great Yarmouth, East Suffolk, Norfolk and Suffolk Councils to make the most of these opportunities.

Through close cooperation, these bodies were successful in bidding for an Enterprise Zone (EZ) covering six sites in Great Yarmouth and East Suffolk to strengthen and build the offshore energy sector in the area. This EZ is one of the most successful in the country, the only zone to have exceeded the original EZ targets. The two Norfolk sites in Great Yarmouth are South Denes and Beacon Park.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Norfolk County Council and National Highways have cooperated closely on developing the road transport infrastructure to support the growth of the offshore energy sector in Great Yarmouth. The third river crossing has now been completed and provides direct access to the Port from the trunk road network, rather than through the heart of the town, and improving the A47 link to the rest of the country.

Meanwhile Norfolk County Council with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, are looking at a range of new infrastructure projects associated with the port and the Great Yarmouth Energy Park in order to enhance the value of Yarmouth to the offshore renewables sector.

5.4.5 Norfolk Coast, the Broads and the Brecks

The Norfolk Coast, the Broads and the Brecks are the 3 key cross boundary areas of the county where economic benefits include not only their attraction for tourism and recreation, but also their contribution to quality of life, and hence the attractiveness of Norfolk as an area to live, work and to locate a business. The economies of these areas are dependent on businesses, infrastructure and environmental protection in surrounding areas. This is particularly the case for the Broads Authority Executive Area, where the Broads Authority boundary is very tightly drawn.

In order to maximise the economic benefits a number of issues require coordination across planning authority boundaries, including coastal change, erosion and flooding; environment, landscape and habitats; as well as tourism and recreation itself. By working together the relevant authorities can ensure complementary measures, and maximise potential economic benefits.

All the Norfolk coastal districts, together with the Broads Authority (part of which is on the coast), East Suffolk District Council in Suffolk, and the Environment Agency have worked together on one or more of the three Shoreline Management Plans covering the Norfolk Coast, developing understanding of the technical and political challenges involved, and coordination of efforts to address these.

The quality, importance and diversity of the natural environment, including the Coast, the Broads and the Brecks, is reflected in the numerous national and international designations, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar sites, and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and protected landscapes (Norfolk Coast National Landscape and the Broads). The planning authorities have a role in helping to protect and manage these assets, along with Natural England, the Environment Agency and a wide range of non-statutory environmental and community organisations. Ensuring that new development can proceed sustainably without harm to protected sites or species, or to biodiversity or geodiversity in the wider environment, is a particular challenge. Through joint working and cooperation across planning authority boundaries, a better understanding of the potential impacts from development (especially relating to housing and recreation) is being developed, and new ideas and best practice for monitoring and mitigating any impacts are being shared.

It is important that all of this care and concern about the natural environment continues to be captured within a Green Infrastructure approach, so that protecting and enhancing nature and natural processes are consciously integrated into spatial planning and area development.

5.4.6 King's Lynn to Cambridge Corridor

The A10, and parallel rail line from King's Lynn to London, via Cambridge (passenger and freight), provides a strategic transport corridor. The section from King's Lynn to Downham Market is identified as a growth location in the Norfolk Economic Strategy. To realise the growth potential of the A10 Corridor there is a need to improve journey times, reliability of services and enhancement of operational capacity. The Ely area capacity enhancement Programme is looking to improve rail infrastructure to allow more trains to pass through the Ely area where several rail lines converge. This would enable more frequent passenger and freight rail services to operate in future; while works have been completed to enable longer trains to run from King's Lynn from December 2020. A new Cambridge North railway station has enabled improved access to jobs in the businesses on the north side of Cambridge for Norfolk residents. There is potential for large-scale job growth in the corridor at Downham Market, while the largest housing allocation in the West Winch Growth Area requires the completion of the West Winch Housing Access Road.

Agreement 8 - The recently adopted and emerging Local Plans for the area will include appropriate policies and proposals to recognise the importance of the above cross boundary issues and interventions.

Section 6 – Housing

Strategic Housing Objectives

To address housing needs in Norfolk by:

- providing for the quantity of housing growth which will support the economic prospects of the County and address in full the identified need for new homes in line with the Norfolk Economic Strategy;
- ensuring that new homes built are of the right sort in terms of size, type, and tenure to contribute positively towards addressing identified needs including for affordable homes, homes for the elderly and students, and other groups in society requiring specialist living accommodation;
- Ensuring that new homes are served and supported by adequate social infrastructure, including schools, Health Services, libraries, fire service provision; play space and green infrastructure provided through developer funding (e.g. through S106 agreements and/or Community Infrastructure Levy)
- contributing towards sustainable patterns of development including improving the relationship between homes, jobs and other key day to day services;
- delivering high quality, energy efficient homes in attractive communities which make a positive contribution to the health and well-being of communities; and
- ensuring that homes are delivered at the right time to address identified needs.

6.1 Introduction

The overall objective of national policy is to ensure that sufficient homes of the right type, are built in the right locations, and at the right time to address all existing and newly arising needs for homes. This means meeting both the market *demand* for new housing and addressing the *need* for homes including the needs of those who are currently unable to afford to buy or rent a suitable home locally. Homes built should be of the right type having regard to needs of the existing and future population and should address the specific needs of groups such as the elderly, those with disabilities, students and the gypsy and traveller community. Local Plans should include measures to address the need for appropriate specific types of dwellings, those wishing to build their own home, live on boats, low-cost home ownership products to purchase and other tenures of affordable housing. Whilst this document considers the likely scale of growth in the different parts of the County, it is not its purpose to determine how many new homes are required or where precisely these should be located. These will be decisions for individual Local Plans or any County wide development plans which may be prepared. Instead the focus is on cross boundary strategic considerations concerning, for example, the capacity of each authority to accommodate the required growth, considering how growth in one area may have impacts elsewhere, the need or otherwise to redistribute growth beyond the administrative boundaries of individual authorities and the implications of this, or the need to take collective measures to improve the rates of housing delivery in the County.

Since taking office in July 2024 the Labour government has made it clear that sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of the country and the living standards of working people. Their approach to delivering this growth has focused on three pillars: stability, investment and reform.

One of the government's key priorities has been reform to the planning system and on the 12th December 2024 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) update was published, alongside the Government's response to the consultation which launched in July 2024 and updates to the NPPG.

Some of the key changes to the NPPF include:

- Reintroduction of Mandatory Housing Targets
- Restoration of Five-Year Housing Land Supply Rules
- A new standard method for calculating local housing need that uses housing stock to set a baseline figure

Based on the government's new standard methodology[39] Norfolk Authorities will need to collectively plan for at least an additional 5,939 homes per annum. This is a significant increase over the previous standard method representing a 48% increase and significantly above average annual delivery in the last 3 years which is 3,812.

As part of the duty to co-operate, and as reflected in the remainder of this section the Norfolk Authorities have reached a number of key agreements both about the geographical area over which it is most appropriate to prepare Local Plans, the period to be planned for, and how each plan will provide at least the minimum number of dwellings required over the agreed period. In reaching these Agreements the authorities have had regard to the needs which may arise from outside of the County and have collectively agreed a process for establishing each areas capacity to accommodate growth. Given the significant raise in the housing numbers required under the new standard method for calculating housing need there may be a need to review these agreements for future versions of this document or any subsequent replacement.

6.2 Existing targets, supply, and delivery rates

The number of dwellings built in the County since 2007 have generally fallen behind published Local Plan targets due to various impacts including covid-19 and recessions. Some areas of the county have also seen significant impacts to the granting of planning permissions because of Nutrient Neutrality since March 2022 and it's likely that this reduced level of new land supply will have impacts on future housing delivery particularly until such time that the supply of Nutrient Neutrality mitigation allows the backlog of planning permissions to be fully unblocked. The required annual rate of housebuilding needs to meet national policy[40] further details of the consequences of under delivery are covered in more detail in section 6.6.

In practice, delivery rates of housing development will vary considerably from one year to the next, with significant periods of under-delivery in some years and over-delivery in others, depending on a wide range of factors including site availability, economic conditions, and the capacity of the local building industry. For this reason, annualised targets represent a blunt instrument against which to assess delivery. Individual authorities will continue to consider carefully how new housing needs evidence might be taken into account appropriately in plan-making and the determination of planning applications.

Detailed information on the availability and deliverability of new housing is published annually by each authority in their Five Year Land Supply Statements.

[39] Housing and economic needs assessment - GOV.UK - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments

[40] National Housing Delivery Test – Results of this test are published by government in November of each year and compare the number of dwellings built over a three year period with the number required.

6.3 Future Housing Demand and Need

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that the need for homes in terms of quantity, size, type and tenure within an area is addressed by planning authorities when preparing Local Plans, unless the consequences of doing so would result in unsustainable development. Where planning authorities conclude that it is not desirable to address identified needs within an individual authority area, they should reach agreement with others to ensure that needs are met.

Following the publication of the revised NPPF in December 2024 the quantity of homes needed should be calculated in accordance with the new standard method in national guidance. The method uses 0.8% of existing stock as the baseline. Over the last 10 years housing stock has grown nationally by around 0.89%. The baseline figure is then increased to reflect housing affordability pressures. The NPPF sets out transitional arrangements that may apply to local plans.

Table 9: Local Housing Need showing change between current and previous standard methodologies (correct as at December 2024)

Area	Previous Method	New Method	Change	% Change
Breckland	625	903	278	44%
Great Yarmouth	354	380*	*	*
KLWN	554	989	435	79%
North Norfolk	556	932	376	68%
Greater Norwich	1,929	2,590	661	34%
Norfolk	**4,017**	**5,939**	**1,922**	**48%**

*The Great Yarmouth figures under the new method is 525 however 380 is being used under the transitional arrangements

To ensure better alignment of Local Plans all Norfolk Authorities have agreed to prepare new Local Plans which address the level of housing need for the period until at least 2041 have formally commenced the process of plan review. Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk have adopted a single Greater Norwich Local Plan allowing for consideration of how needs might be addressed across the larger plan area. Information on progress of local plans for Norfolk LPAs can be found on the NSPF website www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf under summary of local plans.

Agreement 9 - When determining their respective Local Plan housing targets for plan making each Norfolk Authority, working together where desirable, will aim to deliver at least the local housing need as identified in the most up to date evidence (Table 9). Where this would result in unsustainable development, agreement will be sought with other authorities, initially within the same Housing Market Area, to ensure sufficient homes are provided to meet identified needs and demands in the area until at least 2041.

The Broads

Following the publication of the NPPF in December 2024 and updated National Planning Policy Guidance the Broads Authority has looked to reconsider its housing need based on housing stock to align to the new standard methodology. Because of this change in methodology, the housing need for

the Broads has tripled. Based on the commissioned housing needs analysis[41], the total need in the Broads Authority Executive Area between 2021 and 2042 is 1077 dwellings (approx. 51 per year). These figures for the broads' part of the 6 district council areas are as follows:

Table 10: Projected dwelling need within the Broads Authority area 2021-2042

	Broadland	North Norfolk	Norwich	South Norfolk	Great Yarmouth	East Suffolk
Total OAN	316	298	17	204	177	70

It should be noted that this need is part of the need of the overlapping District Councils and not in addition to it. In view of the special qualities of the Broads there has been a long-standing agreement between the BA and their overlapping District Councils about the other areas planning to meet any housing needs arising in the BA area[42]. It would clearly not be in the best interests of good planning in Norfolk for planning in the Broads area to be driven by a need to meet statistically derived housing targets where this would be incompatible with the protection of the special qualities of the Broads. Agreements 11 and 12 below addresses this matter. There is also a residential moorings need that is identified in the Local Plan of 48 residential moorings[43] which the Broads Authority will seek to meet.

Agreement 10 – The Broads Authority will meet its calculated portion of the wider housing requirement as far as is compatible with the protection of the Broad's landscape and special qualities.

Agreement 11 – South Norfolk, Norwich City, Broadland, North Norfolk, and Great Yarmouth Councils will seek to include appropriate provision within their Local Plans to address the housing needs arising from the parts of the Broads Authority area overlapping their administrative boundaries if these cannot be met within the Broads Local Plan.

East Suffolk Council (not signatories to this framework) have also agreed to do the same.

Implications of the City Deal for Housing

In December 2013 the Greater Norwich City Deal was signed[44]. The City Deal was expected to see 300 new businesses supported and secure an additional £100 million of private investment. The deal was also expected to create more than 19,000 jobs, including 3,000 high value jobs at Norwich Research Park, 2,000 jobs around Norwich Airport, 1,000 jobs based around Norwich University of the Arts and 6,000 construction jobs.

[41] Local Housing Needs Assessment Addendum (March 2025) - https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/569329/Local-Housing-Needs-Assessment-Addendum-March-2025.pdf

[42] See Planning for Housing and Employment in and Around the Broads Memorandum of Understanding - http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/432998/Duty-to-Cooperate-Planning-For-Housing-and-Employment-in-and-Around-the-Broads-Proposed-Memorandum-of-Understanding-040113.pdf

[43] Residential Moorings Need Assessment 2022

[44] See Norwich City Deal - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/city-deal-greater-norwich

The housing implications of the City Deal were assessed thoroughly as part of the Greater Norwich local plan. The plan includes a buffer which help builds in flexibility to support higher than trend economic growth incorporating the Greater Norwich City Deal.

6.4 Type of Homes

It is critically important to ensure that sufficient homes are provided but it is equally important that the homes that are built are the right type in terms of size, affordability and tenure. In this regard key issues affecting the County are providing suitable homes for:

- Those on lower household incomes who are unable to afford market prices and rents
- A rapidly aging population
- A growing student population in and around Norwich
- Gypsy and Traveller communities

Collectively, the Authorities are committed to the delivery of energy efficient homes which minimise the inefficient use of scarce resources and each Local Plan will consider the desirability of requiring enhanced construction standards which go beyond the requirements of the current National Building Regulations. For example, all authorities in the County have committed to introducing lower water consumption targets for new dwellings and most are likely to introduce enhanced accessibility requirements. Further consideration is also given to this area in the section on climate change.

Unless there is a significant increase in earnings or a slowing rate of house price increases the evidence concludes that dwelling affordability will continue to be a major issue in most parts of the County. Delivery of affordable homes, as with other types of housing, has failed to keep pace with existing and newly arising needs. Forecasts indicate that across the County as a whole some 26% of the total future housing requirement will need to be provided as affordable homes but this masks significant local variations.

The significance of this issue for Norfolk should not be underestimated. There would be particularly severe impacts on a number of key economic sectors if housing affordability worsens and there is not considerable increase in the availability of forms of housing that meet the needs of people who are employed in low wage sectors across the county. The situation will vary from one council area to another so is best addressed through local plans rather than through collective agreement.

Inward migration from the rest of the UK, mainly due to retirement to the area, is forecast to be the major driver of population growth in the County over the next 20 years and a rapidly aging population, particularly outside of the three main urban centres will continue to increase the need for homes. By 2042 over 16% (171,049 people) of Norfolk's population is forecast to be over 75 years of age and if current trends continue this will increase the need for specialist forms of accommodation such as care, nursing and assisted living schemes. These specialist accommodation needs are not included within household projections and authorities should carefully consider the latest available evidence and develop strategies to ensure these needs are met. If current trends continue an increasing proportion of elderly people will remain in their homes for longer periods.

Specialist types of accommodation

Local Housing Needs Assessments are prepared to establish the likely total need for new dwellings over a given period. These assessments quantify the needs of those residing in households including gypsy and travellers and those living in caravans and houseboats but they do not account for those living in other types of communal accommodation such as care and nursing homes and purpose-built

student accommodation (PBSA). Therefore, in addition to the target for new dwellings Local Plans will need to separately quantify and provide for other specialist types of accommodation and fully understand the relationship between the need for new dwellings and the need for different types of non-household accommodation.

Elderly People

The identified Objectively Assessed Need across Norfolk includes the conventional housing needs of elderly people but does not include people residing in care and nursing homes. On this basis, all self-contained elderly person housing is counted within the housing supply; but the supply of bed spaces in residential institutions (Use Class C2) is not. If sufficient Class C2 bed spaces are not provided, then these people will not vacate existing dwellings and therefore more dwellings may be required.

As section 4 highlights, latest population projections estimate an increase in 65's of over 91,000 between 2018 and 2042 in the county. Local planning authorities were clear that further research was required into their housing needs. As part of the work to update this document previously a study was commissioned to identify the need and types of accommodation which are required to support the increase in the elderly population going forward.

The study highlights that a range of housing types are required to meet the needs of the elderly. It should be noted the many residents will be able to remain in conventional type of housing for many years but may choose to downsize or move to more suitable types of home like bungalows. Therefore, housing types range from conventional housing (either modified or unmodified), age exclusive housing, sheltered housing with low level support to higher level support housing with on-site support or residential/nursing care homes. In 2020 there were 8,612 units of specialist independent retirement housing in Norfolk, 78% of these units are sheltered[45] housing with low level support and only 22% are extra care with higher level support[46]. Across the whole of Norfolk in 2020 there is unmet need for 2,826 units of extra care housing and 4,034 units of sheltered housing. By 2041 these figures will have risen to 5,149 and 10,384 respectively. The report also highlights that care homes will also need to accommodate an additional 5,239 people and better provision should also be made for elderly with various levels of dementia with Norfolk likely to see an increase in residents with dementia by nearly 10,000 to 2041. Full details can be found in the report accompanying this study[47] Norfolk Local Planning Authorities will work with registered providers and housing associations to support the delivery of specialist housing to meet the needs of an increasingly the elderly and retired population.

[45] Sheltered housing is age restricted housing normally with either an onsite or visiting scheme manager or access to a bespoke helpline. There will normally be communal facilities which may include a café or shop but there is no bespoke site specific care package. Scheme residents are typically 75 or over, but the scheme may include some residents aged 65-74

[46] Extra Care housing is age restricted housing with an onsite scheme manager and provide a range of communal facilities. However residents will also have access to a site specific bespoke care package, usually including paying for a specified minimum number of hours of care a week with the option to increase usage if required. The care provider is CQC registered with specific carers allocated to the scheme. Scheme residents are typically 75 or over. Extra care housing can also be known as very sheltered housing, assisted living, enhanced sheltered or as housing with care.

[47] D2 - Study of Retirement Housing Norfolk Report v1 March 2021

Student Housing and the OAN

Planning Policy Guidance requires that local planning authorities should plan for sufficient student accommodation whether it consists of PBSA (both on and off-campus), or private sector housing (in particular Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)).

The largest higher education provider in Norfolk is the University of East Anglia (UEA). The UEA has a campus on the edge of Norwich with a total of 15,775 full time students in the academic year 2022/23. The city also contains the Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) which has 2,765 full-time students, with most of its buildings in the city centre. These institutions greatly contribute to the city's and county's economic prospects.

In recent years there has been an increase in student accommodation both at the UEA campus and in privately owned and managed purpose-built student accommodation, which is mainly in the city centre. In October 2023 there were 6,349 PBSA bedspaces in Norwich. This figure excludes 663 bedspaces at the Ziggurats, UEA as they were closed due to Government guidance on Reinforced Autoclave Aerated Concreate (RAAC).

The AECOM Norwich Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) Study, November 2024, concludes that based on historical trends the student population in and around Norwich is likely to grow by around 383 students per year (or 328 full-time undergraduate students). The AECOM study sets out that the existing PBSA stock and expected pipeline is more than sufficient to meet future demand at least up to 2038/39.

Where accommodation is provided in the form of PBSA, when monitoring housing delivery, the ratio of 1:2.5 can be used for communal/cluster accommodation (i.e. 2.5 net PBSA bedrooms equates to 1 net new mainstream dwelling). However, for PBSA which takes the form of studio flats, each net student bedroom is counted as 1 net new dwelling.

The Greater Norwich Local Plan contains a policy to support growth of PBSA where the need is justified as part of policy 5 (Homes). To better inform planning decision making, in consultation with the two universities, Norwich City Council will use the evidence above to consider updates to its existing Purpose-Built Student Accommodation Evidence and Best Practice Advice Note[48] which was adopted in 2019.

Accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, and other types of accommodation

The accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, including Travelling Show people, and those residing in boats and mobile/park homes are included within the overall assessments of housing need and comprise part of that need rather than an additional requirement. These types of accommodation which are provided can therefore count towards addressing locally set housing targets. In December 2023 the Court of Appeal judgment in the case of Smith v SSLUHC & Others (October 2022) determined that the 2015 PPTS was discriminatory by excluding households who had permanently ceased to travel from being recognised (for planning purposes) as Gypsies and Travellers. In response, the government

[48] Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) Evidence and Best Practice Advice Note - https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/5448/pbsa_best_practice_and_advice_note_-_adopted_november_2019

amended the definition by re-inserting the word 'permanent'. As now set out in the subsequently updated PPTS, December 2023 for the purposes of planning policy, gypsies and travellers means:

'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.'

Locally authorities have prepared specific evidence to quantify the levels of need for such accommodation and use this evidence to inform Local Plan preparation. Great Yarmouth and the Broads Authority commissioned a study in 2022[49]as did Greater Norwich (Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk)[50]. North Norfolk commissioned an updated study in 2024 in order to identify its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people accommodation needs for the emerging Local Plan based on the updated definition issued by the government in December 2023 [51]. Breckland DC published its own study in 2024[52]. In addition, a separate study was also commissioned and published by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in 2023[53] to identify its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs for the emerging Local Plan.

Agreement 12 - The Norfolk Planning Authorities will quantify the need for, and plan to provide for, the specialist accommodation needs of the elderly, students, gypsy and travelling Show People, and those residing in other specialist types of accommodation and working together will ensure that the distribution of provision responds to locally identified needs.

Other forms of specialist accommodation such as self-build and accommodation for military personnel will be addressed by individual authorities but the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum will keep this position under review.

6.5 Capacity and Distribution

Some parts of the County are more constrained than others and their capacity to accommodate new growth is similarly variable.

Each Authority has prepared Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments (HELAAs) using a standardised methodology which has been agreed by all Authorities. These are assessments of unconstrained capacity and take no account of the policy choices that each authority may make when

[49] See https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/432475/Great-Yarmouth-and-Broads-Authority-GTRCAA-Report-June-2022.pdf

[50] See Greater Norwich GTAA June 2022 (gnlp.org.uk)Greater Norwich GTAA June 2022 (gnlp.org.uk) - https://www.gnlp.org.uk/sites/gnlp/files/2022-06/Greater%20Norwich%20GTAA%20Final%20Report%20June%202022.pdf

[51] See North Norfolk Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (September 2024) - https://url.uk.m.mimecastprotect.com/s/DfKxCgxvqTlPMrYUNfNf4J6rt?domain=north-norfolk.gov.uk

[52] See Breckland Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment April 2024 - https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/21598/Breckland-Gypsy-Traveller-and-Travelling-Showpeople-Accommodation-Needs-Assessment-April-2024/pdf/Breckland_Gypsy_Traveller_and_Travelling_Showpeople_Accommodation_Needs_Assessment_April_2024.pdf?m=1716560901907

[53] See https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7907/klwn_final_gtaa_report_-_june_2023.pdf

preparing their Local Plan. Norwich City, Broadland and South Norfolk have worked jointly to address their shared housing need through the Greater Norwich Local Plan with other District Authorities having the capacity to address its own housing need at present.

Agreement 13 – All Norfolk Planning authorities will produce their Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments to the standard Norfolk methodology.

6.6 Delivering Housing Growth

Over the past decade the quantity of new homes delivered in the County has not kept pace with published targets notwithstanding that the number of planning permissions granted typically exceeds the required quantity of development. This is likely to have been compounded by economic recession and poorer housing market conditions in some areas which may have reduced developer confidence and other factors including Nutrient Neutrality.

Slower than required delivery rates have resulted in inadequate or marginal five-year land supply positions resulting in the need to release unplanned development sites in some parts of the County. Recognising this, Norfolk Authorities have agreed to take a range of actions to improve future housing delivery.

Agreement 14 - To minimise the risk of slow delivery over the next plan period, where it is sustainable to do so, the following will be done:

- **Housing strategies will seek to allocate a range of different sizes of sites, where such sites are available and would result sustainable development.**
- **Clear evidence and demonstration of ability to deliver development will be required <u>prior</u> to the allocation of larger sites for development.**

However, such is the scale of delivery challenge facing the County there may well be the need for further actions to be taken to ensure housing targets can be met. Norfolk Local Planning Authorities jointly commissioned a study to look further into the issues impacting delivery within the county. The report highlighted 10 measures to be considered which will be further addressed by Local Authorities in bringing forward their Local Plans:

- Allocating a balanced range of sites and scales of development
- Enable early-stage engagement with high profile councillors and leader of the Council to facilitate stakeholder buy-in and community liaison at the site allocation stage.
- Support and encourage allocation and development of retirement developments, single storey dwellings, lifetime homes and extra care facilities for independent elderly living in suitable environments
- Use Planning Performance Agreements where appropriate for larger scale and more complex housing sites
- Employ or nominate strategic development officers to focus on larger scale growth allocations and assist developers through the planning process. These staff may be a shared resource between neighbouring authorities.
- Seek to invoke Service Level Agreements for Utilities and Network Rail related infrastructure where large scale sites are reliant on strategic interventions.

- Review the s106 approach for larger scale sites and consider a hybrid approach with early phases considered in more detail than later phases to enable flexibility for sites which have longer timeframes.
- Facilitate the creation of a county-wide developer forum
- Consider whether statutory powers can be used to assist with unlocking difficult sites
- Work up a funding strategy with the local highway and flood authorities to support sites where major infrastructure is required and this is not covered by CIL.

Alongside these possibilities there may also be other measures taken which would complement these actions:

- Greater support with infrastructure planning in relation to large scale plans for urban expansion to increase confidence and reduce risks for the industry and make them more attractive for housebuilders to build out at quicker rates than in the past. Increasing the number of housebuilders active in the Norfolk market and increased use of modular (off-site) building techniques will also assist here;
- Action to stimulate the SMEs in the construction sector to increase the number of firms capable of building on the scale of sites that typically result in 5-50 dwellings being provided;
- Action to stimulate the self and custom build sector considerably.
- Further joint working to improve the speed, customer focus, predictability and efficiency of the planning system; and
- A considerable drive to increase the number of people entering the construction sector across the board, particularly in the light of the probable impact of Sizewell C construction on the market of skilled construction labour in Norfolk.

It should be noted that authorities housing delivery is measured against the Housing Delivery Test (HDT)[54] and where this indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, a number of policy consequences will apply:

1. where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;
2. where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites, in addition to the requirement for an action plan.
3. where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

[54] The Housing Delivery Test does not apply to the Broads Authority

Section 7 – Health

7.1 Introduction

The origins of the planning system are closely associated with wider health improvements and recognise that where people live, work, study and relax play a greater role in health and well-being at a population level than just access to health care. Equally we know that as population size and structure change, for example an aging population, so do the demands upon health care facilities increase alongside the ever increasing need to prevent ill health in the first place. These matters are not influenced solely on an individual planning authority basis. Services are arranged and delivered across multiple boundaries. People move between areas to do different things and across their lifetime. Transport routes and methods inevitably impact wide geographic areas.

Health services in Norfolk are provided at geographies which extend beyond district and borough boundaries. The Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System (ICS) covers the whole of Norfolk and the former district council area of Waveney (in north-east Suffolk). Public Health provision is provided at the national, regional and local level.

Given that the various healthcare organisations operate across district and borough boundaries it is considered that there is merit in looking at consistent approaches to planning for health and well-being across the Norfolk local planning authorities.

Consequently, the need to co-operate between agencies and across geographies is important.

7.2 Principles

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that 'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles'. The health and wellbeing of the population, and health infrastructure should be considered in both plan and decision making.

The Planning White Paper (2020 paragraph 1.7) recognises that: "Where we live has a measurable effect on our physical and mental health, on how much we walk, on how many neighbours we know or how tense we feel on the daily journey to work or school. Places affect us from the air that we breathe to our ultimate sense of purpose and wellbeing."

The TCPA has advocated the impact of good planning decisions through its Reuniting Health with Planning workstream since 2010 and has worked in partnership with NHS England, Public Health England and Sport England.

The review of Health Equity in England by Sir Michael Marmot[55] highlights the need to build healthy and sustainable communities as one of 6 core recommendations to address the widening health inequalities. It states that 'since 2010 life expectancy in England has stalled; this has not happened since at least 1900' health is closely linked to the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age'. There are clear links made to the quality, cost and condition of housing in the report, 'The costs of housing have increased significantly, including social housing, impacting on all the other social determinants of health and pushing many people into poverty, homelessness and ill health.'

[55]See Health Equity in England - https://www.health.org.uk/funding-and-partnerships/our-partnerships/health-equity-in-england-the-marmot-review-10-years-on

The need for health infrastructure provision takes place in the context of:

- Stalling of life and healthy life expectancy rates (in the last decade 2011 onwards)
- Widening health inequalities and likely aggravation of this arising from impacts of Covid-19
- An increasingly ageing population, with impacts on health and social care provision and costs[56]
- The number of premature deaths increasing, caused by smoking, lack of physical activity, obesity and alcohol misuse.[57] The UK wide NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to be £9.7 billion a year by 2050 with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year[58]
- Increase in demand for mental health and wellbeing services
- Changing approaches to healthcare delivery.

7.3 Healthy living and Wellbeing – through better design

It is clear that health issues are increasingly important considerations in future planning activities. Therefore, development should facilitate a healthy lifestyle and provide opportunities for a high quality of life through a healthy environment where pollution is controlled and there is adequate access to open spaces and green and blue infrastructure. Availability of suitable and affordable housing and employment opportunities are also critical factors, as is access to active travel opportunities and affordable and practical public transport. It is also likely that active consideration will need to be given to increased home working, space standards and overcrowding in homes and internal ventilation, especially with many organisations having home working as an established new way of working whether this be full time home working or a hybrid model of office and home.

New developments present an opportunity to build homes, streets and neighbourhoods that support and enable healthy lifestyles through high quality provision of walking, cycling and accessible public transport. Good quality public spaces promote a sense of community and increase the variety of options to interact with the local environment and improve physical and mental health outcomes.

Both new and redesign of existing developments should consider a variety of needs of the Norfolk population. These could include:

- Recognising that the greatest health benefits across the population are to be had by encouraging the inactive to be moderately active so build short active journeys in everyday life such as shopping, schooling, catching a bus and work
- Considering the particular needs of an ageing population when designing open space, access to public transport and physically active means of getting about. For example, siting of benches and shelters, availability of toilets, safety when sharing pathways, level terrain and the provision of adult outdoor exercise equipment.
- It is important when designing built environments and making blue and green space more widely available that signage, navigation, and layout actively consider needs of those, for example, with dementia or learning disabilities who may otherwise find some designs less accessible
- A number of these considerations may also support their use by, for example, adults with younger children, the less mobile across all age groups and those with a sensory disability

[56] The King's Fund: Future Trends, Demography, Ageing Populations
[57] British Heart Foundation, 2013: Economic costs of physical inactivity.
[58]Source: Guidance Health Matters: obesity and the food environment March 2017 (Public Health England)

- Signage to facilities could be expressed in time taken to walk, for example, instead of distance and routes designed to break up longer journeys into manageable sizes
- Location of housing, employment, education and retail facilities to minimise journeys by non-private vehicle methods
- Where possible cycle lanes and footpaths should be situated away from busy roads, publicised and well sign posted to encourage use. They can provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement by planting appropriate tree species, hedgerows and pollen and nectar rich flora, facilitating species movement and habitat connectivity.
- Acknowledge that built environments deemed healthy now might not be so in the future, and that when designing built environments the anticipated impacts of climate change are accounted for. This could include adaptations for hotter summers, such as adequate shade and ventilation, but also preparations for wetter winters.

The RTPI published Enabling Healthy Placemaking[59] which highlights the barriers to building healthy places[60] called for 'greater …collaboration between health, social care, and planning professionals to ensure people's health needs are integrated into the conceptualisation, design and planning stages of new developments in the future'. It highlights 7 ways planners can take the lead:

Norfolk authorities should consider skills development and greater understanding around healthy placemaking. Empowering Healthy Places recommends councils:

- Deliver education and training across the workforce and at all levels of seniority to outline health impacts and what can be achieved through existing powers and practices. This should include building an understanding of the different teams and roles across a council to improve shared knowledge and competencies. Signpost the wealth of research knowledge and good practice available to practitioners to guide work further and support local action.
- Update planning roles and associated job descriptions to develop the capacity of planning teams. This includes building skills to be able to work across different health-related disciplines and drive forward coordination between teams to deliver policy synergy that adequately reflects modern crises including health and climate. Incorporate public health, sustainability and resilience principles into core competencies.

[59] Enabling Healthy Placemaking - https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/5777/enabling-healthy-placemaking.pdf published July 2020

[60] Such as lack of funding; different requirements from developers; conflicting policy priorities.

- Invest in skills and capability around the use of data and evidence and the infrastructure required to support this. This may involve exploring how this can be achieved through partnership, such as with academia or a higher-level authority, to drive consistency and reduce costs. This may include developing a platform that brings data and evidence sources together and visualises them spatially, which would increase access, transparency and ease of analysis

7.4 Implementing Healthy Design

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should make use of tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development, specifically recommending assessment frameworks such as Building for Life 12 (recently updated to Building for a Healthy Life[61]).

Building for a Healthy Life replaced Building for Life 12 in July 2020; published in collaboration with NHS England, NHS Improvement and Homes England. 'Building for a Healthy life' is a Design Code to help people to improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods and has been created for community, developer and local authority use. The 12 considerations capture areas of design and placemaking that need most attention but are often the most overlooked'[62]. It provides visual prompts to good practice rather than the previous 12 question approach.

The Healthy Streets Approach is a framework that emphasises a street that works for people and is a street that is good for health. It provides an evidence-based approach for creating fairer, sustainable attractive urban spaces. The Department for Transport has funded Healthy Streets Approach training for Local Authorities (including Norfolk) using Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The 10 indicators focus on the experience of people using streets and complements the use of the Building for a Healthy Life design code.

Agreement 15 - Norfolk authorities agree to consider matters relating to healthy environments and encouraging physical activity, and fully integrate these into local design codes (which will inform planning application decisions, local plans and neighbourhood plans), drawing on key guidance such as Building for a Healthy Life and Active Design.

[61] NPPF revised Feb 2019, para 129.
[62] Building for a Healthy Life, pg 5.

7.5 Health Infrastructure Protocol

To help ensure these issues are addressed a protocol for joint working between planning, public health and health sector organisations was agreed in 2017 and has recently been updated to ensure it is working effectively and to take account of the organisational changes within the health system. Throughout this revision support has come from several quarters, including the Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Public Health and the local planning authorities. It was endorsed by the Norfolk Strategic Members Planning Forum in October 2024. The Protocol seeks to explain the relationship of land-use planning to public health, giving an overview of the planning system to health professionals and an overview of health service commissioning structures to land-use planners. There are mutual commitments to discuss development-related pressures on healthcare services and opportunities for high-quality place-making to enable people to make healthier lifestyle choices. The protocol also provides a single point of contact for local planning authorities within the healthcare system for feedback on planning applications and general advice. Working with Norfolk & Waveney ICS Estates and health colleagues affords an opportunity for long term planning and growth to be considered alongside health infrastructure needs.

The Protocol seeks for health professionals and town planners to work together to secure new healthcare facilities required as a result of development and population growth. To assist with such negotiations modelling data has been used to give an indication of future healthcare requirements throughout Norfolk, Projections are given on future demand for acute hospital beds, intermediate care beds, mental health capacity and the additional square metres of floorspace required for Primary care services infrastructure. The modelling also provides an indication of the cost associated to deliver the infrastructure required for the future demand. The population increases are modelled on low, medium and high scenarios for house-building rates, reflecting the uncertainty as to how economic conditions might affect the house-building industry in coming years. The Protocol also includes a *Health Planning Checklist* that consists of six place-making themes. Whilst use of the Checklist is not mandatory; it is made available to all practitioners as a convenient method to appraise development schemes in advance of, or at the point of, making a planning application. Additionally, there is agreement that within the GNLP area all developments in excess of 500 homes should use a Health Impact assessment. HIA use is to be actively encouraged to tackle health inequalities and the promotion of good health across all areas alongside wider use of both HIAs and the checklist to actively consider designing in health benefits. The Broads Authority Local Plan includes a healthy living checklist as their sites are typically smaller than other local authorities.

Agreement 16 - Norfolk authorities agree to endorse the updated Planning in Health: An Engagement Protocol between Local Planning Authorities, Public Health and Health Sector Organisations in Norfolk and undertake its commitments.

Section 8 – Climate Change

8.1 Introduction

In Summer 2019 the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum requested that a Climate Change sub group should be set up as part of the update process to the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. The group reviewed information in relation to Climate Change with a specific focus on the role and impact on Local Plans and the planning system generally. It also explored some of the emerging policy work around climate change and looked at best practice where applicable.

8.2 Background

Climate change has been embedded into Land Use Planning and Marine Planning for many years; significant emphasis is placed on planners to address climate change through achieving sustainable development, and marine planning can make a contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with national policies. It is recognised that considerable national, international and local research in relation to climate change has been completed in recent years. This includes reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and there continues to be emerging changes in relation to Government policy on the matter.

In June 2019 the government amended the Climate Change Act 2008 to extend the national carbon reduction target within it with the aim to reduce carbon levels to net zero by 2050. In December 2020 the government also announced a new plan which aims for at least a 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade, compared to 1990 levels[63]. Many local authorities were galvanised to either declare climate emergencies, and/or set their own locally applicable targets, either replicating the governments or extending it further as well as enshrining the concept into corporate objectives and Plans.

Within Planning, Local Plans can play a central role in helping to facilitate this key national environmental objective. Effective strategic plan making can deliver sustainable development and help address the challenges that climate change brings, complementing measures outside of the planning sphere but not resolving climate change challenges on its own. Clearly the County is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change through flooding, drought, storm surges, sea rise etc. The costs of climate change are projected nationally to be high and it is emphasised that not taking action could cost more than taking steps to reducing emissions now to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Sustainable development through land use policies is regarded as a key means of addressing climate change and as such the planning system has a duty to ensure that action is taken to encourage and deliver more sustainable development.

8.3 Norfolk Climate Change Partnership

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP) was established in early 2020.

It aims to:

- Effectively tackle climate change, ensuring prosperity for the future generations of Norfolk by building healthy, resilient, sustainable communities and environments.
- Share knowledge and practices regarding how public bodies can respond to and influence climate change in Norfolk as a whole.

[63] See Press Release - https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sets-ambitious-new-climate-target-ahead-of-un-summit

- Support and deliver projects that support Norfolk's public bodies, communities, public, voluntary and community organisations, businesses and residents to reduce their carbon emissions, realise economic benefits, and adapt to and mitigate against the immediate and future impacts of climate change.
-

The NCCP has three strategic priorities:

- Develop a sustainable energy plan to decarbonise energy supply for Norfolk and improve distribution of energy to citizens.
- Reduce and conserve energy demand on the system through retrofitting of buildings through behaviour change, enabling fabric first and heating.
- Enable greener sustainable transport solutions including a focus on behaviour change and using statutory powers where appropriate.

Norfolk LPAs will continue to support the work of the NCCP, further details of the NCCP work plan can be found on it website - https://www.norfolkclimatechange.co.uk/

8.3 Climate Change Research Paper

Working collaboratively through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum, Local Planning Authority planning officers, along with colleagues from the Environment Agency, Local Enterprise Partnership and Norfolk County Council, worked together to develop ideas which could help local plans address climate change through land use policies at a strategic level. The group have produced a Climate Change Research Paper and sub topic reports which set out a number of approaches for local authorities to consider when drafting local plans. In the light of this work the following agreement has been reached.

Agreement 17 - Norfolk Planning Authorities agree that climate change is an urgent, strategic cross boundary issue which will be addressed at the heart of Local Plans. To do this, the Authorities agree to consider to the approaches contained in the NSPF Climate Change research paper when the relevant policies are next being reviewed and updated as part of the Local Plan process and their appropriateness considered against local factors including viability of developments. Norfolk Planning Authorities agree to collectively review the latest evidence and advice on a regular basis and to update this research to ensure that the most appropriate actions are being undertaken to support climate change initiatives.

Section 9 – Infrastructure and Environment

Strategic Infrastructure and Environmental Objectives

To realise the economic potential of Norfolk and its people by:

- strengthening Norfolk's connections to the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond by boosting inward investment and international trade through rail, road, sea, air and digital connectivity infrastructure; and
- ensuring effective and sustainable digital connections and transport infrastructure between and within Norfolk's main settlements to strengthen inward investment.
- strengthening Norfolk's place competitiveness through the delivery of well-planned balanced new developments providing access to a range of business space as well as high quality residential, well serviced by local amenities and high quality educational facilities.
- Recognising the role of our city centre and town centres as a focus for investment and enhancing the quality of life for residents.
- recognising that the long term conservation of Norfolk's natural environment and heritage is a key element of the county's competitiveness.

To reduce Norfolk's greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality as well as reducing the impact on, exposure to, and effects of climate change by:

- locating development so as to reduce the need to travel;
- reducing unnecessary car use and supporting the roll out of new technologies (such as Electric Vehicles and alternative fuels e.g. hydrogen) and Sustainable and active modes of travel including public transport, walking and cycling;
- maximising the energy efficiency of development and promoting the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources; and
- managing and mitigating against the risks of adverse weather events, sea level rise and flooding by reducing the impacts on people, property and wildlife habitats.

Together these measures will help create healthier more sustainable communities.

To improve the quality of life and health for all the population of Norfolk by:

- promoting development and design which seeks to actively improve health, prevent ill health and tackle widespread health inequalities
- ensuring new development fulfils the principles of sustainable communities, providing a well-designed and locally distinctive living environment adequately supported by social and green infrastructure;
- promoting social cohesion by significantly improving the educational performance of our schools, enhancing the skills of the workforce and improving access to work, services and other facilities, especially for those who are disadvantaged;
- maintaining cultural diversity while addressing the distinctive needs of each part of the county;
- ensuring all our communities are able to access excellent sporting facilities, health services and opportunities for informal recreation;
- promoting regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas; and
- increasing community involvement in the development process at the local level.

To improve and conserve Norfolk's rich and biodiverse environment by:

- meeting environmental challenges including those set out in new legislation such as the 2021 Environment Act; e.g. habitat mitigation, achieving Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and addressing issues of Nutrient Neutrality affecting the River Wensum and Broads Special Area of Conservation/ Ramsar sites
- ensuring the protection and enhancement of Norfolk's environmental assets, including the built and historic environment, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected landscapes, the Broads, the Brecks and the Coast;
- protecting the landscape setting of our existing settlements and preventing the unplanned coalescence of settlements;
- maximising the use of previously developed land within our urban areas to minimise the need to develop greenfield land;
- avoiding, where possible, development on the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- maximising the environmental benefits where the development of greenfield sites is needed;
- protecting, maintaining and, enhancing biodiversity through the conservation of existing habitats and species, and by creating new wildlife habitats through development;
- providing a coherent connected network of accessible multi-functional greenspaces;
- reducing the demand for and use of water and other natural resources; and
- Protecting and enhancing water, air, soil and other natural resource quality where possible.

9.1 Introduction

Infrastructure and Environmental objectives have been considered together in the context of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. The issues addressed are complex and multi-faceted and much of the work that has been completed on this subject by working closely with appropriate expert groups.

As is reflected in the introductory text in this framework and as recognised in the agreed vision and objectives, the future economic and social prospects for the County cannot be divorced from issues of environmental protection and infrastructure provision. The quality of Norfolk's environment, both in terms of the countryside, it's historic City and the wide range of distinctive towns and villages it includes, give access to a quality of life which is one of the key selling points of the County and the retention and enhancement of which will be crucial to attracting the growth in highly productive economic sectors that is sought. Yet, as is also noted, Norfolk's infrastructure is comparatively under developed compared to many other parts of the wider South and East of England and will need significant enhancement if growth is to be delivered at the scale envisaged without compromising the quality of life and environment on offer.

The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan[64] (NSIDP) has been produced by the County Council working with all the local planning authorities and utility providers. It lists strategic infrastructure requirements and provides an update on the delivery of a range of projects. The projects in the NSIDP reflect the key infrastructure needed to deliver the scale of growth ambitions outlined in the NSPF. The NSIDP is a working document that will be regularly updated as information

[64]See Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/business-policies

becomes available. A new version of the NSIDP was released in 2024. The NSIDP will help co-ordination, implementation, prioritise activity and respond to any funding opportunities. It will also enable Local Authorities to prioritise the release of revenue funding for the development of scheme information to assist the prospects of successful bids being made for capital funding to deliver further projects. As it concentrates on strategic infrastructure it does not identify the full range of infrastructure required for development. The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan highlights that the following projects have successfully been funded since 2013

Completed:

- Broadland Northway (Norwich Northern Distributor Road (inc Postwick)) - £205m
- Norwich Pedal ways - £14m
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 2) - £3.5m
- Great Yarmouth Beacon Park Link (A47/143 Link) - £6.8m
- A11 dualling Barton Mills to Thetford- £105m
- Great Yarmouth Right Turn at the rail station - £400,000
- Great Yarmouth Rail Station to the Market Place improvement- £2m
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 1) - £2.5m
- Thetford Enterprise Park Roundabout- £1.5m
- King's Lynn Lynnsport Link Road- £3.5m
- Bacton Walcott Sandscaping - £19.3m
- A140 Hempnall Roundabout - £4m
- A11/Outer Ring Road Daniels Road junction improvement- £2m
- Great Yarmouth congestion relief projects- £3.3m
- Attleborough Town Centre Improvements - £4.5m
- Norwich (Growth Deal projects in Norwich City Centre and on the A11 corridor to Wymondham) - £11.2m
- Norwich (various projects through the Transforming Cities Fund programme) - £23.6m
- Active Travel Fund - £5.6m
- Wroxham road to Salhouse road section of the Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road
- Marriott's Way and Bure Valley Path sections of the Green Loop - £1.4m
- North Walsham, Honing and Stalham resurfacing section of the Weavers Way - £650,000
- Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017 onwards (Epoch 2)
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 2) - £3.5m
- Snetterton Heath Energy Supply Phase I – New primary substation and 6MVA transformer commencing Jan 2022 – £3.6m (Prior to Snetterton Heath Distribution Phase 1)
- Great Yarmouth Covered Market
- Great Yarmouth Harfreys Roundabout
- Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing - £120m
- Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017(Epoch 2) - £42.9m

Under construction or part-completed:

- Thetford Water Supply – £9.8m
- Thetford Sewerage Scheme - £2m
- Easton, Hethersett and Cringleford sewerage upgrade - £11m
- Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) - £12m
- Internet of Things Innovation Network - £735,000
- Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus
- Wymondham Water Supply Connections
- Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and University Campus

- Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision (Feasibility study phase)
- A47 improvements (incl dualling Blofield to North Burlingham, and Easton to North Tuddenham)

Planned, not yet started:

- A47 improvements (incl Thickthorn A47 Wisbech Junctions (Broadend Road))
- Increased Surface Water Capacity North Lynn
- Great Yarmouth Winter Garden
- Great Yarmouth Public Realms Improvements

9.2 Utilities

To deliver the rate of growth that is planned across Norfolk in the coming years considerable further investment will be needed in utilities infrastructure. A list of the main schemes that are thought to be necessary is outlined below.

Table 11: Priority Utilities Projects for Promotion[65]

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
Attleborough Energy Supply	Not Known	£22m	BRP, Private Sector
Snetterton Heath Distribution Phase 1	Not Known	£1.5m	Developer Finance
Snetterton Heath Mains Sewer Connection	TBC	£3.8m	Private Sector, Public Sector, Anglian Water.
Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision	2024	£5.2-£5.9m	Private sector investment

9.3 Electricity

Provision of energy, particularly electricity is fundamental to housing and economic growth as energy consumers require access to reliable energy supplies. Since 2004, the UK has been a net importer of energy, and this has changed the way we view our energy security (Annual Energy Statement 2014). Housing and employment growth will put a greater strain on the electricity network with many of the primary substations in Norfolk already reaching capacity.

The 33kV main transmission network in Norfolk is the main network for new on-shore electricity providers and major users such as employment sites and large scale residential development. It is essentially three networks with one in the west serving King's Lynn and West Norfolk and extending in a limited way into the western side of North Norfolk and Breckland; one centred in Norwich and extending to Attleborough and the central and eastern parts of North Norfolk; and one serving the towns along the southern border and extending round to Great Yarmouth. This leaves significant, largely rural, parts of the county some distance from potential connections to this network. This particularly applies to a central swathe running north south, and a southern swathe running east west.

[65] Anglian Water's Long Term Recycling Plan was published in the summer of 2018. Building on this version work has commenced on the drainage and wastewater managements plans, using a nationally agreed methodology, this will be published in 2022.

The electricity network is subject to a number of operational constraints which challenge the ability to predict the future capacity of substations over the time periods that are typical for Local Plans. UK Power Networks (UKPN) will not normally invest to provide additional unassigned capacity and the costs of capacity upgrades falling on developers can be significant. The ability of developers to reserve supply, and unexpected windfall development adds further uncertainty to the forward planning process. In addition, the power requirements of end users of employment sites can vary significantly and are unknown at the time the land is allocated in a Local Plan.

In developing Local Plans, it is clear that Local Authorities will need to work closely with UKPN to ensure that identified locations where housing and employment growth will require strategic enhancement of the electricity supply networks to support new developments can be delivered without delaying the delivery of development or rendering it unviable. Partners continue to work with UKPN to overcome current constraints and prevent future issues, and to explore mechanisms to ensure the cost of electricity infrastructure is shared proportionately between planned developments. To support this, partners are working with UKPN to ensure there is more detailed information available to authorities providing an understanding of potential constraints and where development will require strategic enhancement of the electricity supply networks. Some Norfolk Planning authorities have also completed electricity infrastructure studies to investigate power supply issues and assess local constraints in more detail, these include the Greater Norwich Energy Infrastructure Study[66]and the North Norfolk Power Study[67]. Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils are collaborating to bring forward an Energy Plan for the sub-region, the plan will enable local authorities across Norfolk and Suffolk to identify the actions they need to take to ensure the counties are able to meet the rising demand for energy and unlock housing and economic growth in a way that respects environmental sensitivities and is consistent with a clear, and identifiable pathway to net zero.

Additionally, all Local Plans across Norfolk will need to promote new developments which minimises energy use; minimise reliance on non-renewable or high-carbon energy sources and promote and encourage the use of decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources (including heat networks) and sustainable construction technologies ensure that investment decisions help promote growth and overcome constraints and there are forward looking decision on energy investment.

9.4 Water

Norfolk lies within one of the driest parts of the UK. Planned growth in housing and employment will significantly increase water demand. The area's large agricultural sector is also dependent on water availability in the summer. Water quality is crucial, due to the number of protected sites relying on high water quality, including the Broads.

Water Resources East (WRE) is one of five regional planning groups in England operating under the National Framework for Water Resources[68]. Their region encompasses Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire. WRE works with the four water companies in

[66] See Greater Norwich Energy Infrastructure Study - https://gnlp.oc2.uk/docfiles/46/P3723%20Greater%20Norwich%20Energy%20Infrastructure%20Study%20with%20Appendices.pdf

[67] See North Norfolk Power Study - https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/5583/north-norfolk-power-study-report-march-2019.pdf

[68] See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/meeting-our-future-water-needs-a-national-framework-for-water-resources

the region together with local authorities and representatives of the farming, energy and housing development sectors to create a regional water resources plan that meets the long terms needs of all sectors and the environment. WRE's first Regional Water Resources Plan for Eastern England was finalised and published in December 2023[69].

Anglian Water supplies water to the majority of Norfolk with parts of Great Yarmouth and the Broads Authority being served by Essex and Suffolk Water. Water companies have a statutory obligation to prepare and review Water Resource Management Plans (WRMP) once every 5 years setting how they will maintain a sustainable balance between water supplies and demand.

Anglian Water's current 2024 Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP24) was approved by the Secretary of State and published in September 2024, it describes the action needed over the period from 2025 to 2050[70]. This considers the challenges the region faces, allowing Anglian Water (AW) to implement an affordable, sustainable pathway that can provide benefit to their customers, society, and the environment. The WRMP24 process has identified significant challenges for the East of England between 2025 and 2050; some of which were not present for WRMP19. Anglian Water will continue to prioritise demand management through smart metering, leakage control and water efficiency campaigns. But with almost no surplus water available to meet the new water needs of our region, WRMP24 has to identify new supply options for ensuring customers in Norfolk continue to have a safe, resilient water supply whilst providing best value to the region. New strategic resource options (SROs) include the Fens and Lincolnshire reservoirs, that will meet 36% of new water needs. The region's first proposed desalination plant at Bacton has joined the list of strategic resource options to be accelerated under national oversight by regulators. Anglian Water has planned for adaptive future resources, which allows flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

Anglian Water has a statutory duty to supply water for domestic purposes e.g. to all household properties as well as any domestic requirements (e.g., drinking water, hand-basins, toilets and showers) of non-household properties. There is no legal requirement for water companies to supply water for non-domestic water demands (i.e. water use for industrial processes such as agri-food production or car washes), where it might put at risk the ability to supply water for domestic purposes.

Anglian Water has advised that they can no longer guarantee to supply new non-domestic water requirements for intensive/high water consumptive uses such as manufacturing/ food processing and production, due to water supplies being squeezed by abstraction reduction, climate change and a fast-growing population[71].

As a result of limited water availability, where new and unplanned non-domestic requests are received, which exceed 20,000 litres per day (0.020 Ml/d) (this may be less dependent on the availability of water in that area) Anglian Water will be declining requests. Where the development is progressing through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project planning regime or Special Development Order Anglian Water will ask businesses to submit a Water Resource Assessment as part of their planning process, and, where feasible, will work with them to explore innovative solutions to meet their requests - such as more water efficient manufacturing and cooling processes, water reuse,

[69] See https://wre.org.uk/the-regional-plan/
[70] See V3 WRMP24 main report - V3 WRMP24 main report
[71] Anglian Water's Non-Domestic Water Requests Policy July 2024

or alternative non-potable water resources. This position will be reviewed annually, and this non-domestic water request cap may change.

Essex and Suffolk Water have also finalised their 2024 WRMP[72] for the 2025-2050 period covering the areas of Norfolk they supply.

Norfolk Authorities will work with Water Resources East (WRE) and its members, including both water companies, to help safeguard a sustainable supply of water for Eastern England, resilient to future challenges and enabling the area's communities, environment and economy to reach their full potential.

WRE's five-year business plan 2024-2028[73] sets out five strategic priorities to help increase their impact within the region, as they work with their members to deliver their flagship projects and develop the second iteration of their Regional Plan:

- Develop a more comprehensive, fully multi-sector, regional water resources plan for Eastern England
- Support catchment scale activity across the region to enable long-term planning and environmental improvement across sectors.
- Increase WRE membership, engagement and influence within the region.
- Be thought leaders and pioneers of collaborative approaches to integrated water management, helping to shape international best practice, national government policy and local delivery.
- Continue to strengthen WRE's governance and funding.

These will help to take forward action to help address the projected water shortages identified and deliver shared solutions that serve multiple sectors and help restore, protect and improve the environment.

One of WRE's flagship projects is the Norfolk Water Strategy Programme (NWSP) launched in February 2021 in collaboration with Norfolk County Council, Anglian Water and the international environment charity The Nature Conservancy. In February 2024, the partners launched the Business case for a Norfolk Water Fund[74]; a £30 million investment in nature-based solutions and land use change with a benefit to cost ratio of 6.7. The aim is to establish the Water Fund as a partnership structure to facilitate delivery of nature-based solutions for water management in the medium and long term

Water Funds are governance and financing mechanisms allowing public and private sectors to work collectively to secure water for their communities. They are used successfully around the world to leverage blended finance streams to ensure coordinated delivery, funding and monitoring of nature-based solutions (NBS) for water security. In 40 locations, across North America, Latin America, Asia and Africa, TNC collaborates with partners to set up Water Funds based on science-based plans and innovative tools for representing water management challenges, strong monitoring and mobilisation of diverse funding streams. This programme will establish TNC's first Water Fund in Europe. Being part of the global Water Fund network will access collective experience, accelerating the project, and enable Norfolk to be featured as a global exemplar for water resource management, thereby facilitating access to further financial and human resources.

[72] See WRMP (2025-2030) - https://www.nwg.co.uk/responsibility/environment/wrmp/wrmp-2025-2030/
[73] https://wre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/WRE-5-Year-Business-Plan-2024-2028.pdf
[74] See https://wre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Norfolk-Water-Fund-Business-Case-Report.pdf

Agreement 18 – Norfolk Authorities will remain members of WRE and will work collaboratively with its other members in the development of the Norfolk Water Strategy Programme to ensure the project delivers the best outcomes for the county. Norfolk Authorities will also work collaboratively as part of WRE to support delivery of WRE's Regional Water Resources Plan and develop future iterations of the plan.

Other work is also ongoing across the county considering the wider impacts of water and associated infrastructure. Norwich City Council leads the River Wensum Strategy Partnership, working alongside the Environment Agency, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority and Norwich Society. The strategy has the overall vision of breathing new life into the river by enhancing it for the benefit of all and increasing access to, and making greater use of, this important asset. It will consider social, environmental and economic factors in achieving this vision. Some of the projects already delivered or planned as part of this strategy look to improve water quality and reduce flood risk on a catchment wide basis. In addition, the CATCH project, (Norfolk County Council along with Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and Anglian Water) is working to find long-term solutions to the problem of surface water flooding in Norwich. The pilot project offers homes, businesses and schools the chance to have a slow-release water butts or rain water planters installed completely free of charge. The project is funded by Anglian Water and the Interreg European Union CATCH Climate Change and Flood Reduction Project. The EU are currently considering further phases of project work.

Local Plans can also contribute to long term water resilience by ensuring that new development incorporates water efficiency measures including the adoption of the optional higher water efficiency standard (110 litres/per person/per day).

Agreement 19 – Norfolk is identified as an area of serious water stress, the Norfolk Planning Authorities have agreed that when preparing Local Plans to seek to include the optional higher water efficiency standard (110 litres/per person/per day) or lower for residential development.

Individual authorities may also wish to consider the inclusion of a specific water efficiency BREEAM standard for commercial development within their Local Plans. Improved water efficiency is not limited to measures within dwellings and commercial buildings and a collaborative approach to promote innovation in water efficiency/re-use is required working closely with water companies and site promoters/developers.

Anglian Water's aim is to see residential developers go beyond the optional higher water efficiency standard (110 litres/per person/per day) - this could include water re-use measures in new developments including stormwater and rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling forming part of an integrated approach to water management. Natural England, the Environment Agency and water companies in the WRE region (including Anglian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water) have developed Shared Standards for Water Efficiency in Local Plans (June 2025)[75]. This recently published document promotes tighter water efficiency standards to be included in Local Plans – going further than the optional higher standard of 110 l/p/d towards 85 l/p/d, with a supporting evidence base to assist LPAs

[75] https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/developers/new-content/p--c/shared-standards-in-water-efficiency-for-local-plans.pdf

with policy-making. Norfolk Authorities will work with Anglian Water to establish these higher standards where viability allows.

The current and future management of compliant disposal of wastewater is assessed by Anglian Water's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan 2025-2050 (DWMP23). This is a collaborative long-term strategic plan highlighting the known and expected future risks to drainage and identifying solution strategies to mitigate these. The plan considers risk from population and housing growth along with climate change impacts over time, ensuring assets are maintained and customer needs are met, while protecting the environment. It provides sustainable solutions for maintaining reliable and affordable levels of service and facilitates working in partnership to mitigate flood risk[76].

Anglian Water has also implemented new developer charging arrangements setting out a fixed, upfront schedule of fees that they charge for relevant activities, including laying mains and pipes that connect new buildings and housing developments to their network[77]. These are circumscribed by limits and requirements that Ofwat sets, called charging rules ensuring that water companies provide an excellent service to developers of all sizes. Anglian Water's charging arrangements also cover a number of typical additional services that are offered in order to facilitate developments, including particular circumstances where additional costs are incurred. In addition to the Sewerage Environmental Incentive Scheme, which applies only to brownfield sites where surface water is currently discharged to a combined or foul sewer, developers can also apply for a Water Environmental Incentive where new residential properties are designed to meet 90 l/p/d or less.

It will be necessary to take a co-ordinated approach to water through water cycle studies or integrated water management strategies to address water supply, quality, waste water treatment and flood risk. Flood risk assessments should be used effectively to ensure development is located appropriately and addresses cumulative impacts in key growth areas. To help achieve this a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been produced jointly by most Norfolk authorities[78].

The release of land for development will be dependent on there being sufficient water supply and wastewater infrastructure to meet the additional requirements arising from the new development to ensure that water quality is protected or improved, with no detriment to areas of environmental importance. Growth in several parts of the county is dependent on investment at sewage treatment works (water recycling centres). The timing of these investments will have an important effect on the phasing of development. Such matters could be assessed through water cycle studies/integrated water management strategies and other supporting documents as appropriate to identify the infrastructure needs that are prepared to support Local Plans, and through Anglian Water's Business Plans that set out the growth investment schemes at water recycling centres for each 5-year Asset Management Period (AMP).

During the updating of this NSPF, Anglian Water announced capacity issues with some Water Recycling Centres (WRCs) within the county. Anglian Water have indicated that in some cases, growth schemes have been identified for AMP8 (2025-2030) and so development could come forward once

[76] Drainage and wastewater management plan
[77] See DS charging arrangements - https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/developers/development-services/ds-charging-arrangements-2019-2020.pdf
[78] See Strategic flood risk assessment - http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/sfra/sfra

improvements have been made. However, for other WRCs where no growth schemes have yet been identified this may impact the phasing of development. More information has been circulated to LPAs, and Norfolk LPAs will continue to work with Anglian Water to limit the impact of these capacity issues on new development.

Agreement 23 – The Norfolk Authorities, Anglian Water and Essex and Suffolk Water have agreed to provide regular and timely updates to each other on the delivery of development sites and proposed utility projects to ensure that development is aligned with water and wastewater infrastructure.

In considering the distribution of growth Local Planning Authorities will need to ensure that distribution avoids cumulative detrimental impact on the most sensitive water courses particularly, those in the Broads and on the Wensum which cross a number of Local Planning Authority boundaries. Each public body will have regard to River Basin Management Plan[79] to ensure that their plans and actions do not risk delivery of the environmental objectives for each water body in the County (not just protected sites).

9.5 Digital Connectivity

Broadband

Having access to high-speed and reliable broadband is now regarded as essential by many residents and businesses. The picture regarding superfast broadband coverage is rapidly improving; 97.3% of the county's homes and businesses can now access superfast broadband, up from 42% in 2012[80].

The Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) project was launched in 2012, with the aim of ensuring that by the end of 2015 more than 80% of Norfolk's premises could access superfast broadband (24 Mbps download, also known as Next Generation Access (NGA)). The third phase of the BBfN Programme started in 2019, a further £13 million is now being invested in Norfolk, but this time will deploy Ultrafast Fibre to the Premises broadband for circa 8,200 Norfolk properties that do not have access to Superfast broadband. Overall, this will allow the county to move towards its aim of achieving 100% coverage. As a result of The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review, the Chancellor announced in 2019 a £5 billion commitment to fund gigabit capable broadband for the 20% of UK premises that would be unlikely to receive commercial access to gigabit capable broadband. In March 2021 the first live phase (Phase 1b) of Project Gigabit was launched. Norfolk has been included in the first wave, which will deliver gigabit- capable connections across Norfolk to premises that are unlikely to benefit from commercial investment.

The £114 million Norfolk Project Gigabit contract was awarded to Cityfibre and signed in June 2023. It will provide gigabit capable broadband to around 66,000 premises across Norfolk. As of Summer 2023,

[79] See Anglian district river basin management plan - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anglian-district-river-basin-management-plan

[80] See Local broadband Information Website - http://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/index.php?area=E10000020

Ultrafast (Gigabit capable) broadband coverage has reached over 56% across Norfolk, and increase from 10% from the previous year.

The availability of high-speed broadband is clearly of major strategic significance for Norfolk and Norfolk authorities welcome Openreach's offer to install Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) free of charge to all new housing developments of 20 or more homes and an improved pricing structure all the way down to two homes[81]. However, the further rollout of broadband to existing homes cannot be required through any current Local Plan, but the Norfolk authorities are working closely with Better Broadband for Norfolk and other bodies and providers to ensure that high-speed broadband is delivered to more parts of the county as soon as is practicable.

Working with partners, Norfolk County Council secured circa. £8 million in 2019 via the Government's Local Full Fibre Network programme and a further £2m in 2020 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The LFFN programme completed successfully in March 2022, delivering gigabit capable broadband to 394 rural public buildings, including schools, council offices, fire stations, libraries and village halls. A further circa. 2,200 nearby homes are also able to benefit from full fibre broadband.

In addition, a further 2,500 homes to date have benefitted from commercial operators exploiting the infrastructure installed under LFFN, by installing full fibre broadband deeper into poorly served communities The revised NPPF (para 112) highlights the importance of reliable communications infrastructure in economic growth and social well-being and requires policies to set out how high quality digital infrastructure is expected to be delivered, authorities will engage proactively with broadband and mobile network providers to better encourage the rollout of new infrastructure, particularly Openreach, and will seek to involve Openreach at the pre-application stage of major residential and commercial planning applications, as well as through consultations on the emerging Local Plans.

As part of the work to update the last version of this document a specialist group was set up to provide further guidance to local authorities on supporting broadband in local plans. Since this work was completed, the government has introduced regulations for gigabit broadband infrastructure and connectivity requirements for the construction of new homes in England [82]. The requirements are designed to ensure that during construction, new homes are installed with the fastest broadband connections available within a cost cap. Even where a gigabit-capable connection is not possible within this cost cap, the new homes will be future-proofed with physical infrastructure to support gigabit-capable connections when they become available. Local Planning authorities can also ensure they are able to support developers with information regarding the connection of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) and discuss applications with the County Council to understand how their initiatives can help deliver high speed broadband provision to developments. Local planning authorities can implement Wayleave policies that only seek to cover costs and work with landowners to improve connectivity.

[81] See Fibre for developers rate card - https://www.openreach.com/content/dam/openreach/openreach-dam-files/images/fibre-broadband/fibre-for-developers/Rate%20card%20website.pdf

[82] The Building etc. (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2022 - https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/984/contents/made

Mobile Connectivity

Mobile telephone connectivity has, like broadband, become increasingly important. Significant change is now underway with the continued rollout of 5G services in the County.

Coverage in Norfolk

Interactive mapping (available from Consumer Group Which[83]) shows the general coverage for 2G, 3G 4G and 5G data across Norfolk. The majority of areas across Norfolk receive a weak 2/3/4G signal, with the strongest signals in Norwich and market towns such as King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

Norfolk County Council is collaborating with mobile analysts Streetwave to map mobile coverage in the region using waste collection vehicles. In April 2024, Norfolk County Council installed monitoring devices in some waste collection vehicles across the seven district councils in Norfolk. These devices takes surveys of the quality of mobile networks from the four main providers in the UK: EE, O2, Three, and Vodafone. They collect data on speeds, signal strength, and network generation.

The results of this assessment can be found at the Norfolk Mobile Coverage web page - www.norfolk.gov.uk/mobilemap.

Many mobile "not-spots" remain in Norfolk (some rural areas and parts of the coast in particular), particularly for 4G data coverage, the most significant improvements in rural coverage will be delivered through the Shared Rural Network (SRN) programme. This Programme started in 2020 and will see the four main mobile operators and government jointly invest £1bn in improving mobile coverage in rural areas. The target is to deliver 4G coverage to 95% of the UK by 2025. Through shared and new infrastructure, the Shared Rural Network is planned to increase the parts of the UK that get 4G coverage from all operators from 66% to 84%, improving consumer choice. The mobile operators expect the Shared Rural Network will extend mobile coverage to an additional 280,000 premises and for people in cars on an additional 16,000km of the UK's roads, boosting productivity and investment in rural areas. Norfolk local authorities will continue to work proactively and collaboratively with the MNOs and their network build partners to improve mobile phone coverage including fast data services availability over 4G & 5G services.

5G

5G uses higher frequency radio bands which travel less well than 4G, and can be disturbed by buildings, trees, weather etc. Whilst more base stations will be required Mobile Network Operators will use Multi-Input and Multiple-Output (MIMO) technology which will be rolled out on existing infrastructure where possible. Getting high quality 5G infrastructure rolled out across Norfolk will be important to delivering the vision of the NSPF. The main benefit of 5G is that it could, in theory, provide ultra-high speed broadband access to all, without the bandwidth capacity challenges of 4G. This should enable location to be much less of a barrier to receiving broadband than previously, with benefits for homeowners and businesses. It could remove a barrier to location of employment opportunities, particularly home-based and rural-based businesses.

5G is now available in the most dense urban parts of the County and some dispersed locations where masts have been more recently upgraded. In March 2022 the Government confirmed it's intention to

[83] Which mobile phone coverage map - http://www.which.co.uk/reviews/mobile-phone-providers/article/mobile-phone-coverage-map

reform planning legalisation to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. The changes have been made to the Permitted Development Rights to enable:

- the deployment of taller and wider masts;
- building-based masts located nearer to highways; and
- faster deployment of radio equipment housing, such as equipment cabinets.

At the same time the government published a new code of practice for wireless network development in England. This provides guidance to mobile infrastructure operators on their network deployment with a stronger focus on the siting and design of wireless infrastructure and the process for engaging with local authorities and communities.

The key conclusion is that some consistency of approach from all Norfolk Planning Authorities is clearly important for 5G if the very high degree of nationwide coverage required for 5G to be effective is to be secured. Broadly, it should be made as straightforward as possible for 5G base stations and transmitters to be approved where they fall outside of the remit of permitted development, and common development management policy text to facilitate this should be explored, taking into account material planning considerations. In particular, care will need to be taken to ensure that new telecommunications equipment is sited and located sensitively in respect of the public realm, street-scene, historic environment and wider landscapes.
As part of the work to update this document previously a specialist group was set up to provide further guidance to local authorities on supporting the roll out of 5G. The group have produced a supporting document of Shared Objectives for extending 4G coverage and the rollout of 5G infrastructure in the County of Norfolk.

Agreement 21 - To maximise the speed of rollout of 5G telecommunications to Norfolk, Norfolk Planning Authorities will continue to engage with Mobile Network Operators and Mobile UK on their 5G rollout plans for Norfolk. When reviewing Local Plans and updating relevant policies, Local Planning Authorities agree to have regard to the shared objectives for extending 4G coverage and the rollout of 5G infrastructure in Norfolk produced by the technical group, taking into account material planning considerations.

9.6 Education

Education
Norfolk's pupil population has been in decline for some time, this was first noted by Norfolk County Council in 2019 when it was evident the birth rate was starting to fall. The previous peak in pupil population occurred in 2003 and these pupils entered the primary phase around 2007/2008. Since this period numbers have gradually been reducing

with some recovery but now continue to fall and reach an all-time low of approximately 7400 pupils. Previous higher cohorts of the primary phase sector have now transitioned through into the secondary phases. This will impact different areas and schools differently and will present a challenge as the effect is not sustained for

a long period in the secondary phase. School's Infrastructure colleagues have been working with Post 16 education colleagues to assess how these increased numbers may be accommodated across the existing Post 16 provision.

Based on the current trajectory of birth numbers the primary phase will continue to see reduced numbers entering the reception cohort in some areas of the county and as a result, overtime, the older cohorts reducing, this will have quite different and significant effects on settings in different

communities. The speed of delivering houses is key to the requirements of school places so careful monitoring of housing progress is undertaken between County Council/District/Borough Councils. The expected decline in pupils impacts the ability to deliver new schools in areas of significant development, based on the funding mechanism associated with pupil numbers. This could present significant challenge in certain areas ensuring sustainable travel for education provision and delay the anticipated schemes as a result. Costs of school delivery have increased significantly over the last few years in order to meet additional requirements within the planning system and in order to meet our sustainability targets.

At the same time costs have increased, the needs of Norfolk's pupil population has changed, with increased pupils with identified Special Education Needs and Disabilities, the type of establishment required to respond to this need in future will also have to adapt and change. This changed requirement also brings with it higher costs for more specialists provision to be introduced across the county.

Standards in Norfolk schools have continued to rise with 86% of schools being graded Good or better as of September 2024. The Local Authority retains responsibility for ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of school places and works with a range of partners, e.g. Governing Boards, Dioceses and Academy Trusts to develop local schemes.

Norfolk County Council's School Sufficiency Plan sets the strategic plan for the next ten years or more, published every year identifies a need for 24 new primary schools and 1 high school. It outlines the implications of key growth areas where more than one primary school is required, which includes Attleborough, Thetford, Beeston Park, Rackheath and West Winch. A new High School for north east Norwich is also being discussed and planned. Expansion to existing schools will also be required in areas of the County to respond to local needs dependant on the delivery of housing and impact on the pupil population.

Norfolk County Council works closely with Local Planning authorities as per agreement 26.

Agreement 22: Norfolk Planning authorities will continue to work closely with the County Council and school providers to ensure a sufficient supply of school places. This includes making provision for those with Special Educational Needs (SEND), providing land for school expansion or new schools and/or where no suitable solution for sustainable access to schools exists, appropriate contributions for home to school transport. S106 and / or Community Infrastructure Levy funds will be used to deliver additional school places and/or contributions to home to school transport, where appropriate. The County Council's Planning Obligations Standards will be used to inform any S106 payments or bid for CIL funds needed to mitigate the impact of housing growth on County Council infrastructure. The authorities agree to support Norfolk County Council in securing contributions towards infrastructure where justified and, in the case of planning obligations, suitably evidenced as being in compliance with S122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

9.7 Transportation

There will be a need for considerable further investment in transport infrastructure if this is not to constrain growth. A background paper was previously produced summarising the state of the County's transport network, providing much of the evidence base for the production of the first version of the

NSPF and subsequent Local Plans[84]. The paper aims to identify: the current state of the transport system; the constraints (current and future); and opportunities and includes a review of transport constraints to identify issues that, without resolution, may prove a barrier to growth. The information is now being updated via the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan as mentioned in Section 9.1.

Current Network

Norfolk is served by two trunk roads: the A11 from London and Cambridge, and the A47 from the west. The A47 continues from Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft in the east and from King's Lynn to the A1 in the west. The A11 is fully dual carriageway and the corridor will see some of the largest scale growth planned in the county (at Thetford, Attleborough, Wymondham, Hethersett and the Norwich fringe at Colney/Cringleford). The A47 is a mix of single and dual carriageway, both within and beyond Norfolk.

Away from the strategic road network, Norfolk's road network is a largely rural, single carriageway network. Much of it has not seen significant improvement schemes and so journey times can be slow, particularly away from the higher standard A-class network.

Norfolk County Council, in partnership with Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council, made successful bids to the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of the Transforming Cities Fund. The fund aims to make it easier for people to access jobs, training and retail, and also aims to respond to issues around air quality. The partnership was initially awarded £6.1m to deliver improvements to Norwich Bus Station, investment in the blue and green pedalway routes in Hethersett and Thorpe St Andrew and the introduction of the new bike share scheme for Greater Norwich, Beryl. A further £32m was awarded to deliver a 'core' package of improvements. All Tranche 1 and many Tranche 2 schemes have already been successfully delivered.

[84] See NSPF SUpproting Transport Information - https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/norfolk-strategic-framework/supporting_documents/NSFTTransport_OutputV4.docx

Full details of work carried out on each project can be found on the Norfolk County Council Improvement projects pages[85].

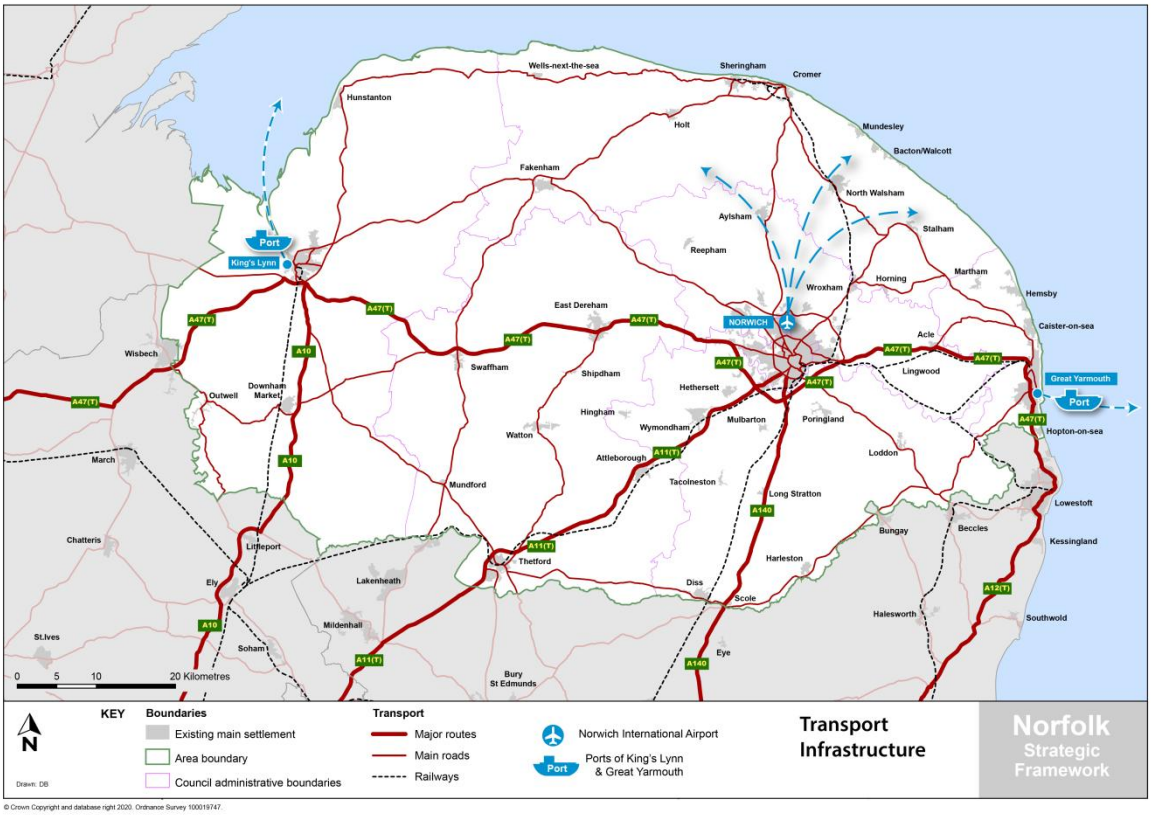


Figure 9: Norfolk Transport Infrastructure, 2021

Norwich Airport is situated some 5km north of Norwich city centre. It operates a number of scheduled and charter flights and provides servicing for the offshore energy industries via helicopter flights. The airport terminal has capacity for 700,000 passengers per year. Norwich airport has published a masterplan setting out a vision for the airport's continued growth over the next 30 years[86]. The masterplan is endorsed by both Norwich City Council and Broadland District Council as a clear indicator of how the airport could grow in a sustainable way in the coming decades.

Great Yarmouth is the largest port in the county. It is a modern, multipurpose facility with 24/7 unrestricted operations, integrating a well-established river port with a fully operational deep water outer harbour with more than 1 km of quayside, accepting vessels up to 220 metres in length and up to 10.5 metres draught at all states of tide. The Port of King's Lynn specialises in agribulks and aggregates handled both in-dock and on Riverside Quay. The port also provides a range of terminal operations for cargo shippers and receivers and can handle specialist industrial project cargo, supporting the development of major UK infrastructure construction.

[85] Improvement projects - Norfolk County Council - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/39833/Improvement-projects

[86] Norwich Airport Masterplan - Norwich Airport - https://www.norwichairport.co.uk/masterplan/

Levels of both walking and cycling to work are relatively high in Norwich. In South Norfolk and Broadland Districts levels of walking are comparatively lower than elsewhere in the county, probably reflecting that many people from these districts work in Norwich and many parts of these districts are too far from Norwich to walk. A comprehensive cycle network has been identified in Norwich, and the city has also benefited from a large amount of funding that has been used to upgrade parts of the cycle network. There is still however a considerable amount of work required to upgrade the network in its entirety.

Accessibility by public transport to services and facilities is problematic in some more rural and isolated parts of Norfolk. Overall, accessibility tends to be poorest in the more rural districts of Breckland and West Norfolk, where there is a significant number of smaller villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings. Providing bus services within these smaller settlements is often unviable due to low population numbers.

Tables below lists some of the key road projects that the County Council in collaboration with partners is seeking to progress in the next 10 years.

Table 12: Key Infrastructure Road Projects in Local Authority Control

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Funding sources
Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road	Part Delivered	£38m	Developer funding, CIL, HIF
A140 Long Stratton Bypass	Started	£46.9m	Developer funding, CIL supported borrowing, DfT Major Road Network Funding
A10 West Winch Housing Access Road	2025	£85m	Developer funding, DfT Major Road Network Funding
A148 Fakenham Roundabout Enhancement	2025	£3.5m	NPIF, Developer funding
Attleborough Link Road	TBC	£18m	Developer finance, Homes England loan, HIF
Norwich Western Link (A47 to NDR)	2026	£274m	DfT Large Local Major transport scheme funding
A17/A47 Pullover Junction	2025	£33.7m	DfT, NCC
King's Lynn STARS	2025	£27m	Levelling Up Fund (LUF), Norfolk County Council, Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk
North Walsham Western Link Road	TBC	TBC	Developer funding
Hethel Infrastructure to open up Employment Land	2025	£9.9m	CIL, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council
North Walsham Western Link Road Lyngate/Folgate Industrial Estate Access	TBC	TBC	Developer Funding

Table 13: Priority Road Projects for delivery by other organisations

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
A11 Thetford bypass junctions	2025-2030	Not Known	NPIF, National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025-2030), Major Road Network Funding

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
A47 Wisbech Bypass Junctions	TBC	£4.5m	NPIF, developer funding, National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 2 (2020-2025), CPCA Business Board Growth Deal Funding
A47 Acle Straight dualling	2025-2030	£144m	National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025-2030)
A47 Tilney to East Winch Dualling	2025-2030	£203m	National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025-2030)

Timely delivery of the above list of commitments will doubtless serve to stimulate the local economy and enhance the prospects of delivery of planned growth. Whilst the growing recognition of the need for further development of Norfolk's infrastructure is very welcome because of its contribution to the delivery of the objectives of the NSPF there remains a considerable need for further infrastructure investment in the County if the vision in this framework is to be realised.

Furthermore, the background paper previously produced identified three key strategic issues affecting the County including: the relatively poor transport connectivity between our main settlements and destinations outside Norfolk resulting in long journey times; the poor connectivity within the County particularly for east-west journeys, exacerbated by congestion and unreliable journey times on parts of the network (especially the A47) adding to business costs; and difficulties in delivering major enhancements to transport networks within our urban areas and market towns which tend to have historical street patterns where the scope for major improvements is limited.

It should also be noted that the area of transport is considered to be an area where new technology may have a particularly significant impact during the duration of this framework and this makes predicting the full range of enhancements to travel networks difficult at this stage.

It is clear that providing suitable transport provision to meet the needs of existing and future populations while reducing travel need and impact will be one of the greatest challenges faced by Norfolk in delivering the level of growth that is anticipated over the coming decades. Given the overall scale of growth that is planned across the County a key matter will be ensuring that transport is a significant consideration in locating this growth and development levels are maximised in areas that are best served by transport networks and have the greatest potential for promoting the use of non-car based modes.

Rail

Norfolk has a limited rail network, meaning that many of its towns are not served by rail. Also, the services offered provide a very limited range of destinations and frequencies. In particular, services to the Midlands and Home Counties are poor. Whilst rail generally provides faster journeys to other major centres compared to road, average rail speeds compare poorly with connections between major centres out of the County.

There are two lines from London: the Great Eastern Main Line from London Liverpool Street via Ipswich to Norwich; and the Fenline / Great Northern Route from London King's Cross via Cambridge to King's Lynn. Norwich is directly connected to Cambridge, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Sheringham; and longer distance services to Liverpool via Peterborough.

The tables below set out some key shared priority schemes for rail improvement that the authorities will work together to promote for funding. Post-pandemic, the numbers and types of journeys made by rail is likely to have changed, and this needs to be factored into long-term planning of services and other improvements. The Great Eastern Main Line Task Force, formed to define how the ambition for a faster, more reliable, better quality service with more capacity could be delivered to serve the needs of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, continues to make the case for improvements between Norwich and London. The Ely Task Force continues to make the case for government to release funding for Ely Area Capacity enhancements which could unlock a range of passenger and freight services. The East West Rail Partnership has made the case for east West Rail, a new railway that will provide direct rail services from Cambridge to – amongst other places – Milton Keynes, Bedford and Oxford, whilst the Eastern Section partners are making the case for direct train services on EWR to be extended to Norwich and Ipswich.

Table 14: Priority Rail Projects for promotion

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
Norwich to London rail (Norwich in 90)	2024-2029	TBC	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Great Yarmouth Rail Station	2024-2029	TBC	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Ely area enhancements	Mid 2020's	£500m	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Broadland Business Park station	2025-2028	£22.5m	TBC
East West Rail (Cambridge to Oxford)	Late 2020s	TBC	Government via special purpose delivery vehicle

9.8 Coastal and Marine Planning

The Norfolk coast is of recreational, environmental, economic and cultural importance but it is also home to industry (energy, ports and logistics, digital, food and drink and creative sector), agriculture and tourism.

Shoreline Management Plans

The East Anglia Coastal Group's role is to influence and support members to manage the coast for the benefit of the Anglian Region, this role includes supporting the Shoreline Management Plans Process. Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) set out a preferred, non-statutory, plan for long-term sustainable coastal flood and erosion risk management, which supports other coastal planning by providing information on coastal processes and expected changes to them. The plans were developed taking account of technical, environmental, social, and economic factors whilst being flexible enough to adapt to new information and changes in legislation, politics, and social attitudes.

The SMPs are led by Risk Management Authorities, either the Environment Agency or Coastal Protection Authorities. Although led by these organisations the SMPs were developed, and are

maintained, by a group of stakeholders – often referred to as SMP Working Groups. As well as Risk Management Authorities these groups tend to include other Defra bodies, wildlife charities, landowners and Regional Flood and Coastal Committee representatives for example. The aim of an SMP is to provide a strategy for managing flood and erosion risk for a particular stretch of coastline, and to help deliver the ambitions of the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. They provide a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes and helps reduce these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environments.

The SMPs provide estimates of how the coast is likely to change over the next 100 years, taking into account the future implementation of coastal policies, geology, likely impacts of climate change and the existing condition of the coast including coastal defences.

Three Shoreline Management Plans are active along the Norfolk coastal frontage:

- SMP4 the Wash Shoreline Management Plan covers approximately 110 km of coast from Gibraltar Point to Old Hunstanton (also known as 'The Wash').
- SMP5 which incorporates the coast from Hunstanton to the west of Kelling Hard.
- SMP6 which incorporates the coast to the east of Kelling Hard to Lowestoft Ness.

Shoreline Management Plans exist around all of the coastline of England and Wales.

Marine Plans

The East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans have been prepared by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and were adopted in April 2014. The East Inshore Marine Plan area includes the coastline stretching from Flamborough Head to Felixstowe, extending from mean high water out to 12 nautical miles, including inland areas such as the Broads and other waters subject to tidal influence, and covers an area of 6,000 square kilometres. The East Offshore Marine Plan area covers the marine area from 12 nautical miles out to the maritime borders with the Netherlands, Belgium and France, a total of approximately 49,000 square kilometres of sea. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs agreed with the MMOs recommendation made in 2022 to replace the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans with a new 'East Marine Plan', which will be the first of a second generation of plans for English waters. The new document will be referred to as the 'East Marine Plan' and will include the same geographical areas as the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plans.

The aim of marine plans is to help ensure the sustainable development of the marine area. Marine plans will contribute to economic growth in a way that benefits society whilst respecting the needs of local communities and protecting the marine ecosystem. They will help to reduce the net regulatory burden on applicants and users by acting as an enabling mechanism for those seeking to undertake activities or development in the future and providing more certainty about where activities could best take place. The MMO is the marine planning authority for England and is responsible for preparing marine plans for the English inshore and offshore waters.

At its landward extent the Marine Plan boundaries extend up to the level of the mean high water spring tides mark (which includes the tidal extent of any rivers), meaning there will be an overlap with terrestrial plans which generally extend to the mean low water springs mark. For Norfolk The East Marine Plan area (previously the East Inshore Marine Plan area) extends up to Norwich on the River Yare, as well as to Wroxham on the River Bure, and to near Ellingham on the River Waveney and in West Norfolk the River Great Ouse and River Nene are tidal. The East Marine Plan (previously the East Inshore Marine Plan) area also extends beyond the Borough boundary almost to Peterborough on the Nene and just beyond Earith on the Great Ouse.

All public authorities taking authorisation or enforcement decisions that affect or might affect the UK marine area must do so in accordance with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and any relevant adopted Marine Plan. Therefore, the MMO are consulted as part of the local plan process for authorities with coastal borders or where tidal rivers are part of their area. The MMO are also involved with a range of local coastal groups and strategies.

It is also important to note that, due to the physical relationship of Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and the MMO, LPAs should consider all areas of strategic planning and continue to engage with the MMO , including around the following policy areas in Agreement 23.

Agreement 23 - Norfolk Planning Authorities and the MMO agree that there are currently no strategic planning issues remaining to be identified and that there is no conflict at a strategic level between the NSPF and adopted Marine Plans. Both parties agree to continue to work together in the preparation of Local Plans being brought forward in Norfolk and any review of the MMOs Marine Plans. Both parties have identified the following areas of common strategic issues:

- **Aquaculture**
- **Biodiversity**
- **Cabling**
- **Climate change**
- **Coastal erosion and coastal change management**
- **Coastal management, including defence, inundation, and Coastal Change Management Areas**
- **Co-existence**
- **Defence**
- **Displacement**
- **Dredging and disposal**
- **Energy – offshore wind and oil and gas**
- **Fishing**
- **Governance**
- **Heritage**
- **Historic environment**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Landscapes and seascapes**
- **Marine aggregates**
- **Marine and coastal employment**
- **Marine Litter**
- **Marine net gain**
- **Marine protected areas**
- **Marine related renewable energy**
- **Natural capital**
- **Non-native species**
- **Oil and Gas**
- **Port and marine infrastructure and employment**
- **Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in small harbour towns**
- **Sustainable port development**

- **Tidal Energy**
- **Tourism and recreation**
- **Underwater noise**
- **Water quality/water supply and sewerage**

9.9 Flood Management and Green Infrastructure

Flood Management

Flood risk is an important issue for Norfolk. Significant parts of the County are vulnerable to tidal, fluvial or surface water flooding from extreme weather events. Such events can pose a significant risk to life as well as property. The three main settlements in the County which all developed in their locations due in part to their access to tidal waters can all be impacted by flooding.

Much of the Norfolk coastline is reliant on flood defences to reduce flood risk to existing development. Considerable further information on the planned interventions that are necessary in order to protect our communities from coastal flooding are set out in the NSIDP.

In addition to that an interactive Environment Agency Map can be accessed at the EA web page - https://environment.data.gov.uk/asset-management/index.html which details managed flood risk assets and planned capital schemes. UK Government studies have concluded that climate change over the next 100 years is likely to result in hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, with more extreme weather events including droughts, floods and sea level rise increasing the level of risk from flooding that is faced by communities in Norfolk.

To address these strategic issues, it will be necessary to take a co-ordinated and proportionate approach to managing flood risk including the opportunities not only for mitigation but also adaptation. Flood risk assessments are to be used effectively to ensure development is located appropriately and away from areas of flood risk wherever possible. Developers will need to work closely with the relevant risk management authorities in minimising flood risk from all sources through a combination of high quality urban design, natural flood risk management including green infrastructure, as well as use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) which can provide multi-functional benefits not limited to flood risk and can form part of an integrated approach to water management with water re-use measures forming part of the overall design of developments. Early engagement with the relevant risk management authorities is required prior to the submission of some planning applications. Anglian Water's Water Smart Communities[87] combine different elements of water management together with town planning and design to deliver multiple benefits for communities and the environment. They use a more holistic and integrated approach to urban water management, with the aim to:

- Enhance liveability by contributing to green streetscapes and high quality open space
- Promote sustainable use of water resources and infrastructure to enable growth
- Build resilience against the potential impacts of climate change and extreme weather events
- Contribute to natural capital and biodiversity through multi-functional water features
- Deliver water efficient homes to reduce household bills and support affordability

[87] See Water smart Communities - https://prod-swd.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/household/about-us/aws-water-smart-communities---flyer.pdf

Anglian Water together with the LLFAs (including Norfolk County Council) have also created a Water Management Checklist[88] for Local Plan policies.

Further guidance on how this will be done is available on the County Council website in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority for the County[89]. The Government has also set out the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England[90]. This strategy's long-term vision is for a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change – today, tomorrow and to the year 2100. It has 3 long-term ambitions, underpinned by evidence about future risk and investment needs. They are:

- climate resilient places: working with partners to bolster resilience to flooding and coastal change across the nation, both now and in the face of climate change
- today's growth and infrastructure resilient in tomorrow's climate: making the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth and environmental improvements, as well as infrastructure resilient to flooding and coastal change
- a nation ready to respond and adapt to flooding and coastal change: ensuring local people understand their risk to flooding and coastal change, and know their responsibilities and how to take action

The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) for Norfolk must be consistent with the National FCERM Strategy. The LFRMS is in the process of being updated to include policies for zero emissions and environmental net gain in local flood risk activities and supporting communities to be more flood resilient.

[88] See AW water management checklist - https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/household/about-us/water-management-checklist-for-local-policies.pdf

[89] See in particular Information for developers - Norfolk County Council - https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/38642

[90] See National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-strategy-for-england--2

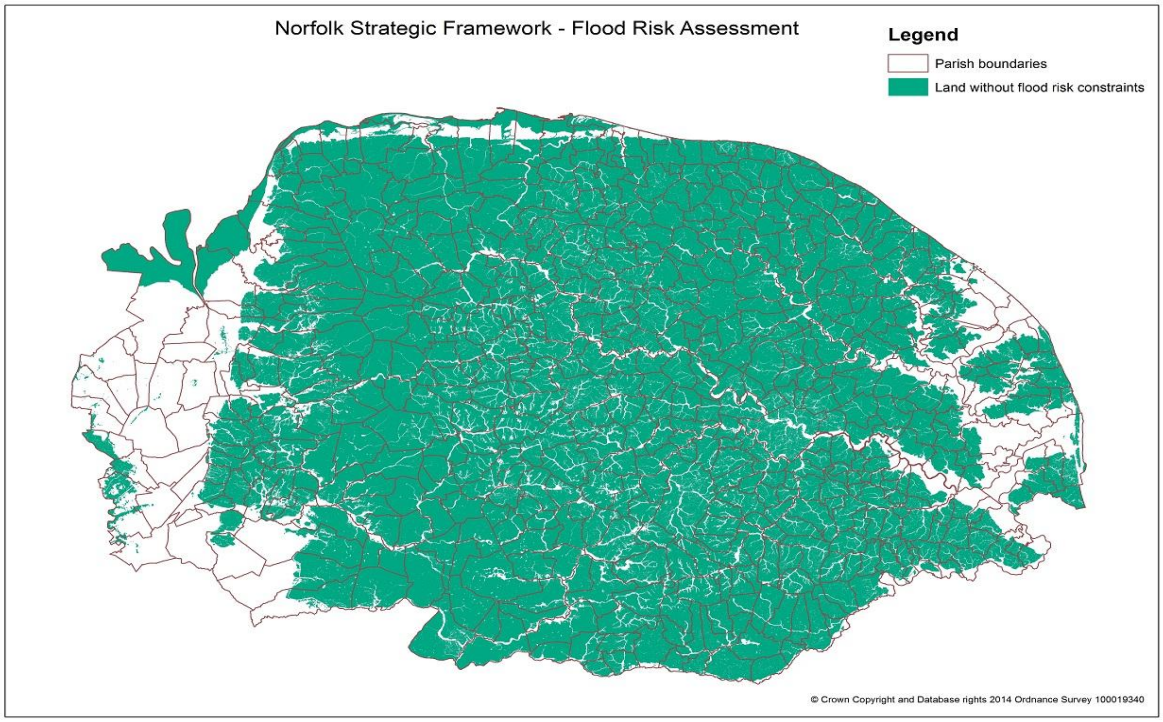


Figure 10: Norfolk Flood Risk Map.

Figure 10 provides an illustration, at a broad scale, of the extent of land with and without flood risk constraints from rivers and the sea in Norfolk. Whilst it is clear that significant areas of the County are free from flood risk constraint it should be noted that many of the currently developed urban areas are at some risk of flooding. It will be important to ensure that a pragmatic approach is taken to new development and consideration of on-site and off-site flood risk. If planned correctly and measures for betterment are agreed and implemented, new development can significantly reduce the flood risk faced by existing communities in these areas.

As flood waters do not respect administrative boundaries there will be a need for the Norfolk Planning Authorities to continue to work closely together on assessing and minimising flood risk as well as on responding to emergencies when they do occur. For example, the Broadland Futures Initiative is a strategic project to explore how best to manage flood risk in the inter-related areas of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, the coast between Eccles and Winterton (which protects the Northern Broads) and the entrance to the Broads system through Great Yarmouth. The project will guide decision making over the short, medium and long term.

A number of significant investments have recently been made or are planned in the near future to help alleviate flood risk, these are listed in section 9.1. Further projects are detailed in Local Plans, coastal management plans and strategic flood risk assessments and included in the county wide NSIDP.

Table 15: Priority Strategic Flood Defence Projects for Promotion

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
Great Yarmouth Tidal Defences (Epoch 3)	mid 2023	£64 million	Central Government, Local Authorities and Private Sector
Future Fens – Flood Risk Management	2026	£10-15m	Central Government, Local Government, Internal Drainage Boards and other funding sources from beneficiaries.
Hunstanton Coastal Defences	2025	£16m	Central Government, Local Government

The Environment Agency (EA) has a duty to update our understanding of current and future flood and coastal erosion risk as part of the statutory 'strategic overview' role for all sources of flood and erosion risk. This is described in the 2010 Flood and Water Management Act.

EA was worked with inland and coastal local authorities across England to develop a new National Assessment of Flood Risk (NaFRA) and an updated National Coastal Erosion Risk Map (NCERM). They use the best available data, information and modelling from both the Environment Agency and local authorities.

The National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024 report was published in December 2024[91]. The report summarises the findings from the new NaFRA2 and the updated NCERM. The report identifies national and regional trends in terms of the source and characteristics of flood and coastal erosion risk and the potential for these to change in the future.

In January 2025 EA published the new data from NaFRA[92] and NCERM[93]. Norfolk Local Planning Authorities will work together to ensure the new data is used to update flood risk assessments for planning applications for new development proposals.

Green Infrastructure and the Environment

Green infrastructure (GI)[94] is a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of economic, environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. The provision of green infrastructure in and around urban areas helps create high quality places where people want to live and work. New GI can also mitigate impacts on existing

[91] National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024 - GOV.UK - National assessment of flood and coastal erosion risk in England 2024 - GOV.UK

[92] See Check the long term flood risk for an area in England - GOV.UK - https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

[93] See Check coastal erosion risk for an area in England - GOV.UK - https://www.gov.uk/check-coastal-erosion-management-in-your-area and Home | Shoreline Management Plans - https://environment.data.gov.uk/shoreline-planning

[94] The definition of GI is set out in the Natural England document GI Guidance - http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/94026 , in terms of the NSPF it includes 'blue infrastructure' ie water environments - rivers, lakes, ponds etc.

sensitive sites and support heritage and conserve the historic environment. Access is an integral part of GI and PROW and 'Norfolk Trails' are an important asset.

The area has a wealth of environmental assets ranging from international and national status, to those of local importance. These must be safeguarded and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations. Many of Norfolk's natural habitats have been lost and fragmented with once extensive areas of habitats reduced to small remnants isolated from each other and surrounded by relatively inhospitable land uses, reducing biodiversity and increasing vulnerability.

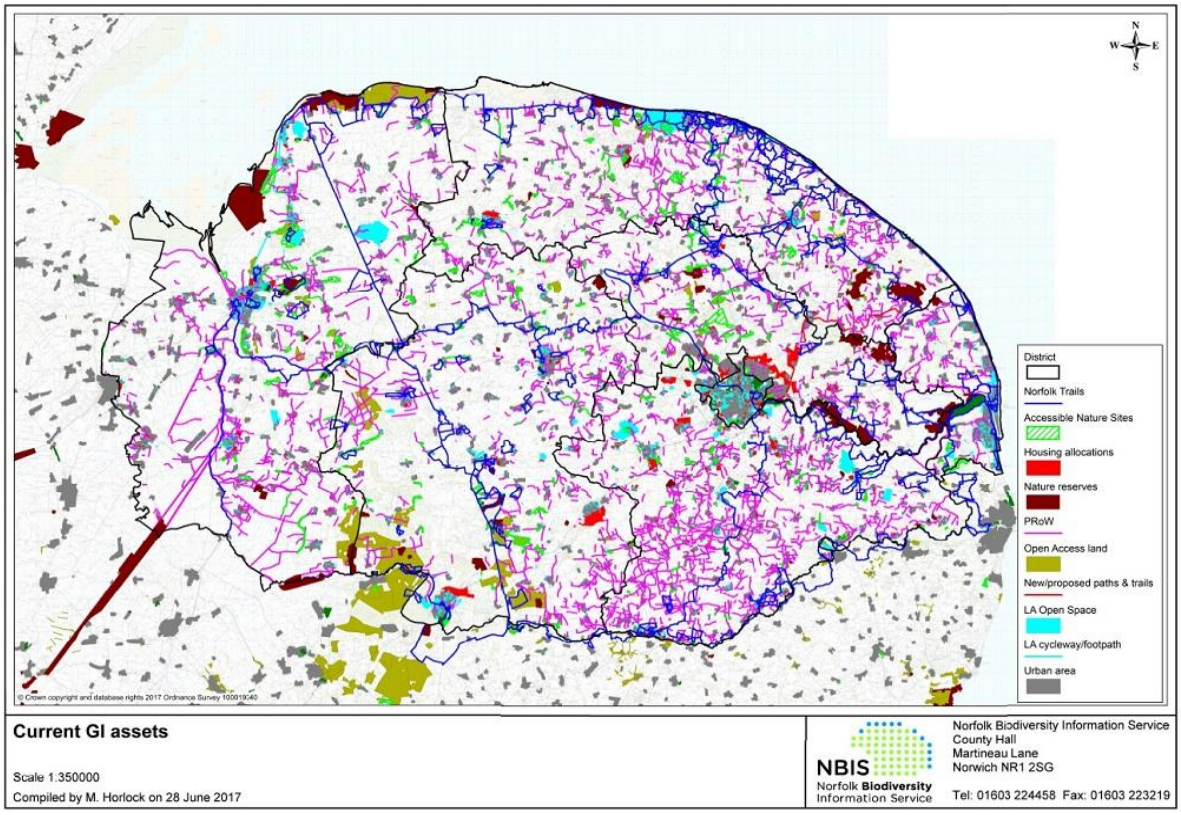


Figure 11: Norfolk's current GI assets.

Current GI assets are set out in Figure 11[95]. Green infrastructure should be provided as an integral part of all new development, where appropriate, alongside other infrastructure such as utilities and transport networks.

Planning for green infrastructure should occur at the evidence gathering (survey and analysis) stage of the planning process, so that green infrastructure responds to character and place, and that standards are set for green infrastructure accessibility, quantity and quality. Early integration of green infrastructure can also ensure that it is properly planned in advance of development or delivered alongside development on a phased basis. In this way green infrastructure can be planned as an integral part of the community. (Natural England Green infrastructure guidance, P43)

The Environment Act has now been introduced which creates a new legal framework for environmental protection. In early 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory for relevant

[95] Further more detailed maps are available from the NBIS website see http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Maps.zip

developments and a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is being finalised by the County Council. These will support the vision of the 25 year Environment Plan Norfolk Local Planning Authorities have worked together to support the introduction of BNG and continue to support Norfolk County Council in the production and implementation of the LNRS.

As Norfolk grows and changes in terms of its demographic profile considerable investment in the provision and maintenance of a GI network will be needed in order to facilitate and support growth whilst also:

- Minimising the contributions to climate change and addressing their impact;
- Protecting, managing and enhancing the natural, built and historical environment, including landscapes, natural resources and areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value;
- Creating more or restoring lost wildlife rich habitat outside protected site networks to reverse the loss of biodiversity
- Ensuring existing and new residents many of whom may be elderly receive the health and quality of life benefits of good green infrastructure and are able to access appropriate recreational opportunities;
- Maintaining the economic benefits of a high quality environment for tourism; and
- Protecting and maintaining the Wensum, Coast, Brecks and the Broads.

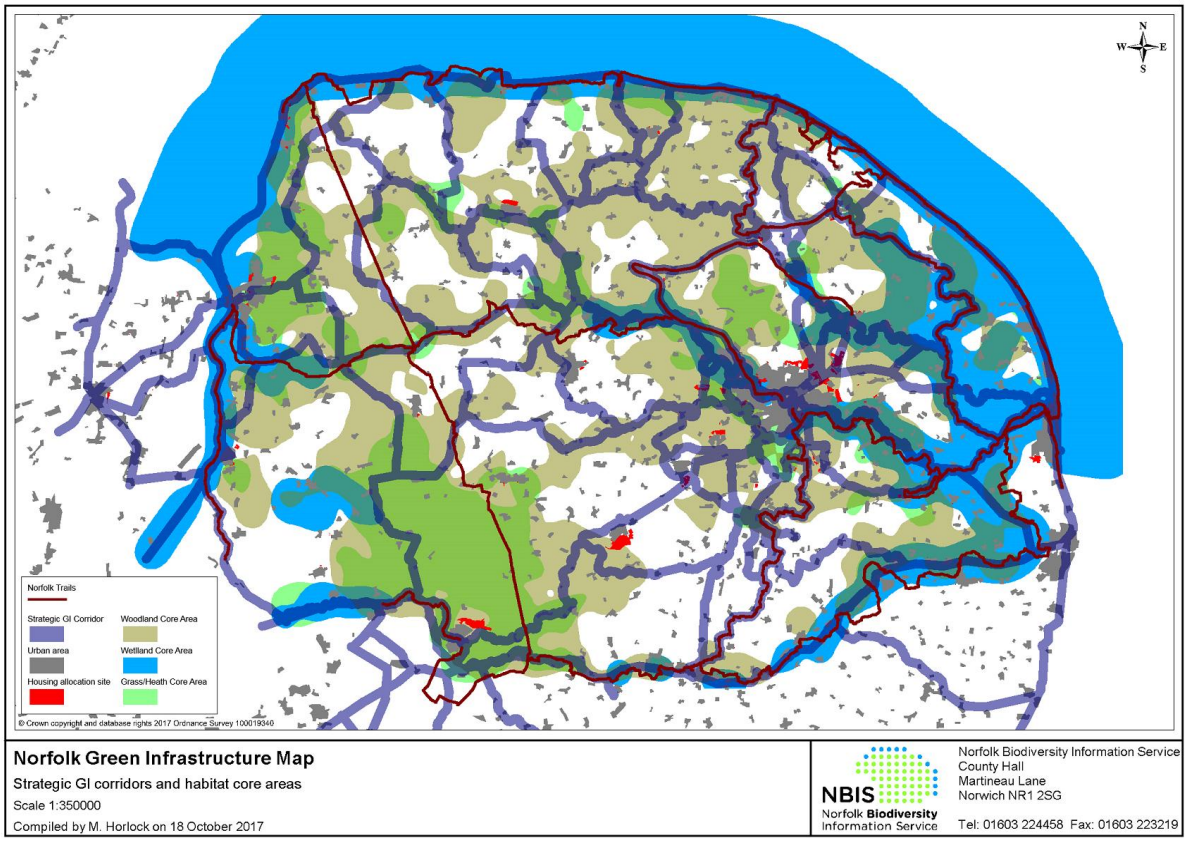


Figure 12: Norfolk's GI corridors. 2017

Figure 12 shows the identified potential Green Infrastructure Corridors. The intention is for this map to inform Local Plans, and also local GI Strategies. It should be noted that depending on the nature of

corridor they may not constrain development, indeed in some circumstances promoting growth in these corridors may enhance their GI value.

One of the strategic aims for the Environment section is to not only 'protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity' but also to restore and create habitats which support biodiversity. New growth in Norfolk must respect this aim, but the use of green infrastructure either existing or new can greatly aid the assimilation of new development.

A commissioned report by Footprint Ecology on the impact of recreational pressures on Natura 2000 protected sites e.g. North Norfolk Coast, The Broads and the Brecks, likely to arise from new housing growth gave insights into the scale and location of that pressure. This is a complex area, many of the Natura 2000 sites attract large numbers of visitors, acting as green infrastructure, but are sensitive environments with specific legislative requirements.

Following on from the visitor pressures report Norfolk Local Planning Authorities, working in collaboration with the Environment Agency, Natural England, Forestry Commission and other local partners, commissioned Place Services to produce the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. This looks to address the recreational pressures on Natura 2000 protected sites in a coordinated way and therefore helps address requirements arising from Habitat Regulations Assessments from respective Local Plans. The Strategy includes:

- A Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMs) - a County Wide programme of mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects on protected habitat sites from the in-combination recreational impacts from new residential development. The cost of measures will be funded by a tariff on new residential development.
- Identification of GI opportunities which aims to divert visitors from sensitive habitat sites

In 2023 and 2024 Norfolk Planning Authorities have been working with Footprint Ecology to produce a detailed action plan. This lists specific projects that are require to mitigation the impacts of increase visitor pressures.

Agreement 24: In recognition of:

a) the importance the Brecks, the Broads and the National Landscapes, together with environmental assets which lie outside of these areas, brings to the county in relation to quality of life, health and wellbeing, economy, tourism and benefits to biodiversity;

b) the pressure that development in Norfolk could place on these assets; and

c) the importance of ecological connections between habitats

Norfolk Planning Authorities will work together to complete and deliver the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy which will aid Local Plans in protecting and where appropriate enhancing the relevant assets.

With regard to the emerging priority projects for short term effort to bring forward, the following feature within the NSIDP.

Table 16: Priority Green Infrastructure Projects for Promotion

Project Name	Estimated Start date	Estimated Cost	Likely funding sources
The Green Loop (Walking/cycling route linking Norwich – Aylsham – Hoveton –NE Growth Triangle)	Not Known	£5.7m	S106, CIL, DfT, NALEP, Interreg Experience-secured
Weavers Way	Ongoing	£3.1m	Norfolk County Council,HLF
Broadland Country Park	Ongoing	£2m	Broadland DC, CIL, BRP
Burlingham Country Park	Ongoing	TBC	CIL, BRP, NCC, Developer Funding

9.10 Nutrient Neutrality

On the 16 March 2022 Natural England issued new guidance to all Local Planning Authorities in Norfolk concerning nutrient enrichment and the role local authorities must play in preventing further adverse impacts to protected wetland habitats. The importance of achieving nutrient neutrality stems from evidence that large quantities of nitrogen and phosphorous entering water systems cause excessive growth of algae, a process called 'eutrophication.' This reduces the oxygen content of water impacting aquatic species; subsequently removing a food source for protected species. The advice covered two catchments in Norfolk for the River Wensum SAC and the Broads SAC/Broadland Ramsar.

Natural England considers that the conservation status of the protected natural habitats of the River Wensum and the Broads SACs are unfavourable due to excessive phosphates in the Wensum SAC and nitrates and phosphates in the Broads SAC. Each of the Norfolk LPAs, as the "Competent Authority" for each local planning authority area under the Habitat Regulations 2017, is required to consider the implications of these matters on the River Wensum SAC and the Broads SAC before permitting any further development which has the potential to result in additional nutrient loads entering the catchments. Consequently, local plans and planning applications leading to new overnight stays in the affected areas can only now be progressed if further assessment provides each LPA with certainty that the resulting development will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the protected habitats.

The initial effect was a total moratorium for new developments that provide overnight accommodation within the catchments of the River Wensum SAC and/or the Broads SAC. The impacts of Nutrient Neutrality vary considerably between districts in the county with Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn and West Norfolk, the impacts are on relatively small areas which are mainly rural in nature, whereas the whole of administrative area of Norwich City Council is impacted.

However, Norfolk Authorities have worked together to help unlock planning permissions held up by this advice, in May 2022 Royal Haskoning were commissioned to provide an evidence base and bespoke Norfolk Calculator. In Spring 2023 Broadland District Council, South Norfolk Council, Breckland District Council and North Norfolk District Council set up Norfolk Environmental Credits (NEC) to help support the delivery of Nutrient Mitigation (which Norwich City Council have subsequently joined). While the initial focus has been on Nutrient Neutrality it is likely that NEC can support other nature markets including water, carbon offsetting, biodiversity and recreational impact. Broadland District Council, South Norfolk Council, Breckland District Council, Norwich City Council and North Norfolk District Council have successfully bid in 2 rounds of the government Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund, this will provide capital grants totalling £18.45m (£9.6m from round 1 and £8.85m from round 2) to help bring forward Nutrient Mitigation schemes in the county. To help manage this funding the five council that bid for this funding have set up the Norfolk Mitigation Fund which was launch in spring 2024.

Whilst the impacts of Nutrient Neutrality on housing delivery in the county are likely to be felt for many years to come Mitigation is increasingly becoming available. The Norfolk LPAs will continue to work together to unlock new development in the county and work with developers and environmental bodies to unlock solutions including increasing the availability of credits.

The area impacted by Nutrient Neutrality is shown in the map below.

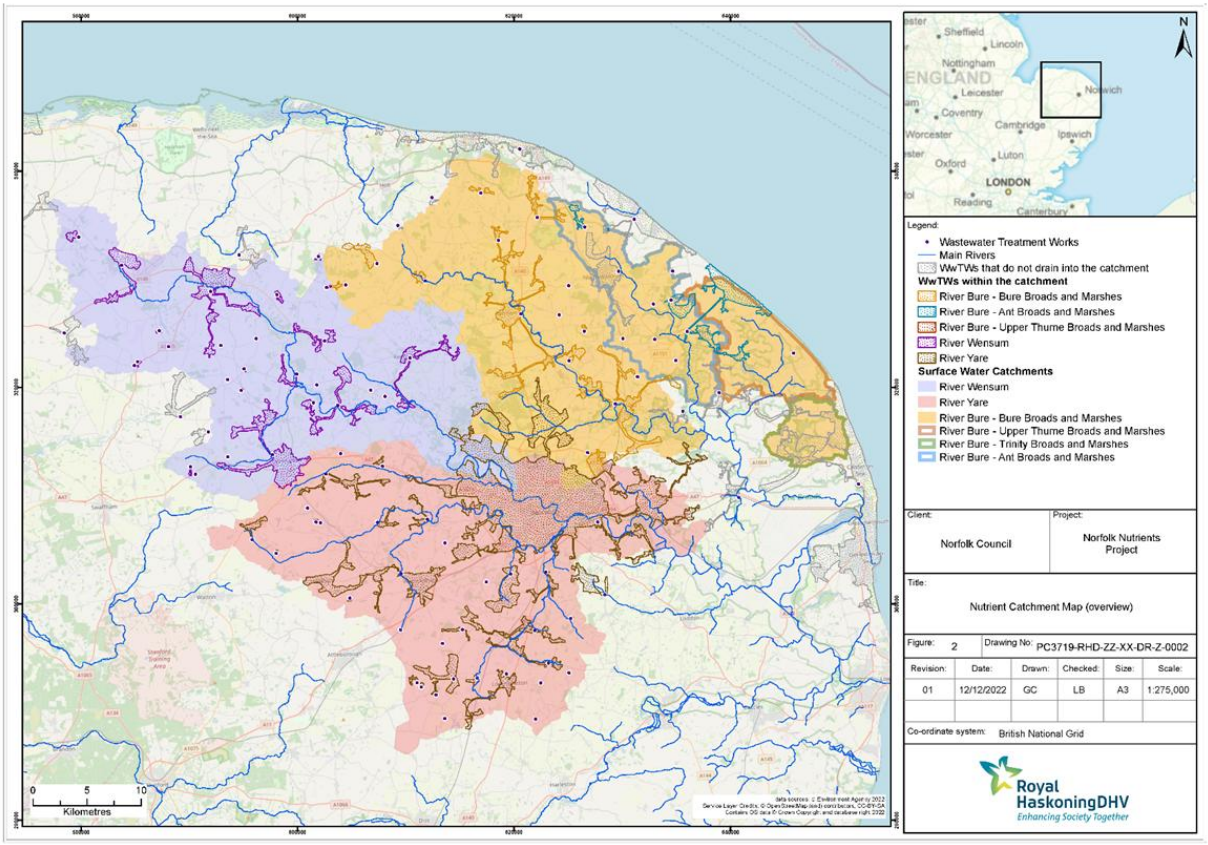


Figure 13: Map of Nutrient Neutrality Catchments in Norfolk, Source: Royal Haskoning

The government introduced changes to the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2024 to require water companies in England to upgrade wastewater treatment works by 2030 in nutrient neutrality areas to the highest achievable technological levels. The treatment works to be identified would be ones serving a population equivalent of over 2000 people. In May 2024 the government published a list of 17 Waste Water Treatment Works which would be upgraded in Norfolk, these are in the following locations:

- Aylsham
- Belaugh
- Bylaugh
- Briston
- Dereham
- Fakenham
- Forncett End
- Hempnall
- Long Stratton
- Mattishall
- Reepham

- Saxlingham
- Shipdham
- Stalham
- Swardeston
- Whitlingham
- Wymondham

9.11 Minerals and Waste

Minerals

Carstone is a type of sandstone that is quarried in west Norfolk. It has traditionally been used as a vernacular building material, although it is no longer used to any significant degree. Although it is classed as a 'hard rock' it is not used as a hard rock (e.g. road dressing), instead it is used primarily as fill (to raise the levels of land prior to construction) or in the formation of embankments. Therefore it is often used in the construction of roads.

Carstone deposits are located in very limited areas of west Norfolk. In 2023 there were two active carstone extraction sites in Norfolk, located at Middleton and Snettisham.

Carstone production in Norfolk was 0.1 million tonnes in 2022. The 10-year rolling average of carstone sales was 0.81 million tonnes in the period 2013-2022. The 3-year rolling average of carstone sales was 0.98 million tonnes in the period 2020-2022. The permitted reserves for carstone extraction sites in Norfolk were 1.423 million tonnes at the end of 2022. Based on the 10-year sales average, at the end of 2022 there was a carstone landbank of permitted reserves of over 17 years.

Silica sand deposits are located in very limited areas of west Norfolk, a relatively narrow band which runs north to south just to the east of King's Lynn. The northern extent of the silica sand resource is at Heacham, and the southern extent around Hilgay. In Norfolk the silica sand resource is split into two broad categories, the Mintlyn Beds and the Leziate Beds; historically the Leziate Beds have been used principally for glass sand and the Mintlyn Beds for the production of foundry sand. Processing of sand for foundry use has stopped at Leziate and those parts of the process plant dedicated to their production have been removed. This reflects a general decline in the demand for foundry sand in England.

The deposit which is being worked at Leziate is one of two in England where silica sand of sufficient purity and grade for the manufacture of colourless flint (container) and float (window) glass is extracted. The other extraction site of silica sand of comparable quality is in Surrey.

Silica sand which is to be used for glass manufacture requires a significant amount of processing prior to being suitable for onward shipment to the glass manufacturers. This processing requires large and capital intensive plant such as the one operated by Sibelco UK Ltd which is located at Leziate. Consistency of material is an important consideration and this requires blending of sand from different areas of the working. The processing plant site includes a rail head to export the processed mineral for use by glass manufactures elsewhere. Norfolk is one of the most important sources of silica sand in Great Britain, accounting for approximately 16 per cent of total silica sand production and 58 per cent of glass sand production in the UK between 2020 and 2022.

Due to the cost and largely fixed nature of the processing plant and railhead, silica sand working has historically taken place in close proximity to the Leziate processing plant. However, this now means that the most accessible areas have either been worked or are in the process of being worked.

The 10-year rolling average of silica sand sales in Norfolk was 0.83 million tonnes in the period 2013-2022. The 3-year rolling average of silica sand sales was 0.79 million tonnes in the period 2020-2022. The permitted reserves for silica sand extraction sites in Norfolk were 3.08 million tonnes at the end of 2022. Based on the 10-year sales average, at the end of 2022 there was a silica sand landbank of permitted reserves of less than 4 years.

Sand and gravel resources are located throughout the County (with the exception of the Fens area in the far west and south-west of Norfolk). Sand and gravel are used in the construction of roads and buildings and it is a key ingredient in the production of concrete and mortar, asphalt coating for roads, as a drainage medium and in the construction of embankments and foundations. The distribution of sand and gravel sites throughout Norfolk is widespread with a relatively large number of small operators. In 2022 there were 22 permitted sand and gravel extraction sites in Norfolk operated by 14 different companies. There are, however, particular clusters of sand and gravel workings near to King's Lynn, in the north of Breckland District and around Norwich.

Sand and gravel production in Norfolk was 1.367 million tonnes in 2022. The 10-year rolling average of sand and gravel sales was 1.413 million tonnes in the period 2013-2022. The 3-year rolling average of sand and gravel sales was 1.39 million tonnes in the period 2020-2022. The permitted reserves for sand and gravel extraction sites in Norfolk were 17.954 million tonnes at the end of 2022. Based on the 10-year sales average, at the end of 2022 there was a sand and gravel landbank of permitted reserves of over 12 years.

Secondary and recycled aggregates are also sourced within Norfolk. The annual average quantity of inert and construction/demolition waste recovered at waste management facilities over the ten years from 2013-2022 was 0.293 million tonnes, however, some parts of this waste stream are unsuitable for use as a recycled aggregate (such as soil or timber). The data is not comprehensive because many operations, such as on-site recovery, are not recorded.

Marine aggregate dredging is carried out by companies on behalf of the Crown Estate and the sites are licensed by The Crown Estate and the MMO. Aggregates from marine dredging are not currently received at any ports of wharves in Norfolk. No marine sourced aggregates were consumed in Norfolk in 2019 (the most recently available date), therefore no adjustments have been made to the mineral requirement figures in the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan based on marine sourced aggregates. Norfolk County Council does not determine planning applications for marine aggregates and they do not form part of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Clay and chalk are also extracted in Norfolk. Clay is primarily used in the engineering of landfill sites and in flood protection schemes. Chalk is primarily used as a liming agent for farmland. In 2022 there was one active clay working at Middleton, and three active chalk workings located at Castle Acre, Caister St Edmund and Hillington. However, the resource for these minerals is considered to be abundant in Norfolk relative to the demand.

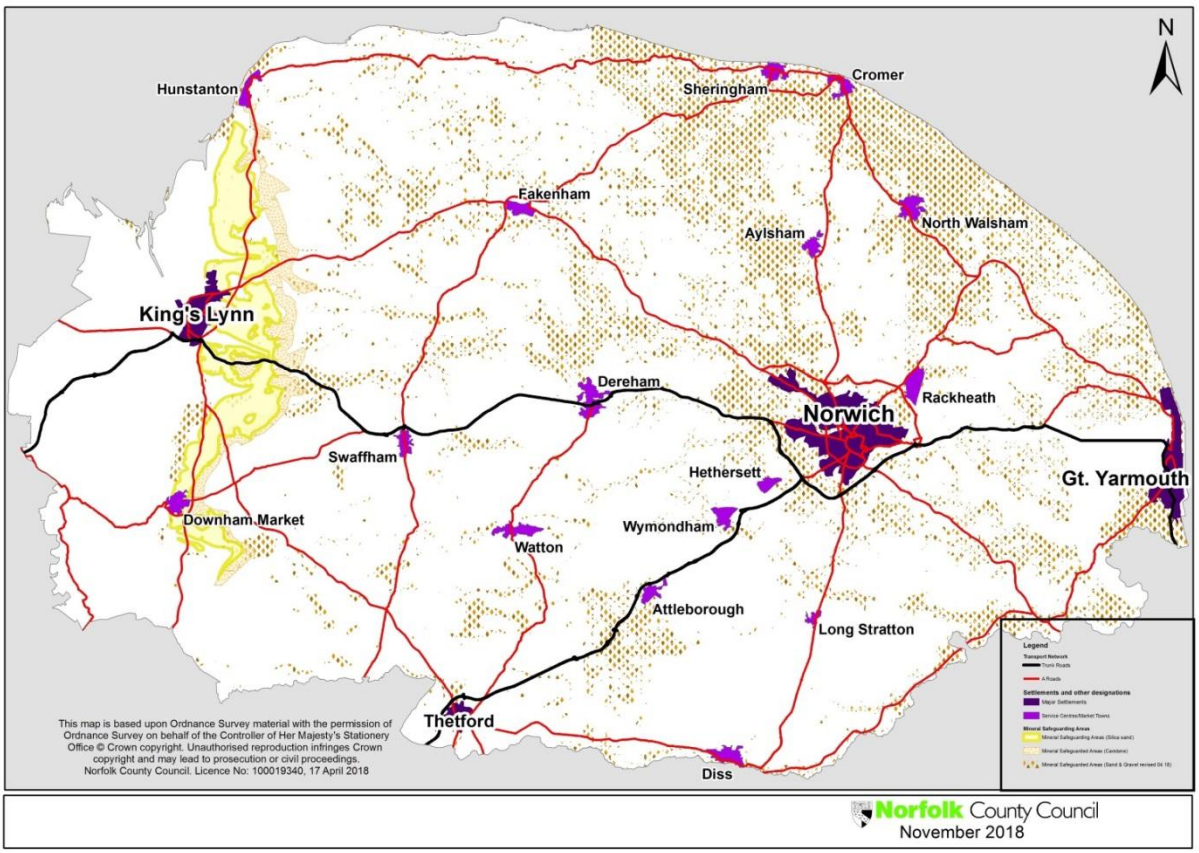


Figure 13: Mineral Resources within Norfolk

Waste

There are a number of waste management facilities within Norfolk. They include:

20 Household Waste Recycling Centres, provided by Norfolk County Council, which accepted over 62,000 tonnes of waste in 2022.

6 commercial composting facilities which received over 94,000 tonnes of waste in 2022;

There are large metal recycling facilities at Lenwade, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn docks and a large number of small sites accepting scrap metal or end-of life vehicles. The metal recycling facilities received over 216,000 tonnes of waste in 2022;

88 operational sites for the treatment and/or transfer of waste (including municipal, commercial and industrial, hazardous, clinical, construction and demolition), which received over 2.188 million tonnes of waste in 2022. Of this total, over 0.64 million tonnes was received at Anglian Water Services Ltd sewage sludge treatment facilities at King's Lynn, Thetford and Whitlingham.;

There are two non-hazardous landfill sites (Blackborough End and Feltwell) in Norfolk. Feltwell landfill site has not received any waste since 2012; it is required to be restored by 2041. Blackborough End landfill site received over 156,000 tonnes of waste in 2022 and is required to be restored by the end of 2026. These two sites have a permitted void capacity (remaining landfill space) for non-hazardous waste estimated to be 1.304 million cubic metres, plus capacity for 2.225 million m^3 of inert waste disposal. In 2022 over 262,000 tonnes of inert waste were received at inert landfill sites or used in the restoration of mineral workings. There is an estimated void capacity at inert landfill sites and for quarry

restoration of at least 3.5 million m^3 in Norfolk at the end of 2022 plus capacity within Blackborough End landfill site.

There is a renewable energy plant operated by Melton Renewable Energy at Thetford which received over 212,000 tonnes of waste in 2022. The waste received at this facility is poultry litter which is burned to produce energy.

There is a wastepaper reprocessing facility operated by Palm Paper at King's Lynn and received over 506,000 tonnes of wastepaper and cardboard in 2022 to produce newsprint.

Agreement 29 :

It is agreed that:

1) It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will therefore enable Norfolk to continue to be self-sufficient in the production of sand and gravel, whilst making an important contribution to the national production of silica sand.

2) As the Mineral Planning Authority, Norfolk County Council will plan for a steady and adequate supply of minerals to support sustainable economic growth through allocating sufficient sites to meet the forecast need for sand and gravel, carstone, as well as allocating sites and providing a criteria-based policy to assess applications to meet the forecast need for silica sand in the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

3) Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. Resources of sand and gravel, carstone and silica sand within defined Mineral Safeguarding Areas will be safeguarded from needless sterilisation by non-mineral development. Infrastructure for the handling, processing and transportation of minerals will also be safeguarded from incompatible development. Defined waste management facilities and water recycling centres will be safeguarded from incompatible development.

4) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan policies will enable the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste in Norfolk to increase, thereby reducing the quantity and proportion of waste arising in Norfolk that requires disposal, in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy.

5) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will enable Norfolk to be net self-sufficient in waste management, where practicable and to enable sufficient waste management infrastructure to be provided in order for Norfolk to meet the existing and forecast amount of waste expected to arise over the Plan period.

6) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will direct new waste management facilities to be located in proximity to Norfolk's urban areas and main towns using criteria-based policies. Priority for the location of new waste management facilities will be given to the re-use of previously-developed land, sites identified for employment uses, and redundant agricultural and forestry buildings and their curtilages.

7) The Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan will contain policies to ensure that minerals development and waste management facilities will be located, designed and operated without unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of local communities, the natural, built and historic environment, the landscape and townscape of Norfolk and surrounding areas.

Section 10 – Conclusions and Next Steps

This Framework documents how the Norfolk Planning Authorities maintain effective cooperation between themselves, with the neighbouring district and county planning authorities, and with other key relevant agencies and utilities. In doing so it meets the relevant requirements of Section 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

To date, since its first endorsement in October 2019 and through its subsequent updates, the NSPF has been successful in addressing the requirements of the duty to co-operate in local plan production for the Norfolk local planning authorities. This has been achieved through the framework providing cross-boundary approaches to strategic infrastructure, housing and jobs numbers and common policy approaches. The NSPF has had further benefits by creating efficiencies through shared evidence production, influencing high-level plans and maximising opportunities to secure external funding to deliver against agreed objectives. The effectiveness of the NSPF was recently reflected in the February 2024 Inspectors' Report on the Greater Norwich Local Plan. The report directly referenced the NSPF, along with the co-operative work of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership, concluding that "We are satisfied that where necessary the Partnership has engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the Plan and that the duty to co-operate has therefore been met".

This experience of co-operative work through the NSPF places the Norfolk local planning authorities in a positive position to address the likely forthcoming introduction of sub-regional Spatial Development Strategies as signalled by the English Devolution White Paper (December 2024).

The current NPPF highlights that Cooperation should be effective and ongoing, with this in mind the Norfolk Authorities have agreed to maintain the following agreement:

Agreement 26 In recognition of the benefits gained by co-ordinating and co-operating on strategic planning activities the Norfolk Planning Authorities agree to support the activities of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum and to continue to appropriately resource joint planning activity.

There remains significant value in continuing with a work programme into the next financial year to address strategic cross boundary issues going forward.

There also remains other significant benefits to continue with the current strategic planning activities completed under this remit, these included:

- Maintaining links to other neighbouring counties and their strategic planning work.
- Maintain links to public bodies and Utilities involved in the preparation of local plans eg Natural England, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, MMO, and UKPN.
- Maintain links to other key initiatives in the county eg Water Resources East, Transport East, Hydrogen East, Greater South East Energy Hub
- Support the county in the production of a county wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan and any potential economic or growth strategies
- Support of Local Plan processes across the county
- Maintain links to NHS estates and the ICS with regular meetings to share updates on key developments and progress of Local Plans
- Scope to continue to commission joint studies across the county to reduce costs

The current NPPF also sets out the requirement for local authorities to prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground. This document is intended to meet this requirement in a single

document for all matters relevant to all Norfolk Local Authorities. Additionally individual local authorities may seek to enter into further statements of common ground with neighbouring or other authorities to address further strategic planning issues as part of the local plan preparation process.

Agreement 27: Norfolk Planning Authorities with support of the signatories of the document agree to maintain this statement of common ground.

Appendix 1 – NSPF Contacts:

Please direct all representations relating to the NSPF to the NSPF Programme Manager as detailed below. Use the Local Planning Authority contact details only if you have enquiries concerning a specific authority area.

Trevor Wiggett NSPF Programme Manager City Hall St Peter's Street Norwich NR2 1NH Email: trevorwiggett@norwich.gov.uk	
Breckland Council	**Broadland and South Norfolk Councils**
Gemma Manthorpe Planning Policy Manager Breckland Council Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke Dereham NR19 1EE Tel 01362 656337 Email : gemma.manthrope@breckland.gov.uk	Adam Banham Place Shaping Manager Broadland and South Norfolk Councils The Horizon CentrePeachman WayBroadland Business Park Norwich NR7 0WF'Tel 01603 430505 Email : Adam.Banham@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk>
The Broads Authority	**Great Yarmouth Borough Council**
Natalie Beal Planning Policy Officer Broads Authority Yare House 62-64 Thorpe Road Norwich NR1 1RY Tel 01603 756050 Email : Natalie.Beal@broads-authority.gov.uk	Nick Fountain Strategic Planning Manager Great Yarmouth Borough Council Town Hall, Hall Plain Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR30 2QF Tel 01493846626 Email: nick.fountain@great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk	**Norfolk County Council**
Alex Fradley Planning Policy Manager Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Kings Court, Chapel Street King's Lynn PE30 1EX Tel 01553 616237 Email : alex.fradley@west-norfolk.gov.uk	Paul Harris Strategic Planning Planner Norfolk County Council Martineau Ln Norwich NR1 2UA Tel 01603 679256 Email : paul.harris@norfolk.gov.uk
North Norfolk District Council	**Norwich City Council**
Iain Withington Acting Planning Policy Manager North Norfolk District Council Council Offices, Holt Road Cromer NR27 9EN Mail : Iain.Withington@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel 0 1263 516034	Mike Burrell Planning Policy Team Leader City Hall St Peter's Street Norwich NR2 1NH Mail : mikeburrell@norwich.gov.uk Tel 01603 987964

Appendix 2 – Cross Border Cooperation Initiatives

Cooperation mechanism	Authorities involved	Brief details	Date	Other Comments	Website link (if relevant)
Membership of Broads Authority	Broadland, Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, Norwich, South Norfolk, East Suffolk, Norfolk and Suffolk.	Each provides members to govern the Broads Authority.	Ongoing		Membership of Broads Authority - http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/who-we-are/members/meet-our-members
East Suffolk/Great Yarmouth sub regional meetings	East Suffolk, Great Yarmouth, Broads Authority.	Quarterly Periodic meetings between these three eastern authorities to discuss strategic cross boundary issues pertinent to the area.	Ongoing	East Suffolk Local Plan Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground (2018) on Housing Market Area, Functional Economic Area and Objectively Assessed Need, between East Suffolk, Great Yarmouth, Broads Authority, South Norfolk, Suffolk Coastal, and Mid-Suffolk.	n/a
Norfolk Coast National Landscape	Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Norfolk, Broads Authority, Natural England	Management of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape	Ongoing	The Partnership also includes 2 community representatives.	Home - Norfolk Coast - https://norfolkcoast.org/
Memorandum of Understanding – Treatment of Housing and Employment Needs and Delivery in the Broads Authority Area	Broads Authority, Broadland, South Norfolk, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, East Suffolk, Norfolk, Suffolk.	Agreed mechanism for distribution of housing (and employment) development in relation to targets for overlapping district and Broads areas.	2014 (and previously)	Further Statement of Common Ground (2017) between Broads Authority and Great Yarmouth Borough Council updating and specifying this in relation to housing in Proposed Broads Local Plan	n/a
Wherry Line Community Rail Partnership	Norfolk, Suffolk, Norwich, Broadland,	To promote the railway and the surrounding area to develop	Ongoing	Partnership also includes Abellio Greater Anglia, Network Rail,	Greater Anglia Community partnerships -

Cooperation mechanism	Authorities involved	Brief details	Date	Other Comments	Website link (if relevant)
	Great Yarmouth, East Suffolk.	economic and environmental benefits for residents, visitors and tourists.		Railfuture, Norfolk Association of Local Councils, rail users, station adopters, RSPB, and local businesses.	https://www.greateranglia.co.uk/about-us/community-rail-partnerships
Great Yarmouth Transport and Infrastructure Steering Group	Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, Environment Agency, Highways England	To promote and coordinate infrastructure improvements in, around and benefitting Great Yarmouth Borough	Ongoing		Great Yarmouth Transport and Infrastructure Steering Group - https://great-yarmouth.cmis.uk.com/great-yarmouth/Committees/CommitteeSystemfromMay2016/tabid/142/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/562/id/170/Default.aspx
A47 Alliance	Norfolk, Great Yarmouth, Broadland, Norwich, Breckland, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Broads Authority	Seeks to promote the dualling of the A47.		Alliance also includes Peterborough & Cambridgeshire local authorities, MPs, business groups, LEPs, etc.	A47 Alliance website - http://www.a47alliance.co.uk/
Greater Norwich Development Partnership	Norwich, Broadland, South Norfolk, Norfolk County Council and the Broads Authority	Partnership to produce Local Plan for Greater Norwich Area and address related planning policy issues such as housing land supply and monitoring. This involves a member level group and joint officer team.	Ongoing		Greater Norwich website - http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/
Greater Norwich Growth Board	Norwich, Broadland, South Norfolk, Norfolk County Council and the Broads Authority	Member level Board and joint officer team for strategic investment planning and delivery across the Greater Norwich area. This includes pooling of CIL receipts and a joint CIL process.	Ongoing		Greater Norwich website - http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/
Norfolk Strategic Planning Officers Group	All Norfolk Local Planning Authorities	Monthly meeting of Heads of Planning Policy teams to discuss cross boundary issues.	Ongoing		Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum web page - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf

Cooperation mechanism	Authorities involved	Brief details	Date	Other Comments	Website link (if relevant)
Norfolk Member Forum	All Norfolk Local Planning Authorities	Over sees Duty to Cooperate requirements at a member level, in particular the production of the NSPF.	Ongoing		Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum web page - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf
Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework	All Norfolk Local Planning Authorities	Shows how the Authorities work together and forms the Statement of Common Ground for the area. Addresses cross boundary issues.	Reviewed for 2021.		Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum web page - www.norfolk.gov.uk/nsf
The Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership	East Linsey, Boston, Fenland, South Holland, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, North Norfolk, Lincolnshire County Council and Norfolk County Council	Local Communities and Management Groups working together to protect marine heritage	On-going	Many other Agencies and local groups involved	The Wash & North Norfolk Marine Partnership - Norfolk Coast - https://norfolkcoast.org/about/wnnmp/
Norfolk/Suffolk Cross border Meeting	Babergh and Mid Suffolk, South Norfolk, Great Yarmouth, Broads Authority, Ipswich Borough, Suffolk County, West Suffolk, Breckland, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, East Suffolk	Quarterly meetings of Planning Policy teams to discuss cross boundary issues.	Ongoing		
Norfolk Rail Group	Norfolk & Suffolk County Councils, all districts		Ongoing		
Joint SFRA Update	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, North Norfolk DC, Greater Norwich,	Team over was the production of a Joint SFRA across most of Norfolk	Completed		

Cooperation mechanism	Authorities involved	Brief details	Date	Other Comments	Website link (if relevant)
	Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth				
East of England Aggregates Working Party	Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire County Councils. Peterborough, Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea, Luton, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire Councils	Quarterly meetings. Collect data relating to the supply and demand of aggregates, publish an annual monitoring report, provides technical advice to Mineral Planning Authorities on their Local Aggregate Assessments. Line of communication between MPAs and MHCLG.	Ongoing	The EoEAWP also includes representatives from the minerals industry, Marine Management Organisation, and MHCLG. Includes feedback and liaison with London AWP and South East AWP.	East of England Aggregates Working Party web page - http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/minerals-waste/aggregate/overview.aspx
East of England Waste Technical Advisory Body	Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire County Councils. Peterborough, Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea, Luton, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire Councils	Quarterly meetings. Forum for discussion relating to waste planning including waste data, capacities and forecasting.	Ongoing	The EoEWTAB is also attended by the Environment Agency. Includes feedback and liaison with London WTAB and South East WTAB.	
Water Resources East	WRE has over 200 members from a diverse range of organisations including all district and county councils in the WRE area	WRE is the independent, not-for-profit membership organisation pioneering a collaborative, cross-sector approach to water resources and integrated water management planning in Eastern England.	Ongoing	For further details see the water section 9.4	https://wre.org.uk/