



Thetford Growth Point Status

Policy Review and Development Panel 1

30 August 2007

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Introduction

- What it is
- What it means
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Headline Figures
- Overview of work underway
- Links to Local Development Framework

Growth Point Status-what it is

- National scheme to accelerate housing and employment growth in regional towns and cities - awarded October 2006
- Thetford is one of 29 Growth Points nationally and one of only three in the East of England (Norwich and Haven Gateway)
- Supported by funding from central government for infrastructure.
- Next funding period 2008/09 to 2010/11 (CSR)

Growth Point Status- what it means

Partnership Working

- Thetford Growth Point is a joint initiative between Breckland, Norfolk and Thetford Town Councils
- Delivery will be dependent on a wider partnership with service providers, landowners, key government agencies and the private sector

Regional Spatial Strategy

Draft Policy TH1 in the Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the town as:

“ a Key Centre for Development and Change building on its role as an employment and service centre, its links to Norwich, Cambridge, Bury St Edmunds and London, and its position as an important gateway to The Brecks.”

It identifies the principal aims for the development of Thetford as:

- To increase the number of dwellings in and on the edge of the town by at least 6,000 between 2001 and 2021 through maximising sensitive development within the urban area which respects its historic settings and features and sustainable urban extensions;
- To Facilitate growth of a diversified employment base which will maintain the town's economic self-containment and reflect its role as a key settlement in the A11 corridor;
- To achieve renaissance of the town centre securing major improvements in the range and quality of its facilities and townscape while protecting and improving its historic attributes and natural setting; and
- To provide improved transport choices both within the urban area and between the town and its hinterland.

Headline figures

900 of the 6000 houses already delivered with majority of rest in urban extensions (over 4000) and with remainder in the existing town area

- Employment study indicates 1500 to 2000 jobs but adopting 'interventionist' strategy to deliver target of 5000 jobs (economic restructuring and overcoming market failure – link to REV)

Overview of work underway

- **£150,000 from Government in first funding period 2007/08 for two further evidence base studies:**
 - ✓ Growth Framework and Infrastructure Study
 - ✓ Green Infrastructure Study
- **Programme of Development**
- **Additional work**
 - ✓ Water Cycle Study
 - ✓ Birds Project

Growth Framework and Infrastructure Study

- Options for growth – residential, employment and services (includes sustainable urban extensions)
- How growth can deliver regeneration – town centre
- ‘Hard’ and ‘Soft’ infrastructure to support growth and regeneration
- Mechanisms and funding to deliver – including ‘tariff’ approach
- Draft Final consulted on
- To be completed end September

Green Infrastructure Study

- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Audit of existing Green infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure Vision for Thetford
- Developer Guidelines
- Identify Projects and Funding
- Draft Final out for consultation
- To be completed end September

Programme of Development

- CLG requirement in advance of CSR
- Housing Trajectory
- Projects to support and help deliver housing included
- Essentially a bidding document
- Thetford aims to receive £25.5 million over three year period, 2008 to 2011.
- To be submitted by 1 October
- Examples include transport, energy study, delivery and design code

Water Cycle Study

- Ensure that water supply, water quality, sewerage, flood risk management and drainage issues are addressed in the Thetford area to enable growth.
- Stage 1 – outline strategy. Details of infrastructure to support development, timing of provision, cost estimates, identify water efficiency measures, guidance for developers.
- Tenders received, interviews next week and appointment by end of September
- Stage 2 – Full strategy – informed by stage 1 but at this stage uncertain as to what would be required but focus will likely be on detailed engineering solutions.

Birds Project

- 3 species of European protected birds close to Thetford
- Forest – Woodlark and Nightjar. Arable and Heaths – Stone Curlews.
- Protected at European level.
- Work is being carried out as part of the formal statutory plan making process to support the carrying out of Appropriate Assessment (European requirement).
- Natural England, RSPB, Breckland Council, UEA and Cambridge University involved.
- Particular issues of focus are visitation, disturbance and recreational pressure.
- Visitor survey underway.

Links to the LDF

- Core Strategy
 - will develop spatial strategy for Breckland and determine broad locations and scale of growth in Thetford
 - Preferred Options will be consulted on this autumn – final Masterplan Report consulted on at same time?
- Thetford Area Action Plan
 - Will develop more detailed policies and proposals (including allocating land) specifically responding to needs of Thetford
 - Work will commence early next year
- Both documents will be informed by all the technical evidence base studies and will be consulted on

