



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Planning Policy Committee – 23 June 2014

### Planning Policy and Conservation Update

#### Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on work on the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Four Towns Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and some other key areas of policy work

#### Attachment(s)

Appendix 1 JPU Briefing Note June 2014  
Appendix 2 Local Plan Project Management  
Appendix 3 Community Planning Project Management

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update on some of the areas of work that the Planning Policy and Conservation Team are involved in. Members should note that this is not an exhaustive list, but is provided to give a flavour of some of the work being undertaken.

#### 2.0 Update

##### 2.1 Local Plan (Appendix 1 and 2)

Work continues on research, survey work and draft policy preparation for the emerging Core Strategy, whilst the outcome of Rushden Lakes was awaited. The JPU has prepared a briefing note about the Core Strategy (Appendix 1) highlighting key dates. The aim is to start consultation on a Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy in October 2014. Certain policies being developed will also directly relate to East Northamptonshire and it is intended to bring these to July's Planning Policy Committee meeting for members' consideration.

- 2.2 Current study and survey work being undertaken through the JPU includes, for example, a workspace assessment; cultural investment plan update; sports facilities framework; and transport modelling. An overwintering bird survey (Appropriate Assessment) has also been completed, particularly of relevance to the Rushden East and Nene Valley Farm areas.
- 2.3 Members will be well aware that the Core Strategy work directly relates to taking forward the work to prepare the Four Towns Plan and that the Council's Policy Planners are therefore actively involved in the Core Strategy preparation, including assisting with the development of draft policies.
- 2.4 Members will recall that on 12 February 2014, the Full Council Issues Debate agreed to proceed with a Four Towns Plan and to appoint a Working Party to assist in the preparation of the Plan. On 23 April Full Council proposed that the membership of the Working Party should be appointed from all Members of the Council rather than only from members of the Planning Policy Committee. On 14 May 2014, Full Council agreed the membership as Cllrs Tony Boto, David Brackenbury, Richard Gell, Glenn Harwood MBE, Marika Hillson, Sylvia Hobbs, David Jenney, Andy Mercer, Gill Mercer, Bob Nightingale, Sarah Peacock, Anna Sauntson and Peter Wathen. It was agreed to appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the first meeting of the working party.

- 2.5 Now that the nominations onto the Working Party have been agreed, an initial meeting will be arranged to bring members up to date with policy work. The Working Party can then start to consider papers that have been prepared ready for the Four Towns Plan.
- 2.6 Appendix 2 highlights some of the work that has been, is being or will need to be undertaken. To assist interpretation, tasks have been colour coded in the “Action” column with dark green being completed projects; light green being current or forthcoming officer (or consultant) work; yellow being items for the Four Towns Working Party to consider in due course; pale orange for items that cannot be started yet as they need to await certain plan preparation stages to have been reached first.
- 2.7 **Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements (Appendix 3)**  
Members shall note that work continues for those who have already designated their Neighbourhood Plan boundary areas (6 Plans: Oundle, Rushden, Raunds, Barnwell, Chelveston and Higham Ferrers) and that in addition a separate report is being brought to this committee for boundary designations, including Irthlingborough and Stanwick. Officers continue to attend meetings, provide advice and information and prepare mapping etc. for Neighbourhood Plans. Members shall also note that, to assist communities further, officers will be preparing a guidance note shortly on the Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements of Neighbourhood Planning to help provide information on this very technical aspect of planning. Appendix 3 highlights stages when the Policy Team are required to undertake work through the set processes of Neighbourhood Plans. As members will be aware, as these are community-led, timelines will be dependent upon their progress. Dates for the set stages will be added in as communities get closer to these stages. For information, progress on community-led Design Statements, which can be adopted by ENC as Supplementary Planning Documents, is also included in Appendix 3.
- 2.8 **Other Work**  
Since the 17 March Planning Policy Committee, professional planners within the planning policy part of the Team have remained static at 2 officers, in a team that consists of 4 policy planners. However, approval has now been given to recruit a planning policy officer (vacancy since December 2013) and the 4th planner (existing officer) has now commenced a phased return to work. It is anticipated that the team will potentially be back up to full force by July/August 2014.
- 2.9 As well as the work highlighted above, the policy planners have been focussing on other areas of work, such as input to planning applications and appeals, for example St Christophers Drive, Oundle and also the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule consultation and responses. 19 respondents commented on this consultation, with a further 2 late responses received. Comments received after the deadline are subject to the Planning Inspector to decide if they wish to consider these or not. Responses are currently being considered, but focus on a variety of detailed issues, which are being reviewed, including detailed viability queries and comments, details about exceptions relief etc.
- 3.0 Conclusion**
- 3.1 The report is provided for information only.
- 4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**
- 4.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.
- 5.0 Legal Implications**
- 5.1 None

## 6.0 Risk Management

6.1 None

## 7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications of the changes outlined in this report are included within the approved budget 2014/15.

## 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 to note work.

*(Reason – to provide an update for Members' information)*

<b>Legal</b>	Power: Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended); Localism Act 2011; The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012				
	Other considerations: None				
<b>Background Papers:</b>					
<b>Person Originating Report:</b>		Karen Britton – Planning Policy and Conservation Manager Extn: 2142 kbritton@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk			
<b>Date: 10/6/14</b>					
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)

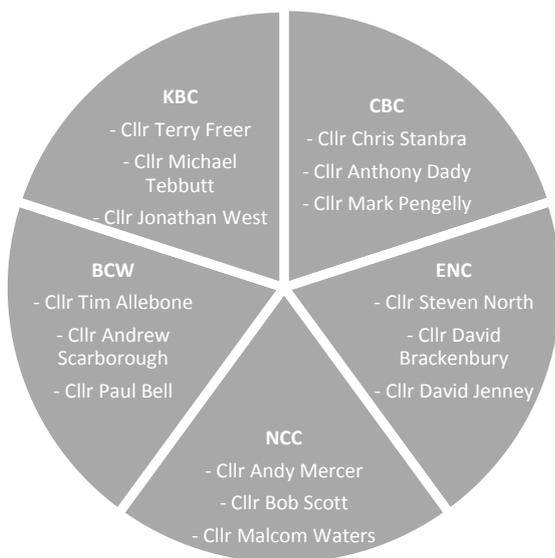
## North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Review Briefing Note: June 2014

### Introduction

The purpose of this note is to update members on the review of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and to outline how they can have an input before the plan is finalised. Further updates will be provided as work progresses.

The JCS sets out the strategic elements of the Local Plans in North Northamptonshire, including housing and employment requirements, infrastructure priorities and proposals for improving the environment. It provides the context for the plans prepared by the partner councils and also for neighbourhood plans.

The JCS is prepared by the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee, set up by the Secretary of State in 2005. This is made up of three members from each of the councils. The current membership is shown below.



The Joint Committee is supported by a small team of officers at the Joint Planning Unit (JPU) based in Thrapston (contact details are provided at the end of this update). The work of the JPU is managed through a Steering Group of the Chief Planning Officers from the councils. As well as preparing joint plans, the JPU supports the councils with urban design advice and technical work. This well-established partnership working meets the statutory 'duty to cooperate' and makes efficient use of resources.

### Completing the Joint Core Strategy

The Joint Committee consulted on an outline of the emerging plan in 2012 and on proposed strategic sites in 2013. The agreed structure of the plan is as follows:

Section	
<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>Vision and Outcomes</b>	
<b>Key Diagram</b>	
<b>Core Policies</b>	
i.	<b>Protecting and enhancing assets</b> (Policies 1-7)
ii.	<b>Ensuring High Quality Development</b> (Policies 8 – 10)

<b>Spatial Strategy</b>
<b>1. The Network of Urban and Rural Areas</b> (Policies 11 – 14)
<b>2. Connections within and beyond North Northamptonshire</b> (Policies 15 – 18)
<b>3. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Framework</b> (Policies 19 - 21)
<b>4. Delivering Economic Prosperity</b> (Policies 22 – 27)
<b>5. Delivering Homes</b> (Policies 28 – 31)
<b>6. Delivering Infrastructure and Services</b> (Policy 32)
<b>Development Principles for Strategic Sites</b>
<b>Monitoring &amp; Review</b>

The next steps involve completing the draft plan, considering the findings of sustainability and viability appraisals and carrying out consultation on a ‘Pre-Submission Plan’. The Joint Committee will then submit the plan for examination by an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector will make binding recommendations about any changes needed to make the plan ‘sound’ before it is adopted by the Joint Committee.

Work on the plan has been held up awaiting the Secretary of State’s decision on the Rushden Lakes retail and leisure proposal. This decision has been delayed several times. The latest Joint Committee timetable, set out below, assumes that the Rushden Lakes decision is issued at the end of May/ early June and that the councils all agree to completing the plan on the basis of that decision. Dates from submission onwards will depend on the complexity of the examination and the Planning Inspector’s approach.

Joint Committee Dates	Committee business
1 <sup>st</sup> May	To agree draft development management policies for inclusion in the JCS
24 <sup>th</sup> July	To consider implications of the Rushden Lakes decision and to endorse sections of JCS that are not impacted
4 <sup>th</sup> September	To endorse further sections of the JCS and supporting evidence base
2 <sup>nd</sup> October	To consider Pre-Submission JCS and associated appraisals
October- November	Consultation on the Pre-Submission JCS
January 2015	To consider the consultation response and to agree to submit the JCS for examination
April 2015- September 2015	Examination in Public including consultation on modifications
October 2015	JPC to consider Inspector’s Report and adopt the new JCS

Whilst the delays to the JCS timetable are frustrating, they have allowed the JPU to take account of new evidence published by external agencies, and guidance including the National Planning Practice Guidance. Furthermore, the Inspector’s report on the West Northamptonshire JCS should be available in late summer, allowing the Joint Committee to take it into account in finalising the JCS. This should help to ensure that the JCS is robust and sound when it comes to examination.

## Opportunities to input into the JCS

The Joint Committee consults the councils at all formal stages in preparing the JCS and additional input is sought to help with key strategic decisions such as housing and employment requirements and important local issues such as strategic sites. Briefings will be arranged for the partner councils as the plan nears completion. It is important to note that elected members are welcome to feed in views on any matters being discussed by the Joint Committee. This can be done through the council's representatives on the Joint Planning Committee, through the Chief Planners and Policy Managers, or directly to the JPU. Please contact the JPU at [info@nnjpu.org.uk](mailto:info@nnjpu.org.uk) if you would like any further information on the JCS or to be notified when agenda papers for the Joint Committee are available.

The JPU and officers from the partner councils are currently refining the protecting assets policies to take into account feedback from the Joint Committee and agencies including English Heritage, Natural England, the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Wildlife Trust. The draft policies are available for comment [here](#) (*policies are at Item 5 appendix 2*).

Please contact Andrew Longley or Simon James at the JPU if you have queries on this briefing note or would like to discuss any aspect of the Joint Core Strategy.

[andrewlongley@nnjpu.org.uk](mailto:andrewlongley@nnjpu.org.uk) telephone 01832 742359  
[simonjames@nnjpu.org.uk](mailto:simonjames@nnjpu.org.uk) telephone 01832 742361

**APPENDIX 1 Local Plan Project Management (to end 2014)**

Project	Action	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14
<b>Joint Core Strategy review work</b> see separate briefing note								
<b>Other Development Plan documents</b>								
<b>Spatial strategy</b>								
Development of Spatial settlement strategy- prepare discussion paper	completed							
Develop criteria for settlement boundary policy	complete (pending Member discussion)							
<b>Housing /Social Housing</b>								
Review and update SHLAA sites and prepare SHLAA	completed							
Update of Strategic Housing Market Assessment	considering updating re- 2011 census and other surveys							
Prepare housing numbers distribution/site selection paper	complete (pending Member discussion)							
<b>Employment</b>								
Employment Land Review- Stage 1 review existing sites	80% complete							
ELR Stage 2 Employment site assessment	not started							
<b>Town centres and retailing</b>								
Prepare paper on methodology for town centre boundaries/retail frontages	65% complete							
Town centre boundary study-prepare	not started							
<b>Sustainability and Habitat Regulations (*timescales will run alongside the plan preparation)</b>								
Sustainability Appraisal-Stage A scoping report	completed							
Sustainability Appraisal-StageB develop and test policy options	80% complete							
Sustainability appraisal-Stage B appraisal of sites	not started							
Sustainability Appraisal-Stage B-discuss site appraisals with WP/PPC	not started							
sustainability Appraisal- Stage C prepare SA for pre submission plan	not started							
Habitat Regulations Assessment-Stage 1	completed							
Habitat Regulations Assessment-Stage 2-evidence gathering	not started							
Habitat Regulations Assessment-Stage 2-consultation on stage 2	not started							
Habitat Regulations Assessment-Stage 3-assessment of impacts	not started							
Habitat Regulations Assessment -submission to NE	not started							
Viability testing of policies	not started							
<b>Flood Risk</b>								
Strategic flood Risk assessment -level 1	completed							
Strategic Flood Risk assessment level 2	completed							
Sequential testing /exception test of potential sites in zone 2/3	not started							
Update Flood Risk Management Strategy	completed							
<b>Natural Environment</b>								
Landscape Sensitivity Studies for Wind and Solar	completed							
Consultation on Energy and Solar SPD	due to commence 25 May for 6 weeks							
Preliminary draft Open Space SPD (consult with CIL)	completed							
<b>Built Environment</b>								
Local listing-develop criteria and undertake survey update for ATP area	completed							
Consider Local listing criteria/call for sites	not started							
<b>Leisure</b>								
Develop new leisure policies in line with business friendly approach	not started							
Discuss policy approach with WP/PPC	not started							
<b>Transport</b>								
Transport modelling of strategic sites (as Core Strategy above)	work ongoing							
<b>COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)</b>								
Prepare Draft Charging Schedule	completed							
Consult on draft charging schedule	completed							
Consider representations	started							
Submission & Prepare for Examination	not started							
Prepare for Implementation	not started							
Report to Council on Examination report	not started							

**APPENDIX 2 Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements Project Management**

	Comments	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS</b>								
<b>Barnwell Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Chelveston Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started - hope to be within next 12 months							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started - hope to submit for Examination around December 2014							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Irthlingborough Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Oundle Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started - hope to be within next 12 months							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Raunds Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Rushden Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Stanwick Neighbourhood Plan</b>								
Consultation on the plan	not started							
Examination	not started							
Referendum	not started							
<b>Nassington</b>								
Have requested a presentation about Neighbourhood Planning in June								
<b>VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENTS</b>								
<b>Oundle Town Design Statement</b>								
TDS drafting in progress								
<b>Pilton, Stoke Doyle and Wadenhoe Potential Village Design Statement</b>								
To date supplied initial advice and information on VDS								
<b>Tansor</b>								
Have requested information about VDS								