

HORSFORD PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

It is because we care about the village of Horsford that this planning policy has been written. Its purpose is to establish sustainable development, the mainstay of the National Planning Policy Framework, by seeking always to balance the economic, environmental and social impacts of any new development. We propose four main aims behind the development of this parish plan.

1. The Committee on Climate Change has required the UK to meet the zero-carbon target by 2050. This policy is now enshrined in law. The Norfolk ALC Task and Finish Taskforce seeks that all Norfolk local councils set a target of 2045 for this mission. The Committee on Climate Change asked that this be achieved fairly and through carbon reducing jobs and planning policies. Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council have publicly noted their desire to be zero carbon in all areas of their responsibilities by 2030. This proposed parish planning policy will endeavour to support local planners in achieving these targets.
2. To explain and support the need for new buildings to take account of climate change mitigation and adaptation and ensure that all building works meet current building standards and standards of energy efficiency that reduce carbon-based emissions to net zero. This applies whether they are part of a large or small development, or an extension to an existing property.
 - The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) states that no other sites within Horsford should be considered for allocation, other than Policy GNLP0264 for 30-40 homes.

This is justified by the following statistics:

- The GNLP states under Policy 7.4 Village Clusters 341: *The remaining permitted and allocated housing , 4024 homes, around 9% of the total for Greater Norwich in the plan period, is on sites in village clusters.* This is broken down between South Norfolk District Council and Broadland District Council. The Table below illustrates this breakdown and the % that Horsford has already provided towards this housing supply.

Housing Allocation Village Clusters	Existing Deliverable Commitment (including uplift and delivery 2018/19)	New Allocations	Total Min Deliverable Housing Commitment	Horsford Allocation To Date	Horsford Allocation as % Existing Deliverable Commitment	Horsford Allocation as % Total Min Deliverable Housing Commitment
Broadland	995	480	1475	479	48.10%	32.40%
Sth Norfolk	1349	1200	2549			
Total			4024			

- When you consider there are 20 villages that fall within the proposed Village Cluster of the GNLP, Horsford have delivered a total quantity of homes way above and beyond what is expected of a service village
 - This compares with other proposed comparable cluster villages like Blofield Heath (107 dwellings) Great and Little Plumstead (140 dwellings) and Coltishall, Horstead with Stanninghall, and Belaugh (70 dwellings).
 - The GNLP states that "The Towards a Strategy document identifies 2,000 dwellings in total should be provided between all the "village clusters"." Horsford have delivered a huge proportion (23.9%) of this total, which is not that far from 1/3 of the expectation! It is little wonder that as a village we need to look at the impact this has on our community, and our homes, so that the sustainable development purpose is met.
 - It is recognised that if the village should grow in the future then a wide choice of mixed homes is essential to support a sustainable, varied and inclusive community, to meet the different needs and requirements for all those living or wanting to settle in the village. It is important to create a social infrastructure and space for residents of the village to get to know one another.
3. Restate and add to the planning policies in the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan which passed Referendum in July 2018. The additions are related to:
- action regarding climate change
 - zero carbon targets
 - the environment and its contribution to the wellbeing of the community
 - the need for recreational space.

4. At an early stage, consulting with developers and local planning officers to ensure local benefits are provided to the village from any new development.

We are well aware that we seek a strengthening of current planning policies as determined in the National Planning Policy Framework. But we also recognise both the requirement of meeting the purpose of sustainable development and of fitting into national and international legal obligations, means that as a Parish Council we have a duty to our residents and our future generations to ensure they are bequeathed a healthy and secure setting for their wellbeing and peace of mind. Current planning arrangements simply do not meet these requirements. The purpose of this document is to ensure that this particular Parish Council does so, and that it sets a precedent for all Norfolk parishes to follow.

POLICIES

TYPE OF HOUSING

Across Horsford there should be the provision of mixed type and tenure of housing to meet the needs of the community. The following should be included:

- Starter homes (small homes intended as the first step on the housing ladder for young people).
- Family homes, with a range of garden sizes.
- Affordable housing, including social housing.
- Housing for older people and the disabled, suitable for independent living, preferably located near village amenities.
- Homes suitable for downsizing.
- Supported housing (a range of housing types for people with support needs).
- Bungalows.

The provision of housing specifically for the elderly or disabled will be particularly supported where there is access to village amenities.

Rebecca Tunstall and Alex Fenton state, "Whilst house type and tenure is the level of mix which policy can most directly affect, the benefits of mixed communities are more often thought to be achieved through the mix of people and households with different social characteristics", with an objective of a more "balanced" neighbourhood.¹

It is the objective of this policy to provide high quality, diverse and affordable housing, which in the long term could lead to a more balanced neighbourhood.

HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

Throughout the parish, all development proposals should be of high-quality design and should seek to demonstrate how they will respect and enhance the character of the local

¹ https://urbanrim.org.uk/cache/Tunstall&Fenton_In-the-mix.pdf

area (see Horsford Neighbourhood Plan Appendix B: character assessment)². Regard should be given to the density, footprint and separation of buildings in the locality. All new development should respect the character, height and massing of surrounding properties. Wherever possible, development should deliver enhancements to the landscape character. Large areas of uniform type and style of housing will not be supported. To avoid estate development that is uniform in look, a range of surface coatings and colours is encouraged across an estate.

Not only is it important how developments look, it is important they are built **now** with the future in mind. This extends to constructing housing already designed to meet the needs of net zero and water use care. Such standards are not officially required to be in place until 2025. We feel this is too late in the light of the official local area commitments to meet the zero-carbon targets through carbon reducing jobs and planning policies

Regarding planning, Professor Tim O’Riordan, in a recent statement distributed by Norfolk ALC, said that:

- All applications must lead to an overall outcome of reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest. All new buildings should therefore meet current building standards and standards of energy efficiency that reduce carbon-based emissions to net zero
- All planning applications should show and justify that they are meeting such standards as a condition of application for planning permission
- All new dwellings should be proposed on an assumption of no fossil fuel-based heating and cooling. Planning committees should make the case for installing heat pumps based on renewable energy as a basis for giving planning permission for any new building, commercial, public or private.

In order to prevent poor design and low-quality applications by developers, Horsford Parish Council seeks a guarantee that it is consulted at an early stage regarding all new development, to ensure they contain the reduction of carbon intensity of new builds as defined in the Future Homes Standard. Application for large developments or those in areas that increase traffic flow and reduce air quality within the vicinity should take account of the views of the residents.

PRIVATE PARKING

New housing developments should be designed to minimise the visual impact and dangerous obstruction of cars parked on the streets. They should provide sufficient off-road parking through parking bays, drives and garages. Wherever possible all off road parking should permit percolation of rainwater.

² Horsford Neighbourhood Plan p47-49

Visitor parking spaces should also be designed into all developments. ³Modern developments often cram in houses which results in very narrow roads and streets are often overcrowded with parked cars both on the pavement and the road. This blocks pavements for pedestrians and wheelchairs, and makes streets more dangerous to use, often restricting the movement of traffic.

The Department of Transport is now consulting (31 Aug 2020 – 22 Nov 2020) on three options to curb parking on pavements. This covers: extending the London-style ban nationwide; making it easier for councils to prohibit the practice; and handing councils the power to fine offenders.

It is vital to make pavements in Horsford accessible for everyone, to enable and encourage safe walking and cycling as part of our village green initiative.

CONNECTIVITY

Wherever possible, all developments should be laid out in a way that is simple to navigate and have good connectivity to other parts of Horsford. Main routes through developments and residential cul-de-sacs should incorporate efficient vehicle, cycle and pedestrian connections. Routes must follow desire lines and clearly link potential destinations. Road crossings and changes in level must be kept to a minimum.

Developments will be supported in locations that reduce the traffic flowing North to South in the village in order to gain access to the Broadland Northway.

Good design and increase in connectivity encourage increased walkability and cycling leading to less air pollution and healthier lifestyles.

- The way we currently travel and the continued growth in road traffic is damaging our health, harming villages, and contributing to climate change. Our quality of life depends on transport and easy access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities, and services. This can be achieved by good road design and path connectivity that is efficient to navigate and promotes a healthier lifestyle.

³ https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/politics/consultation-launched-on-plan-to-ban-pavement-parking-1-6815616?utm_medium=Email&utm_source=Newsletter&utm_campaign=DM30097

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Good high-speed broadband infrastructure is important and planning applications should support this as a priority in order to ensure a sustainable local economy, vital for education and homeworking, and which plays an increasingly central part of community cohesion.

Technology infrastructure (fast broadband and car charging points) should be incorporated into the design of all residential developments and business units.

This is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework that “recognises the importance of infrastructure in delivering sustainable economic growth, and states that “the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.”⁴

It also states that “in preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high-speed broadband”. (Paragraph 43)

Future growth and planning policies should consider long term planning strategies to incorporate policies to facilitate transition to ultra-low emission vehicles and bicycles. It is critical that the development process creates the funds for adequate charging point provision. Further supporting the zero-carbon initiative by 2030.

WALKABLE AND BIKEABLE COMMUNITY

Wherever appropriate, developments should contribute to an enhanced and joined-up network of high-quality footpaths, rights of way and cycle ways to improve access to village amenities and the countryside, including to the Marriot’s Way, for the potential to convey multiple public and environmental benefits.

This provision should also include:

- New footpaths, opening up local connections between housing and following natural desire lines between amenities.

⁴ National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 42 Updated 19 June 19

- Footways within developments that are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and pushchairs, in line with regulations.
- The provision of adequate crossing points (particularly on the Holt Road).
- New cycle paths within the village, providing access to schools, businesses, key services and facilities, and for commuting to Norwich city. The loss of existing footpaths and cycle paths will be resisted.
- Secure cycle storage on new developments, businesses and at village amenities.
- Planning applications for large developments should identify the level of additional traffic that is likely to be generated, and the impact of this traffic on pedestrians, cyclists, road safety, and private and public parking within the parish. Measures to mitigate any impacts should be demonstrated.

The infrastructure of significant developments should be built to accommodate a bus route, through the provision of sufficiently wide roads, bus-stopping lay-bys and designated private parking that does not affect the flow of traffic.

Some of the benefits of walking and bicycling accrue directly to the individuals who choose to walk or bike. Walking or cycling for mobility and recreation:

- Improves personal health
- Increases mobility and access, particularly for youth, older adults, the financially constrained
- Saves money on transportation
- Increases opportunities for social interaction and enjoyment
- Improves safety for all road users
- Decreased air and noise pollution
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Support of climate change emission reduction goals

As Horsford grows the community are concerned about the impact more houses have on local traffic and transport infrastructure with less dependency on the car and more support for other sustainable transport options including pedestrians and cyclists.

The situation in Horsford is that the B1149 cannot cope with the amount of traffic now passing through and funnelled back and forth to the Broadland Northway. There are tailbacks and heavy congestion at peak times going out of the village.

A choice of four roads in and out of the South end of the village has reduced to two.

Further development would increase numbers of vehicles, exacerbate vehicle movements and increase environmental pollution, which conflicts with meeting national greenhouse gas emission targets and the stated intention of Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council to be zero carbon by 2030.

Any additional housing developments should be located south of Horsford or closer to Norwich, where there are far more realistic opportunities for people to walk or cycle to work.

Public transport is also considered inadequate with no evening service and limited weekend services. The current bus service does not meet the requirements of the whole community, especially for those residents working irregular hours or need to travel into or out of Norwich in an evening.

WELLBEING AND SUPPORT FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

COMMUNITY MEETING SPACE

Planning applications that include increased community meeting space, or land for sporting activities and amenities such as a pavilion with changing rooms, toilets, kitchen and team areas, will be given greater consideration based upon the merits of the proposed application and the site of the proposed development.

Any new community meeting space or land for formal recreational space should be located within a reasonable distance of main link roads, should have pedestrian access, be linked to cycle ways, have good public parking provision and complement existing provision. There should also be good natural surveillance to ensure community safety.

All large developments should make generous provision for further formal and informal outdoor recreation space in Horsford, as follows:

- Informal, open, high quality green spaces which are linked to the wider natural environment, with a range of trees and plants, and which are accessible to the public.
- New landscaped areas with a range of play, exercise and leisure equipment for different age groups, seating, rubbish bins and pathways through.
- New outdoor sports facilities. There is particular support for a skate park and an outdoor gym.

At the heart of any community is space where residents of all ages can pursue a diverse range of activities from indoor keep fit classes, community meetings and access to changing rooms for sporting activities held on the Recreation Ground. Play areas where the young people in the community can start socialising with others of their age and where those accompanying the youngsters can meet together and build friendships.

It is considered that exposure to green space can influence mental health both psychologically and physiologically, especially in childhood. Engemann states, "Green space can promote mental health by supporting psychological restoration, encouraging

exercise, improving social coherence, decreasing noise and air pollution affecting cognition and brain development and improving immune functioning.⁵

Therefore, to support this theory, no new or revised planning applications should be allowed if they result in loss of previously agreed and passed planning applications for a set area of public green space.

The Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK says “There is compelling evidence for the therapeutic use of physical activity and Exercise Medicine in the prevention and treatment of disease and many common conditions including mental health.”⁶

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

A planning application that seeks to expand primary health care provision by enlarging existing space or providing new buildings will be supported. Expanded parking provision should be part of any application. There should also be improved cycle access and cycle storage.

It is well known that primary health care helps to prevent illness and death, regardless of whether the care is characterised by supply of primary care physicians, a relationship with a source of primary care, or the receipt of important features of primary care. There is also evidence that primary care is associated with a more equitable distribution of health in populations, by using the means to improve overall health and reduce differences in health within a populace.

Drayton Medical Practice, of which Horsford Medical Centre is part, has written to Broadland District Council in regard to increased population following further development numbers and the inability to register any more patients. They are at capacity, leading to major constraints in regard to safe and convenient health care. Increased housing has already and will continue to put a strain on the services that exist in order to sustain the village of Horsford

⁵ Kristine Engemann, Carsten Bøcker Pedersen, Lars Arge, Constantinos Tsirogiannis, Preben Bo Mortensen, and Jens-Christian Svenning PNAS March 12, 2019 116 (11) 5188-5193; first published February 25, 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1807504116>

⁶ Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK – The Role of Physical Activity and Sport in Mental Health May 2018 to be reviewed May 2021.

Dr Nick Peirce, Dr Catherine Lester, Dr Ajai Seth, Dr Philippa Turner, The Sports and Exercise Psychiatry Special Interest Group of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, MIND www.mind.org.uk

WOODLAND AND HEATHLAND

Development proposals that protect or enhance the natural environment will be supported. Of particular significance is St Faith's Common and the County Wildlife Sites. Any new development proposal located near woodland should demonstrate how it would protect, and where possible, enhance the current natural environment (increasing biodiversity and recreational opportunities).

New dwellings should be built at a sufficient distance from woodland so that the biodiversity and amenity value of the area is not adversely impacted.

It is generally accepted that greenspace has a beneficial effect on peoples' wellbeing. Dr Carmen Stephanie De Keijzer says that:

"Exposure to nature may be indispensable for human wellbeing. Humans are suggested to have an **intrinsic urge to connect with nature and other forms of life**. Contact with nature may help **reduce feelings of stress, restore the ability to concentrate and pay attention, and improve the emotional state**. Indeed, experimental studies have observed that study participants had an **improved mood, more self-esteem, and a lower level of stress** when they were exposed to natural environments."⁷

Barton and Rogerson write that "Individuals have less mental distress, less anxiety and depression, greater wellbeing and healthier cortisol profiles when living in urban areas with more greenspace compared with less greenspace."⁸

There are many examples of research and guidance that support the positive effect of greenspace on the mental health and wellbeing of our communities.

The natural environment is very important to the residents of Horsford, with recognition of the privilege to have accessible woodland on the edge of the village. Therefore, the conservation of its woodland and enhancement of wildlife habitats is important and should be protected. This is supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 174

"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

⁷ Carmen Stephanie De Keijzer PhD from ISGlobal in green spaces and healthy aging
<https://www.isglobal.org/en/healthisglobal/-/custom-blog-portlet/espacios-verdes-un-recurso-para-la-salud-mental/6113078/0#>

⁸ The importance of greenspace for mental health
[Jo Barton](#) and [Mike Rogerson](#) *BJPsych Int.* 2017 Nov; 14(4): 79-81.
Published online 2017 Nov 1

- Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity NPPF Footnote 56
- Maintain wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them
- and protect areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation”

CONCLUSION

This document seeks to put forward not only planning policies that support the aims set out in the Introduction, but also the evidence that validates their presence in this document.

It is fully understood that development for a growing population needs to take place but too often the toll on existing residents is too high a price to pay when perhaps a change of location or a different design and layout would make all the difference.

Paraphrasing another part of Professor O’Riordan’s recent statement:

Providing wellbeing will be the most important act of localism in this county over the coming decade as we struggle out of profound personal and social distress and economic calamity. Those most afflicted will require the combined force of local support, empathy and uplift. Wellbeing counts most of all where people live, work, appreciate their neighbours and surroundings, and feel confident they have the nurturing networks and planning protection to enable them to cope with their futures.

The quality of life for future generations depends upon our decisions today.

HORSFORD PARISH COUNCIL CODE OF CONSTRUCTION PRACTICE

Reducing the impact of construction work and associated parking in Horsford

The Code of Construction Practice is designed to reduce the disruption to Horsford residents and those driving through the village during new build and renovation projects in the village.

It is recommended that the sites of all new developments, renovations, extensions or variance to an existing building, follow the provisions of the Code.

It is important that contractors read the Code prior to starting work, and preferably at the planning stage, to allow time to plan resources and construction methodology.

Communication

- Contractors should communicate with neighbours and local residents before and during works to explain the timescale and impact of the development, and to come up with ways of minimising disruption.
- Contractors should leave phone numbers with near neighbours in the event of problems on site or even theft.

Site management

- Contractors need to make sure they keep sites clean and secure and that all ladders are removed or made inaccessible when unattended.
- Contractors must not leave hazardous materials or substances which could be accessible to wildlife, children or the general public
- Noise should be kept to a minimum when demolishing or cutting materials on site.

Personal Behaviour

- Contractors should be aware of their surroundings and their close proximity to neighbours and children when on site and recognise that offensive language is inappropriate and can be offensive. This is particularly so when children are within hearing distance.

Traffic

- Delivery of building materials should be before 08.00 am or after 09.00 am and between 15.00 and 16.00 pm wherever possible, in order to minimise impact on local traffic, and schoolchildren.
- Materials should be deposited directly onto the site where possible, not into the roadway.
- Use of mechanical plant to remove materials which necessitates large delivery vehicles should be minimized, or deliveries arranged before 08.00 or after 09.00 am.

Parking

- Whenever possible, contractors and sub-contractors must park onsite, rather than inconsiderate or unsafe parking on pavements, verges or green spaces.
- In particular parking on the Holt Road can cause significant disruption and danger to pedestrians when they have to walk out into the road to get around parked cars and lorries.
- Tools can be stored in portacabins on site, or if no storage dropped off en route. Contractors should provide transport to the site if necessary.

Skips

- Skips must be parked on a hard surface if not on site, and removed as soon as possible

Reinstating nearby verges, green spaces and planting

- Contractors must reinstate nearby verges or green spaces and any plantings disturbed by the building project
- Hedgerows must not be covered with netting as this stops birds from nesting in the hedgerows as per the Government statement on 4 November 2019 - "Causing suffering to birds is already criminal. Planning authorities have enforceable powers to protect bird habitats and will soon be able to mandate that developers provide biodiversity net gain."

Planning Conditions

- Developers should strictly adhere to any planning conditions that would influence overall management of construction works to avoid any conflict with those the planning condition was deemed to protect.

Complaint Procedure

- Any complaints or concerns expressed by the general public or Parish Council regarding a development or contractor will be responded to initially within 7 days of the correspondence date to the complainant. If the problem cannot be addressed initially, then it will be followed by a meeting with the developer or contractor and the complainant (should the complainant request it) to address and resolve the problem as soon as possible after the initial 7 days and within 3 weeks of the initial contact date.