Basic Conditions Statement

Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan

July 2015
1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this Basic Conditions Statement is to demonstrate how the proposed Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and satisfies other legal requirements. The Basic Conditions Statement accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan Proposal when submitted for examination and will be considered by the Independent Examiner.

1.2. There are five basic conditions that are relevant to a neighbourhood plan. In summary, the basic conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

1.3. In summary, the legal requirements are:

- The plan is submitted by a qualifying body;
- The neighbourhood plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
- The neighbourhood plan states the period in which it is to have effect;
- The policies do not relate to excluded development; and
- The neighbourhood plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area.

1.4. The table in appendix 1 presents an assessment of each individual Neighbourhood Plan policy against each of the basic conditions. The findings of this assessment are summarised in section 2. The other legal requirements are discussed in section 3.
2. The Basic Conditions

Regard to national policies and advice

2.1. The basic conditions require Neighbourhood Plans to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

2.2. A review of Northampton’s Development Plan was undertaken and presented as a technical evidence base report along with the Neighbourhood Plan. The report discussed key issues arising from national policy including the presumption in favour of sustainable development and core planning principles. This review of the policy context directly informed the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, Spring Boroughs Voice Neighbourhood Forum sought advice and direct support from planning professionals including Planning Aid England, Northampton Borough Council and a local Planning Consultant.

2.3. The assessment presented in appendix 1 appraises each of the Neighbourhood Plan policies to identify if they are consistent with the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The assessment found that the Neighbourhood Plan supports the a number of national policies through a range of measures, summarised as follows:

- **The presumption in favour of sustainable development**: Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 sets out a positive framework for decision-taking and includes a range of ‘Sustainable Development Principles’ which new development must satisfy to ensure it is sustainable. The Spring Boroughs neighbourhood experiences a range of specific local planning issues e.g. shortage of family housing, lack of community facilities, poor permeability and crime. Addressing such issues is critical to ensuring the sustainability of the area.

- **Policy 1. Building a strong and competitive economy**: Land identified by Area-Based Policy 1 is currently allocated for employment use by the CAAP. The NPPF suggests planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 is consistent with the national policy though releasing underused employment land for housing development and creating new opportunities for employment development at the ‘Super Sausage’.

- **Policy 4. Promoting sustainable transport**: Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP5 accords with the national policy through increasing and improving the connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider area, particularly through direct, overlooked pedestrian routes. The policy seeks to reconfigure pedestrian routes, and improve road connections and cycle routes. Similarly, Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 seeks to create better connections to adjoining areas, overcoming the barriers of busy roads and creating more permeable routes. In addition Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB3 supports

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1 Submission document reference: EB/PC1
development proposals which encourage walking and cycling between Marefair and Chalk Lane.

- **Policy 6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes**: National policy requires Local Plans to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. Spring Boroughs suffers a range of housing issues, including poor quality stock and overcrowding. The vast majority of homes in Spring Boroughs are 1 and 2 bedroom flats. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the NPPF policy by creating opportunities for new housing development (policies AB1 & AB3). Policy AB2 supports the redevelopment and regeneration of central Spring Boroughs to provide new housing development. Policies OP1, OP2, AB1, AB2 and AB3 seeks to address local housing needs by encouraging new development to provide a high proportion of affordable housing and homes with gardens which are suitable for families.

- **Policy 8. Promoting healthy communities**: The Neighbourhood Plan supports the NPPF policy through supporting the delivery of new and enhanced children’s play areas, new community facilities (including a new community centre facility and healthcare facility) and seeks to improve the environment through community gardening (Policies OP3 & OP4).

- **Policy 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**: The NPPF places great weight on preserving the historic environment. In seeking to create a ‘Heritage Gateway’ which gives residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area, Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB3 is consistent with the NPPF policy. In addition, Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 requires new development to protect and enhance cultural and natural heritage assets.

2.4. Through the assessment in appendix 1 no policies were found to be inconsistent or in conflict with national planning policies.

2.5. The findings of the assessment in appendix 1 demonstrate that, in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, Spring Boroughs Voice had regard to the national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development

2.6. The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Throughout its preparation, the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) was subject to a process of sustainability appraisal (SA). A range of objectives were produced for the purpose of appraising CAAP policies, which are categorised into a range of topics.

2.7. The assessment in appendix 1 explored how the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to achieving sustainable development by having regard to the CAAP SA topics and objectives. Where a policy positively supports the CAAP SA topics and objectives, it is considered reasonable to conclude that the policy contributes to achieving sustainable development.

2.8. The assessment in appendix 1 found that the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are likely to bring positive effects in respect of a range of CAAP SA topics. The findings of the assessment are summarised below:

- **Air quality and noise**: Policies OP1, OP5 and AB3 encourage walking and cycling through a range of measures. By reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift, the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to improving air quality and reducing noise.

- **Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**: Policy AB3 supports the development of a ‘heritage gateway’ to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area. The policy contributes to achieving sustainable development through protecting the fabric and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

- **Biodiversity, flora and fauna**: Policy OP3 seeks to provide new children’s play spaces and other green spaces. The policy may contribute to achieving sustainable development by bringing ecological benefits through the provision of green spaces and community gardening.

- **Crime and community safety**: Policies OP1 and OP2 require proposals for new development to achieve ‘Secure by Design’ principles. Policy OP5 seeks to improve the safety of pedestrian routes and create ‘home zones’ which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists. The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to achieving sustainable development through improving community safety and reducing fear of crime.

- **Health and wellbeing**: Policy OP3 supports health and well-being by providing opportunities for recreation and sport through the provision of children’s play areas and other green spaces. Housing-related policies, including OP1, OP2, AB1, AB2 and AB3 improve health and well-being through ensuring housing needs are met.

- **Labour market and economy**: Policy AB1 supports the labour market and economy through identifying the Super Sausage site for employment development.
- **Landscape and townscape:** Policies OP1 and AB3 conserve and enhance the quality, character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and townscape through protecting heritage assets and their settings.

- **Material assets:** The purpose of the ‘material assets’ topic is to ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of local people. The neighbourhood plan contributes to achieving this through making provision for new housing development (through policies AB1, AB2 and AB3) and new play areas, other green spaces and community facilities (through policies OP3 and OP4). Policies OP1 and OP2 supports proposals for family housing and affordable housing, to ensure that housing development meets local housing needs.

- **Population:** Housing is the predominant land-use in Spring Boroughs. However there is an imbalance within the housing stock in this area, which consists almost entirely of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and maisonettes. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to redress this imbalance and develop and maintain a sustainable population structure through supporting proposals which provide new family housing to meet local housing needs (through policies OP1 and OP2).

- **Social deprivation:** The Neighbourhood Plan reduces social deprivation through reducing spatial inequalities. The plan enables the regeneration of Spring Boroughs by identifying locations for new development through policies AB1, AB2 and AB3. The Neighbourhood Plan ensures that regeneration benefits the Spring Boroughs community by shaping future development through the sustainable development principles and encouraging the development of family housing to meet local housing needs. The Neighbourhood Plan reduces spatial inequalities through improving access to services and facilities by improving connectivity and reducing physical barriers in policy OP5, and delivers new children’s play areas, other green spaces and community facilities in policies OP3 and OP4.

2.9. The Neighbourhood Plan positively impacts on a range of Sustainability Appraisal topics. No policies were considered to have negative impacts or cause harm. It is therefore concluded that the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan contribute to achieving sustainable development.
General Conformity with the Strategic Policies

2.10. The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) provide strategic policies for the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. Both the JCS and CAAP were prepared in accordance with the NPPF.

2.11. Prior to commencing work on drafting Neighbourhood Plan policies, the Development Plan was reviewed to identify strategic policies. The Review of Northampton’s Development Plan evidence base document informed the preparation of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan.

2.12. The assessment in appendix 1 explores the extent to which the policies of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan. The finding of the assessment are summarised in relation to topics relevant to the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan:

### 2.13. Sustainable Development - relevant strategic policies include:
- JCS Policy SA – Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- JCS Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles; and
- CAAP Presumption in favour of sustainable development

2.14. As set out in the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development. JCS policy SA and the CAAP’s Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy reflect the NPPF’s presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.15. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of achieving sustainable development through Policy OP1. The policy sets out a range of Sustainable Development Principles which all new developments must achieve. The principles complement those Sustainable Development Principles in JCS Policy S10, providing a local interpretation to address specific issues affecting the Spring Boroughs neighbourhood. As the first policy in the plan, OP1 places sustainable development at the forefront of the Neighbourhood Plan, providing an overarching positive framework for decision-making.

### 2.16. Regenerating communities – relevant strategic policies include:
- JCS Policy RC1 – Delivering community regeneration;
- JCS Policy RC2 – Community needs;
- JCS Policy N1 – The regeneration of Northampton;
- JCS Policy N11 – Supporting areas of community regeneration; and
- CAAP Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs.

2.17. The JCS (policies RC1, N1 & N11) recognise the importance of addressing issues of deprivation in Spring Boroughs through community regeneration. Tackling such issues is not only important to the Spring Boroughs community, but to the regeneration of Northampton as a whole. The CAAP (policy 24) identifies that Spring Boroughs suffers deprivation and seeks to regenerate Spring Boroughs in a manner which is consistent with a
range of development principles, whilst recognising community’s commitment to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. The development principles relate to a range of matters including housing, employment and the historic environment. These issues are developed further through the Neighbourhood Plan in a manner which satisfies the requirement for general conformity.

2.18. The strategic policies provide a strong justification for Spring Boroughs Voice to plan for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs in a manner which meets the needs of the community.

2.19. **Housing** – relevant strategic policies include:
- JCS Policy S1 – The distribution of development;
- JCS Policy S3 – Scale and distribution;
- JCS Policy H1 – Housing density and mix and type of dwellings;
- JCS Policy H2 – Affordable housing;
- CAAP Policy 16 – Central area living;
- CAAP Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs

2.20. The JCS (Policy S1) concentrates new development, and specifically housing development (through JCS Policy S3) to locations in and adjoining Northampton’s urban area. The CAAP (Policy 16) identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development. Neighbourhood Plan policies AB1, AB2 and AB3 identify locations for housing development in Spring Boroughs.

2.21. The JCS (Policy H1) requires new developments to provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures cater for different accommodation needs including the needs of older people and vulnerable groups. The CAAP (Policy 24) recognises that Spring Boroughs suffers a range of housing issues and encourages a more balanced community in terms of: age, wealth, household size and reducing turnover of residents, through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 prioritises proposals which contribute toward rebalancing the housing stock to ensure Spring Boroughs offers a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to meet local housing needs. Proposals for affordable family housing with private outdoor space are particularly encouraged by Policy OP2.

2.22. JCS policy H2 requires development proposals which exceed a threshold of 15 or more units to provide affordable housing of at least a 35% proportion of the total number of dwellings to be delivered on the site. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 encourages proposals which provide affordable family housing with private outdoor space. Neighbourhood Plan Policies AB1, AB2 and AB3 also encourage developments which provide a high proportion of affordable housing but do not alter the policy requirement set out by JCS Policy H2.
2.23. **Economy** – relevant strategic policies include:

- Policy S8 – Distribution of jobs;
- E1 – Existing employment areas;
- CAAP Policy 15: Office and business uses; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

2.24. JCS policy S8 concentrates jobs growth in the principal urban area of Northampton. The CAAP (Policy 16) identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development. However CAAP Policy 24 recognises the potential to incorporate a wider range of uses in the area, particularly increased employment opportunities. The CAAP (Policy 15) safeguards land at north west Spring Boroughs for employment development. The strategic policies of the Development Plan seek to retain existing employment sites in employment use. However those strategic policies enable the release of existing employment land where specific criteria are met.

2.25. Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 seeks to redevelop a safeguarded employment site to provide housing. In order to release the employment land for housing development, AB1 satisfies the criteria of the strategic policies (namely JCS Policy E1 and CAAP Policy 15) by:

- Demonstrating that the safeguarded employment site is no longer economically viable;
- Identifying an alternative suitable location for employment development within the Neighbourhood Area; and
- Enabling housing-led regeneration of Spring Boroughs.

2.26. A Business Survey and Employment Technical Paper forms a part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan and demonstrates that the safeguarded employment site has limited potential for future employment development and is considered to be no longer economically viable for employment purposes. In addition to highlighting the merits of other employment sites in the vicinity, the Employment Technical Paper demonstrates that the Super Sausage site provides a realistic alternative location for employment land. The Housing Technical paper demonstrates that housing-led regeneration is a priority in Spring Boroughs.

2.27. It is therefore concluded that Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 achieves general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development through making provision for employment development at the “Super Sausage” site as an alternative suitable location for employment development and through demonstrating that the loss of employment land at north west Spring Boroughs is outweighed by meeting the strategic objective SO7 by:

- Repopulating the Central Area;
- Enabling the redevelopment of a redundant industrial area; and
- Enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs.
2.28. **Built and natural environment** – relevant strategic policies include:

- JCS Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles;
- JCS Policy BN5: The historic environment and landscape;
- CAAP Policy 1: Promoting design excellence;
- CAAP Policy 4: Green Infrastructure; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

2.29. The JCS (Policy S10) sets out Sustainable Development principles which all development proposals must meet, including requirements to “protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings” and “promote the creation of green infrastructure networks, enhance biodiversity and reduce the fragmentation of habitats”. CAAP Policy 1 sets out design principles, requiring new developments to preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the central area’s heritage assets. Similarly Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 provides sustainable development principles which are locally-specific to Spring Boroughs and supports development that “protects and enhance … social, built, cultural and natural heritage assets of Spring Boroughs, especially linked to the castle sites and surroundings”.

2.30. CAAP Policy 4 requires development within Northampton’s Central Area to deliver and/or contribute to the provision of green infrastructure. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP3 supports new and enhanced play areas and encourages opportunities for community gardening, particularly at gateway locations. In addition, Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 supports proposals to provide open space in south Spring Boroughs.

2.31. The JCS (BN5) seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets, their settings and landscapes. Development in areas with known historic or heritage significance are required to sustain and enhance the heritage landscape, demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features. The CAAP (Policy 24), in setting development principles for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs, requires developments to enhance the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill United Reform Church. Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 accords with the strategic policies of the Development Plan by supporting proposals which provide open space, children’s play facilities, residential development and encourages walking and cycling, in a manner which protects and enhances the setting of heritage assets.

2.32. **Connections** – relevant strategic policies include:

- JCS Policy C1: Changing behaviour and achieving modal shift;
- JCS Policy C5: Enhancing local and neighbourhood connections;
- CAAP Policy 9: Pedestrian and cycling movement framework; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

2.33. JCS Policy C1 prioritises transport schemes which contribute to change people’s behaviour in transport mode choices and includes a range of measures to achieve
behavioural change. JCS Policy C5 seeks to enhance local and neighbourhood connections through improving bus networks and cycle routes, and other measures. CAAP Policy 9 sets out a Pedestrian and Cycling Movement Framework, identifying key routes on a map and setting out measures which developers must achieve.

2.34. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 supports modal shift to by requiring new developments to create better connections to adjoining areas and provide more permeable routes. In addition, CAAP Policy 24 seeks to increase and improve connectivity to the wider Central Area, particularly by direct pedestrian routes. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP5 reflects the strategic policies through seeking to improving connectivity, providing direct, overlooked pedestrian routes and prioritising other non-motorised modes.

2.35. **Infrastructure delivery** – relevant strategic policies include:
- JCS Policy INF1 – Approach to infrastructure delivery; and
- CAAP Policy 36 – Infrastructure Delivery.

2.36. JCS policy INF1 and CAAP Policy 36 ensure that new development meets the needs of communities through the provision of infrastructure and facilities. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 reflects the strategic policies by requiring new development to provide infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreation and social facilities.

2.37. Neighbourhood Plan policies OP3 and OP4 support proposals for children’s play space, other green spaces and community facilities. The implementation chapter provides further information by providing a list of priority projects and identifying potential sources of funding, including CIL, planning obligations and other sources.

2.38. The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by the *Review of Northampton’s Development Plan*, in addition to other sources of evidence. Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan is aligned with the strategic policies for the area, providing more detailed policies to address planning matters affecting the neighbourhood. In conclusion, the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area.

**Compatibility with EU obligations**

*Strategic Environmental Assessment*

2.39. In some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan could have significant environmental effects it may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

2.40. Northampton Borough Council undertook a screening assessment of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and prepared a SEA & HRA Screening Report. The Screening Report was published for consultation with the consultation bodies and other technical stakeholders.
2.41. The Council has prepared a SEA & HRA Determination Statement, taking into account the findings of the Screening Report and representations made during consultation. The Determination Statement sets out the Council’s decision in respect of SEA & HRA and will be published for six weeks alongside the publication of the Plan Proposal.

2.42. The Determination Statement concluded that the making of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is not expected to result in likely significant effects on the environment and does not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**Human Rights**

2.43. The Neighbourhood Plan has regard to and is compatible with the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. The main issues for planning in the context of human rights are:

- Right to respect for private and family life: and
- Prohibition of discrimination.

2.44. The housing stock in Spring Boroughs consists almost entirely of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and maisonettes. Through consultation and engagement many residents reported that they and their families are living in overcrowded conditions. In conjunction with this lack of internal space, many families also lacked access to private amenity space where children could play safely. Despite recent improvements works, the poor quality of the stock remains a key issue.

2.45. The Neighbourhood Plan supports family life through providing new housing opportunities for families. The support for the development of family housing with gardens is a key thread running through the neighbourhood plan. Policies OP1 and OP2 establish the principle of such housing, and policies AB1, AB2 and AB3 provide locations for the development and redevelopment of family housing.

2.46. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the regeneration of the Spring Boroughs community in a manner which benefits the community. A key concern arising through consultation and engagement was that vulnerable groups and individuals may be displaced as a result of new development. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan seek to minimise displacement by ensuring new development reflects local housing needs. The housing-related policies in the Neighbourhood Plan (e.g. OP1, OP2, AB1, AB2 and AB3) are informed by the Housing technical paper\(^2\). The paper provided an assessment of the area’s housing needs of the Spring Boroughs community. Due to the objective nature of this assessment, the housing policies do not discriminate against individuals or groups within the Spring Boroughs community.

\(^2\) Submission document reference: EB/H1
2.47. Spring Boroughs experiences high levels of deprivation. Policies OP3 and OP4 seek to provide children’s play areas, other green spaces and community facilities including a new community centre and healthcare facility. Policy AB1 identifies land for employment development. Policy OP5 seeks to improve transport and movement, particularly supporting improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. Through these policies the Neighbourhood Plan improves access to services and facilities for the Spring Boroughs community, including those who are vulnerable or living in deprivation.

2.48. Spring Boroughs is a diverse community. During the consultation stages of plan preparation, diversity monitoring information was collected from respondents. Questionnaire responses were received from a broad mix of individuals of different ages, genders and belonging to different ethnic groups, reflecting the diverse profile of the community. Analysis of this demographic information is presented in the Consultation Statement⁴.

Prescribed condition

Habitats Directive

2.49. Northampton Borough Council undertook a screening assessment to identify whether the ‘making’ of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan would result in likely significant effects on European Sites. A SEA & HRA Screening Report was prepared and published for consultation with the consultation bodies and other technical stakeholders.

2.50. Following publication of the SEA & HRA Screening Report, the Council issued a SEA & HRA Determination Statement which concluded that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not expected to result in likely significant effects on European Sites and that a full Habitats Regulation Assessment is not required.

3. Legal Requirements

Qualifying body


Policies for the development and use of land

3.2. All planning policies in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan relate to the development or use of land and are intended to be used in the determination of planning applications.

3.3. The following policies are plan-wide policies, applicable to the whole of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area:

- OP1: Sustainable Development Principles

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³ Submission Document reference: SD02
• OP2: Family Housing
• OP3: Children’s play space and other green spaces
• OP4: Community Facilities
• OP5: Streets, Movement and Parking

3.4. The following policies are *Area-based policies* and apply to specific locations within the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area:

• AB Policy 1: North West Spring Boroughs
• AB Policy 2: Central Spring Boroughs
• AB Policy 3: South Spring Boroughs

**Plan period**
3.5. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2014 to 2029, as indicated in section 01 *Introduction* of the Plan Proposal.

**Excluded development**
3.6. The policies of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan do not relate to excluded development including county matters (such as mineral extraction and waste development) or Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. Key stakeholders have been consulted throughout the preparation of the plan. No respondents objected to the plan in relation to excluded development.

**Neighbourhood Area**
3.7. The proposed Neighbourhood Plan relates to the designated Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. The plan does not relate to any other Neighbourhood Area.
4. Conclusions

National policy and advice
4.1. In its preparation, the Neighbourhood Plan had regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This is demonstrated through an assessment of individual Neighbourhood Plan policies which found that all policies are broadly consistent with, and actively supports the implementation of, a range of NPPF policies. No Neighbourhood Plan policy was found to conflict with the NPPF.

Sustainable Development
4.2. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan contribute to achieving Sustainable Development. The assessment considered the Neighbourhood Plan policies against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives used during preparation of the CAAP and concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan positively impacts on a range of Sustainability Appraisal topics. No policies were considered to have negative impacts or cause harm.

Strategic policies
4.3. Each proposed Neighbourhood Plan policy achieves general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development plan for the area. The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by a Review of Northampton’s Development Plan throughout its preparation. The assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies (appendix 1) explored the relationship between the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies and the strategic policies of the JCS and CAAP. Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies were found to be broadly aligned with the strategic policies whilst providing further detail in order to address specific planning issues relevant to Spring Boroughs.

4.4. However, Neighbourhood Plan policy AB1: North West Spring Boroughs provides an alternative approach to that which is set out by the strategic policy context. Neighbourhood Plan policy AB1 supports the redevelopment of an existing employment site to provide housing which meets the needs of local people. Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 includes the following measures to ensure it achieves general conformity with strategic policies of the Development Plan:

- Demonstrates that the safeguarded employment site is no longer economically viable;
- Identifies an alternative suitable location for employment development within the Neighbourhood Area; and
- Enables housing-led regeneration of Spring Boroughs.

4.5. A small suite of documents which informed the preparation of Neighbourhood Plan policies (alongside the findings of community consultation) is presented as a supporting Evidence Base.

EU obligations & prescribed condition
4.6. The Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations. Northampton Borough Council prepared and published a SEA & HRA Screening Report and will issue a Determination Statement on publication of the Neighbourhood Plan Proposal. Spring Boroughs Voice
understands that the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan does not require either a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment.

**Other legal requirements**

4.7. The Neighbourhood Plan fulfils all other legal requirements. The Neighbourhood Plan applies to the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area for the period 2014 to 2029. The Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by Spring Boroughs Voice, the designated Neighbourhood Forum for Spring Boroughs. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan do not relate to excluded development and are for the development and use of land.
Appendix 1 – Assessment of policies

The table provides an assessment of individual policies of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. The purpose of the assessment is to demonstrate how each of the policies:

- Has had regard to national policies and advice;
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- Achieves general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan.
Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policy
Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 sets out a positive framework for decision-taking. For Spring Boroughs, the concept of Sustainable Development means the creation of a safe, pleasant and functional environment for families and also includes achieving good design, meeting high environmental standards, better connections and crime prevention, all of which contribute to the quality of life for residents.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 uses a range of ‘Sustainable Development Principles’ which new development must satisfy to ensure the development is sustainable.

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives were developed to test the policies of the CAAP. In the context of the SA objectives, policy OP1 contributes to achieving sustainable development through:

- Reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift and making efficient use of land through enabling new residential development in this centrally located neighbourhood which is close to services, employment and public transport access points;
- Improving community safety and reducing fear of crime through requiring new development to achieve secure by design principles;
- Conserving and enhancing the quality, character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and townscape;
- Ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of the local people;
- Developing a balanced and sustainable population by requiring the development of new family housing;
- Reducing spatial inequalities through increasing the range of housing and improving access to services and infrastructure.

Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policy
JCS - Policy SA: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
Policy S1: The distribution of development;
Policy S3: Scale and distribution of housing development;
Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles;
Policy C1: Changing behaviour and achieving modal shift;
Policy RC1: Delivering community regeneration;
Policy RC2: Community needs;
Policy INF1: Approach to infrastructure delivery;
Policy N1: The regeneration of Northampton; and
Policy N11: Supporting areas of community regeneration.

CAAP:-
Presumption in favour of sustainable development policy;
Policy 16: Central Area Living;
Policy 24: Spring Boroughs;
Policy 36: Infrastructure Delivery.

How the policy achieves general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan
Strategic policies for the area are set out by the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP). Both the JCS and CAAP were prepared in accordance with the NPPF.

JCS policy SA and the CAAP’s Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy reflect the NPPF. Through Policy OP1, the Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of achieving sustainable development through the planning system.

The JCS (Policy S1) concentrates new development, and specifically housing development [through JCS Policy S3] to locations in and adjoining Northampton’s urban area. The CAAP (Policy 16) identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 supports new residential development within Spring Boroughs, prioritising proposals which meet local housing needs and demand.

The JCS (policies RC1, N1 and N11) identifies Spring Boroughs as a deprived community and recognises the importance of the community regeneration of Spring Boroughs. The CAAP (Policy 24) sets out principles for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 sets out a positive framework for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs through the Sustainable Development Principles.

The JCS (Policy S10) sets out Sustainable Development principles which all development proposals must meet. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 provides sustainable development principles which are locally-specific to Spring Boroughs.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 requires new development to create better connections to adjoining areas and provide more permeable routes. This principle supports the JC5 policy C1 by changing travel behaviour and achieving modal shift.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 requires new development to provide infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreation and social facilities. Similarly the JCS (Policies RC2 & INF1) and the CAAP (Policy 36) seeks to ensure that new development meets the needs of communities through the provision of infrastructure and facilities.
6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes

National policy requires Local Plans to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.

The Neighbourhood Plan reflects the intent of the NPPF policy by seeking to meet the need for new homes in Spring Boroughs through policy OP2.

Information on local housing needs was reviewed and a Housing Technical Paper was prepared. In seeking to provide family housing, Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 reflects the findings of the review of technical evidence and community consultation. Proposals for family housing with gardens are particularly encouraged.

Spring Boroughs is characterised by 1 and 2 bedroom flats and suffers from a lack of homes that are suitable for families. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 prioritises the development of family housing to ‘rebalance the housing stock’, thereby ensuring Spring Boroughs offers a range of dwelling types, tenures and sizes to meet local housing needs.

Through ensuring the community’s housing needs are met, the policy is expected to significantly improve the sustainability of the area. Most significantly, the policy is expected to impact on the social dimension of sustainable development such as through reducing deprivation, improving health and wellbeing and balancing the population.

With regard to the CAAP SA objectives, policy OP2 may:
- Develop and maintain a sustainable population structure through the provision of new family housing to meet local housing needs;
- Ensure the housing stock meets the needs of local people;
- Reduce social deprivation, through reducing spatial inequalities and enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs;
- Improving health and well-being through ensuring housing needs are met; and
- Reducing crime and improve community safety by requiring new development to meet Secure by Design principles.

8. Promoting healthy communities

The NPPF recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Neighbourhood Plan policy OP3 supports and encourages new and enhanced, fun and safe children’s play areas in the plan area. Policy OP3 encourages opportunities for improving the environment through community gardening.

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. By supporting the provision of children’s play space and other green spaces, Policy OP3 contributes to achieving sustainable development particularly in relation to social issues such as through improving health and well-being. Such spaces could also benefit the local environment.

In the context of the CAAP SA objectives, policy OP3 may:
- Promote health and well-being by providing opportunities for recreation and sport;
- Deliver ‘Material Assets’ ensuring that infrastructure meets the needs of people; and
- Bring ecological benefits through the provision of green spaces and community gardening.
| 8. Promoting healthy communities | The NPPF indicates that to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP4 reflects national policy through supporting the delivery of community facilities and other projects, including a community centre facility and a new healthcare facility. | Material assets; and Social deprivation. | The 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. Through supporting the provision of community facilities, Neighbourhood Plan policy OP4 is expected to contribute positively to the sustainable development of Spring Boroughs. In the context of the CAAP SA objectives, policy OP4 may:  
- Ensure infrastructure meets the needs of local people;  
- Reduce social deprivation by improving access to local services. | JCS- Policy RC2: Community needs | The JCS (RC2) requires new residential and commercial development to make provision for community facilities and public open space. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP4 accords with the strategic policies through supporting the delivery of community facilities and other infrastructure projects. |
4. Promoting sustainable transport

The NPPF indicates that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP5 accords with national policy through seeking to increase and improve the connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider area, particularly through direct, overlooked pedestrian routes. The policy seeks to reconfigure pedestrian routes, and improve road connections and cycle routes.

| Crime and community safety; Health and wellbeing; and Social deprivation. | 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 St, St Andrew Rd 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. The policy supports the provision of “Home Zones” with restricted speeds within residential areas 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. Taking into account the CAAP SA objectives, the policy is expected to contribute to achieving sustainable development through:

- Reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift through promoting walking and cycling;
- Improving community safety and reducing crime through creating safe pedestrian routes and ‘home zones’;
- Improving health and well-being through encouraging walking and cycling;
- Reducing social deprivation through improving access to services and facilities. |

| JCS- Policy C1: Changing behaviour and achieving modal shift; Policy C5: Enhancing local and neighbourhood connections. |

| CAAP- Policy 9: Pedestrian and cycling movement framework Policy 24: Spring Boroughs |

The JCS (C1) prioritises transport schemes which contribute to change people’s behaviour in transport mode choices. The policy includes a range of measures to achieve behavioural change. Policy C5 seeks to enhance local and neighbourhood connections through improving bus networks and cycle routes, and other measures. The CAAP (policy 9) sets out a Pedestrian and Cycling Movement Framework, identifying key routes on a map and setting out measures which developers must achieve. In addition CAAP Policy 24 seeks to increase and improve connectivity to the wider Central Area, particularly by direct pedestrian routes.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP5 reflects the strategic policies through seeking to improving connectivity, providing direct, overlooked pedestrian routes and prioritising other non-motorised modes.
6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes;

1. Building a strong, competitive economy

National policy requires Local Plans to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. Neighbourhood Plan policy AB1 supports the policy through enabling new housing development in the north west of Spring Boroughs. Land within AB policy 1 is currently allocated for employment use by the CAAP. Whilst the NPPF seeks to build a strong and competitive economy, it suggests planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. A survey of employment sites was undertaken and an Employment Technical paper prepared to inform the policy and demonstrate the limited potential of this area for employment development. To compensate for the loss of employment land, an alternative location is provided nearby (at the ‘Super Sausage’ site). The Housing Technical paper demonstrates that housing-led regeneration is a priority for the area.

Population; Material assets; Social deprivation; Health and wellbeing; and Labour market and economy.

Through ensuring the community’s housing needs are met, the policy is expected to significantly improve the sustainability of the area. Most significantly, the policy is expected to impact on the social dimension of sustainable development such as through reducing deprivation, improving health and wellbeing and balancing the population.

The policy seeks to make better use of existing underused employment land through the development of new homes. To compensate for the loss of employment land, an alternative location is provided nearby (at the ‘Super Sausage’ site). The policy is not expected to cause harm to the economic dimension of sustainable development.

In the context of the CAAP SA Objectives, Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 is expected to achieve sustainable development through:

- Developing and maintaining a sustainable population structure through the provision of new family housing to meet local housing needs;
- Deliver ‘Material Assets’ – ensuring the housing stock meets the needs of local people;
- Reducing social deprivation, through reducing spatial inequalities and enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs;
- Improving health and well-being through ensuring housing needs are met; and
- Creating employment opportunities through identifying land for employment use (the Super Sausage site).

JCS:- Policy S1: The distribution of development;
Policy S3: Scale and distribution of housing development; and
Policy S8 – Distribution of jobs

E1 – Existing employment areas.

CAAP:-
Policy 15: Office and business uses;
Policy 16: Central Area Living; and
Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

The CAAP (Policy 15) safeguards land for employment development, including land at north west Spring Boroughs. JCS policy E1 seeks to retain existing and allocated employment sites in B use classes. JCS Policy E1 permits the change of use of employment sites to other non-employment generating uses where it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer economically viable for employment purposes in the long term, there is a clear conflict with adjoining uses or its release would offer significant benefits to the local area. Similarly CAAP Policy 15 allows some flexibility, enabling redevelopment of the safeguarded employment sites for uses outside the ‘B’ use-class where it can be demonstrated that the loss of employment floor space will be outweighed by meeting the strategic objectives. Strategic Objective 7 (of the CAAP) seeks to Repopulate the Central Area through “substantially increasing the resident population through the redevelopment of redundant industrial areas and the regeneration of Spring Boroughs”.

A Business Survey and Employment Technical Paper forms a part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan and demonstrates that the safeguarded employment site has limited potential for future employment development. In addition to highlighting the merits of other employment sites in the vicinity, the employment technical paper demonstrates that the Super Sausage site provides a realistic alternative location for employment land. The Housing Technical paper demonstrates that housing-led regeneration is a priority in Spring Boroughs.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 achieves general conformity with CAAP Policy 15, as the loss of employment land at north west Spring Boroughs is outweighed by meeting the strategic objective S07, through:

- Repopulating the Central Area;
- Enabling the redevelopment of a redundant industrial areas; and
- Enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs.

Policy AB1 further mitigates the loss of employment land through identifying the “Super Sausage” site as a suitable location for employment development.
6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes  

National policy requires Local Plans to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. Neighbourhood Plan policy AB2 supports the policy through enabling the development or redevelopment of Central Spring Boroughs.

Population; Material assets; Social deprivation; and Health and wellbeing.

Housing is the predominant land-use in central Spring Boroughs. However there is an imbalance within the housing stock in this area, which consists almost entirely of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and maisonettes. Although there have been some improvements works in recent years, the poor quality of the stock remains a key issue. Community engagement has identified many families living in overcrowded conditions. The policy supports the redevelopment of central Spring Boroughs to provide family housing.

Through ensuring the community’s housing needs are met, the policy is expected to significantly improve the sustainability of the area. Most significantly, the policy is expected to impact on the social dimension of sustainable development such as through reducing deprivation, improving health and wellbeing and balancing the population.

With regard to the CAAP SA objectives, policy AB2 may:
- Develop and maintain a sustainable population structure through the provision of new family housing to meet local housing needs;
- Deliver ‘Material Assets’ – ensuring the housing stock meets the needs of local people;
- Reduce social deprivation, through reducing spatial inequalities and enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs; and
- Improving health and well-being through ensuring housing needs are met.

JCS:
Policy RC1: Delivering community regeneration;  
Policy N1: The regeneration of Northampton; and  
Policy N11: Supporting areas of community regeneration.

CAAP:
Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

Neighbourhood Plan policy AB2 seeks to regenerate the central area of Spring Boroughs to improve the quality of homes and rebalance the housing stock through the development of family homes.

The JCS (policies RC1, N1 & N11) recognise the importance of addressing issues of deprivation in Spring Boroughs through community regeneration. Tackling such issues is not only important to the Spring Boroughs community, but to Northampton as a whole.

The CAAP (policy 24) requires Spring Boroughs to be regenerated in a manner which is consistent with a range of development principles. The CAAP (policy 24) encourages a more balanced community in terms of: age, wealth, household size and reducing turnover of residents, through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure.
| AB3: South Spring Boroughs | The NPPF places great weight on preserving the historic environment, encourage authorities to “recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance”.

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB3 is aligned with national policy through creating a ‘heritage gateway’ in the southern part of Spring Boroughs to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area.

In addition, policy AB3 encourages proposals for new development to provide a proportion of affordable family homes to ensure development meet the needs of local people, reflecting the NPPF’s requirement to meet an area’s objectively assessed housing need.

Policy AB3 supports the promotion of healthy communities by providing new children’s play space and green space in South Spring Boroughs. | Archaeology and Cultural Heritage; Health and well-being; Air quality and noise; Landscape and townscape; and Material assets. | Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 contributes to achieving sustainable development through protecting and enhancing heritage assets and their settings. Policy AB3 aims to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area.

In the context of the CAAP SA objectives, Policy AB3 may:

- Protect the fabric and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets through the development of a ‘heritage gateway’;
- Improve health and reduce health inequalities through providing a new children’s play space and green space;
- Facilitate modal shift through encouraging walking and cycling between Marefair and Chalk Lane and preserving historic streets;
- Conserving and enhancing distinctive features through protecting and enhancing heritage assets and historic streets;
- Ensuring the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of local people through ensuring proposals for housing development include a proportion of affordable family housing, and providing a new green space and children’s play space. | JCS:- Policy BN5: The historic environment and landscape

CAAP:- Policy 1: Promoting design excellence; Policy 24: Spring Boroughs

The JCS (BN5) seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets, their settings and landscapes. Development in areas with known historic or heritage significance are required to sustain and enhance the heritage landscape, demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features.

The CAAP (Policy 1) seeks to preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the central area’s heritage assets. The CAAP (Policy 24), in setting development principles for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs, requires developments to enhance the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill United Reform Church.

Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 supports proposals to provide open space, children’s play facilities, residential development and encourages walking and cycling, in a manner which protects and enhances the setting of heritage assets.
Conclusions and summary of findings

Test 1: Is the Neighbourhood Plan policy consistent with national policy? (Basic condition – “Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State”)
The table assesses each individual Neighbourhood Plan policy to identify whether its approach is consistent with national planning policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where the policy is broadly consistent (and does not conflict with) national policy, it is reasonable to conclude that Spring Boroughs Voice has had regard to national policy and advice, satisfying this requirement of the basic conditions.

The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on key issues including housing, open space & recreation and community facilities. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan policies touch on issues relating to sustainability, employment, heritage and sustainable transport. The following national planning policies are considered relevant to the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Policy 1. Building a strong and competitive economy;
- Policy 4. Promoting sustainable transport;
- Policy 6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes;
- Policy 8. Promoting healthy communities; and
- Policy 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development
The Neighbourhood Plan reflects the NPPF’s view that the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 supports the NPPF policy through placing sustainable development at the forefront of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. The Spring Boroughs neighbourhood experiences a range of specific local planning issues e.g. shortage of family housing, lack of community facilities, poor permeability and crime. Addressing such issues is critical to ensuring the sustainability of the area. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 sets out a positive framework for decision-taking and includes a range of ‘Sustainable Development Principles’ which new development must satisfy to ensure it is sustainable.

Policy 1. Building a strong and competitive economy
Land identified by Area-Based Policy 1 is currently allocated for employment use by the CAAP. Whilst the NPPF seeks to build a strong and competitive economy, it suggests planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 is consistent with the national policy though releasing underused employment land for housing development and creating new opportunities for employment development at the ‘Super Sausage’.

Policy 4. Promoting sustainable transport
The NPPF indicates that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OPS accords with the national policy through increasing and improving the connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider area, particularly through direct, overlooked pedestrian routes. The policy seeks to reconfigure pedestrian routes, and improve road connections and cycle routes. Similarly, Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 seeks to create better connections to adjoining areas, overcoming the barriers of busy roads and creating more permeable routes. In addition Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB3 supports development proposals which encourage walking and cycling between Marefair and Chalk Lane.

Policy 6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes
National policy requires Local Plans to meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area. Spring Boroughs suffers a range of housing issues, including poor quality stock and overcrowding. The vast majority of homes in Northampton are 1 and 2 bedroom flats. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the NPPF policy by creating opportunities for new housing development in NW Spring Boroughs (policy AB1) and within the Heritage Gateway (policy AB3). Policy AB2 supports the redevelopment and regeneration of central Spring Boroughs to provide new housing development. Policies OP1, OP2, AB1, AB2 and AB3 seeks to address local housing needs by encouraging new development to provide a high proportion of affordable housing and homes with gardens which are suitable for families.

Policy 8. Promoting healthy communities
The NPPF indicates that to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the NPPF policy through supporting the delivery of new and enhanced children’s play areas, new community facilities (including a new community centre facility and healthcare facility) and seeks to improve the environment through community gardening (Policies OP3 & OP4).

Policy 12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
The NPPF places great weight on preserving the historic environment. In seeking to create a ‘Heritage Gateway’ which gives residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area, Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB3 is consistent with the NPPF policy. In addition, Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 requires new development to protect and enhance cultural and natural heritage assets.

Conclusion
The assessment of individual policies indicates that the Neighbourhood Plan is broadly consistent with, and actively supports the implementation of, a range of NPPF policies. No Neighbourhood Plan policy was found to conflict with the NPPF. The findings of the assessment demonstrate that in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan Spring Boroughs Voice had regard to the national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
Test 2: Does the NP policy contribute to achieving Sustainable Development? (Basic condition - The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development)

The table assesses each individual Neighbourhood Plan policy to identify whether it contributes to achieving Sustainable Development. The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Throughout is preparation the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) was subject to a process of sustainability appraisal (SA). A range of objectives were produced for the purpose of appraising CAAP policies, which are categorised into a range of topics. In testing the Neighbourhood Plan policies, the assessment explored how the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to achieving sustainable development by having regard to the CAAP SA topics and objectives. Where a policy positively supports the CAAP SA topics and objectives it is considered reasonable to conclude that the policy contributes to achieving sustainable development. The findings of the assessment are summarised below:

**Air quality and noise**

Policies OP1, OP5 and AB3 encourage walking and cycling through a range of measure. By reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift, the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to improving air quality and reducing noise.

**Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**

Policy AB3 supports the development of a ‘heritage gateway’ to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area. The policy contributes to achieving sustainable development through protecting the fabric and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

**Biodiversity, flora and fauna**

Policy OP3 seeks to provide new children’s play spaces and other green spaces. The policy may contribute to achieving sustainable development by bringing ecological benefits through the provision of green spaces and community gardening.

**Crime and community safety**

Policies OP1 and OP2 require proposals for new development to achieve ‘Secure by Design’ principles. Policy OP5 seeks to improve the safety of pedestrian routes and create ‘home zones’ which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists. The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to achieving sustainable development through improving community safety and reducing fear of crime.

**Health and wellbeing**

Policy OP3 supports health and well-being by providing opportunities for recreation and sport through the provision of children’s play areas and other green spaces. Housing-related policies, including OP1, OP2, AB1, AB2 and AB3 improve health and well-being through ensuring housing needs are met.

**Labour market and economy**

Policy AB1 supports the labour market and economy through identifying the Super Sausage site for employment development.

**Landscape and townscape**

Policies OP1 and AB3 conserve and enhance the quality, character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and townscape through protecting heritage assets and their settings.

**Material assets**

The purpose of the ‘material assets’ topic is to ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of local people. The neighbourhood plan contributes to achieving this through making provision for new housing development (through policies AB1, AB2 and AB3) and new play areas, other green spaces and community facilities (through policies OP3 and OP4). Policies OP1 and OP2 supports proposals for family housing and affordable housing, to ensure that housing development meets local housing needs.

**Population**

Housing is the predominant land-use in Spring Boroughs. However there is an imbalance within the housing stock in this area, which consists almost entirely of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and maisonettes. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to redress this imbalance and develop and maintain a sustainable population structure through supporting proposals which provide new family housing to meet local housing needs (through policies OP1 and OP2).

**Social deprivation**

The Neighbourhood Plan reduces social deprivation through reducing spatial inequalities. The plan enables the regeneration of Spring Boroughs by identifying locations for new development through policies AB1, AB2 and AB3. The Neighbourhood Plan ensures that regeneration benefits the Spring Boroughs community by shaping future development through the sustainable development principles and encouraging the development of family housing to meet local housing needs. The Neighbourhood Plan reduces spatial inequalities through improving access to services and facilities by improving connectivity and reducing physical barriers in policy OP5, and delivers new children’s play areas, other green spaces and community facilities in policies OP3 and OP4.

**Conclusions**

The Neighbourhood Plan positively impacts on a range of Sustainability Appraisal topics. No policies were considered to have negative impacts or cause harm. It is therefore concluded that the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan contribute to achieving sustainable development.
Test 3: Does the NP policy achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan? Basic Condition General conformity with strategic policies of the development plan

Strategic policies for the area are set out by the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP). Both the JCS and CAAP were prepared in accordance with the NPPF. A review of Northampton’s Development Plan was undertaken and presented as a ‘technical evidence-base report’ alongside the Neighbourhood Plan. The review of the Development Plan found that most JCS policies and most CAAP policies have strategic status. The table assesses each individual Neighbourhood Plan policy against relevant policies of the JCS and CAAP to determine the extent to which the Neighbourhood Plan policies achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. The finding of the assessment are summarised in relation to relevant topics.

### Sustainable Development – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policies SA & S10 and CAAP Policy ‘Presumption in favour of sustainable development’

- JCS Policy SA – Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- JCS Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles; and
- CAAP Presumption in favour of sustainable development

As set out in the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development. JCS policy SA and the CAAP’s Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Policy reflect the NPPF’s presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance of achieving sustainable development through Policy OP1. The policy sets out a range of Sustainable Development Principles which all new developments must achieve. The principles build complement those Sustainable Development Principles in JCS Policy S10, providing a local interpretation to address specific issues affecting the Spring Boroughs neighbourhood. As the first policy in the plan, OP1 places sustainable development at the forefront of the Neighbourhood Plan, providing an overarching positive framework for decision-making.

### Regenerating Communities policies – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policies RC1, RC2, N1 & N11 and CAAP Policy 24

- JCS Policy RC1 – Delivering community regeneration;
- JCS Policy RC2 – Community needs;
- JCS Policy N1 – The regeneration of Northampton;
- JCS Policy N11 – Supporting areas of community regeneration; and
- CAAP Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs.

The JCS (policies RC1, N1 & N11) recognise the importance of addressing issues of deprivation in Spring Boroughs through community regeneration. Tackling such issues is not only important to the Spring Boroughs community, but to the regeneration of Northampton as a whole. The CAAP (policy 24) identifies that Spring Boroughs suffers deprivation and seeks to regenerate Spring Boroughs in a manner which is consistent with a range of development principles, whilst recognising community’s commitment to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. The development principles relate to a range of matters including housing, employment and the historic environment. These issues are developed further through the Neighbourhood Plan in a manner which satisfies the requirement for general conformity.

The strategic policies provide a strong justification for Spring Boroughs Voice to plan for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs in a manner which meets the needs of the community.

### Housing – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policies S1, S3, H1 & H2 and CAAP Policies 16 & 24

- JCS Policy S1 – The distribution of development;
- JCS Policy S3 – Scale and distribution;
- JCS Policy H1 – Housing density and mix and type of dwellings;
- JCS Policy H2 – Affordable housing;
- CAAP Policy 16 – Central area living;
- CAAP Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs

The JCS (Policy S1) concentrates new development, and specifically housing development (through JCS Policy S3) to locations in and adjoining Northampton’s urban area. The CAAP (Policy 16) identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development. Neighbourhood Plan policies AB1, AB2 and AB3 identify locations for housing development in Spring Boroughs.

The JCS (Policy H1) requires new developments to provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures cater for different accommodation needs including the needs of older people and vulnerable groups. The CAAP (Policy 24) recognises that Spring Boroughs suffers a range of housing issues and encourages a more balanced community in terms of: age, wealth, household size and reducing turnover of residents, through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 prioritises proposals which contribute toward rebalancing the housing stock to ensure Spring Boroughs offers a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to meet local housing needs. Proposals for affordable family housing with private outside space are particularly encouraged by Policy OP2.

JCS policy H2 requires development proposals which exceed a threshold of 15 or more units to provide affordable housing of at least a 35% proportion of the total number of dwellings to be delivered on the site. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP2 encourages proposals which provide affordable family housing with private outdoor space. Neighbourhood Plan Policies AB1, AB2 and AB3 also encourage developments which provide a high proportion of affordable housing but do not alter the policy requirement set out by JCS Policy H2.
Economy – relevant strategic policies S8, E1 and CAAP Policies 15 & 24

- Policy S8 – Distribution of jobs;
- E1 – Existing employment areas;
- CAAP Policy 15: Office and business uses; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

JCS policy S8 concentrates jobs growth in the principal urban area of Northampton. The CAAP (Policy 16) identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development. However CAAP Policy 24 recognises the potential to incorporate a wider range of uses in the area, particularly increased employment opportunities. The CAAP (Policy 15) safeguards land at north west Spring Boroughs for employment development. The strategic policies of the Development Plan seek to retain existing employment sites in employment use. However those strategic policies enable the release of existing employment land where specific criteria are met.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 seeks to redevelop a safeguarded employment site to provide housing. In order to release the employment land for housing development, AB1 satisfies the criteria of the strategic policies (namely JCS Policy E1 and CAAP Policy 15) by:

- Demonstrating that the safeguarded employment site is no longer economically viable;
- Identifying an alternative suitable location for employment development within the Neighbourhood Area; and
- Enabling housing-led regeneration of Spring Boroughs.

A Business Survey and Employment Technical Paper forms a part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan and demonstrates that the safeguarded employment site has limited potential for future employment development and is considered no longer economically viable for employment purposes. In addition to highlighting the merits of other employment sites in the vicinity, the employment technical paper demonstrates that the Super Sausage site provides a realistic alternative location for employment land. The Housing Technical paper demonstrates that housing-led regeneration is a priority in Spring Boroughs.

It is therefore concluded that Neighbourhood Plan Policy AB1 achieves general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development through making provision for employment development at the “Super Sausage” site as an alternative suitable location for employment development and through demonstrating that the loss of employment land at north west Spring Boroughs is outweighed by meeting the strategic objective SO7 by:

- Repopulating the Central Area;
- Enabling the redevelopment of a redundant industrial area; and
- Enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs.

Built and natural environment – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policies S10, BN5 and CAAP Policies 1, 4 & 24

- JCS Policy S10: Sustainable Development Principles;
- JCS Policy BN5: The historic environment and landscape;
- CAAP Policy 1: Promoting design excellence;
- CAAP Policy 4: Green Infrastructure; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

The JCS (Policy S10) sets out Sustainable Development principles which all development proposals must meet, including requirements to “protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings” and “promote the creation of green infrastructure networks, enhance biodiversity and reduce the fragmentation of habitats”. CAAP Policy 1 sets out design principles, requiring new developments to preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the central area’s heritage assets. Similarly Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 provides sustainable development principles which are locally-specific to Spring Boroughs and supports development that “protects and enhance ... social, built, cultural and natural heritage assets of Spring Boroughs, especially linked to the castle sites and surroundings”.

CAAP Policy 4 requires development within Northampton’s Central Area to deliver and/or contribute to the provision of green infrastructure. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP3 supports new and enhanced play areas and encourages opportunities for community gardening, particularly at gateway locations. In addition, Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 supports proposals to provide open space in south Spring Boroughs.

The JCS (BN5) seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets, their settings and landscapes. Development in areas with known historic or heritage significance are required to sustain and enhance the heritage landscape, demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features. The CAAP (Policy 24), in setting development principles for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs, requires developments to enhance the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill United Reform Church. Neighbourhood Plan policy AB3 accords with the strategic policies of the Development Plan by supporting proposals which provide open space, children’s play facilities, residential development and encourages walking and cycling, in a manner which protects and enhances the setting of heritage assets.
Connections – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policies C1 & C5 and CAAP Policies 9 and 24

- JCS Policy C1: Changing behaviour and achieving modal shift;
- JCS Policy C5: Enhancing local and neighbourhood connections;
- CAAP Policy 9: Pedestrian and cycling movement framework; and
- CAAP Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.

The JCS Policy C1 prioritises transport schemes which contribute to change people’s behaviour in transport mode choices and includes a range of measures to achieve behavioural change. JCS Policy C5 seeks to enhance local and neighbourhood connections through improving bus networks and cycle routes, and other measures. CAAP Policy 9 sets out a Pedestrian and Cycling Movement Framework, identifying key routes on a map and setting out measures which developers must achieve.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 supports modal shift to by requiring new developments to create better connections to adjoining areas and provide more permeable routes. In addition, CAAP Policy 24 seeks to increase and improve connectivity to the wider Central Area, particularly by direct pedestrian routes. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP5 reflects the strategic policies through seeking to improving connectivity, providing direct, overlooked pedestrian routes and prioritising other non-motorised modes.

Infrastructure delivery – relevant strategic policies include JCS Policy INF1 and CAAP Policy 36

- JCS Policy INF1 – Approach to Infrastructure Delivery; and
- CAAP policy 36 – Infrastructure Delivery.

JCS policy INF1 and CAAP Policy 36 ensure that new development meets the needs of communities through the provision of infrastructure and facilities. Neighbourhood Plan Policy OP1 reflects the strategic policies by requiring new development to provide infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreation and social facilities.

Neighbourhood Plan policies OP3 and OP4 support proposals for children’s play space, other green spaces and community facilities. The implementation chapter provides further information by providing a list of priority projects and identifying potential sources of funding, including CIL, planning obligations and other sources.

Conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan was informed by the Review of Northampton’s Development Plan, in addition to other sources of evidence. Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan is aligned with the strategic policies for the area, providing more detailed policies to address planning matters affecting the neighbourhood. In conclusion, the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan for the area.