

# NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY – CONSULTATION ON THE EMERGING PLAN

AUGUST 2012

## WHAT IS THE JOINT CORE STRATEGY?

The Joint Core Strategy is the strategic Plan for East Northamptonshire, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. It outlines a big picture to be developed in more detail through plans prepared at the local level. It is prepared by the Joint Planning Unit, reporting to a Joint Committee made up of elected representatives from the District, Borough and County Councils.

## WHY IS THE PLAN BEING REVIEWED?

The first Core Strategy was adopted in 2008 and covers the period to 2021. It is being reviewed to take account of the recession delaying development and infrastructure investment and to plan forward to 2031. The review is also responding to the Government's reforms to the planning system, including the new National Planning Policy Framework and the proposed scrapping of Regional Plans. These give greater scope for the Joint Core Strategy to respond to local needs and aspirations, although it must still be based on sound evidence and meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements.



## WHAT STAGE ARE WE AT?



The review started in 2009. Early work involved a series of stakeholder workshops, followed by wider consultation on issues facing North Northamptonshire. This consultation and technical work has been vital in developing draft policies and proposals for the new Plan.

There is still a lot of technical work to complete for the 'Pre-Submission Plan'. This includes infrastructure planning and assessing the impacts of the proposed policies on the viability of developments. There are also some policy areas, such as the retail strategy and development principles for strategic sites that need further consideration. However, the preferred content of much of the Plan is clear already and we are inviting input on an 'emerging plan' document. This is a work in progress, with some policies and most of the supporting text missing. Nevertheless, it gives a good idea of how the Plan is shaping up.

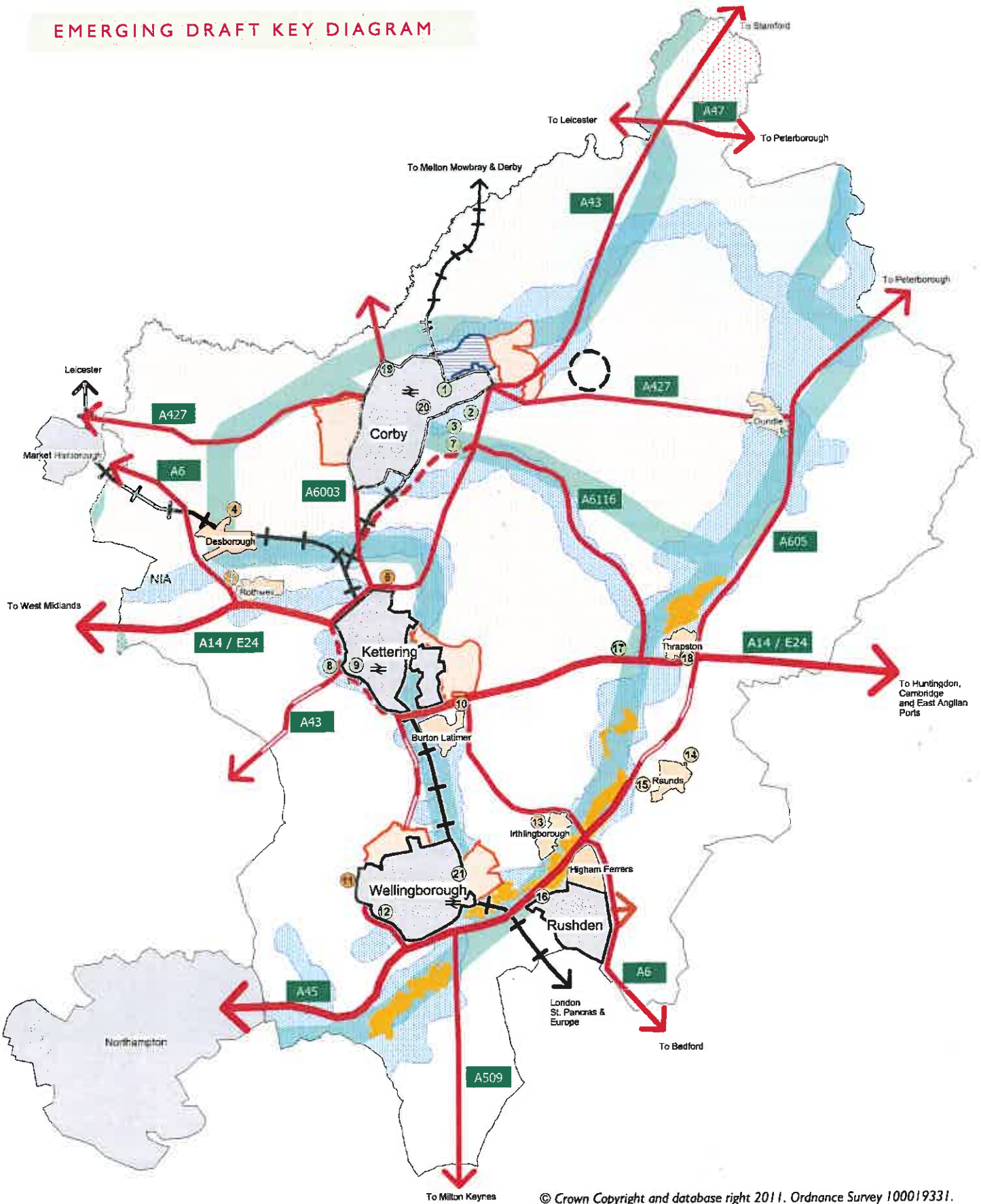
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







North Northamptonshire  
Joint Planning Unit

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## EMERGING DRAFT KEY DIAGRAM



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	Rockingham Forest Area (Policy 21)		Deenethorpe Airfield Area of Opportunity (Policy 14)
	Area of tranquility (Policy 2)		Highway Network
	Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits (Policy 3)		Committed highway improvements (Policy 17)
	Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (Policy 3)		Main highway improvements identified in Policy 17 (not committed)
	Sub regional Green Infrastructure corridors (Policy 19, 20)		Rail
	Growth Towns (Policy 10)		Existing rail stations
	Market Towns (Policy 10)		Proposed electrification of Midland Main Line
	Committed Sustainable Urban Extensions (Policy 23, 29)		Strategic sites with planning permission, or resolution to grant planning permission or previously allocated (Policy 23, 29)
	Rushden Potential Longer Term Direction of Growth (Policy 29)		Proposed other strategic sites not yet with planning permission or resolution or allocated (Policy 23, 29)
	Rockingham MRC Enterprise Area (Policy 27)		

## SO WHAT'S CHANGING?

Many aspects of the current Core Strategy will be taken forward, including the emphasis on securing better infrastructure and services. However the review is resulting in a shift in approach on a range of issues. The main changes are summarised below:

- **A more locally distinctive vision** that sets out how the individual parts of North Northamptonshire will contribute to an area that, by 2031, “...is a showpiece for modern green living and well managed sustainable development with a strong network of vibrant and regenerated settlements complementing an enhanced green framework of living, working countryside...”
- **Increased protection for North Northamptonshire’s cultural and environmental assets**, through a set of Core Policies at the start of the plan, ensuring that the reduction in national policy and loss of the Regional Plan does not leave a policy vacuum;
- **Stronger recognition of the importance of the natural environment**, with new special policy areas for the Nene and Ise Valleys and the Rockingham Forest to supplement the existing approach to ‘Green Infrastructure’ corridors;
- **Greater emphasis on urban design principles and how places could change for the better**, in particularly to make it easier for people to get into town centres and out to surrounding countryside. Development Principles for the proposed Strategic Sites will take account of the consultation feedback;
- **Reduced housing targets that take account of local needs and aspirations and are more realistic** than previous ‘top-down’ regional targets. Proposed housing requirements are related to past trends and local needs, but the draft policies also identify strategic opportunities to accommodate more growth;
- **A more positive and flexible approach to economic development**, with minimum job targets to deliver at least one job for each additional worker, and twice this ratio in the south to tackle high levels of out-commuting. New policies are proposed on rural diversification and strategic distribution (warehouse developments);

- **An enhanced role for Rushden, identifying it as a Growth Town** in recognition of local ambitions and the potential of the town to continue to deliver new homes and jobs. A longer term development opportunity is identified for a Sustainable Urban Extension to the east of the town;
- **Identification of Strategic Sites to help deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure.** The Plan confirms support for strategic housing sites identified in previous plans, and will give more certainty on the extent and form of the Sustainable Urban Extension west of Corby. A number of new strategic employment sites are identified and the area around the Rockingham Motor Racing Circuit is identified as having huge potential.
- **Providing a framework for locally-driven plans in the rural areas,** through a simplified settlement hierarchy which identifies key settlements and provides flexibility for local and neighbourhood plans to determine how much development is needed. A new policy outlines when development might be acceptable as an exception to the normal policy of restraint in the countryside and an opportunity is identified to consider a new village at Deenethorpe Airfield.

### HOW TO COMMENT ON THE EMERGING PLAN

The consultation document is available through [www.nnjpu.org.uk](http://www.nnjpu.org.uk) and for inspection at Council Offices and Libraries throughout North Northamptonshire.

**The consultation runs for 10 weeks from the 6th August to the 15th October.**

A questionnaire is available on the website. We need feedback on whether the range and content of the policies is right and whether the proposed new strategic sites are the most suitable sites for housing and employment.

We have also published background documents, consultation feedback and studies that explain how the policies have evolved. Comments or queries on any of this material are welcomed.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Joint Committee will consider responses to the consultation at its meeting in November 2012. Following this and the completion of outstanding technical work, a Pre-Submission Draft Plan will be prepared for a formal 6 week consultation early in 2013. The Plan will be examined by an independent Inspector later in 2013 and, all being well, adopted at the end of the year or early in 2014.

The consultation on the Emerging Plan is intended to help refine draft policies and to head-off any major concerns. It is important for interested parties to get involved now rather than waiting for the Pre-Submission Stage when there will be less flexibility to make changes to the Plan.

For further information, please contact the Joint Planning Unit by e-mail [consultation@nnjpu.org.uk](mailto:consultation@nnjpu.org.uk) or telephone on 01832 742358.

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