The Plan for North Northamptonshire

A SUMMARY OF THE PREFERRED OPTIONS FOR THE CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Preferred Options for North Northamptonshire
TOWARDS A JOINT CORE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Your chance to comment on the emerging proposals

November 2005

North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit
The Challenge

North Northamptonshire (the area that is covered by Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire Councils) has been identified as a growth area by the Government. The current Regional Strategy for the East Midlands requires North Northamptonshire to deliver 52,100 new homes and 43,800 new jobs over the period 2001-2021, with the prospect of a further 28,000 homes to be provided in the following decade. The growth proposed to 2021 will increase North Northamptonshire’s population by around 90,000 – an increase of over 30% to the present population.

This growth poses major challenges, including:

- Ensuring new and better jobs are provided at the right time and place.
- Providing essential services and facilities such as power, water, gas, health centres, public transport and recreation centres in-step with the development of new homes.
- Protecting and improving the environment and making sure that development respects the area’s existing character.

The growth challenge will also afford the opportunity to significantly improve the quality of life for local residents. Securing substantial investment in the area will lead to the provision of more homes, better jobs, regeneration of town centres as well as new and better services and facilities. The following figure shows how population growth will be concentrated in the three main growth towns (a selection of other towns are shown for comparison).

MAKING PLANS

The Councils in North Northamptonshire are determined to ensure that the growth delivers the needs of the area, including its existing and future communities. To achieve this, the Councils of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire, together with Northamptonshire County Council, are working through a Joint Committee and Joint Planning Unit to create an overall town planning strategy for the area – the Core Spatial Strategy. This Core Spatial Strategy (the ‘Plan’) will set out the overall approach within which the individual Councils will prepare their own detailed plans.

We are at a key stage in preparing the Plan for North Northamptonshire. The Preferred Options document sets out what we think the best approaches are for planning the future of the area. This is based on a range of studies (on issues such as employment, town centres and infrastructure) and also on the feedback from consultation on ‘Issues and Options’ in Summer 2005. These studies and the consultation feedback document can be viewed from the Joint Planning Unit’s website at www.nntogether.co.uk.
**PREFERRED OPTIONS**

This leaflet is a summary of the Preferred Options paper. You can pick up a free copy of the Preferred Options paper from your district Council office or by contacting the Joint Planning Unit at the address given in this leaflet. It is also available from our website.

The Preferred Options paper is not the draft Plan. It is a report on work in progress and a key opportunity for you to help shape the Plan for North Northamptonshire. It is vital to the success of the Plan that we get as much community input as possible. We need to know what you think:

- Are we heading in the right direction?
- Have we missed anything?
- Are there any better ideas?

**THE STRATEGY**

We think that the preferred strategy for North Northamptonshire is one that focuses most development on the Growth Towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough to benefit the area as a whole, and that assists regeneration of these towns and the Smaller Towns of Burton Latimer, Desborough, Rothwell, Higham Ferrers, Rushden and Irthlingborough. Rural needs will be met by focusing required development and infrastructure provision on key service centres at Oundle, Raunds, Thrapston and King’s Cliffe.

A comprehensive transport network will support the development strategy, to enhance North Northamptonshire’s connections with surrounding areas and links the Growth Towns, Smaller Towns, Service Centres and villages.
I. North Northamptonshire Vision

North Northamptonshire in 2021 will be a better place. It will be an area where, through sustainable growth, its component parts have worked together to build a modern, outward looking part of the UK.

Through growing, renewing and regenerating the towns of its urban core; creating strong small towns in its rural east; encouraging a vibrant mix of rural communities; and protecting and enhancing its valuable built and natural resources, a distinctive and successful area will have been developed that meets the challenges of the 21st century.

North Northamptonshire will be a safe, healthy, attractive and sustainable area in which to live, work, visit and do business with. It will be an area transformed.

Do you support this vision?

2. Preferred Options for Settlement Roles and Relationships

We think that the Plan should promote complementary roles and increased self-containment for the three Growth Towns, so that our towns can together meet most needs. This is to be achieved through:

- A focus on bigger and better towns at Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, working together to make North Northamptonshire less reliant on other places for jobs, services, shops and other facilities;
- Encouraging better links between the Smaller Towns, particularly to improve access to jobs and key services and facilities. This will include improvements to transport routes and public transport services;
- Supporting the level and type of services in each of the Smaller Towns that are vital to everyday life will also be a key factor, as will regeneration and strengthening of services to meet local needs, including those of the surrounding rural areas;
- Planning for the local needs of rural areas by concentrating development and services at key places and improving accessibility from the network of surrounding villages; and
- Building on existing economic strengths, including storage and distribution, but shifting the emphasis towards office based employment through the provision of attractive sites in the town centres and elsewhere.

3. Preferred Options for Transport and Accessibility

The preferred approach is to:

- Encourage an improved network of public transport services and infrastructure including a passenger rail service at Corby; and
- Support improvements to key roads to accommodate growth, while encouraging a shift in freight transport from road to rail.

New development is to be designed to link-up with existing (and proposed) transport routes, ensuring that local residents have good access to a well connected transport system, including public transport services.

Developing and maintaining accessible transport hubs and focussing key services and facilities at town centres is also seen as essential to successful transport networks.
4. Preferred Options for the Distribution of Development

We think that focusing the housing growth requirements within and adjoining Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough is the preferred option for development of a sustainable North Northamptonshire. Alongside this, modest growth will take place at Rushden and the Smaller Towns to meet local needs, improve services and assist regeneration of the town centres. On the whole, there will be more limited development in the rural areas and the main development sites will be at the identified Service Centres such as Raunds and Oundle.

The economic well-being of the area will be improved by building on existing strengths and also diversifying employment, for example, by attracting more office jobs. Through this approach, the Plan will aim to provide for at least the 43,800 new jobs required in the Regional Strategy.

The centres of the Growth Towns will be regenerated, with new shopping and leisure development to help pull back some of the spending that currently goes to places outside North Northamptonshire, such as Milton Keynes and Peterborough. This will benefit the area as a whole as it will mean shorter journeys to obtain goods and services. In turn this increased activity and regeneration will help to support new public transport services for local residents.

5. Preferred Options for Urban Extensions

Much of the new development will be on ‘Brownfield’ sites in the towns, on land that already has planning permission or on some sites identified in current local plans. To meet the targets in the regional strategy, there will be a need for new ‘Greenfield’ sites to provide for around 8,000 homes at Corby; 5,000 homes at Wellingborough and 4,000 homes at Kettering.

We think that the bulk of this Greenfield development should be concentrated in a few large ‘sustainable urban extensions’ that will include a mix of housing, employment and leisure uses together with local services and facilities such as schools and health centres. We think that these should be on land to the north-east and west of Corby; on land to the east and north-west of Wellingborough; and on land east of Kettering.
6. Preferred Options for the Environment and Green Spaces

The Plan will include proposals to conserve and enhance existing environmental character. Opportunities to integrate innovative design and local characteristics into new development will be encouraged.

The preferred approach seeks a net gain in ‘Green Infrastructure’ for North Northamptonshire, incorporating natural, cultural and historic assets. Alongside this, strategic gaps will be identified where there will be special protection to prevent settlements from merging together.

7. Preferred Options for Delivering Infrastructure, Regeneration and Growth

We think that the Plan should identify key strategic infrastructure needs for North Northamptonshire, including individual requirements for each district such as health services, power, water and recreation facilities. This will recognise that new housing must be balanced by the provision of the necessary services and facilities.

The Plan will help to secure the services and facilities needed to meet the needs of the community and to support growth, by identifying priorities for investment and setting a charge to ensure that development contributes fairly to infrastructure provision.

What Next?

The Joint Planning Unit is consulting on the Preferred Options paper until the 27th January 2006. It is important that you make your response by then for it to be fully considered in taking the Plan forward.

The response to this consultation, together with further studies (including an independent sustainability appraisal of the Preferred Options) will help shape the North Northamptonshire Plan. We aim to have this ready for further consultation and submission to the Government in Spring / Summer 2006.

Copies of the Preferred Options paper are available free of charge by contacting the Joint Planning Unit and are also available to view on the Joint Planning Unit website and at the main offices of each District Council, the County Council and all North Northamptonshire libraries.

This is your opportunity to influence decisions on the future of North Northamptonshire. Your views on the preferred growth options and strategy are important in ensuring the success of the Plan. A summary of responses will be prepared following the consultation process, which will be made available to all respondents and published on the Joint Planning Unit website: www.nntogether.co.uk

For further information regarding planning for North Northamptonshire please contact the Joint Planning Unit on 01536 414649, or e-mail jpu@nntogether.co.uk
Contact us

- visit the North Northamptonshire JPU web pages at: www.nntogether.co.uk
- telephone the North Northamptonshire JPU on: 01536 414649
- email the North Northamptonshire JPU at: jpu@nntogether.co.uk
- write to the North Northamptonshire JPU at: SATRA House Rockingham Road Kettering Northamptonshire NN16 9JH

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request. Please contact the JPU if you require this service.

This document is printed on Environmentally Friendly paper
Response form

You can respond in detail using the Response Form within the full Preferred Options document, but if you would like to provide brief comments, please use the form below. If you require more space, please attach further sheets. This should be posted or faxed back to the Joint Planning Unit before the 27th January 2006 (see contact details overleaf). Alternatively, responses may be returned by email directly to the Joint Planning Unit, or via the electronic response form provided on the web site (see email and web address overleaf).

Your contact details

Name:___________________________________________________________________________
Address:_________________________________________________________________________
Post Code:________________________________________________________________________
Telephone:________________________E-mail:______________________________

Your Views (Please mark boxes with a tick)

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<th>YES – the approach is right but we need to consider... (see below)</th>
<th>NO – the approach is wrong</th>
<th>Don’t know at this stage</th>
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<td>3. Transport and Accessibility</td>
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Use this space to provide more information on any of your answers to the numbered proposals above

Your Comments:
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Finally, do you have any additional comments?
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In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 your details will be retained on our database. These details will only be used by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and the local planning authorities of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough for the purpose of consultation on the documents listed in the Local Development Schemes for North Northamptonshire. The data will not be passed to other parties or used for any other purpose.