

# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany Regulation 14 consultation  
of the Neighbourhood Plan

February 2025

## Quality information

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## Revision History

| Revision | Revision date | Details                        | Name | Position           |
|----------|---------------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| V1       | November 2023 | Draft (WIP) for client comment | NCB  | Technical Director |
| V2       | February 2025 | Full draft for client comment  | NCB  | Technical Director |
| V3       | February 2025 | Submission version             | LH   | Oneill Homer       |

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# Non-Technical Summary

## Introduction

AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Horsford Neighbourhood Plan (HNP).

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. SEA of the HNP is a legal requirement.<sup>1</sup>

The HNP is being prepared by the Parish Council in the context of the local planning framework of Broadland District Council (BDC). The Parish Council has chosen to incorporate the SEA into a wider Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

This report is the Environmental Report for the HNP. It is published alongside the 'pre-submission' version of the HNP, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).

## Structure of the Environmental Report / this Non-Technical Summary

SA reporting essentially involves answering the following questions in turn:

1. Assessment of reasonable alternatives
2. What are the SA findings at this stage?
  - i.e., in relation to the draft plan.
3. What happens next?

Each of these questions is answered in turn within a discrete 'part' of the Environmental Report and summarised within this Non-Technical Summary (NTS). However, firstly there is a need to set the scene further by answering the questions 'What is the Plan seeking to achieve?' and 'What's the scope of the SA?'

## What is the plan seeking to achieve?

The HNP sets out a vision for the parish to 2038 to be a sustainable and more self-sufficient place where people want to live and work in the future. The vision is supported by 12 specific objectives on the location for growth; access to community, cultural, leisure and sports activities; provision of school and medical facilities; the design of development; sustainable travel; parking; access to the countryside; high quality public realm; enabling an economically attractive and viable village with appropriate infrastructure. A copy of the vision and objectives can be found in the NP document.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by either: a) an environmental report; or b) a statement of reasons why SA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process completed in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations ('the SEA Regulations'). The HNP was officially 'screened in' by Broadland District Council as requiring SA in December 2022.

## What is the scope of the SA?

The scope of the SA is summarised in a list of themes, objectives, and assessment questions, which, taken together indicate the parameters of the SA and provide a methodological ‘framework’ for assessment. A summary framework is presented below, and a full framework which includes assessment questions is provided within the main Environmental Report (see **Table 3.1**).

| SA theme                       | SA objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Air quality                    | Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise sources of nitrogen dioxide.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Biodiversity and geodiversity  | Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Climate change and flood risk  | Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Community wellbeing            | Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, maintaining existing forest areas in the north of Horsford, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities and a thriving local economy, providing employment opportunities for residents. |
| Historic environment           | Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area including the four historic pits.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Land, soil and water resources | Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Landscape                      | Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the forest to the north of Horsford and the historic pits.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Transportation                 | Promote sustainable transport use and realistic active travel opportunities to destinations in the north, as well as the south, and reduce the need to travel by car.                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## Plan-making / SA up to this point

An important element of the SA process involves assessing ‘reasonable alternatives’ in time to inform development of the draft proposals, and then publishing information on reasonable alternatives for consultation alongside the draft proposals.

As such, **Part 1** of the Environmental Report explains how work was undertaken to develop and assess a ‘reasonable’ range of alternative approaches to the allocation of land for housing, including alternative sites.

Specifically, **Part 1** of the report:

1. Presents an assessment of four sites in Horsford against the SA framework.

2. Explains reasons for establishing the preferred option, in light of the assessment.

## Establishing the alternatives

The Steering Group is considering options for how Horsford might grow in a planned way to address issues around community infrastructure, transport and placemaking and to deliver the long-term vision for Horsford as a more self-sufficient settlement that has a stronger sense of identity and is easier to use without a car.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, the Steering Group invited landowners to prepare a high-level presentation for a consultation event held at Horsford Village Hall. The three landowners delivered presentations during this event. These options form three reasonable alternatives for additional growth in the neighbourhood area:

- **Option 1 – Drayton Farms Group Limited:** Promoting three sites to the south of Horsford for mixed-use, including housing; elderly persons accommodation; and potentially employment and retail uses. This is in addition to a further site at Reephams Road, south of The Nest and adjacent to Hellesdon, also for mixed-use.
- **Option 2 – Barratt David Wilson Homes and Brown & Co:** Promoting a 28.8ha site to the northeast of Horsford, positioned between Green Lane and Mill Lane, for mixed-use, including housing; a sports hub; a community hub; a community park; and potentially a school.
- **Option 3 – The Horsford Estate:** Promoting six opportunity areas within the Horsford Estate, including a site to the east of Horsford for housing; three sites along / off Green Lane for leisure and recreation (Horsford Range, Off the Lead and The Woodyard); and a 6ha site to the south of Horsford for the 'Glebe Farm Sports Hub'.

## Appraisal of the alternatives

The table below provides a summary of the results of the site assessment, and the conclusions are summarised below this. Full appraisal findings are presented in **Chapter 5** of the main body of the Environmental Report.

| SA theme                      |                      | Option 1       | Option 2  | Option 3  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Air quality                   | Rank                 | 2              | 3         | 1         |
|                               | Significant effects? | No             | No        | No        |
| Biodiversity and geodiversity | Rank                 | 3              | 1         | 2         |
|                               | Significant effects? | Yes – negative | Uncertain | Uncertain |
| Climate change                | Rank                 | 2              | 3         | 1         |
|                               | Significant effects? | No             | No        | No        |
| Community wellbeing           | Rank                 | 1              | 3         | 2         |

| SA theme                       |                      | Option 1       | Option 2       | Option 3       |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                | Significant effects? | Yes – positive | Yes – positive | Yes – positive |
| Historic environment           | Rank                 | 3              | 2              | 1              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Yes – negative | Yes – negative | Yes – negative |
| Land, soil and water resources | Rank                 | =              | =              | =              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Uncertain      | Uncertain      | Uncertain      |
| Landscape                      | Rank                 | =              | =              | =              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Uncertain      | Uncertain      | Uncertain      |
| Transportation                 | Rank                 | 2              | 3              | 1              |
|                                | Significant effects? | No             | No             | No             |

## Development of the preferred approach

Following a combination of blending the SA/SEA outcome; an assessment of landowners' representatives' presentation proposals; and community responses (as set out in the Site Assessment Report (SOA) published alongside the NP), Option 3 (The Horsford Estate) was chosen as the preferred option for the following reasons:

- **Structure:** Its structure would reinforce the village centre and identity.
- **Traffic:** Is likely to have less impact on traffic movements through the village with its central location making local pedestrian / cycle journeys a more realistic option.
- **Connectivity:** Provides more opportunity for improving connectivity within the village.
- **Green infrastructure:** Offers a more generous and meaningful green infrastructure which has the potential to serve the whole village.
- **Sports provision:** Includes land able to accommodate the proposed sports pitches and facilities.

## Assessment findings at this stage

**Part 2** of the Environmental Report presents an assessment of the draft version of the HNP. Assessment findings are presented as a series of narratives under the 'SA framework' theme headings. The following conclusions are reached:

**Significant positive effects** are only predicted under one SA theme – community wellbeing. This is due to the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan allocating sites to meet the housing requirement for the neighbourhood area, and the focus of the plan on

maintaining and improving community wellbeing by encouraging access to physical activity and key infrastructure.

**Minor positive effects** are predicted under the biodiversity and geodiversity SA theme. This is due to the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity quality and connectivity in the neighbourhood area and reducing the potential for disruption and negative effects to important habitats and designations. Minor positive effects are also anticipated for the historic environment SA theme – reflecting the focus of the policies on protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, which contributes positively towards maintaining and improving the setting and significance of heritage assets. Furthermore, minor positive effects are considered likely for the transportation SA theme – reflecting the focus of the policies on improving active and sustainable transport opportunities in the neighbourhood area, whilst enhancing road safety.

**Neutral effects** are noted under the air quality SA theme. This reflects the provisions of the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan that will help with pollutant absorption, whilst recognising that air quality management is largely the responsibility of the local planning authority. Neutral effects are also concluded as likely for the climate change SA theme. This reflects the removal of the site allocations from areas at risk of flooding, and the inclusion of policies that would contribute towards carbon capture and storage and sustainable and active transportation. It also reflects the inevitable increase in greenhouse gas emissions associated with growth and an intensification of land use in the neighbourhood area.

**Minor negative effects** are considered most likely for the land, soil and water resources SA theme – reflecting the extent of greenfield development despite the provision of the policies on protecting green infrastructure and spaces and ensuring the water environment is protected.

**Minor negative effects** are also concluded as most likely for the landscape SA theme, due to the loss of greenfield land which cannot be mitigated. However, it is noted the policy provisions of the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan do work well to mitigate landscape impacts elsewhere in the neighbourhood area.

Overall, the draft HNP performs well by avoiding any likely significant negative effects. As such, no recommendations are made.

## Next steps

This Environmental Report accompanies the HNP for Regulation 14 consultation.

Following consultation, any representations made will be considered by the Steering Group, and the HNP and Environmental Report will be updated as necessary. The updated Environmental Report will then accompany the HNP for submission to the Local Planning Authority, BDC, for subsequent Independent Examination.

At Independent Examination, the HNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans.

Assuming the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the HNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by BDC. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the HNP will become part of the Development Plan for Broadland District, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Horsford Neighbourhood Plan (HNP).
- 1.1.2 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative effects and maximising potential positive effects. SEA for the HNP is a legal requirement.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.1.3 The HNP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and in the context of the local development framework of Broadland District Council (BDC). Once 'made', the HNP will have material weight when deciding on planning applications in the neighbourhood area, as part of the local development framework.
- 1.1.4 The Parish Council has chosen to incorporate the SEA into a wider Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

## 1.2 SA explained

- 1.2.1 It is a requirement that the SA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which was transposed into national law from EU Directive 2001/42/EC on SEA.
- 1.2.2 In line with the Regulations, a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that "*identifies, describes, and evaluates*" the likely significant effects of implementing "*the plan, and reasonable alternatives*".<sup>3</sup> The report must then be considered when finalising the plan.
- 1.2.3 More specifically, the report can address requirements by answering the following three questions:
  - 1. What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point? (Including in relation to reasonable alternatives)
  - 2. What are the SA findings at this stage? (i.e., in relation to the current draft plan)
  - 3. What happens next?

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation 14 and 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by either: a) an Environmental Report, or b) a statement of reasons why SA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process. The HNP was officially 'screened in' by Broadland District Council as requiring SA in December 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Regulation 12(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

## 1.3 This Environmental Report

- 1.3.1 This report is the Environmental Report for the HNP. It is published alongside the 'pre-submission' version of the Plan, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).
- 1.3.2 This report essentially answers questions 1, 2 and 3 in turn, to provide the required information.<sup>4</sup> Each question is answered within a discrete 'part' of the report.
- 1.3.3 However, before answering question 1, two initial questions are answered to further set the scene; what is the plan seeking to achieve? And what is the scope of the SA?

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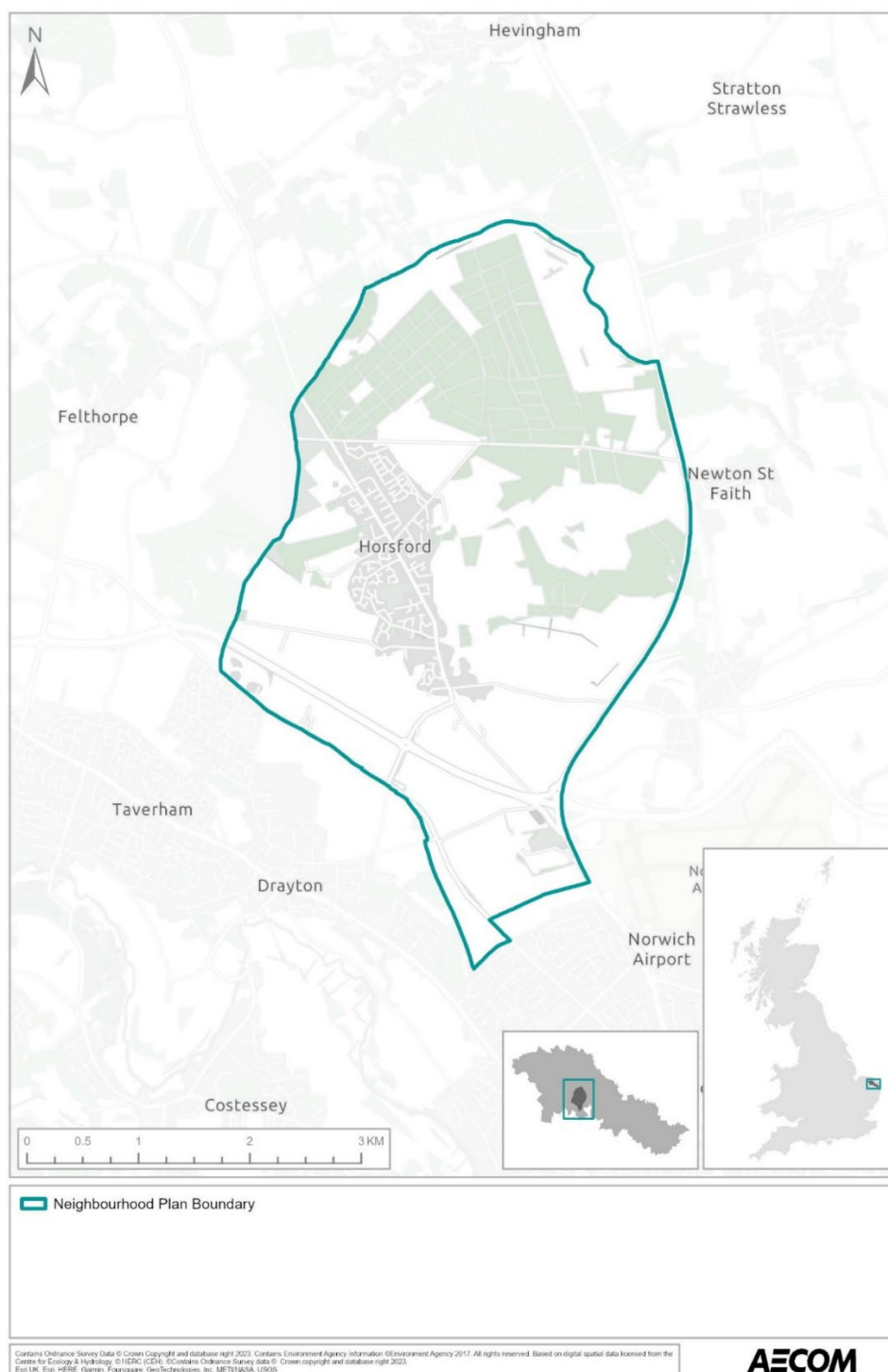
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See **Appendix A** for further explanation of the regulatory basis for answering certain questions within the Environmental Report, and a 'checklist' explaining more precisely the regulatory basis for presenting certain information.

## 2. What is the plan seeking to achieve?

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This section considers the strategic planning policy context provided by BDC's local development framework, before then presenting the vision and objectives of the HNP. **Figure 2.1** below presents the neighbourhood area.



**Figure 2.1 Horsford neighbourhood area**

## 2.2 Strategic planning policy context

2.2.1 The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP), adopted in March 2024, provides the strategic planning framework for development in Horsford. Policy 1 focuses most growth at Greater Norwich to a Strategic Growth Area, which Horsford is located at the northern edge of. The GNLP identifies Horsford as forming part of a 'village cluster' in Broadland; village clusters are expected to provide a minimum of 3,883 homes over the period to 2038. The 3,883 homes are broken down as follows:

- 1,200 homes from sites allocated in a South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Local Plan.
- 1,187 homes from existing consented commitments on major sites in village clusters in South Norfolk.
- 442 homes from unconsented sites in Village Clusters in Broadland (which includes 30 new homes at Dog Lane in Horsford).
- 1,054 homes from existing consented commitments on major sites in village clusters in Broadland.

## 2.3 HNP vision and objectives

2.3.1 The HNP sets out a vision for the parish to 2038 to be a sustainable and more self-sufficient place where people want to live and work in the future. The vision is supported by 12 specific objectives on the location for growth; access to community, cultural, leisure and sports activities; provision of school and medical facilities; the design of development; sustainable travel; parking; access to the countryside; high quality public realm; enabling an economically attractive and viable village with appropriate infrastructure. A copy of the vision and objectives can be found in the NP document.

## 3. What is the scope of the SA?

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SA, i.e., the sustainability themes and objectives that should be a focus of the assessment of the plan and reasonable alternatives. Further information, including the policy review and baseline information that has supported the development of key sustainability issues and objectives, is presented in **Appendix B**.

### 3.2 Consultation

- 3.2.1 The SEA Regulations require that “*when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England.<sup>5</sup> Hence, these authorities were consulted over the period Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023. A response was received from the Environmental Agency, who had no specific comments to make but included general information and supporting documents. No response was received from Historic England or Natural England.

### 3.3 Key sustainability issues

- 3.3.1 The key sustainability issues for the neighbourhood area, identified through scoping, are presented below under each SA theme.

#### Air quality

- There are no AQMAs in Broadland District. Whilst NO<sub>2</sub> is a pollutant of concern, there have been no exceedances within the district or within the neighbourhood area. However, there is an AQMA within Norwich – located approximately 4.5 km from the neighbourhood area. As it is likely Norwich provides the community of Horsford with a variety of amenities and opportunities, development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to impact on the AQMA through greater numbers of people travelling into the city.

#### Biodiversity and geodiversity

- Potential impact pathways and potential impacts at internationally designated biodiversity sites will be informed by a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) process.
- To maintain and improve the quality and integrity of the two SACs (River Wensum SAC and The Broads SAC) and the Broadland SPA designations within proximity to the neighbourhood area, the HNP should take advantage of opportunities that enhance biodiversity and provide net-gains. This will help to ensure the wider natural landscape is

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<sup>5</sup> These consultation bodies were selected “*by reason of their specific environmental responsibility, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes*” (SEA Directive, Article 6(3))

protected, reducing stress on these designations and improving biodiversity connectivity between them.

- 44.68% of the River Wensum SSSI is in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition and 44.27% is in 'unfavourable – no change'. To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect this SSSI but to enhance any unfavourable units; utilising opportunities for net-gain where possible, as a recognised enhancement zone.

## **Climate change and flood risk**

- The HNP is seeking to allocate sites for development. As such, it is likely carbon emissions originating from the area will increase. It will be important for new development to adopt best building practices to limit the increase in emissions, such as using sustainable materials and incorporating renewable energy infrastructure.
- New development in the HNP neighbourhood area has the potential to exacerbate flood risk if built in areas at high risk of fluvial and surface water flooding. Development should be focused away from these areas where possible.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with transport remain high in Broadland District, highlighting the importance of accessible development and the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure, which the HNP can seek to address locally, particularly by strengthening active travel routes and opportunities to increase self-containment.

## **Community wellbeing**

- The whole neighbourhood area is within the 20% most deprived neighbourhood in terms of barriers to housing and services. It will be important for the HNP to help deliver growth that considers the needs of the community – bringing forward affordable housing and housing types / sizes that best serves the residents.

## **Historic environment**

- Given the presence of listed buildings in the settlement of Horsford, the historic environment presents a constraint to future development within and in proximity to the settlement. The HNP can help overcome this by ensuring any development that comes forward during the plan period is sensitive to the historic setting of these features, as well as the two scheduled monuments present in the neighbourhood area.

## **Land, soil and water resources**

- Allocating land for development could influence changes to land, soil and water resources. It will be important for development to be focused away from the pockets of Grade 3 ALC land. Development proposals will also need to consider the impacts on minerals in the neighbourhood area given the overlap with a mineral safeguarding area. It should also consider potential water quality impacts, though it is noted there are no watercourses in the neighbourhood area.

## Landscape

- It will be important for the HNP to protect the local landscape, including its coherence and characteristics. This will bring benefits to other SA themes, including biodiversity and climate change, by maintaining features which support wildlife and natural processes, such as gardens and areas of higher concentrations of trees.

## Transportation and movement

- Given the HNP is looking to allocate sites for development it is expected there will be a change in the current transportation and movement baseline. This is due to the potential increase in private vehicles on the road, as well as a greater number of people accessing the sustainable transportation infrastructure within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area.
- A greater level of development could bring forward an improvement in transportation services, such as an extension of the public rights of way in the neighbourhood area. This would allow for a greater level of safe active transportation and could also enable more connections to the wider public rights of way network.

## 3.4 The SA framework

- 3.4.1 The SA scope is summarised as a list of themes, objectives, and assessment questions, known as the SA framework. These draw on the key sustainability issues identified through scoping. **Table 3.1** below presents the SA framework as broadly agreed in 2023.

**Table 3.1 Summary SA framework**

| SA theme                      | SA objective                                                                                                                      | Supporting assessment questions (will the option / proposal...)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Air quality                   | Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise sources of nitrogen dioxide. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve air quality in the AQMA that is in proximity to the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Implement measures (such as green infrastructure) which will help to support good air quality in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options?</li> <li>• Encourage development which reduces the need to travel?</li> </ul> |
| Biodiversity and geodiversity | Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance internationally, nationally, and locally designated biodiversity sites, including supporting habitats and mobile species that are important to the integrity of these sites?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats as well as priority habitats and species, including ancient woodland?</li> </ul>                                 |

| SA theme                      | SA objective                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Supporting assessment questions (will the option / proposal...)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Climate change and flood risk | Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of journeys made and reduce the need to travel?</li> <li>• Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and EV infrastructure?</li> <li>• Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>• Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> <li>• Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing runoff where possible?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?</li> </ul> |
| Community wellbeing           | Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, maintaining existing forest areas in the north of Horsford, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities and a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?</li> <li>• Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?</li> <li>• Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?</li> <li>• Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?</li> <li>• Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| SA theme                       | SA objective                                                                                                                            | Supporting assessment questions (will the option / proposal...)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | thriving local economy, providing employment opportunities for residents.                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?</li> <li>• Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space?</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?</li> <li>• Support the local economy, providing residents with employment opportunities close to where they live?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Historic environment           | Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area including the four historic pits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of the conservation area?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?</li> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key monuments of cultural heritage interest as listed in the HER?</li> <li>• Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the four historic pits within the neighbourhood area?</li> </ul> |
| Land, soil and water resources | Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible, including the regeneration of underutilised brownfield land?</li> <li>• Identify and avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land?</li> <li>• Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?</li> <li>• Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality?</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| SA theme       | SA objective                                                                                                                                                          | Supporting assessment questions (will the option / proposal...)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                |                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and / or water recycling?</li> <li>• Avoid any negative impacts on mineral deposits and associated safeguarding / consultation areas?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Landscape      | Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape, including the forest to the north of Horsford and the historic pits.        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and / or enhance local landscape character and quality of place?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?</li> <li>• Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?</li> <li>• Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the water setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Transportation | Promote sustainable transport use and realistic active travel opportunities to destinations in the north, as well as the south, and reduce the need to travel by car. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the objectives within the Norfolk County Local Transport Plan 4 to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes?</li> <li>• Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?</li> <li>• Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?</li> <li>• Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?</li> <li>• Improve road safety?</li> <li>• Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?</li> </ul> |

## **Part 1: What has plan-making / SA involved to this point?**

## 4. Introduction (to Part 1)

### 4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Whilst work on the HNP has been underway for some time, the aim here is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of all the work carried out to date, but rather to explain work undertaken to develop and appraise reasonable alternatives through the SA process.

4.1.2 More specifically, this part of the report presents the information on the consideration given to reasonable alternative approaches to addressing a particular issue that is of central importance to the HNP, namely the allocation of land for housing and employment, or alternative sites.

#### Why focus on sites?

4.1.3 The decision was taken to develop reasonable alternative in relation to the matter of allocating land for development, given the following considerations:

- The core plan objective to understand housing and employment needs and allocate sites for development.
- Housing and employment growth is known to be a matter of key interest amongst residents and other stakeholders; and
- The delivery of new homes and employment land is most likely to have a significant effect compared to other proposals in the plan. National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that SA should focus on matters likely to give rise to significant effects.

### 4.2 Structure of this part of the report

4.2.1 Part 1 of the Environmental Report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 5 and Chapter 6** discuss the options appraised as reasonable alternatives, and the findings of the appraisal of these options.
- **Chapter 7** explains reasons for selecting the preferred approach, considering the appraisal.

## 5. Establishing reasonable alternatives

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The aim of this chapter is to explain the process that led to the establishment of alternative sites and thereby present “an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with”.<sup>6</sup>
- 5.1.2 Specifically, there is a need to explain the strategic parameters that have a bearing on the establishment of options (in relation to the level and distribution of growth) and the work that has been undertaken to date to examine site options (i.e., sites potentially in contention for allocation in the HNP). These parameters are then drawn together in order to arrive at ‘reasonable alternatives’.

### 5.2 How much growth

- 5.2.1 As explained in **Chapter 2**, the growth requirements for villages clusters in Broadland has been met through the allocations and commitments outlined in the GNLP. There is no requirement for additional growth in Horsford, though this does not stop the HNP from exploring such opportunities where these meet the wider strategic directions for growth in village clusters.

### 5.3 Where could growth be located?

- 5.3.1 In developing the HNP there are clear objectives to support delivery of the Horsford Transport Masterplan, to improve local facilities, and to prevent further piecemeal development (i.e., support planned strategic growth that could deliver additional community infrastructure).
- 5.3.2 The Horsford Site Assessment Report has been produced to explore the development potential in Horsford and align growth options with the objectives of the HNP. A total of 20 different sites identified through the GNLP Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) 2020 and a local call for sites in April 2023 were investigated and assessed against three main criteria: proximity to the settlement area, connectivity to key services, facilities and sustainable transport corridors, and size (i.e., being of a scale sufficient to deliver community benefits).
- 5.3.3 From this work, four growth options, each with a total site area of between 20 to 30 hectares were identified (in the south, southwest, east, and north of the settlement), and these options were taken into further discussions with landowners. These discussions led to the rationalization and agreement with landowners of three options (south, north and east of the village).

### 5.4 Establishing alternatives

- 5.4.1 The Steering Group is considering options for how Horsford might grow in a planned way to address issues around community infrastructure, transport and placemaking and to deliver the long-term vision for Horsford as a more

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<sup>6</sup> Schedule 2(8) of the SEA Regulations

self-sufficient settlement that has a stronger sense of identity and is easier to use without a car.

5.4.2 On the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, the HNP Steering Group invited landowners to prepare a high-level presentation for a consultation event held at Horsford Village Hall. The three landowners delivered presentations during this event. These options form three reasonable alternatives for additional growth in the neighbourhood area:

- **Option 1 – Drayton Farms Group Limited:** Promoting three sites to the south of Horsford for mixed-use, including housing; elderly persons accommodation; and potentially employment and retail uses. This is in addition to a further site at Reephams Road, south of The Nest and adjacent to Hellesdon, also for mixed-use.
- **Option 2 – Barratt David Wilson Homes and Brown & Co:** Promoting a 28.8ha site to the northeast of Horsford, positioned between Green Lane and Mill Lane, for mixed-use, including housing; a sports hub; a community hub; a community park; and potentially a school.
- **Option 3 – The Horsford Estate:** Promoting six opportunity areas within the Horsford Estate, including a site to the east of Horsford for housing; three sites along / off Green Lane for leisure and recreation (Horsford Range, Off the Lead and The Woodyard); and a 6ha site to the south of Horsford for the 'Glebe Farm Sports Hub'.

## 6. Appraisal of reasonable alternatives

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This chapter provides the detailed findings of the assessment of the three growth options within the neighbourhood area (established in the previous chapter).

### 6.2 Methodology

- 6.2.1 For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes and objectives identified through scoping (see **Table 3.1**) as a methodological framework. Where appropriate neutral effects, or uncertainty will also be noted.
- 6.2.2 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text.
- 6.2.3 Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in term of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that are preferred from an SA perspective with 1 performing the best.
- 6.2.4 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted considering the criteria presented within the Regulations.<sup>7</sup> So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects.

### 6.3 Appraisal findings

- 6.3.1 The appraisal findings are summarised in **Table 6.1** below and expanded upon under each SA theme underneath.

**Table 6.1 Appraisal findings**

| SA theme                      |                      | Option 1       | Option 2  | Option 3  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Air quality                   | Rank                 | 2              | 3         | 1         |
|                               | Significant effects? | No             | No        | No        |
| Biodiversity and geodiversity | Rank                 | 3              | 1         | 2         |
|                               | Significant effects? | Yes – negative | Uncertain | Uncertain |
| Climate change                | Rank                 | 2              | 3         | 1         |

<sup>7</sup> Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

| SA theme                       |                      | Option 1       | Option 2       | Option 3       |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                | Significant effects? | No             | No             | No             |
| Community wellbeing            | Rank                 | 1              | 3              | 2              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Yes – positive | Yes – positive | Yes – positive |
| Historic environment           | Rank                 | 3              | 2              | 1              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Yes – negative | Yes – negative | Yes – negative |
| Land, soil and water resources | Rank                 | =              | =              | =              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Uncertain      | Uncertain      | Uncertain      |
| Landscape                      | Rank                 | =              | =              | =              |
|                                | Significant effects? | Uncertain      | Uncertain      | Uncertain      |
| Transportation                 | Rank                 | 2              | 3              | 1              |
|                                | Significant effects? | No             | No             | No             |

## Air quality

- 6.3.2 There are no AQMAs in Broadland District. Whilst NO<sub>2</sub> is a pollutant of concern, there have been no exceedances within the district or within the neighbourhood area. However, there is an AQMA within Norwich – located approximately 4.5 km from the neighbourhood area. As Norwich provides the community of Horsford with a wider variety of services and facilities, development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to impact on the AQMA through greater numbers of people travelling into the city.
- 6.3.3 All of the options have the potential to increase the number of private vehicles on roads in and around the neighbourhood area, with negative implications for air quality. However, given the scale of growth proposed, this is unlikely to be significant. Nevertheless, it is considered that the sites located in closest proximity to the centre of Horsford, where services and facilities are located, are more likely to encourage walking and cycling.
- 6.3.4 In respect of the above, Option 3 performs most favourably as the site to the east of Horsford, which is proposed for housing, is in closest proximity to the centre of Horsford. Whilst this options includes further sites further sites outside of Horsford, these are proposed for leisure and recreation. With regards to Option 1, the three sites to the south of the village, proposed for mixed-use, also perform relatively well. The site at Reephams Road, south of the Nest, proposed for mixed-use, also performs well by locating development on the edge of Helledon, which has its own services and

facilities. Finally, Option 2 performs least favourably as the sites to the northeast of Horsford are furthest from the centre of Horsford / Hellesdon.

- 6.3.5 Overall, given the scale of growth proposed, **no significant effects** are considered likely across all three options. However, the options are ranked according to the criteria set out above.

## Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 6.3.6 The River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is approximately 1km southwest of the neighbourhood area. Whilst further afield, the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC and Buxton Heath SSSI is approximately 2.8km northwest of the neighbourhood area. In terms of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats, the neighbourhood area contains several areas of deciduous woodland, as well as good-quality semi-improved grassland and lowland heathland and one area of lowland fens. These priority habitats are concentrated in the northern and central parts of the neighbourhood area. A large proportion of the neighbourhood area overlaps with the National Habitat Network.
- 6.3.7 Option 1 is the most constrained from a biodiversity perspective as the site at Reepham Road is approximately 900m east of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also adjacent to areas of deciduous woodland (eastern and western boundaries) and lowland heathland (western boundary) and primarily overlaps Fragmentation Action Zone, but also Network Enhancement Zone 1, Network Expansion Zone, and Habitat Restoration-Creation. Whilst less constrained, the three sites south of Horsford that make up Option 1 are all within the Network Expansion Zone.
- 6.3.8 The three sites along / off Green Lane proposed for leisure and recreation under Option 3 entirely overlap with deciduous woodland (Off the Lead and The Woodyard) or lowland heathland (Horsford Range) and Habitat Restoration-Creation (Horsford Range) and Network Expansion Zone (Off the Lead). Whilst it is recognised that these sites are proposed for leisure and recreation, recreational disturbance to these habitats will likely still occur. In addition, 'Glebe Farm Sports Hub' falls entirely within the Network Expansion Zone. The site to the east of Horsford is adjacent to areas of deciduous woodland (northern, eastern and western boundaries). However, it is noted that this part of the site is being retained as public open space. The option does present the chance to mitigate effects in relation to internationally designated biodiversity sites, by offering alternative recreational areas for existing and future residents.
- 6.3.9 The larger of the two sites that make up Option 2 is adjacent to an area of deciduous woodland (southeastern boundary) and overlaps the Network Expansion Zone and Network Enhancement Zone 1. The smaller site is adjacent to an area of lowland heathland (northern boundary) and primarily overlaps Network Enhancement Zone 1, but also Habitat Restoration-Creation and Restorable Habitat along its northern boundary.
- 6.3.10 Overall, all three options have the potential to adversely impact biodiversity. However, **significant negative effects** are considered more likely under Option 1 due to its proximity to an internationally and nationally designated

site for biodiversity. **Uncertainty** is noted under Option 3 as whilst some of the sites entirely overlap with BAP priority habitats, these habitats could provide alternative recreational space to residents (outside of internationally designated biodiversity sites). Uncertainty is also noted under Option 2 due to the potential to disturb adjacent BAP priority habitats. However, Option 2 is ranked more favourably than Option 3 as it does not overlap any BAP Priority Habitats. Potential effects will be better informed by Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in due course.

## Climate change

- 6.3.11 Only a very isolated area of the neighbourhood area is at risk of fluvial flooding, and none of the options deliver growth in this location. Whilst surface water flood risk is more widespread, this is predominately low risk and therefore the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will likely mitigate any risk of surface water flooding at affected sites.
- 6.3.12 In terms of climate change mitigation, whilst all three options will likely result in an increase in the production of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions in the neighbourhood area, this is not considered significant given the scale of growth. However, it is considered that the sites located in closest proximity to the centre of Horsford, where services and facilities are located, are more likely to encourage walking and cycling, which will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transport. In this respect, Option 3 performs most favourably, followed by Option 1 (with the site at Reepham Road being located adjacent to Hellesdon, which has its own services and facilities), and lastly Option 2.
- 6.3.13 Overall, in light of the above, **no significant effects** are considered likely across all three options. Whilst there is not much to differentiate the options in regard to climate change, the options are ranked according to their proximity to the centre of Horsford / Hellesdon (as outlined above).

## Community wellbeing

- 6.3.14 The neighbourhood area has a relatively good range of services and facilities given its size (population of 4,937 people). This includes a small supermarket (Co-op), a primary school and several health facilities (surgery, dentist and pharmacy). It is considered that the sites located in closest proximity to the centre of Horsford, where services and facilities are located, perform most favourably. In this respect, Option 3 performs most favourably, followed by Option 1 (with the site at Reepham Road being located adjacent to Hellesdon, which has its own services and facilities), and lastly Option 2.
- 6.3.15 Open greenspaces in the neighbourhood area are concentrated in and around Horsford, but also in the southern extent of the neighbourhood area. In this respect, all three options perform well by locating development on the edge of Horsford (or in the south of the neighbourhood area for the case of the site at Reepham Road (Option 1)).
- 6.3.16 In terms of leisure and recreational use, all three options perform well by providing a sports hub and access to open space. However, Option 3 is considered to perform most favourably by providing both a sports hub and 40 acres of public open space alongside sites proposed for outdoors activities, dog walking and community space.

- 6.3.17 Whilst the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in the neighbourhood area is low, the northwestern part of the settlement of Horsford scores poorly in terms of the 'barriers to housing and services' deprivation domain. In this respect, all three options perform well by delivering housing in the neighbourhood area, including a proportion of affordable housing. It is noted that the largest sites, which are delivered through Options 2 and 3, are most likely to deliver the greatest amount of affordable housing. However, in the absence of any site capacity figures, this is uncertain at this stage.
- 6.3.18 Notably, the site to the south of Brewery Lane under Option 1 is proposed for employment and retail use, which could support the local economy and contribute towards self-containment. It is also noted that Option 2 includes a work hub.
- 6.3.19 Overall, all three options are considered likely to lead to long-term **significant positive effects** by delivering housing in the neighbourhood area, including affordable housing, as well as new amenities (e.g. leisure and recreational facilities). Whilst there is not much to differentiate the options in regard to community wellbeing, Option 1 is ranked slightly more favourably than the other two options as it delivers employment and retail use. Option 3 ranks above Option 2 due to its extensive leisure and recreational provision.

## Historic environment

- 6.3.20 The neighbourhood area contains nine listed buildings, two scheduled monuments and 155 locally important heritage assets.
- 6.3.21 Option 1 is closest to the most designated heritage assets. The largest of the three sites south of Horsford, proposed for residential development, is approximately 65m west of grade II listed building 'The Lindens'. The site north of Brewery Lane, proposed for care for the elderly, is also approximately 65m from this listed building. As there is less existing development between this site and the listed building, it has more potential to impact the setting of the building. The largest site is approximately 90m southwest of another grade II listed building ('The Dog Public House'); however, the site is screened by existing development. The sites north and south of Brewery Lane are approximately 200m west / southwest of a cluster of three listed buildings along Church Street, on the other side of Holt Road. This includes grade II\* listed 'Parish Church of All Saints'. Whilst Holt Road provides some separation between the sites and these listed buildings, there is still potential for the sites to impact the setting of the buildings.
- 6.3.22 The smaller of the two sites under Option 2 is approximately 45m south of scheduled monument 'Two round barrows on Horsford Heath'. Whilst it is noted that this site is proposed for a sports hub, development at this site still has the potential to disturb nearby archaeological remains. The larger site is approximately 380m northeast of grade II listed building 'Corn Mill, 32m north of Mill House'; however, the site is screened by existing development.
- 6.3.23 With regard to Option 3, one of the three sites along / off Green Lane proposed for leisure and recreation (Horsford Range) is approximately 125m east of scheduled monument 'Two round barrows on Horsford Heath'. Whilst it is noted that this site is proposed for a rifle range and associated facilities, development at this site still has the potential to disturb nearby

archaeological remains. In addition, the site to the east of Horsford, proposed for mixed-use, is approximately 250m northeast of grade II listed building 'The Dog Public House' (partially screened by existing development) and 625m northwest of scheduled monument 'Horsford Castle'.

- 6.3.24 Overall, all three options have the potential to adversely impact the setting of listed building and / or disturb nearby archaeological remains at scheduled monuments. Due to this, **significant negative effects** are predicted across all three options in the absence of any mitigation measures. The options are ranked according to their proximity to designated heritage assets, taking into consideration the number of heritage assets nearby as well as the site's size and any screening that may mitigate potential impacts on heritage assets.

## Land, soil and water resources

- 6.3.25 The majority of the neighbourhood area overlaps with a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for sand and gravel. In this respect, all three options have the potential to lead to the irreversible sterilisation of mineral resources.
- 6.3.26 With regard to Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), the central and southern parts of the neighbourhood area are underlain by Grade 3 ('good to moderate') agricultural land. However, it is not possible to determine whether this is Grade 3a (best and most versatile) or Grade 3b (poorer quality) agricultural land. The northern part of the neighbourhood area predominately comprises non-agricultural land (woodland).
- 6.3.27 The majority of the neighbourhood area overlaps with a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ). However, development is unlikely to worsen nitrate pollution as agriculture is the main source of pollution. Whilst there are no waterbodies in the neighbourhood area, it does overlap with the Spixworth (and Dobbs) Beck catchment area, which had a moderate ecological status when tested in 2019. However, given the level of growth proposed in the neighbourhood area, and the distance it is from this waterbody, development is unlikely to adversely impact its ecological status as a result of surface water runoff.
- 6.3.28 Overall, **uncertainty** is noted across all three options as it is unclear whether the Grade 3 agricultural land that underlays the majority of the neighbourhood area is Grade 3a (best and most versatile) or Grade 3b (poor quality) and there is a need to consult with the minerals authority. This will likely be determined prior to the development of any site.

## Landscape

- 6.3.29 BDC have published Part 1 of the Brownfield Register, which includes brownfield sites that meet certain criteria and are considered to be suitable for housing development. According to the register, there is one site considered to meet the criteria and / or be suitable for housing development in the neighbourhood area. This site is located on Dog Lane.
- 6.3.30 With regard to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), whilst none of the sites that make up the options contain TPOs, the site at Reepham Road (Option 1) is adjacent to a large TPO area (Drayton Wood) to the west.

- 6.3.31 Whilst the southern part of the settlement of Horsford sits at the lowest elevation, the surrounding land is not much higher and therefore the sites put forward through each option are unlikely to overlook existing development / impact key views. Nevertheless, it will be important for villagescape and landscape character to be considered in the design stage.
- 6.3.32 All of the sites proposed for residential / mixed-use development are on the settlement edge (either Horsford or Hellesdon). In this respect, an extension to the settlement boundary will occur under all three options. Options 2 and 3 include sites disconnected from the settlement edge; however, these are proposed for leisure and recreational use.
- 6.3.33 Overall, due to the role design plays in the impact of future development on villagescape and landscape character, **uncertainty** is noted at this stage. It is difficult to differentiate the options and therefore they are ranked equally.

## Transportation

- 6.3.34 With regard to public transport, there are no railway stations within the neighbourhood area. The nearest railway station is located in Norwich, approximately 7 km southeast of the neighbourhood area. Bus services 36, 36A and 36B, operated by First bus, provide connections to Hellesdon, Norwich city centre, Long Stratton, The Pulhams and Harleston. They stop on Memorial Road and Holt Road / St Helena Way every 30 minutes. Whilst some residents will likely utilise these bus services, others may choose to drive to access wider services and facilities and the railway station in Norwich. In this respect, all three options have the potential to increase the number of private vehicles on local roads in and around Horsford.
- 6.3.35 The A1270 runs through the southern part of the neighbourhood area, whilst the A140 runs along its eastern boundary. These roads connect Horsford to Norwich, Cromer, Ipswich and Diss. The B1149 also runs through the neighbourhood area, connecting it to Norwich and Holt. Whilst these roads support the bus services outlined above, they also have the potential to encourage the use of the private car. All of the sites that make up the options are well connected to the road network, which could encourage the use of the private car to access wider services and facilities further afield.
- 6.3.36 As noted under the air quality theme, it is considered that the sites located in closest proximity to the centre of Horsford, where services and facilities are located, are more likely to encourage walking and cycling. In this respect, Option 3 performs most favourably, followed by Option 1 (with the site at Reephams Road being located adjacent to Hellesdon, which has its own services and facilities), and lastly Option 2.
- 6.3.37 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) in the neighbourhood area. The site to the east of Horsford under Option 3 intersects with public footpath Horsford FP9. In addition, the site to the south of Brewery Lane under Option 1 is adjacent to restricted byway Horsford RB7. These sites could therefore link up with these PRoWs and encourage walking.
- 6.3.38 Overall, given the level of growth proposed in the neighbourhood area, as well as the presence of a relatively good bus service which provides connections to Norwich city centre, **no significant effects** are anticipated.

The options are ranked according to their proximity to the centre of Horsford / Hellesdon (as outlined above).

## 7. Preferred approach for the Neighbourhood Plan

7.1.1 Following a combination of blending the SA/SEA outcome; an assessment of landowners' representatives' presentation proposals; and community responses (as set out in the SOA published alongside the NP), Option 3 (The Horsford Estate) was chosen as the preferred option for the following reasons:

- **Structure:** Its structure would reinforce the village centre and identity.
- **Traffic:** Is likely to have less impact on traffic movements through the village with its central location making local pedestrian / cycle journeys a more realistic option.
- **Connectivity:** Provides more opportunity for improving connectivity within the village.
- **Green infrastructure:** Offers a more generous and meaningful green infrastructure which has the potential to serve the whole village.
- **Sports provision:** Includes land able to accommodate the proposed sports pitches and facilities.

## **Part 2: What are the SA findings at this stage?**

## 8. Introduction (to Part 2)

### 8.1 Overview

8.1.1 The aim of **Part 2** is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current version of the HNP. This part of the report presents:

- An appraisal of the plan under the eight SA theme headings.
- Consideration of cumulative effects; and
- The overall conclusions at this stage and recommendations for the next stage of plan-making.

### 8.2 HNP policies

8.2.1 The HNP proposes a total of 19 policies to guide development in the neighbourhood area, these are listed in Table 8.1

**Table 8.1: HNP policies**

| Policy reference | Policy name                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| SS1              | Settlement limit                        |
| SS2              | New development                         |
| COM1             | Community facilities and local services |
| COM2             | Early years provision                   |
| COM3             | Allotments                              |
| HBE1             | Mixed housing                           |
| HBE2             | Horsford Design Code                    |
| HBE3             | Locally Important Buildings             |
| HBE4             | Addressing the performance gap          |
| TRA1             | Sustainable travel                      |
| TRA2             | Public parking for non-residential use  |
| ENV1             | Green Infrastructure Network            |
| ENV2             | Local Green Space                       |
| ENV3             | Views and Vistas                        |
| ENV4             | Protecting the setting of Horsford      |
| ENV5             | Street lighting                         |
| BUS1             | New business                            |
| INF1             | Developer contributions                 |
| INF2             | Digital infrastructure                  |

## 8.4 Methodology

- 8.4.1 The assessment identifies and evaluates ‘likely significant effects’ on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see **Table 3.1**) as a methodological framework.
- 8.4.2 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the policies under consideration and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a ‘no plan’ scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make assumptions, e.g., in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim of striking a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict ‘significant effects’, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the draft plan in more general terms.
- 8.4.3 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e., the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes, and projects. Policies are considered as a whole when determining significance, but there is no need to systematically appraise policies individually. These effect ‘characteristics’ are described within the assessment as appropriate.

## 9. Assessment of the plan

### 9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 The assessment is presented below under eight theme headings, reflecting the established assessment framework (see **Chapter 3**). A final section (**Chapter 10**) then presents overall conclusions.
- 9.1.2 The Environmental Report accompanying Regulation 14 consultation presented an assessment of the earlier iteration of the HNP.

### 9.2 Air quality

- 9.2.1 There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the Broadlands district, nor have there been any recorded exceedances in monitored air pollutants within the neighbourhood area or the wider district area. However, Horsford is approximately 4.5km from the AQMA declared in Norwich, and as such development through the HNP could impact upon the air quality in this declared area, due to more people travelling into and through the declared area.
- 9.2.2 Whilst the HNP does not have a specific policy linked to air quality, the wider policies would likely contribute positively towards mitigating adverse effects. Site allocation policy SS2 has a focus on bringing forward a green infrastructure strategy that protects existing green features. Linked to policy ENV1 and policy ENV2, protecting existing green features and spaces, and contributing new ones, is likely to have a positive impact on air quality through increasing the amount of pollutant absorption. Additionally, policy SS2 includes the need to incorporate active travel strategies as part of the development of the sites and requires transport strategies to be incorporated in order to manage the traffic impact of additional development on the local road network. This is further linked to policy TRA1, which identifies a sustainable travel network in the neighbourhood area. By ensuring that development has a good level of access to sustainable transport opportunities, the HNP can encourage a greater uptake in public transport – which in turn will lower the level of pollutants linked to travel within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area. It could also encourage a decrease in vehicles moving from the neighbourhood area to Norwich and the declared AQMA, thus reducing impacts to the declared area.
- 9.2.3 It is recognised that managing air quality is largely the responsibility of the local planning authority, however the HNP does put forward policy provisions that help to mitigate increases in air pollutants linked to development in the neighbourhood area. At this time, **neutral effects** are considered most likely (with no significant deviation from the baseline anticipated) – reflecting the focus of the HNP on promoting alternative modes of transport to private vehicles and maintaining and enhancing green features that aid in pollutant absorption.

### 9.3 Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 9.3.1 The HNP allocates two sites for mixed use development under policy SS2. The sites are removed from internationally and nationally designated areas

for biodiversity and geodiversity, and whilst the sites are largely removed from important habitat areas it is noted that the site to the east of Holt Road is adjacent to two areas of deciduous woodland. Policy SS2 does make provisions for biodiversity and geodiversity, indicating that development will be supported where green infrastructure strategies are incorporated to protect and enhance existing environmental features. This will help to maintain and enhance biodiversity value and connectivity in the neighbourhood area. Additionally, policy SS2 indicates that development proposals will be supported where they address the potential increase in visitor pressure on the Broadlands Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and offset potential nutrient neutrality impacts. This will help to protect important biodiversity features within and in proximity to Horsford and maintain biodiversity connectivity across the wider landscape.

- 9.3.2 The wider HNP policies also make provisions for biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy SS1 defines a settlement boundary for Horsford, which will encourage development to come forward within or as close as possible to the existing built environment. This is likely to reduce the potential for negative impacts on biodiversity, as it will encourage growth away from the open countryside where there is higher ecological connectivity. The environmental policies within the HNP will also bring forward positive effects in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity. By designating a green infrastructure network through policy ENV1 and protecting local green spaces through policy ENV2, the Neighbourhood Plan works to well to protect and enhance biodiversity in the neighbourhood area; by protecting features that contribute to important habitat areas and wider connectivity. Biodiversity is also considered through policy ENV5, which focuses on appropriate locations for street lighting. By ensuring street lighting is restricted to main roads only, and intelligent or adaptive street lighting is used wherever possible, disturbances to habitats and species linked to light pollution are reduced. It is anticipated that the Horsford Design Code will include further stipulations that will benefit biodiversity and geodiversity; as such, policy HBE1 is likely to also bring forward positive effects.
- 9.3.3 Overall, the HNP policies work well to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in the neighbourhood area. This is achieved through the site allocation policy provisions, which seeks to reduce impacts to important biodiversity designations within proximity to the neighbourhood area and supports green infrastructure provision within the allocated site boundaries. The wider Neighbourhood Plan policies are also anticipated to bring forward positive effects in relation to this SA theme, through protecting and enhancing the wider green infrastructure network in Horsford to ensure biodiversity quality and connectivity is maintained. As such, **minor positive effects** are considered likely through the HNP for the biodiversity and geodiversity theme.

## 9.4 Climate change

- 9.4.1 The HNP provides an opportunity to include policies that help to reduce carbon emissions created by new development in the area, and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. While it is recognised that there is little value in duplicating planning policies which are already set out by BDC, the HNP should focus on what could be strengthened and respond to local

considerations. This can include vulnerability to overheating, flooding or water stress impacts, car dependency, opportunities for renewable energy, sustainable design, and construction.

- 9.4.2 The HNP allocates two sites for housing development under policy SS2. In terms of climate change adaptation, neither site is at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding. However, policy SS2 does include the need for development proposals to incorporate water strategies, to demonstrate how the scheme will not increase flood risk elsewhere in the neighbourhood area. This includes the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems. This demonstrates that the HNP is taking a proactive approach to flood risk management in the neighbourhood area.
- 9.4.3 In terms of climate change mitigation, transportation is a large contributing sector to carbon dioxide in Broadlands district – and is a key consideration for the HNP. Under the site allocation policy (policy SS2), development proposals for the allocated sites must include active travel strategies. This is likely to help encourage a greater uptake in walking and cycling within the sites and their immediate surroundings, allowing for access to key infrastructure whilst avoiding an increase in vehicles on the local road network for localised journeys. Encouraging active transport engagement is anticipated to contribute to reducing emissions linked to transport to and from the new development sites.
- 9.4.4 Other policies within the HNP also have a focus on climate change mitigation. Policy HBE4, which seeks to address the performance gap, lists several clauses. The first (Clause A) sets out that all planning permissions include a planning condition to require the provision of a Post Occupancy Evaluation Report to the LPA, unless exempted by Clause B (i.e. buildings proposed to be certified to a Passivhaus or equivalent standard with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year). Clause C outlines that all development should be ‘zero carbon ready’; Clause D requires a Sustainability Statement to be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the policy; and Clause E requires planning applications for major development to be accompanied by a Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment.
- 9.4.5 In addition to the above, Policy TRA1 is concerned with identifying the sustainable travel network within the neighbourhood area, with a view to supporting healthy and safe active travel opportunities. By protecting and enhancing the active and sustainable transport network within Horsford, the Neighbourhood Plan can help to encourage a greater uptake in walking, cycling, and public transportation modes (where appropriate) – thus reducing emissions linked to transportation in the neighbourhood area. Policy ENV1 and policy ENV2 are concerned with protecting and enhancing the green infrastructure network and local green spaces within Horsford. By protecting existing green features and spaces, and contributing new ones, the Neighbourhood Plan is maintaining and increasing carbon capture and storage in the neighbourhood area.
- 9.4.6 Reflecting on the above, it is considered that **neutral effects** (i.e., no significant deviation from the baseline) are likely for the climate change SA theme through the HNP. This reflects the focus of the plan on ensuring that new development is brought forward without negatively impacting upon climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. It also reflects the

inevitable increase in greenhouse gas emissions associated with growth and an intensification of land use in the neighbourhood area.

## 9.5 Community wellbeing

- 9.5.1 The HNP is seeking to allocate two sites for mixed use development under policy SS2. Together, the development of these two sites is anticipated to provide up to 300 homes within the centre of Horsford. Immediately this policy is considered to perform positively in relation to community wellbeing, as this level of growth will contribute to the housing need identified in the neighbourhood area.
- 9.5.2 In terms of the specific housing stipulations for the site allocations, policy SS2 indicates that the residential scheme will comprise a mix of dwellings types. This is linked to policy HBE1, which demonstrates an appropriate housing mix for the neighbourhood area – market and affordable housing of one to 2 bedroom dwellings and less provision for houses with 3 bedrooms or more, and affordable housing split between social / affordable rented housing (67%) and affordable home ownership (33%). Policy HBE1 also indicates that the provision of housing specifically for the elderly or disabled will be particularly supported where there is access to village amenities. In this way, the housing policies work well to diversify the local housing stock to meet increased demands and perform well to bring forward appropriate development that meets the needs of the local community.
- 9.5.3 Policy SS2 also makes provisions for community wellbeing through including details on community infrastructure. The site allocation policy indicates that development across the two sites will bring forward a sports hub and a community hub, to help meet a wider range of community needs in Horsford. This is anticipated to bring forward positive effects, as it will allow for safe community engagement with sport and recreation and will allow for greater community integration and cohesion – both of which will contribute to enhancing physical and mental health. The wider HNP policies also have a focus on maintaining community facilities. Policy COM1 identifies several community services and facilities that will be protected to ensure maintained community wellbeing – including (but not limited to) the primary schools, health infrastructure, the village hall, and allotment spaces. This helps to ensure that facilities supporting community cohesion and contributing to mental health are maintained through development. Additionally, policies COM2 and COM3 have a focus on enhancing community infrastructure – through improving the early years provision facility (policy COM2) and providing additional allotment space through major development (policy COM3). This is anticipated to contribute towards community wellbeing by providing additional infrastructure for residents in Horsford.
- 9.5.4 Furthermore, policy BUS1 supports planning applications for new businesses and employment that fit within the surroundings of the neighbourhood area. By providing additional business and employment opportunities within the neighbourhood area, the HNP works to enhance community wellbeing, as it contributes to the local economy – lowering the need for people to travel outside of the neighbourhood area for employment opportunities and encouraging money to be spent within the neighbourhood boundaries. Community wellbeing is further considered through Policy INF1,

which outlines the need for major housing developments to contribute towards a range of planning obligations – this includes the provision of educational and medical facilities, improving existing play areas in Horsford village, and enhancing public open spaces. Again, this will help to reduce the need for residents to travel outside of the neighbourhood area to access key facilities and infrastructure and contribute towards enhanced physical health.

- 9.5.5 Community wellbeing is also considered through the wider neighbourhood plan policies. Engagement with active transportation opportunities is a focus of policy SS2 and the focus of policy TRA1, which identifies the existing sustainable travel network within Horsford for the purpose of supporting healthy opportunities to engage with walking and cycling. Engagement with physical activity is known to support physical and mental health; by protecting important routeways the HNP helps to encourage engagement with physical activity. This is reiterated through policy ENV1 and policy ENV2, which work to protect green infrastructure (including the completion or improvement of the Green Circular Path) and local green spaces. Not only does this allow for engagement with physical activity, but it also provides spaces for the community to come together, which will support a greater level of community cohesion across the neighbourhood area.
- 9.5.6 Overall, **significant positive effects** are anticipated for the community wellbeing SA theme under the HNP. This is due to the plan allocating sites to meet housing demand in the neighbourhood area, and the focus of the policies on safeguarding key community infrastructure that supports physical and mental health.

## 9.6 Historic environment

- 9.6.1 The historic environment is a key consideration of the HNP, given there are 9 listed buildings, 2 scheduled monuments, and 155 local historic environment records within the neighbourhood area.
- 9.6.2 Both sites allocated under policy SS2 are removed from the listed buildings and scheduled monuments within the neighbourhood area, and as such the site allocation policy does not make specific stipulations relating to the historic environment. However, the policy does indicate that the residential scheme taken forward will need to be designed to sustain and enhance the setting and significance of nearby heritage assets in line with the Horsford Design Code (linked to policy HBE2). This will help to ensure housing development is sympathetic and in keeping with the historic environment of the neighbourhood area.
- 9.6.3 The HNP does have a specific policy linked to the historic environment. Policy HBE3 is focused on protecting buildings and structures identified as locally important buildings. This helps to ensure that the local historic environment of the settlement is maintained through development by preventing harm to, and the unnecessary loss of, structures that are important to the local community.
- 9.6.4 The wider neighbourhood plan policies are anticipated to contribute positively to the historic environment. Policy INF1 indicates that developer contributions should be made through major housing developments. This is

expected to include the promotion of the historic importance and fabric of Horsford, which is anticipated to impact the wider historic environment through enhancing the setting of features and the understanding of the historic evolution of the settlement. The wider environmental policies included in the HNP are also anticipated to positively contribute to the historic environment in the neighbourhood area. Through protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and green spaces through policy ENV1 and policy ENV2, and protecting important views and vistas through policy ENV3, the heritage values in Horsford will be maintained and enhanced. This is due to important views of historic features being protected through development, and green features positively contributing to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets – both of which enhance the significance of the historic environment in the neighbourhood area.

- 9.6.5 Overall, **minor positive effects** are considered likely at this time through the HNP. This reflects the focus of the policies on protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment, which contributes positively towards maintaining and enhancing the setting of designated and non-designated, locally important heritage assets. This in turn ensures the significance of the historic environment in the Horsford neighbourhood area is protected through development.

## 9.7 Land, soil and water resources

- 9.7.1 The site allocations under policy SS2 make provisions for land, soil and water resources. The policy indicates that green infrastructure strategies will be incorporated into the development design of both sites; this will help to protect some of the underlying soils within the site boundaries, which could be of greater agricultural quality. The incorporation of green infrastructure is also likely to protect local water sources by providing a level of sustainable drainage – infiltrating water runoff before it can enter the water system. Additionally, policy SS2 supports development proposals where they will offset potential nutrient neutrality impacts; further protecting water quality within proximity to the allocated sites.
- 9.7.2 The wider HNP policies also work to protect land, soil and water resources. Policy SS1 defines the settlement boundary of Horsford in order to manage development proposals coming forward in the neighbourhood area. By defining a settlement boundary, the HNP can encourage new development to come forward within and adjacent to the existing settlement, which will help reduce the impact on higher quality soils in the open landscape by developing land that has a lower likelihood of supporting agricultural activity. Additionally, the environmental policies (specifically ENV1 and ENV2) work to protect land, soil and water resources through designating the Horsford Green Infrastructure Network, protecting local green spaces, and maintaining the local green gap north of the Broadland Northway (A1270). This again will contribute to protecting underlying soils in the network area, and intercept water runoff.
- 9.7.3 In conclusion, **minor negative effects** are considered likely for the land, soil and water resources SA theme under the HNP. This is due to the extent of greenfield development despite the focus of the site allocation policy on

ensuring pollution does not enter the natural systems in the neighbourhood area, and the protection of green infrastructure and spaces.

## 9.8 Landscape

- 9.8.1 Landscape is a key consideration of the HNP, reflecting its proximity to The Broads National Park, which is located approximately 6km to the north-west / west of the neighbourhood area.
- 9.8.2 Policy SS2, the site allocation policy, works to reduce the landscape impact of development on greenfield sites in Horsford. The policy indicates that the residential scheme selected for the site will need to be designed to reflect the local character of the existing Horsford settlement in line with the Horsford Design Code (linked to policy HBE2), in order to ensure landscape quality and important views are maintained and enhanced. It also includes the need for green infrastructure strategies to consider the landscape character and quality of the sites, to ensure that development does not detract from the landscape surrounding the allocated sites. This will help to ensure that development through the Neighbourhood Plan is considerate of the natural and built landscape in the neighbourhood area.
- 9.8.3 The wider plan policies also have a landscape focus. Policy SS1 defines the settlement boundary of Horsford in order to manage development proposals coming forward in the neighbourhood area. By defining a settlement boundary, the HNP can encourage new development to come forward within and adjacent to the existing settlement, which will help reduce landscape impacts by discouraging development in the open parts of the neighbourhood area. This will work to protect visual amenity in the neighbourhood area, and the character of the open landscape. The environmental policies within the HNPn also have a landscape focus. Policy ENV1 and policy ENV2 work to protect green infrastructure and local green spaces. This will likely provide positive landscape effects through protecting features that provide visual breaks or screening of development across the neighbourhood area, thus protecting the visual amenity of the wider neighbourhood area. By protecting these features, the HNP will also protect the value of important views and vistas – which are further protected through policy ENV3. Landscape is also the focus of policy ENV4, which works to protect the setting of Horsford. This will be achieved through maintaining a local green gap to the north of the Broadland Northway, which will provide protection to the open countryside to the south of Horsford – maintaining the physical and visual separation of the settlement from the urban area of Norwich. By protecting this landscape gap, the landscape character of the Horsford settlement and wider neighbourhood area will be maintained.
- 9.8.4 Overall, **minor negative effects** are concluded as most likely for the landscape SA theme. This is due to the loss of greenfield land in the neighbourhood area, the site allocation policy and the wider HNP policies make provisions for landscape which are likely to ensure significant negative effects are avoided.

## 9.9 Transportation

- 9.9.1 The site allocation policy includes stipulations relating to transportation. Policy SS2 indicates that active travel strategies will need to be incorporated into the development design: to help provide an active travel link between the school sites, enable safe and convenient walking and cycling opportunities to community facilities and services, and provide access to the countryside. Incorporating active travel strategies will also contribute towards delivering the Horsford Transport Masterplan and will need to comprise measures to manage the traffic effects of development on the local road network in Horsford. In this way, the site allocation policy works well to promote engagement with walking and cycling to and from the sites and mitigate potential negative impacts of additional traffic on the roads.
- 9.9.2 The HNP includes policies focused on transportation. Policy TRA1 identifies the sustainable transport network in Horsford – outlining the need for development to sustain and enhance the functionality and connectivity of the network. This will help to reduce the impact of development on the local road network by providing good opportunities to engage with active transportation alternatives to move around the neighbourhood area. Traffic mitigation is also a key consideration of this policy, which works to further ensure adverse negative effects on roads within Horsford are mitigated against. This is furthered by policy TRA2, which seeks to ensure parking provision within the neighbourhood area is sufficient. This will help to maintain road safety by reducing the number of parked vehicles on the roads – promoting visibility of cyclists and pedestrians and improving traffic flows.
- 9.9.3 The wider HNP policies are anticipated to bring forward positive effects in relation to transportation. Policy COM1 indicates that any new community space or local services brought forward through the Neighbourhood Plan will need to have appropriate parking and drop off and collection space for vehicles. The same is stated in policy COM2 in relation to a retained or improved early years facility. This will likely promote enhanced road safety by reducing vehicle idling and inappropriate car parking on streets. Policy BUS1 is focused on supporting new business and employment planning applications in the neighbourhood area – indicating that business units should enhance pedestrian access, be linked to cycle ways, be near a bus stop and have good parking provision. This will encourage an uptake in active travel and sustainable transport modes to and from the infrastructure and promote safer roads by reducing inappropriate vehicle parking. Parking is also a feature of policy INF1, which seeks to outline local priorities for developer contributions to engage with, including reducing the amount of on street parking.
- 9.9.4 Overall, the HNP works well to improve the active and sustainable transportation provision in the neighbourhood area, through the wider plan policies and the site allocation policy. Recognising that strategic transport issues are beyond the scope of the HNP, **minor positive effects** are considered likely through the plan.

## 9.10 Cumulative effects

- 9.10.1 No cumulative effects are anticipated under the HNP.

# 10. Conclusions and recommendations

## 10.1 Conclusions

- 10.1.1 **Significant positive effects** are only predicted under one SA theme – community wellbeing. This is due to the HNP allocating sites to meet the housing requirement for the neighbourhood area, and the focus of the plan on maintaining and improving community wellbeing by encouraging access to physical activity and key infrastructure.
- 10.1.2 **Minor positive effects** are predicted under the biodiversity and geodiversity SA theme. This is due to the HNP seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity quality and connectivity in the neighbourhood area and reducing the potential for disruption and negative effects to important habitats and designations. Minor positive effects are also anticipated for the historic environment SA theme – reflecting the focus of the policies on protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, which contributes positively towards maintaining and improving the setting and significance of heritage assets. Furthermore, minor positive effects are considered likely for the transportation SA theme – reflecting the focus of the policies on improving active and sustainable transport opportunities in the neighbourhood area, whilst enhancing road safety.
- 10.1.3 **Neutral effects** are noted under the air quality SA theme. This reflects the provisions of the HNP that will help with pollutant absorption, whilst recognising that air quality management is largely the responsibility of the local planning authority. Neutral effects are also concluded as likely for the climate change SA theme. This reflects the removal of the site allocations from areas at risk of flooding, and the inclusion of policies that would contribute towards carbon capture and storage and sustainable and active transportation. It also reflects the inevitable increase in greenhouse gas emissions associated with growth and an intensification of land use in the neighbourhood area.
- 10.1.4 **Minor negative effects** are considered most likely for the land, soil and water resources SA theme – reflecting the extent of greenfield development despite the provision of the policies on protecting green infrastructure and spaces and ensuring the water environment is protected.
- 10.1.5 **Minor negative effects** are also concluded as most likely for the landscape SA theme, due to the loss of greenfield land which cannot be mitigated. However, it is noted the policy provisions of the HNP do work well to mitigate landscape impacts elsewhere in the neighbourhood area.

## 10.2 Recommendations

- 10.2.1 Overall, the draft HNP performs well by avoiding any likely significant negative effects. As such, no recommendations are made.

## **Part 3: What are the next steps?**

# 11. Next steps

## 11.1 Overview

- 11.1.1 This part of the report explains the next steps that will be taken as part of plan-making and SA.

## 11.2 Plan finalisation

- 11.2.1 This Environmental Report accompanies the HNP for Regulation 14 consultation.
- 11.2.2 Following consultation, any representations made will be considered by the Steering Group, and the HNP and Environmental Report will be updated as necessary. The updated Environmental Report will then accompany the HNP for submission to the Local Planning Authority, BDC, for subsequent Independent Examination.
- 11.2.3 At Independent Examination, the HNP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans.
- 11.2.4 Assuming the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the HNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by BDC. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the HNP will become part of the Development Plan for Broadland District, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

## 11.3 Monitoring

- 11.3.1 The SEA Regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the HNP to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.
- 11.3.2 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the HNP will be undertaken by BDC as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the HNP that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by BDC.

# Appendices

# Appendix A Regulatory requirements

As discussed in **Chapter 1**, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) explains the information that must be contained in the Environmental Report. However, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. **Table AA.1** overleaf links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst **Table AA.2** explains this interpretation. Finally, **Table AA.3** identifies how and where within the Environmental Report the regulatory requirements have / will be met.

**Table AA.1 Questions answered by this Environmental Report in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements**

| Environmental Report question                        | In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... <sup>8</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What's the scope of the SA?                          | What is the plan seeking to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                      | What is the sustainability 'context'? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</li> <li>The relevant environmental protection objectives established at international or national level.</li> <li>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.</li> </ul>                                                            |
|                                                      | What is the sustainability 'baseline'? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan.</li> <li>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</li> <li>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.</li> </ul> |
|                                                      | What are the key issues and objectives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e., provide a 'framework' for) assessment.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with.</li> <li>The likely significant effects associated with alternatives.</li> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.</li> </ul>                                                                          |
| What are the assessment findings at this stage?      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The likely significant effects associated with the draft version of the plan.</li> <li>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft version of the plan.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                               |
| What happens next?                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The next steps for the plan making /SA process.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

<sup>8</sup> NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

**Table AA.2 Questions answered by this Environmental Report, in-line with regulatory requirements**

| Schedule 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Interpretation of Schedule 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| The report must include...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | The report must include...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| (a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;                                                                                                                                                                                                             | An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes                                                                                                                                                                                                 | i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>                                               | i.e. answer – <i>What's the scope of the SA?</i> |
| (b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan                                                                                                                                                                                               | Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance                                                                                                                                                 | i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>                                                             |                                                  |
| (c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>                                                            |                                                  |
| (d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;                                                                      | The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| (e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;                                                                  | The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues &amp; objectives?</i>                                         |                                                  |
| (f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors; | Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| (g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;                                                                                                                                                                         | Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
| (h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information                                                                   | An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')                                                                                                                                                                                 | i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i><br>[Part 1 of the Report]    |                                                  |
| (i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as...<br>... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan. |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i><br>[Part 2 of the Report] |                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                        |                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i><br>[Part 3 of the Report]                                      |                                                  |

**Table AA.3 ‘Checklist’ of how (throughout the SA process) and where (within this report) regulatory requirements have been, are, and will be met**

| Regulatory requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Discussion of how requirement is met                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Schedule 2 of the regulations lists the information to be provided within the SA Report</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Chapter 2 (‘What is the plan seeking to achieve’) presents this information.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | These matters have been considered in detail through scoping work, which has involved dedicated consultation on a Scoping Report. The ‘SA framework’ – the outcome of scoping – is presented within Chapter 3 (‘What is the scope of the SA?’). More detailed messages, established through a context and baseline review are also presented in Appendix B of this Environmental Report. |
| 3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5. The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been considered during its preparation;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects); | Chapter 6 presents alternatives appraisal findings (in relation to housing growth, which is a ‘stand-out’ plan policy area).<br>Chapters 9 presents an appraisal of the plan. With regards to assessment methodology, Chapter 8 explains the role of the SA framework/scope, and the need to consider the potential for various effect characteristics/ dimensions, e.g., timescale.     |
| 7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | The assessment highlights certain tensions between competing objectives, which might potentially be actioned by the Examiner, when finalising the plan. Also, specific recommendations are made in Chapter 10.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Chapters 4 and 5 deal with ‘Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’, in that there is an explanation of the reasons for focusing on particular issues and options. Also, Chapter 7 explains the Parish Council’s ‘reasons for selecting the preferred option’ (in-light of alternatives assessment).                                                                          |
| 9. Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Chapter 11 presents measures envisaged concerning monitoring.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Regulatory requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Discussion of how requirement is met                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10.A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | The NTS is provided at the beginning of this Environmental Report.                                                                                                                          |
| <b>The SA Report must be published alongside the draft Plan, in accordance with the following regulations</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the Draft Plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)                       | At the current time, this Environmental Report is published alongside the 'pre-submission' version of the Horsford Neighbourhood Plan, with a view to informing Regulation 14 consultation. |
| <b>The SA must be considered, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be considered during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure. | Assessment findings presented within this Environmental Report, and consultation responses received, have been fed back to the Steering Group and have informed plan finalisation.          |

## Appendix B Scoping information

This appendix provides a summary of the information that was presented in the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report, which can be accessed on the HNP website, provides the information in full, alongside a number of figures.

### B.1 Air quality

#### Key statistics

- There is an AQMA within Norwich, approximately 4.5 km south-east of the neighbourhood area.

#### Commentary

The only pollutant of concern in Broadland District is nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). As levels have not exceeded the national target for this pollutant type, no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared. However, there is an AQMA within Norwich, approximately 4.5 km south-east of the neighbourhood area. It was declared in 2012 due to exceedances in NO<sub>2</sub> linked to road traffic and was still exceeding the annual mean objective of 40 µg / m<sup>3</sup> in 2021. The residents of Horsford are likely to rely on this larger settlement to access a wider range of goods, services, and employment opportunities.

### B.2 Biodiversity and geodiversity

#### Key statistics

- There are two SACs within proximity to the neighbourhood area – the River Wensum SAC and part of The Broads SAC. The River Wensum SAC is characterised by inland water bodies; bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation and fens; humid grassland and mesophile grassland; and broad-leaved deciduous woodland. The Broads SAC is characterised by inland water bodies; bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation and fens; heath, scrub, maquis and garrigue and phygrana; dry grassland and steppes; humid grassland and mesophile grassland; and broad-leaved deciduous woodland.
- The neighbourhood area is also within proximity to the Broadland SPA.
- The nearest SSSI to the neighbourhood area is the River Wensum SSSI, which is within 1 km south west. The most condition survey indicates 11.05% of the site is within 'favourable' condition, 44.68% is in 'unfavourable – recovering' condition and the remaining 44.27% is in 'unfavourable – no change' condition.

#### Commentary

According to Natural England's citation, the River Wensum SSSI is notified as an example of an enriched calcareous lowland river. There are over 100 species of plants (including the nationally scarce river water-dropwort *Oenanthe fluviatilis*) that support a wide range of faunal species, including invertebrates and hunting birds.

## B.3 Climate change and flood risk

### Key statistics

- Broadland currently emits more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita when compared to the county, the East of England region and England.
- Within Broadland total emissions fell from around 967 kt CO<sub>2</sub> in 2005 to around 749 kt CO<sub>2</sub> in 2018.
- In 2018 approximately 37% of the emissions originated from the industry and commercial sector, 36% from the transport sector and the remaining 27% from the domestic sector.

### Commentary

Broadland District Council has pledged to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030: 20 years ahead of the UK Government's national target for the country. Though no climate emergency has been declared, the Council have created the Environmental Strategy to identify steps to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions data is also available for local authority areas for 2005 to 2018, this is summarised in Figure 5.6. In 2018, the per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figure was 5.8 tonnes in Broadland. For reference the equivalent figure for Norfolk was 5.6 tonnes, the East of England region was 5.2 tonnes and England was 5 tonnes. As such, emissions in the District are above the county, regional and national averages.

## B.4 Community wellbeing

### Key statistics

- The largest age group in the neighbourhood area is 50-59 years.
- The proportion of the population in 'very good health' is higher than the average for Broadland, the East of England, and England.
- The majority of the population own their home outright.

### Commentary

The neighbourhood area has a range of community facilities that serve the community well. This includes:

- Allotments.
- The village hall and play area to its rear.
- Churches and associated features.
- A mobile library.,
- Medical facilities like Drayton Medical Practice – Horsford Surgery, Horsford Dental Practice and Pledger Pharmacy.
- A veterinary surgery.
- Various eateries including The Dog Inn and Spice of India.

- Various places to stay like Church Farm Guest House.
- The Co-op village shop.
- Small businesses.
- Horsford C of E VA Primary School.
- Green spaces, including Broadland Country Park.
- Horsford Football Club.
- Forests in the north of Horsford.

With regards to deprivation, the HNP area overlaps with three lower super output areas (LSOAs). It is considered to be in the 50% least deprived group overall, with two LSOAs being ranked 40% and 20% least deprived. Education, skills and training is a common deprivation metric across the three LSOAs. The northern half of Horsford village is considered to be very deprived (20% most) in terms of barriers to housing and services.

In the 2021 Census, approximately 86% of the Horsford residents reported they had 'very good' or 'good' health. This is higher than the Broadland District (approximately 82%), the East of England region (approximately 83%) and England (approximately 82%).

## B.5 Historic environment

### Key statistics

- 9 listed buildings: one Grade II\* listed (Parish Church of All Saints) and eight Grade II listed.
- 2 scheduled monuments (Two round barrows on Horsford Heath and Horsford Castle)
- The Norfolk Historic Environment Record (HER) returns 155 local historic records.

### Commentary

According to Historic England's official list entry, the Parish Church of All Saints is an example of a medieval church that has been built up over the centuries; for example, it features a C15 stair tower door, a C12 font and C20 altar railings. The outer structure comprises of flint and brick render, with stone dressings.

The Two round barrows on Horsford Heath scheduled monument is located north of the settlement. Horsford Castle scheduled monument is located to the southwest. No details have been supplied as to the reason for their protection. There are no historic environment features on the Heritage at Risk Register in the neighbourhood area.

The listed buildings in the neighbourhood area are mostly within the settlement of Horsford; with six in the southern part and one in the north. There are two outside of the main Horsford settlement – one off Dog lane to the west and one at Lower Farm to the east.

It is also noted that the neighbourhood area contains four historic pits, which are:

- The Watering Pit – located at the end of Mill Lane on Green Lane, this pit contains water and is in a woodland setting.
- Green Lane Pit – a filled in old gravel pit, also located on Green Lane, between the junction of Mill Lane and the A140 Cromer Road.
- Dog Lane Pit – located at the far end of the road, along a track and the first piece of wooded area that adjoins Drayton Drewery.
- Pyehurn Pit – located at the end of Pyehurn Lane, this pit is where the bike track project had started but was discontinued.

## B.6 Land, soil, and water resources

### Key statistics

- The Spixworth (and Dobbs) Beck has a moderate ecological status (and failed chemical status).

### Commentary

Whilst the neighbourhood area sits within the Spixworth (and Dobbs) Beck Water Body catchment area, it does not have a watercourse that links to it.

Parts of the HNP area overlap with a mineral safeguarding area for sand and gravel. As such, Norfolk City Council should be consulted where development is brought forward in these safeguarded parts of the neighbourhood area.

## B.7 Landscape

### Key statistics

Broadland District Council have published Part 1 of the Brownfield Register, which includes brownfield sites that meet certain criteria and are considered to be suitable for housing development. According to Part 1 of the 2022 register, there is one site considered to meet the criteria and / or be suitable for housing development in the neighbourhood area. This site is located on Dog Lane.

There are a number of tree preservation orders (TPOs) within the HNP area. They are located on Horsbeck Way, Church Street, the B1149 / Holt Road, Pyehurn Lane and Millers Way.

### Commentary

The HNP area is within one National Character Area (NCA) – 78 Central North Norfolk. Key characteristics of this landscape designation include (but are not limited to): the relatively well-wooded landscape, the mix of villages and farmhouses within a complex minor road network, ancient countryside and a dense network of public rights of way. There are four statements of environmental opportunity associated with this NCA:

1. Work with the local farming community to safeguard future food production, while maintaining the traditional landscape character with its patchwork field system, mixed hedges and pastoral river valleys; enhancing biodiversity, especially in arable margins and hedgerows, geodiversity, water quality and availability,

pollination, soil quality, and managing soil erosion; and addressing the impacts of climate change.

2. Maintain, enhance and restore priority habitats including woodlands, areas of remnant heathland, and the nationally and internationally important Norfolk Valley Fens, chalk river systems (including the River Wensum) and maritime cliff habitats. Seek opportunities to connect fragmented habitats, improving the area for biodiversity and recreation, and enhancing landscape character and resilience to climate change.
3. Conserve and enhance the historic character of the area while affording protection to heritage assets, biodiversity, geodiversity and water resources, and encouraging sustainable tourism and recreational use and also a sympathetic approach to development in coastal areas, around market towns and towards Norwich.
4. Ensure the sustainable development of the coastline and its coastal towns and villages, while protecting and enhancing its important geodiversity, encouraging natural coastal processes where possible, improving access and interpretation, and encouraging sustainable recreational use and visitor enjoyment while conserving sites with high biodiversity value including maritime cliff habitats.

The HNP area overlaps with two local landscape types: B1 Horsford (part of the Woodland Heath Mosaic landscape), and E3 Spixworth (part of the Wooded Estatelands landscape). Key features of landscape type B1 include (but are not limited to): sparsely settled landscape, small ponds that are often a feature of fields, a sense of openness and distinct flat and elevated landform. Key forces for change for this landscape include: farm diversification, loss of mature hedgerow field boundaries, small scale and increment development within villages, wind turbine developments and infilling of small pits, ponds and extraction sites. Key features of landscape type E3 include (but are not limited to): sand and gravel geology that rises northwards, arable land use with urban fringe usages (like sporting fields and golf courses), the Norwich Airport, a mix of woodland types and parkland areas. Landscape sensitivities for E3 include mature landscape structure, high landscape and recreational value, the landscape setting for the city of Norwich and nearby villages and historic structures, and the open skyline.

## B.8 Transportation and movement

### Key statistics

- The majority of trips in the neighbourhood area are taken using car / van.

### Commentary

There are no rail stations within the HNP area. The main station in proximity to the neighbourhood area is Norwich (located approximately 7 km south-east). Operated by Greater Anglia, Norwich station offers regular services to Liverpool, London, Lowestoft, Stansted Airport, Great Yarmouth and Sheringham.

There are a number of bus services that operate in the neighbourhood area, offering sustainable transport opportunities to nearby settlements. Bus services 36 and 36A, operated by First bus, provide connections to Hellesdon, Norwich city centre and Long Stratton. The 45 service, operated by Sanders Coaches, runs three buses Monday-Friday to / from Norwich city centre. The 43A service, also provided by

Sanders Coaches, provides connections to Aylsham High School Monday-Friday, although anyone can use the service. It goes through Horsford between Aylsham High School and Norwich.

The A1270 and A140 are on the south-eastern neighbourhood area boundary – allowing for vehicular access to Norwich, Cromer, Ipswich and Diss. The A1270 connects to the A47 to the south, allowing for journeys to Great Yarmouth, Dereham, Swaffham and King's Lynn. The B1149 is within the HNP area – connecting to Norwich and Holt. The remainder of the road network is made up of local roads.

There are a number of public footpaths in the neighbourhood area, limited to footpaths and restricted byways. These connect highway routes to each other within the neighbourhood area, and also connect to the wider public rights of way network in Felthorpe to the east. These allow for safe, active transportation methods around the neighbourhood area.

