Purpose of report
The purpose of this report is to seek the Council’s endorsement of the Rushden East Vision Statement, which establishes the council’s vision and objectives for the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension master-planning process.

Attachment
Appendix A: Rushden East Vision Statement

1.0 Background

1.1 The Rushden East Vision Statement (REVS) at Appendix A of this report sets out the council’s principles for the preparation of the master-plan for the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE).

1.2 The principle of development for the SUE is established by its incorporation into the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which was adopted in July 2016. JCS Policy 33 identifies the broad location of the SUE and sets out a series of criteria for its development.

1.3 One of the key criteria of JCS Policy 33 is that:

“A master-plan will be prepared in consultation with the local community and stakeholders and agreed by the local planning authority. The master-plan will define development boundaries and policy expectations for inclusion in the Part 2 Local Plan covering Rushden or the preparation of a planning application for the development of the Sustainable Urban Extension.

In order to avoid piece-meal development, the preparation and agreement of the master-plan is a pre-requisite before any planning applications are granted planning permission.”

2.0 Preparation of the REVS

2.1 The detailed content of the draft REVS was considered at a Rushden East Project Board workshop session on 26th June 2017. The workshop session also included representatives of the Rushden East developer consortium (Barratts, Taylor Wimpey, and their consultants Bidwells).

2.2 The outcome of the workshop session was the vision and objectives set out below. These are incorporated into the REVS document at Appendix A:

VISION

The Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension will comprise new and distinctive neighbourhoods that will offer a high quality of life for all. It will enhance the image of Rushden and Higham Ferrers and will be well-connected to and integrated with both towns. It will contain around 2,500 new homes along with new employment, social and community facilities, and a high quality landscape setting that enhances biodiversity.
OBJECTIVES

The Rushden East Masterplan will:

Objective 1 - Create a comprehensive development which is well-connected by all modes of transport, is highly permeable within itself, and has good linkages to Rushden, Higham Ferrers and future growth sites beyond.

Objective 2 - Provide a mixed-use development which offers a good balance of jobs, homes and local facilities that can be accessed by all.

Objective 3 - Offer different types of homes for all, including affordable and starter homes, homes for older people, larger executive homes, and opportunities for custom and self-build homes.

Objective 4 - Provide a mix of employment opportunities to expand the local economy with the aim of matching the number of new jobs created to the number of new homes built.

Objective 5 - Incorporate high quality, connected green infrastructure of various types and characters, including tree-lined streets that link different parts of the neighbourhood.

Objective 6 - Include a large new park that can accommodate events and activities, help enhance health and wellbeing, support biodiversity and cater for wildlife.

Objective 7 - Incorporate the A6 Liberty Way with the aim of changing its character, reducing speed and improving connectivity.

Objective 8 - Minimise energy requirements and promote walking and cycling.

Objective 9 - Provide appropriate infrastructure including high-quality broadband and adequate parking.

Objective 10 - Provide opportunities for consulting the local community at key stages in the planning process to help shape a place that existing and new communities can be proud of.

3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

3.1 An initial Equality Impact has been carried out and all equality and diversity implications are neutral. Neither a positive nor a negative impact has been identified. The Equality Impact Assessment can be accessed as a background document.

4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 It is important for the council to demonstrate that the Rushden East SUE master-planning process is credible, viable and publically acceptable. The REVS is the council’s statement that it intends to plan carefully for the delivery of a high quality development at Rushden East. The council reduces its risks of later challenge by ensuring that the master-plan is prepared in an open and transparent manner in line with the REVS, and that it is subject to public scrutiny at key stages.

5.0 Risk Management

5.1 Without the REVS, there would be a risk that the council’s influence on the Rushden East SUE master-planning process could be reduced. Endorsement of the REVS provides the council with a vision and objectives that will be used to ensure that the Rushden East SUE master-planning process delivers high quality outcomes for the
benefit of the council, the towns of Rushden and Higham Ferrers, and existing and new residents and businesses.

6.0 Resource and Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to the council arising from this report. The council already employs a dedicated Rushden East project officer and resources are available to proceed with the master-planning process. Should additional resources be required at any future stage, they will be considered through the appropriate committee processes.

7.0 Constitutional Implications

7.1 There are no constitutional implications arising from this report.

8.0 Implications for our Customers

8.1 The council’s endorsement of the REVS will raise awareness of the SUE with the communities of Rushden and Higham Ferrers, as well as with a range of other stakeholders.

8.2 The development of the SUE will take place over a long period, with completion likely in the early 2030s. A new resident population will start to establish and grow in size as the development proceeds.

8.3 The SUE’s new residents will be Council Tax payers and its newly established businesses will be liable to pay business rates. They will require a full range of services from this council, and also services provided by other organisation such as Northamptonshire County Council and the emergency services. On that basis, it is likely that there will be an increase in customer contact for this council proportional to the annual growth of the new community which lives on the SUE.

9.0 Corporate Outcomes

9.1 The endorsement of the REVS will help to meet the following Corporate Outcomes:

- Good Quality of Life – the REVS sets out the council’s high-level vision and objectives for the delivery of the Rushden East SUE.
- Effective Partnership Working – the REVS has been developed by the members of the Rushden East Project Board in conjunction with the developer consortium promoting the development.
- Effective Management – the REVS is an important milestone in the management of the Rushden East SUE project.
- Strong Community Leadership – the REVS establishes the council’s vision and objectives for the effective delivery of a major corporate priority project.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1 The Council is recommended to

(1) Endorse the Rushden East Vision Statement as a basis for preparing the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension master-plan.

(Reason – To provide a basis for preparing the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension Master-plan)
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<th>Legal</th>
<th>Power: Town and Country Planning legislation</th>
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<td>Other considerations: N/A</td>
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<th>Background Papers:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Person Originating Report:</td>
<td>Paul Bland, Head of Planning Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☏ 01832 74(2218) ☘ <a href="mailto:pbland@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk">pbland@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Date: 6th July 2017
The Rushden East Masterplan will:

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**Objective 10** - Provide opportunities for consulting the local community at key stages in the planning process to help shape a place that existing and new communities can be proud of.

**PLANNING REQUIREMENTS**

The Rushden East masterplan and planning application must comply with Policy 33 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, which was adopted in July 2016. It must also comply with all other relevant national and local planning policies.

**CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

The draft Rushden East masterplan must be subject to meaningful consultation with the local community and stakeholders before it is agreed by East Northamptonshire Council.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

For further information on the Rushden East project, please contact East Northamptonshire’s Planning Services team:

Email: planning@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk

**RUSHDEN EAST VISION STATEMENT**

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July 2017
What is Rushden East?

Rushden East is a major new development area located beyond the A6 Liberty Way that currently defines the eastern urban edge of the towns of Rushden and Higham Ferrers.

It is supported by East Northamptonshire Council as part of its planning strategy, and is being promoted by a development consortium which includes the Duchy of Lancaster, Barratts and Taylor Wimpey.