

**Draft Independent Examiners Report of the**  
**North Runcton and West Winch**  
**Neighbourhood Plan**

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*6th June 2017*

## **SECTION 1**

### **CONTENTS**

#### **Section 1**

Contents.....	2
---------------	---

#### **Section 2**

Summary.....	3
--------------	---

#### **Section 3**

Introduction.....	4-5
-------------------	-----

#### **Section 4**

The Report.....	6-37
-----------------	------

1. Appointment of the Independent Examiner.....	6
---	---

2. Neighbourhood Plan Area.....	6
---------------------------------	---

3. Plan Period.....	6
---------------------	---

4. Site Visit.....	6
--------------------	---

5. Consultation Process.....	6
------------------------------	---

6. Comment on Responses.....	7
------------------------------	---

7. Compliance with the Basic Conditions.....	7-8
--	-----

8. Planning Policy.....	9
-------------------------	---

9. Other Relevant Policy Considerations.....	9-11
--	------

10. NRW Neighbourhood Plan Policies.....	11-37
--	-------

#### **Section 5**

Conclusions and Recommendations.....	38
--------------------------------------	----

## **SECTION 2**

### **Summary**

*As the Independent Examiner appointed by Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to examine the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan, I can summarise my findings as follows:*

- 1. I find the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan and the policies within it, subject to the recommended modifications, does meet the Basic Conditions.*
- 2. I am satisfied that the Referendum Area should be the same as the Plan Area, should the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.*
- 3. I have read the North Runcton and West Winch Consultation Statement and the representations made in connection with this subject. I consider that the consultation process was robust and that the Neighbourhood Development Plan and its policies reflects the outcome of the consultation process including recording representations and tracking the changes made as a result of those representations.*
- 4. I find that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan can, subject to the recommended modifications, proceed to Referendum.*
- 5. At the time of my examination the adopted local plan was the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) adopted 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.*

## **SECTION 3**

## **Introduction**

### **1. Neighbourhood Plan Examination.**

*My name is Deborah McCann and I am the Independent Examiner appointed to examine the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan.*

*I am independent of the qualifying body, I do not have any interest in the land in the plan area, and I have appropriate qualifications and experience, including experience in public, private and community sectors.*

*My role is to consider whether the submitted North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and has taken into account human rights; and to recommend whether the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to Referendum. My role is as set out in more detail below under the section covering the Examiner's Role. My recommendation is given in summary in Section 2 and in full under Section 5 of this document.*

*The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan has to be independently examined following processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*

*The expectation is that the examination of the issues by the examiner is to take the form of the consideration of the written representations. However, there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. Having read the plan and considered the representations I did require clarification on a number of issues. These points were dealt with by written representations in a question and answer format. This additional information is publicly available on the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk website. I was satisfied that the written responses adequately clarified the issues and I decided that it was not necessary to hold a Hearing.*

### **2. The Role of Examiner including the examination process and legislative background.**

*The examiner is required to check whether the neighbourhood plan:*

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body*
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation*
- Meets the requirements to i) specify the period to which it has effect; ii) not include provision about excluded development; and iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that*
- Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.*

*The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).*

*As an independent Examiner, having examined the Plan, I am required to make one of the*

*following recommendations:*

- 1. The Plan can proceed to a Referendum*
- 2. The Plan with recommended modifications can proceed to a Referendum*
- 3. The Plan does not meet the legal requirements and cannot proceed to a Referendum*

*I am also required to recommend whether the Referendum Area should be different from the Plan Area, should the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan go to Referendum.*

*In examining the Plan, I am required to check, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whether: - the policies in the Plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area are in line with the requirements of Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004:*

*- The Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to specify the period for which it has effect - the Plan has been prepared for an area designated under the Localism Act 2011 and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.*

*I am also required to determine whether the Plan complies with the Basic Conditions, which are that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan:*

- Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;*
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and*
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area.*

*The Plan must also not breach, and otherwise be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.*

*The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk will consider my report and decide whether it is satisfied with my recommendations. The Council will publicise its decision on whether or not the plan will be submitted to a referendum, with or without modifications. If the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to a referendum, then 28 working days notice will be given of the referendum procedure and Neighbourhood Plan details. If the referendum results in more than half those voting (i.e. greater than 50%), voting in favour of the plan, then the District Council must "make" the Neighbourhood Plan a part of its Development Plan as soon as possible. If approved by a referendum and then "made" by the local planning authority, the Neighbourhood Plan then forms part of the Development Plan.*

## **SECTION 4**

### **The Report**

#### **1. Appointment of the Independent examiner**

*The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk appointed me as the Independent Examiner for the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan with the agreement of North Runcton and West Winch Parish Councils.*

#### **2. Qualifying body**

*I am satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Parish Councils are the qualifying bodies.*

#### **3. Neighbourhood Plan Area**

*The designated North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Area covers the Parishes of North Runcton and West Winch. The Basic Conditions Statement submitted with the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan confirms there are no other Neighbourhood Plans covering the Area of the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan.*

#### **4. Plan Period**

*It is intended that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan will cover the period 2016-2026.*

#### **5. Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk initial assessment of the Plan.**

*North Runcton and West Winch Parish Councils, the qualifying body for preparing the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan, submitted it to Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for consideration as required by Regulation 15. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk has made an initial assessment of the submitted North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting documents and is satisfied that these comply with the specified criteria under Regulation 15.*

#### **6. Site Visit**

*I carried out an unaccompanied site visit on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017 to familiarise myself with the area.*

#### **7. The Consultation Process**

*The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted for examination with a Consultation Report which sets out the consultation process that has led to the production of the plan, as set out in the regulations in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*

*The Statement describes the approach to consultation, the stages undertaken and explains how the Plan has been amended in relation to comments received. It is set out according to the requirements in Regulation 15.1.b of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012):*

*(a) It contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed*

*neighbourhood development plan;*

*(b) It explains how they were consulted; (c) It summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and*

*(d) It describes how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.*

*Examination of the documents and representations submitted in connection with this matter have lead me to conclude that the consultation process was thorough, well conducted and recorded.*

*A list of statutory bodies consulted is included in the Consultation Statement.*

### **8.Regulation 16 consultation by Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and record of responses.**

*The Borough Council placed the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan out for consultation under Regulation 16 from the 19th of December 2016 to the 2nd of February 2017.*

*A number of detailed representations were received during the consultation period and these were supplied by the Borough Council as part of the supporting information supplied for the examination process. I considered the representations, have taken them into account in my examination of the plan and made reference to them where appropriate.*

### **9. Compliance with the Basic Conditions**

*The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan working Group produced a Basic Conditions Statement on behalf of North Runcton and West Winch Parish Councils. The purpose of this statement is for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to set out in some detail why they believe the Neighbourhood Plan as submitted meets the Basic Conditions. It is the Examiner's Role to take this document into consideration but also take an independent view as to whether or not the assessment as submitted is correct.*

*I have to determine whether the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan:*

- 1. Has regard to national policies and advice*
- 2. Contributes to sustainable development*
- 3. Is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the appropriate Development Plan*
- 4. Is not in breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.*

*Documents brought to my attention by the Borough Council for my examination include:*

*(a) The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan: This is the main document, which includes the policies developed by the community.*

*(b) The Consultation Statement: This is a statement setting out how the community and other stakeholders have been involved in the preparation of the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan and is supported by an evidence base which arose from the consultation.*

*(c) Basic Conditions Statement.*

*This is a statement setting out how North Runcton and West Winch Parish Councils consider that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions.*

*(d) The Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment letter for the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan.*

*Comment on Documents submitted*

*I am satisfied having regard to these documents and other relevant documents, policies and legislation that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan does, subject to the recommended modifications, meet the Basic Conditions.*

## **10.Planning Policy**

### **10.1. National Planning Policy**

*National Policy guidance is in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012.*

*To meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have “regard to national policy and advice”. In addition, the NPPF requires that a Neighbourhood Plan “must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan”. Paragraph 16 states that neighbourhoods should “develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development; plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan”.*

*The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat these national policies, but to demonstrate it has taken them into account. In the Basic Conditions Statement, the Neighbourhood Plan Group have identified the elements of National Policy that they consider relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies.*

*I have examined the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan and consider that, subject to modification, the plan does have “regard for National Policy and Advice” and therefore the Plan does meet the Basic Conditions in this respect.*

### **10.2. Local Planning Policy- The Development Plan**

*North Runcton and West Winch is within the area covered by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk. The relevant Development Plan consists of the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk proposed site allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) adopted 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.*

*The Strategic Policies of the Development Plan have been identified both by the Borough of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk and by the Neighbourhood Plan Group in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement. The most relevant of these, for the purposes of my examination are those relating to the strategic growth of the area; Core Strategy Policies CS02, CS03, CS09 and SADMP Policy E2.1. I have considered these Strategic Policies together with the Policies of the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan. I find that subject to modification the policies are in general conformity with the Strategic Policies of the the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and the King’s Lynn*

*and West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) adopted 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.*

## **11. Other Relevant Policy Considerations**

### **11.1 European Convention on Human Rights (ECMR) and other European Union Obligations**

*As a 'local plan', the Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to take cognisance of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC Office.*

*A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion was sought as required from the following organisations on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2016:*

- *Natural England*
- *Historic England*
- *Environment Agency*
- *Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk*

*The anticipated scale and type of development in West Winch / North Runcton was assessed as part of the Core Strategy and SADMP SEAs. The view of Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk was that a SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) was not required given the requirement for general compliance with the Local Plan policies and any minor variation from the development anticipated is most unlikely to be significant to SEA matters.*

#### *Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)*

*A screening for likely significant effects is required to identify whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European Site. The likely relevant impacts of potential development in the Borough have been examined in detail in the Habitats Regulations Assessment Reports for the Core Strategy and subsequent amended version for the adopted SADMP. The view was that the draft neighbourhood plan is in conformity with both of those plans, and it is therefore considered not to require additional assessment.*

### **11.2 Sustainable development**

*I am satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications addresses the sustainability issues adequately.*

*The Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to take cognisance of the European Convention of Human Rights and to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.*

*I am satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan has done so.*

*I am therefore satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions on EU obligations.*

### **11.3 Excluded development**

*I am satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan does not cover County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*

#### **10.4 Development and use of land**

*I am satisfied that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan, subject to modification, covers development and land use matters.*

#### **10.5 The Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Aims and Policies**

##### **THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

###### **The vision**

*West Winch and North Runcton will be two closely linked but separate parishes that are popular and attractive places to live. They will remain distinct from King's Lynn and will be characterised by a predominantly rural setting. They will have a range of excellent facilities allowing residents of all ages to live, work, play and contribute fully to the ongoing success of the communities.*

###### **Aims (what we hope to achieve)**

**General.** *To support the development of high quality, sustainable and successful new neighbourhoods whilst nurturing and enhancing the lives of existing residents in West Winch and North Runcton. To safeguard the unique and distinctive physical and cultural assets of the parishes, using these to shape the future environment and community.*

**Environment.** *To create a network of green spaces and corridors that sustain a sense of rural living and are utilised and respected by everyone. To sustain and safeguard agriculture in the parish in tandem with improved rural access and recreational opportunities for village residents whilst supporting local wildlife.*

**Social.** *To nurture a diverse and supportive community with excellent internal communication and close links to neighbouring communities. To ensure there are spaces, institutions and events where the whole community can meet and socialise.*

**Economy.** *To provide a setting that fosters sustainable and rewarding jobs and supports education and skills development. To ensure that residential expansion is supported by commensurate local employment opportunities.*

**Transport.** *To enable local people to go about their business in a timely manner. To reduce the domination of through-traffic on residents' day-to-day lives. To provide an excellent network of road, cycle and footpaths that allow genuine choice in future transport options and mitigate against excessive road traffic and car dependency.*

**Sustainability.** *To provide new housing which is high quality in plan, size and materials, adapted to the expected results of climate change and suitable for the whole-life needs of residents.*

###### **Objectives (how the plan will achieve its aims)**

**Environment.** *Identify and protect natural and cultural environmental assets. Where development will result in loss or degradation of assets, ensure there will be adequate sustainable compensation. The NP policies promote 'joined-up thinking' so that environmental assets can, where possible, be 'multi-functional' with, for example, benefits for recreation, local biodiversity, drainage, access provision and landscape amenity. Policies encourage community use of green space and community involvement in management. The Plan seeks to ensure that long-term management and maintenance requirements are identified and provided for. The Plan requires appropriate development design so that sustainable 'breaks' are established between settlements.*

**Social.** *The Plan seeks to ensure that new development brings new community facilities that can benefit all residents and bring people together. Policies aim to ensure that key social centres such as primary schools, community halls and health facilities are established at an early stage of development so as to foster social links and organisations.*

**Economy.** *The Plan aims to encourage planning applications that create sustainable job*

opportunities without adverse impacts on the environmental, social or cultural character of the community. It supports home working and small-scale business. Policy encourages development that will support local shops, trades and services.

**Transport.** The Plan seeks to mitigate traffic and environmental problems on the A10 and A47, encouraging a future road hierarchy that will reduce the impact of proposed development. Policies encourage and support traffic calming measures. High standards of public transport, cycle path and footpath infrastructure are encouraged

***I am satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan Policies flow from the issues identified as a result of the community consultation carried out during the development of the plan.***

## **12. North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

### **POLICY WA01: Protecting sites of local value**

The areas illustrated on Figure 5.0 are identified as sites of local value. Where development proposals come forward that could directly or indirectly impact on these assets, a sequential approach shall be applied to their protection:

- first, and most preferable, retain, enhance and create sustainable features of these assets
- second, mitigate potential adverse impacts to them – including consideration of secondary impacts such as pollution, changes to drainage, visitor pressures and severance of ecological corridors
- as a last resort, adequately compensate for the loss or degradation of these features and their ecological value, where it is concluded that such losses and adverse impacts are inevitable and unavoidable.

#### **A. Sites of landscape character value including views**

1. A1 Land adjacent to Long Lane and Hall Lane, West Winch. This corridor separates the 'Bovis Estate' from central West Winch and contains playing fields (refer to B1) and farmland. It provides a visual corridor between the A10 and fenland to the west. Identified by community consultation. This land is also a gas pipeline corridor where development will be restricted. Retain to ensure separation of neighbourhoods.
2. A2 Land south of the Old Windmill, West Winch that contains farmland and paddocks and helps break up linear development along the A10. Identified by consultation. This land is within the strategic allocation area but development will be restricted due to the gas pipeline corridor (refer to Figure 3.0).
3. A3 A narrow corridor of land either side of the A10, and north of Ivy Farmhouse, featuring paddocks, hedges, mature trees and part of an important drainage course that extends east to Illington Lane, North Runcton. Identified by consultation and drainage surveys (refer to Surface Water Management Strategy). It is suggested that a sustainable surface water drainage function must be retained here. The meadows west of the A10 are also a County Wildlife Site (See C1 below).
4. A4 Mature trees, hedges and verge along the A47 road corridor between New Road, North Runcton and the Hardwick Roundabout. Important to the character of the local landscape and approach to King's Lynn – especially where the road is elevated and prominent in views from the north. If it becomes necessary for mature vegetation to be removed here, it would be essential that adequate sustainable replacement planting is provided (notwithstanding that some veteran trees may be irreplaceable).

5. A5 The open landscape between the A47 and Illington Lane, North Runcton. Existing open farmland that is important in sustaining the rural setting of North Runcton and a rural approach to King's Lynn along the A47. Also identified in the BCKLWN SADMP – 'Strategic Concept' plan.
6. A6 The open landscape south of the existing village of North Runcton – including paddocks, woodland and farmland, much of which is elevated and prominent in views from the Nar Valley and areas further south. Settlement expansion here would undermine the rural setting of the village and would also be likely to cause adverse traffic impacts to the community.
7. A7 Paddocks and arable land between Rectory Lane and Common Lane, North Runcton – with mature trees and hedges, providing an extension to the character of North Runcton common and an important backdrop to the village. Identified in consultation.
8. A8 The 'rural' sections and features of Rectory Lane, Common Lane, the 'Twisty Twiney', Setch Road, and Watering Lane, where mature trees, roadside hedgerows and grass verges are important to local landscape character. Identified in consultation.
9. A9 Grass area with West Winch village sign and tree planting, east of A10, south of Chequers Lane – enhances local amenity. Identified in consultation.
10. A10 Land south-west of Gravelhill Lane and South of Elmtree Drive. A large area of low-lying grassland that provides a rural outlook for residents and extends the 'green corridor' of West Winch common. Identified in consultation. This area is within the strategic allocation area but any development plans should aim to retain views and access to open countryside and to include rural features.
11. A11 The predominantly open corridor along the Nar Valley west of Setch Bridge and east towards Blackborough End. Retain remaining open landscape adjacent to River. Identified in consultation.
12. A12 Cholmondley/Blick Close grassed amenity area. Identified in consultation.

## **B. Sites of sports, recreation and amenity value**

1. B1 William Burt Centre Playing Field – important recreational and social centre and contributing to local 'open' setting (part of A1).
2. B2 Leete Way Play Area – a small equipped play area enclosed by a fence and used regularly by local children.
3. B3 Row Hill Play Area – this is a small grassed area in the centre of a large estate providing green space for local residents.
4. B4 Public footpath from Common Lane to Rectory Lane, to Sheep's Course Wood, North Runcton (passing through A5/A7). It is considered important to preserve and expand the local footpath network.
5. B5 North Runcton Cricket Field, New Road. Privately owned but important landmark and open space at the centre of the village.
6. B6 Footpaths across West Winch, Hardwick Narrows and North Runcton Commons – including access points beyond the common land. Important local footpath network.
7. B7 Old railway track and bridge under the A47. This route provides important sections of a 'ready-made' cycle and pedestrian corridor between the proposed growth area and potentially King's Lynn, Bawsey and other destinations. (The railway track is protected in BCKLWN SADMP Policy DM13.)

## **C. Sites of nature conservation value**

1. C1 The Meadow, north of Coronation Avenue, West Winch (County Wildlife Site 2079 with some adjacent land set aside for horse grazing), and Rush Meadow (County Wildlife Site 399), which is actually several meadows west of the A10. Opportunity to enhance biodiversity.
2. C2 West Winch, North Runcton, Hardwick Narrows and Setchey Grazing Commons. (These areas are also important in terms of landscape value and, where paths exist, recreation value.) Many areas of common land are thought to be Saxon or older. (West Winch Common is County Wildlife Site 390).
3. C3 Sheep's Course Wood, North Runcton. This is common land, a County Wildlife Site (2265), a local landmark and includes a public right-of-way. Important to protect the woodland from development and likely increased visitor impacts.
4. C4 Fringes of Hopkins proposed development site (Constitution Hill) including mature and maturing trees, remnant hedgerows, a large pond, species rich grassland and a low-lying semi-wetland area at the north-west corner. Botanical surveys for Hopkins and by others have confirmed these areas are especially rich in species and worthy of retention. Retaining and enhancing these assets, ideally within a network of green corridors linking into the wider landscape, will be essential to help compensate for the extensive loss of other habitat within the main Hopkins site.

### **COMMENT**

I have considered this policy carefully and commend the Neighbourhood Plan Group and the wider community for their work in identifying the areas noted within the policy. A number of the areas identified in this policy could, in my opinion been designated as Local Green Spaces but the decision was made by the Neighbourhood Plan Group not to propose this.

I have received representations which express concern that this policy will make bringing forward development proposals for the growth area more difficult. I am however of the opinion that the sequential approach of the policy acknowledges that some areas will be impacted by some aspects of the development and where this occurs there are measures in place to provide mitigation and/or compensation. On this basis I do not consider that the policy needs modifying in order to meet the Basic Conditions.

### **POLICY WA02: Sites with local heritage interest**

**The following sites are valued locally as having significant interest and are not listed or protected by other conservation designation:** (Also refer to Figure 5.0).

1. D1 Manor Farm Moat and paddock, south of West Winch Church on the eastern side of the A10. Medieval moated enclosure and important to the setting of West Winch Church.
2. D2 The Pound, Watering Lane, West Winch is owned by the West Winch Commoners and was used by farmers as a compound for their animals. Post medieval (?). Identified in consultation.
3. D3 Historic walls adjacent New Road in North Runcton that are related to the former North Runcton Hall. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.
4. D4 The former primary school at North Runcton, now the village meeting place. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.
5. D5 The 'Church Rooms' (former school) West Winch. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.

6. D6 'Church Green' – at School Lane, North Runcton. This open space and the 'informal' nature of the unadopted roadway is considered important to the character of central North Runcton and especially the setting of the Grade I listed church.
7. D7 The Lodge and grounds with mature trees, Rectory Lane, North Runcton. This house is Grade II listed and is probably the oldest dwelling in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, the setting of large gardens with mature trees also requires protection.

Inappropriate extensions or alterations to these properties and structures, or development resulting in significant adverse impacts to their grounds and settings, will be resisted. A balanced assessment of impact must be provided with any application, preferably prepared by an appropriately qualified heritage consultant.

#### **COMMENT**

*The National Planning Policy Framework sets out clearly how Designated and Non Designated Heritage Assets are protected through the planning system. There is a clear requirement that applications affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets must be supported by an appropriately detailed assessment of their heritage significance and the impact of the proposals on that significance.*

*The policy should be modified as follows:*

The following sites have been identified as non-designated heritage assets, valued locally as having significant interest: (Also refer to Figure 5.0).

1. D1 Manor Farm Moat and paddock, south of West Winch Church on the eastern side of the A10. Medieval moated enclosure and important to the setting of West Winch Church.
2. D2 The Pound, Watering Lane, West Winch is owned by the West Winch Commoners and was used by farmers as a compound for their animals. Post medieval (?). Identified in consultation.
3. D3 Historic walls adjacent New Road in North Runcton that are related to the former North Runcton Hall. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.
4. D4 The former primary school at North Runcton, now the village meeting place. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.
5. D5 The 'Church Rooms' (former school) West Winch. (19th-century.) Identified in consultation.
6. D6 'Church Green' – at School Lane, North Runcton. This open space and the 'informal' nature of the unadopted roadway is considered important to the character of central North Runcton and especially the setting of the Grade I listed church.
7. D7 The Lodge and grounds with mature trees, Rectory Lane, North Runcton. This house is Grade II listed and is probably the oldest dwelling in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, the setting of large gardens with mature trees also requires protection.

Any proposals which would impact the significance of a non-designated heritage asset must be supported by a Statement of Significance describing the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

### **POLICY WA03: Protecting and replacing natural features**

**Where a site includes trees, hedges, ponds, ditches, banks, established grassland or other natural landscape features, planning applications shall be supported when they are accompanied by:**

- Professional survey reports undertaken to the appropriate standards (e.g. in 2016 – arboricultural reports to BS5837:2012 and ecological reports to BS42020:2013) identifying the landscape and biodiversity features of value on and adjoining the subject site.
- Plans showing how the subsequent layout and design of the development has been informed by the survey.
- Management plans to show how these features will be protected and sustained for the long term in the new environment, or indicate how features to be lost will be adequately compensated.

Where features will be lost, compensatory provision will be required demonstrating regard to the following guidelines:

- Any trees to be lost that have a trunk diameter greater than 7.5 cm at 1.5 m above ground level will be replaced with new tree planting based on the size of the tree(s) to be lost as follows:

Trunk diameter of tree lost to development (measured at 1.5 m above ground level)	Number of replacement trees
7.5–19.9 cm	1
20–29.9 cm	2
30–39.9 cm	3
40–49.9 cm	4
50–59.9 cm	5
60–69.9 cm	6
70–79.9 cm	7
80 cm+	8

- Replacement tree planting will normally mean containerised extra heavy standards (14–16 cm girth) with appropriate tree pit and staking details. Appropriate species will be agreed at the time.
- • 1 linear metre of mature native hedgerow lost will be replaced with a minimum of 2 linear metres of new mixed native double row hedge, allowing space for sustainable ongoing management.
- • Permanent water bodies will be replaced with permanent water bodies of the same extent, allowing space for sustainable ongoing management.

- • Ditches, other seasonal water bodies, field margins and grassland will be replaced with the same quantity or greater of ecologically equivalent features, allowing space for sustainable ongoing management.
- • Where the developer cannot replace such features within the application site, a negotiated contribution shall be made to a BCKLWN administered fund that will provide for habitat provision and open space management within the Neighbourhood Plan area. For example, for tree planting, financial contributions will be based on a standard replacement tree being an average priced containerised extra heavy standard (14–16 cm girth), planted and maintained for 5 years.
- • New landscaping schemes should provide a varied, robust and sustainable species selection – considering factors such as the impact of future climate change and new pests and diseases. Provision for biodiversity such as bat and bird boxes will be strongly supported.

## **COMMENT**

***I understand the community concerns relating to the level of proposed development and the desire to retain and protect the landscape quality that currently exists within the Parishes. However, having read the policy and the representations I have received I conclude that the policy as it is currently worded is overly restrictive and would in reality be costly and difficult to implement and ultimately monitor. I am of the opinion that the policy as currently worded does not meet the basic Conditions and should be modified as follows:***

Where a site includes trees, hedges, ponds, ditches, banks, established grassland or other natural landscape features, planning applications shall be supported when they are accompanied by:

- Professional survey reports undertaken to the appropriate standards (e.g. in 2016 – arboricultural reports to BS5837:2012 and ecological reports to BS42020:2013) identifying the landscape and biodiversity features of value on and adjoining the subject site.
- Plans showing how the subsequent layout and design of the development has been informed by the survey.
- Management plans to show how these features will be protected and sustained for the long term in the new environment, or indicate how features to be lost will be adequately compensated.

Where features will be lost, compensatory provision will be required. Where the developer cannot replace such features within the application site, a negotiated contribution shall be made to a BCKLWN administered fund that will provide for habitat provision and open space management within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

New landscaping schemes should provide a varied, robust and sustainable species selection – considering factors such as the impact of future climate change and new pests and diseases. Provision for biodiversity such as bat and bird boxes will be strongly supported.

## **POLICY WA04: Providing sustainable drainage**

### **Development proposals involving new build will be supported where:**

- Applicants have demonstrated regard to current surface water risk mapping as well as the recommendations set out in the *North Runcton and West Winch Surface Water Management Strategy* (April 2014), and provided a drainage plan following consultation with the relevant Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and the Lead Local Flood Authority.
- Design plans incorporate good sustainable urban drainage design, commensurate with current best practice design guidance.
- Detailed street and building design includes provision of permeable surfaces, rainwater re-use, green roofs and/or other measures to ensure sustainable water management unless it can be demonstrated that this is not practical.
- Development proposals are designed so as not to adversely affect (and, where possible, to improve) surface water drainage for properties and land, both 'upstream' and/or 'downstream' of the development.
- Financial contributions (in the form of commuted payments or CIL monies if applicable) may be required for the purpose of undertaking improvements to drainage infrastructure where these are necessary to make new development acceptable in drainage planning terms. These should be directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposals.

### **COMMENT**

***This policy does not have regard to the size and scale of the proposed development and what is appropriate in relation to the size and scale of the proposed development. It also makes reference to CIL payments being required. The policy should be modified as follows:***

Development proposals will be supported where they can show they have had appropriate regard for:

- Current surface water risk mapping as well as the recommendations set out in the *North Runcton and West Winch Surface Water Management Strategy* (April 2014), and provided a drainage plan following consultation with the relevant Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and the Lead Local Flood Authority.
- Good sustainable urban drainage design, commensurate with current best practice design guidance.
- Detailed street and building design including provision of permeable surfaces, rainwater re-use, green roofs and/or other measures to ensure sustainable water management unless it can be demonstrated that this is not practical.
- Design that will not adversely affect (and, where possible, to improve) surface water drainage for properties and land, both 'upstream' and/or 'downstream' of the development.

### **POLICY WA05: Providing GI management resources**

Development proposals shall, where applicable, be accompanied by a clear commitment to provide a fully funded minimum 15-year management plan for all new green infrastructure areas and features (including, but not necessarily limited to, public open space, new habitat provision, surface drainage infrastructure, landscape mitigation areas, pedestrian and cycle paths and related furniture and structures).

The **management plan** (which might be confirmed by later condition or S106 agreement) should:

- Include detailed plans of the areas and features being provided, indicating clear boundaries and ownership details, details of easements and/or other relevant legal agreements and with clear annotation denoting any management restrictions and requirements, if applicable.
- Provide details of all management and maintenance practices that will be required in the first 15 years (and preferably beyond that time), indicating the tasks and activities, tools and machinery required, and the programme for the required practices.
- Provide a clear costing for the 15-year establishment management period and determine how such funds will be provided and administered over this period and whether the developer will provide the management services themselves or simply provide the revenue for others to deploy.
- The management plan must include provision for handover at the end of the minimum 15-year management period, indicating what agreements shall be in place with the adopting body.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have considered the wording of this policy and the representations I have received in connection with it. The issue of management is covered in policy DM16 of the Borough Council's SADMP and in order to be in general conformity with this policy and therefore meet the Basic Conditions the policy should be reworded as follows:*

Applications will be supported where they provide robust arrangements for the future maintenance of all new green infrastructure areas and features (including, but not necessarily limited to, public open space, new habitat provision, surface drainage infrastructure, landscape mitigation areas, pedestrian and cycle paths and related furniture and structures). Where necessary there will be a requirement for future maintenance to be funded for 15 years.

#### **POLICY WA06: Protecting agricultural land and soils**

**Where development proposals involve the loss of agricultural land they will be expected to demonstrate that:**

- Development site boundaries have been defined so as to ensure, as far as possible, the retention of viable parcels of agricultural land adjacent to, and outside of, the development site.
- Development on locally available brownfield sites has been favoured over greenfield sites.
- A soil conservation plan has been prepared and will be implemented, setting out how the topsoil resource on the particular site will be conserved and reused, following DEFRA and other best practice guidance.
- Support for future local food production has been considered, e.g. by providing viable gardens for food production (with appropriate soils, aspects, spatial arrangements

and access), allotment gardens, and/or opportunities for shared community food production (e.g. orchards).

## **COMMENT**

*The Borough Council suggest deletion of this policy on the basis that the development proposed through the growth area will predominately be on agricultural land. I am however of the opinion that the Neighbourhood Plan covers all development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and it is therefore reasonable to have a policy of this nature providing it does not impose unreasonable requirement upon any potential development proposal. I therefore recommend the policy is modified as follows:*

Where possible, proposals involving the loss of agricultural land should be accompanied by information which demonstrates how the following has been taken into consideration in the development of the proposal:

- Development site boundaries have been defined so as to ensure, as far as possible, the retention of viable parcels of agricultural land adjacent to, and outside of, the development site.
- Where appropriate, development on locally available brownfield sites has been considered over greenfield sites.
- A soil conservation plan has been prepared and will be implemented, setting out how the topsoil resource on the particular site will be conserved and reused, following DEFRA and other best practice guidance.
- Support for future local food production has been considered, e.g. by providing viable gardens for food production (with appropriate soils, aspects, spatial arrangements and access), allotment gardens, and/or opportunities for shared community food production (e.g. orchards).

## **POLICY WA07: Design to protect and enhance local character**

Development proposals shall recognise, sustain and develop the distinctive village characteristics of the existing neighbourhoods in relation to building design, spatial layout, height, density, scale, lighting and use of materials. This means:

- New residential development shall generally be no more than 2 storeys in height, unless justified by the immediate surroundings and setting, and of exemplary design.
- Materials used in the construction of dwellings, including boundary design, shall be high quality and respond positively to the characteristics of existing properties. The use of traditional local building materials (local brick types, carrstone, pantile) will be strongly supported. Proposals will be supported when they demonstrate how design detail has been fully considered to ensure good visual outcomes, e.g. that the potential impact of parked cars, meter boxes, downpipes, aerials and dishes, overhead services and the like have all been minimised.
- Boundary demarcation should embrace 'rural' character, e.g. by using hedging consisting of mixed native species (hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, hazel, holly, etc.). Unsympathetic boundary design (e.g. unmitigated security railings or Leylandii hedging) will not be supported.
- Where possible, adequate space should be made for the establishment of larger tree species (as opposed to smaller trees and shrubs) so as to provide more significant amenity value over time.

- Night lighting should be restricted to essential public spaces, corridors and road junctions. All street lighting and other external building and space lighting should be designed to minimise light spillage and energy wastage.
- Demonstrating an adequate level of privacy and protection from noise in relation to neighbouring properties and public spaces.

**COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

**POLICY WA08: Enhancing West Winch local centre**

**Development proposals in and adjacent to the historic village centre should demonstrate, where applicable, how they will contribute towards the key goals of strengthening and enhancing the local centre.** This means

- mitigating the impacts of increased road traffic from new development.
- protecting historic buildings and features.
- improving the range of community facilities in scale with new proposed development.
- improving access – especially for pedestrians and cyclists but also with provision for short-term car parking and cycle parking.
- improving facilities for local shopping.
- creating a stronger ‘civic space’ and ‘village centre’ – ideally straddling the A10 and incorporating the presence of the church.

The preferable design options for achieving the above are illustrated on Figure 6.0 and set out in the supporting text below.

**COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

**POLICY WA09: Enhancing the A10 road corridor**

**In line with the BCKLWN SADMP document, no development resulting in significant new traffic or additional accesses on to the A10 will be permitted until the relief road is complete and open. Development proposals within the neighbourhood plan area that are anticipated to have traffic impacts on the A10 shall provide or help to provide the following improvements to that road corridor:**

- The introduction of new safe crossings and wider pedestrian areas at identified sections of the road, from Hardwick to Setchey, and especially at bus stops (refer to Figure 7.0)
- Redevelopment of a section of the A10 road in central West Winch, between Chapel Lane and Long Lane, to improve the village centre and create safe access to adjacent sites.
- The introduction of traffic calming measures for central West Winch.
- Improved junctions at Gravelhill Lane and Garage Lane.
- Improvements to sections of footpath / cycle path along the A10 and links to adjacent safe cycling routes.

## **COMMENT**

*The policy as currently worded does not have regard for Paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework:*

*32. All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether:*

- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;*
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and*
- improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.*

*In order to meet the Basic Conditions, it should be modified as follows:*

Development proposals within the neighbourhood plan area that are anticipated to have traffic impacts on the A10 shall provide or help to provide the following improvements to that road corridor:

- The introduction of new safe crossings and wider pedestrian areas at identified sections of the road, from Hardwick to Setchey, and especially at bus stops (refer to Figure 7.0)
- Redevelopment of a section of the A10 road in central West Winch, between Chapel Lane and Long Lane, to improve the village centre and create safe access to adjacent sites.
- The introduction of traffic calming measures for central West Winch.
- Improved junctions at Gravelhill Lane and Garage Lane.
- Improvements to sections of footpath / cycle path along the A10 and links to adjacent safe cycling routes.

## **POLICY WA10: Adequate provision for cars**

**Development proposals will be supported where:**

- Adequate off-street parking is provided for each housing unit – with at least 2 spaces for one, two and three bedroom units and 3 spaces (per dwelling) for four or more bedroom units. Car parking should, where possible, be provided within the curtilage of dwellings. It should be clearly visible from the properties they serve. Any rear parking areas should serve a maximum of 5 homes.
- Front gardens and external space design are to be designed to soften the impact of cars parked at the front of houses, or in the street.
- Sufficient provision is made for unallocated on-street parking for visitors and delivery vehicles either by sufficient road width or creation of parking areas.
- Where garages are provided, they must be built in direct association with the properties whose inhabitants may be expected to use them. They should reflect the

architectural style of the property and should not obscure or dominate the principal elevation. Garages must be spacious enough to allow easy access to average modern cars (i.e. minimum internal dimensions of 7 m x 3 m).

#### **COMMENT**

*I have received representations regarding this policy questioning why this policy seeks to impose standards that are more restrictive than policy DM17 of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk SADMP. I have not been persuaded that there are overriding reasons why the standards should be higher in this circumstance and am mindful of the strategic requirements of policy E2.1 for the delivery of growth and how onerous parking standards could impact on the viability and deliverability of that growth. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:*

Development proposals are required, as a minimum to meet the parking standards as set out in policy DM17 of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk SADMP but proposals including the following higher standards will be strongly supported:

- Providing 2 spaces for one, two and three bedroom units and 3 spaces (per dwelling) for four or more bedroom units, provided within the curtilage of dwellings and clearly visible from the properties they serve.
- Rear parking areas serving a maximum of 5 homes.
- Front gardens and external space designed to soften the impact of cars parked at the front of houses, or in the street.
- Sufficient provision for unallocated on-street parking for visitors and delivery vehicles either by sufficient road width or creation of parking areas.
- Where garages are provided, they must be built in direct association with properties, reflecting the architectural style of the property and should not obscure or dominate the principal elevation. Garages spacious enough to allow easy access to average modern cars (i.e. minimum internal dimensions of 7 m x 3 m).

#### **POLICY WA11: Adequate provision for bicycles**

Residential development proposals shall include provision for adequate secure, covered bicycle storage at the ratio of one bicycle store space per bedroom + one additional space, for each dwelling unit.

Access between the bicycle store and the highway must be possible without passing through the home living area.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have received representations regarding this policy questioning why this policy seeks to impose standards that are more restrictive than policy DM17 of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk SADMP. I have not been persuaded that there are overriding reasons why the standards should be higher in this circumstance and am mindful of the strategic requirements of policy E2.1 for the delivery of growth and how onerous parking standards could impact on the viability and deliverability of that growth. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:*

Residential development proposals shall include, where possible provision for adequate secure, covered bicycle storage at the ratio of one bicycle store space per bedroom + one additional space, for each dwelling unit.

Where possible, access between the bicycle store and the highway should be designed without passing through the home living area.

### **POLICY WA12: Adequate outside space**

**Residential development proposals will be expected to meet the following external space standards:**

- All dwellings are designed with private outside space (not including driveway, garages and storage sheds). Flats should ideally have balconies with sufficient space for a table and chairs (e.g. 5 sqm or more).
- Houses of one or two bedrooms shall have a minimum garden size of 50 sqm but preferably more. Houses of 3 or more bedrooms shall have a minimum garden size of 100 sqm but preferably more. Residents of flats or multiple occupancy buildings should have access to an equivalent area of semi-private garden space. There may be scope for a reduction in the provision of external amenity space for dwellings which have immediate access to well landscaped and well maintained communal open space; or, where smaller garden sizes for certain homes can be demonstrated to be appropriate for the intended occupiers of the properties, and this is supported by an up-to-date market needs assessment.
- All garden space should be provided 'ready to grow' (i.e. with clean, free draining soil). All principal garden areas will ideally have direct sunlight for several hours a day.

### **COMMENT**

*I understand the community desire to ensure that the design of any new residential development does, where possible meet the highest standards of design and external space. I must ensure that the policy meets the Basic Conditions, and in particular the requirement of the NPPF that requirements should not be so onerous that there is an unacceptable impact upon viability and deliverability of proposals. In addition, I have received representation that this policy is overly restrictive. I agree with the concerns raised and consider that any "blanket" requirement of this nature does not take into consideration individual circumstances, could impact on viability and make the proposed development difficult to deliver. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:*

Residential development proposals will be expected to meet the following external space standards where appropriate and possible, subject to viability and deliverability considerations:

- All dwellings are designed with private outside space (not including driveway, garages and storage sheds). Flats should ideally have balconies with sufficient space for a table and chairs (e.g. 5 sqm or more).
- Houses of one or two bedrooms shall have a minimum garden size of 50 sqm but preferably more. Houses of 3 or more bedrooms shall have a minimum garden size of 100 sqm but preferably more. Residents of flats or multiple occupancy buildings should have access to an equivalent area of semi-private garden space. There may

be scope for a reduction in the provision of external amenity space for dwellings which have immediate access to well landscaped and well maintained communal open space; or, where smaller garden sizes for certain homes can be demonstrated to be appropriate for the intended occupiers of the properties, and this is supported by an up-to-date market needs assessment.

- All garden space should be provided 'ready to grow' (i.e. with clean, free draining soil). All principal garden areas will ideally have direct sunlight for several hours a day.

#### **POLICY WA13: Adequate bin storage**

**Development proposals will be supported where:**

- Storage space for both interior and exterior waste and recycling bins is provided, taking into consideration the level of waste separation required by the local authority.
- Bin storage areas are not visually prominent from the street or main living areas of the dwelling, but have easy access to bin collection points.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy*

#### **POLICY WA14: Affordable housing provision**

Provision of affordable housing will be supported where it is visually integrated with other housing throughout the development, in small groups of 4 or less, to achieve a mixed and balanced community. Exceptions may be acceptable where the applicant can show a particular benefit and need, such as in the provision of sheltered housing for the elderly.

#### **COMMENT**

*It is widely accepted that the integration of affordable housing with other housing tenures within a development is highly desirable however there are circumstances relating to deliverability and management costs that make this aspiration unachievable. I consider that the potential impact of the policy as currently worded would be overly restrictive and not meet the Basic Conditions. The policy should be modified as follows:*

The provision of affordable housing will be supported where it is visually integrated with other housing throughout the development and should where possible be in small groups to achieve a mixed and balanced community. Exceptions may be acceptable where the applicant can show a particular benefit and need, such as in the provision of sheltered housing for the elderly or due to viability and management considerations.

#### **POLICY WA15: Provision of play areas**

Residential development proposals will be required to provide for an acceptable quantity and quality of children's play provision.

All play areas should be designed to be compatible with their setting, to complement and enhance the amenity of the area, to be robust and low maintenance, to provide for a range of abilities and to comply with RoSPA (Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents) health and safety guidelines:

Where communal recreational open space is provided, design shall ensure that:

- It is accessible to all.
- It is designed to consider microclimate, e.g. with a sunny aspect, shelter from wind, etc.
- It is integrated into the overall network of green infrastructure, cycle and footpaths, etc.
- Play areas designed for younger children are to be protected from dog access with fences and gates.

**Development proposals must demonstrate that:**

- Smaller local areas of play (LAPs – designed for children under six years of age) are provided in any development of 10 or more new family dwellings, and/or within a 5-minute walk of the majority of homes.
- A local ‘equipped’ area for play (LEAPs – designed for 4–12 year olds) is provided for every group of between 30 and 100 new family dwellings and/or within a 10-minute walk of the majority of homes.
- A ‘neighbourhood ‘equipped’ play area (a NEAP, designed for 4–14 year olds and suitable for a range of teenage play activities) has been provided within a 15-minute walk of the majority of homes.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

#### **POLICY WA16: Existing employment areas**

Planning applications that sustain the existing employment areas at Hardwick Industrial Estate, Hardwick Narrows Industrial Estate and Garage Lane, Setchey will be supported where it can be demonstrated that any potentially adverse environmental impacts (especially, landscape, visual or transport impacts) will be acceptably mitigated.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

#### **POLICY WA17: Supporting development of local centres**

• Applications for business premises A1 (shops), A2 (professional and financial) and A3 (restaurants and cafés) in the identified neighbourhood centres will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will enhance the character and vitality of the centres and will not have demonstrable adverse impacts to local amenity (e.g. by generating a high level of HGV traffic, causing parking congestion or excessive noise, etc.).

#### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy*

#### **POLICY WA18: Supporting farm-related businesses**

- Applications for farm diversification that will demonstrably improve farm sustainability and/or increase employment opportunities will be supported where they sustain local landscape character, support local biodiversity and maintain opportunities for all residents to enjoy the local countryside.
- Proposals that will result in damage to residential amenity (e.g. through adverse environmental, visual, social or significant traffic impacts, such as the proliferation of HGV traffic on small lanes) will be resisted.

#### **Comment**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

#### **POLICY WA19: Supporting tourism**

Development proposals and initiatives that can contribute to the tourism appeal of the immediate area and Norfolk in general, that can create and/or enhance visitor attractions and that will demonstrably provide new activities and accommodation for visitors will be supported. Provision of new facilities that can also benefit local residents will be especially welcome. However, applications must demonstrate that proposals will not have adverse impacts on residential and rural amenity, particularly in respect of adverse traffic impacts.

Development proposals on sites alongside the A149 in North Runcton should consider the 'gateway' significance of the location for both King's Lynn and North Norfolk and demonstrate exceptional architectural qualities. Site design and especially the peripheral landscape works must also complement the local landscape setting and enhance the urban fringe environment.

#### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

### **POLICIES FOR THE WEST WINCH GROWTH AREA**

#### **POLICY GA01: Creating neighbourhoods**

**Development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area will be supported where they demonstrate that they incorporate the following provisions:**

- Designs help to create 'walkable' neighbourhoods that will reduce the need for local car journeys and provide an interconnecting network of cycle and footpaths.
- Proposals encourage the development of the 'northern' and 'central' neighbourhoods in advance of the southern neighbourhood\*.
- The residential neighbourhoods are separated from each other by corridors of 'green infrastructure', which will ideally be designed to fulfil a variety of uses and should enhance and complement local landscape character.
- Proposals demonstrate adequate consideration for known or expected climate change variables and ensure robust landscape design, for example through providing shelter, shade and opportunities for temperature mitigation (e.g. through street tree planting).

- The main green infrastructure corridors are used to define distinct residential neighbourhoods and have a width of at least 236 metres (southern corridor) and 164 metres (northern corridor) as recommended by the HSE, but preferably wider.
- The neighbourhoods include community 'local centres' providing a focus for local shopping, business and community activities and feature high quality civic space.
- Development proposals can demonstrate (through HRA screening where required and adhering to the requirements set out in the Borough's HRA Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy) that there will be no significant effect on a European site.

Proposals should demonstrate regard to the goals of strengthening and enhancing the West Winch local centre as set out in Policy WA08 and, where relevant, contribute towards those goals.

The provision of a new community centre in the northern local centre is particularly sought. It should be located and designed so as to provide maximum benefit and value to the community, contributing to a sense of place, civic spirit, cultural diversity and low levels of car dependency.

The provision of land or premises suitable for development of GP consulting rooms, clinics, a pharmacy and/or other community health support initiatives will be welcomed and is especially encouraged in the proposed 'old' West Winch local centre.

\* Any development proposals within the North Runcton 'neighbourhood' (i.e. the existing main village) must comply with BCKLWN SADMP Policy DM3.

## **COMMENT**

**I have received representations that bullet point 2:**

- ***“Proposals encourage the development of the ‘northern’ and ‘central’ neighbourhoods in advance of the southern neighbourhood\*.”***

**is in conflict with policy E2.1 of the SADMP which requires:**

**“An orderly phasing of development ensuring that this proceeds broadly instep with infrastructure provision. Development is encouraged to proceed concurrently in northern and southern parts of the growth area.”**

**The concern appears to be that the phasing required by this policy could restrict strategic delivery. Local residents wish to see the “northern” and “central” areas developed first as they feel there would be least impact to the existing parish setting with the initial new development at Constitution Hill, whilst development at West Winch could help to improve the centre of the village by removing existing constraints. I have considered this issue carefully however as Policy GA01 uses the phrase “encourage” I see nothing which conflicts with E2.1 if this wording is retained.**

**Further concern has been raised regarding the width of the green infrastructure corridors. The widths required are very precise and inflexible, not allowing for**

**variations based on site specific situations and this could impact upon the viability and delivery of the growth area and therefore be in conflict with the Basic Conditions.**

**Bullet point 5 of the policy should be reworded as follows:**

- The main green infrastructure corridors are used to define distinct residential neighbourhoods and should be designed to meet, as a minimum, the HSE Policy requirements and be wide enough to perform the function of visual separation between neighbourhoods. The target being a minimum width of at least 236 metres (southern corridor) and 164 metres (northern corridor).

### **POLICY GA02: Infrastructure delivery in the West Winch Growth Area**

**In order to mitigate the impact of development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area, developers will be expected to contribute towards improving local services and infrastructure through either the payment of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and/or planning obligations (via a S106 agreement / planning condition) as follows:**

- The delivery of a new primary school on a minimum 2 Ha site in the northern neighbourhood and improvements/expansion of existing schools serving the development.
- Making improvements to the existing library in King's Lynn or provision of a library linked to another community facility within the new development (e.g. as part of the community centre, retail area or a doctors' surgery).
- Fire service facilities (e.g. fire hydrants)
- A new community meeting space
- Healthcare provision
- Transport infrastructure improvements in line with Policy GA04
- Improvement of local bus services:
- Green infrastructure in line with Policies GA03 and WA01–WA06
- Additional open space and play space provision
- Affordable housing
- Commuted sums to assist in upgrading existing community facilities where it can be demonstrated that this will benefit the growing community.

Planning obligations will meet the tests required by the NPPF if they will be:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- Directly related to the development, and
  - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

For the purposes of the West Winch Growth Area, infrastructure will be delivered in line with an Infrastructure Delivery Plan adopted by the Borough to which all major development proposals will be required to adhere to by planning condition.

### **COMMENT**

***This is not a land use policy and should be clearly set out as a community aspiration.***

*In order to meet the Basic Conditions, Neighbourhood plan policies can only address land use issues, therefore this Policy must be deleted from the policy section of the plan but could be included within the plan generally clearly marked as a community aspiration. The infrastructure requirements for the growth area are set out in Policy E2.1 However the last paragraph of the policy is relevant to Policy GA04 and I have included it in my modification to that policy.*

### **POLICY GA03: Providing 'green infrastructure'**

Planning applications within the 'growth area' will be supported where they provide or contribute towards the phased establishment of a comprehensive network of new public open spaces, sustainable urban drainage corridors, bridle paths, cycle paths, footpaths and other amenity and nature conservation areas that will benefit existing and new residential areas.

**Development proposals must be accompanied by adequate green infrastructure, demonstrating regard to the Settlement Concept (Figure 9.0) and the following requirements which are based on nationally promoted standards and guidelines and reflect additional need generated from delivery of between 1,600 and 3,500 homes:**

- 10 Ha of new active recreation facilities should be provided (which could include sports pitches, courts, multi-use games facilities, children's play areas, or trim trails within the Neighbourhood Plan area).
- An additional 20 Ha of informal public open space, preferably with at least one public space of at least 5 Ha in area. These areas should be designed to provide attractive and varied recreation and amenity spaces suitable for, amongst other things, exercising dogs and informal play – all within easy walking distance of homes. Provision of grasslands, specimen trees, copses and small woodland should be included. The spaces will also provide wildlife habitat and could include non-vehicular access corridors and surface-water attenuation areas (if suitably designed for public access, amenity and wildlife benefit). Shelterbelt or screen planting could also be counted in this area (where it is wider than 10 m and designed for public access).
- An additional 5 Ha of new 'nature reserve' should be provided with varied habitat and managed specifically for the benefit of local biodiversity with controlled public access.
- An additional 0.6 Ha of allotment gardens (indicatively 24 x 250 sqm plots) or equivalent garden space suitable for food production. Provision should include access from the highway, clear boundary delineation of the land (preferably with concrete posts and rabbit- and deer-proof fencing of at least 1200 mm height). Provision of a potable water supply to the site and a lockable store shed per holding would be anticipated. Definitive land registry details should be provided. An ongoing management arrangement with a community association or Parish Council would also be required.
- A dedicated dual-use path connection to the Hardwick industrial estate and links to the existing King's Lynn cycle path network (refer to Figure 9.0) within a 'green corridor'.
- Provision for connection to a future dedicated dual-use path connection to the Bawsey Country Park and a dual-use path connection to the village of Middleton (refer to Figure 9.0) within a 'green corridor'.

### **COMMENT**

*I recognise that securing the provision of "green infrastructure "is an important element of the Neighbourhood Plan however in order to meet the Basic Conditions the*

***policy must not seek to exceed the guidelines on its provision in National and Local Policy. I have received representation that this policy does in fact seek to require more “green infrastructure” than the Development Plan. The requirement of additional green infrastructure can impact upon the viability and deliverability of proposals and I have not been provided with any evidence in relation to this matter. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:***

Planning applications within the ‘growth area’ will be supported where they provide or contribute towards the phased establishment of a comprehensive network of new public open spaces, sustainable urban drainage corridors, bridle paths, cycle paths, footpaths and other amenity and nature conservation areas that will benefit existing and new residential areas.

New developments will be expected, at a minimum to meet nationally recognised standards for the provision of open space. The Fields in Trust’s Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play suggested standard of 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1,000 of population will be used and the provision will be required to reflect additional need generated from delivery of between 1,600 and 3,500 homes. The following provision will be strongly supported:

- 10 Ha of new active recreation facilities should be provided (which could include sports pitches, courts, multi-use games facilities, children’s play areas, or trim trails within the Neighbourhood Plan area).
- An additional 20 Ha of informal public open space, preferably with at least one public space of at least 5 Ha in area. These areas should be designed to provide attractive and varied recreation and amenity spaces suitable for, amongst other things, exercising dogs and informal play – all within easy walking distance of homes. Provision of grasslands, specimen trees, copses and small woodland should be included. The spaces will also provide wildlife habitat and could include non-vehicular access corridors and surface-water attenuation areas (if suitably designed for public access, amenity and wildlife benefit). Shelterbelt or screen planting could also be counted in this area (where it is wider than 10 m and designed for public access).
- An additional 5 Ha of new ‘nature reserve’ should be provided with varied habitat and managed specifically for the benefit of local biodiversity with controlled public access.
- An additional 0.6 Ha of allotment gardens (indicatively 24 x 250 sqm plots) or equivalent garden space suitable for food production. Provision should include access from the highway, clear boundary delineation of the land (preferably with concrete posts and rabbit- and deer-proof fencing of at least 1200 mm height). Provision of a potable water supply to the site and a lockable store shed per holding would be anticipated. Definitive land registry details should be provided. An ongoing management arrangement with a community association or Parish Council would also be required.
- A dedicated dual-use path connection to the Hardwick industrial estate and links to the existing King’s Lynn cycle path network (refer to Figure 9.0) within a ‘green corridor’.
- Provision for connection to a future dedicated dual-use path connection to the Bawsey Country Park and a dual-use path connection to the village of Middleton (refer to Figure 9.0) within a ‘green corridor’.

#### **POLICY GA04: Ensuring transport infrastructure**

**Development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area that total cumulatively 50 or more houses will be supported, subject to there being a**

**binding commitment to an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and/or comprehensive transport strategy which confirms:**

- The detailed route and design of the new 'relief road' and associated required improvements to the Hardwick interchange. These must be fully costed, with land secured and surveyed so they are known to be deliverable within an agreed budget and timetable.
- A delivery plan for the 'relief road' and Hardwick interchange improvements must be agreed with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. This will include all commitments to funding mechanisms that guarantee delivery of the whole of the new route.

It must be demonstrated that the programme for delivery of the 'relief road' and other required local road improvements are commensurate with maintaining a functioning, safe local road system throughout development of the 'growth area', whilst minimising congestion and disruption to local residents and the local economy.

**COMMENT**

*In considering whether this policy meets the Basic Conditions I have had regard to the representations made by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. In accordance with policy E2.1, part B the Borough Council is developing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and this is the mechanism which should deal with this element of the plan. The Borough Council recognises the need for the delivery of the relief road to be linked to the phasing of development but has concerns about the reference to 50 units. As the Borough council will prepare this Infrastructure Delivery Plan it seems appropriate that this policy is modified to require development proposals to be consistent with that Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The policy should be modified as follows:*

For the purposes of the West Winch Growth Area, infrastructure will be delivered in line with an Infrastructure Delivery Plan adopted by the Borough Council to which all major development proposals will be required to adhere to by planning condition and/or Section 106 Legal Agreement.

Development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area will be supported, subject to the proposals being consistent with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and/or a comprehensive transport strategy which should include:

- The detailed route and design of the new 'relief road' and associated required improvements to the Hardwick interchange.
- A programme for delivery of the 'relief road' and other required local road improvements that will maintain a functioning, safe local road system throughout development of the 'growth area', whilst minimising congestion and disruption to local residents and the local economy.

**POLICY GA05: Design of 'relief road'**

**The proposed relief road will be supported with the following design provisions or designs providing similar outcomes:**

- There will be a roundabout or similar ‘free flow’ junction at Gravelhill Lane to eradicate congestion and queues and to provide safe local access to the A10/relief road.
- Rectory Lane and Chequers Lane should remain as through roads and incorporate safe cycle and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle and/or pedestrian paths should be provided on both sides of the relief road corridor and these should be generally separated from the road carriageway by a sustainable soft landscape strip (grass verge, hedge, tree planting – or preferably a mix of all three).
- Appropriate safe cycle and pedestrian crossing points should be provided at regular intervals along the road – and specially to link desire lines between local centres, recreational facilities and public transport nodes. Safe wildlife crossings must also be considered.
- Design should fully integrate environmental impact mitigation features – especially ensuring that existing and proposed settlement is mitigated from traffic noise and night lighting impacts. Night lighting should be minimised, especially in sections adjacent to an agricultural backdrop. The road surface should be designed to minimise tyre noise.
- A maximum speed of 40 mph is anticipated for the relief road – but a 30 mph limit may be appropriate and desirable in some sections. The carriageway design should discourage speeding.

## **COMMENT**

***The proposed relief road will be designed to the relevant Highway Standards. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:***

In designing the proposed relief road, the following design elements should be included where possible:

- A roundabout or similar ‘free flow’ junction at Gravelhill Lane to eradicate congestion and queues and to provide safe local access to the A10/relief road.
- Rectory Lane and Chequers Lane to remain as through roads and incorporate safe cycle and pedestrian crossings.
- Cycle and/or pedestrian paths to be provided on both sides of the relief road corridor and these should be generally separated from the road carriageway by a sustainable soft landscape strip (grass verge, hedge, tree planting – or preferably a mix of all three).
- Appropriate safe cycle and pedestrian crossing points to be provided at regular intervals along the road – and specially to link desire lines between local centres, recreational facilities and public transport nodes. Safe wildlife crossings should also be considered.
- The design should fully integrate environmental impact mitigation features – especially ensuring that existing and proposed settlement is mitigated from traffic noise and night lighting impacts. Night lighting should be minimised, especially in sections adjacent to an agricultural backdrop. The road surface should be designed to minimise tyre noise.
- A maximum speed of 40 mph for the relief road – but a 30 mph limit may be appropriate and desirable in some sections. The carriageway design should discourage speeding.

## **POLICY GA06: Principles of new development design**

**Development proposals in the West Winch Growth Area will be supported where they achieve the following:**

- A 'comfortable' scale with clear distinctions between public and private spaces, avoiding unused or un-owned space.
- A sense of quality: attractive, well-built and well-detailed buildings; spaces and features with good quality, low maintenance materials and unique features (e.g. public art).
- Recognisable landmarks and focal points; clear, safe, navigable routes; views; gateways; signage and way markers.
- A compatible mix of land-use, building form, architectural styles, landscape features and natural habitat.
- A 'sense of place' and local distinctiveness through use of traditional local materials and appropriate native species.
- Interconnection with the existing landscape and settlement – e.g. with retention or enhancement of existing views or incorporation of existing features (ponds, banks, trees, hedges, etc.).

### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy*

## **POLICY GA07: Residential street design**

**Development proposals coming forward as part of the implementation of the West Winch Growth Area, and including new roads and streets, will seek to demonstrate the following principles:**

- Streets are designed so as to prioritise the movement and safety of pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities.
- Where car and cycle parking is provided, it must not dominate the street environment or reduce the comfort and safety of other street users.
- Streets are designed to facilitate desire lines and links between key buildings and spaces and to help create attractive spaces between them.
- Streets are planned and designed to regulate the speed of traffic – where the majority of routes within the 'growth area' will remain predominantly residential in character. Designers should seek to restrict vehicle speeds to 20 mph or below in residential areas.
- Pedestrians and cyclists must be able to use and cross all roads safely and conveniently.
- Residential streets shall be designed as social spaces, helping to facilitate social interaction and safe for children and the elderly.
- Design should incorporate soft landscape, where possible featuring medium or large species of tree that can provide a significant contribution to streetscape character over time. Design must ensure that soft landscape is sustainable in the long term – where planting will not adversely conflict with carriageways, buildings, services or pavements. Species selection should consider climate change variables.

## COMMENT

### *For clarity the policy should be modified as follows:*

Development proposals forming part of the implementation of the West Winch Growth Area, including new roads and streets, should include the following design elements:

- Streets designed to prioritise the movement and safety of pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities.
- Where car and cycle parking is provided, it must not dominate the street environment or reduce the comfort and safety of other street users.
- Streets designed to facilitate desire lines and links between key buildings and spaces and to help create attractive spaces between them.
- Streets planned and designed to regulate the speed of traffic – where the majority of routes within the ‘growth area’ will remain predominantly residential in character. Designers should seek to restrict vehicle speeds to 20 mph or below in residential areas.
- Pedestrians and cyclists must be able to use and cross all roads safely and conveniently.
- Residential streets designed as social spaces, helping to facilitate social interaction and safe for children and the elderly.
- Incorporating soft landscape and where possible featuring medium or large species of tree that can provide a significant contribution to streetscape character over time. Design must ensure that soft landscape is sustainable in the long term – where planting will not adversely conflict with carriageways, buildings, services or pavements. Species selection should consider climate change variables.

### **POLICY GA08: Cycle and footpath provision**

**Development proposals coming forward as part of the West Winch Growth Area should contribute towards the design, delivery and funding of an integrated network of cycle paths, footpaths and dual-use paths throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area. Development should facilitate a hierarchy of cycle and footpaths from streetscapes to open countryside, and linking important community assets such as local centres, employment areas, public open space, and key destinations (e.g. King’s Lynn town centre and Hardwick industrial estate).**

Applications should demonstrate that:

- Cycle path design (widths, surfaces, signage, junctions, etc.) are implemented to current best practice standards.
- Pedestrian/cyclist desire lines form the basis for route planning and streetscape design (where some principal suggested routes are illustrated in Figure 9.0).
- Routes are established between principal residential areas and principal community facilities (e.g. schools, recreation areas).
- Routes are planned and designed to facilitate ‘passive security’ and safety.
- Main cycle routes are predominantly provided on dedicated paths with safe separation from motorists and pedestrians.
- In street design, protected space is provided for cyclists at road junctions where appropriate.

- For development proposals providing destinations that might attract visitors, customers, workers or others on bicycles, appropriate provision is made for cycle parking.
- 'Leisure routes' for pedestrians and cyclists have also been considered and provided.

**COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

**POLICY GA09: Provision for public transport**

**Development proposals coming forward as part of the implementation of the West Winch Growth Area will be supported where:**

- Residential development is predominantly designed to lie within 200 metres walking distance of a bus stop.
- Footpath connections and road crossing points are provided for each bus stop.
- All stops are designed to enable easy access to buses for all users.
- Each local centre should have at least one appropriately designed bus shelter, preferably with an 'intelligent' display, with 'real-time' timetable information in line with current available technology.

**COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

**POLICY GA10: Opportunities for small-scale and self-build development**

**Applicants coming forward with development proposals as part of the implementation of the West Winch Growth Area are encouraged to offer a proportion of land (either as serviced plots or simply as small land parcels) for sale to small-scale builders or self-build projects. It is envisaged that such development would be limited to no more than 5 dwelling units in any one application.**

The scale, design and materials palette for such development would be required to subscribe to the wider character of existing and proposed development and result in an acceptably harmonious outcome for the whole neighbourhood. Applications for buildings with excellent design and sustainability criteria will be strongly supported. An acceptable period for construction and completion of self-build projects (for example, 2 years from the purchase of the plot) would be expected.

**COMMENT**

*Whilst the rationale for encouraging development by small scale builders and self build projects is clear and supported at National and Local policy level it is unclear why the limit of 5 units has been determined and this seems unnecessarily restrictive. To meet the Basic Conditions, the policy should be modified as follows:*

Applicants coming forward with development proposals as part of the implementation of the West Winch Growth Area are encouraged to offer a proportion of land (either as serviced plots or simply as small land parcels) for sale to small-scale builders or self-build projects.

The scale, design and materials palette for such development should reflect the character of existing and proposed development. Applications for buildings with excellent design and sustainability criteria will be strongly supported. An acceptable period for construction and completion of self-build projects (for example, 2 years from the purchase of the plot) would be expected.

### **POLICY GA11: Provisions for a successful primary school**

**Development applications in the West Winch Growth Area will be supported where provision is made for the development of a new primary school in the ‘northern neighbourhood’ to support the proposed 1,600 dwellings to 2026. The school should be located on a minimum size 2 Ha site and include suitable pre-school premises, commensurate with predicted demographics. The following provisions are considered necessary:**

- Early establishment of the new school so that it can provide a social focal point for the new and existing community at an early stage of ‘growth area’ development.
- A suitable site for pre-school facilities on or near the primary school site.
- Facilities that could be ‘shared’ with the local community at appropriate times and whilst ensuring the security of pupils.
- A site that is readily accessible and safe for children and young families to travel to and discourages car dependency. The school will therefore ideally be located away from main roads and connected to principal residential areas by an excellent network of safe cycle and pedestrian paths. It should be sited to ensure equitable access for the whole catchment area. It should however have adequate arrangements for parents who need to use their cars (e.g. dropping off children en route to work).
- The school should be designed to provide maximum benefit and value to the community, contributing to the sense of place, and providing a robust, energy efficient and attractive building.
- The school should have sufficient external space to allow the appropriate recommended provision of playing fields, free play and outdoor education opportunities. Facilities that can benefit the wider community will be encouraged.
- Where further development beyond 2026 or in other neighbourhoods within the West Winch Growth Area demonstrates the need for an additional primary school, similar provisions will be expected.

### **COMMENT**

*I have no comment on this policy.*

## **SECTION 5**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

1. *I find that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*
2. *The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*
3. *The North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area and there are no other Neighbourhood Development Plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area.*
4. *A screening for the requirement of a Strategic Environmental Assessment and amended Habitats Regulations Assessment was conducted satisfactorily and meets the EU Obligation.*
5. *The policies and plans in the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the recommended modifications would contribute to achieving sustainable development. They have regard to national policy and to guidance, and generally conform to the strategic policies of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy 2011 and the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) adopted 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.*
6. *I therefore consider that the North Runcton and West Winch Neighbourhood Plan subject to the recommended modifications can proceed to Referendum.*

*Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD*

*Planning Consultant*

*NPIERS Examiner*

*CEDR accredited mediator*

*6<sup>th</sup> June 2017*