
Contents
1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 3
    Purpose .................................................................................................................................. 3
    Overview of Spring Boroughs .............................................................................................. 3
2. Policy Review .......................................................................................................................... 4
    National Policy and Status of Northampton’s Development Plan ......................................... 4
    Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development ............................................................ 4
    Supply and distribution of new homes .................................................................................. 5
    Delivering Sustainable Housing ......................................................................................... 6
    Housing Density, Mix and Dwelling Types .......................................................................... 7
    Managing existing housing .................................................................................................. 7
    Addressing housing issues through community regeneration .............................................. 7
    Delivering Affordable Housing ............................................................................................ 8
    Summary ............................................................................................................................... 10
3. Other strategies and documents ............................................................................................ 11
    Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010 ........................................................................ 11
    Housing Strategy 2013 - 2016 ............................................................................................ 12
    Summary ............................................................................................................................... 13
4. Local evidence of housing issues – Spring Boroughs ............................................................... 14
    Community Profile .............................................................................................................. 14
    Population, age and families .............................................................................................. 14
    Demographic profile – BMG Research resident’s survey ................................................... 15
    Community Cohesion – BMG Research resident’s survey ................................................ 16
    Summary ............................................................................................................................... 16
    Housing characteristics and issues ...................................................................................... 18
    Total number of dwellings ................................................................................................. 18
    Tenure .................................................................................................................................. 18
    House types ....................................................................................................................... 18
    Council owned stock - quality ........................................................................................... 20
    Requirements and adaptation ............................................................................................. 20
Turnover .............................................................................................................. 20
Occupancy rate .................................................................................................... 21
Summary ................................................................................................................ 22
Attitudes to housing and regeneration .................................................................. 24
  Satisfaction with home, estate and local area ....................................................... 24
  Attitudes toward regeneration ........................................................................... 24
Summary ................................................................................................................ 24
5. Implementation of new housing ......................................................................... 26
  Potential Intervention Sites - UoN Research Note (2014) ..................................... 26
  Community-led housing developments – UoN Research Note (2014) ............... 27
  Funding sources .................................................................................................. 28
6. Discussion and conclusions ............................................................................... 29
  Neighbourhood Profile - Summary ..................................................................... 29
  Need for new homes ............................................................................................ 30
  Meeting local housing needs .............................................................................. 30
  Housing-led regeneration ..................................................................................... 30
  Potential sites and implementation ..................................................................... 31
7. References ......................................................................................................... 33
1. Introduction

Purpose
1.1. The purpose of this note is to identify local housing needs in Spring Boroughs. This report summarises a range of evidence sources into a single document to inform the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan (SBNP) and provide clear justification of the Plan’s approach.

Overview of Spring Boroughs
1.2. Spring Boroughs is the largest single residential area within Northampton’s Central Area, located between Northampton town centre and the rail station. It is the heart of the historic town of Northampton and holds a deep historical significance for the town.

1.3. Spring Boroughs has been redeveloped several times in the past, and the dense terraced streets cleared and replaced by mid-high rise buildings that are characteristic of post-war municipal housing. The neighbourhood includes in the region of 1,200 to 1,400 dwellings, the majority of which are one and two bedroom flats. The Council is the major landowner, with a large proportion of dwellings leased through the Council. By 2016, without intervention, it is estimated that all of the council-owned stock will fail the decent homes standard.

1.4. Spring Boroughs is recognised as being amongst the top 5% most deprived areas in the country. Northampton’s Development Plan recognises the importance of community regeneration of Spring Boroughs in addressing issues of deprivation.
2. Policy Review

National Policy and Status of Northampton’s Development Plan

2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The planning system is “plan-led”. The NPPF requires Local Plans to be prepared with the objective of contributing to the delivery of sustainable development. In addition, Local Plans must be consistent with the principles and policies of the NPPF.

2.2. Northampton’s Development Plan includes the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) adopted in December 2014, and the Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) adopted in January 2013. The JCS sets out a strategic policy framework for the three authorities for West Northamptonshire. The CAAP provides a consistent strategic framework for the regeneration of Northampton’s Central Area, including the town centre.

2.3. The basic conditions require neighbourhood plans to have regard to national policy and achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area. In 2014, Northampton Borough Council provided Spring Boroughs Voice with a review of the policy context which identified strategic policies.

Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

2.4. At the heart of the NPPF (para.14) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, for decision-taking this means:

- Development proposals which accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay; and

- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting [planning] permission unless:
  - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or
  - Specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

2.5. The presumption... is incorporated into the strategic policy context for West Northamptonshire through the JCS, Policy SA – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development and in the CAAP through the Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development policy.

2.6. The implications for neighbourhood planning of the presumption in favour sustainable development are significant. Once made, Neighbourhood Plans become part of the Development Plan for Northampton. Development proposals which accord with the Neighbourhood Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
Supply and distribution of new homes

2.7. The JCS identifies a hierarchy of places within West Northamptonshire. Foremost is Northampton, the Principal Urban Area. Policy S1-The Distribution of Development seeks to concentrate primarily in and adjoining the Principal Urban Area of Northampton.

2.8. Northampton Borough and its adjoining development sites including the Strategic Urban Extensions are collectively known as the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA). The JCS makes provision for about 28,470 net additional dwellings within the NRDA in the period 2011 to 2029. This requirement for new homes in West Northamptonshire is informed by an objective assessment of housing need. To meet this need, the number of new homes built each year must increase substantially increase from the rate of delivery experienced in recent years.

2.9. CAAP Policy 16 identifies that the Central Area will in the period up to 2026 accommodate up to 3,400 homes. Spring Boroughs is recognised as one such location to accommodate additional new homes in the Central Area.

2.10. Maintaining a supply of new homes is important. The NPPF (para. 47) requires NBC to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against its housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there is persistent under delivery of housing, the Council should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

2.11. The NPPF (para. 49) requires applications for new housing development to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF indicates that relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority (NBC) cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. This implies that where NBC cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, proposals for housing development should be approved unless adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or would conflict with specific policies of the NPPF.

2.12. The current Northampton Related Development Area Five-Year Housing Land Supply Assessment April 2014 indicates that at 01 April 2014, the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) offered a supply of available housing land equivalent to 4.87 years supply. Whilst a land supply figure is yet to be published for 2015, it is likely that the 5 year supply requirement will not be achieved.

2.13. The SBNP may therefore wish to consider creating opportunities for new housing development to contribute toward maintaining a supply of housing land, thereby supporting the Council in ensuring housing policies remain up to date in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
Delivering Sustainable Housing

2.14. JCS Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles includes a range of requirements to ensure new development is sustainable, for example through adapting to a changing climate. The policy states that development will:

- Achieve the highest standards of sustainable design incorporating safety and security considerations and a strong sense of place;
- Be designed to improve environmental performance, energy efficiency and adapt to changes of use and a changing climate over its lifetime;
- Make use of sustainably sourced materials;
- Minimise resource demand and the generation of waste and maximise opportunities for reuse and recycling;
- Be located where services and facilities can be easily accessed by walking, cycling public transport;
- Maximise use of solar gain, passive heating and cooling, natural light and ventilation using site layout and building design;
- Maximise the generation of its energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources;
- Maximise water efficiency and promote sustainable drainage;
- Protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings;
- Promote the creation of green infrastructure networks, enhance biodiversity and reduce the fragmentation of habitats; and minimise pollution from noise, air and run off.

2.15. Similarly CAAP Policy 1: Promoting Design Excellence requires all new development within the Central Area to be designed for energy and resource efficiency and where appropriate recognise the inherent sustainability in the reuse and refurbishment of existing buildings.

2.16. In addition Policy S11 – Low Carbon and Renewable Energy seeks to ensure that all new development meets Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 (increasing to Zero Carbon Standard from 2016). The policy requires major new development to contribute to reductions in carbon emissions, adapt to the effects of climate change and where feasible provide decentralised energy.

2.17. JCS Policy H5 – Sustainable Housing requires residential development to be designed to provide accommodation that meets the requirements of the lifetime homes standard e.g. to enable wheelchair mobility and adaptability (subject to assessment of viability).

2.18. The Development Plan includes a range of measures to ensure new development is sustainable. The SBNP should not reproduce strategic policies. However the plan can provide a local interpretation of those policies. For example the neighbourhood plan could identify specific local issues and set neighbourhood plan policies which provide a local
interpretation of those JCS policies (e.g. an identified local fuel poverty issue could be addressed through prioritising energy efficiency over and above other measures).

Housing Density, Mix and Dwelling Types

2.19. JCS Policy H1 – Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings requires new housing development to provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures to cater for different accommodation needs including the needs of older people and vulnerable groups. In addition, JCS Policy H1 requires housing developments to make efficient use of land, whilst having regard to the location and setting of the site, character of the local area and the living conditions for future residents and a range of other considerations.

2.20. The mix and type of dwellings is of particular importance in Spring Boroughs. The CAAP identifies that 70% of Spring Boroughs residents live in blocks of flats. Through the regeneration of Spring Boroughs, CAAP Policy 24 seeks to encourage 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.

Managing existing housing

2.21. JCS Policy H6 – Managing the Existing Housing Stock seeks to manage and safeguard the existing housing stock by:

- Restricting the loss of existing dwellings to other uses;
- Securing the re-use of empty dwellings for residential use;
- Allowing houses in multiple occupation (HiMOs) where they would not adversely affect the character and amenity of existing residential areas. (Northampton Borough Council has adopted an interim policy statement on HiMOs.).

Addressing housing issues through community regeneration

2.22. JCS Policy N1 - The Regeneration of Northampton recognises the importance of addressing factors of deprivation within a number of communities (including Spring Boroughs) to the regeneration of Northampton as a whole. JCS Policy N11 supports the regeneration of Spring Boroughs through working in partnership with the community and other key stakeholders to address a number of key principles, including improving the quality of the public sector housing stock. JCS Policy RC1 – Delivering Community Regeneration provides further guidance on delivering a regeneration scheme.

2.23. The regeneration of Spring Boroughs is required to achieve a number of priorities and development principles set out in CAAP Policy 24. The first priority listed in the policy relates to housing provision through 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, as discussed in para. 2.20.
Delivering Affordable Housing

2.24. **JCS Policy H2** — **Affordable Housing** requires affordable housing to be provided as a proportion of the total number of dwellings to be delivered on individual sites. Within the Northampton Related Development Area, sites of 15 or more dwellings are expected to provide a proportion of affordable housing equivalent to 35%. This requirement is subject to a viability assessment of the proposal and in exceptional circumstances off site provision may be provided as a commuted sum payment in lieu of on-site provision.

2.25. **JCS Policy H2** requires the tenure mix of affordable housing (i.e. social rent, affordable rent or shared ownership) to reflect local housing need and development viability on individual sites. Potentially, Neighbourhood Plans could influence the tenure mix of affordable housing where evidence of local housing need is available.

2.26. The Northampton Affordable Housing Interim Statement sets out Northampton Borough Council’s position on affordable housing alongside practical details of delivery. It reflects policy content within the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. The statement includes a number of key principles:

- **Delivery of Market and Affordable Housing**: When considering housing development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.

- **Definition of affordable housing**: — social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

- **Housing need**: - The Council when considering planning applications will use the latest housing requirement and need surveys, subsequent updates and other relevant housing market intelligence to demonstrate the need for affordable housing.

- **Site thresholds**: - The provision of affordable housing will be sought on all sites of 15 or more dwellings.

- **Percentage of affordable housing**: - 35% affordable housing will be sought on any site which is required to do so. Exceptions may be made on the grounds of viability on a case-by-case basis.

- **Viability**: - It is assumed that all sites that are required to provide affordable housing will do so. If a site is perceived to be unviable, the applicant is encouraged to enter into early dialogue with the Council... It will be the applicant’s responsibility to provide NBC with financial data that enables a full open-book assessment to determine the viability of the site.

- **Tenure split**: - In terms of identified need as part of the 35% requirement the following tenure mix will be sought:
70% Social rent
30% Intermediate housing

However it is recognised that due to Government support for affordable rent, this is heavily dependent on limited external funding availability and consequential viability issues. This will be discussed on a site by site basis.

- **Specialist housing provision**: Affordable housing will be sought as part of specialist housing schemes e.g. older peoples self-contained housing. This can include extra care and other assisted living provision where the Council feels that sufficient need warrants securing affordable housing.

- **Size of property**: There is an identified need to provide affordable family homes within the Borough. This type of property will be sought as a priority where it forms a suitable part of the overall design of a site.

- **Affordable Housing Clustering and Phasing**: In the interest of providing mixed and sustainable communities, the schemes should create tenure blind developments. To this end modest sized clustering of affordable housing throughout the development is sought, and negotiated with the applicant dependent on unit types, scheme design and the size of the site. Where a site is delivered in phases either as a single permission or as separate reserved matters permissions, it will be expected to deliver the Affordable Housing proportionally in each phase to reflect a consistent delivery and sustainable tenure mix throughout the development. Consistent with Joint Core Strategy Policy, Lifetime homes will be encouraged as part of the Affordable Housing mix.

- **Planning considerations**: The provision of affordable housing on a site does not override other material conditions.

- **Design Requirements**: Affordable Housing units should be delivered to a minimum of Sustainable Code Level 4, subject to viability negotiations (consistent with Joint Core Strategy policy). The Council will encourage the provision of affordable housing units to meet the Homes and Communities Agency’s Design and Quality Standards including minimum Housing Quality Indicators, and, where possible should seek to exceed these standards. It is expected that 10% of the Affordable Housing units will meet the Council’s Mobility Standard and on specific sites, usually those massing more than 100 units in total to provide 1% to the Council’s full Wheelchair Adapted Standards. It is required that the Affordable Housing units should be designed in a way to make them tenure blind within the overall development. Applicants should work with the Borough Council and Registered Providers in order to achieve this.

- **Off-site provision**: Only in exceptional circumstances will off-site provision or financial contributions be considered. Such circumstances could include but are not limited to:
The developer can provide clear evidence that affordable housing cannot be delivered on site.

It may be more desirable from a regeneration or sustainability perspective to deliver affordable housing in another location.

The type of units being delivered on site does not fall within the desired requirements or housing need of the Borough.

Summary

2.27. The Neighbourhood Plan should be prepared in a manner which has regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area, set out in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP). Policies should take a proactive approach to new development, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.28. There is a requirement for up to 3,400 new homes in Northampton’s Central Area. The JCS principally directs new development toward Northampton, concentrating new development primarily within the urban area and at adjoining SUEs. The CAAP recognises one such location to deliver additional residential development. The policy review highlights the importance of maintaining a supply of new homes.

2.29. The Development Plan includes a range of measures to ensure new development is sustainable. JCS policy S10 sets out a range of “Sustainable Development Principles” which all new development must meet.

2.30. The JCS and CAAP recognise the importance of addressing factors of deprivation within Spring Boroughs to the regeneration of Northampton, as a whole. The JCS and CAAP seek to ensure a mix of dwelling types and tenures. The CAAP makes particular reference to redressing the balance in Spring Boroughs, which is characterised by blocks of flats of social rent tenure.

2.31. The Development Plan requires the provision of 35% affordable homes on development sites of 15 or more proposed dwellings. The tenure mix of affordable dwellings should reflect local need. The Northampton Affordable Housing Interim Statement sets out Northampton Borough Council’s position on affordable housing alongside practical details of delivery.
3. Other strategies and documents

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010**

3.1. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides a key part of the evidence base for the JCS. The SHMA applies to the West Northamptonshire sub-region. It also explores issues at the scale of each settlement e.g. Northampton, but does not explore issues affecting specific neighbourhoods such as Spring Boroughs. The SHMA made a number of observations and recommendations which may or may not resonate with the experiences of the Spring Boroughs community. A summary of some key information is provided here for reference and should be considered alongside other sources of evidence to determine if they are relevant to Spring Boroughs.

3.2. House prices in Northampton tend to be lower than the average across the sub-region.

3.3. Within the sub-region, the highest levels of deprivation and unsuitable housing are found in Northampton. Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black African households are most likely to be found in overcrowded housing.

3.4. Detached properties comprise around 36% of the stock, semi-detached properties around 32%, terraced housing comprises around 26% and flats account for the remaining 6%. Compared with the East Midlands average, there is more terraced housing in West Northamptonshire.

3.5. The dominant tenure in West Northamptonshire is owner occupation (78%). Less than 5% of owner occupied dwellings are flats and 40% are detached dwellings. Whereas 32% of social rented housing and 27% of private rent dwellings are flats, with very few detached dwellings. Both private rented and social rented dwellings typically contain fewer rooms than those which are owner occupied. In recent years the private rented sector has grown in size and importance relative to other tenures.

3.6. The population of West Northamptonshire is increasing through a combination of more births, fewer deaths and in-migration.

3.7. Northampton has the lowest average household incomes in West Northamptonshire.

3.8. The need for additional intermediate affordable housing (i.e. shared ownership) is low as house prices tend to be lower in Northampton, thereby reducing the sales values in which such housing can occupy. However, as house prices increase, the need for intermediate housing may increase.

3.9. A priority for new build social housing should be to help alleviate overcrowding. Whilst the number of households in these circumstances is relatively small, the degree of housing need can be acute. This problem is more acute within some minority ethnic households. There are health and wellbeing benefits for these households if properly housed. In addition, other smaller households will benefit from the dwellings these households vacate.

3.10. Some older people occupy housing that is too large for them and is also unsuitable given their health, relative low income and vulnerability to cold and tripping hazards.
Ensuring that part of the new housing delivery across all tenures was particularly suited to older people, would increase choice for older people. It would benefit the household, health and support services and again release second hand housing into the market.

3.11. Translating the housing requirement for one bedroom housing into priorities for new build social housing needs careful consideration. Firstly many younger households will not be allocated social housing as they experience low levels of need. The main issue for them is affordability of housing. Many households aspire to a spare bedroom to enable the size of their household to grow without triggering the need to move home. Older households value a spare bedroom to enable children, guests and carers to stay occasionally. A policy aim of seeking to build a greater proportion of 2 bedroom homes would have significant benefits in sustaining communities and should be considered as far as finance will permit.

**Housing Strategy 2013 - 2016**

3.12. The Housing Strategy relates to the management of housing and the delivery of the Council’s housing service, which since January 2015 has been provided by Northampton Partnership Homes.

3.13. The Housing Strategy sets out the Council’s priorities for housing and highlights housing issues affecting Northampton. These issues are included for reference, and can be compared with other data sources to identify the extent to which such issues affect the Spring Boroughs community.

- **Priority 1: Manage supply and growth for the future of Northampton.**
  - Decline in owner-occupied dwellings and increase in private-rented;
  - House prices increasing but lower than Northamptonshire average;
  - Introduction of affordable rent enables Registered Providers to charge up to 80% of market rent;
  - Average income within Northampton lower than national average;
  - People in Northampton need to borrow more than 6 times their income to afford to buy a home;
  - Unemployment in Northampton is rising;
  - Homelessness applications increased in recent years;
  - One in five people live in a deprived Neighbourhood;
  - Demand for shared ownership increasing;
  - Decrease in new affordable homes being built;
  - Increase in discount for Right to Buy is expected to lead to an increase in the number of social rented homes being sold through RTB;
  - 1 & 2 bed households most common formation of household size;
  - Northampton more ethnically diverse than across region;

- **Priority 2: Create resilient and cohesive communities.**
  - Northampton’s population is ageing;
  - Greater need for adaptations to houses;
  - High demand for sheltered housing;
Changes through Welfare Reform could increase rent arrears, homelessness, use of temporary accommodation, and may mean 25-35 years can’t afford to live alone;
Homelessness affects 25-44 year olds more commonly.

- **Priority 3: Deliver well designed, high quality homes, neighbourhoods and services**
  - Council owns 12,200 units for which there is high demand;
  - 48.9% of council stock failed to meet Decent Homes Standard;
  - 128% increase in past 10 years of those renting their home;
  - NBC works with private landlords to improve standards of private rented homes;
  - Both private and council stock faces issues of poor energy efficiency and increasing fuel prices which could leave to fuel poverty particularly vulnerable persons;

- **Priority 4: Improve customer access, opportunity and choice.**
  - NBC has worked to reduce its reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation

**Summary**

3.14. The SHMA provides a profile of housing in Northampton; predominantly over-occupied with the majority of homes detached, semi-detached or terraced houses. The SHMA recognises that house process and income levels are relatively low. The SHMA identifies a priority need for social housing and identifies overcrowding as particularly acute amongst certain ethnic groups.

3.15. The Housing Strategy sets out Northampton Borough Council’s priorities for its housing service. The strategy highlights key housing issues relating to deprivation, low income, declining owner-occupation, ageing population and the poor quality of the Council’s housing stock and poor energy efficiency of both public and private stock.
4. Local evidence of housing issues – Spring Boroughs

4.1. This section explores a range of data sources and information collected to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. The Spring Boroughs neighbourhood is not concurrent with other boundaries used regularly for data collection. The neighbourhood area straddles three Lower Super Output Areas, making it somewhat challenging to gather official statistics such as census data. The neighbourhood profile section therefore uses a range of data sources to make informed estimates on the number of households and the population.

4.2. In 2011, Northampton Borough Council commissioned BMG Research to undertake a survey of residents in Spring Boroughs. The survey achieved a response rate of 59%. The results do not describe the entire population but the sample is considered broadly representative of the wider population of Spring Boroughs. The survey identifies characteristics of and local issues affecting the neighbourhood. Community engagement and consultation undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan confirms whether such issues continue to affect the community.

4.3. The results of the resident’s survey therefore provide a key source of evidence to inform the Neighbourhood Plan, alongside other sources such as census data and Council records on its housing stock. In addition, this section considers the results of community engagement and consultation undertaken through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

4.4. This technical paper does not focus on the findings of consultation and engagement undertaken through the neighbourhood planning process. The findings of such work are discussed in the Consultation Statement submission document.

Community Profile

Population, age and families

4.5. Spring Boroughs falls within three LSOAs. LSOAs Northampton 021E and 021F cover most of the neighbourhood. An area in the north west of Spring Boroughs is located within LSOA Northampton 021C. However this LSOA has been excluded from calculating the population as it includes a large number of dwellings located in neighbouring communities and would likely distort the results. The census 2011 indicates a total population of 2,675 people living in LSOA 021E and 021F.

4.6. In 2011, Northampton Borough Council estimated the population of Spring Boroughs using BMG research data, council tax records, the electoral roll and census 2001 data. However it is not clear whether the study area corresponds with the Neighbourhood Area, which includes land to the south of Marefair and a predominantly market housing development at St Andrews Street. The Council estimated that there were 2,196 people living in Spring Boroughs, comprising 1,641 adults and 555 children.

4.7. The census 2011 data can be shown by age group. Table 1 shows the number of people by age in LSOAs’ Northampton 021E and 021F at 2011.
Figure 1: Table to show persons by age group and LSOA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSOAs</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>021E</th>
<th>021F</th>
<th>Total (Units)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>18.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 - 64</td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>75.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>6.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>2,675</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8. The census 2011 data shows slightly fewer under 18s than the Council’s estimate. However the census data and Council estimate are based on different geographical boundaries. The census data suggests that almost 1 in 5 people is aged under 18, whereas the Council suggests more than 1 in 4 people is aged under 18 (18.65% - 25.27%).

4.9. Three quarters of residents in LSOAs 021E and 021F are of ‘working age’ (18 – 64 years). There is a small proportion of residents in the LSOAs who are of retirement age (6.21%).

4.10. The census provides data on the number of families with dependent children. A dependent child is a person aged 0 - 15 in a household (whether or not in a family) or aged 16 - 18 in full-time education and living in a family with his or her parent(s). Table 2 shows the number of families with dependent children by LSOA. In LSOAs 021E and 021F there are a total of 305 families with dependent children.

Figure 2: Table to show number of families by LSOA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSOAs</th>
<th>021E</th>
<th>021F</th>
<th>Total no. of families with dependent children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of families with dependent children</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic profile – BMG Research resident’s survey

4.11. The sample of residents surveyed by BMG Research is considered broadly representative of the Spring Boroughs community. BMG Research identified that around half of respondents were male (51%) and half female (49%). Respondents were predominantly from younger age groups (47% were aged between 16 and 34). This was twice the proportion that was aged over 55 years (23%). The Resident’s Survey did not include under-16s in the sample.

4.12. Respondents originated from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, most commonly White British (51%), White Other e.g. European (15%) and Black African (13%). After this, 4% were from a Black Caribbean background and 3% from another Black background. The remaining 14% were from other ethnic backgrounds. Around two thirds (64%) said English
is their first language; after this the most commonly spoken languages were Somali (10%) and Polish (6%). The remaining 20% spoke a variety of different languages.

4.13. A third of respondents said they are employed full time (33%) and 9% are part-time employed. Around one in six are retired (16%), and just over one in ten (13%) are unemployed and seeking work. 1% are self-employed and 7% are students / in education.

Community Cohesion – BMG Research resident’s survey
4.14. The Resident’s Survey investigated the extent to which community cohesion exists in Spring Boroughs. Although three in ten respondents (28%) said they never speak to their neighbours, a similar proportion (28%) said they speak to them at least daily, and two in ten (22%) speak to neighbours on a weekly basis.

4.15. Eight in ten (82%) agreed that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. However, most of these said that they tend to agree (63%), rather than definitely agree (19%). Eight in ten (80%) agreed that Spring Boroughs is a place where people respect differences of ethnicity and religion, although again most of these tend to (62%), rather than definitely (17%), agree.

4.16. Six in ten (61%) said they feel they belong to Spring Boroughs; but over two in ten (23%) do not feel they belong. The most common reasons for feeling a sense of belonging were having been in the area a long time (31%), or having friendly people / neighbours around (11%). Amongst those who do not feel they belong, reasons were most commonly having just moved in (20%), or respondents feeling that they (13%) or other people (9%) generally kept to themselves.

Summary
4.17. It is difficult to provide a precise calculation of total population as the Neighbourhood Area does not correspond with boundaries used to compile official statistics. In addition, since 2011 there have been some new developments in the area and a rising birth rate in Northampton.

4.18. It is concluded that estimates in the region of 2,196 to 2,675 residents living in Spring Boroughs appear reasonable. The draft plan uses a population estimate of 2,500 people, which is likely to be a sensible value.

4.19. The population is relatively young. A large proportion of the population is of working age and almost half the population are young adults. A third of people are in work. More than one in ten people are unemployed and seeking work. A small proportion of the population is in retirement.

4.20. The census data and the Council’s population estimates suggest there may be a relatively high number of children living in the area. There is likely to be in the region of 300 families with dependent children in Spring Boroughs.
4.21. There is a fairly even split between men and women living in the area. Spring Boroughs is ethnically diverse, with a range of languages spoken. Most people agree that Spring Boroughs is a place where people of different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions get on well together. A large proportion of people feel they belong to the area.
Housing characteristics and issues

**Total number of dwellings**

4.22. In undertaking consultation on the PSNP, a list of addresses within the Neighbourhood Area was obtained from Northampton Borough Council. There were 1,401 postal addresses in Spring Boroughs. The Census 2011 shows a total of 1,542 households in LSOAs Northampton 021E and 021F. This exceeds the total number of addresses in Spring Boroughs suggesting the LSOAs include parts of neighbouring communities.

4.23. Spring Boroughs is a predominantly residential but mixed neighbourhood which includes employment, community facilities and other uses. Therefore the number of postal addresses is not equal to the number of households. The residents survey (BMG) identified 1,227 residential properties in Spring Boroughs. The BMG figure appears realistic when compared with the total number of postal addresses, although the precise boundary used by BMG Research may differ from the Neighbourhood Area boundary. The number of households is expected to be broadly similar to the number of residential properties.

**Tenure**

4.24. BMG Research found that over five in ten people who took part in the Residents Survey are Council tenants (56%); two in ten (20%) are tenants of private landlords and a similar proportion (17%) are tenants of housing associations. Around one in twenty are freeholders i.e. owner occupiers (5%), or leaseholders (3%). Owner-occupation is markedly lower than the West Northamptonshire average. The SHMA 2010 indicates that the 78% of homes in the sub-region are owner-occupied. Consequently there is likely to be a far greater proportion of social rent in Spring Boroughs than across the sub-region.

4.25. Northampton Borough Council is the major landowner and landlord in the area. Some sources (including the original front-runner bid document) reference as many as 80% of dwellings in Spring Boroughs being leased through the Council. However this figure can vary depending on the precise boundary of the neighbourhood being applied. In addition, some former Council-owned blocks have been transferred to a Housing Association, including the “New Life” apartments.

4.26. The Council-owned housing stock is concentrated in the centre and north of the Neighbourhood Area. The CAAP indicates that there are 647 Council owned properties in Spring Boroughs. A Freedom of Information request to Northampton Borough Council obtained by Spring Boroughs Voice in 2014 indicated that there are currently 630 residential properties in Spring Boroughs. Based on the figures provided by BMG Research and Northampton Borough Council this equates to approximately 51% of all residential properties in Spring Boroughs being in council ownership.

**House types**

4.27. The Residents Survey 2011 (BMG Research) found that the majority of respondents live in a flat (82%). The CAAP suggests that 70% of people live in blocks of flats. Just over one in ten (14%) live in a maisonette. A small proportion (4%) lives in a house.
4.28. Close to five in ten (47%) live in a one bedroom property, and four in ten (41%) have two bedrooms. One in ten (12%) have three bedrooms, but few have more bedrooms than this. Figure 4 uses data supplied by Northampton Borough Council in 2014 (FOI NBC3278-1001 – 14-10-02).

Figure 4: Council-owned stock by dwelling type in Spring Boroughs (Source: Northampton Borough Council FOI request, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property type</th>
<th>Number of residential properties in Spring Boroughs area owned by Northampton Borough Council</th>
<th>Dwelling type as a percentage of all council-owned properties (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedsit</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bed bungalow</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bed flat</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>54.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bed sheltered flat</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bed flat</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>23.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bed house</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bed maisonette</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bed sheltered flat</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bed house</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bed flat</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bed maisonette</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>630</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.29. The table shows that almost 55% of council-owned dwellings in Spring Boroughs are 1-bedroom flats. A large proportion of council-owned dwellings (approx. 24%) are 2-bedroom flats. Therefore almost 80% of the council-owned stock is a 1 or 2 bed flat. There are few council-owned houses in Spring Boroughs. Of the 630 total council-owned dwellings, there are three 2-bedroom houses (0.48%) and fifteen 3-bedroom houses (2.38%).

4.30. In 2014, Northampton Borough Council’s Housing team prepared an estate profile. The findings of the estate profile differ slightly from the results of the FOI request. The estate profile indicates that there are 707 council-owned dwellings in Spring Boroughs. Figure 5 shows the council’s stock by house type.

Figure 5: Council-owned stock by dwelling type in Spring Boroughs (Source: Northampton Borough Council - Estate Profile 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council-owned stock</th>
<th>Bedsits</th>
<th>Bungalows</th>
<th>Low rise flats</th>
<th>Medium rise flats</th>
<th>High rise flats</th>
<th>Houses</th>
<th>Maisons</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.31. The table shows the majority of council-owned dwellings in Spring Boroughs are flats, making up 93% of the council’s stock in the area. High-rise flats make up the largest proportion of council-owned dwellings in the area (42%). A large proportion of council-owned dwellings are medium-rise flats 36%. 15% of council-owned dwellings are low-rise flats. Other house types account for a small proportion of council-owned dwellings. The estate profile indicates there are 20 houses in the area; this is marginally higher than the data provided by the FOI request. However houses account for only 3% of the council-owned stock in Spring Boroughs.

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
\text{Council-owned stock} & \text{0 bedrooms} & \text{1 bedroom} & \text{2 bedrooms} & \text{3 bedrooms} & \text{4 bedrooms} & \text{4+ bedrooms} & \text{Total} \\
\hline
0 & 6 & 409 & 193 & 99 & 0 & 0 & 707 \\
1\% & 58\% & 27\% & 14\% & 0\% & 0\% & 100\% \\
\end{array}
\]

4.32. The estate profile shows that the majority of council-owned homes have one bedroom (58%). A large proportion has two bedrooms (27%). One and two bedroom dwellings therefore account for 85% of the council’s stock in the area. 14% of dwellings have three bedrooms. There are no dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms. It is not clear why some dwellings do not have any bedrooms (1%); however this could be a data recording issue.

**Council owned stock - quality**

4.33. The CAAP indicates that of the 647 Council-owned properties (at the time of writing) it was estimated that 455 do not meet nationally recognised Decent Homes Standard. Without intervention a further 81 will become non-decent by 2015, and all will become non-decent after 2026.

4.34. Since 2013, there has been investment in the Council’s stock in Spring Boroughs as part of the Decent Homes initiative. However improving the quality of the council-owned stock remains a priority. For example, Northampton Borough Council is currently exploring options for renovation, conversion or replacement of flats at Little Cross Street, due to the extent of the works needed to return the block to a habitable condition.

**Requirements and adaptation**

4.35. Just under one in ten (7%) said they or someone living with them has requirements in or around the home, i.e. adaptations within the home to assist with day-to-day living.

**Turnover**

4.36. The Residents Survey suggests that turnover of residents is fairly high as the majority of residents had lived in the neighbourhood for less than five years. Experience of working with the community suggests that there are also many residents who have lived in the
community for a very long time. Just over two in ten respondents have been living in their property for under a year (25%), around four in ten (39%) had lived there for two to five years, and just over three in ten (34%) had lived there for over five years.

**Occupancy rate**

4.37. The average number of residents living in a property was two. Around half of respondents (48%) live alone, and a further three in ten (31%) live with one other person. One in ten (11%) live with two other people. There is some disparity between BMG Research’s findings and the CAAP which indicates that 60% of households are single person households. However both results show that single person households exceed the Northampton average of 30%.

4.38. In July 2014, the University of Northampton supplied Spring Boroughs Voice with a research note which investigated the implementation of new housing in the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. The purpose of the research note was to assess opportunities for new housing development that will meet local needs within the Spring Boroughs neighbourhood.

4.39. The UoN Research Note identifies overcrowding as a significant local issue. The note suggests that one-to-one work with families living in Spring Boroughs indicates that levels of overcrowding are under-enumerated in official statistics. The report recommends the provision of new family homes with gardens.

4.40. The census 2011 provides data on occupancy rate by LSOA. Occupancy rating provides a measure of whether a household’s accommodation is overcrowded or under occupied. The census uses two measures of occupancy rating, one based on the number of rooms in a household’s accommodation, and one based on the number of bedrooms. The ages of the household members and their relationships to each other are used to derive the number of rooms/bedrooms they require, based on a standard formula. The number of rooms/bedrooms required is subtracted from the number of rooms/bedrooms in the household’s accommodation to obtain the occupancy rating. An occupancy rating of -1 implies that a household has one fewer room/bedroom than required, whereas +1 implies that they have one more room/bedroom than the standard requirement.

4.41. Spring Boroughs sits within three LSOAs, each of which includes parts of neighbouring communities. LSOAs Northampton 021E and 021F cover most of the Neighbourhood Area, whereas 021C includes a small area in the north west of Spring Boroughs but predominantly covers adjoining neighbourhoods.
4.42. The chart shows that in the Spring Boroughs LSOAs (Northampton 021C, 021E & 021F) most households do not experience overcrowding as the number of bedrooms in a household meets or exceeds the needs of the household. However within the Spring Boroughs LSOAs, a greater proportion of households have too few bedrooms compared with the Northampton, East Midlands and National average, confirming that overcrowding is a significant local issue as identified through community engagement.

4.43. Based on the census 2011 data, it is calculated that approximately 10% of households in Spring Boroughs have fewer bedrooms than required to meet the needs of the household (either one fewer bedroom or two fewer bedrooms). 10.26% of households in 021E, 9.15% of households in 021F and 9.56% of households in 021C have fewer bedrooms than required.

4.44. In Northampton, 4.37% of households have too few bedrooms. In the East Midlands, 3.13% of households have too few bedrooms. In England, 4.64% of households have too few bedrooms.

4.45. Based on the total number of residential properties in Spring Boroughs as indicated by BMG research, it is estimated that there could be approximately 123 overcrowded households in Spring Boroughs.

Summary
4.46. It is difficult to calculate the number of households within Spring Boroughs as the Neighbourhood Area does not correspond with boundaries used in compiling official
statistics. BMG Research found 1,227 residential properties in Spring Boroughs. There are 1,401 postal addresses within the Neighbourhood Area. Estimates between these values are likely to be reasonable.

4.47. The majority of residents rent from either the Council or a housing association (in the region of 73% to 80% of households). Owner occupation is extremely low and is markedly lower than the sub-regional average. The remainder rent from private landowners. In the region of 70% to 82% of residents live in a flat. Less than 5% of people live in a house. Others live in maisonettes. Almost half of all residents live in one-bedroom dwelling (47%), with approximately 41% in a two-bedroom dwelling. The Residents Survey 2011 found 1 in 10 live in a three-bedroom dwelling.

4.48. The number of single person households in Spring Boroughs is likely to make up between 48% and 60% of total households. This far exceeds the average for Northampton (30%). However as identified in the Neighbourhood Profile, there is also a large number of families with dependent children living in Spring Boroughs.

4.49. There are between 630 and 707 council-owned dwellings in Spring Boroughs. The vast majority of which are flats (80% - 93%), predominantly high rise and medium rise with a smaller proportion of low rise. Most council-owned dwellings are one-bedroom dwellings and a large proportion is two-bedroom dwellings. One and two bedroom dwellings account for 79% - 85% of the council’s stock in the area. Smaller proportions are three-bedroom dwellings (12% - 14%). Approximately 3% of council-owned dwellings are houses, of which 2.38% are three-bedroom houses. The quality of council-owned housing stock remains an issue, whilst there have been recent interventions through the Decent Homes programme.

4.50. Turnover of residents is relatively high. The Residents Survey 2011 found that 7% of people (or someone they live with) has special requirements around the home.

4.51. The Census 2011 data suggests that approximately 10% of homes in the area are overcrowded. This is more than double the average for Northampton and England, and is more than three times the regional average. Following one-to-one work with families, the University of Northampton Research Note suggest that official statistics under-counts the instances of overcrowding. The UoN research note identifies overcrowding as a major local issue and recommends the provision of new family housing with gardens in Spring Boroughs.
Attitudes to housing and regeneration

Satisfaction with home, estate and local area

4.52. The Resident’s Survey investigated the level of satisfaction with the home, estate and local area. The majority of respondents (80%) are satisfied with their current accommodation, however two in ten (20%) are not.

4.53. Three in ten (34%) said they ideally need repairs in their property, over one in ten (14%) need more space overall, and around one in ten need a garden (11%) or more bedrooms (10%). One in twenty respondents (5%) said there is someone in their household who needs to move.

4.54. Residents were asked what they like and dislike about living in Spring Boroughs. In terms of positive aspects, the most common response was that respondents like living close to the town centre (83%), and two in ten said they like living close to transport (23%); 15% mentioned being close to family or friends, and 13% close to work. However, three in ten (31%) said they disliked crime and antisocial behaviour in the area, and over one in ten (15%) said they disliked the standard of property maintenance. Six in ten respondents (63%) said their block or street was in generally good condition, however over two in ten respondents (25%) rated the condition of their block or street as poor. Reasons for rating the block or street as less than good were most commonly a lack of cleanliness (52%), rubbish / litter (45%) or a poor standard of repair (34%). Respondents also mentioned that it was ugly / old fashioned (30%) or that there was anti-social behaviour (29%). The issues most likely to be considered important in making improvements to flats / maisonettes were improving cleanliness (45%) and improving maintenance (37%), improving security (22%) and reducing anti-social behaviour (19%).

Attitudes toward regeneration

4.55. In compiling the Residents Survey 2011, BMG Research investigated attitudes towards regeneration.

4.56. The majority (64%) said that new developments in Spring Boroughs have improved the area, however one in ten (10%) said they had not and a further 26% were unsure. Amongst those who said they have improved the area, over seven in ten (73%) said the area looks cleaner or generally better than before and almost one in ten (8%) said it looks modern or new. However, those who said developments have not improved the area most commonly said this was because nothing has changed (23%), because they preferred the way it was (14%), because there are still problems with anti-social behaviour (11%) or because the same people still live there (10%).

4.57. Three in ten (30%) mentioned certain areas of the estate they thought could or should be demolished. Amongst this group, the most commonly mentioned areas were St Katherine’s Court (29%), St Stephen’s House (17%) and St Peter’s House (12%). For most of these areas, the most commonly mentioned reasons for feeling that the area could or should be demolished were it is too old and needs a new look, or that the area is in bad
condition. Respondents also mentioned anti-social behaviour issues or just that everything needs changing.

4.58. Around six in ten (64%) said they would want the opportunity to return to Spring Boroughs if their home was demolished, although a further two in ten (22%) were ambivalent. Just over one in ten (14%) would not want to return. Among those who said that they would want the opportunity to return, the main reasons for this were the location i.e. near to the town centre (71%), having lived there a long time (29%), or being near to family and friends (19%). Among those who said they do not want the opportunity to return, the most common reasons for not wanting to return were wanting to move away (40%) or wanting to live somewhere else (23%).

4.59. The majority of respondents (57%) said if their home was demolished, they would want to live in new or improved council housing in Spring Boroughs, although around one in six (16%) said they would want to live in a new council home elsewhere in Northampton.

4.60. Respondents had a number of wide ranging fears relating to the proposed regeneration. Comments that were mentioned by at least 2% of the total sample included having nowhere to go (mentioned by 5% in total), the complications of moving (4%), and their homes being destroyed (3%) or the type of people who may move in (3%).

Summary

4.61. The Residents Survey found the majority of residents are satisfied with their home. However approximately a third of respondents said they need repairs to their property. Others indicated they needed more space (14%), a garden (11%) or additional bedrooms (10%). Most respondents like living in Spring Boroughs as it is close to the town centre. Key concerns about the local area included crime and anti-social behaviour, and level of cleanliness and standard of maintenance of blocks and/or streets.

4.62. Most people saw new development as positive, bringing benefits to the area. 30% suggested areas for demolition. Most people said they would want the opportunity to return if their home was demolished, mostly to an improved council house. Respondents had a number of wide-ranging fears relating to regeneration.
5. Implementation of new housing

Potential Intervention Sites - UoN Research Note (2014)

5.1. The UoN Research Note (Implementation of New Housing Opportunities in the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan Area (2014)), as previously discussed, recommends the provision of family houses with gardens to meet local housing needs. The research note identifies and surveyed 10 “potential intervention sites” and explores the suitability of each for housing development. The Research Note identifies that some sites are currently allocated for employment use and suggests that alternative employment provision can be provided elsewhere. Figure 8 provides a summary of the “potential intervention sites” identified in the Research Note. Where relevant, the final column provides updated information at time of writing (June 2015).

Figure 8: Potential Intervention Sites 2014 (UoN Research Note) & Update 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site ref</th>
<th>Site location</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Land-use description &amp; description</th>
<th>Potential use</th>
<th>Owner-ship</th>
<th>Market-ed</th>
<th>Planning history</th>
<th>2015 Update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grafton St/ Lower Harding St/ Compton St (former Honda Garage site)</td>
<td>0.54ha/1.34ac</td>
<td>Cleared vacant site. Principal of housing supported by community.</td>
<td>27 residential units (15).</td>
<td>Shell UK Pensions</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Planning app: N/2014/0600 (refused). Erection of 36 dwellings.</td>
<td>N/2014/1122 approved in March 2015. Site currently under construction to provide 38 Dwellings Comprising 12No. 3 Bed Houses, 13No. 2 Bed Houses And 13No. Flats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Super Sausage Café/ Lorry Park/ Plumbing Supplies, St Andrews Rd</td>
<td>0.8ha/2.0ac</td>
<td>Café, lorry park and plumbing contractor. The café is provided on a short lease and is suggested to have redevelopment potential. The café is a historic converted slipper baths with some architectural merit and is a familiar landmark. The site is adjacent to the Waterside Enterprise Zone.</td>
<td>Not suitable, Potential for employment development</td>
<td>Northampton Borough Council</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None relevant</td>
<td>The café remains on a short lease. A hand car wash was granted permission and is in operation on part of the site (app ref: N/2015/0338).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Collingwood Business Centre, Lower Harding St/ Scarletwell St/ Compton St/</td>
<td>0.285ha / 0.705ac</td>
<td>Business centre providing offices, dance studio, retail, car wash. N/2013/0681 – applicant indicated units are difficult to let.</td>
<td>14 residential units and/ or community facilities.</td>
<td>Unconfirmed</td>
<td>Not known</td>
<td>N/2013/0681 (approved) expansion of Vintage Retreat café &amp; retail</td>
<td>An Asset of Community Value application was registered for the business centre and has not yet been determined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wedge Roofing, Monks Rd</td>
<td>0.32ha/0.79ac</td>
<td>Roofing materials sales and storage.</td>
<td>15 residential units.</td>
<td>Wedge Roofing Ltd</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None relevant</td>
<td>Wedge Roofing has vacated the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PDSA Veterinary Surgery, Monks Pond Rd</td>
<td>Exclude from study as site in active employment use, no indication of availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Volvo Penta/</td>
<td>Exclude from study as site in active employment use, no indication of availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.2. The UoN Research Note recommends that sites 1, 3, and 4 are allocated for the development of new houses with gardens for families. In addition, site 7 was identified as having potential for possible self-build development. The sites provide a total capacity of approximately 82 residential units. However site 3 (14 units) has been subject to an application to designate an Asset of Community Value, which has not yet been determined. If designated, the ACV could limit residential development of the site.

### 5.3. The Research Note recommends that site 2 is allocated for employment use, recognising the need to off-set the loss of allocated employment land, as indicated by the CAAP.

### 5.4. The Research Note proposes that the University of Northampton’s Collaborative Centre for the Built Environment (CCBE) assist Spring Boroughs Voice with planning and development advice on sites with potential for new homes. The note recommends that CCBE work with Spring Boroughs Voice to establish a sub-group to focus on design matters in development proposals.

**Community-led housing developments – UoN Research Note (2014)**

### 5.5. The UoN Research Note suggests that to achieve change in Spring Boroughs, it is likely that a range of innovative delivery mechanisms will need to be considered by the community to ensure appropriate new housing and regeneration schemes take place. The Research Note recommends Spring Boroughs Voice pursue community-led housing development and outlines support the University of Northampton’s CCBE may offer to the forum, through working in partnership.
5.6. The Research Note indicates that community-led housing development can enable communities to secure affordable housing for local people with rent levels, ownership, tenancy conditions and design under community control. The Research Note outlines a range of options for community-led options. The Note recommends that Spring Boroughs consider the establishment of a community development trust and the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Order.

**Funding sources**

5.7. The Research Note explores the principal sources of public funding available for communities. The Note recommends that Spring Boroughs Voice liaise with the Homes and Communities Agency in respect of special funds for housing development.
6. Discussion and conclusions

6.1. This section discusses key issues identified from the review of evidence in sections 2 to 5.

Neighbourhood Profile - Summary

6.2. Whilst it is difficult to be precise about the total number of residents living in Spring Boroughs, estimates in the region of 2,196 to 2,675 residents appear reasonable. (The draft plan uses a population estimate of 2,500 people.) BMG Research identified 1,227 residential properties in Spring Boroughs. There are 1,401 postal addresses within the Neighbourhood Area. Estimates for the total number of dwellings which fall between these values are likely to be reasonable.

6.3. The population is relatively young. A large proportion of the population is of working age and almost half the population are young adults. There is likely to be a relatively high number of children living in the area and in the region of 300 families with dependent children living in Spring Boroughs.

6.4. Spring Boroughs is ethnically diverse, with a range of languages spoken. Most people agree that Spring Boroughs is a place where people of different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions get on well together. A large proportion of people feel they belong to the area.

6.5. The majority of residents rent from either the Council or a housing association. Owner occupation is extremely low. One in five households rent from private landowners. In the region of 70% to 82% of residents live in a flat. Less than 5% of people live in a house. Almost half of all residents live in one-bedroom (47%) dwelling with a further 41% of residents living in a two-bedroom dwelling. The Residents Survey 2011 found that approximately 1 in 10 live in a three-bedroom dwelling.

6.6. The number of single person households in Spring Boroughs is likely to make up between 48% and 60% of total households. However the Census 2011 data suggests that approximately 10% of homes in the area are overcrowded - more than double the average for Northampton. Following one-to-one work with families, the University of Northampton Research Note suggest that official statistics under-counts the instances of overcrowding.

6.7. There are between 630 and 707 council-owned dwellings in Spring Boroughs. The vast majority of which are flats (80% - 93%), predominantly high rise and medium rise with a smaller proportion of low rise. Most council-owned dwellings are one-bedroom dwellings and a large proportion is two-bedroom dwellings. One and two bedroom dwellings account for 79% - 85% of the council’s stock in the area.

6.8. The council’s stock includes a small proportion of three-bedroom dwellings (12% - 14%). Approximately 3% of council-owned dwellings are houses, of which 2.38% are three-bedroom houses. The quality of council-owned housing stock remains an issue, whilst there have been recent interventions through the Decent Homes programme.
Need for new homes

6.9. The Development Plan requires the development of up to 3,400 new homes within Northampton’s Central Area and identifies Spring Boroughs as one such location to accommodate additional residential development by the CAAP. Northampton cannot currently demonstrate a supply of new homes. The Policy Review section demonstrates the importance of maintaining a supply of housing land and how this SBNP housing policy can contribute to this.

Meeting local housing needs

6.10. Spring Boroughs includes a high proportion of one and two bedroom flats rented from either the Council or a Housing Association. The Development Plan seeks to encourage a more balanced community, including through the appropriate provision of house types and tenures. The neighbourhood has a relatively young population, and includes a large number of families with dependent children. Consequently, instance of overcrowding are high.

6.11. To redress the balance of housing in the area, the Neighbourhood Plan should support proposals which deliver houses which are suitable for families. The UoN Research Note recommends the provision of family homes with gardens.

6.12. The Neighbourhood Plan could seek to increase the range of tenures to enable those wishing to own their home to do so. Intermediate tenures could be explored, but relatively low house prices in the area may limit opportunities for such tenures.

Housing-led regeneration

6.13. The JCS and CAAP recognise the importance of addressing factors of deprivation within Spring Boroughs to the regeneration of Northampton, as a whole. The CAAP outlines development principles and a number of key priorities to inform the regeneration of the neighbourhood.

6.14. As discussed in the previous sections, there is a need to provide opportunities for new residential development in Spring Boroughs, which supports the provision of a balanced community in terms of house types and tenures. In addition, the quality of the Council’s housing stock continues to be a key issue, in terms of energy efficiency and the Decent Homes standard. Most people saw new development as bringing positive benefits to the areas, some respondents identified blocks for demolition. It is therefore suggested that the regeneration of Spring Boroughs should be ‘housing-led’.

6.15. Most people agree that Spring Boroughs is a place where people of different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions get on well together. A large proportion of people feel they belong to the area. Most people expressed a wish to return to Spring Boroughs if their home was demolished, preferably to an improved council house. Respondents had a number of wide-ranging fears relating to regeneration. Care must be taken to ensure that the creation of a more balanced community does not undermine the aim to meet the community’s housing needs. New development in the area should therefore provide
Potential sites and implementation

6.16. The University of Northampton prepared a research note which investigated the implementation of new housing opportunities in Spring Boroughs. The note surveyed a number of potential sites within the Neighbourhood Area and identified the following sites as suitable for housing development:

- Site 1: Grafton Street/ Lower Harding Street/ Compton St (former Honda Garage site) – 38 dwellings;
- Site 3: Collingwood Business Centre, Lower Harding St – 14 dwellings (subject to ACV application);
- Site 4: Wedge Roofing, Monks Rd – 15 dwellings;
- Site 7: Lock-up garage/ incidental open space, Lower Bath St – 15 dwellings.

6.17. Site 10: Site of Northampton Castle/ Marefair/ Chalk Lane was excluded from the UoN research note as it is subject to a separate study led by Northamptonshire County Council, partnered with Northampton Borough Council and the Churches Conservation Trust. It is likely that an element of residential development will form a part of any proposal for this site.

6.18. Sites 1, 3 and 4 are safeguarded for employment use by the CAAP. To mitigate this loss of employment land, the UoN Research Note recommends the Neighbourhood Plan designate the following land for employment use:

- Site 2: Super Sausage Café/ Lorry Park/ Plumbing Supplies, St Andrews Rd – 0.8ha / 2.0 acre.

6.19. The UoN Research Note recommends a community-led approach to housing development, suggesting that such a model can enable communities to secure affordable housing for local people with rent levels, ownership, tenancy conditions and design under community control. Site 7 is identified as a potential location for self-build development, thereby offering an alternative model for the delivery of new homes. The Note outlines the support UoN’s CCBE may offer to the Spring Boroughs Voice neighbourhood forum in implementing such developments through a partnership approach.

6.20. This technical paper demonstrates a need for new homes in Spring Boroughs, with a particular emphasis on houses suitable for families. This technical paper identifies a range of vacant and underused sites suitable for new development. As recognised by the Development Plan, issues of deprivation combined with a poor quality housing stock suggest a need for housing-led regeneration of Spring Boroughs. Particular emphasis should be placed on the provision of affordable housing to ensure the needs of existing
residents are met and the community is not displaced. To achieve this aim, alternative approaches may be required such as community-led models or opportunities for self-build. A partnership approach between the community and other stakeholders is likely to provide benefits in delivering new housing development and regeneration.
7. References

7.1. This technical paper draws on evidence provided by the following sources:

- Census 2011 - LSOAs Northampton 021E, 021F and 021C (Office for National Statistics);
- Estate Profile 2014 - Spring Boroughs (Northampton Borough Council);
- FOI Request to Northampton Borough Council - Council-owned dwelling stock 2014;
- Housing Strategy 2013 - 2016 (Northampton Borough Council);
- Implementation of new housing opportunities in Spring Boroughs 2014 (University of Northampton);
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012;
- Northampton Central Area Action Plan 2013;
- Spring Boroughs Residents Survey 2011 (BMG Research);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010 (West Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit);
- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2014.

Northampton Borough Council Development Plan Documents and other plans, strategies and research are available to download from www.northampton.gov.uk