

# PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 17 September 2012

**Venue:** East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

**Time:** 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors: - David Brackenbury (Chairman)  
Tony Boto (Vice Chairman)

Glenn Harwood MBE  
Sylvia Hobbs  
Sylvia Hughes  
David Jenney

Eloise Lucille  
Gill Mercer  
David Read

## **172. COUNCILLOR DAVID BATEMAN**

The Chairman and members of the Committee paid tribute to the contribution made to the Planning Policy Committee by David Bateman who had recently retired from his position as a member of East Northamptonshire Council.

## **173. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2012 were approved and signed by the chairman.

## **174. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Marian Hollomon, Bob Nightingale, Steven North and Pam Whiting sent their apologies.

## **175. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND QUESTIONS**

There were no declarations of interest and no questions.

## **176. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY, FOUR TOWNS PLAN, NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS AND MASTERPLANS UPDATE**

The Executive Director and the Head of Planning provided a verbal update which sought to provide members with a report on progress with the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, Four Towns Plan, Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans.

Members noted that the Core Spatial Strategy was currently going through a consultation period and discussion on this matter would take place in the Planning Policy Working Party following the conclusion of the committee meeting. It was further noted that almost immediately following the conclusion of the Core Spatial Strategy consultation, a further consultation would be undertaken regarding strategic sites.

Members were advised that a revised Strategic Housing Market Assessment had been published in August 2012 by the Joint Planning Unit and that a briefing note on this topic would be sent to all Members shortly.

A further paper was currently being prepared for the meeting of Planning Policy Working Party on 22 October regarding Settlement Hierarchy for the Four Towns Plan. A Level 2 Flood Risk Assessment was also anticipated as being finalised by the end of October. Members heard that additional research work regarding employment sites and town centre boundaries was underway, and discussions had been undertaken with neighbouring authorities to assess interest in the production of a landscape assessment focusing upon the impacts of wind farms. A tender brief for a landscape capacity assessment is under preparation, and this would be progressed subject to the work programme. Members were advised that the proposed planning policy work programme would be coming back to committee in October.

Members were provided with an updates as follows on neighbourhood plans across the district:

- The government has recently announced that it recognises the costs of Neighbourhood Plans to the Local Planning Authority (ENC) and for 2012/13 will enable District Councils to draw down £5,000 for each Neighbourhood Plan Area that is designated and a further £25,000 when the Neighbourhood Plan has completed a successful examination in public. This funding was subject to a maximum of 4 designations in the year. Arrangements beyond 2012/13 have not yet been announced.
- Raunds Town Council were in the process of deciding whether they wished to focus their neighbourhood plan solely along the High Street or to extend the boundary further afield. The area would be designated in this financial year,
- Oundle Town Council were considering a neighbourhood plan covering the whole of the parish boundary and focussing on design issues. It was anticipated that a report to confirm the designated area would be brought to 22nd Oct meeting. The Town Council's ambition is they will have examination done in time for referendum May 2013.
- A meeting had been held with the consultants for the Irthlingborough Master Plan. A further meeting would be held with the town council before going out to public consultation in October.
- Another meeting had taken place with Thrapston Town Council regarding their masterplan. A background paper would be published early October with a community consultation event at the end of October.
- Rushden Town Council were likely to extend the offer of a meeting shortly, and it was probable that their master plan area would be designated within this financial year.
- Higham Town Council is having a consultant drafted report on transport prepared.
- Stanwick Parish Council would present findings of their consultation to the local community shortly.
- Kings Cliffe had considered a community plan but there was currently no agreement to take this forward.
- Woodford would create a community group shortly to take their plan forward.

*(Reason – to provide an update on progress and continue to make good progress with the Four Towns Plan)*

**177. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK COMPATABILITY ASSESSMENT: RURAL NORTH, OUNDLE AND THRAPSTON PLAN**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented the Committee with a report, the purpose of which was for members to endorse the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Compatibility Assessment that had been carried out on the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP).

Members were reminded that at the Working Party held in July they had been provided with a progress update on the Compatibility Assessment. Members noted that the document had now been through full consultation with the Development Control Team and their comments had been fed into the final document that was now before members.

Members asked questions of the officers regarding the completed assessment and registered their pleasure that the RNOT Plan is in general conformity with the NPPF.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee endorse the National Planning Policy Framework Compatibility Assessment carried out on the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan, subject to an update on the Five Year Land Supply.

*(Reason – to confirm the policy position of the RNOTP, in particular after the March 2013 NPPF transition period, and to aid development management)*

**178. FOUR TOWNS PLAN - REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME UPDATE**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented the Committee with a report which sought approval for a statutory 6-week consultation period for the Regulation 18 Consultation document. This would formally launch the Four Towns Plan. The consultation, if given approval, would commence on 2 November 2012 and run for 6-weeks (up till 17 December), involving key stakeholders (predominantly statutory consultees).

Members were advised that the Four Towns Plan and Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) were symbiotic and that Regulation 18 had been prepared within that framework. It was felt there was a need to develop a more locally relevant vision for the Four Towns Plan, with there being a case for further detailed development management policies where necessary. Themes and topics not covered by the CSS need to have a comprehensive local plan and there was a need for more detailed specific policies.

Members asked several questions for clarification and requested that any overt references to previous Preferred Options documents be removed plus the inclusion of "renewable energy" in the Policy Outcomes section of the document.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Planning Policy Committee approve the Regulation 18 Consultation document, subject to the above amendments, for a 6-week consultation period between Friday, 2 November and Monday, 17 December 2012, inclusive.

*(Reasons: to formally launch the Four Towns Plan, in accordance with current planning requirements; to enable the Plan to proceed)*

## **179. FIVE YEAR HOUSING LAND SUPPLY UPDATE**

The Research and Monitoring Officer presented the meeting with a report to update members on ENC's current position with regard to the five year land supply.

Members were informed that since the introduction of the Planning Policy Statement 3 in 2006, planning authorities had been required to identify a sufficient quantity of deliverable sites for housing for a period of five years. Following the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012, a further requirement was made of local planning authorities to provide an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land (i.e. a requirement to demonstrate 5.25 years supply of housing land). Local Authorities with a record of persistent under-delivery of housing would need to increase this buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply.

Members heard that current supply figures, based on extant permission and emerging sites, gave ENC a total 2,577 deliverable units, equating to a land supply of 5.67 years. Members were further advised that ENC did not have a record of persistent under-delivery of housing, having delivered 3,865 units between 2001 and 2008, 184 more than the indicative requirement for the period as outlined in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Spatial Strategy.

Members asked questions regarding specific sites contained within the schedule of sites and stated that they felt the document to be extremely useful to them.

It was

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee endorse the schedule of sites and phasing assumptions used in the calculation of the five year housing land supply figure, for inclusion in the 2012 Annual Monitoring Report.

*(Reason - To provide a robust housing land supply position on which to base planning decisions)*

**Chairman**