



Planning Policy Committee – 23rd January 2012

Four Towns Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans Update

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress with the Four Towns Plan. In addition, updates are provided on progress with Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 Four Towns Plan Evidence Base Projects
Appendix 2 Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At Planning Policy Committee on 12 December 2011, Members requested that progress on the Four Towns Plan be reported at subsequent Committees. This report is therefore provided for Members' information.
- 1.2 As Members will be aware, the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy is under review at present and the evidence base work for that will, where appropriate, also feed into the preparation of the Four Towns Plan. The Joint Planning Unit are working with officers from all of the Local Authorities within North Northamptonshire to progress this, therefore where JPU is specified on Appendix 1, other Local Authorities Officers will also be involved or may be taking the lead on certain issues.
- 1.3 For Members' information, Appendix 1 also provides brief updates on Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans work

2.0 Update

- 2.1 Appendix 1 sets out updates on some of the main areas of evidence gathering work. It should be noted that is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Members will note that progress is being made in a number of areas and in particular in terms of cross-cutting evidence based work being carried out with the NNJPU and with respect to ENC's own Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work.
- 2.2 In addition to this work update, Members are also advised that interviews took place before Christmas for 2 temporary posts: a Senior Planning Policy Officer and a Planning Policy Officer (posts were approved as part of the Four Towns Plan - Resource Plan by Policy and Resources Committee on 29th September 2011). Subject to references and contract, the 2 temporary officers should therefore be joining the Planning Policy and Conservation Team in early Spring 2012.

4.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 This report is presented for information purposes only. Work on gathering evidence for the Four Towns Plan is continuing and is intrinsically linked in part to evidence

gathering work for the review of the Core Strategy. The appointment of 2 temporary officers should greatly assist in this work. Work on Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans is also progressing.

4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

4.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The lack of a Local Development Plan Document for the south of the District could lead to more planning appeals, with associated potential costs for the Council.

6.0 Risk Management

6.1 Delays to the preparation of the Four Towns Plan will result in the south of the District not having an up-to-date, robust detailed planning policy framework to defend against any unwanted development. However, the Adopted North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy does provide a strategic policy framework for this area.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications at present, as all current work and appointments are within existing budget, however Members may wish to refer back to the Report and Minutes of Planning Policy Committee on 19 September 2011, entitled Resource Plan and also the Report and Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee on 29 September 2011, entitled Resourcing the Production of the Four Towns Plan 9 (minute 194).

8.0 Corporate Outcomes

8.1 The relevant Corporate Outcome is:

- Good quality of life – prosperous, sustainable, healthy

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 That Members note the current level of progress (*Reason – to provide an update on progress for the Four Towns Plan and in addition, to provide Members with updates on Neighbourhood Plan and Masterplan work*)

Legal	Power: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	
	Other considerations: None	
Background Papers: Minutes of Planning Policy Committee 19 September 2011 and 12 December 2011; Minutes of Policy and Resources Committee 29 September 2011		
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Date: 3 January 2012		
CFO	MO	CX

Appendix 1: Four Towns Plan evidence base projects					
Evidence Gathering	Work Streams	Who	Potential Costs	Milestones	Outputs
Spatial Strategy					
Settlement Hierarchy	Rural settlement study currently being undertaken by North Northamptonshire JPU. Need for further work dependent upon final output from emerging JPU work.	JPU/ ENC/ Action for Market Towns	Not specified	March/ April 2012 - work finalised	JPU settlement hierarchy study to accompany pre-submission Core Strategy Review
	<i>Settlement hierarchy study (Four Towns Plan area)</i>	<i>In house</i>	<i>Not specified</i>	<i>January/ February 2012 - work finalised</i>	<i>ENC settlement hierarchy study paper</i>
Settlement boundaries	Options review - need for boundaries or criteria - initial report drafted; to be considered through relevant Planning Policy Working Parties	In house/ JPU	Not specified	March 2012 - Options review paper to Working Party/ PPC (as necessary)	ENC settlement boundaries option paper
	Settlement boundary criteria	JPU/ Constituent LPAs	Not specified	March/ April 2012 - JPU work finalised	JPU settlement boundary criteria paper to accompany pre-submission Core Strategy Review
	<i>Review individual settlement boundaries (if necessary) - Dependent on outcome of Settlement boundary Options review</i>	<i>In house</i>	<i>Not specified</i>	<i>May/ June 2012 - Further ENC work to be completed</i>	<i>Boundaries paper agreed/ finalised through Working Party</i>
Environmental Projects					
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Stage A - Scoping	In house/ with statutory consultees	Not specified	March/ April 2012	Consultation on Scoping Paper alongside "Regulation 25" Four Towns Plan consultation
	Stage B - Developing options and assessing effects	In house but with mentoring		September/ October 2012	Consultation on initial SA report alongside Four Towns Plan "options" consultation
	Stage C - Preparation of SA Report – inform preparation of pre-submission draft DPD	In house but with mentoring		October 2012 - March 2013	
	Stage D - Consultation on the SA Report	In house		March/ April 2013	Consultation on Scoping Paper alongside pre-submission Four Towns Plan consultation
	Stage E - Commencement of monitoring process for significant effects of DPD/ submission of final SA report	In house but with mentoring	£5,000 - estimated total cost of mentoring	June/ July 2013	Submission of final SA report to Secretary of State

Habitats Regulations Assessment/ Appropriate Assessment (HRA/ AA)	Stage 1 - Screening (from Four Towns Plan scoping)	Enfusion (Appointed February 2011 to undertake HRA/ AA work alongside Four Towns Plan preparation)	Stage 1 completed by Enfusion (July 2011)		Plans and Programmes/ Site Characterisation work completed
	Stage 2 - Initial evidence gathering (surveys) - Natural England guidance awaited	Enfusion/ Natural England	£5,000 estimate- Stages 2/3 (see total below cost estimate total)	Summer 2012	
	Stage 2 - Scoping and further evidence gathering (through consultation process)	Enfusion/ Natural England		September/ October 2012	Consultation on HRA/ AA Scoping Paper alongside Four Towns Plan "options" consultation
	Stage 3 - Assessment of impacts (HRA/ AA, to inform preparation of pre-submission draft DPD)	Enfusion/ Natural England		October 2012 - March 2013	
	Submission of final HRA/ AA Report	Enfusion/ Natural England	£8,500 (Stage 1-3 total) (Estimated)	February/ March 2013	Final HRA/ AA Report completed
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	Level 1 - Completed August 2011; Final approval/ sign off by Environment Agency still awaited	URS/ Scott Wilson	Level 1 SFRA already completed	Autumn 2011 - EA signed off	Publication of updated Level 1 SFRA
	Level 2 - Detailed site assessment/ modelling work of potential development sites in Rushden and Irthlingborough	URS/ Scott Wilson	maximum £15,000 estimated	January 2012 (formal project start up)	Publication of draft Level 2 SFRA - spring 2012
				Summer 2012 - Completion of Level 2 SFRA	Final Level 2 SFRA (Rushden and Irthlingborough)
Landscape Character Assessment - update and locality issues	Review current evidence and prepare scoping study, undertake study	In house but with mentoring	£5,000 - estimated total cost of mentoring	September 2012 - Completion	Completed report
Open Space Study (2006 PMP study update)	Open Space SPD - Completion of final document	In house	Not specified	Planning Policy Committee approved changes to be made subject to consultation responses November 2011	Final draft SPD (January/ February 2012)
	Complete final Open Space Study update report for publication/ submission alongside Four Towns Plan	In house	Not specified	June/ July 2013	Final Open Space Study update report

Local Listings - Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest	Comprehensive list of Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest prepared	Ann Bond/ Rockingham Forest Trust	Study partially completed/ further work ongoing funded through external grant	June/ July 2013	Publication of completed report
Social/ Housing projects					
Housing site selection work	Stage 1 - Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) site discounting: initial draft methodology/ study prepared May 2010 - update needed to reflect recent changes/ imminent SHLAA update	In house	Not specified	January/February 2012	Publication of completed report
	Stage 2 - PPS3 paragraph 54 assessment - update to November 2010 draft study needed	In house	Not specified	January/ February 2012	Publication of completed report
	Stage 3 - Site by site assessment (sites not discounted at stages 1/2) - update to 2010 draft assessment/ study needed	In house	Not specified	March/ April 2012	Publication of completed report
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	Review of 2009 Roger Tym & Partners Study, including comprehensive updating of database and reconciliation of site specific details	JPU	Not specified	February/ March 2012	Publication of completed SHLAA update. Consider publication of comprehensive database of sites (GIS).
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Stage 1 - Inception Meeting/ survey audit	North Northamptonshire Housing Coordinator (Housing Vision)	£10,000 (estimate)	January/ February 2012	Data/ information review
	Stage 2 - Detailed modelling: household projections, current housing market, affordable housing requirements			February/ March 2012	Publication of completed report
Affordable Housing Assessment (Economic Viability)	Draft viability assessment completed August 2010	AECOM	Draft assessment completed		
	Refresh AECOM assessment, taking account of site specific viability assessments prepared to accompany planning applications	In house/ AECOM	£2,500 - £3,000 estimate	November 2012 - March 2013	Publication of updated AECOM assessment
Economic Projects					
Employment Land Review (update of 2006 Atkins study)	Stage 1 - Existing employment areas site by site review - database update/ current business survey	In house	Not specified	Autumn 2011	Completion of existing employment areas review
	Stage 2 - Employment site assessment - completion of study document	In house	Not specified	January/ February 2012	Publication of completed report
Employment site selection work	Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment (SELA) sites - assessment of smaller potential employment sites below Core Strategy Review threshold (5ha)	In house	Not specified	April/ May 2012	Publication of completed report (possibly combined with Employment site assessment)
Retail frontage/ town centre boundary assessment	Town centre boundary methodology - Initial draft paper presented to Working Parties (Spring 2010)	In house	Not specified	July/ August 2012	Publication of methodology paper

Appendix 2 : Neighbourhood Plans and Masterplans

	Work Streams	Who	Potential Costs	Milestones	Outputs
Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners					
Raunds	The Raunds Masterplan has been completed and discussion on next steps are taking place	Raunds Town Council	£20,000 Government Grant to ENC	Meeting arranged for Jan. 2012 to discuss progress and agree outcomes	Publication of final document (s)
Oundle 2020	Work is progressing on a Parish Plan and Town Design Statement	Oundle Town Council	£20,000 Government Grant to ENC	PP: prepare draft TDS: Jan. 2012 meeting with the new "Authoring Group" to discuss some initial draft work - this will be followed by ongoing receipt of draft work for officer checking; approval of draft TDS for public consultation	Publication of final documents
Masterplans					
Rushden Town Centre Regeneration Strategy	Regeneration Strategy document completed June 2010	Princes Foundation	Already completed		
Raunds Masterplan	Masterplan document completed March 2011	AECOM	Already completed		

Irthlingborough Masterplan	Consultation stage/ workshops undertaken Summer 2011. Publication of draft document anticipated February 2012. Publication of Final MasterPlan May 2012	Arup	£50,000 already agreed	Spring 2012	Corporate project - draft report awaited
Higham Ferrers Masterplan	Stage 1 - Project Plan Completed and Funding secured	ENC Report to P&R February 2012	Maximum of £50,000 agreed in principle by Council	Spring 2013	Corporate project - identified in current Corporate Plan 2011-15 (section 3.2)
Thrapston Master Plan	Preliminary meeting held with TTC. Project Planning and Approach expected summer 2012		Maximum of £50,000 agreed in principle by Council	Spring 2014	Corporate project - identified in current Corporate Plan 2011-15 (section 3.2)