STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

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4.1 DESIGN APPROACH

The following section presents the Strategic Development Framework - which is intended to be a high-level, indicative spatial plan to help establish essential “design parameters” and “guiding principles” for the wider SUE area, to assist the master-planning process (for the various sites/SUE’s) going forward.

As stated earlier in the report, the objective of this SDF in line with best practice guidance is to be “prepared as a prelude to a masterplan or as a tool to guide future development... sets out the structure, the aspirations and the limits within which more detailed work on planning, design and delivery can take place. It is a ‘framework’ – a structure that supports something else – because it emphasises connections and relationships over what happens in detail on particular sites...and it is ‘strategic’ because it only needs to show priorities, not detail. It deals with themes and principles rather than being prescriptive about outputs, which can be fixed later in the process” (A Guide to Large Scale Urban Design, CABE, 2010).

The West Northampton SDF has been developed upon the key information presented in Sections 2.0 and 3.0 and available during the SDF preparation period, including:

- **planning policy review** (specifically the JCS as the key policy driver);
- comprehensive **site assessment and analysis** (desk and assessment);
- an evaluation of existing pre-planning material and evidence;
- known **constraints** and identified opportunities;
- **SLRR road alignment** options;
- stakeholder consultation feedback; and
- **new / emerging County requirements** (transport and education).

The SDF process has investigated the following:

| Roles and relationships of settlements and places | • Function + character of surrounding villages and settlements; Harpole, Harlestone, Kislingbury, Duston, Upton + St. Cripsins • Connectivity and co-location between new and proposed settlements |
| Strategic Connections – key /primary linkages + local links | • Green Infrastructure corridors • Transport + strategic access/movement • Movement network + Local connectors • Sustainable movement patterns and walkability |
| Urban and rural relationship and response | • Built and natural environment (relationships) • Character of built + rural edge response |
| Hierarchy of centres | • Size + location • Access + Function |
| Distribution of development | • Location for new development/definition of appropriate development areas • Land-use mix, quantum and disposition |
4.2 DESIGN EVOLUTION

Analysis    Design Concepts    SDF and Key Themes
The strategic framework for West Northampton SUE’s is presented in the following section. It is presented as a schematic ‘framework diagram’ (not a masterplan) for Policy N9a, N4 SUE’s within the wider context of Duston, Upton, Upton Lodge (N9) and the surrounding villages/urban area.

It is consistent with the WNJCS policy requirements and the NPPF (2012) policy framework for sustainable development and high quality design – and is focussed on high level priorities to ensure that area is developed as a comprehensive piece of townscape through appropriate strategic infrastructure, land use disposition and a cohesive urban structure. The SDF narrative is then explained using three high level themes which form structuring elements and influences for the overall SDF diagram.

The SDF for West Northamptonshire provides for:

**Context**

- A new residential district that is well integrated with the surrounding built and natural context, making a positive response to the natural landscape setting, topography and key views whilst protecting the rural character of surrounding villages;
- Development that respects the 115m contour /ridge line with a sensitive landscaped / development edge;
- The incorporation of Sandy Lane (old and new) to define the new development edge – promoting a soft/rural edge response to new development fronting open space/ countryside where possible;
- New residential development areas that follow a robust layout and promote active frontages and well-overlooked streets and spaces.

**Accessibility**

- A key north-south route to connect Cross Valley Link Road (south of the A4500), new development to the North-West By-pass route (future);
- A key primary route to and through the development via completion of the Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR) – accommodating the proposed SLRR re-alignment (Option B) which could support a design for lower traffic speeds as an ‘urban boulevard’;
- An integrated local ‘network’ of open spaces, green streets and parkland linking N-S, E-W through the development and to existing settlements – supporting good movement and permeability whilst minimising additional traffic pressure on Glassthorpe Lane, Larkhill Lane and Port Road;
- A key north-south link to wider Northampton’s Strategic Green Infrastructure Network via a new country park linking the River Nene, Upton Valley Park to Harlestone Firs and Brampton Valley Way.

**Land use Distribution**

- The optimum location for mixed uses/local centre where key facilities, services, provisional school sites can be co-located along primary routes in highly visible and accessible locations. Three indicative locations have been proposed in each of the allocations N9a – Norwood farm and Upton Lodge and N4 Northampton West – which are located outside an 800m radius and independent from the other.
- Land for primary and secondary school provision located on visible and accessible locations along the primary movement network. These are:
  - N9a (Upton Lodge) x 1 2FE primary
  - N9a (Upton Lodge) x 1 secondary school (provision made if required)
  - N9a (Norwood Farm) x 1 2FE – 3FE primary school
  - N4 (Northampton West) x one 3FE – 4FE primary school
- The potential to develop key anchors and destinations (such as a leisure/recreation focus, primary parks and open spaces + community/education hubs, mixed uses for enjoyment and benefit of the local and wider community) that are both visible and accessible through land-use disposition and the movement network (this theme is presented in more detail in Section 4.3);
- Land for playing pitches/sports provision and open space as per JCS requirements.
FIGURE 6: 4.0 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SDF)

SDF: West Northampton SUE’s

KEY
- Development Area (indicative)
- Development Area (built/consented)
- Key Frontages
- Existing Stone Buildings (to be retained)
- Local Centre/Community Uses
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Landmark/Focal Point
- Landscaping
- Open space
- Country Park
- Potential Sports/Open Space
- Green Links
- Movement
- Indicative Local Route
- Avenue Planting
- Water Bodies
- 115M Contour

West Northampton: Strategic Development Framework
The SDF (indicative diagram) contains a number of key/high level components which have been developed and are presented as three themes.

These themes have been developed and informed by a series of structuring elements and influences within the SDF - in terms of its indicative layout, urban structure, movement and broad distribution of land-uses across the site – and are presented in the following section to explain the narrative behind the SDF proposal. They are as follows:

1. Green Infrastructure + Landscape Network
2. Movement + Connections
3. Land-use, anchors + destinations

1 Green Infrastructure and Landscape network

The NPPF and Northampton Landscape Sensitivity & Green Infrastructure Study (NLSGIS, 2009) outline the following principles in relation to providing Green Infrastructure within new developments. Given the rural nature of West Northampton and the surrounding SUE context, this has formed one of the key drivers for the SDF, to ensure that new development responds positively to and is appropriate to its natural and landscape context. The following principles have been applied:

- Development that provides for a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural (which will in turn deliver wide environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities) and include benefits to biodiversity; access and movement; the local economy; flood prevention; climate change mitigation; and enhancements to cultural heritage assets; landscapes and local communities (through education and improved public health and wellbeing);
- Green infrastructure links and corridors (through strategic open space and planned development) to channel movement and maximise connectivity to open space, key anchors and destinations throughout all new development;
- A wide variety of multi-functional open/green space – namely a new County Park (formal/informal) + recreation ranging from parks/green spaces to areas of ecological or historical interest, and also to places of work, local shops, and community and education facilities. Promote assets in terms of Parks and Gardens; Amenity Greenspace; Natural and Semi-natural Urban Greenspace; Green Corridors and other sites such as allotments. The Northampton Green Infrastructure Plan (NGIP) represents a new, innovative and committed approach to the future delivery for GI in Northampton;
- A hierarchy of routes within a network from doorstep to countryside via a framework for a multitude of route options providing connectivity to a wide diversity of destinations;
- Use existing landscape and topography and respect the ridgeline east of Harpole to retain/protect the rural character and visual amenity of Harpole whilst protecting open space, landscape and nature conservation.
FIGURE 7: 4.0 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SDF)

GI + Landscape network

KEY
- Development area (indicative)
- Existing Stone Buildings
- Existing Development
- Local Centres/Community
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Existing Open Space
- Country Park
- Primary Green Network/Links
- 'Green" Destination
- Sports/Recreation
- Proposed Country Park Buffer
- Rural Edge
- Landscaping
- Landmark/Focal Point
- 115m Contour
2 Movement + Connections

Access

Access to the area will be provided by existing, improved and new road infrastructure on a primary, secondary and local level. Pedestrians, cycles and other modes of transport will be equally supported within the movement framework, supported via connections to (physical and visual) and along key green infrastructure and landscape routes and streets.

Access into the development and surrounding open space from existing settlements has been proposed where the potential/desire has been identified. This will need to be developed and tested as part of the master-planning and planning process going forward.

Movement

As part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the area, the following transport links/connections will need to be provided:

- The Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR) is part of strategic the highway provision within the South West District of Northampton. The development will need to deliver a link road to connect the SLRR to the north/Harlestone with the south/Upton and the A4500 in order to open up the area for planned housing growth;
- The SLRR - Northamptonshire County Council’s requirement for the link road is: “A single carriageway road, with land reserved for dualling. Design speed of 50mph, reducing to 40mph in appropriate urban settlements once the houses have been built”.
- The location of the SLLR to follow Option B - page 20 (realignment) in that it gives:
  - a better balance to the scheme layout as a whole (in terms of block structure and key facilities location) and does not sterilise/isolate areas of development;
  - requires significantly less ‘cut and fill embankments’ than Option A therefore avoids a ‘divorced’ engineering solution with development sitting above and below the road;
  - produces a better road geometry and edge to the development and gives the potential for frontage development which supports the boulevard street aspiration
- SLRR and key primary routes designed as an ‘urban Boulevard’ with integration of public transport to provide a positive development frontage and opportunity to link (existing and proposed) communities/residential areas;
- A well-integrated street network and street hierarchy linking into the existing infrastructure and connecting key existing and proposed land-uses, anchors and destinations;
- Promote walkability to key spaces and destinations throughout the development at a maximum of 800m for the majority of new residents to key services and transport facilities;
- The use of land form/topography, landmarks and key landscape (existing and proposed) as legible movement and wayfinding markers.
FIGURE 8: 4.0 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SDF)

Movement + Connections

KEY
- Development area (indicative)
- Existing Stone Buildings
- Existing development
- Local Centre/Community
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Green Links (pedestrian)
- Primary movement
- Secondary movement
- Local movement

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3 Land-use, anchors + destinations

**Surrounding Land-use and Character**
The majority of the surrounding area is residential, comprising the village settlements of Kislingbury, Harpole and Harlestone, the established suburbs at Duston/New Duston and new communities at St. Crispins and Upton, and Settlements to the east currently form the urban edge of Northampton. Careful consideration has therefore been given to the connections and design response to existing settlements and also to respect the response to the rural edge and character to the west.

**Land-use**
Broad land-use distributions and indicative quantums are based on the requirement as set out in WNJCS allocations, indicative assessment of the site and feasibility together with approximate population forecasting to calculate required provision for each land-use component.

**Open Space Requirements**
Strategic open space requirements and provision (specifically outdoor sports) has been calculated and located on the SDF plan. Other open space/sports provision (such as Play, Sports Facilities, Open Space, water attenuation provision) will need to be informed by further supporting technical studies + master-planning and determined by each individual authority (based on individual authorities requirements) for each allocation separately and as part of the planning process going forward.

**Indicative Landuse Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>JCS: Policy N4</th>
<th>JCS: Policy 9a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>In the region of 2550</td>
<td>In the region of 3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>X 1 = 3 ha (3FE - 4FE)</td>
<td>X 2 = 5 ha (2FE - 3FE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports provision</td>
<td>14 ha + parking</td>
<td>9.5 ha + parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7 + 1000 x 5625 = 9.56ha</td>
<td>1.7 + 1000 x 8750 = 14 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other open space/play requirements</td>
<td>*Specific requirements/provision to be determined by individual authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed use centres/employment</td>
<td>1.5 ha</td>
<td>2 + 1 = 3 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key infrastructure/SLRR</td>
<td>2 ha</td>
<td>3.5 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anchors + Destinations

KEY
- Development area (indicative)
- Existing Stone Buildings
- Existing development
- Local Centre/Community
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Country Park/Local Nature Reserve
- Mixed Use Centre & School
- Park/Landscape Focus
- 800m Walking Distance (from proposed local centre)
- Primary Green Network/Links
- 115m Contour
Anchors + Destinations

Anchors and destinations is an abstract notation to explain the placement and co-location of important land-uses, spaces, facilities and services (such as mixed use centres, education facilities, recreation/sports hub). These are located along primary routes/key connectors to aid ‘walkability’ in order to support sustainable development and lifestyle choice. SDF themes are multi-layered in that the green infrastructure/network and key movement hierarchy support viability and co-location of key land-uses, anchors and destinations.

The general rule of thumb is that anchors provide wayfinding elements (physical and visual) via activity hubs at the local level. These anchors encourage movement to and through places whereby destinations are located within 800m distance at key strategic locations along primary movement connectors.

The SDF would look to promote the creation/enhancement of the following anchors and destinations:

- **New Country Park** – as key destination supporting a variety of formal and informal recreation;
- **Dedicated Outdoor Sports facilities/pitches** – for the majority of Norwood Farm and separate facility to west of Northampton West site;
- **Key ‘formal’ recreational hub/anchor off Larkhill Lane to the east of Harpole village** linking new development with open space/open country park and countryside;
- **New community/education hub** located on the country park development edge at Norwood Farm (to utilise open space as formal sports and education) and adjacent to mixed-use/local facilities centred around a key formal open space;
- **Primary and secondary school provision** (as above) on Norwood Farm/Country Park edge and south of Upton Lodge/adjacent to SLRR and A4500;
- **New mixed-use hub/primary school** to the north located along a primary route at Northampton West SUE;
- **Green recreation hub** to the Western boundary/edge of Northampton West SUE, where bridleways/formal footpaths converge (gateway to the countryside).
CONCLUSION

5.1 MOVING FORWARD

chapter 5.0
5.1 MOVING FORWARD

This document provides a strategic and co-ordinated design approach across the West Northampton Sustainable Urban Extensions, to assist and inform the completion of the masterplanning of the SUE’s and to aid the consideration of planning applications as they are submitted. As such, it has been “…prepared as a prelude to a masterplan or as a tool to guide future development…setting out the structure, aspirations and limits within which more detailed work on planning, design and delivery can take place…”.

The Strategic Development Framework sets out strategic priorities, relationships and development drivers for the sites collectively and deals with themes and principles rather than being prescriptive about outputs, which can be fixed later in the planning process (A Guide to Large Scale Urban Design, CABE, 2010).

The SDF has been a useful tool and platform throughout its process for wider engagement and consultation between the various Authorities and Developers, helping to prioritise key elements for the growth of West Northampton in terms of wider area connections, key infrastructure and relationships between the various SUE allocations.

Going forward, the SDF should be used as a reference document and guide for strategic masterplanning and planning for individual sites. As masterplanning for the various sites progress, further consideration will be given to the appropriate phasing of the development areas to ensure a logical pattern of development and the timely delivery of essential elements of infrastructure.