

Appendix B – Evaluation of Policies contained in the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Development Control Development Plan Document Preferred Options.

This appendix evaluates and recommends Breckland's response to policies contained within the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Development Control Development Plan Document Preferred Options.

Preferred Option CS2

This policy option sets out the spatial distribution of minerals and waste development in Norfolk. The policy proposes that strategic minerals and waste development will be focused within or with in reasonable distance from Key Centres for Development and Change. The policy option would mean larger, more multi-functional facilities, especially for waste. The policy also allows for medium sized facilities to be located around larger and growing service centres. Norfolk County Council has defined Key Centres as settlements with existing populations over 20,000 or settlements which will accommodate a housing growth of at least 3,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021.

In the case of Breckland, only Thetford is classed as a Key Centre for Development and Change. Attleborough and Dereham have been defined as larger and growing service centres.

Recommendation: Support approach but recommend that Attleborough is elevated to a Key Centre due to its planned growth of 4,000 homes over the period between 2001 and 2021, which will increase demands on mineral provision locally and increase levels of waste generated locally.

Preferred Option CS4

This policy option outlines the County's proposals to safeguard Minerals and Waste sites from other forms of development. Through this policy, the County plan to develop Mineral Safeguarded Areas which are complimented by Mineral Consultation Areas. These areas will be identified in the submission version of the document.

Recommendation: The vernacular in Breckland is sustained by many local minerals including flint, chalk and carstone, some of which are still extracted in Breckland (e.g. Newton quarry near Castle Acre). It is important that future supplies of these materials are recognised and protected. The approach should therefore be supported with particular reference to the protection of reserves of the above mentioned traditional Breckland construction materials. However, in defining protection areas, care must be taken that these do not conflict with potential broad areas of growth in Thetford and Attleborough

Preferred Approach 8.1.1 and Preferred Option DC2

This policy and approach aim to reduce waste generation. Norfolk County Council proposes that District Councils will be encouraged to apply financial contributions to new residential, commercial and industrial development for waste minimisation initiatives. The policy also requires new waste management facilities to incorporate waste minimisation initiatives.

Recommendation: Raise concerns about the impact on development viability when financial contributions for waste minimisation initiatives are added to contributions for open space, affordable housing, education and renewable energy requirements. It is requested that Norfolk County Council assists Local Planning Authorities in assessing the viability of contributions for waste minimisation.

Preferred Option DC3 and DC4

These policies outline the County's approach to energy recovery from waste. Preferred policy option DC3 requires development proposals for energy recovery from waste to give adequate consideration to treatment technology that minimises greenhouse gas emissions. Preferred policy option DC4 requires development proposals for waste management facilities maximise possibilities for renewable energy generation.

Renewable energy can be generated from waste by thermal treatment (incineration), combustion of landfill gas, combustion of gas from anaerobic digestion, and through pyrolysis and gasification.

Recommendation: Approach should be supported to ensure that more waste is diverted from landfill. However, concerns should be raised about the impact of thermal treatment facilities which can be a controversial issue. The draft sustainability appraisal on the Core Strategy and Development Control document does not assess the possible detrimental affect on local air quality or health and does not provide any evidence to suggest otherwise. The draft sustainability appraisal also does not reference or review the Health Protection Agency position statement on incineration, which could be an important document in assessing air quality and health impacts of incineration through sustainability appraisal. As Breckland has some health deprived areas and an Air Quality Management Area it is important that thermal treatment methods are appropriately tested through the sustainability appraisal.

Preferred Option CS6 & DC6

These preferred policies aim to give priority to sites that have good access to higher designated routes on the route hierarchy as well as the A11 and A47 trunk roads.

The policies also aim to minimise lorry traffic through:

- Areas with environmental designations or core areas of the ecological network
- Air Quality Management Areas
- Quiet lanes or cycle routes
- Residential areas

Recommendation: Support the preferred policies to ensure that lorry traffic is diverted away from rural settlements and to ensure prioritisation in the selection of sites with good access to the District's trunk roads, the A11 and A47.

Preferred Option DC7

The preferred policy option restricts development in Core River Valleys. The policy states that development in Core River Valleys will only be permitted if it provides flood storage areas in order to mitigate flood risk to existing or planned development

or where restoration schemes offer opportunities for habitat creation or enhancement to landscape character.

Recommendation: Support approach, which will protect the river valleys of the Nar, Wissey, Wensum, Yare, Thet and Little Ouse.

Preferred Option CS8

This preferred policy option seeks to give protection to Historic Parks and Gardens from minerals and waste developments. The policy would mean that the County Council would avoid allocating sites near or in historic parks and gardens.

Recommendation: Breckland has some significant historic parks and gardens, therefore it is recommended that the policy option is supported.

Preferred Approach 10.14.1

This policy approach relies on existing national policy for flood risk protection. The approach suggests that District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessments will be used to further inform planning decisions for minerals and waste development.

Recommendation: Support the use of Breckland's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

Preferred Option CS10

This policy sets out the County's preferred approach to air pollution. The policy aims to prohibit minerals and waste development in Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The policy outlines that minerals and waste development will only be permitted in AQMAs where it can be demonstrated that there are no alternatives and any harmful air pollution emissions will be mitigated.

Recommendation: Support approach to ensure no new waste and minerals development occur in the Breckland AQMA.