

Introduction

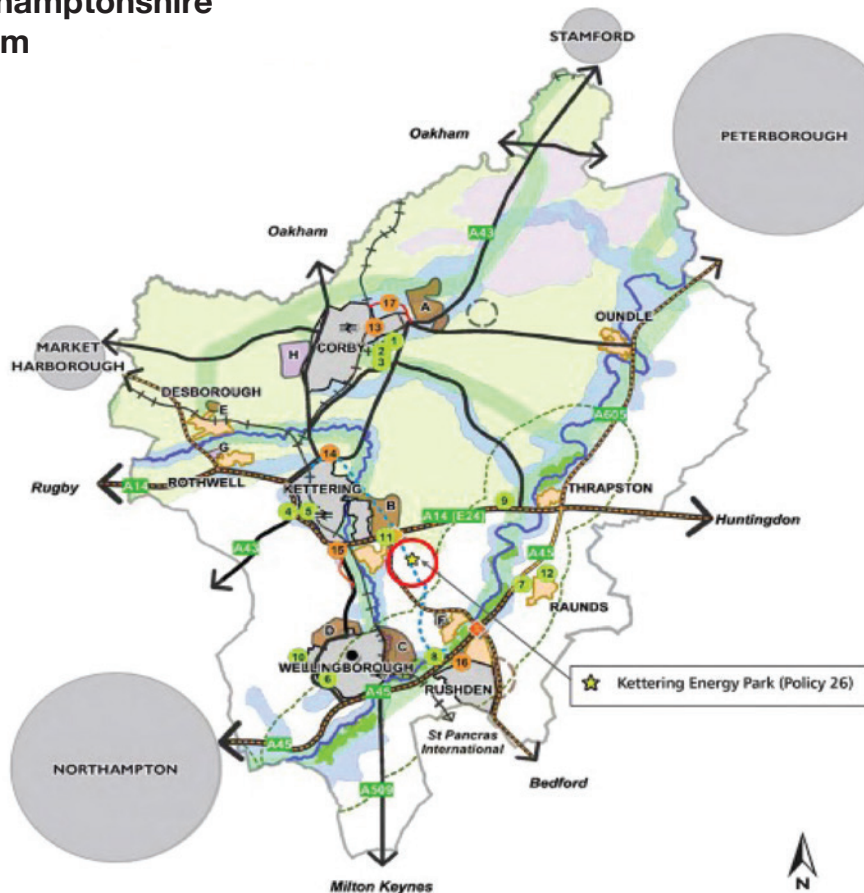
The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (Core Strategy) was adopted in 2016 and provides a framework which aspires to manage change and growth across the unitary authority area of North Northamptonshire, comprising the former non-metropolitan districts of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough.

One of the key objectives of the Core Strategy is to identify Strategic Sites that will support the delivery of new residential and employment development as well as a positive approach to securing economic growth, particularly where this will help address high levels of out-commuting (paragraph 1.8).

The Core Strategy also places significant emphasis upon the provision of Renewable Energy across the North Northamptonshire area to allow it to become more resilient and self-reliant for its energy needs (para 8.29). The Core Strategy also notes that the ‘...co-location of renewable and low carbon technologies in ‘Energy Park’ developments has the potential to strengthen the development of green industries in North Northamptonshire...’ (para 8.33).

Given the strategic nature of the Energy Park, it is identified on the Key Diagram within the Core Strategy with a star marking its broad location, as required by paragraph 23 of the NPPF.

North Northamptonshire Key Diagram



Policy 26 – Renewable & Low Carbon Energy

Policy 26 of the Core Strategy identifies that there is an opportunity to provide an Energy Park at Burton Wold. This policy identifies the Land at Burton Wold as a site for the development of an Energy Park, to provide a decentralised energy network using renewable energy technologies that will also 'link the energy production to existing and new developments.' The policy provides a flexible planning framework under which development can come forward at the Burton Wold site.

The proposals for the Energy Park will also directly respond to the Climate Change and Environment Emergency that has been declared by North Northamptonshire Council, as well as many of the key requirements of the NPPF.

This Masterplan document aims to address the above points of this policy requirement as it will define the boundaries of the proposed development and also identify which energy technologies and other uses could be developed at the Burton Wold site.

For reference, the full text of Policy 26 is set out below.

Policy 26 – Full text

Proposals for sensitively located renewable and low carbon energy generation will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets all of the following criteria:

- a) The landscape impact of the development is minimised and mitigated against;
- b) The development links to a specific demand through a decentralised energy network or where this is not possible, the necessary infrastructure is provided to supply power to the National Grid;
- c) The siting of development avoids harm to the significance of a heritage asset and its setting in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF;
- d) The siting of development does not significantly adversely affect the amenity of existing, or proposed, residential dwellings and/or businesses, either in isolation or cumulatively, by reason of noise, odour intrusion, dust, traffic generation, visual impact or shadow flicker;
- e) The development does not result in an adverse impact on the capacity and safety of the highways network and of public rights of way;
- f) The development includes a managed programme of measures to mitigate against any adverse impacts on the built and natural environment resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of any equipment/infrastructure;
- g) The development does not create a significant adverse cumulative noise or visual impact when considered in conjunction with other developments planned within North Northamptonshire and adjoining local authority areas;
- h) The development retains and enhances on-site biodiversity and supports the enlargement of, and/or connection to, existing biodiversity assets such as wildlife corridors, where possible;

- i) Proposals for Solar Photovoltaic farms avoid the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Provision will be made for the removal of apparatus and reinstatement of the site to an acceptable condition, should the scheme become redundant and/or at the end of the permitted period for time limited planning permissions.

Land at Burton Wold is identified for an Energy Park to add to the range of renewable energy technologies already present. The development will serve as a decentralised energy network which will link the energy production to existing and new developments.

Proposals within the Energy Park should meet criteria a) to i) above and should also be in accordance with a comprehensive masterplan which will be prepared in consultation with the local community and stakeholders and agreed by the local planning authority;

This will:

1. Define development boundaries and also the renewable/ low carbon technologies and land uses to be developed on the site;
2. Make provision for a mix of complimentary employment uses to facilitate development of local knowledge, expertise and research and development;
3. Demonstrate how the proposal will contribute towards meeting the energy needs of existing and planned development, including East Kettering SUE, strategic development at Junction 10 of the A14 and employment uses associated with the site;
4. Create a model for zero carbon energy through the installation of exemplary energy efficiency standards in buildings which use energy produced on-site in their operation

Commentary on Policy 26

The Energy Park is identified as a strategic location to develop renewable energy infrastructure that will connect to adjacent employment uses that have high energy requirements for their operations.

These employment uses are to be located within the Energy Park, with the exact scale, nature and scope of any new employment development to be led by a masterplan. This approach provides flexibility in how the Energy Park can be brought forward under this policy.

Once the masterplan has been agreed and has been subject to consultation, it is then proposed that an outline planning application will be submitted that will be based on the development principles set out in the masterplan and providing additional detail as appropriate.

This approach will ensure that the requirements of Core Strategy Policy 26 have been met such that from a land use perspective, any planning application for employment uses coming forward at the Energy Park can be determined in accordance with the prevailing Development Plan.

