

North Norfolk District Council Local Plan examination

Statement of Common Ground

As Agreed Between

North Norfolk District Council

and the

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

July 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared between North Norfolk District Council (the Council) and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (KLWN). The purpose of the SoCG is to inform the Inspector of areas of agreement and disagreement, if any, between the two parties with regard the submitted North Norfolk Local Plan [A1]. Such document references used in this Statement are those used in the North Norfolk Local Plan Examination document library and are indicated in square brackets. These documents can be accessed on the Council's Examination web site [Home | Local Plan Examination Library \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://Home | Local Plan Examination Library (north-norfolk.gov.uk)).
- 1.2 This SoCG reflects the ongoing process of communication throughout Plan preparation.

2. Background

- 2.1 There is a strong history of joint working and co-operation amongst the Norfolk authorities¹ through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Officers Group (NSPG), key roles of which are to identify and manage the spatial planning issues that impact on more than one local planning authority area and to support better integration and alignment of strategic spatial and investment priorities. The NSPG is responsible for several jointly funded and prepared evidence base and policy documents as well as the joint preparation and agreement of a Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework² (NSPF) [A8.1] which details 31 cross boundary agreements (May 2021). Both the Council and KLWN are signatories to the NSPF.
- 2.3 The Council is committed to engaging positively with its neighbours to address strategic planning matters through the Duty to Cooperate requirement and to ensure that there is co-operation on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
- 2.4 The Norfolk authorities, along with Natural England, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Marine Management Organisation, Active Norfolk, Water resources East, and the new Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, work collaboratively to address strategic issues across the area. The meetings also include liaison with Suffolk Councils and relevant updates on their planning policy and Local Plan work.
- 2.5 A Member forum (MF) oversees the work of the NSPG and comprises an elected Member from each of the authorities. The NSPG consists of key planning policy officers from each Planning Authority in Norfolk as well as other key statutory agencies, responsible for overseeing policy development for strategic planning purposes. Both the MF and NSPG are governed by formal terms of reference.

¹ Breckland District Council, Broadland District Council, Broads Authority, Great Yarmouth District Council, Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, North Norfolk District Council, Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council

² [Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework - May 2021 \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework - May 2021 (north-norfolk.gov.uk))

- 2.6 The MF meets on a regular frequency (every 3 months), and its role is advisory. The NSPG meet on a monthly basis and is itself supported by further officer groups – a Steering Group and Technical Subgroups. Any proposals or recommendations of the MF are not binding on the constituent member authorities. However, where there are matters pertaining to key strategic planning, for example, the preparation of a joint Plan or implications at a County wide level of future development, then any agreement at the MF is subject to ratification at individual authority level.
- 2.7 In addition to the agreements arising from the NSPF, the Council has consulted KLWN at each stage of the preparation of the North Norfolk Local Plan. The Council and KLWN also work collaboratively in several partnerships, including the Norfolk Coast Partnership, producing the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 (Revised 2022) [G14] and on a combined approach to addressing the challenge of flood risk, which led to the production of a suite of Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA) [North Norfolk specific SFRA documents - G5, G6, G6.1-G6.8] across Norfolk towards the end of 2017, with an update in early 2018 which incorporated the delayed coastal modelling around the Wash. More recently the Councils have worked collaboratively across the county, with Natural England and Anglian Water, in the ongoing development of strategic mitigation to address the issues of nutrient neutrality. Further details of this engagement is set out in the Council's Duty to Co-Operate Compliance Statement [A8].

3. Key matters of cross boundary working between the Council and KLWN

- 3.1 The following cross boundary matters have been identified affecting the District of North Norfolk and Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk:
- Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), including protection of nationally significant biodiversity and heritage assets such as Holkham Hall and Holkham National Nature Reserve
 - Functional/ spatial relationships; e.g. roles of Wells next the Sea and Fakenham, as service centres, which also serve rural settlements near the District boundary within the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, such as North/ South Creake, Syderstone, East/ West Rudham.
- 3.2 The Local Plan recognises the strategic importance of the AONB. It also recognises the functional role of settlements such as Fakenham and Wells next the Sea (Large and Small Growth Towns, respectively) which (at least partially) function as service centres for settlements on the eastern edge of the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

4. Statement of Common Ground Agreement

- 4.1 The following statement has been identified, which the parties agree is common ground.

4.2 **Agreement 1 – Duty to co-operate:**

The signatories agree that the North Norfolk Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the “duty to co- operate” imposed by section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in that the Council has co-operated with KLWN, as a neighbouring authority, through constructive and ongoing engagement on the impacts of sustainable development as set out in the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance [A8] and that there are no outstanding strategic planning issues to be addressed.

5. **Signatories:**

North Norfolk District Council		
Name and Position	Signature	Date
Sarah Tudhope Senior Planning Officer	S Tudhope	10/07/2023
Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk		
Name and Position	Signature	Date
Geoff Hall Executive Director (Environment and Planning)	G Hall	10/07/2023