

Broads Authority

29 July 2022

Agenda item number 13

Issues and Options

Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary

The Issues and Options version of the Local Plan is the first stage of producing a new Local Plan for the Broads. This version does not contain policies; it discusses some issues/topic areas and some options to address the issue as well as asks questions.

There is a Call for Sites as part of this consultation. This report also introduces the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment, and details the consultation approach.

Recommendations

1. Members are asked for their comments on the Issues and Options (in particular the residential moorings section), the SA and the HRA.
 2. To endorse the Issues and Options, SA and HRA documents for consultation.
 3. To comment on and endorse the proposed approach to consultation.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Issues and Options version of the Local Plan is the first stage of producing a new Local Plan for the Broads. This version does not contain policies; it discusses some issues/topic areas and some options to address the issue as well as asks questions. There is also a Call for Sites as part of this consultation.

2. Issues and Options Document

- 2.1. Planning Committee Members have seen the vast majority of the sections of this Issues and Options document over the last year or so. Comments have been taken on board.
- 2.2. The Issues and Options was discussed at the July Planning Committee. Because the deadline for this report was before that meeting, comments from that Planning Committee will be reported verbally.
- 2.3. The Issues and Options document is at Appendix 1. This is the compiled, final version of the Issues and Options. Members are asked for their comments and to endorse the Local Plan for consultation.
- 2.4. There have been some changes to the text since Members saw some bite size pieces. The significant changes are as follows:

Section	Change	Explanation
21.0 Water efficiency	Text relating to potential benefits relating to nutrient release by using less water.	By using less water, there could be less water treated at the Water Recycling Centre.
7.0 About the Broads	Reference to Reed and Sedge Cutters in the economy section.	Requested by Navigation Committee.

- 2.5. **Members’ comments on the Issues and Options document are welcomed.**
- 2.6. **Members are recommended to endorse the Issues and Options document for consultation.**

3. Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 3.1. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) be undertaken for plans such as Local Plans. The term “sustainability appraisal” is used to describe a form of assessment that considers the social, environmental and economic effects of implementing a particular plan or planning policy document. It is intended that the SA process helps plans meet the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. The results of the sustainability appraisal will inform the Authority’s decisions on the Local Plan, and the planning inspector’s judgement on the Local Plan’s legal compliance and soundness.

- 3.2. The Issues and Options version of the Local Plan does not include policies. The SA for the Issues and Options assesses the options using a RAG rating. The SA is at Appendix 2 and is also out for consultation.
- 3.3. The SA updates the literature review and baseline data from the SA Scoping Report. It includes the comments made at the SA Scoping Report stage. In terms of assessing policies, as there are no policies in this version of the Local Plan, the options are assessed using a simple RAG rating with some explanation.
- 3.4. **Members' comments on the SA are welcomed.**
- 3.5. **Members are recommended to endorse the SA document for consultation.**

4. Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 4.1. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, as amended, in order to ensure that plans and projects do not adversely affect any European wildlife sites. A plan being produced by a public body is the subject of Habitats Regulations Assessment, and it is the responsibility of the public body to produce the assessment in accordance with the legislation, to inform any necessary changes to the plan, prior to its adoption.
- 4.2. This report provides the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan for the Broads, being undertaken by Lepus Consulting on behalf of the Broads Authority.
- 4.3. The Broads has a wealth of internationally important biodiversity, primarily focussed on the wetlands and their associated habitats. This report assesses the implications of the Local Plan for European sites, which are those designated through European Directives, and also includes those listed as Ramsar sites as a matter of Government policy.
- 4.4. The Issues and Options version of the Local Plan does not include policies. The HRA for the Issues and Options provides scoping for later stages as well as gives a high-level assessment of the issues and options discussed. The HRA is at Appendix 3 and is also out for consultation.
- 4.5. **Members are recommended to endorse the HRA for consultation.**
- 4.6. **Members comments on the HRA are welcomed.**

5. Consultation

- 5.1. The consultation on the Issues and Options version of the Local Plan (and the Design Guide which is also before this Planning Committee) will run for 10 weeks. The likely dates are from 8th August to 16 October 2022.
- 5.2. The consultation will be advertised by emailing those on our consultation database as well as advertising on social media. Documents will be placed on our website. Parish

Councils will be asked to advertise the consultation as well. Drop in events will be advertised.

- 5.3. Three drop-in events have been organised, Officers will be in attendance to speak to anyone who wishes to drop by.

Date	7 Sept	12 Sept	17 Sept
Venue	Oulton Community Centre - small hall	Brundall Memorial Hall - lounge	Potter Heigham Village Hall
Open to public	4-8pm	4-8pm	10am-1pm

- 5.4. Hard copies of the document will be placed in libraries around the Broads, Council offices as well as in the reception of Yare House. Hard copies are also available on request, but there will be a charge for printing, postage and packaging to cover costs.
- 5.5. Versions will be available in other languages and large print if requested.
- 5.6. People will be able to call in with any queries as well as have the option for video calls.
- 5.7. In terms of engaging hard to reach groups, we have identified some groups which the Authority's Education Officer works with. Indeed, some groups will be undertaking activities in the Broads at the time of the consultation and we will endeavour to use those opportunities to engage with them on the Local Plan.
- 5.8. **Members comments on the approach to consultation are welcomed.**

6. A new NPPF

- 6.1. Before recent national political events, a new NPPF was set to be consulted on around July time. The consultation on the Design Guide and Local Plan will likely start around the second week of August. There are three scenarios for the way forward with the consultation on the Local Plan, if the NPPF is released for consultation. **Members are recommended to endorse these three scenarios and associated actions:**
- a) If the NPPF comes out before consultation starts and after the July Broads Authority meeting and if we find on reading it that any aspect of the Issues and Options cannot go forward, then we will delay the consultation and amend relevant sections and come back to future Planning Committee and Broads Authority meetings. We would have to postpone the consultation venues accordingly.
 - b) If the NPPF comes out before consultation starts and after the July Broads Authority meeting and if we find on reading it that it does not affect the Issues and Options we will write to Members to keep them informed and go ahead with the consultation.
 - c) If the NPPF comes out during or after the consultation, then we would carry on with the consultation as planned. We would consider the responses to the consultation, as

well as the NPPF, in preparation for when the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill becomes an Act.

7. Next steps

- 7.1. All responses to the consultation will be logged, read and responded to. We will report the responses at future Planning Committees.
- 7.2. The next version of the Local Plan will be called the 'Preferred Options' and this will include draft policies. Again, bite size pieces will be brought before Planning Committee as this version of the Local Plan is produced.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. There will be a cost associated with the consultation. The cost will arise from the press advert (usually around £400), hiring of venues for the drop-in sessions (around £200) as well as for printing the hard copies that are left at some venues (no cost known at this stage).

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Date of report: 20 July 2022

Appendix 1 - [Issues and Options Local Plan](#)

Appendix 2 - [Sustainability Appraisal](#)

Appendix 2a - [Literature Review](#)

Appendix 2b - [Baseline](#)

Appendix 3 - [Habitats Regulation Assessment](#)