

**Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING**

**held on Monday 6 July 2020**

via Zoom (online) 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr David Burn (Chair); Simon Olander and Eric Taylor (Diss); Jane Jennifer and Paul Curson (Roydon); Sharon Cousins-Clarke (Palgrave); Graham Moore and Dola Ward (Scole); Steve Leigh (Stuston); Alison Wakeham (Burston & Shimpling); Mark Thompson and Louise Cornell (CCP consultancy)

**Apologies received:** Roger Broughton (Brome & Oakley); Roger Greenacre (Stuston); Neil Weston (Palgrave)

There was no formal agenda circulated, but the following items were discussed:

**Item 1:** The Project Officer confirmed that the group had been successful in securing a second grant from Locality. The amount, £9870, is anticipated to take the project to Feb/March 2021, with the Neighbourhood Plan being ready to submit for Reg 14 consultation. A further £1000 had also been made available by the Government to cover costs involved in moving consultation online. This amount was earmarked for a postcard to be produced and circulated to households in the NP area and for the costs involved in printing a number of surveys, although the focus of the Issues & Options consultation would now need to be predominantly online. This was in line with local authority guidance received from South Norfolk Council.

**Item 2:** CCP Consultancy had previously circulated to SG reps the *Issues and Options* discussion document (included here as APPENDIX A) and *Potential Diss Allocations* (included here as APPENDIX B)

Policy Areas for the NP document, plus Potential Site Allocations.

Policy areas that were discussed were:

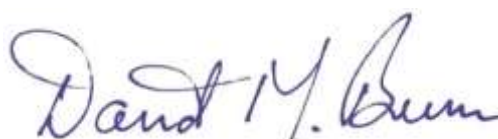
1. **Site allocation**
2. **Housing Need and Mix**
3. **Affordable housing**
4. **Flooding**
5. **Character**
6. **Highway**
7. **Walking and cycling**
8. **Heritage**
9. **Diss Town Centre**
10. **Social infrastructure**

**Item 3:** LC confirmed all parish DDNP update reports had been drafted and circulated to the Clerks for discussion at the July/Aug 2020 parish council meetings.

**Item 4:** Work had started on the survey, and a link would be circulated for initial feedback.

**Item 5:** It was agreed to try Zoom as an online platform for the next meeting, which given the pace of work currently underway was set as the following Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July.

**The meeting closed at 9.10pm**



21 September 2020

# APPENDIX A

## Policy analysis for D&DNP – what policies are needed in the D&DNP?

Steering Group, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

	Issue from evidence base or elsewhere	National policies and Local Plan policies	Potential policy areas for the D&DNP (to be subject to the Issues and Options Consultation)
1	<p>Need to deliver housing requirement for the area for the plan period, which will be through a number of housing allocations.</p>	<p>In the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and South Norfolk Local Plan (SNLP) there will be a need to meet the housing requirement for Diss (at least 400 homes), Roydon village (25 homes), Scole village (25 homes) and Burston (25 homes)</p> <p>In the emerging Mid-Suffolk Local Plan (MSLP) the housing requirement for the area is zero.</p> <p>NPPF Chapter 5 requires plans ensure a significant increase in the supply of new homes.</p> <p>NPPF – neighbourhood plans should use the indicative housing requirement provided by the local planning authority.</p> <p>NPPF para 171 – need to allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value. Elsewhere there is strong support for brownfield land for housing within settlements, and support for having due regard to the</p>	<p>The Diss and District Neighbourhood Plan (D&amp;DNP) should allocate enough sites to meet the housing requirement in South Norfolk.</p> <p>The plan will need to identify and assess site options in Diss, Roydon, Scole and Burston (the AECOM report does this) and consult on the best options. The potential sites for Diss are shown on the <b>accompanying plan</b>.</p> <p>Each allocation will need its own policy, including the number of dwellings to be delivered on each site, as well as density and other site specific matters.</p> <p>The consultation could present the sites as well as the number of dwellings and density for each site.</p>

		<p>intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Also support for development in locations that has good access to local amenities and services using sustainable transport. NPPF para 78 - To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.</p> <p>2016 SNLP Policy DM 1.3 requires development to be located sustainably and restrict development in the countryside. MSLP Policy CS2 does the same.</p>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The housing profile of the area is different from that of South Norfolk and Mid-Suffolk, with proportionately more terrace properties and flats, with a good number of these situated in Diss.</li> <li>• The age profile is broadly similar to that of South Norfolk, though there is a slightly higher proportion of older people, and this is increasing over time. The housing profile would appear to cater well for this.</li> <li>• There is a large and increasing proportion of families with non-dependent children, which could indicate difficulties experienced by younger people in buying locally or remaining in the area.</li> <li>• Analysis completed as part of the Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM) indicates that the housing profile could</li> </ul>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 61 requires plans to have policies that meet the housing needs of different demographic groups, such as older people, disabled people, self-builders etc.</p> <p>JCS Policy 4 requires developments to comprise a mix of housing to meet the needs of the area.</p> <p>SNLP 2016. Policy 3.1 sets out that, “All housing proposals should help contribute to a range of dwelling type and bed spaces to meet the requirements of different households, as identified through the current <i>Strategic Housing Market Assessment</i>.”</p> <p>Policy CS9 in the 2008 MSLP requires proposals to provide a mix of housing to meet different needs, and it sets out indicative densities that</p>	<p>The D&amp;DNP might need a specific policy on meeting the right mix of housing as the required housing mix in the area will be different to the need across South Norfolk (and different to the Central Norfolk-wide SHMA) and Mid-Suffolk.</p> <p>The housing mix policy could refer to the Housing Needs Assessment report for Diss and District (AECOM). The policy could also include support for homes to be built for private rent, and indications as to the size of homes that are needed, especially three-bedroom dwellings.</p> <p>The plan could allocate one or two small sites adjacent to the settlement boundary of Diss for Entry-Level Exception schemes (a type of affordable housing). These are</p>

	<p>usefully include proportionately fewer small properties and more medium to large 3-bedroom properties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a significant need for many new homes to be available to rent to cater for new households</li> </ul>	would be acceptable (30 dwellings per hectare in the main).	discounted from the market rate and mainly for younger people trying to get on the housing ladder or rent their first home. These are also shown on the <b>accompanying plan</b> .
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although there is a need to provide affordable housing, this is not overwhelming and perhaps reduces the need for a Rural Exception site</li> <li>• The focus should be on affordable/ social rented, but there is also a need for more shared equity/ shared home ownership provision.</li> </ul>	<p>The NPPF sets out a policy approach to affordable housing, including the need to ensure at least 10% of new houses are affordable homes to buy. The Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (JCS) sets out in Policy 4 the affordable housing requirements for housing proposals, whereby the percentage varies according to the size of the development. The emerging GNLP also requires 33%. It also sets out a tenure split of approximately 85% social rented and 15% intermediate/shared ownership tenures.</p> <p>Rural Exception Sites are covered in the NPPF. Policy DM3.2 in the 2016 SNLP sets out criteria for supporting affordable housing on Rural Exception Sites to meet local need. The MSLP 2006 Alteration also covers Rural Exception Sites.</p>	<p>The overall affordable housing requirement is a strategic policy as the affordable housing need extends beyond Diss and district, and so needs to be covered by the local plan. The larger sites in Diss are likely to be subject to 33% affordable homes. The Diss and district HNA concluded that the greater need is for social rented, and a lesser need for shared ownership, which seems to be covered by JCS Policy 2.</p> <p>D&amp;DNP does not need a separate policy on Rural Exception Sites as there is no pressing local need for one and it is adequately covered in the local plans and NPPF.</p> <p>It is suggested that there is a D&amp;DNP policy on that affordable housing that is provided as part of open-market housing schemes, such as the larger sites in Diss. This could require the local planning authorities to make use of the D&amp;D HNA when negotiating the mix of affordable housing. It could also require SNC to include the residents of the Mid-Suffolk parishes in its local connections cascade for social rented affordable housing provided as part of</p>

			larger housing schemes <sup>1</sup> . Finally, it is suggested that two small sites could be allocated for Entry-Level Exception schemes (see <b>accompanying plan</b> ) to help younger people have their first home.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presence of the River Waveney increases the likelihood of flooding and parts of the settlement area in Diss fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3. This will constrain the location of future development within the town. It should also be considered that as a consequence of climate change, peak rainfall intensity and peak river flow are expected to increase by up to 40%.</li> <li>Surface water flooding is an issue in some parts of the main settlement areas, it will be important to ensure this is not worsened through new development.</li> </ul>	<p>Flood risk from rivers is covered comprehensively in the NPPF chapter 14. The NPPF also considers the approach to surface water management, with a focus on Sustainable Drainage Systems.</p> <p>Surface water drainage is also covered comprehensively in the SNLP 2016 (Policy DM 4.2). Policy CS4 in the 2008 MSLP also covers surface water drainage.</p>	There is no need for the D&DNP to have its own policy on managing flood risk
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dark skies at night are a feature of the smaller rural settlements including Burston and Shimpling, giving them a tranquil, peaceful character. Light spills out beyond the urban areas, impacting upon smaller settlements which are nearby.</li> <li>The impact of development on dark night skies, including related infrastructure improvements, may want to be</li> </ul>	<p>Policy DM 3.13 (Amenity, noise and quality of life) in the SNLP 2016 considers light pollution, but from an amenity perspective rather than 'dark skies'. The matter is not covered in the 2008 MSLP.</p> <p>The NPPF sets out that policies should aim to limit light pollution in areas of <i>intrinsically</i> dark skies, which are the darkest.</p>	<p>There are some intrinsically dark skies in the NP area. The D&amp;DNP could have a policy on these, aiming to limit light pollution.</p> <p>The general protection of nature conservation designations and the need for ecological gain from developments is covered sufficiently in the NPPF and local plans, as well as in legislation.</p>

<sup>1</sup> We are checking with the Housing Enabling Department whether this is technically and legally possible

<p>considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a number of priority habitats across the area which could be sensitive to development.</li> <li>• The area has a number of county wildlife sites, which whilst considered as part of determining planning applications, are not protected in legislative terms. The working group could consider designating these as Local Green Spaces if they are of demonstrable community value.</li> </ul>	<p>Legislation and the NPPF (chapter 15) afford considerable support for protecting and enhancing key landscapes and areas of value in terms of biodiversity. Also includes the need for biodiversity net gains in developments, including through ecological networks. Para 174 supports the mapping of ecological assets and networks, including for enhancement or creation. NPPF paras 96 -101 covers protecting existing green open spaces and creation of new ones.</p> <p>JCS Policy 1 supports habitat conservation and creation, as well as open green spaces.</p> <p>Policy DM 1.4 in the SNLP reflects the NPPF in terms of conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including ecological gains. MSLP Policy CS5 is a similar policy.</p> <p>Policy DM 3.15 protects outdoor play facilities and recreational space as well as requires new facilities to meet the needs of occupant. Policy DM 4.4 in the 2016 SNLP protects nature conservation designated sites as well as having a requirement for positive ecological gain from development and support for the creation of ecological networks. Policy CS5 in the 2008 MSLP has a similar approach. DM4.4 also identifies and provides some protection for Local Open Spaces, including some in Diss such as Parish Fields.</p>	<p>D&amp;DNP will be designating a number of Local Green Spaces for protection. These need to meet certain criteria set out in the NPPF and the extent to which they are special to the local community can be tested at the consultation.</p> <p>Not all green spaces can be designated. They could however, along with designated Local Green Spaces, form the basis of an ecological network that links with priority habitat. This would be supported by a policy on how this network would be improved.</p> <p>Protection is already provided for Waveney river valley in general, but there could be more specific policies in the NP for the valley. Part of this could be picked up in terms of views and be covered by a policy on important views. There was also Brian Falk’s suggestion of a linear green space for recreation and habitat enhancement, which could form part of the ecological network policy.</p>
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		SNLP Policy DM4.5 aims to give protection to the characteristics of landscapes and the river valleys such as the Waveney. MSLP Policy CS5 is a similar policy though nothing specific about river valleys.	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diss is characterised as a compact market town and large-scale future development could erode this.</li> <li>• Any development located in the river valley, to the south of Diss, should be designed and sited sensitively to ensure retention of the character of the Waveney Valley.</li> <li>• The rural part of the neighbourhood plan area is peaceful in its character, with a pattern of small villages set within the agricultural landscape. Future development in the villages could erode this character if not planned and designed sensitively. Likewise, it is possible that as Diss expands it encroaches upon these rural villages, impacting on their character.</li> <li>• Burston is unique in its setting around a village green and infilling or extension of the village could change its character.</li> <li>• Mature hedgerows are a key feature of the landscape, providing pattern and variety. These could be sensitive to development proposals, depending upon where they come forward.</li> <li>• The surrounding agricultural land</li> </ul>	<p>NPPF Chapter 12 requires plans to have design policies that have community support and pick up the defining characteristics and historic character of the area. Design covers not just appearance but how a place functions. Also encourages innovative design with high levels of sustainability.</p> <p>NPPF chapter 9 supports walking and cycling being integral to design considerations.</p> <p>NPPF paras 122-123 discourages low densities as a poor use of land.</p> <p>JCS Policy 2 promotes high quality design, including having due regard to the use of traditional materials, the setting, historic character, and landscape. It also emphasizes the need to maintain strategic gaps between settlements to avoid coalescence. Also includes the need for landscaping as part of the design consideration.</p> <p>JCS Policy 3 covers sustainable construction and renewable energy, as do the building regulations. MSLP Policy CS3 also covers this.</p>	<p>There is no need for a general policy on materials and density etc, or maybe just one referring to and drawing on the AECOM report and SN place making guide.</p> <p>Density could be covered in each allocation.</p> <p>There seems to be justification for a policy on a Strategic gap between Roydon and Diss.</p> <p>There should also be a policy on important views.</p>

	<p>continues to be productive and part of it is considered to be of high value, this could be lost to new development depending on where it is located.</p>	<p>SNLP Policy DM3.8 includes a number of design considerations, including sustainable access, internal space standards, complementing and integrating with the local area, high quality, locally distinctive, masterplanning for large developments, respecting local landscape, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, landscaping and retaining important existing natural features, providing parking spaces but which do not dominate.</p> <p>SNC has its own detailed Design Codes in its 2012 Place Making Guide, a Supplementary Planning Document. This has a whole section on the key characteristics of Diss, as well as traditional designs and materials used in South Norfolk.</p> <p>SNLP Policy DM 4.8 provides protection of significant and important trees and hedgerows.</p>	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of road traffic collisions has not identified road safety to be a particular issue in Diss, though there are areas in the town where interventions could be considered.</li> <li>• A study undertaken in the last five years does not indicate that public car parking is a particular constraint within Diss.</li> <li>• Road traffic congestion is an issue within Diss town centre and A1066, this could be exacerbated through housing development. Not all of this can be</li> </ul>	<p>NPPF paras 108 and 109 cover highway safety and network operational efficiency of the highways,</p> <p>SNLP Policy DM 3.11 generally reflects the NPPF.</p>	<p>No need for a general policy on highway safety, congestion etc as this is covered by higher level policies</p> <p>There could be a locational policy guiding development to the north and central areas of the town to avoid significantly impacting on congestion and A1066 junctions.</p> <p>Perhaps the plan could have a policy setting out the junctions that are at or near</p>



	mitigated through highway improvements and so care is needed when deciding where growth goes and the scale of growth		capacity and requiring major development to take this into account.
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diss is a fairly compact market town meaning that the town centre is easily accessible by walking or cycling. Some improvements to walking and cycle infrastructure are needed.</li> <li>• As the car remains the dominant mode of travel, home based parking will be an important consideration for any new development.</li> <li>• A relatively high proportion of people work from home, so could be more likely to use local services or those in neighbouring communities, and rely on good technological infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>NPPF Section 9 supports sustainable transport, including making walking and cycling access integral to design. NPPF chapter 9 supports walking and cycling being integral to design considerations.</p> <p>JCS Policy 2 refers to design that incorporates and prioritises walking and cycling access. JCS Policy 6 also supports improved walking and cycling and access to public transport.</p> <p>SNLP Policy DM3.10 supports sustainable transport, including integrating with local sustainable transport networks.</p>	<p>No need for a general policy.</p> <p>The plan should have a policy which identifies the walking and cycling network, and key priorities for improvement.</p> <p>There could also be a policy on pedestrian circulation and prioritization in the town centre.</p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The neighbourhood plan area is one of some historical importance with many listed buildings and the Scole Roman Settlement scheduled monument. There are three conservation areas, in Diss, Scole and Palgrave. Effort should be made to retain both the character of these and their setting, ensuring that it is not diluted through new development.</li> <li>• The neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to identify and protect non-designated heritage assets, such as buildings of local historical importance which are not listed.</li> </ul>	<p>NPPF chapter 16 covers the conservation of the historic environment comprehensively, including the planning balance to be applied to different levels of protection, such as non-designated heritage assets, Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Also legislation provides protection for certain assets such as listed buildings.</p> <p>JCS Policy 1 aims to protect the historic environment.</p> <p>SNLP Policy DM 4.10 covers heritage assets in detail. MSLP Policy CS5 is a similar policy, though less detailed.</p>	<p>A general policy is not needed as covered in higher order policies.</p> <p>Could have a policy that links national and local policy with the mapped non-designated heritage assets, and includes requirements should development be proposed adjacent to (or within the setting of) non-designated assets.</p>

10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diss Town centre</li> </ul>	<p>2016 SNLP policies DM2.4 and 2.5 cover support for town centres and controlling and managing any change of use.</p> <p>There are also policies in the NPPF on enhancing town centres.</p>	<p>The plan might need a policy on supporting the town centre of Diss and its economic and social vitality. There could be support for an area action plan for Diss town centre.</p>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>2016 SNLP at Policy DM1.2 covers the need for development to provide the necessary infrastructure. MSLP Policy CS 6 covers services and infrastructure, including schools and libraries.</p>	<p>There could be a policy on any required social infrastructure, such as community spaces/ village halls. Rather than a general policy, we should we set out what is needed. Could ask as part of the consultation. Of course, we are likely to have something on green infrastructure (ecological networks) and cycling and walking infrastructure. Requirements for open space and affordable housing are covered in local plans, and other infrastructure providers such as Anglian Water will respond through the planning/ application process.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Travel to work and car ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the car remains the dominant mode of travel, home based parking will be an important consideration for any new development.</li> <li>• A relatively high proportion of people work from home, so could be more likely to use local services or those in neighbouring communities, and rely on good technological infrastructure.</li> </ul>
The historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The neighbourhood plan area is one of some historical importance with many listed buildings and the Scole Roman Settlement scheduled monument. There are three conservation areas, in Diss, Scole and Palgrave. Effort should be made to retain both the character of these and their setting, ensuring that it is not diluted through new development.</li> <li>• The neighbourhood plan is an opportunity to identify and protect non-designated heritage assets, such as buildings of local historical importance which are not listed.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B Potential Diss allocations

