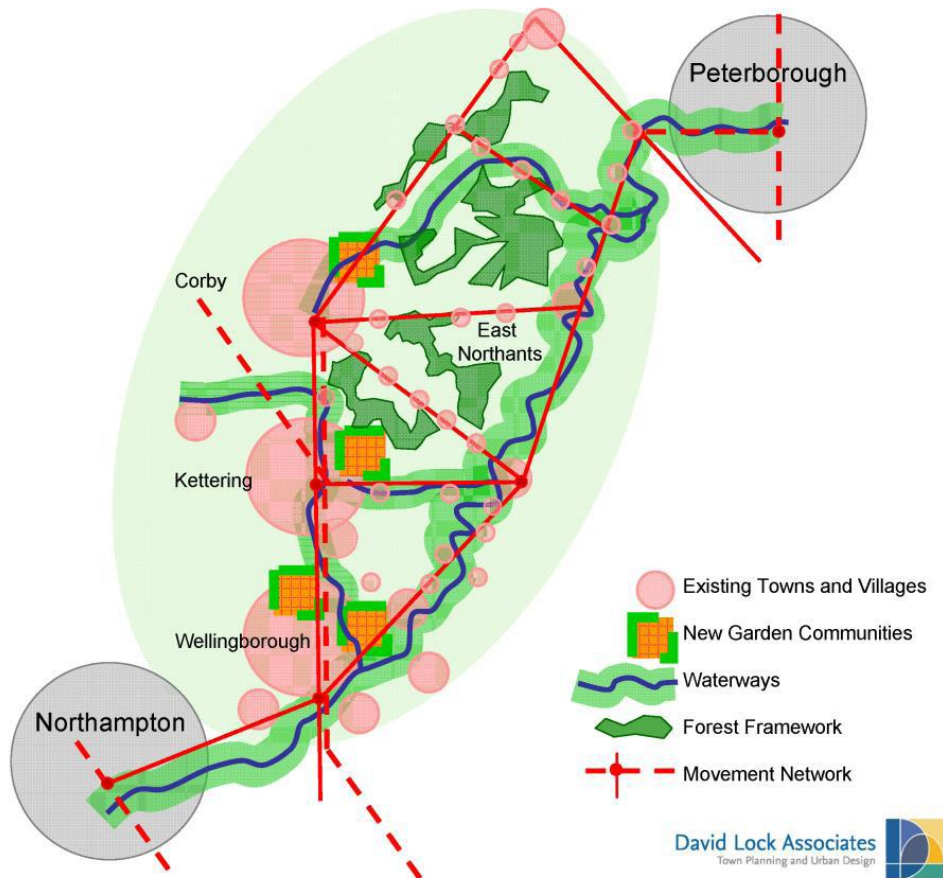


North Northamptonshire Growth Community Capacity Bid

Background

North Northamptonshire

North Northamptonshire is a single functional area comprising individual yet interdependent towns, villages and rural areas set close together in a shared green infrastructure including the Nene Valley and Rockingham Forest. The three main towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough are closely related (just 8 miles between adjacent town centres) with good transport links.



The area benefits from close proximity and transport links to London, relative affordability, economic potential – including its relationship with the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, and limited environmental constraints (No designated AONB or Green Belt).

A proven track record

We have a proven track record of collaboration and growth. Joint-working is simply ingrained in our working practices and enshrined in our structures. The North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit was the first of its type, and works alongside the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Committee to ensure that spatial planning is done across boundaries and with a common-purpose. The NNJPU

has been in existence now for 10 years – we’re close to delivering a second version of our Core Spatial Strategy – having been among the first to deliver the original CSS.

Alongside this we jointly formed the North Northamptonshire Development Company to help realise our ambitions plans for growth - which will see the population rise from approximately 320,000 to 394,000 by 2031. To put that in context, we’re currently around the size of Coventry or Leicester, and we plan to be around the size of Bristol.

The constituent communities that make up North Northamptonshire continue to play an essential role in ensuring that growth is infrastructure-led and that it benefits existing communities as well as new. One SUE within North Northamptonshire has developed a highly successful liaison forum with the local community – a model that is entirely replicable elsewhere.

In progressing our SUEs to their current stages we have had need to work jointly with a host of other parties – from Government Departments and Agencies (DfT, HCA, DCLG, BIS, DECC) to both LEPs (SEMLEP and NEP) and statutory consultees.

We believe in the importance of collaboration – this stems from the Political leadership and mature community debate. We understand that to get major growth up and running it needs to have the support of a whole array of stakeholders. Our track record of delivery proves that it works.

Delivering Responsible Growth

These factors have supported sustained growth within North Northamptonshire, which has a strong track record of delivery. Between 2001 and 2011, the dwelling stock grew by 13.3% (an additional 16,250 dwellings) compared to 8.3% for England (ONS Census data). However the area’s full potential has yet to be realised.

Planning permissions are in place for mixed use Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) at Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough, with a combined capacity of around 16,700 new dwellings. These permissions represent a major investment by the site promoters and their partners, and a huge commitment to growth by the local planning authorities.

The four consented SUEs are among the UK’s 40 biggest housing permissions (schemes of 2500+ dwellings reported in Planning Magazine May 2014).

In fact no single planned area other than the GLA has a greater number of consented large sites.

The North Northamptonshire Growth Community proposal provides a mechanism to realise the potential of the SUEs as part of a coherent growth strategy for North Northamptonshire and to achieve an appropriate rate of infrastructure-led development across the area.

Delivery of the consented SUEs stalled during the recession but Priors Hall is now underway (including the Business Academy, Innovation Centre and around 300 homes) and Kettering East has commenced on site with construction of the first primary school. Stanton Cross and North Wellingborough are poised to commence in 2015/16.

This progress has been hard-won, with the local planning authorities and site promoters committing significant resources to clearing outstanding planning hurdles. The local planning authorities have

accepted reduced or deferred infrastructure and affordable housing contributions to improve scheme viability and investor confidence, while the Government, its agencies and the Local Enterprise Partnerships have committed major investment to unlock key infrastructure constraints.

North Northamptonshire Growth Community

The North Northamptonshire Growth Community proposal provides the opportunity to redouble these efforts to ensure that an appropriate rate of infrastructure-led development can be achieved - so that the SUEs are quickly established as vibrant and desirable places to live and invest in. This will be achieved through collaborative leadership arrangements and a focused and efficient project management team that will be able, amongst other things, to:

- **Enhance capacity and capability** for delivery by pooling public and private skills and resources
- **Unlock key infrastructure** constraints through partnership working with Government and infrastructure providers
- **Develop new delivery models** and where necessary access finance
- Stimulate demand for inward migration of households and businesses to **sustain and enhance the momentum of growth** in North Northamptonshire's Growth Community.
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The alternative to the proposed infrastructure-led, coordinated, approach could see the four SUEs and their host authorities competing with each other for investment and people within the same Housing Market Area, resulting in slower build-rates and a downward pressure on the quality of development due to viability concerns. This would be a missed opportunity to deliver a cluster of inter-dependent Growth Community that meet local growth ambitions in a strategically important part of the UK.

The Proposal

Context

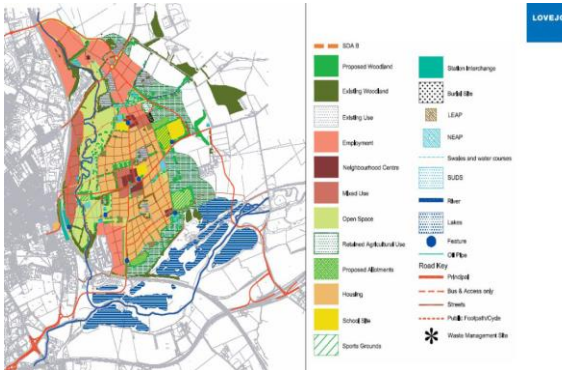
Each of the SUEs are at a different stage of delivery – though there are similarities on what work is required over the next 12 months, there are some differences.



Priors Hall has started, with some gradual progress made including a new school (The Business Academy) Corby Enterprise Centre and around 300 homes. Funding is required (as set out within the North Northamptonshire Growth Community Proposal) for significant infrastructure – new schools and roads.



Delivery of **East Kettering SUE** has begun with the construction of the first primary school on the site. It is also ready to go in terms of the first few parcels of land for house building. Much of the pre-commencement work has been completed, but still lots to do to consent each parcel and satisfy multiple landowning interests. Key infrastructure, such as J10a and the Weekley Warkton Avenue remain critical to the completion of the project.



Further work is required to bring **Stanton Cross** up to the same point as Priors Hall and East Kettering. This will require additional staff resources to ensure delivery is not delayed. Additionally, funding arrangements for infrastructure (primary access, train station and others) *



Likewise, **Wellingborough North** is yet to commence, and further planning work is required at both private and public level to ensure that the scheme can move forward. As with each of the other SUEs, there is a requirement for revolving infrastructure funding as well as project specific finance for key elements – primary school and Isham Bypass. *

* These developments can significantly benefit from the learning curve available from both Priors Hall and Kettering East and a key component of the Joint Delivery Unit and Joint Delivery Committee will be to consolidate and promulgate best practice.

Planned Expenditure 2015-16 and Beyond

Our collective analysis of the resource commitment needed to support a meaningful and effective Joint Delivery Unit and Joint Delivery Committee is as follows:

Table 1 – Total Resource Requirement 2015/16 (£000s)

Item	Descriptor	KBC	CBC	WBC	ENDC	NCC	Total	
Senior Management	Time spent on delivering growth	50	22	22	20	5	119	
Planning and highways Staff	Planning and highways workload	306	290	280	280	130	1286	
Agency Staff	Planning workload	33						33
Running Costs	Conferences, Public Meetings, TCPA, etc	8	7	5	8	2	30	
Assessments/Studies	Transport, Connectivity, Viability, Employment, etc	150				40	190	
Viability/NNDC	Viability, Partnership, Promotion, Negotiation, etc	94				0	94	
Joint Planning Unit	Spatial planning, Specialist advice	110	110	110	110	0	440	
Communications	Newsletters, public events, forums, etc	6	2	2	6	2	18	
Marketing and Economic Development	Staff time, place marketing, inward investment, funding bids	152	100	100	100	0	452	
Energy Consultancy	External advice and support	100	0	0	0	0	100	
Total							2712	

Considerable expenditure is therefore planned by the local planning and highway authorities in North Northamptonshire over 2015/16. There are additional resources being spent by SEMLEP and NEP. It has not been possible to capture this information within this bid, but it is worth noting that the global spend is likely to be closer to £2,800,000. This does not include the funding secured through competitive bidding processes from the HCA, DCLG and DfT (among other government bodies).

The Capacity Bid

The above table factors in the additional support that is required to improve the delivery, whilst maintaining a high level of standards for the developments as they progress. This will enable the long term sustainability of the developments to be ensured. There is a capacity element to this, but also a greater degree of expenditure on studies and assessments. The following table seeks to pull out from table one those elements most relevant to the North Northamptonshire Growth Community proposal previously submitted, and attach estimated costs to them. It so happens that those elements from table one set out below equate to about a third of the overall commitment needed.

Table 2 – Capacity Fund Share of Resource Requirement 2015/16 (£000s)

Item	Descriptor	Estimated Cost
Senior Management	Time spent on Growth and support for partnership structures	25
Growth Manager Post	Delivery Unit Manager and Project Management Resource	80
Planning Staff	Additional Planning Staff for Delivering Unit	200
Highways Staff	Additional Highways Planners to work with Delivery Unit	130
Legal Capacity	Costs associated with delivery of SUEs and governance of unit, etc	75
Viability Testing	External Consultative Advice/Negotiations	40
Joint Planning Unit	Additional support on specialist planning matters – ecology, heritage, sustainability, design, etc	30
Community Engagement	The Growth Community, as a concept, requires additional engagement above and beyond existing scope	25
Economic Development	Place marketing, promotional work, inward investment expertise, funding bids	50
Assessments and Studies	Sub Total	655
Programme of commissioned work on NN Growth Community	Ensure appropriate best-practice principles are enshrined in operational delivery	150
Transport Assessments, etc	Required to support delivery of SUEs	40
	Total	845

What follows is a brief summary of the items included within Table 2:

Senior Management

To provide strategic consideration to the project and ensure proposed governance and delivery structures are delivered efficiently and expediently. To continue to liaise with colleagues in Government departments over specific issues while providing support to developers and planning staff. Existing staff are likely to fulfil this role, with additional temporary staff being brought in to back-fill roles that would otherwise take precedence.

Growth Manager Post

This role will be critical to the effective set up and running of the JDU – providing an operation management function but also planning expertise and strategic vision. Costs are based on a similar role that has existed within one of the authorities - provided through previous capacity fund. Liaise with the JDC on all matters. The cost has increased because we had not previously included the employers costs.

Planning Staff

In order to ensure that the JDU has the ability to manage the workload expected over the next year and beyond, additional staff will be required. It is likely that this will involve some staff moving to the JDU on secondment from the authorities – where they have the ability to do so – and some being brought in directly. The exact nature of that team will be determined once funding is announced – in terms of ensuring that staff are brought in at an appropriate level. The funding sought through capacity fund equates to less than 1/3 of the total spend anticipated on planning staff.

Highways Staff

Providing advice to planning staff within the JDU as well as to the JDC. Liaising with developers to ensure appropriate infrastructure is provided in line with the relevant masterplan and permission. Ensuring that licence applications, etc are dealt with in an expedient fashion. This will fund the equivalent of 3 FTE, although this may be a mix of staff and bought in skills.

Legal Capacity

It is clear that legal advice will be required to enable each parcel of land brought to be brought forward for development. Experience suggests that this will revolve around collaboration agreements, s106 contributions, viability assessments, land acquisitions, funding bids, and the processes around approving S278 and S35 highway orders. The governance arrangements involved in setting up the JDU and JDC will also require some additional legal capacity.

Viability Testing

Evidence to date suggests that individual house builders on each development parcel will seek to lower their contributions (in terms of affordable housing, s106, code level compliance, etc) and as such we will need to be able to count on viability testing expertise beyond that which is currently available. Without such expertise being readily available (and funded) the SUEs delivery will stall, or will undershoot agreed design standards.

Joint Planning Unit

None of the constituent authorities retain the level of expertise within their existing staff that will be required to advise on specialist planning matters such as ecology, heritage, sustainability, design, etc. As such this will need to be brought in at critical moments. The best approach would be for the Joint Planning Unit, which already has experience of doing so, to be the vehicle for it. The quantum of this is unknown at present, but the requirement is an absolute certainty.

Community Engagement

The Growth Community, as a concept, requires additional engagement above and beyond the scope of each SUE on its own. In order to ensure that local communities remain fully updated on development – a key requirement in ensuring that SUEs are able to pass through the planning system – additional expenditure on engagement is guaranteed due to the Growth Community proposal. People will want to know what it is, what it changes, what it means for them, etc.

Economic Development

Drawing in the non-planning elements associated with the level of growth being delivered and ensuring that a big-picture outlook is maintained at all times. It will involve place making, promotional work, inward investment expertise and funding bid drafting. It'll link directly through to marketing work being done by each authority and developer – such as the ThinkingPlace work already commissioned by Alledge Brook for East of Kettering. It is likely to be a combination of consultancy work from external parties and existing staff – the Capacity Fund element of the cost is associated with the former, the latter is retained within the total cost and paid by the authorities.

Accommodation costs

We have removed this.

Assessments and Studies

The assessments required are to support the progress of each development parcel through the planning system to delivery in accordance with the existing masterplans for each SUE and North Northants in general. It is not to deliver new strategies or propositions. Our experience in Kettering and Corby over the last few years is that in order to deliver the SUE appropriate attention has to be paid to how individual parcels fit within the wider context – a patchwork approach if you like. This requires some 'nesting' studies to be undertaken to provide robust evidence that parcel 'A' needs to deliver requirement 'B' in order for priority 'C' to be delivered across the whole site. Without this sort of assessment and approach, it is impossible to secure the necessary infrastructure improvements and contributions from the housing developers involved in individual parcels. This is particularly relevant for Wellingborough's SUEs and that which is expected to come forward within East Northants, as each of these are further behind in terms of delivery.

Alongside the above, funding is required to enable the Strategic Transport Model to be fit for purpose for the SUEs across North Northamptonshire.

Summary

Funding is required to enable the constituent authorities to advance local community engagement, develop ideas on place-making, and secure additional resources with specific skills in the delivery of major growth. Without the benefit of capacity funding, North Northamptonshire would undoubtedly experience great difficulty in providing the capacity required to progress the delivery of infrastructure-led growth, particularly given the challenging economic climate and complexity of the proposals for the SUEs. Further capacity funding will enable not just the continued delivery of the SUEs, but also the development of proposals to form a North Northamptonshire Joint Delivery Unit and Joint Delivery Committee – tasked with bringing forward the delivery of infrastructure-led growth within North Northamptonshire in a coordinated and expeditious manner.

As set out above, our best estimate of the total resource requirement 2015/16 across North Northamptonshire is £2,712,000; of which local authorities are meeting £1,782,000 (69%) and we are asking Government to find £845,000 (31%).

Total Resource Requirement	North Northants Share	Government Share
£2,712,000 (100%)	£1,867,000 (69%)	£845,000 (31%)