



## Planning Policy Committee – 23 July 2012

### Planning Policy Update

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#### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to :

- Provide an update on progress with the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and Four Towns Plan
- Update on community progress on Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans

#### Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 - Four Towns Plan Evidence Base Projects

Appendix 2 - Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans

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#### 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. That work is intrinsically linked to progress on the Core Strategy. This report provides an update on these and some of the other areas of work that the Planning Policy and Conservation Team is involved in.

#### 2.0 Update

2.1 Appendix 1 sets out updates on some of the main areas of evidence gathering work for the Four Towns Plan. It should be noted that it is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Members will note that particular focus is on the cross-cutting evidence-based work being carried out with the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU).

#### 2.2 Core Strategy

At the 3 July Joint Planning Committee, a set of emerging draft Joint Core Strategy policies was approved for informal consultation over a 10 week period from 30 July to 7 October 2012, inclusive. This will enable progress to be made on most areas of policy while technical work is completed and further consideration is given to outstanding policy issues. In addition, the Senior Planning Policy Officer's secondment to the JPU has been extended for a month until the end of July 2012 to assist with preparing documentation ready for this consultation.

#### 2.3 Four Towns Plan (FTP) (Appendix 1)

The FTP is intrinsically linked to the timescales and content of the CS, which provides its lead. A large proportion of the evidence base which will be used for the CS will also be used for the FTP. The primary focus for officers remains the CS review. In addition, officers continue to work on progressing the FTP. For example, the Four Towns Plan Working Party will be considering draft background papers for discussion, such as settlement hierarchy and boundary papers. Consultants are also continuing to make good progress with the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, with a draft expected for officer checking in July.

2.4 Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans (Appendix 2)

**Raunds.** The Town Council are working with the Community Partnerships Team to

progress their Community Cohesion Strategy and their Sport, Leisure and Tourism Strategy. These, together with the proposed Town Centre focused Neighbourhood Plan will take forward the themes of the MasterPlan .

**Oundle** Representatives from Oundle's Town Design Statement Group met the Planning Policy and Conservation Manager in late June to discuss their latest draft text for the Design.

**Irthlingborough.** The consultation on the draft Irthlingborough Masterplan has been delayed from the expected date in June to enable it to consider inclusion of a brief for a key development site. Consultation will now run into September to allow for the summer holiday period.

**Higham Ferrers.** The Town Council are inputting and analysing the results of the 350 plus responses for their questionnaire.

**Thrapston.** The interviews for the consultants shortlisted to carry out the Thrapston Masterplan take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> June

### **3.0 Conclusion**

3.1 Work on gathering evidence for the Four Towns Plan continues and is intrinsically linked to evidence-gathering work for the review of the Core Strategy. The latter is the current priority for the Planning Policy team.

### **4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

4.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

5.1 The lack of an up-to-date plan would potentially result in 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 existing North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (adopted June 2008) does provide a strategic policy framework for this area, and a small number of "saved" policies from the 1996 District Local Plan still remain in force.

### **7.0 Financial Implications**

7.1 None. The preparation of a comprehensive Local Plan for the District is a statutory obligation and staff are specifically employed to undertake this function.

### **8.0 Corporate Outcomes**

8.1 The relevant Corporate Outcomes are:

- Regeneration and Economic Development
- Sustainable Development
- High quality built environment
- Strong strategic partnerships

### **9.0 Recommendation**

9.1 That Members note the current progress. (*Reason – to ensure that Members are aware of progress on the Four Towns Plan*)

<b>Legal</b>	Power: <b>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Localism Act 2011</b>	
	Other considerations: None	
<b>Background Papers:</b> Minutes of Planning Policy Committee, 12 December 2011		
<b>Person Originating Report:</b>	Karen Britton – Planning Policy and Conservation Manager Extn: 2142 kbritton@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk	
<b>Date: 2 July 2012</b>		
<b>CFO</b>	<b>MO</b>	<b>CX</b>

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

**Member Briefing  
Appendix 1**

**Four Towns Plan  
evidence base projects**

Evidence Gathering	Work Streams/ Projects	Who	Potential Costs	Milestones	Outputs	% work completed					Reasons for delays (if applicable)
						20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	
<b>Spatial Strategy</b>											
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	June 2012 work finalised	JPU settlement hierarchy study to accompany draft Core Strategy Review						Report published as JPC committee paper, 3 July 2012
	Settlement hierarchy study (4TP)	ENC	Not specified	July 2012 - draft report awaiting checking	ENC settlement hierarchy study paper						Draft report completed. To be considered by Planning Policy Working Party, 23 July 2012.
Settlement boundaries	Options review - need for boundaries or criteria - initial report drafted; to be considered through 4TP Working Party	ENC	Not specified	July 2012 - draft report awaiting checking	ENC settlement boundaries option paper						Draft report completed. To be considered by Planning Policy Working Party, 23 July 2012.
	Settlement boundary criteria	JPU/ Constituent LPAs	Not specified	31 May 2012 - Draft generic criteria considered at JPC Member workshop	Possible need for JPU settlement boundary criteria paper to accompany pre-submission Core Strategy Review (early 2012)						JPU-led project. Final publication anticipated February 2012 if background paper is deemed necessary.
	Review individual settlement boundaries (if necessary) - Dependent on outcome of Settlement boundary Options review	ENC	Not specified	August 2012 - Further ENC work to be commenced, dependent on outcome of Planning Policy Working Party, 23 July 2012	Boundaries paper agreed/ finalised through 4TP Working Party (if deemed necessary)						Unlikely to be required. Wholly dependent upon Working Party approval of settlement boundaries option paper
<b>Environmental Projects</b>											

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Stage A - Scoping	ENC/ with statutory consultees	Not specified	September/ October 2012	Consultation on Scoping Paper alongside "Regulation 18" 4TP consultation						Wholly dependent upon publication of Pre-Submission draft Core Strategy review (July 2012), which will define scope of 4TP
	Stage B - Developing options and assessing effects	ENC with mentoring		January/ February 2013	Consultation on initial SA report alongside Four Towns Plan "options" consultation						Ditto
	Stage C - Preparation of SA Report – inform preparation of pre-submission draft DPD	ENC with mentoring		February 2013 - May 2013							Ditto
	Stage D - Consultation on the SA Report	ENC		June/ July 2013	Consultation on Scoping Paper alongside pre-submission Four Towns Plan consultation						Ditto
	Stage E - Commencement of monitoring process for significant effects of DPD/ submission of final SA report	ENC with mentoring	£5,000 - estimated total cost of mentoring	September/ October 2013	Submission of final SA report to Secretary of State						Ditto
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)	October/ November 2012							Wholly dependent upon publication of Pre-Submission draft Core Strategy review (July 2012), which will define scope of Four Towns Plan. Also publication of Natural England guidance awaited.
	Stage 2 - Scoping and further evidence gathering (through consultation process)	Enfusion/ Natural England		January/ February 2013	Consultation on HRA/ AA Scoping Paper alongside Four Towns Plan "options" consultation						Ditto
	Stage 3 - Assessment of impacts (HRA/ AA, to inform preparation of pre-submission draft DPD)	Enfusion/ Natural England		February 2013 - May 2013							Ditto

	Submission of final HRA/ AA Report	Enfusion/ Natural England	£8,500 (Stage 1-3 total) (Estimated)	June/ July 2013	Final HRA/ AA Report completed							Ditto
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	July 2012- completion of Level 2 SFRA	Publication of Level 2 SFRA - August 2012							Draft report due July 2012 for officer checking
Flood Risk Management Strategy Update	Update Strategy	URS/ JPU	Not specified	April - June 2012	Updated Strategy now complete							
Landscape Character Assessment - update and locality issues	Review current evidence and prepare scoping study, undertake study	ENC but with external mentoring	£5,000 - estimated total cost of mentoring	January 2013 - Completion	Completed report							Progress dependent upon final completion of GI Delivery Plan (JPU lead)
Open Space Study (2006 PMP study update)	Open Space SPD - Completion of final document	ENC	Not specified	Planning Policy Committee approved November 2011, subject to the changes being made	Final SPD							Awaiting final check before putting on website
	Complete final Open Space Study update report for publication/ submission alongside Four Towns Plan	ENC	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 (RFT)	Study partially completed/ further work ongoing funded through external grant	July/ August 2012	Publication of completed report							Awaiting final confirmation from Ann Bond/ RFT
GI Delivery Plan	Complete Plan	JPU/ENC	Not specified	Jun-12	Publication of completed plan							Completion of project dependent upon appointment of NIA Natural Development Officer by Wildlife Trust

<b>Social/ Housing projects</b>																			
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	August/ September 2012	Publication of completed report														Completion of project dependent upon publication of updated SHLAA (anticipated August 2012)
	Stage 2 - PPS3 paragraph 54 assessment - update to November 2010 draft study needed	In house	Not specified	August/ September 2012	Publication of completed report														Ditto
	Stage 3 - Site by site assessment (sites not discounted at stages 1/2) - update to 2010 draft assessment/ study needed	In house	Not specified	August/ September 2012	Publication of completed report														Ditto
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	July/ August 2012	Publication of completed SHLAA update. Consider publication of comprehensive database of sites (GIS).														JPU project - completed document necessary to progress ENC site selection work
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Stage 1 - Inception Meeting/ survey audit	North Northamptonshire Housing Coordinator and JPU (Housing Vision)	£10,000 (estimate)	January/ February 2012	Data/ information review														
	Stage 2 - Detailed modelling: household projections, current housing market, affordable housing requirements			May/ June 2012	Publication of completed report/ modelling complete														Final draft published June 2012
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	AECOM (ENC)	£2,500 - £3,000 estimate	November 2012 - March 2013	Publication of updated AECOM assessment														Progression dependent upon completion of SHMA







**Neighbourhood  
Plans,  
Masterplans and  
Community  
Plans**

**Appendix 2:**

Neighbourhood Planning Front Runners	Work Streams/ Projects	Who	Potential Costs	Milestones	Outputs	% work completed					Reasons for delays (if applicable)
						20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	
Raunds	The Raunds Masterplan has been completed and discussion on next steps are taking place	Raunds Town Council	£20,000 Government Grant to ENC	Further meeting to be held with Town Clerk re non-Neighbourhood plan element in July	Publication of final document (s)						Completion of 2011 Masterplan represents initial stages in wider NP process. Raunds is currently considering which projects to prioritise.
Oundle 2020	Work is progressing on a Town Plan and Town Design Statement	Oundle Town Council	£20,000 Government Grant to ENC	Further meeting expected in August to brief new members of Oundle Town Council/2010 team	Publication of final documents						Oundle 2020 is a well established local project. Much info/ data gathering etc has already taken place

Towns											
Rushden Town Centre Regeneration Strategy	Regeneration Strategy document completed June 2010	Princes Foundation	Already completed	2 meetings have been attended (Nov. 2011 and March 2012) with the Rushden Design Working Group to advise on Neighbourhood Plans and Planning policy documents							Completion of 2010 Regeneration Masterplan represents initial stages in wider NP process. Rushden is well placed to progress with more formal NP.
Raunds Masterplan	Masterplan document completed March 2011	AECOM	Already completed								
Irthlingborough Masterplan	Consultation stage/ workshops undertaken Summer 2011. Publication of draft document anticipated June 2012. Publication of Final Masterplan Summer 2012	Arup	£50,000 already agreed	Meeting to be held with consultant in July to progress draft for consultation	Publication of final document(s) expected Autumn 2012						Progress dependent upon satisfaction with draft Masterplan for consultation (expected to be finalised July 2012)

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. £18.5k allocated by Council 29/2.	Town Council have started consultation and evidence gathering. Consultants, WYG appointed for transport study (May 2012). Expect to complete transport study by end December 2012	Publication of Masterplan expected Summer 2013						Local/ Town Council led project. Approval of funding represents first stage.
Thrapston Masterplan	Preliminary meeting held with TTC. Project Planning and Approach expected Summer 2012		Maximum of £50,000 agreed in principle by Council	Interviews with Consultant July 2012	Publication of final document expected spring 2013						
<b>Other Parishes</b>											
Stanwick	Supporting the Parish Council sub-group to refresh the Parish Plan.	Community Development Officer	Parish Council meeting costs of refreshing the plan. Local ward member is supporting the project with their Member Empowerment Fund allocation	Consultation being undertaken in July 12	Consultation exercises nearing completion. "Have your say" events undertaken.						Parish Council led project. Approval of funding represents first stage.

