



**AECOM**

# The Raunds Masterplan

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East Northamptonshire Council



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The document is structured into the following sections

## The process

### Chapter 1 – Introduction

Introduces the scope of the commission, previous work undertaken towards the production of this document and what this document seeks to achieve.

### Chapter 2 – The evidence base

This chapter sets out both the findings from the document review undertaken prior to the EbD week and includes information obtained during the week's event and in the production of this document. It also includes a summary of the current or emerging development proposals, in and around the town.

### Chapter 3 – The Enquiry by Design objectives

These objectives were developed through the Enquiry by Design process and set the overall aspiration for the town as defined during the weeklong event. As such, the masterplan set out in the following section seeks to identify how best these can be met.

## The masterplan

### Chapter 4 – The masterplan principles

This chapter looks to take forward the objectives and set out the parameters for how they could be achieved across the town as a series of principles to be used when developing interventions in and around the town.

### Chapter 5 – The masterplan design guidance

The design guidance proposes a number of interventions that should be considered as part of any growth or change that takes place across Raunds. This is based on work undertaken with residents through the EbD process.

### Chapter 6 – Key recommendations

A number of recommendations are made based on the objectives, principles and design guidance work.

## Next steps

### Chapter 7 – Action Plan

This chapter sets out the next steps in relation to taking forward the masterplan. It considers various opportunities and interventions against the masterplan objectives and principles.



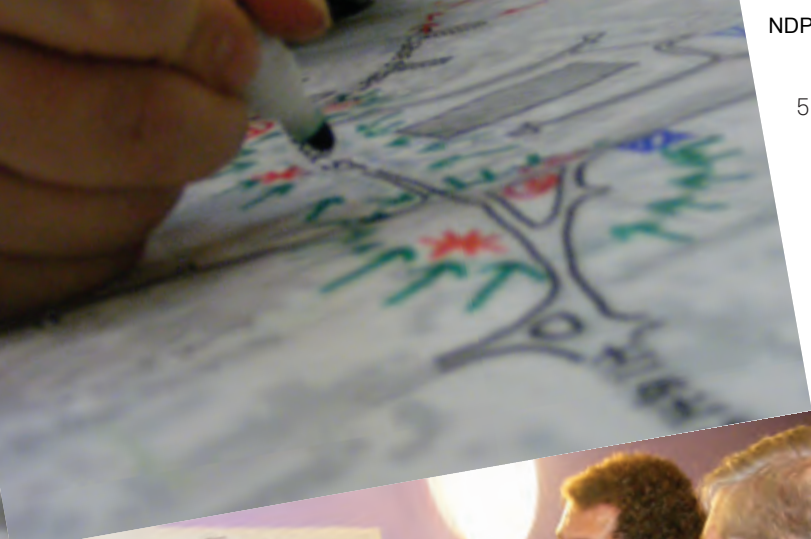
# Purpose and status of the Raunds Masterplan

The Raunds Masterplan is a piece of evidence which will be a consideration in the direction of future policy in relation to Raunds, alongside other statutory studies. It represents a summary of issues discussed by local stakeholders and residents, on which some broad consensus was reached.

The masterplan sets out the key messages and objectives from the Enquiry by Design process as a series of principles and design guidelines, which can help shape the type and location of development and change as it comes forward. The masterplan has been created so that it is able to respond in a flexible manner to any changes arising from the review of the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy, such as revised housing targets for the town.

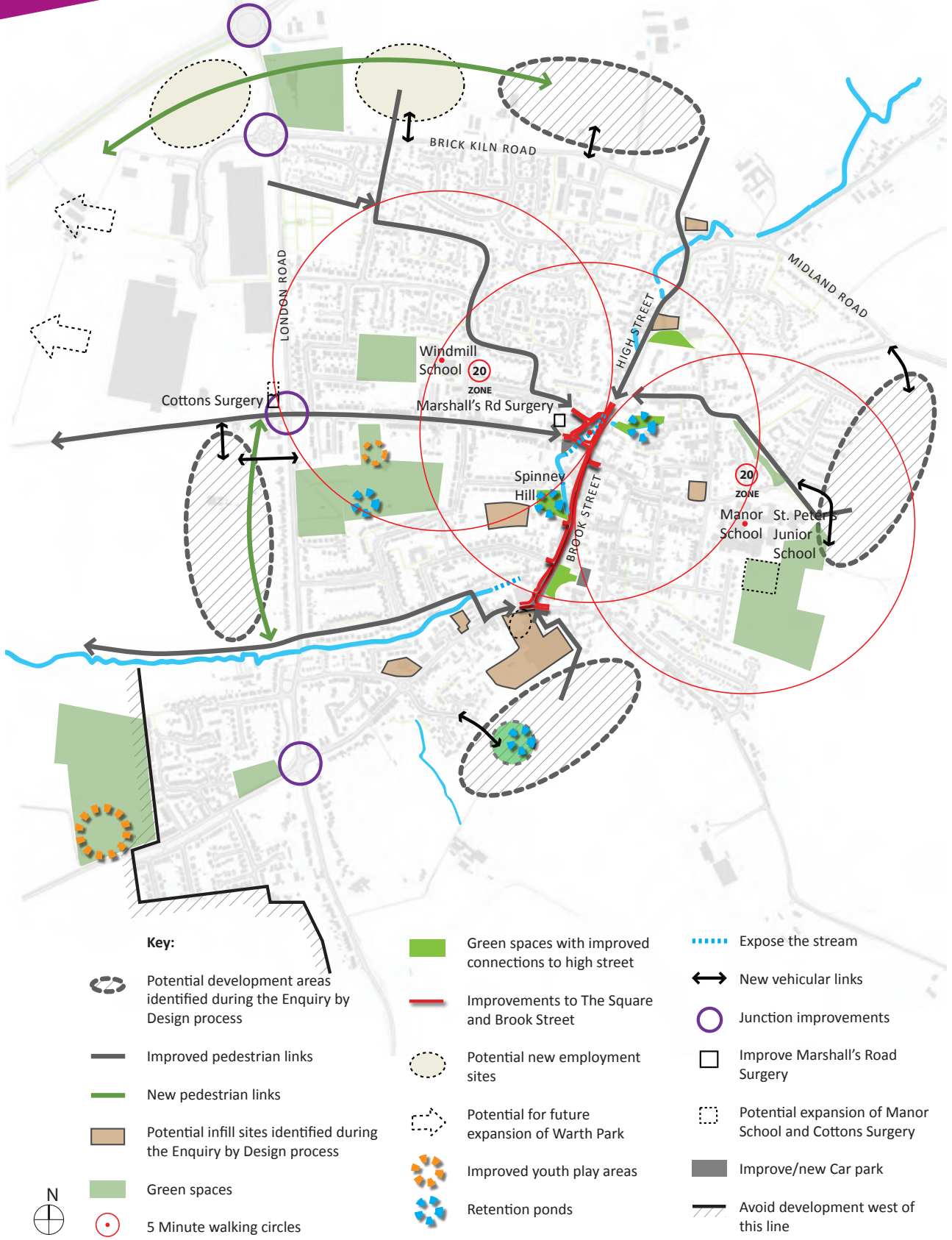
Once housing targets are reviewed and agreed, the masterplan should then act to inform the development of the Four Towns Plan, which will act as the key planning document for Raunds.

The adopted Core Spatial Strategy currently remains the strategic policy framework which guides development in Raunds.



# Executive summary

Diagram: The Raunds masterplan



The Raunds Masterplan sets out a spatial strategy for the town over the next 15 years (2011-2026). It is intended to show how the town can adapt in order to address a series of issues highlighted during a weeklong series of workshops and public events (called an 'Enquiry by Design'). This masterplan, builds on the Enquiry by Design summary document (available separately) setting out a series of objectives, developed by local people, which seek to improve Raunds.

Raunds is a town with a strong sense of identity and rural market town character. It has a strong heritage and good access to open space. It is also seen as relatively affordable to live in the town. However, the town centre itself is in decline, with many residents choosing to shop elsewhere. Furthermore, like many places in the country, Raunds is a place where some residents cannot access or afford appropriate housing to meet their needs. In terms of the town's economy, the collapse of the boot and shoe industry had a significant impact on the town's employment, which has led to an increasing number of residents commuting out of the town for work. This, in turn, has led to increased congestion in and around the town. Raunds does have Warth Park, a significant warehouse and distribution park at the edge of town, which is illustrative of a wider sub regional trend of growth in this sector. However, since the relocation of RPC Containers out of the town, it has no other significant employment base.

The stakeholder group working throughout the EbD process agreed that a 'do-nothing' approach to growth in Raunds was not the way forward as this would lead to a decline for the town. Employment growth is a key focus of the masterplan, to both improve the town's economy and reduce out-commuting. As such, smaller scale office and workshop type spaces in Raunds are promoted to attract employment back to the town.

Additional housing growth is however a concern for residents. Raunds currently needs to provide around 800 new homes to meet the indicative target set out in the Core Spatial Strategy.

However, many residents feel concern that this scale of development would adversely impact on the town's character and identity. As such, the EbD process suggested the masterplan consider 500 homes, a number based on the average completions of houses in Raunds over the past 14 years. This forms part of a number of objectives that emerged from the process covering housing, environmental sustainability, the economy, retail & shopping, community facilities & services and transport. At the heart of the objectives is a town first approach to development, making sure any new development is integrated and focused toward the centre.

#### **The masterplan recommends the following propositions/interventions:**

- The regeneration of the town centre, including improvements to The Square, Brook Street and pedestrian/cycle routes into the town, along with new facilities and provision within the town's existing green spaces.
- A target of 500 new homes in Raunds to allow for growth (and its potential benefits), but limit its impact on the town's character and identity.
- Infill residential development within the urban area is promoted, including at the RPC site, which should come forward with a mix of houses and small office/workshop space.
- If residential development at the edge of town is required, then this should be evenly spread and not concentrated in one place. The masterplan identifies areas where this could happen.
- Development of 500 homes may require a '1 form' of entry expansion of Manor School and more significant levels of homes will lead to the need for the Cottons Surgery to expand. This will need to be funded in part though developer contributions.
- New small office and/or workshop space should be provided both in the town centre and close to the A45. Opportunities to expand Warth Park, providing this demonstrates improved integration with the town and training opportunities for local people, should be considered in order to enhance the employment offer to residents.



# The process





# 01. Introduction

## The brief

### 1.1

Raunds is a small market town in the south of East Northamptonshire District. The North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (Adopted June 2008) (Policy 10) identifies Raunds as a Rural Service Centre. Policy 9 identifies that site-specific Development Plan Documents may identify opportunities for sustainable urban extensions at Rural Service Centres. Since the start of the Core Strategy period (April 2001), 232 new houses have been built within the Raunds parish. A further 868 will need to be delivered by 2021 to realise the indicative housing growth proposed within the current North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy.

### 1.2

In the Raunds Area Plan Preferred Options document, (January 2007), a site to the north east of the town was identified as the preferred location for residential development. However, considerable concern was expressed at the time by the local community about the impact of such a development on the character of the town. East Northamptonshire Council (ENC), secured funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government and the

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to help establish a vision for the future of Raunds, and in doing so, review growth options for the town. Consultants were asked to undertake this through an Enquiry by Design approach, the outcome of which would provide a context for the preparation of a masterplan for Raunds. This masterplan has now been developed to act as a framework against which future decisions about the town can be considered. The masterplan is an evidence base to inform future revisions to the Core Spatial Strategy and the future development of the Four Towns Plan, which when completed will be the key planning document for the area.

## Enquiry by Design (EbD)

Photos from the public exhibitions held during the Enquiry by Design week



### 1.3

There are a number of key elements to this approach, which involves getting groups of people together to explore opportunities and constraints and to discuss the possibility of shared solutions. The approach, devised and promoted by The Prince's Foundation, seeks to:

- Bring together key stakeholders
- Identify and assess complex design issues
- Test the issues through collaborative design
- Include lots of discussions and drawings

### 1.4

By its nature, every Enquiry by Design process is unique, developing a response appropriate to the specific area and issues raised.

The Raunds events were focused on three audiences:

#### **Stakeholder workshops:**

### 1.5

These were focussed sessions with invited local stakeholders. The term 'stakeholder' simply means any organisation or group that has an interest in the future of Raunds. During these events the stakeholders identified and refined the potential parameters for change in the town.



## Public events:

### 1.6

Two sessions were run with members of the public at key stages during the week where they had the opportunity to comment on, challenge and refine the stakeholders' material. This aimed to be an open and inclusive process that encouraged all members of the community and organisations to engage in the formation and refinement of the emerging objectives and design principles.

## Landowner meetings:

### 1.7

Major land owners with interests in or around Raunds were invited to meet with the design team to outline their development proposals, and discuss the process of the Enquiry by Design including the early outputs. Land owners are defined as stakeholders by the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE), which developed the Enquiry by Design process. They are likely to have a role in delivering the aspirations and objectives of the Masterplan. As such, their involvement in the process is valued.

### 1.8

However, due to the competing nature of land owner interests around Raunds, and the fact that the representative stakeholder group included members of two action groups opposed to different land owner proposals, the land owners themselves did not form part of the main stakeholder workshops. It was considered that their involvement over the four days of workshops was likely to affect the collaborative nature of the sessions, which is a fundamental part of the process.

### 1.9

The outcome of separate discussions with land owners were fed back to the stakeholder group in the form of a summary of the key elements of each proposal. Furthermore, a summary of each proposal is included in this masterplan and has informed the development of proposals and interventions set out in this document. The role of this masterplan is not to assess each proposal and decide which should come forward, as this job has and will continue to be undertaken through development of local planning policy. Rather, this masterplan seeks to provide a framework through which existing and emerging proposals can be brought forward through the planning system and beyond.

## The Enquiry by Design Summary Report

### 1.10

A summary report for the Enquiry by Design week has been produced. This describes the key findings from the process, set out against each day's activities. It includes the presentations and drawings that were developed. It concludes with emerging masterplan objectives and principles, which have been used to inform the creation of this masterplan. The document can be downloaded from the ENC website at

[http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/downloads/Raunds\\_EbD\\_report.pdf](http://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/downloads/Raunds_EbD_report.pdf)

### 1.11

A copy of the report is also available at Raunds Town Library.

**1.12**

At the request of the community during the Enquiry by Design week, a public exhibition of the emerging masterplan objectives and principles was held between 19th and 21st November 2010 in the Town Library and Creamers Coffee Shop. The findings can also be downloaded from the ENC website.

## From Enquiry by Design to the Raunds Masterplan

**1.13**

The new central government administration has indicated that they will abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and with them, regional housing targets. While the recent planning appeal by CALA homes (Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2010]) has meant that these targets are currently still retained, the Joint Planning Unit (JPU) has begun a review the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy in light of the expected abolition. As such, whilst the adopted policy is very specific, the future planning policy position for Raunds and North Northamptonshire (the joint planning area within which the town sits) is currently under review.

**1.14**

The EbD process did not yield complete agreement on whether growth was necessary. However, while there was still a great deal of debate about the issue, a level of consensus did emerge among the stakeholder group in relation to the level of housing growth that could come forward (if it was required). This level is 500 homes, which is derived from an average of housing completions in the town over the past 14 years. This figure, and the basis for it, came from resident-led suggestions, and were subject to group discussions. The masterplan proposals are therefore broadly based on this figure, to demonstrate how growth in the town could come forward in accordance with the consultation workshops and public exhibitions.

**1.15**

The masterplan sets out the key messages and objectives from the EbD process as a series of principles and design guidelines, which can help shape the type and location of development and change as it comes forward. The masterplan has been created so that it is able to respond, where possible, in a flexible manner should the review of the Core Spatial Strategy result in revised housing targets for the town. Once housing targets are reviewed and agreed, the masterplan should then be considered alongside other studies, as a piece of evidence to inform the development of the Four Towns Plan, which will act as the key planning document for Raunds. In the meantime, the North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy remains the current policy, but this masterplan will also inform its current review.

# 02. The Evidence Base

## 2.1

This section of the report sets the context for the masterplan. The evidence is set out based on the following themes:

- Housing
- Community facilities
- Environmental sustainability
- Economy
- Retail and shopping
- Transportation
- Current landowner/developer interest

## 2.2

All documents supplied by both potential developers and stakeholders have been considered in the preparation of this masterplan.

## Housing

### 2.3

The current adopted housing target for Raunds is set out in the Core Spatial Strategy. This stands at an indicative figure of 1100 houses to be built in Raunds by 2021. Of these, 232 have been built and planning consent is in place for another 47. A number of planning applications relating to other elements of the target have been submitted and are at various stages of discussion. However, in order to reflect the impact of the recession and the government's intention that housing targets be set locally, a review of the Core Spatial Strategy is now underway.

### 2.4

There are two main types of housing that any residential growth in Raunds would need to consider. These are private (or market) housing and affordable housing.

### Affordable housing

#### 2.5

The two types of affordable housing are 'social rented' and 'intermediate', which are intended for eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. These types of housing can be described as:

#### Social rented housing

#### 2.6

Completely owned and managed by the Council or a Housing Association Rent is cheaper than on the private market. Typically eligible if the cost of mortgaging or renting a private home would cost more than 25% of gross household income.

## Intermediate affordable housing

### 2.7

Partly owned and managed by the Council or a Housing Association.

Rent levels are higher than social rented housing, but below market prices.

Includes the Homebuy scheme (where part of the house is bought (usually 25% or more) and part is rented).

### 2.8

Historically, social rented housing has been the more prevalent model for new affordable housing. However, the Government has recently announced, as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, that they will be seeking greater levels of intermediate affordable housing in the future.

### 2.9

There is an evidence base of information which helps us to understand the demand for affordable housing need in the town:

## Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2007

### 2.10

This concludes that East Northamptonshire has the highest level of affordable housing need in North Northamptonshire (255 homes per year); and specifies that as a result of this, the Local Authority should be seeking up to 40% affordable housing on sites which exceed the threshold (15 units or more).

The SHMA also concludes that the focus for affordable housing in Raunds should be larger properties.

## East Northamptonshire Housing Needs Survey 2004

### 2.11

This survey includes a breakdown of affordable housing need at Ward level for the period to 2009. It concluded that, based on the number of people in each house, their space requirements and income, an additional 43 dwellings per year were required to meet existing and arising need in Raunds. Despite the fact that this survey was completed in 2004 it is reasonable to assume that a level of demand will still exist, given only 24 affordable housing properties have been completed in the town since 2004.

## Choice Based Lettings Bidding Activity

### 2.12

East Northamptonshire Council operates a Choice Based Lettings system of allocating housing in the district; whereby applicants 'bid' for the vacant advertised properties that they are interested in. During the period April to September 2010, only 20 affordable properties in total became available in Raunds. For these 20 properties, 152 bids were received. This suggests that the need outstrips supply.

### 2.13

This becomes more evident when looking at the demand for family houses. Of the 20 properties advertised, 7 of these were family houses (2, 3 or 4 bed). For these 7 properties, 84 bids were received.

### 2.14

This evidence above shows a need for additional affordable housing in Raunds, particularly of the family house type. There is,



however, insufficient evidence to robustly recommend a new level (target number) of affordable housing growth needed in Raunds at this stage. This work will need to be undertaken as part of the current review of the Core Spatial Strategy and the future proposed Four Town Plan, which will provide more detailed planning guidance for Raunds.

### **Private (market) housing demand (rental or purchase) in Raunds.**

#### **2.15**

Developers have made the Council aware that they would like to build in Raunds. This is supported by the planning applications currently under consideration. This suggests there is demand for private homes. Defining if there is a need for these homes, and who it is who needs them is difficult, and it is not possible to do that within this document. However, it is likely that to deliver any affordable homes, private homes will be required to help cross-subsidise their development and to provide the necessary supporting infrastructure and community facilities that may be required as a consequence.

## **Predicting housing demand in Raunds**

### **2.16**

Given the evidence shown above, whilst it is not possible to accurately set a revised housing growth target at this stage, a no-growth option is not a plausible position for this study to take. This position is taken with the knowledge that many residents made it clear that they do not see the benefit of housing growth to the existing character and community of Raunds. The masterplan seeks to set out how additional housing growth could benefit Raunds and achieve some of the many other objectives and principles put forward by residents and stakeholders.



Existing housing in Raunds



## Community facilities & services

### Education

#### 2.17

There are three primary schools and one secondary school in Raunds, all of which have spare capacity to accept additional places at the present time, according to Northamptonshire County Council. It is important to note the capacity information shown here is 2010 Northamptonshire County Council data based on the physical ability of a facility to accept additional pupils. This is used by the Council, in part, to identify trigger points for additional school space. Based on the consultation events, this may differ from the experience of local people. This is because the availability of teachers, different pupil capacity across year groups, and current admissions policies may reduce this supply. However, for the purpose of this study it is regarded that there is significant capacity in local primary schools and some limited capacity in the secondary school in some year groups.

#### 2.18

Northamptonshire County Council currently identifies capacity (October 2010) as follows:

- Park Infant School, 62 spare places
- St Peter's Church of England Junior School, 55 spare places
- Windmill Primary School, 79 spare places
- Manor Secondary School, 81 spare places

#### 2.19

Ultimately, any available capacity that may be identified will need to be the subject of detailed negotiation with the schools directly and the education department.

#### 2.20

Assuming the standard preference of education departments to retain 10% capacity within schools to allow for flexibility within the system, housing development in line with the current Core Spatial Strategy target may create a need for Manor School to expand by 1 Form of Entry, with 500 homes also close to triggering a similar requirement. Due to national space standards, capacity to accommodate additional pupils is also likely to trigger the need for more playing field space. This would require the school site to be extended. Development of homes at a lower level could still have an impact on existing capacity of the school and this should be assessed alongside the review of the Core Spatial Strategy.

#### 2.21

Current space within the primary schools should be sufficient to accommodate the Core Spatial Strategy level of housing growth, if this is taken forward. This assessment does not take account of the quality of provision, which cannot be addressed in this masterplan.



## Healthcare

### 2.22

There are currently two primary healthcare facilities in Raunds.

- The Cottons Surgery (Meadow Lane). Over-subscribed with approximately 2,300 patients per Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) GP
- Marshalls Road Surgery. Under-subscribed with approximately 1,200 patients per WTE GP

### 2.23

The national target is 1,800 patients per WTE GP. The Cottons Surgery is a more recent development than Marshall's Road, benefitting from significant dedicated parking, an on-site pharmacy, a wider range of services and full disability access. There has been a natural migration between the two surgeries, leading to longer waiting times at The Cottons. During the consultation events it became clear that some attendees feel town centre shops have noticeably suffered as a result of this migration

because people are no longer combining a visit to their GP with a 'top up' shopping trip to the town centre. They also noted that the amount of car parking at The Cottons is insufficient for the current number of users.

### 2.24

NHS Northamptonshire aspires to an improvement in popularity of Marshalls Road Surgery catalysed by the arrival of a new partner and relatively short waiting times. Should a level of housing growth occur that is similar to the current remaining Core Spatial Strategy target, then an extension of The Cottons and its parking facilities should be considered. At 500 homes, this expansion is probably not supported, although discussion with NHS Northamptonshire should take place once the Core Spatial Strategy review confirms a target. NHS Northamptonshire deems the Marshalls Road site to be too constrained for an extension.



Saxon Hall & the library – important facilities in Raunds

**2.25**

Raunds does not have a hospital; the nearest can be found in Kettering, Northampton or Bedford. The level of growth in Raunds as set out in the current Core Spatial Strategy alone will not trigger the need for a new hospital or expansion of an existing one. The effect of cumulative growth across the wider region should be taken into account by NHS Northamptonshire.

**Other community facilities****2.26**

There is a lack of dedicated youth facilities in Raunds and the local School Council was united in its request to reinstate a skate park or similar activity in the town. This is also recognised in the Raunds Area Preferred Options document (2007) and amongst some other stakeholders. There are a number of facilities within the town that provide activities for youths, including Saxon Hall and the local churches, as well as Raunds Town Football Club.

**2.27**

The general feedback received during the consultation events is that a dedicated youth facility would appeal to a wider audience. For example one comment received is that Saxon Hall offers only small rooms for dance classes with inappropriate flooring. Based on evidence set out in the Raunds Area Preferred Options document, it is recognised that an extension of the football club pitch and training areas would allow for improved facilities which would benefit the local community.

**2.28**

Raunds Library is a valuable asset to the local community and occupies a central location that attracts residents into the town centre.

**Environmental sustainability****Flooding and drainage****2.29**

The Hog Dyke runs through the centre of Raunds, entering to the north east and exiting to the west of the town. This area has regularly been subject to rising water levels during times of heavy rainfall. Following regular inspections from the Environment Agency and heavy summer rainfall in 2009, improvement works have been recently completed to Hog Dyke. In November 2009, the walls protecting the banks were rebuilt to protect the surrounding residential properties.

**2.30**

Raunds is situated in a valley and there is the potential for knock on impacts of surface water run-off from any new development. As such, any scheme coming forward will need to be carefully designed. This should include consideration of sustainable urban drainage systems solution, incorporating multi-functional green spaces.

**2.31**

East Northamptonshire Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2006) contains flood risk assessments for the following 'study areas' within Raunds:

- Raunds South
- Raunds North East
- Raunds West



### 2.32

The SFRA highlights that on-site flood risk is generally low within these areas. The areas where there is current development interest around Raunds are predominantly land within Flood Zone 1 although small areas fall within Flood Zone 3. In terms of any new development proposed, the most important flood consideration in Raunds is the heightened downstream risk arising from increased surface water run-off associated with increased impermeable surfaces.

### 2.33

The risk of downstream flooding is identified as particularly acute in the Raunds North East study area, where runoff from development would flow through the centre of Raunds via the Hog Dyke. The Hog Dyke has 'Critical Ordinary Watercourse' status, which reflects concerns about its capability to convey flood flows without surcharging. Despite improvement and maintenance works which have improved the Hog Dyke's condition and capacity, the SFRA states that any large scale development in Raunds North East could significantly increase flood risk in the existing built up area if runoff is not attenuated to existing greenfield volumes and rates.



Greenfield development and flood risk are key environmental focus points for Raunds

### 2.34

In Raunds South, downstream flood risk is associated with the Darsdale Stream which bisects the town. Runoff from any future development will drain directly through the Darsdale Stream, the floodplain of which has not been mapped. The SFRA concludes that the culvert is at significant risk of flooding from Hog Dyke or the surcharging of the culvert itself.

### 2.35

The SFRA states that within Raunds West, runoff is likely to drain into the Hog Dyke south of Raunds and thus the risk from downstream flooding is low. Nevertheless, all development on undeveloped land must achieve Greenfield run-off rates and volumes or better. This will help ensure that current flooding issues in the Nene Valley are not worsened.

### 2.36

The recent planning history of Raunds reflects these flooding issues. The Environment Agency has registered objections to proposed housing developments on the basis of concerns around surface water drainage. The EA has withdrawn its objections in respect of flood risk, subject to the imposition of conditions requiring betterment.



**2.37**

It should be noted that work on a new SFRA for the District is commencing (December 2010).

**Sustainable development****2.38**

Following consultation, the Government's Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement announced in July 2007 that all new homes will be zero carbon from 2016. In the Budget 2008, the Government also announced its ambition that all new non-residential buildings should be zero carbon from 2019 (with earlier targets for schools and other public buildings).

**2.39**

Prior to the introduction of the zero carbon requirement, the following intermediary step changes are proposed to the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations for dwellings:

- 2010: 25% improvement in regulated emissions (relative to 2006 levels). This is expected to broadly correspond to the energy and CO2 element (there are nine elements in total) of Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 2013: 44% improvement in regulated emissions (relative to 2006 levels), corresponding to Code Level 4
- 2016: Zero carbon in terms of both regulated and unregulated emissions

**2.40**

Any new development will need to meet these standards.

**Economy****Past economy****2.41**

Raunds has a long history and development associated with the boot and shoe industry. This industry declined in the 1950s and 60s, although several factories remained into the early 1990s. At this point several buildings were demolished and replaced with new housing areas.

**Current economy****2.42**

Many people at the Enquiry by Design felt that recent housing growth did not result in a corresponding growth in local jobs, with limited evidence of any new employment opportunities arising within the town. At present, it is acknowledged that demand for retail in the town centre are limited and improvements may be required to boost its popularity.

**2.43**

There is a recently opened resource centre (St. Peter's Community Enterprise Centre) and examples of community enterprise, such as the Phoenix Centre in Raunds, although there is now no major 'industry' in the town centre apart from retail.

**2.44**

A small industrial estate is located at Enterprise Road on the northern fringe of the town with further provision to the north of Brick Kiln Road. However, there appear to be limited light industrial/office locations for small and medium enterprises.



**2.45**

Following the wider sub-regional trend, local economic development has focused upon the Distribution Sector. Warth Park, to the north-west, is the most recent commercial development in the town and has been successful in attracting national chains, including Robert Wiseman Dairies, Indesit and Avery Dennison. This has provided employment in manufacturing and distribution.

**2.46**

The town is characterised by net-out migration in terms of working population. At the time of 2001 Census, some 63% of working age people living in Raunds commuted out of the town (more than 5km), considerably greater than the national average of 46%. 65% of working people living in Raunds commute by car (2001 data), compared to 61% nationally. The closure of the RPC site and some shops has probably increased this level although accurate figures will not be available until after the 2011 Census data has been analysed.

**Potential future economy****2.47**

The RPC Containers factory is currently being offered for sale on the open market and is identified in the East Northamptonshire Urban Potential Study (2007) as a possible redevelopment opportunity. The factory was a key local employer operating from an edge of town centre site and, subject to market demand, this site has the potential to provide continued employment for the town.

**2.48**

The Core Strategy sets a target for 5220 new jobs (net) in East Northamptonshire, of which 840 should be Strategic Distribution (Use Class B8) and 2330 should be offices (Use Class B1). There is expected to be a net loss of 420 General Industrial jobs (Use Class B2) across the district.

**2.49**

The East Northamptonshire Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is structured around four key priority areas:

- Regenerated town centres
- Effective support for existing local businesses
- Increasing skill levels
- Increased tourist spending

**2.50**

A number of recent interventions in Raunds have worked towards these priorities, including: St Peters Community Enterprise Centre; town centre environmental improvement scheme (2008); and, new and improved cycle and pedestrian links to Stanwick Lakes.

### 2.51

These priorities aim to resolve district-wide problems, some of which are also recognised as local issues:

- High levels of employment in certain declining industries (Manufacturing and Agriculture)
- Low aspirations and skills shortages with a low proportion of residents qualified at NVQ levels 3 and 4
- Falling levels of VAT registrations and low three year business survival rates
- An ageing working population
- Lack of quality employment premises especially for start ups and second stage
- High leakage of shoppers to surrounding retail areas
- Large daily outflow of commuting
- High graduate out-migration
- High levels of empty shops in the defined town centre areas

### 2.52

The East Northamptonshire Employment Land Review (2006) revealed that Raunds has a relatively high percentage of vacant

employment premises (23% of all local premises). Nevertheless, all premises were considered to be in good condition.

### 2.53

The review recommends the retention of the existing allocation for B1 and B2 uses on land south of Meadow Lane, although access constraints and potential conflicts with nearby residential uses are acknowledged.

### 2.54

Sites within north Raunds in close proximity to the A45 are identified as suitable for new employment uses, particularly B8 uses within Warth Park. New Barn Farm and Enterprise Road are also identified as potential employment locations.

### 2.55

The more recent Northamptonshire Employment Land Assessment (2009) reaffirms the strength of North Raunds, in particular Warth Park, as a B8 location. Nevertheless, the 2006 study cautions that, given the proximity and relationship to Raunds, the Council should give careful consideration to the scale and type of development permitted.



Warth Park and RPC containers – both key employment sites for the town



## Retail and shopping

### 2.56

Raunds has a linear town centre that clearly acts as a small, but locally important service centre, serving a wide rural hinterland. The location of the town centre is constrained by the geography of the town (the main street is within a valley) and historic growth patterns. For this reason activity is dispersed along High Street and Brook Street, anchored by the Co-Operative supermarket to the south, and Spar convenience store to the north.

### 2.57

The centre clearly provides a local “convenience” function with a prevalence of local food shops, local services including chemists, doctor’s surgery, hairdressers, newsagents, cafes, takeaways and pubs. The Square provides a focus at the northern end of the town centre and the area around the Town Hall and Co-Operative also provides an attractive setting. The Library, Church and further small-scale commercial activity is

located to the north and appear somewhat disconnected from the predominant town centre activities. Local residents have clearly expressed an aspiration for banking services in the town that are open on a more regular basis than the current arrangement (2 days per week).

### 2.58

Proximity of the town to Wellingborough and Kettering is likely to restrict its expansion as a location for “comparison” shopping. Careful consideration should be given to additional retail or services within any new development to ensure that the town centre benefits from the growth and is not undermined by it.

### 2.59

The North Northamptonshire Town Centres Roles & Relationships Study (2005, updated 2006) provides a qualitative assessment of Raunds, which is classified as a ‘Rural Service Centre’. The study concludes that Raunds town centre provides a top-up convenience shopping offer which is focused upon the Co-Op supermarket and shops along Brook Street.



The Co-Op is an important anchor for Brook Street and High Street



Currently 11 of the 56 shops in Raunds are vacant, which is a significant increase from 5 vacancies in 2006. This negatively affects the pedestrian experience in the town and the assessment suggests there is 'very little to attract visitors to the town'.

### 2.60

In conclusion, the Study recommends that the key priorities for Raunds town centre are reducing vacancy rates and strengthening the offer along Brook Street. As a Rural Service Centre, the Study contains no specific retail allocations for Raunds, which should focus on the consolidation of its existing offer, 'environmental improvements' and 'small scale infill development'.

### 2.61

As with the case for employment, it is clear that the retail offer in the town centre has been in decline for some time. Anecdotally, this was also reported during the Enquiry by Design. New housing has not underpinned the vitality and viability of the High Street, and therefore, measures to address this issue have been explored in the masterplan. Clearly, the decline of the High Street has also come about as people have changed their shopping habits, favouring out of town locations with ample free car parking, facilitating 'bulk buying' and potentially offering more choice. Internet shopping is now also playing a factor in the future of the High Street. In the case of Raunds, many of the shops have been

replaced by 'hot food takeaways'. This was not always seen by some at Enquiry by Design as being a strength, even though this type of business appeared to be viable.

### 2.62

As with housing, however, the "do nothing" option is not possible, as in the absence of some form of action, it is likely that the town centre will further decline, or otherwise change its character.



## Transport

### 2.63

The town is highly reliant on private vehicles, with most recent housing development constructed around car movements. The A45 (T) runs to the north of Raunds and Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough are all within 20-minutes drive of Raunds and have a significant retail and employment offer. Slightly further afield the larger centres of Northampton, Bedford and Peterborough are within 30-minutes drive and the limited local offer combined with the good strategic road connections makes these places attractive for commuting by private car.

### 2.64

The B663 connects to the A45 (T) and is the principal route for vehicles into Raunds, however there is perceived to be a lack of signage to Raunds from the strategic road network.



The road network and provision of public transport will have an impact on levels of growth

### 2.65

The Raunds road network varies in size and form around the town, with the narrowing of High Street at The Square a noticeable feature. Given the standard of the existing road infrastructure and the rural nature of much of the highway network in Raunds there is concern over its capacity to support significant extra traffic. There is on-street parking in Raunds, particularly along Brook Street and the High Street, and car parks serving town centre facilities include The Square, Marshall's Road and the Co-op store. Changes to the on-street parking restrictions on High Street around Market Square have recently been implemented to limit waiting, with the aim to increase the turnover of spaces to help retail activity. Based on the feedback from the public exhibition, these changes have attracted a mixed response from businesses in the town centre. A lack of dedicated servicing provision does cause parking issues on some roads, with large vehicles parking illegally and / or double parking on High Street.

### 2.66

In terms of road safety, stakeholders are concerned about the accident history at the Wellington Road / London Road / Stanwick Road / Chelveston Road roundabout junction. Given the accident record at the junction any changes to the town that would result in additional traffic pressure would need to fully investigate the potential need for road safety improvements at this location.

**2.67**

With regard to public transport provision, there are limited bus services in the town with no rail access. The closest mainline station is at Wellingborough on the Midland Mainline. The focal point for bus services is Market Square. The X46 service to Northampton via Wellingborough operates as the only regular daily service from The Square running two buses an hour from 0620. However the X46 service has a journey time of over 90 minutes from Raunds to Northampton, which makes this mode of travel second choice for trips if people have access to a car. The 46C makes one return journey to Northampton five days a week, primarily to serve students at Northampton College, with more rural stops on route than the X46. The 16 service to Kettering runs seven services Monday to Saturday. The Raunds Rover routes (R11, R12, R13 and R14) provide three services a day on Fridays within Raunds and the surrounding villages, however the fixed routing of this service can be an issue for people with restricted mobility, and a door to door service like Nene and Ouse Community Transport could provide a more flexible (additional) service.

**2.68**

Based on an average walking speed of 80 metres per minute, analysis of existing pedestrian facilities indicates that it is possible to walk through the town within 20 minutes. The footways that run alongside the roads in Raunds are generally in good condition, albeit narrow in places. Raunds is a hilly place and the lack of seating on some roads and footpaths can be a concern for elderly pedestrians. On the whole Raunds can be considered a compact, walkable town with good connectivity for pedestrians, if sometimes a little challenging.

**2.69**

There is good potential to encourage more local travel (journeys up to 5km) by cycle especially to attractions like Stanwick Lakes. There is an existing marked cycle route along Meadow Lane, Marshall's Road and High Street, which then separates into two routes along and Midland Road / Brooks Road and Butts Road / B663.



## Current land owner interest (for information only)

### 2.70

The role of the masterplan is not to assess or promote individual land owner interests. However, there is clearly development interest and it is important that these proposals are set out to provide context for the masterplan objectives, principles and design guidance. A summary of the different proposals is provided for information only.

### 2.71

These proposals are at various stages of development. None has planning permission at the time of writing and as such they still have various stages of the planning process to go through, providing opportunities for consultation or representation from the community and other interests.

### 2.72

This document is based on community and stakeholder consultation and as such should be considered a material consideration in regard to planning applications, but it cannot be considered a formal technical audit of those planning applications.

**Northdale End** (Land North of Raunds fronting Brick Kiln Road, North Street, Brooks Road and Midland Road)

### 2.73

An outline planning application submitted by Barwood Land And Estates Ltd was refused at committee for development across a 16.2 hectare site. The application is based on an illustrative masterplan which relates to a wider area immediately adjacent to the site, but is submitted as a “stand alone development”. The application is currently subject to planning appeal. The applicants describe their proposal in the following way:

- 310 new homes, including affordable housing
- 68 bed care home and 19 close care apartments
- 1,859m<sup>2</sup> (20,000 sq.ft) of flexible, small scale office/light industrial starter units (B1 and B8). This will provide an estimated 100 new jobs. The care home and close care apartments will generate an additional 100 jobs.
- Up to 140m<sup>2</sup> of community facilities.
- Conversion and restoration of the historic Northdale Farm buildings, making them the focal point for a new public square.

- Major areas of multifunctional green infrastructure, including parkland, children's play areas, informal open space, allotments, community orchards and meadows, all of which would bring associated ecological benefits.
- A network of new vehicular accesses and associated road infrastructure, including a new crossing of Brooks Road. Proposed public transport enhancements include the extension of the X46 bus route so that no part of Northdale End is more than 300m from a bus stop. The provision of new footways and cycleways would make making Northdale End permeable and well-connected with the rest of the town.
- Flood relief and attenuation measures that will also alleviate town-wide problems
- Ecological benefits through improved management, retention and strengthening of hedgerows, enhancement of the existing Brook through the site and the creation of new wetlands and green wedges.

## Land at Darsdale Farm

### 2.74

An outline planning application has been submitted by Taylor Wimpey Developments for a residential development at Darsdale Farm and Rushmere, Chelveston Road. The site is 17.28 hectares and the applicants describe their proposed development in the following way:

- Fulfils the criteria set out in the Raunds Area Plan for sustainable development in the town
- Provides up to 460 units at a density of 35 units per hectare.
- Seeks to provide a sense of place for its community by providing a series of linked urban spaces and a linear park.
- Retains many existing trees and edges and incorporates them into the design.
- Two large lakes are proposed on the line of the stream, whose primary function is to retain floodwater, but the design would also encourage wildlife.
- Close to the existing town centre and bounded by existing ribbon development on two sides.
- Development behind existing street frontages minimises impact on the countryside and the town
- Improves pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre and to the countryside.
- Diverts an existing bus service providing links to employment areas beyond Raunds
- Proximity to the town centre gives residents the opportunity to use facilities within the town rather than travel elsewhere
- In the longer term the proposal assists in the regeneration of the High Street benefitting the whole community.



## Land south of Meadow Lane

### 2.75

An outline planning application submitted by Bovis Homes for a mixed-use development at Land south of Meadow Lane was refused on appeal on the grounds of noise. The site is 5.22 hectares. An illustrative masterplan (submitted as part of the refused planning application) has been created by the applicants, and they describe their proposed development in the following way:

- 135 units, with an average density of 40 units per hectare
- 40% affordable housing
- Mixed use and commercial uses (B1) retaining 8.4 acres with potential for live-work units/starter units
- Improved linkages to Stanwick Lakes
- All facilities within 1,600 metres, with primary school and medical centres close to the site
- Minimal impact on existing residents
- Delivers a truly mixed-use sustainable extension
- Located on a key inter-urban bus route linking Raunds to neighbouring towns
- Built development contained within existing physical boundaries
- Negligible impact on biodiversity and ecology
- No flooding concerns or residual risks

## RPC Containers Ltd, Grove Street

### 2.76

An outline planning application has been submitted by RPC Containers, which involves the creation of a new residential development and associated areas of open space. The applicants describe their proposed development in the following way:

- Development comprising up to a maximum of 75 dwellings. There will be a mix of housing ranging from 2 to 5 bedroom dwellings.
- Formal provision for public open space will be made by way of financial contributions to existing facilities in the locality, alongside 0.177ha of open space on-site. This will include areas of amenity space, landscape corridors and footpath links
- Important boundary trees would be retained, particularly those across the frontage of the application site
- The existing access point for Grove Street / Beech Hill would be retained to service the new development
- Vehicular access to the Globe Public House would be maintained

## Warth Park

### 2.77

The Warth Park scheme design has not yet been finalised as further community consultation and discussion with Council officers is continuing. Roxhill describes its emerging scheme in the following way:

- Delivers up to 1500 on-site jobs, and provide new sites for local firms to expand into:
- 400 jobs in administration, managerial, manufacturing and service industries
- 100 managerial and administration jobs in the warehouses.
- 950 logistics jobs include skilled warehouse workers, semi-skilled warehouse workers, drivers and others including cleaning and security staff.
- A 25 acre Community Park with a lake, open space, paths and extensive landscaping will be designed with local people for local people. Additional facilities could include a skatepark for the youth of the town, a nature trail and other facilities.
- London Road widened between the current Warth Park entrance and the A45, with a new site access roundabout to improve traffic flows, improved views and signage and the opportunity for public art.
- Local services from existing town businesses will be needed to provide services and retail to all the business units, and the logistics.
- Strategic warehousing makes the overall development viable.
- Direct access to the main highway network and the impact of the warehouses is lessened by their location alongside and behind the existing Warth Park warehouses.

## Manor Farm

### 2.78

DH Barford & Co have generated initial proposals on behalf of the Rayner family who own the site. The consultants describe their initial proposals in the following way:

- Identified for development within the Raunds Preferred Options Development Plan
- 1.7 hectares of residential development, with potential for 50 units (although open to discussions with the Council)
- Extension to Manor School grounds
- Tree-lined boundary to the site
- A vehicular access link into Mountbatten Way
- New school and staff car parks and reception building
- New school changing room, specifically for the recently built all weather sports pitch



# 03. The Enquiry by Design objectives

## A masterplan objective

A mission, purpose, or standard that can be reasonably achieved through the masterplan.

### 3.1

A series of objectives were developed with the stakeholder group on Day 1 of the EbD and tested at the first public meeting. These objectives evolved and were added to and amended over the EbD week and the subsequent public exhibition. They form the key output from the EbD process and are the basis against which the masterplan proposals have been developed.

### 3.2

Through the development of the masterplan and during the public exhibition, it has become clear that not all of the objectives can be achieved. The masterplan seeks to achieve as many stakeholder and public objectives as possible. Conflicts and tensions within the objectives and how they are resolved in the masterplan are discussed in the next chapter.

### 3.3

It should also be noted that through the EbD process and discussions with ENC officers, an overall approach that favours a focus on the town itself has been a fundamental element of any change in the town. As such, it should be highlighted that Policy 16 of the Core Spatial Strategy, which sets out 12 criteria for Sustainable Urban Extensions across the area should not be rigidly applied to Raunds. This policy includes the need to provide a wide range of local employment opportunities that offer a choice of jobs and training prospects and an appropriate level of retail, leisure, social, cultural, community and health facilities that meet local needs but do not compete with the town centre. However, given the findings of the EbD process, any development coming forward in Raunds should not be viewed as a Sustainable Urban Extension in itself and as such, should help focus the benefits outlined in the policy towards the town, rather than through on-site provision, unless a clear rationale is provided.



Providing the right housing and employment opportunities are at the heart of the Enquiry by Design objectives



## The objectives

### 3.4

#### Housing (HO)

- (HO1) Raunds' character and identity as a small rural market town should be protected and enhanced
- (HO2) Housing and employment growth should be balanced
- (HO3) If more housing is needed, the delivery of infrastructure at the same time as new housing should be promoted
- (HO4) Benefits from new development should be focused on the town centre
- (HO5) Potential support for growth in line with average level of housing completions in Raunds (500 homes over 15 years)
- (HO6) Additional sheltered accommodation should be provided

### 3.5

#### Environmental sustainability (ES)

- (ES1) Ensure that green spaces are better used by all ages
- (ES2) Do not build on the greenfield
- (ES3) Development should incorporate suitable flood prevention
- (ES4) Encourage renewable energy provision

### 3.6

#### Economy, retail and shopping (ER)

- (ER1) Support the ability for people who currently out commute to work locally
- (ER2) Diversify the employment offer in the town

- (ER3) Focus on smaller businesses both in the town centre (especially High Street) and on the edge of town
- (ER4) Strengthen Brook Street as focus of town centre
- (ER5) Encourage a variety of shops (not based on takeaways)
- (ER6) Promote temporary uses for vacant shops
- (ER7) Improve areas around the Co-Op and Market Square to act as 'anchors' for the town centre

### 3.7

#### Community facilities & services (CF)

- (CF1) Promote new services and facilities in Raunds
- (CF2) Promote existing and create new networks to strengthen the local sense of community
- (CF3) Reduce crime through a greater police presence on local streets and through targeted interventions
- (CF4) Maintain current levels of allotment provision

### 3.8

#### Transportation

- (TR1) Improve accessibility to Raunds town centre by Raunds residents
- (TR2) Improve public transport access to Northampton and other towns, including new bus stops and an extended Raunds Rover service
- (TR3) Promote walking and cycling links in safe and appropriate locations



# The masterplan





# 04. The masterplan principles

## A masterplan principle

An intervention or approach that can be applied in developing the masterplan to help achieve its objectives.

### 4.1

This chapter sets out the principles which should help achieve the objectives outlined on page 33. It will also highlight where tensions and conflicts occur between the objectives, and set out how these have been resolved.

## Housing

### 4.2

The EbD process demonstrated that a key part of retaining Raunds' character and identity is protecting the scale of the town. Many participants felt this should be achieved through no growth, others felt this could happen by limiting growth to sites within the town boundary (Objective ES2). If new development on the edge of the town was to happen, a key principle that emerged was that it should be well integrated with the existing town, and dispersed so that no one area of the town is changed through significant levels of new development. This would also ensure a strategic gap between Raunds and Stanwick is retained to protect the identities of the two settlements.

### 4.3

There is clearly a tension about the scale and location of growth. The masterplan needs to provide a framework for growth in the town to ensure change comes forward in a manner that maximises benefit for Raunds. A level of 500 homes emerged from discussions with the



Housing coming forward should be of good quality, such as these at Upton, Northampton

stakeholder group. This was based on a resident-led suggestion, that if growth was necessary, the figure should be based on an average of recent completions. The 500 figure is based on the average number of completions over recent years.

#### 4.4

A key area of interest at both the stakeholder and public meetings was the subject of housing need, and crucially what this actually meant. There was concern that as many of the figures used as a basis for demand for housing included in-migration of people to East Northamptonshire, they did not satisfactorily describe the need of people in the town and/or the surrounding area. However, as set out earlier in this report, the best available information on 'affordable' housing need (i.e. residents identified as not being able to afford private rented or private for sale homes that meet their needs) is based solely on the needs of the existing population of Raunds. This data shows a clear need for 'affordable' homes that are made more affordable to rent or purchase. It should be noted however this is dependent on landowners' co-operation and funding

being available for land purchase and/or construction, as has been the case in recent years.

#### 4.5

The stakeholder group requested more work in the area of housing need, including 'affordable' housing need. Furthermore, a review of the main planning policy document (the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Spatial Strategy) is currently underway, which will review overall housing requirements for the district. This, alongside this masterplan, will need to inform any revision to the Core Spatial Strategy target figure for housing in Raunds.

#### 4.6

The stakeholder group felt that to benefit the town's economy, larger homes to accommodate families and higher earners might be beneficial. Many people felt that new schemes should promote low densities to ensure people had lots of space and did not feel overcrowded, and so that development did not impact on views and routes through the town. Development should also be in keeping with, and sympathetic to, the existing character of the area.



#### 4.7

Ultimately, proposals will need to demonstrate viability to ensure good quality development and that community benefits are not lost through inadequate S106 contributions.

#### Summary of principles

- (HOA) Retain open countryside between Raunds and Stanwick
- (HOB) The real housing needs of Raunds should be established in terms of numbers and type of homes to inform proposals
- (HOC) Larger properties for families and higher earners should be encouraged
- (HOD) New development should integrate with the existing town
- (HOE) Work with the area's topography to maximise views and retain Raunds' identity
- (HOF) Promote lower densities for quality of life
- (HOG) If new development is needed the approach should be to disperse locations equally subject to site capacity, design and viability
- (HOH) New development should be integrated with the town
- (HOI) New houses should be suited to local wage packet
- (HOJ) New housing should be in keeping with existing character, sympathetic to area
- (HOK) Proposals will need to be viable to ensure quality and community benefits are not lost because of inadequate financial contributions made by developers

### Environmental Sustainability

#### 4.8

A key objective of many participants was to protect existing greenfield areas by allowing no development on them. However, during the stakeholder workshops it was established that there is limited capacity within the existing urban area to accommodate homes or employment uses. Therefore, the masterplan shows some growth on greenfield areas, so that the plan is flexible enough to meet existing and any future housing targets and also the 500 homes put forward in Objective HO5. The EbD process indicated that existing green spaces in the town were important and needed improvement. To this end, a principle moving forward should be to build on the urban area first, where this is viable and it does not impact on the quality of green space provision within the town.

#### 4.9

The EbD process has identified a clear aspiration to establish the town of Raunds as a sustainable development in its entirety including the promotion of town centre uses and activities, such as employment, shops and services, rather than for any new development at its edges to include the full range of uses within its own boundaries. This should avoid new development becoming insular and ensure it focuses towards the town for the majority of services. As a result, the masterplan will need to identify how sites within the town can deliver these types of activity.

#### 4.10

New development should (subject to viability) also bring with it opportunities for renewable energy production, in particular photovoltaic panels to exploit the large roof areas. The EbD

process highlighted employment sites, both existing (Warth Park) and any future development as potential locations. The extent to which residential development will need to come forward with renewable energy sources is likely to be defined by building regulations as referred to earlier in this report. While energy efficiency savings, including insulation and modern appliances will help, some onsite provision will be required. Opportunities to provide Combined Heat and Power (CHP) may be limited as the scale and density of residential development identified through the EbD process is likely to not be compatible with this type of technology. However, opportunities to link developments together, especially where different uses provide a balanced demand for heat and power, or to retrofit existing homes to take advantage of cost and energy savings associated with CHP, should be considered.

#### 4.11

Using the town's green space and watercourses for wider benefits is also an important principle that will need to come forward through the masterplan. Flooding is a key issue for the town. New development must consider both on-site and town centre measures to reduce risks. This should include consideration of

sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and also opportunities to open up Hogs Dyke to allow for flood reduction measures as well as enhancing it as a feature through the town. In accordance with Environment Agency advice, the approach in the plan is to encourage flood reduction through sustainable development in advance of flood mitigation.

#### Summary of principles

- (ESA) Build housing in the urban area first
- (ESB) Encourage renewable energy on peripheral employment sites
- (ESC) Identify spaces in the town where new or better activities could be provided to increase usage
- (ESD) Any development on the edge of the town should improve access to the countryside
- (ESE) Celebrate the stream - open up the watercourse, where possible, to promote a positive realm for the natural environment, which encourages biodiversity and includes measures to reduce flood risk
- (ESF) Utilise green spaces to help reduce flood risk, through use of swales (low tracts of land used to retain water) and retention ponds



Sustainable drainage, including swales and retention ponds will need to be considered where appropriate



## Economy, retail and shopping

### 4.12

A clear message through the EbD process was the need to promote small business opportunities within and around the town. The demand for such provision has also been supported by ENC's economic development team. The masterplan will need to consider appropriate town centre locations as well as opportunities for units on the edge of the town. The masterplan will also need to consider opportunities for existing retail units within the town to convert to office use (if there is demand), to support economic activity into the centre. A clear message from the EbD week was that such work will need to go hand in hand with training and support for existing and new businesses.

### 4.13

A town centre public realm strategy will need to be promoted through the masterplan. This should include improvements to The Square, along Brook Street to the Co-Op and The Hall. A focus for this strategy will be reducing the clutter along the street and seeking to resolve some of the car parking issues to make the area feel more appealing to shoppers. Exploring ways to improve access to Spinney Hill and its relationship with the shopping area is a key part of the masterplan.

### 4.14

These physical interventions will need to be matched with a marketing and communications strategy for the town, which should set out an approach to diversifying and expanding retail, community and leisure offer of the town. A key element of this could be the market, with the potential for different speciality days and weekend opening opportunities for the town's economy. However this activity should not compete with, but rather complement, the high street retail offer.

#### Summary of principles

- (ERA) Maximise small business opportunities (100-5000sq.ft)
- (ERB) Promote vacant shops for business start up units
- (ERC) Improve town square (both in terms of activity and design)
- (ERD) Encourage market day specialities and extended opening days to the weekend
- (ERE) Develop RPC site to improve the Co-Op end of Brook Street
- (ERF) Develop a communications & marketing strategy to support and enhance an entertainment programme
- (ERG) Provide support to existing and new businesses
- (ERH) Reduce clutter and improve the public realm in town centre, between Co-Op and Market Square, such as improved signage, seating, lighting and paving
- (ERI) Improve access to Spinney Hill, with better connections and more seating
- (ERJ) Restrict edge or out of town retail development to focus offer on town centre

## Community facilities & services

### 4.15

The need for better community networks was highlighted as critical during the EbD process. It was felt that people needed to refocus on the town centre in order to develop or improve existing community events and activities. Saxon Hall was noted as an existing community asset, but there was a perception that the cost to hire rooms was high and not affordable to many people. The possibility of improving The Square, as a central place for community activities and communication through improved information, is part of the masterplan. The use of vacant shops for community activities, including learning and youth provision, was highlighted during the EbD, although it was noted that this would be subject to available funding.

### 4.16

One of the key messages from the EbD held with pupils from Manor School was the need for new outdoor youth activities as well as improving those within the town itself. As such, the masterplan shows how open space and recreational activities should integrate with the town.



Central spaces for the community to meet are critical to the lifeblood of the town

### 4.17

Key community facilities, such as education, health and leisure were also a major area of consideration during the EbD process. The baseline indicates that the cumulative impact of 500 homes could well require an extension to Manor School, including playing fields and growth over that figure could lead to the need for an additional GP at the Cottons Surgery. The opportunity to re-open the Windmill Primary swimming pool was also considered, but there may be significant viability issues in terms of funding such a scheme, as the level of growth in Raunds would need to be very high to pay for this through development.

### 4.18

Aspects of sustainable development are aspired to as part of this document, including reducing crime and reducing antisocial behaviour through high quality design and the provision of additional investment into community services.

### Summary of principles

- (CFA) Provide central and accessible places for the community to meet and socialise
- (CFB) Promote community empowerment
- (CFC) Use vacant shops/building for community, use, include learning and youth provision
- (CFD) Promote new outdoor youth activities that are well integrated with the town
- (CFE) Explore potential to re-open Windmill Primary swimming pool
- (CFF) Ensure adequate capacity of local schools and health facilities



## Transport

### 4.19

A key aim of the masterplan is to reduce out-commuting from the town. It is clear that this will take time to affect. A fundamental part of addressing this issue will be improving employment opportunities for residents, both existing and new. One of the housing masterplan principles relating to new development refers to larger housing for families and higher earners. Due to the lack of the employment in the town it is likely that such development will increase the level of out-commuting in the short-term. Moreover, improvements in public transport will also enable more residents to access employment out of the town. The masterplan sets out how employment could come forward to help address this issue, but there remains a tension in achieving all these principles (and their respective objectives), at least over the short-term.

### 4.20

As part of the need to better integrate the existing neighbourhoods with the town and its surrounding area, the masterplan should consider improving and enhancing the network of pedestrian and cycle connections through the town, to open spaces and countryside attractions like Stanwick Lakes. The A45 and London Road present significant movement barriers for routes to destinations west of the town that would need to be addressed if feasible. Improvements to the public realm,

such as wider footways and seating on routes would help to reduce severance. Any future growth should connect into pedestrian / cycle routes and improve the existing infrastructure. Ensuring adequate cycle parking at key destinations around the town might help encourage local cycling trips.

### 4.21

Local bus routes like the Raund's Rover service need to penetrate residential estates to become more accessible to the older generation. Variations to provide a more flexible service could include dial-a-ride like the Nene and Ouse Community Transport, which offers a door to door service at cheap annual rates for members, with weekly shopping trips to towns and cities as well as luncheon and other social outings. In terms of the longer distance services, there is a real need for an express service(s) to Northampton and Wellingborough. Options to reroute the X46 during peak travel times with significant reductions in journey times to compete with the private car are likely to be more attractive for local residents, particularly commuters. This would need further testing to assess potential routes and their current levels of congestion. Bus routes need to have a regular frequency of bus stops with high quality infrastructure to maximise accessibility.



The Square – the centre of the town and a key transport focus

#### 4.22

It is possible to walk anywhere in the town within 20 minutes, therefore homes should be in walking distance of local amenities and schools. However, there is a need to promote safe access to local schools to achieve modal shift and reduce demand for the limited parking spaces near schools at the beginning and end of the school day. Implementing School Travel Plans with packages of measures including parking restrictions at entrances on Mountbatten Way and traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds would also help encourage sustainable travel amongst school children and parents. Also given the accident record at the Wellington Road / London Road / Stanwick Road / Chelveston Road roundabout junction, any changes to the town that would result in additional traffic pressure would need to fully investigate the potential need for road safety improvements at this location. An option to introduce a one-way clockwise system using Titty Ho, Wellington Road and London Road would reduce the number of turning movements at the junction and is likely to require minimal changes to the existing infrastructure. This amongst other options should be investigated, however any schemes would need the approval of stakeholders including Northamptonshire County Council (NCC), and there are likely to be issues with changes that increase the traffic along Titty Ho given the residential nature of the street.

#### 4.23

Car parking is also a key issue and further work will be required explore options to improve the arrangement of existing car parks like Market Square, where the current layout is an inefficient use of the space and is not conducive to the operation of the market. The access / egress to the Marshall's Road car park is a safety issue given the poor visibility and the proximity to the bus stop. Better locations for parking need to be investigated, and a potential strategy could be to concentrate more off-street car parking on the main approaches to intercept traffic before it gets into the town centre network, for example at either end of Brook Street. This could provide an opportunity to rationalise on-street parking on Brook Street to help provide a clearer pathway for buses and a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The perception that there is a lack of car parking in the town would also need to be fully investigated before any action is taken, and better management / use of existing car parks like Saxon Hall would help ease any pressures on existing public parking.

## Summary of principles

- (TRA) Improve and enhance the network of pedestrian connections between public spaces within the town, and out to the wider area
- (TRB) Improve local access to public transport services and provide quicker services to larger centres for commuters
- (TRC) Better arrangement and use of existing car parking, to improve access to the town centre and promote additional parking if required
- (TRD) Undertake appropriate assessments for each development proposal to understand impact and any mitigation requirements
- (TRE) New homes should be within acceptable walking distances to town centres and for commuting, school and leisure purposes
- (TRF) Improve walkability of pedestrian routes to the town centre and provide safe / better routes to schools and leisure facilities
- (TRG) Ensure junctions on edge of town have adequate capacity to accommodate existing and new development
- (TRH) Consider 20mph limits around schools
- (TRI) Improve cycle and pedestrian links to Stanwick Lakes
- (TRJ) Explore potential for one-way circuit around Wellington Road, Titty Ho and London Road



# 05. The masterplan

## design guidance

### 5.1

This section of the masterplan sets out the design guidance for Raunds, which illustrate how the objectives and principles could be delivered. The guidance reflects the aspirations of stakeholders and the public as much as possible, while also being grounded in the evidence base set out in chapter 2.

### 5.2

Section 5 also provides high level viability advice for different scales and type of development. It should be noted that this advice is indicative and the viability of schemes coming forward will need to be considered on a site by site basis. Viability advice is provided to ensure good quality development and that community benefits are not lost through inadequate S106 contributions. It also helps to ensure that recommendations do not raise public expectations for proposals that are unlikely to be achievable in practice. In this masterplan a scheme is considered 'viable' if, subject to further testing, it is considered deliverable from a financial perspective.

### 5.3

The design guidance is illustrated using three key diagrams, which are explained in the following groups:

- Providing a framework for potential new homes and jobs
- Connecting the town, its community facilities and integrating open space
- Regenerating the High Street

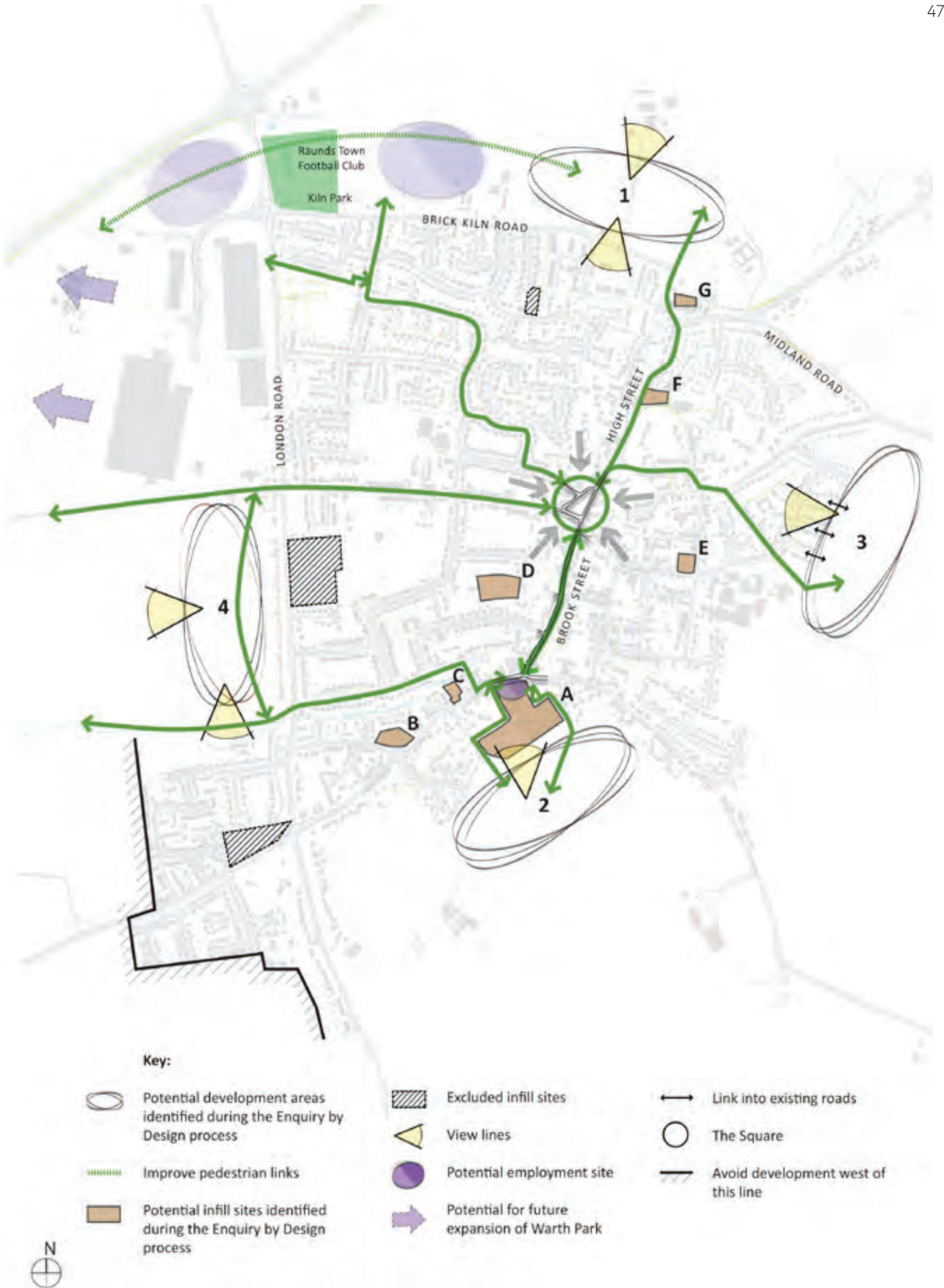


Diagram: Providing a framework for potential new homes and jobs



## Providing a framework for potential new homes and jobs

### 5.4

The masterplan sets out a framework within which potential growth of around 500 homes should be considered, along with new employment space for the town. This is shown on the diagram on page 47, which is based upon the following:

### Brownfield development sites design guidelines

#### 5.5

A number of brownfield sites were highlighted for consideration during the EbD. Many of these were excluded as they were considered to be too constrained in terms of redevelopment or unlikely to be deliverable. Potential development of the London Road allotments and pocket park, as proposed by some stakeholders, was met with significant opposition from some members of the public and stakeholders and has been removed accordingly.

#### 5.6

Any redevelopment of the remaining identified brownfield sites should be based upon an approach that respects the density and character of the local area and does not adversely impact upon surrounding properties.

### 5.7

The following guidelines are site specific:

#### RPC Containers Site (Site A)

- Use the natural gradient of the site to maximise views to the town centre.
- Provide easy pedestrian access to the Town Hall end of Brook Street.
- The development should safeguard a pedestrian route to Darsdale Farm.
- A mix of employment (office and/or small workshop units) and residential should be encouraged on the north end of the site with residential elsewhere to integrate it into the town centre retail area.
- Any new development should sensitively work around the protected trees directly south of the RPC site.

#### Corner of Titty Ho and Grove Street (Site B)

- This site is currently a functioning garage, which would require relocation. It has good vehicular and pedestrian connection to the town centre, as well as to the roads leading out of town.
- Any new development should face onto Titty Ho, Grove Street and the roundabout where Wellington Road, Weighbridge Way, Titty Ho and Grove Street converge. This will help frame the roundabout and provide a sense of arrival from the direction of Stanwick.
- The development should be of a similar density to the one on Sheffield Court, completing the residential urban block between Sheffield Court, Titty Ho and Grove Street.

### **Vacant site between Grove Street and Mackenzie Road (Site C)**

- Any new development should front onto Grove Street to help define it as an arrival route to the Town Hall.
- The green space on Mackenzie Road, behind the site, should be retained.

### **Residential block between Ashfield Rise, Ashfield Grove and Spinney Street (Site D)**

- This site lies at the back of the existing houses which line the outer edges of this residential block. Any new development should be of the same density as the existing houses in order to maintain the existing quality of life.
- A pedestrian link should be provided through the Spinney Park into Brook Street.
- New houses should face inwards and in this case a cul-de-sac development may be appropriate.

### **Vacant site on the corner of Park Road and Hill Street (Site E)**

- The site has good vehicular access and lies within easy reach of Manor School, which makes it more appropriate for residential development in this instance.
- Any new houses should front onto Park Road and Hill Street.
- This site currently has a planning application for 14 homes (planning application reference EN10/00498/FUL). The application went to committee on 10.11.2010, where Development Control Committee resolved to grant the application subject to the

completion of a legal agreement and subject to conditions. The planning permission has not yet been issued, as the legal agreement is still in progress.

### **Gell's Garage on High Street (Site F)**

- Any new buildings should front onto the High Street and continue the curved line of house fronts on the High Street directly north of the site.
- On its south side the development should set back north of St. Peter's church to open up views to the church from the High Street.
- New buildings should overlook St. Peter's Memorial Gardens, to provide more eyes on the site and improve safety.

### **Land to the east of North Street (Site G)**

- This site is adjacent to the Rotten Row historic area and lies on the picturesque triangular green.
- Any new development should front onto the green and the building frontages should follow the line of the road.
- North Street forms part of the pedestrian route to the potential new development north of Brick Kiln Road. Therefore the



building setbacks should allow for a pleasant pavement.

- Density, character and building layout should be similar to the surrounding historic area.

### Small infill development - viability considerations

#### 5.8

Smaller discreet urban infill sites provide opportunities to maximise the effective use of land. These sites do not usually require the high levels of servicing of larger sites, and thus total costs can often be reduced on elements such as infrastructure. However, the issue on smaller sites is that there are few economies of scale, and those developing the sites are likely to be considered small or niche developers who may have restrictions to obtaining finance, or may have to delay development for a number of years until the market improves.

#### 5.9

Small infill sites are also likely to find it difficult to provide any significant volumes of affordable homes and achieve the required returns for the developer. In these cases, the house builder may seek to increase the selling price by producing a higher quality specification.

#### 5.10

Ultimately, the conclusion must be that if a target of around 500 homes for the town were to be in place, only a small proportion is likely to come from infill development.

## Greenfield development sites design guidelines

### 5.11

Building on the principle of dispersed growth, greenfield development could be considered in the following areas:

- Land north of Brick Kiln Road
- Land south of the RPC Containers site
- Land east of Mountbatten Way
- Land south of Meadow Lane

### 5.12

The following guidelines relate to all greenfield development:

- Development sites must be integrated with the existing town centre. A series of key pedestrian links has been identified that must be improved to support this integration.
- New housing development must support new or improved community facilities in the town.
- New developments should work with the existing topography to take advantage of any local and strategic views towards the built area and where possible should face towards the town centre.
- Development should be similar in densities to the adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Footprints, setbacks and heights of new residential developments should be similar to the existing neighbouring developments, although the architectural style may be more contemporary.
- To alleviate storm water run-off, permeable area should be maximised and swales and retention ponds incorporated into the public realm, where appropriate.
- Any existing trees should be retained where possible, and if removed should be replaced preferably within the site.

- New road should be integrated with the existing network to improve linkages to existing neighbourhoods.
- New development should be within a reasonable walking distance (20 minutes walk) of key community services, which include Raunds Manor School and the nearest of the local primary schools and primary health-care facilities.
- Do not extend development west on Stanwick Road to avoid the settlements of Raunds and Stanwick merging together. A strategic green area should be retained to separate the two settlements.

### 5.13

The following guidelines are site specific:

#### Land north of Brick Kiln Road (Site 1)

- Develop a strong frontage onto Brick Kiln Road in order to create a relationship with the neighbourhoods south of these roads.
- Maximise views to the countryside as well as to the town centre.
- Incorporate a pedestrian link from the High Street, through North Street, into the new development.
- New development would occupy an area directly north of the historic area around Rotten Row and High Street. The building layout and density from the historic area should be continued into new development, especially along the new pedestrian route. Densities may be reduced towards the edges of the new development.
- Footprints, setbacks and heights should be informed by the historic area to the south. However, a contemporary building design may be more appropriate for a new development.

#### Land south of RPC Containers Site (Site 2)

- Use the natural gradient of the site to maximise views to the town centre.
- Provide easy pedestrian access to the Town Hall end of Brook Street.
- The development should safeguard a pedestrian route to Darsdale Farm.
- Any new development should sensitively work around the protected trees directly south of the RPC site. Although, the removal of some trees to aid visual and physical connection with the town centre should be considered.
- A vehicular link should be provided into the Weighbridge Way.

#### Land east of Mountbatten Way (south of Station Rd) (Site 3)

- Take advantage of the higher ground to maximise views towards the built area of the town.
- Connect into the existing green link that passes by Manor School.
- Development should facilitate any identified requirement to expand to Manor Schools facilities, including teaching, sports, performing arts or car parking. This should include opportunities to create a 'community entrance' for out of hours use by residents.
- Where possible, roads should link into the existing ones on Mountbatten Way development to the west of this site, ensuring full integration with this existing development.
- Follow the density of Mountbatten Drive development, which may be reduced towards the edges of the site. However, a more contemporary architectural style could be more appropriate.



### Land south of Meadow Lane (Site 4)

- Due to the existing houses along London Road, views are limited towards the town centre. Take advantage of the natural fall in the site to maximise views towards Hog Dyke and the surrounding countryside to the west.
- Link into the green routes to Stanwick Lakes, both along Hog Dyke and Meadow Lane and provide a pedestrian connection between these two green routes.
- Densities should be similar to the neighbouring development along London Road.

### Greenfield development – viability implication

#### Larger Scale Development

#### 5.14

Larger scale development can provide a much greater chance of viability particularly in difficult economic conditions. As delivery programmes tend to be longer, this helps spread cost. There are also create economies of scale. By providing a large number of homes over an extended period of 7 to 15 years the developer may counter the lower values experienced at the outset with enhanced values later in the cycle. By having a larger portfolio the developer is also able to timetable delivery and thus will build a greater number private market homes during peak periods to optimise profitability.

#### 5.15

However, development of this size requires significant infrastructure investment, and the viability can often depend on when such expenditure is incurred during the development cycle. To front load these requirements and

other section 106 obligations creates an environment which immediately pressurises a scheme's attractiveness to developers. All schemes need roads and utilities but in many cases in larger schemes this can be significant. In peak conditions this was far more achievable. However the large reduction in returns for house builders has meant that large upfront investment is more challenging.

#### 5.16

Other considerations on more extensive projects relate to density of development and efficient use of land. Once roads and public open spaces are considered, the land take is less efficient and therefore a developer may have to purchase much greater areas in order to accommodate these requirements. Any land which is purchased but does not produce any revenue can significantly impact on the viability particularly where land costs are high.

#### 5.17

A larger scheme may have greater flexibility in terms of revenue generation but it may carry higher risk due to the size and complexity of the site.

#### 5.18

It is clear from the findings of the EbD process (as set out in the objectives, principles and design guidance) that larger scale development on any one site, and concentrated in one part of the town, is not the desired outcome for residents. The majority of residents placed the need to retain Raunds' character and identity as fundamental to any change in the town and saw larger scale development as directly

opposed to this. It was felt by participants that developer contributions would be unable to mitigate this impact on the town. This is enshrined in the masterplan through the direction to disperse development equally and to reduce the overall level of development below existing planning policy to 500 dwellings.

### Employment sites design guidelines

- Focus retail provision on the town centre, and office and small workshops on the periphery, including the RPC site, Warth Park and land north of Brick Kiln Lane.
- Any expansion of large scale storage and distribution should happen to the west of the existing Warth Park, close to the A45, or north of Raunds, but with improved pedestrian and cycle links to the town.
- Provide pedestrian links from the town core to potential employment sites at the edge of the town.

### Employment sites – potential viability implications

#### 5.19

Introducing commercial opportunities the returns from development can be affected by virtue of the development mix. Commercial property has shown greater resilience during the downturn. However, within the sector there are still large amounts of vacant space available on the market.

### Offices

#### 5.20

As with most areas of the UK the Northamptonshire area rent levels are currently depressed. There is no significant demand for

large amounts of Class A office space and any investment within that area would require significant incentives or a pre let tenant to drive development. A more likely approach will be smaller units for start up or locally focused businesses. This type of venture would attract smaller investment landlords rather or institutions looking for a portfolio opportunity. The ENC economic development team report significant demand for these types of units within Raunds. As such, the masterplan promotes these type of employment related development at key locations in and around the town.

### Retail

#### 5.21

Retail opportunities, as with the offices, may need to focus on the provision of smaller localised units rather than national retailers. This type of retail development is likely to attract portfolio purchasers or in some cases owner occupiers. The retail competition within the East Northamptonshire area does appear to be relatively strong with people travelling to existing facilities. The finite nature of the market place will require retailers to feel confident in the return on investment and that a market exists for their product. Raunds is surrounded by a number of other towns within easy travelling distance that provide residents with shopping opportunities. As such, the town's retail market cannot be seen in isolation making new investment in the town less likely.



## Industrial\Distribution

### 5.22

The area has a wide range of distribution facilities, which are located strategically to take advantage of the transport links in the area. As with the other commercial options there is a large amount of this type of space, and it carries specific servicing requirements such as direct access to the motorway/trunk road network. The Core Spatial Strategy identifies a district wide need for this type of provision. Opportunities appear to be limited to the area north and/or west of Raunds, as highlighted in the Strategic Employment Land Assessment (2009), in order not to significantly impact on the town's character and identity.

## Connecting the town, promoting community facilities and integrating open space

### Connecting the town design guidelines

- The junctions could be improved at the following locations to help alleviate congestion and road safety issues:
  - A45 / B663 junction
  - B663 / Brick Kiln Road junction
  - Marshalls Road / London Road / Meadow Lane junction
  - Chelveston Road / Wellington Road / Stanwick Road / London Road junction.
- Development on greenfield sites should have appropriate access arrangements, which do not adversely impact on the surrounding transport network. Should additional

development increase trips on the network then consideration will be given to an appropriate package of highway and sustainable improvements to mitigate the impact of the development proposals, through appropriate assessments.

- The Raunds Rover service could be improved to increase accessibility for the older generation and could provide a 'Dial-a-Ride' style service.
- There is currently no dedicated space for bicycle parking in Raunds and lockable racks could be provided at the Town Square, Co-op, Saxon Hall and Warth Park.
- The X46 bus route could provide an express service(s) to Northampton and Wellingborough, potentially following a more direct route during peak travel times to attract commuters (subject to further testing).
- School Travel Plans to be implemented with packages of measures, which could include parking restrictions at school entrances on Mountbatten Way, 20 mph zones and other traffic calming measures. This should reduce vehicle speeds and help to encourage sustainable travel.
- New homes should be in walking distance of local amenities and schools, with safe routes to schools in place.
- Appropriate levels of cycle parking at key destinations around the town, such as The Square, Manor School and the Co-Op, should be considered to encourage local cycling trips.



Diagram: Connecting community facilities and integrating open space



- Car parking in the town should be improved. This should include:
  - The layout of Market Square car park should be improved to increase car parking capacity and better accommodate the needs of the market.
  - Investigate improvements to the vehicle access to Marshall's Road car park and consider moving the bus stop and traffic chicane (if feasible)
  - Install better signage and extend opening hours to promote better use of the existing car park at Saxon Hall for public parking, and consider potential to rationalise on-street parking along Brook Street to improve movement for buses, cyclists and pedestrians.

### **Promoting community facilities design guidance**

- The need to expand Manor School if the overall cumulative development in Raunds requires it, will need to factor in:
  - The potential need for playing field space,
  - Opportunities to create a performing arts centre,
  - Measure to resolve parking issues on Mountbatten Way
- The need to expand the Cottons Surgery if the overall cumulative development in Raunds requires it, will need to ensure:
  - Improved crossing facilities on London Road
  - Additional car parking space is provided
- Marshall's Road GP surgery requires improvement work, but it does not have the scope to expand.

### **Pedestrian Links**

- Ensure green links within the town connect to existing countryside footpaths, to retain the important connection Raunds has to its surrounding landscape.
- Improve pedestrian connections from the town centre into the community. Extend these routes to the existing countryside footpaths. Key routes identified include:
  - From The Square north up High Street and North Street. Link into an existing footpath that connects to the north end of North Street.
  - From The Square northwest along Windmill Avenue and Lane, and up Webb Road, or west along the north edge of Raunds Cemetery.
  - Create a pedestrian footpath connecting potential employment and residential sites from north side of the Warth Park development and the north of Brick Kiln Road.
  - West along Marshall's Road and Meadow Lane, extending towards Stanwick Lakes
  - West along Mackenzie Road, crossing London Road, and continuing along the existing footpath that runs along the stream towards Stanwick Lakes.
  - South through new development on the RPC site, and connecting to the existing countryside footpaths that run south from the site.
  - East from the Town Square along Manor Street and Manor Farm Road.

- Identified pedestrian connections within the town should include improved lighting, seating, planting and where appropriate, paving.
- Brook Street should be improved with new paving, feature lighting and seating to improve environment and visitor experience.
- Retention ponds could be included in Amos Lawrence Park, Basford Rec Ground, and Manor School green space. Utilising exposed drainage systems also helps to retain the town's rural character. The significant benefits of combining flood risk reduction measures with high quality green spaces are recognised and promoted accordingly.

### Parks and Green Spaces

- Protect the existing park spaces in Raunds, as an important part of the town's character, but improve them with well-designed play areas and youth-oriented sports activities, along with seating, particularly at Basford Rec Ground and Amos Lawrence Park.
- Reinststate the skate park (at Amos Lawrence Park or elsewhere) with robust, vandal-proof materials are used. Raunds Town Council is already working toward reinstating the Skate Park.
- The stream could be brought into the open (de-culverted) and access along its route made more public and appealing wherever possible to better integrate with existing open spaces.
- Consider improving the setting of the War Memorial site to celebrate this important heritage asset.
- Additional playing field requirements for an expanded Manor School could be delivered in the adjacent green space.
- Raunds has numerous green spaces, so new developments could seek to enhance existing parks and/or provide new open spaces. This will need to be considered on a site by site basis.



## Regenerating the High Street Design Guidance:

### The Square

- The Square should be promoted as the town's centre.
- A shared surface street (road and pavement made of same material and at the same level as they are effectively one space) should be considered for The Square, prioritising pedestrian movement. The shared surface should extend The Square to the adjacent building edges, providing a more expansive and visible centre to the town. The shared surface should extend south down Brook Street to Hill Street, and north to the north end of West Street.
- On market days, the shared surface area around The Square could be closed to vehicle traffic, other than merchant vehicles.
- Parking to be relocated to the edges of the square, running along West Street and High Street. This allows the square itself to function more as a public meeting place.
- Parking layout and access could also be improved in the car park at Marshall's Road and West Street.
- Public amenities, including seating, public art and lighting, to be included and/or enhanced in The Square. Existing play equipment could be replaced by alternatives that are deemed locally to be more appropriate and higher quality.
- The opportunity to expose the stream through the town square in a hard channel, celebrating this town feature and connecting it visibly to other areas of exposed stream to the east (next to the George and Dragon) and south of the square towards Spinney Hill.

### St. Peter's Memorial Garden

- If development to the north side of St. Peter's occurs, using building edges open up views to the church from the High Street to the north of St. Peter's church should be explored.
- Any new development should overlook the St. Peter's memorial garden, to provide more eyes on the site and improve safety.
- Lighting could also be improved to reduce anti-social behaviour.

### Spinney Hill

- Enhance the entry of Spinney Hill off Brook Street, by widening it, and improving signage and lighting.
- Spinney Hill itself could be improved by enhancing the seating and lighting, and also by opening up a pond space in the northeast corner, where the stream meets the park. This would provide a park feature, but also a retention area for water.

### Town Hall Green

- Steps from the east Brook Street pavement into the Town Hall green space should be provided.
- A play area exists in this location, but it could be expanded/improved, and comfortable seating should be provided for watching parents.

### Brook Street, South End

- The space in front of the Town Hall should be improved with amenities such as seating, seasonal planting, lighting and possibly artwork, to enhance The Hall’s appearance and to signify this main entry onto the High Street.
- Likewise, new development at the RPC site should enhance the view down Brook Street providing a focal point, either by the building design, or by providing enhancements that complement those proposed for The Hall’s frontage.
- Crossings at this road junction should be improved and well-marked. A clear pedestrian entry into the RPC site should be included in any new design proposal.

### Vacant Buildings on Brook Street

- Use vacant shops and other buildings along Brook Street for community uses, including exhibition and meeting space, to improve the street activity, and to provide more activity in the retail area.
- Two locations adjacent to the Town Square have been identified as possible locations for a youth or community centre.

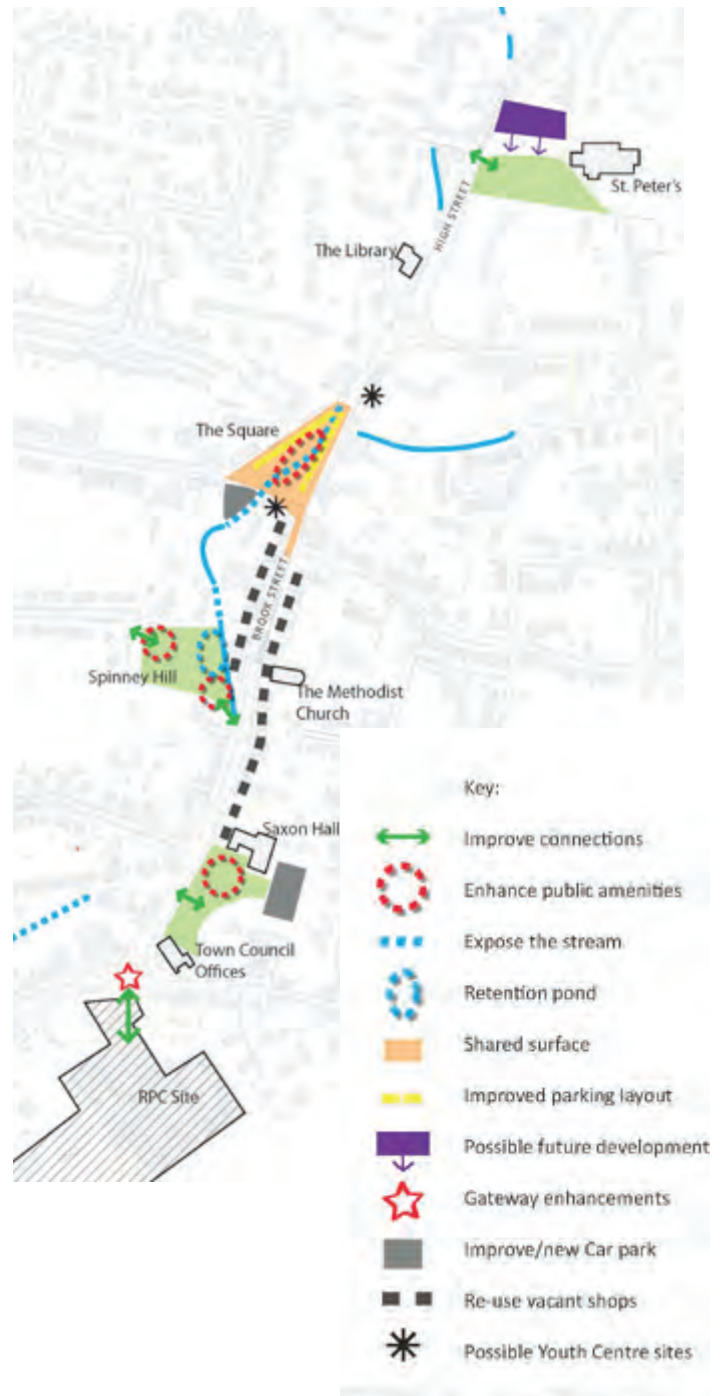






















Diagram: Regenerating the High Street



# 06. Key recommendations



**Key:**

-  Potential development areas identified during the Enquiry by Design process
-  Improved pedestrian links
-  New pedestrian links
-  Potential infill sites identified during the Enquiry by Design process
-  Green spaces
-  N
-  5 Minute walking circles
-  Green spaces with improved connections to high street
-  Improvements to The Square and Brook Street
-  Potential new employment sites
-  Potential for future expansion of Warth Park
-  Improved youth play areas
-  Retention ponds
-  Expose the stream
-  New vehicular links
-  Junction improvements
-  Improve Marshall's Road Surgery
-  Potential expansion of Manor School and Cottons Surgery
-  Improve/new Car park
-  Avoid development west of this line

**6.1**

The masterplan adopts a town centre first approach. Improvements to the centre, including High Street and Brook Street, are fundamental to the successful future of Raunds.

**6.2**

The masterplan sets out a number of principles and design guidance, including improvements to The Square and Brook Street, as well as connections leading to the centre from the residential areas. It also recommends the improvement of the town's existing open space, with the potential for some new open spaces.

**6.3**

Brownfield development, while very popular as a concept, may not deliver significant levels of housing within the town. However, they should be promoted at every suitable opportunity as outlined in the design guidance section. The RPC site presents the best opportunity for residential dwellings on brownfield sites, as part of a mixed-use scheme with some employment.

**6.4**

If residential growth is to come forward in Raunds this should be based on the target of 500 homes (Objective HO5). Any of the identified areas at the edge of the town could be brought forward within the Core Spatial Strategy plan period, with infill sites, principally the RPC site, contributing wherever possible.

**6.5**

Developer contributions should focus on the town centre to ensure the impact of growth does not negatively affect the town. They should also be considered in parallel to

affordable housing policy to ensure the right priorities for the district and the town are met on a scheme by scheme basis. The cumulative impact of 500 homes could well require an extension to Manor School, and growth over that figure could lead to the need for an additional GP at the Cottons Surgery. Once an overall figure is confirmed this will need to be properly assessed to inform negotiations with developers.

**6.6**

New employment opportunities should be encouraged as part of the strategy to reduce outcommuting from Raunds. This should focus on the development of small office or workshop type units (B1). It is important that an element of employment is retained on the RPC site. This would meet a range of goals set out in this masterplan. An additional opportunity for small office or workshop units presents itself on Brick Kiln Road (north side), where proximity to the road network should be a key attractor, and similarly land adjacent to Warth Park at the junction of the A45 and London Road.

**6.7**

The expansion of Warth Park is also promoted, based on market opportunity, strategic location of Raunds and potential employment possibilities it offers. Care will need to be taken to ensure any new development improves connections with the town and promotes job and training opportunities for local people.

**6.8**

Proposals involving open space, areas at risk of flooding, or sites within 25m of a watercourse, should be progressed in connection with a flood risk management strategy. The strategy should be informed by the strategic flood risk assessment process.

# Next steps





# 07. Action Plan

## 7.1

A number of initiatives have been explored in this Masterplan; some social, some economic and others physical. Underpinning all of these is that Raunds cannot stand still. There is not a “do nothing” option. To go down this route would see the town centre enter into further decline, fewer jobs within the town and the need for affordable and market housing not met.

## 7.2

The proposed withdrawal of regional housing targets and the collapse in the market generally is resulting in the delayed delivery of development and creating another aspect of uncertainty about the future of Raunds. However, these two aspects are largely out of everyone’s control, so the next steps, listed below, focus on initiatives that could be undertaken over various timescales to address many of the issues that were explored during the Enquiry by Design workshops.

## 7.3

Those organisations proposed as having Lead Responsibility would be accountable for taking forward the action to a stage where business or other plans are prepared. Most of these fall within the remit of East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) or Raunds Town Council (RTC) to drive forward, albeit often working in partnership. However, in the spirit of community ownership of this plan, if other organisations wish to take a lead or join the suggested partnership please use the consultation process to indicate your interest.

### Timescales for Action Plan

Immediate - Within 2 years

Short term - Within 5 years

Medium term - Within 10 years

Long term - Within 15 years

Theme	Next Steps/Actions	Suggested timeframe	Lead Responsibility (Partners)
Housing	1. Housing needs assessment to be undertaken	1. Immediate	1. ENC
	2. Assessment of market demand to establish typologies	2. Immediate	2. ENC
	3. Refinement of policy on affordable housing through Four Towns Plan	3. Short term	3. ENC
	4. Evaluation of parameters for Section 106 contributions	4. Immediate	4. ENC

Theme	Next Steps/Actions	Suggested timeframe	Lead Responsibility (Partners)
Environmental sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. User survey of open space</li> <li>2. Liaison with EA to review stream proposals</li> <li>3. Ensure adequate coverage of possible Raunds development sites in new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</li> <li>4. Amend/ direct planning policies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure a clear separation/open countryside between Stanwick and Raunds</li> <li>• Work with the areas topography to maximise views and retain Raunds identity</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Short term</li> <li>2. Short term</li> <li>3. Short term</li> <li>4. Short term</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RTC</li> <li>2. RTC (ENC Environment Agency)</li> <li>3. ENC</li> <li>4. ENC</li> </ol>
Economy, retail and shopping	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide employment land to meet the local employment demand.</li> <li>2. Enable ICT infrastructure to support e-business</li> <li>3. Maximise the business network opportunities to maximise local productivity</li> <li>4. Create opportunity for managed start up space for local businesses i.e. incubator units and maximise small business (100-5000 sq ft) opportunities</li> <li>5. Promote vacant shops for business or retail use</li> <li>6. Strengthen the role of the Raunds business partnership to create a network of business opportunities</li> <li>7. Provide support to new and existing businesses through business development grant, business support service provided by the Council and other agencies</li> <li>8. Set up/strengthen Raunds Town Centre Partnership to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote events focusing on retailers</li> <li>• Programmes of retail skills and training</li> <li>• Shop Locally campaigns</li> <li>• Empty shops schemes</li> <li>• Create town website</li> <li>• Local Marketing campaigns</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medium term</li> <li>2. Short term</li> <li>3. Immediate</li> <li>4. Medium term</li> <li>5. Immediate</li> <li>6. Short term</li> <li>7. Medium term</li> <li>8. Immediate</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ENC (Private Sector)</li> <li>2. ENC (Private Sector)</li> <li>3. Private Sector</li> <li>4. Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (Local Enterprise Partnership, ENC, Private Sector)</li> <li>5. RTC (Private Sector)</li> <li>6. Private Sector</li> <li>7. ENC as sign-posting agency</li> <li>8. RTC (Private Sector)</li> </ol>

Theme	Next Steps/Actions	Suggested timeframe	Lead Responsibility (Partners)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify land ownerships on the High Street to ascertain potential for re-use of vacant units</li> <li>2. Planning policy or guidance in the Four Towns Plan to protect town centre</li> <li>3. Strategy for signing, interpretation and public realm</li> <li>4. Review actions in second phase of the Raunds Environmental Improvement Scheme for viability/compatibility with this masterplan</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate</li> <li>2. Short term</li> <li>3. Medium term</li> <li>4. Immediate</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RTC</li> <li>2. ENC(RTC)</li> <li>3. RTC</li> <li>4. ENC(RTC)</li> </ol>
Community facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that cumulative impact on social infrastructure of development in Raunds is understood for all development so that developer agreements fact in cost (including potential extensions to Manor School and Cottons surgery)</li> <li>2. Improve facilities at Marshalls Rd Surgery</li> <li>3. Public realm strategy &amp; concept design for The Square (to link with retail/economic activity as well as community use)</li> <li>4. Investigate demand and options for community spaces, including possible additional uses of St Peters Community Enterprise Centre and vacant shops/buildings</li> <li>5. Reinstate the skate park</li> <li>6. Provide and promote new outdoor youth activities that are well integrated with the town</li> <li>7. Consider asset transfer of some community facilities so they become run and managed by the community</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Short term</li> <li>2. Medium term</li> <li>3. Medium term</li> <li>4. Short term</li> <li>5. Immediate</li> <li>6. Short term</li> <li>7. Medium term</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ENC (RTC/ NCC/PCT/ Developers)</li> <li>2. PCT</li> <li>3. RTC (ENC / Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)/ Private Sector/Community Groups)</li> <li>4. RTC (Community Groups/St Peters Centre/Private Sector)</li> <li>5. RTC (already in progress)</li> <li>6. RTC (Young People/Residents/ Community Groups)</li> <li>7. RTC (Northamptonshire County Council/ Primary Care Trust/ Community Groups)</li> </ol>

Theme	Next Steps/Actions	Suggested timeframe	Lead Responsibility (Partners)
Transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve and Enhance the network of pedestrian connections between public spaces within the town, to schools and community facilities, and out to the wider area</li> <li>2. Improve local access to public transport services and provide quicker services to larger centres for commuters</li> <li>3. Car park survey to assess whether recent new improvements are effective and promotion of additional parking if required</li> <li>4. 20mph feasibility undertaken to assess impact around schools</li> <li>5. Undertake appropriate assessments for each development proposal to understand impact and any mitigation requirements, including capacity of junctions at edge of town</li> <li>6. Schemes proposed in Raunds Masterplan to come forward in response to findings from Transport Assessment related to development proposals</li> <li>7. Improve cycle and pedestrian links to Stanwick Lakes</li> <li>8. Explore potential for one-way circuit around Wellington Rd, Titty Ho and London Rd</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medium term</li> <li>2. Short term</li> <li>3. Immediate</li> <li>4. Short term</li> <li>5. Short term</li> <li>6. Short term</li> <li>7. Medium term</li> <li>8. Long term</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. RTC (NCC/ Landowners)</li> <li>2. RTC (NCC/ public transport providers)</li> <li>3. RTC</li> <li>4. NCC</li> <li>5. Developers (ENC)</li> <li>6. ENC (NCC)</li> <li>7. NCC (ENC)</li> <li>8. NCC(RTC/ Residents)</li> </ol>





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