



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7th February 2023

Report Title	Northampton Local Plan Part 2: Adoption
Report Author	<p>Paul Everard Planning Policy and Heritage Manager paul.everard@westnorthants.gov.uk</p> <p>Noreen Banks Planning Policy Team Leader noreen.banks@westnorthants.gov.uk</p>

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

Solicitor and MO	Theresa Boyd, Solicitor Catherine Whitehead, Monitoring Officer	Email confirmation from TB 23 rd January 2023. Email confirmation from CW 24 th January 2023.
Senior Finance Officer	Martin Henry, Executive Director Finance	Email confirmation 23 rd January 2023.
Director for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Stuart Timmiss Executive Director: Place, Economy & Environment	Email confirmation 27 th January 2023.

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to explain to the Committee how the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 is progressing towards potential formal adoption by the Council.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2021. Government-appointed Planning Inspectors conducted hearings about the Plan in November 2021. Following the hearings, proposals for the modification of the plan (including Main Modifications which were agreed with the Inspectors as they were necessary to make the Plan sound) were prepared to reflect the outcome of the hearing sessions and a note produced by the Inspectors following the close of the hearings.
- 2.2 The Proposed Main Modifications and a round of Further Main Modifications were put out to public consultation in 2022. The Inspectors have considered all the responses received to the Main Modifications consultations and have sent a draft Final Report to the Council for fact checking. The draft report recommends that the Plan be adopted, subject to modifications being made.
- 2.3 Following receipt of the final version of the Inspectors' report, a final version of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 will be produced to take on board recommendations in the Inspectors' Final Report and comments from the consultation on Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map.
- 2.4 A new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire is being developed to replace the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, December 2014 (the Part 1 Local Plan) and the Part 2 Local Plans for Daventry, South Northamptonshire and Northampton. This Committee will have the opportunity to scrutinise the new Local Plan throughout its production.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- a) Notes the Council's progress in producing the Northampton Local Plan Part 2.
 - b) Considers the opportunity to scrutinise the new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire at future stages in its production.

4. Reason for Recommendations (NOTE: this section is mandatory and must be completed)

- To accord with legislation on local plan preparation.
- To ensure consistency with previous decisions of Planning Policy Committee regarding the Northampton Local Plan Part 2.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 is being prepared such that it conforms with the policies set out in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1). Since the Joint Core

Strategy is strategic in nature, it is the role of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 to set out detailed policies and site allocations specifically for Northampton. Part 2 Local Plans covering the former South Northamptonshire Council and Daventry District Council areas were adopted in 2020. There have been several stages of public consultation in the process of producing the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 - the Issues Consultation (April 2016), Options Consultation (October 2016) and Sites Consultation (October 2017), public consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan Part 2 (July 2019) and a second round of consultation public consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan Part 2 (July 2020).

- 5.2 At its meeting of 18th July 2022, Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group, Members discussed the Northampton Local Plan Part 2. It was concluded that there was no place at that time for Scrutiny to add value as decisions about Plan were ultimately in the hands of Government-appointed inspectors who would deliberate and form their own view which would be fed back to the Council.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in February 2021. Government-appointed Planning Inspectors conducted hearings about the Plan in November 2021. Following the hearings, proposals for the modification of the plan (including Main Modifications which were agreed with the Inspectors as they were necessary to make the Plan sound) were prepared to reflect the outcome of the hearing sessions and a note produced by the Inspectors following the close of the hearings.
- 6.2 The Proposed Main Modifications and a round of Further Main Modifications were put out to public consultation in 2022. The Inspectors have considered all the responses received to the Main Modifications consultations and have sent a draft Final Report to the Council for fact checking. The draft report recommends that the Plan be adopted, subject to modifications being made.
- 6.3 Following receipt of the final version of the Inspectors' report, a final version of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 will be produced to take on board recommendations in the Inspectors' Final Report and comments from the consultation on Additional Modifications and Changes to the Policies Map. At this stage, the contents of the Plan, including its policies are "fixed" pending its adoption (if the Council chooses to adopt it). If the Council were to choose to change the Plan at this stage, there would have to be further public consultation and the Plan would have to be re-examined, which would be likely to delay the adoption of the Plan by up to two years.
- 6.4 A new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire is being developed to replace the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, December 2014 (the Part 1 Local Plan) and the Part 2 Local Plans for Daventry, South Northamptonshire and Northampton. This Committee will have the opportunity to scrutinise the new Local Plan throughout its production.

6.5 The timetable for the production of the new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire is as follows:

- Draft Plan Consultation (Regulation 18) – June 2023
- Publication of Draft Plan and Consultation (Regulation 19) – December 2023
- Submission (Regulation 22) – May 2024
- Examination (Regulation 24) – December 2024
- Adoption (Regulation 26) – September 2025

Choices

6.6 Since the recommendations are for noting, there are no particular choices that arise at this stage.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Legal

7.1.2 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals in this report.

7.2 Risk

7.2.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations in this report.

7.3 Consultation

7.3.1 The plan preparation process has been undertaken in compliance with the regulations set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and consultation forms a key element of the process. Consultation on the new Local Plan will also be undertaken in compliance with those Regulations.

7.4 Climate Impact

7.4.1 Policies in the Northampton Local Plan Part 2, including those relating to flooding, sustainable construction and the provision for electric vehicle charging points, will have a beneficial impact on climate change.

7.4.2 Sustainable development and climate impact will be key strands in the development of the new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire.

7.5 Community Impact

7.5.1 The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 will ensure that developments are directed to the right locations and that they are constructed in a manner that meets the required standards. It will ensure that a balance is secured between the built and natural environment, therefore continuing to supply houses and employment for existing and future residents whilst enhancing the quality and quantity of open spaces and protecting the area's heritage assets. All these will have a positive impact on the community.

7.5.2 It is the intention that the new Local Plan will address the same issues.

7.6 **Communications**

7.6.1 Communications plays a key role throughout the local plan preparation process, particularly in publicising and encouraging participation in the consultation stages. The council will continue to keep the public and all other stakeholders informed and engaged in this consultation using its corporate communications channels including media releases, social media and targeted marketing activity.

8. **Background Papers**

- [Northampton Local Plan Part 2 Submission & Examination | Northampton Local Plan Part 2 Submission & Examination | West Northamptonshire Council - Northampton Area](#)
- [New Local Plan for West Northamptonshire | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Minutes of Previous Meeting.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)