

Greater Norwich Local Plan
Statement of Common Ground with the
Environment Agency
Representations on Part 1 (The
Strategy)

Date: 16/09/2021

Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)

Purpose of Statement

1. This document has been prepared to inform the Inspector of the agreed position between GNLP and the Environment Agency in respect of the Environment Agency's representations on the GNLP Part 1 (The Strategy).

Background

2. The Environment Agency are a consultee on the Plan and the GNLP authorities have considered issues raised by them, including objections relating to the soundness of the Plan made at the Regulation 19 stage. The GNLP authorities have considered these representations and produced a response to them. For a number of the representations the GNLP authorities consider that a "minor" additional modification could usefully be made to the Plan and that this does not relate to its' "soundness"; for example, a change for clarification purposes; and that this could overcome the Environment Agency's concerns. For other representations the GNLP authorities consider that the Plan is appropriately worded at present and is "sound", and that no modification is necessary; though in some instances the authorities would not object to a wording change being made as a "main" modification if the Inspector deemed it necessary to make the Plan sound.

3. A summary of each representation, together with the GNLP authorities' response including any potential change to the Plan, and the Environment Agency response to this, is set out in the appended table. The areas of agreement or remaining disagreement are also highlighted.

Conclusion

4. The position of the GNLP authorities and the Environment Agency on representations made by the Environment Agency to the GNLP Part 1 Reg 19 Proposed Submission document is set out in the appended table. The Inspector is asked to consider these in assessing the soundness of the Plan, and in determining whether any modifications might be necessary to make the Plan sound.

On behalf of GNLP authorities:

Mike Burrell
GNLP Team Manager

On behalf of the Environment Agency:

Jo Firth
Environment Agency Sustainable Places Team Leader (East Anglia East)

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Appendix 1 - Table of summary of Environment Agency representations and responses Part 1 – The Strategy

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APPENDIX 1 Table of summary of Environment Agency representations and responses Part 1 – The Strategy

Policy / map / para no. etc	Rep ID/s	Support/ Object	Main issues raised	Council response	Potential change to plan	Environment Agency response
Emissions and Climate Change, Para 97	23776	Support	The NPPF 118(b) states that the plan should “recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;”. This paragraph doesn’t specifically state that the carbon balance of developments should be considered but 148 in the plan does say that the plan should “shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions...”.	Support noted	No change	N/A
The Natural Environment, para 109	23777	Support	We are pleased that this paragraph now mentions protecting Water Quality in SACs and habitats sites.	Support noted.	No change	N/A

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The Natural Environment, para 112	23778	Support	In relation to para 112, this new paragraph has removed mention of natural capital as far as we can see. The paragraph does not mention of natural functioning of ecosystems which would be beneficial.	Although it is not considered necessary for the soundness of the plan, and the profile is intended to be concise, it is accepted that an additional clause in para. 112 on the enhancing natural capital and the natural functioning of ecosystems would provide clarity.	Make a minor change as an additional modification to add a clause to para. 112 so that it reads: “Long-term work is ongoing to improve and expand the green infrastructure network throughout Greater Norwich and beyond. Green infrastructure is vital to supporting biodiversity, enhancing natural capital	Agree We are happy with the improved wording.

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					and assisting the natural functioning of ecosystems, combating climate change, reducing pollution, helping to create attractive homes and workplaces, enhancing landscapes, reducing flood risk and aiding active lifestyles and wellbeing”.	
The Natural Environment, Para 115	23779	Support	We find this paragraph sound but raise the following comments. We are pleased that our previous comments to paragraph 110 at the time have partially addressed this in new paragraph (115). However, it appears that the there is some	Support noted. Although it is not considered necessary for the soundness of the plan, and the profile is intended to be concise, it is accepted that an	Make a minor amendment to the first sentence of para. 115, as an additional modification so that it reads:	Agree We are content with the improved wording.

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			<p>confusion between green infrastructure and natural habitats. NPPF 171 keeps the two concepts separate “take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure.”</p> <p>We would reiterate that green infrastructure is not necessarily biodiverse and may not include different habitats (e.g. farmland and playing fields).</p>	<p>additional clause in para. 115 on a network of habitats would provide clarity.</p>	<p>“Overall, the plan should promote the protection, enhancement and delivery of a network of habitats and a strategic green infrastructure network which addresses the scale of development proposed in the plan”.</p>	
Water, Para 120	23780	Support	<p>There is no information about WFD and risk to water quality. Regarding paragraphs 120 to 122: While we are finding this paragraph sound we do have some concerns. We have gone</p>	<p>Support noted. Since the profile is concise and water quality is covered in para. 109, no additional text is regarded as being needed here.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Agree We have included further comments in relation to WFD in Policy</p>

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			<p>into more detail in this in our responses to policies 3 and 4.</p> <p>The water section paragraph includes 3 paragraphs. 2 of these are about drinking water and only one (paragraph 122) with any mention of pollution. There is no information about WFD and risk to water quality.</p> <p>It is disappointing none of our previous suggestions have been added here and, no links made to risk from development, or that preventing deterioration as part of WFD is not an 'aim' is a requirement.</p> <p>The Local Plan must highlight WFD and links to water quality - it is statutory environmental legislation and should be</p>	<p>A wide range of legislation is relevant to the local plan, but it is not necessary to specifically reference it or provide information about it. The Plan aims to be concise and focus on the policies which apply to development.</p>		<p>3 below however.</p>

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			referenced in the environment section. The "water" section (para 120-122) is sparse and there is required to acknowledge potential risks to the water environment from growth pressures. There is no mention of waste-water issues and infrastructure.			
Environment, para 145	23781	Support	This section has not included anything here about rivers and water quality, such as: 'development will ensure that it is carried out in such locations and ways so that rivers and other water protected sites are protected from pollution and ensure water quality does not deteriorate'.	Support and proposed additional wording noted. No changes are required for soundness, however the GNLP authorities accept that minor modifications should be made for clarity.	Make a minor change to the wording at the end of paragraph 145 as an additional modification so that it reads: "Development will be carried out in such locations and ways so that rivers and other protected water sites are protected from pollution to	Agree We see additional wording is now added in paragraph 145, this is welcomed.

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					ensure water quality does not deteriorate'.	
Addressing Climate Change, Climate Change Statement	23785	Support	The climate change table is a good improvement to the plan and we fully support this.	Support noted.	No change	Agree
Policy 2	23782	Support	Comments made on Green Infrastructure	Support noted Comments noted	No change	Agree
Policy 3	23783	Object	Not sound The Water Framework Directive should be referenced as should water and water quality and the Water Cycle Study. It should state that development should be located in areas to avoid harm to the natural environment.	In accordance with the NPPF Local Plans should be concise and avoid excessive detail. It is not necessary for Policy 3 to reference the Water Framework Directive, water quality and the Water Cycle Study. The Water Cycle Study is available as	No change to Policy 3. However, a minor change is to be made as an additional modification to the supporting text at the end of para 210, adding:	Agree We are pleased to see that WFD is now referenced. We are also pleased that the WCS is

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				<p>part of the evidence base and addresses issues relating to the Water Framework Directive and water quality.</p> <p>Policy 3 sets out the strategic policy for protecting the environment. This will be applied together with other relevant policies, such as in Development Management Local Plans, together with locational policies for development such as allocations. As such the development is directed away from sensitive areas. It is not necessary nor</p>	<p>“Relevant legislation also has to be applied including the Water Framework Directive, which sets requirements to protect and improve the water environment, and the Habitats Regulations which set requirements to protect habitats and species”.</p>	<p>submitted as a part of the evidence base.</p>

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				<p>appropriate to state that “development should be located in areas to avoid the natural environment” as that would be widely opened to interpretation and so not give the clear guidance required of a Local Plan policy. Policy 2 and 4 and their supporting text also address water / waste-water issues.</p> <p>However, it is accepted that it would be useful to make a reference to key environmental legislation, such as the WFD, in the supporting text of the policy.</p>		
Para 258	23784	Support	Concern not enough emphasis has been given to the importance	Noted.	No change	Agree

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			of Water Cycle Study. The local plan would benefit in highlighting key findings/recommendations from the study. Prefer a separate foul water policy.			We are satisfied that the WCS has been submitted formally as an evidence base supporting the Local Plan.
Policy 4 Strategic Infrastructure	23832	Object	No mentioning of waste-water Infrastructure or address the issue of water quality. There is also no mentioning of Water Framework Directive.	<p>Anglian Water (AW) provides water and water recycling infrastructure for the Greater Norwich area.</p> <p>AW's Water Recycling Long Term Plan (2019) identified the need to increase drainage capacity through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and upsizing sewers.</p>	No change	<p>Agree</p> <p>We are pleased that additional wording has been included in paragraph 145</p> <p>.</p> <p>We are satisfied that the WCS has been submitted formally as an evidence base</p>

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				<p>Policy 4 bullet-point 2 specifically refers to “<i>Water supply and sewerage network improvements including the waste-water network at Whitlingham water recycling centre, the Yare Valley sewer and elsewhere to protect water quality and designated habitats</i>”. Also reference is made to Appendix 1 which sets out infrastructure requirements including in relation to waste water; and the supporting text at para 249 to 257 addresses water / waste water, and para 258 references the Greater Norwich Water</p>		supporting the Local Plan.

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				Cycle Study that investigated water issues. Policy 2 and its supporting text also addresses water / waste-water issues.		

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