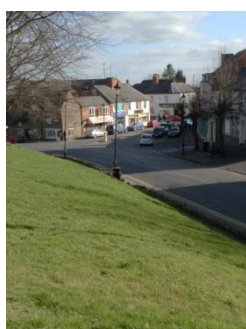


# EARLS BARTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN BASIC CONDITIONS STATEMENT

JUNE 2014



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been prepared by James Wilson Associates as part of the work on the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Earls Barton Parish Council. The Parish of Earls Barton has been designated a qualifying area and the Parish Council is a qualifying body. See Appendix 1 for the Borough Council of Wellingborough Council designation letter.
- 1.2 This report sets out the reasons for producing the Neighbourhood Plan for the community of Earls Barton and explains how the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ('the regulation'). The Basic Conditions Statement also addresses how the basic conditions of neighbourhood planning have been met as prescribed by the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) 1990 (as amended) Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B.

# 2. The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has been conceived by the local community and sponsored by the Parish Council to enable the community to take a greater role in influencing the future growth of the village and in encouraging sustainable development.
- 2.2 The plan has been prepared with strong engagement by the local community and the main purpose of the plan is to deliver the shared vision and objectives agreed by the community. These are;
- 2.3 Vision - Earls Barton will be a thriving community delivering greater access to local facilities and services for a growing population while maintaining its rural, village character.
- 2.4 Objectives
  - Services: Improve residents' quality of life by improving the facilities and services within Earls Barton
  - Development: Allow limited housing and commercial development to meet local needs and increasing local employment opportunity while providing some degree of expansion.
  - Design: Protect, conserve and enhance natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources, areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value and both designated and non-designated heritage assets and promote high quality design in all new developments.
  - Access: Increase accessibility within Earls Barton and to other areas through improved transport links and provide better parking and access to the centre of Earls Barton

- 2.5 Overall the community wishes to see the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan to provide the framework within which the village's future growth can be positively planned to benefit all sections of the community and to minimise the impacts of new development on the village. The plan should also protect the unique character of Earls Barton and maintain the compact nature of the settlement retaining the 'feel' of a village community.
- 2.6 The draft plan has been through the Neighbourhood Plan Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) healthcheck and this has helped produce a plan that meets the basic conditions.

### 3. Legal Requirements and Outline Compliance Statement

#### 3.1 The draft Plan is Being Submitted by a qualifying body

- 3.1.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan is being submitted by Earls Barton Parish Council which is a qualifying body under 'the regulations'.

#### 3.2 What is being proposed is a neighbourhood development plan

- 3.1.2 The plan proposal relate to planning matters (the use and development of land) and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and 'the regulations'.

#### 3.3 The proposed neighbourhood plan states the period for which it is to have effect

- 3.3.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood plan period is from 2011 to 2031. This period has been chosen to align with the emerging revised North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy which is being prepared by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit.

#### 3.4 The policies do not relate to excluded development

- 3.4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan proposal does not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### 3.5 The proposed neighbourhood plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there are no other neighbourhood development plans in place within the neighbourhood area.

- 3.5.1 The neighbourhood plan proposal relates to the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Area and to no other area. There are no other neighbourhood plans relating to that neighbourhood area.

#### 3.6 Outline Compliance Statement

- 3.6.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Draft was made available for consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of ‘the regulations’, from 19th March 2014 to 30th April 2014.
- 3.6.2 Part 5, paragraph 15 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for the qualifying body submitting a neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority as follows:
- 15.—(1) Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include –
- (a) a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;
- (b) a consultation statement;
- (c) the proposed neighbourhood development plan; and
- (d) a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.
- 3.6.3 Part (a) is provided within Appendix 1 of this statement and includes the application, map and designation notice.
- 3.6.4 Parts (b) and (c) have been prepared and will accompany this statement as part of the submission.
- 3.6.5 The requirements for part (d) in respect of neighbourhood development plans are that the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan meets the following basic conditions:
- The plan has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
  - The plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
  - The plan is in general conformity with strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority
  - The plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations
  - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the plan
- 3.6.6 The next sections set out how the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has met these basic conditions.

## 4. Submission of Supporting Documents and Evidence

- 4.1 In addition to this Basic Conditions Statement, the following documents have been prepared to support the preparation of the Plan and meet the Basic Conditions:
- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan** – the neighbourhood plan for the designated neighbourhood area of Earls Barton which has been developed

with the community and contains policies to guide future development in the area.

- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement** – this sets out the consultation and community engagement processes from early engagement through to the formal pre-submission consultation.
- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Final Sustainability Appraisal Report** – the report incorporates sustainability appraisal and its purpose is to assess whether the Plan may have negative effects on a range of sustainability topics.
- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report** – this report establishes the baseline evidence for a number of sustainability topics that relate to the environmental, economic and social aspects of the area.
- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Equalities Assessment** – this report forms part of this Basic Condition Statement and assesses whether the Neighbourhood Plan policies and proposals have any impact on ‘protected characteristics’ as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 or contravenes the Convention Rights as defined by the Human Rights Act 1998.
- **Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Determining a Housing Target** – this provides the rationale and methodology used in order to define the housing target for the neighbourhood plan period
- **The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base** – a compilation list of other relevant information used to inform and for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 5. The Basic Conditions

### 5.1 The plan has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State

5.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in sections 184 refers to Neighbourhood Plans and seeks that those plans are aligned to the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area and as such must be in ‘general conformity’ with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans should also have regard to the NPPF.

5.2 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan, following each policy area, sets out where it is in conformity and alignment with the Core Spatial Strategy and NPPF citing the policy or paragraph where there is conformity or regard has been had. This section expands on and explains those statements in relation to the NPPF. It has been set out to cover the key sections of the NPPF below and relating the policies to them.

- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Requiring good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### 5.3 General Regard for NPPF

- 5.3.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan is considered to have regard to the NPPF, particularly in relation to Neighbourhood Planning provisions, the policy areas set out between para 18 and 141 (excluding Protecting Green Belt Land) and delivering sustainable development for the area.
- 5.3.2 The plan supports the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14) and seeks to positively support local development through an approach to development proposals by the Parish Council that seeks to work proactively with applicants finding joint solutions where these accord with the plan.

### 5.4 Building a strong, competitive economy

- 5.4.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 21 that *‘Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth..... Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:*

- *identify strategic sites ... to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*
- *support existing business sectors;*
- *identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement; and*
- *facilitate flexible working practices such as the integration of residential and commercial uses in the same unit.*

- 5.4.2 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan sets out the following policies which seek to help build a strong and competitive economy;

- EB.G1 – allocation of a reserved employment site for B1 business uses and potential location for a small business centre
- EB.LB1 - Promotes commercial, retail and community facilities to be located within the village centre shopping and business area.
- EB.E1 - allocation of 1 ha of employment land (B1/B2/B8 use classes) to act as expansion land for the existing industrial estate.
- EB.E2 - promotion of a small business centre.

5.4.3 These policies support the aims of the NPPF by; planning positively for and promoting growth; supporting existing businesses on the industrial estate to expand if required through provision of additional land; facilitating commercial and retail development in the village centre alongside residential uses.

5.4.4 Policy EB.G1 allows for an alternative use to employment after the mid-point of the plan if insufficient demand in the site for employment uses can be demonstrated. This accords with para 22 of the NPPF which guards against the long term protection of employment sites where there is no reasonable prospect of them being used for this purpose.

## 5.5 Ensuring the vitality of town centres

5.5.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 23 that: *‘Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period.’* The NPPF goes on to set out the issues that Local Authorities should consider in drawing up Local Plans, and those of particular relevance to Earls Barton are:

- *recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;*
- *define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;*
- *promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;*
- *allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres. It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability; and*
- *recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites.*

5.5.2 While Earls Barton is not technically a town and it values its ‘village’ characteristics the Neighbourhood Plan does as a core principle seek to focus the key commercial, retail and service uses within the village centre. As the largest settlement within the Borough outside of Wellingborough it is important for residents to be able to meet most of their day to day needs locally.

The following policy seeks to support the vitality of town [*village*] centres;

EB.LB1 – defining a village centre shopping and business area helps to concentrate this activity at the heart of the settlement and promotes changes of use for these uses.



## 5.6 Supporting a prosperous rural economy

5.6.1 The NPPF para 28 supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings. It goes on to state that local and neighbourhood plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages such as local shops, meeting places and sports venues ...

5.6.2 The Neighbourhood Plan policies which support a prosperous rural economy are;

EB.G1 - the allocation of 6ha of sports and leisure land at the Grange development will see the development of a significant sports venue for the village. The opportunity also exists to develop a community hall and meeting place.

EB.E1 - allocates 1ha of employment land which will promote the sustainable growth and expansion of manufacturing, warehousing and office businesses in the village.

EB.E2 - supports the development of a small business centre which will encourage rural enterprise.

## 5.7 Promoting sustainable transport

5.7.1 NPPF para 37 supports the balance of land uses within their areas to minimise journey lengths. Para 34 also states that developments '*that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport can be maximised*'.

Para 35 also suggests that development should be located and designed ... to

- accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies
- give priority to pedestrian and cycle movement and have access to high quality public transport facilities;

The NPPF also requires that larger scale residential developments should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site (para 38).

5.7.2 The following Neighbourhood Plan policies help to achieve these aims.

EB.G1 - allocation of a mixed use comprehensive development for 280 dwellings alongside sport and leisure facilities and employment opportunities will reduce some of the trips generated by development. Strong pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre from this development will also reduce the need to use the car and easier access to bus stops on Northampton Road through a permissive right of way across the sports and leisure area will facilitate better access to public transport.

EB.GD1 - both these policies require future development to not create unacceptable  
EB.GD2 impacts on congestion or road and pedestrian safety which will ensure that

developments or surrounding areas are not overly dominated by the car and safe access can be provided for pedestrians and cyclists.

EB.T1 - will assist in promoting road safety which will help to support the hierarchy of transport mode for appropriate journeys.

## 5.8 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

5.8.1 The NPPF sets out in para 47 that local planning authorities should significantly boost the supply of housing. It goes on to state in para 50 that a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends should be planned for. Para 52 states that *'The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns...'*

5.8.2 The Neighbourhood Plan, through consultation with the community, has taken the approach of planning for a single comprehensive extension to the village which can significantly boost the supply of housing for local needs and also contribute toward the 5 year supply of housing for the wide area of Wellingborough. A supporting document 'Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan: Determining a Housing Target' has been produced in support of the plan submission to set out how this housing target was arrive at. Additional housing growth over and above that required as a minimum has been built into the plan with a total of 397 dwellings allocated or already completed or with permission over the plan period.

5.8.3 The following policies of the Neighbourhood Plan help achieve the NPPF aspirations for the delivery of high quality homes;

EB.G1 - allocates 280 dwellings as part of a sustainable extension to the village.

EB.GD1 - promotes infill and windfall development within the village boundary where appropriate.

EB.GD2 - allows for exceptions sites to meet local need for affordable housing on small scale sites.

## 5.9 Requiring good design

5.9.1 The NPPF (para 57) highlights that *'the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development'* is important. Local and Neighbourhood Plans should also set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area (para 58).

5.9.2 The following policy of the Neighbourhood Plan responds to these aims;

EB.D1 - Any developments are required to be of a high standard in keeping with the local character and utilising sustainable building techniques where practical. The policy also requires developments to perform well against

the local design guidance and Sustainable Design SPD which is based on Building for Life checklist.

EB.GD1 - development must demonstrate that it performs well against the  
EB.GD2 Sustainable Design SPD

## 5.10 Promoting healthy communities

5.10.1 The NPPF in para 69 recognises that creating a shared vision with communities of the residential environment and facilities they wish to see in their town is important, and encourages local authorities to involve all sections of the community in the development of Local Plans. It further states (para 70) that planning policies should

- plan .. for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings ..) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities.
- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

5.10.2 Access to high quality open space and opportunities for sports and recreation are important for well-being (para 73) and special protection for green spaces can be afforded by designating land as Local Green Space.

5.10.3 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has been developed in full collaboration and engagement of the local community (as demonstrated through the Consultation Statement) in order that the plan fully reflects local people's wishes and creates a shared vision for the Parish. The Neighbourhood Plan policies which support the promotion of healthy communities are as follows;

EB.G1 - allocation of sports and leisure facilities, potential for a community hall and open space provision will help to contribute towards a healthy and inclusive community. Also provides for integrated uses of residential, economic uses and community facilities.

EB.OS1 - designates existing and proposes green areas as Local Green Space to ensure their future enjoyment and relief from the built environment.

EB.LB1 - Protects against the loss of local retail, service provision, community assets and change of use will be resisted.

## 5.11 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

5.11.1 The NPPF sets out in para 95 that, to support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should:

- *'plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions;*
- *actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and*
- *when setting any local requirement for a building's sustainability, do so in a way*

*consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards.'*

5.11.2 Paragraph 94 also requires that proactive strategies should be adopted to mitigate and adapt to climate change taking full account of flood risk.

5.11.3 The Neighbourhood Plan supports meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding as set out in the NPPF through the following policies;

EB.G1 - the allocation of a comprehensive development site as set out in 5.7.2 Above will assist in promoting sustainable modes of transport and reduce carbon emission generated by vehicle trips.

EB.GD1 - for general development and exceptions sites all proposals should seek to perform well against the Sustainable Design SPD which covers aspects of renewable energy, waste minimisation and sustainable drainage solutions.

EB.D1 - this policy supports development proposals which provide for sustainable drainage solutions designed in accordance with National Standards and that achieve Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes prior to this being incorporated into Building Regulations.

## 5.12 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.12.1 The NPPF states (para 109) that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by a range of means, including,

- *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and*
- *minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'*

5.12.2 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the NPPF's requirements for conserving and enhancing the natural environment and has carried out a screening assessment in respect of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). Both process concluded that there was unlikely to be any significant impact from the Neighbourhood Plan policies especially in relation to the characteristics of the Special Protection Area of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.

5.12.3 The policies in the plan that further support these aims are;

EB.D1 - which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources, areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value and both designated and non-

designated heritage assets, as well as minimising the loss of tress and hedgerows.

EB.OS1 - designates Local Green Space protecting the biodiversity about the allotments, cemetery, recreation grounds and village church along with other open space.

EB.DC1 - prioritises financial contributions, alongside other issues, for environmental improvements towards enhancing open space and minimising impact on the SPA as well as further allotment provision and open space.

5.12.4 A monitoring indicator has been included to identify potential increase pressure on the SPA from new residential development.

### 5.13 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.13.1 The NPPF sets out in paragraph 126 that: *‘Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment..... In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.’*

5.13.2 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan, through the views of the community fed back through consultation, heavily reflects the desire of local people to retain the character and historic nature of the village. The following policies help to reinforce this;

EB.D1 – requires that new development should protect, conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources, areas of natural habitat or nature conservation value and both designated and non-designated heritage assets; and will be supported where it protect, conserve and enhance the setting and views of All Saints Church and its Saxon tower as well as other designated and non-designated heritage assets.

EB.GD1 - supports development where scale, massing, density and design in keeping  
EB.GD2 with the local character of neighbouring buildings and the village generally.

#### 5.14 Achieving Sustainable Development

5.14.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Project Group has prepared the plan with a conscious approach to delivering a document and policies which actively promotes sustainable development for the community.

5.14.2 The plan, in section 3, acknowledges the balancing of 3 dimensions – Economic, Social and Environmental which go towards achieving sustainable development. It goes on to set out the approach that the Parish Council will take in respect of sustainable development reflecting the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14). The NPPF puts this at the heart of framework and sees it as *‘a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.’*

5.14.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has also been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which has been submitted alongside the Plan and has helped to guide the decision making and principles that have been used in preparing the plan.

5.14.4 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan helps to achieve Sustainable Development by;

- promoting significant housing growth, over the plan period, in a sustainable location with a mix of uses, as part of a comprehensive masterplan, that delivers a coherent village extension;
- locating the development where it is accessible to villages services by foot and cycle and providing enhanced pedestrian and cycleways as well as better access for public transport;
- contributing to building a strong, diverse and competitive economy by allocating land for new employment, supporting existing employment, supporting the vitality of the village centre; and
- protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment of Earls Barton by:  
enhancing biodiversity and creating and protecting Local Green Spaces;  
encouraging high quality development that reflects and responds to the local character of Earls Barton and  
protecting the Parish’s heritage assets

#### 5.15 Conformity with Strategic Policies

5.15.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in close liaison with planning officers at the Borough Council of Wellingborough. As such the Project Group has ensured that through this process the development of policies for the plan have been fully scrutinised in terms of conformity with strategic policies of the development plan. This includes the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy adopted in 2008 and saved policies of the Wellingborough Local Plan 1999 as amended in 2004. While the latter has policies which would relate to Earls Barton,

advice from the Borough Council suggested that these were not strategic in nature and these policies were now superseded by the Core Spatial Strategy. Regard has also been had to the emerging Core Spatial Strategy and the evidence base behind this review as with the emerging Wellingborough Local Plan and previous work on the Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document. The Plan is therefore fully aligned to these emerging strategies.

- 5.15.2 The following sets out the strategic policies which are relevant to the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan and states how the plan is in general conformity with these strategic policies in the Development Plan.

**North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (NNCSS)**

- 5.15.3 Policy 1: Strengthening the Network of Settlements.

This policy states that development will be principally directed towards the urban core... the remaining rural area development will take place on sites within village boundaries... development adjoining village boundaries will only be justified where it involves re-use of buildings or in exceptional circumstances... required to meet local needs for employment, housing or services. Development will be focussed on those villages that perform a sustainable local service centre role.

The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has set a level of growth that can provide for its own needs and contribute to the wider housing supply of Wellingborough as a 'Principal Village' as designated in the emerging Core Strategy while maintaining its role in the network of settlements. It does not promote itself as a location for excessive growth and seeks to support development which reinforces the role of the village centre by providing new houses, employment, services and infrastructure. The level of housing promoted in the plan is supported in the Borough Council's background paper 'Rural Housing Targets for Wellingborough's Principal Villages' and the Neighbourhood Plan's summary report 'Determining a Housing Target'.

- 5.15.4 Policy 2: Connecting North Northamptonshire with Surrounding Areas

This promotes stronger connections with surrounding areas to North Northamptonshire and strategic infrastructure investments to 2021 which are relevant to Earls Barton include the direct strategic link along the A605/A45 spine from Peterborough to Northampton.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not specifically reference the strategic transport infrastructure as this is the job of the higher level plans, however, by providing a permissive right of way in policy EB.G1 for residents of the Grange development to access the X4 bus stop it is supporting the use of long distance strategic bus services the sustainable use of public transport.

- 5.15.5 Policy 4: Enhancing Local Connections

This policy promotes connections between rural hinterland and their most accessible service centre and will be strengthened by... Improving the strategic and local bus network.. and by improved walking and cycling strategies

The Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with this policy through its allocation of the major development site close to the strategic and local bus service network and the enhancement of pedestrian and cycleways through the village (EB.G1).

#### 5.15.5 Policy 5: Green Infrastructure

Requires a net gain in green infrastructure...proposals affecting the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits proposed Special Protection Area need to satisfy tests of Habitats Regulations... Earls Barton lies within a local Green Infrastructure corridor these will be safeguarded, amongst other things, through using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to their quality and robustness.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening opinion has identified that significant impacts to the Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA from the plan's proposals as unlikely. The plan helps to reinforce the existing Green Infrastructure corridors and provides potential protection through the prioritisation of environmental improvements through policy EB.DC1 which seeks to guide s106 contributions and CIL payments to various community facilities and themes. The identification of valued open space and justification for its protection is set out in the 'Local Green Space Assessment – 2013'.

#### 5.15.6 Policy 6: Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions

This policy requires that new development be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide balanced self-sufficient communities.

Policy EB.DC1 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires that financial contributions will be sought to mitigate impacts of development where a need is identified in line with local guidance on planning contributions. It further prioritises the element of s106 contributions or CIL payments which are of most importance for Earls Barton.

#### 5.15.7 Policy 9: Distribution & Location of Development

Development will be distributed to strengthen the network of settlements. Preference will be given to locations that are accessible by a choice of means of travel. Site specific Development Plans Documents may identify opportunities for smaller scale Sustainable Urban Extensions at smaller towns and rural service centres.

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 280 dwellings at the Grange site which is located directly onto the A4500 and has easy access for future residents to the X4 bus service which runs from Milton Keynes to Peterborough. The Plan takes the opportunity to provide a comprehensively planned sustainable extension for the village and as such is considered to be in conformity with Policy 9 of the CSS.

#### 5.15.8 Policy 10: Distribution of Housing

New housing to be focussed at the 3 growth towns with limited development in the villages and restricted development in the open countryside. Development Plan



Documents will make provision for the amounts of housing development in the named settlements or groups of settlements.

The focus of housing development in the CSS is on the main growth towns, however, a level of housing allocation is directed to the rural areas. As Earls Barton is the largest settlement in the Borough apart from Wellingborough it is consistent to consider this location along with other sustainable rural locations as areas to accommodate further housing delivery. The report 'Determining a Housing Target' also sets out the rationale for the level of housing growth for the Neighbourhood Plan and it is also considered in conformity with the emerging CSS.

#### 5.15.9 Policy 11: Distribution of Jobs.

Existing employment areas and allocated employment sites will be safeguarded for employment use. New sites will be allocated to meet any identified shortfall in supply. Within the rural areas new employment development will be directed to the rural and local service centres.

Policy EB.E1 and EB.E2 allocates land for general employment uses as an expansion to the existing industrial estate within the village and promotes the development of a small business centre. The policies seek to provide employment opportunities for the village which has high levels of out migration for work and as such could be seen as displaying a low jobs/workers balance. The employment areas would be in close proximity to the strategic bus services.

#### 5.15.10 Policy 12: Distribution of Retail Development

Retail development will be focussed on the town centres of the growth towns.. The remaining Smaller Towns and Rural Service Centres will consolidate their roles in providing mainly convenience shopping and local services.

Policy EB.LB1 promotes the diversification and enhancement of local shops and services for the local community thereby consolidating this area as the location for convenience shopping and the place to access local services. It does not promote a level of activity which is in conflict with the size of the village or the settlement hierarchy. Policy 12 requires that the scale of retail development should be appropriate to the role and function of the centre where it is to be located. In defining the village centre shopping and business area around the existing commercial activity in the village it ensures that only small scale local retail facilities will be developed.

#### 5.15.11 Policy 13: General Sustainable Development Principles

Development should meet principles of sustainable development – meeting needs of residents & businesses, raising standards of development and protecting assets..

The Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in conformity with the general principles of sustainability. A Sustainability Appraisal has been developed for the plan and it seeks to balance the economic, social and environmental aspects of future development. Regard has been paid to statutory bodies' consultation

responses to the plan and changes have been incorporated to help achieve further clarity and enhancement around the delivery of sustainable development.

#### 5.15.12 Policy 14: Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Construction

Development should meet the highest viable standards of resource & energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions.. residential development involving 10 or more dwellings or  $\geq 0.5$  ha should demonstrate that at least 10% of demand for energy will be met onsite from a renewable supply.

The general development and windfall site policies EB.GD1, GD2 and D1 require development to perform well against the Sustainable Design SPD checklist which requires consideration of a range of issues relating to the adaptability, resilience and environmental sustainability of development proposals. Policy EB.D1 also requires all development to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 unless this is proven to be unviable.

#### 5.15.13 Policy 15: Sustainable Housing Provision

Provision will be made for the delivery of a balanced mix of housing types and tenure and 30% affordable housing provision will be sought within the Borough of Wellingborough. New dwellings will be capable of being adapted to meet the needs of all people in line with the 'lifetime homes' standard.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to deliver sustainable residential communities and the Project Group has carried out a Local Housing Needs Assessment in order to understand the local requirements of the community. Policy EB.G1 states that the 'Grange' development will provide for up to 280 with an affordable housing contribution in line with policies elsewhere in the development plan (currently 30%). It will also provide for a range of types of houses as suggested by the Housing Needs Survey. Part of the criteria for Policy EB.D1 is for development to perform well against the Sustainable Design SPD checklist which includes and assessment on the flexibility of internal spaces for adaption, conversion and extension.

#### 5.15.14 Conclusions

In conclusion, from the above assessment and liaison with officers at the Borough Council of Wellingborough, the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Project Group considers that the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy 2008.

## 6. EU Obligations

- 6.1 The Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared alongside a Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan. As part of this early screening reports were produced in respect of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment.

- 6.2 Sustainability Appraisals are a tool to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are incorporated into every level of planning policy. Sustainability Appraisal is a requirement of the EC Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (Directive 2001/42/EC). This is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 which applies to plans with significant environmental effects. Although Neighbourhood Plans are not required to produce a Sustainability Appraisal one has been prepared in this instance to ensure that there are not adverse impact on the environment and particularly to assess the plan's effect on the sensitive Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and Ramsar site. This has greatest relevance for the EU Habitats Regulations as a European designated site.
- 6.3 The Strategic Environmental Assessment screening report concluded that it was unlikely there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan. Following consultation with statutory bodies the Local Planning Authority agreed with this assessment and stated that *'we can confirm that no formal Strategic Environmental Assessment will be required in support of your plan.'* (See Appendix 2.) The Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment also concluded that *'that there will be no likely significant effect from the proposals in the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan'* subject to various policy measures being incorporated within the plan. The Local Planning Authority confirmed that no further Appropriate Assessment would be required in support of the plan (See Appendix 3).
- 6.4 An Equalities Assessment has been prepared and is submitted in support of the Neighbourhood Plan. This concludes that the Plan does not generate any negative equality impacts on any parts of the local community with protected characteristics arising from policies or proposals contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. It also concludes that there are no issues or implications in relation to any of the convention rights in the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 6.5 It is therefore considered that the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies contained within it.



**Rosemary Smart**

**Clerk to the Council**

83 Downton Hill • Earls Barton

Northampton • NN8 6PY

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email: theclerk@earlsbarton.gov.uk

web: www.earlsbarton.gov.uk

Steven Wood  
Head of Planning and Local Development  
Borough Council of Wellingborough  
Swanspool House  
Doddington Road  
Wellingborough, NN8 1BP

Dear Steven,

#### **APPLICATION FOR THE DESIGNATION OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA**

##### **Earls Barton Parish**

Further to our conversations regarding the delivery of a Neighbourhood Plan for Earls Barton, Earls Barton Parish Council wishes to formally register its intent to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 require that where a relevant body submits an area application to the local planning authority it must include —

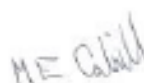
- (a) a map which identifies the area to which the area application relates;
  - (b) a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area; and
  - (c) a statement that the organisation or body making the area application is a relevant body for the purposes of section 61G of the 1990 Act.
- 
- (a) The Parish Council through the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Project Team has agreed to designate the whole of Earls Barton Parish as the Neighbourhood Plan area. A map of this area is attached at Appendix 1.
  - (b) The Parish Council and the Project Team have decided that this is an appropriate area incorporating the whole of the land of the Parish under the control of the plan. This will ensure that any policies which are developed which extend outside of the urban confines and village boundary line can be implemented and will have weight within the plan.

- (c) A relevant body under section 61G of the amended Town and Country Planning Act 1990 means a parish council, or an organisation or body which is, or is capable of being, designated as a neighbourhood forum. Earls Barton Parish Council qualifies therefore as a 'relevant body' and will act as the Steering Group for the Neighbourhood Plan process.

We understand that the regulations require the Local Planning Authority to publicise this application for not less than 6 weeks before coming to a decision on the suitability of the area proposed and agreeing to register the area.

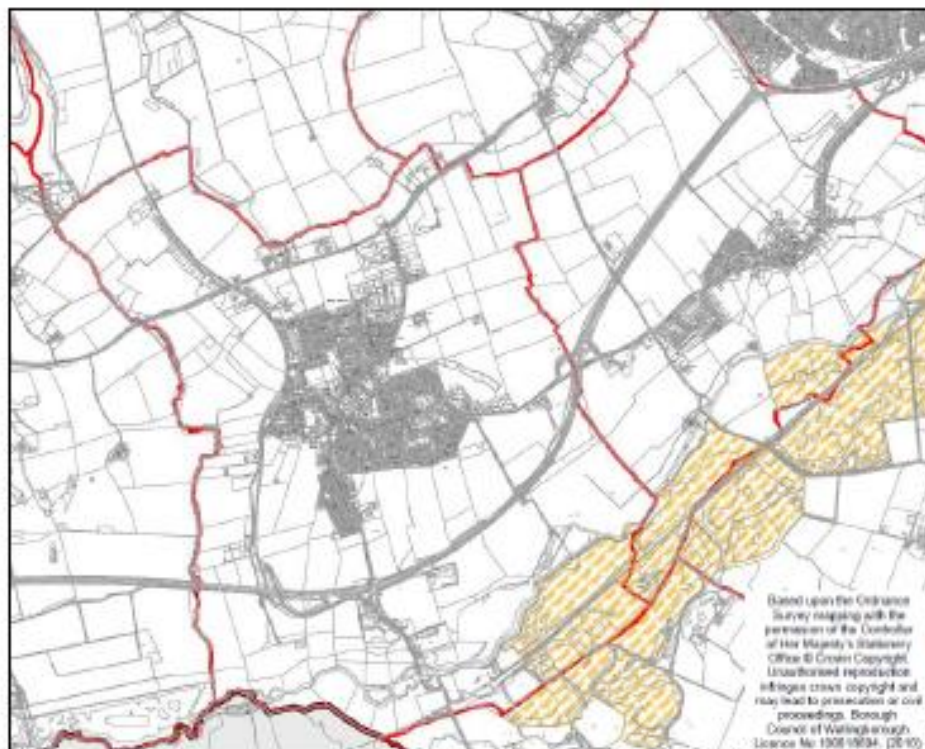
We would appreciate your confirmation after this time that we have been successfully in registering the Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan area.

Yours sincerely



Martin Cahill  
Earls Barton Parish Council - Chairman

## Appendix 1: Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan Area



## Neighbourhood Area Application Decision Notice

*Section 61G Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as inserted by paragraph  
2 of Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011*

An application for the designation of the parish of Earls Barton as a Neighbourhood Area was received from Earls Barton Parish Council on 10 April 2012. The application was advertised and comments invited until 1 June 2012.

Following consideration of the application, the area shown on the attached map is designated as 'Earls Barton Neighbourhood Area'.

Signed



Head of Planning and Local Development

Dated: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2012

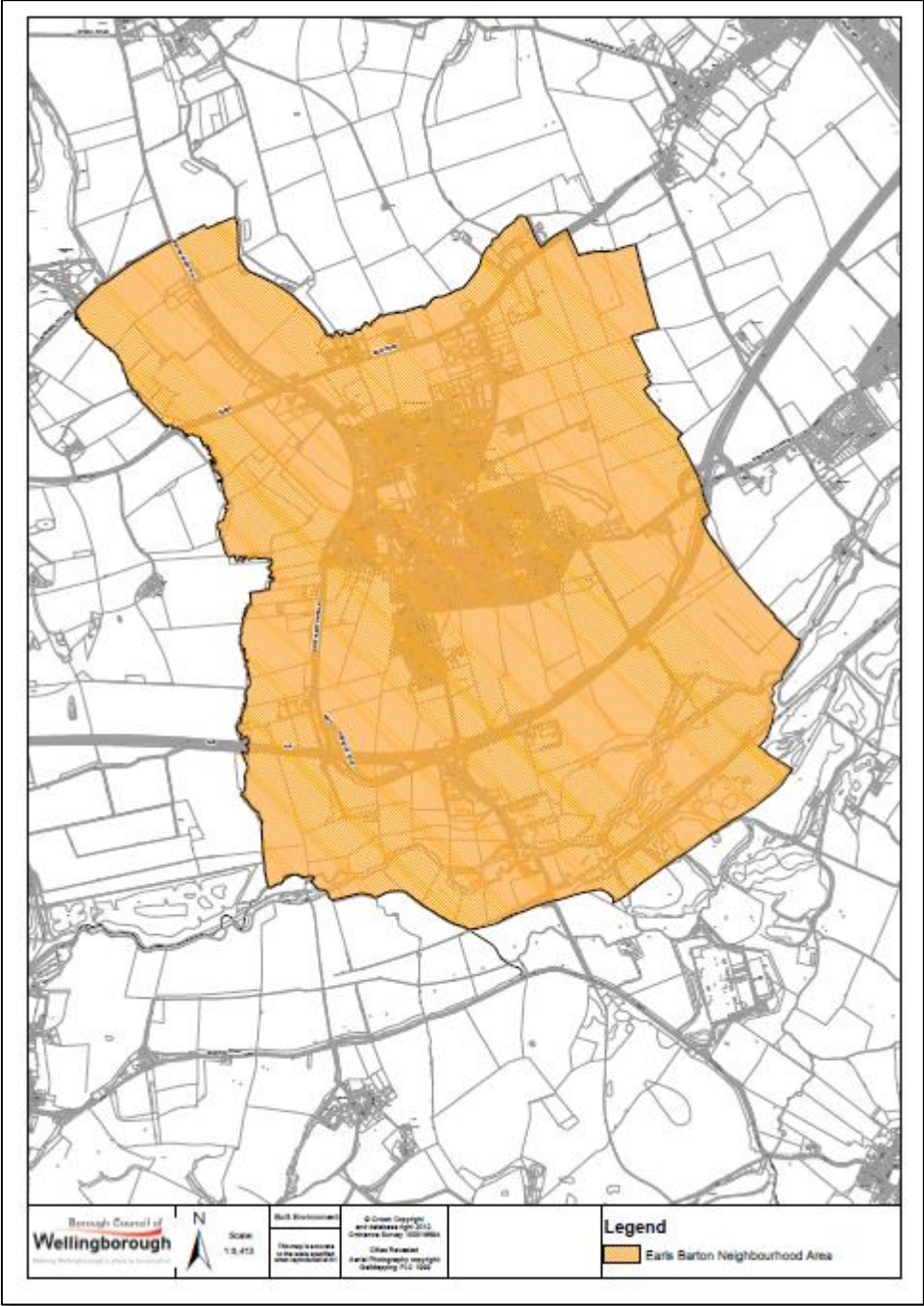


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ENTERING IN PRINCIPLE







Alex Munro  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer  
T: 01933 231931  
F: 01933 231980  
E: [Amunro@wellingborough.gov.uk](mailto:Amunro@wellingborough.gov.uk)

Borough Council of  
**Wellingborough**  
Making Wellingborough a place to be proud of

By email

James Wilson  
[jwa1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jwa1@hotmail.co.uk)

Date: 30 January 2014

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Dear James,

**Determination of the need for a formal Sustainability Appraisal  
Proposed Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan**


Following recent consultation with Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage to allow us to determine the need for a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment of Earls Barton's neighbourhood plan, we are now pleased to summarise and present our qualified response within this letter.

At this stage, and based upon the information contained within your summary report entitled 'EBNP Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report v2 Oct 2013' we can confirm that no formal Strategic Environmental Assessment will be required in support of your plan. As is our duty under the EU SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 our determination has been informed by the following responses (attached to this letter):


- Letter from Natural England, dated 16 December 2013, confirming that no SEA will be required;
- Letter from English Heritage, dated 19 December 2013, confirming that no SEA will be required; and
- Letter from the Environment Agency, dated 16 January 2014, confirming that no SEA will be required although advice on additional mitigation against environmental effects is included.

As we are aware that your plan is still to be subject of a formal 6 week period of community consultation, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, we are also aware that it may be subject to change. If any substantive changes are to be made as a result of the consultation exercise we would welcome a discussion to ensure that the determination in this letter remains valid.

In addition, whilst we do not consider that a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan is required, we do still remind you that there is a duty for your plan to demonstrably contribute towards sustainable development. In which case, as a matter of best practice we would encourage the preparation of a proportionate assessment of sustainability that should accompany your plan proposal upon its submission to BCW.



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In the meantime, I hope the response within this letter provides sufficient clarity in relation to the need for SEA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Munro', written in a cursive style.

Alex Munro  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer

Encs as above

### Appendix3: BCW HRA Determination Letter

Alex Munro  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer  
T: 01933 231931  
F: 01933 231980  
E: [Amunro@wellingborough.gov.uk](mailto:Amunro@wellingborough.gov.uk)

Borough Council of  
**Wellingborough**  
Making Wellingborough a place to be proud of

By email

James Wilson  
[jwa1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jwa1@hotmail.co.uk)

Date: 6 February 2014

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Dear James,

**Determination of the need for further Appropriate Assessment 'AA'**  
**Proposed Earls Barton Neighbourhood Plan**


Following your request for the Borough Council of Wellingborough to determine the likelihood of any adverse impact caused by your plan on any local Natura 2000 site, we are now pleased to summarise and present our qualified response within this letter.

At this stage, and in response to our duty under the EU SEA Directive 1992/43/EC based upon the information contained within your screening report entitled 'Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening for Appropriate Assessment Version 3', we can confirm that no further Appropriate Assessment will be required in support of your plan. This is. This determination follows the detailed dialogue held between officers of the Council, Natural England and yourselves to ensure that the screening is based upon the most robust evidence available. To this end, please find enclosed the final opinion of Natural England arrived at as a response of these discussions.

As we are aware that your plan is still to be subject of a formal 6 week period of community consultation, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, we are also aware that it may be subject to change. If any substantive changes are to be made as a result of the consultation exercise we would welcome a discussion to ensure that the determination in this letter remains valid.

In the meantime, I hope the response within this letter provides sufficient clarity in relation to the need for AA.

Yours sincerely



Alex Munro  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer

Encs as above



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