BIODIVERSITY
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

February 2015



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A steering group led by the Nature Improvement Area officer, North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit officer and including the Local Planning Authorities to which this work applies has prepared a "Biodiversity draft Supplementary Planning Document" (SPD). The SPD will amplify policies contained in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (adopted Dec 2014) and the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (adopted June 2008).

1.2 Some sites and species have environmental classifications which mean that they are protected by Environmental Regulations as well as Planning policy and associated processes that have to be undertaken. The contents of the SPD have largely been guided by the previous contents of an earlier adopted Biodiversity SPD.

1.3 This document has been produced to help Local Planning Authorities, developers and others to ensure that development meets legislative and policy requirements and best practice standards in relation to protection and enhancements to bio-diversity are achieved. It supports a standardised approach all applicants should follow.

2. PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION STATEMENT

2.1 The preparation of this Consultation Statement conforms to Regulations 12 and 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It sets out the details of the people consulted in assisting with the preparation of the document, how they were consulted, what key issues were raised and how they have been addressed in the SPD.

2.2 The purpose of this consultation statement is twofold:

- To comply with regulations 12 and 13 of the Act. This includes a public consultation exercise undertaken between the 9th February and 23rd March 2015 and
- To demonstrate that a comprehensive consultation exercise has been undertaken in compliance with the respective Local Planning Authorities' Statements of Community Involvement (SCI)

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

i Early Engagement

3.1 This Consultation Statement demonstrates how the Local Planning Authorities – through the steering group – resolved to actively engage key representatives from within the respective Local Planning Authority Councils as well as external organisations in developing the principles for this SPD.

3.2 In the early stages of preparing this SPD, representatives of the Local Planning Authorities attended meetings, and/or undertook discussions with Officers from Development Management, Natural England, RSPB, Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area and both Northamptonshire Joint Planning Units. As the SPD is an update of an existing SPD that has been adopted for a considerable period, the officers were able to understand the effectiveness of the document in assisting in shaping development proposals.

3.3 The Local Planning Authorities also sought the views of their representative on Equalities to ensure that the SPD contained principles which were legally compliant. In undertaking a Community Impact Assessment, areas like eliminating discrimination, improving equality of opportunity and accessibility and fostering good relations, were assessed.

3.4 The key considerations emerging from these early discussions were:

- The contents needed to have greater focus which encouraged the writing of a sharper, tighter document that was easier for non-professionals to engage with/use.
- The document should guide an applicant through the correct procedures such that a complete package of information is presented with an application for validation.

ii Consultation Draft

3.5 The relevant comments obtained from these communications were incorporated into the consultation draft which was circulated to the steering group prior to its release for formal consultation.

3.6 The consultation draft was subsequently released for formal consultation between the 9th February and 23rd March, to accord with Regulations 12 and 13 of the Planning Act.

3.7 For the consultation process to be effective, the Local Planning Authorities prepared the following:

a. Advert Notice

3.8 At least one of the Local Planning Authorities released a public notice (see Appendix 1 for the example related to Northampton, posted in the Northampton Herald & Post and Northamptonshire Telegraph). This notice explained what the SPD is about and how people can make their representations and by when.

b. Publicity

3.9 The Local Planning Authorities wrote to a wide range of people and organisations (see Appendix 2 for an example of the notification letter) including:

- The Local Press to inform them about the purpose of the document and the period of consultation
- European and Local Members of Parliament and Councillors
- Partner organisations and local authorities including Northamptonshire County Council and Milton Keynes Council
- Parish Councils and Residents Associations
- Relevant consultees registered on the Local Plan database, including statutory consultees such as English Heritage, Homes and Communities Agency, Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Anglian Water and Natural England, as well as private consultants and healthcare providers
- Charity and voluntary organisations
- Where available, those expressing a desire to be kept informed of progress on development plan issues.

3.10 In undertaking this consultation exercise, a link to the following documents was made available on the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit's website (Appendix 1) as well as the respective local planning authority websites:

- The draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document
- The Community Impact Assessment
- The Consultation Statement

3.11 The consultation was also placed on Northamptonshire County Council's consultation register.

3.12 The above documents were also made available at the:

- District council offices
- Northamptonshire libraries

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CONSULTATION RESPONSES

4.1 Regulation 12 and 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that representations on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) should be for a period of not less than 4 weeks.

4.2 The consultation period for the SPD is for 6 weeks, this is consistent with the adopted Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) for Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire.

5. THE NEXT STAGE

5.1 All responses received will be assessed and where relevant, incorporated into the adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). A summary of the responses, officer responses and where appropriate changes to the SPD and associated documents will be provided to each of the

respective Local Planning Authorities committees with responsibility for adopting SPD. The consultation statement supporting the final adopted version of the SPD will also contain this detail.

5.2 Once approved, each relevant Local Planning Authority will formally adopt the SPD and release an Adoption Statement. This information will be made available on the Local Planning Authorities' websites and sent to all those who requested that they be informed of the status of the SPD.

APPENDIX 1

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION PERIOD FOR BIODIVERSITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT AND THE COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012

A Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been published, in accordance with Regulations 12 and 13 of the Regulations. The draft SPD amplifies policies contained in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (adopted 2014). It provides information and guidance for developers and others to ensure that development has no significant adverse effect on the biodiversity and where possible can be enhanced.

These draft consultation documents (comprising the SPD, Consultation Statement and the Community Impact Assessment) are available for inspection during normal office opening hours at the Council's One Stop Shop, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE. The documents are also available to view within opening hours at all libraries in the Borough (Central Library (Abington Street), Abington, Duston, Far Cotton, Hunsbury, Kingsthorpe, St James, Weston Favell and Wootton Fields).

The full documentation can be downloaded from **www.nnjpu.org.uk/consultations**, or requests for copies can be made to the NIA Natural Development Officer on 01604 361210 or email planning@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

Representations are invited during the consultation period which runs from Monday 9th February 2015 and **closes at 5pm Monday 23rd March 2015**. Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified of the adoption of the SPD. If making such a request, please specify the address for this purpose. Representations can be sent in the following ways:

- In writing to: Ms Heather Webb, Natural Development Officer, Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area, % Northamptonshire County Council, County Hall, Guildhall Road, Northampton, NN1 1DN, or
- By email to planning@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

All representations must be received by:
Monday at 17:00 (5pm) on the 23rd March 2015.

APPENDIX 2:

EXAMPLE OF THE NOTIFICATION LETTER (FROM NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH) INFORMING OF THE CONSULTATION, WHERE THE DOCUMENTS WERE AVAILABLE TO VIEW AND SETTING OUT HOW TO RESPOND

Our Ref:	PL/BIO
Your Ref:	Biodiversity SPD Consultation
Please Contact:	Mr P Lewin
Direct Line	(01604) 838734
Date:	5th February 2015
E-mail:	planningpolicy@northampton.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation:Draft Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document

This letter refers to the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will be published for consultation purposes from Monday 9th February. This is being published for consultation under Regulations 12 and 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2012. The document provides information and guidance for developers and others to ensure that development has no significant effect on bio-diversity including special designations and protected species as addressed through regulations and planning processes. It sets out a consistent approach to identifying potential significant effects on biodiversity and provides guidance on how bio-diversity can be enhanced in new developments.

The consultation period runs from Monday 9th February to 17:00 (5pm) Monday 23rd March 2015.

As bio-diversity networks cross local authority boundaries and are not confined to Northampton Borough Council's boundary, the Council is working with adjoining local authorities in Northamptonshire to take forward the SPD. This work is being co-ordinated by the Natural Development Officer of the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area in association with the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit. The Council welcomes consultation responses submitted either electronically or in paper form.
The documents for consultation are:

- Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Community Impact Assessment (for the SPD)
- Consultation Statement

Viewing the consultation documents

All the published documents can be viewed in the following ways:

Electronically:
http://www.nnjpu.org.uk/consultations/ where you can view and download the documents

Libraries:
Local libraries within the Borough have printed copies of the documents available to view

Council Offices:
The One Stop Shop, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE, where printed copies of the documents are available to view

Making a comment

By email: planning@northamptonshire.gov.uk

By post:
Natural Development Officer, Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area
% Planning Services, Northamptonshire County Council
County Hall
Guildhall Road
Northampton
NN1 1DN

By fax: 01604 361210

We look forward to welcoming your views. If you need further information or assistance, please contact Ms Heather Webb, Natural Development Officer, Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area 01604 361210 or email: planningpolicy@northampton.gov.uk.
Yours sincerely



Paul Lewin
Planning Policy and Heritage Manager