

Item No: 6
Date: 21 April 2009

**WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Programme Monitoring Report

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF THE JOINT PLANNING UNIT

Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the progress on the approved Local Development Scheme programme and the evidence base workstreams to date. Appendix 1 contains key milestones and meetings of this committee and its sub group whilst Appendix 2 outlines the rest of this report in simple chart form.

West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme Milestones

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

- 1.2 The next milestone for the Joint Core Strategy in the approved Local Development Scheme is the publication of the Joint Core Strategy in November 2009. This is also known as the pre-submission stage. The Joint Core Strategy preparation is on target to meet the next milestone.
- 1.3 The Regulation 25 consultation letters were posted out in early January to everyone on the Joint Planning Unit's consultation database (over 2,300 individuals and organisations). Details of the consultation were also available on the Joint Planning Unit's website. This part of the Regulation 25 consultation closed on the 5th March 2009. 52 responses were received in total relating to a range of different topic areas including Infrastructure, Employment and Economy.
- 1.4 Work is continuing on the spatial vision and objectives. The preferred strategy is being drafted during April and May together with synthesis of the alternatives explored at the officer charette in January and February. The preferred strategy document will include the options that are not favoured.

West Northamptonshire Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 1.5 The Affordable Housing SPD will provide interim supplementary policy guidance until the Joint Core Strategy and the West Northamptonshire

Development Contributions and Affordable Housing DPD come into effect. The SPD will be based on the Saved Adopted Local Plan policies.

- 1.6 The deadline for comments on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was the 23rd March 2009 and two responses have been received to date. The next milestone for the Affordable Housing SPD in the approved Local Development Scheme is consultation on the draft SPD that will take place from the 9th April 2009. The SPD preparation is ahead of target.

West Northamptonshire Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing Development Plan Document (DPD)

- 1.7 The first milestone for the Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing DPD in the approved Local Development Scheme is commencement of preparation of the DPD and consultation with the statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal. This milestone was achieved on 30 January 2009, and the DPD is on target. The intention is to bring in further consultancy assistance on this project as a stop gap prior to full recruitment of the team.

Progress on Evidence Base Workstreams

- 1.8 The names in brackets below are references to consultancies engaged in the delivery of the evidence base workstreams.

1.9 **Green Infrastructure and Environmental Sensitivity Studies:**

Northampton Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study [Living Landscapes] – This study has now been completed, sign off and launch on the WN JPU website. An email informing all members of the Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Local Planning Authorities that the study is complete was sent out to this effect.

Towcester and Brackley Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Studies [Quartet Design] – The draft study went out for consultation with each of the key environmental stakeholders and the Local Authorities within West Northamptonshire and those adjoining the study boundary. The deadline for consultation is on the 3rd April 2009; to date two responses have been received. This study is on target to be completed on time.

1.10 **West Northamptonshire Sports Facility Strategy [Synergy]**

The majority of concerns raised by Sport England have now been addressed and it has been agreed that 'subject to a few modest amendments, the strategy can be accepted as a useful framework for the assessment of future sports facilities needs'. The project will be completed by the end of April 2009 and although later than anticipated, this has no impact on the approved LDS milestones.

1.11 **Pursuit of Evidence of Service Needs [Being Prepared In-House by the JPU]**

This is the collection of evidence of service needs, projections and plans for education, health, social services, etc. Discussions and the sharing of information are ongoing with a variety of service providers including education,

the water companies, energy providers, cultural services, emergency services etc.

1.12 **Joint Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal [Environ]**

The consultants are currently updating the Scoping Study. This work is on target.

1.13 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**

The Level 1 SFRA for West Northamptonshire has been completed, accepted by the EA and sign off. The full Assessment is available on the WN JPU website and an email informing all members of the Strategic Planning Committee and each of the Local Planning Authorities was sent out to this effect.

The draft Level 2 SFRA for Daventry District and South Northamptonshire District was sent to the Environment Agency for comment in Mid February 2009 for comment. The Environment Agency has said that comments will be made available by the 6th April 2009. This project has been delayed.

The invitations to tender for the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Northampton have been sent out and the closing date for responses passed. The short list will produce a suitable consultancy to complete the work.

1.14 **West Northamptonshire Outline Water Cycle Strategy [Halcrow]**

It is now expected that the Phase 1 study will be published in April 2009. This has run over time. Scoping of the Phase 2 study is now underway.

1.15 **Rural Accessibility**

The assessments and modelling will commence shortly. Northamptonshire County Council, using their existing work on accessibility, can undertake this work in house.

1.16 **Strategic Urban Design Appraisals**

Strategic urban design appraisals are valuable to frame the strategy with respect to urban form, public realm and place making. The JPU is currently scoping any further work that may be required given that a range of studies are already in existence.

1.17 **Northamptonshire Strategic Employment Land Assessment [Atkins et al]**

This study is not progressing to timetable. The request for sites letter was sent to landowners, developers and commercial agents. The deadline for responses was the 27th February 2009 and the responses are currently being processed. The consultants contracted by NEL have reported slippage in the programme. Interim reports are being sought by early May at the latest to ensure this does not impact on the programme. Results are being shared with the JPU as they emerge.

- 1.18 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) [Being Prepared In-House by the JPU]**
Site identification and surveying is now concluding. Consultation with the technical members of the SHLAA Panel will commence shortly. Public consultation on the draft SHLAA report will then follow in May 2009.
- 1.19 **West Northamptonshire Retail Study [CACI]**
There was a short delay in finalising the study which has now been signed off.
- 1.20 **West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) Update [Consultants to be commissioned shortly]**
Three tenders have been received for the update to the West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and these are currently being considered by the SHMA Steering Group. This study is on target.
- 1.21 **Transport infrastructure risk assessment**
The Highways Agency and NCC are undertaking a risk assessment on options with respect to transport modelling to inform the preferred strategy consultation. The modelling is to be provided by mid May with risk assessment in April.

Appendix 1

Key Milestones and Meeting dates - West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Interim Head of WNJPU 2/04/09

6 th April 2009	Working spatial portrait, vision, objectives and principles to Business Sub Group
21 st April 2009	LDF Programme Board – emergent strategy update
21 st April	Working spatial portrait, vision, objectives and principles to JSPC for agreement
28 th April	Member and Officer workshop on emerging options and decision making criteria
5 th May	Emergent strategy discussions Business Sub Group
12 th May	Member and Officer Workshop on emergent strategy
2 nd June 2009	Emergent strategy to JSPC for approval for consultation
16 th June	Programme Board – agenda TBC
30 th June	Member and officer workshop on next stages
14 th July	Business sub group – agenda TBC
4 th August 2009	Consultation results and refinements to strategy to JSPC for approval
25 th August	Programme Board – Agenda TBC
8 th September	Member and Officer workshop – Agenda TBC
16 th September	Business Sub Group – Agenda TBC
29 th Sept 2009	Pre Submission Joint Core Strategy to JSPC to be agreed for publication
6 th October	Programme Board – Agenda TBC
7 th October	Business sub Group – Agenda TBC
20 th October	JSPC – Agenda TBC

November 2009 Publication of pre submission Joint Core Strategy

- 3rd November Member and Officer Workshop – Agenda TBC
- 10th November Business Sub Group- Agenda TBC
- 24th November Initial report on consultation on Pre Submission Joint Core Strategy
- 5th January Consultation results and amendments discussion at Programme Board
- 12th January Member and Officer workshop on consultation results and amendments
- 19th January Discussion on Pre Submission consultation and Final Submission Document to Business sub group
- 26th January Report on Pre Submission consultation and Final Submission Document to JSPC for agreement

March 2010 Submission of the Joint Core Strategy