

Examination of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 2011 – 2029

Inspectors:

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Agenda - Hearing Day 2. Wednesday 17 November 2021

0930 start

Introductions and Inspectors' Opening Announcements

Matter 3: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Issue: Is the Plan positively prepared and would it be effective in addressing the likely accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and travelling showpeople?

36. Has the identified need for additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers been robustly calculated and given the age of the West Northamptonshire Travellers' Accommodation Needs Study January 2017 (WNTANS), does it provide an up to date assessment of the housing needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople? Should it be reviewed?
37. Several figures are provided in the WNTANS for the need which may arise from the unknown households. Which of these is correct?
38. Paragraph 1.27 of the WNTANS states that in relation to transit sites that a review should be done in Autumn 2018. Was this done and if not, why not?
39. Why has the pitch requirement dropped from that set out in the WNJCS?
40. Paragraph 4.7 of the WNTANS refers to one household which moves around the area living in roadside encampments. Is this still the case?
41. Have any Planning Permissions been given since 2014 for Gypsy and Traveller sites in Northampton and if so for how many pitches? Have any Planning Applications been refused for Gypsy and Traveller Sites since 2014?
42. Are there currently any unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in the plan area? If so, what is their current status?
43. Is there still a waiting list for pitches at the Ecton Lane Site, and if so, what is the current number on the waiting list?
44. Where is the evidence that the needs of Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been considered when preparing the Plan under the Public Sector Equality Duty?

45. The Framework in paragraph 22 sets out that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption. What is the justification for the Gypsy and Traveller provision not looking ahead a minimum 15 years from adoption?
46. Does Policy 16 avoid unnecessary duplication of other plan policies that apply to the area, and would it be effective?
47. Are the proposed main modifications necessary for soundness?

Participants

West Northamptonshire Council

Matter 4: Housing Allocations (Not to start before 1100)

Issue: Are the proposed housing allocations justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Policy 13 Residential and other residential led allocation and Policy 38 Development Allocations

48. Consistent with paragraph 16 of the Framework, is there a clear purpose for including both Policies 13 and 38 which appear to largely duplicate each other?
49. The Plan sets out a number of allocations in Policies 13 and 38, and includes specific, more detailed, allocation policies for a number of sites. In respect of those policies not subject of specific detailed allocations, is the Plan clearly written and unambiguous so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals?
50. What is the justification for the indicative dwelling capacities for the proposed allocations set out in Policy 13?
51. What is the evidence that the specific proposed site allocations would be deliverable or developable as per the Framework definitions?
52. Are the proposed main modifications necessary for soundness?

Proposed allocations and the Strategic Road Network

53. A number of the proposed allocations (LAA0168, 0333, 1025, 1098, 1104, 1107, 1113, 1140, 1142) have been identified as being in close proximity to the Strategic Road Network. What is the evidence that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree?
54. Are any such transport improvements necessary achievable and if so, when? What is the evidence for this?
55. What are the costs of any necessary transport infrastructure required for the proposed developments? Have such costs been considered in the assessment of viability for the Plan?

56. Is it intended that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared for the Part 2 Plan? (See also Policy 37)

Flood risk and the application of the Exceptions Test

57. What is the evidence that the Council has applied the Exceptions Test as set out in paragraph 163 of the Framework as necessary in respect of the proposed allocations?
58. Are the Council's proposed main modifications necessary for soundness?

Proposed allocations and existing public open space

59. A number of the proposed site allocations concern areas of open amenity space within the built-up area. These include by way of example, and amongst others, land rear of garages in Coverack Close – LAA1052, 2 sites off Meadow Drive, near Medway Close – LAA1071 and two parcels of land in Sunnyside Estate – LAA1086. What is the justification for the development of the areas of open amenity space proposed and is the Plan consistent with paragraph 99 of the Framework in this regard?
60. Are the proposed allocations on areas of amenity open space consistent with national policy for achieving well designed places as set out in the Framework?

Participants

West Northamptonshire Council

David Lock Associates for Collingtree LLP and Lagan Homes

Lichfields for Shoo 22 Ltd

Matter 4: Housing Allocations (Not to start before 1400)

Issue: Are the proposed housing allocations justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Policy 39 Northampton Railway Station (LAA0288) Rail freight and adjoining sites (LAA0333)

61. Is the proposed allocation of railway land for redevelopment consistent with paragraph 104 of the Framework and is it justified in terms of the provision of sustainable freight and passenger transport?
62. Having regard to the recommendations of the Northampton Heritage Impact Assessment, would Policy 39 be effective in conserving and enhancing the historic environment?
63. What is the evidence that the proposed allocation would be deliverable or developable as per the Framework definitions in the plan period?
64. Is it evident from the Policy as to how a decision maker should react to proposals in respect of existing sewerage?

65. Are the proposed main modifications necessary for soundness?

Policy 41 The Green, Great Houghton (LAA1098)

66. The HRA identifies that the proposed allocation site is either optimal, or sub-optimal habitat for Golden Plover and/or Lapwing and could therefore be functionally linked to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA. In addition, the proposed allocation site is within 3 kilometres of the Habitats site and has the potential to increase recreational disturbance there.
- What is the specific evidence as to whether there would be any adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA arising from the proposed scheme?
 - What is the evidence that any necessary robust and effective mitigation measures, can be secured?
 - What effect would the provision of any necessary mitigation measures have on the viability of the proposed allocation?
67. Is it evident from the second and seventh bullet points relating to woodland and 'buffers' as to how a decision maker should react to development proposals?
68. In terms of paragraph 110 of the Framework, what is the evidence that:
- appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be taken up?
 - safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users including existing residents of Great Houghton?
 - any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree?
69. Does the Policy set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment?
70. Does the Policy set out a clear design and landscape vision and expectations for the site so that applicants would have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable at the site? What is the justification for the development principles set out in Figure 20?
71. Would the Policy be effective in respect of the provision of sustainable drainage systems and existing sewerage systems?
72. Is there any other reason as to why the proposed allocation should not be considered as being either deliverable, or developable as per the Framework definitions?
73. Is the anticipated delivery trajectory for the proposed allocation realistic?
74. Are the proposed main modifications necessary for soundness?

Participants

West Northamptonshire Council

Homes England