

## PLANNING COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL 19 JULY 2023

<b>Briefing Title</b>	<b>Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension Supplementary Planning Document</b>
<b>Briefing Author</b>	<b>Richard Palmer Planning Policy Manager</b> <a href="mailto:Richard.Palmer@northnorthants.gov.uk">Richard.Palmer@northnorthants.gov.uk</a>

### List of Appendices

**Appendix A – Rushden East SUE SPD (text)**

**Appendix B – Rushden East Masterplan Framework Document (February 2021)**

**Appendix C – Revised Policy EN33**

#### **1. Purpose of Briefing**

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- 1.1. To consider the content of a proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for delivering the Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) and to seek agreement to publishing the SPD for public consultation.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 This report is prepared to provide the Advisory Panel with an opportunity to consider the content of an SPD, which provides a Masterplan Framework for delivering the Rushden East SUE, in advance of undertaking public consultation. The purpose of the SPD is to amplify development plan guidance to inform the comprehensive delivery of the SUE and guide future planning applications.

#### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Panel:
- a) Note the contents of the Rushden East SUE Masterplan Framework SPD and that any comments or observations raised be taken into consideration by a delegated decision making process, made through the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration (Interim) to progress the document to public consultation.
  - b) Note the proposed revised wording of Policy EN33 of the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2

Reason for Recommendation

- 3.2 To provide Member input into the preparation of the draft SPD and to agree, through a delegated decision process, the undertaking of a statutory public consultation on the proposed SPD to allow the document to progress towards adoption.

#### **4. Briefing Background**

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- 4.1 Rushden East is one of several large scale SUE development proposals allocated through the adopted North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS), which seeks to ensure that North Northamptonshire delivers the scale of growth and investment set out in the strategy.
- 4.2 The Rushden East SUE recognises the role of the designated growth town status for Rushden in seeking to bring forward around 2,500 new homes, employment provision, and supporting infrastructure, including new schools, community facilities and green space, including a new town park. The development proposal forms part of the portfolio of the Garden Communities, supported by the Government, which aspire to deliver high quality built design and open space which seek to embody clear development principles for place making, these are set out in section 4 of the SPD.
- 4.3 Policy guidance to ensure the SUE meets delivery expectations, as referred to above, is required through JCS Policy 33 and East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2, draft Policy EN33. A Masterplan Framework Document (MFD) was previously approved through the former East Northamptonshire Council's Planning Policy Committee and incorporated into the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2.
- 4.4 At the hearing sessions of the Local Plan examination the Inspector concluded that the level of detail contained in the MFD was more appropriately provided through a stand-alone document, and that the key delivery principles set out in the MFD should be incorporated into the Local Plan.
- 4.5 Policy EN33 of the Local Plan has been revised to reflect those considerations and has been consulted upon as part of the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan, to assure that the overall objectives for delivering the Rushden East SUE are made clear. To ensure the more detailed aspects of the SUE are made available to inform future planning applications the MFD has been re-worked as an SPD to amplify Policy EN33 of the Local Plan and Policy 33 of the JCS.
- 4.6 The draft text proposed for the Rushden East SUE SPD is attached to this report (Appendix A). The figures referred to in the draft document all remain unchanged from the original MFD, and they can be viewed through that document, which is attached (Appendix B).
- 4.7 The main changes to the MFD relate to the planning application requirements that were set out in blue boxes. These requirements have largely been inserted into a revised Policy EN33 to ensure the main delivery principles are retained in planning guidance through the Local Plan. Policy EN33 formed part of the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan, which were consulted on between 10 March and 21 April 2023. Subsequent deletions and additions proposed to the policy are set out following discussions with the Inspector, however, these

further proposed additions are still awaiting the outcome of the Inspector's report (Appendix C refers).

- 4.8 One particular change required by the Inspector was the removal of the Council's proposed restriction on larger employment buildings within the area designated for employment within the Masterplan. No evidence was found to support the justification for restricting proposals for strategic B8 units within the site.
- 4.9 Whilst Policy EN33 has been subject to consultation as a Proposed Modification to the Local Plan, the Inspector's report is currently awaited, should the Inspector's report raise any further implications in respect of Policy EN33 these will need to be taken into account. The latest information from the Inspector is that the report is imminent, and a verbal update will be provided at the Advisory Panel should the report be received in advance of the meeting. However, Officers are not anticipating any further changes that may alter the content of the revised draft SPD.
- 4.10 Once the content of the SPD has been agreed, the document can be published for consultation. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to the Council in due course, together with any further revisions proposed to the document, with the intention to adopt the SPD as efficiently as possible, to allow its guidance to be taken into consideration in determining future planning applications.

## **5. Issues and Options**

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- 5.1 The option proposed is to take forward the draft Masterplan SPD for public consultation. This would be agreed through a delegated decision as set out above and require a statutory public consultation for a minimum period of six weeks, in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, which was adopted in July 2022.
- 5.2 Following consultation, incorporating any further proposed revisions as appropriate, the SPD would then be reported to the Executive for adoption. The document would provide additional planning guidance, which would be of material importance in determining future planning applications for Rushden East.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 6.1 There are no significant resource implications, the preparation and consulting of the SPD will be undertaken within the current work programme without significant impact.
- 6.2 In respect of transformation, Officers and Members have invested time in producing the guidance contained in the Masterplan, through a project group made up of officers and Members presenting evidence at the Plan Examination and through discussion with the Inspector.

## Legal and Governance

- 6.3 SPDs comprise non-statutory documents that can form part of the development plan on adoption. They provide a wide range of issues giving detailed guidance on how policies or proposals in development plan documents will be implemented.
- 6.4 Preparation and adoption of SPDs must be undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

## Relevant Policies and Plans

- 6.5 In addition to the Plan policies set out in the report, delivering development proposals that incorporate high standards of development and place making contributes to the Council's corporate objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2021-25, particularly objectives 1 Active fulfilled lives; 3 Safe and thriving places; 4 Greener, sustainable environment and 5 Connected communities.

## Risk

- 6.6 This SPD is being prepared in response to a specific issue arising from the Local Plan examination hearings, to ensure current guidance is prepared to inform the delivery expectations of the Rushden East SUE.
- 6.7 There are no anticipated risks arising from the preparation of the document, the Inspector's report into the examination is due shortly, though previous discussions with the Inspector indicate that no significant changes are anticipated to Policy EN33 following the Proposed Modifications. However, if the SPD is not prepared and adopted in a timely manner its availability to inform future planning applications will be limited.

## Consultation

- 6.8 The SPD will be subject to a minimum of six weeks public consultation in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, and which will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012, this requires publication on the Council's website, hard copies of the SPD being provided in the local library and council offices, and consultation with stakeholders.

## Consideration by Scrutiny

- 6.9 The report proposes consultation on a draft planning document for consultation. A further report will be prepared to set out the responses to the consultation and any proposed changes, which will provide opportunity for scrutiny to comment in advance of its potential adoption.

## Equality Impact

- 6.10 The SPD does not change policy, it amplifies existing policy contained in development plan documents which have previously been subject to a full equalities assessment.

## Climate Impact

- 6.11 The purpose of a Masterplan Framework is to set out expectations for a sustainable urban development. The SPD incorporates sections that provide guidance to address the environmental impacts of the proposal by setting out expectations for green infrastructure provision, standards for sustainable construction, a transport and movement strategy, and supporting infrastructure. The SPD also includes a section setting out guidance for the approach to energy and sustainability within the development.

## Community Impact

- 6.12 The SPD will be of benefit to the community by providing a masterplan framework for delivering a sustainable urban extension, that ensures a high level of design and place making which reflect the qualities anticipated through the Government's Garden Communities initiative.

## Crime and Disorder

- 6.13 The SPD considers aspects of crime and disorder, particularly through design and placemaking. The preparation of design codes will be a condition of any outline planning consent. The consultation will provide further opportunity for input.

## **7. Conclusions**

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- 7.1 The production of an SPD will provide the opportunity to amplify the policies set out in the local development plan, in seeking to provide a high quality, comprehensive masterplan framework that delivers a sustainable urban extension on land to the east of Rushden, guiding future planning applications.