

North Norfolk District Council Local Plan examination
Statement of Common Ground

As Agreed Between
North Norfolk District Council
and
Breckland District Council
October 2023

1. Introduction

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

2. Background

- 2.1 There is a strong history of joint working and co-operation amongst the Norfolk authorities¹ through the Norfolk Strategic Planning Officers Group (NSPG), key roles of which are to identify and manage the spatial planning issues that impact on more than one local planning authority area and to support better integration and alignment of strategic spatial and investment priorities. The NSPG is responsible for several jointly funded and prepared evidence base and policy documents as well as the joint preparation and agreement of a Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework² (NSPF) [A8.1] which details 31 cross boundary agreements (May 2021).
- 2.3 The Council is committed to engaging positively with its neighbours to address strategic planning matters through the Duty to Cooperate requirement and to ensure that there is co-operation on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
- 2.4 The Norfolk authorities, along with Natural England, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, Marine Management Organisation, Active Norfolk, Water Resources East, and the new Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, work collaboratively to address strategic issues across the area. The meetings also include liaison with Suffolk Councils and relevant updates on their planning policy and local plan work.
- 2.5 A Member Forum (MF) oversees the work of the NSPG and comprises an elected Member from each of the authorities. The NSPG consists of key planning policy officers from each Planning Authority in Norfolk as well as other key statutory agencies, responsible for overseeing policy development for strategic planning purposes. Both the MF and NSPG are governed by formal terms of reference.
- 2.6 The MF meets on a regular frequency (every 3 months), and its role is advisory. The NSPG meet on a monthly basis and is itself supported by further officer groups – a Steering Group and Technical Subgroups. Any proposals or recommendations of the

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

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

MF are not binding on the constituent member authorities. However, where there are matters pertaining to key strategic planning, for example, the preparation of a joint plan or implications at a County wide level of future development, then any agreement at the MF is subject to ratification at individual authority level.

- 2.7 In addition to the agreements arising from the NSPF, the Council has consulted BDC at each stage of the preparation of the North Norfolk Local Plan. More recently the Councils have worked collaboratively across the county, with Natural England and Anglian Water, in the ongoing development of strategic mitigation to address the issues of nutrient neutrality. Further details of this engagement are set out in the Council’s Duty to Co-Operate Compliance Statement [A8].

3. Statement of Common Ground Agreement

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

3.2 Agreement 1 – Duty to co-operate:

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

4. Signatories:

North Norfolk District Council		
Name and Position	Signature	Date
Sarah Tudhope Senior Planning Officer	Sarah Tudhope	11October 2023
Breckland District Council		
Name and Position	Signature	Date
Simon Wood Director of Planning and Building Control		11October 2023