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GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EMPLOYMENT LAND STUDY

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 POLICY CONTEXT

This employment land study for Great Yarmouth is part of a joint exercise on behalf of Great Yarmouth and Waveney Districts to assess future employment land needs for both authorities and employment land policy for the sub region as a whole. The latter is intended to reflect the economic and employment strategies of the draft East of England Plan (DEEP). The employment land policies of the individual Districts provide its basic building blocks. The study has produced a report for each District and a sub-regional report.

The report identifies the DEEP policies (E3, E4, GYL1) which guide development in the sub-region. These repeat the government's advice to every district, to: "provide a range and choice of sites and premises to meet quantitative and qualitative needs of business" with the additional guidance to provide 'strategic employment location sites', the primary example of which is the planned East Port project in Great Yarmouth (and land to support it). It also summarises the current policies applicable to each District from their Local Plans. These will be developed into the various local planning documents which collectively make up the authorities' Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), notably the core strategy and the site specific allocations.

The sub-region for planning purposes and most of the analysis undertaken is defined simply as the two local authority areas, although a distinction for employment areas has been made in Waveney between Lowestoft and Waveney rural and market towns. Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth correspond approximately to an economic sub-region but the report comments that this has yet to be defined.

2 EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Since 1991 employment in the sub-region has displayed considerable volatility, first declining in the early '90s then expanding in the second half of the decade, but still lower in 2003 than it had been in 1991, in both Great Yarmouth and Waveney. Local performance was markedly poorer than the regional average. The losses were concentrated in primary industry (agriculture, fishing) manufacturing and in some services, including the distribution and transport sector.

Employment per capita was particularly low in construction and financial and business services. High location quotients (specialisation) are evident in sectors like tourism and energy but there is limited employment in knowledge-based activity.

Economic disadvantage in both districts is reflected in unemployment and activity rates, earnings, skills, business formation and deprivation indicators, although there has been something of a recovery of growth in recent years.

3 BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

A questionnaire was mailed to more than 2,300 companies. Replies were received from over 400 companies employing more than 9,000 people - a good response and likely to be reasonably representative of private sector business characteristics. In Great Yarmouth replies were received from 227 firms, mainly in the manufacturing, wholesale and transport, and business services sectors.

The most notable findings of the survey were the low employment densities reported and a widespread optimism about future growth. No less than 57% of responding firms expected to increase their staff numbers within three years, an indication of considerable confidence in the economic outlook. The optimism was not confined to particular industry sectors, but was evident across the board. Relatively few businesses had additional site requirements . however, not surprising given the low employment densities

4 EMPLOYMENT LAND FIELD SURVEY

A field survey of employment land in Great Yarmouth and Waveney classified sites into six groups:

- riverside industrial and port areas, 119 has (Great Yarmouth 101Has)
- older estates with converted buildings, 7 has (Great Yarmouth 0 Has)
- modern and modernised estates, 223 has (Great Yarmouth 106 Has)
- mixed developments, 162 has (Great Yarmouth 66 Has)
- single user developments, 63 has (Great Yarmouth 0 Has)
- business parks. 44 has (Great Yarmouth 33 Has)

The waterfront areas (Type 1) contain a high proportion of vacant buildings and land, and many had poor access. The Borough had no estates classified to the older estates with converted buildings category **(**Type 2**)**. The more modern estates (Type 3) were mostly well let to a range of users including manufacturing, maintenance, auto sector, depots, storage and bulky goods and building materials retailing. Mixed developments (Type 4**)** were also well let to a similar range of users as the more modern estates. There were no single user developments (Type 5) in Great Yarmouth, these being mostly on green field, rural sites in Waveney. Finally, there are only two real business parks (Type 6), Beacon Park and Riverside (in Waveney), the former as yet little developed.

Conspicuous by their absence are mainstream office users or developments, with no real major town centre office development, and just a few recent schemes. There is hardly any speculative development, but public sector agencies have supported some specialist development including an innovation centre.

Large areas of industrial land have been or are being developed for retail and quasi-retail uses such as superstores, retail warehouses, car showrooms and builders merchants. However, for the main B1-B2-B8 employment uses there is little inward investment demand.

Waveney and Yarmouth appear to have much more land than they need, but the surpluses are in unattractive locations. In these areas land can be released. In contrast, there are shortages of land in popular locations, especially green field sites with good road access on the outskirts of town. While some users need waterfront access, the survey suggests that many do not, and those sites can be developed for mixed use – principally housing, offices, marina and allied uses, with port areas rationalised. But while there is considerable demand for modern space, speculative development is generally not viable. Housing is much more profitable to develop than employment space. Residential developers should therefore be obliged to build employment space under S106 agreements to provide more sustainable mixed use schemes.

5 ECONOMIC/EMPLOYMENT CHANGE TO 2021

An inferred sub-regional employment target (employment increase 2001-21 for Great Yarmouth and Waveney Districts) can be identified although the DEEP did not generally break down regional estimates to Districts. The inferred DEEP target (+7,200 jobs), compares with a higher target produced by the recent Norfolk Area Growth Study (NEGS) of +10,000 jobs, divided evenly between Great Yarmouth and Waveney.

The target is more optimistic than a long term trend projection, but there is considerable uncertainty about the level of growth that might arise up to 2021, and a number of factors suggest that the target is attainable. These include the impact of projects like East Port, proposals to promote the alternative energy sector, and the catalytic impact of the Urban Regeneration Company. It is also a figure which could be accommodated by increases in the resident labour force under certain assumptions. Finally, the survey indicated that in the short term at least, the outlook for employment growth in the sub-region was very buoyant.

It was concluded that the +10,000 employment target and equal division between the Districts should be taken as a basis for estimating potential employment land requirements. For this purpose the aggregate employment increase was broken down to 30 sectors using an employment structure derived from Experian projections underlying the DEEP.

6 EMPLOYMENT LAND IMPLICATIONS

A net change in employment land requirements was calculated by allocating employment in each of 30 sectors to land uses categories B1, B2 and B8 and then applying density ratios to estimate the land required. These transpose employment to floorspace via m^2 per worker figures, for each sector, and then a land requirement by assuming a plot ratio of land per m^2 of floorspace. Alternative density assumptions tested included a baseline with business park densities for B1 use, a first variant with higher B1 densities and a second variant with densities based on the results of the employment survey. The baseline assumption generated a net increase in B1 land requirement for the sub-region to 2021 of 17 has offset by fall in need for B2/B8 land of 14 has.

Density ratios used are typical ones that have been derived from a review of the available published survey evidence from a variety of places. Too much should not be read into the precision of has land requirements: it is emphasised that the numbers have to be regarded as an approximate guide, which imply considerable changes of use and redevelopment.

7 NEW ALLOCATIONS AND REMOVALS

While in the older port-riverside industrial areas there is considerable surplus land, some of which could be released quickly, there is also uncertainty concerning potential development and take-off of activities like the Great Yarmouth outer harbour and off-shore energy sector. For this reason some caution is appropriate with the speed of release of all the potential surplus identified, with a review in 3-5 years of the position with regard to these major developments.

On the basis of the field survey and interviews with local agents the consultants identified the potential need for further B2 employment land in Great Yarmouth

In Great Yarmouth up to 30 has in South Denes and Southtown is similarly surplus to probable needs and could be released in phases. Most unused land at Eurocentre in Great Yarmouth could be released. These releases should be in accordance with the forthcoming URC master plan.

8 PROPOSALS FOR POLICIES AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

At the sub-regional level the Districts and the regional planning bodies will be implementing defined policies set out in the DEEP, notably policies SS10 and policies E2-E7. In addition to the strategic regional industrial site identified to support port development the consultants recommend that Beacon Park in Great Yarmouth be designated as a regional scale facility, serving both Districts. Otherwise little change, subject to the Inquiry Panel’s recommendations for the DEEP, is foreseen. For Great Yarmouth, existing policies and allocations in the Local Plan will need to be updated to take account of the employment study’s estimates of land requirements. The land need changes will go forward to the site specific allocations in the Local Development Framework (LDFs). The District's existing policies, updated to take account of revised land need calculations, will go forward into the core strategy part of their LDFs.

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1. POLICY CONTEXT

This report appraises Great Yarmouth's employment land needs to 2021 as a component of a **sub-regional employment land review** for Great Yarmouth and Waveney combined. It is in effect a **'Great Yarmouth'** edition of the sub-regional report, paralleled by a **'Waveney'** edition. Each Borough report stands on its own as a self-contained document, but since the work was undertaken as an integrated exercise, includes a certain amount of data in respect of the two districts (the administrative sub-region), as a whole. This is therefore one of three reports, each with a degree of overlap with the others.

Starting with a brief policy review (Chapter 1) the report begins with an analysis of historic employment and business land change (Chapter 2) followed by a description of the two field surveys undertaken, first the survey of local companies (Chapter 3) and second the survey of current employment land provision (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 assesses potential future employment land allocations and disposals. As a principal basis for the long term assessment of employment land requirements Chapter 6 examines future employment expectations while Chapter 7 translates these projections to an employment land requirement. Chapter 8 makes recommendations for policies and Local Development Frameworks.

1.1 Study Rationale, ODPM Guidance, Local Development Frameworks

Formally, the need for local planning authorities to review employment land allocations stems from PPG3 Housing (2000) which asks them to:

"review all their non-housing allocations when reviewing their development plan and consider whether some of this land might be better used for housing or mixed use developments" (PPG3 para 42).

The revised 2005 PPG3 reiterated that LPAs should encourage:

"housing or mixed use developments which concern land allocated for industrial or commercial use in saved policies and development plan documents or redundant land or buildings in industrial or commercial use, but no longer needed…" unless three factors applied:

- did not conform to PPG;
- housing development would undermine the RSS planning for housing; strategy;
- a realistic prospect of the employment land allocation being taken up was demonstrated, or
- economic strategies would be undermined)

The requirement to undertake a review has been reinforced by three additional needs: first, to provide input into the statutory Local Development Frameworks being prepared by each authority; second to meet the policies set out in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and draft Regional Spatial Strategy/ East of England Plan (RSS14/EEP); and third to provide more specific input on business land needs identified for specific initiatives such as the Urban Regeneration Company (URC) master plan, the proposed East Port outer harbour project in Great Yarmouth and new industrial initiatives like renewable energy in Lowestoft.

For this purpose ODPM released “Employment Land Reviews – Guidance Note” prepared by consultants ERM in December 2004. The Guidance has been broadly followed although inevitably it is difficult for all the steps set out in such documents to be literally applicable to areas with greatly differing conditions of economic and population growth. Accordingly this study has simplified some of the procedure outlined in the Guidance

1.2 Regional/EERA Policies, Strategic Estates etc

The RES and the EEP include particular policies and objectives which need to be reflected in the Employment Land Review, following the earlier RPG6 which identified Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth as Priority Areas for Regeneration (EEP Policy **SS11**) Policies highlighted in the RES include [to achieve diversification of the economy] “the provision of high quality business land and space and regeneration of key Brownfield opportunities, such as at Lake Lothing”, and the three initiatives mentioned above, URC, East Port and renewable energy.

These policies are given specific labels in the EEP:

- **E3** (need to provide a range and choice of sites and premises to meet quantitative and qualitative needs of business);
- **E4** (need to provide a **strategic employment site** in **Great Yarmouth** for development associated with the port); and
- **GYL1** pertaining to the Lowestoft-Great Yarmouth sub-region, specifying the need to provide support for a wider group of industries including food processing, transport and tourism, environmental technologies and a research and teaching centre.
- **E2** which identifies job targets for some districts which are clearly germane to an employment land exercise.

In Great Yarmouth It goes on to name strategic locations of sites in **Gorleston** (Beacon Business Park) and **South Denes/East Port,** linking each to particular industry sectors. These spatial policies are augmented by quantificational policies.

1.3 District Employment Land Policies

Current policies are set out in the Borough Wide Plan, adopted February 2001. They may be broadly categorised as:

- general policies on sound planning principles, change of use and relocation (**EMPS 1,9,11-14,16**)
- specific policies related to land allocations (**EMPS 2-8,10**)
- specific policies related to ad hoc issues like temporary use, conversions, working from home, environmental protection etc (**EMPS 15, 17-22**)
- policies concerned with the existing and potential future port (**EMPS 23-35**)

The first and third groups of these are essentially local matters and would expect to go forward relatively unchanged into the LDF. The second group is clearly directly impacted by the present study, while the fourth group will have to take account of regional policies such as the strategic employment land designation.

Although the Norfolk County structure plan informs and provides the historic framework for the Local plan, from a sub-regional perspective the two District Plans' utility is limited since they are not co-ordinated or relate to the same timescales. Thus the Great Yarmouth Plan discusses how the employment land policies need to accommodate an increase in County workforce by 2006 [1]- which is nearly upon us.

The final chapter of the report makes recommendations on how employment land policies go forward into the Local Development Framework (LDF). These will be guided by PPS12.

1 Borough Wide Local Plan, op cit, para 1.3.3.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS LAND HISTORY

2.1 Introduction/Methodology

This chapter traces the changes in employment in Great Yarmouth, and the overall sub-region since 1991, with a comparison made with the East of England region as a whole. The analysis is a deskwork appraisal of changes in summary sectoral groups.

2.2 Economic Background and Historic Employment Change

The local economy

A review of the local economy of Great Yarmouth was undertaken as part of the feasibility study for the prospective East Port harbour project in the district[2] and further information on the Great Yarmouth economy is contained in another other recent studies. [3] Extracts from the first of these is provided as background in Appendix 1. It is not part of the Brief for this study to detail the local economic background, but the reports have some implications for the necessary judgement of appropriate employment targets up to the year 2016.[4] This concerns how far these should make up specific deficits like above average unemployment, in addition to catering for other net employment growth. The studies highlight three of these deficits:

- above average unemployment
- below average activity rates
- high proportion of part time (and seasonal) employment

The last of these can easily be overlooked compared with the first two.

This Chapter deals with Great Yarmouth characteristics, but more detail is provided in the sub-regional report for both Great Yarmouth and Waveney.

Employment change in Great Yarmouth and the sub-region since 1991

Table 2-1 provides an overall picture of employment change for the period 1991-1996-2001-2003 for which historic time series data is available (figures for 2004–2005 are only estimates). The table provides an overview of sectoral change for Great Yarmouth and the sub-region as a whole. The data source (Experian) is useful because time series for the ABI original source data (previously Annual Employment Survey) have been ‘cleaned up’ as far as possible to provide a consistent dataset, and self-employed have been estimated and added in.

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[2] Great Yarmouth Outer Harbour Economic Impact Assessment East Port, EEDA/Amion Consulting, June 2004.

[3] The Seaside Economy, ESRC/Sheffield Hallam University, June 2003.

[4] This is taken up particularly in the recent Norfolk Employment Growth Study, Roger Tym & Partners, August 2005, which however has limited economic analysis of the sub-region.

Table 2-1 Summary of employment change in Great Yarmouth and the sub-region 1991-2001-2003 ('000)

Area/Period	Year				Change		
	1991	1996	2001	2003	91/96	96/01	01/03
Great Yarmouth							
Agric & extractive	2.35	1.93	1.37	1.19	-0.42	-0.56	-0.15
Manufacturing	4.23	3.78	4.33	4.08	-0.45	0.55	-0.25
Construction	2.56	2.00	2.15	2.07	-0.56	0.15	-0.08
Distrib, hotels, transp't, comms	15.83	14.70	14.47	14.32	-1.13	-0.23	-0.15
Financial & business services	4.36	3.66	3.89	5.20	-0.70	0.23	1.31
Public services	11.46	10.09	13.07	13.91	-1.37	2.98	0.84
TOTAL	**40.79**	**36.16**	**39.28**	**40.77**	**-4.63**	**3.12**	**1.49**
Sub-Region							
Agric & extractive	6.54	4.89	3.05	2.37	-1.65	-1.84	-1.68
Manufacturing	15.70	14.84	14.00	13.61	-0.86	-1.94	-0.39
Construction	6.18	4.75	5.23	5.39	-1.75	0.48	0.16
Distrib, hotels, transp't, comms	30.75	26.84	28.46	28.70	-3.91	1.62	0.24
Financial & business services	8.34	7.70	10.25	11.78	-0.64	2.55	1.53
Public services	23.26	21.47	24.51	25.72	-1.79	3.04	1.21
TOTAL	**90.87**	**80.48**	**86.48**	**87.58**	-10.39	6.00	1.10

Source: Experian.

The table shows the sectors and periods (shaded) when the District and sub-region experienced net job losses. Clearly the first half of the 1990s was much worse than the second half, but employment had in fact fallen significantly just before 1991 – having peaked in the sub-region at 96,000 in 1990, from 83,500 in 1982. Since 2001 there has been a continued improvement in employment trends in all sectors except extractive and manufacturing, which of course have also declined nationally.

From an employment land use perspective the reductions in manufacturing and wholesale/transport/distribution sectors are consistent with a slackening of traditional B2-B8 land use demand and spread of low density, semi derelict sites in industrial areas.

2.3 Changes in Business Floorspace Stock

An analysis of floorspace and unit numbers derived from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) Industrial and Commercial Floorspace Statistics, published at various dates, shows that the total area of industrial floorspace changed little between 1998 and 2004 (Table 2-2). Between 1998 and 2004, office floorspace in Great Yarmouth increased modestly from 70,000 m^2 to 78,000 m^2 while factory and warehouse floorspace declined from 596,000 m^2 to 574,000 m^2.

Vacant land and floorspace

Vacant floorspace is included in the VOA statistics but they do not identify under utilised or low density floorspace. This is concentrated in the older port areas, e.g. around South Denes in Great Yarmouth. Very approximately it is estimated that about 40% of employment land may be underutilised, with large areas of gross floorspace containing negligible employment. This means that 'normal' employment: floorspace ratios are not applicable to all parts of the sub-region. Some appraisal is made of the survey results (chapter 3) to investigate this further.

Table 2-2 Offices, industrial and warehouse floorspace in Great Yarmouth 1986-2004 (' 000 m^2 and nos)

Premises type	Year	Gt Yarm '000 m2	Year	Gt Yarm nos
Offices	Apr-04	78	Apr-04	400
Commercial Offices	*Apr-04*	*53*	*Apr-04*	*319*
Factories	Apr-04	301	Apr-04	529
Warehouses	Apr-04	273	Apr-04	572
Offices	Apr-01	75	Apr-01	381
Commercial Offices	*Apr-01*	*49*	*Apr-01*	*304*
Factories	Apr-01	313	Apr-01	546
Warehouses	Apr-01	305	Apr-01	573
Offices	Apr-00	75	Apr-00	380
Commercial Offices	*Apr-00*	*50*	*Apr-00*	*303*
Factories	Apr-00	311	Apr-00	544
Warehouses	Apr-00	285	Apr-00	587
Offices	Apr-98	70	Apr-98	364
Commercial Offices	*Apr-98*	*45*	*Apr-98*	*288*
Factories	Apr-98	314	Apr-98	553
Warehouses	Apr-98	282	Apr-98	592
Offices (1)	Apr-86	-	Apr-86	-
Commercial Offices	*Apr-86*	*63*	*Apr-86*	*340*
Factories	Apr-86	383	Apr-86	190
Warehouses	Apr-86	579	Apr-86	820

Source:ODPM/DETR. (1) Non-commercial office floorspace not available.

2.4 Conclusions, Implications and Issues Arising

The appraisal of the Great Yarmouth's employment history and business floorspace change has highlighted the following:

- net loss of employment since 1991, in marked contrast to the regional picture
- significant sectoral losses of jobs in primary industry, manufacturing, and transport and distribution
- limited presence of knowledge based industry
- economic disadvantage reflected in unemployment and activity rates, earnings, skills, business formation and deprivation indicators
- more recently, a recovery in employment which reflects the regional pattern more closely
- increases in office floorspace and slow decreases in industrial and warehousing space

The changes are consistent with the emergence of large areas of vacant and under-used employment land left with the retreating tide of traditional industry, much port related. They are also consistent with healthy demand for modern sites and premises by more service oriented employment, although a considerable amount of this is non-B1 and sui generis activity.

The main issues arising are, first, the need to ascertain the usage of industrial and warehousing floorspace to establish the level of under-utilisation, and second, whether the recent upward trend of employment will continue.

3. BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

3.1 Introduction/Methodology

This chapter sets out the findings of an employment survey of businesses in Great Yarmouth and Waveney, located within the two Districts' administrative areas. The sectors chosen attempted to exclude all public sector agencies (e.g. local government), agriculture, retail, personal services and other non-B uses as far as these could be filtered out. In practice some of these did find their way into the survey, partly because of multi-activity, so that there were for example a small number of responses classified to retail and public sector organisations.

Contact details for businesses were provided by a commercial database, which was then crosschecked with the Chamber of Commerce lists for Norfolk and Suffolk. The commercial database provided the addresses of 2,003 businesses (1,000 in Great Yarmouth and 1,003 in Waveney), and the Chamber of Commerce list provided a further 275, the universe accordingly being 2,278 companies. In total 422 responses were received, of which 420 were useable, 227 from Great Yarmouth and 193 from Waveney. The response rate, exceeding 18%, was very good, comparing with 15% obtained for a similar survey conducted recently by the consultants on behalf of another local authority. The total employment count for the 420 processed respondents was 9,156.

The questionnaire was prepared in consultation with the local authorities, and can be found in Appendix 2, showing the response counts for each District.[5] It contained questions concerning the size of businesses, the type of space occupied, location and future prospects. The businesses were also classified according to broad industrial classification (detailed in summary tables). A few caveats: classification of businesses was sometimes difficult, particularly in instances where the business in question fell under more than one category, thus the consultants used judgement in allocating businesses to a category. Also, the fairly bullish response to the question about expectations of employment growth needs to be treated with some caution given natural business optimism. Appendix 3 contains a number of more detailed cross-tabulations.

3.2 Report Findings and Tables

Industry sector and employment

Waveney and Great Yarmouth have a roughly similar proportion of businesses in each sector, Waveney having a greater proportion in business services, and Great Yarmouth in manufacturing and wholesale (see Table 3-1). The majority of respondents in the sub-region as a whole were in the manufacturing, wholesale and business service sectors. As might be expected, firms classified under business services employ considerably fewer people than in other sectors and use less business space (see Appendix 3) implying that most of the

[5] Note that numerical responses refer only to the number of respondents who answered a particular question, not what they answered. Also, percentage counts of 100% do not indicate that all respondents answered that question, and should be ignored

employment (in terms of land and jobs) is in manufacturing and wholesale. By size (Appendix 3) 56% of the Great Yarmouth respondents were small firms (under 10 employees) with only 6 respondent companies employing over 100 people.

Table 3-1 Industry sector classification of firms in Waveney and Great Yarmouth (1)

Absolute Respondents	Base	Origin: Waveney	Origin: Gt. Yarmouth
Base	**376**	**172**	**204**
SIC			
Primary & Utilities	**6**	1	5
Manufacturing	**81**	31	50
Construction	**48**	22	26
Wholesale, communications, transport, storage	**87**	36	51
Retail	**12**	6	6
Business services	**95**	50	45
Public services	**6**	4	2
Leisure & culture	**11**	7	4
Automotive	**30**	15	15

(1) Note companies which could not be allocated to a sector excluded.

Many companies who provided information on employee numbers did not similarly provide information on total floorspace and site area (see Table 3-2). Density can thus only be estimated in respect of firms who answered all those questions, as shown in the table. Aggregate responses for all who answered one or other questions is shown in Appendix 3.

The presence of companies in (mostly) the old port areas with very underutilised premises gives rise to considerable distortions in the average worker density – and to a lesser extent on plot ratios. Accordingly a further analysis was undertaken removing outliers from the individual respondent records in each sector. These are shown in the table, a similar analysis being undertaken for Waveney and the sub-region as a whole. It should be noted that for the purpose of using survey data for estimation (e.g. employment densities) it is generally to be recommended that the sub-regional average survey responses and tables are used (set out in the sub-regional report) not these for Great Yarmouth Borough. The larger sample being more reliable.

Table 3-2 Employees, gross floorspace and site area by sector of firms in Great Yarmouth responding to these questions (1)

SIC codes	No of respondents	No of respondents less outliers	No of Employees	No of Employees less outliers	Internal floorspace m/2	Internal floorspace m/2 less outliers	Site area m/2	Site area m/2 less outliers	Average m2 per worker (2)	Avge m2 per worker less outliers(2)	Average plot ratio (2)	Average plot ratio less outliers (2)
Primary and utilities	2	2	10	10	620	620	925	925	*62.0*	*62.0*	*1.5*	*1.5*
Manufacturing	35	30	932	828	83508	35531	127448	77052	89.6	42.9	0.9	2.2
Construction	15	10	282	257	19785	6905	76480	41290	70.2	26.9	2.1	6.0
Wholesale/transport	34	28	599	493	50369	27180	108149	87742	84.1	55.1	1.7	3.2
Retail	1	1	122	122	1400	1400	1850	1850	*11.5*	*11.5*	*1.3*	*1.3*
Business services	21	16	492	450	10745	8499	47815	41709	21.8	18.9	3.9	4.9
Public services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Leisure and culture	1	1	54	54	3250	3250	2787	2787	*60.2*	*60.2*	*0.9*	*0.9*
Auto trades	10	7	74	67	9621	5941	21356	16566	130.0	88.7	1.7	2.8
Total based on SIC codes	119	95	2566	2281	179298	89326	386810	269921	69.9	39.2	1.5	3.0
Total replies including companies without SIC codes	*135*		*3021*		*202591*		*444853*					

Source: Company survey. (1) Note that it was not possible to allocate companies employing 804 staff (8.8% of the total) to an SIC category. A separate categorisation for auto trades was made to identify the large number of vehicle related activities

The table shows both employment density (m2 per person) and plot ratios (approximately ratio of gross site area: to floorspace). The replies indicate low floorspace per person densities for many of the different sectors. This is discussed further in Chapter 7.

Business location

Table 3-3 shows responses to Q12: "type of location at current address". The responses indicate that the most common business location in Great Yarmouth is on an industrial estate (49% of responses), which is in line with the consultants' expectations. Table 3-4 shows the types of floorspace occupied in Great Yarmouth with warehouses and workshops dominating (most companies of course had an office).

Table 3-3 Type of employment area of responding companies in Great Yarmouth

Absolute Respondents	
Base	**228**
Missing	
No reply	19
Type of location at the current address: [TICK ONE BOX]	
Industrial estate	112
Business park	9
Town centre	23
High street / shopping frontage	17
Freestanding / separate site	48

Table 3-4 Types of premises occupied in Great Yarmouth

Absolute Respondents	
Base	**228**
Missing	
No reply	10
Please describe the types of space occupied at the curren...	
Office	187
Shop	35
Warehouse/depot	95
Factory	37
Workshop (including repair)	96
Parking	112
Open yard/storage (not used for parking)	85

Because of the interest in future waterfront development and the perception that many

businesses had a waterfront location, several questions were asked to probe this. Table 3-5 shows that 31 companies had a waterfront location - about one in eight of responding firms. However only 19 said it was essential for their business, although interestingly 5 companies presently without such access said they needed it.

Table 3-5 Waterfront location and public transport in Great Yarmouth

Absolute Respondents	
Base	**228**
Missing	
No reply	-
Is your site/premises directly on the waterfront?	
Yes	31
No	190
Do you need a waterfront locaton for operational reasons?	
Yes	19
No	196
Do your premises have good access to public transport / lie on a bus route?	
Yes	119
No	99
Do you need premises that have good access to public transport?	
Yes	54
No	164

Table 3-6 Those companies in Great Yarmouth with waterfront location who require it for operational reasons

Absolute Respondents		Missing	Do you need a water-front locaton for op...	
	Base	No reply	Yes	No
Base	**228**	**13**	**19**	**196**
Missing				
No reply	**7**	6	1	-
Is your site/premises directly on the waterfront?				
Yes	**31**	6	13	12
No	**190**	1	5	184

The same question asked companies about access to public transport. Approximately 55% of businesses said that they had good access to public transport, whilst only 25% said that they needed it.

Age and quality of premises

Tables 3-7 and 3-8 show responses to questions about the type, age and quality of the premises of the respondents.

Table 3-7 Age of premises occupied in Great Yarmouth

Absolute Respondents	
Base	**228**
Missing	
No reply	4
How old is your building?	
1-5 years	9
5-10 years	11
10 years or more	204

Table 3-8 Quality of premises occupied in Great Yarmouth

Absolute Respondents	
Base	**228**
Missing	
No reply	11
Premises	
Very good	47
Good	71
Adequate	81
Poor	16
Location	
Very good	45
Good	73
Adequate	69
Poor	17

Overall, respondents seemed to be satisfied with the quality and location of their premises, only 7% reporting poor quality premises and 7% poor location. However a very large proportion (89%) reported occupying buildings that were more than 10 years old.

Skills

Companies were asked whether they were experiencing skills shortages, a total of 228 responding,. Of these 36% said they were - a reasonably high proportion. As Table 3-9 reveals, of those with a large sample manufacturing, construction and business services claimed to have the most severe shortages, although these questions are notoriously difficult to interpret.

Table 3-9 Skills shortages reported in Great Yarmouth

SIC codes	No of respondents	Experiencing skill shortages	Not experiencing skill shortages	No reply
Primary and utilities	5	0	3	2
Manufacturing	50	22 (44%	15	13
Construction	26	10(38%)	14	2
Wholesale/Transport	51	18(35%)	20	13
Retail	6	0	2	4
Business services	45	16(36%)	17	12
Public services	2	0	0	2
Leisure and culture	4	3*	0	1
Automotive	15	4(27%)	7	4
Total based on SIC codes	204	73(36%)	78	53
Total replies including companies without SIC codes	228	83	84	61

* *sample too small sample to be reliable*

Expected growth

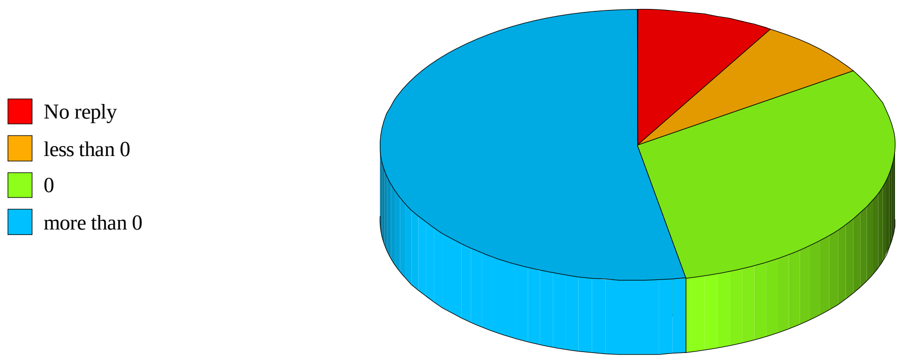
Figure 3-1 illustrates the responses (for the whole sub-region) to question 7 of the questionnaire: "How many additional staff, if any, do you expect to employ in 3 years time?" There is a striking contrast between the proportion of firms that are expecting to employ more staff (57%), and those that are expecting to employ fewer staff (8%). As mentioned above, part of this may be attributed to natural business optimism. Part may also be due to bias resulting from the phrasing of the question: firms that expected to employ less staff may have replied "0" or not responded (as they would be employing no *additional* staff), and of course, potentially there is inbuilt bias towards more growth oriented companies replying to the survey in the first place. Even taking these caveats into consideration, it appears that many firms in the sub-region are expecting to expand in the near future. The incidence of this has indeed taken the consultants by surprise. There is no noticeable sector bias in firms expecting to hire additional staff - when examined by sector, the proportions of firms expecting to take on more staff were:

- Primary and utilities: 66%
- Manufacturing: 60%
- Construction: 49%
- Wholesale, transport, communication: 58%

•	Retail:	41%
•	Business services:	66%
•	Public sector:	60%
•	Leisure & culture:	36%
•	Auto trades:	62%

Appendix 3 provides cross-tabulations for the above showing additional staff by sector and by company size.

Figure 3-1 Additional Staff



3.3 Implications and Issues Arising

The most significant finding has been the very large proportion of businesses expecting to expand their employment, if not their premises. While these reflect relatively short term intentions – the time period being 3 years – it provides some support for taking an optimistic view on employment growth targets in the longer term, bearing in mind that there has as yet been no influence from potential large scale development such as East Port or through the URC.

Other issues to note include the relative age of many business premises and the relatively few businesses who either had or required waterfront access. There is probably no need to safeguard much of the waterfront areas for business use.

4. EMPLOYMENT LAND FIELD SURVEY

4.1 Introduction/Methodology

The information set out in this chapter is derived primarily from the field survey undertaken by the consultants of employment land between 10 and 12 August 2005. Much of the information covers both districts as it was not practical to separate them within an overall sub-regional exercise. The work involved inspections of each estate supplemented by plans and details of occupiers provided by the local authorities. The information was culled from proformas for each estate prepared on the basis of ODPM guidance notes. The categories indicated by the proformas do not always fit with the situation on the ground. So we did not seek to fill in unnecessary or obvious answers, e.g. Gapton Hall estate has little prospect being redeveloped for any other purpose.

Following the field survey, other site details were completed from information supplied by the local authorities and other deskwork. A review was also made of other potential employment land locations identified in the Districts' urban capacity studies (very few sites being found that had not already been surveyed). Appendices 4 and 5 contain respectively a summary profile of all 47 estates surveyed and a sheet per estate containing full information including assessments of market and sustainability criteria.

Each estate has been categorised by type as discussed below. Although for statistical purposes we only show a single type, some like Jeld Wen (single occupier/port and heavy industry area) fall into more than one category. Also shown are the ERM categories set out in Table 5-2 of the ODPM guidance, classifying each by location.

A grading of (1-3) with 3 highest was given for occupier demand or likely demand, where possible showing the total number of units against vacancies. (It was not always possible to tell where units were vacant where they were locked with no sign of activity, but may have been used for storage). Accessibility for both lorries and workers and environmental constraints was scored where employment uses impinge on the amenity of residents, either directly through noise dust and fumes or indirectly by way of heavy traffic through residential areas.

The consultants also produced a photo library of several hundred pictures which have been provided on CD-Rom.

We supplemented our knowledge of the market with interviews of three local agents. There are not many agents active in the area. Face to face interviews were held with two of them and a telephone interview was conducted with a third.

4.2 Main Findings

Broadly speaking, the industrial estates of Waveney and Great Yarmouth fall into six categories as illustrated below:

1. Riverside industrial and port areas	 Great Yarmouth, South Denes
2. Older estates, comprising converted buildings – formally used for storage, heavy engineering or wartime airfield buildings	 Waveney, Ellough Industrial Estate
3. Modern/ modernised industrial estates	 Lowestoft, Colville Road Works
4. Mixed development areas where modern units mingle with older converted buildings	 Halesworth, Norwich Road/Broadway Drive
5. Major single user developments – old and new	 Beccles, London Road, M&H Plastics

6. Business parks	 Great Yarmouth, Beacon Park

The riverside industrial and port areas (Type 1) include the areas to the north and south of Lake Lothing, the South Denes and land fronting the river to the north and on the west bank of the Yare. All these areas contain a high proportion of vacant buildings and land. Most of the floorspace is contained within big old buildings – mainly used in days bygone for storage (principally along both banks of the Yare and the north side of Lake Lothing) and heavy engineering and boat storage and repair (south side of Lake Lothing). Some areas are occupied by major single users (e.g. Jeld Wen and Bunns); some have been vacated by major single users and are now underutilised (e.g. Brooke Marine and the former Shell premises at Lake Lothing).

Access to most of these areas is poor over congested bridges and pinch points (Lake Lothing and South Denes) and/or through densely developed residential communities (south side Lake Lothing).

The **older estates (Type 2)** include the Boasts and West Ellough estates outside Beccles. All were developed from the former premises of a single user. For the most part these estates are well let to a variety of users for whom the working environment is not a priority – typically motor repairs and agricultural engineering. Notable exceptions include Beck's Green – a mix of offices and workshops, and Brooke Marine – which is also part of a port area and appears mostly empty.

The **modern and modernised estates (Type 3)** include the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate, Colville Road Works and the Oulton Industrial Estate at Lowestoft, Gapton Hall at Great Yarmouth, the new units on Site 3 and the Beccles Industrial Estate at Ellough, Blyth Road Halesworth and Reydon Business Park. Most are well let to a range of users including manufacturing, maintenance, vehicle sales and servicing, depots, storage and distribution and a variety of retailers of bulky goods and building materials to both trade and public. There are few out-and-out office users, with the notable exception of the former Amec building at Harfreys/Gapton.

Most of the very new units have been built on a bespoke basis for a particular occupier – there is little, if any, very recent speculative development. Terraces of small units (with very few vacancies) pay testimony to the power of tax allowances (the 100% Industrial Building Allowance scheme for small workshops) and to the foresight of the public sector which developed them in the eighties.

These modern estates contain most of the vacant development land – apart from the business parks.

Mixed developments (Type 4) with old and new buildings include the Beach Industrial Estate at Lowestoft, Broadway Drive North at Halesworth, the inland part around Suffolk Road of the Southtown industrial area at Great Yarmouth. Again, they are surprisingly well let to a similar range of users as the more modern estates.

Single user developments (Type 5) include, Buxted at Flixton, M&H Plastics at Beccles, Bernard Mathews at Halesworth and Clays at Bungay. Most comprise modern units on green field, rural sites - somewhat remote, in the case of the poultry processors. Clays is very much the exception – a modernised hotchpotch of older buildings on a site, which is very tightly constrained on two sides by main roads and on the other two sides by a residential area.

There are only two real **business parks (Type 6)**, Beacon and Riverside. Beacon is the more attractive with heavily landscaped common parts and surrounded by open fields and modern housing. Until recently it only had one building completed, EEDA's Innovation Centre, but earlier in the year the prestigious headquarter servicing centre was opened for the East Anglian Ambulance Trust and a new office building for PKF, and development of four to six speculative office units totalling 1,400 m^2 gross using Objective 2 assistance, are presently under construction. Riverside is less attractive – the spine road also provides access to a number of non office-users including a coach depot. EEDA's Riverside Centre sets the tone for new development, but unfortunately the only other new building is a Honda dealership on the other side of the entrance.

Modern **office developments** are few and far between. Aside from Beacon Park and Riverside Park, which are public sector-led, the only new development is by Oldham, at North Quay, Lowestoft. Most office accommodation is provided over shops or in converted houses although there are instances of recent conversions to modern offices, e.g. Fastolff House.

The figures and our inspections suggest that as factories and warehouses close and/or relocate to the better, more peripheral estates, the old premises are reoccupied by less intensive users or redeveloped for other purposes. In much of the port and riverside area employment densities are clearly low. For example Jeld Wen occupies around 20has, but will have only 150 people working on the site when the door manufacturing operation shuts at the end of the year. At the southern end of South Denes, along the opposite bank at Southtown and along the north side of Lake Lothing, many large sites were empty or only had a handful of workers in operation. We did not undertake a detailed count, but from our observations, we believe there were not many more than fifty workers in the Brooke Marine complex.

New development that does occur is normally driven by the migration of firms within the area, to bigger, better, more efficient buildings - rather than inward investment.

A substantial proportion of both greenfield and previously used industrial land has been or is being developed for retail and quasi-retail uses (such as car showrooms and builders merchants). Examples include: the car showrooms at Horn Hill and Riverside, and the retail warehouses at Great Yarmouth Business Park.

In Great Yarmouth the rate of development over the seven years to 2005 is reported as 1.47 hectares per year.

More recent figures taken from the Annual Monitoring Report show for the four years to 2005 Great Yarmouth gained 9.43 hectares and lost 2.96 hectares.

Developed and undeveloped land - summary

Tables 4-1 and 4-2 provide summary information on employment land for Great Yarmouth Borough. Each table shows the estimated developed and undeveloped area, the latter divided into three categories: available and unconstrained; available and constrained; and committed – i.e. generally sold for development for owner occupation. Table 4-1 summarises employment hectarage by estate type (consultants' classification) and Table 4-2 by location.

Table 4-1 BWA-Hewdon classification by estate type

Area/Estate Type		Land in hectares					
		Developed	Undeveloped				Total
			total	available	commited	constrained	
Gt Yarmouth	**1**	94.1	7.2	1.6	2.1	3.5	101.3
	2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	3	78.6	27.0	0.9	7.4	18.7	105.6
	4	43.9	26.9	1.1	1.0	24.8	70.8
	5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	6	1.2	32.0	30.7	1.3	0.0	33.2
		217.8	**93.1**	**34.3**	**11.8**	**47.0**	**310.9**

Source: Consultants' survey.

Consultants classification

1. Riverside industrial and port areas
2. Older estates, comprising converted buildings –
formally used for storage, heavy engineering or wartime airfield buildings
3. Modern/ modernised industrial estates
4. Mixed development areas where modern units mingle with older converted buildings
5. Major single user developments – old and new
6. Business parks

Table 4-2 BWA-Hewdon classification by location type

Area/Locdation Type		Land in hectares					
		Developed	Undeveloped				Total
			total	available	commited	constrained	
Gt Yarmouth	**1**	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2	108.9	8.6	2.7	2.1	3.8	117.5
	3	107.1	83.3	31.6	9.7	42.0	190.4
	4	1.8	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	3.0
		217.8	**93.1**	**34.3**	**11.8**	**47.0**	**310.9**

Source: Consultants' survey

Location category

1. Town centre 2. Urban
3. Urban edge 4. Rural or market town

Available land shown for Great Yarmouth includes 30.7 hectares where occupiers are restricted to B1 and B8 uses. As things stand B2 uses will not be permitted.

Overall (Table 4-1) the employment land stock may be divided into three categories:

i. Riverside/port and old industrial areas and estates – 101 has, and with minimal available land (1.6 has, 1.5%);

ii. Modern industrial estates and mixed areas with some modern units – 176 has, but no more land available (2 has, 1.1%);

iii. Other employment land comprising single user developments (none in Great Yarmouth) and business parks - 33 has - of which there is significant availability (30.7 has, 93%).

In terms of location (Table 4-2), none of the employment land is truly town centre, although some larger employment areas extend into town centres. It is distributed largely between two other categories identified: Urban (118 has) and Urban Edge (185 has). Availability varies from 2.7 has of the Urban land, to 31.6 has of the Urban Edge employment land, but this is heavily weighted by the major availability on one business park, Beacon Park, in Great Yarmouth.

Thus undeveloped and available land amounts to 34 has overall, about 11% of the total, with 93% of this contained within a single estate.

The consultants have also reviewed the Urban Housing Potential Study for Great Yarmouth. This produced two sites (above the 0.5 ha threshold):

- 0.89 hectares at Suffolk Road (Between Great Yarmouth Business Park and Southtown)
- 1.07 hectares at Runham Road (leading to Eurocentre, used as garage and scrapyard)

The former has since received an application for A1 retail use and the latter an application for 96 residential units. Neither is likely to impinge on employment land needs.

The occupier market

The market for modern, medium and small general purpose **industrial units** on the better estates is buoyant, with very few agents' boards in evidence. For example between them Gapton and Harfreys had only six vacant out of 250 plus units. At Colville Road, all 42 units were occupied. Such low vacancy rates are comparatively rare.

Agents say that modern rents in Lowestoft range up to £64 m^2 for very small units and something over £44 / m^2 for medium (4-500 m^2) units. There have been few if any recent letting of really good modern premises, but reasonably large units might makeup to £35 m^2. Demand for small units is "insatiable".

In Great Yarmouth rents are slightly lower (up to £59/ m^2) for small units and higher for medium units (£48-54 / m^2). One agent said he could "not put his finger on any good quality units on the market".

Other than the two EEDA developments at Riverside Park and Beacon Park, no really modern **offices** have been brought to the market on a speculative basis – though bespoke building are being developed for owner occupiers at North Quay and the Borough Council in partnership with EEDA presently has four to six new speculative units under construction to complement their existing scheme at Beacon Park. In theory, the principal competition comes from Norwich about 20 miles to the east, but in practice the market tends to be from small/ medium local users. We heard no recent evidence of substantial footloose office occupiers rejecting Yarmouth and/or Lowestoft for lack of premises – in any event, if they were serious, they could always build a bespoke unit.

Come what may, most offices in the area comprise residential conversions or premises over shops.

Agents believe that if there were any new offices available to let, they might command up to £130 m^2. Good eighties building when sub-let might make £86-97 /m^2 with good, well situated conversions making c. £75 / m^2.

The development market

With rents of **good modern industrial units** around £43-54/ m^2 for medium sized units, in common with most of the UK, speculative development is marginal at best – even on the most attractive sites. Such development as is taking place is bespoke – a fair proportion for quasi-retail uses such as car dealers and builders merchants.

Although the occupier market for modern units is pretty buoyant, rents are unlikely to rise to a level where speculative development is profitable. So unless the public sector decide to intervene with direct development, most of the demand for employment land is likely to come from single users wanting bespoke units.

Land values vary even on the better industrial estates where backland might fetch £250,000 per ha with prominent frontage plots fetching up to £375,000 per ha. At Ellough (in Waveney District) large sites have been making £175-225,000 per ha.

Even so, with greenfield servicing costs typically approaching £200,000 per ha, it is not generally profitable for the private sector to provide serviced sites. Brownfield sites are usually more expensive to service – and have an underlying existing use value – if only for rough storage. Accordingly it is more difficult to develop them profitably for employment uses than Greenfield sites– and so they tend to be redeveloped for more profitable uses such as residential or retail.

Although the public sector has brought some land forward in recent years, notably at Beacon Park, there is precious little good quality serviced land left on any of the better industrial estates. Most of the remaining land at Harfreys is marshland which makes for very high construction costs to cover the deep piling and reinforcing of floors, walls and even drains. At Ellough, take up has accelerated rapidly, so that only two of the 12 ha or so of undeveloped land remain for sale.

The picture in the **office** sector is even more stark. Rental levels are well below those needed to stimulate speculative development. Even bespoke schemes are few and far between – though Oldham appears to be remarkably successful in attracting owner occupiers to his small office pavilions at North Quay.

Subject to overriding business considerations (like boat builders needing water frontage) bespoke occupiers will want to ensure that they minimise the difference between the cost of providing the building and its value. This means maximising value and minimising costs, by locating on the most attractive greenfield sites – not the former port and fabrication areas with poor access and an unattractive environment.

4.3 Implications and Issues Arising

Great Yarmouth appears to have much more land than it needs - but not in the right places; there is a surplus in the older industrial/waterside areas but some shortages elsewhere But it is not possible to rationalise existing uses overnight. Improved efficiency of land use will take time. And it is not possible to direct businesses to redevelop run down industrial areas, when they want a greenfield site with good road access on the outskirts of town. So more land is needed in the popular locations, and land needs to be released for other uses in those areas where the development of employment space is unattractive.

The port areas are not popular amongst occupiers, unsurprisingly since much comprises older buildings in poor condition which are unattractive to prospective investors – nor are the port areas sensible for general industrial development as they have such poor access. These and the old industrial estates have little nominally available land, but contain large amounts of either of low density or low grade, low activity uses.

Vacancy levels in port areas are high. Certain areas need to be reserved for particular industries, but some sites could be developed for mixed use – principally housing, offices, marina and allied uses. The employment survey provided useful evidence that water frontage is not essential for nearly half those firms who actually have it (in both Waveney and Great Yarmouth), suggesting that there is considerable scope for re-use. The areas need to be large enough to create a new market to dispel current negative perceptions of the area. And because housing is much more profitable to develop than employment space, residential developers should be obliged to build employment space under

S106 agreements. With mixed use redevelopment, employment levels could be much higher than now, on less land.

It might appear superficially attractive to put industry close to town centres to minimise travel by private car. But, in sustainability terms, it makes sense to put offices and housing with high population densities close to town centres, with low density land hungry manufacturing and storage uses on the outskirts. More town centre housing could well justify removing greenfield sites from residential allocations.

Areas should be reserved for East Port, core port uses, fabrication of wind turbines and existing businesses that really need water frontage. In particular, port uses need to be rationalised. Low grade uses that merely locate in the area because land and premises are cheap and/or it is the only place that such uses will be tolerated should be discouraged. Policies should be framed to prevent new low grade storage and, if possible, encourage existing occupiers to move by granting consent for alternative uses where appropriate.

On the face of it:

- notwithstanding Beacon Park, Great Yarmouth needs land at Gapton Hall and Harfreys. But with such constrained sites, the remaining allocated land is not suitable for development without expensive piling. Perhaps it might be possible to fill the unreclaimed land and use it for storage, relocating some of the yards and depots for development for industrial uses. If it cannot, it may be sensible to recognise the fact and remove its industrial designation
- development for quasi retail uses, such as car dealers should be resisted on good industrial sites and encouraged to go to brownfield areas or low lying land where higher values can cover abnormal construction costs. In any event, with a potential scarcity of good quality industrial land quasi retail uses, which are land hungry and generate comparatively high traffic levels, would be best located on peripheral sites with good road access
- within Great Yarmouth big single users appear to have enough land
- Riverside Park only provides enough land for in town office development to meet immediate requirements. To some extent, Beacon Park can serve Lowestoft as well as Yarmouth. Nevertheless, more land is needed for high quality employment uses – possibly by way of allocations as part of mixed use schemes around Lake Lothing, supplemented by possible developments on the better industrial estates
- Great Yarmouth has Beacon Park, but nothing of any note for office development in town. Land might be made available as part of any redevelopment at North Quay
- the prospect of any meaningful development on the Eurocentre with its poor ground conditions and access problems is remote – especially now the third river crossing seems destined to be built some miles to the south. It seems pointless to retain the industrial designation of the undeveloped land, unless an alternative access from the A47 can be provided
- while the owner-occupier market is viable so long as serviced land is available, servicing costs may exceed land value. So some public sector intervention or cross subsidy may be necessary. Without any financial incentive to service land, it will remain undeveloped and any allocation to employment use will be merely academic

Leaving aside strict planning policies, the scale of demand for modern units and good serviced sites, coupled with a lack of activity in the private sector to service sites or build accommodation on a speculative basis, points strongly for a need for public sector intervention – probably through EEDA.

5. ECONOMIC/EMPLOYMENT CHANGE TO 2021

5.1 Introduction/Methodology

This chapter looks at future employment change in the sub-region. It initially considers the background to change. It looks at the job growth targets in the Draft Regional Plan, and the process by which they were derived from a projection of regional and sub-regional employment. It then goes on to compare and evaluate the range of recent forecasts of jobs, of which there is no shortage. The *Norfolk Employment Growth Study* (Roger Tym and Partners and Regional Forecasts, 2005) particularly has added to their number and contributed to the understanding of the employment outlook. Following the ODPM guidance the employment outlook is then compared with inferred employment derived from recent projections of the economically active population produced by Anglia Polytechnic University (Chelmer), and a view formed about the appropriate quantum of job growth to plan for. It considers finally structural change within that growth.

A brief review is made of land take up rates in the sub-region, as an approach discussed in ODPM guidance for gauging land demand trends, but apart from data issues this is arguably a more useful guide to the short term outlook.

5.2 Economic Prospects

Prima facie the Waveney (Lowestoft)-Great Yarmouth sub-region is faced with many economic disadvantages – remoteness, legacy of obsolescent industrial activity, lack of much advanced industry. This is reflected in the relatively poorer rates of unemployment, earnings, skills etc described in Appendix 1.

However it is not large in population terms and has significant land and waterside assets, likely to exert a strong long term attraction in an over crowded region with seemingly insatiable demand for development. While relatively remote from London it should increasingly benefit from links to Europe through the TENS (Trans European Network) strengthening linkages with the Midlands and North of England. It is also quite close to other prosperous areas, Cambridge, Norwich, Ipswich and Suffolk rural hinterland, thus being well placed to benefit from links with these areas. These are not necessarily conventional business linkages – establishing a branch business in the sub-region – but include keeping a boat or yacht in the area.

A number of initiatives and projects have emerged to exploit these assets, notably:

- the establishment of the URC, with potential to develop the land and waterside assets
- the prospective East Port outer harbour development
- the prospective alternative energy industry

Of these three, the most dependable, in the consultants' view may be the first. There is now considerable evidence of the wealth generating impacts of waterside land assembly and development, especially when catalysed by an agency like the URC. In contrast prospects for the renewable energy sector and possible new outer harbour are more uncertain. It is hoped that the harbour project will get the green light but it is not yet a commitment. As for the energy sector, there are undoubtedly huge opportunities but also a risk that the region will not be able to capitalise on them.. However, if the industry does take off it could stimulate a significant demand for employment land so this needs to be reviewed as part of the overall employment land supply:demand balance. Other projects like InteGREAT, although not likely to lead to direct land demands, should contribute towards a more buoyant economy.

5.3 Draft Regional Plan Policies and Job Targets

The Draft Regional Plan policy E2 contains targets for job growth between 2001 and 2021 for counties and sub-regions (subdivided to their components in different counties), but generally with no targets for districts. Although some sub-regional policies contain district targets, the Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft sub-region is not among them. In the sub-region the Draft Plan's Policy E2 targets are as follows:

- in Norfolk, 'Norwich sub-region and Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft sub-region (part) - 32,700'
- in Suffolk, 'Great Yarmouth/Lowestoft sub-region (part) - 4,700'

The Suffolk part of the sub-region only includes Lowestoft, not the whole of Waveney.

As the sub-region is an acknowledged regeneration area there is an implication that job growth should be encouraged as much as possible, and Policy GYL1 specifically calls for local development documents to 'develop the existing economic structure' and 'promote radical change in the economy', which suggest but does not require accelerated job growth.

The Draft Plan jobs targets therefore provide little specific guidance for the Great Yarmouth part of the sub-region on the jobs to be planned for, which would need to be determined through the local plan process.

It is possible to infer an indicative target based on the method of derivation of the E2 targets. This is set out in a working paper for the Economic Development Task Group: *RES and RPG14 – Employment, Labour, Population and Housing to 2021*. This paper sets out how a job growth scenario known as EG21-plus was derived from the projections by Experian Business Strategies (EBS) of 2003 for enhanced growth, based on the region reaching top 20 regional GVA per capita in Europe by 2021 (EG21). The EG21-plus scenario was derived by adding known job aspirations in particular areas to the EG21 scenario, and then deducting a notional proportion of the job aspirations to avoid double counting. The EG21-plus regional total of 421,500 jobs growth became the E2 regional target.

The target figure in Policy E2 for Norfolk is actually the same as the EG21 forecast and the E2 target for the Suffolk part of the sub-region (i.e. Lowestoft, not the whole of Waveney) is only 300 less than the EG21 figure for Waveney, which presumably indicates a view that most of the growth in the District would occur within Lowestoft (which may or may not be justified). Effectively, therefore, the E2 policy targets for the sub-region are the EG21 forecasts.

5.4 Workplace Employment Projections

There are a number of projections of jobs available for Great Yarmouth and Waveney, produced at different times, with different base data, although all are derived from successive releases of the Annual Business inquiry (ABI), with added estimates of self employment derived from the labour force survey and/or the Census. Table 5-1 sets out the various projections. The EBS forecasts include Business as Usual (BAU) forecasts, which are trend based forecasts assuming continuation of past policies, and Enhanced Growth (EG) projections, which involve policy driven accelerated growth, in versions published in 2003 and updated in 2004. Their forecast unconstrained by population removes the constraint of workforce growth at the regional level[6], which cascades down to local areas. Special forecasts were prepared by Regional Forecasts for the *Norfolk Employment Growth Study,* which are trend based, and the forecast by Cambridge Econometrics for Great Yarmouth only is on a similar basis.

Table 5-1 Alternative forecasts of job growth in Great Yarmouth and sub-region

	2001	2011	2021	Change 2001-21
EBS EG21 (2003) (basis for Draft RSS Policy E2)				
Great Yarmouth	38,816	39,668	41,030	2,214
Sub-region total	82,593	86,798	89,823	7,230
EBS BAU (03)				
Great Yarmouth	38,816	39,041	39,631	815
Sub-region total	82,593	85,409	86,782	4,189
EBS EG21 (2004)				
Great Yarmouth	40,267	39,985	40,683	416
Sub-region total	86,472	88,189	91,291	4,819
EBS BAU (2004)				
Great Yarmouth	40,267	39,918	39,606	- 662
Sub-region total	86,472	88,040	88,939	2,466
EBS Unconstrained by Population (2004)				
Great Yarmouth	40,267	46,289	55,812	15,545
Sub-region total	86,472	97,944	112,024	25,552
Norfolk Employment Growth Study recommendation (Final Report Table 36a)				
Great Yarmouth				5,000
Sub-region total				10,000
Norfolk Employment Growth Study Regional Forecasts' population constrained projection (Final Report table 36a)				
Great Yarmouth				5,100
Sub-region total				5,100
Norfolk Employment Growth Study Regional Forecasts' projection (Interim Report Appendix D)				
Great Yarmouth	39,945		47,055	7,110
Sub-region total	85,642		97,635	11,993
Cambridge Econometrics (2005)				
Great Yarmouth				4,400

Sources: Experian Business Strategies, Roger Tym and Partners/Regional Forecasts

The forecasts vary widely and illustrate the substantial uncertainties involved in any such projection. The differences in part reflect differences in the policy assumptions; the EG21 forecasts in particular assume a change in policy directed towards accelerating job growth throughout the region.

The more recent, updated EBS BAU and EG jobs projections (increments of growth not end-date totals) are lower (by 40% and a third) than the earlier ones, which are the basis for the Draft Regional Plan job targets. The reasons for these differences are to do with revisions to past data and changes of view about the future prospects for particular industries.

The EBS forecasts provide a useful breakdown to district level on a consistent basis across the whole region. However, a number of caveats need to be made about these district projections:

- First, there is inherently more uncertainty about such projections at the district level than at higher levels. In effect they are an allocation of county level projections to districts according to their existing economic make-up. In reality there could be significant departures from this spatial allocation reflecting supply constraints, property prices, new infrastructure etc. Indeed such

[6] Nationally and, allowing for inter-regional migration, regionally, job growth cannot exceed the growth of the workforce, which therefore constrains job growth given underlying economic buoyancy.

departures might be encouraged by policy bringing about redistribution within counties or between counties.

- Second, the jobs growth projected has varied considerably in successive revisions (the EBS projections have been updated in 2004), and furthermore, different forecasters have significantly different views about future job growth in the area. This is discussed further below.
- Third, the Draft Plan policy for the sub-region would tend, if successful, to increase job growth, although the more optimistic aspirations may not be achievable in practice.
- Finally, Enhanced Growth (EG21) scenarios are not projections of what is likely to happen, but simply indicate how many extra jobs have to be added to reach a particular GVA per capita target, without any position on achievability. They would require new policy interventions to make them happen. The Business as Usual (BAU) projections are the most likely ones, assuming continuation of past policies.

The Regional Forecasts' projection for the *Norfolk Employment Growth Study* in the Interim Report is significantly higher than the EBS and Cambridge Econometrics forecasts[7]. They argue that recent data for 2003, not available for the others, indicates higher growth. This may place too much burden on one year's results. Furthermore, Regional Forecasts' projection, which simultaneously projects population, envisages much higher population growth than the draft RSS. This is an important factor boosting job growth in their model. A further scenario constrained by the population implied by the draft RSS housing targets was produced for the final report, indicating substantially lower growth. The actual recommendation for the figure to be adopted was close to the original, unconstrained forecasts.

Past history of the number of jobs in the sub-region has been very volatile as illustrated by Figure 2-1 above, and a simple linear trend through the data over 20 years (1982-2002) actually slopes downwards, although the volatility of the figures indicates that such a trend is not a very reliable guide to the future.

A reasonable conclusion is that the quantum of jobs growth to be planned for is very uncertain, and that the outlook in five years time might seem quite different. On the basis of the figures now available, and the aspiration to encourage the development of the local economy, it might be reasonable to plan to accommodate near to the highest, up to date trend based projection growth of nearly 12,000 jobs in the whole sub-region. This would however be well above the implicit Draft Plan target, and looks hard to achieve in the light of some of the other projections. However there is some encouragement from the results of the survey of businesses carried out for this study.

5.5 Growth in the Workforce

The growth of the workforce can provide an alternative guide to the numbers of jobs it is appropriate to plan for. It might be argued that local plans should accommodate enough jobs to employ the local workforce, allowing for a reasonable volume of commuting, especially in an area where the intention is to make a significant effort to improve the economy and the existing jobs deficiency.

This does raise a policy issue of how much net out-commuting is desirable, and how self contained the sub-region ought to be. It is not the job of this study to decide this. However, the forecast labour market balance for Norwich (Figure 3.5 of the *Norfolk Employment Growth Study* Final Report) shows that the city will need to attract some 40,000 to 50,000 net in-commuters in 2021. Whilst this is, no doubt, partly a reflection of the tight administrative boundary round the city, which excludes large

[7] A more recent projection by Regional Forecasts for GOEast (Regional Forecasts Ltd, (August 2005), Advice on Job Growth Policies in the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England),using the same model, projects job growth forNorfolk 2001-2021 at 5% less (67,000). If taken to apply to the whole subregion, projected growth would fall to 11,400.

suburbs, it suggests a significant draw on other nearby labour forces, including Great Yarmouth and Waveney.

2001 census data on travel to work indicates a broadly self contained travel to work area in the defined Lowestoft-Great Yarmouth economic Sub-Region, with 12,000 persons living in the sub-region and working elsewhere, and 15,000 persons working in the Sub-Region and living elsewhere. [8] Despite the *overall* net inflow, there is a specific net outflow to Norwich (2,000 out and 700 in) and a smaller net outflow to long distance locations, like London, but these are comparatively small proportions of total movement.

Table 5-2 shows the up to date projected numbers of economically active in the (administrative) sub-region produced in 2005 by Anglia Polytechnic University (Chelmer), controlled to the Draft Regional Plan Policy H1 dwellings, and different assumptions about activity rates. It is apparent that the different projections vary widely, with very different implications for the balance between jobs and workforce. The mid variant is the activity rate assumption normally taken as a base case, however that does not take into account some of the pressures for higher activity rates, like pension deficits, the potential for an increase in men's statutory retirement age and the government's approach to disability benefits, so the high variant is also worth considering. Of course rates also depend on employment demand, the kinds of jobs available and levels of pay and benefits. With unattractive or deficient numbers of jobs available locally, activity rates would be depressed. But the forecast active population suggest the potential size of the workforce, given suitable jobs available.

Taking the mid variant, there would be only a small increase of less than 1,000 in the overall size of the sub-regional workforce, but if the high variant is possibly a better guide to future pressures to work, the increase would be 8,000, split roughly 55:45 between Great Yarmouth and Waveney. However it is not only the extra workforce that would need to find jobs, but also the current gap represented by the high numbers of unemployed that needs to be reduced. For unemployment levels at the start in 2001 to be 3%, for example, a level close to full employment instead of the actual 7.1% average for the sub-region, this would have required some 4,000 extra jobs split about 60:40 in Great Yarmouth and Waveney. The resulting range (rounded) of 5,000 to 12,000, based on the mid and high activity rate variants, corresponds to the range defined by the population constrained and the trend forecasts by Regional Forecasts.

Table 5-2 Chelmer Projections of Economically Active Population

	2001	2021	Change 2001-21
Mid			
Great Yarmouth	41,372	42,383	1,011
Waveney	49,392	49,253	- 139
Total	90,764	91,636	872
High			
Great Yarmouth	41,372	45,800	4,428
Waveney	49,392	53,000	3,608
Total	90,764	98,800	8,036
Low			
Great Yarmouth	41,372	39,200	- 2,172
Waveney	49,392	45,900	- 3,492
Total	90,764	85,100	- 5,664

Source: Anglia Polytechnic University (Chelmer) population projections for economically active population, March 2005

[8] 2001 Census profile of Gt.Yarmouth and Lowestoft Sub-Region, Employed Resident Population & Workplace Population, G0-EAST, EEDA.

5.6 Trend Take Up Rates

ODPM guidance (Guidelines Step 7) suggests that analyses of take up rates of employment land may be used to complement employment forecasts or labour supply projections. This information is invariably problematic since the one thing it ought to measure – net additional land take – it rarely does. Most local authority data relates to gross rather than net land take, with large amounts of redevelopment on brownfield land, extensive transfers to and from B to sui generis use and so on, offsetting gross take up. The reality is clear **reductions**, not increases, in industrial land take in the sub-region (both warehousing and manufacturing), since 1998 and earlier as can be seen from the VOA data in Table 2-5. This trend data on its own would point to a clear need to reduce aggregate employment land holdings in the area.

Given the difficulties of interpreting land take up data it was not considered that the appraisal should rely much on them. The most firm local authority information is probably completions, particularly, where identified by locality, as an indicator at least of spatial demand. For optimal usability, e.g. comparability with other sources such data needs to:

- distinguish B1,B2, B8 land use, especially floorspace
- be 100% , without 'cut-off' thresholds
- be a reasonable time series – say a minimum of 5 and preferably 10 years
- show net completions (rather than planning consents)

For floorspace the information which Great Yarmouth had was data for the regional monitoring tables. These provided gross gain for all B uses for several years but only showed a more detailed breakdown (B2, B8, B1b+c, B1a in town centres) for the single year 2003/04.

Table 5-3 shows the ,[9] single year for Great Yarmouth derived from the Regional Monitoring Tables (RMT). It is not comparable with planning completions data (collected by Great Yarmouth), as the RMT does not record B1/office completions except in town centres nor any development over 1,000 m^2 floorspace.

Table 5-3 Floorspace take up statistics from Great Yarmouth

Land use	2003/4
B1a TC	0
B1b+c	424
B2	1980
B8	2080
Total	**4484**

5.7 Appropriate Job Target for Employment Land Planning

The growth target recommended by the *Norfolk Employment Growth Study* of 10,000, should be given weight as a well considered conclusion. This lies towards the top of the range based on the available up to date projections of jobs and the workforce, and is consistent with an aspiration to develop the local economy.

In view of past trends, other forecasts, and the considerable time needed to produce a significant boost to jobs growth from new policies and initiatives, the consultants judge that the achievement of this

[9] Approximately, since has and sometimes floorspace are not always split by use type, so an apportionment has to be made.

level of jobs growth by 2021 is optimistic. But this does not mean that one should not plan for the possibility of such an outcome, provided that doing so does not constrain other important objectives by withholding land. Given the relatively plentiful supply of employment land in the sub-region and the relatively low requirements for extra housing, that proviso, on the face of it, would not apply, although this issue may need further consideration. Also, the higher the target the greater the potential for development of the economic structure and radical change that the Draft Regional Plan requires.

The recommendation of this study is therefore to adopt a jobs growth target as set out in Table 5-4, based on both the Norfolk Employment Growth Study and the Chelmer mid and high labour force projections, with an allowance for the 2001 jobs deficiency reflected in excess unemployment. The split between the two districts is reasonably consistent between the two approaches. This approach effectively maintains net out-commuting at the 2001 levels.

Table 5-4 Proposed job growth targets for employment land planning purposes

	Jobs increase 2001-21
Great Yarmouth	5,000
Waveney	5,000
Total sub-region	10,000

Source: Consultants.

5.8 Economic Structure

Details of the projected changes in the structure of the local economies are described in the sub-regional report. Table 5-5 shows the Regional forecasts projections of employment by sector for Great Yarmouth extracted from the sub-regional report

Table 5-5 Regional Forecasts projections of jobs by sector ('000s)

Sector	**Great Yarmouth**		
	2001	**2021**	**2021 shares**
Agriculture	0.44	0.29	0.6%
Mining & quarrying	0.77	0.11	0.2%
Construction	1.96	2.18	4.6%
Manufacturing	4.07	1.74	3.7%
Electricity, gas and water supply	0.03	0.02	0.0%
Wholesale distribution	2.4	2.13	4.5%
Retail	5.46	6.35	13.5%
Hotels & catering	4.26	3.25	6.9%
Transport, storage & communication	2.01	3.52	7.5%
Financial & business services	5.04	8.47	18.0%
Public admin	1.49	2.15	4.6%
Education & health	8.66	12.69	27.0%
Other community, social & personal service activities	3.36	4.1	8.7%
Total employment	39.95	47	100.0%

Source: Appendix A of the Summary Paper to Norfolk Chief Executives, April 2005 from the Norfolk Employment Growth Study.

As a basis for projecting employment land requirements, the projections incorporate all the limitations discussed in this report. Because they are essentially trend based they cannot reflect the higher potential[10] of major but uncertain initiatives like Great Yarmouth outer harbour and a renewables sector take off. This is discussed further in the report's conclusions.

[10] By adopting an aspirational jobs target, a degree of success in achievement of such projects may be inferred, even though not specifically identified in sector terms.

6. EMPLOYMENT LAND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Approach

This chapter examines employment land requirements as a function of projected employment change. The implications and limitations of this approach need to be clearly understood. The process assesses a net change of employment land based on estimated densities. Therefore it does not take account of existing under utilised or vacant land, large amounts of which might be released irrespective of the employment land calculation. In addition, since the calculations are aggregative – for whole districts – net change figures such as a projected decline in total land need are perfectly compatible with justifiable increases in employment land in certain areas.

The change in employment land requirements is calculated by allocating employment in each of 30 sectors to land uses categories (B1, B2 and B8) according to an assumption about the proportion of employment in each sector that is employed on each land use (see Table 6-1), and then applying density ratios to the total estimated employment on each land use to produce an estimate of land required. In the baseline projection, for example, 80% of business services employment is assumed to be on B1 land. This is assumed to occupy floorspace at 19 sq. m gross per worker in buildings constructed at a plot ratio of 0.4 equivalent to 211 workers per hectare[11].

For the baseline estimate the ratios used are typical ones that have been derived from a review of the available published survey evidence from a variety of places. Where the evidence is lacking, the consultant's judgement has been used and some adjustments have been made to reflect the character of the area and comparisons with Valuation Office Agency floorspace estimates.

The net land area[12] is assumed to be 75% of the gross area. Densities assumed are set out in Table 6-2. In particular it should be noted that for the baseline assumption relatively low density for B1 use has been adopted, typical of a business park environment. B1 includes both conventional offices and light industrial space. In this area, the proportion of the latter may well be higher than it would be in places where property values are much higher. Variants 1 and 2 represent sensitivity tests with different density assumptions. Variant 1 assumes higher B1 densities (50% of floorspace at town centre plot ratios). Variant 2 keeps these B1 plot ratios but adopts floorspace/worker densities, and industrial land plot ratios, drawn from the employment survey undertaken[13] - see Table 3-2.

[11] i.e 1 ÷ 19 workers per sq. m floorspace x 0.4 x 10,000 sq. m. floorspace per hectare = 210.53 workers per hectare.

[12] i.e. the actual plots on which premises are sited as opposed to the gross land area, which is the aggragate of the individual plot areas, together with access roads, their verges and public parking areas, facilities such as substations and some minor services, and small pieces of opens space and unused corners.

[13] Density averages adjusted to remove outliers

Table 6-1 Assumed allocations of employment to land uses

	Proportion of employment by land use			
Sector	**B1**	**B2**	**B8**	Total
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	0	0	0	0.0%
Oil & Gas Extraction	0.3	0.2	0.5	100.0%
Other Mining	0.1	0	0.15	25.0%
Gas, Electricity & Water	0.5	0	0	50.0%
Fuel Refining	0.05	0.4	0.05	50.0%
Chemicals	0.4	0.3	0.3	100.0%
Minerals	0.05	0.9	0.05	100.0%
Metals	0.1	0.8	0.1	100.0%
Machinery & Equipment	0.15	0.8	0.05	100.0%
Electrical & Optical Equipment	0.5	0.4	0.1	100.0%
Transport Equipment	0.1	0.8	0.1	100.0%
Food, Drink & Tobacco	0.1	0.65	0.25	100.0%
Textiles & Clothing	0.15	0.75	0.1	100.0%
Wood & Wood Products	0.2	0.75	0.05	100.0%
Paper, Printing & Publishing	0.4	0.5	0.1	100.0%
Rubber & Plastics	0.2	0.7	0.1	100.0%
Other Manufacturing	0.15	0.75	0.1	100.0%
Construction	0.3	0.05	0.15	50.0%
Retailing	0.15	0.05	0.1	30.0%
Wholesaling	0.2	0.1	0.7	100.0%
Hotels & Catering	0.1	0.05	0	15.0%
Transport	0.15	0.05	0.2	40.0%
Communications	0.5	0	0.45	95.0%
Banking & Insurance	0.6	0	0	60.0%
Business Services	0.8	0	0	80.0%
Other F&Bs	0.6	0.1	0	70.0%
Public Admin. & Defence	0.65	0.05	0.05	75.0%
Education	0.15	0.05	0	20.0%
Health	0.2	0.05	0.05	30.0%
Other	0.5	0	0	50.0%

Source: consultants

Table 6-2 Assumed densities for estimation of land requirements

	Density (gross m2 per worker)	Density per net area (workers/ha)	Net to gross ratio	Density per gross area (workers/ha)
B1	47.4	211	0.75	281
B2	84.7	118	0.75	157
B8	125	80	0.75	107

Source: consultants.

A calibration exercise comparing VOA floorspace data with requirements estimated from jobs by land use for 2001[14], using the methodology described above, suggests that industrial floorspace densities

[14] Note that the VOA statsitics do not include A2 land use as offices and so much of the financial sector and professional activities, especially in an area such as this where most such employment tends to be in branch offices serving local needs, would not be occupying space classed as offices.

are low, which accords with the survey findings and other knowledge of the local situation, and that a substantial proportion of B1 space is light industrial use rather than offices, and possibly the representation of office based functions within industry sectors is below national averages. This is not surprising, given the peripheral location of the area and the characteristics of the local economy. Inferred office floorspace densities appear to be somewhat higher than indicated by the survey, but it is difficult to assess the latter because of some respondents in the sample. High density may be a reflection of the function and status of the office functions present in this area such as call centres, which typically have higher density than average for offices.

In looking ahead at future requirements, the assumptions adopted are typical of what would be expected in a growing area and do not reflect the very low floorspace densities recorded in the survey, as these reflect historic situations. These would not be appropriate for estimating future needs.

Estimates on this basis are approximate and should not be interpreted too literally. They depend on assumptions about average allocation of sector jobs to land uses and employment densities, which can vary considerably according to the circumstances of individual occupiers. It would not, for example, take account of requirements for one-off specialist uses requiring large areas of land such as East Port, OREC and the related renewables wind turbine initiative. Furthermore, this method does not allow for changing trends that could occur in the land requirements of existing employment (e.g. spaceless growth referred to in the Draft Regional Plan paragraph 6.14). Whilst there is clearly scope in principle for spaceless growth, where occupiers are using land and buildings at low densities, especially industrial property, these tend to be in mature rather than growing activities, and are not likely to be the activities that will add to jobs. Hence these occupiers appear less likely to raise their existing densities. While they remain in place, and until such land is released for use by others or redevelopment, job growth is likely to require additional space.

Evidence from the employment survey

Table 3-2 in Chapter 3 showed overall average and adjusted (gross) densities obtained from the companies responding to the employment survey. The former indicated very low densities in terms of m2 per employee across a range of sectors, but the densities were significantly higher after removal of 'outliers'. The building floorspace areas need to be adjusted to convert to net internal (lettable) area to compare with VOA data, but not to compare with figures developed by the Arup study which are gross internal floorspace including stairs, corridors, toilets etc, excluding only the walls.[15] Table 6-3 uses adjusted survey response data, summary employment data and VOA floorspace statistics to generate inferred densities, with an additional comparison of the findings of the study undertaken by Arup[16].

The table suggests that the adjusted survey densities would produce a reasonable approximation of actual floorspace for offices as recorded by the VOA and also for industrial – B2 and B8 combined. For the latter, the “local” densities replicate recorded VOA figures much more closely than do the Arup density rates. Even given that the VOA figures by definition include the 'outliers' companies with atypically low densities the calibration appears fairly good.

[15] For a VOA comparison it is necessary to convert gross survey floorspace to net lettable area, which for offices would be 0.8 (based on the SERPLAN report, The Use of Business Space, Roger Tym & Partners, 1997, para 2.8). Correspondingly, VOA floorspace data needs to be grossed up for comparability with survey floorspace.

[16] Employment Densities, A Full Guide, Arup Economics and Planning, English Partnerships & the RDAs, 2001.

Table 6-3 Implied and actual floorspace using data from employmernt survey, Experian projections, and VOA floorspace data (sub-region)

Planning use class	Estimate	Employ ment	Gross floorspace (m2)	m2 per worker
B1/ offices	Survey based (1)	648 (2)	12,152 (2)	18.8
B1/ offices	VOA based	11,730 (3)	231,000) (4)	19.7
B1/ offices	*Arup estimate*	NA	NA	19
B2/ general industry	Survey based (5)	3,210	194,958	60.7
B2/ general industry	VOA based	13,340 (6)	873,000	65.4
B2 general industry	*Arup estimate*	NA	NA	34
B8/ warehousing	Survey based	769 (7)	50,463	65.6
B8/ warehousing	VOA based	9,090 (8)	539,000	59.2
B8/ warehousing	*Arup estimate*	NA	NA	50

Sources & definitions: (1) Business services & public sector. (2) Excluding outliers. (3) Experian Baseline projections 2004, sum of financial & business services less 10% working at home, plus 25% of public administration employment. (4) VOA 2004 ,figure of 185,000 net m2 Table 2-5, grossed up by 1.25. (5) Manufacturing respondents (6) Manufacturing employment (7) Sum of wholesaling/transport & auto trades in BWA survey. (8) Sum of Wholesaling transport and communications employment.

6.2 Estimates of Employment Land Requirements

Requirements for employment land resulting from the application of the assumptions set out on Tables 6-1 and 6-2 , for the quinquennial periods 2001-6, 2006-11, 2011-16, 2016-21, are shown in Appendix 6. These show for each LA District and the sub-region, first results for the baseline assumptions, second results for Variant 1 and third results for Variant 2, the latter using floorspace densities and plot ratios based on the employment survey.

These estimates, summarised for Great Yarmouth in Table 6-4, suggest that for the baseline density assumptions there would be little net additional land required in the B classes to accommodate jobs growth in the sub-region as a whole, because increase in jobs in B1 uses at relatively high density, would be offset by losses in B2 and B8 uses at lower density. However there would be an increase of the order of 17 hectares gross in the requirement for B1 land. And, if industrial land were not released, for example if jobs were lost through shrinkage of workforces in firms continuing to operate on their current sites, or if the redevelopment process of redundant industrial land was elongated, the full offsetting might not occur. In that case up to the full B1 additional requirement could be needed. However, using the lower density assumptions based on the BWA survey, the aggregate land requirements are reduced. Implicit is more B1 employment being accommodated in town centres at higher densities than the average business park.

Table 6-4 Summary of change in aggregate employment land requirements in Great Yarmouth, 2001-2021 (Hectares)

	B1	B2	B8	Total
Baseline	+17	-6	-5	+4
Variant 1	+12	-6	-5	+1
Variant 2	+12	-10	-7	-5

Source: Appendix 6

6.3 Conclusions

As a guide to the future, Variant 2 may be the most appropriate scenario for B2 and B8 land use. It reflects the existing low density of such development – with reductions in employment likely to result in above average reductions in land requirement. For B1 the most appropriate scenario my be somewhere between the baseline and Variant 1 scenarios – with a majority of employment accommodated at business park densities but a proportion – literally 25% - accommodated at town centre densities.

The estimated land requirements should be regarded as an approximate guide only. As the estimated change in overall land requirement is the combination of falls in industrial uses and expansion in B1 uses, this will require changes of use and redevelopment. The inertia in this process may mean that an extra margin of land will be required to enable this turnover to take place. Similarly extra land could be needed to meet requirements in particular localities (such as Waveney market towns) or to provide variety and quality suited the changing economic structure.

7. POTENTIAL NEW ALLOCATIONS AND REMOVALS OF EXISTING ALLOCATIONS

7.1 Employment Land Strategy: Overview

Employment land provision has to take account of many uncertainties in the sub-regional economy which suggest that a cautious approach to land disposal be adopted. The appropriate strategy may be sketched out as follows:

- In the older port and waterfront areas with greatly under-utilised land and premises, a substantial proportion of this [underutilised land] could probably be released quickly, without risk, whatever happens to the sub-regional economy.
- Within 3-5 years the position with regard to major local initiatives should become clearer. The outer harbour decision will have been taken, and the 1,000 or so direct jobs and land take associated with that development will become firm - or not happening. Similarly, if the renewables sector takes off as it could do, supporting the planned very major off shore wind farm capacity by 2009, some back of the envelope calculations suggest that 2-3,000 additional jobs may be directly created, leaving aside indirect impacts. Over and above this the URC may catalyse significant service employment. The impacts could be cumulative, e.g. port development prompting A47 dualling and development of a major new freight corridor to the area from the midlands.
- At this stage the outlook for jobs growth might be considerably clearer, leading to policy decisions either to release significantly more under-utilised land, or to confirm that much of it should be retained.

Major inward investments should be steered to established modern estates like Beacon Park, to sites in the older port areas close to Great Yarmouth (when upgraded and provided with better access), or to the town centre.

7.2 Short and Long Term Land Provision

There is unfortunately little linkage between the long term projections made in Chapter 6 and shorter term policy decisions relating to land requirements and disposals. This is because:

- the long term projections are directly related to a certain set of assumptions regarding employment growth, employment structure, and anticipated density. They will be realised only if employment evolves as projected, and if the density assumptions hold up.
- the estimates are aggregative, for the sub-region and the two districts, and do not take account of spatial variations in demand. A projection of so many hectares per year is compatible with surpluses in some areas and shortages in others.
- densities on existing employment land may go up or down, and with re-development may impact on the overall amount of employment land required, whatever the employment projections.

- there is often a time lag in development, with new investors needing land before unwanted land can be made available, leading to an actual land requirement in excess of the nominal (calculated) one.

For these and other reasons it is very difficult if not impossible to connect short and long term land requirements statistically. The former are driven mainly by short run demand pressures reflected in agents' searches. This chapter deals with these essentially short term requirements.

7.3 Requirements

We have identified the possible need for further employment land at Yarmouth (B2. In this chapter we discuss our criteria for recommending further allocations (or not) and our reasoning behind these recommendations. We also discuss one potential removal of an industrial allocation.

7.4 Site Selection Criteria

Where we have identified new sites we have prepared proformas along the lines of ODPM guidance.

We have looked at sustainability in the round - social, environmental and economic. All too often sustainability is considered in a narrow way – merely minimising the use of the private car. But what works best for minimising car travel may not be workable economically. It is pointless allocating land for development the private sector cannot afford to build and the public sector will not fund. And as we explained earlier, although allocating sites close to town centres might minimise worker travel to the industries located there, they might be better used for other purposes which would have a greater impact on car travel.

In days bygone workers used to cycle or walk to work. Now with such high car ownership amongst the working population most seek the best career opportunities for themselves - even though that may mean a comparatively long car journey. The walk or cycle to work is becoming increasingly rare - although walking and cycling rates in both Lowestoft and Yarmouth are high and should be encouraged through dedicated cycleways and footpaths. More employment in mixed development in or close to town centres would encourage people to walk or cycle (because it was near to home) or to use public transport, because bus routes tend to run radially to and from town centres

Nevertheless, public transport use for travel to work is generally low across the sub-region. It is worth noting that the most remote sites, which employ some of the most deprived people in the community (the poultry processors) have some of the most sustainable transport policies in that they put on dedicated buses from town centres for their workforce. New developments – especially in the remoter areas, should be contingent upon satisfactory green travel plans.

Policies to reduce parking standards need to be balanced against the need to secure investment. Inward investors in office or high-tech developments simply will not accept low parking standards.

As things stand most of the sites in both Lowestoft and Yarmouth are close to and offer easy access to people in the most deprived areas.

In terms of environmental impact, with no sites of particular ecological interest, we have sought to allocate those sites where development will cause the least damage to the landscape and outlook of local residents.

As a general principle we have sought to consolidate development rather than allocate stand-alone sites. This generally minimises impact on the environment, helps generate economies of scale and opens the way to the introduction of collective green travel plans.

Where new land might be needed, but the position is unclear, we recommend not extending employment allocations, but keeping the position under review, with a view to reconsidering the position should a shortage become apparent.

7.5 Our Recommendations and Reasoning

The following recommendations are based on the consultants' initial site appraisal and discussions with agents, without a detailed assessment of constraints, infrastructure and services. They are considered to be robust but will of course be subject to more detailed analysis of these factors.

Great Yarmouth – new or re-allocations

In **Yarmouth** the most important regional provision is for land to meet the RSS strategic site requirement of land to support the planned new RoRo port (EastPort), assuming this comes to fruition. At this stage of the project no net additional land is proposed since the 11 has of back up land identified for port use[17] is to be provided through reclamation. However ports are notoriously land hungry and many kinds of indirect activity may seek to locate close by, while possible further road or rail links could require further land. Hence the project if it proceeds will need to be kept under review in case this requirement increases. In such a case additional land needed is by definition likely to be behind the new port, at the southern end of **South Denes**.

Yarmouth also needs more land for general industry. It is difficult to find any suitable sites that would not impinge on residential areas, areas of important landscape value or wildlife habitats. Land is available for B8 development at **Beacon Park –** but the authority does not wish to see uses extended to B2 at the present time. For the time being B2 users will have to make the best of what is available – principally at Harfreys, Gapton and South Denes although in due course, B1 occupiers may relocate to Beacon Park and some of the depots may be rationalised to make way for redevelopment. And when the third river crossing is open, South Denes will be more attractive to general industry. Constrained land at Gapton Hall and Harfreys should be returned to agricultural/open space use.

With the potential shortage of good accessible land for B2 development, we considered the possibility of releasing some of the land at Beacon Park, at present dedicated for B1 and B8 use, for some B2 development. This would be subject to detailed consideration of the impact on the particular development on neighbouring uses – and not a general release. This presents a dilemma as we understand that the *current* designation excludes B2 in pursuance of a policy to restrict uses not of high quality. Nevertheless, should a further phase of development (a Phase 3 extension) be considered at Beacon Park, and bearing in mind (see next chapter) our recommendation to consider designation of this facility as a strategic employment site, the Council should review its potential for B2 uses.

In **Great Yarmouth** (as in Lowestoft) we draw attention to the recommendation in Chapter 4 to locate new office development close to the town centre. There are a variety of locations which could be designated for this purpose and it is up to the District to identify these. A small, modern office quarter would help to attract the kinds of business services which are under-represented in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Generally, policies should be flexible to allow office development in the town centre as the market decides. Speculative office development on its own is unlikely to be profitable, so the authorities should consider making consents for more lucrative developments contingent on providing employment space as part of a mixed use scheme.

[17] see 'Outer Harbour Economic Impact Assessment', op cit.

Great Yarmouth – removal of existing allocations

As we said earlier, the prospect of any meaningful development on **Eurocentre** with its poor ground conditions and access problems is remote – especially now the third river crossing seems destined to be built some miles to the south. It seems pointless to retain the industrial allocation of the undeveloped land, some 19 has. Accordingly we recommend its removal, returning the land to agricultural use.

Not all the port/industrial land along the banks of the Yare is likely to be needed. **South Denes** is an enormous area – 90.6 has – and much is vacant or underused. Even with consolidation and new development behind East Port, land at the northern end could be released for residential (or mixed use purposes). We suggest 30 has could in theory be released, (from both sides of the Yare together) but this would involve much disruption to existing businesses. On the other side of the Yare the employment areas of **Southtown** account for around 23 has**,** largely occupied but much in poor condition and with poor access. Redevelopment of surplus areas on both sides of the river should be guided by the URC masterplan. Further from the river the 12 ha potential development site at Gapton Hall, on unstable marshland, should be transferred from employment to agricultural/open space use.

7.6 Managed Release of Surplus Employment Land

As discussed above, two major influences on land release are the URC Master Plan (when is it finalised) and the prospective developments relating to the new outer harbour and the off-shore energy industry. Subject to these developments a broad strategy of land release may be outlined, with particular reference to the old port and waterfront areas in the two districts.

In **Great Yarmouth**, significant areas in South Denes should be subject to managed release, in a planned manner in conformity with the URC Master Plan. Even if the port is approved, much of this land is unlikely to be required. The main constraints are on timing – disruption to existing users should be avoided as should flooding the market by excessive release in a short time – and on replacement uses, since the more southerly port of South Denes is not attractive to housing. In contrast, on the other (west) bank of the Yare, housing and mixed use is very suitable, and this area should have priority for land release.

8. PROPOSALS FOR POLICY AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

8.1 Land Policies for the Sub-Region

The foremost document concerning sub-regional policies is the East of England Plan (DEEP) although some account may be taken of the Local Area Framework/Objective 2 Programme policies for the economic sub-region, and other studies, e.g. the SQW Subregional Framework Study, where these provide relevant information pertaining to the application of policies at the sub-regional level.[18]

The draft regional plan (Policy SS10) states that local development documents must take account of, and facilitate the delivery of, the Regional Economic Strategy in line with the statement of synergy between RES and RSS. At the sub-regional level there are two lead policies relevant to land policy:

- **SS10** policies promoting key sectors, which have spatial/sub-regional implications pertaining to the incidence of particular sectors or clusters in Waveney or Great Yarmouth;
- **Policy E2** job growth, providing an overall job growth target for the region for the period 2001-21, and a specific target for the Lowestoft part of the sub-region (+ 4,700) jobs.

Supporting these are RSS enabling policies whose function is to deliver the over-arching policies. These may be regarded as relevant to the districts as well as the sub-region. These are:

- **Policy E3** – approach to employment land allocation
- **Policy E4 -** provision of strategic employment sites
- **Policy E5** – supporting economic diversity and employment
- **Policy E6** – information communications technology (ICT)
- **Policy E7** – supporting cluster development

Delivery

a. Policies SS10 and E2

To support **Policy SS10** the local planning authorities will work together with the RPBs to encourage the development of sectors and clusters identified as regional priority industries, including, in the Lowestoft-Great Yarmouth sub-region, the off-shore energy sector, and modern port-related activity. Such support will include provision of sufficient land in locations suitable for the development of these activities. These priority sectors will be kept under review and may change over time.

To support **Policy E2** the local planning authorities will plan for and monitor the achievement of an increase of 10,000 jobs in the Lowestoft-Great Yarmouth sub-region over the period 2001-21, 5,000 in

[18] These reports identify sectors/clusters concentrated in the area (economic sub-region), which are not identified in the regional plan.

each area. The authorities will work together to optimise the alignment of housing with the expanded employment to promote sustainability.

b. Policies E3-E7

Policy E3 is addressed by the provisions of this employment land review, enabling local authorities to ensure that a range of sites and premises is allocated sufficient to meet the quantitative and qualitative needs of business within the sequential approach of the core strategy and job growth targets of policy E2. Sites will be provided in locations which meet the needs of the region's significant clusters as set out in the economic strategy.

To meet the requirements of **Policy E4** a ***strategic employment site*** will be provided in Great Yarmouth to support the planned new port expansion.

To support **Policy E5** the sub-regional authorities will regularly assess the needs of different sectors of the local economy, including emerging sectors, to ensure that land is provided for the needs of business, including smaller units, safeguarding a balanced economy.

Policy E6 will be encouraged through regular co-operation between the local authorities and the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), together with the telecommunications industry to improve broadband coverage in the sub-region and generally promote communications technologies within the private and public sectors.

Policy E7 will be encouraged through local development documents to support regionally significant clusters identified by EEDA and local economic partnerships, including provision of a sufficient quantity quality and choice of sites for business including incubators ands established business clusters.

8.2 Employment Land Policies for Great Yarmouth

Core strategy

Key spatial objectives

- Accommodate the employment growth targets set by the EEP and the NEGS in the plan period 2001-21.
- Optimise the use of previously developed land, so that this makes up a total of [….%] of the total land developed by 2021.
- Encourage growth in sectors/clusters identified as key to the future economic health of the (sub-region)

Policies

[INSERT FROM GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH WIDE LOCAL PLAN 2001]

Section 1.3 paras 1.3.1-1.3.2, Sections 1.4-1.6, extracts from Sections 1.7-1.8 updated to be consistent with Employment Land study. Sections 1.11-1.18 updated as necessary.

Site specific allocations

Existing industrial areas

[INSERT FROM BOROUGH WIDE LOCAL PLAN]

Sections 1.7 pt, 1.9-1.10 (numerical allocations) updated to be consistent with Employment Land Study.

- up to 30 has of land in the northern part of South Denes to be re-allocated for housing or mixed use (in accordance with the URC master plan)
- 19 has of unoccupied Eurocentre to be re-allocated for agricultural or open space use

New/extended industrial areas

- No new allocations are proposed.

Section 6 paras 6.1-6.22 omitting E1 and E2 site allocations, and updating as necessary, e.g. para 6.12 to be edited to say that Employment Land Study has been carried out.

8.3 Sub-Regional Definition and Statistical Harmonisation

The study brief anticipates joint working of the two local authorities to develop employment land policies at the sub-regional level. This is presently hampered by absence of an agreed definition of the sub-region and differences in the statistics collected by each authority. The de facto definition for the economic sub-region in employment land terms has been to add Waveney's Lowestoft area (industrial estates: Lake Lothing, South Lowestoft, Beach, Oulton, Colville Works) to the whole of the Great Yarmouth Borough. Waveney rural and market towns is accordingly defined (in employment land terms) as the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and Southwold areas.

These could be defined by wards, but a decision would need to be made whether to include the whole of Great Yarmouth in this economic sub-region, or to omit some rural/peripheral wards. In any case there are difficulties in adopting (say) the SQW study definition of the sub-region since this includes two wards from another local authority (Broadland).

Perhaps more important would be to align the data collected, principally if Great Yarmouth could measure m2 floorspace completions and has land take up on an identical basis to Waveney's and if possible undertake industrial estates surveys using the same format as those done by Waveney (identifying company name, address, SIC, use class including sui generis, site area).[19] Floorspace could be added using VOA hereditament records which are now available. This would facilitate density assessments. By adding ward level information (subject to confidentiality) from ABI records employment control totals could be established.

[19] For Great Yarmouth a start on a 2005 records base could be made using the Wegener database used for the employment survey.