

12. Monitoring and Review



Orwell Bridge, Ipswich

12.1 The Structure Plan looks well ahead at issues over which there must inevitably be a degree of uncertainty. These include population and housing growth pressures, changes in the national and local economy and the levels of investment in infrastructure and services. The outcome of the Plan's policies depends to a considerable extent on the actions of others. District Councils prepare and implement local plans and exercise development control responsibilities. Important investment decisions are taken by both businesses and individuals. Similarly, the activities of organisations such as the Environment Agency and the water and sewerage companies are fundamental to the plan's success, while implementation of the transport strategy and specific transport schemes will largely depend on the availability of Government funding. The County Council will monitor and report on the extent to which policies are being implemented and will further review and update this Plan as appropriate.

12.2 In its monitoring work, the County Council will pay particular regard to:

- (a) the implications of changes in the structural framework within which the Plan operates, such as the review of European Structural Funding and the introduction of Regional Development Agencies;
- (b) changes in national and regional policy, and in the strategic approach being promoted through the structure plans of adjoining counties;
- (c) the rate of population and housing growth, and the extent to which assumptions underlying the Plan's provisions for growth remain valid. The implications of new national forecasts of population change and household formation, and any fresh guidance on the role of these forecasts in Plan preparation, will be kept under review;
- (d) housing land availability;
- (e) the scale and location of employment and retailing development and the take-up of land allocated for these purposes;
- (f) the extent to which service and infrastructure provision is consistent with and is facilitating implementation of the county development and transport strategies;
- (g) the extent to which the strategy and policies are being carried forward into local plans and individual development control decisions.

12.3 A central theme of this review is the promotion of environmentally sustainable development. Since the previous Structure Plan was drawn up, the

Suffolk Local Authorities have co-operated to prepare the first comprehensive audit of the state of the Suffolk environment. This provides a baseline against which to monitor future change, making use of a range of indicators identified in the audit. As information on these indicators is assembled, the effectiveness of Structure Plan policies in safeguarding the environmental assets of the county and promoting sustainable development will become easier to assess.

12.4 Development of the monitoring programme and demonstration of the clear relationship of the indicators to the environment of Suffolk will aid the environmental appraisal process. In turn, this will enable future Plan reviews to reflect more closely the effectiveness of policies, or deal with any shortcomings.