

Greater Norwich Local Plan

Hearing Statement

Matter 5 - Strategic Infrastructure

Introduction

This Hearing Statement has been produced by Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, working with Norfolk County Council as the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP).

The Document Library for the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) Examination and further information can be found on the GNLP Examination website:

www.gnlp.org.uk

The Councils have responded to each question directly in the body of the Hearing Statement.

Issue 1: Is Policy 4 Strategic Infrastructure justified and effective?

Question 1

Policy 4 identifies a number of transport schemes and projects and says that they will be brought forward to support the aims of the Plan. Is Policy 4 an effective policy or a statement of a number of transport infrastructure schemes and projects which may be implemented? Should these schemes or projects (or some of them) be listed in supporting text rather than in the policy?

Response to question 1 -

1. The transport schemes and projects listed in policy 4 are major transport schemes to be provided by partners and government. They are not relied upon for the delivery of individual sites. However, they are part of the infrastructure and strategic improvements being promoted within the plan area which will support overall growth.
2. The schemes included are generally well advanced in terms of their preferred route status, funding, and/or their statutory processes. Consequently, it is considered to be correct to include these well-advanced schemes in Policy 4.

Question 2

The Partnership's response to our Initial Questions states that the Western Link Road is not necessary for the delivery of any of the proposed allocations. Should it therefore be shown on the Key Diagram?

Response to question 2 -

3. This is a transport scheme to be provided by Norfolk County Council which will have an influence on the growth and development of the area without being required to support any specific sites. The Norwich Western Link Road has had a published preferred route since 2019, has conditional funding approval, and an outline business case is currently being considered as the next detailed funding approval stage by the Department for Transport. The scheme provides a direct connection to the planned A47 improvement projects (currently undergoing their Development Consent Order examination). It will be subject to its own planning processes during 2022.
4. Given the active delivery of the project, it is right to show it on the key diagram.

Question 3

To what extent are the allocations in the Plan and the level of growth and development proposed across the Plan area reliant upon the implementation of the other listed schemes? For example is the provision of the A140 Long Stratton by pass necessary for the delivery of planned growth in the Plan?

Response to question 3 -

5. Overall, the delivery of growth will benefit from general improvements to transport infrastructure, but individual sites are not reliant on specific transport schemes.
6. The exception is the Long Stratton bypass which is a requirement of the growth set out in the Long Stratton Area Action Plan (LSAAP). The LSAAP identifies a threshold of 250 dwellings, subject to viability considerations, before completion of the bypass. The planning application for the Long Stratton bypass (in detail) and the associated development (in outline) has been submitted and is anticipated to be considered early in 2022. All necessary orders to enable construction of the bypass are expected to be in place by 2023, with the project completed and open to the public by the end of 2024. This will enable the significant, already allocated, housing development in Long Stratton.

Question 4

Are the listed transport projects compatible with the climate change policies of the Local Plan and with national policy?

Response to question 4 -

7. Each scheme will undergo its own environmental appraisal and will be taken forward by the promoting authority. The improvements to the A47 at Blofield/Burlingham, Thickethorne and Easton to North Tuddenham are being promoted by National Highways. The Norwich Western Link Road is being promoted by Norfolk County Council. The GNLP reflects the fact that these projects are being promoted separately and each will be required to carry its own assessments and provide, where necessary, appropriate mitigating measures.
8. Transport for Norwich includes a complete package for growth with the promotion of active travel and public transport being supported by freeing up road space.
9. All future projects will also need to take account of the Environment Act, including carbon emission and biodiversity net gain targets.

Question 5

Has the cumulative impact of the proposed level of growth on infrastructure been adequately addressed, particularly in relation to available power and water resources? Have the cross-boundary implications for this been satisfactorily addressed?

Response to question 5 -

10. As an overall principle, the cumulative impact of the proposed level of growth on all infrastructure has been addressed, including power and water resources. As part of this, any relevant cross boundary implications have also been satisfactorily addressed.

11. The process and the detail of this are set out in the Strategic Infrastructure Topic Paper ([D3.5](#)).
12. The GNLP authorities have actively engaged with the key infrastructure providers including Anglian Water and UK Power Networks (UKPN) from the early stages of plan-making. We are satisfied that there are no unmet needs that have not been considered. Any future emerging needs due to any changes in circumstances can be considered through the annual production of Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
13. On the topic of energy, the plan has been well informed by the Greater Norwich Energy Infrastructure Study (GNEIS 2019 [B4.1](#)). Paragraphs 17 – 19 of the Strategic Infrastructure Topic Paper ([D3.5](#)) summarise the study's findings in terms on infrastructure needs. These are set out in GNLP Strategy ([A1](#)) appendix 1 which identifies substations requiring upgrades and/or measures to off-set the need for reinforcement. Policy 4 commits the local authorities and partners to lobbying for the timely delivery of these improvements by UKPN.
14. On the topic of water supply, the plan has been well informed by Anglian Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP 2019) (see paragraphs 20 – 26 of the Infrastructure Topic Paper [D3.5](#)). The WRMP currently plans provision of water supplies to meet growth needs through the use of groundwater supplies and river intake from the Wensum, as well as promoting water efficient development. Water resource planning will regularly be updated by Anglian Water.
15. Any cross-boundary issues have been primarily addressed through the county wide, and endorsed, Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework ([B2.3](#)). This has included political and officer level engagement in the form of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum and the Norfolk Strategic Planning Officer Group.
16. More specifically, the GNLP authorities have entered a Statement of Common Ground with Breckland District Council to address identified cross boundary issues, including for power and water (see appendix 3, page 55 of the Duty to Cooperate Statement [A9.1](#)).

Question 6

Will there be adequate wastewater capacity to accommodate the proposed level of growth? Could this consideration either delay or restrict the delivery of allocated sites?

Response to question 6 -

17. The plan has carefully considered wastewater capacity issues in relation to the proposed level of growth. There should be no unmet needs that will restrict the delivery of allocated sites.

18. The GNLP authorities have actively engaged with Anglian Water as the key infrastructure provider from the start of plan-making.
19. Paragraphs 22-24 of the Infrastructure Topic paper ([D3.5](#)) highlight that Anglian Water's Water Recycling Long Term Plan (2019 [WRLTP](#)) and the Greater Norwich Water Cycle study ([B27.4](#)) have informed both policy 4 and appendix 1 of the GNLP Strategy ([A1](#)). These set out the main upgrades required to the wastewater network to serve growth.
20. Any future emerging needs due to changes in circumstances will be considered through future revisions to Anglian Water's wastewater plans and reflected in the annual production of the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
21. The specific provision of wastewater infrastructure is funded directly by Anglian Water through its charges. GNLP Policy 4 commits the local authorities and partners to lobbying for the timely delivery of improvements.
22. The GNLP and ongoing infrastructure evidence updates will ensure that the Greater Norwich authorities continue to work closely with Anglian Water to bring key schemes to fruition in a timely manner to support sustainable growth.