

Report of the Head of Planning and Local Development

LOCAL PLAN UPDATE

1 Purpose of report

To update members on progress on the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (PBW) and to approve the approach set out in various background papers.

2 Executive summary

Work is progressing on preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough. Some of the evidence gathering is now complete and decisions can be made on how to progress with various issues. Officer responses have been prepared to the representations received as part of the last consultation stage and background papers have been prepared for a number of rural issues. In addition employment land has been reviewed.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Glossary of terms

Appendix 2 – Responses to representations made to the Issues and Options paper

Appendix 3 – Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper

Appendix 4 – Rural Housing Allocation Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper

Appendix 5 – Village Boundaries Background Paper

Appendix 6 – Employment Land Review

4 Proposed action:

The committee is invited to resolve to:

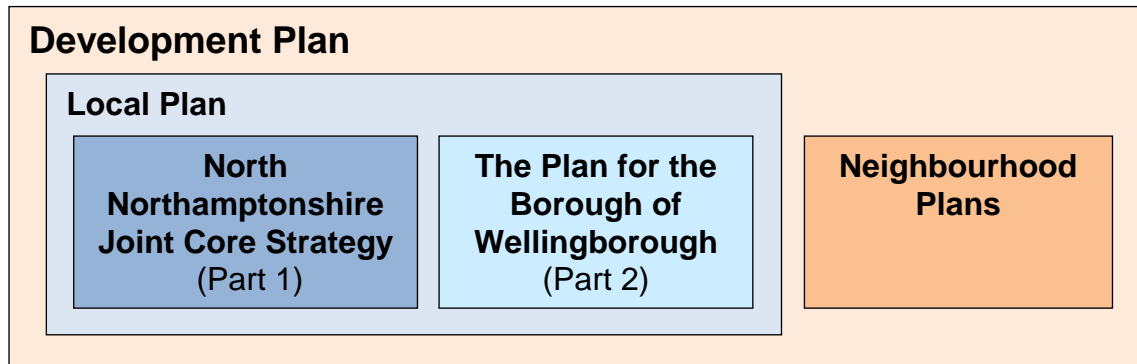
4.1 note the progress being made towards preparing the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough;

4.2 agree that the responses to the representations included in Appendix 1 are an appropriate basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough;

4.2 approve the background papers included in Appendices 2 – 5 as the basis for preparing a draft Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough.

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) which is also under review. 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 Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough 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 early in 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.
- 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 and 5 October 2015. The background papers have been amended to reflect discussions had at those meetings.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The following stages of the PBW have already been completed. These are:
- Regulation 18 Consultation;
 - The Issues and Options Consultation;
 - The commissioning of consultants for specific topic areas.
- 6.2 The next stages that are necessary in the process are:
- Responding to the representations raised at 'issues and options' stage;

- Completing evidence gathering;
- Drafting the emerging plan
- Consulting on the emerging plan.
- Reporting this to Services Committee

6.3 Consultation on the Issues and Options for the plan took place from the end of January to early March this year. 79 consultees responded providing a total of 663 comments. Appendix 1 summarises those comments and provides an officer assessment of how the various issues should be taken forward in preparing the plan. The responses take account of the background information which has now been prepared.

6.4 In order to determine the most appropriate course of action on various topics, several background papers have been prepared. 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 will be included in the plan itself. The following draft background papers accompany this report:

- Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper
- Rural Housing Allocation Methodology and Site Selection Background Paper
- Village Boundaries Background Paper
- Employment Land Review

6.5 It is recommended that members review these papers and agree that they form an appropriate basis for preparing an emerging plan for consultation and further testing.

6.6 The Settlement Hierarchy paper 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.

6.7 The Rural Housing Paper 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. 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).

6.8 The Villages Boundaries paper also 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.

- 6.9 The Employment Land Review (ELR) 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. This ELR will be subject to further updates as the plan progresses.
- 6.10 It is anticipated that the emerging draft plan will be produced based on these and other background papers and evidence ready for committee on 7 December. The aim is to consult on the emerging draft plan in Jan 2016, after which the representations will be considered. Whilst the plan is being consulted on 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 before preparing a pre-submission plan. This plan will be subject to further consultation before being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

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 will be completed for the plan once policies have been formulated. This will form part of the sustainability appraisal.

13 Author and contact officer

Sue Bateman, Senior Planning Officer.

14 Consultees

Julie Thomas, Head of Planning and Local Development.
Victoria Phillipson, Principal Policy and Regeneration Manager.
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.
	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 Scientific Interest	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
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.