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FOREWORD

This is the Pre-Submission version of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan which has been developed from earlier work following public consultation and research and reflects the hard work of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Forum over the past two years.

This has been a unique opportunity for everyone who lives, works and volunteers in Spring Boroughs to focus on the future and plan for the future of the estate.

This is an important stage for the Plan, offering local people, businesses and other organisations the opportunity to shape the document, before it is submitted to Northampton Borough Council, in spring 2015. An independent examination and a local referendum will follow, when we will need your support to get the Plan “Made”.

The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on policies to encourage;

- Affordable family houses with gardens
- New play facilities
- New community facilities
- Better routes for pedestrian and cyclist through and into/out of the area
- Protecting and making the most of heritage assets and open spaces

As well as policies, the Plan has a summary of the background research and sets out a Vision and objectives for the area. A detailed Profile and an analysis of the policy context are available as separate documents. When it is submitted, two further documents will be produced

1. Statement of Community Involvement: This describes how local people, businesses and other bodies have been consulted on the Plan and comments, which have been made.
2. Basic Conditions Statement: This explains how the Plan meets legal requirements.

For those who want to know a little more about Neighbourhood Plans and how they fit into the planning system, the following summary may be helpful:

- They are part of the new planning system under the Localism initiative to give people a greater say about development in the area and to help to protect valued landscape and community assets.
- They can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land.
- Once “Made”, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Local Development Plan for the local authority and are used to consider planning applications.

Despite limitations, Neighbourhood Plans can have real influence and they are an important means of getting local people in decisions on how their area will appear and function.

Finally, please get involved in the six week consultation on the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan – we want to hear from as many local people (of all ages), businesses and community organisations as possible. Remember that the Neighbourhood Plan will help to shape the future of our community over the next 15 years and after a successful referendum, it will have real legal power.

Clive Ireson - Chair of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Forum
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

This is the (Regulation 14) Pre-Submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood (Development) Plan for Spring Boroughs. The Plan covers the designated Forum Neighbourhood Plan area.
The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2014 to 2029, corresponding with the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2011 – 2026) and the emerging West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2011 to 2029) and with those documents, when it is “Made” the Neighbourhood Plan will become the part of the planning framework for Spring Boroughs.

Following a development period during 2012 and 2013, The Neighbourhood Forum (Spring Boroughs Voice) was formally approved by the Borough Council December 2013 and at the same time the Neighbourhood Plan area/boundary was designated. A Steering Group, which reports regularly to the Forum, has managed the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The purpose of the plan is to set out local based and justified planning policies to manage the detailed change in land uses and other forms of development in the area related to proposals of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan. The aim of the plan is to improve the quality of life for local residents and to maximise the social, environment and economic benefits that can arise from well planned and managed development.

The Forum identified consultation as the key to a successful Neighbourhood Plan involving different stages of activity:

1. Awareness raising on the creation of the forum and deciding on the plan area
2. Asking people about local issues and options for dealing with them.
3. Consultation on a draft plan.
4. Awareness raising for the local referendum.

The nature of the area has required very personal and informal approach to consultation involving face to face contact, drop in sessions and interactive events with groups of local people. A summary of outcomes is given in section 04 ‘Evidence 1 – consultation has shown us...’ and a full statement of Community Involvement will be produced at the submission stage.
MAP OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA / WIDER CONTEXT MAP
HOW WE HAVE / WANT TO INVOLVE LOCAL PEOPLE
HOW WE HAVE / WANT TO INVOLVE LOCAL PEOPLE

March to July 2013
17 Drop-in meetings were held at Castle Hill URC for residents to find out more about neighbourhood planning. These meetings were helpful in finding those residents who may wish to become a member of a future Neighbourhood Forum. During this time about 120 resident visits amounted, taking account of multiple visits, to an approximate total of 35 different residents who have visited the Drop-ins. Other residents have been contacted through numerous ad-hoc community meetings, Tea and Toast at Spring Boroughs School and festivals.

The Drop-Ins were publicised through notices around the estate and a flyer to all households and businesses. In May 2013 workshop events were held to explore issues for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Forum. To celebrate its achievements the neighbourhood Forum with the help of local partner organisations held a ‘Spring Festival’ with farm animals, music, food and events.

August to December 2013
The bid to declare a Neighbourhood Area and to form a Neighbourhood Forum was submitted to Northampton Borough Council in July 2013. It was estimated that a decision would not be made until December 2013. The emerging Spring Boroughs Voice decided to maintain the momentum of community engagement on the Neighbourhood Plan process during this period of waiting.

During this time 18 Drop-in meetings were held at Castle Hill URC and two SBV meetings were held focusing on the subjects of play and green space; and transport and circulation. The decision to approve the Forum and the Neighbourhood Plan process was made on 11th December 2013.

January 2014 – February 2015
SBV Neighbour Forum was officially set up and from the main Forum a Steering Group was elected. The main forum also encouraged input from all who lived and/or worked/volunteered in the area. A pattern of meetings evolved to have a steering group on the second Thursday of the month and a full forum on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Once the forum felt confident of the issues it went out to consultation at the ‘Spring Festival’ of 2015. This consultation showed that over 905 or respondents were in favour of the forums priorities. Other issues were raised that consequently the Forum discussed and included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Following on from this consultation the full Forum and the steering group worked in earnest to construct a draft Neighbourhood Plan.

On the 26th February 2015 the Neighbourhood Forum approved the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

March 2015 onwards
It is intended every household and business will receive a copy of this Draft Neighbourhood Plan and consultation events will be held during the Spring Boroughs Week of Action from 23rd March 2015 with questionnaires to give feedback.
EVIDENCE 1 –
CONSULTATION HAS
SHOWN US…
EVIDENCE 1 – CONSULTATION HAS SHOWN US...

Through the various approaches to community consultation outlined in the previous section, the Forum managed to identify three key issues which the majority of local residents wished to see addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan. These three issues are outlined below.

1. Overcrowded homes / shortage of family housing with gardens

Numerous local residents spoke of having to utilise their living room as an extra bedroom. Such circumstances were generally a result of families living in small apartments which are unsuitable for family living. In conjunction with this lack of internal space, many of these families also lacked access to private amenity space where their children could play safely and in view of their parents.

93% of respondents to the summer 2014 consultation event were in support of the Neighbourhood Plan enabling new family homes to be built in Spring Boroughs.

2. Lack of safe and attractive public play facilities

Widespread concerns were shared by local residents about the lack of quality public play space within Spring Boroughs. Local parents communicated a strong desire for play space where they could observe their children playing safely, whilst other residents complained of noise and nuisance currently caused by children playing in undesignated areas throughout the neighbourhood.

98% of respondents to the summer 2014 consultation event were supportive of providing new play spaces for both younger and older children in locations where parents and guardians can supervise them.
3. **Inadequate community facilities**

A lack of a central community centre, where different groups from within the community could associate and socialise, represented the third key issue for local residents. Respondents saw this existing situation as a barrier to social cohesion and the building of strong community relations.

91% of respondents to the summer 2014 consultation believed that Spring Boroughs needs a central community centre where different groups can associate and socialise.

In addition to the above three key issues, the local community also saw potential for the neighbourhood plan to deliver a number of additional objectives, including:

- **Heritage asset protection and enhancement**, particularly at the southern end of Spring Boroughs which is earmarked for the Heritage Gateway project.
- **Improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity**, with greater ease of access to key destinations including the town centre, enterprise zone and train station.
- **Environmental improvements** to the neighbourhood, including the introduction of further community gardens, and enhanced gateways into Spring Boroughs from key approaches.

Through the policies arising from the above issues, it is intended that the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the **reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour** by bringing forward development which minimises opportunities for crime and provides a safe and secure environment within Spring Boroughs, which was also a major priority for local residents.

Not only do the issues highlighted in this section represent the views of local residents, but they are also substantiated by the statistical profile of the area, surveys and a practical local experience of how the area functions in terms of land uses and movement.
EVIDENCE 2 –
STATISTICS TELL US...
EVIDENCE 2 – STATISTICS TELL US…

Statistical Profile/Area Summary

The population of Spring Boroughs is around 2500* (*the 2011 census shows that LSOAs 021E and 021F have a combined population of 2,674 but they include some areas outside Spring Boroughs). The area is 20.5 hectares (50.6 acres) and it contains 1,227 properties.

Census 2011

This summary is taken from the ONS Neighbourhood Statistics. 10% of households in the LSOAs are overcrowded (too few bedrooms), compared with <5% of households in Northampton. It is apparent from this data that looking at the occupancy rating (rooms) data Spring Boroughs is the most overcrowded area in Northampton, and the number of rooms, number of bedrooms and household size show that Spring Boroughs has the lowest number of rooms & bedrooms (related to household size) in the town. This is also reflected in the 2011 resident’s survey (see below).

The Borough Council has calculated that housing density differs, with the northern areas of Spring Boroughs built at a significantly higher density than the southern areas. Further data demonstrated that, the areas with higher densities had significantly more 1-bedroom properties than other areas, with some blocks having 100% 1-bedroom properties.

Spring Boroughs Residents Survey 2011 (BMG Research)

The section on the housing profile of residents showed that 25% had been living in their property for under a year, 39% for two to five years and 34% for over five years. 56% were Council tenants, 20% tenants of private landlords and 17% housing association tenants. Only 5% of people were freeholders and 3% leaseholders. The majority lived in flats (82%) and 14% in maisonettes with only 4% in houses. 47% or properties have only one bedroom and 41% two bedrooms. Only 12% have three bedrooms. In summary;

- 88% of residents have only two or fewer bedrooms
- 96% of residents do not live in a house with a garden.

2014 Northampton Borough Council Housing Data

This also shows that the majority of houses are small, in low, medium and high rise blocks.

Other statistics for the area (e.g. health, educational attainment, employments, skills etc.) demonstrate all the aspects of deprivation. These are not presented in detail in this Plan, which focuses on land use opportunities, especially housing, open spaces, community facilities and connectivity, to address key issues. However, alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, Spring Boroughs Voice will continue to engage other agencies in deprivation issues.
EVIDENCE 3 – THE POLICY CONTEXT MEANS…
EVIDENCE 3 – THE POLICY CONTEXT
MEANS…

Planning Policy context

The policies in this draft Neighbourhood Plan seek to deliver the Vision and Objectives (section 08) in a manner which is consistent with national planning policies and guidance (including the National Planning Policy Framework) and the strategic policies of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Northampton Central Area Action Plan.

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS)

The JCS sets out strategic planning policies for Northampton Borough, Daventry District and South Northants district. The JCS will make West Northamptonshire an outstanding UK location of choice for diverse employment opportunities, high academic and vocational educational attainment, high quality housing for all and a superb quality of life for its communities. This will include the development of new homes, jobs services, infrastructure and green spaces in Northampton.

Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP)

The CAAP sets out a bold vision for Northampton’s Central Area to be the destination of choice for people within the County and beyond to live, work and relax. The following CAAP policies are particularly important to the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan: Presumption in favour of sustainable development; Promoting Design Excellence (Policy 1); Tall Buildings (Policy 2); Public Realm (Policy 3); Green Infrastructure (Policy 4); Inner Ring Road (Policy 6); Pedestrian and Cycling Movement Framework (Policy 9); Parking (Policy 10); Office and Business Use (Policy 15); Central Area Living (Policy 16); Spring Boroughs (Policy 24); Infrastructure Delivery (Policy 36).

Policy 24: Central Area Action Plan supports regeneration of the Spring Boroughs neighbourhood to tackle issues of deprivation, improve the quality of the housing stock, encourage a more balanced community and improve access to services and facilities. Policy 24 seeks to regenerate Spring Boroughs in accordance with the following priorities:

- Encouraging a more balanced community in terms of age, wealth, household size and reducing the turnover of residents; through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure.
- The potential to incorporate a wider range of uses within the area, particularly increased employment opportunities, taking into account its location as an edge-of-town centre site and Castle Station.
- Increase and improve the connectivity to the wider Central Area, particularly by direct pedestrian routes, for example, from Castle Station towards the Market Square.
- Positively address the boundaries of the site with the adjoining major roads including the proposed change of Horsemarket to a single carriageway road.
- Enhance the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill United Reform Church.

Technical note: Supporting documentation, including a review of Northampton’s Development Plan, accompanies the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan (pre-submission version).
SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES
SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Through a review of the policy context, relevant evidence and statistics, and the comments and feedback received through consultation with the local community, the below issues have been identified:

- Overcrowding of existing dwellings and a shortage of affordable family housing
- Lack of private gardens and amenity space
- Lack children’s play space and other youth facilities
- Inadequate community facilities
- Need for improved pedestrian and cycle links
- Need for a safer, more secure environment
- Support for protecting local heritage assets and enhancing their settings

Prevalence of high density housing which lacks gardens and does not lend itself to family living
Poor quality of existing play space
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Following the identification of the key issues facing Spring Boroughs an overall vision and a set of objectives were defined, from which the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been developed.

VISION

The Neighbourhood Plan will push Spring Boroughs up the league of desirable neighbourhoods in Northampton. The Plan will drive towards a Spring Boroughs, which is a vibrant neighbourhood with a balanced and diverse community. Spring Boroughs will be a great place to live and work close to the town centre and the Enterprise Zone, the new rail station and university, and will support Northampton’s character, identity and cultural life. Spring Boroughs will become known by people at all stages of their lives as one of the best parts of the town.

Spring Boroughs will be known for its strong community, rich urban character, attractive streets and spaces. It will be safe and enjoyable to move around on foot, bike and be will connected to the rest of Northampton and beyond by public transport.

OBJECTIVES

1. Housing
   To create opportunities for new housing development, with a focus on bringing forward more affordable family-sized housing for residents of Spring Boroughs.

2. Play space and youth facilities
   To create opportunities for a variety of new and improved youth and play facilities, which are both fun and safe, and cater for a range of age groups.

3. Community Facilities
   To create opportunities for the development of new and improved community facilities in the local area, which provide residents with opportunities for leisure and social activities, and facilitate greater interaction amongst local people, contributing to enhanced community relations.

4. Heritage Gateway
   To protect and enhance the setting of the historic features located at the south of Spring Boroughs, and to create a gateway into Spring Boroughs which maximises the potential of these valuable heritage assets.

5. Transport
   To improve pedestrian and cycle routes within Spring Boroughs, and promote greater connectivity between surrounding areas such as the town centre, train station and Enterprise Zone.

6. Community Safety
   To create a safe and secure neighbourhood and minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

7. Environment
   To create and support opportunities for improving the local environment, including promoting further community gardening and the improvement of key gateways into Spring Boroughs from surrounding areas.
ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN
PLAN WIDE POLICIES
PLAN WIDE POLICIES

OP1: Sustainable Development Principles

A. Planning permission will be granted for development in Spring Boroughs at a scale and in locations that accord with policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and where it can be shown that the development would support the local community, by providing:

1. New and affordable homes suitable for occupation by families in Spring Boroughs related to the local housing demand and needs of the community in terms of size, design, tenure and affordability.
2. A high quality environment for residents, visitors, community groups and businesses.
3. Infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreational and social facilities.
4. Better connections to adjoining areas, overcoming the barriers of busy roads and creating more permeable routes.
5. Security for occupiers and users through the use of design principles from “Secured by Design” according to known local issues and reference to the county wide Supplementary Planning Guidance – Planning Out Crime.

B. Development should have regard to the principles set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and be located to ensure that it protects and enhances the following:

1. Amenity of nearby residents.
2. Character and appearance of the local area in which it is located.
3. Social, built, historic, cultural and natural heritage assets of the Spring Boroughs, especially linked to the castle sites and surroundings.

Justification

This policy provides a positive framework for decision making, as required in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 14). Through this approach, development will be encouraged where it can be shown that the scheme will help to achieve the Vision and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan (as outlined in Chapter 8). Locally in Spring Boroughs, a key part of the concept of sustainable development is the creation of a safe, pleasant and functional environment for families but it also includes good design, meeting high environmental standards, better connections and crime prevention, all of which will contribute to the quality of life for residents.
Policy OP1 seeks the creation of high quality environments for residents, visitors, community groups and businesses.

Image credit: Karakusevic Carson Architects

**OP2: Family Housing**

A. Proposals for housing developments within Spring Boroughs will be supported subject to the following criteria

- Proposals provide a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures for a range of household types and sizes.
- Proposals for affordable housing with private outside space will be particularly encouraged.
- Proposals follow the design principles set out in Policy OP1 including using “Secured by Design” design principles.

B. Appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures will be supported. ¹

**Justification**

Providing affordable housing of a good standard with spring boroughs is the highest priority for the community to ensure that current and future needs can be met locally. Currently, there is a lack of family sized affordable housing with gardens in Spring Boroughs and many residents live in crowded spaces and sub-standard accommodation. The housing conditions are associated with high levels of deprivation and anti-social behaviour which affects the quality of life of the community's residents.

The neighbourhood plan seeks to create opportunities for spring boroughs residents to move into social/affordable family sized housing without leaving the area.

¹ Options for exploring housing ownership and management are set out in Implementation of New Housing Opportunities in the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan Area, Andy Clarke and Bob Colenut (July 2014)
There is a need to address the poor quality of the Council’s housing stock, all of which has been transferred to an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO). New solutions to deliver improvements to the Council’s housing stock must be sought, to bring housing up to appropriate standards which will help to break the cycle of multiple deprivation. This could include the establishment of a community development trust or a Neighbourhood Development Order.

This policy seeks to encourage a more balanced community in terms of age, household type, income and will enable residents and future generations to stay in the area.

A study to ascertain options for social housing provision on the opportunity sites will be produced in conjunction with the neighbourhood plan to help to deliver social housing in appropriate locations.

OP3: Children’s play space and other green spaces

A. The neighbourhood plan will support and encourage new and enhanced fun and safe children’s play areas in the plan area

B. The neighbourhood plan will encourage opportunities for improving the environment through community gardening, particularly in the ‘gateways’ between Spring Boroughs and other areas.

Justification

There is widespread concern amongst the community about the lack of adequate children’s play opportunities in Spring Boroughs. Real tensions result from lack of space, noise and disturbance.

There is little children’s play space for general Spring Boroughs use. Green space is generally not accessible and blocked off with fences and gates due to a legacy of anti-social behaviour prevention measures. The
lack of supervisable space near homes and private gardens adds to the problem and many homes lack suitable space to play indoors. Good quality parkland is too far away to be accessible to Spring Boroughs children.

Policy OP1 seeks the provision of new play space within Spring Boroughs.

Image credit: Design / landscape architecture: Muf Architecture / Art

OP4: Community Facilities

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of community facilities and other infrastructure projects using sources of funds as appropriate, including

- A community centre facility to serve the neighbourhood. In particular a new integrated (non-faith based) community building would be welcomed. This could be within the Collingwood Centre or a suitable alternative location.
- A new healthcare facility to be located within the community building or a suitable alternative location.

Justification

Regeneration of Spring Boroughs must bring with it access to necessary social and physical infrastructure. The neighbourhood currently lacks places for different groups to associate and socialise. Most importantly, Spring Boroughs lacks a main community centre.
Policy OP4 seeks the provision of new and improved community facilities for within Spring Boroughs.

Image credit: ARCHITECTURE: Susi Marzuola, STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Paul Endres & John Ware, PHOTOGRAPHY: David Wakely
OP5: Streets, Movement and Parking

A. The Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals which
   • Increase and improve the connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider area, particularly by direct, overlooked pedestrian routes provided they adhere to the principles set out in OP1 (5).
   • Positively address the boundaries of Spring Boroughs with adjoining major roads.
   • Increase and improve road connections, footpath and cycle routes within spring boroughs and between spring boroughs and the wider town centre, particularly to the town centre, enterprise zone and Grafton St Industrial Estate and from Castle Station towards the bus station and market square.
   • Reconfigure pedestrian routes within Spring Boroughs to ‘design out’ crime.
   • Increase kerbside parking for residents and local businesses within Spring Boroughs.

B. The neighbourhood plan will support the identification of residential streets to create ‘home zones’ with measures to reduce and slow traffic, improve safety and give priority to pedestrians over motor vehicles.

Justification

Pedestrian movement through Spring Boroughs is currently restricted, due to a legacy of anti-social behaviour measures such as high fences. The current car circulation pattern also restricts movement and discourages non-residents.

Connections from Spring Boroughs to the town centre are severed by the main roads of Horsemarket / Broad Street, St Andrew Road and Grafton St. Priority should be given to pedestrians. Access routes should be reconfigured to design out crime.

It is an aspiration within the neighbourhood plan to create safe and welcoming spaces for the community. Home Zones with restricted speeds within residential area give greater priority to non-motorised users and improve the quality of life of residents by making them places for people instead of just being thoroughfares for vehicles.

Image credit: Karakusevic Carson Architects
AREAS OF CHANGE
POLICIES
AREA BASED POLICIES

**AB Policy 1: (North West Spring Boroughs)**

Develop existing employment area in north west of plan area (Area 1) for high quality affordable housing

The North West part of Spring Boroughs will be redeveloped as an area of high quality social housing to include affordable family homes with private outside space in order to give residents of Spring Boroughs, particularly families with children, a better quality of life.

This area is currently in employment use and is designated for continued employment use in the Central Area Action Plan. However the neighbourhood plan would support proposals for housing in this area subject to

- fulfilling the criteria in Policy OP2 (Housing) and
- employment land elsewhere.

The future development of the area should include:

Provision of a range of housing types and tenures, including three bedroom affordable family homes with private outside space.

**Justification**

There is an immediate and urgent need for social housing with gardens to reduce overcrowding of families and to give families in need the basic facilities to enable them to enjoy a reasonable quality of life.

Spring Boroughs is surrounded by employment areas including a new enterprise zone and the neighbourhood plan has identified a new employment zone to the west of St Andrews Road.
AB Policy 2: Central Spring Boroughs

Develop central housing area of Spring Boroughs (Area 2) as new residential to include a high proportion of affordable housing suitable for families

A. The central area of Spring Boroughs will be transformed into a safe and attractive residential neighbourhood with safe and legible routes within the neighbourhood and between the neighbourhood and the wider central area. The area will include a high proportion of affordable family housing with gardens. The neighbourhood plan would support proposals for either

- comprehensive redevelopment of the area to rebalance the housing stock by providing more family housing, or
- redevelopment of individual sites or collections of sites within the policy area to provide more family housing.
B. Proposals for redevelopment would be supported, subject to
• fulfilling the criteria in Policy OP1 (Sustainable Development) and OP2 (Housing)
• provision of a range of housing types and tenures, including three bedroom family homes with private outside space.

Justification

Housing is the predominant use in this area. However, there is a housing stock imbalance of 95% one and two bed flats and maisonettes with no gardens. The housing is of poor quality and there is reported severe overcrowding. In accordance with the CAAP, the neighbourhood plan supports the provisions of a more balanced community in terms of age, wealth, household size and reducing the turnover of residents; through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure. Play areas need to be provided in order to create safer more attractive spaces for families with children.

AB Policy 3: South Spring Boroughs

Protect and enhance southern part of Spring Boroughs (Area 3) as a heritage gateway

A. A ‘heritage gateway’ will be created in the south of Spring Boroughs to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area.

The neighbourhood plan will encourage proposals which:
• protect heritage assets and enhance the setting of Northampton Castle and Mound, Grade 1 listed St Peters Church and Grade 11 listed Castle Hill United Reformed Church.
• create a heritage and green space
• allow safe use of routes between Marefair and Chalk Lane by encouraging walking and cycling
• any housing provided will include a proportion of affordable family housing
• provide a children’s play space
• preserve the historic streets in Spring Boroughs

The neighbourhood plan would support the creation of a Conservation Area, represented by Policy Area 3, to include the Saxon Palace site, St Peters Church, Hazelrigg House, Castle Mound and the site of Northampton Castle (to include the edge of the south bailey earthworks on Marefair and the finger of land stretching beyond Castle Mound to the Castle North Gate earthworks)
Local artists vision for the heritage gateway green space.

**Justification**

Spring Boroughs is located at an important historical location in terms of the history of Northampton from Saxon through Medieval to the present day. The area includes the earliest beginnings of the town around the Saxon palace on the south side of Marefair, through its medieval greatness in the site of Northampton castle to the north of Marefair, and the Norman St Peters Church are key landmarks in Northampton. Castle House in Marefair was purchased by Northamptonshire County Council as a key part of the ‘heritage gateway’ project.

Though built heritage assets such as St Peters, Castle Hill URC, the Old Black Lion and Hazelfrigg House are protected, archaeological assets both north and south of Castle Mound have very limited protection. Heritage assets such as these are best protected by local knowledge, understanding and enjoyment. In addition there is a need to open up sight lines between heritage assets in order to make them more visible to the general public and so that people in Spring Boroughs can better enjoy their relationship with St Peters Church and the other built assets on the south side of Marefair.
Red – Archaeological excavations 1961-65 by John H Williams, in published NDC reports 1982. Showing principally the remains of Northampton Castle’s inner bailey, Great Hall and Queens Apartments.

Green – Surveys by E.F Law in 1865 and 1879 during the demolition of Northampton Castle, indicating the earthworks and defences of the castle, together with some building foundations. Published in Assoc. of Architectural Studies Reports and Papers 15.
IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to influencing decisions on future planning applications by the Borough Council, based on the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and monitoring their effectiveness, the focus on implementation will include partnership working, seeking external funding, a focus on priority projects and the use of other (planning and non-planning) mechanisms.

Working in Partnership

Partnership working will be a key element in the successful implementation of the Plan. For the Neighbourhood Forum the main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below.

- Northampton Borough Council - Planning Policy, Development Management, Housing,
- Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities
- Northamptonshire Local Enterprise Partnership- Infrastructure & business support.
- Homes and Communities Agency – funding for new family housing.

Funding and Implementation Mechanisms

Funding will be sought from developers through a combination of S106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for infrastructure and local facilities, linked to new development, focused on assisting the delivery of the specified projects as a priority.

The Forum will also seek to influence other budget decisions by the Borough and County Councils on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport. In addition, we will work with other organisations (including; the Homes and Communities Agency, the Lottery, UK Government and EU Funds and LEP programmes), to obtain funding to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

Priority Projects

- The list of infrastructure projects below reflects local priorities.
- Affordable Family Houses with gardens
- A new integrated (non-faith based) community building
- Better pedestrian/cycling links to the railway station and the town centre.
- The creation of a heritage gateway with linked spaces at key locations.
- Improved open spaces and landscaping.
- Improved road and footway surfaces

Other Mechanisms

The Forum, working with appropriate partners, will also consider the use of other initiatives to achieve Neighbourhood Plan objectives, including; Neighbourhood Development Orders, Community Right to Build, Assets of Community Value and community led housing developments. It is recognised, however, that in several case these measures will require other legal processes to be followed, some of which are outside the planning system and separate to the Neighbourhood Plan. There is a supporting document, a research note produced by the University of Northampton, which considers these options in more detail.
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