

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Date: 28 March 2011

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: - Roger Powell (Vice Chairman) in the chair

David Bateman

Tony Boto

Albert Campbell

Lisa Costello

Michael Finch

Roger Glithero JP

Philip Hardcastle

Dudley Hughes JP

Steven North

Ron Pinnock

Phillip Stearn

447. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2011 were approved and signed by the vice chairman.

448. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors David Brackenbury (Chairman), Eloise Lucille and Pam Whiting sent their apologies.

449. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Personal

Members declared personal interests in the items below as indicated. They remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting when the respective item was considered.

Member	Item	Nature of Interest
Albert Campbell	All planning policy matters regarding Raunds	Lives in Raunds
Michael Finch	All planning policy matters regarding Stanwick	Lives in Stanwick
Dudley Hughes	All planning policy matters regarding Raunds	Lives in Raunds and his wife is also a district councillor
Roger Powell	All planning policy matters regarding Rushden	Lives in Rushden

450. CORE STRATEGY ISSUES PAPER

The committee was informed that the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was currently being reviewed and an Issues Paper had been produced by the Joint Planning Unit (JPU), as part of the review, to enable local communities to participate in strategic plan making for the North Northamptonshire area, including East Northamptonshire.

The Issues Paper contained a number of questions inviting local planning authorities, businesses and local residents to comment on the future shaping of the JCS. Officers had prepared draft responses to the relevant questions and members were asked to consider these and to also prioritise a list of issues, which the new strategy plan could influence.

Members considered the draft response to the questions and requested that the following comments and points be added to the response before it was submitted to the JPU:

- To create employment, policies should enable older buildings to be converted for business use, where appropriate, particularly disused barns
- It was agreed that flexibility and sustainability should be added to the criteria based approach when drawing up village boundaries. The criteria should allow different responses for different villages and it was important that the council should have a direct input into this process
- A firmer statement was required for housing targets and the council should directly influence what the future targets should be for East Northamptonshire
- There was some local concern about extending development at Rushden to the east of the A6 bypass where a new settlement could develop separately from the main town
- Rushden was running out of brownfield sites for housing development in the town centre and sites currently allocated for employment use could be re-allocated for housing with employment uses re-located
- Future housing development in the towns should be based on sustainability with enough locally based jobs to sustain growth.

For the list of issues (appendix 2), it was agreed that:

- (a) the third bullet point be amended to include “suitable sustainable” to renewable energy developments and local peoples’ views should be taken account of;
- (b) trees in the highway be supported and these should be planned from the outset of a project. It was also considered that, because saplings were planted too close together in existing landscape schemes, many did not survive; and
- (c) a new bullet point be added to encourage the incorporation of photovoltaic and green roofs on commercial buildings.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the submitted draft response to the Issues Paper consultation be agreed and the comments made by members detailed in the pre-amble above be incorporated into the council’s response.
- (3) That the following three issues be forwarded to the JPU as the council’s top three priorities for East Northamptonshire in the revised JCS:
 - more services and jobs provided locally, reducing people’s need to travel

- public transport that is better joined up, faster and runs more often, both within and between towns and in the rural area
- in towns – bigger gardens, more public parks and green routes, river restoration (taking rivers back out of culverts).

(Reason – to support the development of the strategic planning framework for North Northamptonshire and therefore have a positive impact on environmental, social and economic issues).

451. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS - UPDATE ON BID

Members were notified that the council had recently submitted a bid for Neighbourhood Plan Vanguard status for Raunds and Oundle. The two towns had been chosen because of the different ways in which their masterplans had developed and the likely planning solutions required. If successful, the pilots would be supported by funding of £20,000 and the council would be able to influence the future development of Neighbourhood Plans.

The Department of Communities and Local Government had indicated that the council would hear the outcome of the bid by late March 2011 and members would be notified by e-mail when a decision was known.

452. SHARED STATEMENT OF AMBITION FOR THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT IN EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

The committee was informed that the council had been approached by English Heritage, on behalf of the East Midlands Heritage Forum (EMHF), to prepare a 'Shared Statement of Ambition' for the historic environment in East Northamptonshire. All local authorities within the East Midlands had been asked to participate.

The statement would be an agreed set of priorities with key partners to support funding bids and be a focus for resource allocation and partnership working.

Members were asked to consider and approve a proposed Statement of Ambition for the historic environment in East Northamptonshire.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the submitted draft Shared Statement of Ambition for East Northamptonshire be approved.
- (2) That the EMHF be requested to consider the feasibility of a common policy with other local authorities in the East Midlands regarding the impact of development and wind farms on the historic environment.

(Reason - To support the Council's Corporate Outcomes).

453. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Members considered two supplementary planning documents (SPD) on biodiversity and open space.

(a) Biodiversity

A consultation draft Biodiversity SPD produced by the Joint Planning Unit (JPU) was considered by this committee for initial comments on 20 September 2010. The draft had also been considered by Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough Councils.

At its meeting on 7 December 2010, the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee (NNJPC) considered and incorporated the comments on the draft document submitted by the district and borough councils, the local community and stakeholders. The NNJPC recommended that the revised draft document should be adopted by the four constituent North Northamptonshire districts and boroughs as an SPD.

RESOLVED:

That the submitted draft Biodiversity SPD be adopted.

(Reason – to assist in improving biodiversity throughout the district (and wider North Northamptonshire) and therefore have a positive impact on the character and appearance of towns, villages and their surroundings and also on people's quality of life).

(b) Open Space

A draft Open Space SPD had been prepared to supplement policies of the adopted Core Spatial Strategy (CSS) and members were asked to approve the draft for public consultation.

The document set out the council's approach to providing open spaces in new developments and securing financial contributions from developers. It also provided a greater opportunity for town and parish councils and the local community to be involved in the process of local open space provision.

Members considered the draft document and requested that the following comments and points be added to the document before it was published for consultation:

- for clarification, it should mention that the RNOT plan had not yet been adopted by the council
- developers should be encouraged to provide bigger residential gardens rather than LAPs (where these were unlikely to be used) for future housing developments in towns.

In addition, members requested that the evidence base be updated regarding the following sites and facilities:

- other sites in the district, such as Stanwick Lakes, should be added to the list of high value amenity green space sites
- the new leisure and community facility at Kings Cliffe should be added to the list of high value sports facilities.

It was also considered that the inclusion of examples of the evidence base within the consultation draft could be confusing to consultees.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to appendices I and J being removed, the submitted draft Open Space SPD be approved for public consultation after the district elections in May 2011.

(Reason – to assist in improving open space provision throughout the district and therefore have a positive impact on quality of life and appearance of towns, villages and their surroundings)

Chairman