

## **Part 2 Local Plan for Corby**

Corby Borough Council is in the process of developing a Local Plan to supplement the Joint Core Strategy for North Northamptonshire which was adopted in July 2016. Having consulted in November 2016 on the scope and issues to be contained in its Local Plan, Corby Borough Council has just consulted once more on the emerging policy options. Cottingham and Middleton Parish Councils commented at the first stage of the process and have just commented further on the emerging options. See the Parish Councils' websites for a copy of the full responses. The next version of the document will consider and respond to these latest contributions and will be published in February 2019.

The consultation document is 108 pages long and should you wish to study it in detail it is available on the Corby Borough Council website, simply type in 'Part 2 Local Plan for Corby' and it will take you to the Borough's web page. The document is split into ten chapters and its scope is considerable, ranging from the delivery of economic prosperity and housing to public transport, education and emergency services. It also covers town centre planning, nature conservation and the maintenance of green infrastructure.

Corby is scheduled to double in size by 2031 and the Local Plan sums up its desire to improve inward investment in industry, tourism and leisure and to maintain and improve its green infrastructure by protecting and enhancing Corby's various landscapes. Developments in Communication Technology are recognised and plans to improve infrastructure are outlined. There is an emphasis on low carbon growth and the development of a prosperous economy hopefully leading to an increase in Corby's profile within the UK and Europe.

Development in rural villages is a section of the document that is of particular interest to the Parish Councils and currently the Corby Local Plan aims to restrict building in rural villages as Corby BC considers that sufficient sites have been given planning permission to meet the identified needs for market housing that were identified in the recent Rural Housing Needs Survey. The Joint Core Strategy supports small scale in fill development in villages which will not materially harm the character of the settlement. Development in the rural villages is likely to remain a contentious area of the Local Plan however as developers often argue strongly for access to development sites in villages.

"Neighbourhood Plans will supersede this Plan for their respective designated areas", which is an important point. If villages wish to keep control of their environment the development of a Neighbourhood Plan will be important.

There are a number of specific policy proposals in the Plan. It mentions improvements to Rockingham Forest by tree planting, the care and improvements of Corby's green spaces. In terms of transport, relief roads around Corby and Weldon, various junction improvements, improvements in the infrastructure to support walking

and cycling and the hoped for electrification of the railway, all get a mention. A commitment to improve local transport is mentioned but, it is not clear how this will affect the rural areas. Nor is it clear whether improvements in emergency services outlined in the Plan will affect villages like ours. For example, to support Corby's growth between now and 2031 there is a requirement to create a second fire station and increase community policing but the detail of that provision is as yet unclear. The Plan promises a review of car parking in the town and it is interesting to note that it considers the possible demise of petrol and diesel driven cars.

There is a section on Education and Training which outlines the need to increase the number of schools in the District. Sadly this section barely mentions any plan for non-compulsory education and training.

Much emphasis is given to the development of Corby Town Centre in planning terms, whilst accepting that there are rows of shops outside the town centre which have significance for the local neighbourhood. Cottingham village centre with its Village Shop is noted as one of these.

A chapter devoted to rural area needs discusses the importance of allowing Farmers the ability to diversify. It is here that the restrictions on housing development in villages are proposed and the arrangements for delineation of village boundaries are covered. Additionally, there is an acknowledgement that increased development within the Corby Town boundary is likely to have an impact on the use of rural roads and as such, traffic through the area will require monitoring. This is a matter that both Parish Councils are continuing to discuss with Corby BC as the plans for the West Corby extension develop.

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