



Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan

Regulation 14 Consultation Draft

January 2023

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION DRAFT

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Foreword

A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is a powerful tool backed and informed by local debate and support. It aims to shape the future development and growth of a town or village by making a direct contribution to the planning decision-making process whilst also striving to protect our unique heritage and green spaces.

Neighbourhood Development Plans are a way of giving direct planning power to local communities. They give a voice to local residents to enable them to have a say on how a town or village is shaped, and how their unique character and environment can be preserved and enhanced. The whole community have contributed to this plan to create a positive vision for Lowestoft. Your comments throughout this process have resulted in the basis for much of the content, with the policies being developed to reinforce and help deliver that vision.

As residents, I hope that you will continue your support for this process and are able to give it its formal approval when the plan comes forward for public referendum.

Finally, I would like to thank those residents, councillors and consultants who have given their time to help prepare our NDP.

Councillor Alice Taylor, Lowestoft Town Council
Chair of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group

1. Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1** The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan is a framework for development and regeneration of Britain's most easterly town. Lowestoft is a complex urban area comprising port, town centre, areas of deprivation, retail parks, offshore industry as well as beaches and being a magnet for tourism.
- 1.2** The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Area was designated in 2018. The neighbourhood area covers the entire administrative area of Lowestoft Town Council (see Figure 1 below).
- 1.3** The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan, once made, will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, together with the Waveney Local Plan (adopted March 2019). Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Time Period

- 1.4** The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan covers the period from the date it is made to the end of 2036.

Review

- 1.5** Lowestoft Town Council, as the Neighbourhood Planning body, will be responsible for monitoring and periodically reviewing the Plan, to respond to changing circumstances.

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Figure 1 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Area

2. Vision and Aims

Vision

- 2.1** To secure sustainable and high quality regeneration and economic development for Lowestoft, realising the town's potential as a vibrant and attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

Aims

- 2.2** From analysis of evidence and the outcomes of community engagement, the Neighbourhood Development Plan seeks to address a range of social, economic and environmental aspects. The aims of the Neighbourhood Plan are:



3. Overview of Lowestoft

Location and Strategic Context

- 3.1** Lowestoft is a town in the district of East Suffolk (formerly part of Waveney district) and is the easternmost point in the UK. It is located at the north most point of Suffolk and is closer to Norwich, Norfolk, than it is to its own county seat. Lowestoft is the largest town in East Suffolk and the second largest town (after Ipswich) in the County of Suffolk.
- 3.2** The next largest town nearby is Great Yarmouth, which is 12 miles to the north, in Norfolk. Growth in Great Yarmouth and in Lowestoft is reflected in growth in the villages between the two towns with a new mixed-use development including housing, employment, a primary school, green infrastructure planned on the outskirts of Lowestoft.
- 3.3** Lowestoft, on the North Sea coast, is the most-easterly settlement of the UK. The town is 110 miles north-east of London, 38 miles north-east of Ipswich and 22 miles south-east of Norwich. Lake Lothing is found in the centre of the town and forms Lowestoft Harbour, providing access to the River Waveney and the Broads. Lowestoft is mainly low-lying but with hilly areas in the north of the town. The beaches to the south of the harbour are sandy and frequented by holidaymakers and locals in the summer season. To the north of the harbour is an area of old sand dunes known locally as the 'Denes' as well as more beaches and Ness Point – the eastern most point of the UK. At Ness Point there is a Euroscope, marking distances to European cities.
- 3.4** The Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan, along with the Waveney Local Plan, will form the basis of infrastructure plans and proposals.

Nature of the Area

- 3.5** Following a period of decline in the later 20th century, the local economy is now supported by a number of industries; including fishing and maritime, renewable energy, retail, light industry, administration, tourism and the visitor economy. The port retains a strategic importance and economic value to Lowestoft and the wider area.
- 3.6** Most of the area is developed, with some 200 ha of Open Space¹ and the remainder made up of semi-natural greenspace, woodland and water bodies. This substantial amount of open and recreational space provides a tranquil backdrop for residents and a range of ecological services including food production, carbon capture and opportunities for flood control.
- 3.7** The responses to the Residents Survey revealed most felt that Lowestoft is a friendly place in which to live with a strong sense of community. The historic High Street and Scores area, subject of a Heritage Action Zone, has retained much of its charm with a significant number of listed buildings. The Neighbourhood Development Plan Area encompasses the town's two Conservation Areas: North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone and the London Road South Heritage Action Zone. In the residents' survey, most people agreed or strongly agreed that it is Lowestoft as an historic town centre which adds character to the area.

¹ WDC Open Space Needs Assessment (2015) - Table 1.1: Open space provision in Waveney

3.8 In August 2022, Lowestoft received £24.9m from the Government's Towns Fund programme. This Fund enables work to progress on five major regeneration projects set out in the Lowestoft Town Investment Plan. This builds on other recent investments in Lowestoft and the wider area which have contributed positively to the Town's reputation for innovation:

- Delivery of £1m worth of investment in the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and the London Road, High Street HAZ (south) in partnership with Historic England
- First Light Festival (which attracted over 30,000 visitors to the town) supported by Arts Council England
- The recently completed Lowestoft Town Centre Masterplan
- £1.2m redevelopment of The Ness, the UK's most Easterly park, funded by the Coastal Community Fund
- £30m investment in employment and renewable energy in Lowestoft by Scottish Power Renewables
- £12m investment in a state of the art Energy Skills Centre by East Coast College
- £43m investment by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to support the Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Programme (LFRMP).
- £16m investment by Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) in their state-of-the-art Marine Science headquarters
- £125m investment in the Gull Wing bridge.

Figure 2 shows the Priority Areas for transformation:

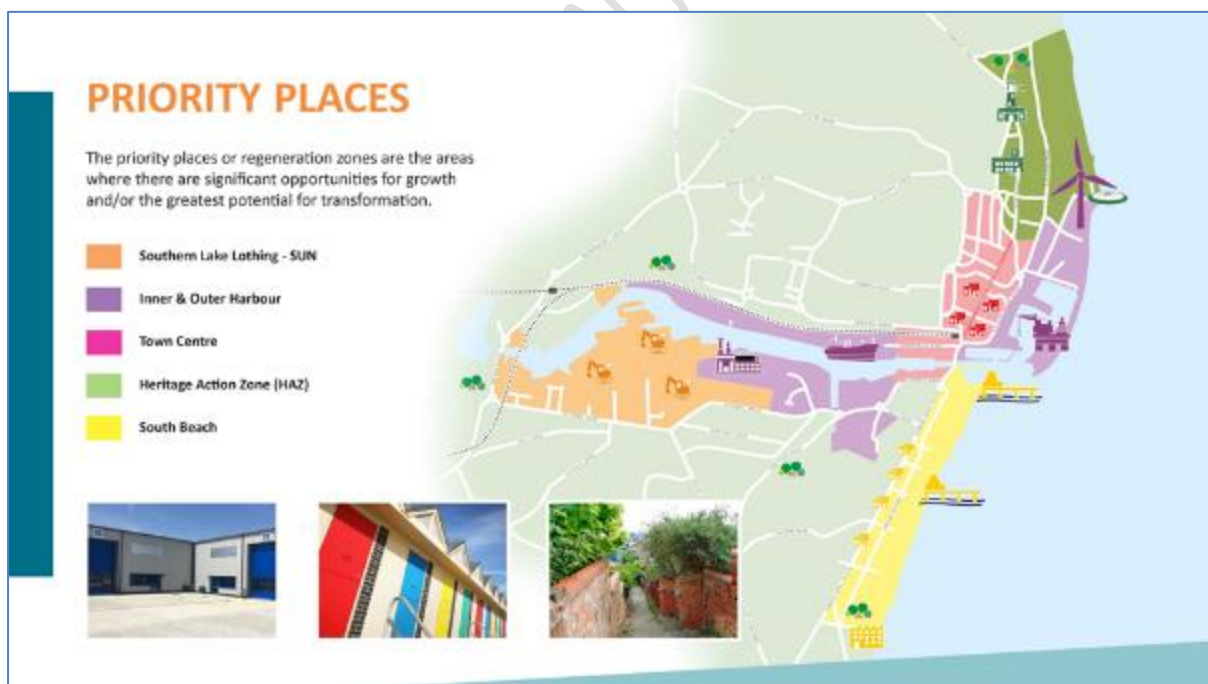


Figure 2 Priority Places in the Lowestoft Investment Plan (see <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/regeneration-projects/lowestoft-investment-plan/>)

Population

- 3.9** The mean age in the former District of Waveney is 43.9, with just over one in five aged 17 or younger². Thus Lowestoft's housing and amenities will be expected to continue to focus on young families attracted to the town with good local schools. However, in a nation with an aging population, 31.6% were over 60, many of whom were born in Lowestoft and want to stay here, as indicated in the Residents' Survey. Life expectancy is 10 years lower for men and 6.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Waveney than in the least deprived areas.

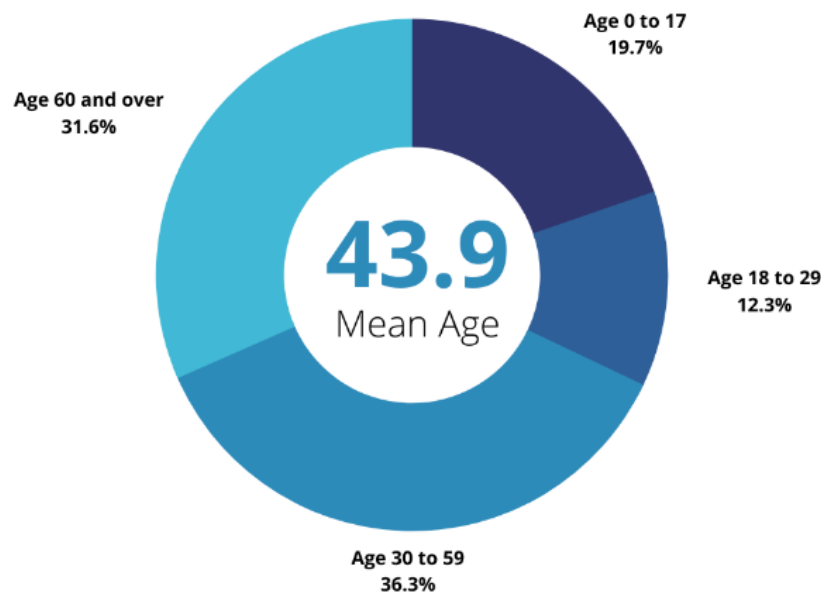


Figure 3 Mean age of the former Waveney District (Census 2011)

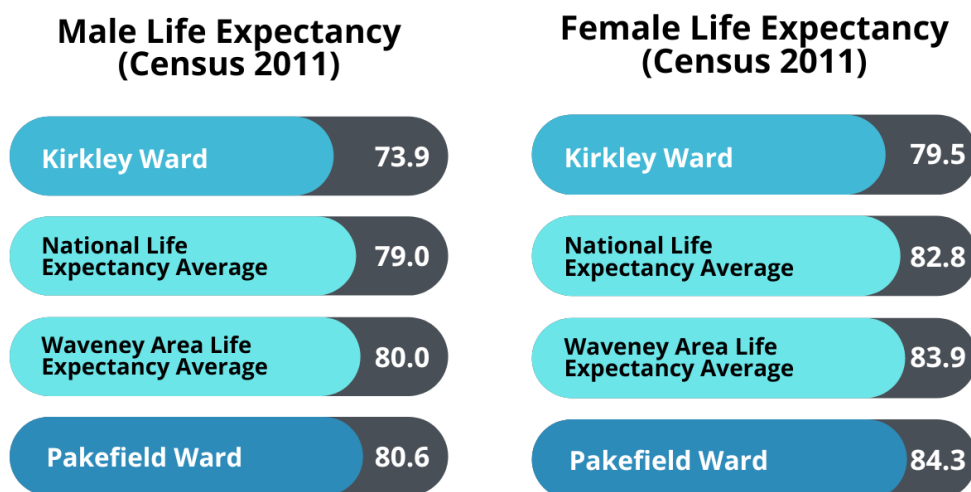


Figure 4 Life expectancy by gender, comparing the most deprived and most affluent wards in the former Waveney District against the National Average and District Average (Census 2011)

² <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/KS102EW/view/1946157245>

Other Evidence

3.10 In addition to the Waveney Local Plan, other Key Evidence Documents used to inform this plan include:

1. UK Office for National Statistics (2018)
2. Suffolk Observatory
3. National Department of Transportation Statistics (2016)
4. Waveney Cycle Strategy (2016)
5. East Suffolk Council: Cycling and Walking Strategy (Oct 2022)
6. Gorleston to Lowestoft Coastal Strategy (Jan 2016)
7. Zoopla (2018)
8. East Anglian Daily Times (Sept. 2018)
9. Waveney District Council, Lowestoft Snapshot (2014)
10. New Anglia Economic Strategy Report (2017)
11. Waveney Health Summary (2017)
12. Lowestoft Town Centre Masterplan (2020)
13. Lowestoft Town Investment Plan 2021-2031 (2020)
14. Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 (2011)
15. North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide (2020)
16. North Lowestoft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2021)
17. South Lowestoft Kirkley Conservation Area and Appraisal and Management (2022)
18. Associated British Ports: Port of Lowestoft – Our Future (2020)
19. East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan (2018)
20. East Suffolk Council: PowerPark Design Vision (2020)
21. Suffolk Design Streets Guide (2020)
22. Suffolk Guidance for Parking (May 2019)
23. East Suffolk Council Leisure Strategy (2021)
24. Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document (2021)
25. Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2022)
26. Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (2022)
27. London Road, Lowestoft High Street Heritage Action Zone and Seafront Masterplan (2022)

More detailed evidence on a range of subjects is included in the policy rationales, later in this document.

4. Community & Stakeholder Engagement

How People Were Engaged

4.1 The following table sets out the range of engagement that was undertaken during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Timing	Publicity and Engagement Activities
Ongoing	Dedicated page on website.
Ongoing	Weekly column in Lowestoft Journal (local newspaper with 7,500 circulation).
Ongoing	Facebook posts on NDP Committee activities.
August 2018	Community Survey to residents. One Tabloid page with questions on what is good, what is bad, would you change. This helped to inform policy themes.
August 2018	Stand at Lowestoft Summer Festival, with copies of questionnaire.
March 2019 + March 2020	Annual Town Meeting included stand and displays, with opportunity to suggest areas for Local Green Space.
January 2019	Survey Monkey on open spaces (respondents included (ramblers association, bird watching groups, dog walking groups).
January 2019	Engagement with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and commissioning of biodiversity surveys.
Ongoing	Engagement with "Friends of" and advocacy groups throughout the town regarding the use of parks and open spaces.
Sept 2018 + 2019 and ongoing	Heritage Open Days. Engagement with history groups such as Jack Rose Society and also Suffolk Records Office.
Ongoing	Formal engagement with Historic England regarding the protection and redevelopment of the Town Hall (listed) and work with the Heritage Action Zone stakeholders. The HAZ has also involved walks around town, meetings, presentations and engagement with public at HAZ events. Consultations were held on the designation of South Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone.
June - Dec 2019	Engagement with Sustrans Cycle Way Consultation, Community Rail Development Officer, East Suffolk Travel Association meeting, and County Council cabinet member for Transport.
Feb 2019	Tourist Board meetings and engagement with Lowestoft Cultural Board and cultural initiatives such as First Light Festival, Making Waves Arts Project. Also, engagement on public art for new Ness Park.
June 2019 and ongoing	NSPCC open event presentation with Waveney Youth Council.
November 2019 and ongoing	Work with District Council in socially deprived area to engage with youth and improve facilities for them, including surveys and engagement events.

Timing	Publicity and Engagement Activities
July 2019	Town Council declares climate emergency and Lowestoft Climate Action Group formed. NDP Committee presentations to Action Group on development of policies and initiatives to support 'green' initiatives and standards for new buildings.
Ongoing	Transport and infrastructure engagement with Highways Authority and Highways England.
Ongoing	Engagement with the business community, including Associated British Ports, Scottish Power, Birds Eye. Also, engagement with Coastal Fisheries initiative regarding harbour redevelopment.
Ongoing	LTC is a stakeholder on the Lowestoft Place Board.
March 2020	Engagement with landowners of sites designated for development in Waveney Local Plan.
July/August 2022	Consultation on proposals for protection of green spaces and playing fields.
July/August 2022	Informal consultation with County and District Councils on the draft Plan and supporting documents.

Outcomes of Engagement

4.2 Key themes raised through engagement include:

- Better use of the waterfront;
- Need for more employment opportunities;
- Development of the High Street and tourist economy and need for more footfall;
- Harm from out-of-town retail and closure of shops;
- Importance of green and recreational spaces and trees;
- Improvement of cycle paths and facilities;
- Importance of the historic environment, including parks;
- Lack of bus stops and routes not accessing the town;
- Development of arts and cultural activities;
- Social and sporting facilities needed;
- Electric charging needed for cars;
- Flood defences;
- Poor quality of design in new development;
- Third river crossing needed;
- Growth of off-shore energy industry;
- Policies should support quick and long-term fixes;
- Better residential and retail mix.

4.3 Figures 5 and 6 summarises responses to the questionnaire. Further details of stakeholder consultation is set out in *Supporting Document 1 – Statement of Consultation* which does not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Public Consultation* on what is Good and Bad about Lowestoft

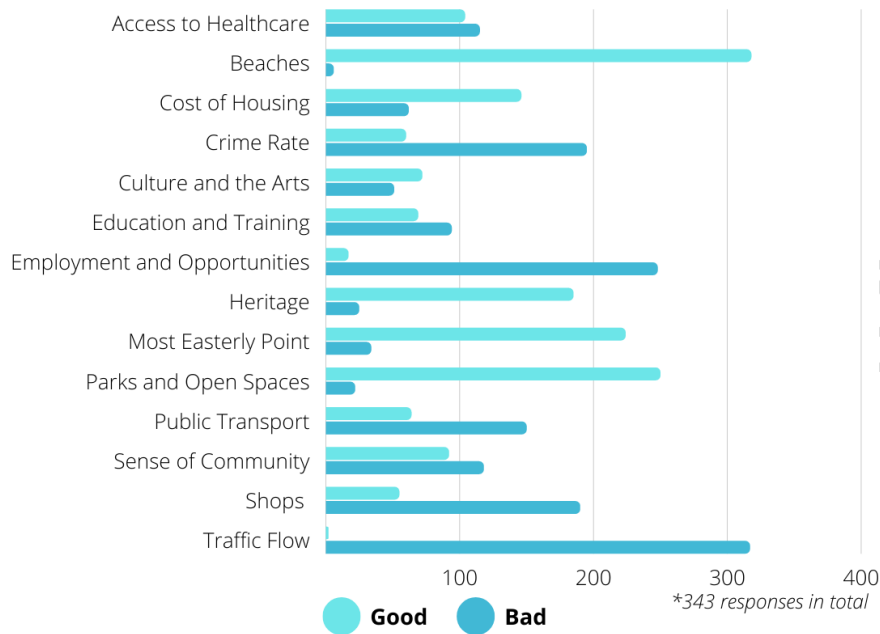


Figure 5 Summary of Public Consultation - "What is good and bad about Lowestoft?"

Public Consultation* on what could be better about Lowestoft

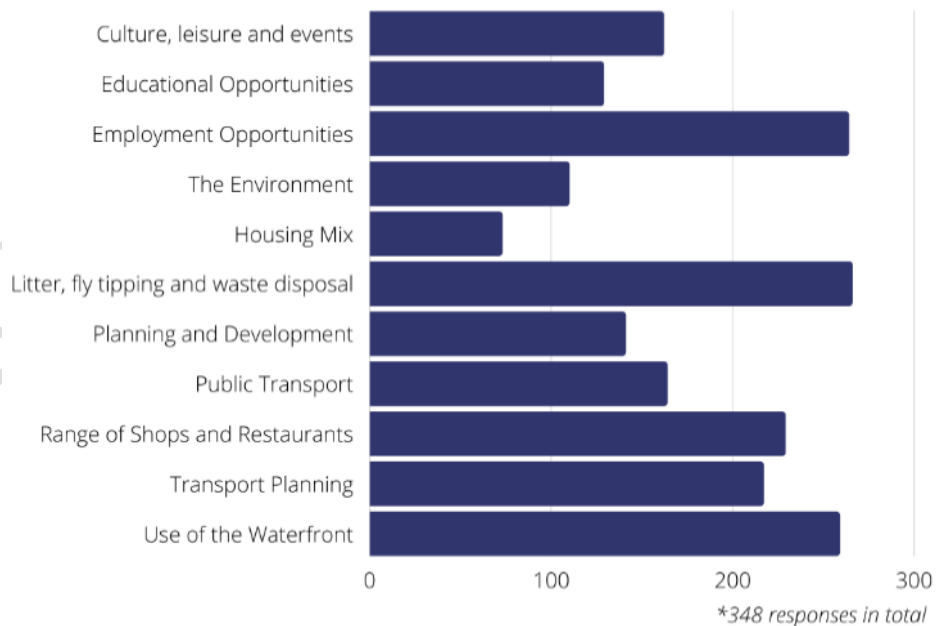


Figure 6 – Summary of public consultation – "What could be better about Lowestoft?"

5. Meeting Legal Requirements

The Basic Conditions

- 5.1** Neighbourhood Plans must meet the “basic conditions”, set out in planning legislation. This is tested through the independent examination.
- 5.2** The Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans are that:
- They must have appropriate regard to national policy;
 - They must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - They must be in general conformity with strategic local policy;
 - They must be compatible with retained EU legislation;
- 5.3** In addition, Neighbourhood Plans must be compatible with human rights legislation.
- 5.4** This Neighbourhood Development Plan was prepared against this context. A Statement of Basic Conditions forms Supporting Document 2 to this Plan.

National Policy

- 5.5** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Neighbourhood Plans to set out a positive vision for the future of the local area and planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan positively addresses the economic, social and environmental objectives of the NPPF, taking account of the character, needs and opportunities of the area.
- 5.6** This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been written, having regard to national planning policy and guidance on a range of issues, including positively addressing economic, social and environmental objectives.

Sustainable Development

- 5.7** A key principle of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined clearly in paragraph 11. In response, the Neighbourhood Development Plan plans positively to identify opportunities to meet development needs of the neighbourhood area. The policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan seek to ensure the viability and sustainability of our diverse rural town.
- 5.8** Growth across the Neighbourhood Area of Lowestoft should not be to the detriment or loss of green space and will be concentrated around the potential development of brownfield sites, the Town Centre and appropriate infill. The Neighbourhood Plan strongly promotes the re-use of existing buildings, particularly those in the Town Centre. This will be augmented by the usual smaller-scale incremental development that is typical of medium sized towns.

Local Strategic Policies

- 5.9** East Suffolk Council as the Local Planning Authority defines which policies are to be considered ‘strategic’ for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. The Council considers that Waveney Local Plan (adopted March 2019), which applies to the part of East Suffolk formerly covered by the Waveney local planning authority area, to be strategic for the purpose of neighbourhood planning.

5.10 The Neighbourhood Plan helps to achieve the spatial strategy in the Local Plan. The evidence behind the local plan is part of the evidence base for the neighbourhood plan (where relevant).

5.11 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group worked in liaison with East Suffolk Council throughout the preparation of the plan to ensure general conformity between the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan.

EU Obligations and Human Rights

5.12 This Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations and has been subject to ongoing engagement. The policies within this plan have been prepared with due care and consideration to ensure they are compatible with EU obligations and the Neighbourhood Plan has been screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). The screening responses confirmed that further assessment was not required.

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6. Policies

Overall Growth Strategy

- 6.1** The Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared within the context of global and local environmental issues, national and local economic trends, and the needs of local communities, current and future. The policies address climate change at local level by enabling growth, but ensuring such growth has limited impacts and enhances the local environment.
- 6.2** The key challenge in Lowestoft is in improving the viability of development and attracting employment and economic growth. The health and viability of the town centre is a further key challenge, reflected in the policies. This includes regeneration of the Historic High Street.

Policies for the Neighbourhood Area

- 6.3** The policies in the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan are based on evidence gathered from official statistics and existing publications and reports commissioned for the Plan. In addition, local surveys, views, comments and ideas expressed by the local community have been taken into account.
- 6.4** Evidence is provided in the following Supporting Documents:
- Supporting Document 1 – Statement of Consultation
 - Supporting Document 2 – Statement of Basic Conditions
 - Supporting Document 3 - Protecting Open Landscapes, Sports Fields and Local Green Spaces.
 - Supporting Document 4 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Response.
 - Supporting Document 5 - Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Response.
- 6.5** The policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan seek to deliver the aspirations and needs of the local community, within the framework of meeting the basic conditions and other legal requirements.
- 6.6** The policies are contained in the following chapters of this plan, under these themes:
- Seafront and Waterfront
 - Revitalising the Town Centre
 - Living
 - Environment and Place
 - Flooding
 - Transport and Movement
 - Sustainable Energy
- 6.7** Local Green Space designations are included in the **Environment and Place** Section. Details of designated Local Green Spaces are contained in *Supporting Document 2 - Protecting Open Landscapes, Sports Fields and Local Green Spaces*.
- 6.8** Each grouping of policies starts with a stated purpose, followed by rationale and evidence to support the policies, which sets out the policy context, relevant evidence and the planning rationale. This is followed by the policies (shown in bold). Each policy has an interpretation section which explains how the policy should be interpreted and applied.

Policies Maps

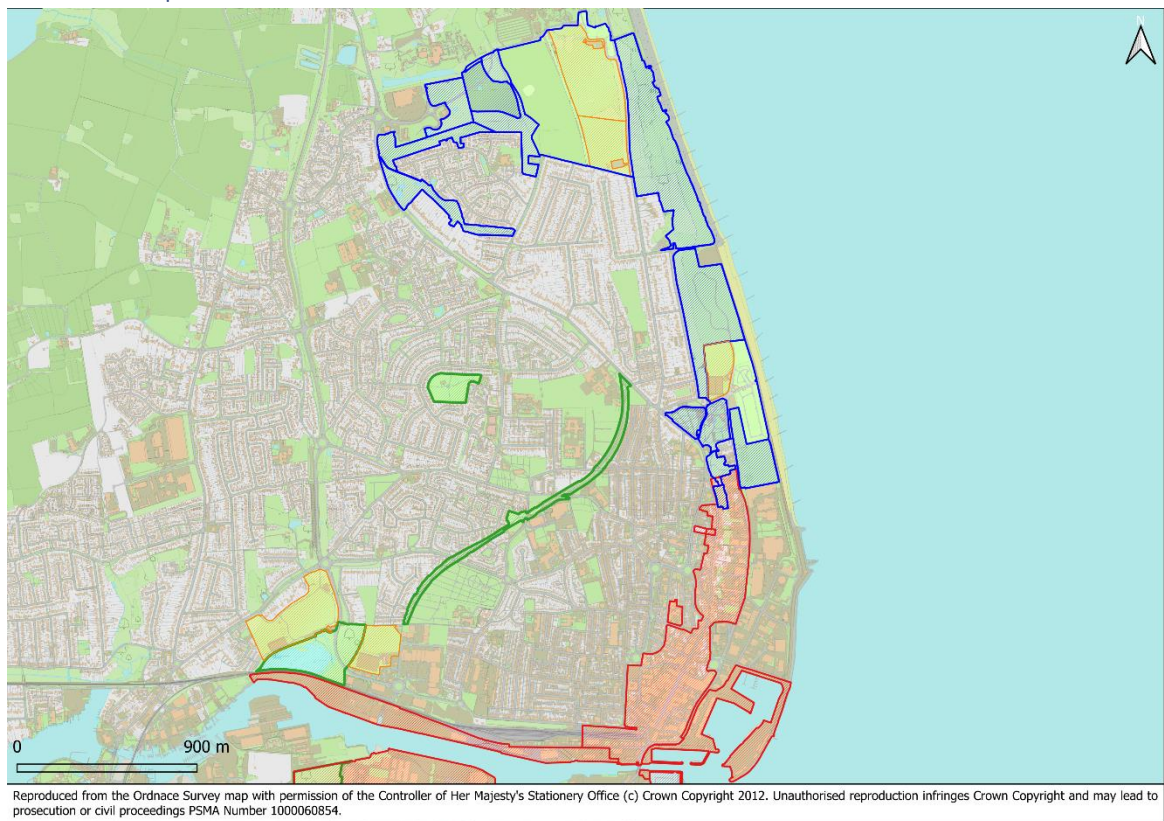


Figure 7 Policies Map for North Lowestoft

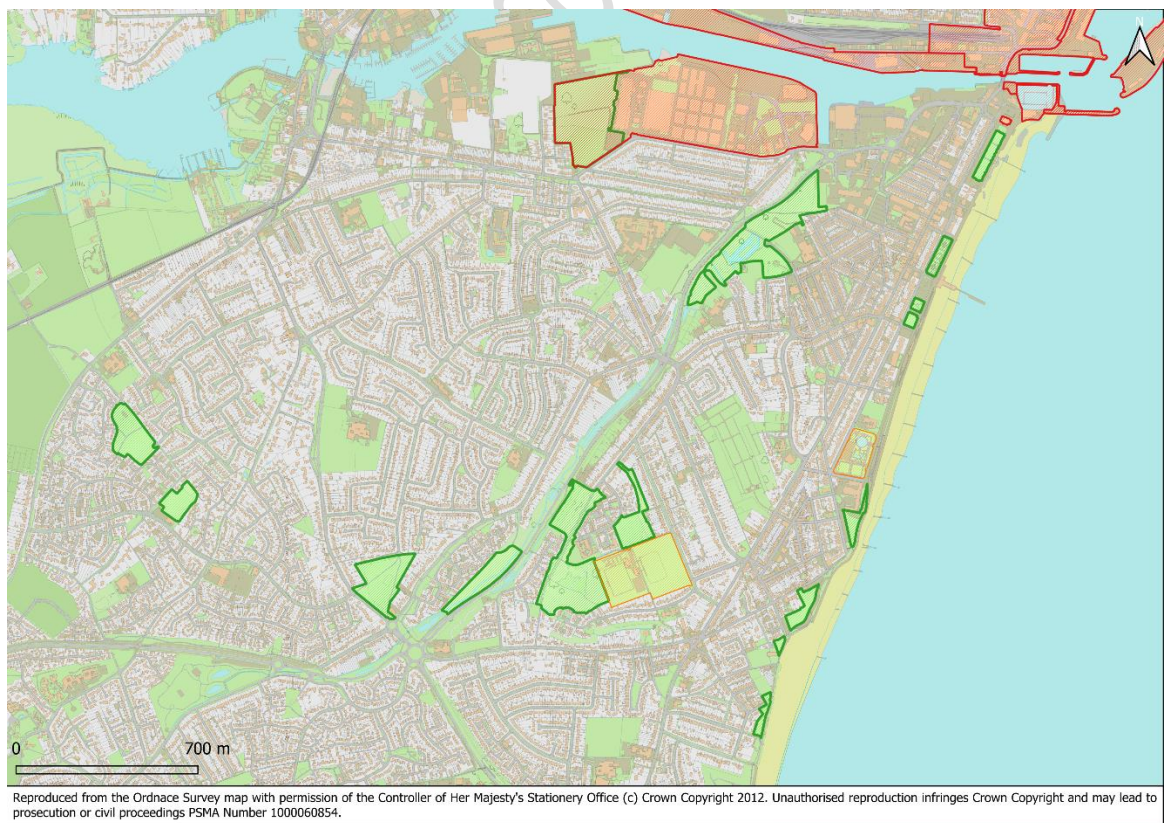


Figure 8 Policies Map for South Lowestoft

7. Seafront and Waterfront

Purpose

- 7.1** To modernise the waterfront and seafront to increase its attraction to tourists and visitors, to promote economic development and create more diversity in living accommodation.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

- 7.2** Chapter 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 deals with achieving sustainable development and Chapter 3 with plan making. Paragraph 11 states that “all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development” to “meet the development needs of their area”. Paragraph 13 says neighbourhood plans “should shape and direct development that is outside of ... strategic policies”.
- 7.3** Chapter 5 deals with homes and Chapter 6 deals with building a strong, competitive economy. Design is dealt with by Chapter 12.
- 7.4** The following policies apply these NPPF policies, dealing with key waterfront sites in the neighbourhood area. This includes shaping development on sites allocated in the Local Plan, and also identifying two sites for culture and visitor-related uses. The aim is to realise the potential of waterfronts and to help achieve higher levels of growth.

Local Policy

- 7.5** The Waveney Local Plan (adopted March 2019) has allocated the following sites for development which are identified in Figure 7 below:
- WLP2.2 Power Park
 - WLP2.3 Peto Square
 - WLP2.4 Kirkley Waterfront and Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood (part of allocated site is in Lowestoft)
 - WLP2.5 East of England Park (since adoption of the Local Plan this area is now known as Ness Park and Ness Point)
 - WLP2.10 Inner Harbour Port Area

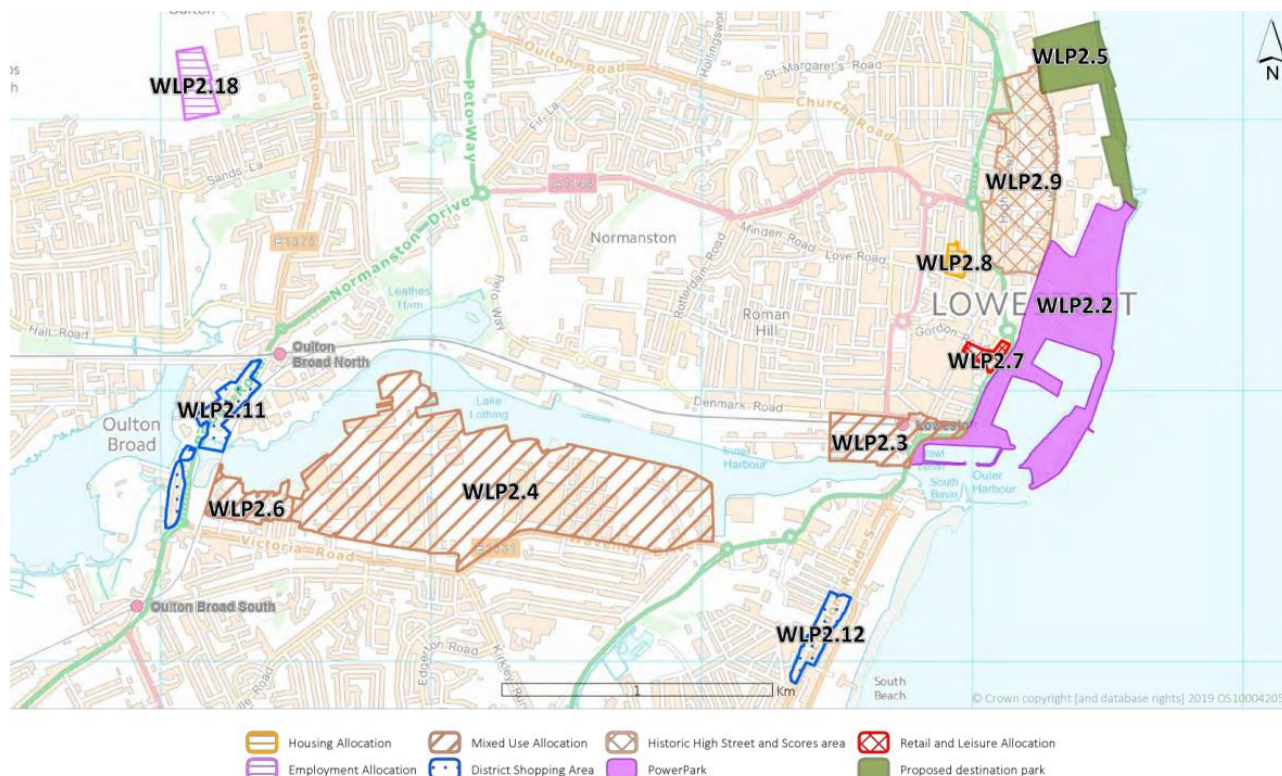


Figure 9 Locations of Local Plan Development Sites from the Waveney Local Plan

- 7.6** The Local Plan Policy WLP2.1 ‘Central and Coastal Lowestoft Regeneration’ seeks to work with numerous agencies including Suffolk County Council, Lowestoft Town Council, Oulton Broad Parish Council, Associated British Ports, Environment Agency, Network Rail, Marine Management Organisation, the Broads Authority, to deliver regeneration projects in central and coastal Lowestoft.

Planning Rationale

- 7.7** The strategic importance of the allocated Kirkley Waterfront site, allocated by the Local Plan, is recognised by the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to shape development to ensure that it is sustainable, of high quality and appropriate to the waterfront location.
- 7.8** As far as physical growth is concerned, Lowestoft is landlocked. The border to the east is the North Sea. To the west and north any expansion is curtailed by the Norfolk Broads and the Carlton Marshes and the parishes of Oulton Broad and Oulton. The parishes of Carlton Colville and Gisleham border the south and south-west. Land directly to the south of the town, between the ward of Pakefield and the parish of Kessingland is protected from development by WLP8.36.
- 7.9** Therefore, the prospects of Lowestoft expanding in physical area to accommodate any expansion in industry and population is limited. It is therefore important to make more efficient use of land within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 7.10** The temptation for the strategic housing sites and other key sites may be to adopt a development-at-any-cost approach, including acceptance of poor design. This would be a grave error which, in the longer term, would be likely to lock the area into a cycle of underperformance. So robust application of the later design policies in conjunction with the site-specific design principles is crucial.

- 7.11** In order to tackle challenges of land reclamation, viability and low land value and to make development of the appropriate quality happen, any relaxation of affordable housing requirement for waterfront sites should only be considered where superior environmental performance can be achieved, reducing running costs and addressing climate change.
- 7.12** It is clear that both the Local Authority and the local community have an aspiration to create a modern, attractive waterfront and seafront. Refurbishment of The Pavilion (renamed as East Point Pavilion and within the Seafront Masterplan) was completed in June 2022 to encourage tourism and attract new visitors. The surrounding Lowestoft Seafront Vision project area provide opportunities, identified by Wayne Hemingway on behalf of the council, to regenerate the south beach and to bring forward opportunities presented by the seafront.
- 7.13** This Neighbourhood Development Plan includes policies for the development of various sites in the Town. Further information about these are set out in *Supporting Document 1 – Development Sites*. The Kirkley Waterfront site is also identified in the Waveney Local Plan and detailed proposals are set out in the Development Brief. The policy in this plan relates only to the part of the site that is within the Lowestoft NDP area and should be read alongside the Local Plan policy and the Development Brief (Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood and Kirkley Waterfront Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Adopted May 2013).

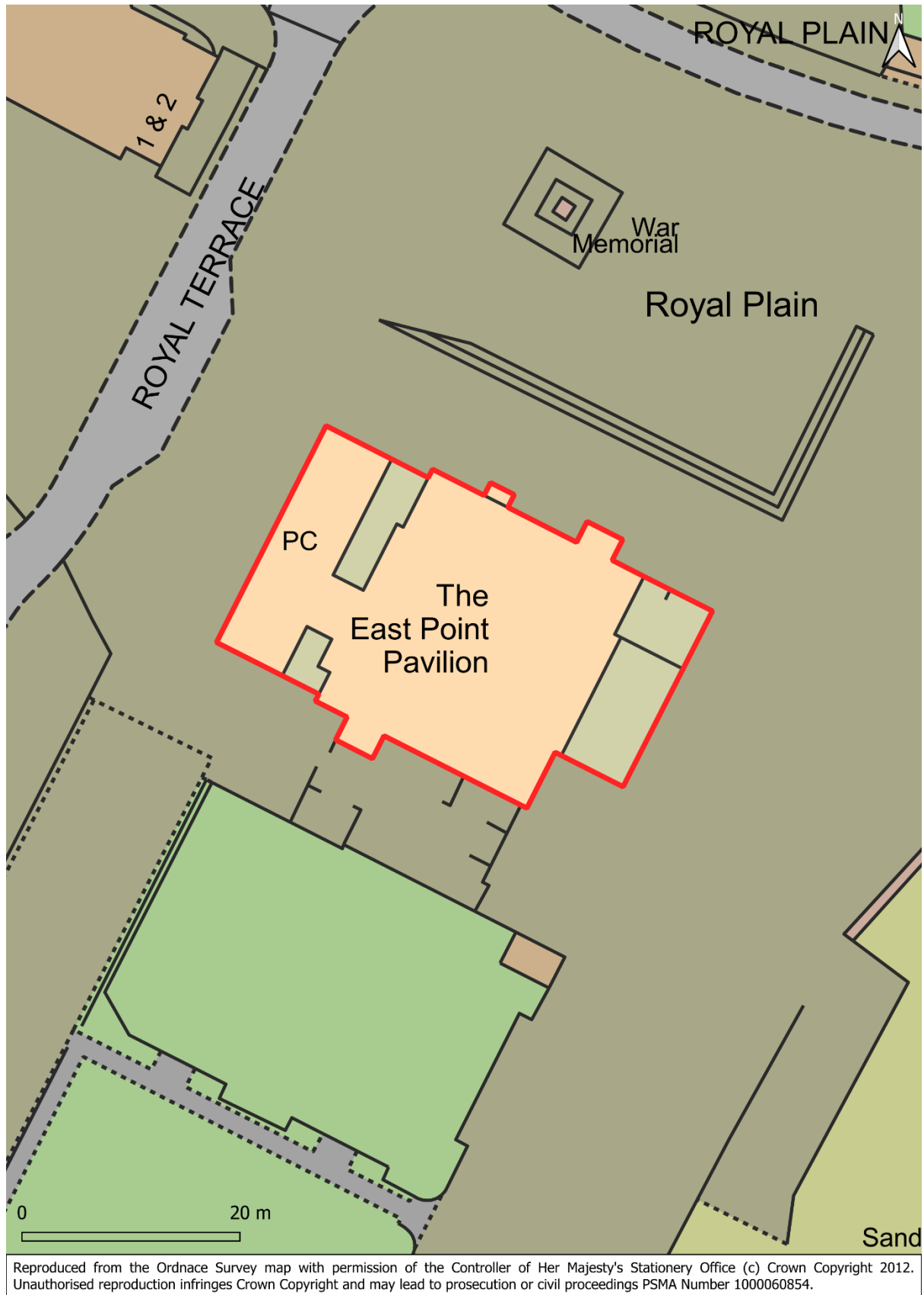


Figure 10 East Point Pavilion Site

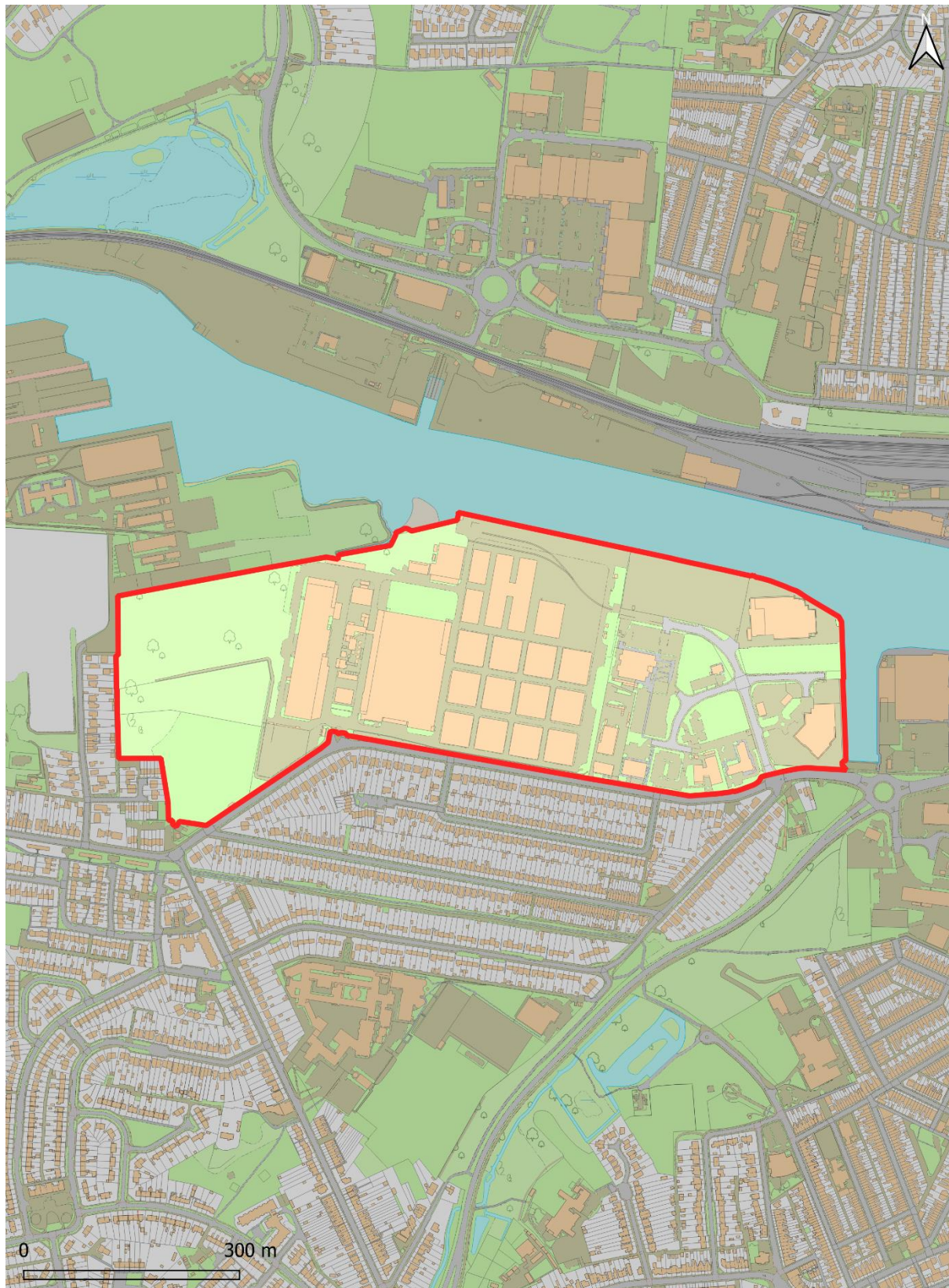
Policy LOW1 – East Point Pavilion Site:

1. Any redevelopment of the East Point Pavilion site on the south beach seafront (identified in Figure 10) should support tourism and the visitor economy. This includes performance, display, exhibition, recreation, and other tourist and visitor-related uses.
2. Development should comply with the following development principles:
 - a) The seafront and surrounding public realm should be overlooked by active frontages;
 - b) Creative and aspirational architectural and landscape design should be employed to create a distinctive landmark and strong seafront identity;
 - c) The scheme should include a high-quality public realm, taking account of the proximity to the war memorial.
 - d) Higher buildings may be supported where they demonstrate exceptional design quality.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 7.14** This is a key site for a major visitor attraction, to attract visitors, tourists and people from the local and surrounding areas. The site could accommodate an art gallery, arts and innovation centre, events space, performance space, viewing tower and other similar uses.
- 7.15** Active frontages could include elevations with windows or other glazing, balconies, terraces, or entrances.
- 7.16** Independent design review is encouraged, in line with NPPF advice. Alternatively, the site would be an ideal subject for an architectural competition. The aim of the policy is to achieve exemplar design, to create a positive symbol of an area in transformation. The design of development should also meet the requirements of Policy LOW3.
- 7.17** Whereas the later Policy LOW8 seeks to ensure that the scale of development complements surrounding townscape, this policy modifies that requirement, recognising the opportunity that this site presents in terms of landmark development. The scheme should provide a strong identity from all viewing angles, including the seafront and from the surrounding spaces. Achievement of a suitable scheme may involve remodelling of the wider public realm and parking areas.

Policy LOW2: Kirkley Waterfront Site



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Figure 11 Kirkley Waterfront Site

Policy LOW2 – Kirkley Waterfront Site:

1. Development of the Kirkley Waterfront site (identified in Figure 11) should result in the creation of a high-quality urban waterfront, including residential and employment uses, in accord with the Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood and Kirkley Waterfront Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Adopted May 2013.
2. Development should comply with the following development principles:
 - a) There should be public access to the waterfront edge, provided through a combination of walkways, cycle ways, public spaces and high-quality landscape design;
 - b) Spaces should be designed to encourage public and visitor use of the waterfront;
 - c) The layout should prioritise pedestrian access to the waterfront edge and include clear sight-lines through the development;
 - d) The waterfront and streets and spaces should be overlooked by active frontages;
 - e) Higher buildings may be supported on the waterfront, where they demonstrate exceptional design quality and maximise the potential for energy efficiency;
 - f) Creative architectural design should be employed to create a strong waterfront identity.
3. Affordable housing provision should take account of Policy LOW6.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 7.18** The policy sets a high level of expectation for development in general and in particular the waterfront edge, in recognition of the strategic importance of the sites and its potential to support growth in Lowestoft. Active frontages could include elevations with windows or other glazing, balconies, terraces, or entrances.
- 7.19** Independent design review is encouraged, in line with NPPF advice. As with the seafront policy, the aim of this policy is to achieve exemplar design, to create a positive symbol of an area transforming. The layout and design of development should also meet the requirements of Policy LOW2. The key to compliance with the policy is to create a new neighbourhood with an accessible and vibrant waterfront.

8. Revitalising the Town Centre

Purpose

- 8.1** To achieve sustainable growth and development, including enhancing retail areas, attracting employment and creating local economic opportunity and realising the social and economic potential of Lowestoft's heritage.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

- 8.2** The NPPF Chapter 7 refers to the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Planning policies should define town centres and primary shopping areas and 'promote their long-term vitality and viability, allowing them to 'grow and diversify'. The role of residential development in supporting vitality is also highlighted.
- 8.3** The following policy responds to Chapter 7, supporting diversification. However, recent changes to Use Classes and permitted development rights undermine this to some extent, potentially making the centre less diverse.

Local Policy

- 8.4** Waveney Local Plan policies in the Retail, Leisure and Town Centres chapter provide support for economic development through specific policies:
- WLP8.17 – Existing Tourist Accommodation;
 - WLP8.18 – New Town Centre Use Development;
 - WLP8.19 – Vitality and Viability of Town Centres.
- 8.5** The Local Plan identifies within the economic profile for Lowestoft (p13) that:
"The town's economy benefits from its strong links to Great Yarmouth, which also profits from the offshore sector. Tourism is an important sector to the town, and its unique position between the Broads and the sandy beaches on the North Sea help attract high numbers of tourists each year. The town is quite self-contained with 54% of working people living in the town also working in the town. However, an increasing number of residents are commuting to Great Yarmouth for work."
- 8.6** The Local Plan further states that Lowestoft's economy been traditionally based on the fishing and manufacturing industries in recent years and recognises potential for future jobs growth in offshore renewables and the significant benefits from the Port of Lowestoft.
- 8.7** The Local Plan also states:
"Lowestoft town centre acts as a day-to-day shopping centre for residents of the town and the surrounding area. However, its catchment is quite small, given its coastal location and competition from nearby centres of Great Yarmouth and Norwich. The town centre has suffered in recent years with higher levels of vacant shop units and residents consider that the shopping offer could be better."
- 8.8** Further frameworks for development of the Town Centre can be found in the Town Centre Masterplan; London Road Lowestoft High Street Heritage Action Zone; The Scores and Triangle Feasibility Study; and the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide.

Planning Rationale

- 8.9** Lowestoft is recognised as a place to invest by different industries due to its access to the North Sea and lower operating costs, fuelling demand for leisure, community and retail. To offer employees a healthy life/work balance, East Suffolk Council aims to improve this offer across Lowestoft, with the town centre at its core. The Lowestoft Town Centre Masterplan (June 2020) and the Lowestoft Town Investment Plan 2021-2031 (2020) sets out some of the plans for achieving this aim.
- 8.10** The following policies recognise the need for Town Centre and Historic High Street to diversify. Retail alone will not create a competitive town centre. The whole offer needs to be considered, including retail, food and drink, entertainment, community facilities, culture, recreation and other uses that draw people into the area. The historic environment is also an important factor in making the Town Centre attractive. The Historic High Street in particular has potential to create a magnet for visitors, perhaps based more on independent businesses. Lower rentals mean that the area can support enterprise, independent business and start-ups.
- 8.11** The bustling town centre is surrounded by a mix of residential housing and industry, an Enterprise Zone and the seafront tourist area. It is served by the central railway station with direct links to Norwich, Ipswich and London.
- 8.12** There are three Enterprise Zones in Lowestoft (South Lowestoft Industrial Site, Riverside Road and Mobbs Way), designed to fast track development on vacant employment land and encourage business investment. They represent an ideal relocation area to unlock future development opportunities in and around Lowestoft. Businesses relocating to the enterprise zones can apply for up to three years of Business Rate Relief.
- 8.13** Enhancing the public realm by improving accessibility and developing the urban landscape, will act as a catalyst for investment and link the whole Lowestoft area from the south beach to the Heritage Action Zone. Development of the former post office and Battery Green car park will address the need for a central leisure and cultural offer, whilst residential developments and the utilisation of vacant properties will develop the area as a community hub, following the aims of the Waveney Local Area Plan.
- 8.14** Repopulation of the town centre based on conversion of upper floors and newbuild development around the edges has potential to make it far more vibrant (see also next chapter on 'Living').

Policy LOW3: Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street

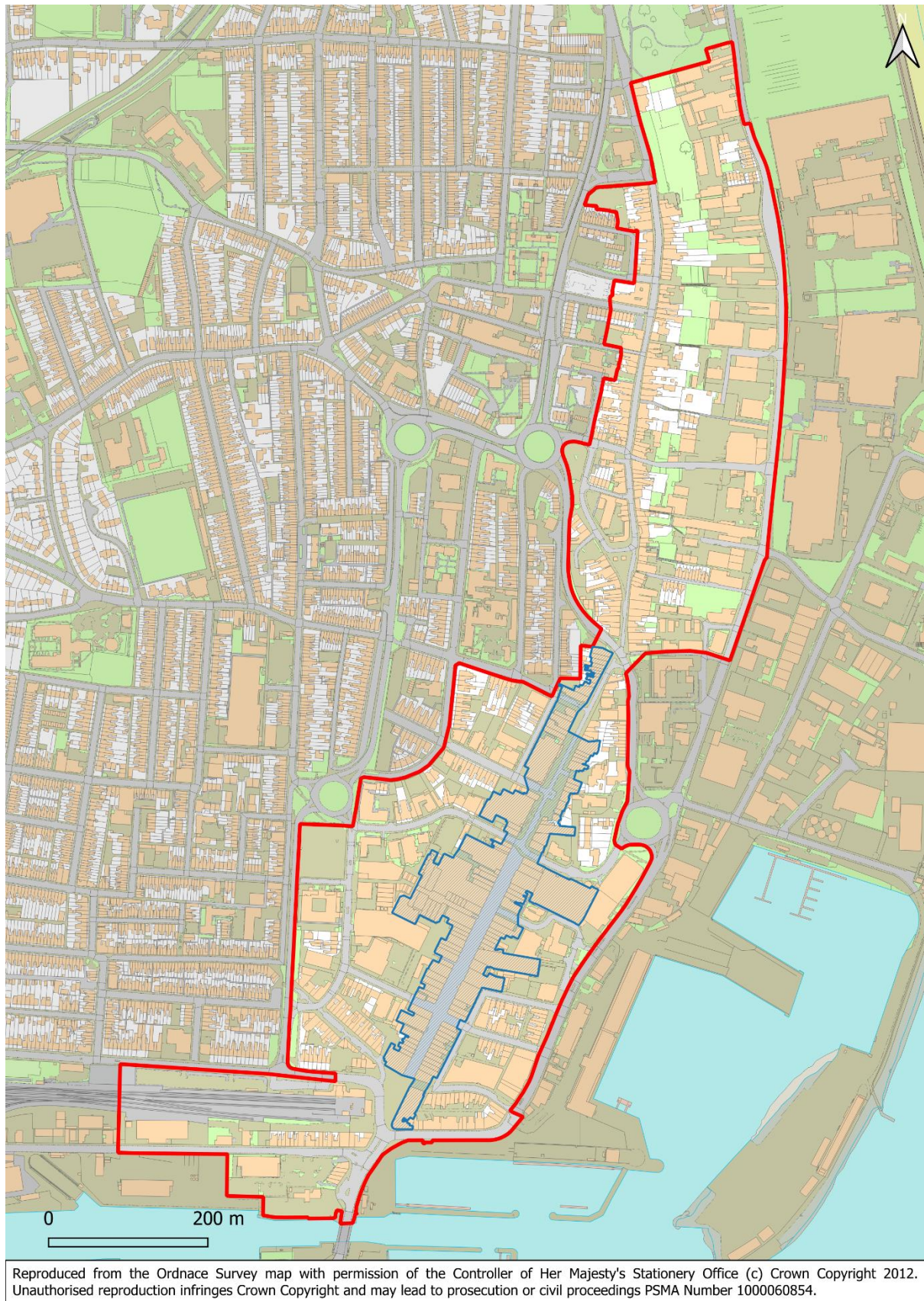


Figure 12 Lowestoft Town Centre and Historic High Street

Policy LOW3:

Within the Town Centre (defined as the retail core, Historic High Street, London Road North and railway station retail areas and identified with a red outline in Figure 12):

1. Development will be supported, providing it enhances or causes no harm to its vitality and attractiveness, as a facility for visitors and local communities.
2. Redevelopment of buildings will be supported, providing it does not involve the demolition of listed buildings or buildings in a Conservation Area that contribute positively to the architectural, historic or visual interest of the area.
3. Residential uses will be supported for upper levels or sites in and immediately adjacent to the town centre.
4. Upwards extension will be supported, subject to meeting the requirements of design and other policies.
5. Reuse and refurbishment of listed buildings and buildings of architectural, historic or visual interest will be supported, providing the scheme preserves the buildings and their settings and preserves or enhances the character or appearance or special architectural or historic interest of the area.
6. Conditions relating to the hours of operation of uses may be considered where necessary to protect residential amenity.

Within the Primary Shopping Area (identified with a blue outline in Figure 12):

7. Ground floor street-frontage units should remain in appropriate town centre uses, including activities in Use Class E (retail, recreational uses, entertainment, culture and the arts, community facilities, and other uses open to the public) and Class F1 (schools, libraries, galleries and churches).
8. Ground floor street frontages should retain or create shop fronts or other active frontages.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 8.15** The policy recognises the need for high street ground floors to remain as town centre uses, but recognises that this is not just about retail, but other uses such as food and drink, cultural uses and personal services. The policy also recognises that upper floors can accommodate a range of commercial uses or hotels or residential accommodation. Appropriate town centre uses include those falling within Use Classes E and F1.
- 8.16** The policy does aim to repopulate retail areas through residential development. This requires some care and possible use of conditions to avoid conflicts between residential development and evening commercial uses.

Policy LOW4: Historic Town Hall Regeneration



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Figure 13 Historic Town Hall

Policy LOW4:

1. Support will be given to change of use and conversion of the Town Hall (identified in Figure 13) to provide a creative hub, including enterprise space, meeting space, work space, a café and other uses to support creative and knowledge-based businesses and activities.
2. Conversion works for the Town Hall should preserve the special interest of the Listed Building, conserve and enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area in which it is set.
3. Change of use of land adjacent to the historic town hall for parking, servicing and other uses connected with the regeneration of the building will be supported subject to provision of a high-quality scheme for the layout, surfacing and landscaping of the site.
4. Development of the land adjacent to the Town Hall should ensure that adequate parking and servicing space is provided to serve users of the whole site.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 8.17** Lowestoft Town Council are the owners of the Town Hall building which is a Grade II listed building within the North Lowestoft HAZ Conservation Area. East Suffolk Council owns the open area of the site (to the west) which this policy supports for parking and servicing space. The Town Hall site is therefore also subject to Heritage Policies and the North Lowestoft HAZ Design Guide.
- 8.18** The policy recognises the need for servicing areas to support the regeneration of the historic town hall and ensures that any such scheme is carried out to a high standard.
- 8.19** Lowestoft Town Council's planned redevelopment of the Town Hall has been influenced by a Public Consultation on the site in 2021. This Consultation highlighted the public's support for the Town Hall to return to use as a Town Hall as well as having provision for a museum, café, community/social space and "hot-desking". The results of the consultation fed into the Lowestoft Town Hall Business Plan (published in June 2021) which outlined proposals.
- 8.20** The Public Consultation also highlighted the need for parking close to the Town to support it becoming a multi-use community hub, alongside improved public transport in the area. Policy LOW15 outlines a balanced transport provision approach.

9 Living

Purpose

- 9.1** To ensure that new residential development meets the needs of existing and incoming populations and is encouraged in locations close to community facilities.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

- 9.2** Chapter 5 of the NPPF deals with supply of homes, mix and affordability. It includes the following:
- ... to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed ...*
- ... that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed ...*

- 9.3** Housing supply is addressed primarily through the Local Plan and there is limited capacity to add to this. The following policies highlight where there are opportunities for additional provision of housing, and seeks to shape residential development, to meet a diverse local need.

Local Policies

- 9.4** The Waveney Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Objectively Assessed Need (OAHN) Study (April 2016) concluded that its OAN between 2011 and 2036 would be 381 dwellings per annum (dpa). Amounting to a 41 dpa uplift on the most recent household projections from CLG, taking account of the results of the Offshore Wind employment scenario.
- 9.5** The figure eventually adopted by the Waveney Local Plan equates to 374 dwellings per annum, of which annually, 208 need to be affordable to meet local need. 56% of this new growth is to be directed to the Lowestoft area. In terms of the form that housing should take, the Local Plan states at Paragraph 2.37:
- "Waveney has an ageing population and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2017) identified a significant need for new sheltered and extra care housing and new care homes."*
- 9.6** The Neighbourhood Plan area falls within the remit of the Suffolk Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). Residential development in the area will therefore be required to make a financial contribution towards the mitigation of adverse impacts on Habitat Sites (European designated sites). This approach is in accordance with Policy WLP8.34 of the Waveney Local Plan and the Suffolk Coast RAMS SPD. The following policies therefore apply against this context.
- 9.7** The Local Plan notes *"Life expectancy is lower in some of the central wards of Lowestoft than the rest of the [former Waveney] District, and death rates are higher"*, which may imply that the housing stock has some influence.
- 9.8** The Former Lowestoft Hospital site is recognised in the Local Plan as being suitable for housing development. The following policies include sustainable development principles for this site.

Planning Rationale

- 9.9** Much of the identified need is met by the Strategic site allocations in the Local Plan. However, this neighbourhood plan encourages additional housing provision, primarily by enabling development in and around the Town Centre, including conversion of upper floors above retail units. The conversion of upper levels above larger units and the collective impact of smaller conversions, together with suitable new-build, will add significantly to the provision of residential units, whilst also contributing to town centre regeneration.
- 9.10** The Community Survey to residents contained questions on what is good, what is bad and what would you change on the subject of life in Lowestoft. The responses informed the structure of the neighbourhood plan and actually noted that the cost of housing in Lowestoft is one of its positive attributes.
- 9.11** In July 2019, Lowestoft Town Council declared a climate emergency. The subjects raised included Standards for sustainable development and insulation in properties. Most recently, March 2020, engagement has been undertaken with landowners of sites designated for development in Waveney Local Plan, looking at securing green space within development and residential mix for housing development.
- 9.12** The policies are designed to enable housing development in and around the town centre, as a sustainable location which supports town centre regeneration. In addition, policies address housing standards and also affordability requirements, recognising the relatively low property prices and that the challenges in Lowestoft are related to viability, design quality and ongoing running costs.

Policy LOW5:

1. In addition to the sites allocated in the Local Plan, new residential development will be supported and in the following locations:
 - a) Sites in the Town Centre, in accordance with Policy LOW3;
 - b) Conversion and adaptation of upper levels above shops and commercial units;
 - c) Development of infill sites within existing residential areas;
 - d) Redevelopment of existing residential buildings, providing it does not involve the loss of a heritage asset.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 9.13** The policy identifies sustainable locations where housing schemes will be supported, subject to meeting other policy requirements. The importance of repopulating retail areas is recognised by enabling residential development of sites around the main retail streets, or of upper storeys, above retail units. It does not enable residential development of ground floor units in main retail streets.
- 9.14** Infill and redevelopment proposals will require careful consideration against other policies, such as those relating to design and character.
- 9.15** Potential for incompatibility between housing and commercial uses would arise primarily from noise and disturbance through late hours of operation. Existing commercial uses could be compromised by new residential development where there would be a significant likelihood of complaints being made by residents, following occupation. Planning conditions relating to hours of operation may provide the necessary safeguards in some circumstances.

Policy LOW6: Former Lowestoft Hospital Site



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Figure 14 Former Lowestoft Hospital Site

Policy LOW6:

1. Development of the Former Lowestoft Hospital site (identified in Figure 14) should comply with the following development principles:
 - a. The historic ranges from 1882, 1927 and the earliest 20th century should be retained and be sensitively refurbished, to preserve or enhance their architectural or historic interest;
 - b. Opportunities should be taken to reverse unsympathetic past alterations and/or extensions;
 - c. The layout, height and massing of new buildings should complement the historic building complex, creating spaces enclosed and defined by continuous building ranges;
 - d. The palette of materials used for the new buildings should complement those used in the historic building ranges, though these may be combined with green materials and construction to maximise the potential for energy efficiency.
 - e. Spaces within the development should include planting using local native species or other species with high environmental value to create amenity for residents and to support biodiversity.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 9.16** The policy complements Policy WLP2.8 in the Local Plan, setting out development principles for the retention and refurbishment of the historic building complex.
- 9.17** The policy requires new buildings should respond to the townscape characteristics of the complex, but should not be interpreted as requiring or implying stylistic imitation. Indeed, the design of buildings and spaces should respond to the current global context of climate change.

Policy LOW7:

1. Residential development should add to the mix, quality and choice of residential accommodation in the area, based on the latest evidence of local need and including housing suitable for the elderly, such as adaptable and accessible homes built to M4(2) and M4(3) standards or future equivalent standards.
2. Residential development should provide screened storage space for refuse bins and recycling bins and for houses this should be provided within the curtilage of the property.
3. Where there is an affordable housing requirement, including First Homes, it should be provided as an integral part of the scheme and be indistinguishable within the overall development (tenure blind).
4. Residential development should be flexible to changing needs, including for an ageing population, home working, and should meet or exceed national space standards.
5. Housing development should include positive design and landscape features to reduce carbon impact and promote biodiversity and particular support will be given to schemes that incorporate superior environmental performance, helping to achieve lower running costs.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 9.18** The policy should be applied with regard to 'Technical Housing Standards nationally described space standard' (March 2015) or any equivalent standard superseding that document. First Homes are defined in Planning Practice Guidance.
- 9.19** The requirement for affordable housing to be tenure blind means that it is indiscernible from the market housing. The policy requires affordable housing to be within the site, and not be addressed through a financial contribution for housing on a remote site. Please note that Policy LOW16 enables car-free development within the Town Centre.

10 Environment and Place

Purpose

- 10.1** To preserve or enhance the natural, built and historic environments, making Lowestoft an attractive and sustainable place to live, work, visit and invest.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

- 10.2** Chapter 8 of the NPPF 2021 deals with promoting healthy and safe communities, including achieving 'healthy, inclusive and safe places ...', supporting healthy lifestyles and making provision for shared spaces and community facilities.
- 10.3** Chapter 11 deals with effective use of land, including *safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*. Local Green Space, including criteria for designation, is dealt with in Chapter 8 (Paragraphs 101-103).
- 10.4** Chapter 12 deals with achieving well-designed places. Design considerations include function, adding to the quality of the area, visual attractiveness, effective landscaping, being sympathetic to local character and history, not discouraging innovation and change, maintain strong and distinctive sense of place, optimise site potential, and making safe, inclusive and accessible places.
- 10.5** Chapter 15 of the NPPF 2021 deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment and requires planning policies to protect and enhance valued landscapes, intrinsic character and beauty of the landscape, habitats, and provide net gains in biodiversity.
- 10.6** The National Design Guide (2021) establishes that well-designed places have ten characteristics. These are context, nature, identity, use, resources, movement, built form, public space, homes and buildings and lifespan.
- 10.7** Chapter 16 deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment and includes consideration of sustaining or enhancing heritage assets, wider social, economic and cultural benefits, contribution of new development, and character of place.
- 10.8** The following set of policies deal with design and different aspects of environment, to ensure that development is sustainable and to protect the green and historic environments of the area.

Local Policy

- 10.9** The policies in this section find support in Waveney Local Plan policies:

- WLP8.28 – Sustainable Construction;
- WLP8.29 – Design;
- WLP8.30 – Design of Open Spaces;
- WLP8.34 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- WLP8.35 – Landscape Character
- WLP8.37 – Historic Environment;
- WLP8.38 – Non-Designated Heritage Assets;
- WLP8.39 – Conservation Areas.

10.10 The North Lowestoft Conservation area appraisal focuses on the medieval core of the town and explains the heritage value of this key location –

‘At the core of the conservation area is the High Street, an historic and largely self-contained streetscape which follows the local topography, curving to follow the edge of the cliff. The narrow width of the street and its undulating character, combined with continuous building frontages of varied form, height, and materials creates an enclosed streetscape that draws in views and maintains visual interest. The scores punctuate this space to the east, providing long views towards the North Sea, whilst to the west, perpendicular streets terminate in wide and disjointed vistas towards Jubilee Way’.

10.11 Included within the northern limits of the Conservation Area is Belle Vue Park. The Waveney Strategic Play Evaluation Action Plan (November 2015) undertaken by Sentinel found that Lowestoft scored lowest after Halesworth and Holton for average play space provision quality across the board, for toddlers, juniors and teens. Whilst this showed some improvement since 2010, this was a low base and requires enhancement.

Planning Rationale

10.12 The historic High Street and Scores area are the subject of a Heritage Action Zone. This recognises the need for regeneration and enhancement. The Scores and Triangle Market Feasibility Study identified twelve new pocket parks that could reimagine wasteland behind the Scores as green open spaces for communities and visitors. The HAZ is an area-based time-limited project that will conclude in 2023, but could be extended.

10.13 In terms of Open Space Provision, North Lowestoft has 3.5 ha per 1000 people; South Lowestoft has 2 ha per 1000 people. The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommended minimum standard is 2.4 hectares of ‘outdoor playing space’ per 1000 population (commonly referred to as the ‘6 acre standard’). The Fields in Trust (FIT) is the operating name of the NPFA produced *Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play* which updated and modernised previous recommendations made in ‘The Six Acre Standard’ published in 2001, arriving at recommendations very similar to previous. FIT concluded that the total recommended standard for outdoor sport is 1.6ha per 1,000 population, which is consistent with the previous Six Acre Standard. This is reinforced by *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play England (April 2018)*. Overall, Lowestoft generally meets these standards, but with small room for improvement in the south of the town.

10.14 The coast off Lowestoft is designated as a Special Protection Area. As such, any development with the potential to impact on the SPA will need to be supported by information to inform a Habitat Regulations Assessment.

10.15 Larger-scale development of the Port would be classed as nationally significant infrastructure, so would be an excluded matter for neighbourhood plans. The policy on port development relates to smaller-scale development that would be subject to normal planning control.

10.16 Good design is a requirement for all development, including the strategic housing sites. The following policies draw on the Design Council’s Building for a Healthy Life. The policies of this Neighbourhood Development Plan have been drafted to provide specific design requirements related to this guide.

10.17 The North Lowestoft Conservation Area is subject to a character appraisal and management plan which was adopted in June 2021 and this has informed the following policies.

10.18 The Port is important economically to Lowestoft, but there is a need to consider off-setting its considerable environmental impact.

10.19 Three types of open space are identified for protection. The rationale and justification for these is set out in *Supporting Document 4 - Protecting Open Landscapes, Sports Fields and Local Green Spaces*:

- Local Green Space (LGS) - designations assessed against NPPF criteria.
- Strategic Green Landscape - a larger landscape area which has strategic importance to Lowestoft (a predominantly urban area)
- Formal Recreational and Sports Spaces (RSS)

10.20 These form the backbone of Lowestoft's green infrastructure. Such areas are protected for their amenity, recreational and environmental value. It also helps to ensure that new-build development is focused on brownfield sites and the need to regenerate the existing urban environment.

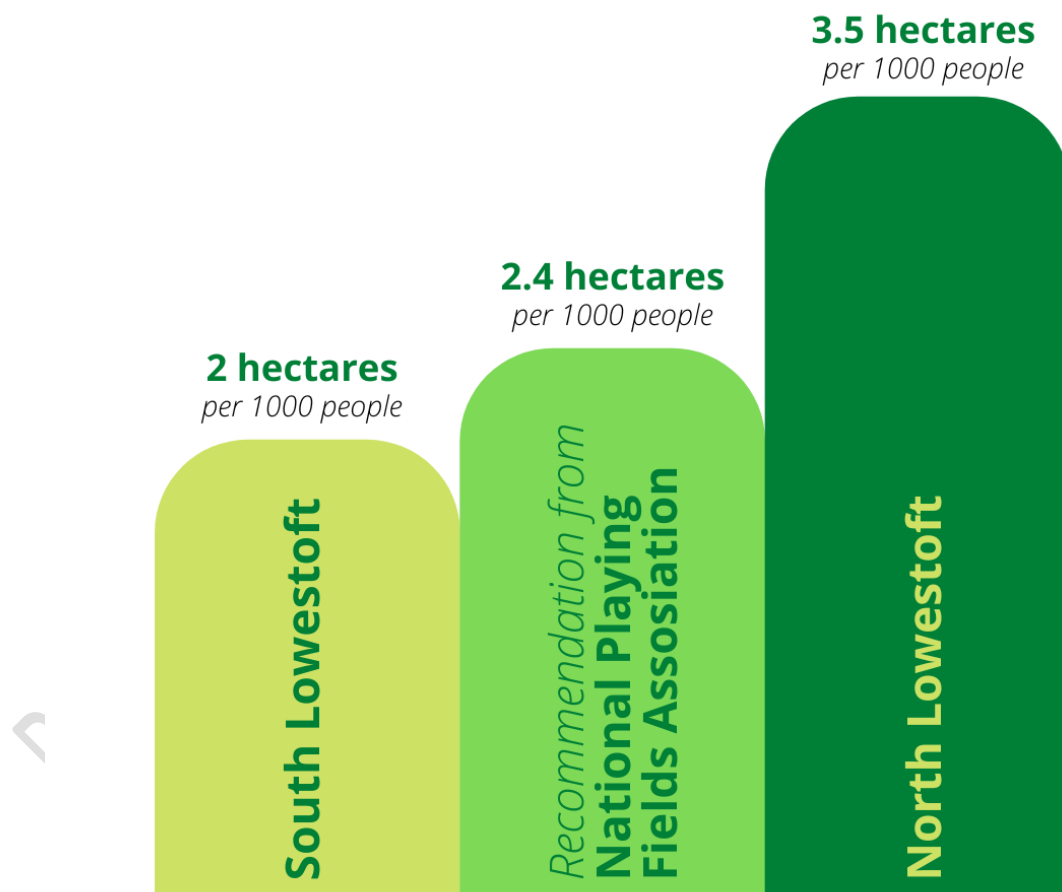


Figure 15 Graph comparing the 'Outdoor Playing Space' provision per 1000 people in North and South Lowestoft to the National Playing Fields Association's (NPFA) recommended minimum standard

Policy LOW8:

1. Development should be locally distinctive and sustainable, responding to the following requirements of this policy proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.
2. Design solutions should respond to the topography, landscape, heritage, boundaries and other features of the site and local context.
3. An integrated approach should be taken to the design of buildings, townscape, streets, urban and green spaces and green infrastructure to create a safe, convenient, attractive and functional public realm, overlooked by active frontages with doors and windows to provide natural surveillance.
4. Development should complement the scale, height, massing, set back from the road, and character of surrounding townscape, providing similar enclosure and definition to streets and spaces.
5. Development should prioritise the amenities, safety and convenience of pedestrians, providing ease of movement within a site and connections to surrounding pathways and facilities.
6. Street layouts should be designed for low vehicle speeds, with varied provision of parking so that traffic and vehicles do not dominate the public realm, and in accordance with the Suffolk Design Streets Guide.
7. High-quality and durable materials with a high standard of finish should be used, including local, reclaimed or recycled materials or green materials and construction with low embodied energy or superior environmental performance.
8. Development should include positive design and landscape features to reduce carbon impacts and promote biodiversity.
9. Creative and innovative design solutions will be supported, especially where they add to the architectural quality and diversity of the area or where they incorporate superior environmental performance.
10. Future maintenance requirements should be considered in the design, layout and spacing of properties.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.21 This policy and Policy LOW16 encourage a varied approach to parking, so that the public realm is not dominated. This may best be achieved through mixed provision of garages, hard standing spaces and on-street. For apartments, parking could be incorporated into the ground floor.

10.22 Complementing local context is not about stylistic imitation, but in responding to the characteristics of the site and to the scale and townscape character of the local context. Materials can be modern or traditional. In historic areas and locations, where using traditional materials, they should be authentic materials and not poor imitations, such as plastic windows or concrete roof tiles.

10.23 Active frontages can include doors and windows at ground floor level and windows and possibly balconies at upper floors. A suitable gap between properties to allow for maintenance would usually mean around two metres.

10.24 Positive design features to reduce carbon use could include:

- use of efficient heating and cooling systems, or design to reduce dependency on heating and cooling systems.
- superior insulation properties and airtightness;
- orientation to take account of climate and solar gain;
- natural ventilation and air flow (for warmer months) to help avoid over-heating;
- use of local, low-embodied energy, recycled and recyclable materials;
- living (green or brown) walls or roofs;
- rainwater capture, storage and reuse (grey water);
- flexible spaces and layouts to accommodate changing demands.
- sustainable drainage systems (SDS) incorporated into the landscape design.
- use of traditional hedges for boundary treatments, to create a greener environment.
- local green energy schemes such as ground heat pumps, photovoltaics, biomass and other technologies.
- reusing and retrofitting existing buildings to maintain the embodied energy used in their construction, whilst also avoiding landfill.

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION DRAFT

Policy LOW9:

1. Development should have no overall significant adverse impact on biodiversity. Any identified adverse impacts should be mitigated, including with positive building design and landscape features to enhance developments for wildlife. Development should achieve biodiversity net gain, which should be measured using the latest DEFRA biodiversity metric available at the time of submission of the proposal for planning permission.
2. Development sites should be based on a masterplan for the whole site, including the location of key pedestrian paths, new urban green space and other green infrastructure.
3. Urban green space should be designed to provide an attractive setting for development and to:
 - a) provide opportunities for social interaction and recreation;
 - b) include retention of existing trees and landscape features and new tree planting using native species;
 - c) incorporate layouts with active frontages to paths and green space and avoid flanking it with rear boundaries and high fencing.
4. Existing ponds should be protected from development.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.25 The policy protects Lowestoft's green infrastructure and also highlights the importance of creating urban green spaces and paths as an integral part of site planning in new development, and not as an afterthought. The requirement for a masterplan for strategic sites for the whole site is intended to avoid the risks of uncoordinated, incremental, unsustainable development.

10.26 In terms of impacts on habitats, compliance with the policy will be easier if the following hierarchy should be used:

- Avoid habitat damage;
- Minimise habitat damage;
- Restore damaged or lost habitat;
- Compensate for habitat loss or damage (as a last resort).

10.27 Incorporating existing landscape features, landform and green infrastructure into redevelopment is an important part of avoiding habitat damage. The nature of new green space and infrastructure depends on the specific site. For some sites, existing trees and landscaping may indicate the best location for green spaces or paths. For sites linking pathways, a linear green space may be the best response.

Policy LOW10: Port Development

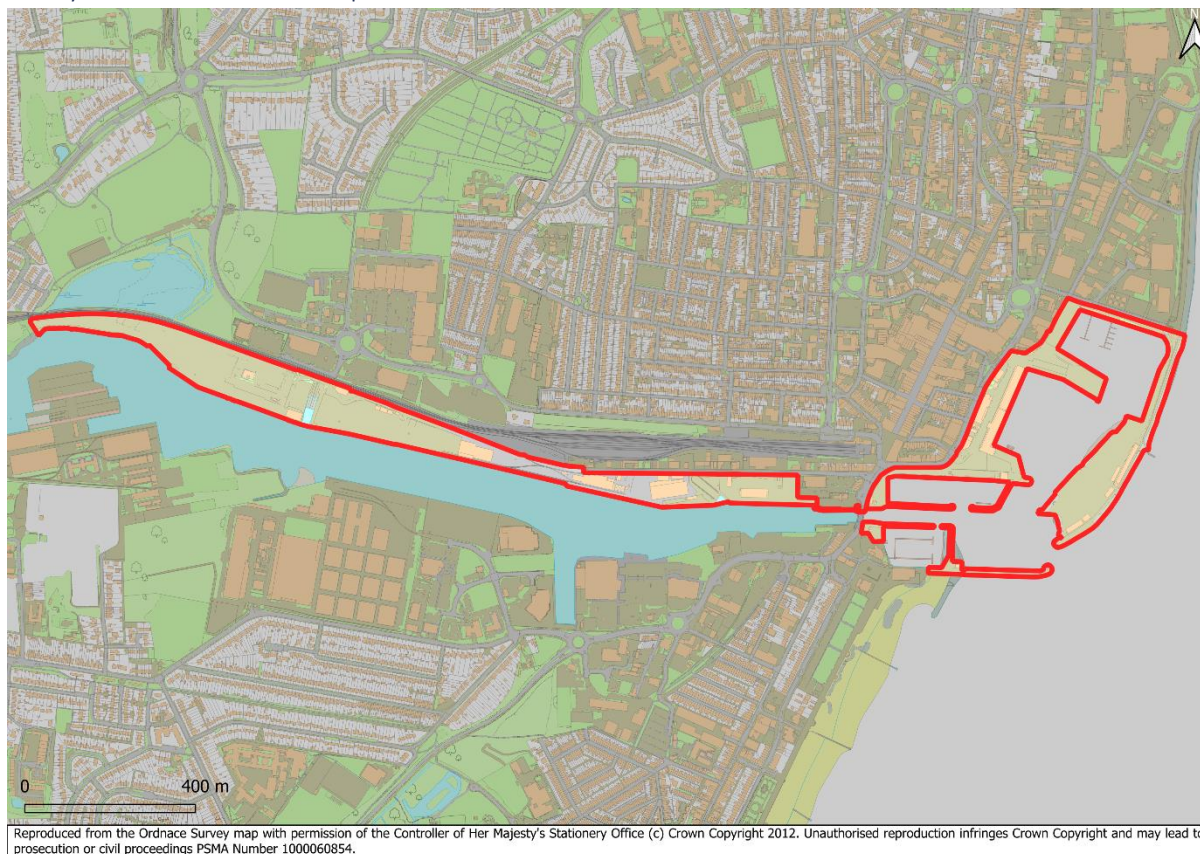


Figure 16 Port Development

Policy LOW10:

Development taking place on the Port site (identified on Figure 14) should demonstrate how any environmental impacts are mitigated through taking opportunities to improve the site, its boundary and environs.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.28 The policy recognises the importance of the port and seeks in particular to ensure that development enhances the site, for example through boundary improvements, such as improved fencing and landscaping.

10.29 Larger scale developments would be dealt with under separate planning provisions for nationally significant infrastructure. Whilst neighbourhood planning policies would not apply in this instance, the Town Council would still seek to work with the Port to secure improvement of the site.

Policy LOW11: North Lowestoft Conservation Area

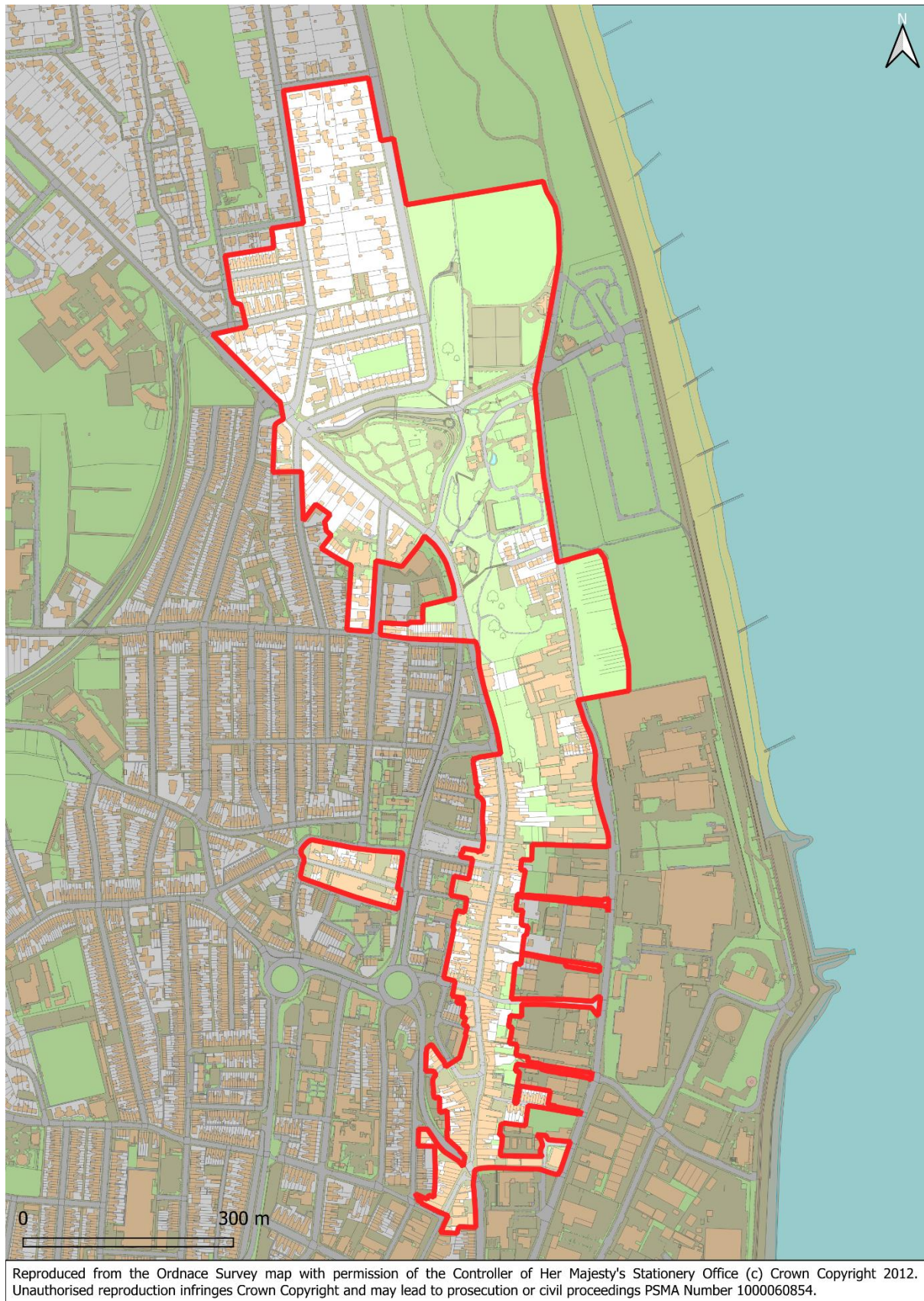


Figure 17 North Lowestoft Conservation Area

Policy LOW11:

1. Development within the North Lowestoft Conservation Area (identified in Figure 15) should preserve or enhance its character or appearance and special architectural interest. This includes maintaining and complementing the following key characteristics:
 - The predominant 2-3 storey height, with occasional taller buildings;
 - Rear of the footway frontages;
 - Architectural diversity, resulting from development over the centuries;
 - Variations and contrasts in form, including commercial properties with shop fronts, warehouses, villas and town houses, religious and public buildings, terraced gardens and yards;
 - The varied palette of authentic traditional materials;
 - Surviving historic pub and shopfronts.
2. Development should not encroach onto the 'The Scores' footpaths or harm their character, accessibility or amenity.
3. Creative and innovative design solutions will be supported, where they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and add to its architectural quality and diversity.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.30 Preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area is not about stylistic imitation, but in responding to key characteristics of the area. Indeed, development should represent the time of its construction, in the same way that older buildings represent different periods of construction. Green design is positively encouraged within the Conservation Area, as elsewhere.

10.31 The palette of materials used in the area is varied. Walling materials include painted render, stucco, ashlar, roughcast, hanging tiles, red and white brick, faience and flintwork. Dressings are sometimes of stone or contrasting brick. Roofing materials include slate and plain clay tiles. Ground surface treatments include cobble stone setts. Where using traditional materials, they should be authentic materials and not poor imitations, such as plastic windows or concrete roof tiles.

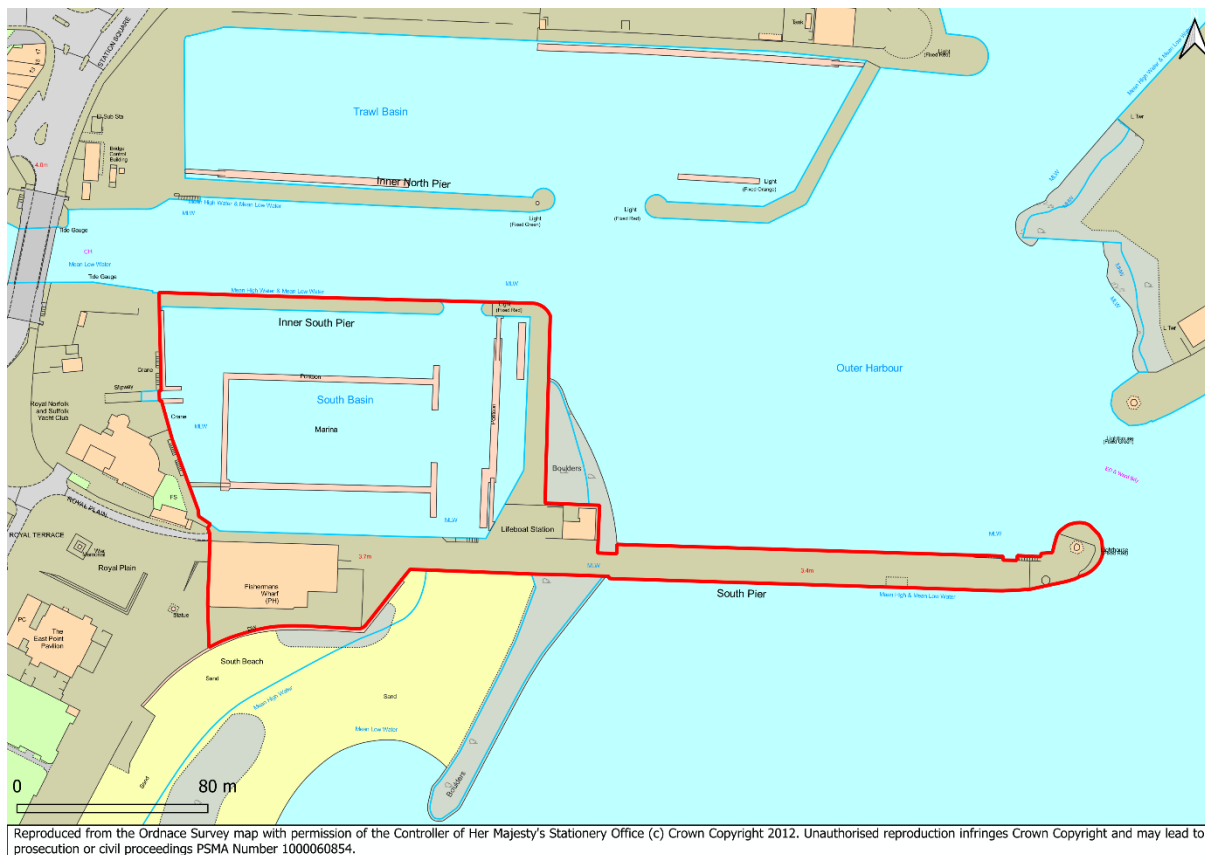


Figure 18 Map of Lowestoft South Pier (non-designated heritage asset)

Policy LOW12:

1. Development should take opportunities to preserve, enhance and reuse non-designated above-ground heritage assets and avoid harming below-ground non-designated heritage.
2. The South Pier (non-designated heritage asset and identified in figure 18) is of particular importance to Lowestoft as a seaside town and development to realise the economic and community potential of the pier will be supported, providing it preserves or enhances the character of the structure and its setting.
3. Development within designated or non-designated historic parks and gardens should preserve or enhance their historic, architectural and landscape character.
4. Development adjacent to historic parks and gardens should enhance or have no adverse impact on their setting or historic, architectural or landscape character.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.32 Designated heritage assets are already subject to special statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Undesignated heritage assets fall outside of these duties.

10.33 It should be noted that development affecting unlisted buildings within conservation areas is subject to the special statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which states:

- (1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.*
- (2) The provisions referred to in subsection (1) are the planning Acts and Part 1 of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.*

10.34 The policy augments Policy WLP8.36 of the Waveney Local Plan.

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION DRAFT

Policy LOW13: Strategic Green Landscape

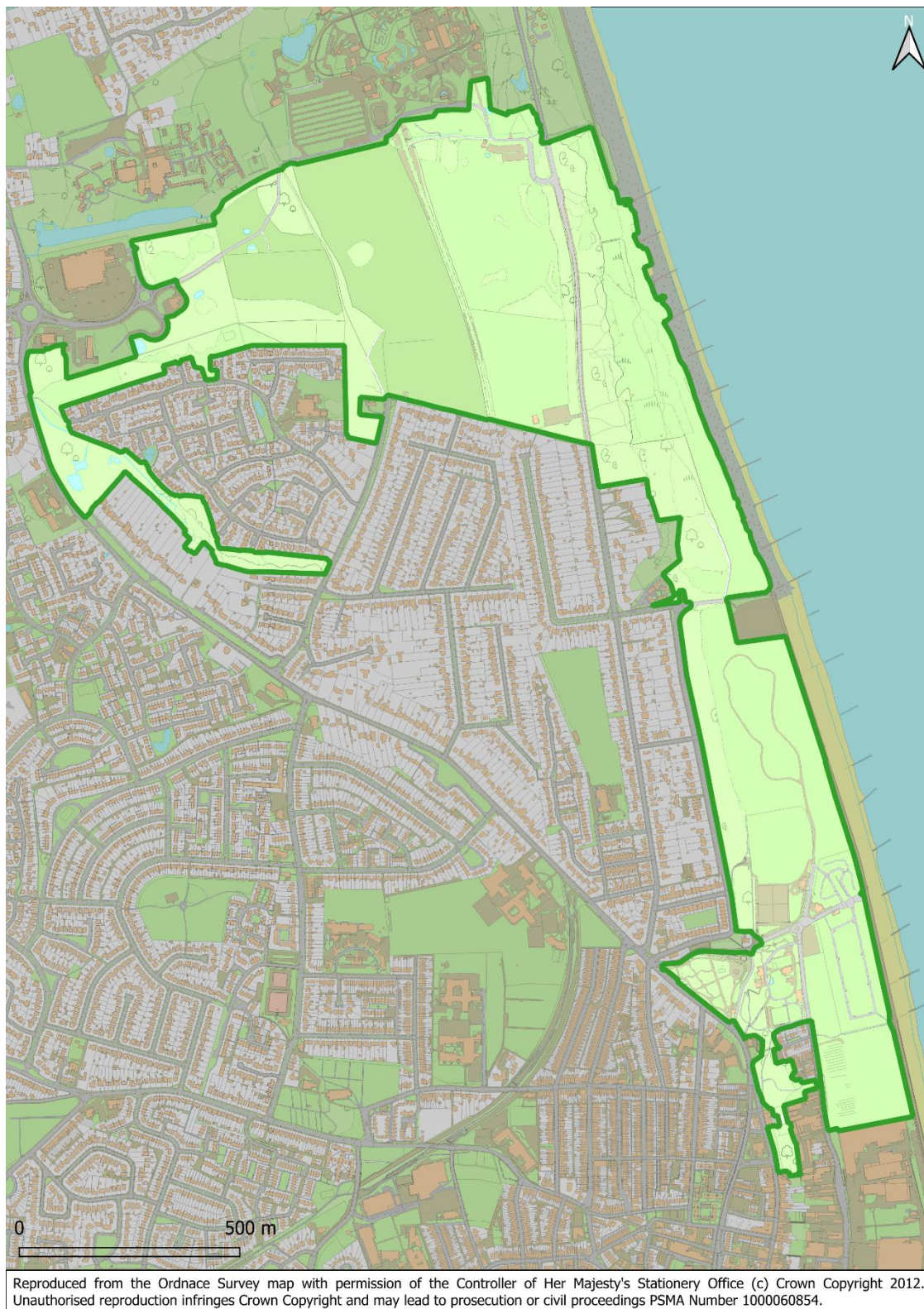


Figure 19 Strategic Green Landscape

Policy LOW13:

Development within the Strategic Green Landscape (identified in figure 19 and on the policies map) should support its amenity, recreational and environmental value and should enhance its open and green character.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.35 The policy protects a key green landscape from development which diminishes the value of the area as a whole. This area is the only strategic open space within the Town boundary and contains within it smaller areas which are important in their own right as informal open space, associated with enjoyment of the coast, wildlife areas including County level Wildlife sites, ancient woodland and playing fields.

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION DRAFT

Policy LOW14: Local Green Spaces

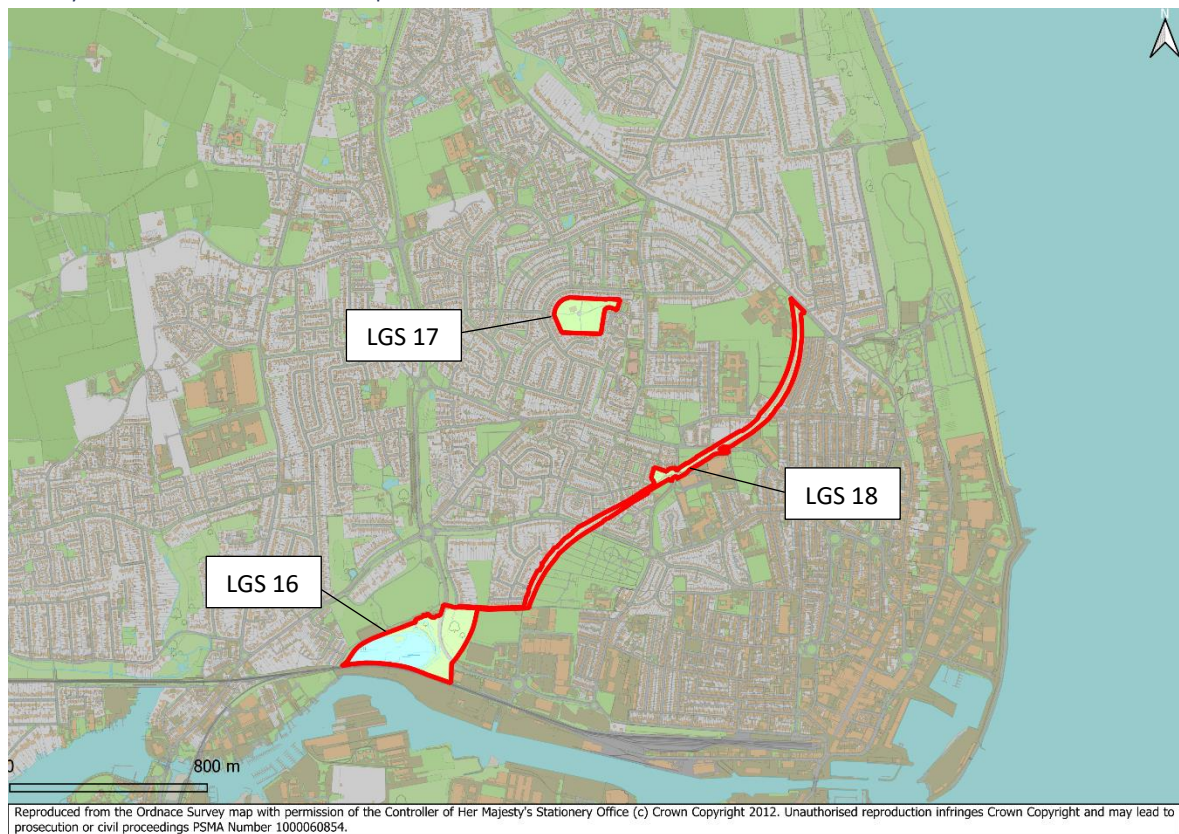


Figure 20 Local Green Spaces - North Lowestoft

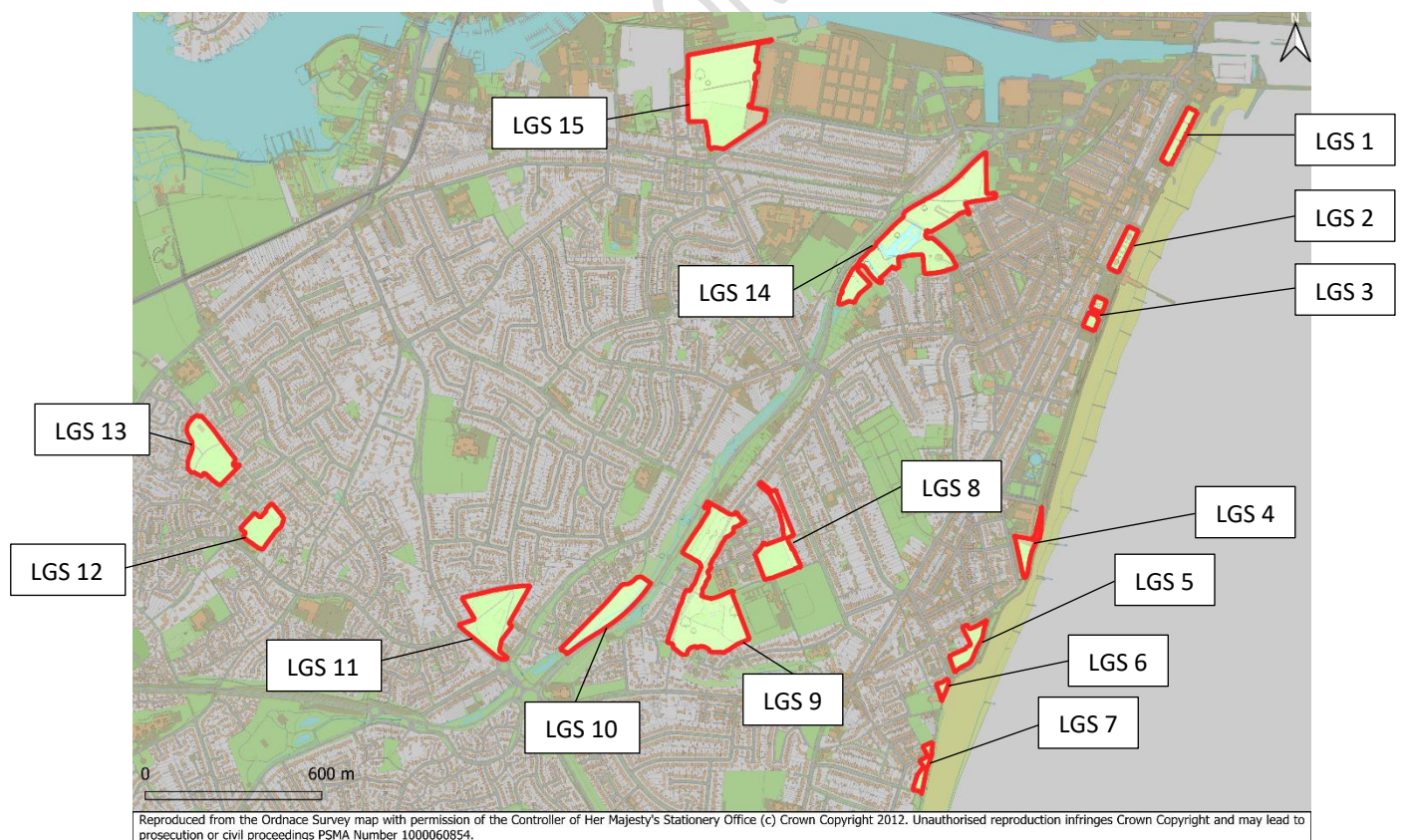


Figure 21 Local Green Spaces - South Lowestoft

Policy LOW14:

1. The following green spaces are designated as Local Green Space (identified in Figures 20 and 21):

LGS1: Royal Green
LGS2: Wellington Gardens
LGS3: Twinning Gardens
LGS4: Fisheries Meadow
LGS5: Shingle Glade
LGS6: Saints Green
LGS7: Florence Field and Nightingale Road Play Area
LGS8: Pakefield Green
LGS9: Pakefield Park & Love Lane
LGS10: Tom Crisp
LGS11: Rosedale Park
LGS12: Uplands Community Centre
LGS13: Clarke's Lane
LGS14: Fen Park and Kirkley Ham
LGS15: Kirkley Waterfront Wildlife Site
LGS16: Leathes Ham
LGS17: Gunton Community Park
LGS18: Great Eastern Linear Park

2. Development should take opportunities to enhance and should not harm the accessibility, character, setting, amenity or safety of Local Green Space
3. In exceptional circumstances, small-scale development will be supported within Local Green Spaces where it directly supports the community use of the space and;
 - a) does not harm the open and green character of the space; and
 - b) includes positive design features to offset the loss of green space.

Interpretation and Guidance

10.36 Local Green Spaces (LGS) enjoy similar protection to green belts. However, it should be noted that the purpose of LGS is different than that for green belts. The policy does make provision for small-scale development related to the community use of the space, for example a small storage building in a park or next to a sports pitch. For small-scale-development, design features to offset loss of green space could include things like green or brown roofing or walling.

10.37 An outline for the justification for each LGS can be found in *Supporting Document 3 - Protecting Open Landscapes, Sports Fields and Local Green Spaces*.

Policy LOW15: Recreational and Sports Spaces

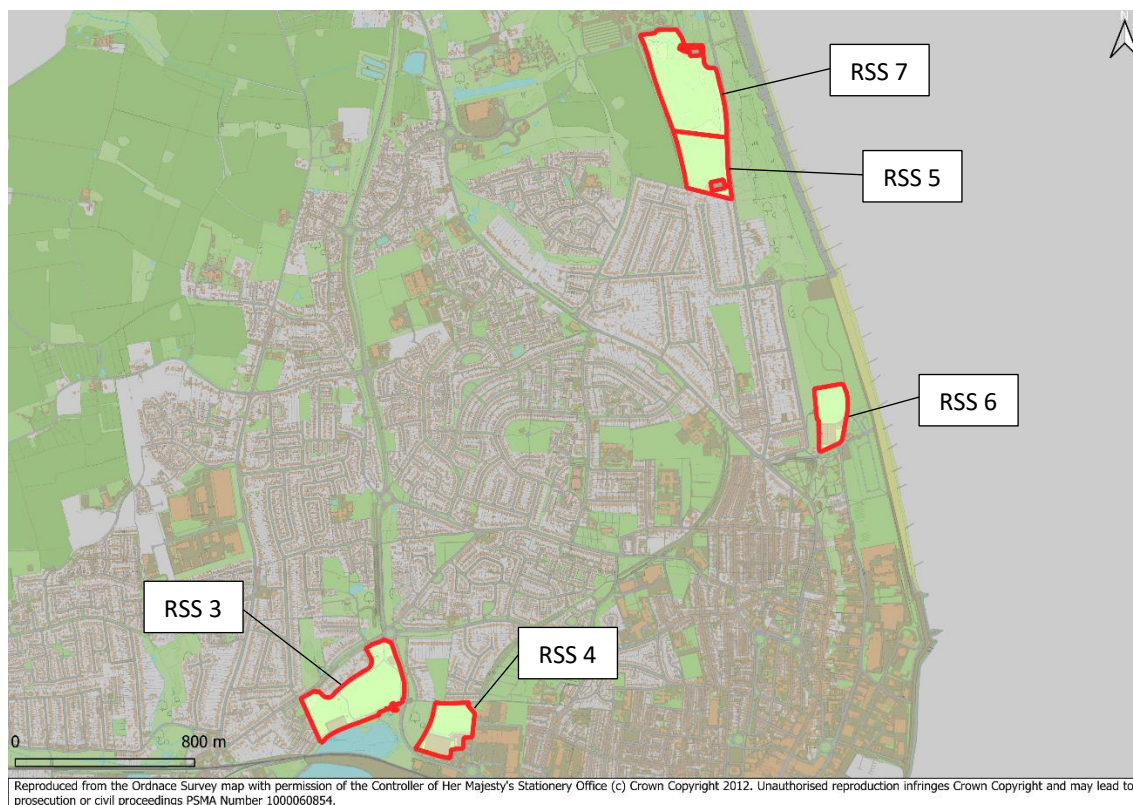


Figure 22 Recreational and Sports Spaces - North Lowestoft

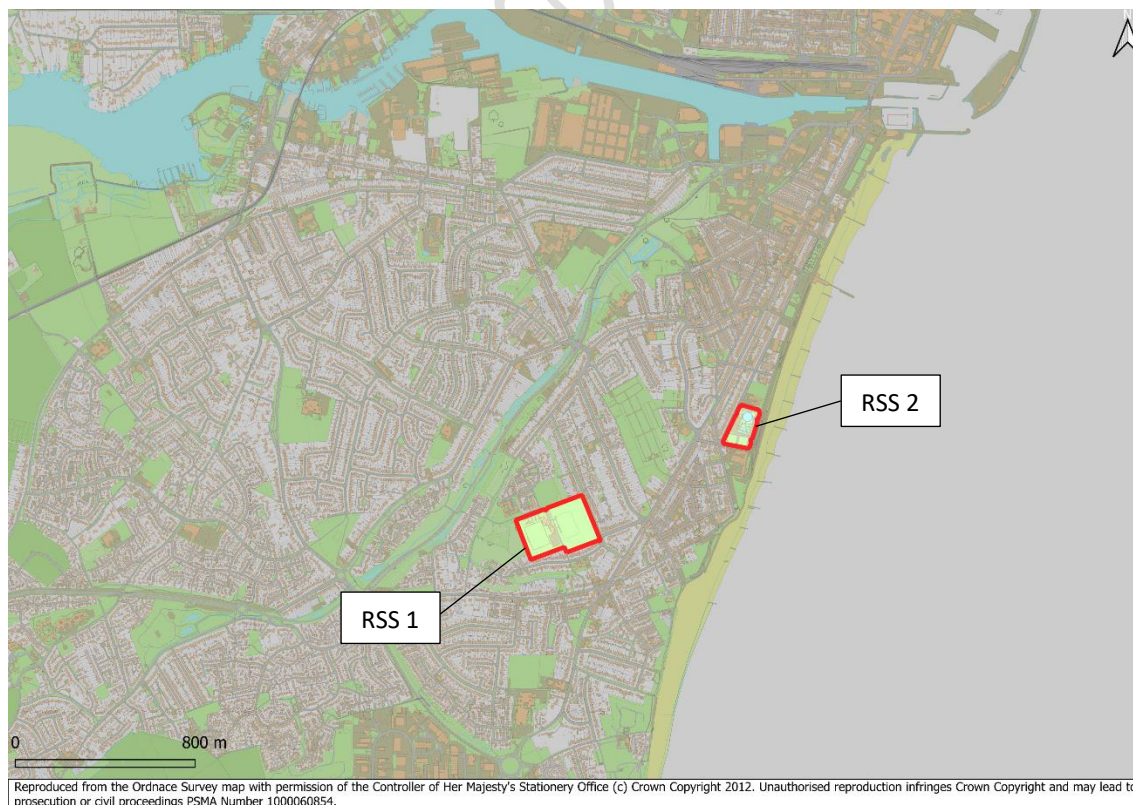


Figure 23 Recreational and Sports Spaces - South Lowestoft

Policy LOW15:

1. Development should not encroach onto the following formal recreational and sports spaces (identified in Figures 22 and 23):

RSS1: Walmer Road
RSS2: Kensington Gardens
RSS3: Normanston Park
RSS4: Barnard's Meadow
RSS5: Dip Farm Playing Field
RSS6: Denes Oval
RSS7: Dip Farm Golf Course
2. Development adjacent to formal recreation and sports spaces should take opportunities to enhance, and should have no significant adverse impact on, their accessibility, amenity or safety.
3. Development within formal recreational and sports spaces may be supported, providing it is necessary to support the operation and sports or recreational use of the space.
4. Children's play areas should not be adversely effected by development.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 10.38** The policy protects parks and recreation spaces, but also recognises that limited development may be necessary in parks to allow them to adapt to changing requirements. The policy also protects children's play areas of which there are many across the town.
- 10.39** Recreational spaces would include sports grounds and pitches and play areas. Development in parks must specifically relate to community use of the park to meet the policy requirements. The policy would prevent parks being used for mainstream development.

11 Flooding and Coastal Erosion

Purpose

11.1 To manage flood risk and consider the need for relocation of uses due to coastal erosion.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

11.2 Chapter 14 of the NPPF 2021 deals with the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

11.3 Paragraph 152 refers to the planning system supporting the “transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change”. This includes consideration of flood risk, resilience to climate change, and promoting a low carbon economy.

Local Policies

11.4 National policy is reinforced in the following Waveney Local Plan Policy:

- WLP8.24 ‘Flood Risk’.

11.5 This policy requires development proposals to “*consider flooding from all sources and take in to account climate change.*”

Planning Rationale

11.6 The threat of flooding is of major concern to both residential and commercial property owners and occupiers in the town and a significant proportion of the Waterfront allocation is subject to flood risk. This will open up unique challenges and opportunities for development in this location.

11.7 Lowestoft faces the threat of both fluvial and tidal flooding separately and in combination, and flooding can also occur when high tides and severe precipitation occur concurrently due to the closure of surface water outlet flaps. Ongoing strategic flood protection proposals in the town are intended to address such issues:

- Tidal flood barrier at Lowestoft Harbour
- Mitigate against surface water flooding
- Temporary flood protection at vulnerable locations

11.8 Planning policies can make provision for the relocation of uses threatened by coastal erosion. Much of Lowestoft’s sea frontage is protected from erosion by flood defences. There are no buildings in the Gunton area north of the sea wall and the major threat to the south is to the Pakefield caravan park.

12 Transport and Movement

Purpose

12.1 To provide balanced and sustainable transport for people of all ages, means and mobility.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

12.2 Chapter 9 of the NPPF 2021 addresses sustainable transport and includes consideration of impacts of development, existing and proposed infrastructure, promotion of walking, cycling, and public transport, environmental impacts, and movement, streets, and parking in the design of schemes.

Local Policy

12.3 The policies in this section find support from Waveney Local Plan Policy:

- WLP8.21 – Sustainable Transport

12.4 This policy requires development proposals to be designed from the outset to incorporate measures that will encourage people to travel using non-car modes to access home, school, employment, services and facilities.

Planning Rationale

12.5 The main A12 road from London into the southern area of Lowestoft ends at the town's harbour bascule bridge. This connects to the A47 which runs around the centre of the town, before exiting the town and crossing the county border into Norfolk (towards Great Yarmouth).

12.6 Lowestoft Railway Station is centrally located within walking distance of the beach and the town centre. It provides services to Ipswich on the East Suffolk Line and to Norwich along the Wherry Line. Both Ipswich and Norwich provide high speed connections to London Liverpool Street. The City of Norwich offers an airport which connects internationally via Schipol.

12.7 However, overall, transportation to Lowestoft is poor. Poor transportation infrastructure discourages tourism and business growth, because it is so difficult to get workers, supplies, and goods in and out of the town.

12.8 For the town to serve current business needs, accommodate growth and attract development focussed on the North Sea, significant investment in Lowestoft's road infrastructure and its access routes via the A12 and A47 is necessary. These involve unlocking pinch points and re-routing traffic away from congested areas, including:

- New crossing over Lake Lothing
- Upgrades to Urban Traffic Management Control System
- Improvements to the A47/A12
- Junction and Access Improvements to Enterprise Zones

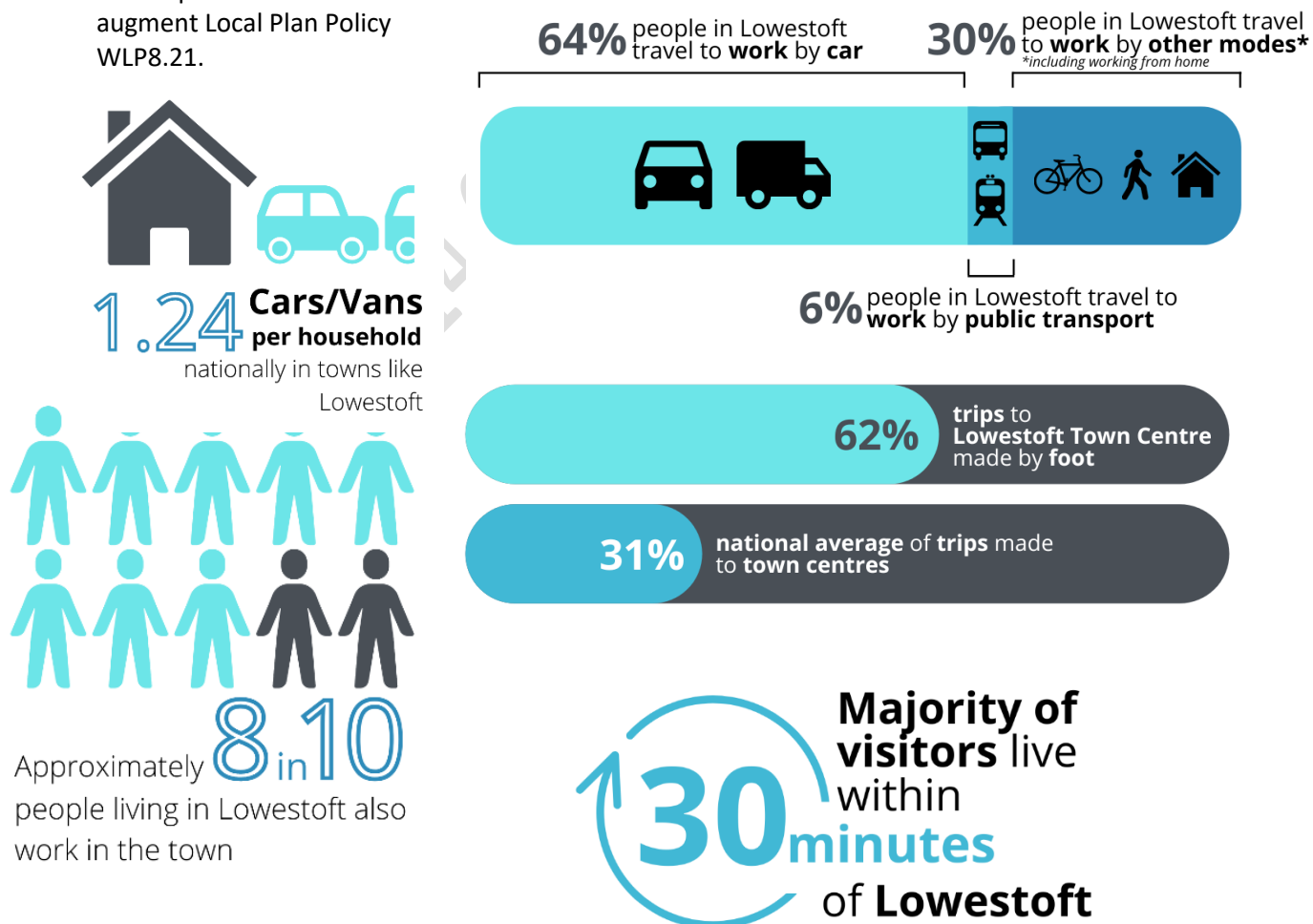
12.9 Public transportation in town is limited to buses and taxis. Lowestoft's central axis runs down Yarmouth Road, High Street and down through London Road South to Pakefield. The new Tom Crisp road runs about a half mile west and also feeds traffic north south. Public transport runs down these main roads north/south but is very weak east to west.

12.10 A key characteristic of Lowestoft is that around 80% of people who work in the town also live there³. 6% of Lowestoft residents use public transportation to get to work. Nationally, in towns like Lowestoft, there are 1.24 cars/vans per household. 64% of Lowestoft residents use a car to travel to work. The national average for car ownership is 43% (one car or van).

12.11 As a compact and relatively flat town, cycling is a major transportation mode through town and again, the north/south links for a cyclist are good, but the east/west links are very poor. Most journeys are short and could be made without the car. However, cycle paths are inadequate and poorly laid out, with good paths being isolated in sections and suddenly disappearing altogether. A new pedestrian and cycle bridge has been proposed to cross Lake Lothing.

12.12 The Suffolk County Council Transport Plan estimates that 80% of people living within Lowestoft also work in the town which means that many journeys are short⁴.

12.13 The policy requires a balanced approach to transport provision in new development, including emphasis on pedestrian convenience and cyclists, something which is also highlighted in the Town Centre Masterplan and the South Lowestoft HAZ and Seafront Masterplan. It is intended to augment Local Plan Policy WLP8.21.



³ <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/business/regeneration-projects/lowestoft-transport-and-infrastructure-projects/>

⁴ (www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-andtransport/public-transport-bus-pass-and-transport-planning/transport-planningstrategy-and-plans/).

Policy LOW16:

1. Development that generates additional journeys should incorporate a balanced and sustainable provision of transport options, including active travel, meeting the following requirements proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.
2. The needs and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists should be prioritised, including:
 - a. Supporting ease of movement and making connections to surrounding pathways, as required by policy LOW8.
 - b. Designing for low vehicle speeds, varied provision of parking and ensuring that the public realm is not dominated by traffic and parking, as required by Policy LOW8;
 - c. Including convenient links within the layout of new development to nearby public transport facilities.
3. Secure, covered storage for cycles and scooters should be provided, including facilities for every new dwelling.
4. Electric charging points should be provided as part of car parking provision.
5. Car-free development will be supported in or near to the Town Centre, as defined in Policy LOW3, or on public transport routes.
6. Parking standards should be in accordance with Suffolk Guidance for Parking 2019, or any successor documents. Residential parking should be provided as part of the development, and with a proportion of on-street parking provisions for visitors that is well-designed and integrated to avoid obstruction or impede visibility.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 12.14** The requirement for secure, covered storage for cycles, scooters and other personal transport may be addressed through collective facilities for apartments or employment or community development. For houses, each dwelling should normally have its own facility.
- 12.15** The policy ensures that sustainable transport options are designed into new development, avoiding over-reliance on motor vehicles. Priority should be given to pedestrian convenience, especially in the layout of new development. Some parts of the policy only apply to development that includes new layout. The requirement for secure, covered storage and electric charging points would also apply to changes of use or new single dwellings.
- 12.16** No figure is given for the extent of provision of electric charging points (though a minimum of one point is required to comply with the policy). However, it is important to consider that development without adequate provision will become unviable in a relatively short period of time.
- 12.17** This policy and Policy LOW7 encourage a varied approach to parking, so that the public realm is not dominated. This may best be achieved through mixed provision of garages, hard standing spaces and on-street. For apartments, parking could be incorporated into the ground floor.

13 Sustainable Energy

Purpose

- 13.1** To support proposals for renewable energy schemes.

Rationale and Evidence

National Policy

- 13.2** Chapter 14 of the NPPF 2021 deals with climate change, flooding and coastal change.
- 13.3** Paragraph 155 requires renewable and low carbon energy to be addressed through a positive strategy, identifying opportunities, but ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed.

Local Policy

- 13.4** The Waveney Local Plan devotes a chapter to Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. Policy WLP8.27 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy' expands on this with strong support for the role of Neighbourhood Plans:

'The Council will support Neighbourhood Plans in identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy development.'

Renewable and low carbon energy schemes, including wind energy schemes, will be permitted where the proposal is in a suitable area for renewable and low carbon energy as identified in a Neighbourhood Plan'.

Planning Rationale

- 13.5** The neighbourhood plan supports renewable energy, subject to impacts on the area's sensitive environments. Renewable energy is a growing part of the local economy. Its success is intimately tied the port, Lowestoft's biggest asset and economic opportunity, in particular, to support offshore wind farms. These in turn create significant employment and business opportunities. The port and the town need to ensure that these opportunities are maximised which is best achieved by removing obstacles to growth. In one regard this involves port improvements such as limited draft adjacent quays, clear width through the bascule bridge and the need to upgrade quay headings to meet changes in industry demands.
- 13.6** In another respect, enhancements at the waterfront aim to exploit the town's potential as a renewable energy hub.
- 13.7** The Powerpark project (WLP2.2) will reconfigure employment land to provide the focus for the energy industry within Lowestoft. It provides 24.7 hectares of excellent port related facilities and the opportunity to build upon Lowestoft's international position within the offshore renewables, oil and gas industry. It is already home to offshore related companies such as Sembmarine SLP and Scottish Power and Renewables.
- 13.8** Powerpark is also the location of OrbisEnergy, built by Suffolk County Council in 2008, a 3,300m² eco-building, with office accommodation, meeting rooms and conference facilities for the offshore industry. A wind turbine sits adjacent to OrbisEnergy, which is a significant local landmark, at 126 metres high and generating 2.75 megawatts of power.

Policy LOW17:

1. Local energy schemes will be supported, subject to:
 - a) The siting, scale and appearance of the scheme causing no significant adverse visual impact.
 - b) There being no significant adverse impacts on the amenities of residential properties, including noise, pollution, vibration or, in the case of wind turbines, shadow flicker.
 - c) There being no adverse impacts on listed buildings and their settings or on the character or appearance of conservation areas, having regard to heritage policies in this Neighbourhood Plan;
 - d) There being no significant adverse impact on the local and natural environment, having regard to other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

Interpretation and Guidance

- 13.9** The policy applies to all local energy schemes, including wind power, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products, and innovative schemes such as tidal energy generation and hydrogen generation.
- 13.10** Application of the policy includes consideration of the cumulative impacts of the scheme, other schemes with planning permission and existing schemes. Impacts on the local environment could include impacts on green spaces, the coastal environment. The policy also addresses impacts on historic environments.
- 13.11** Conditions may be used to ensure that local energy structures are removed, once they reach the end of their operational life.

Glossary of Terms

A

Active frontage

Ground floor building frontage that is in use, for example, as a restaurant or shop front.

Affordable housing

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

B

Brownfield site

See *previously developed land*.

Building for a Healthy Life

Building for a Healthy Life (formerly known as Building for Life 12) is a set of design criteria which can be used to assess the quality of design of a development proposal.

<https://www.designforhomes.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/BFL-2020-Brochure.pdf>

C

Conservation area

An area that is considered worthy of protection because of its architectural and historic interest.

Conservation area appraisal

A detailed study of the streets and buildings in a conservation area.

E

Enterprise zone

An area where assistance is offered to new businesses. The Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Enterprise Zone covers a number of sites within the Waveney and Great Yarmouth areas.

G

Green Infrastructure Strategy

A comprehensive plan for the use of different types of green spaces and natural areas.

Green space

A natural or manmade space containing plants or grassland. This can include parks, woodlands, playing fields, areas of grassland and areas of biodiversity value.

H

Heritage assets

An overarching term that refers to buildings, parks and gardens, monuments and archaeological remains that are of historic or archaeological value.

Housing market area

A geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.

L

Listed building

A building that is recognised and statutorily protected for its historic and architectural value.
www.historicengland.org.uk/listing

M

Masterplan

A detailed plan which provides a template for the development of a site or area.

N

National Planning Policy

Most national planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. Some policy is also contained within ministerial statements. National planning policy is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance which gives further detail on how national policy should be implemented and interpreted.

Neighbourhood plans

An optional plan, which can be produced by a designated neighbourhood organisation, to guide development within a neighbourhood or local area.

Non-designated heritage assets

A heritage asset that has not been included on any national list. Some of these are identified on the Local List, which is maintained by the Council.

O

Objectively assessed need

An assessment of the amount of new housing, jobs, employment land, retail floorspace and other uses that are likely to be needed within the District.

Open space

A range of different sites and areas, including wildlife areas, natural greenspace, parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, play space, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards and green corridors.

P

Planning condition

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission. Planning conditions might require additional approvals for specific aspects of the development (such as the colour of materials, submission of a landscaping scheme) or might restrict the use of the site (for example limiting operating hours).

Policies Map

Local Plan policies and proposals identified on an Ordnance Survey map.

Previously developed land

Land which has been previously developed but is now largely vacant or disused. Previously developed land is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

S

Special Protection Area

This is an area identified as being of value for the feeding, breeding, migrating and wintering of threatened bird species. These sites are identified under the European Wild Birds Directive and receive enhanced protection.

Strategic housing market assessment

An assessment of housing need and demand within the housing market area.

Supplementary planning document

A planning document that provides practical guidance to assist in the implementation of Local Plan policies.

Surface water flooding

This is caused when rain water cannot be absorbed into the ground but instead flows over the surface.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is a contested term and has many definitions and interpretations. The United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as “as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly. The National Planning Policy Framework states that the majority of the document taken as a whole constitutes the Government’s view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

U

Use classes

Different categories of uses identified in the planning system by the Use Class Order (1987 as amended) https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use