

# PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 16 September 2013

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

**Time:** 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors: David Brackenbury (Chairman)

Peter Baden  
Tony Boto  
Sylvia Hobbs  
Sylvia Hughes  
David Jenney

Gill Mercer  
Bob Nightingale  
Jeremy Taylor  
Jake Vowles

Andy Mercer – attending as an observer

## 152. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2013 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 153. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Glenn Harwood MBE, Marian Hollomon and Steven North.

## 154. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND QUESTIONS

There were no declarations of interest and no questions.

## 155. WELCOME TO HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

The Chairman welcomed David Reed, who had recently commenced working for the Authority as Head of Planning Services, to the meeting of the Committee.

## 156. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING UNIT – URBAN STRUCTURE STUDY CONSULTATION DRAFT

The Committee considered a report regarding a consultation being undertaken by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit regarding the Urban Structure Study Consultation Draft and seeking to formulate a formal response from the Council.

Members had discussed the consultation document in detail at a Working Party meeting prior to the Committee meeting and a number of issues had been raised which would be incorporated into the Council's response.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to approve the East Northamptonshire Council response to the Urban Structure Study Consultation Draft paper, incorporating the issues raised on this consultation at the Planning Policy Working Party meeting (the final response document is attached at Appendix A).

*(Reason – to provide a formal Council response to the North Northamptonshire JPU's Urban Structure Study Consultation Draft paper that is currently out for consultation).*

**157. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING UNIT – DRAFT INTERIM POLICY STATEMENT ON HOUSING REQUIREMENTS IN THE NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HOUSING MARKET AREA**

The Committee considered a report proposing a formal East Northamptonshire Council response in respect of a consultation on the Draft Interim Policy Statement on housing requirements in the North Northamptonshire Housing Market Area, known as the (Interim Housing Statement) currently being undertaken by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.

It was noted that the new Core Strategy would be in place until 2031, whilst the current Core Strategy ran until 2021. The Interim Strategy included a requirement of 17,832 dwellings in the North Northamptonshire area between 2011 and 2021 compared to 31,255 in the adopted Core Spatial Strategy with a corresponding reduction in the figure for East Northamptonshire.

National policy (NPPF paragraph 48) allowed for the inclusion of a “windfall allowance” in housing supply calculations, and an appropriate figure for East Northamptonshire would be included in future. This figure would be calculated based on historic completion rates.

The 2012 Annual Monitoring Report, upon which the Interim Policy Statement (Part B) was based, demonstrates provision for sufficient land to fulfil the Interim Housing Statement commitments. A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee with a view to updating the data, for the 2013 Annual Monitoring Report.

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to the inclusion of statements affirming that:

- i) East Northamptonshire Council's position in relation to five year housing land supply is even more favourable in relation to the Interim Policy Statement, and
- ii) Whilst other Districts are identifying additional sites, East Northamptonshire does not need to do so.

The draft response to the Draft Interim Policy Statement on housing requirements in the North Northamptonshire Housing Market Area be endorsed

*(Reason – to provide a formal Council response to the North Northamptonshire JPU's Interim Housing Statement policy document that is currently out for consultation).*

**158. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING UNIT – STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT SITES CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The Committee considered a report proposing a formal East Northamptonshire Council response in respect of a consultation regarding Strategic Housing and Employment Sites (which included the Updated Draft Background Paper on Strategic Housing and Employment Sites, the “Strategic sites paper”), being undertaken by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.

A number of issues were raised by Members which would be reflected in the Council’s response.

**RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the following amendments being included, the Head of Planning Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to approve the East Northamptonshire Council response to the Strategic Housing and Employment Sites paper

- i) Paragraph 4.30 Include specific “Place shaping” references in the final ENC response comments, regarding:
  - Location of bus services/ stops
  - Need to create a significant gateway feature
  - Need for the scheme to be masterplan-led
- ii) Paragraph 4.31 Amendments to policy criteria:
  - Specific highway improvements; i.e. Northampton Road/ Crown Way road link (g)
  - in relation to Nene Valley Farm the inclusion of an additional policy criterion (i) that proposals must include arrangements to ensure local people have priority access to the job and training opportunities created by development of the site

*(Reason – to provide a formal Council response to the North Northamptonshire JPU’s Strategic Housing and Employment Sites paper that is currently out for consultation).*

**159. NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING UNIT – REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Committee considered a report proposing a formal East Northamptonshire Council response in respect of a consultation regarding the Revised Statement of Community Involvement for North Northamptonshire; which was being undertaken by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.

A query was raised regarding a footnote within the consultation document which referred to buildings of 1 hectare in size or greater, which seemed improbable and the response should highlight the need for a correction to be made.

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to amendment of the final sentence of the paragraph 5.11 footnote, to read: "*In respect of other land uses the definition includes proposals where the sum of the floor area within the building is 1000m<sup>2</sup> or greater*" the East Northamptonshire Council response to the Revised Statement of Community Involvement be endorsed.

*(Reason – to provide a formal Council response to the North Northamptonshire JPU's Revised Statement of Community Involvement that is currently out for consultation).*

**160. RAUNDS: NEW APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

It was reported that the Committee had previously approved consultation on a proposed Neighbourhood Area boundary for Raunds (Minute 307/12-13 refers). In the previous application, the boundary had been drawn tightly around the town centre area. Consultation had then taken place, which had ended on 11 February 2013. However, since the consultation the Government had made changes to Neighbourhood Plans in relation to the use of any future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. Those changes would enable areas covered by a Neighbourhood Plan to receive 25% of funds from CIL if CIL chargeable developments took place within that Plan area and once the Council had decided its position on CIL.

Raunds Town Council had therefore re-considered its initial proposed boundary and the Town Council had now re-drawn it to cover the whole parish. In addition, the Town Council had included two areas outside of the parish adjoining (to the east of) the A45, which fell within the parish of Ringstead.

**RESOLVED:**

That support be given for consultation to commence on the proposed new Raunds Neighbourhood Area

*(Reason – to enable work to commence on the Neighbourhood Plan).*

**161. DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY POLICY UPDATE**

The Committee received a report providing an update on the work to develop energy policy since the Committee had approved the use of consultants in October 2012 to undertake landscape sensitivity work, including the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relating to energy.

There had been delays in progressing this work due to staffing shortages and the Committee was asked to consider whether the proposed SPD should be broader in scope in view of new Government guidance issued on low carbon energy.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That an Energy Supplementary Planning Document concentrating on wind and solar power be prepared
- ii) That a timetable for the production of the Energy Supplementary Planning Document be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee

- iii) That a Working Party comprising Councillors David Brackenbury, Glenn Harwood, Sylvia Hughes, Bob Nightingale and Jake Vowles be established to assist with the production of the Energy Supplementary Planning Document
- iv) That a meeting of the Working Party be convened before the next scheduled meeting of the Planning Policy Committee

**162. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY WORKING PARTY: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY UPDATE**

The Committee received a report providing an update on the work being carried out on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

It was noted that a Joint meeting of this Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee had been scheduled to be held on 9 October 2013 to consider the CIL Draft Charging Schedule, although the report might not be ready for submission by that date. Whether the report was submitted on 9 October or to a later meeting, a presentation by the consultants working on the viability report underpinning the Draft Charging Schedule would be made on 9 October.

**163. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting having lasted for two hours, in accordance with procedure Rule 8 in Part 4.1 of the Council's Constitution it was proposed and duly seconded that the meeting should continue.

**RESOLVED:**

That the meeting continue to complete the item currently under consideration, this being the last item of business on the Agenda.

The Chairman of the CIL Working Party provided an outline of the work it was carrying out to the Members of the Committee not serving on the Working Party.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted

**Chairman**



Appendix A	
<b>Committee date:</b>	16 September 2013
<b>Closing date:</b>	11 October 2013

## East Northamptonshire Council consultation response – Urban Structure Study Consultation Draft (August 2013)

Non-statutory consultation regarding draft evidence base document – looks at how the framework of streets and open spaces in the towns affects the way that people can move around to access local facilities and the countryside.

### a) Are the vision and the guiding design principles set out in Chapter 1 appropriate for the towns in North Northamptonshire?

[Members are asked to consider, whether the three principles; “Well connected places – from centre to edge”; “Mix up [mixed] uses” and “Streets for All”, represent the best design strategy for new development around the periphery of the six towns within East Northamptonshire?]

**Summary:** In individual cases, it may not be possible to apply all of the detailed attributes for the towns which relate to movement and place. It is suggested that recognition needs to be given to the fact that the detailed principles may represent competing priorities.

#### Detailed comments (including suggested changes):

Under the 2008 North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (CSS), the large scale “sustainable urban extensions” (SUEs) have been promoted as “self contained” concepts. Whilst large scale urban extensions or SUEs may be appropriate to larger towns, their inclusion in smaller settlements tended to create more “outward facing” communities. The emphasis placed upon integrating new developments with existing/ historic urban areas through the USS is therefore noted and supported.

Most design principles are universal, e.g. the need to provide for ‘permeable’ networks to encourage walking and cycling, and to ensure that cul-de-sacs are short and, wherever possible, provide opportunities for creating future linkages (paragraph 2.10/ p9). By contrast, it must also be recognised that certain infrastructure barriers (e.g. railways/ trunk roads) will greatly limit opportunities for integrating new developments (urban extensions) into the existing urban fabric.

While the overall principles are welcome and supported, it is suggested that the USS could, more clearly/ explicitly, address the following concepts:

- Connectivity between towns/ surrounding hinterland, to maximise opportunities for modal shift (e.g. Higham Ferrers-Irthlingborough-Finedon; Raunds-Ringstead-Stanwick; Rushden-Irchester; Islip-Thrapston)
- Clearer signposting/ directions within towns
- Learning from past mistakes, e.g. bad practice such as inward looking loops/ cul-de-sacs
- Ensure permeability along unbuilt edges – enhance future permeability
- Application of USS principles at early stage in planning process; i.e. masterplanning

Suggested additional section/ paragraph 2.30: *“It must be recognised, in designing a new scheme, that the overarching principles will be accorded differing priorities on a case-by-case basis. For example, in the case of certain ring and arterial roads (e.g. A14), it may not be possible or practical to secure changes in the speed and nature of that road (see Principle 2.29(3)).”*

**b) Is the methodology of the study appropriate or are there other techniques that should be used?**

[In respect of Chapter 2, Members are asked to consider what other methods may be utilised to define spatial principles for each town?]

**Summary:** It is important to maximise opportunities to apply the USS principles and techniques, at the earliest possible opportunities.

**Detailed comments (including suggested changes):**

East Northamptonshire Council considers it would be helpful for the USS to provide more explicit direction regarding the following issues:

- Highways, e.g. specific recommendations/ design criteria guidance regarding No of access points serving new developments
- Greater emphasis upon longer term ambitions, e.g. “legacy”/ quality of life
- Use of “good” and “bad” examples throughout
- Recognition of (in some cases) the potential for conflict between “Planning out Crime” and USS guiding principles, e.g. re No of links/ routes

An additional criterion is suggested, for defining the key issues and opportunities for each place, in respect of the table at section 3, p19.

Suggested additional row: *“9: Historic landmarks and features. **How?** Use existing (GIS mapping) to plot locations of key landmarks and historic features. Refer to statutorily listed buildings (English Heritage information); local lists of heritage assets (if available); conservation area appraisals and/ or local/ town design statements. **Why?** Historic assets are critical in determining the character and interest of a place.”*

**c) Is the study correct in its assessment of opportunities, constraints and spatial principles for each town?**

[In respect of Chapter 2, Members are asked to consider that the assessments have been robustly and systematically undertaken in each case]

**Summary:** Detailed officer comments have previously been made in respect of the individual town-by-town assessments, prior to the publication of the previous draft USS (August 2012)

**Detailed comments (including suggested changes):**

It may be desirable to undertake further USS assessments, for settlements where a discrete strategic housing target is being proposed. However, it is emphasised that this would depend upon the eventual spatial strategy and (obviously) available resources and timescales.

The town-specific principles are generally supported. For example, it is noted that the USS specifically recognises the historic relationship between Irthlingborough and the outlying Crow Hill estate (paragraph 8.12).

**d) Do you agree with the grading of sectors for growth around each town (based purely on potential for integration)?**

[In respect of Chapter 3, Members are asked to consider that the assessments have been robustly and systematically undertaken in each case]

**Summary:** Detailed officer comments have previously been made in respect of the individual town-by-town assessments, prior to the publication of the previous draft USS (August 2012)

**Detailed comments (including suggested changes):**

The need to undertake additional assessments for specific directions of growth was highlighted during preliminary consultations regarding earlier versions of the draft USS. This has already led to additional work being completed.

**e) Are the key issues identified for the potential strategic sites correct?**

[In respect of Chapter 4, Members are asked to consider whether the site specific development principles are generally robust and satisfactory]

**Summary: Nene Valley Farm** – The development principles for Nene Valley Farm are generally welcome and supported.

**Detailed comments (including suggested changes):**

Nene Valley Farm is classified “Category D” (i.e. low integration potential), despite being located between the main urban area and A45 (i.e. “inside” the A45). Additional consideration may need to be given to this scoring. Also, it needs to be explicitly stated that Rushden East is covered through Chapter 3 (Development Principles), so it is not considered necessary to repeat this within Chapter 4.

**Other comments:**

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<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	03 October 2013