
Review of the Joint Core Strategy

SYNOPSIS

This report updates Members on progress with the review of the Joint Core Strategy for North Northamptonshire

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members will be aware of the current ongoing review of the Core Spatial Strategy for North Northamptonshire. The Joint Planning Committee will consider an emerging draft Joint Core Strategy on Tuesday 3rd July 2012 where it is anticipated that the emerging approach will be considered for release for public consultation. A copy of the latest draft will be made available at the Local Plan meeting.

2.0 Discussion

- 2.1 The emerging draft Joint Core Strategy has involved extensive input from stakeholders at various technical events and the wider public through the Issues Paper consultation reported to Members on 23rd March 2011. Officers from the Council together with the Council's members represented on the Joint Planning Committee have both through formal meetings and ongoing dialogue had the opportunity to have a substantial input into the development of the current iteration of the Joint Core Strategy. Consequently much work has been done on seeking to influence the document as much as possible to take sufficient account of meeting Corby's needs and aspirations.
- 2.2 The Joint Core Strategy will set out the key elements of the planning framework for North Northamptonshire up until 2031. It will comprise a long-term spatial vision, strategic outcomes and core policies on key strategic issues, including:
- Protecting and enhancing assets such as the historic environment, geodiversity and biodiversity;
 - Safeguarding landscape character through criteria based policy and the creation of 'areas of tranquillity' within the Rockingham Forest area around Kings Cliffe;
 - Protecting community assets such as open space, allotments, sports and recreation buildings whilst encouraging the co-location of community facilities;
 - Introducing a framework for reducing carbon emissions and designing sustainable places including mechanisms such as allowable solutions that help builders to make payments to fund local energy projects;
 - Provide a context for growth and phasing of growth which relates to infrastructure;
 - Establish a spatial strategy that recognises Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden as Growth Towns where the greatest share of development will be focused;
 - Apply strong development management to the villages where development will be limited to meeting specific local needs or opportunities;
 - Provide a positive framework to enable developers to bring forward a new village at Deenthorpe Airfield subject to the proposals meeting certain criteria;
 - Strengthen the connectivity within and beyond North Northamptonshire through a series of transportation schemes, including the prioritisation of investment in the electrification of the Midland Mainline and the Corby Northern Orbital Road;

- Establish a green infrastructure framework for the creation of multi functional areas of green space;
 - Support tree planting schemes in Rockingham Forest;
 - Emphasise economic prosperity, including support for rural diversification and promotion of a mix of uses on strategic distribution sites to unlock complementary higher value jobs;
 - Adopt a flexible approach to employment development through the provision of minimum job targets to ensure that the Plan does not hold back the creation of additional jobs;
 - Identify strategically important employment areas and provide guidance to focus attention on opportunities for investment and positive change, including a special policy for Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit area;
 - Identify sustainable urban extensions at North East Corby and West Corby together with site specific development principles;
 - Take a twin approach to housing requirements with minimum target of 8,900 new houses in Corby by 2031 and a ambitious target of 14,200 new houses over the same period based on successful implementation of the sustainable urban extensions;
 - Set out housing mix and tenure requirements based on the findings of the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and assessment of viability; and
 - Make provision for a single residential pitch for gypsies and travellers up to 2022;
- 2.3 The emerging draft strategy excludes policies that deal with town centre and retail strategy in view of the planning application for a substantial out-of-town retail/leisure development at Rushden Lakes. This proposal could have significant implications for the spatial strategy and it is considered prudent to exclude retail policies until the application has been determined and retail strategy resolved.

3.0 Public Consultation and Timetable

- 3.1 This consultation stage is non-statutory but provides an essential step in reviewing the Joint Core Strategy. Public consultation is to be run over a 10 week period between the end of July and middle of October. At the time writing the details of the public consultation have not been released but every opportunity will be taken to ‘piggy back’ consultation with existing/planned Council and partner meetings/events and consultations such as the Rural Area Forum on 16th August.
- 3.2 Your officers will continue to input into shaping the replacement Core Strategy as the plan is refined as a result of responses received to public consultation and the completion of technical evidence based studies. The Council will have formal opportunity to make representations on the contents of the Core Strategy as it progresses towards adoption. The remaining stages of the review are:
- Consultation on emergent draft Core Strategy – July to October 2012
 - Consultation on Pre-Submission Plan – January to February 2013
 - Submission to PINS – April 2013
 - Independent Examination – April to July 2013
 - Adoption of the revised Joint Core Strategy – December 2013

4. Issues to be taken into account:-

Policy Priorities

Planning decisions directly contribute to corporate priorities.

Financial

None directly related to this report.

Legal

There is a legal requirement for local planning authorities to prepare a Local Plan for their area. The replacement Joint Core Strategy will form an important part of the Local Plan and must be prepared in accordance with the development plan regulations.

Performance Information

None directly related to this report.

Best Value, Human Rights and Community Safety

None directly related to this report

Equalities and Sustainability

None directly related to this report. The Joint Core Strategy review will be subject to an on-going process of sustainability appraisal and equality impact assessment

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The emerging draft Joint Core Strategy is obviously the result of a significant amount joint working between the partner authorities, including a collaborative approach to research, assessment and consultation. The result is a draft document that closely aligns with the themes and priorities of Corby Borough Council.
- 5.2 Due to the committee cycle it has been necessary to prepare this report ahead of the emerging draft of the Joint Core Strategy being reported to the Joint Planning Committee. An oral update on the latest developments will be provided at the meeting.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members note the report.

Background Papers

The emergent draft Core Strategy will be supported by a number of other papers, reports and assessments that will be available for inspection on the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit's website at www.nnjpu.org.uk

Officers to Contact

Terry Begley

Principal Planner