



Planning Policy Committee - 23rd April 2018

Planning Policy and Conservation Update

Purpose of Update

The purpose of this report (for information only), is to update the Committee on work on the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and other key areas of work being undertaken by the Planning Policy and Conservation Team.

Appendix 1: Key issues arising from Town/ Parish Council Local Plan workshops (February – April 2018)

1.0 Background

1.1 This report provides an update into key areas of work for which the Planning Policy and Conservation Team delivers. It is a standing committee item, summarising key elements of the team's current workload.

2.0 Local Plan Making

2.1 The Regulation 18 consultation for the Local Plan Part 2 (site specific policies) took place in 2017. Regulation 18 is the first formal stage in preparing the Local Plan and this was accompanied. Following on from this a series of workshops have been held, to gather local evidence and views to inform the Plan, its detailed policies and proposals.

2.2 Workshops have been held for each of the six Town Councils, together with two rural parish workshops (north and south areas). These workshops took place as follows:

- 6th February 2018 – Thrapston;
- 13th February 2018 – Oundle;
- 14th February 2018 – Higham Ferrers;
- 20th February 2018 – Raunds;
- 21st February 2018 – Rushden;
- 14th March 2018 – Rural parishes (north);
- 20th March 2018 – Rural parishes (south);
- 4th April 2018 – Irthlingborough.

2.3 Key issues arising from the Town Council and rural parish workshops are summarised at Appendix 1. Information from these workshops is currently being collated and will help to inform the Local Plan Part 2 during 2018, as this is drafted.

2.4 The Town Council and rural parish workshops are the last in this series. Subsequent workshops will relate to the statutory Duty to Cooperate and will involve key stakeholders (statutory consultees), focusing upon themes that are of greatest relevance to these statutory consultees. Meanwhile, officers will continue to work towards developing the evidence base, draft policies and supporting text. This work is being informed throughout by feedback from the Regulation 18 consultation and all of the workshops that have taken place since November 2016.

2.5 An employment land assessment is currently being undertaken to enable future information to be provided on informing the economic aspects of the Local Plan.

3.0 Neighbourhood Planning

3.1 The content of individual Neighbourhood Plans will have implications for the Local Plan Part 2. Neighbourhood Plans which have already come forward contain a range of locally distinctive Parish-level policies that would otherwise be covered by the Local Plan Part 2. The Local Plan Part 2 must take account of any emerging and “made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Plan policies.

3.2 Full details of Neighbourhood Plan progress are set out in a separate report on this agenda. Further information about these and other emerging Neighbourhood Plans is available through the Neighbourhood Planning web page (<http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning>). Details of individual Neighbourhood Plans are available through the websites for individual Town or Parish Councils.

4.0 Historic conservation

4.1 Confirmation of the Brigstock conservation area Article 4 direction is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

5.0 Tresham Garden Village (formerly known as Deenethorpe Garden Village)

5.1 Consultation for the Tresham Garden Village Masterplan and Delivery Strategy ran from 26th February – 16th April 2018. Information relating to the Masterplan consultation is available through the relevant webpage: https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/news/article/890/consultation_on_tresham_garden_village.

5.2 Work on the preparation of a draft Masterplan and delivery framework is ongoing. A report is considered as part of the agenda for this meeting of the Planning Policy Committee.

6.0 Rushden East SUE

6.1 Various work-streams relating to providing the necessary technical evidence that supports the drafting of a masterplan and eventual planning application are ongoing. Work is progressing on the preparation of a draft masterplan, which will be subject to public consultation later this year.

7.0 Working Groups

7.1 Various Member working groups have been/ are being set up, to develop policy at the detailed level. In most cases these will support the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents, to inform the implementation of adopted Local Plan policies. The following working groups are of particular relevance to Planning Policy and Conservation:

- Developer contributions working group – The working group will initially focus on revising the Developer Contributions SPD. Further detailed policy announcements have recently been published by Central Government for consultation purposes
- Housing Policy Working Party – To develop detailed policy guidance for implementing the Local Plan housing mix and tenure policy (North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 Policy 30).

8.0 SPA Mitigation Strategy SPD

8.1 The SPA Mitigation Strategy SPD was adopted in November 2016. Since adoption of

the SPD, the Council continues to secured contributions from planning applications, as well as permitted development. An action plan has been drawn up by the Wildlife Trust and Natural England, in partnership with the relevant Local Planning Authorities to provide a direction for project funding.

8.2 The initial projects for this Council are as follows:

- Mitigation – Titchmarsh reserve fencing
- Monitoring – survey work and co-ordination
- Mitigation – Thrapston lake hedge planting

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 Members are asked to note the current progress to date within the Planning Policy and Conservation team.

(Reason – to keep Members informed as to current progress with plan making)

Legal	Power: Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)				
	Other considerations: National Planning Policy Framework Local Plan Part 1 – North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031				
Background Papers: None					
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Date: 13 April 2018					
CFO		MO		CX	

Appendix 1: Key issues arising from Local Plan Town and Parish Council workshops (February – April 2018)

Thrapston Town Council Workshop, 6th February 2018

- Key green/ blue infrastructure (G/BI) assets/ open spaces – Thrapston Lakes shoreline (SPA/ Ramsar site); Meadow Lane; River Nene and tributaries; e.g. Water's Edge
- Tourism/ leisure – Proposed new tourism/ heritage hub – possible future role for library building (Town Council Strategic Plan); expansion of leisure facilities at Castle Playing Fields, Meadow Lane
- Walking/ cycling – Potential new connections/ improvements – Northern Greenway extension (Oundle); Thrapston Viaduct; Land north of Meadow Lane (Thrapston Lakes); Mill Lane, Islip
- Community facilities – Town Council Strategic Plan includes proposals for Town Council Assets; e.g. community hub/ relocation of existing Town Council offices; potential for relocation of NHS services to single Meadow Lane Hub
- Investment – earlier Cattle Market (Sainsbury's) scheme now defunct, but still need for 'local' supermarket/ convenience retailer; additional public car parking; consider potential for new indoor market
- Retail – Concerns re mix of uses (e.g. many takeaways/ hairdressers); future for Barclay's Bank, if closed
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – Small scale enhancements to improve quality of town gateways (e.g. Oundle Road); learn lessons from The Sidings noise bund; overall need for improved car parking provision
- Housing – consider provision for specialist/ older persons' housing
- Key sites (focus for regeneration/ redevelopment) – Bridge Hotel (gateway site); Cattle Market; Chancery Lane/ Bull Ring (Chancery Autos/ St John Ambulance); Hermitage, Market Road; 17-31 High Street/ Library (redevelopment opportunity); Land north of Top Close, Oundle Road; Huntingdon Road nursery; consider potential expansion opportunities (e.g. south of A14)

Oundle Town Council Workshop, 13th February 2018

- Natural capital – Key site – Snipe Meadow, Occupation Road
- Tourism/ leisure – overall shortage of tourist accommodation; many potential opportunities; e.g. Barnwell Country Park (festivals); Occupation Road; work to secure delivery of consented Riverside Hotel scheme; need for improved quality and quantity of leisure facilities (Oundle School already uses facilities to capacity, and leases land to other groups; e.g. Football/ Cricket Clubs); proposal for new Festival Park (Benefield Road)

- Walking/ cycling – active local groups; riverside connection opportunities along permitted paths (e.g. to Cotterstock, Riverside Hotel, Barnwell Marina, Benefield Road); Greenway extension from Thrapston/ to the north (Wansford/ Peterborough)
- Community facilities – significant pressures; e.g. GP services; opportunities for release of Police/ Fire Service/ library buildings (Glaphorn Road) – possible multi-functional hub
- Investment – opportunities include relocation/ release of Post Office building; former TSB/ Nat West Bank buildings; former Primary School, Milton Road
- Retail – over-provision of certain uses (e.g. coffee shops, hairdressers, takeaways); need more quality town centre businesses; retain town centre retail hubs/ active shopping frontages
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – few vacant premises (exceptions e.g. Angel Pub), but concerns re loss of facilities (e.g. ATMs); Oundle Wharf – new retail focus; Nene Valley Business Park is still important employment area, but some challenges (e.g. limited local opportunities, notably Fairline, Oundle School)
- Housing – overall shortage of properties for households to downsize; consider opportunities for “Extra Care” scheme; e.g. Fletton Fields; adj Primary School, Cotterstock Road
- Car parking/ roads – overall lack of parking, affecting town as a whole – several hotspots, including Town Bridge; New Road; Joan Strong Centre; Ashton Road/ South Road; West Street
- Key sites – Riverside Hotel (gateway site); Fletton House; Fletton Field/ Abbott House; Primary School site, Milton Road; Joan Strong Centre

Higham Ferrers Town Council Workshop, 14th February 2018

- Natural capital – Need to consider green separation between Higham Ferrers/ Rushden; i.e. implications of Rushden East
- Tourism/ leisure – Need for improved signposting to tourist destinations/ new cultural hub (e.g. Town Hall); Rushden Lakes has been positive for town; overall shortage of green space; e.g. issues to resolve for Town Council to adopt Long Meadows (main public open space)
- Walking/ cycling – funding recently obtained to extend Greenway, but consider further opportunities to extend/ upgrade footpaths; e.g. to Rushden East; improve access from housing site (east of Ferrers School) to town
- Community facilities – Concerns re loss of library (building needs considerable work); Saffron Meadows sports facility needs redevelopment (consider use as community hub); need provision for new cemetery/ allotments

- Investment – Vacant industrial units to north of town; consider potential future uses for library building; concerns re loss of financial services (e.g. ATMs)
- Retail – recent business closures (Cranberry Cottage; Corner Studio; Thatched Cottage; bakery); look for opportunities to increase footfall
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – Need gateway features (e.g. Rushden East); consider opportunities from redundant rural buildings east of A6
- Employment – implications of Rushden East (e.g. demand for big sheds); several vacant units (e.g. White/ Woodleys, Bury Close)
- Housing – If further expansion is needed, this should be provided at Rushden East; consider site allocations for care schemes
- Car parking/ roads – more parking needed (Market Square often operating at capacity), but limited opportunities (e.g. adj Charles Parker Building); consider new Kimbolton Road/ Newton Road access to Land East of Ferrers School; traffic flows to new Sharnbrook/ Colworth station
- Key sites – Bury Close; Library Building; vacant town centre units; Tannery Building; Methodist Church; Saffron Meadows (potential community hub)

Raunds Town Council Workshop, 20th February 2018

- Natural capital – develop links between Raunds and Stanwick Lakes (Nene Valley); e.g. Meadow Lane
- Tourism/ leisure – note recent consents (e.g. Warth Park hotel); town centre features (e.g. Church); key sports facilities (e.g. Amos Lawrence Park, Raunds Town FC)
- Walking/ cycling – Improve access across London Road (connections to Stanwick Lakes/ Greenway)
- Community facilities – Saxon Hall/ Town Council are important facilities; library provides opportunity as new community hub; consider potential for Fire/ Police Station if these are relocated
- Investment – key opportunities include The Spinney, land adj car park (Marshall Road)
- Retail – many small units (hair/ beauty businesses); need overall improvements to shop frontages; Quality Discount retail unit is key attraction
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – Need improved gateways, particularly to the north of the town; concerns re impacts of proposed warehouses; recognise technological advances (e.g. need for electric car charging)
- Employment – Significant home working, but need to encourage more SMEs within town (start-up units); much out commuting (Rushden/ Thrapston)
- Housing – Would prefer additional housing to warehouse at West End; new opportunities at Newton Road, Pocket Park, south of Marshalls Road noted
- Car parking/ roads – some provision (e.g. Market Square, Saxon Hall); regular bus service; key safety concern is crossing A45

- Key sites – Meadow Lane (main connectivity opportunity); Marshalls Road; Pocket Park; Sub-station, Brook Street

Rushden Town Council Workshop, 21st February 2018

- Natural capital – Overall shortage of open space
- Tourism/ leisure – Need additional hotel (e.g. Premier/ Holiday Inn etc); overall shortage of open space (proposed sports hub provides opportunity to improve offer); important to retain existing sports provision (Pemberton Centre/ Splash Pool) within town; i.e. suitable replacements
- Walking/ cycling – Potential Washbrook Road/ Rushden Lakes link; improvements needed to Greenway/ connections (e.g. rear of Fire Station); opportunities for new funding through ERDF
- Community facilities – Need for additional cemetery provision; new playing fields at Rushden East; potential opportunities – Alfred Street School, Wesleyan Chapel; need for additional function/ conference venue
- Retail – Town Centre/ High Street – need improved access for delivery vehicles, but restrict other vehicular traffic; need policy to retain retail uses
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – Sorting Office, College Street – new opportunity for improved delivery access/ road layout; recognise Conservation Area/ historic interest
- Employment – Include some Rushden East jobs within Parish; retain existing factories in employment use
- Housing – need good connections – Rushden East/ A6; concerns re Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs); need greater policy direction re flats; potential for gated communities (e.g. Russell Court, Imperial Court, Duston Care Home); e.g. restrict community rights
- Car parking/ roads – mostly occupied by town centre workers; opportunities for multi-storey car park; overall need improved parking/ traffic management; e.g. Wellingborough Road

Rural Parish Workshops, 14th and 20th March 2018

- Natural capital – key opportunities; e.g. Tresham Garden Village (TGV), Harper's Brook, Nenescape; country parks (Fermyn Woods, Barnwell, Twywell); priority should be smaller scale green infrastructure projects (e.g. grass verges, potential village greens)
- Tourism/ leisure – lack of overnight accommodation; implementation timescales for consented schemes (e.g. Oundle Marina, Jack's Green forest holiday village); draw of tourist areas/ leisure facilities beyond the District (e.g. Corby, Stamford, Peterborough), although some areas (e.g. Oundle, Rushden)

Lakes, Stanwick) already successful; note key sites along River Nene (Barnwell Marina, Yarwell Mill); need to improve rural connections (e.g. Ashton Estate, east of River Nene)

- Walking/ cycling – many footpaths blocked – need to improve opportunities for strategic links (e.g. TGV/ Oundle/ Lyveden Way connection; circular routes such as “Green Wheel”; new Oundle/ Barnwell and Corby/ Brigstock cycle routes); missing connections noted (King’s Cliffe/ Nassington; Warmington/ Ashton; Lilford Park)
- Community facilities – Some communities preparing Community Plans instead of Neighbourhood Plans (e.g. seeking enhanced local facilities); future role for village halls (e.g. conference facilities etc); new opportunities for enhanced facilities at TGV
- Nene Valley/ Rockingham Forest – Key brand for tourism; strategic and local projects (e.g. Greenway, Harper’s Brook); need for improved facilities/ moorings along River Nene navigation
- Rural diversification – most villages only have limited scope to support economic growth (e.g. Broadband speeds); concerns re rural industrialisation/ impacts (new warehouse developments along A14/ A45 corridors)
- Functional connections – recognise wider linkages beyond District (e.g. Peterborough, Stamford); some villages (e.g. Barnwell) have multiple connections to different service centres (Oundle/ Thrapston); rural isolation remains an overarching concern; recognise service role of larger villages; many services under threat (e.g. buses, Call Connect)
- Employment – identify opportunities for SME/ start up units (e.g. Warmington/ A605 corridor); ongoing concerns re out-commuting and poor ICT connectivity; landscape impacts of major warehouse developments; consider end-of-life/ long term functions
- Housing – concerns that villages without Neighbourhood Plan would be vulnerable, although Local Plan will provide some overall protection (e.g. Easton on the Hill); most Neighbourhood Plans propose additional housing allocations; some villages lack most basic utilities/ infrastructure (e.g. Twywell); recognise rural older persons’ housing needs and identify opportunities to meet these needs
- Transport/ accessibility – Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) must function alongside Local Plan; implications of “Park and Walk” tourism (e.g. King’s Cliffe/ Fineshade); concerns re “rat running” (e.g. avoiding A43/ A47 corridor); recognise implications of A45 dualling (e.g. access to Stanwick Lakes); limited public transport, with likely loss of subsidies from 2018; Parish Councils may take a lead in improving local streets
- Key sites – Yarwell Mill, Riverside Hotel; Warmington; Twywell (many redundant farm buildings); Barnwell Workshops

Irthlingborough Town Council Workshop, 21st February 2018

- Natural capital – opportunities for direct access to Nene Valley; potential “blue” corridors (e.g. Finedon Road brook, mine “adit”); Greenway extensions
- Tourism/ leisure – Proposals for information hub; some existing facilities (e.g. Nene Park, Crow Hill), new facilities (e.g. adult gym) also being developed
- Walking/ cycling – Greenway provides opportunities for Stanwick Lakes/ Rushden Lakes/ Higham Ferrers connections; consider other possibilities (e.g. Nene Park tourism hub)
- Community facilities – some need enhancement/ expansion (cemetery, allotments); some good facilities (e.g. Les O’Dell recreation ground, Parson’s Green, Cricket Club, Crow Hill, Youth Club); library reprieved, but consider longer term opportunities (e.g. relocation/ combined facility); Police Service – no coverage, mobile police officer based in Rushden
- Investment – ongoing delays re Irthlingborough West development (s106 contributions)
- Retail – Many existing units unsuitable (e.g. Post Office); banks/ ATMs (Nationwide, Crow Hill stores); Rushden Lakes is main retail draw; new units under construction (Aldi, Coop)
- Regeneration/ re-imagination – Nene Park – key challenge – need vision/ focus upon sports/ leisure (i.e. suitable replacement for Rushden & Diamonds stadium); Select and Save – consider re-use as library, to enable release of current library site
- Employment – Whitworths is largest single employer (currently considering whether to stay at current site); Local Plan needs to direct opportunities such as Nene Park redevelopment
- Housing – current supply includes Irthlingborough West (700 dwellings), but need to consider smaller non-strategic contingency sites (100-200 dwellings); implications of Joint Core Strategy review (possible increased requirements)
- Car parking/ roads – overall need for additional parking, issues re High Street/ College Street parking (blocking emergency vehicles etc); concerns re Chowns Mill roundabout, capacity of A6 to Kettering; need for re-surfacing (e.g. Finedon Road)
- Key sites – Station Road/ Manor Drive/ south of A6 (new information hub); Lower Crow Hill allotment (new Greenway Hub); Express Works Canteen, Church Street; Select & Save, High Street (new community hub); Soniflex, Station Road; Land west of town, Wellingborough Road (mainly privately owned); Quarry north of Green Close (opportunity for informal recreation); future development proposals at Irthlingborough West/ Whitworths; Town Council offices, Station Road