

ebulletin

Issue 10: April 2006



Northamptonshire County Council

Produced by [Northamptonshire County Council](#) on behalf of partners including the seven [Borough and District Councils](#), [WNDC](#), [NNT](#), [Catalyst Corby](#), [Invest Northamptonshire](#), [Northamptonshire Partnership](#), [emda](#) and [Government](#)

IN THIS ISSUE:

SPECIAL FEATURE

NORTHAMPTON:

- WATERFRONT OPPORTUNITIES
- FULFILLING TOWN CENTRE POTENTIAL
- CASTLE STATION IMPROVEMENTS

PLANNING

- WNDC - NEW POWERS
- DRAFT DAVENTRY MASTERPLAN
- STANTON CROSS MOVES FORWARD

RESOURCES

- LTP2: £19.4m
- GAF BOOSTS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- CSR07
- MKSM SINCE 2001 - FIRST AMR PUBLISHED

DELIVERY

- NORTH NORTHANTS MERGER LATEST
- £200m SCHOOLS SCHEME UNDERWAY
- NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ENTERPRISE LTD

£51.8m+ FOR KEY INFRASTRUCTURE

ODPM ANNOUNCES GROWTH AREA FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Another significant step has been taken towards the creation of sustainable communities in Northamptonshire following the announcement in February that 10 vital infrastructure schemes that will support new housing in the county had been formally approved for a total of £51.83m Growth Area Funding.

West Northamptonshire will benefit from £25m to address priority issues identified by WNDC and up to £21.5m will be made available to regeneration projects across North Northamptonshire.

A range of green infrastructure projects throughout the county will receive at least £3.98m - for more details on these see page 6.

The successful schemes are as follows:



| | |
|---|-------------------|
| West Northants Development Corporation: Block Capital grant 2006-08. | £25.0m |
| Corby: Parkland Gateway Project. | £9.0m |
| Northants: Employment Land and Premises (Fit for Market/Invest Northants). | £6.0m |
| Kettering: Town centre and borough regeneration (provisional approval for 3 separate projects). | £5.0m max. |
| North and West Northants: Green Infrastructure. | £1.9m |
| Wellingborough town centre: High street mixed use development project (provisional approval). | £1.5m max. |
| Northants: Yardley Chase (funding earmarked for future project). | £1.35m |
| Corby: Top Lodge – Fineshade Woods. | £0.95m |
| East Northants Market Towns: Town centre improvements. | £0.75m |
| Northants: Right of Way Network Improvements. | £0.38m |

In addition to this a package of projects in Northamptonshire worth £33.7m are still being appraised for the Community Infrastructure Fund and further allocations from the remaining £72m are anticipated before the Easter parliamentary recess - watch this space!

Further details of the '06-'08 GAF and CIF allocations can be found on the ODPM website at: <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=2080>

SPECIAL FEATURE: Key Northampton Projects

In this issue's Special Feature we look at the progress of three projects that are central to the fulfilment of Northampton's potential as a vibrant and competitive town centre: the Waterfront Regeneration Opportunities Study, Northampton Town Centre Framework and Northampton Station improvements.



Waterfront Regeneration Opportunities Study

The regeneration of the River Nene waterfront in Northampton is currently being explored. Using Fit for Market funding, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, working in partnership with Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council, British Waterways and the Environment Agency have commissioned Taylor Young to undertake a study to identify commercial regeneration opportunities along the waterfront. The study is looking at opportunities for commercial and mixed-use development with an emphasis on high quality urban design and creating a more vibrant waterfront. A final report will be presented to the WNDC Board later in the spring.

Northampton Town Centre Framework

In January, a team led by Building Design Partnership was commissioned by Northampton Borough Council, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation, Northamptonshire County Council and English Partnerships to begin work on a Design, Development and Movement framework for the town centre of Northampton. The framework is designed to help the town centre to reach its full potential through the growth agenda. One of the key requirements is for Northampton to be able to compete with other centres in order to become a regional centre. To do this, existing facilities within the town centre are required to be enhanced and links need to be improved within the town centre and to its surrounds.

The framework will first be examining the current situation within the town centre including the assessment of the retail currently on offer in the town,

assessment of other uses in the town centre and a vitality and viability check on the town centre. This will enable options for development to be brought forward within the town centre. The final stage of the framework will be to produce a masterplan and strategies for design and movement within the town centre, as well as sites and strategies for development.

The framework will help to inform the town centre Local Area Action Plan which is being prepared by Northampton Borough Council and is likely to be adopted in 2007.

The outcomes of the framework are expected during April.

For further information contact Ian Achurch:

spointer@northampton.gov.uk

Castle Station takes next step towards redevelopment

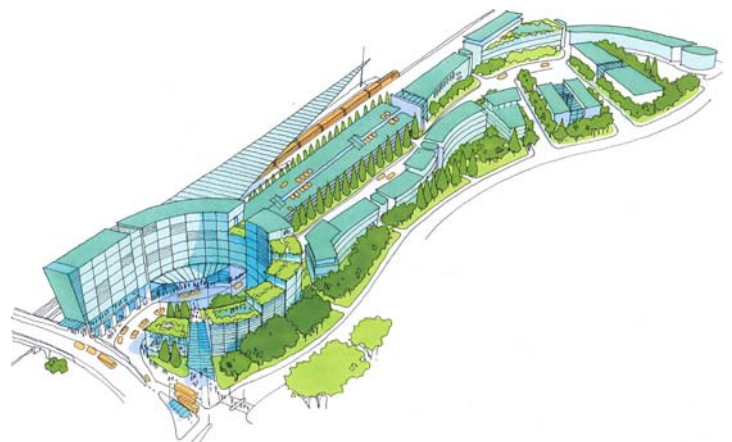
A consortium of consultants led by Building Design Partnership has prepared a first stage report on potential improvements to Northampton station and the land surrounding it. The Railway lands site in Northampton is one of the most important development opportunities in West Northamptonshire. As a gateway into the town centre its regeneration is central to the growth strategy for the town.

The first stage report presents proposals for transforming the Railways lands site into a new and exciting transportation hub and business address in Northampton. The consultant's view is that the site has the potential to deliver an enhanced rail and bus interchange, vastly improved passenger facilities, 300,000-400,000 ft² of office and business accommodation, a hotel and 600-700 apartments as well as greatly improved links into the town centre. The report states that the quality of the development needs to be exemplary and should add to Northampton's fine legacy of attractive buildings and public spaces.

The next stage of the project will develop the following issues:

- Preparation of more detailed development and design proposals to test the principles of planning, urban design, movement and market and financial deliverability;
- Establishing the operational rail requirements including the rail safeguarding envelope and the potential to relocate the rail freight activities elsewhere, which is essential if the comprehensive and transformational proposals detailed in the preferred masterplan options are to be delivered;
- Soft market testing to establish the interest of private sector partners and the mechanisms for attracting investment;
- Integration with the town centre framework proposals.

If you would like more information please contact Matthew Berry: mberry@northamptonshire.gov.uk





PLANNING

WNDC Planning Powers Live from 6 April 2006

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) gains new planning powers from 6th April 2006 to help deliver infrastructure & co-ordinate the regeneration & development of West Northamptonshire.

WNDC is tasked with facilitating the delivery of 37,000 homes, 37,000 new jobs and regenerated town centres in Northampton, Daventry & Towcester by 2021.

WNDC will deal with all strategic planning applications in the urban development areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester and with all applications for new development and change of use in Northampton town centre.

Chief Executive Mike Hayes said:

"We are very pleased that our planning powers have been agreed and that WNDC will be properly 'open for business'. We look forward to working with developers, communities and local authorities in Northampton, Daventry and Towcester to deliver high quality developments that will make a real difference to people's quality of life."

In January 2006 WNDC Board outlined arrangements for its Planning Committees, for Daventry, Northampton and Towcester.

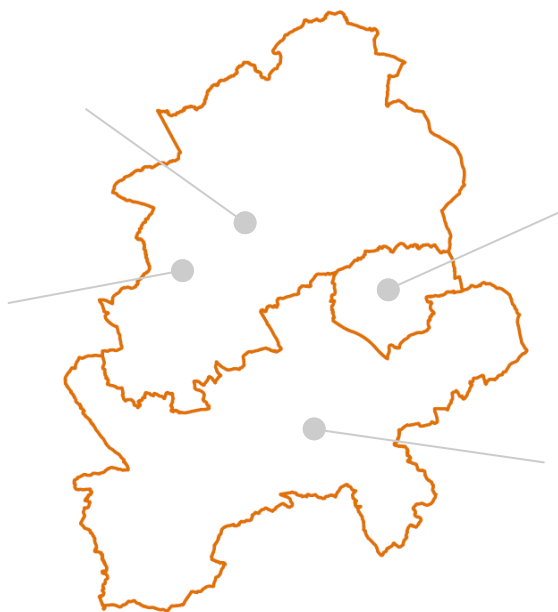
WNDC Board members have also agreed that the three planning committees will be made up of both WNDC Board members and representatives from the local authorities. The Board also approved a scheme of delegation enabling decisions on smaller scale development proposals to be made by the WNDC Chief Executive & the Director of Development & Planning.

Applications for listed building or conservation area consent, and the use of planning enforcement powers will continue to be the responsibility of the relevant local authority, along with householder applications in Northampton Town Centre.

Results from WNDC's Prospectus Consultation Events

Earlier this year residents in Daventry, Northampton, Long Buckby and Towcester participated in discussions about their towns and the work of the WNDC. At each event residents, together with WNDC Board Members and the WNDC Team considered the Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) facing their towns.

Click on each location below to find out what they said.



A full report and recommendations arising from the Prospectus will be presented at the April WNDC Board meeting.

For more details about WNDC news please contact Tracey Anthony-Winter: Tracey.Anthony-Winter@wncd.org.uk



Northampton Youth Forum

On the 23rd February WNDC hosted an informal workshop through the Northampton Youth Forum. Students were asked to consider Northampton as a person and an object and relate their ideas. They were then asked to vote for the top 3 improvements they would like to see in the town. Here are a few of their ideas:

Person Northampton is most like:

- My grandma – used to be all wild and now just sits there! Set in her ways.
- Supermodel - looks good on the outside?! ... [not so good on the inside?]
- Pauline Fowler – worn at the edges, lots of history

Object Northampton is most like:

- Half finished pint glass with a fag end in it
- Metro car – small and old, breaks down a lot - not reliable
- ...bus - big, slow, does not turn up on time

Good things about Northampton:

- Youth forum
- Roadmender (as was)
- Radlands skatepark (as was)

Bad things about Northampton:

- Police Service
- Litter, untidy
- Perception of young people by old people

Top 3 improvements:

- Youth Centres in every neighbourhood
- Re-design town so easier to get around
- Improve education

KH-POD Launch

Tracey Anthony-Winter Head of Communications at WNDC gave a presentation on the role of the WNDC to communities of Kings Heath. A lively Q & A session followed during which the prospect of building homes on Kings Heath was raised. Tracey confirmed that the WNDC were aware that the area had been earmarked by NBC as land for potential development, but gave assurances to the group that full and open consultation regarding any proposed development would take place with both residents of Kings Heath & Dallington Heath.

PLANNING

Draft Masterplan for Daventry Unveiled

Daventry District Council have unveiled draft plans showing how Daventry could look in 15 years time. The illustrative plans, prepared by architects Marchini Curran Associates (MCA), demonstrate how the town could accommodate the almost doubling of population proposed under the Government's Milton Keynes–South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy.

Daventry District Council Leader Councillor Chris Millar said:

"This is a very exciting time for Daventry as we embark upon delivering our holistic vision of improving the choices and opportunities available to our residents. I am particularly pleased with the progress made to date on our new Learning Quarter as we look to equip both children and adults with the skills to fulfil the requirements of the wide variety of new employers who will be based in Daventry in the years ahead. I would urge all interested parties to proactively play a part in developing our future plans for both the town and district."

The draft plans include exciting proposals for a new 'Learning Quarter' to the north of the existing town centre, incorporating joint campuses for Northampton and Moulton Colleges, and with the possibility of a presence of Northampton University as well.

A technical library and a hall are also proposed, which, apart from its use by students, would be open for community events such as concerts.

In addition to the Learning Quarter, the draft masterplan includes:

- Major leisure provision, including a town centre site for a cinema.
- Detailed proposals for marina development around the head of the proposed canal – 'Daventry WaterSpace'.
- Proposals for extensive regeneration of the Marches industrial area.
- Extensive green space provision, including opening up the important historic sites of Burnt Walls, John of Gaunt's Castle and Daventry Wood, and links between them.
- Provision to make travelling by foot or cycle, and public transport, easy and attractive. This includes a network of routes for Personal Rapid Transport (PRT) so that they can be integrated into the proposed developments and used as the technology is proven.
- Sites for development of offices and an Innovation Centre – seeking to give local people a broader range of jobs, and the ability to stay in the town rather than have to commute to Northampton, Milton Keynes or other towns.

A date for formal consultation on the draft plans has yet to be set, but given the importance of the project to the district as a whole, the council will ask for comments in the near future.

However, any views that are expressed at the moment are welcome.

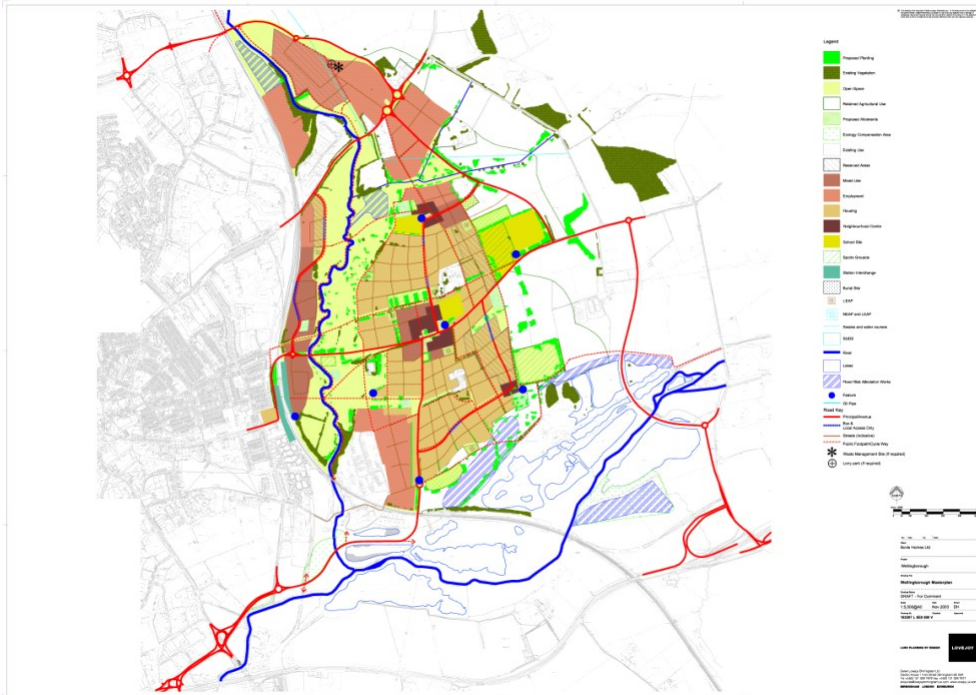


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PLANNING

Stanton Cross moves forward

The Borough Council of Wellingborough approved the outline planning application for the Stanton Cross development to the East of Wellingborough at a Full Council meeting on 8th March. This decision is subject to a range of conditions and to a planning agreement which will need to be negotiated with the lead developer (Bovis) and landowners. After more than five years of extensive consultation and assessment this decision now allows for the first element of MKSM growth within Wellingborough to go ahead.



Revised Stanton Cross masterplan submitted August 2005

The outline application will provide for:

- 3100 residential units
- 50 hectares of employment development
- Transport links including buses, walking and cycling routes
- Transport Interchange at the Station
- Town Park along the River Ise floodplain including a Visitor Centre
- 2 Primary Schools
- Reserved site for a Secondary School
- Main Neighbourhood Centre with 2 local centres, with health, community and leisure facilities as well as convenience retail units
- Open Space and recreation facilities
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and floodplain compensation areas

The next stage for the development will be to finalise the Design Codes which will help guide the first phase of the development around the new neighbourhood centre and help with the assessment of the reserved matters applications which will now be submitted. Negotiation and confirmation of the planning agreement will also be required. The Council will be working with the developers to ensure that the essential infrastructure is provided according the agreed phasing and that provision for employment and jobs is made early to create and maintain a balanced community.

Temporary Car Park allows for station redevelopment

The completion of a temporary station car park on the former Higgins Builders Yard, funded by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, will allow for the gradual redevelopment of Wellingborough Station and permit the occupation of the northern station car park to build the embankment for the new road to access to main development site of Stanton Cross.

The developers of the scheme (Bovis Homes Ltd) have been in detailed negotiations with Network Rail and the train operator Midland Mainline to ensure that future proposals are fully in line with rail industry standards and that minimal disruption to existing services occurs.

Extensive resurfacing, drop off and pick up facilities, taxi rank, short stay car parking, cycle parking facilities and bus laybys will be provided and ultimately a new station approach will be developed on the eastern side of the railway once development proposals have been finalised for this area of the Stanton Cross development.



Artist's impression of the Midland Road extension and the new transport interchange at Wellingborough Station (West).

Further information on the Stanton Cross development can be obtained from the Borough Council of Wellingborough's website: www.wellingborough.gov.uk

RESOURCES

£19.4m FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE TRANSPORT SCHEMES IN 2006/07

Transport in Northamptonshire is to receive £19.4m of Government funding over the next year – details are set out in the county council's Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2) which is out this week.

Northamptonshire's plans for the 2006/07 year comprise:

- £9.3m for the reconstruction of roads and pavements.
- £6.3m for improvements to transport services to tackle congestion, road safety, public transport and air quality.
- £2.5m for maintenance of former trunk roads like the A43 and the A45.
- £1.3m towards the Getting Northampton to Work scheme.

The LTP also sets out a provisional programme for the next five years, including dualling the A509 from Kettering to Wellingborough, and the Corby Southern Link Road.

Look out for more LTP2 details in ebulletin 11 or contact Jon Shortland for further info: jshortland@northamptonshire.gov.uk

RIVER NENE REGIONAL PARK SECURES GROWTH AREAS FUNDING FOR 2006-2008

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has announced that the River Nene Regional Park (RNRP) Initiative has secured £3.23m with the potential of a further £1.35m for future green space projects. The funding has been allocated to exciting projects that will strengthen the emerging network of inspirational outdoor experiences within the RNRP spatial framework:



Green Infrastructure

£1.9m will be provided to support the preparation of Green Infrastructure Strategies in North and West Northants, as well as being channelled into habitat and access improvements to key sites within the River Nene Regional Park. The project will improve environmental quality, promote healthy living, and provide opportunities for community involvement.

Image courtesy of RNRP initiative, copyright Mike Finn Kelcey



Corby: Top Lodge - Fineshade Woods

£950,000 will be invested in a major new learning centre and a new family cycle route to help Fineshade Woods, within the ecologically and archaeologically important Rockingham Forest area, become a local and regional exemplar of best practice for ancient woodland.

Image courtesy of Forestry Commission image library



Connecting People and Place Project

£380,000 will help support the delivery of Northamptonshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the benefit of new and existing communities.

Image courtesy of RNRP initiative, copyright Mike Finn Kelcey

For more information regarding the River Nene Regional Park Initiative go to: www.rnrp.org or email: rnrp@northamptonshire.gov.uk

CSR07

The MKSM Growth Implementation Group is commissioning work to prepare a growth area submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07). The CSR07 represents a long term and fundamental review of government spending to identify what further investments and reforms are needed to equip the UK for the global challenges of the decade ahead.

This work should present a strong case to Government for reform through CSR07 to enable Departments, public sector delivery agencies and local government in the Growth Areas to better deliver integrated services and infrastructure fundamental to the development of sustainable communities within a climate of rapid growth. It will draw on the real life delivery challenges faced by

Growth Area partners in delivering a step change in accordance with the Sustainable Communities Plan and will recognise the significant opportunities which exist within the Growth Areas to deliver higher levels of sustained economic and housing growth. It will also consider existing anomalies between the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan, Departmental policy targets and the delivery machinery and funding regimes that are in place to enable the public sector to respond to and deliver these.

The submission will be considered by the Inter-regional Board in June prior to being submitted to Government.

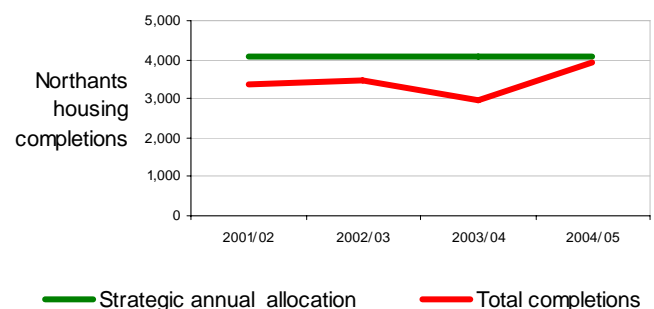
For further information contact Ian Achurch: iachurch@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Development levels on the increase

The first MKSM SRS Annual Monitoring Report was published in February, providing a snapshot of progress between 2001 and 2005 towards targets set out in the MKSM SRS. It contains a wide range of data, and shows that in Northamptonshire:

- the population rose by 17,100
- 13,727 dwellings were built
- c.11,400 jobs were created

For further details or to obtain a copy of the report contact Sarah Geddes: sgeddes@northamptonshire.gov.uk



DELIVERY

MERGER OF NORTH NORTHANTS TOGETHER & CATALYST CORBY MOVES CLOSER



Further steps have been taken towards the proposed new Urban Regeneration Company (URC) to be formed through the merger of Catalyst Corby and North Northants Together (NNT).

The merger proposal was subject to a public consultation following its announcement by ODPM Minister Baroness Andrews on 18th November 2005 at the North Northamptonshire Delivery Summit. The consultation, which was issued to over 450 recipients, resulted in 75 responses by the closing date of 27 January 2006.

60% of respondents supported the merger; 12% were non-committal; and 28% were opposed to the move. Over two thirds of the latter were parish councils and individuals, particularly from the Kettering area, who were concerned about how growth would impact on rural areas. Those who were supportive particularly saw value in the streamlining of agencies.

A single body offers efficiencies and economies of scales in respect of resources. It also provides a stronger base for taking a coherent and strategic approach to the delivery of regeneration and sustainable communities priorities for the area. It will ensure that the focus on the regeneration of Corby and the momentum achieved there is not lost, whilst transferring the skills, experience and drive from both Catalyst Corby and NNT to the benefit of the wider interests across North Northamptonshire.

A working party with members from both Boards has been set up to ensure that the transition to the new body is smooth. The submission to Government presenting the case for the merger and supported by a draft Business Plan was made in late March 2006. If approved by Government, the new URC will be launched in April 2006 and will be known as the North Northamptonshire Development Company (one of the most popular choices amongst the dozen or so names put forward). It will take up new office premises in Corby.

North Northamptonshire Development Company (NNDC) will play a key role in bringing delivery partners and other stakeholders together to ensure that investment in the area to support growth can be maximised, particularly in terms of infrastructure support, and to ensure that resources are effectively targeted. It will be a champion for North Northamptonshire including being a driver to raise standards in the quality of development and 'eco' design for example. NNDC will not have planning powers but will work with the local planning authorities, including the Joint Planning Committee and its Joint Planning Unit, to ensure that its delivery priorities complement the implementation of the emerging core spatial strategy for North Northamptonshire and the Milton Keynes South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy.

Further information on the merger position will be available in April 2006 - see NNT and Catalyst Corby websites: www.nntogether.co.uk and www.catalyst-corby.co.uk

Corby regeneration continues apace

- On 2 February 2006, the Urban Regeneration Company Catalyst Corby announced the completion of the £2m initial phase of Central Business Park, the first speculative office development in the heart of Corby for more than 10 years. The development by Priority Sites consists of two modern high-specification buildings, No.1 and No.2 Exchange Court, totalling approximately 16,000 sq ft and 76 car parking spaces. As a result of substantial interest, only the first floor of No.1 Exchange Court remains available.
- On 16 February 2006, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister confirmed the allocation of £9m to the Parkland Gateway project, which will create a new civic hub and arts centre, educational facilities, a new town square and town centre apartments, cafes and bars. This will link with other significant public investments from English Partnerships, Corby Borough Council and emda and the redevelopment of Corby's shopping centre by Land Securities.
- On 13 March 2006, Catalyst Corby confirmed that major funding had been secured to create the £7m Corby Enterprise Centre. The 40,000 sq ft centre will provide entrepreneurs, innovative and expanding businesses with high quality office and workshop space. Funded by emda, Corby Borough Council and Northamptonshire Partnership, work is expected to start on-site this Spring with a target of opening the centre in Spring 2008.



Work starts on £200m schools project

Work has begun at several school sites in Northampton after Northamptonshire County Council and the Babcock and Brown consortium signed a deal for the biggest ever group school PFI scheme in the country, which will see significant rebuilding and remodelling projects take place at 41 schools as part of the change from a three-tier to a two-tier system of education in the town. Cabinet member for children and young people Joan Kirkbride said:

"Over the coming months people across the town will witness an historic change to schools - a change which will see the education system fully fit to face the challenges of the 21st century."

For further information contact Peter Burrell: pburrell@northamptonshire.gov.uk

DELIVERY

One Voice for Northamptonshire

Five established Northamptonshire organisations, responsible for delivering economic growth and promoting the county, will merge into one new company this summer.

Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited is the new company and will bring together the Northamptonshire Partnership, Northamptonshire County Council's Economic Development team, research body the Northamptonshire Observatory, investment promotion agency Invest Northamptonshire and tourism company Explore Northamptonshire.

The merger is the result of extensive planning to form an independent company that will drive and deliver the sub-region's economic development responsibilities. The company will focus on forming more effective strategic alliances and cohesive marketing of Northamptonshire.

Paul Southworth, Private Sector Chair of the Northamptonshire Partnership, has been elected by the merger's steering group to act as interim Chair of Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited. He said: "It makes sense to pool together the resources of the five organisations, as each has proved its expertise and all the organisations concerned are increasingly working more closely.

"By combining the skills and experience of each organisation, the county will have a powerful and highly efficient company to drive economic growth that will benefit residents, visitors, employers and investors and will enable one strong and coherent voice for the county."

The company is expected to be fully operational by summer 2006. The company's board will be made up primarily of members from the private business sector.

Partners in the new company:



The Northamptonshire Partnership is the main partner for the East Midlands Development Agency (emda) and delivers initiatives to benefit the workforce of existing businesses, attract new jobs and industries to the county, raise the skills of Northamptonshire people and ensure thriving local communities.



The Northamptonshire County Council Economic Development Team provides strategic input into the county's economic growth agenda at local, regional, national and international levels. It also provides economic intelligence and works on influencing European policy.



Explore Northamptonshire is the county's business and leisure tourism promotion company. The company is marketing-led with a focus on destination co-ordination, attracting the visitor, services for the visitor and services for the industry. It aims to increase the revenue generated by county tourism, which currently stands at £600m per year.



Invest Northamptonshire is the county's investment promotions agency and runs initiatives to attract business investment from in and outside the UK. It offers support to existing businesses to help them achieve their growth potential and delivers programmes to ensure the county has an adequate stock of commercial premises.



The Northamptonshire Observatory manages impartial and objective research, statistics and expertise about the county. Its website aims to be the most complete source of Northamptonshire economic data anywhere on the web.

Fit for Market

The Fit for Market programme, delivered by Invest Northamptonshire, is set to transform more disused sites and premises over the next two years. Through the programme, sites and premises are regenerated so that they are fit for commercial use. Projects include the Northampton Waterfront study to identify sites adjacent to the River Nene and funding towards the redevelopment of a 22,000 sq ft unit in Wellingborough. Invest Northamptonshire is also supporting a study to examine the need for additional land and premises to accommodate the expected employment growth.

For more details about Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd or Fit For Market contact: rachael.dewis@explorenorthamptonshire.co.uk

The successful communication of news and progress on projects and activities within the Northamptonshire growth areas relies on your contributions to the e-bulletin. Thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

If you have any news for the next e-bulletin please contact Kieran Palmer on 01604 236268 or e-mail: kpalmer@northamptonshire.gov.uk. Please let us know in advance if you anticipate any major news on key developments or significant milestones which you would like to highlight as a special feature. For any other enquiries, please contact Bob Colenutt bcolenutt@northamptonshire.gov.uk, tel. 01604 237776.

All issues of the e-bulletin can be found on the Northamptonshire County Council website: <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/Environment/MKSM/ebulletin.htm>
Issue 11 of the e-bulletin will be circulated in June 2006.

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