



**Cabinet**

**Tuesday, 8 November 2022**

**Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Preferred Approach**

## **Report of the Director – Development and Economic Growth**

### **Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Councillor R Upton**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils are preparing the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, which will cover the Plan period up to 2038, and will set out policies and proposals to secure sustainable growth. Following earlier rounds of public consultation on potential options for these policies and proposals, a Preferred Approach for the Strategic Plan has been prepared. This focusses on housing and employment provision, rather than the full range of topics which will be included in the final Strategic Plan.
- 1.2. If approved by Cabinet, and there is equivalent approval by Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough and Nottingham City Councils, the Preferred Approach will be published and consulted on for a minimum of six weeks. The consultation will seek views on a proposed strategy and vision, an approach to housing and employment provision and proposed strategic allocations. The responses received will then be considered as part of preparing the final (publication) draft of the Strategic Plan.
- 1.3. Once adopted, the Strategic Plan will, for Rushcliffe, replace the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy that was adopted in 2014.

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) approves the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Preferred Approach, in so far as it relates to Rushcliffe Borough, for public consultation; and
- b) delegates authority to the Director for Development and Economic Growth to approve any minor changes required to the Preferred Approach document and the evidence base prior to consultation.

#### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

To enable preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan to progress further and to identify the Preferred Approach in respect of housing and

employment provision for the purpose of public consultation prior to finalising the publication draft of the Strategic Plan.

#### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1. In July 2020 and February 2021, Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils consulted on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Growth Options. This was a Regulation 18 consultation, which required that various bodies and stakeholders were notified that the Councils are preparing a Plan and invited them to comment about what the Plan ought to contain.
- 4.2. A Report of Consultation Responses for the Growth Options was published in February 2022, which summarised the consultation responses received. The Councils' proposed response to the consultation comments, for matters relating to this Preferred Approach consultation, is included in the Response to the Growth Options Consultation document. For matters not relating to this consultation, responses will be provided at the Strategic Plan's publication draft stage.
- 4.3. Following the earlier Growth Options consultation, a Preferred Approach for the Strategic Plan has been prepared. It focusses on housing and employment provision, rather than the full range of topics, which will be included in the final Strategic Plan. All topics will be covered as part of the publication draft stage.
- 4.4. The following documents have been prepared to support the Preferred Approach:
  - Preferred Approach: Sustainability Appraisal
  - Preferred Approach: Site Selection Report
  - Preferred Approach: Heritage Assets Assessment
  - Preferred Approach: Housing Background Paper
  - Preferred Approach: Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City
  - Preferred Approach: Employment Background Paper
  - Preferred Approach: Green Belt Review
  - Preferred Approach: Green Belt Background Paper
  - Preferred Approach: Infrastructure Delivery Plan Baseline Assessment
  - Report of Consultation Responses: Growth Options
  - Preferred Approach: Response to the Growth Options Consultation
  - Preferred Approach: Habitats Regulations Assessment Paper
  - Rushcliffe Borough Council: Equalities Impact Assessment for Preferred Approach

These documents and other evidence to support the preparation of the Strategic Plan are available to view at:

[www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan](http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan)

- 4.5. The proposed Preferred Approach document (Appendix 1) contains a vision setting out the intended character of the Plan area, describing what the Plan area will look like in 2038. This vision includes key strategic issues such as

climate change, enhancing Blue and Green Infrastructure, improving access to homes and jobs and the distribution of development. It is based on current and future trends of key aspects such as population and economy. Objectives flow from the vision, establishing the way in which the Plan area will deal with the identified key issues. Only objectives relating to housing and employment are proposed as part of this consultation. Objectives covering all aspects will be included as part of the Strategic Plan's publication draft stage.

- 4.6. The Preferred Approach includes a proposed Planning Strategy, which focuses on new development linking to and enhancing Blue and Green Infrastructure and promoting urban living within the main built-up area of Nottingham, and to a lesser extent adjoining it, seeking to achieve sustainable growth by making the most of existing infrastructure and reducing the need to travel. It promotes development of a lesser scale adjoining Hucknall (in Gedling Borough) and at key settlements across the Plan area. It seeks to embed the principles of the '20-minute neighbourhood' approach and recognises the economic development potential of key sites including the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station (within Rushcliffe), Toton (within Broxtowe) and the wider Broad Marsh area (within Nottingham City).
- 4.7. The proposed Planning Strategy aims to meet housing and employment needs, based on a defined settlement hierarchy. This includes taking full account of current housing and employment supply and identifying strategic site allocations to meet any remaining need. Specific details for strategic sites are also identified, with key development requirements.

### **Housing provision**

- 4.8. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the standard method for assessing local housing need should be the starting point for determining the minimum number of homes required, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach.
- 4.9. The proposed approach is for each council to meet its own housing need as determined by the Government's standard method (plus appropriate locally determined buffer), except for Nottingham City. It is proposed that the City will meet as much of its housing need as it can. It is not proposed for the City Council's remaining unmet need to be met elsewhere in Greater Nottingham. The proposed minimum housing targets are set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Proposed Housing Targets 2022 to 2038**

	<b>Housing Target</b>	<b>Minimum Flexibility Buffer</b>
Broxtowe	6,240	10%
Gedling	7,950	10%
Nottingham City	25,760	0
Rushcliffe	9,950	10%
Greater Nottingham	49,900	N/A

- 4.10. In order to meet these housing targets, a number of proposed strategic sites and locations where growth will take place are identified within the Preferred Approach (Appendix 1). An important point to note is that the majority of housing proposed is already identified or provided for in current Local Plans, although extensions to two existing strategic development sites are proposed in Gedling (subject to Gedling Borough Council's approval), and the Broad Marsh area in Nottingham City is identified as suitable for significant residential development (subject to Nottingham City Council's approval).
- 4.11. In Rushcliffe, in accordance with the proposed Development Strategy, it is proposed that development would be concentrated within the main urban area (West Bridgford) where opportunities exist. However, West Bridgford has relatively limited capacity to accommodate development over the Plan period and, therefore, it is proposed that the majority of 'main urban area' development in Rushcliffe will be delivered on three Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE) at Melton Road, Edwalton, South of Clifton (also known as Fairham Pastures) and East of Gamston/North of Tollerton.
- 4.12. Approximately 6,000 new homes will be provided for on these three SUEs over the Plan period. All three locations were selected for inclusion in the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2014, and are on land that was removed from the Green Belt at that time in order to accommodate development. As there is no need to do so, it is not proposed that any further land adjacent to the main urban area (within Rushcliffe) is allocated for housing development during the Plan period.
- 4.13. The Melton Road strategic allocation at Edwalton will provide around 1,780 homes when completed. The delivery of these new homes is already well underway (with around 1,000 homes built by March 2022) and it is expected that all development will be finished by March 2028. The development of the South of Clifton strategic allocation has recently commenced, and it will deliver around 3,000 new homes in total; all of which are expected to be delivered within the Plan period. The strategic allocation to the East of Gamston/North of Tollerton is still to secure planning permission. In accordance with the proposed Development Strategy, the site is adjacent to the main urban area and is outside the Green Belt. It would deliver around 4,000 new homes in total but with expected delivery of around 2,240 new homes by the end of the Plan period (2038) and then all remaining homes by around 2047.
- 4.14. Beyond the main urban area of Nottingham, there are three other strategic allocations within Rushcliffe: North of Bingham (around 1,050 homes); the Former RAF Newton (528 homes); and the Former Cotgrave Colliery (463 homes). The delivery of new homes on the North of Bingham strategic allocation is now well underway (with 284 built by March 2022) and it is expected that all new homes will be delivered on site by 2028. The Former RAF Newton strategic allocation has planning permission and development has commenced. All homes should have been completed on the site by 2028. All new homes (463 in total) on the Former Cotgrave Colliery strategic allocation have already been delivered. It, however, remains a strategic allocation because the site includes approximately two hectares of employment land, which is still to be delivered.

- 4.15. It is proposed that development elsewhere in Rushcliffe will be concentrated at the Key Settlements of Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington, again to assist in meeting sustainability objectives. The delivery of new homes at these Key Settlements over the Plan period will be achieved through a combination of sites which have already been allocated by the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2019) and sites within the settlements, which already have planning permission or come forward as infill or windfall sites within settlements. It is not proposed that any further land adjacent to any of the Key Settlements is allocated for housing development during the Plan period.
- 4.16. In other settlements, it is proposed that development will be smaller scale, as defined by a new Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 to replace the one adopted in 2019. It is expected that the delivery of new homes at these other settlements over the Plan period will be achieved through a combination of sites, which have already been allocated by the adopted Local Plan Part 2, sites within settlements that already have planning permission or come forward as infill development within settlements, conversion or changes of use of buildings and/or on 'exception' sites. It is not proposed that any further land adjacent to any other settlements is allocated for housing development during the Plan period.
- 4.17. The proposed approach to housing provision, distribution and site selection within Rushcliffe is outlined and justified further in the Preferred Approach document (Appendix 1), the Housing Background Paper and Site Selection Report (available as background documents). While a number of other potential site options have been put forward by developers, landowners and others, there is no requirement for the allocation of any new strategic housing within Rushcliffe.
- 4.18. In total, the anticipated housing supply within Rushcliffe from 2022 to the end of the Plan period in 2038 would be around 14,300. This would significantly exceed the housing target and would provide sufficient protection against any potential future housing undersupply should the delivery of one or more of the larger strategic allocations either stall completely or if the rate of housing delivery on site falls significantly below expected levels. However, in the event that delivery on any of the sites does stall or slow, there would be no requirement for these homes to be provided for elsewhere through the allocation of new housing sites.

### **Economic development and employment land**

- 4.19. In order to fulfil the requirements of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance, an Employment Land Needs Study has been undertaken. It used a variety of scenarios to assess a range of employment space needs for both industrial/warehousing space and office floorspace.
- 4.20. Based on this analysis, it is concluded that the regeneration scenario which predicts jobs growth towards the upper end of the Employment Land Study forecasts is the most appropriate level of growth to plan future requirements. It

matches the aspirations of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, will assist in recovery from the pandemic and help counter the likely impacts on the economy predicted for the early years of the Plan period as a result of the unforeseen rise in the cost of energy. Further details of the scenarios and the approach are set out in the Employment Background Paper (available as a background paper).

- 4.21. In order to meet this growth scenario, the following requirements for employment space across the housing market area are proposed:
- 294,500 sq. m of office space; and
  - 180 ha of industrial and warehousing land.
- 4.22. As part of meeting this scenario, within Rushcliffe, it is proposed to carry forward all those strategic employment sites allocated by the existing Rushcliffe Local Plan (which form part of mixed-use allocations). These are identified at Appendix A of the Preferred Approach (Appendix 1 to this report). In addition, major new employment growth is proposed at the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station site. As referred to above, the Strategic Plan's proposed Planning Strategy recognises the economic development potential of the Power Station, which is due to close in 2024. It is proposed that the site is allocated for strategic scale employment related development and removed from the Green Belt to help support development.
- 4.23. The Ratcliffe site is the subject of a draft Local Development Order (LDO), published in July 2022, which will accelerate the redevelopment of the site and specify permitted uses. In accordance with the East Midlands Freeport and East Midlands Development Corporation aspirations for the site, the LDO would allow for the creation of an industrial park focused on advanced manufacturing, including technology needed to transition to net-zero, green and low-carbon energy generation, and energy storage. The justification for which is outlined within the draft LDO itself and also within the July 2022 Cabinet meeting paper concerning the LDO. The site's allocation and removal from the Green Belt is justified given the proposals already being progressed via the LDO and in order to support the long-term re-use of the site for major economic development. The site's allocation is also supported by the conclusions of the Employment Land Needs Study. The detailed boundaries of the proposed allocation would be identified at the Strategic Plan's publication stage following further work.
- 4.24. The proposed approach to employment provision, distribution and site selection within Rushcliffe is outlined and justified further in the Preferred Approach document (Appendix 1), the Employment Background Paper and Site Selection document. A number of other potential employment site options have been put forward by developers, landowners, and others, particularly in the A453 and A46 corridors, but there is not the justification at this stage to identify further new strategic employment sites. Notwithstanding this, the Councils have recently undertaken a "call" for strategic distribution sites and the approach to large strategic distribution development will be addressed at the next stage of Plan preparation.

## **Next steps**

- 4.25. The Preferred Approach consultation will seek views on the proposed strategy and vision, the approach to housing and employment provision and the proposed strategic sites. The responses received will then be considered as part of preparing the Strategic Plan's publication draft.
- 4.26. Subject to approval by all four of the Councils, the aim is to consult on the Preferred Approach before the end of the year. Following consideration of consultation responses, a final draft of the Strategic Plan will likely be published in the summer of 2023, prior to submission for examination later in 2023. This timetable is subject to change in response to planning reform, as the Government's approach will hopefully become clearer over the coming months.

## **5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection**

- 5.1 The production of a Local Plan is a statutory duty. It would be possible for the Borough Council to prepare a Local Plan without the involvement of the partner councils, but this has been rejected as significant cost savings are achieved in preparing a joint document covering more strategic matters. It will also ensure a consistent and coherent planning policy approach across the wider area.
- 5.2 In respect of the Preferred Approach, all reasonable alternatives have been assessed through the sustainability appraisal and site selection work undertaken as part of Plan preparation.

## **6. Risks and Uncertainties**

Failure to review the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy would eventually result in the Borough not having an up-to-date Development Plan. The absence of which would increase the risk of speculative unplanned development in Rushcliffe and could weaken the Council's ability to effectively deal with all planning applications.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Financial Implications**

At present, the workload required preparing the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, in terms of the Borough Council working jointly with partner councils, will be undertaken utilising existing Planning Policy resources. Any additional resources that might be required as the review progresses will need to be considered as part of the Council's budget review processes.

### **7.2 Legal Implications**

It is a statutory requirement, as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, for the Council to have a Local Plan. Under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Local Plans must also be reviewed at least once every five years from their adoption date

to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

### 7.3 Equalities Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared (available as a background document), and due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

### 7.4 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

## 8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	The Strategic Plan will be underpinned by policies and proposals that aim to maintain the quality of life for both existing and new Rushcliffe residents.
Efficient Services	The provision of efficient services includes ongoing appraisal and alignment of resources to growth aspirations. The Strategic Plan will include policies and proposals to achieve development that is supported by adequate infrastructure, which includes not just transport and physical infrastructure such as flood risk management measures, but also health, education, and cultural facilities.
Sustainable Growth	Sustainable growth includes ensuring the Council's priorities are reflected in wider plans at a local, regional, and national level to ensure we can maximise the opportunities for Rushcliffe of developments such as HS2 and the expansion of East Midlands Airport whilst also providing support needed at some of our key sites including Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station. The Strategic Plan will play a vital role in achieving these aims.
The Environment	The Strategic Plan will establish a strategic framework for ensuring that new development respects and, where possible, enhances Rushcliffe's environment.

## 9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) approves the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Preferred Approach, in so far as it relates to Rushcliffe Borough, for public consultation; and
- b) delegates authority to the Director for Development and Economic Growth to approve any minor changes required to the Preferred Approach document and the evidence base prior to consultation.



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<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	<p>Available at: <a href="http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan">www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preferred Approach: Sustainability Appraisal</li> <li>2. Preferred Approach: Site Selection Report</li> <li>3. Preferred Approach: Heritage Assets Assessment</li> <li>4. Preferred Approach: Housing Background Paper</li> <li>5. Preferred Approach: Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City</li> <li>6. Preferred Approach: Employment Background Paper</li> <li>7. Preferred Approach: Green Belt Review</li> <li>8. Preferred Approach: Green Belt Background Paper</li> <li>9. Preferred Approach: Infrastructure Delivery Plan Baseline Assessment</li> <li>10. Report of Consultation Responses: Growth Options</li> <li>11. Preferred Approach: Response to the Growth Options Consultation</li> <li>12. Preferred Approach: Habitats Regulations Assessment Paper</li> <li>13. Rushcliffe Borough Council: Equalities Impact Assessment for Preferred Approach</li> </ol> <p>Evidence documents available: <a href="http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan">www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planningpolicy/greaternottinghamstrategicplan</a> and <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base">www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base</a></p> <p>Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Growth Options consultation document: <a href="http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/1rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/planningandbuilding/planningpolicy/greaternottmstrategicplan/GNSP%20Growth%20Options.pdf">www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/1rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/planningandbuilding/planningpolicy/greaternottmstrategicplan/GNSP%20Growth%20Options.pdf</a></p>
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1: Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Preferred Approach