

Report of the Head of Planning and Local Development

LOCAL PLAN – EMERGING DRAFT

1 Purpose of report

To update members on progress on the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (PBW) and to seek approval to carry out public consultation on the emerging plan and various accompanying background papers.

2 Executive summary

Work is progressing on preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough. Much of the evidence gathering is now complete and an emerging draft of the plan has been prepared. A series of background papers have also been produced to support the plan. The report seeks approval to carry out public consultation on the emerging draft. Whilst this consultation is taking place further testing of the plan will be undertaken in respect of sustainability appraisal, habitats regulations assessment, viability and transport modelling. The results of these studies and the responses received from the consultation will be taken into account before producing a revised version of the plan.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Glossary of terms

Appendix 2 – Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough – Emerging Draft

Appendix 3 – Responses to the Issues and Options Paper

Appendix 4 – Consultation leaflet

The following documents are available to view at:

http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/903/services_committee

Appendix 5 – Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper

Appendix 6 – Village Boundaries Background Paper

Appendix 7 – Open Space Designations Background Paper

Appendix 8 – Rural Housing Allocation Methodology and Site Selection
Background Paper

Appendix 9 – Town Housing Allocation Methodology and Site Selection
Background Paper

Appendix 10 – Employment Land Review

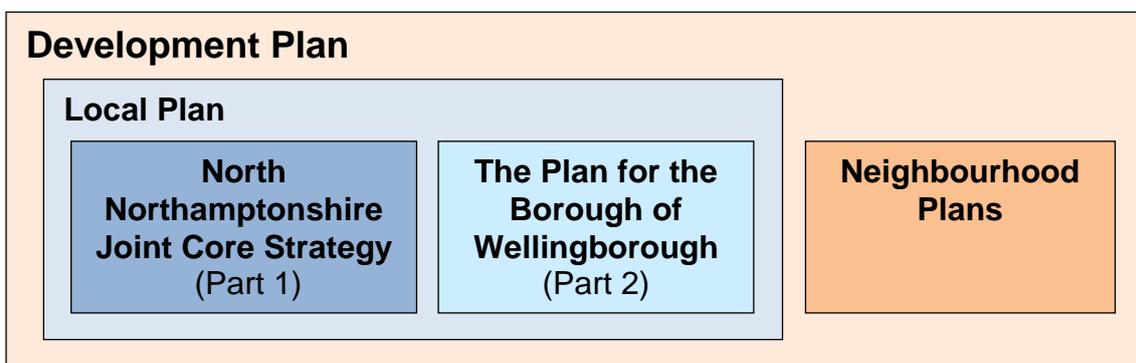
4 Proposed action:

The committee is invited to RESOLVE to:

- 4.1 note the progress being made towards preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough;**
- 4.2 approve the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough – Emerging Draft and the associated background papers and leaflet for consultation.**

5 Background

- 5.1 The PBW is being prepared to help guide future development and planning decisions in the area. It will sit alongside ‘The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy’ (JCS). Together these documents will both form the ‘local plan’ for the borough (The JCS being ‘part 1’ and the PBW being ‘part 2’). Both documents will cover the period 2011 to 2031. The local plan together with neighbourhood plans will then form the development plan which will assist in determining planning applications.



- 5.2 The JCS will set out the strategic planning policies for the area. The PBW will compliment and add local detail to these strategic policies. The PBW will not need to repeat policies contained within the JCS or those within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The aim is to adopt the JCS in mid 2016 and the PBW by mid 2017. A glossary of terms commonly used in the context of the local plan is included as Appendix 1.
- 5.3 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a statement setting out what documents are to be prepared as part of the PBW and the programme for their production. The LDS was approved at the Services Committee on 14 September 2015. A separate report to this committee is seeking to update the LDS.
- 5.4 A Local Plan Advisory Group has been established to enable councillors and officers to discuss the topics that have arisen following consultation and evidence gathering. That group met on 24 August, 5 October, 2 November and 7 December 2015 and on 22 February 2016. The background papers

and the emerging draft of the PBW have been amended to reflect discussions had at those meetings.

- 5.5 The Services Committee of 19 October 2015 considered responses to the issues and options paper and drafts of the rural housing background paper, village boundaries background paper and the employment land review. These papers were approved as the basis for preparing the draft PBW.
- 5.6 The Services Committee of 7 December 2015 considered the draft settlement hierarchy background paper and an open spaces, sport and recreational facilities audit and assessment and approved these as the basis for preparing the draft PBW.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The following stages of the PBW have already been completed.

Stage	Timetable
Regulation 18 consultation (identifying the scope of the plan)	21 March to 2 May 2014
Evidence gathering, stakeholder engagement and commissioning of consultants	May 2014 to Dec 2014
Report Issues and Options document and background papers to committee	15 Dec 2014
Consultation on Issues and Options	26 Jan 2015 to 9 March 2015
Evidence gathering, options testing, taking into account representations received, stakeholder engagement and writing draft plan	March 2015 to March 2016

- 6.2 The next stages that are necessary in the process are:

Stage	Timetable
Consultation on emerging draft plan and commissioning of consultant work to test the plan	April 2016 to May 2016
Consideration of representations and consultant reports and preparation of pre-submission plan	June 2016 to July 2016
Report pre-submission plan to Committee	September 2016
Consultation on pre-submission plan (publication of plan)	September 2016 to November 2016
Report submission plan to committee	December 2016
Submission of plan to Secretary of State	December 2016
Examination	December 2016 to June 2017
Adoption	July 2017

- 6.3 An emerging draft of the PBW (Appendix 2) has been prepared taking into account the comments received at the previous consultation stages, discussions with stakeholders, input from the Local Plan Advisory Group and the evidence that has been gathered to support the plan. Much of this evidence has been produced by officers in the policy team, but this has also been supported by evidence prepared for the Joint Core Strategy (such as the SHMA and SHLAA) and evidence commissioned from consultants (such as the open spaces, sport and recreation audit and assessment and the town centre and retail study). All of the evidence base is available to view on the council's website (http://www.wellingborough.gov.uk/info/200132/local_development_framework/1169/evidence_base)
- 6.4 The emerging draft of the PBW includes a total of 31 draft policies. These cover: the proposed settlement hierarchy; protection and provision of open space; employment proposals; housing allocations; housing to meet the needs of older persons; a retail hierarchy; proposals for the town centre and development principles for individual sites. Appendix C of the PBW includes draft policies maps which show: village boundaries; open space designations; housing allocations; local green infrastructure corridors; the primary shopping area; primary shopping frontages and secondary shopping frontages; and town centre boundary.
- 6.5 The Services Committee of 19 October 2015 considered initial responses to the issues and options paper and agreed these as the basis for preparing the PBW. At that time some of the evidence gathering was still underway. Appendix 3 provides an updated position on the responses received taking account of the work which has now been completed. These responses have been discussed with the Local Plan Advisory Group.
- 6.6 Various background papers have been prepared to support the plan. It is intended that these will accompany the draft plan when it goes out for consultation. This will provide stakeholders with a greater level of detail than included in the plan itself. The background papers are included as Appendices 4 to 9 of this report. Paper copies are available for members in the Members Room. These have been discussed with the Local Plan Advisory Group. The background papers on settlement hierarchy, village boundaries, employment land review and rural housing have been previously considered by this committee and have had only minor updates since then.
- 6.7 The Settlement Hierarchy paper (Appendix 4) has reviewed the sustainability and role of all the settlements in the borough and suggests that rural settlements should be classified as: either 'village', 'restraint village' or 'open countryside' (which includes settlements of dispersed form). All of the settlements in the borough have been divided into one of these three categories as the basis for consultation. Policy SS1 of the emerging plan adds additional detail to the JCS on the type of development that will be acceptable in the Restraint Villages.
- 6.8 The Villages Boundaries paper (Appendix 5) updates a background paper

that was consulted on as part of the Issues and Options consultation. It takes account of the settlement hierarchy paper and suggests draft boundaries for all of the settlements categorised as 'villages' that are not being covered by Neighbourhood Plans. Other settlements are proposed to be treated the same as if they were open countryside and not have a boundary identified. The boundaries proposed take account of comments from a consultation with the Parish Councils in Oct-Nov 2014 and responses to the issues and options paper. The village boundaries are included on the draft policies maps in Appendix C of the PBW.

- 6.9 The Open Space Designations paper (Appendix 6) takes account of the evidence produced by consultants The Environment Partnership (TEP) in November 2015. The TEP report on open spaces, sport and recreation included an audit and assessment of all open space in the borough. The report was considered by the Services Committee on 7 December 2015 and was approved as the basis for preparing the PBW. The background paper uses this evidence as the starting point for identifying two types of open space designations in the borough – Local Open Space (LOS) and Local Green Space (LGS). Policies GI1 and GI2 of the emerging plan relate to these areas. These designations are intended to replace the existing designations in the local plan – Important Amenity Areas (IAAs) and Environmentally Important Open Space (EIOS).
- 6.10 The Rural Housing paper (Appendix 7) updates a methodology and site selection paper that was consulted on as part of the Issues and Options consultation. It sets out what the rural housing requirement is for the borough and then assesses a number of sites around Finedon. The paper concludes that two adjacent sites off Milner Road, Finedon should be consulted on as potential housing allocations. These are proposed to be allocated under Policy H2 of the emerging plan. Development principles for the site are also included in Policy Site 8. It is not proposed to allocate any other sites in the rural area; these will either be allocated in Neighbourhood Plans or will come forward for housing as infill or exception sites (known as windfall sites). This paper is largely unchanged from the paper approved by Services Committee on 19 October 2015.
- 6.11 The Town Housing paper (Appendix 8) also updates a methodology and site selection paper that was consulted on as part of the Issues and Options consultation. It sets out what the urban housing requirement is for the borough and then assesses a number of sites within Wellingborough. A number of sites are suggested as being suitable and these are proposed to be allocated under Policy H1 of the emerging plan. Several of the sites have site specific policies which set out development principles for the sites – these are included in section 9 and 10 of the PBW.
- 6.12 The Employment Land Review (ELR) (Appendix 9) assesses the need for and supply of employment land in the borough. It identifies that there is no need to allocate any further sites for employment. The ELR was approved as the basis for preparing the PBW by Services Committee on 19 October 2015. It has been subject to only minor updates since then.

- 6.13 It is recommended that the Committee approved the emerging draft and the accompanying background papers and leaflet for consultation. Whilst the consultation is underway the council will commission consultants for work on viability testing, transport modelling, sustainability appraisals and habitats regulation assessments. It may therefore be necessary to make further amendments to the approach based on the results of these assessments and the responses from the consultation before preparing a pre-submission plan. This plan will be subject to further consultation before being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.
- 6.14 This is not a formal stage of plan preparation and there are therefore no specific regulations which set out how consultation should take place. It is however normal to consult for a minimum of six weeks. It is therefore recommended that a six week consultation period takes place. Consultation is expected to include:
- Publication of the plan and accompanying documents on the council's website;
 - Placing the documents in the council's reception and the libraries in the borough for viewing;
 - Consulting with all consultees on the local plan data base via email or letter (this includes: parish councils; neighbouring authorities; national and local groups and organisations; agents and landowners; and individuals that have asked to be notified);
 - Contacting all landowners of sites suggested for designation as open space;
 - Production of a summary leaflet (Appendix 4);
 - Posters advertising the consultation;
 - Publication of a press release;
 - A tweet from the Council's twitter account;
 - An exhibition in the Swansgate Centre and Morrisons; and
 - An exhibition in Finedon.

7 Legal powers

- 7.1 The Localism Act 2011 and Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

8 Financial and value for money implications

The efficient production of the Local Plan protects against costly planning appeals and is therefore value for money. Production of the plan in house with the use of consultants for specific evidence production is a cost effective way of producing the plan balanced with the need to minimise the time to adoption.

9 Risk analysis

Nature of risk	Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Control measures
Lack of a local plan	More appeals against planning refusals due to policies becoming out of date, leading to more awards of costs.	High	Update the timetable and proceed through the various stages in the plan making progress towards adoption as soon as possible.

10 Implications for resources

- 10.1 The funding for additional resources for the production of the PBW was agreed by Resources Committee in December 2013.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities

- 11.1 Progressing the local plan review will help to make stronger and safer communities by producing policies that guide development to the most appropriate locations and to deliver sufficient housing, jobs, retail and other land uses.

12 Implications for equalities

- 12.1 An equality impact assessment (EqIA) screening has been completed for the plan. This identified that there is no anticipated negative effect on groups with protected characteristics. The plan includes a policy which seeks to improve housing to meet the needs of older people.

13 Author and contact officer

Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Officer.

14 Consultees

Victoria Phillipson, Principal Policy and Regeneration Manager
Julie Thomas, Head of Planning and Local Development
Liz Elliott, Head of Finance
Bridget Lawrence, Head of Resources

15 Background papers

None.

Glossary of terms

	Affordable Housing	<p>Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.</p> <p>Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.</p> <p>Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).</p> <p>Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.</p> <p>Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. (Source NPPF)</p>
AMR	Authorities' Monitoring Report	A report prepared that reviews: progress on preparing documents set out in the LDS; how policies are being implemented; the number of dwellings delivered; progress on any Neighbourhood Plans or Orders; any CIL reporting requirements and action taken under the duty to cooperate.
	Biodiversity	The variety of life in all its forms
	Comparison Shopping	Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. There is currently no CIL adopted in this area.
	Community Right to Build	The Localism Act allows for community organisations to bring forward a ‘community right to build order’ which is a type of neighbourhood development order. This allows certain community organisations to bring forward smaller-scale

		development on a specific site, without the need for planning permission. This gives communities the freedom to develop, for instance, small-scale housing and other facilities that they want.
	Convenience Shopping	Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items including food and drink, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.
CSS	Core Spatial Strategy	The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy adopted in June 2008 which covers the period 2001 - 2021. It is currently being reviewed by the JPU and will be replaced by the JCS.
	Development Plan	This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and is defined by section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
	Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms
	Green Infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits
JCS	Joint Core Strategy	The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. This is in the process of being prepared and covers the period 2011 - 2031. It will replace the adopted CSS
JPU	Joint Planning Unit	The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit is a local partnership between Corby, Wellingborough, Kettering and East Northamptonshire councils with Northamptonshire County Council. Its key responsibility is to review the Core Strategy. The JPU reports to a Joint Planning Committee made up of three elected members from each of the councils.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The document which sets out which development plan documents are to be prepared and includes a timetable for their production.
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership	A body designated by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in the area. The local LEP is the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP).
	Local Plan	The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In this borough it is intended that the Local Plan will comprise the Joint Core Strategy (Part 1) and the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (Part 2).
LPA	Local Planning Authority	The Borough Council of Wellingborough is the local planning authority for the borough and has all planning powers for all development in its area with the exception of: minerals and waste disposal which is the responsibility of Northamptonshire County Council and the preparation of the

		Core Strategy which is the responsibility of the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee.
	Main Town Centre Uses	Main town centre uses include retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities). (Source NPPF)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions
NIA	Nature Improvement Area	Inter-connected networks of wildlife habitats intended to re-establish thriving wildlife populations and help species respond to the challenges of climate change. The Nene Valley NIA has been designated to deliver a step change in nature conservation, where local organisations have come together with a shared vision for the natural environment.
	Neighbourhood Plans	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Once made they form part of the development plan for the area.
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance	A web-based resource setting out national planning practice guidance.
	Policies Map	An Ordnance Survey map which illustrates graphically the policies in the development plan.
PSA	Primary Shopping Area	Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontages). (Source NPPF)
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	This is a statement setting out how the local planning authority intends to involve the community in the preparation of the Local Plan and all development control decisions.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment	Required under the terms of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for 'environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use'.
SA	Sustainability Appraisal	An assessment of the impact that policies and proposals within a local plan could have on the environment, economy and society.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	Documents that add further detail to policies in the local plan. They are a material consideration in planning decisions, but are not subject to independent examination and are not part of the development plan.
SSSI	Sites of Special	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

	Scientific Interest	
SPA	Special Protection Area	Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA has been designated due to the importance of over wintering birds in the area.
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	An assessment of the full housing needs for a housing market area. It should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	An assessment to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.
	Town Centre	Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres. (Source NPPF)
TCAAP	Town Centre Area Action Plan	Adopted by the Borough Council of Wellingborough on 21st July 2009, the document set the direction for the future development of the town centre to 2021.