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Subject: New Local Plan – Options Consultation

Report to: Policy and Resources Committee – 6th December 2022

Report by: Samuel Hubbard – Strategic Planning Manager

SUBJECT MATTER

This report seeks approval to conduct a consultation on the new Local Plan for the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION

That Policy and Resources Committee:

- Approve the consultation document on the new Local Plan appended to this report (Appendix 1)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council's recently adopted Local Plan Part 2 commits the Council to an immediate review of the Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1) and the Local Plan Part 2. This is due to the age of the Core Strategy, updates to evidence and changes in national planning policy. The new plan will be a single plan covering the strategy, site allocations and detailed policies. The plan will cover a period to 2041 to ensure a 15-year coverage of strategic policies on adoption in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.2. Work has already begun on the preparation of the new plan. Following approval by Policy and Resources Committee in May a 'Call for Sites' was issued over the summer of 2022. This was an opportunity for individuals, landowners, developers, parish councils and other interested parties to let the Council know what sites may be suitable for inclusion in the new Local Plan for development. Sites for potential housing development, gypsy and traveller accommodation, commercial development, renewable energy or other types of development were invited to be submitted. The Council also wrote directly to landowners of vacant and agricultural land within and adjacent to the settlements in the Borough. Additionally, the Council asked stakeholders and the public to submit sites for consideration as Local Green Spaces.
- 1.3. Alongside this, several evidence studies have been prepared to support the new Local Plan on housing needs (including gypsy and traveller accommodation), employment needs, open spaces and sports facilities and transport.

- 1.4. The Local Development Scheme, which sets out the timetable for the preparation of the Local Plan, was approved by Policy and Resources committee in May and commits the Council to undertaking an initial consultation on options for the Local Plan over this autumn/winter. This initial consultation covers the key issues the Local Plan will need to address. It also involves a consultation on the sites submitted through the call for sites process.
- 1.5. A draft consultation document to fulfil this stage of Local Plan preparation is included in Appendix 1 to this report. Please note the consultation document presented in Appendix 1 is yet to be fully formatted. The consultation document will be presented as a fully interactive consultation document on the Council's website alongside a formatted hard-copy consultation document for those who cannot access the internet easily.
- 1.6. The Council's Local Plan Working Party have reviewed and endorsed the consultation document.

2. Content of the Consultation

- 2.1. This stage of the Local Plan preparation is about understanding what the public and other stakeholders want the Local Plan to address and gather early views on some of the key matters the Local Plan needs to address. This consultation does not set out a preferred position of the Council on any of the main issues or strategy or policy approaches. At this stage it is important for the Council to keep an open mind to give the public and stakeholders the maximum opportunity to help shape the plan from an early stage. Similarly, no assessment has been undertaken of the sites presented in the consultation. However, with regard to local green spaces, only those which meet the strict criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework have been presented in consultation document.
- 2.2. In summary this consultation seeks views on:
 - the amount of development we should be planning for
 - how development could be distributed across the Borough
 - what infrastructure and community facilities are required to support development
 - what can we do to regenerate and improve Great Yarmouth
 - how we should plan to meet the housing needs of the whole population including gypsies and travellers
 - how we should plan for future economic development
 - how we should plan for climate change
 - how we should plan to ensure protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment
 - Potential sites for development
 - Potential sites for renewable energy
 - Potential sites to be designated as Local Green Spaces
- 2.3. The consultation is presented in the form of a series of questions designed to get feedback on the key issues. The consultation has been kept as concise as possible in order to make it

accessible to range of audiences. The proposed interactive format will make it easy for people to navigate to the part of the consultation they are most interested in.

3. Approach to Consultation

- 3.1. In undertaking the consultation an interactive version of the document included in Appendix 1 and interactive maps will be published on the website. The interactive nature of the document will allow consultees to zoom and query the maps and respond to the questions using online surveys.
- 3.2. In line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, at the start of the consultation the Council will notify:
 - Council's Local Plan Mailing List
 - Statutory consultees
 - Parish Councils
 - Interest groups, including environmental, amenity and local community and voluntary groups
 - Developer Forum
 - Neighbouring authorities
 - Ward councillors
- 3.3. A press release will also be issued and the consultation will be advertised on the Council's social media channels.
- 3.4. Hard copies of the document included in Appendix 1 will also be made available at the Town Hall and libraries and we will send free hard copies of documentation to those on the Council's Local Plan Mailing List.
- 3.5. It is intended that we will hold a drop-in event at the Town Hall, where members of public and other stakeholders can come and discuss the consultation with officers. We also hope to organise an event with local schools and colleges to get the views of younger people who are often less likely to engage in planning consultations.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. Given the forthcoming Christmas holidays, it is proposed that the consultation begins in early January and last for 6 weeks. This represents a slight slippage from the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme. However, it shouldn't impact upon the overall timetable for local plan preparation as set out below:
 - First Draft Local Plan Consultation: Summer 2023
 - Final Draft Local Plan publication: Spring 2024
 - Submission of Final Draft Local Plan for Examination: Spring 2024
 - Examination: Spring 2024 – Spring 2025
 - Adoption: Spring 2025

- 4.2. Following this consultation, all comments will be reviewed and considered by the Local Plan Working Party. Officers will then work with the Local plan Working Party to develop the first draft plan in response to these comments and the emerging evidence base.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. No additional implications. Preparation of the Local Plan and other documents is provided for in the agreed Strategic Planning budget.

6. Legal and Risk Implications

- 6.1. The consultation will form part of the engagement required by regulation 18 of the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The consultation will take place in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (2022).

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. It is recommended that Policy and Resources Committee:
- Approves the consultation document on the new Local Plan appended to this report (Appendix 1)

8. Appendices

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Great Yarmouth New Local Plan – Options Consultation

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Through ELT prior to Policy and Resources Committee
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Through ELT prior to Policy and Resources Committee
Existing Council Policies:	Local Plan Part 1 (Core Strategy), Local Plan Part 2 & Corporate Plan
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	Addressed in the report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Addressed in the report
Risk Implications:	Addressed in the report
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	n/a
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Every Child Matters:	n/a

Great Yarmouth New Local Plan – Options Consultation

Unformatted Hard-Copy Version for Committee.

Great Yarmouth New Local Plan – Options Consultation	1
Introduction	3
Vision.....	4
How much development should we plan for?	5
Where should new development be focussed within the borough?	7
Infrastructure	11
Urban and Waterfront Regeneration	12
Design.....	15
Housing Planning Policies	17
Employment, Retail and Tourism Planning Policies.....	23
Open Space, Community Services and Facilities Planning Policies.....	34
Climate Change Planning Policies	37
Natural Environment Planning Policies.....	41
Historic Environment Planning Policies	43
Anything Else?	44
Appendix 1 – Maps of Potential Sites for Development.....	45

Introduction

The Local Plan is a key document which sets out a vision and framework for the future development of the area. The Local Plan sets out the amount of development which needs to be planned in an area and identifies where that development should go and how it should be delivered. The Local Plan also sets out planning policies which are used to help determine planning applications for development.

The current Local Plan for Great Yarmouth is split over two documents, [the Core Strategy](#) (adopted in 2015) and the [Local Plan Part 2](#) (adopted in 2021).

Great Yarmouth Borough Council is currently progressing a review of the whole Local Plan. The new Local Plan will eventually replace the Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2. It is intended the new Local Plan will be a single document, rather than being separate local plans covering strategy, allocations and detailed policies.

The new Local Plan will cover the period to 2041.

The plan will not cover the part of the borough which falls within the Broads Authority. The Broads Authority are currently preparing a [new Local Plan](#) for their area.

The Local Plan will sit alongside [Neighbourhood Plans](#) as part of the 'development plan' for the area. Existing Neighbourhood Plans will be taken into account in preparing the new Local Plan and the plan will set a framework for new Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared against.

Overview of Consultation

This consultation aims to get your views on some of the key matters the new Local Plan will need to contain. The consultation comprises a series of questions to help the Council prepare the Local Plan. These questions can be responded to using our online survey.

The Council issued a Call for Sites over the summer of 2022 which was an opportunity for individuals, landowners, developers, parish councils and other interested parties to let the Council know what sites may be suitable for inclusion in the new Local Plan for development. The Borough Council asked for sites for potential housing development, gypsy and traveller accommodation, commercial development, renewable energy, or other types of development. The Council also wrote directly to landowners of vacant and agricultural land within and adjacent to the settlements in the borough. Additionally, the Council asked stakeholders and the public to submit sites for consideration as Local Green Spaces. This consultation provides an opportunity to comment on those sites received.

In summary this consultation seeks views on:

- the amount of development we should be planning for
- how development could be distributed across the borough
- what infrastructure and community facilities are required to support development
- what can we do to regenerate and improve Great Yarmouth
- how we should plan to meet the housing needs of the whole population including gypsies and travellers
- how we should plan for future economic development

- how we should plan for climate change.
- how we should plan to ensure protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment
- Potential sites for development
- Potential sites for renewable energy
- Potential sites to be designated as Local Green Spaces

Next Steps

Following this consultation, the Council will carefully consider all the responses made. The Council will then prepare a first draft of the Local Plan which takes into account the comments made during this consultation. The current timetable for the subsequent stages of Local Plan preparation are as follows:

- First Draft Local Plan Consultation: Summer 2023
- Final Draft Local Plan publication: Spring 2024
- Submission of Final Draft Local Plan for Examination: Spring 2024
- Examination: Spring 2024 – Winter 2025
- Adoption: Spring 2025

Vision

The new Local Plan will need to contain a vision and set of objectives to frame what the plan is seeking to achieve in terms of the development of the borough. The vision will be influenced by the Council's Corporate Plan and priorities and the issues identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. The following questions are intended to help shape and refine a vision for the plan:

Question 1

a) What is good about living or working in the borough of Great Yarmouth and b) what is good about living or working in the town or village you live/work in?

b) What is not so good about living or working in the borough of Great Yarmouth and b) what is not so good about living or working in the town or village you live/work in?

Question 2

What would be your vision for the borough for 2041?

How much development should we plan for?

It is important that the Local Plan ensures there is sufficient land available to meet needs for new homes and economic development.

Housing Needs

Over time household sizes in Great Yarmouth are getting smaller, this means for the same population more homes are needed. Additionally, more people migrate into the borough than leave (mainly from other parts of the UK). These factors mean there is a need for new housing to be built in the borough. If we don't plan to meet these needs, demand can outweigh supply meaning steeper rises in house prices which can make it more difficult for people to enter the housing market.

[National planning policy](#) requires local plans to identify housing needs using a [standard methodology](#). This methodology involves looking at average household growth forecasts published by the Government and applying an uplift based on the affordability of housing in the area (ratio of earnings to house prices). For Great Yarmouth this is calculated as follows as set out in the Council's [Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022](#):

- Annual average projected household growth = 308 homes per year
- Affordability uplift = 44
- Annual housing need = 353

This means that over the plan period from 2021 to 2041, **7,060** homes need to be built to meet needs. Many of these homes already benefit from planning permission or allocation in the existing Local Plan (4,032 homes) and some have been built since 2021 (362 homes). This means the Local Plan will need to ensure provision of at least a further 2,666 homes.

Whilst the housing requirement from the standard method is the minimum amount of housing it is common for local plans to either set a higher target or to plan and allocate land for more housing than the minimum requirement set as a target. The reasons for such a buffer are:

- To ensure resilience in delivery of homes in case some sites don't come forward or delivery slows on some sites.
- To ensure a greater delivery of affordable homes
- To ensure sufficient housing to provide workers to support local economic growth
- To ensure there is sufficient land available in case of changing circumstances in terms of needs.

The [current Local Plan](#) for Great Yarmouth allocates sufficient land to deliver 32% more homes than the housing requirement (which is based on the standard method at the time of adoption). This was a comparatively high-level of over provision and reflected the low number of years left of the plan period for that plan at the time of adoption of the Local Plan Part 2.

Question 3

Is the target of 353 homes a year, equating to 7,060 between 2021 and 2041, the most appropriate housing requirement for the plan?

Question 4

Should the Local Plan provide for more homes than the minimum requirement of 7,060?

Gypsy and Traveller Needs

National policy requires the identification of sufficient sites within local plans to meet the needs of the local gypsy and traveller population. Evidence from the Council's [Gypsy, Traveller and Residential Caravan Accommodation Needs Assessment 2022](#) indicates that there is a borough-wide need for up to 25 new permanent pitches for gypsy and travellers by 2041. By ensuring that the plan meet this need, this will in turn help to prevent unauthorised sites occurring in the borough in the future.

Question 5

Is the identified need for new gypsy and traveller permanent pitches appropriate, do you have any other evidence on future gypsy and traveller needs which could inform the Local Plan?

Economic Needs

Economic forecasts as discussed in the Council's Employment Land Needs Assessment 2022 indicate there will be between 1,400 and 4,400 new jobs over the plan period in Great Yarmouth. The largest growth sectors are healthcare, accommodation and food services, and business services. Given the potential for opportunities associated with the growing offshore renewables and engineering sector, there could be opportunity for more jobs than forecasted. However, clearly at present there is some uncertainty as to the level of likely jobs growth, particularly given the after-effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the increasing inflation. Nevertheless, the plan needs to ensure there is sufficient land available to ensure the potential for economic growth is not constrained.

The Employment Land Needs Assessment recommended ensuring approximately 39 hectares of land is available for new offices and industrial development within the Local Plan. To meet this need there is currently undeveloped land of 19.38 hectares within existing industrial estates that may be suitable for further employment uses. The existing Local Plan also contains a 20.12 hectare allocation for new employment development at Beacon Park which could be carried forward into this Local Plan and help meet needs. Together these would provide 39.5 hectares of land for employment uses.

The Council's [Retail Capacity Study \(2020\)](#) indicates there will be limited need for new retail developments within the borough. The study estimates that over the period to 2040 only 246sqm of convenience floorspace needed within the borough and no new floorspace is needed for non-food retail.

Question 6

Do you think the economic forecasts of between 1,400 and 4,400 new jobs over the plan period are realistic, do you have any other evidence on economic growth that could inform the Local Plan?

Question 7

Should we be planning for more or less than 39 hectares of land for new office and industrial development?

Question 8

Do the retail development need forecasts seem realistic, do you have any other evidence on retail needs which could inform the Local Plan?

Where should new development be focussed within the borough?

[National Planning Policy](#) requires local plans to promote a sustainable pattern of development which improves the environment, mitigates climate change, makes effective use of brownfield land, supports the vitality of rural communities, support town centres and helps achieve healthy active communities.

The existing Local Plan focusses 65% of new development within the urban area of Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Bradwell and village of Caister-on-Sea. The remainder is focussed on the larger villages in the rural areas to the north and south of the borough.

A key consideration for the new Local Plan will be whether to continue with the current distribution or allocate more or less development to the urban or rural areas of the borough.

More development allocated to the urban area means there is less need for people to travel due to the better service provision which reduces congestion and carbon emissions and facilitates people to walk and cycle to work which helps support a healthier population. However, there are limited opportunities for development on brownfield sites and viability and flood risk constraints means it may be difficult to allocate a large proportion of growth to the urban area. It is likely that to accommodate growth within the urban areas, some agricultural land on the edge of Gorleston and Bradwell would be required.

More development within the rural area can help support existing services and facilities in villages, such as schools, pubs and villages shops and ensure they remain viable. House prices are generally less affordable in rural area and increased development can allow for more affordable homes to be built. However, development in rural areas can increase the need to travel for work and services, which in turn can increase congestion, carbon emissions and limit the ability to for people to make healthier choices in the way they commute and access services. There are very limited opportunities for brownfield development in the rural areas and therefore agricultural land on the edge of villages will be needed.

A further constraint affecting development in the south of the borough along the A143 corridor is the congestion experienced at the A143 Beccles Road/Mill Lane/Church Lane/Long Lane junction. Traffic studies indicate that there is very limited capacity for development to the south-west of the borough due to these constraints. One possible strategic solution could be to create a link road connecting the A143 to Market Road as part of a large development to the west of Bradwell. This would mean distributing the majority of growth (up to 2000 homes) to the west of Bradwell in order to fund and deliver this link road. At present it is unclear whether this would entirely resolve the situation or whether it would be deliverable, particularly given not all the land required has been submitted to the Council as part of the Call for Sites. Notwithstanding this, the Council is keen to hear views on this possible option.

Caister-on-Sea is the largest village in the borough and acts as a key service centre to many of the villages in the north of the borough. It benefits from a good range of services and facilities, has good connections into Great Yarmouth and has some employment opportunities, particularly in the tourism sector. The new Local Plan will need to carefully consider the role of Caister-on-Sea in accommodating new development. There is potential for further development to the west of the village adjacent the recently permitted scheme off Jack Chase Way and some opportunities to the north-east of the village as shown on the potential sites map in the next section.

Elsewhere, the Local Plan will need to consider the role of each village and which villages are best suited for accommodating new development.

Most office and industrial development is located in the urban area where there are large industrial estates, business parks and town centre offices. It is likely that these areas will be the focus for new development, but we will also need to consider whether there is scope for industrial development elsewhere in the more rural parts of the borough

Question 9

Should new housing development be more focussed in the urban (Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Bradwell) or the rural parts of the borough or an equal balance between the two areas?

Question 10

a) Should future development be focussed in Bradwell in order to deliver a potential link road between the A143 and Market Road?

B) do you think such a link road would help address traffic congestion at the A143/Mill Lane/Church Lane/Long Lane traffic lights or are there any other solutions?

Question 11

Should Caister-on-Sea be a focus for new housing development in the borough?

Question 12

Which villages do you think are most suitable for new housing development?

Question 13

Should the Local plan seek to allocate employment areas outside of the urban area of Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Bradwell?

Potential Sites for Development

The Council issued a Call for Sites over the summer of 2022 which was an opportunity for individuals, landowners, developers, parish councils and other interested parties to let the Council know what sites may be suitable for inclusion in the new Local Plan for development.

We are now seeking your views on whether you think any of the sites submitted could be suitable for development and therefore allocated in the new Local Plan.

Please note, more sites have been submitted than what will be needed to accommodate development needed in the borough and therefore many of the sites presented in this consultation will not be needed to meet development needs. We are publishing all of the sites submitted with no pre-filtering on potential suitability. This is so everyone is aware of all the possible options and have an opportunity to consider and comment on them at this early stage of Local Plan preparation.

The Council, taking into account the views expressed as part of this consultation, will thoroughly assess all the sites, and filter the sites down to a smaller number of sites which can meet the development needs of the borough in line with any distribution strategy determined as discussed above.

The site submitted for consideration can be seen in Appendix 1.

As part of this consultation the Council welcomes further sites to be submitted for consideration for allocation in the new Local Plan.

Gypsies and Travellers

There is one gypsy and traveller site in the borough which is located off Gapton Hall Road. This provides for 24 pitches (18 permanent, 6 transit pitches) and is managed by the Council. The current Local Plan safeguards the site for gypsy and traveller use as well as allowing for the potential extension of the site to be explored to meet future needs.

Whilst this site is well established within the existing community, it is in need of investment and upgrading to meet current gypsy and traveller living standards. The size of the site is also at the upper limit of what is normally considered appropriate for any single gypsy and traveller site. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by land that is at a high risk of flooding. For these reasons it is unlikely that either an extension to, or intensification of, the existing will be suitable or appropriate in order to help meet the borough's future need. Therefore, the new Local Plan will need to consider how additional sites for gypsy and travellers can be brought forward during the plan period to ensure it meets its future need.

The existing Local Plan only identified a limited requirement for new gypsy and traveller pitches and therefore used a criteria-based policy to help identify and determine planning applications for new sites in the absence of any formal plan allocations. These criteria require new sites to have good transport links and easy travelling distance to schools, services and shops; have adequate sewerage connections and not in a flood zone; that there will be no adverse impacts on nearby residents or land users; will have minimal impact on the character of the countryside; and will not harm areas of landscape or biodiversity importance.

A reliance upon this criteria-based policy alone in the new Local Plan may not provide for sufficient sites to come forward in a timely way, increasing the future likelihood of unauthorised sites occurring in the borough. Therefore, it is considered necessary that some new sites for gypsies and travellers will need to be allocated through the new Local Plan. No sites have been put forward to date through the 'Call for Sites' process for gypsy and traveller accommodation. However, we would welcome your views on whether any of the sites submitted (as shown in Appendix 1) could be suitable for gypsy and traveller accommodation, either alone or as a part of a mixed-use development.

Question 14

Are there any reasons for not allocating new sites for gypsy and travellers in the Local Plan, instead relying upon the existing criteria-based policy to determine planning applications for new gypsy and traveller sites as and when they come forward?

Question 15

Are there any other locational factors that the Council should take into account when seeking to identify new sites for gypsies and travellers?

Question 16

Would any of the sites put forward through the 'Call for Sites' shown in Appendix 1 be suitable for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation?

Development Limits

The Local Plan will need to give clear signals to developers, the community and infrastructure providers about where development will take place and where it will not take place. The plan will identify specific sites for development to meet needs. Similar to many other local plans, the existing Great Yarmouth Local Plan also supports infill development and development on unallocated sites within the built-up areas of settlements. It has a policy which identifies Development Limits which are drawn around built-up areas and supports development within them but restricts development outside of them.

This policy approach helps guide the location, type and amount of development to ensure it delivers, and is consistent with, the overall strategy for development. Development Limits also help to avoid urban/suburban sprawl, the unplanned coalescence of settlements and unnecessary loss of agricultural and undeveloped land. This is particularly important in Great Yarmouth borough given that much of the agricultural land is high grade. Development Limits can also help reduce the 'hope value' of land outside of settlements which may make it more viable for certain types of development such as 100% affordable housing schemes and schemes for the relocation of properties at risk from coastal erosion.

However, there are other approaches to achieving such policy goals, such as simply having a policy which supports the development of brownfield sites and infill developments but restricting development of vacant and agricultural land on the edge of settlements where it hasn't been specifically allocated in the Local Plan.

Question 17

Should the new Local Plan retain the policy of Development Limits, or should it take a different approach?

Infrastructure

Strategic Infrastructure

There are a number of strategic infrastructure projects currently under development within Great Yarmouth. These projects will help unlock and provide new opportunities for development.

Third Crossing

The third crossing over the River Yare in Great Yarmouth links the A47 to South Denes and provides a third access to the town. The bridge will ease traffic journeys and reduce journey times and increase journey reliability. The development should help support regeneration and economic growth opportunities in the town and the wider borough. The bridge will be open in May 2023.

New James Paget Hospital

The James Paget Hospital is eligible for funding to develop a new hospital. The new hospital is proposed to be located to the rear of the existing hospital. It is expected that the new hospital will be operational by 2030.

Great Yarmouth Flood Defences

The Environment Agency is currently refurbishing and improving approximately 4km of flood defences and the supporting quayside. It is anticipated that the work will allow a further 30 years of life to be gained from the assets and manage the flood risk to around 2000 homes and 700 businesses. Future epochs of work will provide additional protection to other properties in the town. The flood defences support the economic growth and development of Great Yarmouth with the potential to support 34,000 jobs and £1.5 billion to the economy over the lifetime of the epochs.

Question 18

What opportunities do you think could be exploited in the Local Plan following the delivering of the above strategic infrastructure projects?

Infrastructure Needs

Development proposed in the new Local Plan needs to be supported by adequate infrastructure including, schools, medical facilities, community facilities, open spaces and transport infrastructure such as cycle paths, pedestrian infrastructure and improvements to roads. Developers are often required to make financial contributions towards improvements to infrastructure and make land available for such infrastructure to meet the needs generated by their developments. Emerging legislation will require the Council to introduce a new levy on developments which will require all developers to make a financial contribution towards infrastructure provision in the area.

Question 19

What infrastructure do you think is required to support new development in the borough and in your community?

Urban and Waterfront Regeneration

The existing Local Plan ([Policy CS17](#)) sought to facilitate regeneration of the Great Yarmouth waterfront comprising riverside areas at Vauxhall, Fuller's Hill, North Quay, The Conge, Bure Harbour Quay and Ice House Quay. It was expected that the regeneration proposals would provide an opportunity to develop high quality waterfront housing (approximately 1000 homes), overlooking the river and historic quays alongside new commercial properties. There was recognition that the project would run beyond the plan period (which was up to March 2030), with the delivery of the majority of housing, employment and retail and leisure taking place after that date. Constraints associated with land ownership, contamination and flood risk have held back progress, and impact upon the viability of development.

Progress has been made in respect of the areas at North Quay and The Conge. The Council is currently assembling land within North Quay to support regeneration and has secured planning permission for a high-quality residential development of 89 homes along the Conge.

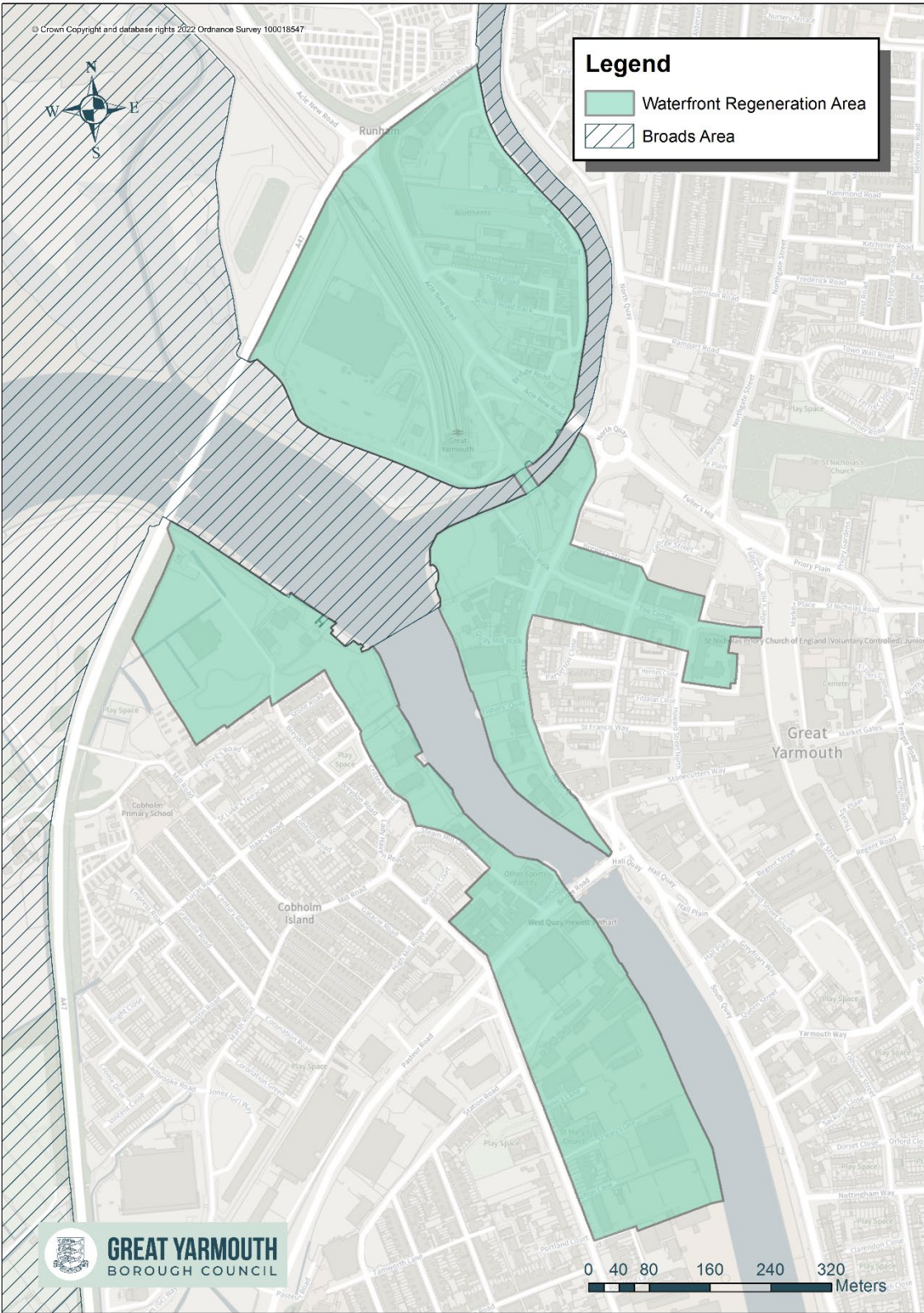


Figure 1 - Waterfront areas identified in existing Local Plan

The Government is also keen to support regeneration as set out in the national planning and through its wider 'Levelling Up' agenda. The Borough Council has been successful in attracting significant external funding through the likes of the 'Town Deal'. As part of this bid a [Town Investment Plan](#) was drawn up to identify a wider sweet of key projects such as the renovation of Palmers department store to relocate the public library or support to deliver a new Offshore & Maintenance facility at South Denes.

Question 20

Do you agree that the waterfront areas identified in the existing Local Plan should still be considered for regeneration? Should any further areas be considered, or the site area amended in some way?

Question 21

What should the priorities be for re-developing these areas be?

Question 22

Are there any further opportunities that should be explored for regeneration in the wider urban area?

Design

Securing high quality design

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning process should achieve. Good design, making better places for people to live and work is key to achieving sustainable development. National policy requires local plans to set out a clear design vision and clear design expectations for new development by preparing design codes (or guides).

The existing Local Plan provides general design principles expected from new residential developments based upon the Government's [National Design Guide](#). Whilst these policies currently provide the Council with a strong starting point to shape new development proposals, they are relatively high-level and do not reflect the individual character areas of the borough, nor do they provide graphical or detailed guidance for specific types of developments.

To complement the preparation of the new Local Plan the Council is also currently preparing a borough-wide design code which will provide this additional level of detail and guidance to improve the standard of design quality across the borough. There are mutual benefits in preparing the borough-wide design code in parallel with the new Local Plan, and there is an opportunity to nestle the requirements of the design code within the Local Plan, meaning that full planning weight can be given to them when deciding future planning applications.

Question 23

Should the Council consider incorporating the emerging 'borough-wide design code' into new Local Plan?

Density

Housing density is the number of homes built on a specific area of land (usually a number per hectare). The higher the density the less land is required to build on, however this is not always appropriate in every circumstance, and can result in poorly designed areas which do not reflect local character.

National policy requires local plans to set minimum density standards for town centres and other locations which are well served by public transport. In other areas a range of density standards can be considered to reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas.

The existing Local Plan follows the national policy approach, setting minimum densities of dwellings per hectares (dph) depending on the accessibility of specific locations. This ranges from at least 50 dph in the most accessible locations e.g., the town centres of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, 30 dph in the main villages like Caister, Martham, Belton, to 20 dph in the smaller villages and rural areas of the borough.

Question 24

Should we continue to set minimum densities for new developments outside of our town centres? If so, what should it be?

Question 25

Does the current approach to calculating density i.e., dwellings per hectare remain appropriate, or should we consider alternative methods to calculate density e.g., habitable rooms per hectare?

Optional standards for accessibility, internal space and water efficiency

The new plan has the option to apply technical standards for new homes which go beyond Building Regulation requirements. These currently include standards set for accessible and adaptable dwellings (called “M4(2) standard”), wheelchair user dwellings (“M4(3)”) and enhanced water efficiency standards. The Government is seeking to update Building Regulations to require all new dwellings to be of M4(2) standard. The Government also has a nationally described internal space standard which local plans can also choose to adopt. In choosing to adopt any of the local optional technical standards, plans need to consider the need and viability of development to do so.

The existing Local Plan requires all new homes to meet M4(2) accessible and adaptable requirements, and as well as requiring homes to meet the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day. The existing Local Plan does not require new dwellings to meet the nationally described space standard, nor meet M4(3) wheelchair user standards due to the present viability of doing so.

Question 26

Should the Council continue to require new housing developments to meet the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day?

Question 27

Should the Council consider adopting additional optional standards in relation to M4(3) wheelchair users or the nationally described space standards?

Housing Planning Policies

Affordable Housing – Overall Provision

House prices in the borough are nearly 7 times average annual earnings which means that many people cannot afford to buy or rent their own home and rely upon affordable housing to meet their accommodation needs. Affordable housing can be provided in different forms to help suit individual circumstances. This includes affordable rented housing, such as council homes or those provided by a housing association, and affordable home ownership for those who wish to buy but cannot currently afford to.

Evidence from the Council's [Local Housing Needs Assessment](#) indicates that to meet future affordable housing need to 2041, the Local Plan will need to plan for at least 2,644 affordable homes, or 37% of the total amount of housing planned. Of the 2,644 affordable homes, 86% should be provided for affordable rent, and 14% should be provided as affordable homes to buy.

Question 28

Should the plan provide for the affordable housing need as a minimum?

Affordable Housing – Housing sub-market areas

In the existing Local Plan, the borough is divided up into three affordable housing sub-market areas reflecting the geographical differences in viability across the borough. Each sub-market area sets a development threshold of either 10 or 15 dwellings when triggering affordable housing contributions of either 10% or 20% of the total development.

The latest [needs assessment](#) indicates that four housing sub-market areas are now likely to be operating in the borough. These sub-areas are based on market characteristics rather than solely financial viability, however, remain broadly similar to those in the existing plan, although a new sub-market area is identified in the Gorleston/Bradwell area.

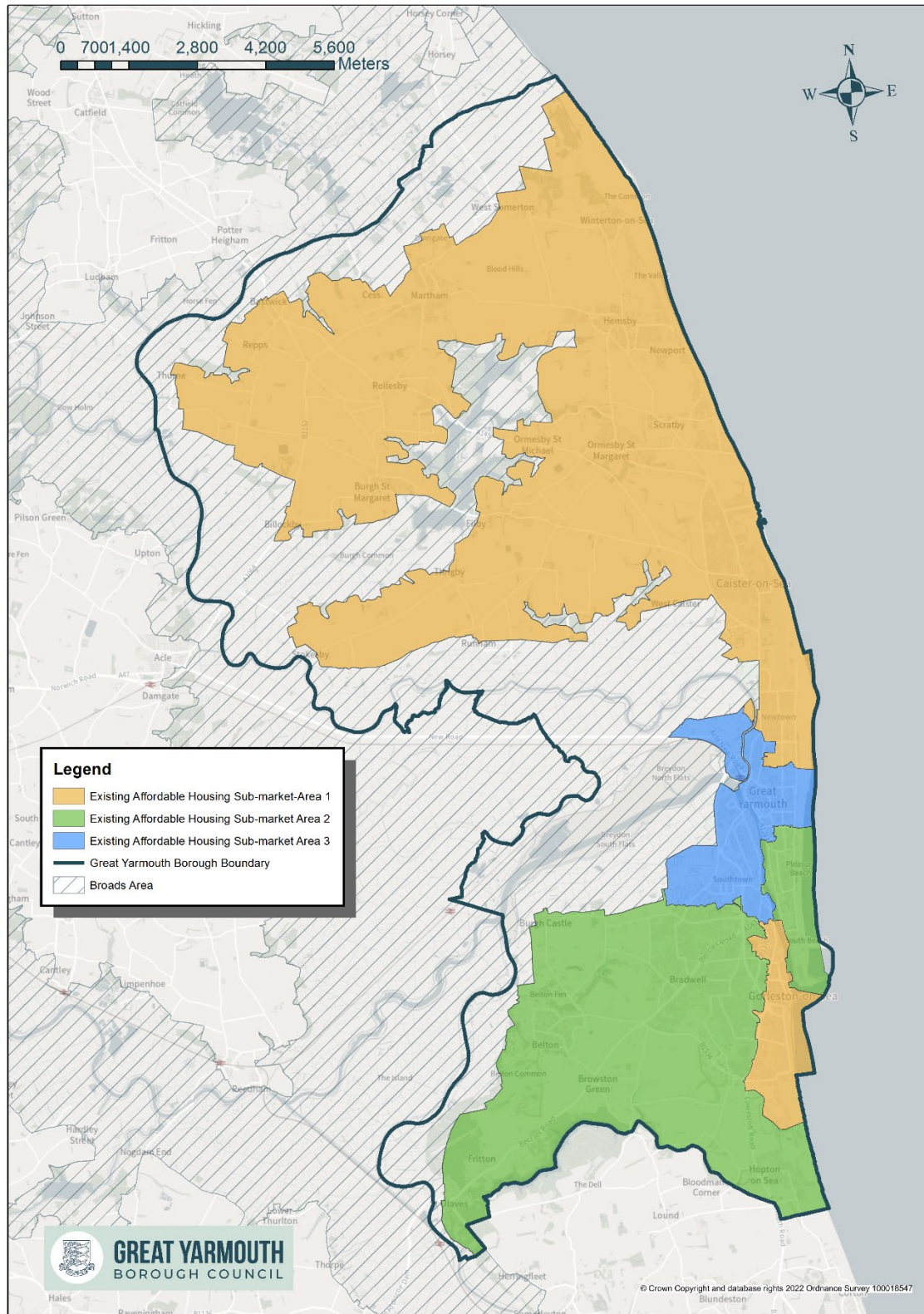


Figure 2 - Existing Affordable Housing Sub-Market Areas

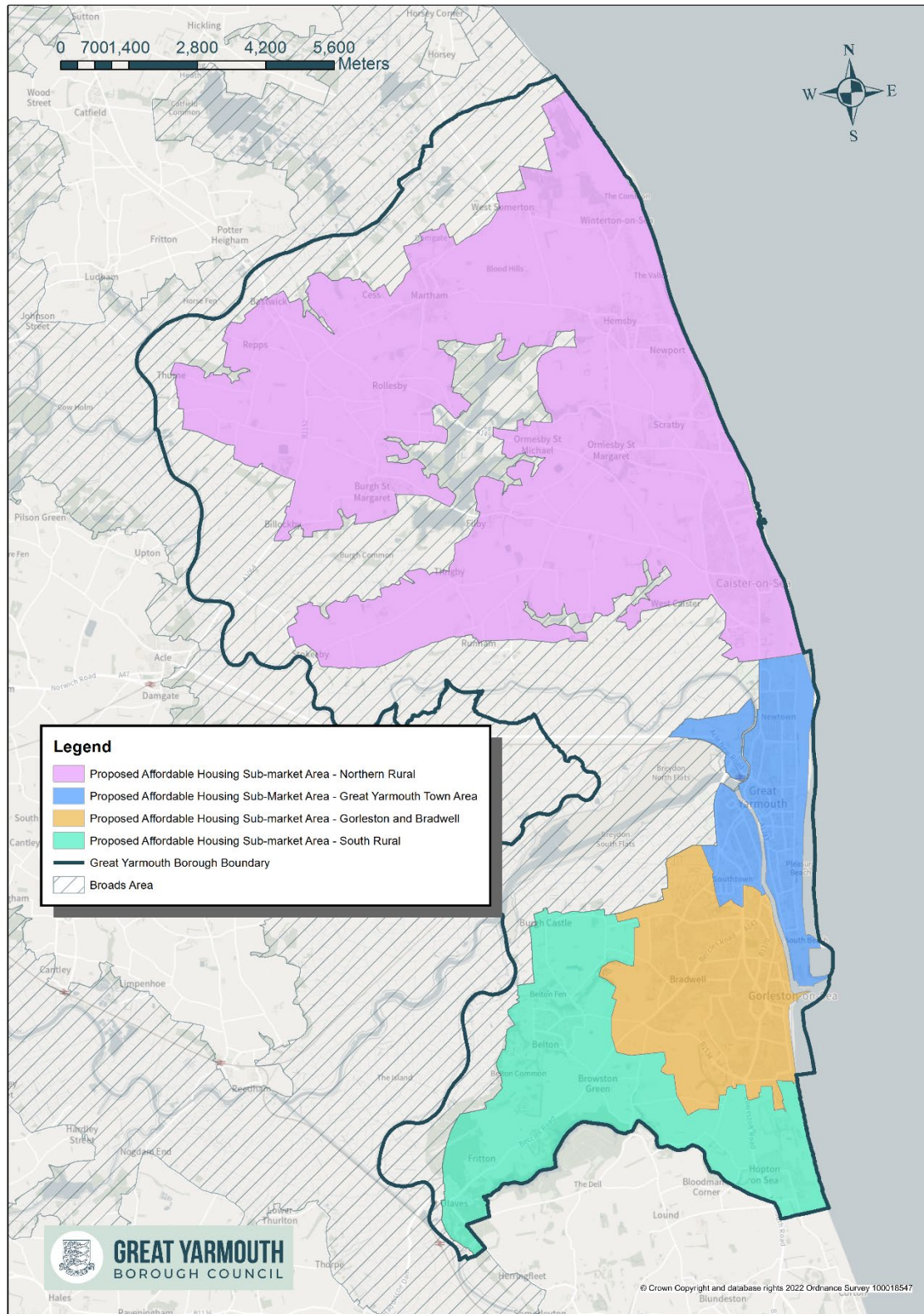


Figure 3- Proposed Sub-Market Areas in the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022

Question 29

Should the plan continue to seek different levels of affordable housing on new housing developments, based upon their location in housing sub-market areas?

Question 30

Do you think the proposed housing sub-market areas in the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 best reflect the main differences in housing affordability and need across the borough?

Affordable Housing – First Homes

National policy generally expects at least 10% of all housing on development sites to be made available for affordable home ownership. There are a range of affordable homeownership products available to developers which meet the definition of affordable housing, including 'First Homes'.

First Homes are discounted by a minimum of 30% of market value (or a higher discount of either 40% or 50% where demonstrated through a local housing needs assessment). National policy expects that a minimum of 25% of all affordable units delivered on sites need to be First Homes, therefore First Homes can make up or contribute to the 10% affordable homeownership requirement noted above.

The Council's Local Housing Needs Assessment indicates that all the borough's affordable homeownership need (367 homes) could be provided through 'First Homes' if the Local Plan sets its local market value discount at 50%. If a lower discount was set at 30%, then only 1 in 5 properties provided as 'First Homes' would help to meet the borough's affordable homeownership need, and therefore additional affordable homeownership products would need to be sought on sites through the plan, to ensure needs are fully met.

Question 31

Do you agree that the Local Plan should set its 'First Homes' local market discount at 50%? If not, what discount should be applied and how can the plan ensure that all of affordable homeownership needs are met in full?

Affordable Housing – Exception Sites

Local plans have the ability to allow some forms of housing development to come forward outside of allocations or the development limits on 'exception sites' in order to help meet any identified affordable housing needs of local areas. National policy prescribes two forms of exception sites 'Rural' and 'First Homes' which local plans can set policies on.

The existing Local Plan allows for rural exception sites to be built within or close to any settlement where there is an identified local affordable housing need. Whilst the policy seeks to bring forward affordable housing, it also allows for a proportion of market housing to come forward on a site to help make them more viable and to encourage them to come forward for development.

Whilst 'First Homes' exception sites are principally similar to 'Rural' exception sites, they are aimed at delivering primarily First Homes on the site as the affordable housing and may also allow an element of market housing to help fund their delivery.

Question 32

Should we allow Rural or First Home exceptions sites to come forward anywhere, or only where they are located close to settlements with good accessibility to services?

Question 33

Should we continue to allow market housing to enable the delivery of Rural or First Home exception sites where the financial viability of a development is challenging? If so, should the plan set a maximum percentage of market housing on such sites?

Older People Housing

National policy requires local plans to provide for a range of housing types for older people where a need exists, as often their choices are limited by shortages of specialist housing provision within an area's existing housing stock. Increased choice to suit changing needs can help those to live independently for longer and reduce costs on the social and healthcare system. Extra accommodation can also help free-up some of an area's existing housing stock, making it available for families and other young people for whom it is more suited.

The borough's population is ageing, and the largest share of population growth predicted by 2041 is expected to occur across the borough's older residents (aged 65+), increasing by over 7,000 persons. To meet the needs of our increasing ageing population, the Norfolk 'Study of Retirement Housing Demand and Planning Issues' has indicated that an additional 1,348 specialist retirement housing units will need to be provided by 2041.

The study indicates that there is a combined need for an additional 710 beds in nursing and residential care homes. However, as people get older, the probability of needing to access these beds is decreasing and combined with the planned increase in provision of 'extra-care' dwellings, it may not be necessary to plan for any need above retaining the existing provision.

Question 34

Should the Council specify a proportion of retirement housing, or other forms of housing suitable for older people (such as accessible housing or bungalows) on sites over a certain size and/or location?

Question 35

Should the Council continue to safeguard the potential for new housing accommodation for older people to come forward on available sites (above other forms of residential accommodation) where located within the town centres of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston? Should other locations be included?

Question 36

Should the Council allocate specific sites in the Local Plan for housing accommodation for older people?

Self-build

Nearly half of the national population say that they would consider building their own homes, however less than a tenth of the total number of homes are self-built in the UK, compared with figures upwards of 70 or 80% elsewhere in Europe.

As a Council we are required to keep a register of people who are interested in self-build and custom housebuilding and ensure that enough plots are provided to meet that need. The current demand for self-build in our borough is quite low, therefore this need is regularly being met through the granting of planning permission on single plots on windfall sites, without any specific policy requirement in our

current Local Plan to either allocate sites or require a proportion of plots on larger sites to be made available for self-build.

Question 37

a) Should self-build plots be provided as part of housing developments?

b) Should the plan allocate specific sites for 100% self-build?

c) What other options could the Local plan consider for self-build provision?

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Houses in multiple occupation are properties being shared by three or more who form two or more separate households and who share a kitchen and bathroom (and/or toilet).

Houses in multiple occupation provide an important role in providing low-cost accommodation. However, due to changes in the holiday accommodation sector there has been an increase over recent years of properties converting to houses in multiple occupation, which has led to clustering and an over-concentration of these uses in certain parts of the urban area. In response the existing Local plan has a policy ([Policy H12](#)) to avoid the over concentration of houses in multiple occupation in any one area in order to avoid impacts on amenity. The policy also prohibits the development of such uses in the seafront area and the 'back of seafront' area.

Question 38

Should the Local Plan continue to have a policy restricting the over-concentration of houses in multiple occupation in any given area?

Employment, Retail and Tourism Planning Policies

Safeguarded Employment Areas

Previous local plans have sought to designate and protect land for employment use (office, industrial and warehousing uses) where there are clear identified needs. Such an approach ensures that there are sufficient premises available for employment uses and opportunities within the borough to develop employment uses. It also helps to avoid conflicts of uses that may not be appropriate within predominantly employment areas.

The Employment Land Needs Assessment 2022 has audited existing sites and provided recommendations as to which of the previously safeguarded sites, and any new sites, are worthy of protection. Part of the South Denes and Beacon Business Park sites also benefit from 'Enterprise Zone' status and Local Development Orders to stimulate growth as a Centre for Offshore Renewable Energy.

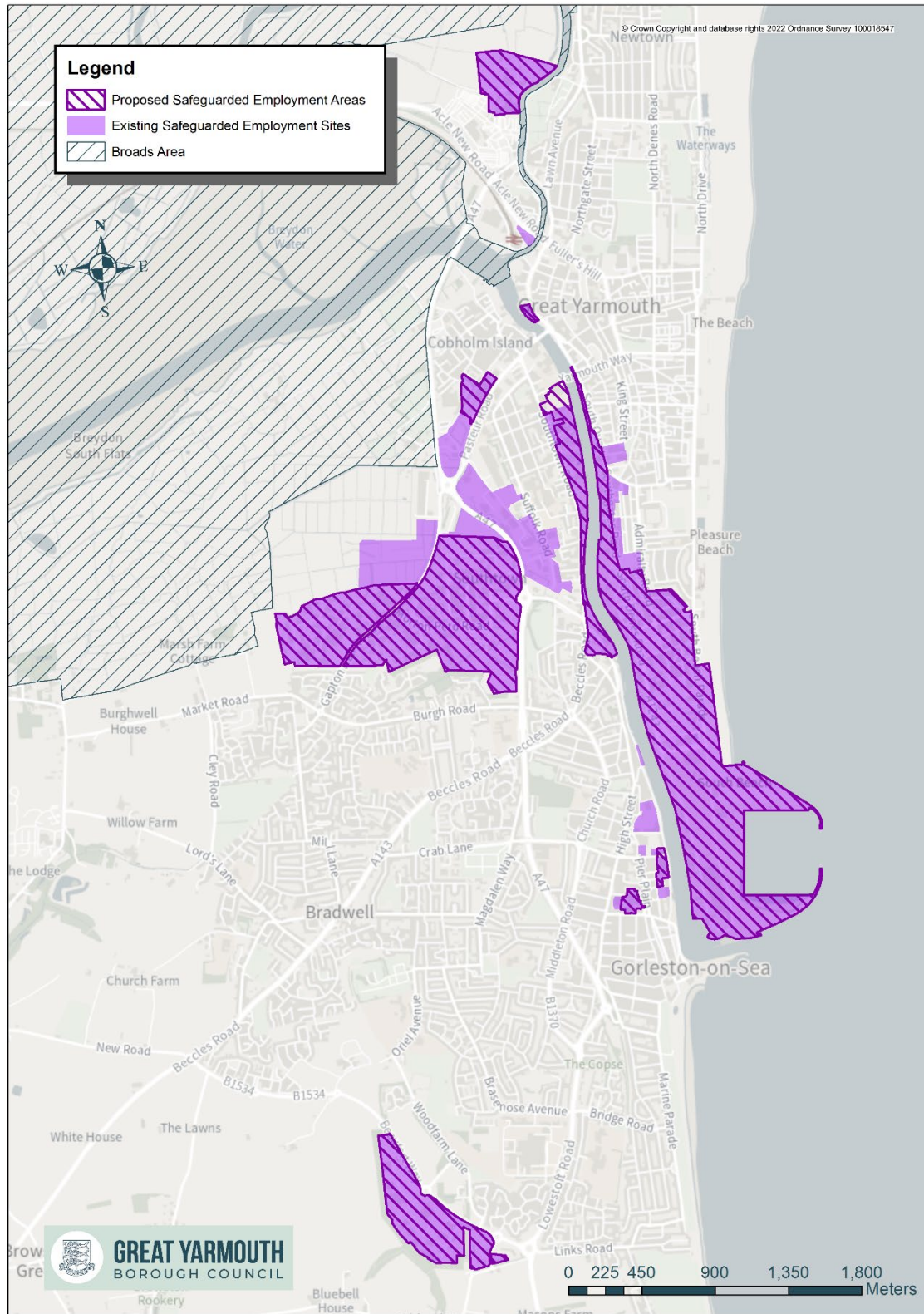


Figure 4 - Safeguarded Employment Sites - Existing and as proposed by the Employment Land Needs Assessment 2022 - Great Yarmouth and Gorleston

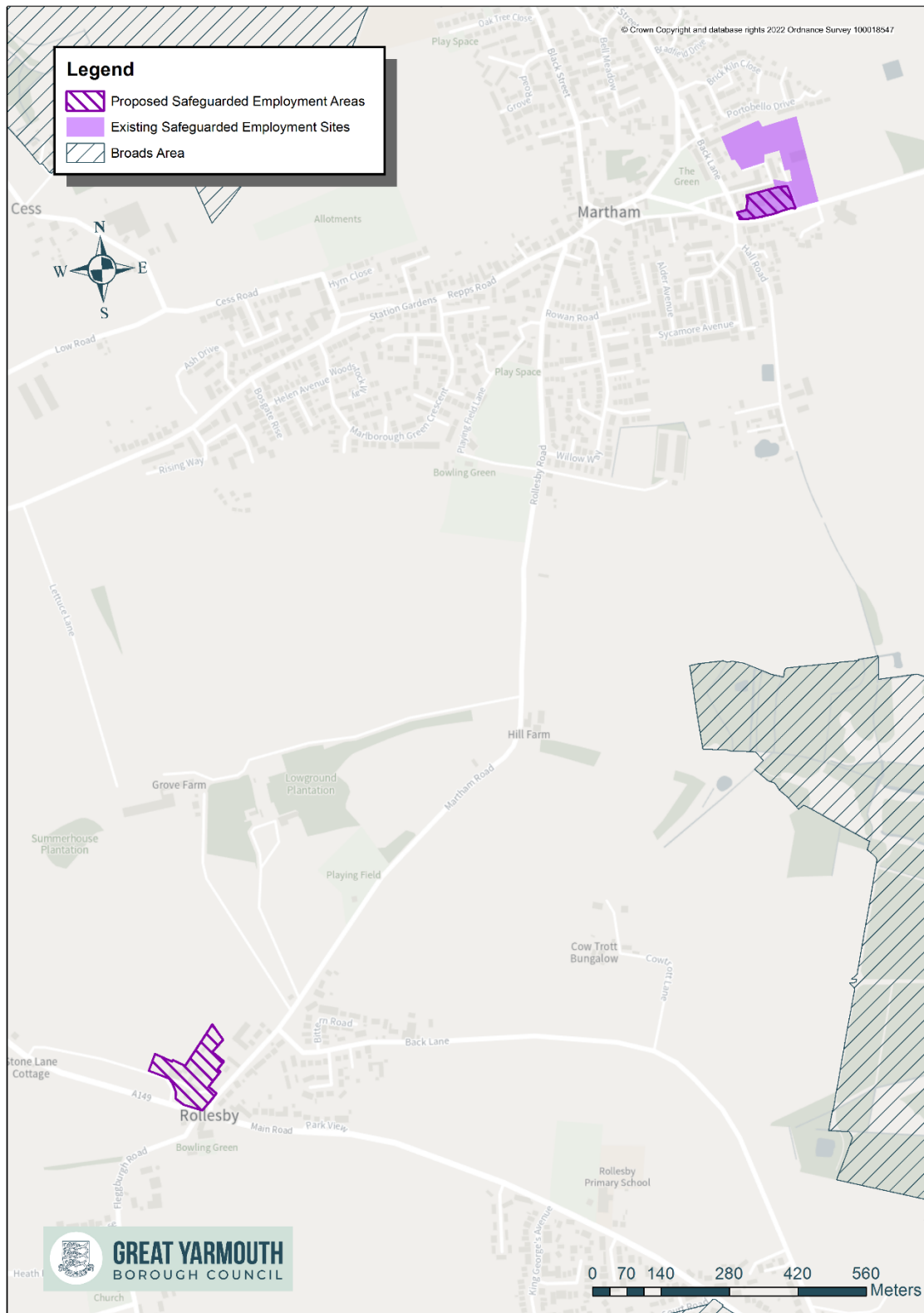


Figure 5 - Safeguarded Employment Sites - Existing and as proposed by the Employment Land Needs Assessment 2022 – Martham and Rollesby

Previous local plans have supported employment development within existing built-up areas (Development Limits) where they do not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers. Previous policies also tended to have a more restrictive approach to rural employment activities, such as further justification as to why a rural location is necessary and whether there are any suitable sites available in existing built-up areas.

Question 39

a) Should the Local Plan identify ‘Safeguarded Employment Areas’ to protect premises and land for employment uses within the area from redevelopment/conversion to other uses unless marketing evidence demonstrates that there is no demand for employment use?

b) If so, do you agree with the areas identified?

c) Should any flexibility be provided on the variety of uses allowed within ‘Safeguarded Employment Areas’, such as car showrooms, and trade counters?

d) Should the Local Plan provide greater protection to more strategic sites such South Denes and Beacon Business Park which have been specifically identified to support growth in the offshore energy sector?

Question 40

Should the Council continue to support development of employment uses within existing built-up areas, with a more restrictive approach for proposals within the open countryside?

Town Centre Uses

[National planning policy](#) is clear in identifying that the town centre (and other smaller centres, as appropriate), is the place to locate retail, offices, leisure and cultural uses at the heart of the communities that they serve. Development of these uses is only considered suitable outside of town centres when there is no land available within them. It is therefore important that such centres are identified on the Policies Map.

It is important that centres are resilient and adaptive. Plans and policies must seek to protect the vitality and viability of centres. National planning policy also recognises that residential development can play an important role in maintaining the vitality of centres.

Great Yarmouth Town Centre is the borough’s largest centre reflected in size and the variety of services and facilities. Gorleston Town Centre is also a large centre offering a decent range of services and facilities. Beyond these areas, there are other smaller high streets, village centres and shopping parades which serve smaller communities; some of which have benefitted from ‘District Centre’ or ‘Local Centre’ designation.

The borough has rates of childhood and adult obesity which significantly exceed regional and national averages. Public Health England have issued guidance, [‘Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments’ \(2020\) \(addendum in 2021\)](#) encouraging the consideration of restrictions on hot-food take-aways as a way of encouraging more healthy eating. Options could involve restricting new developments in wards with the highest rates of obesity, restricting development close to schools or restricting clustering of uses within town centres, district and local centres.

Question 41

What should the priorities for the Great Yarmouth Town Centre Area be?

Question 42

What should the priorities for the Gorleston Town Centre Area be?

Question 43

a) Should the Local Plan continue to identify and protect District Centres and Local Centres?

b) Are there any shopping areas we have missed which you think should be designated as a local centre or district centre?

c) What should the priorities for those areas be?

Question 44

Should the Borough Council apply a more restrictive approach to permitting hot food takeaways? If so, how?

Tourism

The tourist economy remains an integral part of the borough's wider economy and cultural heritage. It is therefore important that accommodation and facilities are protected where desirable, and that opportunities to enhance the visitor experience are taken through new development. One way to support this is to identify the main tourist areas for attractions and accommodation. Generally, there is a need to support the enhancement of the borough's accommodation stock. The existing Local Plan identifies 'Holiday Accommodation Areas' to protect and enhance these tourist facilities. The existing Local Plan also protects holiday accommodation across the borough, including the seafront area of Great Yarmouth.

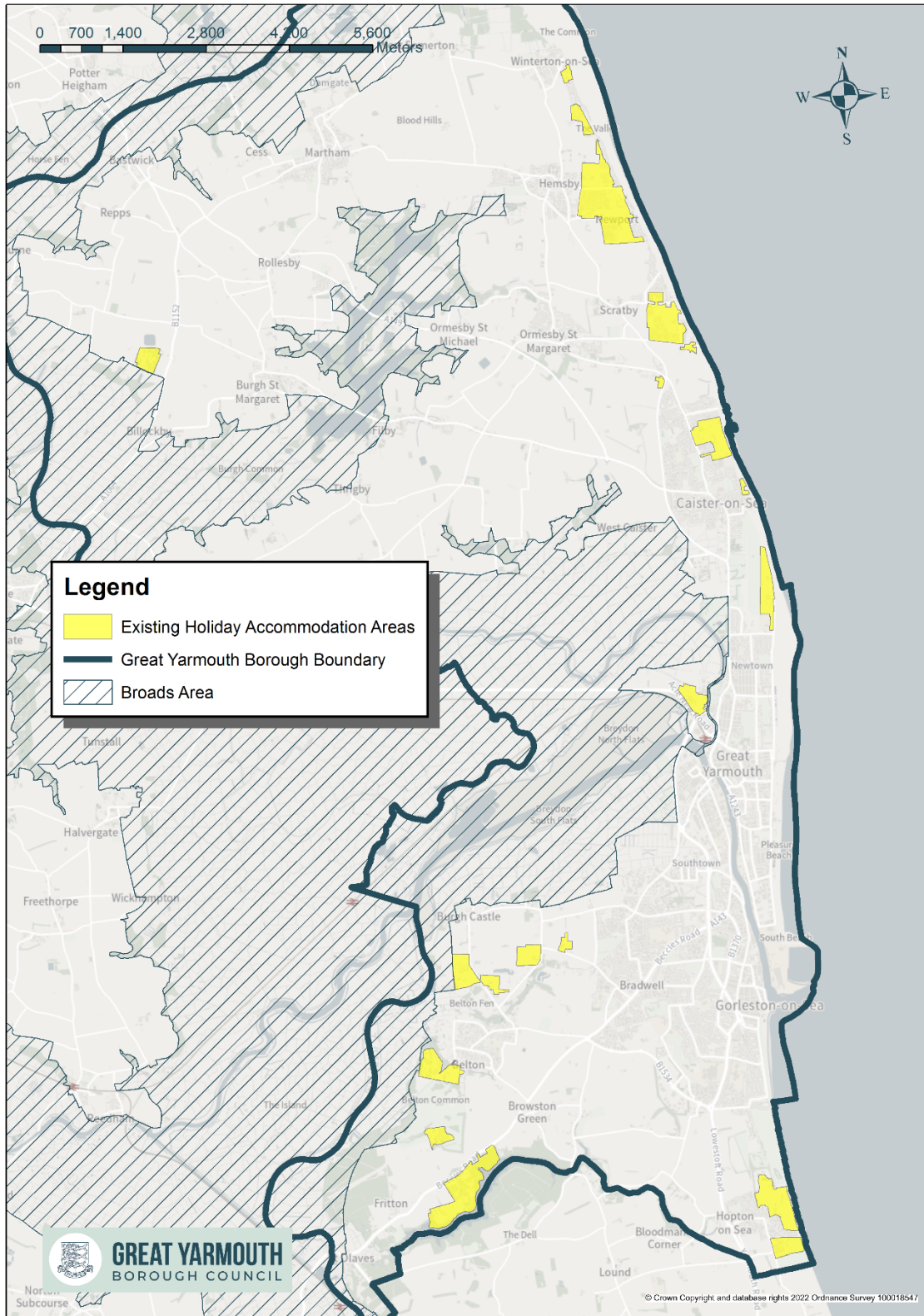


Figure 6- Existing Holiday Accommodation Areas

Over the last 10 years there have been multiple planning applications for expanded tourist accommodation. Rural locations tend to lack services and facilities (other than those contained within the holiday camp) and access to public transport, and as such they have a much lower capacity to support development. There is also a risk that some accommodation is (or may be) unlawfully used for permanent residency.

Question 45

Do you agree with the extent of the existing 'Holiday Accommodation Areas' identified?

Question 46

Should tourism developments including holiday accommodation be supported outside of built-up areas and identified 'Holiday Accommodation Areas'?

Great Yarmouth Seafront

Great Yarmouth Seafront remains a vibrant, family-friendly coastal resort that offers visitors a wide choice of shops, restaurants and bars. The greatest concentration of attractions within the borough lays along the 'Golden Mile' at the seafront with key attractions such as the Wellington and Britannia Piers, the Sea Life Centre, the new Marina Centre and the Pleasure Beach. The area is steeped in history with multiple buildings and structures of historic significance.

The area is also a key corridor of movement, providing facilities to support walking, cycling, hire scooters, horse and cart trips, sight-seeing trains, public transport, and private vehicles. It is therefore important that all proposals ensure the safe and convenient movement of residents and visitors.

Beyond the immediate seafront, moving west inland, there is a large area comprising large terraces that traditionally served as the main holiday lets, bed & breakfast, visitor accommodation. Such buildings have a distinct historic character, however, over the last 20 years there has been a transition to other uses, predominantly permanent residential accommodation, but also including Houses in Multiple Occupancy. While there is undoubtedly an important role for this accommodation to play in providing lower-cost accommodation, they can sometimes have amenity impacts both on their residents and on adjoining residents. Previous local plans have sought to prevent HMO use in the Great Yarmouth Seafront and back of seafront areas.

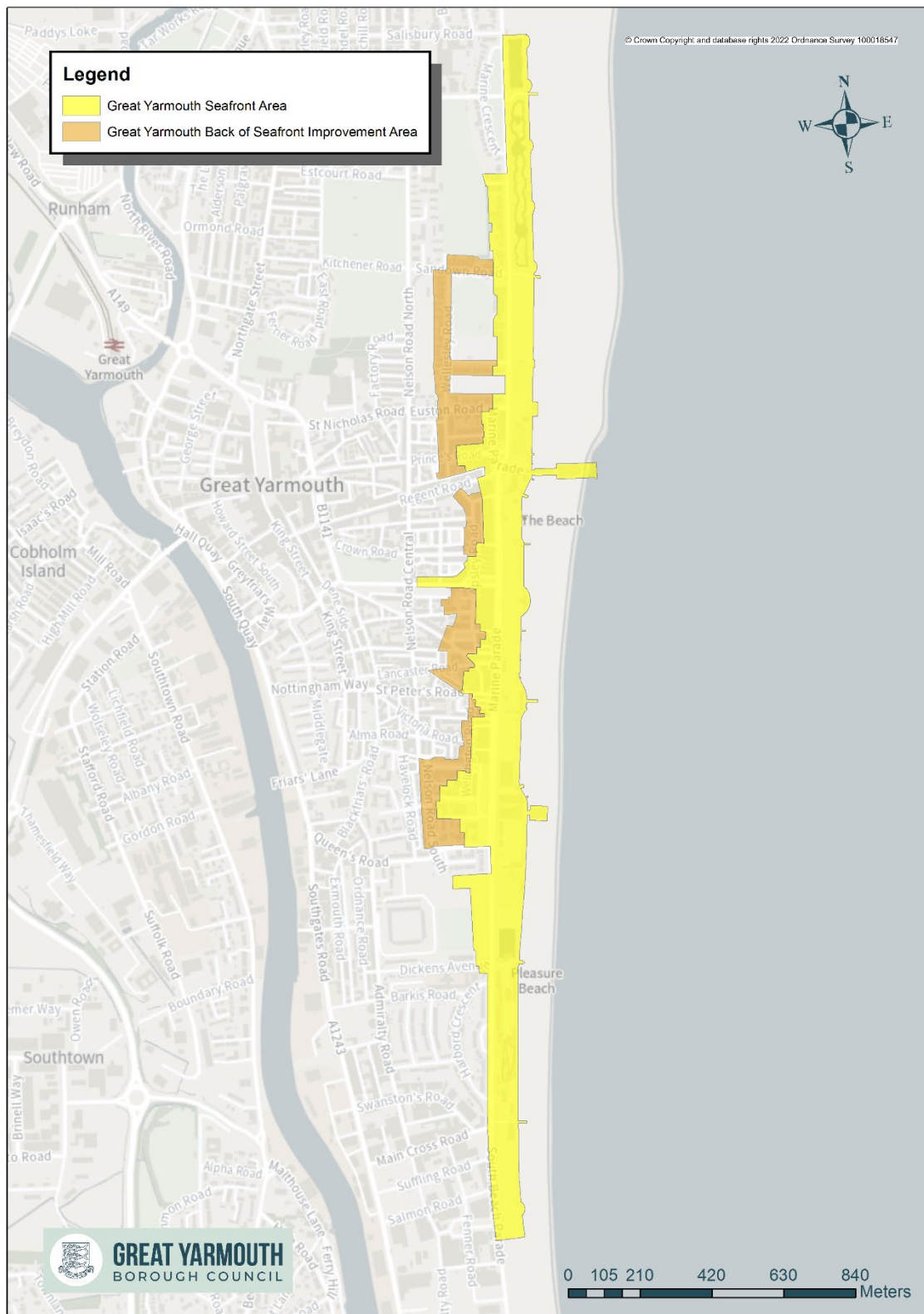


Figure 7- Great Yarmouth Seafront area and 'Back of Seafront' area as identified in the existing Local Plan

Question 47

What uses/development should be encouraged within the Great Yarmouth Seafront area?

Question 48

Are there any uses/development which should be restricted within the Great Yarmouth Seafront area?

Question 49

Is there anything else that should be prioritised within the Great Yarmouth Seafront area?

Question 50

What uses should be supported or restricted in the area to the back of the seafront?

Gorleston Seafront

There is an opportunity for the Local Plan to build on the ambitions set out in the Gorleston Seafront Masterplan. The masterplan objectives seek to improve within the area:

- Conservation
- Wayfinding & local enhancements
- Sustainable transport & parking
- Accessibility
- Leisure attractions
- Environmental standards
- Events

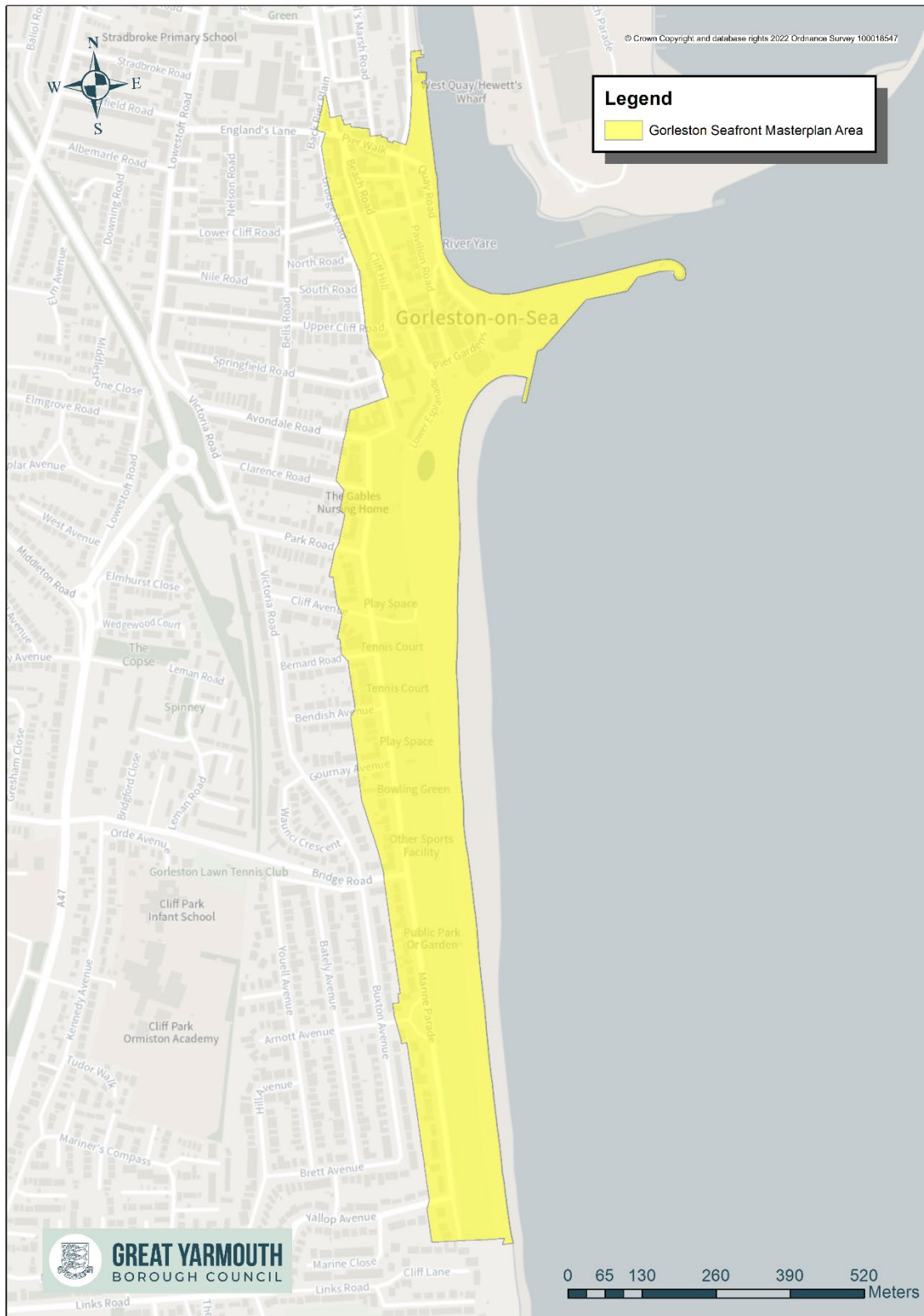


Figure 8 - Gorleston seafront area as identified in the Gorleston-on-Sea Masterplan

Question 51

Should the plan include a policy to support development to achieve the above objectives for Gorleston seafront? Is there anything else that such a policy should include?

Open Space, Community Services and Facilities Planning Policies

Open Spaces

[National planning policy](#) identifies that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. National planning policy seeks to protect existing open spaces unless:

- the space is demonstrably surplus to requirements; or
- the loss will be replaced in quantity and quality; or
- the alternative open space provision benefits outweigh the loss.

In addition to open space protection, national planning policy allows communities to designate 'Local Green Spaces' through local plans and [neighbourhood plans](#). For those parishes with adopted neighbourhood plans, communities have already identified their own Local Green Spaces, therefore there is no need to identify any further spaces within these areas. Under national policy, such spaces will have protection consistent with [Green Belt](#) and will only be designated where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves,
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

The Borough Council has reviewed the Local Green Spaces suggested through the 'call for sites' using the above criteria. This has identified some sites that may warrant Local Green Space designation.

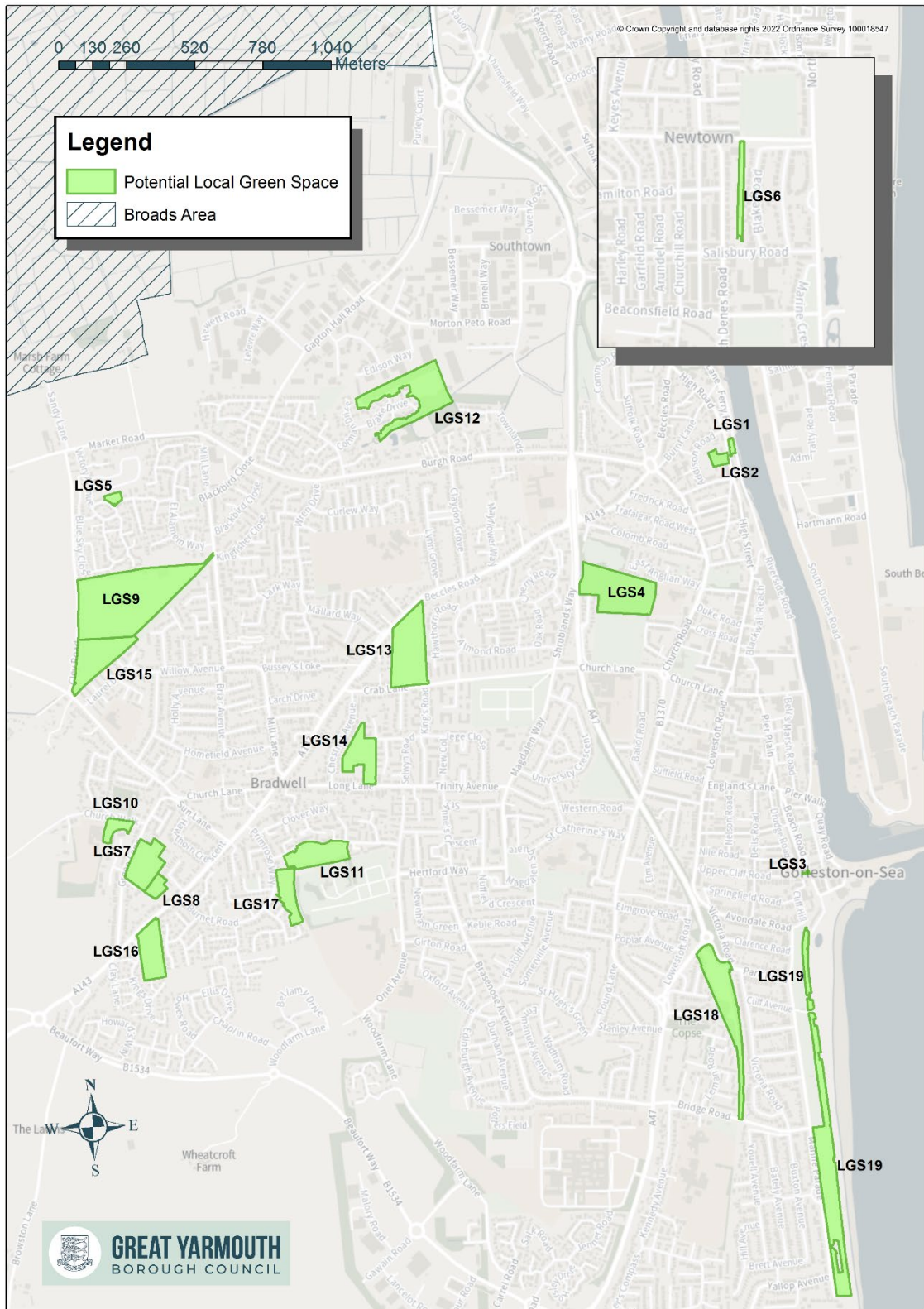


Figure 9- Potential Local Green Spaces

Question 52

Should the Local Plan have a specific policy to protect its open spaces, or rely on national planning policy to do so?

Question 53

a) Should the Local Plan identify Local Green Spaces?

b) Do you agree or disagree with any of the spaces identified?

Community Facilities

Community facilities are a type of infrastructure essential in maintaining sustainable communities. They can be wide-ranging, including facilities such as schools, colleges and other educational facilities and community centres, doctors, dental surgeries, public houses, local shops, cultural buildings, and sport and recreational facilities. In smaller settlements, facilities can be limited to just a public house or post office/convenience store; nonetheless, such facilities hold value to the communities that they serve.

[National planning policy](#) is clear that policies should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

Previous local plans have sought to protect such facilities by permitting their loss only where criteria are met such as marketing evidence demonstrating that the use is no longer viable.

The [Community Right to Bid](#) as introduced by the Localism Act, offer communities the opportunity to identify community facilities as Assets of Community Value. Where an asset is listed, community groups get a chance to prepare a business case and put in an offer to buy the asset when it comes up for sale. The Local plan could give increased protection to Assets of Community Value to give communities a greater chance of securing the asset.

Question 54

Should the local plan continue to protect all existing community facilities as far as it is possible to do so?

Question 55

Where it is not possible or viable to retain an existing community facility, should policy require further consideration of how the community may be served (alternatives) before allowing its loss?

Question 56

Should certain community facilities be afforded more protection than others, for example those listed as an Asset of Community Value?

Climate Change Planning Policies

Local plans have an important role in helping to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring development adapts to the impacts of climate change. This can be through locating development in accessible locations which minimises the need for the use of the private car, supporting renewable energy developments and ensuring new development is safe from flooding and coastal erosion.

The Council's Sustainability Strategy (2022) sets out a strategy for how the Council will work with stakeholders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy sets a target for Council operations and estates to be net zero by 2035. The strategy sets an action for the Local Plan review to encourage low carbon development.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

[National planning policy](#) requires that local plans include a positive strategy for the development of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure. National policy also requests local planning authorities to consider identifying suitable areas for renewable energy development. It states that developments for new wind turbines should only be permitted where suitable areas have been identified and local concerns resolved. A key issue for renewable energy development in Great Yarmouth is the proximity to the Broads and the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the potential for such development to impact upon the setting of these protected landscapes. The Broads Landscape Sensitivity Study for Renewable and Infrastructure 2012 ([Part 1](#)) ([Part 2](#)) identifies that wind turbines in most parts of the borough, particularly those higher than 50m in height, would have a visual impact upon the Broads.

As part of the call for sites the Council invited submissions for renewable energy development, 3 sites were submitted, and we would welcome your view on them.

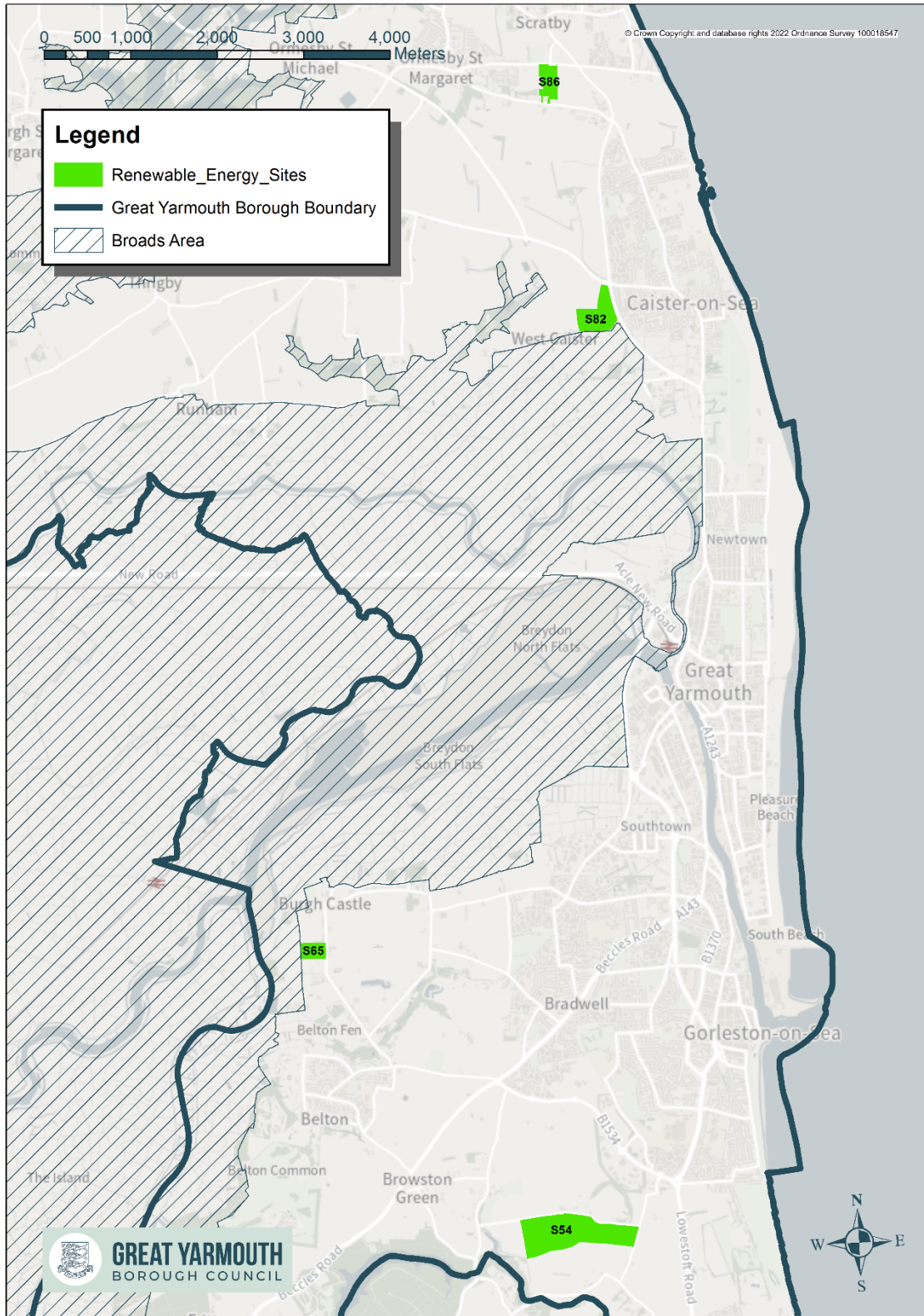


Figure 10- Sites Submitted during 'Call for Sites' for consideration for Renewable Energy Development

Question 57

a) Should the Local Plan identify suitable areas for renewable energy development?

b) Are there any areas of the borough which you think would be suitable for renewable energy development such as those submitted through the call for sites?

c) if the Local Plan does not identify suitable area, what sort of positive strategy towards renewable energy development should it contain?

Sustainable Construction

[National planning policy](#) does not allow local plans to set energy efficiency standards for new homes which go beyond standards set out in the [Building Regulations](#). However, the Council can set higher standards for non-domestic buildings. However, energy efficiency standards are likely to increase the cost of construction which could make non-residential development less financially viable to develop.

There are other ways in which planning policies can help achieve energy efficiency and carbon reductions without setting standards for buildings such as through setting design requirements for the orientation of buildings and tree planting.

Question 58

How can the local plan encourage more sustainable buildings which reduce carbon emissions?

Question 59

Should the local plan include energy efficiency standards for non-residential development?

Flood Risk

Large parts of Great Yarmouth are at a high risk from flooding, mainly from the sea. Areas of the waterfront in Gorleston are also at risk. These areas benefit from flood defences which will protect against most flood events. However, in extreme events there is a risk of overtopping and breaches. Elsewhere in the borough there are parts of Belton, Bradwell, Burgh Castle, Caister, Hemsby and Winterton which suffer from flood risk from the sea, rivers and surface water.

[National planning policy](#) contains comprehensive policy on managing flood risk and there is no need for the Local plan to repeat this.

However, national planning policy requires development to be steered away from areas at risk from flooding. However, this is not practical in Great Yarmouth given the majority of town is at risk from flooding. There are sustainability benefits of allowing development in the town despite the risk of flooding. There may also be other parts of the borough where there are sustainability benefits which outweigh the risk of flooding, for example the re-use of brownfield land along the waterfront in Gorleston. National planning policy and existing local planning policy still requires development to be made safe from flooding for example through raised floor levels and evacuation plans.

Question 60

Are there any parts of the borough where a more flexible approach is needed to allow development in flood zones which have wider sustainability benefits?

Question 61

Are there any other local policy considerations which are needed in relation to flood risk?

Coastal Change

Some parts of the borough are at risk from coastal erosion with significant numbers of properties at risk within the next 100 years. The existing Local Plan has robust policies in place ([Policy GSP4](#) and [Policy E2](#)) to manage development within the area at risk and to allow development to relocate in line with national planning policy and these could be carried forward into the new Local Plan. In terms of relocation there is an opportunity for the Local Plan to specifically identify sites for relocation or require allocations for housing development to include plots for relocation

Question 62

- a) Should the Local Plan allocate a site for the relocation of properties at risk from erosion?**
- b) Should any housing allocations in areas at risk, such as Hemsby and Scratby include a requirement for a certain number of plots to be made available for relocation?**

Question 63

Do you have any other thoughts on possible planning policies for managing risk to coastal change?

Natural Environment Planning Policies

Biodiversity

The borough has a natural environment that is rich in biodiversity and includes internationally recognised nature designations such as SSSIs, SPAs (including Marine), SACs and Ramsar sites. These designations provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity.

[National planning policy](#) sets out a comprehensive suite of policies for protecting habitats and the Local Plan does not need repeat these. However, the national policy does require local plans to map and safeguard local wildlife -rich habitats and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity as well as the ecological networks connecting them. In Great Yarmouth these will constitute County Wildlife Sites as identified by Norfolk County Council. Ecological networks have been identified in the [Landscape Character Assessment](#).

New development can potentially impact upon internationally protected habitats, principally through disturbance from recreational activities. To manage this, the Council working with other local planning authorities in Norfolk, has prepared a strategy to mitigate this impact known as the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Avoidance Mitigation Strategy. It is likely that this strategy will be needed to support growth set out in the new Local Plan.

The Environment Act 2021 introduces a statutory requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain from most types of new development. In most cases this requirement will be met on site. However, in some case it will only be possible to deliver off-site net gain. The new Local Plan could identify specific sites or areas where off-site net gain could be directed to.

Question 64

a) Should the Local Plan identify specific sites for biodiversity net gain?

b) If so, are you aware of any sites which may be suitable?

Question 65

Do you have any other thoughts on possible local planning policies for biodiversity?

Landscape

The borough of Great Yarmouth has a diverse landscape character containing part so the Broads and the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/media/1236/Landscape-Character-Assessment/pdf/Landscape_Character_Assessment.pdf?m=635720551564970000 identifies a range of different landscape characters across the borough with recommendations on how the landscapes should be managed with respect to development. Existing local planning policy requires developments to have regard to the findings of the assessment.

The existing Local Plan also identifies '[strategic gaps](#)' between settlements where there is a risk of coalescence and loss of the individual character of settlements and their landscape setting. Such gaps include between Great Yarmouth and Caister, Caister and Ormesby, Belton and Bradwell, Hopton and Gorleston and Corton (in East Suffolk) and Hopton.

The Broads Authority have identified some of the darkest areas of the Broads within the borough of Great Yarmouth, particularly to the north of the borough near Somerton (see [Broads Dark Sky Surveys \(2015-2016\)](#)). The [Broads Local Plan](#) has a policy restricting illumination in these locations. The Great Yarmouth Local Plan could consider a similar policy for areas adjacent to these areas.

Question 66

Are there any particular landscapes outside of the Broads and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which should receive specific protection in the Local Plan?

Question 67

a) Should the Council continue to identify and protect strategic gaps between settlements?

b) Are there any gaps missing from the existing plan which should be protected?

Question 68

Should the Council protect areas of dark skies adjacent to protected areas within the Broads?

Historic Environment Planning Policies

[National planning policy](#) provides detail on how both designated heritage assets, such as listed buildings, and non-designated heritage assets can be protected and enhanced. There is no need for the new Local Plan to repeat this. However, national policy requires local plans to set out a positive strategy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Question 69

What could be included in a positive strategy in the local plan to protect and enhance heritage assets? How could such a strategy support and influence Neighbourhood Plans?

Heritage assets

The borough has a rich and varied historic environment including 431 listed buildings, 14 scheduled monuments and 18 conservation areas. These heritage assets make an important contribution to the borough's culture, character, and distinctiveness; however, some heritage assets are in a poor condition and require active intervention to prevent them falling into disrepair. The current Local Plan promotes heritage-led regeneration, recognising its role in helping to create popular successful places with character, and as a valuable catalyst for regeneration. In recent years, the Council has collaborated with the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust, Historic England, and the National Trust on a variety of heritage regeneration initiatives, for example, establishing the Great Yarmouth High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and continued repair and refurbishment of buildings along King Street.

Question 70

How might the Local Plan continue to prioritise heritage-led regeneration across the borough? Are there any specific areas in the borough where further active intervention may be necessary, and why?

Non-designated heritage assets

Non-designated heritage assets are not part of the national list of historically or architecturally significant buildings, however they can be of local interest and worthy of preservation. As these assets are not protected in the same way as, for example, nationally listed buildings or scheduled ancient monument, they can be prone to unnecessary loss.

The current Local Plan provides some resistance to the potential loss of non-designated heritage assets. Demolition is only permitted in limited circumstances, for example where the building is structurally unsound and beyond feasible repair, or where it has been demonstrated that all practicable alternative uses to sustain the building has been explored.

Councils can identify specific, non-designated heritage assets within their local plans through a policy mechanism called 'local listing'. The inclusion of a building or structure on a Council's 'local list' can be a planning consideration when determining planning applications and can also help to support the identification of buildings and structure of local importance in Neighbourhood Plans.

Question 71

What level of protection should be given to non-designated heritage assets?

Question 72

Should the Local Plan seek to identify non-designated heritage assets through a 'local list'? If so, what local criteria might be used to help identify specific, non-designated heritage assets?

Anything Else?

This consultation has sought to get views on some of the key local issues and considerations which the new Local plan will need to address. There will likely be other issues and planning policies which the Local Plan will need to include which are not covered by the above questions.

The existing Local Plan has policies on amenity, rural worker dwellings, conversion of rural buildings, replacement dwellings, extensions, annexes, kiosks and stalls, rural retailing, equestrian development, pollution and hazards, telecommunications, parking standards and foul drainage which haven't been specifically covered above. It is likely that the new Local Plan will retain some of these policies however, this will depend on proposed reforms to the planning system which include the creation of new national development management policies which local plans are not expected to replicate.

Question 73

Should the above listed policies be retained in the new Local Plan?

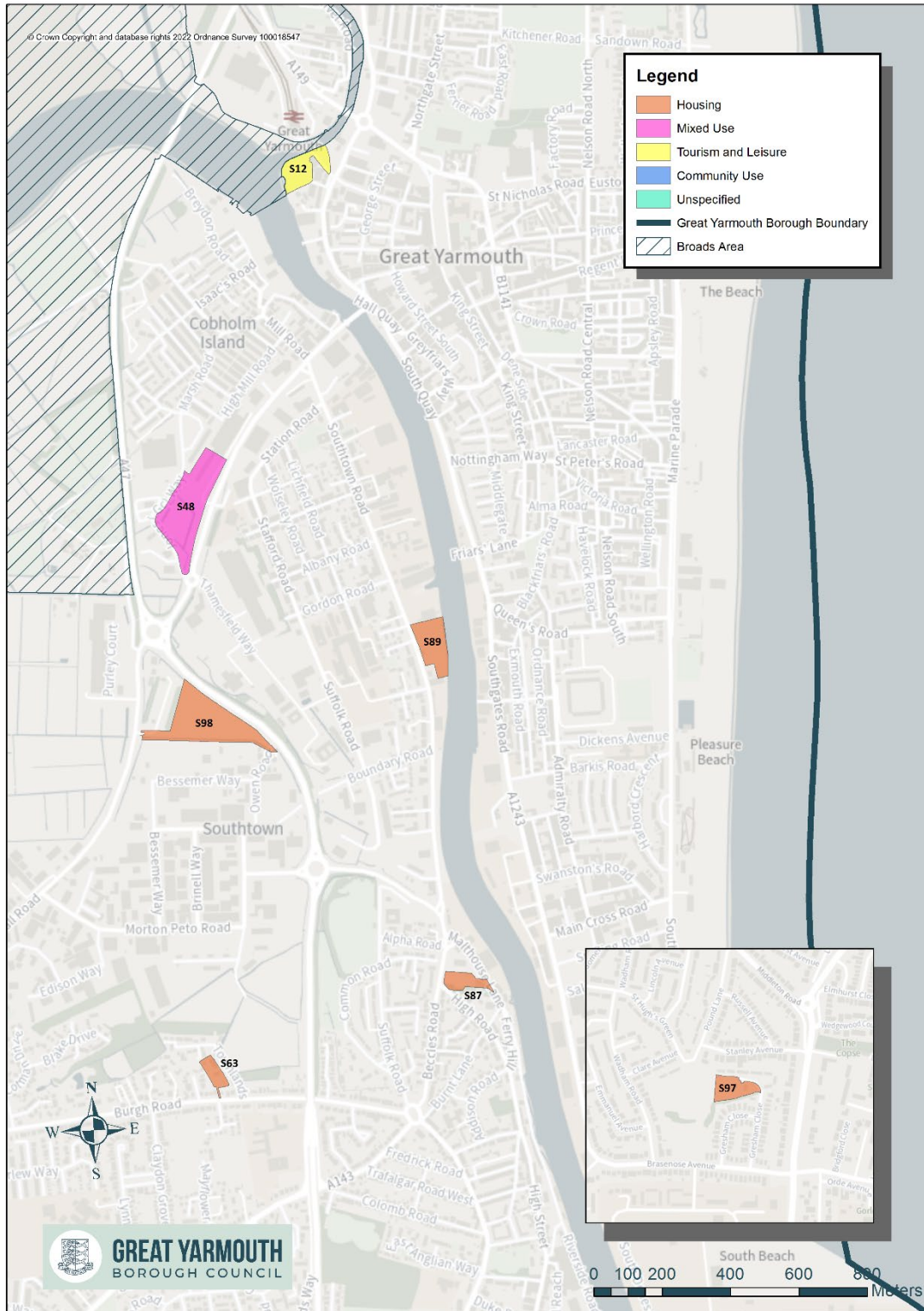
Question 74

Is there anything else the Local Plan should contain which has not been covered by the questions above?

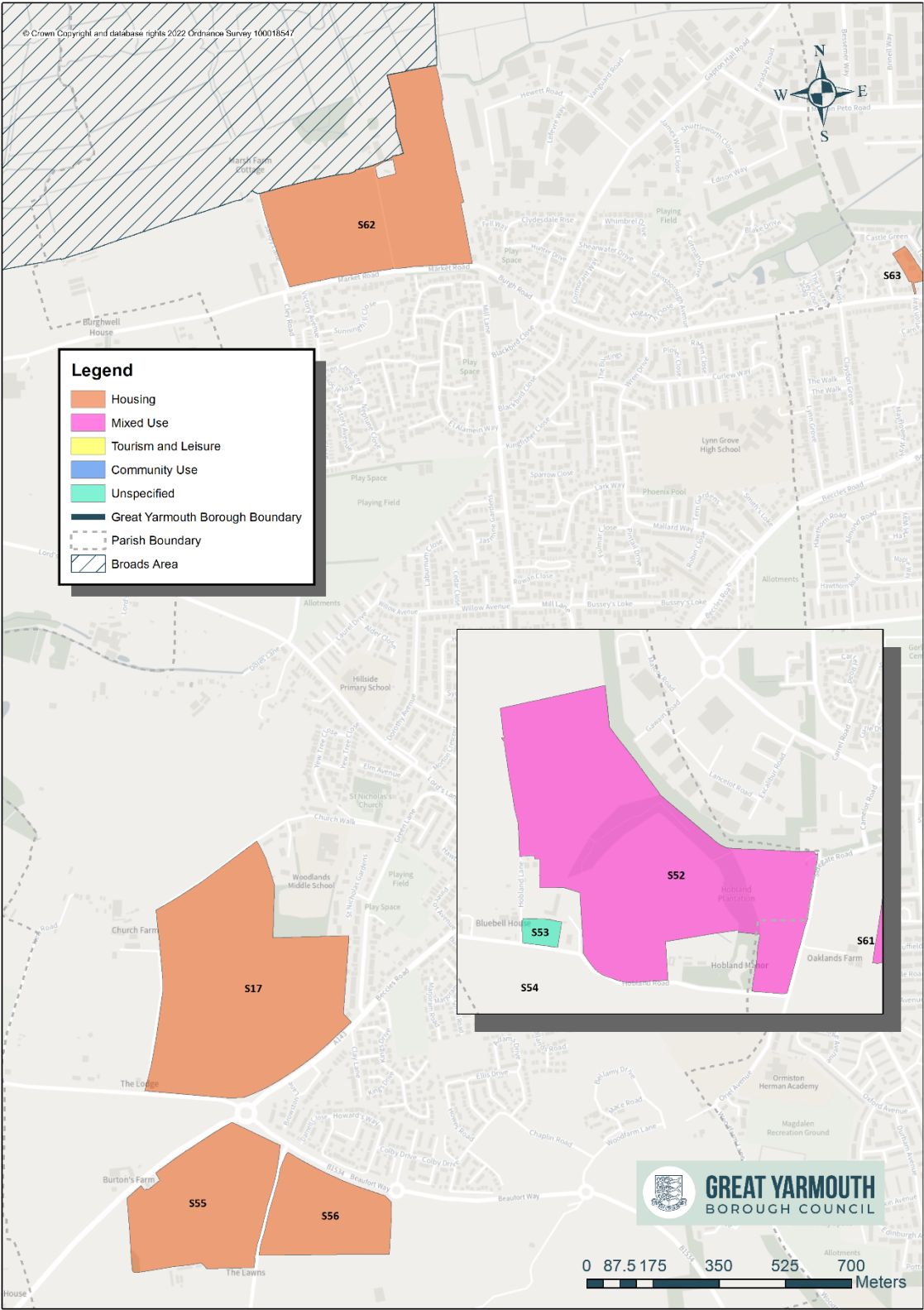
Appendix 1 – Maps of Potential Sites for Development

Great Yarmouth, Gorleston and Bradwell

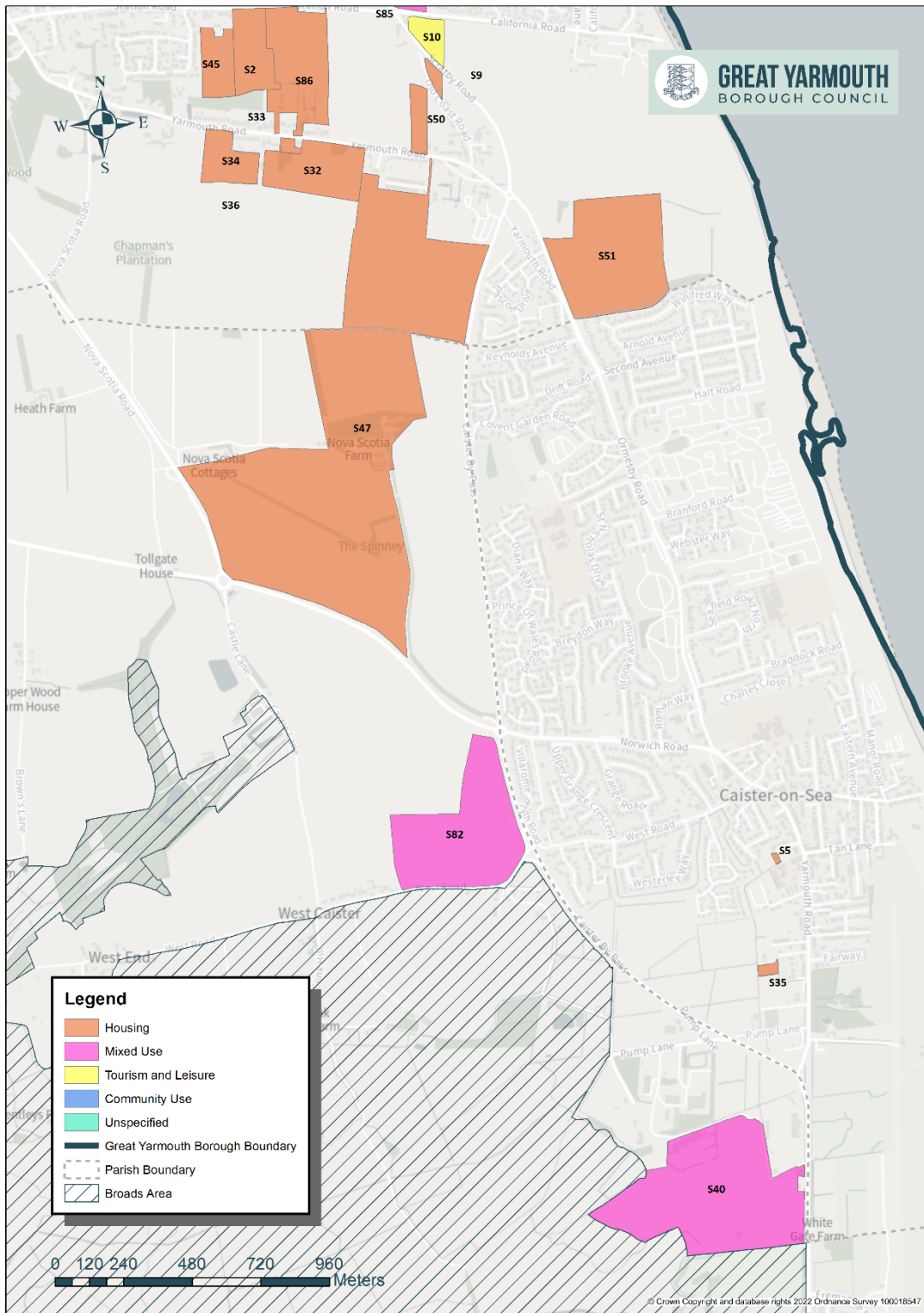
Great Yarmouth and Gorleston



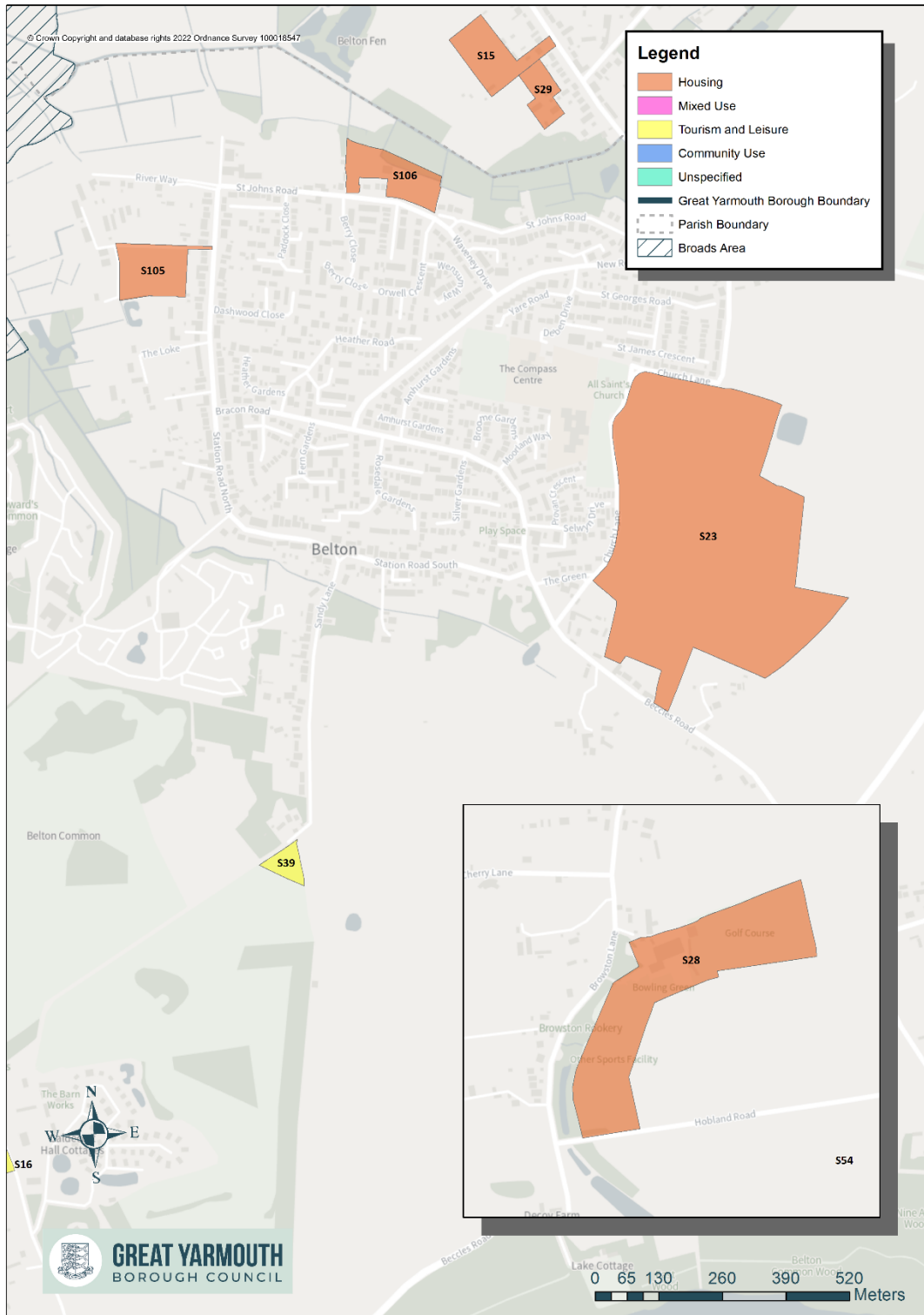
Bradwell



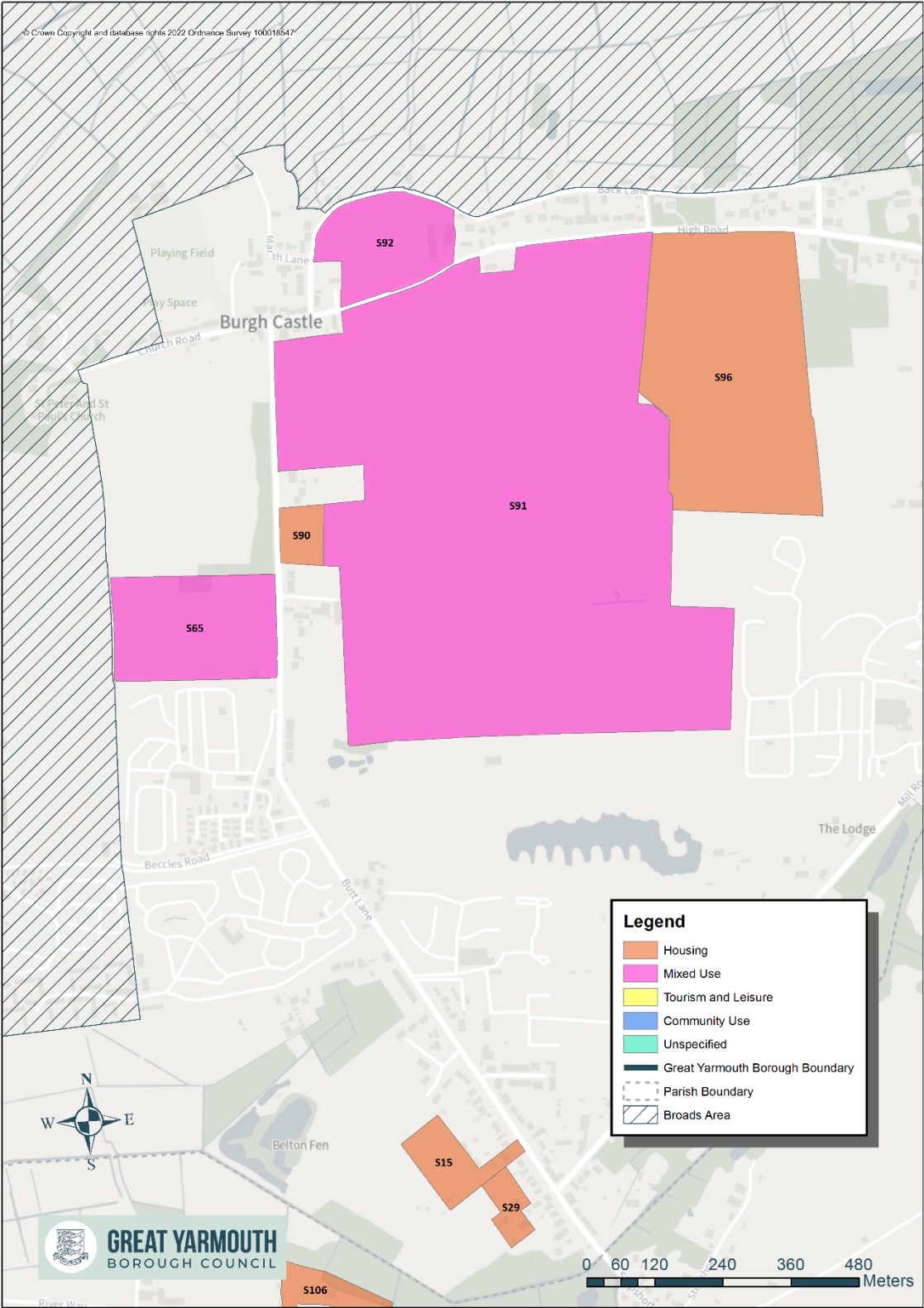
Caister-on-Sea



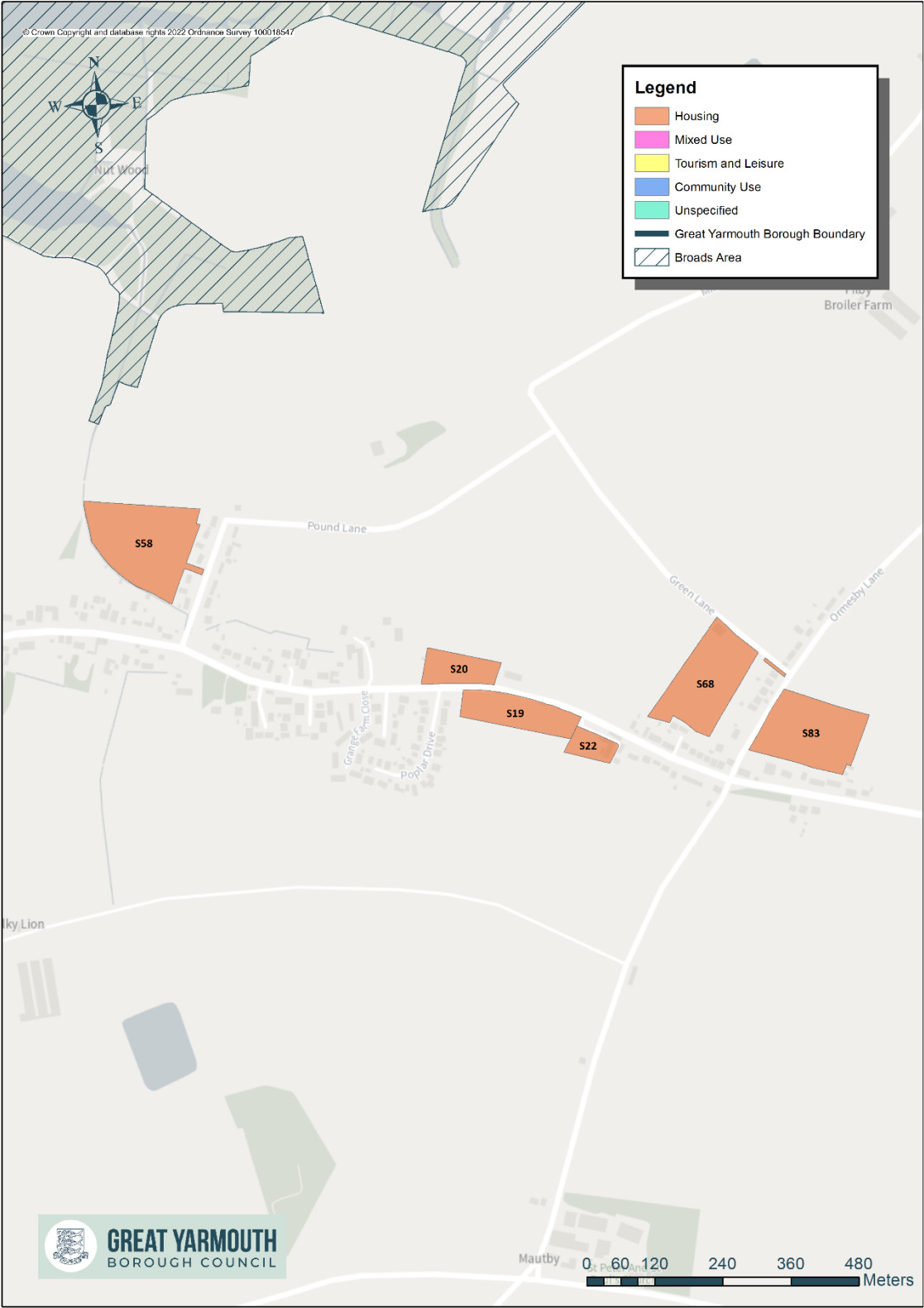
Belton



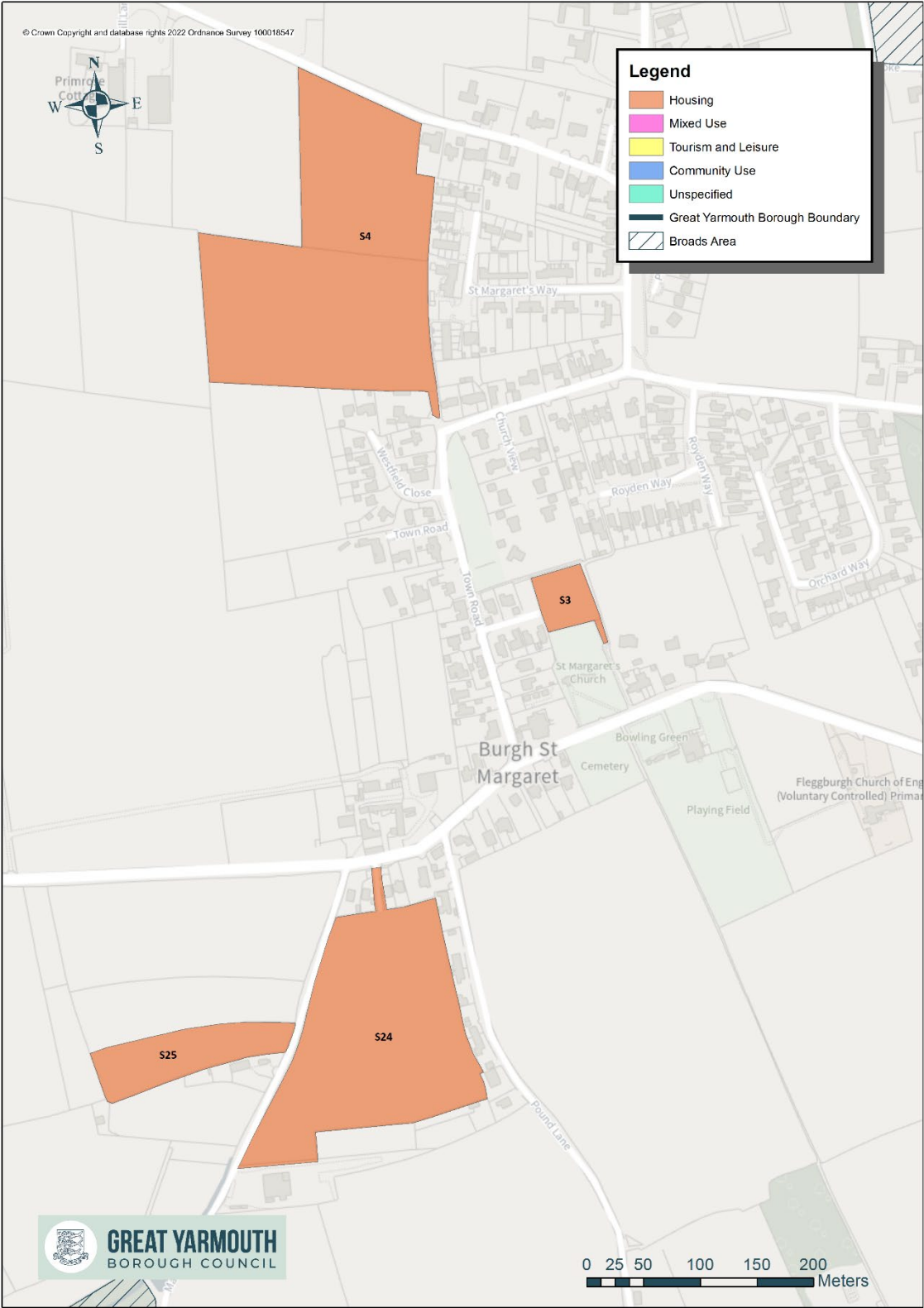
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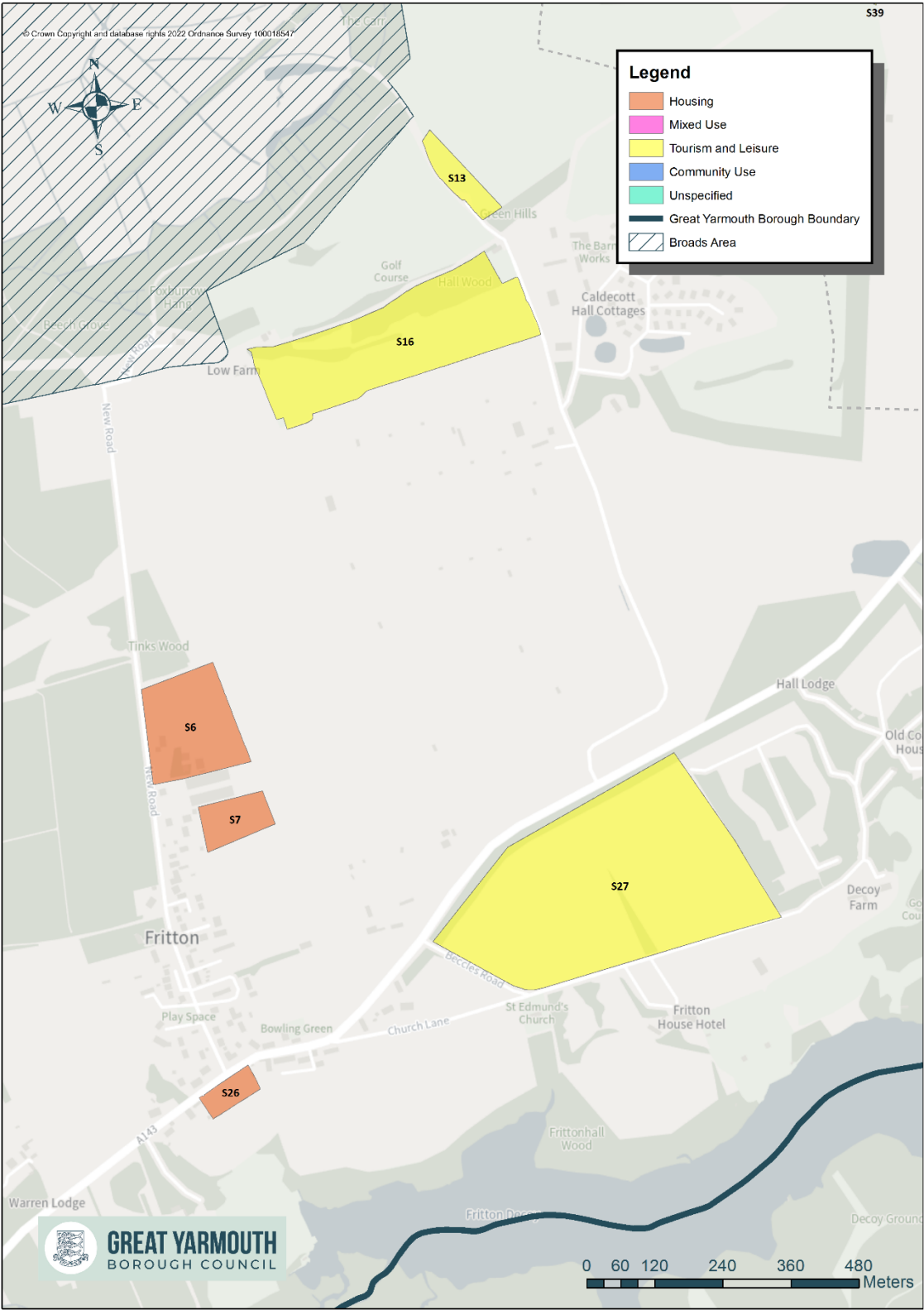
Filby



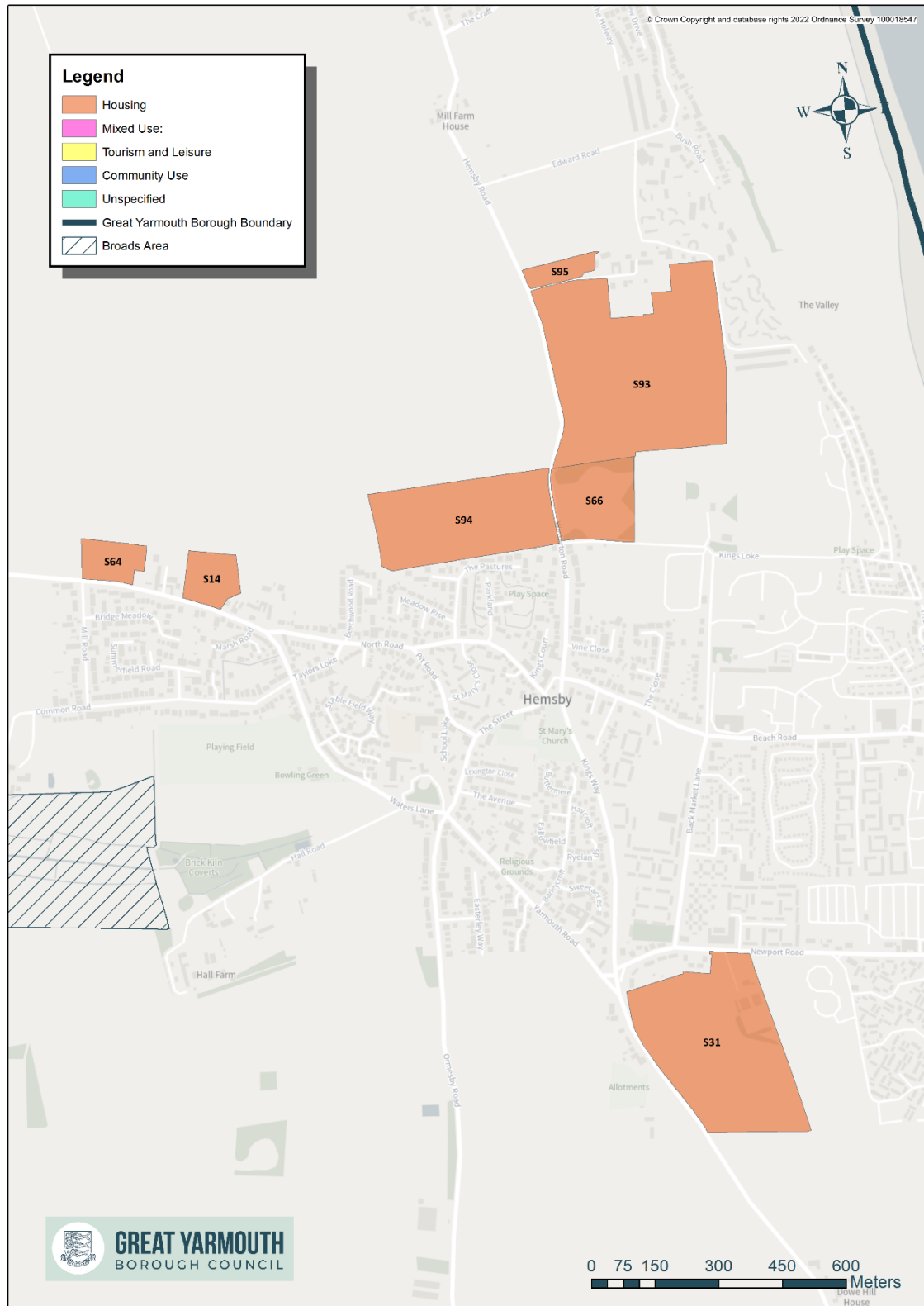
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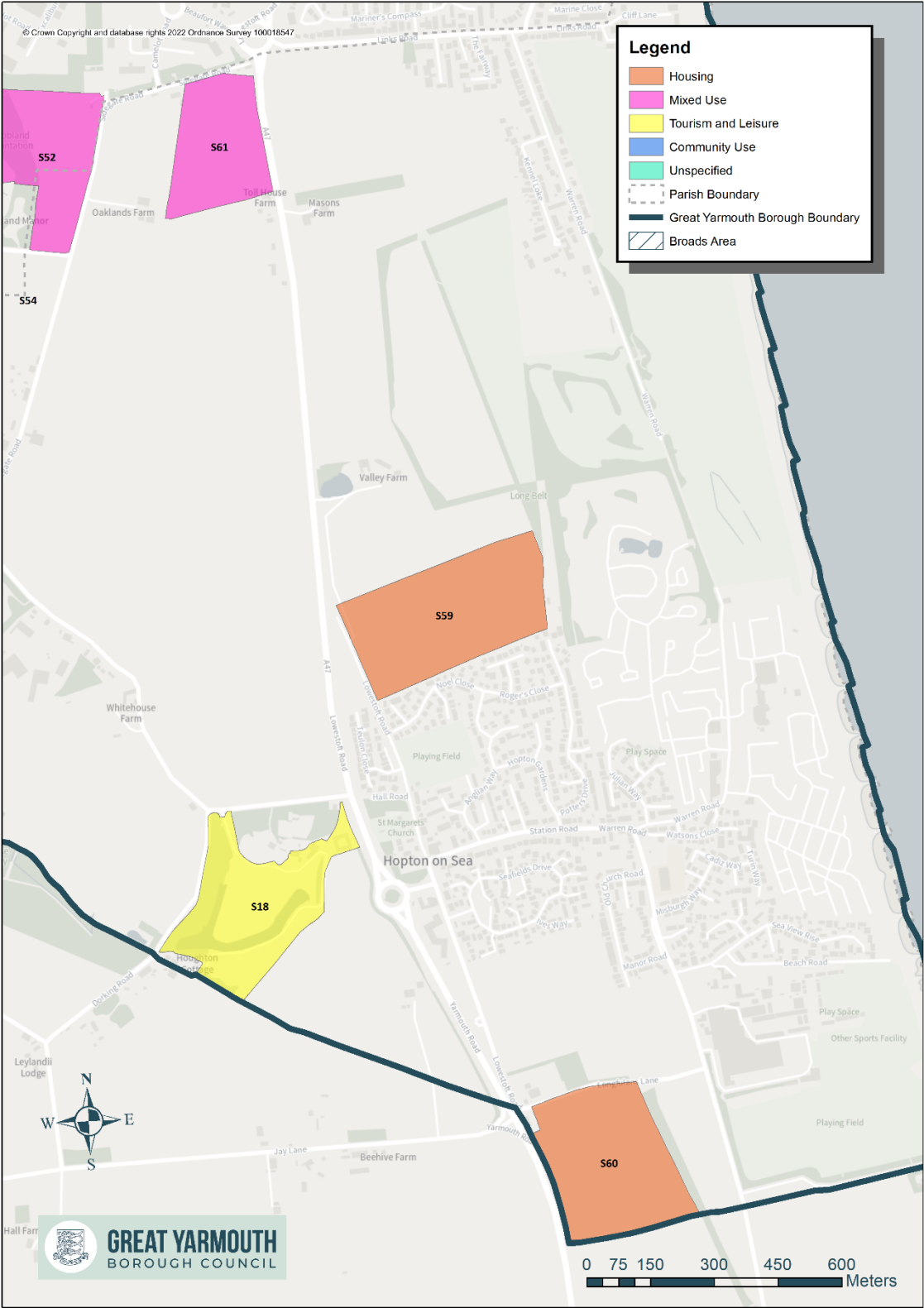
Fritton and St Olaves



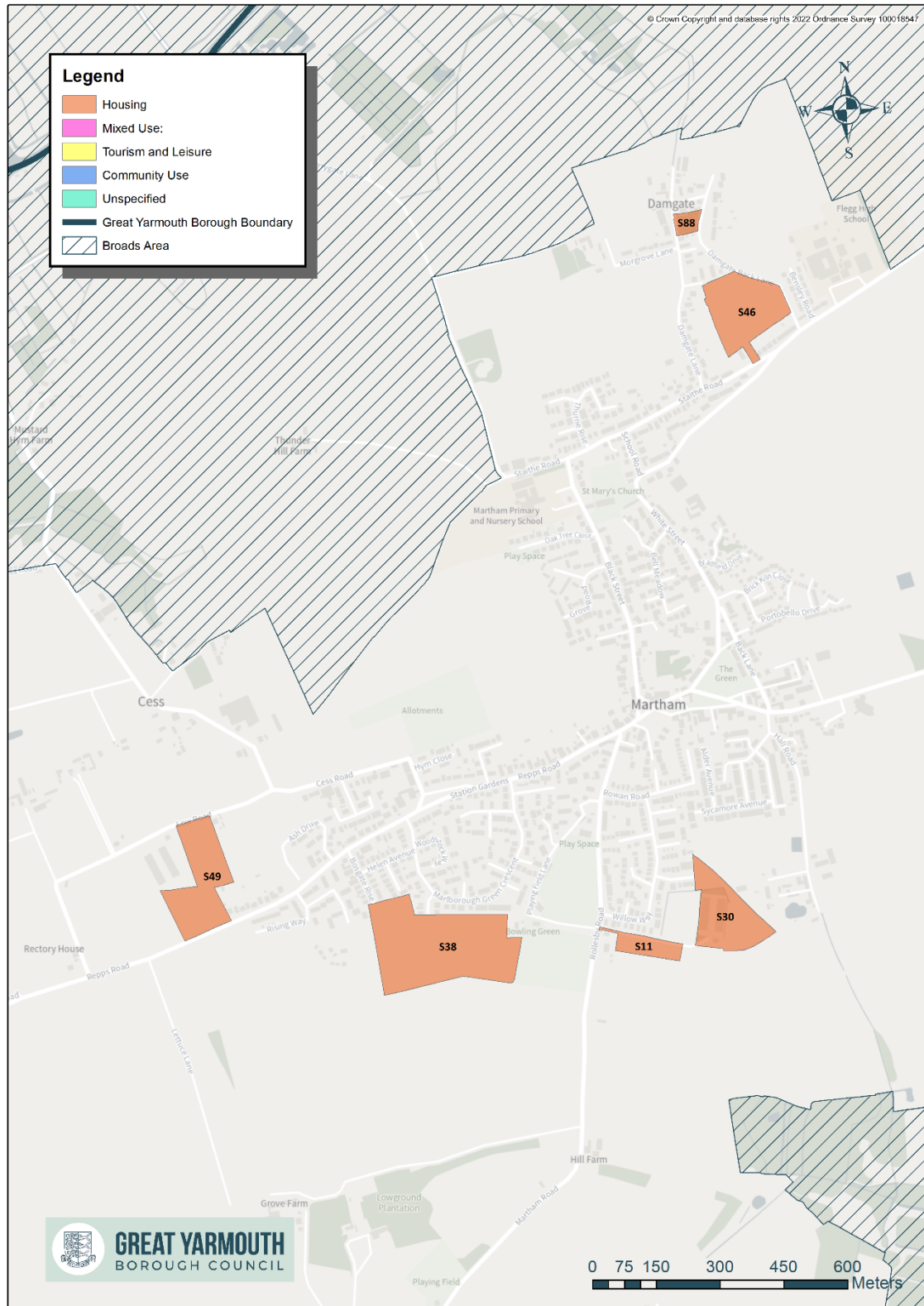
Hemsby



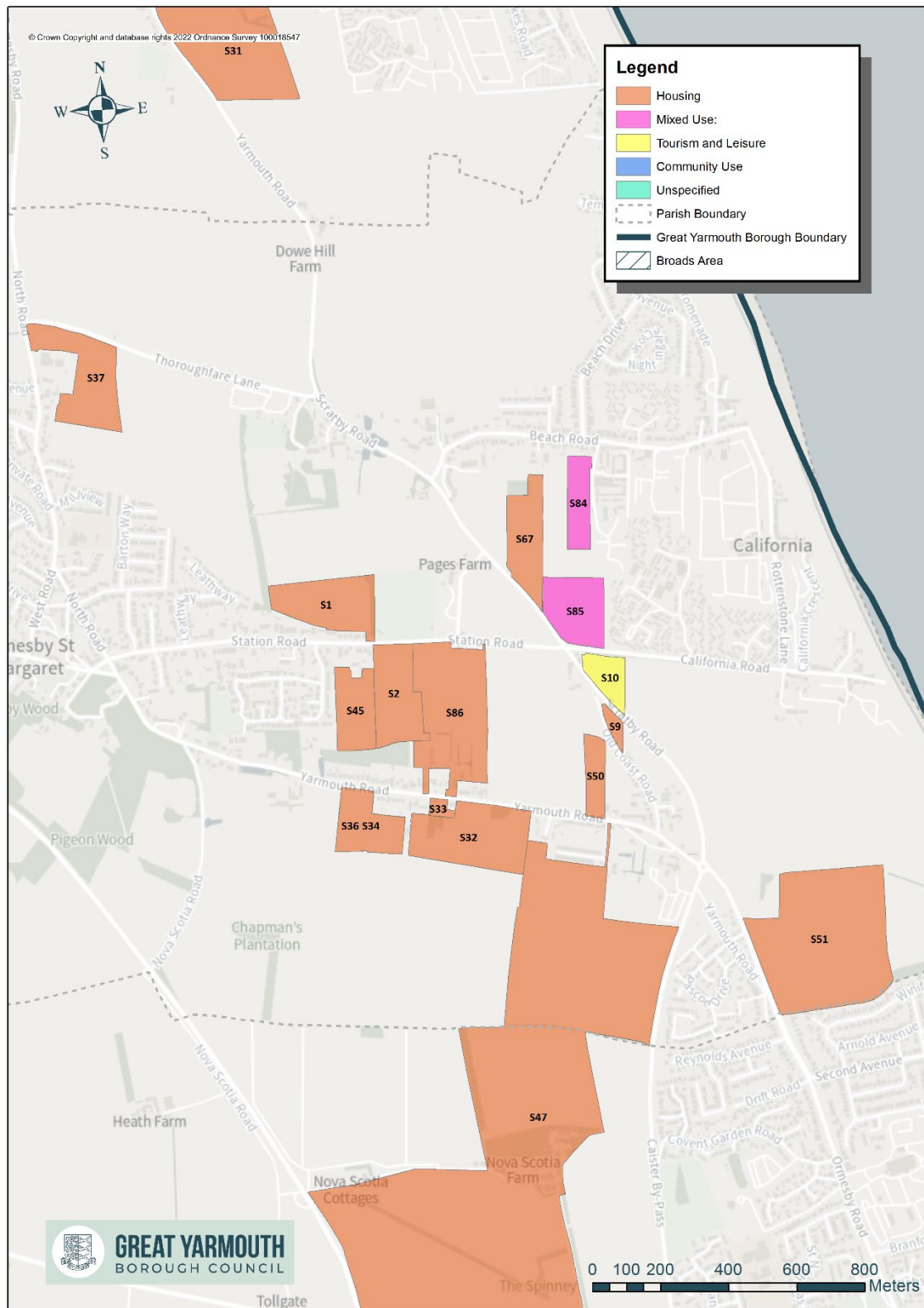
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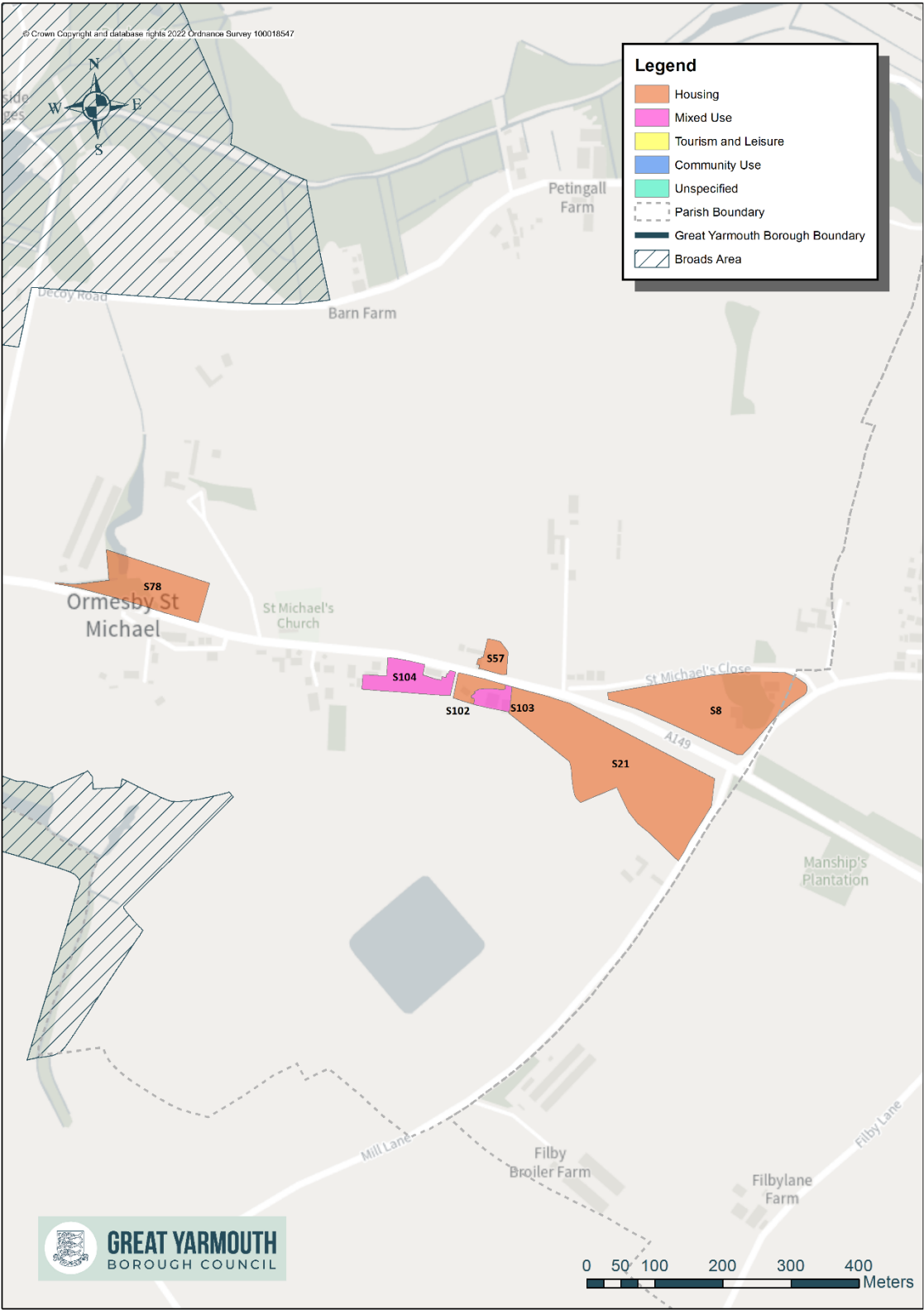
Martham



Ormesby St Margaret and Scratby



Ormesby St Michael



Repps with Bastwick

