



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Planning Policy Committee – 19 September 2011

### North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Progress Report

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#### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to update members on progress with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

#### **Attachment(s)**

None

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#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Joint Core Strategy is the plan for the area covering Corby, Kettering, East Northamptonshire and Wellingborough. It deals with strategic issues that need to be looked at across district boundaries and provides a long-term vision for the area with an overall framework in which more detailed plans will be drawn up and decisions made. This innovative approach to collaborative working between the four districts in North Northamptonshire, together with the county council resulted in the adoption of the Core Spatial Strategy in June 2008. This was the first Joint Core Strategy to be adopted in the UK and received the East Midlands RTP1 award for spatial planning.
- 1.2 Considerable progress has been made since on the review of the Core Strategy with technical workshops and events on rural areas, smaller towns and the visions for the area taking place since September 2009. An Issues Paper consultation has already taken place and the next stage will be a Preferred Options consultation (during autumn 2011) followed by pre-submission (spring 2012) and submission to the Secretary of State for public examination (May 2012).
- 1.3 Most recently a workshop was held for Joint Planning Committee members as part of the process of helping to develop a set of preferred options for the Core Strategy. This report summarises the key issues brought up at the event and how these are being addressed.

#### **2.0 Joint Core Strategy Seminar**

- 2.1 The Joint Planning Committee member workshop took place on 27 July 2011 to consider the emerging work in developing the preferred options for the Joint Core Strategy.
- 2.2 The purpose of the event was to have an open and frank discussion on the key issues and provide opportunity for Members to identify 'elephants in the room' i.e. obvious problems or difficulties that people may not want to personally raise. The discussions were informed by background material including work on urban design and demographic and transport modelling.
- 2.3 The workshop prompted a detailed and wide ranging discussion. Key areas of debate related to retail hierarchy, housing targets, new settlement at Deenethorpe and job numbers.

## 2.4 Retail hierarchy

The Joint Planning Unit suggested that a Preferred Option is likely to require Corby and Kettering to accommodate a higher proportion of new comparison retail space than Wellingborough and Rushden by 2031. A lively debate took place at the seminar with both Corby and Kettering having aspirations to be the prominent retail centre in North Northamptonshire.

## 2.5 Housing targets

The Joint Planning Unit indicated that a Preferred Option is likely to maintain high housing targets for Corby between 2011 and 2031, which could boost the population of the town to nearly 100,000 in line with the Regeneration Framework. The deliverability of Corby's aspirations was challenged at the workshop; in particular the capacity of the housing market to support the level of growth and the capacity to accommodate growth within the administrative boundary. The concern was that, in light of the emerging National Planning Policy Framework, other districts may be required to accommodate any shortfall against Corby's aspirational housing target.

## 2.6 New settlement at Deenethorpe

The Joint Planning Unit suggested that a new village at Deenethorpe may be an appropriate departure from the current spatial strategy. There was general agreement that further work is needed on deliverability of Deenethorpe and the potential implications on existing settlements.

## 2.7 Job numbers

The Joint Planning Unit suggested that a Preferred Option is likely to aim for at least one new job for each worker, with the majority focused in Corby, Kettering and the rural north of East Northamptonshire. The debate at the workshop challenged the targets in the context of strong economic performance within East Northamptonshire and the enormous potential for job creation at locations such as Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit.

## **3.0 Next Steps**

3.1 Further technical studies on employment provision, retail hierarchy and deliverability of the housing aspirations is being developed in response to the discussions at the event which is anticipated should be reported by early September. One of the issues that will need investigating, for example is the scope that Rushden town centre could play in accommodating a share of growth in the south and whether this will be supported by the market.

3.2 The issues raised at the workshop will need to be analysed as part of the consultation process and against the findings of the various updated technical studies that are being undertaken.

3.3 While the current Local Development Framework programme anticipates consultation on the Preferred Options in September 2011, it is proposed that it would be more practical to move this back to October, with approval of a consultation document to be sought from the Joint Planning Committee on 12 October 2011, the purpose of which will be to invite feedback on the way the replacement plan is shaping up. This will give the opportunity for comment on the range of options considered and on the issues that remain to be addressed before the Joint Core Strategy can be drafted.

3.4 This allows more time to reinforce the technical evidence base studies and adequate time for more detailed follow up discussions with key stakeholder organisations.

3.5 The latest overall timetable is

Consult on Preferred Options	October/November 2011
Consult on draft Core Strategy	February/March 2012
Submit Core Strategy	May 2012
Examination	September 2012
Adoption	January 2013

**4.0 Conclusion**

4.1 The feedback from the workshop identifies the key issues that will need to be fully considered when developing the Preferred Options for the Joint Core Strategy review. The event presented an opportunity to express the Council's aspirations. It is clear that some issues are fundamental to the spatial strategy and distribution of development within it and will be developed by additional technical work as part of agreeing the Preferred Options.

**5.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

5.1 None

**6.0 Legal Implications**

6.1 None

**7.0 Risk Management**

7.1 None specifically at present, however there are always risks inherent with plan preparation, for example through potential delays to preparation caused by any changes to legislation/procedure/resource input.

**8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 There may be some financial implications should any additional work be required to provide the evidence base work.

**9.0 Corporate Outcomes**

9.1 The relevant corporate outcomes are:

- Regeneration and Economic Development
- Sustainable Development: strong communities, high quality built environment
- Strong Strategic Partnerships

**10.0 Recommendation**

10.1 The committee is recommended to note the progress on the Core Strategy.

*(Reason – to ensure that a local planning policy framework is put into place and implemented)*

<b>Legal</b>	Power: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
	Other considerations: None
<b>Background Papers:</b> None	
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<b>Date:</b> 30 August 2011	

<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	
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(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)