

Hearing Statement on behalf of The Crown Estate (“TCE”)

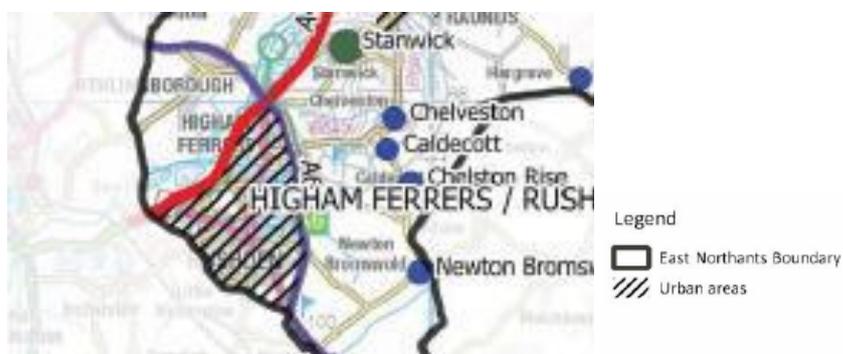
**Matter 2: Spatial Strategy**

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**Settlement categories and boundaries**

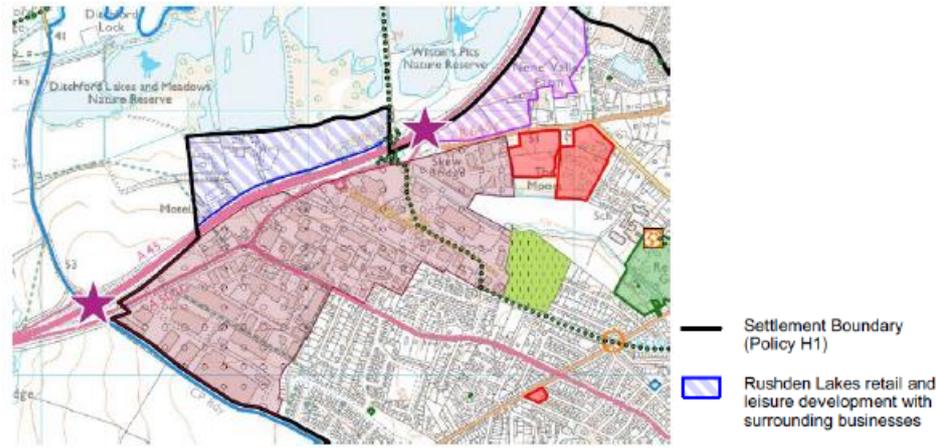
**9. What is the justification for the criteria for settlement boundaries referred to in Policy EN2 for the urban areas? In practical terms, do the criteria relate to how settlement boundaries will be defined, or are they criteria relating to when infill development will be permitted? Should the policy be clear that it applies only where settlement boundaries are not established in a NP? Is the intention that all the criteria apply?**

1. Paragraph 1.19 of the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 – Submission Plan (March 2021) (“The Submission Plan”) describes the relationship between the Submission Plan and Neighbourhood Plans noting that it has been written to minimise any potential for conflict with extant Neighbourhood Plan policies. Paragraph 2.54 of the Submission Plan also states that the Plan should recognise and complement policies from Made Neighbourhood Plans.
2. Figure 6 of the Submission Plan presents the ‘Local Plan spatial strategy – Settlement Hierarchy’ and identifies the ‘Urban areas’ within the district. An extract of Figure 6 showing the proposed Urban area for Higham Ferrers/Rushden (hatched) is shown in Figure 1 below. This is the only visual representation we can find of the Urban Areas which are in turn referred to in policies EN1 and EN2. There does not appear to be an equivalent representation on the Draft Policies Maps.



**Figure 1:** Submission Plan Figure 6 Extract: Local Plan spatial strategy – Settlement Hierarchy

3. The Policies Map of the Rushden Neighbourhood Plan (‘Made’ 2018) identifies the Settlement Boundary for Rushden (black line) which includes the existing Rushden Lakes development (hatched purple) (Figure 2 below):



**Figure 2:** Rushden Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map extract

4. In order to be consistent with the Rushden Neighbourhood Plan and to follow the most appropriate strategy, the Urban area for Higham Ferrers/Rushden as shown on the 'Local Plan spatial strategy – Settlement Hierarchy' Figure (Figure 6) of the Submission Plan should be extended across the A45 Trunk Road to include Rushden Lakes.
5. This approach would also be consistent with paragraph 4.30 of the Submission Plan which refers to defining settlement boundaries "i.e. the extent of the built up area". Rushden Lakes clearly comprises part of the existing built up area of Rushden.
6. When referring to the 'Rushden: Growth Town' Urban Area in paragraph 2.8, the Submission Plan states:

*"Rushden is designated as a Growth Town in the Joint Core Strategy (2011- 2031), and is expected to undertake a significant amount of development over the Plan period. The wider town contains a mix of existing leisure facilities, businesses and services as well as providing future leisure, retail and business opportunities. The most notable of these include Rushden Lakes (opened in 2017, extended in 2019) and the proposed mixed-use development of the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension, adjoining the eastern side of the town. The growth for this area is anticipated to provide for greater investment and value within Rushden." [our underlining]*

7. Additionally, when describing Rushden as a Growth Town, paragraph 10.11 of the Submission Plan also identifies Rushden Lakes as one of the town's three strategic sites to deliver the majority of Rushden's growth.
8. Extending the Urban area for Higham Ferrers/Rushden as shown on Figure 6 of the Submission Plan to include Rushden Lakes would mean that the written text in the Submission Plan and the visual representation of Urban Areas would be consistent.

**Word Count: 598**