



Core Strategy Preferred Options

May 2007



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1 Introduction

What is the Local Development Framework

1.1 A number of new terms and abbreviations have been introduced as a result of the new planning system and a glossary is included in Appendix A of this document to provide clarification.

1.2 The Mid Suffolk Local Plan (adopted 1998) will be replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF). The new LDF will be a folder that will hold a number of documents. It includes a Statement of Community Involvement, setting out how the consultation will take place for each document prepared, a Local Development Scheme, setting out the timetable and plan for the preparation of planning documents, and an Annual Monitoring Report.

1.3 The LDF will also include the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) consisting of the Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations and Policies, Generic Development Control Policies and Proposals Maps. These provide the main set of planning policies and proposals replacing those in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan, taking into account the local demands of development and growth, while seeking to protect the environment and the well-being of local communities.

1.4 Until such time as all DPDs are completed and adopted, 'saved' policies from the Mid Suffolk Local Plan will continue to form part of the policy context for planning decisions. The list of saved policies is outlined within the Mid Suffolk Local Plan Saved Policy Report (March 2007) and will be updated through the Local Development Scheme and the Annual Monitoring Report.

1.5 It is intended that the new system of LDFs will simplify the local planning process and become more accommodating to any required changes. In addition to greater community involvement, there is also a greater emphasis to be given towards the environment and sustainable development.

1.6 The DPDs are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which is produced alongside the DPDs to assess the appropriateness of different policy options in terms of their environmental, social and economic impacts.

1.7 This document and all other related reports referred to in this document that are produced by Mid Suffolk District Council can be found on the Council's website at www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/planning under the heading 'Local Development Framework'.

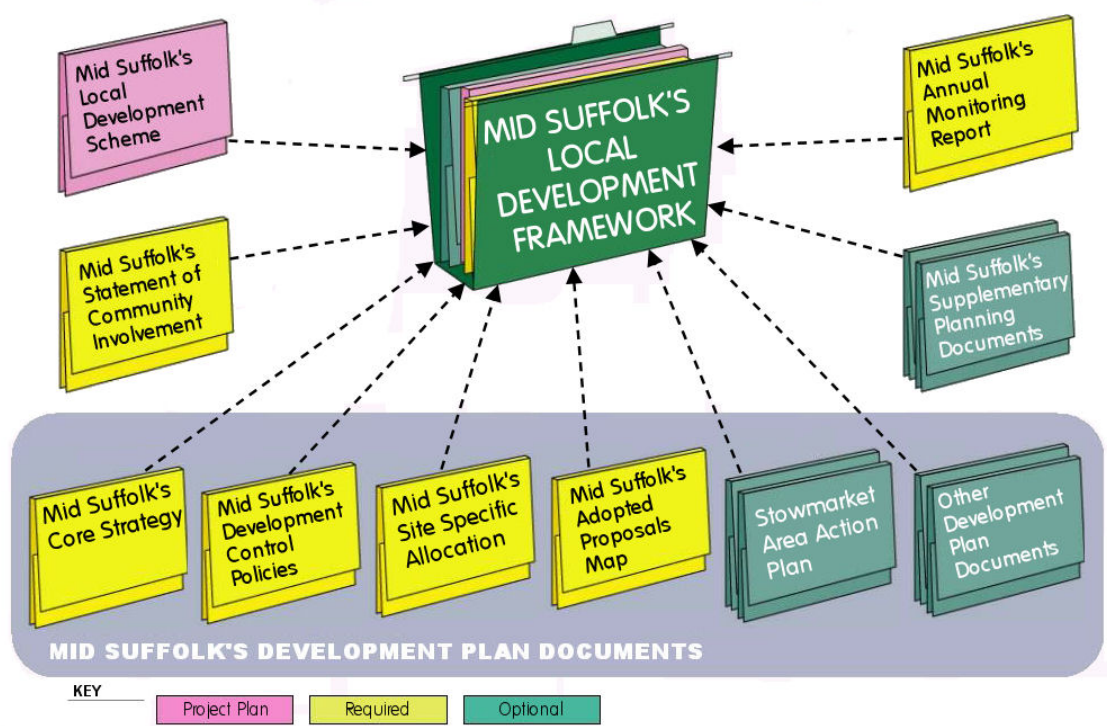


Figure 1.1 Mid Suffolk's Local Development Framework

What is the Core Strategy

1.8 This document will be the LDF's key strategic planning document guided by sustainable development principles. It will perform the following functions:

- define a spatial vision for Mid Suffolk District to 2024
- set out a number of objectives to achieve the vision
- set out a spatial development strategy to meet these objectives
- set out strategic policies to guide and control the overall scale, type and location of new development
- set out the broad location of new housing and employment land necessary to meet the requirements of the regional spatial strategy; and
- set out a monitoring and implementation framework

1.9 The core strategy does not include details of site allocations or development control policies for development, these will be set out in separate DPDs to be prepared later in the LDF process (in accordance with the timetable set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme).

1.10 All the other DPDs prepared as part of the LDF must conform to the policies set out in the Core Strategy.

The Preferred Options Stage

1.11 Prior to the preferred options stage, the Issues and Options stage was carried out and involved engagement and consultation with the community, interested parties and consultees in the development of issues and alternative options. The following consultations and engagement was carried out:

- Survey of current Local Plan Users - 2001

- Mid Suffolk Messenger (paper consultation) Questionnaire - 2001
- Issues Report (paper consultation) - 2002
- Parish Meetings - summer 2003
- Community Workshops and road shows - late 2003 - early 2004
- Members seminar - 2005
- Issues and Options Core Strategy Workshops - 2005 - 2006
- Issues and Options Core Strategy (paper consultation) - 2005
- Issues and Options (paper consultation) Key Service Centres - 2006
- Members Forum - 2006
- Final Issues and Options for Core Strategy (paper consultation) - 2007

1.12 This document now sets out the Council's Preferred Option for the Core Strategy. The preferred options stage involves putting forward for public consultation the Council's preferred approach to the spatial planning of Mid Suffolk District. It also identifies policy which have been discarded and why. After this document has been through public consultation it will be revised accordingly and formally submitted to the Government. At the time of submission, a six week period will be allowed for formal consultation. Subsequently the Plan will be subject to an examination in public by an independent planning inspector.

1.13 When the Core Strategy is adopted, the policies within it will replace some of the policies of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan, adopted September 1998. Until such time as all DPDs are adopted within the LDF folder policies in the Core Strategy will need to be read in conjunction with 'saved' policies in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998.

Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.14 This Core Strategy document is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which is also available for public consultation. The SA ensures that the LDF achieves sustainable development by testing objectives, strategies and policies at each stage of preparation - to assess their potential impact on environment, economic and social objectives and to make any changes necessary to ensure sustainability. Each of the DPDs prepared under the LDF process must comply with the requirements of the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). These requirements are built into the SA process.

Getting Involved

1.15 One of the key aspects of the new LDF planning system is the recognition of the need for the 'earliest and fullest public involvement in the preparation of the new Plan. This is in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, which was formally adopted by the Council in July 2006.

1.16 All of Mid Suffolk's LDF documents are widely consulted in order to ensure that all views are fully considered. The Council will be consulting the following to let them know that the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report are available for comment:

- consultees identified in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement
- Statutory consultation bodies, stakeholders and other interested bodies, groups and individuals
- the three designated consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Countryside Agency and Natural England)
- all those who responded to the Issues and Options consultation
- anyone else who has asked to be kept informed about the preparation of the LDF

1.17 In addition the council will be publicising the availability of the report in a variety of ways in accordance with the SCI to engage the wider general public. If you are aware of any individual or organisation who may wish to be informed then please let us know and we will contact them.

What happens next

1.18 We need your views and welcome your input. If you have any comments on the Council's Preferred Options for the Core Strategy or the Sustainability Appraisal Report, please submit them:

- online at www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/planning and select the 'Local Development Framework' link.

The consultation system allows you to make representations online, using a login which can be accessed on line.

- Alternatively fill in the attached comments form and return it to Mid Suffolk District Council.

The hard copy option is available for people unable to access the online consultation system. The Council is trying to reduce unnecessary costs and paper production to save our environment.

1.19 All comments should reach us no later than **2nd July 2007**

1.20 All comments received during the 6 week period of consultation will be carefully considered by the Council. They will be taken into account when the final version of the Core Strategy is prepared for the final submission to the Secretary of State in October 2007.

2 Policy Context

2.1 The national, regional and local policy context is a key consideration in the determination of the preferred options of the Core Strategy.

National and Regional Context

2.2 This document needs to take into account the implications of national planning policy statements (PPSs), planning policy guidance (PPGs) and circulars. The appropriate guidance, statements and circulars are listed in each section of this report and these are generally available on the Department of Communities and Local Government website.

2.3 The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) also known as the East of England Plan, which was published by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) in December 2004. Proposed changes by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government were published in December 2006. It is anticipated that the RSS will be adopted during the early summer 2007. The RSS will replace the Suffolk County Structure Plan (2001).

2.4 The vision of the RSS is "to sustain and improve the quality of life for all people who live in, work in, or visit the region, by developing a more sustainable, prosperous and outward-looking region, while respecting its diversity and enhancing its assets."

2.5 The RSS sets out a strategy to guide planning and development in the East of England to the year 2021 and forms part of the development plan for Mid Suffolk. It provides guidance in terms of economic development, retail, regeneration, housing, the environment, transport, waste management, culture, sport and recreation, mineral extraction and implementation. The RSS indicates that 8,300 houses should be supplied in Mid Suffolk up to 2021 and that 18,000 jobs for Mid Suffolk, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath should be provided up to 2021. The RSS also provides targets for 60% of development to be on previously developed land (brownfield land) and a contribution of 30% affordable housing.

Local Policy Context

2.6 The Core Strategy, and other Local Development Documents are key components in the delivery of The Community Plan (2004) (community strategy) for the District, particularly those elements of the community strategy that relate to the development and use of land.

2.7 The purpose of the Community Strategy is to make measurable improvements to the economic, social and environmental conditions in Mid Suffolk and to improve the quality of life for everyone. It provides a vision for the future of Mid Suffolk and a series of actions to be implemented by a variety of agencies working together. The vision for the Community Plan of Mid Suffolk is "a safe, healthy and prosperous community, living within thriving towns and villages with access to first class services, actively involved in providing a fairer society and a better social economic and environmental heritage for future generations." The community strategy sets out the following aims and objectives are:

A safe community:

- Protect the environment from pollution, flooding and other natural and man-made disasters.

A healthy community:

- Improve access to health services.

Prosperous thriving towns and villages:

- Provide leisure and recreation facilities for children and young people.
- Work towards a balanced housing market, including affordable housing for existing residents.
- Maintain rural facilities especially village shops and post offices.
- Ensure a sufficient supply of land for employment development, using brownfield sites where possible.
- Develop tourism and leisure opportunities.

Active community involvement:

- Ensure meaningful engagement between the statutory agencies and the voluntary and community sector.
- Explore alternative methods for involving communities in the decision-making process.
- Coordinate consultation and community engagement within the Partnership.
- Expand the use and effectiveness of community appraisals.

Access to first class services:

- Set up 'one stop shops' in Stowmarket and other major towns.
- Improve access to further and higher education.
- Provide more affordable starter homes in village locations.
- Take specific measures to accommodate the special needs of people with disabilities.

A just and equal society:

- Provide affordable housing options for all sections of the community.

A better heritage for future generations:

- Encourage business and the community to protect and enhance open spaces.
- Improve the availability of Nature Reserves in the District.
- Improve water and energy efficiency through the implementation of energy and water saving devices.
- Increase the level of waste being recycled by making recycling facilities more locally available.
- Promote the inclusion of water saving devices in all new developments.
- Improve and encourage access to the countryside for all.
- Encourage the community to cherish our local history, traditions and culture.
- Safeguard our built heritage by ensuring that the District's historic buildings are protected.
- Reduce the risk of flooding through preventative planning.

2.8 In addition to the Community Strategy several strategies and documents informed the preparation of this document. A list of the appropriate evidence particular to each section are provided within each section of the report and a comprehensive evidence list are provided on the website of Mid Suffolk District Council.

3 Mid Suffolk Today

Characteristics of the Area

3.1 Mid Suffolk is one of the largest districts in England covering 87,107 hectares (335 square miles) with a population of 86,837 people. That's 0.9 persons per hectare (259 persons per mile) and over 70% of the population live in villages and rural areas. Mid Suffolk remains one of the safest places to live, with a low overall crime rate compared to the rest of the country. The district has a distinctive character with its combination of market towns, idyllic villages and attractive countryside including the valleys of the River Waveney and Dove in the North, through the open fields of High Suffolk to the Valleys of the River Ratt and Gipping in the South. All of these areas have distinctive and attractive areas that have their own unique characteristics.

3.2 The A14 trunk road and the parallel railway is a key transport corridor in the region. In Mid Suffolk, most of the industrial and commercial development is located in this corridor - along with sites along the A140 including Mendlesham airfield - and this is where demand for business space and housing development is greatest. The larger towns and villages along the A14 corridor in Mid Suffolk (those with a population of over 2000) together house about 40% of the District's population. The largest town is Stowmarket (population 15,248). The district's economy and housing market are also influenced by other large towns and cities along the A14 including Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds, Felixstowe - with its port-related activity - and Cambridge. These centres combined with Diss and Harleston to the north, and Framlingham to the east, of the district increase pressures on growth.

3.3 Census estimates suggest that the population of Mid Suffolk will grow to 98,700 people around the year 2021. These figures show that the population figure for Mid Suffolk is growing faster than Suffolk as a whole and this reflects a net influx of people into the district. As the population of Mid Suffolk grows, it is anticipated that the diversity of the district will increase. At present around 0.9% of Mid Suffolk's population is made up of black and ethnic minority communities. Like many other rural districts, Mid Suffolk has an ageing population. Currently the largest age group is in the 20 - 54 range with 47%. The largest group within this group is the 50 - 54 year range which presents certain issues in the future for the district.

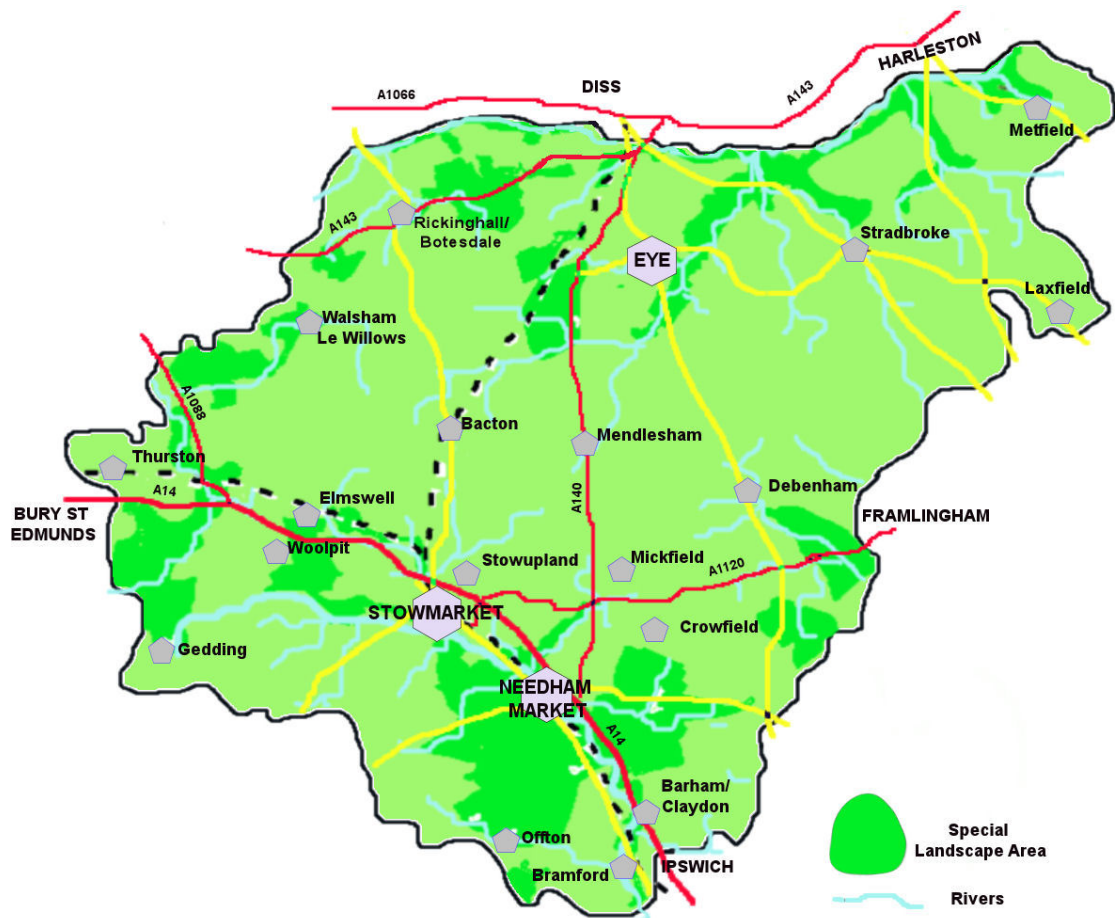
3.4 The overall indication is that the health of the population in Mid Suffolk is very good with Mid Suffolk ranking 37th out of the 48 regional local authorities for poor health. The percentage of people classified as in good health from the 2001 census is 77.3%, with 6.6% in poor health. This compares to 68.8% and 9% for England.

3.5 Basic education levels in the district are greater than the national average. The proportion of working age people with no qualifications (10.6%) is the lowest in the county and lower than the England and Wales average (15.6%). In terms of higher educational achievement, 17% of Mid Suffolk's residents have a degree qualification below the national average of 24.2%.

3.6 According to the Census 2001, the district ranks well in terms of issues such as employment and general good health. On the down side, however, it ranks poorly in terms of the number of students living within the District, which reflects the lack of any major facility for further education within the district and the proximity of Cambridge and Norwich.

3.7 The majority of dwellings in Mid Suffolk are houses and bungalows (80.8%) , well above the national average of 54.1%. The most common house type in Mid Suffolk is detached (47.9%) followed by semi-detached (33.5%).

3.8 The Mid Suffolk economy remains narrowly focussed, with approximately 30% of Mid Suffolk industry in manufacturing, and 11% in agriculture. However, there is the potential for developing tourism in the district, which has many attractive villages and large areas of unspoilt and tranquil countryside.



Map 3.1 Mid Suffolk District

Map for guidance only

Key Issues

3.9 For the Core Strategy's proposals and policies to be effective there needs to be a clear understanding of the issues facing the district in terms of needs, constraints and opportunities. The context for this is set out in the spatial vision. Overall there are a number of issues highlighted within Mid Suffolk's Corporate Plan and Community Strategy which the Core Strategy will address to improve the overall quality of life in the district.

3.10 This section provides a more detailed analysis of the key issues facing the district which provide the underlying context for the spatial vision, objectives and policy options set out in the chapters proceeding this section.

Housing

3.11 Between 2001 - 2006 the average number of new dwellings built per year in Mid Suffolk was 377. Demand for new housing remains high in all parts of Mid Suffolk generated by local demand through demographic trends (increase in single person households and aging population) and partly through in-migration. The level of demand provides a target for delivery of an improved balance of house types within the new stock. A relatively

large percentage of the district's homes are now single person households therefore it is important that the supply of the right types of housing is provided.

3.12 The idyllic surroundings and good accessibility has attracted house buyers to the district. The influence of large centres of population across Mid Suffolk's borders has increased the districts attraction and accommodating high levels of housing demand has become a key issue. The resulting house prices rise and the supply of affordable properties (for those on low incomes) is recognised as one of the most pressing priorities facing the District.

3.13 Within this demand there has been a trend for housing schemes focusing on the middle-upper ends of the market leaving a shortage of smaller new-build properties. There is also a trend for relatively low density housing developments. The Council needs to ensure future developments make efficient use of land whilst reflecting local characteristics and that there is an appropriate mix of unit sizes to be provided in residential developments to counter this trend and house types should be targeted to meet the need in identified parts of the district. This area of work will be guided by a detailed Housing Market Assessment.

Land

3.14 There is a limited supply of previously-developed land due to the rural nature of the district. It is essential that development makes most efficient use of land (especially previously developed land) in sustainable locations to help minimise losses of Greenfield sites. Where development is to occur in more isolated locations (e.g. in support of rural economy) Mid Suffolk will ensure that compensatory sustainable measures are implemented. Development will be refused on high quality agricultural land, unless an overriding argument is made.

Health

3.15 Providing for the healthcare needs of the community is essential. None of the wards in Mid Suffolk falls within the 20% most deprived in the country for income, employment, health, education, housing and child poverty. However, due to the rural nature of the district, several wards are in the 20% most deprived with regard to geographical access. Mid Suffolk has a high overall death rate per 100,000 population which is above the Suffolk average and has annually increased. Significant causes for this include heart disease, cancer deaths and an ageing population. Mid Suffolk consults with the Primary Care Trusts to ensure that future provision is made in accordance with the communities needs.

3.16 A key issue is to assist residents in leading active and healthy life styles and encourage sport for all by increasing opportunities for both formal and informal sport and recreation. There is a growing demand for healthcare services and a local need for health care facilities. Improving health and tackling health inequalities involves addressing a number of issues, many of which have been identified in the 2004 Government white paper 'Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier'. These include access to and information on health services, tackling obesity, control of tobacco, reducing smoking, reducing the harm caused by alcohol, meeting the needs of the elderly and midlife age groups etc.

Population

3.17 Nationally we will see an increasingly ageing population over the next coming years. For Mid Suffolk the growth in the ageing population is growing faster than Suffolk as a whole. This means that we need to find ways of supporting and helping people maintain independent lives in their own homes, whilst encouraging younger people to stay in the district. The most significant feature is the growth of the population in the over 65 age group, 9,000 more individuals over the forecast period a growth of 69%. The largest increase is projected to occur between 2011 and 2016 (+ 3,600; 20.1%).

Transport

3.18 Mid Suffolk has a higher than average number of cars per household due to its rural nature. Mid Suffolk recognises the effect of car ownership in rural areas on the design, layout and density of development. The impact on the environment, our health, our safety and congestion means that alternatives to the car must be promoted and made more attractive and accessible. Reducing the need to travel must be met with accessibility to services and facilities by a range of alternatives, to the car. The number of older people and the percentage of the population living in isolated rural areas mean that Mid Suffolk must improve community and public transport options and actively encourage less reliance on private car usage.

Involving everyone

3.19 So much of the support provided for people in our communities is achieved through the work of volunteers and community groups. Active Community Involvement means communities getting involved in planning, deciding, shaping and possibly delivering the services they need. It is neighbourliness, volunteering, and community self-help. Mid Suffolk needs to make sure that we support our voluntary and community groups to ensure that this vital work can continue. Volunteers are also important to the cultural activities of the district, which helps to make communities more sustainable. The importance of community centres, village halls and playing fields as hubs for the local community are also reaffirmed by the Suffolk Acre report (2006) from analysis of Parish Plans completed in Mid Suffolk District.

Environmental issues

3.20 We are fortunate to have a rich variety of wildlife and heritage in our district including the international RAMSAR designation at Redgrave and Lopham Fens and numerous national, regional and local designations. Mid Suffolk includes Suffolk's Local Biodiversity Action Plan species; bats and great crested newts and their habitats, dry acid grassland, heathland and ponds are a regular feature. Nationally we produce more than 30 million tonnes of waste each year. Three quarters of household waste could be recycled or composted. The district has low air pollution and no AQMA are required.

Climate change

3.21 Climate change will have an impact on our communities and local businesses. Climate change is likely to lead to increased storm intensity, with significant implications for flood events. Action must be taken locally to adapt to climate change and to reduce the district's contribution to the problem. There are high risks of flooding in some areas where any development proposals will be avoided. Partnership working is required to take into account the effects of development beyond the district boundary. There is a need for increased energy efficiency and resilience to climate change in the design, construction and use of buildings.

Community safety

3.22 Mid Suffolk has some of the lowest levels of crime in the country but people's perception of crime and anti-social behaviour is still considerable. Reducing this fear and improving public confidence, as well as reducing actual levels, is a real challenge for the district. There is a low % of crime per 1000 population in Suffolk but the Council must ensure developments are designed to limit the fear of crime, as well as addressing the actual risk of crime.

Local economy

3.23 Mid Suffolk has 1.3% unemployment and slightly above average householder income. Whilst we want the local economy to be strong and diverse we also need to ensure that it is appropriate to the nature of the district and that environmental impacts are limited. There is an opportunity to improve the employment base and the well being of the rural population by facilitating a positive approach to development that offers employment

opportunities. Areas within Stowmarket are some of the most deprived within the district. It is essential that Mid Suffolk seek regeneration and enhancement employment opportunities to broaden the employment base and the quality of work available.

Education

3.24 Mid Suffolk has a low % of year 11 pupils gaining 5+ A*-C grade and low average point score per student at A and AS level. Mid Suffolk seeks to raise achievement and address inequalities in educational performance, particularly for boys. Another issue in relation to schools is linked to the sustainability of communities. Population shifts and low birth rates have an impact on the viability of village schools. Ensure that development opportunities are taken to support the existing network of schools by seeking contributions from developers, where appropriate to allow accommodation and facilities enhancement where new development is likely to generate demand that is harmful to an identified schools well being.

Service provision

3.25 Ideally, the provision of Key Service Centres should keep pace as the district's population grows. This includes schools, healthcare, water supply, drainage and flood alleviation, leisure and community centre. Currently there is a poor provision of key basic services and facilities in the rural area and only 50.8% of villages have access to a food shop, general store, post office, pub, primary school and meeting place. There is also a low percentage of rural households within 13 minutes' walk of an hourly bus service. Lack of facilities for young people is one of the issues which will be addressed through the Council's recently adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for social infrastructure including open space, sport and recreation. It provides for a local standard charge, providing the mechanisms to obtain commuted sums of money from developers to provide and manage social infrastructure.

An enriched and active community

3.26 The provision of opportunities, activities and facilities for people to enjoy in their leisure time is vital for Mid Suffolk's community well being. Keeping active is key to promoting good health and well-being. Engaging people through sports, arts, leisure and cultural activities strengthens communities and helps to reduce antisocial behaviour. The Council also need to ensure that the district is promoted for visitors, and that our facilities and attractions are enhanced.

3.27 All parts of the district need to share in improvements to the quality of life within Mid Suffolk. Some parts of the district are more deprived than others and there may be a need as appropriate to direct investment in new infrastructure, housing, employment provision and environmental improvements to such areas.

4 Spatial Strategy for Mid Suffolk

Spatial Vision

4.1 Central to the Core Strategy DPD is the identification of an overarching spatial vision which will set out the context for specific objectives and policies. Mid Suffolk's spatial strategy is the vision for sustainable development for the district until 2024.

4.2 The spatial vision has regard for the district's local characteristics and key issues facing Mid Suffolk, complimenting the aims and priorities of the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan.

Vision for the Mid Suffolk District

By 2024 the Mid Suffolk district will become a more prosperous, healthy, safer and greener place to live with fewer inequalities, improved access to and provision of housing, employment and services for all.

The regeneration of the District will continue through a policy of concentrating employment opportunities where they are most accessible to the majority of the population, which include the Towns and Key Service Centres with strategic growth of high quality employment within villages located along the A14 and A140 corridor.

The main residential growth will be focused at Stowmarket, with Needham Market and Eye, and the Key Service Centres also accommodating appropriate levels of residential growth. Limited growth for the primary and secondary villages, linked to local need, will ensure that the housing needs of smaller villages are met.

This will be achieved in ways that reduce the impact of society on the environment, improve the quality of design of the built environment and protect and enhance Mid Suffolk's environmental assets such as its biodiversity and historic heritage.

The District Council will be a leader in tackling climate change across the district. Any development that occurs will need to address the key issues of energy and resource conservation (to support the Council's climate change initiatives and good design in new development which can help prevent crime, while enhancing the District's natural and built environment and heritage.

Core Strategy Objectives

4.3 The following objectives (in no particular order) have been identified as central to achieving the delivery of the spatial vision for Mid Suffolk. These objectives provide provide a more specific direction taking on board the key issues that face the district.

4.4 SO1. To protect, manage and enhance the landscape, biodiversity and geology of the District

4.5 SO2. To reduce the adverse impact of society on the environment, and respond to the implications of climate change

4.6 SO3. To protect and enhance the historic heritage and the unique character and identity of the towns and villages by ensuring that new developments are appropriate in terms of scale and location in the context of settlement form and character

4.7 SO4. Reinforce the vitality and viability of local shops, schools, services, recreation and community facilities in towns and key service centres and primary villages.

4.8 SO5. Provision of housing, employment, retail, infrastructure and access to services will be coordinated to enable communities to be balanced, inclusive and prosperous.

4.9 SO6. To support sustainable communities by locating development where it will enable people to access jobs and key services, such as education, health, recreation and other facilities recognising and respecting the diversity in the function and character of Mid Suffolk's towns, key service centres and primary and secondary villages and countryside.

4.10 SO7. To meet the requirements for new housing while maintaining the special character of Mid Suffolk's towns, villages and countryside. New development will be of a high standard of design and layout and will address the need for energy and resource conservation.

4.11 SO8. Planning and housing policies will maximise the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.

4.12 SO9 To prepare for an ageing population, including the provision and retention of community facilities and suitable housing, including sheltered accommodation.

4.13 SO10. To support the growth of the local economy and rural regeneration in ways which are compatible with environmental objectives, and which deliver increased prosperity for the whole community.

4.14 SO11. Promote high quality, sustainable tourism.

4.15 SO12. Support and enable public and community transport services to provide access to jobs, shops and services and consider new methods of delivering and protecting existing services for smaller communities.

4.16 SO13. To provide accessible and varied opportunities for leisure and recreational activities in order to promote healthy lifestyles.

4.17 SO14. To develop vibrant and prosperous towns and service centres by encouraging development that supports their function with a range of good quality jobs, businesses, shops and services that meet the needs of local people.

Development Strategy

4.18 This part of the document sets out the council's preferred options for the distribution and scale of development amongst the towns and villages and the strategic location of housing and other development.

Guidance and Documents 1

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| National Policy | PPS1, PPS12 |
| Regional Policy | SS1, SS4 |
| Mid Suffolk Community Strategy Aims | Prosperous, thriving towns and villages Access to first class services A better heritage for future generations |

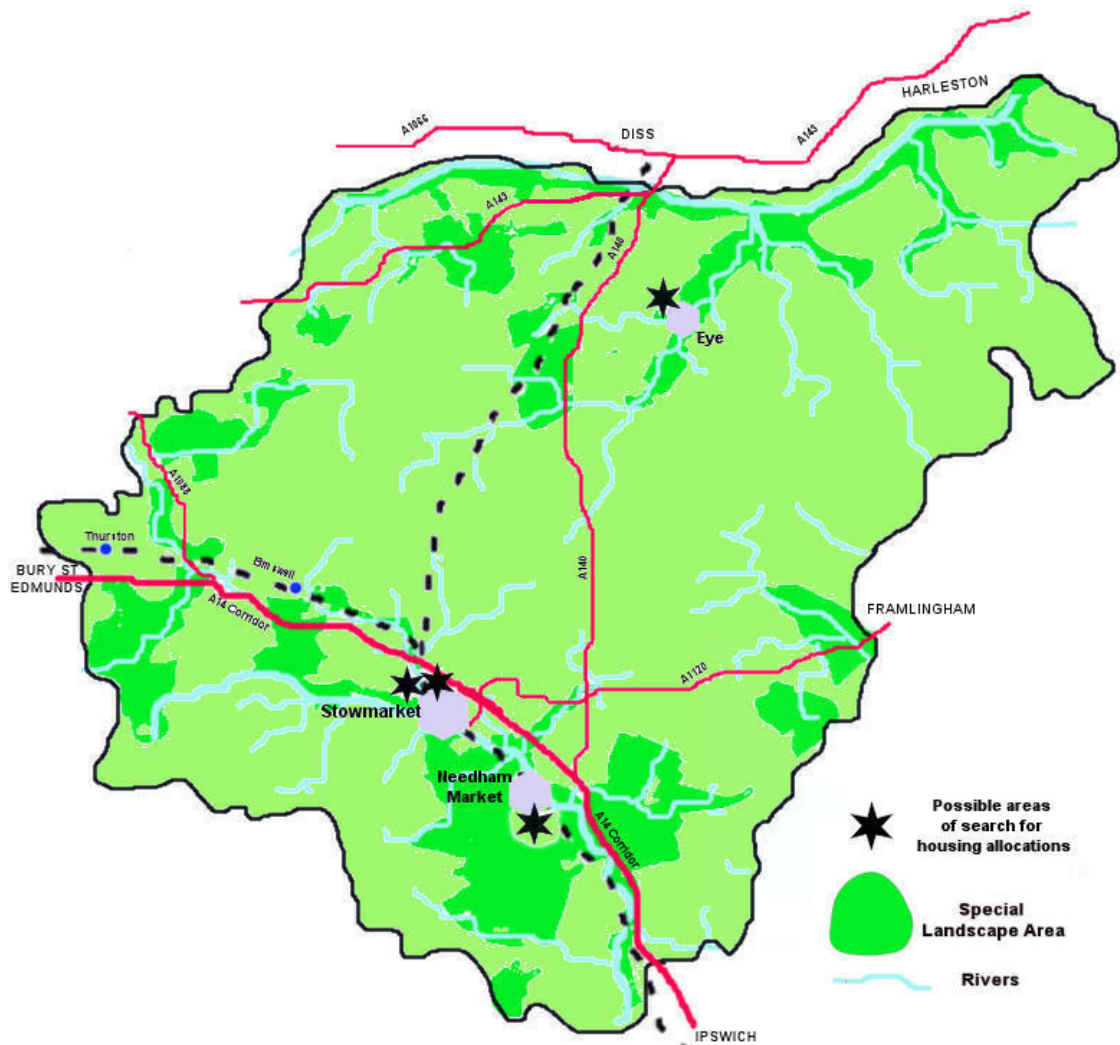
| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| National Policy | PPS1, PPS12 |
| Mid Suffolk Corporate Plan priorities | Prosperous, thriving towns and villages Access to fair and affordable services An improved inheritance for future generations |
| Core Strategy Objectives | All. SO1 - SO14 |

The Council's preferred Development Strategy aims to be the best practicable, sustainable option to meet the Government's objectives for urban and rural planning, which include ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

4.19 The Council is proposing that most new development, whether it be retail, employment or housing should be in towns and a limited number of the larger villages. This will enable people to live closer to places of employment, schools, shops and services and reduce the need for travel and commuting. It should also limit the amount of development in the countryside, to help protect the special character of Mid Suffolk. Policies will seek to meet local needs for affordable housing and access to services and employment in all areas of the district.

Mid Suffolk Key Diagram

4.20 The Key Diagram below shows the major transport links, landscape features, together with the location of the towns and the areas of search for future growth in the district. The actual growth sites to be allocated will be determined through public consultation on the Site Specific Allocation DPD, which starts later this year.



Map 4.1 Key Diagram

Map for guidance only

Justification for Key Diagram

1. Towns

4.21 The towns in Mid Suffolk are **Stowmarket, Needham Market and Eye**.

4.22 The Key Diagram shows their location in relation to transport networks and important landscape features

4.23 The relative sizes of the different towns and their locations is an important factor when considering the distribution of development between the towns. Stowmarket is much the largest of the three towns and it is expected that Stowmarket will be the main focus for development during the plan period.

4.24 **Stowmarket** is the main town in Mid Suffolk, with a population of about 16,000. It is situated in the "A14 corridor", which is the main road and rail communication route and growth area in Suffolk. Stowmarket

has a range of employment, services and shops and good public transport links, including rail. The catchment area for shopping and other services in Stowmarket is constrained by its location midway between the much larger centres of Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds.

4.25 Although the MidSuffolk Urban Housing Capacity Study has identified the potential for 400 dwellings on brownfield sites there will be a need to allocate further green field sites for housing, as extensions to the urban area, if previous rates of housing growth are to be maintained or increased, . There are constraints to development on parts of the eastern and northern sides of the town with the railway, the River Gipping and the A14 trunk road as barriers to development . To the south, much of the countryside has been designated in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan as a Special Landscape Area and Combs Wood is a SSSI. The flood plain of the Rattlesden River is also designated as a Special Landscape Area.

4.26 There have also been policy constraints to maintain strategic gaps between towns and villages to protect their separate identity and prevent coalescence of settlements (former County Structure Plan policy CS5). This would be a consideration for any outward expansion of Stowmarket towards Needham Market, Combs, Onehouse or Stowupland.

4.27 Of the potential sites put forward by landowners and developers as housing “land bids” to extend the urban area, those on the western and southern edges of Stowmarket are farthest from the town centre and those on the northern edge are closest to the centre. Distance from the centre is relevant in terms of accessibility to town centre shops and amenities by walking, cycling and public transport.

4.28 Taking account of these considerations, the main areas of opportunity for extensions to Stowmarket on green field land, as indicated on the Key Diagram, are likely to be on the northern side of the town.

4.29 The District Council's Regeneration Strategy intends to improve the range of employment, retail, leisure and tourism facilities to ensure that continued housing growth is matched by upgraded employment opportunities, services and infrastructure, including sustainable transport links to adjacent villages in Stowmarket's catchment area.

4.30 The town has been the subject of a number of studies in the recent past and an outline development strategy for the town centre considered by the town council and the specially constituted Town Forum. This work is continuing at present and further proposals will be brought forward for public consultation this year, so that:

- appropriate sites can be brought forward for inclusion in the Site Specific Allocation DPD, and
- a long term strategy for future action will be formulated in the Local Development Framework as the Stowmarket Area Action Plan, to bring together an integrated programme for future development and enhancement of the town.

4.31 Under the preferred option, Stowmarket would continue to be the main centre and growth area in Mid Suffolk.

4.32 **Needham Market** is a small market town with a population of about 5,000. It has a small range of shops and services, local employment, including a business park, and bus and rail links to Ipswich, Stowmarket etc. During the period 1991 to 2006 an average of about 8 houses per year were built in Needham Market.

4.33 The railway has been a barrier to eastward expansion of Needham Market, while to the north and west, landscape constraints have been recognised by designation of countryside as Special Landscape Area in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan. At the previous Local Plan inquiry, the prevention of development over the ridge line into the Gipping Valley towards Stowmarket was a key consideration for the Inspector.

4.34 The main “brown field” site identified in the Urban Housing Capacity Study is on the southern edge of

Needham Market. If the previously developed sites identified by the study (for 360 houses) can be delivered, there may not be a need to allocate further green field land at Needham Market, at least for the early years of the plan period.

4.35 **Eye** is classified as a town and has a Town Council but its population of about 2,000 is less than that of some of the larger villages in Mid Suffolk. Eye is only about three miles from the larger town of Diss, in South Norfolk District, which has a greater range of shops and services and a mainline railway station. There is a limited range of local services and shops in Eye and a large employment area at the adjacent Mid Suffolk Business Park, which the District Council has promoted as a means of improving employment opportunities for the northern part of the District (previously designated as a Rural Development Area). The scale of housing development in Eye (14p.a.) has been closely related to the growth of local employment.

4.36 The town of Eye has historically been constrained from expanding to the east, south and west by low lying land liable to flooding from the River Dove and its tributaries. These areas of countryside have been designated as Special Landscape Areas in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan. Most development has taken place on higher ground to the north of the attractive historic core of the town. This is close to the employment area at Mid Suffolk Business Park on the former Eye Airfield. There is likely to be scope for some further housing development in this direction, without damaging the special character of the central area of Eye or locating housing too close to industrial uses. The historic core is shown to be an "island" in the strategic flood risk assessment and future development proposals will be subject to a sequential test.

Settlement Hierarchy

4.37 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (December 2006) seeks to locate the majority of new development in cities and towns. It also recognises the role of market towns and larger villages in providing employment and services to their rural hinterlands and meeting housing needs. Regional policy SS4 requires local development documents to define the approach to development in towns and rural settlements. It proposes that some larger villages should be classified as "Key Service Centres", with potential to accommodate development which is sympathetic to local character and of an appropriate scale and nature in relation to local housing and employment needs.

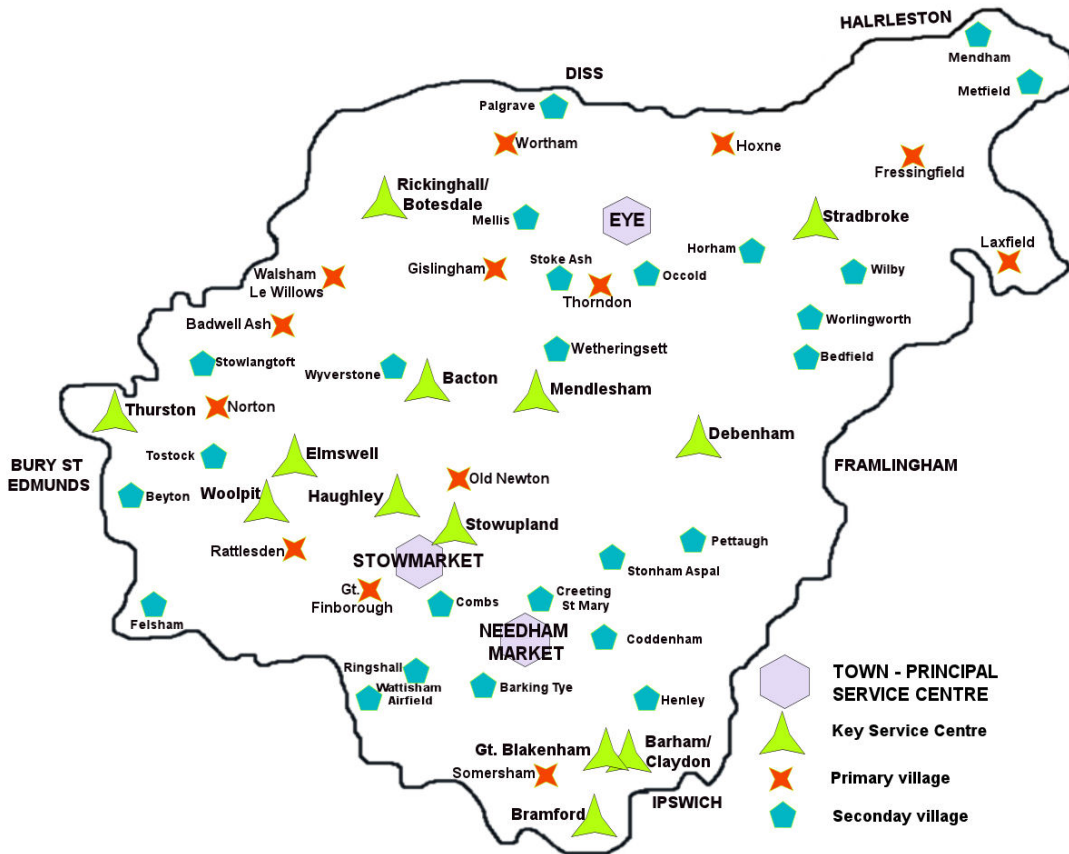
4.38 Below the level of Key Service Centres national and regional guidance acknowledges that local needs may be met best by development in smaller villages rather than concentrating everything into towns and key service centres. Care must be taken to ensure that development is directed to locations where it will have the greatest benefits for rural sustainability.

4.39 To meet these requirements we propose the following settlement hierarchy:

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Towns | the main focus for development in the district |
| 2 | Key Service Centres | the main focus for development outside of the towns |
| 3 | Primary Village | villages capable of limited growth where this will meet local needs |
| 4 | Secondary Villages | villages unsuitable for growth but capable of taking development for local needs only |
| 5 | The Countryside | open countryside and villages below the level of secondary villages where only the types of development specified in para 4.79 (below) will be permitted |

4.40 The reasoning behind this proposed hierarchy of settlements and the criteria that will be used to determine a settlement's position in the hierarchy are set out below with lists specifying where each settlement appears

in the hierarchy . The hierarchy is summarised in the following Map:



Map 4.2 Settlement Hierarchy

Map for guidance only

Core Strategy CS 1

Settlement Hierarchy

Most new development, (including retail, employment and housing allocations) will be directed to Towns and Key Service Centres, but also with some provision for meeting local housing needs in Primary and Secondary villages, in particular for affordable housing. Settlements are proposed to be included in the hierarchy according to the following list:

Towns:

Stowmarket, Needham Market and Eye

| Key Service Centres: | |
|--|---|
| Bacton | Haughley - (excluding Haughley Green) |
| Botesdale/Rickinghalls | Mendlesham |
| Bramford | Stowupland |
| Claydon (with part Barham) & Great Blakenham | Stradbroke |
| Debenham | Thurston |
| Elmswell | Woolpit - (excluding Woolpit Green, Heath and Borley Green) |

| Primary Villages: | |
|---|--------------------|
| Badwell Ash - (excluding Long Thurlow) | Old Newton |
| Fressingfield | Rattlesden |
| Gislingham | Somersham |
| Great Finborough - (includes part Buxhall parish) | Thorndon |
| Hoxne - (excluding Low Street) | Walsham-le-Willows |
| Laxfield | Wortham |
| Norton - (excluding Little Green, Ashfield Road) | |

| Secondary Villages: | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Barking Tye | Palgrave |
| Bedfield | Pettaugh |
| Beyton | Ringshall - (Stocks) |
| Coddenham | Stoke Ash |

| Secondary Villages: | |
|---|--|
| Combs | Stonham Aspal |
| Creeting St. Mary - (excluding Jacks Green) | Stowlangtoft |
| Felsham | Tostock |
| Henley | Wattisham Airfield |
| Horham | Wetheringsett - (excluding Brockford Street) |
| Mellis | Wilby |
| Mendham | Worlingworth - (excluding Church, Church Road) |
| Metfield | Wyverstone |
| Occold | |

4.41 The built up areas of towns, Key Service Centres, Primary Villages and Secondary Villages will be defined by settlement boundaries, in the Development Control Policies and Site Specific Allocations development plan documents.

Reasons for the Preferred Approach

4.42 Sustainability Appraisal of five options took account of likely environmental, economic and social impacts and how to achieve a balance between market demand, local needs, environmental issues and the need to conform with national and regional planning policy.

4.43 Directing most new development to the larger settlements with local services, employment and public transport should help to reduce environmental impact by placing houses in places most accessible to jobs, services and facilities. It can also help with the economic provision of community services.

4.44 In villages with limited services the preferred option takes account of social needs for some limited housing provision, particularly for affordable housing.

4.45 Policies for housing, employment, infrastructure and services will be coordinated in order to promote sustainable patterns of development and sustainable communities in rural areas.

Alternative Approaches Considered

4.46 Five options were considered at the "Issues and Options" stage.

- 1. Concentration of development in towns** (Stowmarket, Needham Market and Eye), with potential for about 800 houses on brown field sites plus need to allocate green field sites to meet housing requirements. Concentration of housing development in the largest towns only would meet key sustainability criteria but would not provide adequate choice in the local housing market and would not allow for local housing needs to be met in villages.
- 2. Dispersal of development to villages**, as well as towns. In addition to development of brown field sites in towns and villages this option could allocate some development to green field sites adjoining villages. Dispersal of development around the District, with a share of the growth in a large number of villages and

towns could result in significant harm to the environment and rural landscape and loss of agricultural / "green field" land. Smaller villages do not have adequate facilities, services and employment opportunities to support substantial growth in housing and population. This would create increased levels of outward commuting and car traffic.

3. **Directing development to towns and a limited number of "Key Service Centres"** . Based on the criteria for Key Service Centres set out in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy, this option would select the larger, better served villages and allocate sites for housing in each. Development in towns and a limited number of Key Service Centres would follow some sustainability criteria but may not provide sufficient scope to meet to meet local needs in other villages.
4. **Most development in towns and key centres but also provision for meeting local needs in villages.** This option performs best in sustainability appraisal and would follow the approach advocated in the Regional Spatial Strategy and latest Government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 3: - Housing.
5. **Development of brownfield sites, wherever they are located.** The re-use of previously-developed land in preference to green field land is supported by national guidance, but this depends on the location being suitable and sustainable. Remote locations outside towns or villages are unlikely to have adequate local services and would add to car dependence and traffic. Development in the countryside away from settlements and services performs badly in sustainability appraisal and would be contrary to national and regional planning policy.

Consultation Response

4.47 Responses to the Issues and Options consultation broadly support the Council's proposed vision for future development and emphasised the need to carefully balance the requirements for a 15 year housing supply with maintaining the special character of Mid Suffolk and meeting local needs, particularly for affordable housing.

4.48 The Highways Agency supports the Council's approach to achieve sustainable development by locating new development in areas well served by public transport, walking and cycling, thereby reducing the need to travel.

4.49 In respect of infrastructure capacity, the Environment Agency advises that Ipswich Cliff Quay and Stowmarket sewage works, which serve parts of Mid Suffolk, were flagged up in a capacity delivery strategy as potentially requiring expansion/ improvements in order to serve future developments planned within their catchments. This should be taken into consideration when looking to distribute the housing requirements for the district.

4.50 Previous public consultations have shown support for use of previously developed land and for protecting the character and appearance of villages and the countryside.

4.51 Concerns have been raised about higher density development and infill development leading to "village cramming" and about pressure for large "executive" houses in villages to meet market demand from the London area rather than catering for local needs.

4.52 There have been some requests to continue to allow limited infill development of general market housing in some villages in order to help sustain existing services and reduce pressure for development of greenfield sites at the towns and largest villages.

Criteria used to determine the position of Villages in the Hierarchy:

Key Service Centres

Key Service Centres are described in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy as large villages with a good level of services, which might include:

- A primary school within the settlement and a secondary school within the settlement or easily accessible by public transport
- Primary health care facilities
- A range of retail and service provision capable of meeting day-to-day needs, in particular for convenience shopping
- Local employment opportunities
- Frequent public transport to higher order settlements

4.53 It is our view, supported by sustainability appraisal, national guidance and representations to earlier consultation that a settlement hierarchy based solely on these criteria will not facilitate sustainable development in Mid Suffolk and additional criteria are set out below.

Additional Criteria used to determine Key Service Centres

(a). Size Threshold

4.54 In Mid Suffolk the settlement pattern is of one dominant market town in the south with the next largest town close-by, while elsewhere there is a pattern of a large number of closely spaced small to medium sized villages. Nearly all the largest villages provide most of the services listed above and with so many villages offering similar levels of facilities there is a need to focus on the largest, best served villages in an area and we therefore propose that size of settlement be one of the criteria and that only villages with a population in excess of 1,000 be considered for inclusion as key service centres.

(b). Locational criteria:

4.55 In some cases facilities such as health care and secondary schools may be shared by a group of villages and unless additional locational criteria are taken into account, large areas of Mid Suffolk would be left without a key service centre. This is particularly important in Mid Suffolk because it has only one major town (Stowmarket) on the A14 in the south of the district. This pattern of a single dominant settlement in a district of 336 square miles is different to that of other districts in Suffolk which have subsidiary towns (much larger than Needham Market) located across their districts.

4.56 The lack of major settlements in the district requires that the sustainable development in most areas must be provided primarily in key service centre villages and that these must be identified in locations that give access to key facilities to all areas of the district. This need to identify key service centres in all areas may be mitigated where villages are located near to towns or service centres in adjoining districts. The impact from neighbouring towns in different areas is considered below together with the implications for named villages

(c). Influence from centres outside the District

4.57 Ipswich is situated close to the Eastern boundary of the District and its influence is formally recognised in the inclusion of 6 parishes in the "Ipswich Policy Area" and therefore in the Haven Gateway Partnership area. The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies a specific housing growth target from the villages in the policy area. In accordance with this regional strategy Mid Suffolk will identify as key service centres the settlements within the policy area that are capable of sustaining the required housing development, largely on brownfield sites and include - **Claydon (with part Barham), Great Blakenham and Bramford.**

4.58 There is a similar but smaller influence from Bury St Edmunds in the west but no formal recognition in the regional strategy. The large villages closest to Bury are **Thurston and Elmswell**, which are the two largest villages in the District with multiple services and both have main-line railway stations, good bus links and are therefore well served by public transport to higher order settlements. They have good access to primary health care facilities in either Bury or in the nearby village of **Woolpit**, which is the fourth largest village in Mid Suffolk and also has a high level of facilities including an industrial estate. All three are therefore proposed as key service centres but removing the settlement boundaries from the outlying parts of Woolpit at Woolpit Green, Woolpit Heath and Borley Green.

4.59 In the north of the district there is influence close to the border from both Diss and Harleston. The villages closest to these towns do not have the full range of services and cannot be self sufficient. The reality for many residents is that the two towns in neighbouring districts act as service centres to villages on this border. It is not proposed to duplicate the services offered by these towns by nominating any nearby village in Mid Suffolk as a key service centre.

(d). Remote areas of the District

4.60 As noted above, Mid Suffolk does not have a spread of significantly sized towns across the District and therefore, where there is no adjacent town outside the district, local sustainable services must be provided within villages. Key service centres are therefore identified across the district to ensure that essential services can be sustainably delivered in all areas. This is particularly important in the North East of the District and in the centre away from the A14 and A140 main trunk roads where the villages of **Stradbroke and Debenham** are put forward as key service centres while **Bacton, Mendlesham** and **Botesdale / Rickinghalls** fill gaps elsewhere.

(e). Other

4.61 The other proposed key service centres are **Haughley** and **Stowupland**. They both lie adjacent to the A14, are well serviced and are both comfortably within the top ten largest villages in Mid Suffolk. Haughley is midway between Stowmarket and Elmswell and currently has a settlement boundary around the main village and another around a more distant group of houses known as 'Haughley Green'. It is proposed to remove the settlement boundary from Haughley Green so that any future development is focussed closer to the existing services and facilities.

4.62 Stowupland is situated very close to the new Stowmarket Development Area but is protected from encroachment from Stowmarket by the barrier of the A14. Stowupland is extremely well served by shops, schools and other facilities with easy access to employment sites both local and through frequent public transport links to Stowmarket and other centres inside and outside the district.

Criteria applied to determine Key Service Centres

The preferred approach is that Key Service Centres will be large villages that meet the following criteria:

- A population of at least 1,000 people
- A primary school, food shop and a range of community facilities
- Local employment opportunities
- Journey to work public transport access to a town
- Satisfy the locational requirements set out above

4.63 These criteria accord with the requirements of PPS12 and the Regional Spatial Strategy, the consultation responses, the pattern of settlement in Mid Suffolk and the influences from neighbouring districts. They

are considered to be better than the criteria in the RSS that could have left large areas of the district with no key service centres and over time induced a need to travel to access essential services.

Villages below the level of Key Service Centres - Primary and Secondary Villages

4.64 The draft RSS notes that many villages have very limited local services and are dependant on key service centres, market towns and main urban areas for everyday needs. Below the level of key service centres the main challenges are securing small scale local employment opportunities and supporting the needs of agriculture, improving public transport access to higher order settlements, providing housing for the full range of local needs and supporting the sustainability of local services.

4.65 Responses to the Issues and Options consultation for housing and employment in Mid Suffolk supported provision for local needs in some villages. Because there are a large number of villages in Mid Suffolk (119) and limited resources for supporting local services and providing affordable housing, it is necessary for the Core Strategy to give guidance on the appropriate way of targeting development and resources to cater for local needs. National and regional guidance on sustainable development emphasise that any housing development should have access to at least a basic range of services.

4.66 It was commented in consultation at the Issues and Options stage that Mid Suffolk had not identified any formal settlement hierarchy below the level of key service centres contrary to guidance. In addition, representations from many villages (and others) made the point that while large scale development was unwelcome, without any development at all villages would be vulnerable to loss of facilities and slow decline. This was replicated within the sustainability appraisal and is therefore included within the preferred options report.

4.67 The District Council's preferred approach is to facilitate development in smaller villages that is appropriate and beneficial both to these villages and to the key service centres by distinguishing two new levels of villages in the hierarchy capable of taking limited forms of development.

3. Primary Villages

4.68 Those villages which have basic local services including a primary school and food shop, will be classified as "**Primary Villages**", where small scale housing growth to meet local needs, particularly affordable housing, will be appropriate. Development will be limited to sites within their settlement boundaries or, by allocation in the Site Specific Allocation document to sites adjacent to settlement boundaries.

4.69 Local needs may include employment, amenity and community facilities as well as housing and may be identified through annual monitoring or in locally generated documents such as parish plans or local needs surveys. Sites for these facilities will be sought within settlement boundaries but we will also consider alternative sites to meet operational needs and/or mitigate impacts on residential amenity, environment and the landscape.

4. Secondary Villages

4.70 These are villages with a reduced range of services and facilities that have either a school or a shop but not both. They may have a range of other facilities and services but will be dependant on nearby towns or key service centres to provide the full range of essential facilities.

4.71 These villages will retain a settlement boundary and benefit from small-scale development to meet local needs but not the level of growth envisaged for primary settlements. Local needs include employment, amenity and community facilities as well as small-scale infill housing and "rural exception" sites for affordable housing. Local needs may be identified through annual monitoring or in locally generated documents such as parish plans or local needs surveys.

4.72 Settlement boundaries will be retained to facilitate appropriate development while directing it to appropriate locations and restricting the scope and scale of development. The position of settlement boundaries for these villages will be reviewed in the Site Specific Allocation document to ensure that there is no overprovision through inappropriate infill.

Appropriate types, size and scale of development in Primary and Secondary villages

4.73 The determination of the scale of additional development in the Primary and Secondary Settlements will have regard to local circumstances, including:

- local housing need;
- the availability of employment opportunities, shops and commercial and public services;
- the capacity of existing and potential infrastructure;
- the availability of previously-developed land and buildings;
- the recommendations of relevant Mid Suffolk studies; and
- the presence of environmental constraints
- the impact on nearby key service centres and other villages

4.74 Development Control Policies DPD will identify more precisely the criteria for determining the size and scale of development appropriate in both primary and secondary settlements, and suggest sources of evidence of local need that will help determine the types of development that are appropriate. Sources of evidence will include Parish Plans, (Village Appraisals) and local housing needs surveys.

Development proposals should be accompanied by supporting evidence of the need that is being met.

Justification for the criteria used to determine Primary and secondary Villages

4.75 Previous to the preferred options Mid Suffolk did not consult on any formally proposed village hierarchy below the level of key service centres and therefore no alternative options are offered. The option to identify Primary and Secondary Villages according to the above criteria has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal which shows that the policy is:

- In line with national guidance and regional policy - PPS1, PPS3, RSS4
- in accordance with the responses to earlier consultation that a balance is needed between protecting the countryside while facilitating beneficial development
- Will satisfy villages legitimate aspirations for appropriate development
- will benefit sustainability in rural areas
- will avoid large scale housing in rural areas that prejudice the council's ability to meet most of its development needs in the most sustainable locations (towns and key service centres).

4.76 The availability of services will be monitored and the position of villages within the hierarchy reviewed to ensure that genuine local needs can continue to be met.

The Rest of Mid Suffolk - The Countryside

4.77 The rest of Mid Suffolk, including all settlements not listed above, will be designated as **Countryside**.

4.78 Villages other than those listed as key service centres, primary and secondary villages will lose their settlement boundaries, preventing infill, so that development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptions might be for affordable housing where a local need is identified or small scale employment that can be operationally justified and where these developments cannot be met in a more sustainable location.

Criteria to be applied to planning applications for such developments will be set out in future Development Control Policies.

4.79 In the countryside development will be restricted to the following categories in accordance with other Core Strategy policies:

- agriculture and forestry;
- the preservation of Listed Buildings;
- rural exception housing as described in the 'Housing in the Countryside section' to include: -
 - agricultural workers dwellings
 - possible conversion of rural buildings
 - replacement dwellings
 - affordable housing on exception sites
 - sites for Gypsies and Travellers and travelling showpeople
- the extension of dwellings
- the reuse and adaptation of buildings for appropriate purposes, as defined elsewhere in this document
- new-build employment generating proposals where there is particular environmental or operational justification
- recreation and tourism
- community services and facilities meeting a proven local need
- development by statutory undertakers or public utility providers
- flood protection
- renewable energy projects
- mineral extraction
- waste management facilities.

4.80 These criteria will facilitate the consideration of appropriate development for the re-use of farm buildings and farm diversification projects, in line with representations made at the Issues and Options stage.

4.81 Villages with no settlement boundaries - to be treated as part of the Countryside

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Ackenham | Gedding | Rishangles |
| Ashbocking | Gipping | Shelland |
| Ashfield Cum Thorpe | Gosbeck | Southolt |
| Aspall | Great Ashfield | Stonham Earl |
| Athelington | Great Bricett | Stonham Parva |
| Badley | Harleston | Stuston |
| Badwell Ash (Long Thurlow) | Haughley (Green) | Syleham |
| Barham (Sandy Lane) | Helmingham | Tannington |
| Battisford Tye | Hemingstone | Thornham Magna |
| Baylham | Hessett | Thornham Parva |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bedingfield (both parts) | Hinderclay | Thrandeston |
| Braiseworth | Hunston | Thwaite |
| Brome & Oakley | Kenton | Wattisfield |
| Brundish | Langham | Westhorpe |
| Burgate | Little Blakenham | Wetherden |
| Buxhall | Little Finborough | Wetheringsett (Brockford Street) |
| Cotton | Mendlesham Green | Weybread |
| Creting St. Mary (Jacks Green) | Mickfield | Whitton |
| Creting St. Peter | Monk Soham | Wickham Skeith |
| Crowfield | Nettlestead | Willisham Tye |
| Denham | Norton (56b Little Green) | Wingfield |
| Drinkstone | Offton | Winston |
| Finningham | Onehouse | Woolpit (Green, Heath, Borley Green) |
| Flowton | Redgrave | Worlingworth (Church, Church Road) |
| Framsden | Redlingfield | Yaxley |

Table 4.1 Villages with no settlement boundary

Justification for the criteria used to determine which villages are to be considered as part of the countryside.

4.82 Previous to the preferred options Mid Suffolk did not consult on any formally proposed village hierarchy below the level of key service centres and therefore no alternative options are offered. The option to identify Primary and Secondary Villages according to the above criteria has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal which shows that this approach to development in the countryside is:

- in accordance with national guidance and regional policy PPS1, PPS3 and RSS4
- in accordance with the sustainability appraisal
- restricts infill development in the countryside that could prejudice the success of businesses in towns and key service centres
- facilitates appropriate development that will be beneficial to the rural economy
- safeguards the character of the countryside, the environment and wildlife.

5 Strategic Policies

Climate Change

5.1 It appears likely that there will be significant long term changes to the global climate, due partly to the emission of green house gases. Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing the District.

5.2 Mid Suffolk Local Development Framework needs to plan for development that will help slow down the rate of, (but also be resilient to the effects of), climate change. In this respect the LDF's task will be to:

- Reduce consumption of natural and non-renewable resources
- reduce pollution to levels that do not damage natural systems
- help improve air quality
- reduce contributions, and adapt to climate change
- reduce the use of non-renewable energy and promote renewable energy
- plan in the context of increased flood risk

Guidance and Documents 2

| | |
|---|--|
| National Guidance | <p>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)</p> <p>Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change (consultation 2006)</p> <p>PPS12: Local Development Frameworks (2004)</p> <p>PPS22: Planning for Renewable Energy (2004)</p> <p>PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control (2005)</p> <p>PPG24: Noise (1994)</p> <p>PPS25: Planning and Climate Change (2006)</p> <p>Circular 2/2000: Contaminated Land</p> |
| Regional Guidance | <p>Policy WAT4: Flood Risk Management</p> <p>Policy ENV 7: Quality in the Built Environment. Requires planning policy to 'reduce pollution</p> <p>Policy ENG2: Renewable Energy</p> |
| MSDC Corporate Plan Priorities Mid Suffolk Community Strategy Aims | <p>Develop the built environment in a sustainable way</p> <p>Avoid and reduce the impacts of flooding through good planning.</p> <p>To protect our water environment and reduce</p> |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| | <p>pollution through educating industry and agriculture on pollution prevention measures.</p> <p>To protect the environment from pollution, flooding and other natural and man-made disasters</p> <p>To reduce the risk of flooding through preventative planning, and better management of surface water run-off in all new developments.</p> <p>Promote Energy Efficiency</p> |
| <p>Evidence base</p> | <p>A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Mid Suffolk is currently being carried out and will enable a more detailed understanding of the flood risk issues to existing and proposed developments allowing a direct input into the strategic planning of the Mid Suffolk district through the Local Development Framework. The SRFA will be used to inform the Sustainability Appraisal and as the evidence base for Core Strategy.</p> <p>Contaminated Land Strategy (2000)</p> <p>Progress Report on Air Quality in Mid Suffolk (2005)</p> |

Flooding

5.3 The area of Mid Suffolk includes 43km of ordinary watercourses, the main rivers are the Rivers Gipping, Dove, Deben and Waveney. The primary source of flood risk in the District is from fluvial flooding. The vulnerability of this area to flooding from this and other sources such as urban storm water and groundwater is likely to increase with climate change.

5.4 Mid Suffolk has an obligation to ensure that development is located in sustainable locations. Through the spatial objective SO2, the council will adopt a precautionary principle approach to protect life and property from future risk.

5.5 Several areas within Mid Suffolk are at risk from flooding, the key diagram within the Development Strategy chapter identifies these flood risk areas. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will identify in more detail areas at varying risk within flood risk zones. It is anticipated that this will be published May 2007 and used to inform further decisions.

Pollution

5.6 The Sustainability Scoping Report (2007) and the Progress Report on Air Quality in Mid Suffolk (2005) identifies that pollution (nitrogen dioxide) levels in the district are low and no Air Quality Management Areas are required. It is not considered necessary to undertake increased monitoring.

5.7 However, pollution is a strategic issue for Mid Suffolk. Noise pollution (from domestic and commercial sources) is the most frequent cause of complaint by residents. Light pollution is also a key concern to residents.

The management of pollution levels is a particularly important issue for Stowmarket and those villages located near to the A14 corridor, even though monitoring suggests the least amount of complaints received are attributed to noise pollution levels from transport. As a key contributor to climate change, pollution control will be monitored through the AMR and a policy is needed to ensure air, water and land pollution levels are reduced or managed where they cannot be reduced, ensuring the spatial objective SO2 can be adhered to.

Renewable Energy

5.8 Mid Suffolk currently contains one renewable energy development located in Eye. Eye power station, the worlds first poultry litter fuelled generating plant and consumes 160,000 tonnes per annum of chicken litter and produces 12.7 MWh. In April 2004 the planning permission for Eye was extended to allow a wide range of biomass fuels to be burned.

5.9 Wind Energy developments are currently limited within Mid Suffolk as we have a generally low average wind speed throughout the district. In addition, Wattisham Airfield creates aviation issues that constrains the location of wind farm developments further to any landscaping and visual effects which may be evident. As technology improves wind energy schemes which will be focused may come forward and these scheme along with other renewable energy schemes in appropriate locations will be encouraged and promoted throughout the District.

5.10 Limited data exists on energy consumption. During 2003 domestic use per consumer was 6,167kWh and total commercial/ industrial use was 234 GWh. Energy consumption for domestic use in Mid Suffolk is the highest in Suffolk. This was reflected in the Sustainability Appraisal, Scoping Report (2007) which stated that there is a need to increase energy efficiency and resilience to climate change in the design, construction and use of buildings.

The Preferred Approach

Core Strategy CS 2

Climate Change

Development must reflect the to need plan for climate change, through addressing its causes and potential impacts:

1. The council will support development proposals that avoid areas of current or future flood risk, and which do not increase flooding elsewhere. This will involve a risk based sequential approach to determining the suitability of land for development.

- All new development should be located within flood zone 1. Environment Agency Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 will be identified on the proposals map and flood risk policies will prevail in these areas. Allocations for new development will not be made in flood risk zones 2 and 3.

Developments proposed in flood risk zone 1 which is situated in the middle of flood risk zones 2 and 3 will be treated in the same way as developments in flood zone 2 or 3, and therefore is subject to the sequential test.

- All new development and all land uses (including agricultural activities and changes to drainage in existing settlements) should not add to the risk of flooding elsewhere. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems should be incorporated into all developments where technically feasible.
- Where protected habitats are threatened by flooding, replacement habitats may need to be provided

to ensure there is no net loss of important habitats. There may be opportunities for creation of new habitats in areas at risk of flooding.

The Council will also seek to reduce the increase in flood risk due to climate change through measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

2. The emission of pollutants needs to be avoided, reduced or omitted wherever possible and, if they must occur, the negative impacts should be reduced, in order to protect and enhance the built and natural environment and human health.

Development that harms the quality of soil, water resources or air and/or causes noise, dust, odour or light pollution will be avoided wherever possible

3. The Council will require developers to consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy appliances in all new developments and appropriate existing buildings. Such energy production could include energy from biomass, solar panels, photovoltaic cells, combined heat and power schemes (CHP) and wind.

The Council will promote and encourage the appropriate development of renewable energy schemes within Mid Suffolk to assist in achieving the Regional Spatial Strategy's target of 10% total electricity consumption in the East of England by 2010 and 17% by 2020 (excluding offshore wind).

4. The Council will seek to realistically reduce the use of the private car and encourage the provision of alternative forms of sustainable transport.

Reason for Preferred Option

5.11 It was considered necessary to merge flood risk, pollution control and renewable energy into one preferred policy headed Climate Change. All three issues relate primarily to objective SO2: To reduce the adverse impact of society on the environment, and respond to the implications of climate change. Climate change relates to all these aspects, therefore this approach was considered appropriate, creating a policy strategic in nature for the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy.

5.12 The option is consistent with national policy PPS25, PPS24, PPS23, PPS22 and PPS1 and the supplement to PPS1. The policy reflects the current national priority for reducing climate change and reducing Mid Suffolk's carbon footprint.

5.13 The option is also consistent with the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (Dec.2006), in particular Policy WAT4, ENV7 and ENG2.

5.14 The sustainability appraisal indicated that the single preferred option would have significant environmental benefits safeguarding wildlife through protection of the soil and water courses. The impact upon the natural environment is positive, ensuring that the species and habitats are protected and air, land and water quality is maintained and enhanced. Social benefits occur through the improvement of individual quality of life, improved health and well-being and the protection of property.

5.15 The sustainability appraisals during the issues and options stage replicated the preferred option sustainability appraisal if merged. The inclusion of 'promotion of sustainable modes of transport' in to the policy, identified a further area of positive effect within the sustainability appraisal of the preferred option.

5.16 The renewable energy options proposed in the Final Issues and Options Core Strategy (2006) are

mutually exclusive and remain unchanged. None of the options were rejected and the preferred option is a combination of Options BE1 and BE2, incorporating the consultation responses where appropriate and subsumed within subject climate change.

5.17 The pollution control option proposed at the Final Issues and Options Core Strategy (2006) has remained unchanged. While the flood risk option has been amended, in accordance with the Environment Agency and Government Office advice.

5.18 The policy approach was supported through the consultation process of the Issues and Options Core Strategy.

5.19 The option relating to flooding risk within the final Issues and Options consultation (2007) was considered too broad, although the single option followed PPS25, it lacked detail, which has been included for the preferred option. It should be recognised that the preferred option is a key strategic policy and not to be used within development control process.

5.20 In addition, representations received during the Issues and Options stage identified Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and flood zone protection as key issues for inclusion in the preferred options.

5.21 Based on the consultations received, pollution control is identified as an important issue. It is important that the Mid Suffolk LDF incorporate an appropriate policy for dealing with environmental protection ensuring air, water and land pollution levels are reduced or managed in accordance with national and regional guidance.

5.22 This policy needs to complement the needs of the rural district. The private car, is considered a necessity for residents in primary, secondary villages and residents located in the countryside, allowing the capability of travelling to the nearest Key Service Centre or Town for the services and facilities. Public transport opportunities will be promoted throughout the District.

5.23 There was significant support for the encouragement of renewable energy as part of initiatives to protect the environment and reduce the effects of climate change. Of the responses received 85% supported the renewable energy policy.

Alternatives Considered

5.24 None have been considered.

5.25 The preferred approach merges all the options consulted during the Final Issues and Options consultation (2007). All options were considered appropriate and have been amended taking into account the previous sustainability appraisals, the consultation representations as deemed appropriate and to complement the policy title 'climate change'. The previous options included:

5.26 Option BE1: Integration of renewable energy schemes into new development

The Council will require developers to consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy appliances in all new developments and appropriate existing buildings. Such energy production could include energy from wind, biomass, solar panels, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes (CHP).

5.27 Option BE2: Stand alone renewable energy schemes

The Council will promote and encourage the appropriate development of renewable energy schemes must occur, the negative impacts should be reduced. Development that harms the quality of soil, water resources or air that causes noise, dust or light pollution will be avoided wherever possible.

Sustainable Construction

5.28 Development plans are required to contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change - through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions, promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development.

5.29 Climate change is real and happening now. Planning has a pivotal and significant role in helping deliver carbon neutral development. Spatial strategies should make a full contribution to delivering the Government's Climate Change Programme by:

- enabling the provision of new homes, jobs, services and infrastructure and shaping the places where people live and work, secure the highest viable standards of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions;
- securing and shaping new development that is resilient to the effects of climate change in ways consistent with social cohesion and inclusion;
- reflecting the development needs and interests of communities and enable them to contribute effectively to tackling climate change.

Guidance and Documents 3

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| National Guidance | <p>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2004)</p> <p>The Planning and Climate Change Supplement (to PPS 1, 2006 consultation)</p> <p>Code for Sustainable Homes. A step-change in sustainable home building practice (Dec 2006)</p> <p>Further guidance is available from the Local Government Association and Planning Officers Society in "Planning policies for sustainable building guidance for Local Development Frameworks" (2006)</p> <p>PPS22: Planning for Renewable Energy (2004)</p> |
| Regional Guidance | <p>Policy ENG1 suggests that to meet regional and national targets for reducing climate change emissions, local authorities should encourage the location of development and design to "optimise its carbon performance."</p> |
| MSDC Corporate Plan Priorities | <p>The Council has a duty to ensure the natural and built environment is managed in a sustainable way.</p> <p>Objective: An improved inheritance for Future generations' as a headline objective.</p> <p>It also wants to deliver on other long term objectives</p> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | for sustainable development including its waste recycling targets, "sustainable" building methods, and good site planning and layout which helps to deliver broader social and health aims. |
| Mid Suffolk Community Strategy Aims | Objective: to provide a better heritage for future generations Priority: water quality and energy efficiency through the implementation of energy and water saving devices." |

5.30 Concentrating new development in the towns and key service centres, along with promotion of opportunities to increase the use of public transport, will help to reduce carbon emissions from traffic. However, the private car is a necessary part of rural life and vitality, therefore other measures are required.

5.31 Buildings contribute to half of the UK's total carbon dioxide emissions and improvements in energy efficiency and integration of renewable of renewable energy are also essential. Recent changes in Building Regulations standards and the proposed Sustainable Buildings Code should result in more energy efficient buildings, however Mid Suffolk District Council wish to encourage developers to reduce emissions beyond these minimum standards.

5.32 PPS22 states that local authorities may include policies requiring a percentage of the energy to be used in large development to come from on-site renewable and many authorities are pursuing such policies in their LDF.

5.33 To achieve the spatial vision and spatial objective, new development should maximise energy efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide emissions while integrating sustainable construction and design techniques into the built environment. The Council will seek appropriate measures to integrate sustainable construction in all developments ensuring measures are sympathetic to the historic built environment.

5.34 In an open landscape (which contributes to the character of Suffolk as a whole) large wind turbines may make an impact on the landscape and local amenity needs to be carefully considered and balanced with the wider benefits. If generation is to occur at the smaller scale (on a site by site or house by house basis - often referred to as Micro-renewable) the cumulative effect of a large number of schemes needs to be considered especially in relation to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

The Preferred Approach

5.35 The preferred option is considered the most sustainable option identified through the sustainability appraisal. The drive for carbon neutral homes will require the introduction of material production and construction methods that will contribute to the desired reduction in emissions. The environmental positive impact upon natural environment and health is generated by this policy.

5.36 It should be noted that this policy will require close monitoring through the housing trajectory and the AMR to ensure that housing delivery is not affected by this policy. It is also recognised that a further piece of evidence base is required.

Core Strategy CS 3

Sustainable Construction

The Council will ensure:

Within the towns and key service centres all development will be expected to meet the highest standards of sustainable design and construction in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes. A step change in sustainable home building practice document to an overall sustainability performance rating level 5. Residential development in the countryside, through barn conversions and replacement dwellings will be expected to achieve the same rating.

Within the primary and secondary villages all residential development will be expected to meet the highest standards of sustainable design and construction in accordance with the Code for Sustainable Homes. A step change in sustainable home building practice document to an overall sustainability performance rating level 3.

Proposals will need to take into account the historic environment when seeking to incorporate energy efficient designs, material and equipment and a balance may need to be applied in Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

Developers will be encouraged to bring forward schemes for low or carbon neutral development on sites allocated within the the Site Specific Allocations, particularly in Stowmarket.

Commercial development above 500sqm will be required to integrate renewable energy technology in order to provide at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements.

Reasons for Preferred Option

5.37 The policy is in accordance with national guidance PPS1, the supplement to PPS1 and PPS22, and regional guidance policy ENG1.

5.38 The consultation responses identified the lack of renewable energy / sustainable construction measures for commercial development and therefore has been included into the preferred option.

5.39 Using a higher size threshold as a basis for sustainable construction is not feasible in such a rural district, such as Mid Suffolk. Mid Suffolk experiences very little large scale development and the ability to integrate renewable energy and develop carbon reduced developments would be severely limited. In the last 5 years Mid Suffolk have only received 28 applications for developments of 10 or more, this year Mid Suffolk received only 2 applications . It should be recognised that new allocations made through the LDF may bring forward larger schemes. This is also applicable for commercial development.

5.40 The preferred option creates a realistic and achievable measure for reducing carbon emissions in Mid Suffolk due to the large number of small villages located throughout the significant geographical area.

5.41 If development is to be agreed in areas that are beyond the usually accepted framework for development (described in the Regional Spatial Strategy - recognising that the rural areas are less likely to enjoy the benefits of public transport). In locations outside towns and key service centres to help maintain sustainable rural communities we will require a "compensatory" level of carbon reduction above and beyond the Building Regulations standard. This is designed to make up for the extra emissions that may arise from car journeys.

5.42 Whether for residential or commercial premises, this initiative would see an enhanced level of emission

and heat loss control built into new development that will adequately compensate the environment for the emissions that may arise from additional journeys by car. These measures will accord with levels five or six of the new Sustainable Homes Code published in December 2006 by DCLG.

5.43 Controlling the effects of local energy generation.

Alternatives Considered

1. The Building Regulations have minimum standards but higher standards could be imposed, such as those proposed by the Code for Sustainable Homes: A step-change in sustainable home building practice (December 2006) In areas beyond Key Service centres, identified in Local Development Documents, the Council will require new developments to be designed above the minimum energy efficiency requirements set by the Building Regulations.

2. By maximising the energy efficiency of a building, its energy requirements can be minimised to the point at which all or most of this can be met through renewable energy on-site. In this way, zero or dramatically reduced net carbon emissions can be achieved. Low carbon or zero carbon emission developments will be sought throughout Mid Suffolk.

3. The Council will require new developments to be designed to the minimum energy efficiency requirements which solely accord with the Building Regulations.

5.44 A combination of options 1 and 2 have been merged to create the preferred option. The Council wishes to seek a higher threshold than proposed by the Building Regulations, a more sustainable option which is practical within the rural district of Mid Suffolk to realistically tackle climate change

Landscape and Historic Environment

5.45 The District is characterised by a gently rolling plateau of boulder clay dissected by undulating river valleys, with a predominantly arable irregular field pattern and some pasture located on the valley floors. It is common in Mid Suffolk to see woodlands dominated by Oak and Ash and field boundaries and road sides lined with hedgerows and verges. This provides a haven for wildlife, thriving in all areas of the district and along with other features, like settlement patterns, gives a unique landscape character to the area.

Guidance and Documents 4

| | |
|--|--|
| National Policy | <p>PPS1: 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005)</p> <p>PPS7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' (2004)</p> <p>PPG15: 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (1994)</p> <p>PPG16: 'Archaeology and Planning' (1990)</p> |
| Regional Policy | Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policy ENV2, ENV5, ENV6 and SS16 |
| Mid Suffolk Community Strategy (2004) | Manage the natural environment in a sustainable |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>National Policy</p> | <p>PPS1: 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005)</p> <p>PPS7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' (2004)</p> <p>PPG15: 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (1994)</p> <p>PPG16: 'Archaeology and Planning' (1990)</p> |
| <p>Mid Suffolk Corporate Plan (2004)</p> | <p>way</p> <p>Maintain the character of the Mid Suffolk landscape</p> <p>Manage the natural environment in a sustainable way</p> <p>Reduce the risk to the environment through responsible planning</p> <p>Maintain the character of the Mid Suffolk landscape</p> <p>Contribute to the conservation of Mid Suffolk's heritage</p> |
| <p>Other Evidence Documents</p> | <p>Landscape Character Assessment - The Countryside Agency (2002)</p> <p>Suffolk's Landscape Character Assessment - Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Suffolk Design Guide (2003)</p> <p>Village Design Statements - various parishes</p> <p>The Character of England; landscapes, wildlife and natural features (1996)</p> <p>Countryside Character Volume 6: East of England (1999)</p> |

5.46 Over the years many features of local character and distinctiveness have been lost as a result of changing practices in land management and through development. It makes even more important the need to retain the remaining elements of local distinctiveness such as trees and hedges, and where possible, to add or restore them. An assessment of Suffolk's landscape has been conducted which will help to ensure that future developments stay in keeping with their surroundings. This is a national directive currently being undertaken by Suffolk County Council in conjunction with all of the district councils in Suffolk. Landscape Character Assessment involves far more than simply an analysis of visual features. It takes into consideration a wide variety of factors, including geology, topography, soil type, land use, field patterns, settlement patterns, cultural

influences, historical changes, ecology, ground cover and condition.

5.47 The Issues and Options consultation recommended the introduction of development documents based on Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment. It was seen as a key statement and should be considered of prime importance when considering development of any kind. Further information will be given in Development Plan Documents concerning the design characteristics, grouping and scale of development is deemed to conserve / enhance the landscape. Landscape enhancement is an important issue in the district and the impact of development could have a detrimental impact on the landscape if not appropriately controlled.

Principles of Landscape Character Assessment

- Emphasis is on landscape character, rather than landscape quality
- Detailed analysis helps to build up an informative picture of an area
- Recognition of objective and subjective aspects
- Need for application at different scales
- Stakeholder participation

5.48 Surveys have been conducted in order to produce a Landscape Character Assessment of the whole County and uses the Character Areas as a baseline expanded by local authority consultants who have broken these down into Landscape Description Types. The ongoing survey work provides a more detailed descriptions of the landscape with detailed maps and survey sheets used to help this process. The map below displays a close up of the district taken from the overall Suffolk landscape character assessment map.

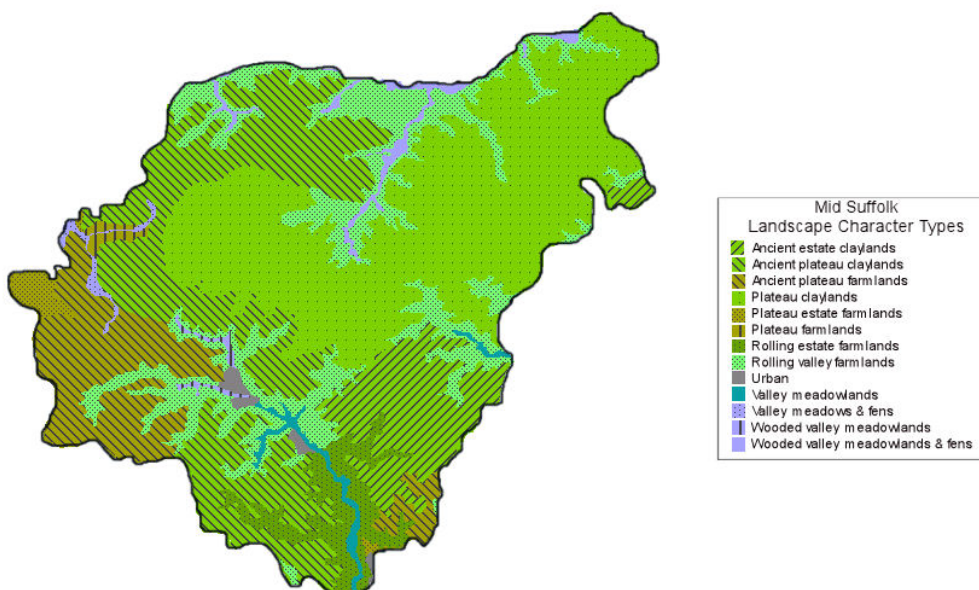


Figure 5.1 Mid Suffolk - Landscape Character Assessment

Map for guidance only

5.49 The Landscape Character Assessment for Suffolk is currently being finalised with development and expansion of descriptions for each Landscape Character Type from the field surveys being carried out. A completed version will be available online from July 2007. On completion, it is envisaged that the landscape description areas will form the basis of a separate Mid Suffolk Supplementary Planning Document to assist in the interpretation of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

5.50 There are 31 Conservation Areas in Mid Suffolk, 4,062 Listed Buildings (the highest in Suffolk) and 21 Scheduled Ancient Monuments; the collective extent of these designations is fairly far reaching covering a high proportion of the existing building stock. This presents both challenges and opportunities in bringing forward new development through intensification and redevelopment that respects the built heritage of the district and enhances the appearance and character of an area. Detailed Development Control Policies pertaining to development in Conservation Areas, the alteration of Listed Buildings and development affecting the setting of a Listed Building will be set out in the Development Control Policies DPD.

5.51 Mid Suffolk's rich and rural landscape heritage needs protecting and in the last round of consultation many respondents supported both of the options presented. Concerns were made in relation to unauthorised alterations to buildings, for example window changes, which can have a serious effect on character. Also mentioned was the need for greater support to local communities and individuals to help maintain our heritage including more funding with positive, practical and supportive advice. Option HE2 is supported by respondents to Mid Suffolk's final Issues and Options paper as it ensures the distinctiveness of the area is maintained and enhanced. The sustainability appraisal identified that the preferred option would create significant social and environmental benefits by protecting our heritage.

Core Strategy CS 4

Protecting Mid Suffolk's Landscape and Heritage

Special Landscape Areas (in accordance with PPS7) will be retained. Mid Suffolk will work with Suffolk County Council to prepare and adopt a district Landscape Character Assessment.

The Council will continue to protect its Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas in accordance with Government guidance. The Council will also take account the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole rather than concentrating solely on selected areas, protecting the districts most important components and encourage development that is consistent with maintaining its overall historic character.

Reason for Preferred Options

5.52 This preferred policy option is consistent with PPS7, PPG15 and PPG16.

5.53 This option is consistent with Regional Policy ENV2 and ENV5

5.54 PPS7 advises that local landscape designations should be removed and replaced with a criteria-based policy to protect the landscape based on a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). The aim is to provide protection for these areas without the need for rigid local designations that may unduly restrict acceptable, sustainable development and economic activity essential for the area. PPG15 states that listed buildings cannot be replaced and they can be robbed of their special interest as surely by unsuitable alteration as by outright demolition. PPG15 provides advice on historic landscapes, including registered parks and gardens, and PPG16 provides advice on protection and enhancement of scheduled ancient monuments, other important archaeological sites and their settings, and the process of evaluation archaeological remains which provides the Council with guidance on heritage protection.

Alternatives considered

5.55 None. The final Issues and Options consultation stated individual options for landscape and heritage. The Preferred Options consultation has merged these policies into one as they are intrinsically related. Landscape protection is a key requirement of national policy. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is required by national and regional policy.

Design

5.56 Design is a 'cross cutting' issue which influences a number of preferred options set out in other parts of this document. High quality design can enhance the character and appearance of an area, helping to create attractive, vibrant spaces. In turn this can help to deliver safer places and reinforce the vitality of urban areas. High quality design can also encourage energy efficiency through careful layout, orientation and arrangement of windows. Policies providing detailed design guidance will be subject to the detailed development control policies. It was recognised from the consultation responses that options on design were missing from the issues and options paper and it was considered important.

Core Strategy CS 5**Design**

Development should be of a high quality design that respects the built heritage of Mid Suffolk and enhances the character and appearance of the district. It should create visual interest within the street scene and where appropriate encourage active uses at ground floor level.

Reason for Preferred Options

5.57 This preferred policy option is consistent with PPS1.

5.58 This option is consistent with Regional Policy SS16

5.59 The quality and local distinctiveness of the built environment, such as the use of thatch, is an important asset for Mid Suffolk towns and villages and has significant impact on everyday life. There is concern that the character of Mid Suffolk has been damaged by poorly designed development particularly of residential estates. PPS1 gives strong guidance that good design is inseparable from good planning and that development which does not improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions should be refused. The Suffolk Design Guide provides guidance on how design should complement local architectural traditions. Mid Suffolk will produce a district focused design guide in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to incorporate advice on sustainable construction within the historic environment. The sustainability appraisal identified that the preferred option would create significant social and environmental benefits by planning with good design in mind.

Alternatives considered

5.60 None. High quality and inclusive design is a key requirement of national policy.

Biodiversity and Geology

5.61 Biodiversity relates to the variety of plants and animals and the habitats in which they thrive. It contributes to the distinctive character of the natural areas and green spaces as a result of the collection of species and habitats in a particular area.

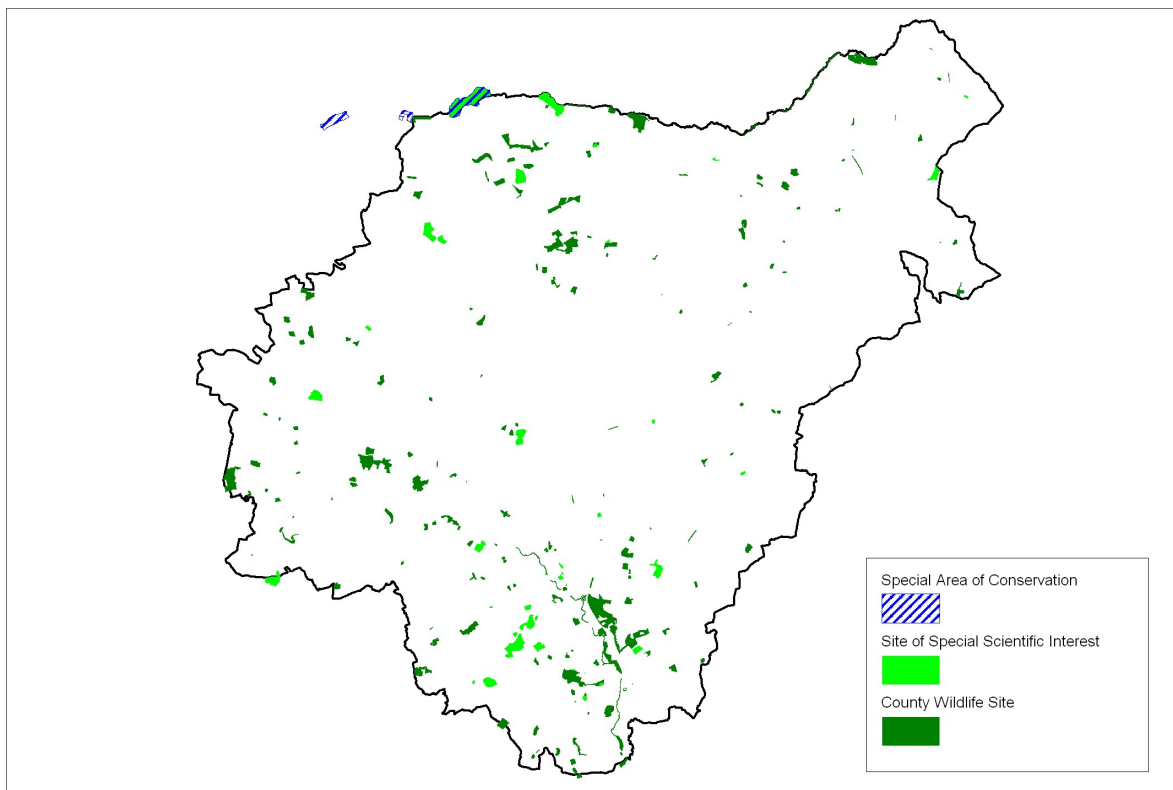
Many people appreciate that local planning authorities protect existing designated sites ranging from international to local sites through control of development. However, over recent years there has been a growing recognition that conserving biodiversity extends beyond this network of designated sites. A range of wildlife and habitats are found throughout the countryside and urban areas of Mid Suffolk which is essential to the maintenance of Mid Suffolk biodiversity.

Guidance and Documents 5

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| National Guidance | <p>PPS1: Planning for Sustainable Development (2004)</p> <p>PPS9: Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</p> <p>Circular 05/06 Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</p> |
| Regional Guidance | <p>ENV3 Biodiversity and Earth Heritage states that planning authorities should ensure that internationally and nationally designated sites in the region are given the strongest level of protection, and that development does not have adverse effects on the integrity of sites of European or International Importance for nature conservation. Proper consideration should be given to the potential effects of development on the conservation of habitats and species protected by law.</p> |
| MSDC Corporate Plan priorities | <p>Mid Suffolk LSP Community Strategy (2004) and Corporate Plan (2004) states that the partnership is committed to its part in delivering Suffolk's Biodiversity Action Plan by recreating habitats such as water meadows and grasslands, we can increase biodiversity and create environments that are of value to people and wildlife for generations to come. In defining the Local Development Framework we will take account of sustainability issues, including the need to use less natural resources, to protect natural and semi-natural wildlife habitats.</p> <p>Objective: A better Heritage for future generations</p> <p>Action: Improve the availability of Nature Reserves in the District and Make people aware of the importance of protecting their local environment.</p> |
| Community Strategy Aims | |
| Evidence base | <p>Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan</p> <p>Suffolk Biological Records Centre</p> |

5.62 Mid Suffolk includes international, national, county and locally designated sites for nature conservation outlined in the table below and 6 nationally designated sites for geological value.

| Designation | Number of Designated Sites | Area |
|--|---|-------|
| RAMSAR * | 1 in part (Redgrave and South Lopham Fen) | 33 |
| SAC * | 1 in part (Waveney and Little Ouse Fen) | 91 |
| SSSI | 24 | 426 |
| CWS | 182 | 1334 |
| LNR | 6 | 32.48 |
| Will require an Appropriate Assessment to be completed (Source: Biological Records Centre March 2006) | | |



Map 5.1 Mid Suffolk designated ecological sites

5.63 Mid Suffolk's natural assets include its geology, trees and woodlands, historic parklands, ponds and river valleys provide varied habitats and species, sites with nature conservation and geological interest. The Council will continue its approach to protect and manage designated sites of nature conservation importance and encourage wildlife throughout the area.

5.64 There are also a number of species and habitats which are locally distinctive to Mid Suffolk. The table below contains a list of species recognised in Suffolk's Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP). The location of these locally BAP species and habitats is wide spread, found throughout the district with a cluster of species and habitats found along the river Gipping stretch.

| Suffolk Biodiversity Action Plan Species identified Mid Suffolk (Suffolk Biological Records Centre 1950-to date) | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Adder | Common Dormouse | Greater water-parsnip | Nightjar |
| Barn Owl | Corn Bunting | Grey Partridge | Otter |
| Bittern | Cornflower | Linnet | Pipistrelle |
| Black Poplar | Desmoulin's whorl snail | Little Tern | Ramshorn snail |
| Brown Hare | Dingy Skipper | Man Orchid | Red Squirrel |
| Bullfinch | Great Crested Newt | Narrow-mouthed whorl snail | Red-Tipped Cudweed |
| Reed Bunting | Shepherd's needle | Skylark | Song Thrush |
| Spotted Flycatcher | Spreading Hedge-Parsley | Stag Beetle | Stone-Curlew |
| Tassel Stonewort | Tower Mustard | Tree Sparrow | Turtle Dove |
| Unspotted Lungwort | Water Shrew | Water Vole | Woodlark |

Table 5.1 Suffolk BAP species in Mid Suffolk

5.65 Priority habitats also include dry acid grassland, healthland and ponds, which are a regular feature throughout the district.

5.66 The consultation responses indicate general support for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and restoration of habitats and species. It was identified that the policy options posed in the 3rd Issues and Options consultation were too generalised and required further explanatory text to include the protection and enhancement of wildlife corridors and ecological networks. In addition, the policy option did not include any local information specific to Mid Suffolk which would create a more locally distinctiveness policy. The preferred policy option reflects this.

5.67 The Sustainability Appraisal carried out for the Issues and Options consultation (2007) is similar to the preferred options Sustainability Appraisal, the option is considered more favourable due to the additional text which has been added to meet the requirements of the NERC Act 2004 and consultation representations.

The Preferred Approach

5.68 The preferred option is a combination of options 1 and 2 from the 3rd and final Issues and Options consultation with appropriate amendments. The principles of the preferred option reflects government policy and guidance.

Core Strategy CS 6

Biodiversity and Geology

To protect, manage and enhance Mid Suffolk's biodiversity and regionally important geomorphological sites based on a network of:

- Designated Sites (international, national, regional and local)
- Biodiversity Action Plan Species and Habitats
- Wildlife Corridors and Ecological Networks

and where appropriate increase opportunities for access to and appreciation of nature and geology conservation for all sections of the community.

Emphasis will be given to create new habitats particularly along the Gipping, Upper Waveney and Deben river valley's in connection with flood management and to contribute towards green tourism opportunities.

Reason for Preferred Option

5.69 This option is consistent with National Planning Policy Guidance PPS1, PPS9, The Companion Guide to PPS9 and Circular 05/06.

5.70 This option is also consistent with the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and in particular Policy ENV3.

5.71 The option (combination of options NE1 and NE2) was identified through the Sustainability Appraisal as the most sustainable option. This option will have significant positive social and environmental impacts, contributing to a good quality of life and well-being in social terms and improving the environmental quality of the district in environmental terms.

5.72 Support was expressed for the option by the representations received on the Issues and Options Core Strategy. The preferred option reflects responses that the option should not be generalised, additional text on wildlife corridors and ecological networks has been included and local information to make the policy more locally distinctive.

Alternatives Considered

5.73 None. Protection of biodiversity is required by national policy and international legislation. The policy option builds upon the evidence base which exists to protect and enhance local priority species and habitats.

Services and Infrastructure

Services

5.74 Living the rural life is easy when everything is to hand. Sadly, some rural services are declining and we are forced to travel further a field for some of the things we need. In the absence of plentiful and regular public transport services to get us around, PPS7 recognises that the car will remain an important mode of transport in rural areas. Despite this acceptance we must accept our responsibility in trying to minimise the effect of the car and the emissions they cause. The availability of quality services close at hand in our key service centres and the main settlements will therefore influence our need to travel longer distances to meet our daily needs.

5.75 If we are to prevent the continued growth of harmful emissions; based on increased levels of car ownership and usage, we need to understand the importance of retaining existing services and delivering new facilities on a ward by ward, parish by parish basis. To reduce the need to commute for our daily needs' a range of services are needed locally. Village and neighbourhood community halls, nurseries and creches, schools, places of worship, convenience shops, public houses, post offices all play an important part in the fabric of village and town life. They can bring a sense of belonging, vibrancy and community spirit to communities and contribute to the quality of life offered to young and old alike. Similarly, our main town and neighbourhood centres need to be cared for and enhanced, where necessary, to offer an attractive environment for shopping without the need to travel further afield.

5.76 On one hand we need to prevent any over burden of existing services arising from new development. Extra people using, for example play, recreation or health facilities can cause an unacceptable strain on the existing residents of an area. On the other hand the delivery of new services may result in existing facilities being able to remain open. Build too many new homes and services can come under strain - build too few and other services may fail. But for most rural communities coping with development is about so much more than wondering whether the roads will cope or the doctor's surgery is full. The full range of facilities that are needed by a community to live life, safely and without harm to the environment includes an ever growing set of demands. Within this context the range of facilities could include sport, leisure and recreational facilities, social and community facilities, public art, public realm improvements (including landscaping and tree planting), nature conservation measures, waste and recycling initiatives and services, educational facilities, infrastructure provision, public transport, improvements to highways, health facilities/ resources, town centre management initiatives and amenity woodlands.

Transport

5.77 A key role for the Local Development Framework is to coordinate policies for development and transport, in particular to help reduce the need to travel and so reduce the unwanted impacts of transport and traffic. However, Government guidance acknowledges that the car will continue to have an important part to play and for some journeys, particularly in rural areas it will remain the only real option for travel. Particular issues for Mid Suffolk are rural accessibility and the capacity of the A14 road and rail corridor to cope with future development and the growing freight traffic between the port of Felixstowe and the Midlands.

5.78 Suffolk County Council, as transport authority, has the main role in transport planning and prepares the Local Transport Plan for Suffolk. The District Council coordinates the Local Development Framework with the Regional Strategy, Local Transport Plan and the investment programmes of public, private and voluntary sector transport providers. The District Council also has some direct involvement in transport matters, such as off-street parking, concessionary fares and taxi licensing.

5.79 The draft Regional Transport Strategy, set out in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England, has the following objectives:

- To manage travel behaviour and the demand for transport in order to reduce the rate of road traffic growth and ensure the transport sector makes an appropriate contribution to the required reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- To encourage the efficient use of existing transport infrastructure.
- To enable the provision of the infrastructure and transport services necessary to support both existing development and that proposed in the spatial strategy.
- To improve access to jobs, services and leisure facilities.

5.80 In rural areas priority should be given to providing sustainable access from villages and other rural settlements to market towns and key service centres, for example with flexible, demand responsive public transport. The location and delivery of services such as healthcare and education are important for rural accessibility. Measures should include:

- Support for public transport, where viable, to improve accessibility to key services
- Innovative approaches to local transport provision including community - based transport initiatives, delivering services to remote areas and measures to assist people without use of a vehicle.
- Support for increasing the availability and use of communications technology to reduce dependency on travel in remote areas.

5.81 The East of England Regional Assembly has highlighted the need for adequate Government investment in transport infrastructure in the region in order that new housing and jobs can be delivered sustainably over the next 15 years.

5.82 The Local Development Framework can contribute to the Local Transport Plan objective of helping to maintain viable communities in market towns and villages and support the implementation of proposals for Mid Suffolk through planning control, land allocations, and negotiating developer contributions for improvements to public transport, pedestrian and cycle facilities.

5.83 The LDF can help to reduce some of the need for travelling by ensuring that new housing is close to work places, schools, shops and other services and by encouraging alternatives to car use, with improved facilities for public transport, walking and cycling. There may be other opportunities to reduce the need to travel, for example by home delivery of shopping and services, more out-reach services, use of communications technology rather than face to face meetings, home working and development of live-work units.

5.84 The District Council prepared its own transport strategy in 2006, in order to set out local priorities and provide input to the Suffolk LTP and the Mid Suffolk LDF. The priorities for Mid Suffolk, which have been identified in consultation with parishes and a range of other organisations, are:

- safety improvements to the A14 and A140 roads
- completing cycle-route networks, particularly for the main town of Stowmarket
- new cycle routes and safe routes to school are high priorities for Mid Suffolk
- rural bus services, including community transport feeder services and fully accessible buses
- Promote further upgrades to rail passenger services and rail freight route to relieve lorry traffic on A14 road.
- promoting community transport and helping to reduce social exclusion for older and less mobile residents
- New village footways to mitigate problems with lorry traffic, pedestrian access to schools and community facilities
- Coordination of Stowmarket Local Transport Action Plan with Stowmarket regeneration proposals
- Reducing the need to travel and increasing accessibility to services for all sections of the community

- Developer contributions towards infrastructure taking account of the cumulative impact of smaller developments.
- Continue to monitor, update and enforce lorry management measures.

5.85 The preferred approach for the location of new housing and other development, as set out in the development strategy and housing sections of the Core Strategy, takes account of the need to be where access to day to day facilities is available, or could be provided, by public transport, walking and cycling, to lessen the need to travel by car.

Guidance and Documents 6

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| National Policy | PPS1, PPS7, PPG13 and PPG17; Circular 05/2005: Planning Obligations; Consultation Document on Planning Gain Supplement. |
| Regional Policy | Draft RSS Policy SS9, Policy SS12, Policy SS16, and T1-15. |
| Mid Suffolk Community Strategy Aims | Access to health services and education, provide leisure, sport and recreation facilities, maintenance of rural facilities, waste recycling, provision for elderly/ youth, and promoting alternatives to car travel. |
| MSDC Corporate Plan Priorities | Encourage recycling, recognise the needs of each generation by providing equal access to key services and provide opportunities to improve health. |
| Evidence base | Parish Plans, Village Design Statements/ Appraisals; SPG for Shops, Public Houses and Post Offices in Villages (2004); Mid Suffolk SPD for Social Infrastructure including open space, sport and recreation (2006); Parish Needs Assessment / Parish Profiles (2006), Suffolk Local transport Plan. |

5.86 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for Mid Suffolk highlighted several key sustainability issues with regards to community facilities facing Mid Suffolk. The implications of these trends for the sustainability of community facilities included a need for improved healthcare and educational facilities, inadequate availability of open space for recreation in some settlements, limited public transport services across much of rural Mid Suffolk, many parishes in Mid Suffolk are disadvantaged as a result of barriers to housing and service, trends showing a decreased of key facilities in rural villages and a lack of facilities for young people and an ageing population. In addition an analysis by Suffolk ACRE in 2006 of priorities identified in Parish Plans completed in Mid Suffolk District between 2003 and 2006 showed that key priorities include culture and sport, facilities for the youth, community safety and transport and the built environment.

Consultation Responses on Final Issues and Options Core Strategy

5.87 Although the Suffolk Strategic Health Authority and Suffolk Education Authority have asked the Council to collect "s106" funding, they have made no suggestions in terms of forward planning for health and educational facilities. Therefore it would not be possible at this stage to include particulars relating to future development of these services and a more generalised approach would have to be adopted.

5.88 In the most recent consultations (Feb 2007) regarding the Issues and Options Core Strategy it was

established that:

- 77% of the responses were in support of the vision. Concerns related to the number of planning obligations, how the vision accords with the housing section, planning obligations proposed are not appropriate to the size of development and managing the costs of obligations.
- 58% of the responses were in support of Option CS1 (where possible secure contributions). Concerns related to conformance with national guidance, excessive contributions, brownfield sites would not be developable, the adoption of SPD on for Social Infrastructure were premature, contributions should be judged on a case-by-case basis and unacceptable development should not be approved as a result of obligations provided.
- 65% of responses were in support of Option CS2 (standardised planning obligation). Similar concerns were expressed to those against Option CS1.
- Support for local priorities including: sport, leisure and recreational facilities, affordable housing, public realm improvements, social and community services, amenity woodlands, infrastructure, waste minimisation, nature conservation, health facilities, public transport, educational facilities and town centre management initiatives.
- Most responses to the consultation on Issues and Options supported the proposed vision for transport in Mid Suffolk. There is also support for use of workplace travel plans in order to encourage more sustainable travel, such as car sharing, and an approach to residential parking standards that will allow different criteria to be applied in urban and rural areas. Suffolk County Council advised that Core Strategy should promote improvement of pedestrian and cycle routes in accordance with the Suffolk Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2006). More detailed policies will be set out in the Development Control DPD.

Core Strategy CS 7

Services and Infrastructure

The District Council will seek the provision of appropriate infrastructure and community services by:

Working with role players such as the Health Authority and Education Authority to provide community facilities and infrastructure in accordance with the development strategy;

Ensuring that new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure and community services; and

Safeguarding appropriate key local services in rural villages.

Developer contributions for infrastructure and community services will be sought where appropriate by applying a standardised planning obligation payment on each new housing unit or area of commercial floor space developed. Local priorities could include infrastructure, open space, sport, leisure and recreational facilities, social facilities, public realm improvements, nature conservation mitigation and improvement measures, new or waste minimisation and recycling initiatives and services, educational facilities, improvements to public transport, improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes, health facilities and resources, amenity woodlands for public access and town centre management initiatives.

Planning policies will help reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys and make it safer and easier for people to access jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling.

Reasons for Preferred Option

- This option is consistent with National Planning Guidance in PPS1, PSS3, PPS7, PPG13, PPS17 and Circular 05/2005.
- This option is consistent with the RSS in Policies SS9, SS12, SS16, and T1-15.
- The Preferred Option proved to be the most sustainable option in the Sustainability Appraisal with significant positive social and economic impacts anticipated by ensuring that contributions are secured. In addition increased provision of services could also have environmental benefits by reducing the need to travel by private car.
- Support were expressed during the consultation process for this option. Additional comments relating to the provision of health and education facilities and protection of services were included in the preferred option.
- Objections related to the viability of this option and conformity of the option to the tests in Circular 05/2005. It has to be stated that contributions will only be sought for community facilities and infrastructure that are in accordance with the tests in Circular 05/2005. The policy will be monitored to assess the impacts upon housing provision.

Alternative Options Considered

- Option 1: Where possible secure contributions through the use of standard charges or formulae.
- Option 2: Apply a standardised planning obligation payment on each new housing unit or area of commercial floor space developed.
- Option 3: Residential parking standards that allow different criteria to be applied in urban and rural areas.
- Option 4: To encourage more sustainable travel through workplace travel plans.

Housing

Guidance and Documents 7

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| National Policy | PPS1: 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005) PPS3: Housing (2007) |
| Regional Policy | Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policy SS4, SS2, H1, H2, H3, H4, |
| MSDC Corporate Plan (2004) Priorities | Working towards a balanced housing market. More affordable starter homes |
| Community Strategy (2004) Aims | Improve the supply of affordable housing. Meet Decent Homes Standard |
| Other Evidence Documents | Mid Suffolk Housing Strategy (2003) Alteration to Mid Suffolk Local Plan - Policies for Affordable Housing (2006) |

Housing Requirements

5.89 The Regional Spatial Strategy (Panel Report) housing requirement for Mid Suffolk for 2001-2021 averages up to 415 homes per year. This comprises 7,500 houses for Mid Suffolk plus up to a further 800 houses in the part of Mid Suffolk adjacent to Ipswich. In December 2006 the Secretary of State confirmed these figures, but stated that they are to be treated as minimum figures.

5.90 This requirement is similar to the overall average rate of housing development in the District between 1991-2006 (419 per year, compared to the County Structure Plan requirement for Mid Suffolk of 405 per year). Part of the requirement will be met by existing planning permissions, part will be met by use of previously developed land and buildings, **but there will also be a need to allocate some green field sites for housing development.**

5.91 The Local Development Framework will also have to consider continued provision for housing beyond 2021 as PPS3 requires it to address delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption (2009), i.e. up to 2024. **The District Council proposes that housing requirements beyond 2021 are estimated on the basis of a continuation of the same annual rate as that up to 2021 i.e. 415 houses per year.**

| Houses required 2001-21 (draft Regional Spatial Strategy): | |
|--|--------------|
| Mid Suffolk parishes adjoining Ipswich: | 800 |
| Remainder of Mid Suffolk | 7,500 |
| Total 2001-2021 | 8,300 |
| Houses required 2021-24 (estimate based on draft Regional Spatial Strategy) | |
| Total 2021-2024 (415 X 3 = 1,245) | 1,245 |

Table 5.2 Houses required (draft Regional Spatial Strategy)

| Houses built 2001-2006: | |
|--|--------------|
| Mid Suffolk parishes adjoining Ipswich: | 90 |
| Remainder of Mid Suffolk | 1,796 |
| Total | 1,886 |
| Houses Required 2006-2024 (8,300+1,245 -1,886 = 7,659) | 7,659 |

Table 5.3 Houses Built

| Existing Provision 2006 | |
|---|--------------|
| Planning permissions 2006 | 2,110 |
| Remaining allocated sites in Mid Suffolk Local Plan | 400 |
| Previously developed land (sites for 10 or more houses) | 1,100 |

| Existing Provision 2006 | |
|---|--------------|
| "Windfall" Allowance for small (less than 10 houses) windfall sites 2006-2024, <u>excluding first 10 years of land supply</u> (for 18 -10 = 8 years) 112 per year X 8 = 896 | 896 |
| Total = existing provision as at mid 2006 | 4,506 |
| Additional Houses required 2006-2024 7,659 - 4,506 = 3,153 | 3,153 |

Table 5.4 Existing Provisions

note: The requirement for 8,300 houses up to 2021, and the estimated continued rate from 2021-2024, is subject to the final RSS figures being confirmed by the Government.

note: The estimate of 1,100 potential houses on previously developed / "brown field" sites may change with further assessment of sites identified in the Urban Housing Capacity Study and flood risk assessment etc.

note: Remaining land at Cedars Park, Stowmarket, allocated in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan, but without full planning permission, is estimated to provide for about 400 additional houses.

note: The gap between the housing requirement of 7,659 from 2006 to 2024 and existing provision in 2006 of 4,506 would leave sites for 3,153 houses to be found, in the form of new housing allocations in the Site Specific Allocations development plan document.

note: Some of this requirement is specified in the RSS Panel Report to be in the parishes adjoining Ipswich (about 450 need to be found out of 800 houses, taking account of completions, planning permissions and potential brown field sites).

note: Over the period 1991 to 2006 28% of new housing development was in Stowmarket, 5% in Needham Market and Eye and 67% in the remainder of Mid Suffolk. National and regional policies would maintain or add to the contribution of the towns to housing supply, particularly as most of the previously developed land is in the towns. The future proportion of development in villages is likely to be less, in view of the Governments approach to sustainable development, less reliance on "windfall sites" and greater emphasis on local needs and affordable housing in villages.

"Windfall Sites"

5.92 Windfall sites are those which have not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. They comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available, including infill development of former garden land, residential conversions and flats over shops.

5.93 Government advice in PPS3 is that allowances for windfalls should not be included in the first 10 years of land supply (in this case 2010 -2019)

5.94 Small sites (of less than 10 houses) have in the past provided a significant proportion of housing completions in Mid Suffolk because of the rural nature of the District, with a large number of villages, where planning policies have allowed limited infill development inside settlement boundaries. Over the 5 years 2001

to 2006 an average of 153 houses per year have been built on small windfall sites (representing 40% of housing completions and a major contribution to use of previously developed land in Mid Suffolk). The Mid Suffolk Local Plan did not allocate any housing sites for less than 10 dwellings. The ability to allocate sites solely for affordable housing, as provided for in PPS3, may result in small sites being allocated in the LDF.

5.95 The regional annual monitoring report makes an estimate of 112 dwellings per year for small windfall sites in Mid Suffolk for the period up to 2021. This takes account of past rates of development, diminishing opportunities for infill development, as sites inside Settlement Boundaries are used up, balanced by higher densities of infill development arising from PPG3 guidance since 2000. This estimate represents an average of less than one dwelling per parish per year.

5.96 In view of the intention under PPS3 to minimise reliance on windfall sites, the District Council proposes, at the Site Specific Allocations stage, to review settlement boundaries and to make use of the ability to allocate small sites solely for affordable housing in rural communities. It is likely that small scale infill housing development and conversions will continue to make a contribution to housing supply and the use of previously developed land. Although no longer included as an allowance in the first 10 years of land supply, this contribution to housing completions will be monitored and may reduce the need for allocations of green field land for housing later in the plan period.

Previously-Developed ("Brown Field") Land

5.97 The overall regional target for the proportion of housing development on previously developed land is 60%. In Mid Suffolk, as a rural District, the potential for brown field development is less than in some urban areas.

The Preferred Approach

Core Strategy CS 8

Brown field Target

The District Council proposes a target of 50% for brown field / previously development land redevelopment in Mid Suffolk.

Reason for Preferred Option

5.98 Between 2001 and 2006 the proportion of housing built on previously developed land in Mid Suffolk was approximately 50%. Much of this was on small infill sites and development of garden land. However the largest housing site currently being developed in Mid Suffolk is at Cedars Park, Stowmarket, which is a green field site planned in the 1980s. The total capacity of this site is about 1,770 dwellings, of which nearly 800 were built by mid 2006.

5.99 The Urban Housing Capacity Study (2006) for Mid Suffolk makes an assessment of the scope for future development of housing on previously developed land, on sites with potential for 10 or more houses. Sites for about 1,100 potential dwellings have been identified by the study. Most of these are in the towns of Stowmarket and Needham Market.

5.100 The re-use of brown field sites will have to take account of the need to retain local employment as well as the potential for housing development. Otherwise, some places could cease to be sustainable settlements if all employment sites are redeveloped for housing. The assessment takes account of the need to maintain local employment, for example with mixed-use developments rather than 100% housing. More detailed

assessment of flood risk, access constraints etc will be carried out before site specific site options are proposed.

5.101 The distribution of these previously-developed sites and an estimate of their potential housing capacity is as follows:-

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Stowmarket | 400 houses |
| Needham Market | 360 houses |
| parishes adjacent to Ipswich | *190 houses |
| Eye | 80 houses |
| key service centres | 50 houses |
| primary villages | 50 houses |
| Total | 1,130 houses |

Table 5.5 Brown field land capacity

* An additional previously-developed site for about 400 houses is being considered in conjunction with a public inquiry into the "Snoasis" major leisure development proposal at Great Blakenham.

5.102 The proposed 50% target represents about 200 houses per year and would be a challenging target, but it could be achieved, based on existing commitments (1,219 out of the 2,110 dwellings with planning permission in 2006 are on previously developed land) and if the 1,100 potential dwellings estimated in the Urban Housing Capacity Study can be delivered over a 10 year period. Whether this target could be maintained beyond 10 years depends on other sites becoming redundant and available for redevelopment. The District Council considers 50% to be the maximum realistic target for Mid Suffolk, towards the regional figure of 60%, based on the evidence available. Therefore no alternative options have been proposed.

5.103 Small windfall sites will continue to make a contribution to the use of previously developed land although there is no longer an allowance for this in the first 10 years of land supply.

5.104 Much of the housing provision will need to be by the allocation of green field sites as extensions to existing settlements. The preferred option indicates how these allocations may be distributed between different types of settlement, based on the Development Strategy and the preferred options for the location of housing development. The phasing of green field site allocations will need to take account of the first priority, under PPS3, for using previously-developed land.

Alternatives considered

5.105 The option is based upon the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy target and Mid Suffolk evidence base, therefore no alternative option was considered appropriate.

5.106 Under the "plan, monitor, manage" approach advocated in PPS3, rates of development will be monitored and if the delivery of previously developed sites is greater than expected, the requirements for green field allocations may be reduced later in the plan period.

Core Strategy CS 9

Provision and Distribution of Housing

That provision is made for allocating sites for at least 3,153 homes and associated infrastructure in Mid Suffolk over the period from 2006 to 2024.

The release of land for housing will be phased to enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption and to ensure that priority is given to use of previously-developed land.

Broad Distribution and Phasing of Housing Allocations for 15 Years Housing Supply

| Years | 1-5 | 6-10 | 11-15 | Total |
|---------------------|----------|----------|-------|------------|
| Stowmarket | PDL +300 | PDL +500 | 800 | PDL +1,600 |
| Needham Market | PDL | PDL | 150 | PDL +150 |
| Eye | PDL | 100 | 100 | PDL +200 |
| Ipswich fringe | PDL | PDL | 450 | PDL +450 |
| Key Service Centres | PDL +100 | 150 | 200 | PDL +450 |
| Primary Villages | 100 | 100 | 100 | 300 |
| Secondary Villages | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mid Suffolk Total | PDL +500 | PDL +850 | 1,800 | PDL +3,150 |

PDL = Previously developed land. Other figures are for allocations of green field sites. PDL = Previously developed land. Other figures are for allocations of green field sites.

Specific sites cannot be identified at this Preferred Options stage, and will be considered and consulted on in the later Site Specific Allocations document.

Reason for Preferred Option

5.107 Selection of housing sites to be allocated in the Site Specific Allocations DPD will give priority to previously developed land and buildings in towns and Key Service Centres. The Council's preferred approach is for most new general market housing development, including a proportion of affordable housing, to be in towns and Key Service Centres.

5.108 The Development Strategy also allows for some provision for meeting local housing needs in "Primary Villages" where basic local services, including a primary school and food shop are available. The intention is to identify those settlements where some development may be acceptable if it supports local need and contributes to the sustainability of the community. This can help to address local concerns about possible decline of the communities and the need to support local facilities, for example to retain young families and primary schools in villages.

5.109 In other, "Secondary Villages", housing development would be limited to small scale infill or affordable

housing under the rural exceptions policy, where a local need can be identified that cannot be met in a more sustainable location .

Housing policies will be coordinated with the investment strategies of service providers to ensure that necessary services and infrastructure can be maintained or enhanced. Local needs will be assessed taking account of survey information including housing needs surveys, housing market assessments, village appraisals, parish plans and village design statements.

5.110 The sustainability appraisal supports the preferred option. The approach reacts to Mid Suffolk's rural character, whilst developing in a sustainable nature.

Alternatives considered

5.111 No alternatives were considered appropriate. The figures are based upon the 'annual housing land availability evidence base.

Housing Density and Mix

5.112 One of the Government's strategic housing policy objectives is to create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural.

5.113 In Mid Suffolk new housing development should provide a mix of house types, sizes and affordability to ensure that new homes meet local needs, as identified in housing needs surveys and housing market assessments. This includes the needs of particular groups such as families with children, older and disabled people and continuing trends in Mid Suffolk of an ageing population and smaller households.

5.114 Recent housing trends, in response to national policies, are leading to higher density development and more house building in urban areas. There is a national indicative minimum density figure of 30 dwellings per hectare for new housing development, in order to ensure the efficient use of land. The Annual Monitoring Report for 2005-2006 shows that 44% of new dwellings were completed at less than 30 dwellings per hectare, 37% at 30 to 50 per hectare and 19% above 50 per hectare. Government guidance in PPS3 allows local planning authorities to develop housing density policies having regard to local circumstances, as well as national and regional requirements. This could be a range of densities across the plan area.

Consultation Response

5.115 Some responses to consultations, from parish councils and residents, have expressed concerns about higher density infill development in villages and the need for any new development to take account of the character and appearance of the existing built environment. Densities below 30 dwellings per hectare would need to be justified by local evidence, for example in Village Design Statements prepared by local communities.

The Preferred Approach

5.116 In respect of density, the preferred approach is to specify a range of densities appropriate to different types of location in Mid Suffolk - but still achieving an overall average of at least 30 per hectare for the district.

5.117 The planning system is required to deliver a mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households.

Core Strategy CS 10

Density and Mix

New housing development should provide a mix of house types, sizes and affordability to cater for different accommodation needs.

Housing developments should make best use of land by achieving average densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, unless there are special local circumstances that require a different treatment.

Lower densities may be justified in villages to take account of the character and appearance of the existing built environment.

Higher densities of at least 40 dwellings per hectare may be achieved in more sustainable locations in towns, close to a good range of services and facilities.

Reasons for the Preferred Approach

5.118 To recognise the distinctive character of Mid Suffolk, where housing sites may range from town centre redevelopment sites close to a range of shops, services, employment and public transport, which may be suitable for fairly high density flats, to small village infill or affordable housing schemes which need to respect the traditional form of development, rather than following a standardised suburban form of development. This approach was supported by the sustainability appraisal.

5.119 A flexible approach to density will allow new development to be more responsive to the existing distinctive character of an area or settlement and to community views, for example, as set out in Village Design Statements.

Alternative Approaches Considered

5.120 Two options were considered in respect of housing density:

1. To apply the national indicative minimum housing density figure of 30 dwellings per hectare for all locations throughout the district of Mid Suffolk.
2. To specify a range of densities appropriate to different types of location in Mid Suffolk - but still achieving an overall average of at least 30 per hectare for the district.

5.121 More detailed policies for the layout and design of new housing will be set out in the Development Control Policies document.

Affordable Housing

5.122 Affordable housing is a key issue for Mid Suffolk and the Local Plan Alteration for affordable housing policies was adopted in July 2006, following extensive public consultation.

5.123 The definition of affordable housing in the Alteration is housing accessible to households who cannot afford to rent or buy homes generally available on the open market. It includes social rented housing and intermediate housing. Intermediate housing is housing at prices or rents above those of social rent but below market prices or rents (can include sub-market renting, low-cost home ownership and shared ownership).

5.124 The Mid Suffolk Housing Needs Survey 2003 and statistical update in 2005 supported the need for up

to 35% affordable housing to be provided in new housing developments above the specified site size thresholds.

5.125 The housing needs survey estimated an annual shortfall of affordable housing of 362 units. However the overall annual housing requirement proposed for the District is only 415 units, so it would not be possible to meet the full need for affordable housing (representing 87% of all new housing) within the resources of the private and public sectors. The adopted target of up to 35% affordable housing took account of need and also what may be achievable and deliverable with the resources available. The District Council aims to improve on the past rate of affordable housing provision, which has been based on annual Housing Strategy targets of about 80 affordable homes per year.

5.126 Negotiations with developers will have regard to any abnormal costs associated with the development. However standard site development costs (such as those relating to site clearance, archaeological, flood defence or landscaping works), will not be considered as extraordinary, particularly those costs that were foreseeable and should therefore have been budgeted for in the price paid for the land.

5.127 The Local Plan alteration includes a Rural Exception Site Policy to allow small sites solely for affordable housing, abutting the settlement boundary of a small rural settlement, where a need can be demonstrated. In addition, the possibility of allocating such sites will be considered in the Site Specific Allocations document.

5.128 The existing housing needs survey information will be followed up by an Ipswich Area Housing Market Assessment, including Mid Suffolk, in Spring 2007. Further work on housing needs and housing market assessment will inform the LDF process and may provide evidence to justify further improvements to policies for affordable housing in the later Development Control Policies and Site Specific Allocations documents.

The Preferred Approach

Core Strategy CS 11

Affordable Housing

The target for the proportion of affordable housing in new housing developments should be 35%. A higher figure may be negotiated if supported by up to date housing needs and housing market assessments. The precise percentage would have regard to other planning objectives and development requirements which need to be provided for, but recognising the high priority of affordable housing.

Rural exception sites, for small scale affordable housing only, may be allowed or allocated in small rural communities, if a local need can be demonstrated.

Reasons for Preferred Option

5.129 This strategic policy is based on the recently adopted (July 2006) Local Plan Alteration in respect of affordable housing, which was subject to extensive consultation and a public inquiry, so alternative options have not been proposed.

5.130 The site size thresholds for requiring affordable housing in new housing developments, as set out in the adopted Local Plan Alteration, are:

sites of 15 dwellings or more or sites of 0.5 hectare and above, in Stowmarket and Needham Market;

sites of 5 dwellings or more or sites of 0.17 hectare and above, in the remainder of Mid Suffolk.

5.131 Detailed affordable housing policies and policy for a mix of house types and sizes will be considered in the Development Control Policies document.

5.132 Other aspects of policy will also contribute to improving affordability, including economic development policies to promote better employment opportunities, education and training, in order to raise income levels in the District.

Sites for Gypsies and Travellers

5.133 A criteria based policy is proposed to guide consideration of sites.

Core Strategy CS 12

Gypsies and Travellers

Provision will be made for any additional Gypsy and Traveller sites required within the District following the completion both of joint studies with neighbouring authorities to assess the unmet need and site selection studies to determine the appropriate specific locations. The principle will be to seek to address the permanent accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller families within the District either as extensions to existing sites or by the identification of additional small-scale sites that have reasonable and sustainable access to facilities including health and education.

With regard to 'transit' sites for Travellers, the intention will be to identify suitable opportunities within the area of assessed need related to current working patterns and to secure appropriate management of any such site. Any site should be in a suitable location which meets the needs of the community involved and limits the impact on neighbouring land uses and the wider landscape.

Where a need for further pitches has been established, the following criteria will be used to evaluate specific sites.

In all areas:-

- The site is within a reasonable journey time, either by public transport or private vehicle, of a primary school, secondary school and primary healthcare facility
- Vehicular access arrangements meeting current Highways Authority standards can be put in place, including vehicle parking and turning areas within the site's boundaries
- The site is not situated in an area where the Environment Agency's current Indicative Flood Map indicates the extent of potential flooding for a one in 100 chance of flooding each year.

In rural areas:-

- The site will not have an adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside
- The site respects the scale of the nearest settled community in terms of both its area and the total number of residents

Reasons for the Preferred Approach

5.134 The Council is required by the Government to address the specific housing requirements of gypsies and travellers. National guidance requires the criteria to be set out to guide allocations of sites to meet identified accommodation needs and for consideration of planning applications. The intention is to provide additional

authorised sites, if necessary, in order to reduce unauthorised encampments in unsuitable locations.

5.135 A study of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers has been carried out as part of a review by the East of England Regional Assembly to identify the number of additional caravan pitches required across the Eastern Region. The study has suggested there is inadequate provision for gypsies and travellers in the East of England leading to problems of unauthorised sites. The need for permanent pitches in each District in the Eastern region has been estimated and for Mid Suffolk a need for 39 additional caravan pitches, up to 2011, has been estimated.

5.136 A more detailed Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment has been commissioned jointly with four neighbouring authorities (Babergh, Ipswich, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney) to assess the number and type of sites needed in each District.

5.137 Consultation with representative of the gypsy and traveller communities has indicated a preference for small privately owned sites, especially for extended family groups and friends, rather than large council-run sites

Alternatives Considered

5.138 National policy requires local authorities to set out appropriate criteria to guide allocation of sites to meet identified needs for gypsies and travellers, so no alternative options were considered appropriate.

Employment

Guidance and Documents 8

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| National Policy | PPS1, PPG4, PPS6, PPG13 |
| Regional Policy | RRS Policy E1, E2 |
| MSDC Corporate Plan Priorities | Seeks prosperous, thriving towns and villages by ensuring a sufficient supply of land for employment development, using brownfield sites where possible. Develop incubator units using, where possible, existing facilities, in particular redundant farm buildings. The provision of jobs needs to be facilitated in industry and commercial activities to prevent the opportunity for social exclusion. |
| Community Strategy Aims | |
| Evidence base | Mid Suffolk District Council - Draft Employment Land Study (Nov 2006) Mid Suffolk District Council - Draft Regeneration Strategy 2005 - 2008 Haven Gateway Partnership - Framework for Growth (Employment Land Study - Nov 2005) |

Introduction:

5.139 The way in which different types of employment uses are monitored has implications for the content of this chapter:

- This section is focused on Use Classes B1, B2 and B8, such as offices, light industry, general industry, warehouses and distribution in line with regional and local monitoring.
- Other Use Classes that make a significant contribution to employment, such as the A1/A2/D1, are monitored separately and therefore are covered more completely in other sections of this document such as retail, town centres and community facilities.
- Similarly regional and local monitoring of employment is focused on sites of 2 hectares and over and consequently omits the smaller employment sites common in the countryside, which therefore merit separate consideration. The principles of employment and other development in the countryside is considered in the chapter on Development Strategy and this chapter should be read in conjunction with this earlier section.

Trends in Employment (Mid Suffolk draft Employment Land Study 2006)

5.140 The Mid Suffolk Employment Land Study (November 2006) shows that the district has an economically active population of 43,600 with around 4,000 businesses, of which over 1,000 are located in Stowmarket. Economic growth in the district has been steady, especially in the south of the district around the A14. Stowmarket attracts a high number of inward investment enquiries for commercial land and property through the 'Choose Suffolk' website.

Sector trends

5.141 Mid Suffolk is a rural district and in the 2001 census 7% of the resident workforce were engaged in agriculturally related employment, with distribution (22%) and manufacturing (20%) employing the largest number of employees, closely followed by public administration (18%). Forecasts taken from the Haven Gateway Partnership employment land study (table 7.5) anticipate that the trend for decline of agriculture, manufacturing and distribution sectors will continue in the plan period, but will be compensated by a rise in other sectors such as transport, communications, business services, health, education and other services to give overall growth of 1400 jobs.

| Sector | Number of Jobs |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Agriculture | -1,600 |
| Manufacturing | -1,900 |
| Electricity, Gas and water | -100 |
| Construction | 0 |
| Distribution | -100 |
| Retail | +200 |
| Hotels and Catering | +100 |
| Transport and Communications | +1100 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Banking, Finance and Insurance | +100 |
| Other Business services | +2,100 |
| Public Administration and Defence | +100 |
| Health and Education | +500 |
| Other Services | +900 |
| Total | +1400 |

Table 5.6 Sectoral changes of employment types in Mid Suffolk

Note: Framework for Growth - Employment Land Study - Haven Gateway Partnership (Nov 2005)

5.142 However the report recognises that the trend data used were subject of large variations and counsels caution regarding the accuracy of the actual number of jobs involved. The forecast total growth of 1,400 jobs is considerably less than that quoted by other studies and this discrepancy is considered under employment land demand.

Rural Perspective

5.143 The Suffolk Business Profile 2002 shows that 57% of Mid Suffolk businesses employ less than 6 people, a pattern of small-scale enterprise common in rural areas. Monitoring of employment land focuses on sites in excess of 2ha, which makes it difficult to assess the considerable contribution that these small-scale enterprises make to the district's economy. Given the trend for decline in the agricultural sector it is vital for the health of the rural economy and to reduce commuting that these jobs are replaced with alternative local employment. There is a trend of growing demand for live/work units and small-scale workshop and office units in rural areas.

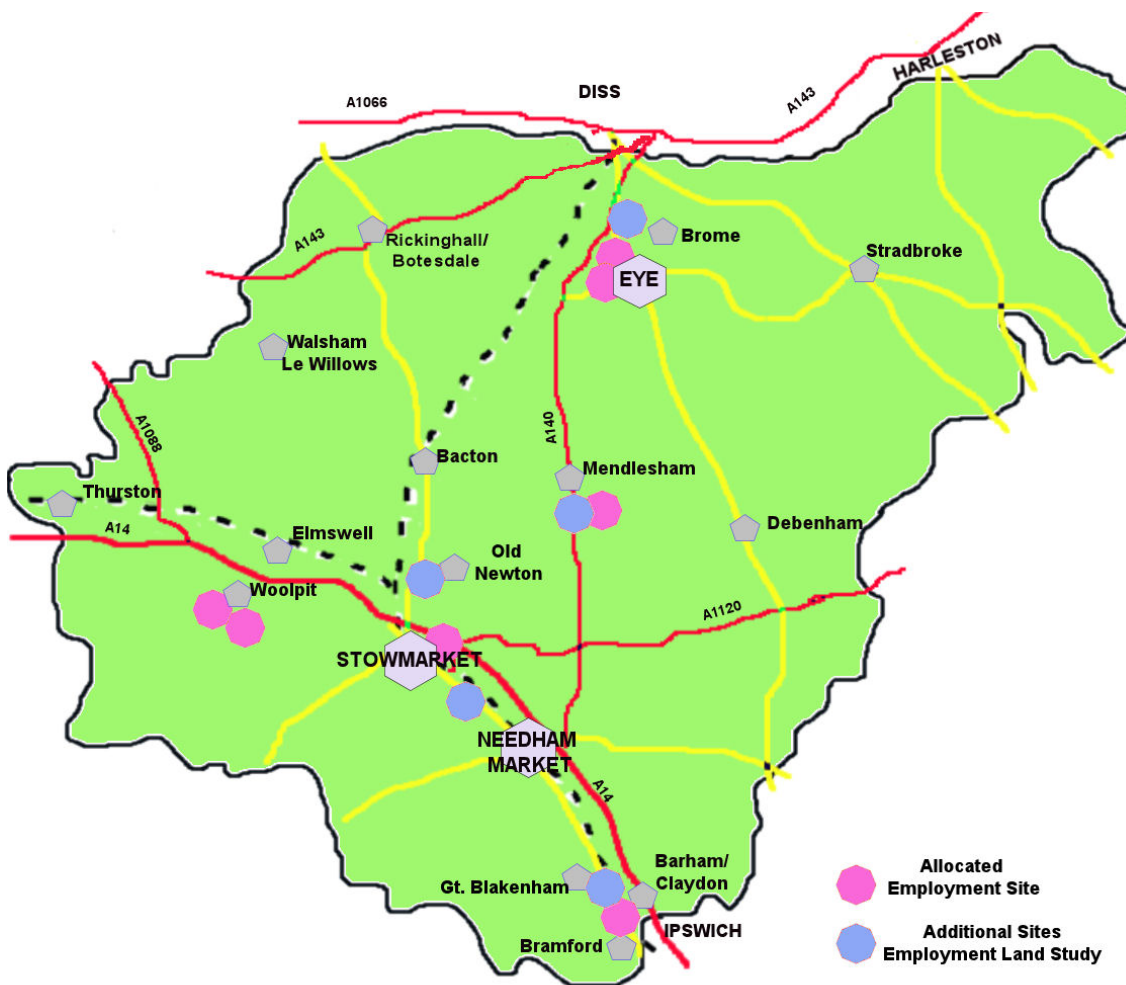
5.144 A trend that is causing concern in rural areas is the vulnerability of employment land to change to residential use that arises in part from policies that give priority to housing on brownfield sites. The Urban Capacity Study for Mid Suffolk shows a potential loss of up to 40 Hectares of employment land to housing. This is considered further in the section on supply and demand.

Monitored employment sites

5.145 The Annual Monitoring Report 2005-6 shows that some 4.7 hectares of new (B1, 2, 8) employment land has been approved since 2001 in addition to 13 hectares of vacant land brought back into use on allocated and employment land study sites. Year on year tables are not shown because changes to the monitoring system make comparisons of different year's figures misleading.

5.146 The brownfield/greenfield split is also misleading as all the allocated land, including that on old war-time airfield sites, is technically greenfield. Employment development on allocated sites is only recorded as brownfield development where existing industrial sites are redeveloped.

5.147 The Mid Suffolk draft Employment Land Study (2006) incorporates all the allocated sites plus some additional sites of local importance. These sites were assessed in the Haven Gateway Partnership study as the basis of supply of employment land in Mid Suffolk (see below). Their locations are illustrated in the diagram below and is for guidance only.



Map 5.2 Monitored Employment Sites

Employment Land Supply and Demand

Employment Land Demand

5.148 Regional policy E1 sets indicative targets for each district in the region. Mid Suffolk must support an unspecified contribution to the total 29,400 jobs in the Haven Gateway Partnership area and an unspecified contribution to the 18,000 jobs envisaged for 'the rest of Suffolk', (Mid Suffolk, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath). The Secretary of State recognised the need for further work by EEDA, in partnership with others, to produce more robust and monitorable targets down to district level.

5.149 There is no indication of how the total of 18,000 jobs is to be split between the three districts of "the rest of Suffolk", but if allocated according to population, Mid Suffolk's share would be some 36% of the total, approximately 6400 jobs.

5.150 Forecasts from the Office of National Statistics based on demographics suggest that we should plan for some 10,000 jobs while the Haven Gateway study suggests 1,400 jobs. These differences have been resolved in Mid Suffolk's Employment Land Study to a forecast figure of 6,000 extra jobs between 2001 and 2021. This agrees closely with the figure of 6,400 derived from Mid Suffolk's share of the 18,000 jobs forecast

for "the rest of Suffolk" in the Regional Spatial Strategy and is a reasonable basis for forward planning.

5.151 The actual land supply required to deliver these additional 6000 jobs depends on the way they are distributed across different types of industry each of which has a typical density of employment. For example manufacturing requires some 33m² per employee and distribution 56m². Based on the trends for different employment sectors (table 7.5) the additional 6000 jobs envisaged in the Regional Spatial Strategy might be met on only 2.9Ha additional allocated employment land.

5.152 SnOasis the application for this proposed leisure complex is currently subject of an inquiry by the Secretary of State. It has the potential to provide 1100 jobs on a defined site and does not require additional allocation in its own right. However the independent Economic Impact Assessment has forecast an additional demand of 1.33ha of employment land for indirect and induced employment from SnOasis.

5.153 In summary, the additional demand from growth during the plan period will be in the region of 2.9 - 4.23 ha, depending on the outcome of the SnOasis inquiry.

Employment Land Supply:

5.154 The supply of vacant land for B1, B2, B8 uses on sites in excess of 2ha exceeded 67ha in 2005 (Haven Gateway Study). However since then 13ha have come back into use, notably along the A14 corridor, while the heavily contaminated vacant site at Climax Molybdenum (12.47ha) has been removed from the list due to its poor quality and low levels of interest, leaving 42ha for development.

5.155 The Urban Capacity Study identified that some 40ha of land currently used for employment was vulnerable to changes in employment patterns and the shift from manufacturing to service industries. These brownfield sites were thought likely to come forward for consideration in the plan period and could be lost for residential use, some in the short-term.

5.156 Consequently the Mid Suffolk Employment Land Study shows that the seemingly high current supply of 67ha might all be utilized either for employment or housing within the next 10 years.

Area of land needed for employment in the plan period:

5.157 The Secretary of State considered that Local Development Documents should in the first instance be guided by RSS policy E1 but may also consider additional new evidence. Mid Suffolk's analysis of employment land need in the remaining plan period, together with the relevant supporting information is given above.

5.158 In order for the economy to grow, there must be sufficient, good quality, vacant employment land to allow for growth and relocation of existing firms, startups, restructuring and general "churn" in the market. We intend to allocate sufficient employment land during the plan period, to maintain the existing supply of vacant land and to incorporate the growth envisaged by the regional spatial strategy and that induced by SnOasis, should that application be approved. On an uncritical appraisal of the figures this would give rise to a need to allocate up to 70ha of additional employment land for B1, B2, B8 uses within the plan period - as summarised in the table below.

| | Source of Land | Area in Ha |
|---------------|--|-------------|
| Demand | Additional demand from employment growth (RSS) | 2.90 |
| | Potential demand from SnOasis | 1.33 |
| | Additional demand in plan period | 4.23 |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------|
| Supply | Current vacant land identified in Land study | 67.06 |
| | Loss to Take up of vacant land in 2006 | -13.11 |
| | Loss from removal of stock of poor quality | -12.47 |
| | Predicted loss to residential use | -40.01 |
| | Net Supply in plan period | 1.47 |
| Allocation | Allocation required just to meet demand | 2.76 |
| | Potential allocation required by 2021 to restore vacant land to 2006 level (67.06Ha) | 69.82 |

Table 5.7 Employment Forecasts 2001 - 2021

5.159 The figure of 69.82ha indicated in the table above is the best estimate based on current information but is subject to high levels of uncertainty and should be regarded as a maximum. For example, the biggest threat to employment land is from loss to residential use as identified in the urban capacity study. This land has yet to come forward and the area quoted (40 Ha) is based on an assessment of the vulnerability of sites if policy, and the economic and social drivers that apply today continue into the future. In practice there is no guarantee that this area will ever come forward for change of use, or if brought forward it will be for residential rather than mixed use.

5.160 69 Hectares is a very significant land take and draws attention to the fact that one of the potential consequences of redeveloping brownfield land for housing may simply be the need to allocate greenfield land for employment.

5.161 Given the uncertainties involved at regional and local levels and to avoid either over or under allocation, the Mid Suffolk Employment Land Study will be regularly updated in line with: -

- the requirements of the annual monitoring report,
- future reviews of the urban capacity study,
- work with the Haven Gateway Partnership
- future revisions of the Regional growth targets for the district.

5.162 As noted elsewhere the calculation of the area of land required includes sites that have not yet been lost to employment, or are dependant on the outcome of planning enquiries or on projected future growth. Sustainability considerations linking housing to jobs requires that the location and timing of employment allocations must also have some regard to the council's housing trajectory and housing policy elsewhere in this document.

5.163 Controlling the loss of employment land to other uses will minimise the land take required to meet regional job growth targets. It will also facilitate the consideration of employment growth in the wider context of sustainable housing growth, and the impacts on community and environment, rather than short-term commercial interests.

5.164 Land allocations need to be capable of meeting the evolving needs of businesses in Mid Suffolk and a phased release of land in line with up to date assessments of the Employment Land Study is most likely to meet these needs.

Location of Employment Land:

Regional Policy

5.165 Policy E2 of the RSS requires that an adequate range of sites/premises is identified and subsequently allocated to meet the growth targets and sectoral requirements of RSS Policy E1 and also to meet the needs of the local economy revealed by up-to-date employment land reviews.

5.166 Policy E2 also requires that sites of sufficient range and quantity and quality to meet the needs of all relevant employment sectors should be provided at an appropriate scale in urban areas, market towns and key rural centres. These sites should be located to enhance sustainability by:

- achieving a closer relationship between jobs and homes,
- maximising the potential use of public transport
- minimising loss or damage to environmental and social capital

5.167 This will often mean giving precedence to the reuse of previously developed land and the intensification of use within existing sites.

Sustainability Appraisal

5.168 The Sustainability Appraisal for the Core Strategy shows that the aims of Regional Policy E2 will be best served by directing employment towards the towns and key service centres where the resources and services essential to economic development already exist together with the infrastructure capable of absorbing its impact. Representations to the Issues and Options Report support this general policy providing exceptions are allowed where alternative locations would better serve the the needs of the business or the interests of residential amenity and the environment.

5.169 The sustainability appraisal supports the location of businesses heavily dependant on HGV traffic away from settlements and closer to existing major transport routes. The appraisal also supports the retention of appropriate employment opportunities in rural areas and encourages new employment development in these areas where it is of an appropriate type and scale.

Response to Consultations

5.170 Earlier responses to the Council's consultation exercises have indicated that there is broad support for an hierarchical approach to locating new employment opportunities.

5.171 In particular there is support for:

- focusing most economic development towards towns and key service centre villages, and
- focusing on existing industrial sites within and adjacent to those identified towns and villages
- recognising that transport orientated business may be better sited adjacent to main transport routes rather than on sites close to residential areas or sites that can only be accessed via quiet rural roads

5.172 The hierarchical approach is supported because it will tend to direct larger new development to locations that already have the resources and services essential to economic development and the infrastructure capable of absorbing its impact.

5.173 However there is equal support at the other end of the hierarchy for:

- ensuring that local employment opportunities should be retained in villages.
- promoting small scale local employment opportunities in villages through such proposals as

- small scale tourism that enable the rural economy to diversify
- diversifying agriculture (e.g. new crops bio-fuel) and
- re-use of old farm building for commercial activities (offices, farm shops, holiday lets)
- home working and live/work units
- giving some priority to the needs of small businesses
- controlling impacts from increased (lorry) traffic on rural roads

5.174 Respondents did not find any conflict in supporting both the general concept of focusing most development into towns and supporting certain types of economic development along transport corridors and other types in rural areas where it would meet local need. There was general consensus in principle as to the size, scale and employment uses that were likely to be appropriate in different types of location.

5.175 Several representations from the development industry suggest that for economic growth to continue employers, landowners and developers require sufficient levels of certainty together with adequate levels of flexibility to manage risk in their forward plans. Consequently allocations should be phased throughout the plan period to ensure that facilities offered have the opportunity to evolve with the changing needs of industry.

5.176 Residents also require reassurance that economic growth will be managed in a way that does not significantly impact on their amenity or on the landscape and environment. The policies set out below aim to balance these different needs.

Special Requirements for Rural Employment

What is the Countryside?

5.177 In planning policy the 'countryside' is defined as any land falling outside of a town or village settlement boundary. Previous consultation has shown that this specific meaning for the word can be confusing in public consultations where most people understand the term 'countryside', as in common usage, to mean relatively undeveloped rural areas

Monitoring of employment in Rural areas

5.178 As noted earlier, current studies into employment land are focused on larger sites of 2ha or more and consequently tend to miss the smaller employment sites common in rural areas. More detailed studies show that almost 60% of people in Mid Suffolk are employed in businesses employing less than 6 people (many of which will be rural businesses) and 12% of rural residents work from home.

5.179 Households of resident rural workers frequently have an income derived from a variety of sources, not only full-time employment, but also including (multiple) part-time employment, self employment and benefits. Other important economic services such as child-minding are often delivered free of charge by members of an extended family. Because of this dependence on large numbers of disperse, small-scale enterprises it is both difficult to establish the patterns of employment in rural areas and easy to under-estimate the contribution made by small businesses to the local economy.

5.180 The Council's objective to create thriving prosperous villages and a vibrant rural economy will depend on the success of such small scale rural enterprises and their needs merit this separate consideration.

Types of Development Appropriate in the Countryside

5.181 A key principle for sustainable development in rural areas identified in PPS7 is that development in the open countryside away from settlements should be strictly controlled with the aim of protecting the countryside for the sake of: -

- its intrinsic character and beauty
- the diversity of its landscape, heritage and wildlife
- the wealth of its natural resources, and
- so it may be enjoyed by all

5.182 This is to be achieved in part by focusing employment opportunities in or near to local service centres, which should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development. This requirement is fulfilled through the settlement hierarchy in the Development Strategy section of this document.

5.183 The PPS goes on to recognise that not all economic development can be located 'in or near to' service centres and that the health of the rural economy requires support for disperse small-scale enterprises, in line with the comments made above. However such support should be limited to development that does not prejudice the character and beauty of the countryside, or damage the landscape, environment or wildlife.

5.184 The Development Strategy set out in this document also lists all the types of development that may be allowed in the countryside, away from settlements, and includes the following employment generating types of development

- agriculture and forestry
- the reuse and adaptation of buildings for appropriate purposes, as defined elsewhere in this document
- new-build employment generating proposals where there is particular environmental or operational justification
- recreation and tourism
- community services and facilities meeting a proven local need
- flood protection
- renewable energy projects

5.185 Development Plan Documents will be produced setting out the criteria for permitting economic development.

Farm Diversification

5.186 Modern agriculture performs a wide variety of roles besides food production, all of which have been subject to pressures arising from fundamental changes in global markets, support mechanisms and environmental legislation. As a consequence some of the best and most versatile agricultural land is threatened by speculative development while diversification into non-agricultural activities has become vital for the survival of many farm enterprises.

5.187 Development control policy criteria will include consideration of the following issues and that the proposed development should: -

- exclude new-build permanent residential use
- be subsidiary to the agricultural enterprise
- make a long-term contribution to sustaining the agricultural enterprise as a whole
- be well conceived with evidence of feasibility and viability in a business plan
- contribute to sustainable development objectives
- be consistent in scale and size with its rural location
- involve the re-use / redevelopment of existing buildings
- not be detrimental to the amenity of any nearby residents or other rural businesses
- be in accordance with all other policies in the Core Strategy, particularly the location of retail enterprises

Preferred Option

5.188 There is broad agreement between the sustainability appraisal and the views of expressed in earlier consultation that the requirements of Regional Policy E2 will be served best through a hierarchical approach with exceptions for employment development in the countryside and for businesses generating a large number of trips by heavy goods vehicles

Core Strategy CS 13

Protection of existing employment sites

To meet the growth in jobs anticipated in Regional Policy E1 while minimising the need to allocate new employment sites, the Council will identify all existing, significant employment sites and allocate them for employment use in the Site Specific Allocation Development Plan Document.

Allocation of new employment sites

Mid Suffolk will seek to locate new businesses according to the following criteria:

- direct new allocations of employment land primarily to sites within and close to towns and key service centres,
- give preference to the extension and intensification of existing employment sites, where this is feasible and viable
- aim to locate businesses dependant on frequent, regular access by HGVs on sites adjacent to major trunk roads
- encourage employment development in rural areas where it could not be located more appropriately close to a town or key service centre and where it is of a type, size and scale consistent with a rural location. (see below)

Employment in the Countryside

In line with the Development Strategy we will encourage appropriate employment generating development in rural areas that may include the following:

- agriculture and forestry
- the reuse and adaptation of buildings for appropriate purposes, as defined elsewhere in this document
- new-build employment generating proposals where there is particular environmental or operational justification
- recreation and tourism
- farm diversification projects
- community services and facilities meeting a proven local need

- flood protection
- renewable energy projects

Development Control Policies will set out the criteria to be applied to planning applications for employment uses in the countryside that support the rural economy without significantly impacting on residential amenity or on the landscape and environment..

5.189 Reasons for Preferred Options

5.190 Currently we only monitor allocated sites and other significant employment sites after they become vacant. By identifying and allocating all current employment sites we will ensure the retention of a good supply of employment sites to meet Spatial Objective SO10.

5.191 The flexibility of locating businesses according to operational need and to minimise impacts on residential amenity, landscape and the environment is

- inline with national guidance in PPG4 and regional policy
- the most sustainable option from the Sustainability Appraisal
- consistent with the responses to earlier consultation

5.192 The policy for the countryside is inline with

- National Guidance PPS7 and Regional Policy
- the Development Strategy in this document
- the sustainability appraisal in that it will benefit the rural economy while controlling impacts on residential amenity, landscape character, the environment and wildlife and minimising the need to travel
- responses to previous consultation

Alternative Options considered

5.193 The sustainability appraisal considered directing employment all to Towns and Key Service Centres; all to the A14 corridor; or all to rural areas. The best alternative was to allocate employment to towns and key service centres but this did not address the needs of the rural economy nor the impact of lorries on residential amenity. Locations along the A14 placed jobs inaccessible by public transport and away from other facilities and services, as did rural locations.

Town Centres

5.194 The Council has a vital role to play through its planning function helping create the best shopping environment for retailers and their customers. By creating policies that protect the disruption of pure retail frontages from "other" non retail uses such as too many fast food outlets, the Council will enhance and strengthen the vitality and viability of its town centres. This is often carried out by designating "Principle Shopping Areas", where protective planning controls are applied and preventing the loss of retail to edge of centre or out of town

sites can also support town centre activity.

Guidance and Documents 9

| | |
|--|--|
| National Policy | PPS1: 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (2005) PPS 6: 'Planning for Town Centres' (2005) |
| Regional Policy | The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policy E5, E10, E11 and SS6 |
| Mid Suffolk Community Strategy (2004) Mid Suffolk Corporate Plan (2004) | Prosperous, Thriving Towns & Villages. Regenerate town centres and revitalise villages |
| Other Evidence Documents | The Vision for Stowmarket (2002) Needham Market and Surrounding Parishes Healthcheck (2004) Village Profiles: Rural Services Survey (2006) Village Design Statements Mid Suffolk Retail Monitoring Report (2005/6) Suffolk's Environment: towards sustainable development (2005/6) Mid Suffolk Urban Capacity Study (2006) (unpublished) Stowmarket Town Centre Study and Strategy (2003) Stowmarket Retail Study 2006 |

5.195 In the most recent round of consultation - the final Issues and Options report - it was established that Debenham should be defined as a principal shopping area along with the current existing areas in Stowmarket, Needham Market and Eye. This approach is favoured by Debenham Parish Council as Debenham covers a wide and diverse catchment. The Council's Planning workshop held in Debenham (November 2005) reaffirms this approach as a large number of attendees don't travel as far as people from other villages for essential services. It was also expressed that Needham Market and Eye have particular scales and limits and should retain their small market town character. In Stowmarket, a richer mix of retail development is required and acknowledgements were made to other centres in the region, including; Norwich, Ipswich, Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds and how they impact on Mid Suffolk's towns.

Policy approach

5.196 PPS6 'typologies' have been applied to Mid Suffolk's towns with regard to its rural nature and unique character. Stowmarket is identified as a "Town" functioning as an important service centre providing a range of facilities and services. Needham Market, Debenham and Eye also offer similar important services as Stowmarket, but for a more local level and are classified as "District Centres" with identified principal shopping areas. The four principal shopping centres identified will continue to be the preferred sites for appropriate new retail, commercial and service development in order to strengthen the existing use and accessibility by public transport. Sequential test approach requires that developers demonstrate that all potential town centre options have been assessed before edge of centre sites are put forward. The Council will not support out of centre sites as they will undermine the retail role of the main centres and have detrimental impact on the overall character of the district in accordance with Core Strategy Objectives 4 and 5.



Map 5.3 Retail Hierarchy

Map for guidance only

5.197 Within Mid Suffolk the creation and expansion of retail and other town centre uses will assist in supporting the local economy, and reduce the need for travel to other areas for relatively low order goods and services. Retail monitoring has identified a total of 34555.84 sq metres of A1 stock with a total of 702 sq metres approved planning permission in the period April 2005 to March 2006.

Development opportunities

5.198 Stowmarket is a small market town centre surrounded by much larger centres, in particular Ipswich, Colchester and Bury St Edmunds. It is currently ranked 650th by Javelin Group's 'Venuescore' rating out of 2,226 centres nationally. For comparison, Ipswich is ranked 43, Bury St Edmunds 204, Colchester 66 and Sudbury 312.

5.199 The Stowmarket catchment area was defined in the Mid Suffolk's Stowmarket Retail Study, establishing where residents shop for food, convenience and comparison goods. This catchment in 2006 was 249,728 and is predicted to rise to 278,631 by 2021 making retail a strategic issue for Mid Suffolk. This is an increase of almost 12% over the period 2006 to 2021, or 0.73% per annum.

5.200 The Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) identified a number of proposals which have not been fully developed and potential for development is to be confirmed:

- Mixed use development at Bury Street, Stowmarket has been partially completed but there may be a potential for small mixed use development. Non-food retail warehousing at Prentice Road, Stowmarket, potential size and suitable development is subject to access and other mitigating circumstances relating to the proposed Stowmarket relief bridge.

Three potential new retail development opportunities have been identified in and on the edge of the town centre to accommodate new development put forward by the Stowmarket Retail Study 2006:

- The Sherringham Court site behind and including 101-103 Ipswich Street.
- The west side of Ipswich Street from number 20 to Stricklands Road.
- Thoughtful redevelopment of land south and west within the Asda superstore site.

The Preferred Approach

Core Strategy CS 14

Retail Provision

The preferred location of new retail development will be in existing principal shopping areas retaining the vitality and viability of existing town centres.

Stowmarket - Mid Suffolk's Principal Service Centre - Provision is made to increase existing retail floor space by 1,200 sq m net by 2011 and 6,100 sq m net by 2021. **Needham Market, Eye** and **Debenham** - Mid Suffolk's District Centres - along with Stowmarket will continue to be the preferred sites for appropriate new retail, commercial and service development in order to strengthen the existing use and accessibility by public transport.

Reason for Preferred Option

- 5.201** This preferred policy option is consistent with PPS1 and PPS6.
- 5.202** This option is consistent with Regional Policy E5, E10, E11 and SS
- 5.203** The policy draws upon the evidence documents.

5.204 The sustainability appraisal indicated that the policy option (A) posed in the final Issues and Options Report (2007) conforms to national guidance and significantly contributes to retaining the vitality and viability of town centres with knock-on effects for businesses in the area. Social benefits occur through the improvement of individual quality of life and well-being.

Alternatives considered

5.205 National policy guidance requires the promotion of town centres through their vitality and viability. Making no attempt to control the location of different types of business would not conform to the Government's key objective.

5.206 A. Should the council adopt development plan documents that identify the core business areas of each town with comprehensive strategies controlling development in these areas.

5.207 B. or should the council make no attempt to control the location of different types of business.

6 Monitoring and Implementation

6.1 Review and monitoring is becoming an increasingly important aspect of evidence based policy making and it is a key factor of the Governments 'plan monitor, manage' approach to the new planning system. An important aspect of the new system is flexibility to update components of the LDF to reflect changing circumstances. The ability to produce various local development documents will allow the Council to respond quickly to changing priorities in the district. Monitoring will play a critical part in identifying these. The findings of monitoring will feed directly into any review of policy that may be required. Part of the tests of soundness of the Core Strategy will be whether it includes clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.

6.2 A key component of the monitoring process is the Annual Monitoring Report. This document is prepared annually and based on the period 1 April to 31 March. The AMR is required to assess the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which polices in local development documents are being successfully implemented.

6.3 The LDFs Local Development Scheme (LDS) will also play a crucial role in implementing the polices and proposals in the Core Strategy. This project management tool sets out the programme for producing the raft of other general and area specific LDF documents that will follow the Core Strategy. In doing so the LDS can ensure that the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy are implemented in such a way that ensures areas of greatest priority and need are tackled first. This coordinated approach will help to secure implementation and timely delivery of the Core Strategy's objectives.

6.4 The Council has developed a framework for monitoring the Core Strategy that can assess the extent to which the strategy, vision and strategic objectives are being achieved. This framework includes a series of indicators and targets which will be used to assess to the extent to which policies in the Core Strategy are being implemented. Where this is failing, the monitoring process will help to explain why and set out the steps to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented properly or amended. Monitoring should also be undertaken to identify any significant effects that implementation of the policies in the Core Strategy is having on the delivery of sustainable development, and to determine whether policies need to be amended or replaced. The outcome of this monitoring will be provided in the AMR.

6.5 To measure the performance of the Core Strategy, the Council has used the strategic objectives and related polices to guide the selection of meaningful indicators and targets as a means of ensuring effective policy implementation, monitoring and review.

6.6 Implementation of the polices contained in the Core Strategy will require concerted action by a range of public, private and voluntary sector bodies working in partnership. The documents role is to provide a clear and robust framework for development in order that investment and action can be coordinated and geared to efficient and effective delivery.

6.7 Should annual monitoring of the key indicators reveal any significant failure(s) to meet targets, the Council will take action to rectify the situation as soon as possible. This will include a review of one or more policies or the whole Core Strategy. In the event of a material deficit arising in the delivery of new dwelling completions against the district housing trajectory, the Council will bring forward suitable sustainable alternative / additional sites as soon as possible via the site specific DPDs and/or the development control process to meet the requirements of the RSS.

| Core Strategy Policy | Indicator | Main Agencies | Targets |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| CS1 -Location of Development | <p>Proportion of population with access to key local services.</p> <p>Percentage of rural households within 13 minute walk of an hourly bus service</p> <p>Percentage of rural population living in parishes which have a food shop or general store, post office, pub, primary school and meeting place</p> | Developers, partners, local parishes (Parish Plans), local groups | Post adoption housing trajectory target (AMR) Target to be met within Development Control DPD. |
| CS2 - Climate Change | <p>Installed electricity generating capacity using renewable energy</p> <p>Planning Applications approved against Environment Agency Advice</p> <p>Properties at risk from flooding</p> <p>Incidence of fluvial flooding</p> <p>Number of Air Quality Management Areas</p> | Environment Agency, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, District Council, Local businesses and local communities, | <p>Do not exceed threshold limits (Air Quality).</p> <p>Flood Risk Target: 0</p> <p>National target: to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% below 1990 levels by 2010.</p> <p>Continue to reduce Local emissions.</p> |
| CS3 - Sustainable Construction | <p>Energy efficiency from homes</p> <p>Consumption of gas - Domestic use per consumer / industrial use</p> <p>Consumption of electricity - Domestic use per consumer total commercial / industrial use</p> | District Council, Development Control Policies DPD | 10% of total electricity consumption in the East of England by 2010 and 17% by 2020 (excluding offshore wind). |

| Core Strategy Policy | Indicator | Main Agencies | Targets |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| CS4 - Landscape | <p>Area of designated landscapes</p> <p>Change in landscape</p> <p>Number and area of town village greens and commons</p> <p>Number of countryside stewardship schemes</p> | Suffolk County Council - Landscape Section, English Heritage, District Council | Complete Landscape Character Assessment at Local Level. |
| CS5 - Design | <p>Number of planning applications refused for reason due to poor design</p> <p>Indicator to be set within Development Control Policies DPD, based on design checklist</p> | All promoters of development, local communities, developers, District Council | <p>Completion of Mid Suffolk SPD</p> <p>100% record. Target to be set in Development Control Policies DPD</p> |
| CS6 - Biodiversity and Geology | <p>Change in number and area of designated ecological sites</p> <p>Change in number of designated geological sites</p> <p>Reported condition of SSSI's</p> <p>Achievement of Habitat Action Plan targets</p> <p>Achievement of Species Action Plan targets</p> <p>Development proposals affecting BAP habitats outside protected areas</p> | Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Suffolk BAP Officer (SCC), Suffolk Biological Records Centre, District Council, Regionally Important Geological Sites Group | No loss in number or condition of biodiversity and geology. |
| CS7 - Services and Infrastructure | <p>Proportion of population with access to hospital or GP or dentist surgery.</p> | Primary Care Trust, Local Strategic Partnership, partners, District Council, local communities. | Obtain continue dialogue with Primary Care Trust. |
| CS8 - Brown field Target | <p>Percentage of new dwellings on previously developed land</p> | Developers, District Council, Site Specific Allocations DPD | 50% housing on brown field (local target) |

| Core Strategy Policy | Indicator | Main Agencies | Targets |
|---|---|---|--|
| CS9 - Distribution of Residential Development | <p>Housing Trajectory - Projected net additional dwellings up to 2024.</p> <p>Net additional dwellings over the previous 5 years.</p> <p>Net additional dwellings for the current year</p> <p>Percentage of all new development taking place in towns, key service centres and elsewhere.</p> | House builders, District Council, Site Specific Allocations DPD | At least 3,153 homes and infrastructure over the period 2006 - 2024 Annual rate of development 415. |
| CS10 - Housing Density and Mix | Percentage of new dwellings completed at: Less than 30 dwellings per hectare, Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and Above 50 dwellings per hectare | Developers, District Council, Development Control Policies DPD | To avoid developments which make inefficient use of land |
| CS11 - Affordable Housing | Number of affordable housing commitments Number of affordable housing completions | Registered Social Landlords, House builders, other partners, District Council | 35% affordable housing |
| CS12 - Sites for Gypsies and Travellers | Number of authorised public and private sites (both permanent and transit) and numbers of caravans on them Number of unauthorised sites | Gypsy community, district council. | Target to be defined in Development Control Policies and Site Specific Allocations DPD |
| CS13 - Distribution of Employment | Amount of land developed for employment by type | Developers, Local businesses, District Council - Economic Development, partners | To maintain a supply of available land where appropriate and to encourage year on year employment development. |
| CS14 - Town Centre | Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development | local retail outlets, District Council, | To ensure that the proportion of A1 uses does not fall below national average 50% in any one centre. |

Table 6.1 Monitoring and Implementation Policy List