

## **LP37 – Rural Areas Policy**

Link to the draft policy and comments in full received from the draft consultation stage:

<https://west-norfolk.objective.co.uk/portal/lpr2019/lpr2019?pointId=s1542882759462#section-s1542882759462>

### **Officer Recommendations to Task Group:**

**Policy remains the same as consulted upon**

### **Consideration of issues:**

A mixture of comments were displayed within LP37 Development in Rural Areas. Over half of the comments that were received were supportive of the policy which we welcome. Other comments expressed different concerns including the deletion of specific criteria or changing the wording. The criteria that brought interest to the consultees who objected were criterion 3, 6 and 7.

- With criterion 3 which focuses on most new development in rural areas being within Growth Key Rural Centres and Key Rural Service Centres, attention here was either to make the wording more flexible to allow settlements in close proximity to be included within this focus and that Rural Villages should also be placed within this principle.
- Involving Rural Villages within criterion 3 also leads onto one consultee wanting criterion 6 to have rural villages removed from this point; so rural villages and SVAH are treated within the same point.
- Criterion 7 brought attention to consultees who object policy LP26 and wish for this criterion to be deleted

## **Policy LP37- Development in Rural Areas**

### **13.1.3 The strategy for rural areas is to:**

1. promote sustainable communities and sustainable patterns of development to ensure strong, diverse, economic activity, including farm/agricultural diversification (see also Policy LP06);
2. maintain local character and strive for a high-quality environment;
3. the focus of most new development in the rural areas will be at Growth Key Rural Centres and Key Rural Service Centres selected from the Settlement Hierarchy Policy LP02;
4. ensure employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities are provided in close proximity to settlements;
5. focus on improving accessibility between towns and villages so helping to reduce social exclusion, isolation and rural deprivation;
6. in the Rural Villages and Smaller Villages and Hamlets, more modest levels of development, as detailed in Policy LP25, will be permitted to meet local needs and maintain the vitality of these communities where this can be achieved in a sustainable manner, particularly with regard to accessibility to housing, employment and services and without detriment to the character of the surrounding area;
7. housing development could take place within inside settlement development boundaries if judged to be in accordance with LP04. It may also take place outside of these development boundaries if judged to be in accordance with LP26;
8. within all centres and villages priority will be given to retaining local business sites unless it can be demonstrated that any proposal for change accords with Policy LP06;
9. sites may be allocated for affordable housing or exception housing to support the housing strategy;

10.support may also be given for entry level exception sites;

11.beyond the villages and in the countryside the strategy will be to conserve and enhance the countryside recognising its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, and its natural resources to be enjoyed by all.

**13.1.4 Policy LP37 contributes to Objectives 6, 7, 9 Society, 14, 15 Environment, 28, 29, 30, 31 Rural Areas 34 Coast, New Norfolk Coast AONB Policy**

**Supporting text:**

**LP37 Development in Rural Areas (~~previously CS06~~)**

**Introduction**

13.1.1 The Council will continue to encourage a strong hierarchy of rural settlements by developing competitive, diverse and thriving rural enterprise that supports a range of jobs. Rural settlements provide essential services and facilities to serve visitors to the borough as well as the local communities.

13.1.2 The Borough Council's approach to housing in rural areas will seek to sustain rural communities, identifying a need for both affordable and market housing. Rural exception sites can be used to enable the Council to deliver affordable housing in rural communities on sites not otherwise available for residential development

## Sustainability Appraisal

### LP37 Rural Areas

This policy has been updated from the CS ones to reflect the adoption of the SADMP, proposals within the Local Plan review and new programmes which are now in place. Consequently, the SA scores for the new policy are similar to those of the original CS one's par objective 18. Objective 18 now scores '++' instead of O and this because a range of rural areas are in the process of their neighbourhood plan which we are supporting and helping the local community with their aspiration and active community involvement within preparing and adopting this planning document.

Given this having the old policy remain is not really an option as this doesn't reflect the current situation accurately. Not having policies to cover the area, would result in a lower score and would not reflect the sustainability objectives of the borough council as well.

LP37: Rural Areas																							
SA Objective:																							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	+	-	Overall Effect	
LP37	+	O	O	+	O	+	+	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	++	++	+	++	+	++	+14	0	Likely Positive Effect +14
CS06	+	O	O	+	O	+	+	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	++	++	+	O	+	++	+12	0	Likely Positive Effect +12
No Policy	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	O	-	O	O	O	O	+	+	O	+	+	+11	-10	Likely Mixed Effect



<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Nature of response</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Consultee modification</b>	<b>Officer response</b>
Ms Debbie Mack, Historic England	Support	Support- we welcome criterion 11 of the policy	n/a	Noted- we welcome the support
Mrs Sarah Watts, West Winch Parish Council	Suggestion	West Winch Parish Council comments that broadband and high-speed connections are still not up to standard in rural areas. Work from home should be an option, not an alternative, to reducing the use of the car, or poor public transport modes. Constant use of technology could be a health hazard.	n/a	Noted- no further action
Ed Durrant, Pigeon Investment Management	Support	1.46 We support the promotion of sustainable patterns of development to ensure strong, diverse, economic activity but do not believe that this should be constrained by the settlement hierarchy of settlements in Policy LP02. 1.47 We support the fourth criterion of Policy LP37 to 'ensure employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities are provided in close proximity to settlements. This approach to development clearly supports	Suggested change: 1.50 The third criterion of Policy LP37 should be amended to allow greater flexibility for growth in smaller settlements, where they form functional clusters with higher order settlements. The wording of the third criterion of Policy LP37 should be amended as set out below: 13.1.3 The strategy for rural areas is to: 3. the focus of most new development in the rural areas will be at Growth Key	We welcome the support to the overall policy. In reference to changing the wording to allow more flexibility for the growth in smaller settlements this change will not take place. The settlement hierarchy sets out the approach taken for focusing where most development would be appropriate. Windfall development and LP26 allows for flexibility also where deemed suitable in smaller settlements or

		<p>the argument for further employment sites to be considered near to larger settlements, like Pigeon's site in Snettisham.</p> <p>1.48 Like Policy LP02, Policy LP37 only allocates 'modest' levels of development in the Rural Villages. Notwithstanding this, it does acknowledge the positive impacts that this development can have on maintaining the vitality of these communities where this can be achieved in a sustainable manner. Given the example of Ingoldisthorpe, which is near to the services at higher order settlements, Policy LP37 should allow for more than just 'modest' growth in this Rural Village.</p> <p>1.49 Whilst Pigeon supports the aim of conserving and enhancing the countryside this has to be balanced against the need to boost the supply of housing in accordance with paragraph 59 of the NPPF. Where countryside is not of any intrinsically recognisable character or beauty, has limited landscape, heritage or wildlife</p>	<p>Rural Centres and Key Rural Service Centres selected from the Settlement Hierarchy Policy LP02 or those smaller settlements, in close proximity to higher order settlements, where growth would achieve sustainable development;'</p>	<p>adjacent to the settlement hierarchy.</p>
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		benefit, then its loss should be part of the balancing act when considering the benefits of delivering new homes.		
Mr Ian Cable	Support	Support	n/a	We welcome the support
Mr & Mrs J Clarke	Support	Support	n/a	We welcome the support
Mr D Russell	Support	Support	n/a	We welcome the support
Mr L Aldren	Support	Support	n/a	We welcome the support
Mr D A Jones	Support	Support	n/a	We welcome the support
Norfolk County Council (Infrastructure Dev, Community and Env Services)	Support	The County Council supports the inclusion of a Policy for the rural areas and supports the objectives of the policy including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting sustainable communities and sustainable patterns of development;</li> <li>• Supporting diversification;</li> <li>• Improving accessibility.</li> </ul> The County Council would support Local Plan policies which aim to protect the rural economy and services/facilities such as public houses, local shops and valued facilities.	n/a	We welcome the support
Mrs Erica Whettingsteel, EJW Planning Limited	Mixed	Policy LP37 is too long, too detailed and repeats policy set out elsewhere within the plan. It needs to be condensed such	Appropriate levels of growth to make villages and rural communities more sustainable will be supported.	Given the nature of the Borough we believe that the detail is necessary within the

		that it is succinct, consistent with national policy and is shown to be positively prepared	<p>Growth Key Rural Service Centres and Key Rural Service Centres identified in the Settlement Hierarchy will be the focus for most development. In smaller villages and rural communities, the type and scale of development will reflect the need to maintain the vitality of these communities.</p> <p>Housing In villages not identified for a specific level of growth in the settlement hierarchy, residential development will only be permitted where;</p> <p>a) Where there are suitable sites available within or adjacent to the settlement boundary; or</p> <p>b) It involves the appropriate re-use of a rural building or a previously developed site; or</p> <p>c) It is an affordable housing scheme or exception scheme that supports the housing strategy.</p>	<p>policy, it has been positively prepared and is consistent with the NPPF.</p> <p>No change</p>
Mr Michael Rayner, CPRE	Mixed	CPRE does not agree with the need for Policy LP26 enabling	Point 7. Remove - It may also take place outside of these	Noted- This criterion (7) will not be removed due to LP26

Norfolk		development to take place outside settlement boundaries, particularly smaller rural settlements, where any such development is likely to be unsustainable. This would be contrary to point 11 which states: "beyond the villages and in the countryside the strategy will be to conserve and enhance the countryside recognising its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, and its natural resources to be enjoyed by all."	development boundaries if judged to be in accordance with LP26	is a policy which will stay in the plan.
Mr & Mrs Gerald Gott	Object	We do not support LP37 (6) for two reasons: a) it treats development in Rural Villages, Smaller Villages and Hamlets in the same way, contrary to Policy LP02; and b) it does not comply with paragraphs 77 and 78 of the NPPF 2019 by restricting development to modest levels of development. Policy LL37 (7) is also contrary to paragraph 78 of the NPPF as it only allows housing development outside development boundaries if it is in	Delete criterion 3 and replace with the following: "the focus of new development in the rural areas will be at Growth Key Rural Centres, Key Rural Service Centres and Rural Villages." Delete reference to Rural Villages in criterion 6. Delete criterion 7.	We do not agree with this point. The policy is consistent with the NPPF and changing the wording for criterion 3 would not be appropriate to treat Rural Villages the same as GKRC and KRSC. Rural villages have a limited need in supporting the sustainable growth of new development in rural areas so by focusing most new development to be within Rural Villages as well as GKRC and KRSC will be in contrary with LP02 and

		<p>accordance with LP26. This policy only permits residential development where it is adjacent to existing settlements. Policy LL37 (11) is contrary to paragraph 78 of the NPPF as it perpetuates the theme of protection of the open countryside for its own sake and its limitations are inimical to the balanced approach to the balanced approach which the NPPF 2018 exhorts.” The Inspector went on to say: “The NPPF has never and still does not exhort a restrictive approach to development outside settlements in this manner. It does not protect the countryside for its own sake or prescribe the types of development that might be acceptable. The draft policy as worded obviates a balancing exercise and precludes otherwise sustainable development by default and thereby defeats the presumption in its favour.”</p>		<p>the settlement hierarchy. Criterion 6 and 7 also will remain the same.</p> <p>No change.</p>
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