

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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Report Originator	Head of Development Services	Fwd Plan Ref No:	
Wards Affected	All	5 July 2017	
Title	SITE SPECIFIC PART 2 LOCAL PLAN – RURAL AREA		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the initial draft text covering the Rural Area, for inclusion in the emerging Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan; and

For Members to comment on the draft text covering the Rural Area (outlined in Section 3).

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2) will form part of the statutory North Northamptonshire Development Plan. The Development Plan, as it relates to Kettering Borough, will consist of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Part 1 Local Plan) adopted July 2016; the Kettering Borough Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan; the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan (July 2011); and any made Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.2 The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides a set of strategic planning policies for Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough Borough Councils, and East Northamptonshire District Council. Whereas, the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan (SSP2) will provide local planning policies to cover Kettering Borough, and will include the identification of sites for housing, employment, recreation and other land uses.
- 2.3 The housing targets for Kettering Borough have already been determined through the JCS, and form the basis for the distribution of housing for each of the four towns and rural area. The housing requirement for the rural area for the plan period 2011 - 2031 is 480 dwellings.
- 2.4 Members will recall a report was considered on 19th April 2017, (Minutes 16.PP.34 refers), providing an update on the assessment of housing sites within the various villages. The first part of the report presented at the meeting sets out the expected outstanding rural housing requirements as at 1st April 2016, discounting housing completions and commitments (sites with planning permission), and a windfall allowance. This resulted in a residual requirement to allocate land for at least 143 dwellings to meet the JCS requirement. A revised update is set out in Table 1 below, which provides the requirement as at 1st April 2017. This is now at least 140 dwellings.

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Table 1: Housing numbers requirements 2011-2031 (base date: 1st April 2017)

Settlement/ Category	JCS requirement 2011-2031	Completions 2011-17	Commitments 2011-17*	Residual JCS requirement	Windfall allowance**	Residual JCS requirement up to 2031
Rural Area	480	146	54	280	140	140

* Commitments include sites with planning permission/ resolution to grant planning permission/ sites currently under construction.

** Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

- 2.5 At this same meeting, Members agreed a number of housing sites for inclusion as draft housing allocations in the full draft plan which is to be consulted on. However, in the villages of Broughton, Cranford, Geddington, Newton and Stoke Albany it was agreed that prior to concluding on the suitability of these sites for allocation, further work was required on a number of outstanding matters relating to some particular sites. Since this meeting, officers have been progressing with this work, in consultation with statutory undertakers but there are still some matters outstanding in relation to technical surveys and other information required (explained further under Section 3); so it is not possible to bring these sites back to Members at this stage. These sites will be reported back with recommendations as soon as possible.
- 2.6 Officers are, however, now able to present a draft chapter of the emerging SSP2 which covers the rural area. This is further explained under Section 3 of this report.

Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.7 As previously reported, four parishes have currently been designated as Neighbourhood Plan areas. These are Broughton, Mawsley, Great Cransley and Pytchley. It is important to re-iterate that at this stage in the preparation of the SSP2, and given that the neighbourhood plans are still working their way towards submission to the Council, it is considered prudent to retain those sites still being considered for housing allocations in these villages and to cover other policy designations. This is until such time as there is a clear understanding that a Neighbourhood Plan would be made (i.e. been through a successful examination process) in those villages affected.
- 2.8 Relevant sections for these particular villages have, therefore, been completed and included in the Rural Area chapter, but recognising that in the case of Broughton in particular, a draft neighbourhood plan has been published for consultation and a revised draft is due to be submitted to Kettering Borough Council later this summer. The draft neighbourhood plan will be subject to a further round of public consultation which is arranged by the Council. Ultimately a Referendum pending a successful independent examination of the document will need to take place to formally have the plan 'made'. Officers will continue to track its progress towards reaching these milestones, in order to ensure there is a continued and appropriate relationship with the emerging SSP2; especially with

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regards to those housing sites and other policy designations which are currently being considered for inclusion.

3. RURAL AREA CHAPTER

Overarching Joint Core Strategy Policies covering the Rural Areas

- 3.1 The JCS provides an urban-focussed strategy within North Northamptonshire in which the bulk of development is to be directed where it will support urban regeneration; be most accessible to jobs, shops and services; and make most efficient use of existing and new infrastructure/ services and of previously developed land. The JCS aims to ensure that development in the villages is focussed on meeting locally arising needs and aspirations rather than significant inward migration, which is directed to more sustainable locations at the Growth Towns followed by the Market Towns.
- 3.2 In following the localism approach of national planning policy in the rural areas the JCS does not assign any of the villages within Kettering Borough with a specific housing requirement and, instead, provides for a simple and flexible framework within which Part 2 Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans can consider more detailed settlement hierarchies and the spatial strategies for the rural area. This follows the previous 2008 adopted Core Spatial Strategy approach on the rural areas. The diversity of villages within North Northamptonshire in terms of their scale, character, development opportunities and proximity to the Growth Towns and Market Towns means that housing requirements are to be determined locally rather than through the strategic plan of the JCS.
- 3.3 In summary, Policy 11 of the JCS specifies that development in the rural areas will be limited to that required to support a prosperous rural economy or to meet arising need which cannot be met more sustainably at a nearby larger settlement. Small scale infill development will be permitted on suitable sites within villages. Part 2 Local Plans and/ or Neighbourhood Plans may identify sites within or adjoining villages to meet the rural housing requirements identified in the JCS (i.e. 480 dwellings in the plan period between 2011 and 2031). Other than small scale infilling or 'rural exceptions' schemes, development above these requirements will be resisted unless agreed through the Part 2 Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans to meet a particular local need or opportunity.
- 3.4 The JCS is clear that other than small scale infilling (Policy 11 – The Network of Urban and Rural Areas) or rural exceptions schemes (Policy 13 – Rural Exceptions), levels of housing development in excess of the identified requirements for the Rural Areas will only be permitted where tested and supported through Part 2 Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. These plans should also identify the phasing of individual housing sites in the rural areas to ensure that development opportunities are not exhausted early in the plan period.

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- 3.5 The JCS also makes clear that strong development management will be required to ensure that development pressures are not diverted to villages if development at the Growth Towns and Market Towns is slower than planned.
- 3.6 In line with national planning policy, the JCS looks to strictly manage development in the open countryside, in order to safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside to maintain distinctive and separate settlements by ensuring that development does not result in coalescence. Some small rural settlements with a dispersed built form may be designated as open countryside, where development will be strictly limited.

Relevant Background Papers for the SSP2

- 3.7 The Rural Area chapter makes reference to a number of Background Papers which have been prepared as an evidence base to inform the emerging SSP2. These are as follows. Copies of the documents have been made available for inspection in the Member's Room.

1) Rural Masterplanning Report (February 2012) – This report provides the evidence base for preparing detailed policies in the rural area. The work took a holistic look at each of the villages' needs, aspirations, capacity for future development, opportunities for improvement and their capacity for future development and, crucially, to ensure that any new development in villages respects and enhances the qualities of that village which makes it special. The report identified a set of suggested development principles to be applied to development in rural areas, as well as a set of village specific development principles to be applied to proposals for development as well as opportunities for future development and/ or improvements in each village.

N.B. This is a large document but it is also available to view at:

http://www.kettering.gov.uk/downloads/file/4917/rural_master_planning

2) Settlement Boundaries (update September 2015) – This paper provides the evidence base for setting out the approach to development in the countryside. The paper sets out the methodology for defining settlement boundaries based on a number of principles which are then applied to settlements in the Borough using the existing Local Plan boundaries as a basis and amending these to conform to the principles and to take account of any changes in land use. At this stage, the proposed boundaries do not include new allocations as these are still being decided upon. The Settlement Boundaries paper was originally published in October 2011 and updated in February 2012. Members of the Planning Policy Committee considered a further iteration at the meeting on 2nd September 2015 and endorsed its contents pending, the inclusion of identified housing, employment or other allocations.

3) Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space (update June 2016) – This paper was originally compiled in July 2014 and the proposals to

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identify particular sites have been considered by the Planning Policy Committee on a number of occasions; including on 31st July 2014, 2nd September 2015 and 8th June 2016. The paper has also been subject to focused consultation with landowners as well as parish and town councils. Members of this Committee endorsed a list of sites at this last meeting, to be identified as Historically and Visually Important Local Green Space (LGS) and to be included in the full draft plan for consultation. Reference is made in the draft Rural Area chapter to a draft policy on LGS, which Members have also previously agreed.

- 4) Facilities Audit report (June 2017) – The Kettering Borough Rural Masterplanning Report (February 2012) included a facilities assessment for each rural settlement in the Borough. This audit has subsequently been updated and is now included in the evidence base for the SSP2 as a standalone document listing all relevant facilities and services located within each settlement.

The Emerging Rural Strategy for Kettering Borough

- 3.8 In looking at the villages through the Rural Masterplanning project (refer to Section 3.7 above) the Options Stage consultation identified two options for each village. These were either to allow no growth beyond the village boundary or, to allow small scale growth to meet local needs and to provide enhancements to the existing village. The results of the consultation were reported at meetings of the Planning Policy Committee on 12th September 2012 and 30th January 2014. It was concluded that the rural strategy for the SSP2 should:

- 1) Where appropriate, some small scale growth to meet local needs and provide enhancements to existing villages.
- 2) Where appropriate, proceed with a policy of no growth beyond the village boundary, subject to rural exception sites.
- 3) Progress with a set of generic development principles for the rural area.
- 4) Proceed with a rural exception policy for affordable housing where a tenure mix on allocated sites is not available.¹

- 3.9 The developing Draft Vision and Objectives for the SSP2 (attached as Appendix 1) confirms that in accordance with the JCS there should be an emphasis on urban-focussed sustainable growth. It is proposed that within villages, appropriate small-scale development will be allowed to meet local needs, there will be a focus on ensuring development reflects the character of villages and maintains the important features and characteristics of these villages. In villages which are particularly sensitive, because of their special character, development will be resisted. This is made clear in the policies covering the villages concerned.

- 3.10 To this effect it is proposed to continue to categorise the different villages into three separate groupings of settlement hierarchy. The saved policies RA3 and

¹ This policy objective is now included with the JCS though 'Policy 13 – Rural Exceptions'.

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RA4 of the Local Plan for Kettering Borough currently follow this approach and categories are referred to as “Restricted Infill Villages”, “Restraint Villages” and “Scattered Settlements”. See Appendix 2 for information on the current village categorisation. There are policies dealing with proposals for development depending on the category of village and what is considered appropriate using a policy based criteria.

- 3.11 It is proposed to continue with this approach but to make the terms more in line with national planning policy, ensuring it does not preclude the preparation of neighbourhood plans but also drawing a distinction between villages and open countryside. Therefore, the proposed categories are either “Category A”, “Category B” or “Category C”.
- 3.12 Based on work which has taken place to define these boundaries (refer to Section 3.7 above) a settlement boundary is proposed for most settlements with the exception of the Category C settlements which are considered scattered development in the open countryside. As Mawsley was identified as a new village in the 1995 Local Plan and built out after this, no settlement boundary designation or village category status currently exists. It is, therefore, proposed that in the SSP2, Mawsley is placed within the Category A grouping and that a new settlement boundary is designated. Historically, Glendon and Thorpe Underwood have not been included in the list of village categories. It is appropriate that these villages are brought in line with other types of scattered settlements and, for that reason, have been included in the Category C list.

Draft Rural Area Chapter

- 3.13 The draft Rural Area chapter (attached in Appendix 3) follows the approach taken at the earlier Options Stage and begins with an explanation of the rural strategy and then individual sections on each rural settlement. The draft Rural Area chapter explains the decision made for each village based on either a ‘no growth’ or ‘limited small scale growth’ approach.
- 3.14 The village sections provide a short description of the village including its character; local planning issues; a summary of key services and facilities to be found in that settlement; key development principles and where relevant, site specific site allocations/designations for different land uses such as housing, employment, allotments, local green spaces etc.
- 3.15 At this stage, only the draft housing allocations are listed where these have been endorsed by this Committee. Given outstanding issues at a number of villages an explanation is provided in this version of the draft chapter, pending further confirmation on the position of these sites.
- 3.16 The Options Stage did identify some potential employment sites in rural locations, but these are required to be assessed further through an employment land study that Officers are undertaking on the need/ scope for employment sites in both urban and rural locations.

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- 3.17 For those sites which are recommended to be put forward as housing allocations in the draft Local Plan, a number of draft development principles have been prepared. Details of any relevant development principles are set out under the summaries of sites which are being recommended for allocation. A summary table covering all these aspects is provided in Appendix 4. For the purposes of providing updates to outstanding issues or on particular sites text has been inserted and shown in *(italics)*.
- 3.18 Some areas that were previously envisaged as needing to be included in the SSP2, such as rural exception housing, are covered in the JCS and reference is made to these policies to help readers understand the content of both the Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plans. Other references are also made to other policies in the JCS, such as relevant development management policies. It will be important to ensure that there is an appropriate link in terms of content and language/ tone between these two Local Plan documents and further refinement of the text may be needed.
- 3.19 The draft Vision and Objectives for the SSP2 (at Appendix 1) indicates which policies in the Rural Area help to contribute to achieving the various identified 10 Outcomes of the JCS.
- 3.20 A Proposals Map will be produced alongside the draft full plan. At this stage, a set of plans for the individual villages is provided which show the proposed settlement boundary for each village (as agreed to date) as well as any draft housing allocations and other potential sites still under consideration; proposed designations such as LGS or open space.

4. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 It is anticipated that Members will have comments to make on the draft Rural Area chapter, but it should be recognised that this is still a chapter of the SSP2 which is subject to further additional text, policies and refinement. Two areas of work are to confirm whether any employment land allocations are being recommended and also which of the outstanding housing sites at Broughton, Cranford, Geddington, Newton and Stoke Albany are to be recommended for allocation.
- 4.2 A revised version of this chapter will be presented to Members at a future date for further consideration.
- 4.3 When completed, the full Draft Plan will also be accompanied by an Interim Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Appraisal) and Habitats Regulation Assessment which will provide consultees with information on the implications of the plan and different options presented. The findings will be reported to Members at a later meeting when the draft plan has been assessed in full.

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5 **CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

5.1 The draft SSP2 will be subject to public consultation in due course. Prior to this, Members will be asked to agree evidence, the contents of the plan and the approach taken with respect to consultation.

6 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The SSP2 will form part of the North Northamptonshire Development Plan and will guide the provision of sustainable growth in Kettering Borough.

7. **USE OF RESOURCES**

7.1 The preparation of the SSP2 will be met within the existing Development Services Planning Policy budget.

8. **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the update given on the development of the Rural Area chapter and named villages; and
- Provide comments on the initial draft text covering the Rural Area, to be developed further, for inclusion in the emerging draft Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan, and published for consultation purposes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Vision and Objectives for the SSP2

Appendix 2: Kettering Borough Local Plan (1995) village categories

Appendix 3: Rural Area Chapter (including Village Plans)

Appendix 4: Summary Table of Rural Area (Villages)

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Previous Reports/ Minutes:

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Housing Land Allocations (Villages) Date: 19th April 2017

Ref: Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan – Housing Land Allocations (Villages)
Date: 23rd November 2016

Ref: Housing Land Supply
Date: 27th January 2016

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Progress Update and Programme
Date: 2nd September 2015

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Housing Allocations Assessment of Additional Sites and Update Consultation
Date: 30th January 2014

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Housing Allocations Paper
Date: 30th September 2013

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Options Paper
Date: 13th September 2012

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Options Paper
Date: 4th September 2012

Ref: Site Specific Proposals Local Development Document – Options Paper Consultation
Date: 22nd February 2012