

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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Report Originator	Head of Development Services	Fwd Plan Ref No:	
Wards Affected	All	30 September 2013	
Title	NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY – CONSULTATION ON URBAN STRUCTURES STUDY		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (JPU) consultation on the Urban Structures Study, and to agree the Councils response to the consultation.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The aim of the Urban Structures Study (USS) prepared by the JPU is to gain an understanding of the urban structure of towns in North Northamptonshire to inform policy development in the Joint Core Strategy and in Site Specific/ Neighbourhood Plans. The Urban Structures Study is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2 Within Kettering Borough the study covers Kettering, Burton Latimer, Desborough and Rothwell.

2.3 The first chapter of the USS sets out the following vision for successful towns;

‘North Northamptonshire’s towns will be vibrant places where it is easy and pleasant to get around, where people can access what they need or where they work easily, where people choose to walk, cycle or take the bus rather than drive and where each town retains its local distinctiveness and has a strong, positive sense of place’.

2.4 The document sets key principles for achieving this vision:

- Well connected places – from centre to edge
- Mix up uses – Locate services and jobs where people can get to them
- Streets for all – designed to be safe, pleasant, lively and character full

2.5 These key principles will need to be considered alongside other planning considerations on a site by site basis.

2.6 Chapter 2 sets out spatial principles for each town. Kettering Borough’s towns are summarised below:

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Kettering (page 34 of the USS)

- Ring Roads – create better pedestrian and cycle links/ greening routes/ connecting development south of the A14/ character of A43 and A6003
- Prioritise radial routes
- Promote walkable and cyclable connected places
- Ensuring mixed neighbourhoods in Kettering
- Connect the green spaces

Burton Latimer (page 39 of the USS)

- Improve radials for walking and cycling
- Town centre focus
- Employment in mixed use areas with variety in unit/ block size
- Use historic layouts to guide new development

Desborough (page 43 of the USS)

- Promote walkable and cyclable connected places
- Improve town centre public realm
- Improve countryside access
- Provide more green infrastructure in a linked up network

Rothwell (page 47 of the USS)

- Improve east-west links
- Promote walkable connected places
- Green Infrastructure
- Schools and new facilities – well located on key radial routes or well connected grid streets
- Employment – ensuring walking and cycling links along radial roads

2.7 Chapter 3 uses the constraints and opportunities information contained within chapter two and other qualitative factors. Summary diagrams assess the potential sectors where development could be located around the towns. These assessments focus on connectivity and do not consider other qualitative factors such as landscape, coalescence, infrastructure issues or other issues. Sectors are graded from A-E depending upon how easily new development could connect to the town and how easily barriers could be overcome.

Kettering (page 91)

2.8 The assessment for Kettering shows that in terms of connectivity the town is heavily constrained with the majority of sectors scoring E. The only area where there is potential for better connectivity is east of the Kettering East development. The assessment of land east of Kettering East is based on assumptions on the layout of Kettering East.

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Burton Latimer (page 94)

2.9 The assessment for Burton Latimer identifies the land in sector 6 as the area where there is the best potential for connectivity, this area is grade B. It also assesses 3 sectors as grade C, 1, 3a and 5.

Desborough (page 98)

2.10 The assessment for Desborough identified sectors to the north-west, west and south as having the best prospects for integration with the town. The railway line and the old A6 present significant barriers to connectivity. The study concludes that sector 3b is the closest to the town centre and offers the most potential for creating Green Infrastructure links.

Rothwell (page 102)

2.11 The assessment for Rothwell concludes that areas to the north of the town provide the best opportunities for connectivity with the town.

2.12 The final chapter summarises the key attributes and issues of each town and applies those findings to create specific principles for strategic sites within the settlements. The following is a summary of the principles for strategic sites within Kettering Borough:

Kettering North (page 130)

- Improve access to the town centre through enhancements for walking and cycling.
- Improving local integration through clear and safe pedestrian crossing facilities and improvements to routes.
- Mixed use.

Kettering Business Park adjacent to A6 Burton Latimer (page 132)

- Improve connectivity to the town through improvements to walking and cycling links.
- Improve street connections for walking and cycling.
- Historic layouts – ensuring units are set within a traditional street pattern and form to help link the area to the town.

Desborough North (page 134)

- Improved connections to the town centre, including a bridge across the railway.
- Improve local integration through maximising connection points and providing a clear hierarchy of streets.
- Improve Green Infrastructure links to existing footpaths and the wider network.

2.13 The Urban Structures Study consultation includes a series of questions; proposed responses to these questions are set out in section 3 below.

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3. Proposed Council Response

Question a) Are the vision and the guiding design principles set out in Chapter 1 appropriate for the towns in North Northamptonshire.

- 3.1 Proposed response: The Council support the vision and guiding principles which are a good starting point when considering development and set out good general principles to guide development.

Question b) Is the methodology of the study appropriate or are there other techniques that should be used?

- 3.2 Proposed response: The Council support the methodology used in the Urban Structures Study as a method for assessing the urban structure of towns and for assessing the potential connectivity of areas of land around towns.

Question c) Is the study correct in its assessment of opportunities, constraints and spatial principles for each town?

- 3.3 Proposed response: The Council supports the spatial principles for each of the towns as set out in the document.

The Council would also like to highlight that the connections plan for Desborough is missing Desborough Green Space. Also the overall policy and principles for Rothwell refer to improving access to the countryside via the bridge to connect to the Desborough Green Space.

Question d) Do you agree with the grading of sectors for growth around each town (based purely on potential for integration)?

- 3.4 Proposed response: The Council supports the grading of sectors in relation to the connectivity of these areas of land. However the Council would like to highlight that this assessment relates only to potential connectivity and does not consider the full range of factors which would need to be considered if the land was being considered for future development.

Question e) Are the key issues identified for the potential strategic sites correct?

- 3.5 Proposed response: The Council supports the recommendations for strategic sites set out in the document as a basis for ensuring these sites are well connected to existing towns. There are two sites which are included in table 1 of the 'Consultation on Strategic Housing and Employment Sites' which are not included in this section of the report, Rothwell North and South Kettering (A14 jct 9). As these sites are being progressed through the Joint Core Strategy review it would be useful if recommendations were included for these sites.

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4. **CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT**

4.1 The results of this consultation will further develop the findings of the Urban Structure Study. Kettering Borough Council is a consultee, but also works in partnership with the Joint Planning Unit in preparing this document.

5. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Urban Structure Study will continue to inform the preparation of policy in the Joint Core Strategy and Site Specific and Neighbourhood plans.

6. **USE OF RESOURCES**

6.1 None directly related to this report.

7. **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members agree the comments set out in section 3 of this report, as the Councils response to the Joint Planning Unit consultation on the Urban Structures Study.

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