



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

## Planning Policy Committee – 29 September 2014

### North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy review: Policy 14: Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity – Draft policy and supporting text

#### Purpose of report

The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) is working to finalise the Pre-Submission Draft North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) review. To this end, the Council needs to finalise and agree relevant policies and supporting text for the emerging JCS review which are specifically relevant to the District.

#### Attachment(s)

Appendix 1: Policy 14 – Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity – Draft policy and supporting text

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) is progressing towards submission to the Secretary of State. It is intended to publish the Pre-Submission Draft JCS for statutory consultation early next year, with submission to the Secretary of State by spring 2015 and adoption around autumn 2015. One proposed policy within the JCS relates exclusively to East Northamptonshire; namely Policy 14: Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity.
- 1.2 On 21 July 2014, the Planning Policy Committee considered the background and context to emerging proposals for an exemplar new village at Deenethorpe Airfield. The preferred approach, previously agreed by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee (JPC) on 31 January 2013, was to include an “enabling” policy within the North Northamptonshire JCS review. At the previous Planning Policy Committee (21 July 2014), Members highlighted and discussed a range of issues, including:
- Viability issues – questions over how quality of development will be guaranteed;
  - Greater flexibility over sustainability standards – capture in policy without being too prescriptive;
  - Employment provision – ensuring employment and home working opportunities and mix of housing;
  - High speed broadband – fundamental to success of village;
  - Impact on education in surrounding areas needs to be explored;
  - Renewable energy and reed-bed water system supported;
  - Need for balanced community with adequate affordable housing (40% considered too much), bungalows and elderly person accommodation.
- 1.3 Prior to the Committee (21 July 2014), the promoters of the Deenethorpe Airfield proposals (Deene Estates) presented the latest outline proposals to Members. The Committee then discussed these, and resolved that:
- i) the inclusion of the Area of Opportunity Policy for Deenethorpe Airfield in the Joint Core Strategy continue to be supported
  - ii) subject to the target standards for quality etc being balanced with the viability of the scheme, the (still extant) national eco-towns standards set out in Appendix 2 to the report represent an appropriate basis for ensuring

the highest possible quality of development.

- 1.4 The Planning Policy Committee did not, however, discuss the detailed policy and supporting text for the emerging draft JCS Policy 14. Given that Policy 14 is pertinent to East Northamptonshire but will generally not affect North Northamptonshire as a whole, it is considered important that this ought to be agreed by the Planning Policy Committee in the first instance, although final decision is anticipated to be taken by the JPC on 2 October 2014.

## **2.0 Developing the Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity policy and supporting text**

- 2.1 The evidence base for the emerging Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity policy and supporting text (JCS Policy 14) has already been extensively considered by the JPC (31 January 2013) and, most recently, the previous Planning Policy Committee (21 July 2014). The draft text has been prepared by the JPU and East Northamptonshire Council, in consultation with the landowner/ promoter(s) of the scheme (the Deene Estate).

- 2.2 A critical consideration has been the National Planning Policy Framework requirement to ensure that the Deenethorpe policy is “aspirational, but realistic”. To this end, the draft JCS Policy 14 and supporting text include:

- Background to the proposal – why Deenethorpe Airfield represents a unique development opportunity;
- Delivering a mixed and balanced community – explanation for affordable housing requirement;
- Developing a Masterplan for Deenethorpe Airfield – how the scheme will be implemented;
- Policy criteria regarding exemplary standards of design, carbon neutrality, supporting the rural economy, providing a hub for rural services, affordable housing, sustainable transport, waste water treatment, green infrastructure, improvements to water quality (Willow Brook) and long term stewardship of the development.

## **3.0 Matters to consider**

- 3.1 Members are asked to review the draft Policy 14: Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity – Draft policy and supporting text (**Appendix 1**). Officers will record any comments made during the Committee meeting and these will be collated and forwarded on to the JPU, who will report these to the forthcoming JPC (2 October 2014) for final agreement. This will enable Policy 14 and its supporting text to be incorporated into the Pre-Submission Draft North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy review.

- 3.2 The current timetable for the JCS review seeks to secure JPC approval for the Pre-Submission Draft JCS review and supporting documentation, on 18 December 2014. This will be followed by a statutory 6-weeks consultation upon the Pre-Submission Draft JCS review during **January and February 2015**.

## **4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 4.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the proposals.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

## **6.0 Risk Management**

- 6.1 The agreement of East Northamptonshire Members is required for elements of the emerging JCS review which are especially relevant to East Northamptonshire. While the JCS is the primary responsibility of the Joint Planning Committee (JPC), it remains important that the Council is able to give explicit agreement to those aspects of the JCS review which are exclusive to East Northamptonshire.
- 6.2 Equally, however, it is important to ensure that unnecessary delays in the process of preparing the JCS review are avoided. It is therefore imperative that decisions are reached promptly and repetition of tasks between the Joint Committee and East Northamptonshire Members are avoided.
- 6.3 The emerging draft JCS Policy 14 (Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity) relates exclusively to East Northamptonshire and it is therefore considered beneficial for the Planning Policy Committee to give consideration to this proposal, in order to inform the JPC/ JPU. It is also critical that the “uniqueness” of the Deenethorpe scheme can be robustly demonstrated. Otherwise, it is possible that the policy would not pass the national soundness tests and could then be deleted from the JCS review by the Examiner (Planning Inspector).

## **7.0 Resource and Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no resource or financial implications arising from the proposals.

## **8.0 Constitutional Implications**

- 8.1 There are no constitutional implications arising from the proposals.

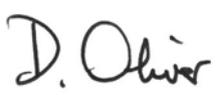
## **9.0 Corporate Outcomes**

- 9.1 The relevant Corporate Outcomes are:
- Good Quality of Life – economic development, sustainable development, strong communities, a high quality built environment and improved housing for the District
  - Effective Partnership Working – effective joint working with other North Northamptonshire partners; i.e. Corby Borough Council, Kettering Borough Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough
  - Strong Community Leadership – setting aspirational but realistic policies and proposals through the emerging JCS review, reflecting appropriate local aspirations (“localism”), is an important aspect of delivering effective local leadership

## **10.0 Recommendation**

- 10.1 The Committee is recommended to agree Policy 14 – Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity – Draft policy and supporting text (Appendix 1) for inclusion within the emerging North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy review (Part 1 Local Plan).

*(Reason – to ensure that the emerging Local Plan addresses local aspirations regarding the development of an exemplar new village at Deenethorpe Airfield)*

<b>Legal</b>	Power: <b>Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended); The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012</b>			
	Other considerations: National Planning Policy Framework			
<b>Background Papers:</b> Planning Policy Committee, 21 July 2014 (Agenda Item 6) North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee, 31 January 2013 (Agenda Item 4)				
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<b>Date: 22 September 2014</b>				
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b> 17/9/14 

# **Appendix 1: Policy 14 – Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity – Draft policy and supporting text**

## **Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity**

The Rural North of East Northamptonshire has a special rural character, with a dispersed settlement pattern incorporating attractive villages and the historic market towns of Thrapston and Oundle. This plan sets out how these existing settlements will contribute to meeting objectively assessed needs for housing jobs, services and facilities, taking account of the need to protect the character of the settlements and surrounding countryside and to ensure that most new development is focused on the Growth Towns as the most sustainable places.

A potential exceptional opportunity has been identified to enable the Rural North to accommodate additional development through the creation of an exemplar new ‘Garden Village’ including 1,000-1,250 homes at Deenethorpe Airfield. This would be in addition to growth delivered through an urban-focused spatial strategy elsewhere in North Northamptonshire (including the housing provision set out in policies 28 and 29).

Deenethorpe Airfield is located between Corby (3.5km to Priors Hall centre, 8km to the town centre) and Oundle (9km). Development of the new ‘Garden Village’ would enable the provision of dedicated pedestrian and cycle connections between Deenethorpe, Upper Benefield and the North East Corby sustainable urban extension (Priors Hall and Weldon Park). The airfield and its surroundings are in the single ownership of the historic Deene Estate. It is a major brownfield site and has no designated areas of landscape or biodiversity value, but is surrounded by an attractive landscape of farmland. The airfield is located close to the A427 (and public transport services between Corby and Oundle) and development could potentially improve the highway network by providing a link between this road and the A43.

The opportunity to consider the creation of a new village is considered unique to this location because of the commitment of the Deene Estate to use its landholdings and long term stewardship of the development to deliver an exemplar settlement, built to the highest possible standards of design and sustainability, with generous green space and a mix of homes, jobs, community facilities and services to create a balanced and cohesive community that is well integrated with the existing network of settlements. In particular, the single historic ownership of the site will enable substantial investment in infrastructure and community facilities early in the scheme.

Policy 14 sets out criteria against which this development opportunity can be refined and tested through the preparation of a masterplan.

### **Delivering a mixed and balanced community**

It is important that any development at Deenethorpe is complementary to the delivery of growth planned at Corby, particularly the SUEs, and therefore it will be necessary for the proposal to provide a distinct offer as a genuinely ‘exemplar’ sustainable rural community. The onus is upon the Deene Estate (Brudenell family), in its role as promoter and intended long term steward of the Deenethorpe Airfield proposal, to satisfactorily demonstrate how the scheme would be an exemplar development.

The new development must deliver a mixed and balanced community through the provision of a wide choice of high quality market and affordable homes to meet the needs of different groups including families and older people and those wishing to build their own homes. A

housing strategy will be prepared to identify the mix of house sizes, types and tenures required to meet this objective. Only around 12% of the dwelling stock in the Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston area is affordable housing and there are very few shared ownership properties. The new village must help to address this deficit. However, it is recognised that, given the scale of investment needed in infrastructure and other measures to achieve an exemplar development, the affordable housing needs evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (over 40% of new housing in East Northamptonshire) may not be viable. Furthermore, this scale of affordable housing provision in a new village is unlikely to provide a mixed and balanced community. For these reasons, Policy 14 sets a minimum requirement for 25% of the development to be affordable, to include intermediate tenures such as shared ownership. In addition specialist housing for older people and opportunities for self-built/custom-built housing should be provided.

### **Developing a Masterplan for Deenethorpe Airfield**

Policy 14 sets out the exemplar standards and provisions that will need to be achieved in order for the proposed village to be supported. Based on this policy, the site promoters will work with the local planning authority and relevant Parish Councils (in particular, Deene and Deenethorpe, Benefield and Weldon) to prepare a masterplan for the new village, in consultation with local communities and other stakeholders. This should take forward the vision for a sustainable 'garden village' of a character and scale in keeping with East Northamptonshire's attractive small towns and villages, but which provides an exemplar of 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards of design, construction and community facilities.

The masterplan will consider infrastructure requirements and any necessary matters of avoiding, mitigating or as a last resort compensating for environmental impacts. This will include consideration of how the proposal will contribute to the wider network of settlements, providing a focus for rural services and connecting to and supporting services and facilities in nearby towns.

The masterplan will include a delivery strategy to identify how and when the development will be implemented to the exemplary standards that are being proposed and with the required infrastructure and services. The mechanisms identified in the delivery strategy must provide a high degree of certainty that the exemplary standards and provisions set out in the masterplan will be achieved on the ground. This will include design coding, provisions for long term management and stewardship and opportunities for community governance, and the outline heads of terms for a legal agreement to deliver planned infrastructure and services.

If the masterplan demonstrates to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that the criteria and standards set out in Policy 14 can be met in a viable development, it will be used as the basis for either a Part 2 Local Plan, other site specific development plan document or a Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted by East Northamptonshire Council.

### ***Policy 14 - Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity***

***The unique opportunity to create a new 'Garden village' of between 1000 and 1250 dwellings at Deenethorpe Airfield will be assessed through the preparation of a masterplan and delivery strategy agreed with the Local Planning Authority and subject to public consultation. The masterplan will include phasing and define funding requirements and a delivery strategy for the timely provision of infrastructure. For such a proposal to be supported, the masterplan will need to demonstrate how the proposal would meet all of the following criteria:***

- a) **Create a model for sustainable rural living, with exemplary standards of design, construction and community facilities, made possible by the long term commitment of the Deene Estate, including through the use of pre-set design codes;**
- b) **Provide for the new village as a whole to be carbon neutral through:**
- **Buildings utilising contemporary construction techniques and exemplary construction standards and including systems to reduce their energy demand;**
  - **A bespoke energy strategy including the production of heat and electricity from renewable and low carbon sources to provide at least 80% of energy requirements on site;**
  - **Investing in tree planting in the Rockingham Forest**
- c) **Make effective use of previously developed land to restore despoiled landscape and remove the existing aviation activity and open storage uses;**
- d) **Support the rural economy through:**
- i. **The provision of land and buildings for owner occupiers of small and medium sized enterprises and service providers to build to their requirements within the design code;**
  - ii. **Ensuring extra land will be made available under 10 year options to allow successful enterprises to expand;**
  - iii. **Installation of super-fast broadband for all businesses and community facilities and also for all dwellings to support home working;**
  - iv. **Use of mechanisms to deliver apprenticeships and training opportunities in association with the construction phases for the new village;**
  - v. **Provision of community food production to serve local businesses.**
- e) **Provide a hub for rural services, phased early in the development, through:**
- i. **Providing nursery and primary education within the village and identify how secondary education will be provided in a way that complements provision in neighbouring communities;**
  - ii. **The provision of appropriate health care facilities;**
  - iii. **Provision of local shops and services including a range of spaces for the community use.**
- f) **Develop a balanced and mixed community, and address affordable housing needs through:**
- i. **Providing at least 25% integrated affordable housing;**
  - ii. **Specialist provision to meet the needs of an ageing population;**
  - iii. **Opportunities for bespoke individual and community custom-build projects.**
- g) **Maximise integrated transport choice and connections to services and facilities in neighbouring settlements through the preparation and implementation of a Travel Plan to achieve modal shift, including provisions for:**
- i. **A network of dedicated pedestrian and cycle links throughout the new village, with direct and clearly defined connections to neighbouring towns and villages;**

- ii. Viable public transport services to Corby and Oundle, e.g. through diversion of the X4 Milton Keynes – Peterborough bus service at the earliest possible opportunity;*
  - iii. Improving the highway network with a link between the A427 and A43;*
  - iv. Comprehensive infrastructure and incentives to facilitate the use of electric vehicles;*
- h) Provide a sustainable waste water treatment facility that meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and secure improvements in water quality and surface water management;*
- i) Strengthen the Green Infrastructure (GI), to support biodiversity and providing accessible opportunities for recreation and contributing to the Rockingham Forest for Life and wider Green Infrastructure links to nearby settlements through:
  - i. Provision of parks, allotments and large private gardens;*
  - ii. Provision of significant areas of connected GI including new woodland, woodland pasture, agricultural meadows, open space and creative nature conservation including re-connecting the ancient semi natural woodlands of Weldon Park Wood to Langley Copse;*
  - iii. Creating an extensive walking, cycling and riding network with the new GI across the Deene Estate and into the wider area of the Rockingham Forest.**
- j) Help achieve good ecological status on the Willow Brook, in accordance to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, through contributing to protection and enhancement of its river quality elements and protecting ground water.*
- k) Establish appropriate liaison and governance solutions by identifying the ways in which inclusive and continuous engagement, joint working and long term stewardship can be secured to deliver on the unique and exceptional garden village development.*