Northampton Local Plan (Part 2)

Comments Form and Guidance Notes

Options Consultation Paper

and Sustainability Appraisal

Northampton Borough Council

September 2016
Consultation Guidance Notes

- Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Options Consultation
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Options Consultation Paper

Northampton Borough Council is inviting your comments on the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Options consultation and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal.

This follows the Scope and Issues consultation which was undertaken between April and June 2016. It focuses in more detail on some of the key issues in preparing the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) and will form the second formal stage of the local plan preparation process.

The Options consultation paper sets out a vision for Northampton for 2029, the objectives which the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) will be seeking to achieve and the strategy that will underpin future development and regeneration activity across the Borough. It sets out some of the key challenges that the new Local Plan (Part 2) will need to address, focusing on the delivery of growth, particularly the challenges of delivering new homes, economic prosperity and the future role of our centres, in a sustainable and deliverable way. The strategy sets out how the Council can plan positively for the new homes and jobs, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic assets within the borough. The vision, objectives and strategy are informed by the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) and responses to the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Scope and Issues consultation.

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) 2013 contains development plan policies for Northampton town centre and its immediate surrounding area. Some policies have now been superseded by recent development and/or changes in legislation, such as recent changes affecting permitted development rights, and need updating. It is proposed that the new Local Plan (Part 2) will contain those CAAP policies which remain up to date and any CAAP policies which need updating. Once adopted, the new Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) will supersede the Central Area Action Plan.

The accompanying Sustainability Appraisal considers the likely significant effects that the Local Plan may have on various environmental, economic and social factors.

The consultation period runs from Wednesday 21 September to 5pm on the 02 November 2016.

Where can I view the consultation documents?

You can view the consultation documents in the following ways:

- On the Council’s consultation portal at http://northampton.gov.uk/localplan
  This system also allows you to submit comments.
- At the Guildhall One Stop Shop, Northampton Borough Council, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE
• At all libraries in Northampton Borough

If you do not have access to a computer, you can request paper copies by:
telephoning 01604 837326

Or by writing to

Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Options Consultation, Planning Policy, Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning Directorate, Northampton Borough Council, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE

If you would like copies of consultation documents in translated or other formats please refer to the Council's website at:

http://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200041/equality_and_diversity/1309/interpreting

How can I comment?

You can comment on the consultation documents in one of the following ways:

Online: http://northampton.gov.uk/localplan OR

Complete the comments form which you can download from the website. By using the comments form, it helps us ensure we have all the correct information to register and process your comments and keep you informed. Once completed you can do the following:

Email: planningpolicy@northampton.gov.uk OR

Post: Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Options Consultation, Planning Policy, Regeneration, Enterprise & Planning Directorate, Northampton Borough Council, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE (using the comments form available on the website)

All the above can be found by accessing the following link:

http://northampton.gov.uk/localplan

Responses should be submitted by 5pm on Wednesday 02 November 2016.

Please note that comments submitted to the Issues Consultation do not need to be sent again.

How will my comments be used?

The Council will consider your comments in progressing work on the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2). Comments received will be published on the Council’s consultation portal in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
Responses will be reported to the Council’s Cabinet Advisory Group, which advises on the preparation of the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2). They will also be reported in summary to the Council’s Cabinet.

If you are organising a petition or intend to, or have signed one, it must be submitted by the deadline and be accompanied by the name and contact details of the petition organiser. The Council will only register the petition organiser on its Local Plan consultation database and future notifications will only be sent to the petition organiser. The number of signatories to the petition will be recorded.

Following the consultation, a feedback report will be produced setting out the main issues raised. Consultation responses will be used to inform preparation of the following:

- Draft Northampton Local Plan (Part 2)
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Local Plan (Part 2)

**Fair Processing Notice issued under The Data Protection Act 1998**

All observations, objections and supporting comments submitted to Northampton Borough Council are public documents. Therefore the information you submit in response to consultations on the Local Plan will be publicly available as part of the consultation responses and made available for any member of the public to view in person. This may include your name and the comment made. Specific personal contact data such as your email address, signature, postal address and telephone number will not be published on the Northampton Borough Council website but retained for contact purposes only by the planning department at Northampton Borough Council.

In submitting a comment on the Local Plan you agree for your information to be held and processed for the purpose(s) and in the way detailed above.

If you have any questions, please contact us by email at: planningpolicy@northampton.gov.uk or by telephone: 01604 837326.
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Some handwritten notes: 
- Activists of past 50 years are no politicians provide work for party money + schemes like Brothers + System.
Question 1 - Do you have any comments on the vision for the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2)?

Too many political constraints/restrictions being applied by local council politicians will very little knowledge of business starts and the hi-tech/creative industries in this country. The Council should consult more with local business people on how to create the right environment for business starts-up and growth from major entreprenuers who have succeeded through very serious difficult times. (See Richard Branson and James Dyson)

Question 2 - Do you think there are other objectives that should be included?

The local electorate should have a greater say and input on decisions made by councillors within the Guildhall. More jobs should be given to the small and local construction industry businesses which are more often than not, family run businesses which are struggling to survive. The Victoria Centre in Nottingham should be replicated onto the vacant yard area of Castle Station in the Town Centre. Central car parking, ditach businesses and one and two bed housing all on one site will solve a considerable number of problems in one go.
Question 3 - Do you agree that we should apply a 20% housing land supply buffer to our housing land supply?

Currently existing empty properties in this town should be brought back into occupancy first, whether in need of compulsory purchase and conversion into HMOs for student "shrink". Brownfield sites should be built for four-bed rooms to deal with the loneliness crisis and real need for properties (National Survey results).

Question 4 – Do you agree with a residential density of 40 dwellings per hectare outside of the sustainable urban extensions, with higher densities in the town centre, other centres and along key transport corridors?

1+2 bed flats to be three-bedroomed as compulsory on brownfield sites in T/A. Property estate to be built on these 1st floor before building on outbuildings and already designated SUEs. "Hampshire Housing Board" housing estates should be recognised as they are being built on prime green belt for planning only purposes. Current villagers are seeing their properties seriously devalued by externally based developers who just don’t about rural lifestyles.
Question 5 – In allocating sites for housing development, do you agree that we should give priority to sites that can be delivered in the short term?

Yes, brownfield sites within town centres are better. New empty office units above current retail outlets, local building firms should be awarded specific contracts. (St Peter's St, 1-bedroom flat)

NHC should concentrate to "view" upon the existing "Built Environment" before building any more."New Housing" upon known Green Belt areas.

Question 6 – What other actions would help new homes to be built and completed more quickly on the identified sites for housing development?

A competent Northamptonian should be employed as a Senior Project Officer (currently being advertised by NHC) to take charge for specific new builds on brownfield sites. First of all, the designated sites on the outskirts of town (St Peter's, Hardingstone, Mounts, Collingtree, Upton) should be cancelled and re-issued until brownfield Town Centre developments have been completed (lower cost, lower building firm techniques) have been properly orchestrated. Build-up works not outwardly. Von nicer to be kept or an academic institution in order to supply skilled labour for redeveloping the local economy on a much grander scale.
Question 7 – Do you agree that we should identify sites for specialist housing?

The discontinued ‘middle school sites’ BCC policies from mid 1970s to mid 1980s; to be converted into 1+2 bed flat units and major allotments to tackle climate change link to ‘extreme weather risks’ for food growing on non-allotments sites within housing estates. i.e. Emmanuel Middle School, Blackthorn’s designated middle school site should be managed by ‘Main sheds’ in form of near net sufficient + modernised static caravans. No pitched housing whatever by BCC.

Question 8 – Do you agree that we should identify sites specifically for the provision of older persons housing?

"Seniors only Villages" should be built within known existing housing or taken and should not attract criminality. i.e. St. Thomas housing area. "Retire neat dream" should include access to allotments in order to deal with increased levels of physical activity and to better young women in self sufficiency. Situated near academies.
Question 9 – Should allocations for general housing include a proportion of smaller market dwellings (1 and 2 bed)?

Specific allocations have to be made for 1+2 bed flats within the town centre in order to increase housing density - no car parking allowed at all - Local industry has UB within easy walking distance so Victorian era shoe factories + working housing. Several known sites already exist but NBL has not considered them (Mike Key @ NPL already notified). Empty office units in St Michaels Rd can be brought back into usage by entrepreneur/developers given challenges alone.

Question 10 – Should the plan specify a threshold or proportion of serviced plots to ensure the delivery of custom-build and self-build plots?

Only four specific "Eco-Friendly Build" on edge of town, High density plots in current, existing Victorian era Estates in Town Centre.

No building within known SPS sites as they are currently "unsuitable for purpose" ie flood sites + SSSI protection. Modified large static caravans which can be situated into other county licensed "caravan sites" ie Wilby, Bingham Caravan and Billing Aquadrome built by Banks Burton Caravan firm - local builder gets the business.
Question 11 – Do you agree that there is demand for more small scale office space, especially in the town centre?

Yes, I do, on condition that central HMCo enforced business rates are dropped dramatically in order to attract start-ups & SMEs in IT & creative arts to a realistic affordable level i.e. £500 pa. MAX for two calendar years. By properly utilising the hard
regen try and compulsory purchase orders for IT
creative media companies to inhabit under right term
the Town Centre will be properly restored. All the Town's
will need various help from NSP/ SOMP & Town Centre
BID organisations.

Question 12 – Do you think that dated, low value office stock in the town centre is oversupplied?

Yes. Conversion costs or estimated by specialist local
town construction companies may be off-putting for
some IT & creative arts media start-ups along with
apprenticeships funding at £10k-15kpa for specialist
apprenticeships £12.5kpa for rail technician. The office units have to be brought up to date (via e.g.) with
respect to technologies and aimed primarily at high tech
creative arts for occupancy purposes. Apprentices have to
be taken on in all new business.

NB the large attitude towards the tech start-ups being
in the town centre instead of being within restricted by back-
bedrooms and garden sheds.
Question 13 – Do you agree that outside the town centre, some medium and larger office allocations should be released to provide small or medium sized industrial and distribution uses to help meet demand for these uses?

There are already enough empty office units in Town Centre and the lack of high business rates against the small high street shops. The financial incentive for small businesses to rent office space is significant. The success of Richard Branson’s Virgin offices is a testament to the demand for such spaces. There are numerous empty industrial units within existing industrial estates which were originally planned by Northampton Development Corporation in the 1960s and 1970s. There is no need to build brand new buildings until the existing ones are fully utilised.

Question 14 – In demonstrating that existing employment sites have been actively marketed before they are considered for release to other uses, should active marketing be required to be undertaken for a minimum period of 12 months or 24 months?

The marketing of properties period should start from a known date of leaving by current occupiers in order to maintain occupancy for the minimum period required for prospective new occupiers. Ideally, properties change of use require occupiers from the business sector, as the private sector standards. There is a need to apply throughout the Town with a known business driver in NCC officers in each marketing team. The marketing team has to be much more proactive in attracting external companies, yet it would preferably concentrate upon existing businesses within acceptable and the under 25’s involved in apprenticeships. NCC staff attitudes have to change towards the private sector standards.
Question 15 – Do you agree that we should allow more flexibility in some smaller centres for other uses to be introduced?

Multi-purpose/multi-use centres here to be the norm with better time flexibility of users and groups concerned. Planning invited with preferably one person in overall control of the whole thing - school day renegotiation, consistent management of sites/areas etc. by specialists within specific industries. No political interference in any way. More flexibility within market sections led by private sectors, bodies who can react faster than public sector bodies i.e. NBC & WBC.

Question 16 – Do you agree that we should review the secondary retail frontages policy, which restricts non-retail uses in some sections of frontage, to allow greater flexibility for non-retail uses in some areas?

Hi tech business above retail outlets of live above shops practices of 19th + 20th. No car parking allowed, people in line within Town Centre increases footfall for all retail outlets. A four man team to be within total control of whole process of finding the empty units and filling them in the right way with possible modification where necessary. Key reference point within NBC. Set to dominate Town's future development in next 10-20 years. Apply same technique to NHS 'bed blocking problem'.
Question 17 – Do you think that within the town centre, some of the medium and larger sized office allocations are oversupplied?

"Belgrade House can have open plan offices for hi-tech & creative arts/media companies with big office units. SME other regulations apply for shared premises for start-ups. Numerous empty units currently exist for start-ups but business rates are far too high - putting for entrepreneurship. The area of larger based companies within the town centre is vast. NLC has to concentrate upon SME's and entrepreneurs who are taking up their own businesses. Apprentices and trainees have to be based within Belgrade House and take the remaining five floors."

Question 18 – Are there any other Development Management policies that you think should be included in the Northampton Local Plan (Part 2)?

"A keen Londoner should be employed as a Senior Project Officer/ Business & Enterprise Mgr for some years to come and can allocate 'work areas' for the hi-tech/IT/SMEs which are to be in shared. The planned 500+ for the outskirt of town for new housing estates should be cancelled immediately with broad new housing being placed within reowned brownfield sites towards the Town Centre. Currently empty/unused (old) unused properties should be made habitable first and foremost (new building if checked/thorough) that can then be outwards providing the fill the gaps."

"First before greenfield when one to be built upon."
Northampton Local Plan (Part 2)

Consultation On The Sustainability Appraisal of the Options Consultation Paper

When preparing a Local Plan, the Council is legally required to undertake an environmental appraisal of its proposed plans and policies, as well as a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). There is a requirement to consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of the policies in the Local Plan.

Question 19 - Do you have any comments on the Sustainability Appraisal of the Options Consultation Paper?

Please identify the page, paragraph number(s), table or appendix within the Sustainability Appraisal to which each of your comments applies.

The Council has to listen to its electorate who are more in contact with realistic business needs and requirements. They are. The business rates on properties for entrepreneurs and SMEs have to be less than £12,000 whether retail outlets or the office units above ground floor retail units within the Borough limits of Market Harborough. This will cause businesses and customers to increase full footfall and buying options to change quite dramatically within town centre locations. As far as the environment is concerned, the green spaces within the Borough have to be treated with a Victorian attitude towards agriculture and landscaping. All hedge rows have to be manually hedged down and sprayed by tractor added on units in order to reduce costs and hours of work. All hedge row work has to be manually in terms of that indigenous wildlife is plants and animal, one property looked after with regard to future prospects. The Upton Medieval Village can be properly rebuilt as a living History Project and future tourism attraction through a "Time Team" Project, which have already occurred within this County in the past 10 years. I have to be involved in all such projects.