



## Planning Policy Committee – 15 April 2013

### Planning Policy Update

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#### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress on:

- The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy and Four Towns Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans

#### Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 Four Towns Plan and Core Strategy 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 and other relevant policy documents be reported at subsequent meetings of the committee. This report provides an update on these and some of the other areas of work that the Planning Policy and Conservation Team are involved in. Members should note that this is not a fully detailed list of activities, but provides information on the main areas/activities of work related to each of the projects being undertaken in terms of the development plan and neighbourhood planning.

#### 2.0 Update

##### 2.1 Core Strategy and Four Towns Plan (Appendix 1)

Work continues to progress on the Core Strategy and Four Towns Plan. From previous reports and discussions, members will be aware of the intrinsic links between the plans. Members are reminded that they can view all items relating to the Joint Core Strategy and Joint Planning Committee via <http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/>.

2.2 On 14 March 2013 the Joint Planning Committee (JPC) considered how key policy issues could be progressed pending the Secretary of State's decision on the Rushden Lakes retail/leisure development proposals. In brief, the JPC agreed to work progressing on the technical work for the Joint Core Strategy (to ensure that the Core Strategy can be progressed as soon as the Joint Committee can consider the implications of the Secretary of State's decision on the Rushden Lakes planning application); and that an interim housing policy statement be prepared for consideration by the Joint Committee in April or June.

2.3 Technical research continues for the Four Towns Plan and it should be noted that the 2011/12 period Monitoring Report is now available to view at <http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1317> while contextual information about the district can be found at [http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.aspx?downloadID=1866](http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.aspx?downloadID=1866). One of the key points to make is that work needs to progress throughout this year on the various elements of the preparation of the development plan so that as soon as a plan can be published (following the publication of a Core Spatial strategy) then this happens in a timely manner. This will involve regular discussions with this Committee on the various policy elements of the plan.

2.4 Since the last committee, consultants WYG have also now been appointed to undertake a Transport Study for Rushden.

### 2.5 **Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans (Appendix 2)**

Consultation has closed on the proposed Raunds Neighbourhood Area (NA), while consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Areas at Higham Ferrers and Oundle closed on 1 April. Due to recent announcements from the Government about Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, which propose that areas with a Neighbourhood Plan receive 25% of any CIL receipt received in that area, Raunds Town Council are currently re-considering their proposed Neighbourhood Plan boundary (which was drawn tightly around the town centre area, rather than being parish-wide). A decision from the Town Council is anticipated in April. Should they decide to change their currently proposed NA boundary area, then a further report will need to be brought to this committee requesting that a new consultation takes place on the new boundary.

2.6 Work on Masterplans and Community Plans continues to be lead by ENC's Community Partnership Team, with input from the Planning Policy and Conservation Team as applicable (see progress at Appendix 2).

### 2.7 **Other Information**

Members are advised that the Statutory Instrument that revokes the Regional Strategy for the East Midlands was placed before Parliament on 20 March 2013 and comes into effect on 12 April 2013. At that point the Strategy will therefore no longer be relevant for decision-making.

## 3.0 **Conclusion**

3.1 The appendices highlight progress for members' information.

## 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

## 8.0 **Corporate Outcomes**

8.1 The relevant Corporate Outcomes are:

- Good quality of life: Regeneration and Economic Development, Sustainable Development, High quality built environment
- Strong strategic partnerships

## 9.0 Recommendation

- 9.1 Members note current progress.  
(Reason – to provide an update on progress for Members' information)

<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:</b> 26/03/13					
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

Appendix 1 Core Strategy and Four Towns Plan

	Work completed
	Work to be done
	Milestones not met (further explanation provided in right hand column)

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	Review needed	ENC settlement hierarchy study paper						Draft report completed (December 2012). Considered by Planning Policy Working Party - February 2013; further reviews necessary to overcome concerns raised by Working Party.
Settlement boundaries	Options review - need for boundaries or criteria - initial report drafted and currently being updated; to be considered through 4TP Working Party	ENC	Not specified	Draft report being updated	ENC settlement boundaries option paper						Draft report considered/ endorsed 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 2013)						JPU-led project. Final publication anticipated May/ June 2013 if background paper is deemed necessary.
	Review individual settlement boundaries (if necessary) - Dependent on outcome of Settlement boundary Options review	ENC	Not specified	Discussion Paper presented to Planning Working Party 23 July 2012	Boundaries paper agreed/ finalised through 4TP Working Party (if deemed necessary)						Not considered necessary, unless Planning Policy Committee determines that this represents the preferred approach
<b>Environmental Projects</b>											
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Stage A - Scoping	ENC/ with statutory consultees	Not specified	Prepare September/ October 2012, followed by statutory consultation	Consultation on Scoping Paper alongside "Regulation 18" 4TP consultation and put on website						Consultation completed 17 December 2012. Consultation report to Planning Policy Committee, February 2013.
	Stage B - Developing options and assessing effects	ENC with mentoring		January/ February 2013	Consultation on initial SA report alongside Four Towns Plan "options" consultation						
	Stage C - Preparation of SA Report - inform preparation of pre-submission draft DPD	ENC with mentoring		February 2013 - May 2013							
	Stage D - Consultation on the SA Report	ENC		June/ July 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	ENC with mentoring	£5,000 - estimated total cost of mentoring	September/ October 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 and to be put on website						
	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							Awaiting publication of Natural England (NE) guidance - date unknown. In response to recent consultation re Stage 1 Screening report, NE expressed a desire for continuous involvement throughout HRA process.
	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						Consultation completed 17 December 2012. Consultation report to Planning Policy Committee, February 2013.
	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 - amended date to end November 2012	Publication of Level 2 SFRA (December 2012)						Level 2 SFRA report now published on website, February 2013
Sequential Test/ Exception Test (Flood Risk)	Need to provide sufficient justification if sites in Flood Zones 2/3 or having other identified flood risk are proposed to be taken forward as site allocations in the Four Towns Plan	ENC	Not specified	May - June 2013	Four Towns Plan Sequential Test/ Exceptions Test paper, providing rationale for Four Towns Plan site selection re flood risk						EA requirement, if sites assessed through Level 2 SFRA are to be considered as Four Towns Plan allocations
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	by end 2013	Completed report						Progress dependent upon final completion of GI Delivery Plan (GIDP) (JPU lead) - estimated completion for GIDP by end of 2013, dependent on Nature Improvement Area (NIA) officer.

Appendix 1 Core Strategy and Four Towns Plan

	Work completed
	Work to be done
	Milestones not met (further explanation provided in right hand column)

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>											
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						Completed
	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	June/July 2013	Publication of completed report						Further work required, with focus upon Buildings of Local Architectural and Historic Interest outside Conservation Areas (CA Appraisals have already assessed/ identified BLAHs within Conservation Areas)
GI Delivery Plan	Complete Plan	JPU/ENC	Not specified	tba	Publication of completed plan						Completion of project dependent upon NIA Officer.
<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	tba	Publication of completed report						Completion of project dependent upon publication of updated SHLAA (now anticipated March 2013 - note changes to SHLAA timetable below)
	Stage 2 - PPS3 paragraph 54 assessment - update to November 2010 draft study needed	In house	Not specified	tba	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	tba	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	Jan-13	Publication of completed SHLAA update. Consider publication of comprehensive database of sites (GIS).						JPU project - completed document necessary to progress ENC site selection work. Final version to be published April 2013
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
Viability assessment	Draft viability assessment (affordable housing) completed August 2010	AECOM	Draft assessment completed. To be incorporated into wider CIL/ JCS review viability assessment work	May/ June 2013	Publication of completed reports/ viability assessments						Further JPU led work to be pursued through draft CIL/ JCS viability assessments
	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						Further work only needed if it is deemed necessary to set out more detailed local standards than draft Core Strategy review Policy 30 re housing mix/ tenure
<b>Economic and Retail Projects</b>											
Employment Land Review (update of 2006 Atkins study)	Stage 1 - Existing employment areas site by site review - database update/ current business survey	ENC	Not specified	May-13	Completion of existing employment areas review (Four Towns area)						Note - work ongoing new deadline May 2013
	Stage 2 - Employment site assessment - completion of study document	ENC	Not specified	June/ July 2013	Publication of completed report						Progress once Stage 1 ELR update finalised (anticipated June/ July 2013)
Employment site selection work	Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment (SELA) sites - assessment of smaller potential employment sites below Core Strategy Review threshold (5ha)	ENC	Not specified	tba	Publication of completed report (possibly combined with Employment site assessment)						Wholly dependent upon completion of Employment Land Review update
Retail frontage/ town centre boundary assessment	Town centre boundary methodology - Initial draft paper presented to Working Parties (Spring 2010)	ENC	Not specified	May/ June 2013	Publication of methodology paper						Update/ review alongside retail surveys. Subject to completion intend to take to May/ June 2013 Working Party for consideration
	Retail surveys (twice yearly)	ENC	Not specified	September/ October 2012	Publication of latest retail surveys in Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (JPU)						Retail Survey is finalised - Note: JPU prepare Joint AMR
	Town centre boundary studies	ENC	Not specified	tba	Publication of boundary assessment paper(s) for 4TP						Progress once methodology/ approach finalised
Retail Requirements update	Update study	Roger Tym and Partners (JPU)	Not specified	April-June 2012	Publication of update						
Assessment of Retail Strategy	Carry out assessment	GVA (JPU)	Not specified	April-June 2012	Publication of results						
<b>Transport Projects</b>											
Transport modelling of strategic sites and broad locations	Undertake modelling	NCC/WSP (JPU)	Not specified	Apr-13	Updates to initial draft results required, to take account of recent commitments (e.g. Raunds)						JPU-led project. Updated transport modelling work ongoing - expected new timeline April 2013

Appendix 2 Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans and Community Plans

KEY:

	Work completed
	Work to be done
	Milestones not met

Assistance from :

PP&C = Planning Policy and Conservation Team

CP = Community Partnerships Team

P&P = Policy and Performance Team

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS (NPs)	Work Streams/ Projects	Who	Potential Costs	Milestones	Outputs	% work completed					Comments
						20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	
Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan	Work is progressing on a community/ Masterplan with elements progressing into a Neighbourhood Plan	Higham Ferrers Town Council (PP&C, CP, P&P)	Maximum of £42,150 in principle by ENC - Policy and Resources Report 3/12/12	Application for Neighbourhood Area designation submitted and consultation closes on 1st April 2013	Neighbourhood Plan						1st stage of Neighbourhood Planning underway - consultant appointed to progress NP
Oundle Neighbourhood Plan	Work is progressing on a Town Plan and Design Statement with elements progressing into a Neighbourhood Plan	Oundle Town Council (PP&C)	£20,000 DCLG Grant to ENC for Frontrunner - this is now available to Oundle TC to prepare their NP. £5,000 is available from DCLG to ENC when Neighbourhood Area designated; £5,000 at submission for publicity and examination; and £20,000 following successful examination.	Application for Neighbourhood Area designation submitted and consultation closes on 1st April 2013. Planning Policy and Conservation have also assisted OTC by preparing a draft consultants brief for Oundle TC to potentially employ consultants to complete the N'hood Plan	Neighbourhood Plan						1st stage of Neighbourhood Planning underway
Raunds Neighbourhood Plan	RTC taking a holistic approach - Work has commenced on preparing a Community/Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Plan or other planning mechanisms to address specific growth/planning aspects.	RTC supported by ENC P&C, CP Teams	As above	Application for Neighbourhood Area designation received. Consultation closed. Town Council currently considering their position re-boundary, in the light of recent Government announcements re use of CIL receipts.	Anticipate - Publication of final documents for: Neighbourhood Plan or similar; Leisure and Recreation Strategy and Branding/Heritage/ Tourism Development						1st stage of Neighbourhood Planning underway
Rushden	Rushden Town Council had previously proposed not to proceed at this stage with a Neighbourhood Plan but to include any planning related matters in the Four Towns Plan. This position is currently being reviewed.										
<b>MASTERPLANS AND COMMUNITY PLANS</b>											
<b>TOWNS</b>											
Higham Ferrers Masterplan/ Community Plan	Consultation stage/ workshops completed. Analysis of questionnaire responses completed and issues to be addressed by Neighbourhood Plan are being identified. Other issues will be covered by separate Town (Action) Plan.	Higham Ferrers Town Council (PP&C, CP)	see N'hood Plan above	Consultants WYG have completed Transport Study	Publication of Town Plan expected Summer 2013						

