

Broads Authority

15 March 2024

Agenda item number 14

Local Plan consultation

Report by Planning Policy Officer

Purpose

The Preferred Options version of the Local Plan for the Broads, with its accompanying documents, are now ready for consultation. An 8-week consultation is proposed, with three drop-in events.

Recommended decision

- i. Subject to comments made at this meeting, to endorse the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for public consultation.
 - ii. To delegate any typos, formatting, or minor improvements to the Planning Policy Officer.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Over the last year or so, the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan has come before Planning Committee in 'bite size pieces' for consideration and comment by

Members. The bitesize pieces have been brought together and the Preferred Options is now ready to be consulted on.

- 1.2. The Planning Committee reviewed the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan at their meeting of 1 March and endorsed it with the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The Committee has recommended that the Broads Authority Board approves the documents for consultation.

2. Preferred Options Local Plan

- 2.1. The 'bite size pieces', that Planning Committee Members have reviewed, have now all been brought together to form the Preferred Options version of the Local Plan. This is set out at Appendix 1 and comprises the entire Local Plan and appendices (please note that this version is the same as submitted to the Planning Committee meeting on 1 March 2024).
- 2.2. At the Planning Committee meeting held on 1 March, it was agreed that ST01 be amended to read "The scheme delivers a selection of housing types and sizes agreed with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Broads Authority in consultation with the Parish Council". It was also agreed to add a sentence to confirm that the Authority are considering more than 10% BNG, however, this is covered already in the supporting text to the policy. Links will be inserted. The Biodiversity Net Gain policy has tracked changes as this changed significantly when compared to the policy that came before Planning Committee as a bite size piece.

3. Policies Maps

- 3.1. The Broads Authority's GIS Officer has produced policies maps to accompany the policies. We have also produced an interactive on-line mapping system that will link to the Local Plan. We intend to put PDF versions of the policies maps online. We do not intend to print off the policies maps. See Appendix 3 for the policies maps.

4. Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.1. With each bitesize piece of the Local Plan that came before Planning Committee, there was a table that assessed the policy against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). These have been compiled to form the Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal document that will also be out for consultation. This is attached at Appendix 2.

5. Preferred Options Habits Regulation Assessment

- 5.1. Each bitesize piece that has come before Planning Committee over the last year or so has been assessed by our Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) consultant, Lepus Consulting. The final HRA is included at Appendix 4.

6. Consultation

- 6.1. It is intended that an 8-week consultation will run from 25 March to 17 May 2024. We may be able to start the consultation a few days earlier. The required statutory minimum consultation period is 6 weeks and two weeks have been added as the consultation period is over Easter.
- 6.2. Posters and press releases will be produced to advertise the consultation, in conjunction with placing advertisements in the local press. Social media will also be used to promote the consultation.
- 6.3. Three drop-in events will be held as follows:

Saturday 13 April	Tuesday 30 April	Wednesday 8 May
10am to 1pm	4pm 8pm	5:30pm to 9pm
Wroxham Church Hall	Filby Village Hall	Beccles Blyburgate Hall

- 6.4. Ways to engage with those who are less easily engaged will be worked up with the assistance of the Education Officer.
- 6.5. An HTML version of the Local Plan will be produced. The Local Plan will be displayed as webpages online, as well as in the usual way through a PDF. This HTML version will link to the interactive mapping system and vice versa. The Senior Communications Officer, GIS Officer and Administrative Officer have all assisted with this element of work.
- 6.6. Hard copies of the Local Plan, SA and HRA will be placed in the venues listed below. Hard copies of policies maps will not be made available at the venues as people will be directed to the interactive map. The venues are:
- Libraries: Acle, Beccles, Brundall, Bungay, Cromer, Great Yarmouth, Loddon, Lowestoft, Norwich Millennium, Oulton Broad, Stalham and Wroxham.
 - Council Offices: Broadland, Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, South Norfolk, East Suffolk, Norfolk County and Suffolk County.
 - Yare House, Norwich.

7. Next steps

- 7.1. Comments received during the consultation will be logged and responded to, and amendments made to the Preferred Options version as required, as it becomes the Publication version of the Local Plan. A Whole-Plan Viability Assessment will be completed. A sequential test (in relation to flood risk) will also be completed. Gypsy and Traveller work will be undertaken to inform the next version of the Local Plan. We also intend to see if we can justify greater than 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Documents will come to the Planning Committee over the coming months on these matters.
- 7.2. The ultimate aim is to produce a Publication version of the Local Plan around the end of 2024 that can be consulted on and then submitted before the end of June 2025.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. The main costs incurred are the Habitats Regulation Assessment, hiring of venues, paying for adverts in the local Press and printing of hard copies of the Local Plan. Going forward, costs will be incurred through producing the Gypsy and Traveller study as well as the Whole-Plan Viability Assessment.

9. Risk implications

- 9.1. The Government intends to change the way Local Plans are produced and has set a transition period for producing Local Plans under the current system. The timeline set out earlier in this report is intended to meet that transition period. If there are delays and the Local Plan is not submitted by June 2025, this will have implications for its production. This would include the risk that we would need to prepare it under the new system, which would necessitate starting the process again.

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Date of report: 04 March 2024

Appendix 1 – [Local Plan for the Broads – Preferred Options 2024](#)

Appendix 2 – [Sustainability Appraisal](#)

Appendix 3 – Policies Maps: [Settlement policies bundle](#); [Overarching policy maps](#); [Development Boundaries](#); and [SA Baseline maps](#).

Appendix 4 – [Habitats Regulation Assessment](#)