

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal
Explanatory Note

Contents

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1	Introduction	1
2	Growth target	2
3	Distribution of growth	4
■	Appendices	
1	Call for Sites July 2017	9
2	Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals	10

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The purpose of this explanatory note is to provide clarification on the decision-making processes which informed the selection of the growth target and the distribution of growth within the Huntingdonshire Proposed Submission Local Plan to 2036. This has been prepared following the discussions which took place at the Local Plan examination hearing sessions held on 17 July 2018.
- 1.2** This note supplements the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report submitted for examination on 29th March 2018 which can be found at: [Final Sustainability Appraisal](#). It draws together elements from HELAA, particularly the site specific sustainability appraisals, and the assessments of growth targets, distribution of growth, individual site appraisals and significant changes to the Local Plan during its preparation presented in the Sustainability Appraisal to provide clarification on how the overall development strategy was prepared in the light of the alternatives that were considered.
- 1.3** All page references quoted are from the [Final Sustainability Appraisal](#) unless otherwise stated.

2 Growth target

2 Growth target

- 2.1** In 2012 three growth options were identified and published for consultation. These were:
- Low economic growth option (16,375 new homes; decrease of 1,400 jobs) based on the East of England Forecasting Model's (EEFM) lost decade scenario
 - Medium economic growth option (17,125 new homes; increase of 5,620 jobs) based on the EEFM's baseline scenario
 - High economic growth option (20,250 new homes; increase of 12,250 jobs) based on the EEFM's high migration scenario
- 2.2** A summary of these options are set out in pages 129-131. The sustainability appraisal of these options is set out in pages 133-140. Further detail is provided in the Draft Strategic Options and Policies consultation (2012) (PREP/06, pages 16-26).
- 2.3** Refinement of the options and discussion of the influence of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit's Technical Paper on Growth Requirements is set out in pages 140-141. These options were:
- No growth - based on existing commitments including the Core Strategy directions of growth and expected population growth from Cambridgeshire County Council's natural changes calculation totalling 15,400 dwellings
 - Technical paper - based on Cambridgeshire County Council's Population, Housing and Employment Forecasts Technical Report (April 2013) which considered 11 forecasting scenarios and suggested a requirement for 21,000 dwellings
 - Higher growth - based on a growth rate of 35% above the 2011 dwelling stock which was taken as an average anticipated growth figure across the Cambridge housing market area if forecasts were extrapolated to 2036
- 2.4** The strategic options for the amount of growth published for consultation in response to these are set out in page 141 with their sustainability appraisals following on pages 142-151. The conclusion drawn from this set out in page 151 was that the Technical Paper figure of 21,000 new dwellings was the most sustainable to take forward as it maximised the advantages of concentrating a substantial proportion of growth into a limited number of strategic expansion locations where opportunities for people to live, work and access services in close proximity are greatest, while reducing the need to travel. It also included sufficient growth to meet local needs overcoming the disadvantages of the No Growth option in terms of limiting opportunities for people to live in a decent home or undermine the viability of existing services and facilities. It was considered likely to be more deliverable than the Higher Growth option due to lesser constraints from infrastructure provision or capacity.
- 2.5** The Sustainability Appraisal Stage D 'Consultation and development of the plan' built on this and explains the reasoning for re-testing the objectively assessed housing need figure in April 2017 following publication of updated national guidance on the calculation of objectively assessed need for housing. This is set out in pages 589-590. Paragraph 6.22 concludes that the reduced figure, together with policies that seek to deliver housing above this figure, are expected to result in housing delivery relatively close to the previous total of 21,000 homes so it was not considered to be a significant change that would require detailed appraisal.

- 2.6** The last Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan published for consultation in July 2017 included an objectively assessed housing need figure of 20,100 (804 per year) presented as part of the text rather than in a specific policy (PREP/02, p24). This was followed by an explanation (PREP/02, p30) that the strategy for development supported provision of at least 21,000 new homes (840 per year).
- 2.7** Peterborough City Council expressed concerns about the lack of status accorded to the objectively assessed housing need figure and suggested it be elevated to inclusion in a policy, they specifically stated that they did not object to the the plan over-allocating above the target in order to provide flexibility to deliver homes to meet that target. Fenland District Council expressed concern that a target for Huntingdonshire above the objectively assessed housing need might draw provision of new housing away from Fenland due to their concern that Fenland is more marginal in terms of housing viability and delivery. In response to these concerns a new policy was introduced in the Proposed Submission Local Plan: LP1 Amount of Growth specifying a need for 20,100 new dwellings. The sustainability appraisal for this policy is presented on page 786.
- 2.8** A range of alternative housing targets were put forward in representations and several references were made to the methodology suggested by the Local Plans Expert Group. Alternative calculations included:
- a range of between 20,725 and 31,925 new homes (829-1,277 per year) by DLP with 24,475 (979 per year) stated as their preferred minimum OAN
 - a range of between 23,809 and 27,068 new homes (952-1,083 per year) by RPS
 - 23,375 new homes (935 per year) by GL Hearn
 - acknowledgement of 19,140 new homes by the ONS 2014 household projection based estimate by Gladman Developments while seeking 25,200 new homes (1,008 per year)
- 2.9** The White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' was published in April 2017 stating that the government would consult on options for introducing a standardised approach to assessing housing requirements. A draft methodology was presented in the consultation document 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' (September 2017). This suggested an annual average of 1,010 new homes for 2016-2026.
- 2.10** Proceeding with the objectively assessed housing need for 20,100 dwellings calculated by Cambridgeshire Research Group in April 2017 as a baseline for the Local Plan was considered to be the most reasonable approach in the circumstances because:
- the national standardised methodology was only in draft form
 - it provided a consistent baseline with other updated housing need calculations within the housing market area
 - alternatives calculated by developers covered significant ranges but averaged around 24,430 new homes
- 2.11** The development strategy, however, draws a distinction between the objectively assessed need for housing and the amount of housing which the Local Plan seeks to deliver; this reflects an uplift to this figure in excess of 15%. Existing completions, commitments and proposed allocations are expected to deliver around 22,068 new homes; additional numbers from rural exceptions sites and sites of under 10 dwellings are expected to increase this to around 23,600 dwellings. Larger windfall sites would be additional to this again. This level of uplift reflects a balanced approach between the desirability of providing flexibility, supporting the provision of additional affordable housing and avoiding a detrimental impact on neighbouring districts with weaker housing markets.

3 Distribution of growth

3 Distribution of growth

3.1 The distribution of growth options for early phases of consultation on the draft Local Plan were informed by known development opportunities at the time along with a precursor to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) known then as the Environmental Capacity Study. This addressed parts of Huntingdonshire where significant pressure for growth was anticipated based on knowledge of the local housing market and local economy and built on the settlement hierarchy established three years earlier in the Core Strategy. The Environmental Capacity Study identified significant constraints around at least part of each main settlement in the district limiting options for the location of housing growth. The consideration of broad areas for potential growth is set out in pages 228-252. More detailed settlement-wide capacity analyses are set out in the HELAA (HOUS/02) where they form the introduction to the section on each settlement.

3.2 Three potential strategic expansion locations were identified at this time:

- Alconbury Weald which was already subject to an outline planning application based around the designated enterprise zone
- St Neots Eastern Expansion which had been identified as a direction of growth in the Core Strategy (2009) for 2,500 new homes which recognised this was for the first phase of a significant mixed use urban extension
- Wyton Airfield where the decision to close the airfield was announced in 2012

3.3 Alconbury Weald and Wyton Airfield both comprise previously developed land and provide substantial development opportunities in locations close to main centres of market demand in Huntingdonshire. St Neots Eastern Expansion was a pre-existing commitment through the Core Strategy. Sustainability appraisals for each were completed and the sites were considered to form a sustainable element of the wider proposed development strategy as each offered opportunities for major mixed use development in locations well-related to main centres of population, employment and services which were each of sufficient scale to provide necessary social, community and green infrastructure within the site. Sustainability appraisals of these are set out in pages 260-289.

3.4 Strategic options for the distribution of growth initially assessed in 2013 focused on appraisal of three distinctly different strategies considered to form reasonable alternatives:

- highly concentrated growth based on relatively high density development in limited locations focused on the settlements with the four spatial planning areas and three strategic expansion locations
- growth in larger settlements based on varied densities responding to the nature of the location and adding development in key service centre settlements
- dispersed growth fewer sites and lower densities at the settlements with the four spatial planning areas and three strategic expansion locations and including allocations within small settlements

3.5 Detailed descriptions of these and sustainability appraisal of each alternative is set out in pages 152-163. The growth in larger settlements option was preferred as representing the most sustainable option overall. This included use of strategic expansion locations to deliver growth in locations which variously maximised the use of previously developed sites in relatively sustainable locations, could take advantage of committed highway infrastructure improvements and were of sufficient scale to provide integral services and facilities to meet the daily needs of potential residents including new secondary education provision where required.

- 3.6** A 'Spatial Strategy for Huntingdonshire to 2036' section was identified in the 2013 consultation draft Local Plan (PREP/05, pages 21-25). This responded to the options identified above and was shaped by the then draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Spatial Framework 2011-31. The sustainability appraisal of the 'Strategy and principles for development' which this led to is set out in pages 170-173. The Sustainability Appraisal sets out in pages 228-252 how the site options were developed to fulfil the preferred distribution of growth option. This included assessment of broad areas around settlement followed by individual site appraisals. Sustainability appraisals for individual sites as at 2013 are set out in pages 260-513 including appraisals for the three strategic expansion locations proposed at that time.
- 3.7** In response to the 2013 consultation documents additional potential strategic scale sites were submitted to the Council. Appraisals of each site were carried out and the Additional Sites Environmental Capacity Study published for consultation in November- December 2013. Sustainability appraisals for these sites are set out in pages 514-567. Further sites were submitted on an ongoing basis and a HELAA Additional Sites document published for consultation in September - November 2016. Sustainability appraisals for individual sites were transferred into the Sustainability Appraisal and are presented on pages 708-742. All sites submitted for consideration up to March 2017 were considered during preparation of the Local Plan consultation draft July 2017 (PREP/02).

Influence of Transport Infrastructure on the Distribution of Growth Options

- 3.8** Capacity of the highways infrastructure to accommodate substantial additional growth is a significant challenge in Huntingdonshire. To ensure that the proposed distribution of growth would be deliverable a Strategic Transport Study was commissioned in May 2016. This initially tested four development scenarios described in the Strategic Transport Study (INF/09), as set out below:
- Scenario 1 for 24,516 dwellings including full build out of Wyton Airfield within the plan period for 4,500 dwellings
 - Scenario 2 for 22,896 dwellings including a slower build out of Wyton Airfield with 2,880 dwellings within the plan period
 - Scenario 3 for 22,456 dwellings which excluded Wyton Airfield and introduced 2,200 new homes at Gifford's Park, St Ives
 - Scenario 4 for 32,416 dwellings which sought to focus as much growth as possible along the A141 corridor to test the potential for a significant upgrade to this route which reintroduced Wyton Airfield for 4,500 new homes and introduced 1,440 at Ermine Street, 1,300 at Sapley park Farm and 3,820 at Lodge Farm, all around the northern side of Huntingdon.
- 3.9** The modelling identified junctions which would require mitigation to support the increased development levels as set out in the Strategic Transport Study (INF/09) in pages 42-43. Five possible mitigation packages were tested as set out in the Strategic Transport Study (INF/09) in pages 50-74. These covered:
- Package 1 - all junction improvements only; total estimated cost £6.7million
 - Package 2 - all junction improvements and A141 improvement; estimated cost £87.3million
 - Package 3 - all junction improvements, A141 improvement and third river crossing; estimated cost £223.5million
 - Package 4 - all junction improvements and third river crossing; estimated cost £142.9million
 - Package 5 - all junction improvements, third river crossing and closure of B1044 historic river bridge between Huntingdon and Godmanchester; estimated cost £143million

3 Distribution of growth

- 3.10** Cost estimates excluded a wide range of factors including land purchase or rental, statutory fees, environmental mitigation works. For all four scenarios only package 1 was considered likely to be deliverable through developer contributions alone; substantial external funding would be required to achieve any other package. The conclusion drawn was that none of the four development scenarios tested was deliverable in terms of the level of infrastructure spend required to mitigate their impacts.
- 3.11** Development of a further scenario responded to issues identified in testing the first four scenarios by focusing on including sites which were:
- away from identified congestion points
 - not separated from the A14 by the River Great Ouse
 - maximised opportunities to utilise existing or planned upgrades to highway infrastructure
- 3.12** In terms of developing options for the distribution of growth the most significant impacts of testing the first four development scenarios through the Strategic Transport Study were the elimination of Wyton Airfield and Gifford's Park as being undeliverable without significant highway infrastructure improvements.
- 3.13** Capacity and access to the transport model is limited due to high demands placed upon it so only one further development scenario could be tested at this stage. Development scenario 5 was prepared in October 2016. The identification of main congestion points and potential mitigation measures necessary significantly informed the distribution of growth strategy progressed with due to the necessity of demonstrating its deliverability. The rationale behind this is set out in the Strategic Transport Study (INF/09) in page 74. This scenario tested a package of sites deemed the minimum necessary to be sufficient to meet the then objectively assessed need figure of 21,000 dwellings.
- 3.14** The Strategic Transport Study and its relationship with the Sustainability Appraisal is set out in pages 590-591 and the appraisal of the resultant changes to Policy LP1: Strategy for Development follow on pages 597-602.

Preparation of the Final Distribution of Growth Option

- 3.15** By July 2017 a number of other influencing factors had experienced significant changes:
- An updated objectively assessed housing need figure had been calculated reducing this to 20,100
 - This figure was 2,796 dwellings lower than any of the development scenarios which included redevelopment of Wyton Airfield tested through the Strategic Transport Study negating the need to replace the site in full
 - Publication of the White Paper: Fixing our broken housing market in February 2017 with increased emphasis on re-use of previously developed land and support for small and medium sized sites and thriving rural communities
 - Sibson Garden Village was unsuccessful in its bid to be part of the vanguard group of locally-led garden villages
- 3.16** To provide an opportunity for full public consultation on the revised draft Local Plan an additional round of Regulation 18 consultation was undertaken in July 2017. This was accompanied by a draft final Sustainability Appraisal, an updated Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment and a formal Call for Sites. Within the Final Sustainability Appraisal Section D an explanation of the proposed draft allocations in the July 2017 consultation Local Plan and the main sources that influenced them is set out on pages 745-753. The relationship between the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment July 2017 and the Sustainability Appraisal is set out in page 754.

- 3.17** By preparation of the Proposed Submission Local Plan a number of influencing factors had experienced further significant changes:
- Consideration of representations on the July consultation draft Local Plan expressing concern about over-reliance on the strategic expansion locations
 - DCLG consultation proposals 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' published in September 2017
 - The Call for Sites had generated over 200 sites for consideration
 - An additional Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (October 2017) had been completed which included five potential new settlements, site in spatial planning areas and key services centres and sites in settlements assessed as having good or reasonable levels of sustainability; all were presented with a site specific sustainability appraisal
 - Determination of a planning appeal at Buckden resulted in declaration of the district's housing policies as out of date, the five year housing land supply figure reduced to 4.78 years and application of the tilted balance to determination of planning applications in accordance with NPPF paragraph 14
- 3.18** Consideration was given to the range of settlements in which sites were put forward through the Call for Sites and assessed in the HELAA October 2017. The criteria specified in the Call for Sites are set out in Appendix 1. The settlements were classified into those put forward as potential new settlements, those with good sustainability ie meeting all five of the specified criteria and those with reasonable sustainability ie meeting four of the five criteria. The criteria were existence within the settlement of a primary school, doctor's surgery, public hall, food shop and public house as these were deemed complementary to, but less demanding than, the criteria required for identification as a key service centre.
- 3.19** A revised growth strategy was prepared reflecting the above factors. Three main options were considered when this strategy was being formulated but it was decided that it was unnecessary to reflect all of these in the reporting of the process set out in the Final Sustainability Appraisal as this was focused only on presenting the appraisals of the significant changes that were made to the Local Plan at this stage. It is accepted that it would have been more helpful if the Final Sustainability Appraisal had explained the process that was undertaken in relation to the assessment of these options. Therefore, for clarification the three options that were considered are set out below.
- 3.20** Option 1: Addition of a new settlement. Consideration was given to the five new settlement proposals put forward. The two adjoining Abbotsley proposals and the land West of the A1 extending from Brampton to Buckden were 'red line' submissions only and there was no evidence of deliverability so they were not considered to be reasonable alternatives. The submission for RAF Molesworth specifically stated that the Homes and Communities Agency were not seeking formal allocation in this plan so it too was not considered to be a reasonable alternative. The proposal for Sibson Garden Village was accompanied by substantial supporting evidence but there was insufficient evidence on the viability and achievability of the infrastructure required to support the development, particularly the new junction onto the A1 needed to provide access to the site, so it was not considered to be a reasonable alternative.
- 3.21** Option 2: Addition of allocations in a limited range of small settlements with good levels of service provision within which sites had been put forward. This option was taken forward as it was considered to provide an appropriate balance between boosting supply and supplementing the variety of housing available to the market with supporting local services and facilities and reducing the need to travel. It led to the proposed identification of three settlements as Local Service Centres: Alconbury, Bluntisham and Great Staughton. It has since been recognised that Earith provides all five of the specified services but no sites were put forward for development there.

3 Distribution of growth

- 3.22** Option 3: Addition of allocations in a wider range of settlements with good and reasonable levels of service provision. Seventeen settlements fell into this category: Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Bluntisham, Catworth, Elton, Farcet, Great Gidding, Great Gransden, Great Paxton, Great Staughton, Hemingford Grey, Houghton and Wyton, Needingworth, the Offords and Stilton. This option was rejected as it was considered to represent the dispersed option assessed previously as set out in pages 153-163.
- 3.23** To provide clarification on the reasoning for assessments of individual sites a table has been prepared identifying all sites in excess of 25ha which were considered for complete or partial residential use. A 25ha threshold was selected as these are sites considered to be of sufficient scale to individually influence the overall strategy for distribution of growth in the Local Plan. The table provides a summary of the sustainability appraisal and suitability conclusions for each site and the reasoning presented in the HELAA (HOUS/02). This is included as Appendix 2.
- 3.24** Option 2 was tested for deliverability in transport terms through an addendum to the Strategic Transport Study and presented as INF/11. This reflects the following amendments to development scenario 5 previously tested:
- Intensification of Alconbury Weald by an additional 1,550 dwellings although the proposed allocation only refers to this in paragraph 9.10 of the development guidance
 - Increase in the number of proposed dwellings at RAF Alconbury from 1,450 to 1,680 following reassessment of the site's potential capacity
 - Inclusion of seven additional sites across the spatial planning areas and key service centres
 - Inclusion of five additional sites across the proposed local service centres
- 3.25** The Addendum to the Strategic Transport Study concluded that the increased scale of development at Alconbury Weald would not trigger the need for significant new highway infrastructure. It recognised that the other additional sites are too small to have a strategic impact and the level of development in any one settlement is unlikely to be a severe residual cumulative impact. The Addendum concluded overall that it is possible to confirm that there is likely to be an acceptable mitigation associated with all the junctions impacted and therefore no compelling transport reason why any of the sites should be rejected. As noted previously the Strategic Transport Study itself is not subject to sustainability appraisal but provides confirmation of the deliverability of the proposed strategy from the highways perspective.
- 3.26** The revised strategy for the distribution of growth was considered again in Section 7 of the Sustainability Appraisal as part of the assessment of significant changes to the Local Plan moving from the Draft Final SA to the Final SA as submitted. Table 7.3 set out in pages 770-781 appraises the significant changes made to the strategic options for the distribution of growth between the July 2017 consultation document and the proposed submission version of the Local Plan. This concludes that the revised approach is more sustainable as it is likely to provide more support for the rural economy, particularly the services and facilities in the three local service centres and it will broaden the range of locations where development is planned which is considered to be beneficial in supporting inward investment, providing affordable housing and giving opportunities for 'down-sizing'. Policy LP2: Development Strategy is appraised on pages 788-792 and policy LP9: Local Service Centres is appraised on pages 810-811. The appraisals of sites selected for inclusion in the Local Plan and hence appraised as significant changes are set out in pages 881-930.

Appendix 1 Call for Sites July 2017

Call for Sites to accompany Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017

A call for potential development sites accompanies the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017 for two purposes:

1. To identify previously developed land potentially suitable for residential development for inclusion in a Brownfield Land Register expected to be compiled by 31 December 2017; and
2. To ensure sufficient land is identified which is available for development should it be required in response to changes arising out of the White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market'

The Council has a long established strategy of seeking growth within the district's most sustainable locations and avoiding development on land subject to significant environmental constraints. The amount of any additional land required is not yet known. A proportionate assessment of any sites put forward will be completed taking into account considerations reflecting issues raised in 'Fixing our broken housing market'. These may include:

- Re-use of previously developed land
- Releasing more small and medium sized sites, particularly those under 0.5ha
- Allowing rural communities to grow in a sustainable manner
- Promoting opportunities for self and custom-build homes

The Council is asking landowners, developers and agents to submit details of:

1. Previously developed land which is available and potentially suitable for residential development throughout Huntingdonshire; and
2. Greenfield land which meets the criteria set out below:
 - A. Is located in or adjacent to one of the:
 - spatial planning areas identified in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017 which are Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey; or
 - Key Service Centres identified in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017 which are Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley; or
 - small settlements which has a range of services including at least four of the following: primary school, doctors surgery, public hall, food shop or public house; and
 - B. Does not comprise:
 - Grade 1 agricultural land, which is the highest quality agricultural land
 - Land designated as functional floodplain (flood zone 3b) determined by consideration of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
 - Land designated as being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or other important nature designation such as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a Special Protection Area (SPA) or Ramsar Site
 - Land within the 400m safeguarding area of a waste water treatment works in accordance with Policy CS31 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals & Waste Core Strategy 2011.

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

The following summaries of the site sustainability appraisals are based on those presented in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HOUS/02) submitted in March 2018.

Table 1

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
Potential free-standing new settlement proposals							
Sibson Aerodrome	10- 13	126	No - promoted initially as being outside the Local Plan process	Unknown - new junction with A1 would be required	The Sibson Garden Village was initially explored as part of the locally-led Garden Village programme. The Expression of Interest submitted acknowledged that the proposed development would be in addition to Local Plan proposals (Prospectus Questions and Responses pages 4, 11, 36, 46 and 47). Site relates better to the Peterborough housing market area. Substantial additional infrastructure would be required including a new junction	<p>The sustainability appraisal of the site is generally positive due to the services and facilities that would be expected to be provided as part of the development.</p> <p>The site is almost entirely greenfield, mostly agricultural grade 3 and at low flood risk,</p> <p>Development would be highly visible from the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Major transport infrastructure required including a new junction onto the A1.</p> <p>The site has also been promoted through the Peterborough Local Plan as being ideally placed to meet growth across the Peterborough HMA.</p> <p>Site relates better to the Peterborough housing market area; remote from many centres of growth in Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>Substantial additional infrastructure would be required, including a new junction to the A1 to provide access. Viability and deliverability had not been adequately demonstrated.</p>	<p>Sibson was not included in the list of successful garden village bids announced in response to the Locally-led Garden Villages programme.</p> <p>The HELAA assessment and integral sustainability appraisal was carried out in response to submission of the site as part of the Call for Sites in July 2017.</p> <p>Not considered to be a reasonable alternative at this time due to insufficient evidence to demonstrate its deliverability.</p>

Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
					to the A1 to provide access. .		
RAF Molesworth	14- 17	263	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown - upgrade to B660 would be needed.	Substantial additional work would be required to demonstrate the deliverability of this proposal. Additional close co-operative working with East Northamptonshire District Council would be required as the boundary of the site is within 250 metres of the district boundary.	<p>The sustainability appraisal of the site is generally positive due to the services and facilities that would be expected to be provided as part of the development.</p> <p>Almost all of the site is previously developed non-agricultural land and at low flood risk,</p> <p>Some visual sensitivity as situated on a plateau.</p> <p>Situated 3kms north of A14 with direct access provided by B660; upgrading works expected to be required to this.</p> <p>An announcement was made in 2015 that RAF Molesworth would be transferred to the Homes and Communities Agency in 2022/23. In September 2017 the US Embassy formally updated the MOD that the site would not be released until 2024 at the earliest.</p>	<p>The HELAA assessment and integral sustainability appraisal was carried out in response to submission of the site as part of the Call for Sites in July 2017. This submission specifically stated that the site was not being promoted as a potential allocation in this Local Plan but for longer term consideration.</p> <p>Not considered to be a reasonable alternative at this time reflecting the Homes and Communities Agency's comments on availability.</p>
West of A1 from Buckden to Brampton	18- 21	524	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown - parts of the site are within the A14 upgrade safeguarding area.	Substantial additional work would be required to demonstrate the deliverability of this proposal.	<p>The sustainability appraisal of the site is generally positive due to the services and facilities that would be expected to be provided as part of the development.</p> <p>The site is almost entirely greenfield, predominantly grade 2 agricultural land. Mostly at low flood risk with land in flood zones 2 and 3a situated in the north-eastern part of the site.</p>	<p>The HELAA assessment and integral sustainability appraisal was carried out in response to submission of the site as part of the Call for Sites in July 2017.</p>

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
						<p>The landscape is very open and development would be visible at some distance from a variety of directions.</p> <p>Significant areas within the north-eastern part of the site are within the A14 upgrade safeguarding area.</p> <p>The eastern boundary adjoins the A1 and the northern boundary is 1km from the A14. Major transport infrastructure required.</p>	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative at this time due to insufficient evidence to demonstrate its deliverability.
Abbotsley (2 parts)	22 - 29	93	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown - but current access is to 'C' category local road	Substantial additional work would be required to demonstrate the deliverability of this proposal.	<p>The sustainability appraisal of the site is generally positive due to the services and facilities that would be expected to be provided as part of the development.</p> <p>The site is almost entirely greenfield, grade 2 agricultural land, currently used for golf courses. It is at low flood risk.</p> <p>Limited landscape impact due to substantial landscaping within the site and around the boundaries.</p> <p>Access to the site is a significant constraint. Access would need to be obtained onto the B1046 but this has no junction with the A428 at present; traffic is required to go into St Neots and via Barford Road to join the A428.</p>	<p>The HELAA assessment and integral sustainability appraisal was carried out in response to submission of the site as part of the Call for Sites in July 2017.</p> <p>Not considered to be a reasonable alternative at this time due to insufficient evidence to demonstrate its deliverability.</p>
Wyton Airfield	35 - 38	245	Yes	No - substantial upgrades to highway network and new river crossing required	Suitable site for redevelopment but deliverability cannot presently be demonstrated.	<p>The sustainability appraisal of the site is generally positive due to the services and facilities that would be expected to be provided as part of the development.</p> <p>Almost all of the site is previously developed non-agricultural land and at low flood risk,</p>	<p>Promoted through earlier draft versions of the Local Plan as a strategic expansion location.</p> <p>Not proposed for allocation due to anticipated costs for upgrades to</p>

Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
						<p>Some visual sensitivity as situated on a plateau.</p> <p>Significant transport challenges explored through the Strategic Transport Study including a slower delivery option extending beyond the plan period.</p>	the A141 and provision of an additional crossing of the River Great Ouse which indicate that delivery would not be viable at this time without significant transport infrastructure funding.
North of Wyton Airfield	39- 41	67	No	Unknown but access is onto the A141 and similar challenges anticipated as for Wyton airfield.	Not currently available for development	<p>The site is almost entirely greenfield, mostly agricultural grade 2 and at low flood risk,</p> <p>It would form isolated development in the countryside and should only be considered in the context of an extension to development of Wyton Airfield.</p> <p>Access forms a significant constraint to the site.</p> <p>The site was promoted in 2015 but all further attempts to contact the owners and their agent have failed so the site's availability cannot be confirmed.</p>	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative in isolation but only as a potential extension to Wyton Airfield which is currently undeliverable.
Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area							
Brampton Park	103-106	32	Yes	Yes	Suitable for mixed use redevelopment.	Previously developed land; public land disposal programme; Core Strategy direction of growth; good accessibility to sports, open space, services and public transport.	Proposed allocation HU13. Under construction.
North west of Alconbury Airfield	121-123	175	No	N/a	Not suitable for development at this time.	Currently forms a significant intrusion into the open countryside as Alconbury Weald separates it from Huntingdon, may have longer term potential once substantial progress has been made at Alconbury Weald	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative until substantial progress has been made at Alconbury Weald

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
North east of Alconbury Airfield (Western part also assessed as East of Alconbury Weald, including solar farm, Abbots Ripton)	124-127 816-819	155	No	N/a	Western part potentially suitable for mixed use development. Eastern part unsuitable in isolation due to lack of connectivity. Developed for a solar farm with a 20-25 year lifespan in 2014.	Western part is situated immediately east of Alconbury Weald with good potential for integration; eastern part is separated by the East Coast mainline railway and forms part of the open countryside and would not be suitable for development in isolation.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to unavailability.
Alconbury Weald	128-131	575	Yes	Yes	Suitable for mixed use development around designated enterprise zone.	The site is the largest parcel of previously developed land in the district located in close proximity to the A1(M), A14 and East Coast mainline railway. Opportunity to provide new neighbourhood in conjunction with the enterprise zone; of sufficient size to provide services and facilities to meet demand created on site with easy access to Huntingdon for other services. Outline planning permission granted October 2014 for 5,000 dwellings, 290,000 sq m employment uses and other supporting development.	Proposed allocation SEL1.1. Under construction.
RAF Alconbury	132-135	84	Yes	Yes	Suitable for residential led redevelopment.	Previously developed land at low flood risk. This site contains significant services and facilities with potential for reuse and is well related to the enterprise zone and committed services and facilities at Alconbury Weald.	Proposed allocation SEL 1.2.
Washingley Farm	136-139	33	Yes	Yes	Suitable for residential led mixed use development.	Outstanding planning permission for employment use unlikely to be implemented due to proximity to enterprise zone; close to existing employment	Proposed allocation HU1 (eastern part).

Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
						opportunities and forthcoming services and facilities at Alconbury Weald; realignment potential for A141	
Sapley Park Farm	140-143	71	Yes	No	Not suitable for development at this time due to highway infrastructure constraints	Greenfield land in a prominent position on the northern edge of Huntingdon; extensive impact on open countryside; separated from huntingdon by the A141 with limited opportunities for integration. Not brought forward on deliverability grounds due to highway improvement requirements to A141.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to undeliverability on highway grounds.
Lodge Farm	144-147	305	Yes	No	Not suitable for development at this time due to highway infrastructure constraints	Extensive greenfield site with few physical constraints; prominent in the landscape; separated from Huntingdon by the A141; extensive area with opportunity to meet social infrastructure needs on site. Not brought forward on deliverability grounds due to highway improvement requirements to A141.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to undeliverability on highway grounds.
Bearscroft Farm, Godmanchester	160-163	45	Yes	Yes	Suitable for residential led mixed use development.	Greenfield land separated from Godmanchester by A1198; Core Strategy direction of growth; planning permission granted 2013 addressing constraints.	Proposed allocation HU19. Under construction.
East of Romans' Edge, Godmanchester	164-168	69	No - availability had not been confirmed when work undertaken	Unknown	Not suitable for development due to environmental impacts and social impacts on the existing community.	Few physical constraints when considered in isolation; substantial extension into the open countryside; substantial impact on scale and character of existing settlement; integration difficulties and need for realignment of A1198. Not considered deliverable within the time period pf the Local Plan due to impact on the existing community.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to need for additional evidence on viability and deliverability of A1198 realignment and need for prior integration of development at Bearscroft Farm

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
							to which this would form an extension.
South of West End to West of Buckden Road, Brampton	197-201	87	No	N/a	Not suitable due to flood risk and large parts within the A14 upgrade safeguarding area	Strong flood risk and landscape constraints; large parts not well-related to Brampton; southern part forms borrow pits for A14 upgrade and will be used as ponds and green space after the roadworks are completed.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to flooding constraints and A14 upgrade requirements.
South of Ermine Street	226-229	52	Yes	Yes	Suitable for residential led mixed use development.	Adjoins north west Huntingdon; provides opportunity to help integrate Alconbury Weald with Huntingdon; allocation in Local Plan alteration 2002; inability to provide adequate pedestrian connectivity has impeded development so far; capacity reduced to eliminate flood risk on western edge	Proposed allocation HU1 (western part)
St Neots Spatial Planning Area							
St Neots Eastern Expansion	283-286	226	Yes	Yes	Suitable for mixed use development.	Well related to St Neots; Core Strategy direction of growth; planning applications submitted; opportunity to provide a new neighbourhood with a range of services and facilities on site complementing those easily accessible elsewhere in St Neots	Proposed allocation SEL2
South east of A428 from roundabout with B1425	290-293	93	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable due to separation from St Neots	Separated from St Neots by the A428 and the proposed SEL2; significant landscape impact; uncertainty over realignment route of A428.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to uncertainty of A428 realignment route and longer term ability to integrate development with St Neots.
East of Potton Road, South of A428	294-297	98	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable due to separation from St Neots	Separated from St Neots by the A428 and the proposed SEL2; significant landscape impact; uncertainty over realignment route of A428.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to uncertainty of A428 realignment

Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
							route and longer term ability to integrate development with St Neots.
St Ives Spatial Planning Area							
North of St Ives	334-337	74	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable due to known transport constraints in the vicinity	Parts of the northern and south-western boundaries are in flood zones 2 or 3a; significant impact on the landscape; scale of development is a constraint due to the volume of traffic that would be generated onto a highway network which is already heavily constrained in its capacity to absorb additional traffic volumes.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to undeliverability on highway grounds.
Gifford's Park	341-344	127	Yes	No	Not suitable due to highway infrastructure constraints	Broadly positive SA but flood risk is a significant constraint affecting the quantity and layout of development; landscape impact in long distance views; significant transport constraints arising from capacity issues on the A1096 and A1123.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to undeliverability on highway grounds.
St Ives West	360-362	54	Yes	Yes	Suitable for residential-led mixed use development	Partially previously developed land; sustainably located in relation to St Ives; Core Strategy direction of growth; sensitive heritage and biodiversity assets present.	Proposed allocation SI1. Partially under construction.
Houghton Hill Farm (larger site)	363-366	122 (other site is 14)	No - larger site first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable due to countryside intrusion, coalescence of St Ives and Wyton on the Hill and inability of local road network to absorb more traffic.	Strategic transport assessment indicates significant additional congestion on the B1090, A1123 and A1096; significant impact on landscape and heritage assets.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to visual impact, coalescence and highway impacts.
Ramsey Spatial Planning Area							

Appendix 2 Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
Former RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House	406-409	25	No	Yes	Suitable for residential-led mixed use development	Previously developed land; enlarged from Core Strategy direction of growth; flood zone 1; substantial demolition required; potentially sensitive heritage and biodiversity assets present.	Proposed allocation RA8.
Key Service Centres							
East and West of Glatton Road, Sawtry	575-578	54	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Western part not suitable due to detachment from Sawtry; eastern part only suitable for employment	Western part is entirely detached from Sawtry; significant impact on open countryside and highly visible in the wider landscape; substantial traffic generation. Eastern part adjoins industrial estate; surface water flood risk.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to impact on landscape.
South and East of Ramsey Road, Warboys	685-688	27	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable due to adverse impact on the character of Warboys and surrounding landscape.	Poor access to services and facilities of Warboys; significant impact on landscape character; and adverse impact on the conservation area.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to impact on landscape.
Manor Farm, Warboys	689-694	118	No	Unknown	Not suitable due to adverse impact on the character of Warboys and surrounding landscape.	Limited access to services; highly visible in the landscape; impact on heritage assets; viability assessment required of suggested western bypass; no consented headroom at WWTW.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative due to scale overwhelming Warboys and substantial impact on heritage and landscape character.
Other locations							
South of Hermitage Wood, Alconbury	740-743	43	No	Unknown	Not suitable for development at this time.	Currently forms a significant intrusion into the open countryside; may have longer term potential once substantial progress has been made at Alconbury Weald	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative until substantial progress has been made at Alconbury Weald

Summary Table of Site Sustainability Appraisals Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 Sustainability Appraisal Explanatory Note

Site	HELAA page ref	Site area (ha)	In the STS?	Deliverable in transport terms	Assessment	Reasoning for assessment	Outcome
Farmland North of Alconbury Weald, East of Hermitage Wood	744-747	42	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable for development at this time.	Adjacent to county wildlife site; potential transport impacts; no access to services and facilities at present; dependent on successful prior delivery of Alconbury Weald.	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative until substantial progress has been made at Alconbury Weald
East of Peterborough Road, Farcet	851-854	34	No - first put forward in August 2017	Unknown	Not suitable for development - required as a landscape buffer to prevent coalescence with Peterborough	Land forms open countryside separating Farcet and Peterborough; highly visible from open countryside to the east; limited access to local services in Farcet; impacts of noise and air pollution from the A605 would need assessment	Not considered to be a reasonable alternative as it forms a landscape buffer preventing coalescence of Farcet with Peterborough