



**Council**

**Thursday, 26 September 2024**

**Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan**

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

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

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

- 1.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council, in partnership with Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough and Nottingham City Councils have prepared the draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (Publication Draft), which covers the plan period up to 2041, and sets out policies and proposals to secure sustainable growth across the plan area. The Strategic Plan has been prepared following earlier rounds of public consultation on potential options for these policies and proposals and, following this, the Councils' preferred approach in respect of housing and employment land provision.
- 1.2. If approved by Council, and there is equivalent approval by Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough and Nottingham City Councils, the draft Strategic Plan will be published for a six-week public representation period. The responses received, along with the draft Strategic Plan and all supporting documents, will then be submitted for public examination by a government appointed planning inspector or inspectors.
- 1.3. Once adopted, the Strategic Plan will, for Rushcliffe Borough, replace the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy that was adopted in 2014.

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Council:

- a) approves the Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and Policies Map Changes document, in so far as they relate to Rushcliffe Borough, and agrees to their publication for a six-week public representation period;
- b) agrees that, following the representation period, the Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, the Policies Map Changes document, all supporting documents and all representations received be submitted for public examination; and
- c) delegates authority to the Director for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to make any minor editing changes to the Publication Draft Greater

Nottingham Strategic Plan and the Policies Map Changes document prior to their publication.

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

- 3.1. To enable preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (Appendix 1) to progress further and for it to be submitted for examination in public. The Strategic Plan is required to be examined by a Planning Inspector (or Inspectors) appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government before it can be adopted as part of the statutory development plan.
- 3.2. Failure to review and replace the 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.
- 3.3. The recent consultation on revisions to the NPPF has identified a transitional period for local plans to proceed without fully reflecting the proposed changes to the NPPF – in particular, a requirement for Rushcliffe's housing target to be increased further. If the Strategic Plan is delayed, the transitional period 'window' would be lost and the Strategic Plan will not be able to proceed in its current form, preparation of a new plan would have to commence and the Council would be without an up to date plan.
- 3.4. The Strategic Plan preparation process has, across a number of meetings, involved consideration by the Council's cross-party Local Development Framework Group (LDF) of the draft policies and proposals for inclusion in the Strategic Plan. The LDF most recently considered the draft Strategic Plan document at a meeting on 5 September 2024, at which it was unanimously resolved: 'that the LDF Group accepts the draft document discussed at the meeting, and it be submitted to Full Council for approval'.

### **4. Supporting Information**

#### **Background**

- 4.1. The Local Plan is central to the planning system with a legal requirement that planning decisions must be taken in line with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires each local planning authority to identify their strategic priorities for development and use of land and have policies to address these in their local plans.
- 4.2. The Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014. The Core Strategies of the other Greater Nottingham local planning authorities (Broxtowe, Erewash, Gedling and Nottingham City) were similarly adopted in 2014. Together, they provide a consistent and coherent strategic spatial planning framework for the Greater Nottingham area. It is necessary for all the authorities to review their Core Strategies to ensure an up to date

strategic planning framework for Greater Nottingham remains in place and the scale and distribution of future development is appropriately managed.

- 4.3. The decision was taken previously for Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils (the 'Councils') to review their respective Core Strategies together on an aligned basis. While the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) is being prepared jointly in partnership, each Council will still have to individually agree and adopt the Strategic Plan as part of its own development plan. Once adopted, the Strategic Plan will replace the Rushcliffe Core Strategy, as well as the Core Strategies of the three other Councils. The 2019 Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 (Land and Planning Policies) would still remain part of the development plan, even once the Strategic Plan is adopted, until such time as its policies are reviewed and superseded by a subsequent local plan document.
- 4.4. The Rushcliffe Core Strategy and the other Councils' Core Strategies cover a plan period which ends in 2028. It is proposed that the Strategic Plan will extend the plan period by 13 years and cover the period to 2041.

#### **Previous preparation stages**

- 4.5. In July 2020 and February 2021, the Councils consulted on Growth Options for the Strategic Plan. This was a Regulation 18 consultation, which required the notification of various bodies and stakeholders that the Councils were preparing the Strategic Plan and invited them to comment about what it ought to contain. A summary report of those responses received in response to the Growth Options consultation was published in February 2022.
- 4.6. The Strategic Plan's Preferred Approach was published for consultation in January 2023 and focussed on a proposed strategy and vision, an approach to housing and employment land provision and proposed a number of strategic allocations. At the time of that consultation, the Councils published the Preferred Approach: Response to the Growth Options Consultation document (December 2022) that set out the Councils' response to consultation comments received in respect of certain matters covered by the earlier Growth Options consultation.
- 4.7. A further Preferred Approach consultation was undertaken in September 2023 that focussed on strategic distribution and logistics development, including the proposal for such uses to be allowed on part of the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station site.
- 4.8. The Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Publication Draft (Regulation 19) Statement of Consultation (Appendix 2) provides a comprehensive summary of the consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Strategic Plan, including summaries of comments made by consultees at the two Preferred Approach consultation stages, together with a response by the Councils.

## **Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan: Publication Draft**

- 4.9. The next preparatory stage is the publication of the final draft GNSP (Publication Draft), as required by Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The draft Strategic Plan is at Appendix 1.
- 4.10. It will, subject to approval by all four Councils, aim to be published in late October 2024 for a six-week public representation period. The draft Strategic Plan, all representations received and the Plan's supporting evidence will then be submitted for public examination by a Planning Inspector (or Inspectors). It is the role of the Inspector(s) to determine whether the Strategic Plan is sound (including compliance with national policy) and legally compliant. Subject to the Inspector(s) concluding that these two tests are satisfied, the Councils would then be able to adopt the Strategic Plan as part of their respective statutory development plans.
- 4.11. The drafting of the Strategic Plan to its present stage has been fully informed by Sustainability Appraisal outcomes, other supporting evidence and the consultation feedback received by the Councils during the various stages of community engagement undertaken. These factors have been balanced in preparing the Plan's proposed policies and proposals. Each of the policies is accompanied by justification text to help explain and justify the approach taken, and various background papers have been prepared to provide further explanation and justification (see the 'Background papers available for inspection' further below).
- 4.12. The Sustainability Appraisal is a legal requirement of plan preparation, and a Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Strategic Plan has been prepared to fulfil this requirement. The Sustainability Appraisal has assessed the environmental, economic and social impacts of the various policies and proposals included in the draft Strategic Plan and the alternatives considered. The Sustainability Appraisal Report Non-Technical Summary is at Appendix 3 to this report and the other documents which make up the Sustainability Appraisal are available as background papers.
- 4.13. The Sustainability Appraisal provides information on the relative sustainability of the alternatives considered and helped to identify the most sustainable options. All reasonable alternatives, the strategic policies and strategic site allocations have been sustainability appraised and key findings of the appraisal are set out within the Sustainability Appraisal Report. However, the Sustainability Appraisal outcomes are not the only influence in selecting and rejecting alternative options. The Strategic Plan must conform to national planning policy, take into account comments from public consultations and include site allocations that are available and deliverable.
- 4.14. The other supporting evidence prepared for the Strategic Plan is extensive and covers a range of matters, including carbon reduction, housing needs, employment land requirements, Green Belt review, heritage impacts, flood risk, transport assessment, heritage impacts, retail centres review, water capacity, flood risk, Blue and Green Infrastructure, biodiversity and infrastructure

capacity. The Strategic Plan's preparation has also been informed by a Habitat Regulation Assessment, an Equality Impact Assessment and a Health Impact Assessment. The evidence base for the Strategic Plan is available to view at the Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership website:

[www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base](http://www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base).

### **Vision, Objectives and Strategy**

- 4.15. The draft Strategic Plan is in three main parts: section 1 introduces the Strategic Plan; section 2 looks at the character of the plan area, now and in the future, setting out a 'spatial vision' of what the area will look like in 2041 if the Strategic Plan's strategy is implemented, together with spatial objectives that set out the key principles by which this vision will be achieved; and section 3 is the delivery strategy, including a set of policies and proposals which together form a strategic and consistent policy approach for delivering the vision. The 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.
- 4.16. Draft Policy 2 (Spatial Strategy) follows on from the vision and objectives and places a focus on urban living through prioritising sites 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. This approach aims to utilise the range of facilities and services which are provided within the city and town centres and provide opportunities to redevelop brownfield sites and regenerate parts of the urban area. The strategy aims to facilitate the economic development potential of key sites including Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station (within Rushcliffe), Toton (within Broxtowe) and the wider Broad Marsh area (within Nottingham City).
- 4.17. Policy 2 also establishes a settlement hierarchy for shaping and directing growth. It reflects the role and size of urban areas and sets the preferred sequence for focussing growth across the plan area, which is:
  - a) in the main built-up area of Nottingham;
  - b) adjoining the main built-up area of Nottingham;
  - c) adjoining to the Sub Regional Centre of Hucknall; and
  - d) in or adjoining Key Settlements.
- 4.18. Nottingham and its built-up area (including West Bridgford) is of national and regional importance in terms of its size and economy. The Sub Regional centre of Hucknall (in Ashfield District) is relatively large and has its own distinct identity and economic role. The Key Settlements have been locally defined, based on their role, function and planning policy considerations. In Rushcliffe, the Key Settlements continue to be identified as Bingham, Cotgrave, East Leake, Keyworth, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington. Outside of the Key Settlements, any new development at other settlements will be of a smaller scale, which will be defined in subsequent Local Plans.

## Housing provision

- 4.19. All aspects of the Strategic Plan, including policies for housing provision, are required to be consistent with national policy. This is principally policy included in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2023. In July 2024, the new Government published proposed reforms to the NPPF which are relevant to the preparation of the draft Strategic Plan, albeit that its proposed changes are yet to be confirmed.
- 4.20. The current NPPF confirms that the Government's standard method for assessing local housing need should be the starting point for determining the Strategic Plan's housing targets, unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach. The July 2024 draft NPPF further emphasises the importance of the standard method, and includes transitional arrangements for plans at an advanced stage of preparation. Under these transitional arrangements, the Strategic Plan is only able to be completed and adopted if each Council's annualised housing target is no more than 200 dwellings below its new standard method annual housing need figure.
- 4.21. For Nottingham City, the draft standard method housing need is 26,118 homes over the Strategic Plan period (2023 to 2041). However, Nottingham City has an identified housing land supply of 26,690, and it is proposed that this higher figure is adopted as the City's housing target, given the imperative to provide new homes within the City which supports the strategy of promoting urban living, and to fit with the City Council's growth ambitions.
- 4.22. In order to comply with the NPPF transitional arrangements, it is proposed that the Borough Councils increase their housing targets over the level set by the current 2023 standard method to fall within the 200 dwelling annual threshold of the transitional arrangements. This approach enables the Strategic Plan to be completed and adopted under the transitional arrangements and thereby support the early delivery of substantial housing growth.
- 4.23. The draft Strategic Plan's proposed housing targets are included within Policy 3 and are as set out below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Proposed Housing Targets 2023 to 2041**

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Housing Target</b>
Broxtowe	8,250
Gedling	8,370
Nottingham City	26,690
Rushcliffe	11,360
<b>Greater Nottingham</b>	<b>54,670</b>

- 4.24. In the case of Rushcliffe, there is more than sufficient existing housing supply, as identified in the 2023 Rushcliffe Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, to meet the Borough's proposed housing targets.

- 4.25. The approach and justification behind the Strategic Plan's housing targets is set out in detail in the Greater Nottingham Housing Background Paper (2024).
- 4.26. In order to meet these housing targets, a number of proposed strategic sites and locations where growth will take place are identified in the draft Strategic Plan. It is important to note that most proposed housing is already identified or provided for in current Local Plans, although an extension to an existing strategic development site is proposed in Gedling, and the Broad Marsh area in Nottingham City is identified as suitable for significant residential development.
- 4.27. In Rushcliffe, in accordance with the Strategic Plan's spatial strategy, it is proposed that development would be concentrated within the main built-up area of Nottingham (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) and East of Gamston/North of Tollerton.
- 4.28. Approximately 8,810 new homes would be provided on these three SUEs, of which approximately 1,270 new homes had been built by March 2023. All three locations were allocated in 2014 by the Rushcliffe Core Strategy and are on land that was removed from the Green Belt at that time to accommodate development. It is not proposed that any further land adjacent to the main urban area (within Rushcliffe) is allocated for housing development by the Strategic Plan, as further land is not required to meet the new Rushcliffe housing target.
- 4.29. The Melton Road, Edwalton strategic allocation will provide around 1,800 homes when completed, with 1,270 of these having been built by March 2023. The development of the South of Clifton (Fairham) strategic allocation has recently commenced and will deliver around 3,000 new homes in total. The strategic allocation to the East of Gamston/North of Tollerton is still to secure planning permission, although has two live planning applications. It would deliver around 4,000 new homes in total but with expected delivery of around 2,700 new homes by 2041 and the rest beyond the plan period.
- 4.30. Beyond the main built-up 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). All three locations were allocated as strategic sites in 2014 by the Rushcliffe Core Strategy. The delivery of the North of Bingham and Former RAF Newton sites are both well underway. All new homes on the Former Cotgrave Colliery site have already been built. It is, however, proposed to remain as a strategic allocation as the site includes approximately two hectares of employment land which is still to be delivered.
- 4.31. 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 would 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/windfall sites. It is not proposed that any further land adjacent to any of the Key Settlements is allocated for housing development as part of the Strategic Plan.

- 4.32. In other settlements, development will be smaller scale. It is expected that the delivery of new homes at these other settlements over the plan period would be achieved through a combination of sites which have already been allocated by the 2019 Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2, sites within settlements that already have planning permission or come forward as infill/windfall development, conversion or change of use of buildings and/or on 'exception' sites for 100% affordable housing. It is not proposed that any further land adjacent to any other settlements is allocated for housing development through the Strategic Plan.
- 4.33. In total, the anticipated housing supply within Rushcliffe from 2023 to the end of the plan period in 2041 is 14,144 homes, which includes delivery from the strategic allocations referred to above. This would significantly exceed the proposed housing target (11,360 homes) 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 or if the rate of housing delivery on site falls significantly below expected levels. 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.
- 4.34. The proposed approach to housing provision, distribution and site selection within Rushcliffe is outlined and justified further in the supporting text to draft Policy 3, the Housing Background Paper and the Site Selection Report. 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 or expanded strategic sites for housing within Rushcliffe as part of the Strategic Plan.

#### **East of Gamston/north of Tollerton**

- 4.35. The East of Gamston/North of Tollerton strategic allocation includes Tollerton Airfield. The NPPF sets out that planning policies should recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields, taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs. The inclusion of this provision within the NPPF post-dates the site's allocation in 2014 and therefore needs to be considered in carrying the allocation over into the Strategic Plan.
- 4.36. The site owner has confirmed that it will not be retaining the site as an airfield. Even if its retention were possible, the importance that the NPPF attaches to general aviation airfields is one of a number of competing factors that need to be balanced when aiming to satisfy housing and other development needs and delivering sustainable development. While the current airfield contributes in terms of economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, this needs to be balanced against the likely much more significant local economic and social benefits that would result from the delivery



of around 4,000 homes on the wider allocation (with 30% proposed as affordable housing) and around 15 hectares of new employment development.

- 4.37. The retention of an operational airfield in this location would undermine the ability to deliver a major sustainable urban extension in what is one of the most sustainable locations within Rushcliffe, adjacent to the Nottingham urban area and in relatively close proximity to Nottingham city centre. This site is due to provide for a particularly substantial proportion of Rushcliffe's housing need over the plan period, and especially so later in the plan period.
- 4.38. Airfield related businesses and operations, including those adjacent to the site will presumably close in their current form once the airfield closes. While this is not ideal, the pending loss of the airfield was established when the site was originally allocated in 2014, and it would be presumed that any business investment or operation decisions in the intervening period will have been taken in this context.

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

- 4.39. The Nottingham Core and Outer Housing Market Areas Employment Land Study, 2021 (ELS) provides evidence on the quantity of employment land to be planned for over the period from 2018 to 2038. This study considers office jobs and industrial and warehousing jobs separately. The ELS has also assessed the quality of key employment sites in the study area, finding the majority to be of average or good quality. The Employment Background Paper 2024 has been prepared and shows how the findings of the study have been taken into account.
- 4.40. The ELS sets out several scenarios for modelling future employment change for the period 2018 to 2038. For the reasons set out in the Employment Background Paper, it is proposed to select the regeneration scenario which takes account of the interventions set out in the Derby Derbyshire Nottingham Nottinghamshire (D2N2) Local Economic Partnership Strategic Economic Plan. The forecasts have taken into account employment development delivery between 2018 and 2023 and extrapolated estimates of employment space needs to 2041 so they are consistent with the plan period for housing provision.
- 4.41. In order to meet this growth scenario, the following requirements for employment space are proposed for the plan area (as part of draft Policy 5: Employment Provision and Economic Development):
  - 291,000 square metres of office space, including 68,000 square metres in Rushcliffe; and
  - 173.5 hectares of industrial and warehousing land, including 128 hectares in Rushcliffe.
- 4.42. As part of meeting this scenario within Rushcliffe, employment land provision continues to be a requirement within the following strategic sites allocated by the 2014 Rushcliffe Core Strategy: Melton Road, Edwalton; North of Bingham; Former RAF Newton; Former Cotgrave Colliery; South of Clifton (Fairham); and East of Gamston /North of Tollerton.

- 4.43. 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 Spatial Strategy recognises the economic development potential of the Power Station site, which is due to close at the end of September 2024. It is proposed that the site is allocated for strategic scale employment related development and removed from the Green Belt (see draft Policies 4, 5 and 32).
- 4.44. The Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station site is the subject of a Local Development Order (LDO), which was adopted in July 2023 and gives planning consent for employment and energy generation related uses on site. The site's allocation for uses that align with those already permitted by the LDO, and its removal from the Green Belt, is therefore justified. The site's allocation would further support the long-term re-use of the site for major economic development. The allocation is also supported by the conclusions of the Employment Land Study. The extent of the proposed allocation and the corresponding land to be removed from the Green Belt (see Appendix 4) closely follow the boundary line of the LDO.
- 4.45. In addition to providing for new office space and general industrial and warehousing land requirements, the Nottinghamshire Core and Outer Housing Market Area Logistics Study (July 2022) was prepared to quantify the scale of strategic distribution and logistics need across the study area. The Councils undertook a "call" for strategic distribution sites and the Councils' proposed approach to large scale distribution sites was set out in the Preferred Approach: Strategic Distribution and Logistics document, which was consulted on in September 2023. The draft Strategic Plan provides for new strategic distribution and logistics provision through the proposed allocation of the former Bennerley Coal Disposal Point on 52 hectares of land (within Broxtowe Borough) and through provision on up to around 36 hectares of land as part of the proposed Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station strategic allocation. The sites would lead to a significant uplift in terms of the plan area's contribution to meeting regional needs for this specialist distribution and logistics sector.
- 4.46. The proposed approach to employment provision, distribution and site selection is outlined and justified further in the justification text to Policy 5 (Appendix 1), the Employment Background Paper, Strategic Distribution and Logistics Background Paper and Site Selection Report. A number of other potential employment site options have been put forward by developers, landowners, and others, particularly for Rushcliffe in the A453 and A46 corridors, but there is not the justification to identify additional new strategic employment sites.

#### **Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction, Energy and Managing Flood Risk**

- 4.47. Draft Policy 1 includes new requirements and standards for energy efficiency and sustainable construction to support the delivery of carbon neutral development and mitigate against and adapt to climate change. The policy also includes strategic requirements for renewable energy developments and relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage. The policy's requirements have been informed by supporting studies which have explored carbon reduction

policy options and assessed the financial viability of the Plan's policies and proposals.

### **Green Belt**

- 4.48. Draft Policy 4 proposes the retention of the Nottingham Derby Green Belt (that falls within the plan area), as set out on the Plan's Key Diagram and each of the Councils' Policies Maps. The policy identifies proposed changes to the Green Belt, including inseting the site of the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station strategic allocation. The Green Belt Background Paper outlines the work undertaken by the Councils to conduct a strategic Green Belt review as part of preparing the Strategic Plan.

### **Nottingham City, town and other centres**

- 4.49. Draft Policy 6 aims to ensure development contributes to the strengthening and enhancement of the role of Nottingham as a principal shopping, leisure, office and cultural destination. Draft Policy 7 defines a hierarchy for town, district and local centres and establishes which centres are within each tier. This hierarchy is carried forward from the 2014 Core Strategies, but with the proposal that West Bridgford centre moves from being classified as a district centre to a town centre within the Strategic Plan. This would result in a minor amendment to the Policies Map to reflect this change – see Appendix 4. In addition, draft Policy 7 includes provisions to ensure development proposals consolidate and strengthen the network and hierarchy of centres and do not harm their viability and vitality.

### **Housing mix and gypsy and traveller accommodation**

- 4.50. The NPPF requires that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. This includes those groups who require affordable housing, older people, students, people with disabilities and gypsy and travellers. Accordingly, the draft Strategic Plan includes Policy 8 (Housing Size, Mix and Choice) and Policy 9 (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) to provide for relevant identified needs. The requirements of both policies have been informed by studies undertaken to assess housing (including affordable housing) and gypsy and traveller needs locally and also to assess the financial viability of the Plan's policies and proposals.

### **Design and Local Identity**

- 4.51. The NPPF emphasises the importance of good design. It states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places. In this context, draft Policy 10 requires all developments to aspire to the highest standards of design, and materials, and these issues should be integrated into the development process at an early stage, along with the consideration of community safety, residential amenity and sustainable access. Draft Policy 10 part 2 sets out a number of proposed key principles for achieving a consistent approach to high quality design across the plan area.

## **Historic Environment**

- 4.52. The NPPF requires local plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. Draft Policy 11 is included in the Strategic Plan to respond to this requirement. The policy identifies elements of the historic environment that are of particular importance in contributing to the identity of the plan area and which should, wherever possible, be conserved or enhanced.

## **Local Services and Healthy Lifestyles**

- 4.53. The aim of draft Policy 12 is to facilitate the provision of new, extended or improved community facilities, including where required to support major residential development. The policy also provides protection for existing facilities from redevelopment or alternative uses, where retention is supported by evidence of need.

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport**

- 4.54. The aim of draft Policy 13 is to support the provision of culture, tourism and sporting facilities, and to ensure their development is in the most appropriate locations, dependent on the scale of the facility. The policy also provides protection for existing facilities from new development or alternative uses, unless the benefits of the new use outweigh the facility's retention.

## **Travel and Transport**

- 4.55. Draft Policy 14 (Managing Travel Demand) and draft Policy 15 (Transport Infrastructure Priorities) together aim to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car, by seeking to secure new developments of appropriate scale in the most accessible locations following the Spatial Strategy in draft Policy 2, in combination with the delivery of sustainable transport networks to serve these developments. Draft Policy 15 (Transport Priorities) includes a list of existing planned transport schemes which are essential for the delivery of the Strategic Plan and which have committed funding. The policy also lists schemes that do not currently have committed funding, but whose delivery would support planned growth.

## **Blue and Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity**

- 4.56. The NPPF requires local plans to include strategic policies that conserve and enhance natural environments and landscapes and that take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats, green infrastructure and recreational open spaces. Draft Policy 16 (Blue and Green Infrastructure, Parks and Open Space) and draft Policy 17 (Biodiversity) are included in the draft Strategic Plan to respond to these requirements. Specific to Rushcliffe, draft Policy 17 proposes to increase the requirement for biodiversity net gain to a minimum of 20%, from 10%. This approach is supported by evidence set out in the Biodiversity Net Gain Background Paper.

## **Infrastructure**

- 4.57. Draft Policy 18 (Developer Contributions for Infrastructure) sets out strategic requirements to ensure development is supported by appropriate new or improved infrastructure where required and that its delivery is developer funded. Additionally, as referred to above, draft Policy 15 identifies transport infrastructure schemes which are required to support plan delivery. Elsewhere, the draft site-specific policies (policies 19 to 32) identify various infrastructure requirements for each of the individual strategic allocations. To support delivery of the Strategic Plan, the Councils have also prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to help ensure that the right infrastructure and services are in place to allow development to come forward as planned.

## **Site specific policies**

- 4.58. The draft Strategic Plan includes site-specific policies for each of the Plan's strategic allocations (policies 19 to 32), setting out broad development requirements in respect of, for example, housing mix, employment, transportation and infrastructure provision. Also provided alongside each policy is an illustrative plan for the indicative location of proposed uses on site.

## **Changes to the Local Plan Policies Map**

- 4.59. The policies and proposals within the draft Strategic Plan give rise to a small number of changes to each Council's Policies Map. The Policies Maps show geographically the application of local plan policies and designations. Those changes resulting from the Strategic Plan are illustrated on the Policies Map Changes document (Appendix 4). For Rushcliffe specifically, the changes include the addition of the boundary for the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station allocation, the related amendment to inset the Power Station site from the Green Belt and redesignation of West Bridgford centre from a District Centre to a Town Centre.

## **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 because 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 preparing the Strategic Plan all reasonable alternatives have been assessed through the sustainability appraisal and site selection work.

## **6. Risks and Uncertainties**

- 6.1. Failure to review and replace the 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.

- 6.2. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) allows the Government to set deadlines for submitting development plans under the current system. Any delay to the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan timetable would risk the plan missing set deadlines and not being able to progress as it is.
- 6.3. The recent consultation on revisions to the NPPF identifies that any proposed changes brought through an updated NPPF would need to be reflected within local plans. A transitional period has been identified in the draft NPPF that states that updates to the NPPF do not need to be completely reflected in local plans if they reach a certain stage. With the current timescales it appears that the Strategic Plan would be included within this transitional period. If the Strategic Plan is delayed further, the transitional period 'window' would be lost and the Strategic Plan will not be able to proceed in its current form, preparation of a new plan would have to commence and the Council would be without an up to date plan. It is important that the Strategic Plan keeps to schedule to minimise this risk.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Financial Implications**

At present, the workload required in undertaking preparation of 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 (as amended, including by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023), 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. Further information on new regulations relating to the local plan preparation process are expected during 2025.

### **7.3. Equalities Implications**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared (available as a background document) for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and its outcomes have been used to inform the Plan's policies and proposals.

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

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

## 7.5. Biodiversity Net Gain Implications

Local plans can introduce a requirement for greater than 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on an area-wide basis or for specific allocations for development if justified. Planning practice guidance sets out that justification would need to be based on evidence including as to local need for a higher percentage, local opportunities for a higher percentage and any impacts on viability for development. The draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan includes the proposal to increase the requirement for biodiversity net gain to a minimum of 20% within Rushcliffe Borough. Consideration will need to be given to how the policy will be implemented.

## 8. Link to Corporate Priorities

The Environment	The Strategic Plan establishes a strategic framework for ensuring that new development respects and, where possible, enhances Rushcliffe's environment.
Quality of Life	The Strategic Plan is 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.
Sustainable Growth	The Government views the primary purpose of the planning system as contributing to the achievement of development, including the provision of new homes, new commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. The Strategic Plan will play a vital role in achieving sustainable growth locally.

## 9. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Council:

- a) approves the Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and Policies Map Changes document, in so far as they relate to Rushcliffe Borough, and agrees to their publication for a six-week public representation period;
- b) agrees that, following the representation period, the Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, the Policies Map Changes document, all supporting documents and all representations received be submitted for public examination; and
- c) delegates authority to the Director for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to make any minor editing changes to the Publication Draft Greater

Nottingham Strategic Plan and the Policies Map Changes document prior to their publication.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Richard Mapletoft Planning Policy Manager 0115 914 8457 <a href="mailto:rmapletoft@rushcliffe.gov.uk">rmapletoft@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	<p>The following documents, plus all other evidence and supporting documents prepared for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, are available to view at: <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base">www.gnplan.org.uk/evidence-base</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sustainability Appraisal Report (including Appendices A to H), September 2024</li><li>2. Housing Background Paper, September 2024</li><li>3. Site Selection Report (including Appendices A to D), September 2024</li><li>4. Employment Background Paper, September 2024</li><li>5. Nottingham Core HMA and Nottingham Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study, May 2021</li><li>6. Nottinghamshire Core &amp; Outer Housing Market Area Logistics Study, August 2022</li><li>7. Greater Nottingham and Ashfield Housing Needs Update, March 2024</li><li>8. Greater Nottingham and Ashfield District Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, March 2021</li><li>9. Green Belt Background Paper, September 2024</li><li>10. Infrastructure Delivery Plan, September 2024</li><li>11. Transport Modelling Background Paper, September 2024</li><li>12. Heritage Assets Assessment, September 2024</li><li>13. Habitats Regulations Assessment, July 2024</li><li>14. Biodiversity Net Gain Background Paper, September 2024</li><li>15. Health Impact Assessment, September 2024</li><li>16. Equality Impact Assessment, September 2024</li></ol> <p><b>Previous consultation documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Growth Options consultation, July 2020: <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/2asfxrdu/greater-nottingham-strategic-plan-growth-options-web-version.pdf">www.gnplan.org.uk/media/2asfxrdu/greater-nottingham-strategic-plan-growth-options-web-version.pdf</a></li><li>• Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Preferred Approach Consultation, January 2023: <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/o2knkbif/preferred-approach-document.pdf">www.gnplan.org.uk/media/o2knkbif/preferred-approach-document.pdf</a></li><li>• Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Strategic Distribution and Logistics: Preferred Approach Consultation, September 2023: <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/ujvflvnl/indesign-preferred-approach-logistics-consultation-approved-v2.pdf">www.gnplan.org.uk/media/ujvflvnl/indesign-preferred-approach-logistics-consultation-approved-v2.pdf</a></li></ul>



	<p><b>Previous consultation summaries and response documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of Consultation Responses: Growth Options, February 2022  <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/mnco0kmt/report-of-consultation-responses-growth-options.pdf">www.gnplan.org.uk/media/mnco0kmt/report-of-consultation-responses-growth-options.pdf</a></li> <li>• Preferred Approach: Response to the Growth Options Consultation, December 2022:  <a href="http://www.gnplan.org.uk/media/w25l02xx/preferred-approach-response-to-the-growth-options-consultation.pdf">www.gnplan.org.uk/media/w25l02xx/preferred-approach-response-to-the-growth-options-consultation.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rushcliffe Borough Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Report 2023, December 2023:  <a href="http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/absjy2uf/shlaa-2023-final-report.pdf">www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/absjy2uf/shlaa-2023-final-report.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>List of appendices:</b></p>	<p>Appendix 1: Publication Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2: Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Publication Draft (Regulation 19) Statement of Consultations</p> <p>Appendix 3: Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, Non-Technical Summary</p> <p>Appendix 4: Draft Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Policies Map Changes</p>