

West Suffolk Council's Local Plan- Summary of some Key Points

A local plan provides a vision for the growth and development of an area and policies, which set out the way that the plan aims to meet the housing, employment, social and community needs of an area while at the same time protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. It is a statutory requirement that local authorities produce a local plan for their area and keep it up to date.

The first phase of the West Suffolk Local Plan was for West Suffolk Council to prepare an evidence base. Part of this process involved a 'call for sites' where landowners put forward land that they feel may be suitable for development. West Suffolk Council describes this as a landowner's 'wish list'.

Another part of the process is for West Suffolk Council to prepare a settlement hierarchy. A settlement hierarchy categorises settlements according to the range of services and facilities they offer, reflecting their level of sustainability. West Suffolk Council has identified six potential types of place for West Suffolk in the draft hierarchy, from most to least sustainable:

- Towns
- Key service centres
- Local service centres
- Type A villages
- Type B villages

Risby has been categorised as a Type A village. These villages have a limited range of services and facilities but can still meet some of the day to day needs of their residents and/or lie within two kilometres of a town with the opportunity for sustainable access. The opportunity for site allocations will be explored through the Local Plan.

In October 2020, West Suffolk Council carried out its first consultation – The Issues and Options consultation. They also carried out an additional 'call for sites'. During the Issues and Options consultation, communities were asked to provide feedback on how they think the Local Plan should shape the future of West Suffolk to 2040.

West Suffolk Council is currently reviewing all the comments received as part of the Issues and Options Consultation and will identify how much development should take place and where it should go.

Several sites have been put forward in Risby during both 'call for sites' and two landowners have asked that their deferred sites be reconsidered. West Suffolk Council will produce a list later this year detailing which sites put forward by landowners will be deferred or included in the next stage of the Local Plan. The sites that are included in the list will have passed West Suffolk Council's initial assessment against a list of criteria such as suitability and sustainability. This does NOT mean that these sites will be developed. West Suffolk Council will pick sites from this list which they feel are best suited for development. They have not decided yet where growth will take place in West Suffolk or the numbers of new homes communities will be expected to accommodate.

Once West Suffolk Council has decided where growth will take place, they will prepare the Preferred Options draft of the plan. At this stage we will have more information about which sites will be put forward in Risby and how much new housing Risby is expected to accommodate. Consultation for this stage will take place in January 2022. The final plan is not expected to be approved until 2024. Risby Parish Council will discuss their response to the Preferred Options document and sites allocated in Risby at a meeting in January/February 2022 (TBC). This meeting will be open to all residents and you are very welcome to join the meeting and speak to councillors during the Open Forum at the start of the meeting. Alternatively you can email your views to the Parish Council about the impact of the Preferred Options document on Risby.

If you would like to be kept informed of the progress of West Suffolk Council's Local Plan, West Suffolk Council encourages residents to register on their local plan consultation planning portal at <https://westsuffolk.inconsult.uk/>