

Planning Policy Update at 16.12.13

This provides a brief update on the work of the Planning Policy and Conservation Team, for members information, just in relation to the planning policy elements of work.

Core Strategy review:

As Members will be aware, the review of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) has been delayed until the Secretary of State has decided whether a major retail and leisure development should go ahead at Rushden Lakes. In the meantime, non-statutory consultation has therefore taken place on the following elements of the emerging plan and its evidence base, which are not dependent on the Rushden Lakes decision:

Consultation on Strategic Housing and Employment Sites - this consultation document sets out development principles for strategic sites where these have not already been established through planning applications or site specific plans, and the broad location for a Sustainable Urban Extension to the East of Rushden. The rationale for this broad location is set out in the report to the July 25th Joint Planning Committee. It is supported by an updated **Background Paper on Strategic Sites**, explaining how potential sites have been assessed, including the consideration of new sites and information put forward in response to the emerging JCS consultation in August 2012.

Urban Structure Study - this 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. It sets out design principles based on improving connectivity, which will need to be considered alongside other planning considerations on a site by site basis. As such, it provides an evidence base for policies and proposals in the JCS and site specific plans and will help in the consideration of individual development proposals.

The biggest challenge caused by the delay in the JCS is that the housing requirements in the adopted Core Spatial Strategy (which arose from the, now revoked, Regional Plan) are out of date and cannot be delivered because of the recession. As an interim measure until the JCS can be finalised, the Joint Committee and partner Councils are consulting upon:

Interim Housing Policy Statement (IHPS), which introduces up-to-date information on housing requirements and identifies the sites that will contribute to a supply of deliverable housing land over the next five years. This can't replace the adopted CSS but should be a material consideration in considering how much housing land is required to meet objectively assessed housing requirements in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Finally, to complete the package of consultation documents, the Joint Committee and partner Councils are seeking comments on:

A revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out how the Joint Committee and partner planning authorities will seek to engage people in plan-making and in considering specific development proposals. This is a document that all planning authorities are required to produce and the current SCI, dating from 2006, is out of date given recent changes to the planning

system.

The ENC Planning Policy Officers have been heavily involved in preparing work for the above documents.

The Joint Planning Committee considered a report on these matters on 14 November 2013. It is proposed to report the JPU's response to representations on the IHPS to the Joint Committee on 9th January 2014, together with an update on the work that is being undertaken to satisfy the Duty to Cooperate. The further work on strategic sites and the Urban Structure Study alongside further components of the evidence base to support the JCS is scheduled to be reported to the Joint Committee on 3rd April 2014. Members shall note that the adoption of a revised Statement of Community Involvement is a separate item on the ENC Planning Policy Committee of 16 December 2013.

Other Core Strategy work:

Consultants BNP Paribas are currently undertaking a **viability assessment of the emerging Core Strategy**. Consideration is also being given to potentially updating the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), based on the 2011 census and new household projections. The SHMA provides information on housing markets, housing needs, past delivery of homes and projected requirements etc. The current SHMA (published August 2012) can be viewed at:

<http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1261> with a summary at: <http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/publications/docdetail.asp?docid=1260>

Other policy work:

As already highlighted, ENC planning policy officers have been working with the JPU on the various papers and reports, including preparing work for the strategic sites of Rushden East and Nene Valley Farm, Rushden. The Core Strategy needs to go ahead in advance of finalising the more local development plan documents (i.e. the Core Strategy leads and the other documents follow). The team have also been focussing on the **Community Infrastructure Levy**, including the **Draft Charging Schedule**, which was approved by a joint meeting of Planning Policy and Policy and Resources Committee. Two separate **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) on Open Space and S106 Planning Agreements** have also been prepared for consideration at Planning Policy Committee 16 December 2013. These act as preliminary draft SPDs to sit alongside the Draft Charging Schedule and supporting documents. The **SPD on energy** is also underway and is expected to be reported to March 2014 committee as a consultation draft prior to consultation commencing.

Neighbourhood Plans and other projects

Chelveston, Raunds and Barnwell have just finished (9 December) consultation on their proposed **Neighbourhood Plan** boundary areas, which will be reported to a future Planning Policy Committee. The final **Rushden Transport Study** is expected imminently, following the receipt of some comments from stakeholders for consideration/incorporation.