

**Local Plan Update**  
Report by Planning Policy Officer

**Summary:** Work continues on the new Local Plan. The report details work to date.

**Recommendation:** That the contents of the report be noted. No further action required.

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that work on the new Broads Local Plan is underway and a number of Members attended a workshop to look at potential issues on 5 December 2014. This report seeks to provide an update on the key issues which are currently being examined.

## **2 Update**

### **2.1 Housing**

- 2.1.1 Case law indicates that the Broads needs an Objectively Assessed Housing Need<sup>1</sup>. The Broads is part of three Housing Market Areas:

- Great Yarmouth – SHMA completed in 2013/14<sup>2</sup>
- Central Norfolk SHMA ongoing
- Waveney's SHMA to be started later in the year

- 2.1.2 Discussions are ongoing with constituent districts and the Central Norfolk SHMA consultants regarding how to proceed. There will ultimately be a piece of work done that assesses the Broads' housing need. If the Broads cannot accommodate the need for the housing which is identified through this work, discussions will commence as to how and where to accommodate this need with our constituent districts through the Duty to Cooperate and the Non Statutory Shared Strategic Framework.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments/the-approach-to-assessing-need/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/consumption/groups/publicgybc/documents/article/gybc145976.pdf>

## **2.2 Settlement Hierarchy/Development Boundaries**

- 2.2.1 A study is underway to assess access to facilities and services by residents in the built up areas of the Broads. Initially this will be a desk-based study, officers will then consult with the relevant Parish Councils. The study uses the GYBC Sustainable Settlement methodology and scoring system<sup>3</sup>. The study will be used to indicate and justify a Settlement Hierarchy and thus indicate where there could be Development Boundaries.

## **2.3 Light Pollution/Dark Sky Status**

- 2.3.1 Officers have completed a pilot survey of the dark skies in the Broads (March 2015). Two areas of the Broads were assessed from land and water: the Coltishall to Horning area and the Whitlingham to Brundall area. The survey used an application on I Phones to assess the quality of the dark sky. The Pilot has concluded that the methodology is generally sound, with some minor improvements. It is proposed to roll out the study and survey the entire Broads in autumn/winter 2015/2016. The data collected will be compiled on a map to show areas of particularly dark skies in the Broads. This could lead to stronger light pollution policies in the Local Plan as well as potentially an application for Dark Sky Status<sup>4</sup> if the results indicate that this might be appropriate and the Authority wishes to take it forward.

## **2.4 Riverbank Stabilisation**

- 2.4.1 The current guide is being reviewed and improved. An officer level working group with representatives from the various work streams of the Broads Authority (for example heritage, access and navigation) are undertaking the work. It is intended that the improved guide will be consulted on to give it more weight when used in determining planning applications. There will be a policy hook for the guide in the Local Plan.

## **2.5 Moorings**

- 2.5.1 A new guide is being produced covering the various physical forms in which moorings can be provided. Again, an officer level working group with representatives from the various work streams of the Broads Authority (for example heritage, access and navigation) is completing the guide. It is also intended to consult on the document to give it more weight when used in determining planning applications. There will be a policy hook in the Local Plan.

## **2.6 Second Homes and Holiday Homes**

- 2.6.1 A student has been employed to undertake research into this issue. The aim of the work is to understand better the level of holiday accommodation in the area, as well as applications for permanent occupation of holiday

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/consumption/groups/publicgybc/documents/article/gybc145936.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.darksky.org/>

accommodation. Council tax records will also be assessed to give an indication of second homes in the area. Officers can then assess the data to see if a policy response is required.

## **2.7 Economic Development**

- 2.7.1 A Workshop/meeting was held with Economic Development Officers of the Broads' constituent district and county councils in March. The meeting was well attended by all our constituent district and county councils. This initial meeting was more of a fact finding meeting to start to better understand the economy of the Broads as well as understand links between the Broads and the wider districts.

## **2.8 Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report<sup>5</sup> and Statement of Community Involvement<sup>6</sup>**

- 2.8.1 This and the Statement of Community Involvement are the first steps in preparing a Local Plan. The SA Scoping Report seeks opinions from the environment bodies as well as specific other interested parties (such as the constituent councils) on our initial assessment of the issues and problems the Local Plan should look into as well as the proposed Sustainability Appraisal Objectives that will be used to assess each policy every step of the Local Plan route. The Scoping Report (a technical piece of work) was generally well received with some minor considerations as the SA process goes forward.

## **2.9 Existing Policy Review**

- 2.9.1 All policies of the Core Strategy, Development Management DPD and Sites Specifics Local Plan have been assessed by Development Management Officers. The assessments have indicated where improvements can be made following lessons learnt from using the policies for a number of years. Policies will either be kept as they are, improved or discarded.

## **3 Anticipated timescales**

- 3.1 The Current Local Development Scheme<sup>7</sup> (or timeline for the Broads Local Plan) was agreed at Planning Committee in September 2014. Whilst this indicates that the first round of consultation on the draft Issues and options for the new Local Plan is set for May/June it is likely that this will now be towards the end of the summer and start of autumn. This is because of the Objectively Assessed Housing Need as described at 2.1 above will result in a delay to the process..

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/524257/Broads-Draft-SA-Scoping-Report-Local-Plan-2014.pdf](http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/524257/Broads-Draft-SA-Scoping-Report-Local-Plan-2014.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/development>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/496747/Broads-Local-Plan-LDS.pdf](http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/496747/Broads-Local-Plan-LDS.pdf)

## **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Producing a Local Plan has financial implications through evidence base production, consultation events and examination of the final document.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 This paper is intended to update members on the progress of the new Local Plan. Work has started on the research phase of the Local Plan.

Background papers: None

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Appendices: None