

**APPENDIX A - WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT SPATIAL PLAN  
STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND  
September 2018**

**Produced by:**



**Supported by:**



## 1.0 Introduction and Geographical Area Covered by the Statement

1.1 Local planning authorities and county councils have a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic planning matters that cross administrative boundaries. This requires effective and ongoing joint working between strategic plan-making authorities to address issues such as the provision of cross boundary infrastructure and whether there are development needs which cannot be met in a particular area but could be met elsewhere.

1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advocates the preparation of Statements of Common Ground (SOCG) as a means of demonstrating effective and ongoing joint working and compliance with the duty to cooperate.

1.3 This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF and the advice contained in national practice guidance. The SOCG covers the areas of three local planning authorities, namely:

- Daventry District Council;
- Northampton Borough Council; and
- South Northamptonshire Council

1.4 Collectively these three Councils make up the area known as West Northamptonshire. The extent of the area is shown below:



1.5 The signatories to the SOCG are:

- Daventry District Council;
- Northampton Borough Council;
- Northamptonshire County Council; and
- South Northamptonshire Council

## 2. Key Strategic Matters Addressed by this Statement

2.1 The partner Councils in West Northamptonshire have a strong track record of joint working as demonstrated by the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (JCS) which was adopted in December 2014. With the support of the County Council, the three local planning authorities have agreed to prepare a West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (WNSP) which will, when adopted, be a local plan that replaces the strategic framework provided by the existing JCS<sup>1</sup>.

2.2 The key strategic matters addressed by this statement essentially flow from the scope of the Strategic Plan. To address the key strategic priorities for the area the scope of the Plan will comprise:

- **The spatial vision for West Northamptonshire** – extended up to 2050 to reflect the wider spatial vision being prepared for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor.
- **The spatial strategy for the distribution of development** – this could include new spatial options such as new settlements (garden towns), where these would be a long term sustainable approach to development.
- **The housing requirement** – the number of new homes to be provided across West Northamptonshire. Targets to be split by Policy Area and/or strategic locations.
- **Affordable housing** – Proportion of the overall requirement that should be affordable. Guidance on the tenure split having regard to the expanded definition of affordable housing in the revised NPPF.
- **Economic growth** – An overall jobs target for West Northamptonshire and guidance on the strategic locations for employment, including new employment land. This would also include a review of the strategy for town centres / retail as the exiting JCS evidence / policy is out of date.
- **Strategic infrastructure** – The key primary infrastructure projects that are required to deliver the strategy such as strategic transport schemes and utility networks.
- **Place-shaping / sustainable development** – Key principles to ensure quality development and sustainable places including the protection and enhancement of natural/built and historic assets.

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<sup>1</sup> Certain policies in the JCS may be retained as saved policies.

- 2.4 The adopted JCS makes provision for about 42,620 net additional dwellings in the plan area during the period 2011 to 2029 and distributes this provision between the District and Borough Councils.
- 2.5 Specific provision for the housing needs of Northampton is made within the Northampton Related Development Area (NRDA) which comprises the whole of the Borough Council area, together with neighbouring parts of Daventry District and South Northamptonshire where development to meet the needs of Northampton has taken place, has planning permission or is allocated in the JCS. Provision for about 28,470 dwellings in the NRDA of which 18,870 dwellings are in Northampton Borough, 5,750 dwellings are in Daventry District and 3,850 dwellings are in South Northamptonshire.
- 2.7 The WNSP will review the objectively assessed need for housing using the new national methodology which is being introduced. It will address the distribution of the housing need across the plan area, but will apportion this to policy areas and/or strategic locations.
- 2.8 The plan will deal with matters at a strategic level, and will be supplemented by part 2 plans, which will provide, as necessary additional policies and allocations.

### **3. Matters on which the parties agree**

#### **The need for a Strategic Plan for West Northamptonshire**

- 3.1 The West Northamptonshire authorities agree that there is a need to prepare a Strategic Plan to replace the strategic framework provided by the existing JCS, to ensure that there is an effective framework for future plan making and to secure the necessary funding for enhanced infrastructure and affordable housing delivery.

#### **The geographical coverage of the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan**

- 3.2 The parties agree that the WNSP will cover Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire, collectively referred to as West Northamptonshire i.e. the same area as the current JCS.

#### **The key cross boundary issues that the WNSP needs to address**

- 3.3 The parties agree that the WNSP will determine the scale of housing need to be addressed up to 2041, including the need for affordable housing
- 3.4 Preparation of the WNSP will include the calculation of new housing need figures using the Government's national methodology for calculating local housing need. The WNSP will also have regard to the

opportunities and demands arising from the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor.

- 3.5 The WNSP will be supported by a robust, but proportionate, joint evidence base covering housing and economic development needs, infrastructure requirements, environmental constraints and opportunities, and health and well-being. Evidence base studies will be jointly commissioned where appropriate.
- 3.6 The WNSP will provide a strategic housing target for West Northamptonshire which will be split by functional area, including the NRDA policy area, and strategic locations.
- 3.7 The WNSP will provide an overall jobs target and guidance on the strategic locations for new employment land.
- 3.8 The WNSP will set out strategic infrastructure priorities in particular the key infrastructure projects which are critical to the delivery of the plan's strategy. A major focus will be on the opportunities and demands provided by the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Corridor. Any uplift in housing growth above local housing needs will be dependent on adequate resources being made available to deliver the essential infrastructure required to support growth.
- 3.9 The plan will determine the broad distribution of housing and economic development across the area and will identify Strategic Development locations and opportunities including the potential for new settlements.
- 3.10 The existing monitoring framework will be reviewed to assess the implementation of the WNSP against key milestones and indicators.
- 3.11 Engagement with local communities and other stakeholders, including statutory consultees will be set out in a Joint Statement of Community Involvement to be agreed by the parties.

### **Assessment of reasonable alternative options for the growth of Northampton**

- 3.12 Strategic plan making should ensure that all reasonable alternative options for accommodating the housing needs of Northampton are properly assessed. Having regard to the close housing and economic market relationship between Northampton and parts of the adjoining borough of Wellingborough, the parties will seek to prepare a separate SOCG with the Borough Council of Wellingborough and/or the North Northamptonshire authorities as a whole to ensure that reasonable options for accommodating Northampton's growth in the Borough of Wellingborough will be tested through their plan making process. The SOCG will ensure a coordinated approach to plan making and a collaborative approach to the consideration of development options to meet the needs of Northampton, including options for the urban

development of Northampton beyond the eastern boundary of the Borough.

### **Governance and Decision Making**

- 3.13 The WNSP will be prepared under section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which enables two or more local planning authorities to prepare a joint Local Plan. Plan preparation will be overseen by the Joint Planning and Infrastructure Board comprised of Members supported by an officer Programme Board. Key decisions on the Plan such as publication, and submission would need to be taken by the individual Councils. Based on current timetables for local government review in Northamptonshire, it is anticipated that the decision to adopt the WNSP would need to be taken by a new unitary authority.
- 3.14 The Board will ensure that the SOCG is updated at key points in the process, for example when agreements are reached on strategic issues such as the overall level of housing need and the distribution of the required housing across the area. The SOCG will also need to record any strategic matters on which agreement has not been reached.

### **4. Matters on which parties don't agree**

- 4.1 None

### **5. Signatures**

Signed for and on behalf of:

#### **Daventry District Council**

Name

Position

Signature

Date

#### **Northampton Borough Council**

Name

Position

Signature

Date

**Northamptonshire County Council**

Name

Position

Signature

Date

**South Northamptonshire Council**

Name

Position

Signature

Date