



## Planning Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Policy Committee held at on Tuesday 28 February 2023 at 6.00 pm.

### **Present:**

Councillor Matt Golby (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Adam Brown  
Councillor Phil Bignell  
Councillor Stephen Clarke  
Councillor Jonathan Harris  
Councillor Jamie Lane  
Councillor Kevin Parker  
Councillor Wendy Randall

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Councillor Rebecca Breese  
Councillor Cathrine Russell

### **Officers:**

Richard Wood (Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy)  
Paul Everard (Planning Policy and Heritage Manager)  
Mags Howe (Senior Planning Policy Officer)  
Rhian Morgan (Heritage Policy Assistant)  
Theresa Boyd (Planning Solicitor)  
Ed Bostock (Democratic Services Officer)

#### 49. **Declarations of Interest**

None advised.

#### 50. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

#### 51. **Chair's Announcements**

#### 52. **Newnham Conservation Area**

The Heritage Policy Officer presented the report which sought the Committee's consideration of responses to the consultation exercise on the draft Newnham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and proposed changes to the appraisal and further steps to implement outcomes. The proposed Mounts Lane extension (BA1) had been reduced to no longer contain several properties to the

north, however, the other extensions remained as they were in the draft. Newnham Chapel was proposed as a candidate for the Council's List of local list of buildings and sites during the consultation which met scoring threshold, so was added to the list. Plans for an Article 4 Direction would be consulted at a later date, if approved by the Committee.

Members discussed the report.

**RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Agreed that the conservation area boundary as set out in Appendix C of the report be designated and supersede the designation that was made in 1998.
- b) Agreed that the proposed changes to the Newnham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan in response to representations, as set out in Appendices A and B of the report be approved.
- c) Agreed that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the Newnham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan including to reflect that the document will be in its final adopted form.
- d) Agreed that the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Newnham be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- e) Agreed the Local List entries for Newnham set out in Appendix D of the report.
- f) Agreed that an Article 4(1) for Newnham in accordance with the proposals in the conservation area appraisal and management plan be made subject to consultation (Details of Article 4(1) Direction in Appendix E of the report).
- g) Agreed that delegated authority to confirm the Article 4(1) Direction be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy in the event that there were no objections received in response to the consultation on the Article 4 Direction.

**53. Brockhall Conservation Area**

The Heritage Policy Assistant presented the report which sought the Committee's consideration of the responses to the consultation exercise on the draft Brockhall Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and further steps to implement outcomes. Proposals for an Article 4 Direction would be consulted on at a later date. A response to the consultation was received via the online survey which expressed disagreement with the proposed extensions, particularly two areas of woodland (BA1 and BA2). No other responses were received.

Members discussed the report.

**RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Agreed that the conservation area boundary as set out in Appendix B of the report be designated and supersede the designation that was made in 1999.

- b) Agreed that the proposed changes to the Brockhall Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan in response to representations, as set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.
- c) Agreed that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy to make further minor editorial changes to the Brockhall Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan including to reflect that the document will be in its final adopted form.
- d) Agreed that the conservation area appraisal and management plan for Brockhall be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- e) Agreed the Local List entries for Brockhall set out in Appendix C of the report.
- f) Agreed that an Article 4(1) Direction for Brockhall in accordance with the proposals in the conservation area appraisal and management plan be made subject to consultation.
- g) Agreed that delegated authority to confirm the Article 4(1) Direction be given to the Interim Head of Planning and Climate Change Policy in the event that there were no objections received in response to the consultation on the Article 4(1) Direction.

**54. Progress in Producing and Reviewing Neighbourhood Development Plans**

The Interim Head of Planning Policy presented the report which asked Members to note the progress being made in producing and reviewing Neighbourhood Plans across West Northamptonshire, and the make Members aware of future neighbourhood planning activity.

At the April 2022 meeting it was agreed that reports would be submitted to future meetings to provide updates on neighbourhood planning activity. Since then, progress against key milestones was as follows:

- Two new plans had been made - Great Houghton and Pitsford
- Three plans had been reviewed – Guilsborough, Kilsby and West Haddon
- One new area had been designated – Whittlebury
- Two plans had reached regulation 16 stage – Arthingworth and Nether Heyford
- One plan had reached examination stage – Harlestone

In response to a question, it was explained that the Weedon Neighbourhood Plan proposal had been withdrawn.

Members discussed the report.

**RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Noted and welcomed the progress that had been made, and was being made, in producing Neighbourhood Plans across West Northamptonshire.

**55. Response to consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework**

Jane Wood, on behalf of Climate Action West Northamptonshire, addressed the Committee and expressed concern that current evidence showed that plans that performed to the NPPF did not achieve their objectives regarding sustainable development as defined in the NPPF. She stated that developments being built today in west Northamptonshire were limiting options for the future and stated that economic measures were given too much weight. Ms Wood questioned whether there were any plans in place to ensure that this was addressed in the future. She further questioned whether it was the opinion of the Council that the NPPF and regulations provided adequate regulatory framework to enable sustainable development in West Northamptonshire and ensure new development contribute to WNC's net zero target, and if not, if the Council should be feeding back to central government through its MPs to support that message.

The Interim Head of Planning Policy presented the report which sought Members' views on a suggested response to the current consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The report summarised the government's proposed changes to the NPPF and suggested a response from the Council. Regarding points made by the speaker, the Committee was informed that policies relating to green initiatives and sustainability were being looked at by officers and a further report would be brought to the next meeting.

Members discussed the report and the following points were raised:

- There were no green belt designations within West Northamptonshire.
- Regarding the response to question 5, it was suggested that neighbourhood plans should be viewed as holding as much weight as local plans.
- Regarding question 15, it was suggested that the response make reference to families and sustainability.
- Regarding question 13, it was explained that should this form part of the NPPF in the future, the response was querying whether the urban uplift would have the potential to impact West Northamptonshire if a nearby authority was unable to deliver on its housing targets.

**RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) With the exception of the response to question 5, agreed the suggested response to the consultation on proposed changes to the NPPF as set out in Appendix A of the report. Regarding the response to question 5, this should be amended to reflect the Council's view that Neighbourhood Plans and Local plans should have equal weight.

**56. Northampton Local Plan Part 2: Adoption**

The Planning Policy and Heritage Manager presented the report which sought Members' agreement to the recommendation that Full Council should adopt the Northampton Local Plan Part 2. The Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2021 and Government-appointed Planning Inspectors conducted hearings about the Plan in November 2021. Following the hearings, proposals for the modification of the plan and the policies map were

prepared to reflect the outcome of the hearing sessions and a note produced by the Inspectors following the close of the hearings. The Proposed Main Modifications were necessary to make the plan sound and were released for public consultation. Comments received were considered by the Inspectors who subsequently recommended that Further Main Modifications be released for consultation, which took place in November and December 2022. The Inspectors considered all the responses received to the consultations and issued their Final Report, which recommended that the Plan be adopted, subject to some changes being made. Representations received in response to consultation on Proposed Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map, which took place in July and August 2022, were also forwarded to the Inspectors and were considered by officers. A final version of the Plan was produced to take on board the recommendations in the Inspectors' Final Report and comments from the consultation on the Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map.

Members discussed the report and the following points were raised:

- With regard to fast-food outlets near schools, this was a policy created following a motion passed by Northampton Borough Council, however the Inspector did not feel that the evidence to support it was sufficient.

#### **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Agreed the suggested changes in response to the consultation on the Additional Modifications, changes to the Policies Map, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix A of the report).
- b) Recommended that Full Council adopt the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (the plan), which incorporated the changes in Appendix A of the report, the changes recommended by the Planning Inspectors in their Final Report (Appendix B of the report) and other editorial changes reflecting the fact that the plan will be in its final form (Appendix C of the report).
- c) Noted the final versions of the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix E of the report) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix F of the report).
- d) Recommended that, if Full Council adopts the Northampton Local Plan Part 2, then the Central Area Action Plan (2013) and all the remaining saved policies within the Northampton Local Plan (1997) were thereby formally revoked.
- e) Delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs, authority to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the plan.

#### **57. Harlestone Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented the report which sought Members' consideration of the recommendations of the independent examiner following the examination of the Harlestone Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), and seek approval to put the plan to referendum. The area was first designated on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 and an amended application for the designation of the area was received on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Following consultation on the application, Daventry District Council

approved the application and designated the Harlestone Neighbourhood Area on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Following a launch event, a draft NDP was published by Harlestone Parish Council for the Harlestone Neighbourhood Area for Regulation 14 public consultation 11th April 2022 – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The plan was then published for formal Regulation 16 consultation from 21st September 2022 – 2nd November 2022. The Council then, with the agreement of Parish Council, appointed an independent examiner to review whether the plan met the basic conditions (see para 6.5) and should proceed to a referendum. If agreed, the referendum would take place on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and would be adopted if more than 50% of votes cast were “yes”.

Members discussed the report and the following points were raised:

- Where there were conflicts in policy, the most recently adopted plan took precedent.

**RESOLVED:**

The Planning Policy Committee:

- a) Noted and welcomed the significant progress in making the neighbourhood development plan (NDP) by the Harlestone community.
- b) Accepted the Examiner’s recommended modifications in respect of the Harlestone NDP
- c) Accepted the Inspector’s recommendation that the NDP, as modified in accordance with recommendation (b), shall proceed to a referendum of voters within the Harlestone Neighbourhood Area.
- d) Approved the proposed Decision Statement set out in Appendix 1 of the report, subject to items (b) and (c) above and any necessary factual alterations.
- e) Agreed that delegated authority be given to the Interim Head of Planning Policy to make any further minor editorial changes be made to the Plan to address any factual and typographical errors and to reflect the fact that the document will be in its intended final form
- f) Agreed that the costs of the referendum be met from the earmarked reserve for neighbourhood planning.

58. **First Homes Policy**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda prior to the meeting.

59. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_