

Chet Neighbourhood Plan - Decision Statement

1. Summary

Following an independent examination, South Norfolk Council and The Broads Authority have received the examiner's report relating to the Chet Neighbourhood Plan. The report makes a number of recommendations for making modifications to policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. The local planning authorities have each made a decision to approve the examiner's recommendations and to allow the Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area.

2. Background

Following the submission of the Chet Neighbourhood Plan to South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority in October 2023, the Neighbourhood Plan was published in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and representations invited. The publication period took place between 2nd February and 15th March 2024.

South Norfolk Council, with the approval of Loddon Town Council (the Qualifying Body), subsequently appointed an independent examiner, Mr Derek Stebbing, to conduct an examination of the submitted Neighbourhood Plan and conclude as to whether it meets the Basic Conditions (as defined by Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and consequently whether the Plan should proceed to referendum.

The examiner's report concludes that, subject to making certain recommended modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions for neighbourhood planning and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum within the adopted neighbourhood area.

3. Decision

Having considered each of the recommendations in the examiner's report and the reasons for them, South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority have decided to approve each of the examiner's recommended modifications. This is in accordance with section 12 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Councils consider that this decision will ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions.

The following table sets out the examiner's recommended modifications, the local planning authorities' consideration of those recommendations, and their decision in relation to each recommendation.

Subject to the modifications approved by South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority, as set out in the table below, the local planning authorities are satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area, in accordance with part 12(4) of Schedule 4B of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

Section	Examiner's recommendation	Consideration of recommendation	LPAs decision
Throughout the document	<p>PM1:</p> <p><u>Amendments to reflect the adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan by South Norfolk Council on 25 March 2024</u></p> <p>Amend paragraphs 13, 16, 17, 26, 43, 84, 89, 122, 165, 171 and 188 as set out in the Town Council's response to Question No 1 of May 2024.</p>	The Council agrees that these modifications are required in order to bring the Neighbourhood Plan up to date before it proceeds to referendum.	Agree to the recommended modifications.
<p><u>Policy Context</u></p> <p>(Page 9)</p>	<p>PM2:</p> <p>Insert the following text as new paragraph 26:</p> <p>"26. One of the basic conditions this Plan must address is contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF (December 2023) summarises the three interdependent objectives for sustainable development which are economic, social and environmental. The Loddon & Chedgrave (Chet) Neighbourhood Plan has considered the need for sustainable development within the parishes by addressing these three overarching objectives and including policies which will add further detail to the policies in the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan and the Broads Local Plan. The policies in this Plan reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development to ensure that, in addition to economic and growth considerations within the Plan area, environmental and social considerations are fully considered."</p> <p>Re-number existing paragraphs 26-193 as paragraphs 27-194 respectively.</p>	The Council agrees that this statement is required in order to address the requirement of contributing to sustainable development.	Agree to the recommended modifications.

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<u>Policy 1 – Sustainable Design and Building Practices</u> (Page 15)	<p>PM3:</p> <p><u>New Buildings</u></p> <p>Delete the word “possible” in the fourth bullet point criterion and replace with “relevant”.</p> <p>Delete the second paragraph of Policy text in full and replace with:</p> <p>“Within the South Norfolk Planning Area, proposals for non-major (less than 10 units) self-build proposals adjacent to the settlement boundary will be supported in principle where they are net zero carbon homes and meet or contribute to the meeting of an identified and demonstrable local need. Within the Broads Authority Planning Area, self-build proposals will be assessed in the context of the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan for the Broads.”</p> <p><u>Retrofitting Existing Buildings</u></p> <p>Add new third paragraph of text as follows:</p> <p>“All proposals should include a Design and Access Statement (DAS) or Planning Statement which demonstrates how the proposals are addressing and securing energy reduction and energy efficiency.”</p>	<p>The Council agrees that these amendments are required in order to achieve the clarity and precision required by the NPPF.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>
<u>Policy 3 – Managing Surface Water Flood Risk</u> (Page 20)	<p>PM4:</p> <p>Amend the three references to “SuDS” in the Policy text to read “sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)” in each case.</p>	<p>The Council agrees that these amendments are required in order to achieve the clarity and precision required by the NPPF.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modification.</p>

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<u>Policy 4 – Affordable Housing</u> (Page 25)	<p>PM5:</p> <p>Delete the first paragraph of Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p>“Affordable Housing will be delivered in the Plan area, in accordance with national policy requirements and the adopted policies and strategies of South Norfolk Council for the provision of Affordable Housing in the district. The Affordable Housing tenure mix will reflect those policy requirements, also taking into account the findings of the Loddon and Chedgrave Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (August 2022) and any other more recent assessments of housing need in the Plan area.”</p>	<p>The Council agrees with the examiner's modification to set out a more general requirement for Affordable Housing provision within the Plan area.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modification.</p>
<u>Policy 5 – Housing Mix</u> (Page 27)	<p>PM6:</p> <p>Delete existing text in full and replace with:</p> <p>“Proposals for new residential development in the Plan area should include an appropriate housing mix that reflects the identified local housing needs in the Plan area up to 2038, taking account of the Loddon and Chedgrave Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) (August 2022), as summarised at paragraphs 76-79 above.</p> <p>Proposals for new housing that are designed to maximise accessibility and be adaptable to the changing needs of older people or those with other requirements will be supported.”</p> <p>Delete Footnote No. 22.</p>	<p>The Council agrees that the examiner's modification will provide clear policy guidance for users of the Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the NPPF.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modification.</p>

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<u>Policy 6 - Design</u> (Page 33)	<p>PM7:</p> <p>Delete the words “both in general and in terms of specific detail as given in the codes” in the first paragraph of Policy text and replace with “and should take account of the design guidance and specific details set out within that document.”</p> <p>Add new fourth paragraph of text to read as follows:</p> <p>“All development proposals within the Plan area should conform to the ‘Secured by Design’ principles, in order to improve community safety and reduce the prospects of crime.”</p>	<p>The Council agrees with the policy modification in order to reference the ‘Secured by Design’ approach, in accord with its own previous comments, and those of Norfolk Constabulary.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>

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<p><u>Policy 7 – Biodiversity and Blue/Green Corridors and Figure 11 – Blue and Green Corridors</u></p> <p>(Pages 39-41)</p>	<p>PM8:</p> <p>Amend the text of Policy criterion a. to read as follows:</p> <p>“a. All qualifying built development within the extent of a Blue or Green Corridor is encouraged to deliver measurable net gains in biodiversity, which if appropriate exceed national policy requirements.”</p> <p>Amend the text of Policy criterion d. to read as follows:</p> <p>“d. In the Plan area, if a proposed development, following through the metric related to Biodiversity Net Gain as required by the Environment Act 2021, needs to deliver the net gain off-site, then the first preference should be to deliver this net gain in an area adjacent to the site including, where appropriate, within the extent of the Green Blue Corridors, with the second preference being within reasonable proximity to the development site.”</p> <p>Add new third paragraph of Policy text to read as follows:</p> <p>“Buffer zones should be considered and encouraged around sensitive sites, for example, around the County Wildlife Sites, where appropriate, and where this will provide ecological benefits. The addition of green roofs and/or green walls to any new buildings should be used, where possible and as appropriate.”</p> <p>Revise Figure 11 to include the areas of land and sites identified by South Norfolk Council in its representation (Ref. CNP 04) as being missing from this map.</p>	<p>The Council agrees with the recommended modifications, based, as they are on matters raised in the response submitted by the Council during the Reg. 16 stage consultation.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>

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<p><u>Policy 8 – Local Green Space</u></p> <p>(Pages 43-55 and 95-100)</p>	<p>PM9:</p> <p>Amend the Policy title to read “Local Green Spaces”.</p> <p>Amend the first sentence of Policy text to read as follows:</p> <p>“The areas listed below and shown on Figure 13 and on the accompanying Inset Maps, are designated as Local Green Spaces:”</p> <p>Amend the descriptor for site no. 4 to read “Small green spaces between George Lane, Kitten’s Lane and the Loddon and Chedgrave Playing Field” and amend inset map Figure 13 (4) accordingly.</p> <p>Delete site no. 10 (Green space behind Grebe Drive, Chedgrave) from the list of sites within the Policy text, from Figure 13 (All Local Green Spaces) and from the Policies Map at Appendix A.</p> <p>Delete accompanying inset map Figure 13 (10).</p> <p>Delete photograph of Green Space behind Grebe Drive from Page 44.</p> <p>Amend reference at paragraph 112 to “16 LGS” to read “15 LGS”.</p> <p>Re-number site nos. 11-16 to be 10-15 respectively, and re-number Figures 13 (11-16) to be Figures 13 (10-15) respectively</p> <p>Delete second, third, fourth and fifth paragraphs of Policy text in full.</p> <p>Add new second paragraph of Policy text to read as follows:</p> <p>“Development proposals in the 15 designated Local Green Spaces listed above and defined on the accompanying maps to this policy will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.”</p> <p>Appendix B – delete in full.</p>	<p>The Council agrees that the examiners recommended modifications are necessary in order for this policy to meet the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>

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<u>Figure 14 – Key Views</u> (Page 62)	PM10: Amend Figure 14 by revising the splay of the view shown from Viewpoint C2 such that it accurately reflects the accompanying photograph shown at page 60 in the draft Plan (and also at page 25 in the supporting Key Viewpoints Assessment document, i.e. in the north-east direction from the viewpoint). Amend the notation panel on Figure 14 by showing the symbol (a splay) that corresponds to those shown on the map to indicate the arc and direction of the Key Views.	The Council agrees with the examiner's recommended modifications, in that they will help to achieve the clarity required by the NPPF.	Agree to the recommended modifications.
<u>Policy 10 – Employment Growth</u> (Page 67)	PM11: Amend the first section of text to read as follows: "Proposals for new commercial or employment developments and the extension of existing premises for commercial or employment uses, which fall within Class E of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended), will be supported subject to:" Add new criterion e) to the Policy text, as follows: "e) The proposals do not have any adverse impacts upon the amenities of neighbouring uses, including any residential uses."	The Council agrees with the examiner's recommendation, as it will help to ensure the policy contributes to sustainable development, as required by the NPPF.	Agree to the recommended modifications.
<u>Policy 11 – Protecting Key Employment Sites</u> (Page 68)	PM12: Amend the second paragraph of text to read as follows: "Proposals for commercial and employment developments falling within Class E of the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) on the employment land allocations as shown in Figure 15, and which are in accordance with other policies in this Plan and the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan, will be supported."	The Council agrees that the examiner's modification will provide clear policy guidance for users of the Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the NPPF.	Agree to the recommended modifications.

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<p><u>Policy 12 – The Main Retail Route</u></p> <p>(Pages 71, 72 and 95)</p>	<p>PM13:</p> <p>Figure 16 and Policies Map - delete all policy notations of the Main Retail Route that are beyond the extent of the defined Village Centre of Loddon.</p> <p>Amend the title of Figure 16 to read “The Defined Village Centre of Loddon”</p> <p>Amend the Policy title to read “Supporting the Village Centre”.</p> <p>Amend the first paragraph of Policy text to read:</p> <p>“Proposals for new retail and leisure uses will be supported within the designated Village Centre of Loddon, as defined on Figure 16.”</p> <p>Amend the second paragraph to read:</p> <p>“Development proposals that help retain existing retail and leisure uses within the Village Centre will be supported.”</p> <p>Delete the words “enhancement of the Retail Route” from the third paragraph of text and replace with “the enhancement of the Village Centre and surrounding areas”.</p>	<p>The Council agrees that these recommendations will ensure that this is an effective and appropriate land-use planning policy.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>

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<u>Policy 14 – Community Facilities</u> (Page 79)	<p>PM14:</p> <p>Amend fourth paragraph of text to read as follows:</p> <p>“Improvements and enhancements to existing community facilities, and the development of any new facilities that are identified as being necessary within the Plan area, will be supported, subject to securing the necessary approvals and appropriate funding sources are identified.”</p> <p>Delete fifth paragraph of text from the Policy and insert as seventh sentence of text within paragraph 147, replacing the existing seventh sentence.</p> <p>Delete sixth paragraph of text from the Policy and amend the third sentence of text within paragraph 149 as follows:</p> <p>“Proposals that would result in the sensitive regeneration of The Hollies building and the Methodist Hall for community use will be supported.”</p> <p>Add new fourth sentence of text to paragraph 150 as follows:</p> <p>“Proposals that would result in the sensitive regeneration of the building for continued community use will be supported.”</p>	<p>The Council agrees that these recommendations will help to bring clarity and precision to the policy, as required by the NPPF. These modifications help to address matters raised by the Council as part of its consultation response.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>
<u>Policy 15 – Walking and Cycling Improvements</u> (Page 82)	<p>PM15:</p> <p>Amend the first sentence of Policy text to read:</p> <p>“In order to promote Active Travel opportunities within the Plan area, and encourage walking and cycling as natural travel choices, all new development sites should have good connectivity to the existing walking and cycling network that is safe, convenient and accessible for all users.”</p>	<p>The Council agrees that the examiner's modification will provide clear policy guidance for users of the Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the NPPF.</p>	<p>Agree to the recommended modifications.</p>

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<u>Policy 17 - Loddon and Chedgrave Conservation Areas</u> (Pages 85 and 90)	PM16: Delete the word “preserving” in the second paragraph of text and replace with “conserving and enhancing” . Paragraph 174 – add new third sentence of text to read as follows: “The Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Strategy and Advice Team offers advice on historic environment issues associated with proposed planning applications, ensuring that any potential harm to archaeological remains is minimised, or that archaeological remains are fully recorded before development takes place.”	The Council agrees that the examiner's modifications will provide clear policy guidance for users of the Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the NPPF.	Agree to the recommended modifications.
<u>Monitoring, Review and Implementation</u> (Page 91)	PM17: Paragraph 191 – delete existing text in full, and replace with: “The Plan will be reviewed should the emerging review of the Local Plan for the Broads and any future review of the Greater Norwich Local Plan contains policies and proposals that necessitate such a review, in order that the Plan remains in conformity with the relevant strategic policies of the Local Plans. Similarly, the Plan will be reviewed should any changes in national policies necessitate revisions to the Plan's policies.” Paragraph 192 – delete the existing text in full, and replace with: “Additionally, the Town/Parish Councils will monitor the effectiveness of the policies within the Plan. The monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis, and a decision can be made whether this requires a review of the Plan.”	The Council agrees that it is necessary for Neighbourhood Plans to set out how the document will be monitored and reviewed in the future, and therefore concurs with the examiner's recommendation.	Agree to the recommended modifications.

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Throughout the document	PM18: Refer to the December 2023 version of the NPPF and update paragraph references where they have changed.	The Council agrees that these modifications are required in order to bring the Neighbourhood Plan up to date before it proceeds to referendum.	Agree to the recommended modifications.

4. Next Steps

This Decision Statement and the examiner's report into the Chet Neighbourhood Plan will be made available online at:

- www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plans

Printed copies of these documents have also been deposited at the following locations, where they can be viewed on request during normal opening hours:

- **Loddon Library**, 31 Church Plain, Loddon, Norwich, NR14 6EX
- **South Norfolk Council**, The Horizon Centre, Broadland Business Park, Peachman Way, Norwich, NR7 0WF (Appointments only – please contact (01508) 533805).

South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority are satisfied that, with the approved modifications as detailed above, the Chet Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood area, in which the following question will be posed:

'Do you want South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Loddon and Chedgrave to help them decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

Further information relating to the referendum will be published by South Norfolk Council in due course.