



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Local Plan Part 2 Sections 7.0 and 8.0 Proposed Additional Text – January 2020



Additional Site Allocation:
Rushden Lakes West

Proposed additional text:

Section 7.0 (Economic Prosperity)

Section 8.0 (Housing Delivery)

Section 7.0: Economic Prosperity [Rushden Lakes text following paragraph 7.24]

Rushden Lakes West

Over and above the major outstanding employment land commitments anticipated to be delivered during the remainder of the Plan period, further economic development opportunities may be identified. Employment land commitments in and around Rushden Lakes (e.g. Rushden Gateway) and Stanton Cross (Wellingborough East) should provide opportunities to enhance the A45 corridor between Wellingborough and Rushden as a focus for employment growth, as emphasised in the Joint Core Strategy (paragraph 5.6).

The recently consented Ditchford Lane/ Rushden Lakes link road opens up a development opportunity to the west of Rushden Lakes. The proposed site allocation will provide a mixed use scheme, delivering the following benefits:

- *An appropriate balance of employment, business, well-being, tourism/leisure, community and residential uses;*
- *New workspaces which specifically meet the needs of the local businesses accompanied by community, tourism (which could include a new hotel) and recreational facilities; and*
- *Provision for the enhancement and sustainable use of the surrounding natural environment.*

This mixed development should promote the wellbeing of the wider community of Rushden and the wider area. It will deliver broader strategic benefits such as new green infrastructure connections between Rushden Lakes and Stanton Cross. Further details are provided in the housing delivery section of the Local Plan.

8.0 Housing Delivery [Rushden Lakes West –“Housing Contingency” – paragraphs 8.27-8.37 replacement text]

Irthlingborough and Rushden – additional housing land allocations

8.27 *The Joint Core Strategy (Policies 11 and 33) emphasises that the focus for this Plan should be to work with key stakeholders to secure the delivery of priority strategic sites, particularly those at Irthlingborough West and Rushden East. The delivery trajectories in the Joint Core Strategy (Annex 1) are as follows:*

- *Irthlingborough West – 700 dwellings, 2019-2030; and*
- *Rushden East – 1,600 dwellings, 2020-2031.*

- 8.28 *The trajectories for the major strategic sites (sustainable urban extensions) have been reviewed yearly, through subsequent Authorities' Monitoring Reports (AMRs). Since adoption of the Joint Core Strategy (July 2016) the trajectories for Irthlingborough West and Rushden East have been substantially reviewed, in response to the latest deliverability evidence. The latest trajectories, as agreed for the 2019 AMR¹, are as follows:*
- *Irthlingborough West – 250 dwellings, 2026-2031; and*
 - *Rushden East – 1,200 dwellings, 2022-2031.*
- 8.29 *The April 2019 trajectories for the two sustainable urban extensions equate to a combined reduction of 850 dwellings for Irthlingborough and Rushden within the Plan period. Predominantly this is due to development viability affecting delivery of these two sites; in particular costs associated with ground stability mitigation for Irthlingborough West arising from the former mine workings. The revised trajectories equate to residual shortfalls of 323 dwellings and 256 dwellings, for Irthlingborough and Rushden respectively.*
- 8.30 *The NPPF requires the Council to maintain a rolling supply of specific deliverable sites (paragraph 67). The challenges around development viability for delivering major sustainable urban extensions were subject to detailed discussions during the 2015 Examination for the Joint Core Strategy. The Inspector concluded that, the overall urban-focused spatial development strategy concentrating “on existing towns and a series of deliverable SUEs represents the most suitable and sustainable strategy for the area over the plan period” (paragraph 91, Joint Core Strategy Inspector’s Report, 22 June 2016).*
- 8.31 *The Local Plan housing requirements for Irthlingborough and Rushden (Joint Core Strategy Policy 29/ Table 5) are minima. Notwithstanding, the Joint Core Strategy (paragraph 9.10) allows for the Local Plan Part 2 to assess higher levels of housing provision at individual settlements, or where this would meet a shortfall in deliverable sites at another settlement within the southern part of the District, which includes Irthlingborough and Rushden. In other words, the Joint Core Strategy allows for the allocation of additional housing land in order to meet the outstanding residual requirements for Irthlingborough and Rushden (totalling 579 dwellings, as at 1 April 2019).*
- 8.32 *The combined shortfall for Irthlingborough and Rushden equates to greater than 500 dwellings, so this could exceed the definition of a “strategic” housing requirement, as defined in the Joint Core Strategy (Figure 12: Key Diagram/ paragraph 9.14). However, regard should also be given to the housing land supply figures for Higham Ferrers, which currently exceed the Joint Core Strategy requirement by 244 dwellings (principally due to additional brownfield development opportunities within the urban area). If the Higham Ferrers figure is applied to offset the Irthlingborough and Rushden shortfall, this would give a residual requirement for 335 dwellings across the three urban areas.*

¹ Planning Policy Committee, 17 December 2019

8.33 *The Local Plan Part 2 has considered a number of possible further directions for growth around Irthlingborough and Rushden. The following locations at Irthlingborough and Rushden (lying within the East Northamptonshire area) were assessed:*

- *North of the A6, Irthlingborough;*
- *North and East of Crow Hill, Irthlingborough;*
- *East of Higham Ferrers;*
- *South East of Rushden; and*
- *West of Rushden Lakes.*

8.34 *Of the five locations considered, the possibility of allocating further land at Rushden East (such as East of Higham Ferrers) has been discounted, as this would not address issues of delivering the outstanding requirements for Irthlingborough and Rushden within the Plan period. Of the potential locations for growth, a site allocation for a further mixed use development to the west of Rushden Lakes is considered to be the most appropriate option, for the following reasons:*

- *Capacity for 400-450 dwellings (with further new employment land), to offset the net residual requirements for Irthlingborough and Rushden;*
- *Access to services and facilities within walking and cycling distance, such as Rushden Lakes, the Greenway, the Nene Valley and Stanton Cross (Wellingborough East); and*
- *Significant consented new infrastructure to service development, such as the Ditchford Lane/ Rushden Lakes link road.*

8.35 *Accordingly, a 23ha (gross) site to the west of Rushden Lakes and east of Ditchford Lane is allocated for a mixed use development. Any proposals will need to satisfactorily address the following site specific constraints:*

- *East/ west former Wellingborough/ Higham Ferrers railway cutting landfill;*
- *East/ west gas pipeline, parallel with former railway cutting;*
- *Environmental conflicts with established uses to the south, such as the A45 and industrial areas to the south (e.g. air pollution, noise or odours).*

8.36 *Policy EN27 below sets out specific requirements for the development of Rushden Lakes West.*

Rushden Lakes West



[New] Policy EN27: Rushden Lakes West

Land to the west of Rushden Lakes and east of Ditchford Lane (23ha) is allocated for a new mixed use development; consisting of housing, employment, tourism and leisure uses including supporting infrastructure.

A comprehensive masterplan and project level Habitats Regulation Assessment, to be agreed by the local planning authority, which will address all relevant policy requirements. The proposed development will deliver the following:

- a) Up to 450 dwellings,*
- b) Tourism, leisure and community facilities, (including the potential for a hotel);*
- c) Employment provision (predominantly business and industrial);*
- d) New vehicular accesses from the new Rushden Lakes/ Ditchford Lane link road;*
- e) Pedestrian and cycle connections, to Stanton Cross, Rushden Lakes, Rushden Town Centre (via the Greenway), Sanders Lodge Industrial Estate and the Nene Valley to maximise opportunities to improve connectivity to, and enhance the quality of, public rights of way network;*

- f) Appropriate mitigation measures, to the satisfaction of Natural England, to avoid significant adverse impacts upon the integrity of the adjacent Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site;*
- g) Green infrastructure connections, to the Nene Valley (north and west) and Rushden Lakes shopping and leisure area;*
- h) High quality landmark features at the main access points and Ditchford Lane gateway;*
- i) Appropriate safeguarding for the gas pipeline and any other essential infrastructure that bisects the site; and*
- j) Appropriate multi functional structural landscaping to service the development, including suitable bunding along the southern boundary to provide the necessary mitigation such as noise from the A45 and established industrial operations to the south².*

² Sander's Lodge; designated as a location for waste management facilities through the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, adopted July 2017 (policies 13 (WL19) and 30)

Appendix 2 – ADDITIONAL SITE ALLOCATION
BACKGROUND PAPER



Local Plan Part 2 – Rushden Lakes
West

January 2020

This background paper has been prepared to:

1. Explain the background to the proposed site allocation for a new mixed use development land allocation to the west of Rushden Lakes; and
2. Signposting the relevant documentation for the site selection process.

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 Preparation of the District-wide Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) was launched in January 2017. During the initial consultation (January – March 2017), under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012³, LXB (the promoters/ developers of Rushden Lakes) submitted a site specific representation promoting the area of land to the west of Rushden Lakes (east of Ditchford Lane) as a potential development land allocation.

1.2 The 1st draft version LPP2⁴ was published for a non-statutory consultation in November 2018 (November 2018 – February 2019). This highlighted the following issues:

- Section 7.0 (Economic Prosperity) explains that at least 9,300 jobs are anticipated to be delivered within the Local Plan period (2011-2031), compared to a requirement for 7,200 jobs, with a significant proportion of this (over 2,000 jobs) to be delivered at Rushden Lakes West (paragraphs 7.16-7.24);
- Section 8.0 (Housing Delivery) was prepared on the basis of the 1 April 2018 housing land supply monitoring data⁵ and identified shortfalls of 368 and 113 dwellings for Irthlingborough and Rushden respectively, predominantly due to slippages in the delivery trajectories for the sustainable urban extensions (SUEs) at Irthlingborough West (reduction from 700 to 315 dwellings within the current Plan period) and Rushden East (reduction from 1,600 dwellings net, to 1,300 dwellings within the current Plan period) (Table 17/ paragraphs 8.9-8.12).

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents>

⁴ https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/4721/local_plan_part_2_-_documents

⁵ <http://www.nnjpdu.org.uk/publications/amr-2017-18-assessment-of-housing-land-supply-2019-24/>

1.3 The 1st draft LPP2 considered (paragraphs 8.27-8.37) whether it was necessary to allocate additional contingency housing sites within the current Local Plan period, to address the potential for further slippages in delivery of the two SUEs. However, given that the 2018 housing land supply data identified an overall housing land supply of 550 dwellings in excess of the strategic requirement for 8,400 dwellings, it was concluded at the time that there would be no need to allocate further housing sites in the south of the District for the following reasons:

- As at 1 April 2018, the housing land supply showed a robust position in respect of meeting the overall North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2011-2031 (Local Plan Part 1) housing requirements for East Northamptonshire; and
- Additional housing requirements over and above the strategic allocations were identified through the opportunity to create a new garden communities settlement at Tresham Garden Village (JCS Policy 14).

1.4 The position regarding the shortfall was reconsidered during 2019, in order to ensure that the LPP2 is robust in maintaining a deliverable housing land supply throughout the current Plan period. This paper explains the process, by which it has been determined:

- Assessment of whether additional strategic housing land allocations are needed to address any overall shortfall, arising from further slippages to the delivery trajectories for the Irthlingborough and Rushden SUEs; and
- Site selection process for additional potential housing land allocations in the south of the District.

2.0 Assessment of whether additional strategic housing land allocations are needed to address any overall shortfall

2.1 The housing land supply position was reconsidered by the council in June 2019 (Planning Policy Committee, 10 June 2019, Item 5⁶), in light of the latest available evidence.

2.2 A background paper regarding housing requirements of the Local Plan Part 2 (urban areas) was published for the Planning Policy Committee (Item 5, Appendix 3). This concluded, in response to the housing land supply shortfalls at Rushden and Irthlingborough (113 dwellings and 288 dwellings⁷, respectively), that the LPP2 could apply the following approaches to housing delivery:

⁶ https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/964/planning_policy_committee

⁷ Figure shown in 2018 housing land supply for Irthlingborough omitted 80 dwellings at Land off Addington Road (1996 District Local Plan, Policy IR1-A), which has the effect of reducing the Irthlingborough residual requirement from 368 to 288 dwellings

- **Rushden** – No need to allocate further housing land to meet the small identified residual requirement (113 dwellings), given that any permission for Rushden East would bring up to 2,700 dwellings into the housing land supply in its entirety exceeding the JCS requirement by 1,287 dwellings, and furthermore could be offset by over-provision (over 230 dwellings) at Higham Ferrers; and
- **Irthlingborough** – No need to allocate further housing land to meet the identified residual requirement (288 dwellings), given that the JCS requirement (1,350) was inflated by over 500 dwellings above the baseline requirement, itself predicated upon delivery of Irthlingborough West (700 dwellings) in its entirety within the current Local Plan period.

2.3 The June 2019 urban areas housing land supply position was reviewed, in view of the 1 April 2019 housing land supply data. This data was collated in autumn 2019 and agreed by the Planning Policy Committee on 17 December 2019 (Item 8⁸). The latest housing land supply data identified an increase in the potential housing shortfalls for both Rushden and Irthlingborough within the current Plan period (between the 2017-18 and 2018-19 monitoring periods) is shown in Table 1, below.

Location	Residual Shortfall (2017-18 monitoring period)	Housing shortfall (2018-19 monitoring period)	Change/ difference
Rushden	113	256	143
Irthlingborough	288	323	35
TOTAL SHORTFALL	401	579	178

2.4 This increase in the Rushden and Irthlingborough shortfalls (totalling 178 dwellings) over the 2018 position has necessitated a review of the approach to managing housing land supply proposed in the 1st draft LPP2. It was initially determined by the Planning Policy Committee on 30 September 2019 that the approach should be reconsidered (Item 5, paragraphs 2.15-2.17⁹), and this was borne out once the 2019 housing land supply data was finalised in autumn 2019.

3.0 Site selection process for additional potential housing land allocations in the south of the District

3.1 A refreshed “call for sites” was undertaken during November 2019 for the south of the District. This identified a short list of five potential delivery locations at Irthlingborough and Rushden. These five locations (approximate sites) were subject to a detailed assessment; for which the site assessment was reported to the Planning Policy Committee on 17 December 2019 (Item 6, Appendix 1: Additional Housing Site Assessments):

⁸ https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1023/planning_policy_committee

⁹ https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1006/planning_policy_committee

- Land to the north of the A6, Irthlingborough;
- Land to the north and east of Crow Hill, Irthlingborough;
- Land to the east of Higham Ferrers;
- Land to the south east of Rushden; and
- Land to the west of Rushden Lakes.

3.2 The five sites were assessed using a matrix linked to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) objectives of the Local Plan (Planning Policy Committee, 17 December 2019, Item 6, Appendix 1¹⁰). This assessment utilised a ‘traffic light’ system to indicate how well these broad locations perform against the criteria. Initial discussions were also held with statutory undertakers to help understand opportunities and constraints for delivery.

3.3 The assessment recognised that, to a greater or lesser extent, all five of the broad locations, identified as opportunities for meeting the potential shortfall in housing requirements within the Plan period, raise issues which need to be taken into consideration. The site assessment (Planning Policy Committee, 17 December 2019, Item 6) concluded that the location to the west of Rushden Lakes provides the most sustainable and deliverable option for addressing the potential shortfall in housing delivery in the short/ medium term, thereby maximising the opportunity of contributing to housing delivery within the Plan period. If developed this proposal could deliver up to 450 houses.

4.0 Implications of the proposed Rushden Lakes West development land allocation for the LPP2

4.1 As explained above, Rushden Lakes West has been proposed as an additional LPP2 allocation to make provision for additional housing land. However, the site assessment has revealed that significant parts of the site are unsuitable for residential development due to environmental constraints such as landfill (former Higham Ferrers/ Wellingborough railway cutting) and traffic noise from the A45.

4.2 Given that the site adjoins Rushden Lakes, one of the most significant employment land developments since 2011, it is anticipated that the proposed development should also accommodate a mix of employment uses, predominantly related to leisure, tourism or the visitor economy. While there is no need for further strategic employment land allocations within the current Plan period (2011-2031), it is proposed that an appropriate mix of uses could come forward at Rushden Lakes West to complement the additional housing development.

¹⁰ https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1006/planning_policy_committee

5.0 Proposed draft LPP2 text

- 5.1 The addition of Rushden Lakes West as a mixed use development land allocation necessitates additional consultation in advance of the formal statutory Pre-Submission Draft (Regulation 19) consultation for the LPP2. This entails the addition of a site allocations policy and supporting text within sections 7.0 (Economic Prosperity) and 8.0 (Housing Delivery) of the LPP2.
- 5.2 This background paper sets out the contextual information for the proposal to allocate land to the west of Rushden Lakes for mixed use development. It is supported by an Annex (below), which sets out the draft text that it is proposed should be incorporated into the LPP2. The draft LPP2 will consist of:
- Section 7.0 (Economic Prosperity) – New sub-section “Rushden Lakes West”, following paragraph 7.24 (1st draft LPP2, November 2018); and
 - Section 8.0 (Housing Delivery) – Replacement of “Housing Contingency” paragraphs 8.27-8.37 (1st draft LPP2, November 2018), by new sub-section “Irthlingborough and Rushden – additional housing land allocations”.
- 5.3 The consultation is anticipated to take place over a 6-week period, during February and March 2020.