

Michael Burton  
East Northamptonshire Council  
Planning Policy  
East Northamptonshire House  
Cedar Drive  
Thrapston  
NN14 4LZ

**Our ref:** AN/2012/114626/OR-04/PO1-L01  
**Your ref:** MB/RuNP-Reg16  
**Date:** 14 December 2017

Dear Michael

**Rushden Neighbourhood Plan submission: consultation under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012**

Thank you for inviting our comments on the Rushden Neighbourhood Plan.

We have considered the current submission version of the neighbourhood plan in the context of our remit. At this stage our comments are in brief:

We welcome the in-principle application of the flood risk sequential test to site allocations.

We believe new housing development will contribute to the improvement of water quality especially in Rushden Brook which is heavily polluted with urban runoff derived from the town. This is important because the Brook discharges into the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site and is likely to lead to long-term deterioration of a sensitive ecological network. Accordingly, development proposals should ensure that they reduce or ameliorate the effects of urban drainage in watercourses as part of the plan.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss our response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Daniel Oladejo**  
**Sustainable Places - Planning Specialist**  
Direct dial 02030254936  
Direct e-mail [daniel.oladejo@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.oladejo@environment-agency.gov.uk)



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