

# Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036

## Stage 3 Consultation







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## 1 Introduction and Context

### What is in this Draft Local Plan?

- 1.1** The Local Plan guides sustainable development in Huntingdonshire up to 2036. It addresses a broad range of planning issues affecting local communities and their land use requirements. It seeks to match up new homes with jobs, infrastructure and environmental protection and to facilitate provision of land for wider community needs. It provides a sound strategy for Huntingdonshire which balances competing economic, social and environmental demands to ensure that new development and growth is sustainable.

Chapter	Contents
<b>1 'Introduction and Context'</b>	Development of the Local Plan, timetable for production and the plan's context.
<b>2 'The Spatial Portrait'</b>	Current picture of Huntingdonshire, its physical, economic and social structure.
<b>3 'The Spatial Strategy'</b>	Influences on the strategy for development to 2036, overarching strategy and principles for development and key diagram.
<b>4 'Infrastructure and Delivery'</b>	Infrastructure provision in the district, capacity issues and future requirements for delivery of growth.
<b>5 'Development Strategy'</b>	Development strategy policies identifying the scale of development considered appropriate across the district.
<b>6 'Requiring Good Design'</b>	Policies to achieve high standards of design and sustainability.
<b>7 'Promoting Sustainable Travel'</b>	Policies on how development will be expected to deal with the need to travel.
<b>8 'Building a Strong, Competitive Economy'</b>	Policies to maintain and promote all aspects of a strong competitive economy.
<b>9 'Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes'</b>	Policies to deliver a wide range of high quality homes in Huntingdonshire.
<b>10 'Conserving and Enhancing the Environment'</b>	Policies to protect, conserve and enhance the built and natural environments.
<b>Development Sites</b>	A series of chapters that identify sites which are considered suitable for allocation for development in the Local Plan that will contribute to delivering the strategy.
<b>Appendices</b>	A series of appendices contain information about how the Council will monitor the Local Plan (more detail is available in the Sustainability Appraisal that goes with this plan), maps for the Establish Employment Areas and the Town Centre designations.



# 1 Introduction and Context

## Strategic Policies

- 1.2 Strategic policies are those which are essential in delivering the strategy of the Local Plan. The policies in the plan represent what is considered to be a concise set of policies that are aimed at promoting the strategy. Unless otherwise stated all policies in this Local Plan should be considered as Strategic. This is considered to be compliant with the distinction made in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF) between policies of a strategic nature and those that are not.

### Important Note:

*This plan should be read as a whole. Cross references to policies have been included in certain circumstances where they are considered to be particularly important. However the plan cannot anticipate all scenarios where particular policies will be relevant, nor should it be expected to do so. Therefore these references are NOT exhaustive and the lack of a reference to a specific policy should NOT indicate that it is not relevant.*

## Development of the Local Plan

- 1.3 The Development Plan for Huntingdonshire is currently made up of a number of different documents, parts of which have been produced recently and so their content is mostly up to date but other parts were produced much longer ago and are now out dated or have been partly replaced. This can be confusing for people trying to use the Development Plan and trying to work out which policies are applicable. Producing a new Local Plan gives the opportunity to put all of Huntingdonshire's development plan policies into a single document. The most up to date parts of the Development Plan are the adopted Core Strategy to 2026 (2009) and the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (2011) which were prepared following extensive public engagement each culminating in independent examination by a government planning inspector where both were found to provide a sustainable strategy. The intention is to use the content of these two documents as a starting point for considering the way forward with this Local Plan.

### What has happened so far?

- 1.4 There have been two previous stages of consultation for the Local Plan:

Stage	Consultation completed and dates
Stage 1: Initial Issues and Options Consultation	This was an initial consultation which ran from 21 May to 24 June 2012. The purpose of that consultation was to indicate the key headline planning issues and put forward three initial growth options which were based on the best demographic data available at the time. The aim of this initial consultation was to start raising awareness of the new Local Plan prior to a more detailed phase of engagement later in the year.
Stage 2: Strategic Options and Policies Consultation	This was a wide ranging consultation focusing on the strategy we should adopt for development up to 2036, the locations that might be suitable to deliver that strategy and the policies we should use to guide and manage development. This stage took place between 31 August and 23 November 2012.

- 1.5 Information about the methods used during these previous consultation stages, the issues raised in comments received and how we have tried to address them is detailed in the Statement of Consultation.

## What is happening now?

- 1.6** The current Stage 3 consultation sets out for the first time a complete draft of the Local Plan in a single document. This non-statutory stage runs from **31 May to 26 July 2013**. This eight week period is longer than the six weeks normally provided at this stage of a consultation and is intended to give more opportunities to get involved in shaping the new Local Plan. There are several ways to find out more and to get involved:
- 24 hour access available through our online consultation [website](#) with the facility to respond directly on individual elements of the draft Local Plan
  - Copies of the draft Local Plan have been placed in libraries across Huntingdonshire during the consultation
  - A series of public exhibitions where information will be displayed and staff will be available to answer questions and queries about the consultation
- 1.7** In addition to the draft Local Plan there are a series of evidence base documents which have been taken into account when writing the plan. A full list of evidence base documents is included in the Statement of Consultation with many being available in 'Supporting Documents' on the consultation [website](#).
- 1.8** We encourage everyone to get involved at this stage as comments made now can really help shape the content of the Local Plan. The preferred method of making comments is through the consultation [website](#). It is suggested that all comments are made through the website in order to benefit from instant<sup>(1)</sup> email notification of comments being submitted and processed.

## What happens next?

- 1.9** The comments from this consultation will be considered prior to producing the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan. The Proposed Submission version is the final draft and should be the version that the Council considers to be good enough to adopt. Proposed Submission is the first statutory stage of producing the Local Plan and as such there are a number of requirements that have to be complied with. Of those requirements the most important to be aware of is that comments made on the Proposed Submission Local Plan have to say whether the plan is 'sound' or 'unsound' and whether it is 'legally compliant' or not. This means that this current consultation is the best time to get involved with producing the Local Plan as there are no restrictions on the form comments can take.
- 1.10** The Proposed Submission Local Plan will be stage 4 of the Local Plan preparation process, scheduled for January 2014. It will be open for comments for the statutory period of 6 weeks. Full details of stage 4 will be published closer to the time.
- 1.11** The following diagram illustrates the stage that production of the Local Plan has got to and the stages that it will need to go through before it is finally adopted.

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1 Depending on personal settings

# 1 Introduction and Context

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	Stage	Timetable
	<p><b>Stage 1: Initial issues and options consultation</b></p> <p><i>Introductory consultation designed to raise awareness of key issues and to start the process of considering potential options focused on housing growth.</i></p>	<p>May to June 2012 ✓</p>
	<p><b>Stage 2: Initial strategy and policy consultation</b></p> <p><i>This was the first consultation to seek views on a draft strategy, place-based policies, potential development sites, development management policies and draft sustainability appraisal.</i></p>	<p>August to November 2012 ✓</p>
<p><b>Current Stage</b></p>	<p><b>Stage 3: Consultation on a complete draft Local Plan</b></p> <p><i>Consultation on the first complete draft of the proposed new Local Plan taking into account responses received during previous stages and incorporating sites put forward where they contribute to the strategy.</i></p>	<p>May to July 2013</p>
	<p><b>Stage 4: Formal publication of the draft Local Plan</b></p> <p><i>Representations are sought on the soundness of the Local Plan and legal compliance. Representations received are sent on to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration in the examination.</i></p>	<p>January to February 2014</p>
	<p><b>Stage 5: Submission of the Local Plan</b></p> <p><i>The Council can, but is not obliged to, make changes to the Local Plan before it is formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. This signals the start of the examination process.</i></p>	<p>April 2014</p>
	<p><b>Stage 6: Independent Examination of the Local Plan</b></p> <p><i>The Planning Inspectorate will appoint an inspector who will consider the soundness and legal compliance of the Local Plan. Public hearings will be held during this stage when the inspector will invite people who made representations at stage 4 to participate.</i></p>	<p>May to October 2014</p>
	<p><b>Stage 7: Recommendations of the Planning Inspector</b></p> <p><i>The inspector sends their report on recommendations for amendments to the Local Plan to the Council for fact checking and an opportunity to seek clarification. The report is then published.</i></p>	<p>November 2014</p>
	<p><b>Stage 8: Adoption of the Local Plan</b></p> <p><i>Formal adoption of the Local Plan by Full Council as the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire. The Local Plan then supersedes all current development plan documents.</i></p>	<p>December 2014</p>



## Context for the Local Plan

### The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)

- 1.12** The NPPF was introduced in March 2012 setting out the government's economic, environmental and social priorities for planning. Its intention is to provide a new, simplified planning framework that better supports growth and helps create the homes and jobs that the country needs, further empowers communities, and helps protect and enhance our natural and historic environment. Local authorities now have to update their Development Plans to ensure consistency with the NPPF which includes an expectation that local planning authorities should produce a single local plan document and should only produce additional development plan documents where clearly justified.
- 1.13** A sustainable approach to social, economic and environmental issues lies at the core of the Local Plan reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. The following two boxes illustrate national expectations of what this means and how it should be achieved.

#### NPPF Paragraph 14

At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

For plan-making this means that:

- local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
  - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.<sup>(2)</sup>

For decision-taking this means:<sup>(3)</sup>

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
  - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.<sup>(4)</sup>

2 For example, those policies relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives (see paragraph 119) and/ or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park (or the Broads Authority); designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

3 Unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4 For example, those policies relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives (see paragraph 119) and/ or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park (or the Broads Authority); designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.

# 1 Introduction and Context

- 1.14 The NPPF states that Local Plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally. The Planning Inspectorate considers that the following wording will, if incorporated into a draft Local Plan submitted for examination, be an appropriate way of meeting this expectation.

## National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will endeavour to work proactively with applicants, in particular through the pre-application process, to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood development plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

## Status of Other Documents and Plans

- 1.15 The Local Plan does not exist in isolation. It is supported by a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that cover a range of subjects in more detail. SPDs can and are produced periodically in order to respond to changing circumstances or where a need for more detailed guidance has become apparent.
- 1.16 Reference should also be had to the Waste and Minerals plans prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council<sup>(5)</sup>.
- 1.17 There is no regional tier of planning policy. East of England Plan which included regional policies was revoked in January 2013. Earlier Structure Plans at County level have also been revoked.

## Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 1.18 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a formal neighbourhood planning system that gives local communities the power to prepare their own neighbourhood plan to promote the types of development that they think are right for their area.
- 1.19 A parish council can apply to the local authority to establish a neighbourhood planning area. The most appropriate neighbourhood planning area may be the whole parish or a smaller area or a larger area if several parish councils have agreed to work together. The neighbourhood plan must be drawn up so that it reflects the Local Plan for the area, this is known as 'general conformity'. A neighbourhood plan can build upon work already undertaken in preparing a parish plan or village design statement. Parish councils may wish to plan for new housing, employment, retail and tourism with the aim of making their community more sustainable. Plans can identify new housing and employment over and above the target from the area's Local Plan, provided that these proposals satisfy national policy and environmental requirements

5 Available on the Cambridgeshire County Council [website](#)

(e.g. The Habitats Regulations and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)). A neighbourhood plan can also identify areas of local green space important to the community and that they would wish to see protected. It may also propose new or improved community facilities including sports and play space.

- 1.20** This Local Plan has been prepared anticipating that some parishes in Huntingdonshire will want to draw up neighbourhood plans. The Council recognises that this may be a significant undertaking, even for well organised parish councils. So, within the constraints of available resources, the Council will provide assistance where it is sought in the preparation of neighbourhood plans. However, the Council's priority in the short term will be to adopt this Local Plan without delay to provide the basis for future neighbourhood plans.

## **Duty to Cooperate**

- 1.21** The Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have introduced a requirement for councils to work together on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. This requirement is known as the 'Duty to Cooperate' and requires planning authorities to work with neighbouring authorities and other "prescribed bodies" while preparing documents such as a local plan or activities which facilitate the preparation of development plans. The duty only applies where such activities are a "strategic matter" regarding sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas. The full list of "prescribed bodies" are set out in the Act itself plus subsequent Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.22** The Cambridgeshire Councils have a long history of working together and cooperating on a range of issues. In light of the duty to cooperate further arrangements have been put in place to ensure cooperation with the wider range of prescribed bodies. Of particular relevance is the establishment of a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Planning Unit and how the work of that body has influenced this local plan is described in the chapter 'The Spatial Strategy'. Ongoing liaison meetings and special meetings with the prescribed bodies in the formulation of this local plan have also been arranged in accordance with the duty to cooperate.



# 2 The Spatial Portrait

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## 2 The Spatial Portrait

- 2.1** Huntingdonshire is situated between Cambridge, Peterborough and Bedford and is strategically located on the East Coast mainline railway, the A1 and A14 trunk roads. In 2011 the population was 169,500 with approximately half living in the district's four main towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey with others living in over 100 villages and in the countryside. The River Great Ouse has shaped the district's historic settlement pattern and provides a strategic green corridor through the south and east of the district.
- 2.2** Many parts of Huntingdonshire, including the towns of Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives, look predominantly to Cambridge for employment and higher order services. St Neots also looks towards Bedford as a higher order centre given its proximity. The northern part of the district is influenced by the relationship with Peterborough which has experienced significant growth over recent years and continues to do so.

### Huntingdon

- 2.3** Huntingdon is the district's administrative centre reflecting its status as the former county town of Huntingdonshire. It is located toward the centre of the district on the northern valley slopes of the River Great Ouse. Huntingdon is a major housing and people centre with a high jobs to employment ratio. Much of the historic street pattern based on the Market Hill and High Street remains largely intact. It is well connected with the strategic road network and the east coast mainline railway which runs through the town on a north-south axis restricting linkages from western parts to the town centre. Huntingdon is accessible from the A14 which runs through the south west of the town, much on an elevated carriageway. Parts of the town centre are undergoing redevelopment and regeneration. The River Great Ouse and its flood meadows form the south eastern boundary to Huntingdon.

### St Neots

- 2.4** St Neots has the largest population of any settlement in the District. It is a market town established on the on Great North Road with the River Great Ouse forming a green corridor through the centre of the town. It has expanded significantly over recent years assimilating the previously independent settlements of Eaton Socon, Eaton Ford and Eynesbury, although their historic and separate character is still recognisable within the town. St Neots has its own railway station, on the east coast mainline, located in the north eastern quarter of the town, and has direct access onto the A1. It is connected to Cambridge via the A428. Retailing is centred on St Neots High Street on the east side of the River Great Ouse and the traditional market square. Significant housing development is now taking place to the east of the railway.

### St Ives

- 2.5** St Ives is an historic market town situated on the northern bank of the River Great Ouse. The town has grown asymmetrically to the north of the river; the extensive floodplain to the south being retained as open land. The town centre contains many original buildings and retains its distinctive medieval street pattern but is constrained in terms of growth opportunities. St Ives is a picturesque town with a range of small specialist shops contributing to its economic success and attractiveness to visitors.

### Ramsey and Bury

- 2.6** Ramsey is situated in the north east of Huntingdonshire on the edge of the fenland landscape, with a historic core centred around the former Abbey. It is the smallest of the district's market towns. Originally two distinct settlements, Ramsey and Bury have now merged; the junction of Upwood Road and the B1040 defines the point at which Ramsey and Bury meet. The urban area extends south west to include areas of housing formerly associated with RAF Upwood. The High Lode industrial area defines the northern edge of the town. The elevated landscape to the south and west and the lower lying Fenland landscape

to the north and east combine with the lack of significant vegetation to allow extensive views. Ramsey is relatively remote as it lies off the main road network and this restricts the opportunities for sustainable development. Ramsey continues to be the focus of a number of regeneration initiatives.

### Key Service Centres

**2.7** Huntingdonshire has ten larger villages which play a role in providing services for residents of nearby smaller villages and countryside areas. These are considered to be key service centres all of which have at least a primary school, a range of shops, public transport services, community meeting place and various libraries, GP surgeries and a range of employment opportunities. The key service centres of Brampton and Godmanchester are now considered to be part of the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area and Little Paxton is part of the St Neots Spatial Planning Area. The other key service centres are: Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley.

### Villages and the Rural Area

**2.8** Huntingdonshire remains a predominantly rural district and despite the growth that has taken place many of Huntingdonshire's villages retain their historic form. Buildings clustered around a church or village green and linear patterns are both common. The range of services available in the villages varies significantly as does the population. The agricultural heritage of the district has had a large impact on its landscape appearance. The underlying Oolitic Limestone and stone buildings of the Nene Valley and the dark peat soils and flat landscapes of the Fens are particularly distinctive.

### Population

**2.9** The 2011 Census gave the usually resident population of Huntingdonshire as 169,508 which was an 8% increase on 2001. In terms of age breakdown the population comprised: 19% aged 0-15 years, 37% aged 16-44, 28% aged 45-64 and 16% aged 65 or more. Huntingdonshire's residents are generally healthier than the national average with 6% of residents having long term health or disability issues which limit their day to day activities a lot compared to 8% for England as a whole. 26% of households are comprised of just one person. The rural nature of the district is reflected in the overall population density which averages just 1.87 people per hectare.

### Housing

**2.10** The housing stock of Huntingdonshire is very diverse in terms of size and character. The 2011 Census showed just over 71,400 dwellings in the district of which 3% were vacant/ second/ holiday homes. By way of comparison the 2001 Census showed 63,060 occupied dwellings. The housing stock is dominated by detached dwellings which make up 41.3% of the total, followed by 31% semi-detached properties; terraced properties account for 19.5% of the total stock and flats just 10.6% although this is a significant increase on 2001. Mobile or temporary properties make up just 0.7% of the total housing stock.

**2.11** In terms of tenure 72% of all dwellings were owner occupied and 14% rented privately. Shared ownership accounted for 1% of all dwellings in 2011, double the level in 2001. 13% of dwellings were rented from social landlords. 4% of households were reported as living in overcrowded housing.

### Economy

**2.12** Huntingdonshire has higher levels of economic activity than the national average with 75% of residents aged 16-74 being economically active. The 2011 Census provides a breakdown of residents by occupational group: managers, directors and senior officials 12.4%, professional occupations 16.8%, associate professional and technical occupations 14%, administrative and secretarial occupations 12.1%, skilled trades occupations 11.5%, caring, leisure and other service occupations 8.9%, sales and customer service occupations 7.3%, process, plant and machine operatives 7.5% and elementary occupations (including agriculture) 9.5%.



## 2 The Spatial Portrait

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

- 2.13** Much of the economy has historically been based around agriculture and associated food production. In more recent times a specialist manufacturing industry has grown up alongside jobs in retail, leisure and office based sectors. Tourism and leisure are also important contributors to the local economy. Visitors are attracted by strong historical connections and opportunities for sport and informal recreation in the countryside and varied water-related activities on the network of waterways in Huntingdonshire, the River Great Ouse and at Grafham Water.

### Transport

- 2.14** Huntingdonshire benefits from strategic communication links with the east coast mainline railway with stations in Huntingdon and St Neots. The A1 gives access north – south on the trunk road network. The A14 provides east – west links and facilitates access to Europe via the east coast ports. East – west linkages are also provided by the A428 crossing the southern part of the district. Stansted, Luton and Birmingham are the nearest major passenger airports to the district.
- 2.15** Car ownership in Huntingdonshire is significantly higher than the national average reflecting the relatively rural nature of most of the district with consequent dependence on private cars for personal transport. The 2011 Census showed that only 14% of Huntingdonshire's households did not have access to a car/van with 46% of households having 2 or more vehicles. In terms of travel to work 19.3% of employed residents travelled by public transport, cycling or walking.

### Environmental Issues

- 2.16** Much of the countryside is fertile farmland, predominantly used for arable farming with large fields and few hedgerows. Huntingdonshire's agricultural land is almost entirely of good quality; 98% of all agricultural land in the district is classed as grades 1, 2 or 3, with 15% classed as grade 1. Grade 1 land occurs mainly in the Fens, in the north east of the district, although there are pockets along the Ouse Valley. The land north of Huntingdon and land south of the A14 is predominantly grade 2. From the Nene Valley in the north of Huntingdonshire south to the A14 corridor and extending from the district's western boundary to the A1 the land is classed almost entirely as grade 3.
- 2.17** Huntingdonshire contains a number of sites of particular importance for biodiversity, such as the Ouse Washes, Woodwalton Fen and Portholme Meadow. There are over 25 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), four Woodland Trust sites, and over 125 County Wildlife Sites. A Strategic Open Space Study was commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council in 2004 which looks at the provision of open space across the county. The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) was developed to provide a strategy for Green Infrastructure for Cambridgeshire. The Great Fen is a major habitat restoration project which will create a 3700 hectare wetland between Huntingdon and Peterborough by connecting Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen and will also provide new opportunities for recreation and education. There are also significant initiatives to extend Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and to expand a new wildlife reserve at Needingworth Quarry.
- 2.18** Much of the district lies between the two large floodplains of the rivers Nene to the north and the Great Ouse that runs through the central areas of Huntingdonshire. Many of the major settlements are located adjacent to the River Great Ouse and its tributaries, including Huntingdon, St Ives, Godmanchester, St Neots, Alconbury and Brampton. Flood risk from these two rivers is managed by the Environment Agency. Flooding across the district varies in nature from the well defined valleys of the uplands, such as Bury Brook and the Ouse Tributaries to the large low lying floodplains of the Great Ouse and the Nene and the low lying areas of the Fens, much of which is at or below sea level, which is managed by the Internal Drainage Boards/ Middle Level Commissioners.

## Community Facilities

- 2.19** Huntingdonshire Regional College provides full and part-time education for young people and adults. State education for those aged 11-18 is provided in 7 establishments, focused in the larger centres of population with Huntingdon and St Neots each having two secondary schools and St Ives, Ramsey and Sawtry each having one with all secondary schools also serving extensive rural catchments. Some students in the north of the district fall within the Stanground College catchment located in Peterborough.
- 2.20** Huntingdonshire currently has 60 state primary schools catering for children aged 4-11. Of these 25 are located within the market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey with 35 others spread around the district, mostly in the larger villages. Samuel Pepys and Spring Common schools provide education services to students aged 2-19 with special educational needs and are based in St Neots and Huntingdon respectively.
- 2.21** There is a small private education sector, including Kimbolton School which offers boarding facilities, but most students choosing this form of education travel outside the district, mainly to Cambridge and Peterborough. Pre-school education is supplied by a range of state, private and voluntary providers.
- 2.22** Cambridgeshire NHS is responsible for the overall commissioning of health care services in Cambridgeshire. 22 General Practices operate within the district with some having satellite surgeries in villages to provide more local facilities to patients. Opened in 1983 Hinchingsbrooke Hospital provides medical services for residents of Huntingdonshire and some surrounding areas, a major new treatment centre opened in 2005 has allowed a significant increase in day case patients and a replacement children's ward opened in 2007.

# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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## 3 The Spatial Strategy

### Influences on the Strategy

#### Leadership Direction (2012)

- 3.1 A primary purpose of the Local Plan is to complement the corporate vision and themes by detailing elements that planning can influence and help to deliver. The Huntingdonshire District Council Leadership Direction (2012) sets out a corporate vision and a series of related themes:

#### Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Vision

'Huntingdonshire District Council will continue to improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire by working with our communities and partners to achieve sustainable economic growth whilst providing excellent value for money services that meet local needs within a balanced budget'

#### Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Themes

- To achieve a strong local economy
- To enable sustainable growth
- To improve the quality of life in Huntingdonshire
- To work with our communities

#### Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU) - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Co-operation - Supporting the Spatial Approach 2011-2031

- 3.2 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Strategic Planning Unit has been commissioned to prepare a strategic spatial framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough up to 2031 to provide a clear strategic context for the local plans being produced by local councils. It will help to co-ordinate planning for the long term needs of the county by considering functional relationships across district boundaries and will set out a spatial vision and objectives for the whole area.
- 3.3 The spatial vision and objectives from the draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Co-operation - Supporting the Spatial Approach 2011-2031 have been used to shape the spatial vision and objectives for Huntingdonshire.

#### JSPU Technical Report (2013)

- 3.4 A major factor in shaping the spatial strategy for the Local Plan has been determining how many new homes will need to be built in Huntingdonshire up to 2036 to accommodate the anticipated population growth. The draft Technical Report summarises all available sets of data forecasts for population and employment growth and assesses them in the light of the 2011 Census outputs. The 2011 Census gives a population of 169,500 for Huntingdonshire. When this is taken into account population forecasts arrive at an indicative population figure to 2031 of 195,000.
- 3.5 Specific modelling has been run to forecast the potential implications of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone on both jobs and population growth. This has modelled the assumption that the Alconbury Enterprise Zone will generate 8,000 additional jobs in the target industries of chemicals, pharmaceuticals, metals manufacturing, electronics, waste and remediation, telecoms, computer related activity, professional services and research and development. Additional spin-off jobs may be created in non-target sectors.



- 3.6 When the potential implications of Alconbury Enterprise Zone are taken into account the population of Huntingdonshire is predicted to have risen to 201,000 by 2031 and 209,000 by 2036. Having regard to a forecast decline in household size from 2.41 to 2.27 persons per house, an indicative 21,000 additional homes is required between 2011 and 2036. This Local Plan has been produced with the intention of securing allocations capable of meeting this full level of need.
- 3.7 The Local Plan will also need to address the housing requirements of Gypsies and Travellers so the Council has been working with other authorities in the area to assess the level of need for additional new pitches. The number of additional pitches currently anticipated suggests that site specific allocations are not necessary at present.

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012)**

- 3.8 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the Cambridge housing market area in which Huntingdonshire predominantly falls was substantially revised in 2012 with a clearer structure and updated information sources. This provides detailed analysis of the housing market including the economic and demographic context in which it operates. It addresses tenure, affordability and homelessness issues and provides forecasts of households by age and tenure.
- 3.9 For Huntingdonshire, the total household growth anticipated between 2011 and 2031 is around 16,200. Households comprising residents over the age of 65 are forecast to experience the highest growth increasing by 72% to 32,675 to become the largest age group by 2031. Households aged 45 to 65 are forecast to have a low growth rate (3.6%) but are expected to remain the second largest group totalling 27,700 households by 2031. Households aged 25-44 are also expected to experience limited growth to 25,200 by 2031 (6.6%). Households aged 15-24 are expected to remain steady at 1650 by 2031.
- 3.10 As a group one person households are forecast to experience the highest growth at 66.4% of the total net growth in households; of these over 55% is expected to be in one person households aged over 65. The second highest growth is in households comprising couples on their own; with the over 65's accounting for 95% of this. Households comprising small families with one child are expected to account for just 5% of total household growth distributed across all age groups. In contrast, larger families with children are expected to decrease by 4.4% by 2031 although some growth is predicted amongst the 45-64 year old households.
- 3.11 The Peterborough SHMA was prepared in 2008 and covers a small area of the district including Yaxley, Stilton and villages in Huntingdonshire lying to the west of Peterborough. A review process for this is starting in May 2013.

### **Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth (2008)**

- 3.12 The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth (2008) sets out basic principles for achieving excellence in new housing developments and reflects experience from other developments in the UK and abroad. It is organised around 4 broad themes comprising: community, connectivity, climate and character all interwoven with the need for collaboration and offers a shared vision of the sustainable and vibrant communities that could be created here.
- 3.13 The Quality Charter has 3 overriding aims: to inspire innovation, to help communication and to support a genuinely cooperative approach all with the common purpose of creating successful places where residents have a sense of community through having a choice of housing types, can actively participate in the ways their community is run and have a high quality of life. It advocates new developments being located where people can benefit from high connectivity to jobs and services and infrastructure provision that matches the pace of new development.

# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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## Alconbury Enterprise Zone

**3.14** An enterprise zone was designated at Alconbury Airfield in August 2011 to help deliver the economic growth aspirations of the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Planning legislation requires a review of all development plan documents whenever an enterprise zone is designated. Although the adopted Core Strategy made provision for employment development at Alconbury Airfield, to make the most of the opportunities offered by the Alconbury Enterprise Zone the plan requires updating. Alconbury Enterprise Zone covers 150 hectares of land and will provide significant opportunities for new investment in the economy. It is envisaged that the Alconbury Enterprise Zone will lead to the creation of 8,000 jobs over 25 years to 2036. This has the potential to significantly change both the numbers and diversity of job opportunities available to local residents.

## Local Economic Assessment (2012)

**3.15** The Local Economic Assessment provides an analysis of the structure of the local economy, the historic and future predicted trends in key sectors of the local economy and the implications of these on the people and businesses that interact within the economy.

**3.16** The Local Economic Assessment sets out eight action priorities:

- Raising Huntingdonshire's profile
- Increasing the working age population
- Building on business strengths
- Prioritising industry sectors
- Matching skills with jobs
- Delivering economic growth
- Maximising the impact of strategic development
- Delivering the vision and strategy

**3.17** The Local Economic Assessment provides a baseline for the Economic Strategy (forthcoming).

## Draft Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan 2013-2023 (2013)

**3.18** A strong, growing economy is needed to achieve the corporate vision, supported by strong business sectors, vibrant service sectors and readily available strategic development sites. Huntingdonshire's proximity to the economic driver of Cambridge provides a major opportunity to develop complementary sector specialisms, supply chains and business accommodation. To be successful the local economy needs to build on business strengths, prioritise industry sectors that add value and be complemented by delivery of critical infrastructure. The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan aspires for the district to become a destination of choice for people to live, work and invest.

**3.19** Particular challenges identified include the decreasing proportion of residents who are of working age, the need to target specific growth sectors which will differentiate Huntingdonshire and the current polarisation of the business base of the district and a tendency towards more traditional industry sectors. The majority of the district's businesses are small to medium sized enterprises. Larger businesses are concentrated in more traditional industries although diversification into professional and scientific sectors has increased. The rural economy will need to continue to evolve and diversify whilst maintaining the character of individual villages and countryside areas.

**3.20** The Alconbury Enterprise Zone has the potential to be a key growth catalyst and radically change the local economy; it provides a focal point for high quality business development that will support economic growth in the Local Enterprise Partnership area. In quantitative terms Alconbury Enterprise Zone could provide sufficient land for economic growth for the whole of the Local Plan period. However, the needs of the economy and local residents cannot just be met through development at the enterprise zone. Land will be needed for economic development across the whole of Huntingdonshire.



## Huntingdonshire Employment Land Study (forthcoming)

- 3.21** An employment land study has been commissioned to assess the detailed supply of employment land across the district. This will consider the viability of established employment areas and make recommendations on those that should be protected or released. The study will be completed prior to the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan and its recommendations incorporated at that stage.

## Huntingdonshire Retail Study (2013)

- 3.22** Retailing is highly sensitive to prevailing economic conditions and preferences can evolve very rapidly. This makes longer term forecasting of requirements difficult. This Local Plan will provide a strategy for how our town centres can best respond to the changing circumstances and encourage the expansion and diversification of retail outlets to ensure that Huntingdonshire's town centres retain their roles in the wider hierarchy and continue to meet residents' primary shopping needs.
- 3.23** Huntingdon remains the principal comparison goods shopping destination in the district. This role will be reinforced by the redevelopment of Chequers Court and facilitated by new retail provision in Huntingdon West between George Street and Ermine Street. Additional retailing in St Neots will serve the expanding population of the town. St Ives town centre competes successfully offering a high proportion of independent and high quality shops. Ramsey town centre continues to serve a localised catchment with a range of successful independent traders.
- 3.24** The Huntingdonshire Retail Study 2013 indicates limited quantitative need for additional shops given the Chequers Court and Huntingdon West commitments. However, additional provision will be made in growing areas to serve the day to day needs of residents and workers.

## Water Cycle Study (2012)

- 3.25** The Stage 2: Detailed Water Cycle Study was completed in November 2012 based on sites capable of delivering the directions of growth identified in the Core Strategy 2009. This assesses the capacity of the water environment and water services infrastructure to sustain the level of development proposed. The Study acknowledges limits to wastewater treatment capacity as Brampton, Ramsey, Somersham, St Ives and St Neots. Engineering solutions are feasible for all but Brampton to increase capacity; at Brampton changes to discharge to the River Great Ouse provide a workable solution. In all cases the assessments have shown that the ability of watercourses to meet water quality targets (good status) will not be compromised by growth. The study also shows where developers will be required to contribute towards upgrades to existing or new sewerage infrastructure.
- 3.26** The study concluded that Huntingdonshire will have adequate water supply to cater for proposed growth in the Core Strategy given the planned resource management approaches of Anglian Water Services and Cambridge Water. However, key sources of water (rivers and aquifers) are close to their limits of abstraction before ecosystems reliant upon them may be detrimentally affected. In order to reduce reliance on raw water supplies the study sets out ways in which new developments should reduce demand for water and further action should not be necessary. It will be updated to consider the full implications of this Local Plan.
- 3.27** Surface water drainage management systems have changed from conventional systems which focused on clearing surface water as quickly as possible at risk of causing flooding downstream, to the use of sustainable drainage systems which hold back and treat surface water to reduce downstream flood risk and protect water quality. The study reflects the district's aim of achieving sustainable drainage systems for all future developments where technically feasible and acceptable to the Environment Agency or Internal Drainage Board receiving the water discharge.

# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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## Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

**3.28** The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was updated in 2010 specifically to help guide allocations for development in Huntingdonshire. It used the most up-to-date hydraulic modelling and topographical data available and took into account the presence of existing flood defences. Much of the district lies between the large floodplains of the River Nene in the north east and the River Great Ouse in the south. Flooding across the district varies in nature from well defined valleys such as Bury Brook, through the large low lying floodplains of the Great Ouse and the Nene and then the Fen area managed by 12 Internal Drainage Boards. The SFRA flood extent maps show the annual probability of flooding.

## Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)

**3.29** The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 has a vision for high quality green spaces that enhance the quality of new and existing communities, provide health and leisure benefits for residents and improve the Cambridgeshire 'offer' to attract businesses and individuals considering locating here and help retain them within the area. "Green Infrastructure" is a broad term referring to many different types of green and open spaces, water courses and the routes and links between them. The strategy establishes a 'Strategic Network' where green infrastructure can provide the greatest benefit to:

- enhance quality of life by providing an attractive living, working and recreational environment
- attract and retain high value businesses
- offer economic opportunities for rural industries and land management
- encourage exercise and activities to improve health and well-being
- play a major role in tourism by creating visitor attractions, preserving attractive landscapes and conserving biodiversity.

**3.30** Within Huntingdonshire this covers the River Nene, the Huntingdonshire Fens and Wolds and the River Great Ouse. The strategy supports delivery of green infrastructure in a flexible manner at different scales and by a number of organisations as and when resources and opportunities permit.

## Heritage Assets Registers

**3.31** Huntingdonshire benefits from extensive heritage assets with over 60 conservation areas, nearly 2,800 listed buildings, five registered historic parks and gardens and over 50 scheduled ancient monuments. The Council is committed to the positive conservation of heritage assets which are recognised as an irreplaceable resource that make an important contribution to the identity, distinctiveness and sense of place of Huntingdonshire.

**3.32** English Heritage maintains a national Heritage at Risk register which in 2012 identified four listed buildings within Huntingdonshire: 4 buildings Parish Church of All Saints in Elton, Church of All Saints in Grafham, Park Wall of Hinchingsbrooke House in Huntingdon and St Andrews Church in Woodwalton and 8 scheduled ancient monuments. This is complemented by the local Buildings at Risk register which sets out a strategy for buildings considered locally to be at risk. The 2011 Register identifies 245 listed buildings within the district categorised as at risk and in need of repair, including 19 buildings identified as being at severe and immediate risk of further rapid deterioration and 20 in as being at high risk of further deterioration. Extensive repair and/ or stabilisation works are urgently needed for both these categories.

## Habitats Regulations Assessment (to be undertaken)

**3.33** Regulation 48(1) of the Habitats Regulations 1994 requires that the impacts of policies, plans and proposals on Natura 2000 (European sites)<sup>(6)</sup> are assessed. Since 2005 government has required all land use plans to be subject to appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations where they could have a significant effect on European sites. The objective is to ensure that European sites, which represent our most valuable nature conservation assets are fully and properly protected.

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6 Consisting of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar sites



- 3.34** The Habitats Directive applies the precautionary principle in that plans can only be permitted if it can be ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site(s) in question. A two stage process is required; first a screening process is used to check whether the plan is likely to have any impacts on European sites. If impacts cannot be ruled out a full assessment forms the second stage. The full assessment establishes the full extent of any impacts and identifies measures to eliminate or mitigate them. The process is overseen by Natural England.
- 3.35** The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be completed prior to the Proposed Submission Local Plan. Any recommendations from the assessment will be incorporated at that stage.

### The Spatial Strategy for Huntingdonshire to 2036

- 3.36** The following spatial vision and objectives are shaped by the influences identified above and in particular by the vision and objectives from the draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Spatial Framework 2011-31. The vision provides an aspirational description of Huntingdonshire in 2036, complemented by a series of objectives to help deliver it. The paramount theme is building sustainable communities with a high quality of life, by providing for essential infrastructure and community facilities, enhancing accessibility, encouraging a dynamic economy that fulfils its potential, by addressing the implications of climate change and by conserving and enhancing the district's environment.

#### Spatial Vision and Objectives for Huntingdonshire to 2036

##### Spatial Vision

###### Development and growth

By 2036 Huntingdonshire will:

- Be a destination of choice as a place to live, work and invest. It will offer attractive homes, jobs and a high quality of life providing opportunities for all residents and workers to achieve their maximum potential and enjoy healthy and sustainable lifestyles.
- Have grown sustainably by locating new homes in and close to Huntingdon, St Neots, Alconbury Enterprise Zone and Wyton-on-the-Hill as the main existing and proposed centres of employment through planned strategic expansion locations as well as a range of smaller development sites.

###### Infrastructure

By 2036 Huntingdonshire will:

- Benefit from integrated transport networks, including an improved A14, frequent high quality public transport between main centres and an enhanced east coast mainline railway. There will be a closer relationship between homes, jobs and services, access to high quality routes for walking and cycling and good links to strategic green space and the wider countryside.
- Comprise vibrant and inclusive communities with access to community and social facilities that provide opportunities for a high quality of community life.

###### Housing

By 2036 Huntingdonshire will:

- Have met its full objectively assessed need for housing including provision of a range of tenures, housing types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. Communities will be empowered to deliver housing schemes that meet local needs and help sustain and enhance their vitality.

# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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## Economic development

By 2036 Huntingdonshire will:

- Be home to a successful Enterprise Zone and foster a culture of enterprise by supporting the existing business base, encouraging investment from businesses in high value sectors and encouraging entrepreneurship at an early age. Superfast broadband will be available across the district supporting wider economic growth.
- Attract and retain a flexible and resilient workforce and support the educational attainment and skills needed to realise the district's economic potential, including development of university level qualification capability.
- Have thriving, distinctive town centres which meet 21st century needs and have established their own niche to compete and survive as retail centres.
- Retain its thriving countryside blending agriculture, strategic green space, rural businesses and tourism whilst maintaining the distinctive character of the rural areas.

## Environment

By 2036 Huntingdonshire will:

- Successfully conserve and enhance its urban, rural and historic environment retaining attractive market towns and villages and distinctive landscapes including the Great Fen, Ouse valley, Grafham Water and ancient woodlands.
- Contribute towards Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's aspirations to promote low carbon living, efficient use of resources, sustainable development and green infrastructure.
- Be well prepared for the impact of climate change and highly adapted to its predicted effects, especially in low lying areas and through minimisation of additional demands for water.

## Objectives

### Development and growth

1. To maintain a good supply of suitable land for growth, focused on previously developed land, offering sites of a variety of sizes and types to meet a range of market demands.
2. To promote high quality, well designed, locally distinctive sustainable development that is adaptable to climate change and resilient to extreme weather.
3. To provide better job opportunities and more affordable homes to help create a more balanced and diverse local population and encourage more young people to stay or move here.
4. To facilitate opportunities for people to pursue a healthy lifestyle and to actively participate in their community and to have a high quality of life.

### Infrastructure

5. To maintain an up-to-date Infrastructure Business Plan to identify the infrastructure needs of proposed developments and to prioritise investment to be provided by developer contributions and other identifiable resources.
6. To focus investment on improving access in strategic expansion locations to make optimum use of available resources.
7. To facilitate sustainable modes of travel and minimise the needs for unnecessary travel in all new developments. Where travel and mobility is beneficial high priority is to be given to use of public transport, cycling or walking.

## Infrastructure

8. To provide for adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of new growth and facilitate active, cohesive communities and sustainable lifestyles.
9. To ensure inclusive and accessible provision for community needs including education, health, social care, policing, sports, play and open space and integrated community facilities.

## Housing

10. To provide for a quantity and quality of housing growth to support the economic aspirations of the district while contributing to sustainable patterns of development across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
11. To provide a range of market and affordable homes that enables choice between types, sizes and tenures as well as over lifetimes and within individual communities.
12. To provide opportunities for vulnerable people to live independent lives with support to meet their needs.
13. To promote attractive, safe and distinctive residential neighbourhoods in which people can meet their day-to-day social, health, educational, recreational and convenience shopping requirements with access to sustainable transport to meet other needs.

## Economic development

14. To promote economic growth and resilience and diversify the range of businesses active in the district that can add greater value to the local economy.
15. To maximise the advantages offered by Huntingdonshire's strategic location to develop complementary sector specialisms, supply chains and business accommodation.
16. To increase the proportion of economically active residents in the district and promote education and skills that meet the future needs of the local economy.
17. To enhance the role of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey's town centres helping them to adapt to modern retail trends and focusing commercial developments towards the most accessible locations.
18. To support agriculture, farm diversification, estate management and rural tourism that will support the function and character of the countryside and its communities.

## Environment

19. To utilise sustainable design and construction techniques; as a minimum to meet national standards for building performance as they evolve and to exceed them where feasible and viable to do so.
20. To maximise opportunities for minimising energy and water use and securing carbon emission reductions in all new development and transport choices.
21. To encourage waste management and pollution control practices which minimise contributions to climate change and do not incur unacceptable impacts on the local environment or endanger human health.
22. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's heritage assets, characteristic landscapes, natural habitats and biodiversity.
23. To conserve and enhance Huntingdonshire's strategic green infrastructure, including the water-related features of the Great Fen, Ouse valley and Grafham Water and promote a balance between conservation and public access to and enjoyment of these assets.



# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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## Strategy and principles for development

- 3.37** The purpose of setting out the strategy and principles for development is to provide a clear context for delivering the vision and achieving the objectives set for Huntingdonshire by 2036. They are intended to help ensure that the Local Plan will enable delivery of a strong local economy with high quality job opportunities and sufficient homes to meet needs along with facilitating essential infrastructure provision. They also aim to facilitate sustainable and well designed communities whilst protecting the natural and historic environment.
- 3.38** A series of strategic developments have been planned and are expected to come forward as key elements of the strategy. They will contribute to delivery of a mix of new uses including new homes and employment facilities to be complemented by the provision of new community infrastructure and environmental, countryside and green space protection mechanisms.
- 3.39** The challenge is to make the most of the opportunities that arise from establishment of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone and to positively anticipate and address the issues that will face a growing population. The key to achieving good planning for Huntingdonshire in the period to 2036 will be to effectively balance and manage the competing economic, environmental and social pressures that will come forward as a consequence of the district's growth.

### Policy LP 1

#### Strategy and principles for development

The Council will support proposals which contribute to the delivery of new housing, economic growth and diversification and infrastructure provision through the following development strategy:

- 3 strategic expansion locations will make provision for approximately 12,450 new homes giving a range of accommodation to meet the needs of all sectors of the community and to facilitate growth of the local economy, in particular through the designated enterprise zone at Alconbury Weald
- market towns and key service centres will make provision for approximately 7,850 new homes and support economic and community development that serves needs in the most sustainable locations, promotes the vitality and viability of established communities and maintains their character and identity
- the Ouse valley, Great Fen, Grafham Water/ Brampton Woods area and the Nene valley will be priority areas for strategic green infrastructure enhancement of public access

Development proposals will be expected to:

- a. prioritise the use of previously developed land in accessible locations;
- b. contribute to the creation or maintenance of mixed and socially inclusive communities by integrating development of homes, jobs, services and facilities;
- c. make efficient use of land, buildings and infrastructure within existing settlements whilst preserving local character and distinctiveness;
- d. promote healthy, active lifestyles by protecting and enhancing green space, sport and recreation facilities
- e. maximise opportunities for use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- f. provide appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs generated by the proposed development;
- g. support the local economy by providing a mix of employment opportunities suitable for local people;
- h. minimise greenhouse gas emissions, oxides of nitrogen, fine particles and other forms of pollution;
- i. reduce water consumption and wastage, minimising the impact on water resources and quality and managing flood risk; and
- j. protect and enhance the historic environment and the range and vitality of characteristic landscapes, habitats and species.



- 3.40** The overall development target for Huntingdonshire is to provide 21,000 new homes between 2011-2036 to meet the objectively assessed need as set out in the JSPU's Technical Report. These will need to be accompanied by appropriate levels of employment, retail, community facilities and infrastructure provision.
- 3.41** Housing development is ongoing, with a number of planning permissions in place at the Local Plan base date of 1 April 2011. There were also some residual development allocations from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002. The latest available monitoring data is for 31 March 2012 which can be found in the Annual Monitoring Report 2012<sup>(7)</sup>. This shows that 875 new homes were completed in 2011/12. It also shows the number of planning permissions outstanding and properties under construction. To help provide certainty over the delivery of sites which only have outline planning permission, a number of these are proposed for allocation to facilitate their delivery should the planning permissions expire. Once such sites are deducted from the total level of current commitments a balance of 1,818 homes are expected to be delivered through sites with outstanding permission, or where part is already under construction or on sites with permission for less than 10 dwellings where allocations are not proposed. Also included in the commitments figure are a small number of sites which the Council had considered for allocation but gained full permission after 31 March 2012 and are already under construction, so do not require allocation (totalling 107 dwellings).
- 3.42** The following table sets out how the target is expected to be delivered.

**Table 1 Composition of the housing target**

Source	Number of homes
Completions 2011/12	875
Commitments excluding those proposed for allocation	1,818
Proposed allocations	17,902
Total approximate proposed dwellings <sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>	20,595

- All capacities have been estimated at a conservative level and proposed schemes may include higher or lower numbers.
  - Proposed allocations at Alconbury Weald and Wyton-on-the-Hill may have potential for some more dwellings which are not reflected in this number.
  - Small sites and windfalls are additional to this number and are expected to contribute further dwellings to overall housing delivery.
- 3.43** A minimum threshold of 10 dwellings has been set for proposed allocations. However, it is recognised that developments will continue to come forward on new sites below this threshold. These will be additional to the proposed allocation numbers.
- 3.44** The following diagram illustrates the key elements of the Spatial Strategy.

## The Key Diagram of the Spatial Strategy

- 3.45** The Key Diagram illustrates the key elements of the Spatial Strategy. It includes the three Strategic Expansion Locations, the settlements of the Spatial Planning Areas and Key Service Centres as well as key features such as the River Great Ouse, The Great Fen and Grafham Water. It does not show proposed development sites.

7 Available on the Council's [website](#).

# 3 The Spatial Strategy

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Figure 1 The Key Diagram of the Spatial Strategy





## 4 Infrastructure and Delivery

- 4.1** The provision of new and improved infrastructure to support existing and future residents and businesses will be important to ensure the successful delivery of sustainable growth in Huntingdonshire and the surrounding area. The types of new infrastructure required to ensure that the district functions effectively include road and public transport improvements, energy and power distribution, water and waste facilities, schools and education facilities, health centres, community and leisure facilities, green infrastructure and communications infrastructure such as broadband. Partnership working will be essential to successful delivery of the spatial strategy. Development will play an important role in the provision of new and improved infrastructure to address additional needs created by residents and users of new developments.
- 4.2** The Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014 (2013) was developed by the Growth and Infrastructure Group of the Huntingdonshire Local Strategic Partnership. It helps to identify the infrastructure needs arising from developments proposed to 2026 through the Core Strategy. This will be updated for 2014/15 to incorporate needs arising from proposed Local Plan allocations. A further infrastructure study has been commissioned to update the existing studies and will be available to guide the preparation of the next stage of preparing the new Local Plan. Projects are categorised according to their scale of impact, prioritisation and timescale.

### Transport Infrastructure

- 4.3** The A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon is a crucial piece of infrastructure to this area as it intersects with the M11, A428 and A1. The length of the A14 that runs through Cambridgeshire regularly experiences excessive traffic congestion, accidents and incidents which undermine investment and limit growth particularly within the Cambridge sub-region. The condition of the A14 is a key consideration for many businesses when deciding whether or not to invest locally and a lot of potential growth depends on its early improvement.
- 4.4** In July 2012 the Transport Secretary announced that a major new A14 scheme involving tolling and other measures will be added to the Department for Transport's (DfT) programme of major projects. Detailed design and statutory processes have been started. The A14 package as described in July 2012 includes construction of a new bypass to the south of Huntingdon re-routing the A14 between the A1 in the west and Fen Drayton or Trinity Foot beyond the eastern edge of the District. The existing route, which may be changed by the removal of the viaduct over the railway at Huntingdon, will become part of a local road network. This announcement enables the Local Plan process to proceed with more certainty.
- 4.5** Since the Stage 2 consultations in the autumn of 2012, there has been further progress on identifying options on the future of the A14. The DfT and Highways Agency have continued with initial work on the scheme design and are developing and refining plans for a tolling regime. The proposed improvement scheme includes the planned separation of local and long distance traffic movements which would greatly increase the reliability for both commercial traffic and local residents. The current aspiration is for the A14 improvement scheme to start in 2018. To assist with funding the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCGPEP) have committed up to £50 million in Enterprise Zone business rates receipts over 25 years to the proposed A14 upgrade. Local councils along the route and business partners are also expected to contribute towards the costs of the scheme.
- 4.6** The section of the A428 between Caxton Gibbet and St Neots is the only section of the main east-west route between the M1 and the east coast which remains as single carriageway. It is recognised that this will also need to be upgraded although the DfT have no programme for this at present. The nature and scale of improvements will vary depending on proposed developments along the route and alterations to traffic volumes as a result of A14 works. As further details about any proposed scheme emerge they will need to be taken into account as preparation of the Local Plan progresses.

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- 4.7 In January 2013 Network Rail's strategic business plan incorporated a proposed £240 million improvement scheme for the East Coast Mainline to address key bottlenecks. The potential for creation of an additional railway station for the district is also being explored in conjunction with development proposals at Alconbury Weald.
- 4.8 The guided bus linking Cambridge and Huntingdon was opened in 2011 with dedicated route running from Addenbrookes Hospital in the south of Cambridge to the park and ride at St Ives and on-road priority measures through to Huntingdon. Services have been expanded to include routes to Somersham, Wyton and Peterborough. There may be potential for further route expansion and additional services in conjunction with new developments.
- 4.9 To promote the sustainability of new developments and encourage use of non-car based transport the Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014 identifies an extensive list of potential improvements to public transport, walking and cycling routes. Many of these are local in scale and nature but in combination have potential to significantly enhance people's experience of using these methods of transport.

## Economic/ Regeneration Requirements

- 4.10 Achieving economic recovery and growth is an essential component of sustainable development. The Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan (2013) sets out the Council's aspirations for the future shape of the local economy. Ensuring appropriate infrastructure is an important element of delivering this, including improving the quality of the environment for businesses. Although investment will undoubtedly focus primarily in the key growth areas it will be important to ensure that villages and rural areas also receive the economic support necessary to facilitate economic activity.

## Social and Community Infrastructure

- 4.11 Social and community infrastructure is likewise an essential component of sustainable development; it is provision of this infrastructure that tends to affect people's daily lives more than other elements. This covers provision of health, education, leisure and recreation, public halls, open space and emergency services. The Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014 identifies a large number and range of projects required to meet the needs of proposed new development. Funding for these will come from a variety of sources including developer contributions for on-site provision and contributions from the community infrastructure levy.

## Community Infrastructure Levy

- 4.12 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new mechanism to allow local planning authorities to raise funds to help provide infrastructure that is, or will be, needed as a result of development. The Council introduced its CIL charging schedule on 1 May 2012. The CIL will generate funding to help deliver a range of district-wide and local infrastructure projects that support residential and economic growth prioritised in the Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014. CIL will provide certainty for future development, and benefit local communities, however, it must be recognised that CIL receipts will be insufficient to fund all infrastructure required in the district. The Infrastructure Business Plan provides a detailed project list of infrastructure requirements. There will however remain a role for planning obligations and other funding mechanisms for specific developments where there would be a specific issue arising from the development that would be best met on site.
- 4.13 The Localism Act (2011) also requires CIL charging authorities to allocate a 'meaningful proportion' of levy revenues back to the neighbourhood in which they are raised for the town or parish council to spend on locally agreed and prioritised infrastructure. The government recently set out new regulations for the apportionment of this 'meaningful proportion' which sets out different arrangements depending on whether a neighbourhood plan is in place. Following regulation the Council will work with town and parish councils to try to ensure that essential infrastructure is delivered in a timely fashion.



## Communications Infrastructure

- 4.14** Telecoms providers generally offer good broadband coverage in urban and commercial areas, but this does not reach enough rural areas in our region. Investing in superfast broadband will help our existing businesses to grow, bring innovative, new companies to the area and create new jobs. Increasing broadband coverage in rural areas will encourage local enterprise, give more people the flexibility to work from home, save transport costs and reduce congestion. Wider access to broadband will also bring opportunities to provide health, education and public services in better ways. This includes supporting elderly and vulnerable people so they can live independently, and helping young people and adult learners to develop the skills they need to succeed.
- 4.15** The 'Connecting Cambridgeshire' initiative has set out a plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to have at least 90% of homes and businesses with access to superfast broadband with speeds of at least 24Mbps and better broadband connectivity for all remaining premises by 2015.

## Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

- 4.16** Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF) has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in Huntingdonshire, especially from biomass (including waste), wind and solar sources. The Council is currently updating its supplementary planning document on landscape sensitivity to wind turbine development with a view to adopting the revised document later in 2013.

## Utilities

- 4.17** The proposed level of growth within Huntingdonshire will necessitate the strategic upgrade of infrastructure by the utility companies in some areas. The timing for these upgrades and need for regulator approval before implementation could have an impact on the extent or timing of growth within the affected areas. As well as demand for supply to new developments there may be changes to the level and nature of demand from existing users in response to sustainability initiatives and changes in the balance of energy sources. The Council's partner organisations will need to address this through their annual management plans.

## Flood Risk and Water Management

- 4.18** Significant areas of Huntingdonshire are at some risk of flooding. These areas are concentrated around the River Nene in the north of the district and the Great Ouse that runs through the southern and central parts of Huntingdonshire.
- 4.19** It has been concluded that, allowing for the planned resource management of Anglian Water Services and Cambridge Water, Huntingdonshire will have adequate water supply to cater for growth over the plan period. However the Anglian region is the driest part of the UK and rivers and aquifers are considered to be close to their limits of abstraction before ecosystems reliant on them would be adversely affected. It is also predicted that climate change will further reduce available water resources. In order to reduce reliance on water supplies from rivers and aquifers, the Detailed WCS has recommended ways to minimise water use, moving towards achieving a more 'water neutral' position i.e. that there is no net increase in water demand between the current use and after development has taken place.

## Green Infrastructure

- 4.20** Green infrastructure provides a balance to built development facilitating opportunities for people to access open space and providing habitats for plants and wildlife. The largest scale green infrastructure scheme in the district is the Great Fen project which aims to link Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen and create 3,700 hectares of wetland incorporating a range of recreation, education and business uses. The River Great Ouse provides a strategic green corridor between St Neots, Huntingdon and St Ives, flowing out of the district at Earith; improved access is being provided at Paxton Pits. Grafham Water provides a focal point

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for watersports and walking and has opportunities for improved linkages with nearby ancient and semi-natural woodlands. The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) identifies a series of projects which would enhance green infrastructure provision in the district.

- 4.21 Policies in this chapter are set out in order to clearly identify how development should contribute to addressing the infrastructure issues that arise.

## Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery

- 4.22 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to securing developer contributions towards local infrastructure, facilities and services from sustainable development proposals, predominantly through the Community Infrastructure Levy and planning obligations.

### Policy LP 2

#### Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery

A proposal will be supported where it makes appropriate contributions towards the provision of infrastructure, and of meeting economic, social and environmental requirements.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy

Applicable developments will be liable to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as set out in the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule<sup>(8)</sup> or successor documents.

#### Planning Obligations

Contributions in addition to the CIL may be necessary to make the proposals acceptable in planning terms. Such contributions will be calculated as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)<sup>(9)</sup> or successor documents and will be sought through a planning obligation. The nature and scale of planning obligations sought will depend on the form of development and the impact it is considered to have upon the surrounding area on the basis of documentary evidence. Provision may be required on or off site as set out in the SPD. The timing of provision of infrastructure and facilities will be carefully considered in order to ensure that adequate provision is in place before development is occupied or comes into use.

All considerations and negotiations will be undertaken in a positive manner in order to come to the most appropriate solution and will, subject to such evidence being submitted, take viability and other material considerations including specific site conditions into account.

Where particular requirements of development sites set out in other policies in this plan are known they are included in the applicable policy.

Subdivision of sites in order to avoid liability for contributions will not be accepted. Contributions will be calculated on the complete developable area. Where the development proposes the sub-division of a larger developable area contributions will be apportioned on a pro-rata basis.

### Reasoning

- 4.23 Provision of adequate infrastructure within development is essential both to mitigate the impact of that development and enable growing communities to be as sustainable as possible. Development can place additional demands upon physical infrastructure and social facilities, as well as having impacts upon the environment.

8 Available from the Council's [website](#)

9 Available from the Council's [website](#)

- 4.24** The Community Infrastructure Levy mechanism allows local planning authorities to levy development in order to pay for the infrastructure that is, or will be, needed as a result of that development. The [Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule 2012](#) (or successor documents) sets out the charge per square metre that will apply to each category of development where new floorspace is being created. CIL is unlikely to cover the full costs of all infrastructure requirements. Therefore, it will be important to identify strategic infrastructure dependencies and requirements and to identify priorities for funding with partners in order to help ensure clarity over implementation and funding. The Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014, prepared in partnership by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership, sets out how CIL receipts will be used; this will be reviewed each year to ensure that it is up to date and necessary infrastructure will be appropriately prioritised.
- 4.25** Planning obligations, often known as Section 106 Agreements and planning conditions will also be used for local infrastructure requirements on a development site, such as site specific local provision of open space, connection to utility services, habitat protection, access roads and archaeological investigations. For large scale developments further obligations could be required for instance on-site provision of a primary school. Guidance is set out in the [Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document \(2011\)](#) or successor documents.
- 4.26** The adopted Recycling for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) Waste Management Design Guide SPD needs to be taken into account by development proposals as it includes advice on developer contributions for Household Recycling Centres. It is available from the [Cambridgeshire County Council website](#).
- 4.27** The Council will endeavour to ensure that contributions to infrastructure are not unduly burdensome to development by being flexible regarding timing and delivery of infrastructure and taking site specific considerations including viability into account. However, the Council will also endeavour to ensure that adequate provision is in place before development is occupied or comes into use.
- 4.28** Subdivision of sites in order to avoid liability for contributions will not be accepted. For example the requirement to provide affordable housing, as set out in Policy LP 25 'Affordable Housing Provision' will apply to incremental developments on sites which would result in the development of 10 dwellings or more on a larger site. Where a large site was divided up into smaller sites and proposals were submitted for 9 dwellings or less on each site on a piecemeal basis affordable housing provision would be sought on a proportional basis.
- 4.29** Please refer to the '[Important Note:](#)' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Communications Infrastructure

- 4.30** Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.
- 4.31** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new sustainable developments provide for the installation of fibre optic cabling to allow the implementation of next generation broadband.

### Policy LP 3

#### Communications Infrastructure

A proposal including homes, employment or main town centre uses will support and help implement the aims and objectives of the 'Connecting Cambridgeshire' broadband initiative. This will be achieved through provision of on-site infrastructure, including open access ducting to industry standards, to enable all premises and homes to be directly served by fibre optic broadband technology. Exceptions will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that making such provision would render the development unviable.



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## Reasoning

- 4.32** Delivery of broadband across Huntingdonshire is an issue that can affect business competitiveness and economic productivity and can lead to rural areas being disadvantaged in terms of community integration, economic vibrancy, farm diversification and home working. 'Connecting Cambridgeshire' was launched in 2012 with the aim of providing access to superfast broadband to at least 90% of homes and businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and better broadband connections for all other premises, by 2015.
- 4.33** The policy expects homes, employment uses and main town centre uses to be able to connect to fibre optic broadband infrastructure. It is recognised that the availability of such infrastructure will vary considerably across the district. The expectation is that even where such infrastructure is not readily available that provision is made for local infrastructure of ducting and cabinets to enable connection when the strategic connections are put in place.
- 4.34** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Mobile Communications Infrastructure

- 4.35** The Council supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband. However, the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations will be kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of networks as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.
- 4.36** The Council will apply the requirements of the NPPF relating to evidence that telecommunications infrastructure will not cause significant or irremediable interference and the potential for the construction of new buildings or other structures interfering with broadcast and telecommunications services.
- 4.37** Where applications for telecommunications development (including for prior approval under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order) are supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development as set out in the NPPF they will be processed without delay.
- 4.38** The Council can only determine applications on planning grounds and will not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

## Enabled Exceptions

- 4.39** The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to and criteria for considering agreed sustainable community based development proposals and to help deliver positive community planning.

### Policy LP 4

#### Enabled Exceptions

A community based proposal for a locally prioritised community project will be supported in or adjacent to a Key Service Centre or Small Settlement where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. it has clear support from the local community;
- b. all elements of the proposal have been carefully considered, particularly siting and design, in order to maximise sustainability benefits;



- c. all elements of the proposal have been carefully considered in order to avoid any potential adverse impact on its surroundings, including the surrounding landscape, townscape, countryside, and the amenity of existing and future residents and users; and
- d. where cross subsidising development is proposed it is demonstrably sufficient for the specified project and no more.

A project involving affordable housing will be expected to comply with relevant requirements of [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#).

## Reasoning

- 4.40** The Localism Act 2011 devolves greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and gives local communities greater inputs into local planning decisions.
- 4.41** Development opportunities in the district's rural parishes are constrained by a range of factors but it is recognised that rural communities may wish to address the longer term sustainability of their area through the identification of community based development opportunities which could enable and ensure the delivery of identified community projects.
- 4.42** Each parish's set of long-term planning and development priorities, and associated community supported development projects, should be established through an appropriate community commissioned study or Neighbourhood Development Plan, which should be subject to and supported by local consultation. However, mechanisms will also be established whereby other appropriate proposals may also come forward.
- 4.43** The range of community projects that may be considered under this policy may include (but are not limited to):
- community based affordable housing (please refer to [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#))
  - provision or enhancement of playing fields, play equipment, play areas or outdoor sports facilities
  - provision or enhancement of community buildings, which may include community centres and meeting rooms
  - community managed shops, post offices or public houses
  - targeted environmental and conservation improvements
  - provision or enhancement of community managed allotments
  - creation or enhancement of community managed woodland and other publicly accessible natural green space
  - community managed renewable energy facilities
  - community managed telecommunications infrastructure
  - provision or enhancement of community nursery and educational facilities
  - provision of car parking
- 4.44** Enabling development will be considered in cases where it is required to deliver community facilities that have been prioritised by local communities. The Council may consider integration of a small proportion of open market housing where cross-subsidy is essential in order to make delivery of the community project viable. However, in considering such schemes it would need to be satisfied that the development has community support and that the minimum number of market houses are incorporated to ensure the project's viability. In addition the Council will seek legal assurances that the facility being enabled will be delivered.
- 4.45** A project promoting affordable housing to meet local needs will be encouraged in locations offering residents access to at least a basic level of facilities appropriate to their needs to help reduce their need to travel. For instance access to a food shop and also a primary school where the houses will be occupied by

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families would be preferred. The level of services available locally, along with the form and location of affordable housing, will be informed by Parish or Neighbourhood Development Plans where they are available.

4.46 Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

4.47 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's strategy for managing the growth of renewable and low carbon energy generation as part of Huntingdonshire's contribution to this important part of the UK's energy infrastructure.

### Policy LP 5

#### Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

A proposal for a renewable or low carbon energy generating scheme will be supported where all potential adverse impacts including cumulative impacts have been avoided or minimised as far as possible. In addressing adverse impacts the proposal will demonstrate how it will seek to avoid harm to:

- a. the environment and local amenity including noise levels;
- b. any heritage assets and/ or their settings;
- c. biodiversity; and
- d. the character of the surrounding landscape with reference to the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007)<sup>(10)</sup> and the Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Power Development SPD (2013)<sup>(11)</sup> or successor documents.

If adverse impacts are identified and they are proven to be unavoidable, the proposal will be required to demonstrate that such impacts have been minimised as far as possible. Where residual environmental effects remain after avoidance and minimisation the proposal will include alternative enhancement and/ or compensatory measures. The level of harm and the extent to which adverse impacts remain will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

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.

#### Reasoning

4.48 Together with energy conservation measures, the construction of renewable energy generation installations is central to efforts to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and achieve statutorily agreed reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Government policy encourages renewable energy schemes unless the environmental impacts would outweigh the wider social, economic and environmental advantages that stem from exploiting the energy generation potential unless restrictive policies set out in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

4.49 Research<sup>(12)</sup> has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in Huntingdonshire, especially from biomass (including waste), wind and solar sources. This policy is intended to encourage appropriate schemes whilst ensuring the risk of adverse impacts is minimised.

10 Available from the Council's [website](#)

11 Available from the Council's [website](#)

12 Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF)

- 4.50** An updated Supplementary Planning Document on Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Turbine Development will be completed by the Council in summer 2013. This document provides information on the relative sensitivity and capacity of the district's landscapes in relation to wind turbines, indicates the criteria that would need to be taken into account and provides guidance on potential mitigation measures. It clarifies the guidance regarding impacts of wind turbine development taking into account changes and developments since the previous SPD was published. A range of matters will need to be considered, including the effects on amenity such as noise generation, shadow flicker and electromagnetic disturbance as well as the impact on the natural and built environment. The Council also issued clarification on the specification of assessments and information that should be submitted with applications.
- 4.51** In the case of wind energy proposals there are often residual landscape and visual impacts which, because of the scale of proposed development, are impossible to fully mitigate. In such circumstances it may be appropriate to make landscape enhancements in the wider site and surroundings, create new habitats or enhance existing ones.
- 4.52** Some renewable energy technologies are developing rapidly, and it is recognised that sites and equipment may become obsolete. Arrangements for the removal of any equipment, should it cease to be operational, are required in order to prevent unnecessary environmental intrusion. Where sites become redundant they should be returned to a state agreed by the Council. In appropriate circumstances this may include the creation of priority habitats included in the England Biodiversity List. In most cases this will be secured through the use of planning conditions.
- 4.53** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Flood Risk and Water Management

- 4.54** The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach in relation to flood risk and water infrastructure.

### Policy LP 6

#### Flood Risk and Water Management

##### Flood Risk

A proposal will be supported where:

- a. it is located in an area that is not at risk of flooding with reference to the Environment Agency flood risk maps and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), unless a Sequential Test, and if necessary an Exception Test, as set out in the NPPF's technical guidance on flood risk, proves the development is acceptable;
- b. suitable flood protection/ mitigation measures can be agreed as appropriate to the level and nature of flood risk and satisfactorily implemented and maintained; and
- c. there will be no increase in the risk of flooding for properties elsewhere, e.g. through a net increase in surface water run-off, or a reduction in the capacity of flood water storage areas, unless suitable compensation or mitigation measures exist or can be agreed, satisfactorily implemented and maintained.

##### Surface Water

A proposal will be supported where:

- d. sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are incorporated where possible in accordance with the Cambridgeshire SuDS Design and Adoption Manual and the Cambridgeshire SuDS Handbook



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- (forthcoming)<sup>(13)</sup> or successor documents to the satisfaction of Cambridgeshire County Council as SuDS approval body and considered comprehensively with water efficiency measures;
- e. the standing advice of the appropriate Internal Drainage Board and the Middle Level Commissioners has been taken into account for the proposal if surface water would drain to an Internal Drainage Board area; and
  - f. there is no adverse impact on, or unacceptable risk to, the quantity or quality of water resources by incorporating appropriate measures to help achieve the strategic aim of reducing impact and risks to the quality and quantity of water resources and to help meet the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

## Waste Water

Where a proposal would be served by the Brampton, St Ives or Ramsey Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTWs) it will only be supported where:

- g. it can be demonstrated that waste water from the proposal can be accommodated either within the limits of capacity at the relevant WWTWs or by sufficient capacity being made available;
- h. the requirements of the Water Framework Directive will not be compromised; and
- i. for proposals generating flows to Ramsey WWTWs appropriate flood mitigation measures are incorporated to minimise flood risk in the Middle Level system.

Where a proposal would be served by the St Neots WWTWs it will only be supported where a pre-development enquiry has been sought with Anglian Water Services to determine process capacity at the Waste Water Treatment Works.

A proposal for development of a site which the Detailed Water Cycle Study or subsequent updates indicates has potentially limited sewer network capacity, will only be supported where a pre-development enquiry has been sought with Anglian Water Services to determine any upgrades needed.

## Reasoning

- 4.55** Huntingdonshire is relatively low lying with much of the district lying between the two large floodplains of the River Nene in the northeast and the River Great Ouse in the southwest. Much of Huntingdonshire is also close to or below sea level with these areas being managed by inland drainage boards and the Middle Level Commissioners. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was completed for the District in 2004 and updated in 2009 which considers the extent, nature and implications of fluvial and tidal flood risk in Huntingdonshire. This assessment takes into account the implications of climate change which may lead to additional flooding risk.
- 4.56** The Environment Agency publishes Indicative Floodplain Maps of vulnerable low lying areas to show where the annual likelihood of flooding is greater than 1% in any year for fluvial inland flooding (equivalent to 1 flood event in 100 years). These maps do not take into account any existing flood defences but show what land could be vulnerable to flooding at this frequency and are thus termed the indicative floodplain maps. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2009)<sup>(14)</sup> supplements this information.
- 4.57** The damage caused by floods is costly, disruptive and distressing for those affected, so it is essential that development does not add to the risk of flooding that already exists. Development should be located in areas at the least risk of flooding, following the technical guidance issued with the NPPF. Where there is any residual risk, measures must be incorporated to ensure safety for occupants and no increase of risk on neighbouring land.

13 These documents will be available from Cambridgeshire County Council's [website](#) once finalised

14 Available from the Council's [website](#)



- 4.58** The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water flows is required by the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. Cambridgeshire County Council is the body that will approve drainage systems before construction begins. The County Council has also produced the 2011 Surface Water Management Plan, together with some detailed 'wet spot' maps which identify how surface water will be managed. SuDS can also assist pollution control through improved filtration and habitat creation within developments. The Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) has published useful guidance which should be referred to: SuDS Manual (reference C697) and the Site handbook for the construction of SuDS (reference C698), both of which are available from the [CIRIA website](#). Information on how SuDS can be incorporated into development can be found in the Cambridgeshire SuDS Design and Adoption Manual, the Cambridgeshire SuDS Handbook (forthcoming) and Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)<sup>(15)</sup>.
- 4.59** In support of the Local Plan a stage 2 Water Cycle Study has been completed. The study advises on policy content with regards to wastewater, water supply, surface water management, flood risk and ecology. This policy has been updated reflecting the study's advice with water supply recommendations addressed in Policy LP 14 'Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions'. Reference should be had to the study which is available from the Council's consultation [website](#).
- 4.60** Please refer to the '[Important Note:](#)' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

### Strategic Green Infrastructure Enhancement

- 4.61** A range of strategies, masterplans and other coordinated approaches have been used to compile areas of strategic green infrastructure enhancement. Within these areas action will be taken with statutory and other agencies and bodies to improve their biodiversity, landscape and recreational value through appropriate forms of habitat creation and landscape management and projects to promote quiet enjoyment of these areas. The creation and enhancement of links between these areas will be promoted.

#### The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

- 4.62** This strategy was produced for Cambridgeshire in 2011. This strategy is designed to assist in shaping and co-ordinating the delivery of green infrastructure in the county, to provide social, environmental and economic benefits now and in the future. The strategy used a range of themes; biodiversity, climate change, green infrastructure gateways, heritage, landscape, publicly accessible open space and rights of way, to identify a strategic green infrastructure network. The strategic green infrastructure network is divided into six strategic area of which the Huntingdonshire Fens and Woods and the Great Ouse fall at least in part within Huntingdonshire.

#### The Great Fen

- 4.63** The Great Fen project's aim is to restore more than 3,700 hectares of fenland habitat connecting Woodwalton Fen and Holme Fen National Nature Reserves. This will provide many conservation benefits for wildlife as well as recreational and educational benefits for residents. It will also contribute to agricultural diversification and the development of the local economy through increases in visitors and creation of new jobs and income streams through different land management regimes and visitor enterprises. The Great Fen Partnership, of which Huntingdonshire District Council is a member, prepared a master plan for the Great Fen in 2010. The Council has endorsed the master plan as Council policy to help determine development proposals within the Great Fen itself and within the Great Fen landscape and visual setting.

#### The Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area Partnership

- 4.64** The Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area was established in 2012 and covers northern parts of Huntingdonshire northwards from the A605 by Elton and west of the B671 through to railway line at the Wansford Tunnel. It covers all the district north of the railway line. It also runs down the northeastern side of the district, extending to southwest of the A1 from Wansford Station to Chesterton. Various habitat

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15 Available from the Council's [website](#)

# 4 Infrastructure and Delivery

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opportunities are identified for wet and dry grassland and for wet woodland. The Partnership intends to review and update green infrastructure strategies and delivery plans to ensure their content remains appropriate given the relatively recent designation of this area. The production of an NIA Supplementary Planning Document to include the delivery of the NIA objectives for North Northamptonshire is planned.

## Fens for the Future

- 4.65** This strategic plan for the fenland areas surrounding the Wash covers an extensive area of eastern England including a large area in the northeast of Huntingdonshire. The plan is intended to help the Fens for the Future Partnership identify the top priorities for biodiversity action and assist with subsequent funding bids across the 'Inland Fens' part of the Fens National Character Area. The plan identifies a series of target areas include the Great Fen, landscape corridors with several linking the Great Fen with other important areas in the Fens and sustainable use areas where the focus should be on the sustainable use of natural resources and appropriate economic activities, together with the maintenance of ecosystem services.

## The Bedfordshire and Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan

- 4.66** This strategy released in 2007 includes a strategic green infrastructure network with two corridors of significance for Huntingdonshire. The strategy identifies these as the Milton Keynes - Grafham Water corridor and the Lower Great Ouse River Valley Corridor which extends along the river through St Neots. The link with the River Great Ouse is clearly identified in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 and the Cambridgeshire strategy also covers the area west of Grafham Water.

## Peterborough's Green Grid Strategy

- 4.67** Peterborough's Green Grid Strategy 2007 sets out the proposed green infrastructure for the area including local green infrastructure corridors around Yaxley, Farcet and Folksworth. The strategy was produced by consultants on behalf of the wider Green Grid Partnership. The strategy seeks to provide a comprehensive vision to improve the quality, quantity and connectivity of the area's green spaces and to identify proposals for capital projects.

## South Peterborough Green Parks Delivery Plan

- 4.68** This 2008 plan identifies a number of projects in the north of Huntingdonshire between the A1, Yaxley and Farcet. The Plan as a whole covers an extensive area of land to the south of Peterborough stretching from the A1 in the west, through the Hamptons up to the Nene Washes and Whittlesey to the east. The area largely lies within the Peterborough administrative area but also includes parts of Fenland District to the east as well as parts of Huntingdonshire.

## The Northamptonshire Environmental Character and Green Infrastructure Suite (Strategic Green Infrastructure Network)

- 4.69** The Strategic Green Infrastructure Network released in 2006 identifies two sub-regional corridors extending into Huntingdonshire. The first is along the River Nene into Peterborough entitled 'Nene Valley (Wansford - Peterborough)'. The second is along the A605 past Elton and Haddon entitled 'Elton Park - Peterborough (Peterborough Green Wheel Link)'. There are also four local corridors; extending to Great Gidding, along the B662 near Old Weston, along the A14 near Keyston, and along the B645 near Covington.
- 4.70** The purpose of this policy is to set out council's approach to protecting and enhancing Huntingdonshire's green infrastructure to the benefit of biodiversity and local residents for recreation and leisure.

## Policy LP 7

### Strategic Green Infrastructure Enhancement

The Council will work with partners to safeguard, enhance and facilitate provision of and access to strategic green space. In order to help achieve these aims a proposal will be supported where it:

- a. is consistent with the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2011 or successor documents; and/ or
- b. contributes towards the objectives of protecting, managing and enhancing existing green infrastructure, of creating new green infrastructure and of creating and strengthening links between areas of green infrastructure as shown on the Strategic Green Infrastructure Map.

Additionally a proposal will be expected to:

- c. assist in achieving Natural England's Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt) through improving accessibility, naturalness and connectivity of green spaces;
- d. provide replacement provision of equal or greater value than that which will be affected where the proposal would result in harm to existing green infrastructure; and
- e. maintain and where appropriate enhance the rights of way network.

Where a proposal gives rise to a specific requirement for green infrastructure, provision will be required in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions SPD<sup>(16)</sup>, or successor documents, informed by the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and other relevant plans and strategies as identified in supporting text.

The following priority areas are defined which have potential to consolidate and link important habitats and facilitate access improvements:

#### The Great Fen

Within the Great Fen a proposal will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that it will make a positive contribution towards the implementation of the Great Fen master plan or successor documents.

A proposal that lies outside the Great Fen but within its Landscape and Visual Setting will be expected to demonstrate consideration of the visual and landscape impacts that the proposal could have on the Great Fen, such as how the proposal might affect the aims of the Great Fen project to establish an area where the experience gained by visitors will be one of a tranquil area of countryside unaffected by urban encroachment.

#### Grafham Water/ Brampton Woods

A proposal will be supported where it would create linkages between Grafham Water and any nearby ancient or semi-ancient woodland where it demonstrates how enhanced access can be provided without harming biodiversity.

#### Nene Valley Area

Within the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) a proposal will be expected to consult the NIA Partnership to ensure that the proposal is compatible with the objectives of the NIA and where possible enables identified habitat opportunities to be achieved.

#### Great Ouse Valley

16 Available from the Council's [website](#)



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A proposal will be supported where it would contribute to the value of the Great Ouse Valley as a key landscape corridor by incorporating improvements to publicly accessible open space and promote its role for quiet leisure uses.

A proposal will be supported where it demonstrates how it contributes to delivery of the Green Fen Way project to improve countryside access networks and the Fens Waterways Link project to enhance river navigation.

A proposal at Paxton Pits should demonstrate how it will help to deliver the objectives of the Management Plan (as amended 2007) or successor documents.

A proposal for reuse of sand and gravel extraction pits should demonstrate how it will contribute to habitat creation and public access to the countryside.

## Reasoning

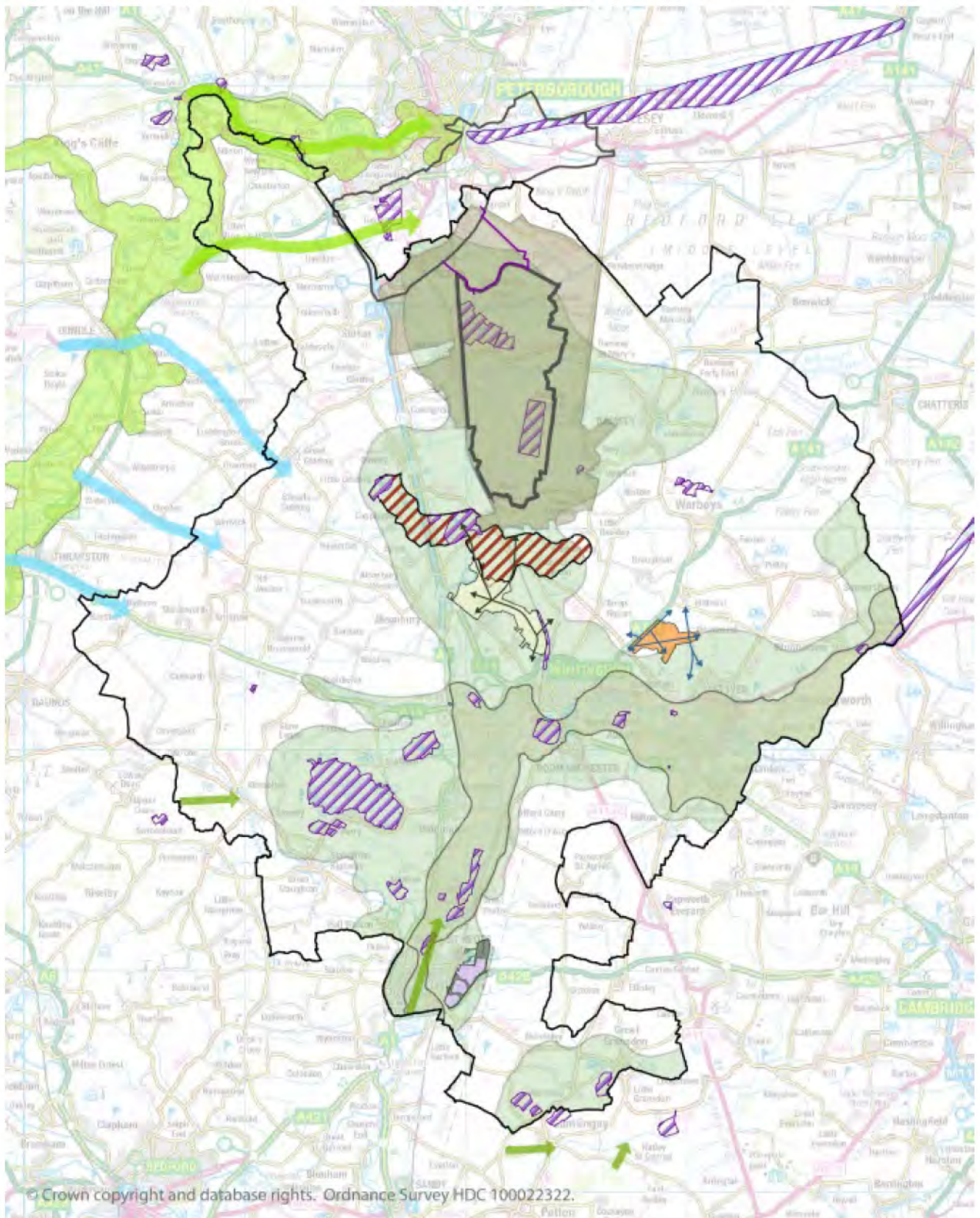
- 4.71** Huntingdonshire's countryside needs to respond to changing economic and environmental circumstances. Improving the ecological, visual and recreational value of the countryside brings environmental, social and health benefits. It can also boost the local economy through increased visitor spending. Green infrastructure is essential to enhancing biodiversity by providing important green corridors for species and helping to protect against habitat fragmentation.
- 4.72** Green infrastructure has an important role in tackling the effects of climate change. Green infrastructure provides important cooling, shading and filtering effects that will become even more significant if temperatures rise as predicted. Trees and woodland in particular have a role to play as they store CO<sub>2</sub> and intercept rainfall which can help to reduce erosion and prevent flooding.
- 4.73** The National Planning and Policy Framework encourages local planning authorities to identify areas of strategic green space in Local Plans. Such areas will have the effect of helping to balance development with conserving and improving the natural environment.
- 4.74** The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is the key document to which reference should be made. It is recognised that the strategic green infrastructure map, in accordance with the Strategy, covers urban areas, but in most cases it is only the edges of these urban areas that are relevant. Within the strategic green infrastructure network identified by the strategy it will be important to ensure that development proposals do not conflict with its vision and objectives. The Council will seek to identify enhancement projects for these areas and the identified related green corridors by working with appropriate partners.
- 4.75** Particular reference is made to the Great Fen given the strategic importance of this project. The Great Fen masterplan contains detailed advice on preferred proposals within the area and proposals should look to balance tourism and nature conservation requirements. Within the Landscape and Visual Setting of the Great Fen, the primary aim of this area is to protect the tranquillity of the Great Fen itself. It will help to protect the Great Fen against visual and noise intrusion from major structures such as wind turbines, telecommunications masts and any other major development located in close proximity to the project area. Development will not be precluded within this area; however, potential impact on the Great Fen will be a material consideration when determining applications that fall within the boundary. Beyond this boundary major structures, although potentially visible from the Great Fen area, are less likely to impact on the setting of the Great Fen.
- 4.76** The Nene Valley area has been identified in recognition of the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area (NIA) which was not established at the time of writing the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy. A development proposal within this area will be expected to consult with the NIA Partnership to ensure that the proposal is compatible with the objectives of the Nene Valley NIA and where possible enables identified habitat opportunities to be achieved.

- 4.77** Paxton Pits is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) owned or leased by several different organisations and companies, each of whom undertakes management for wildlife, with the help of a large group of volunteers. A management plan was prepared in 1999 and in 2007 it was announced that the nature reserve would expand to 704 acres.
- 4.78** Grafham Water, Brampton Wood, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and other areas are not specifically identified in this policy although they are covered within the areas identified for Strategic Green Infrastructure. Where appropriate these areas will also be specifically identified as Local Green Spaces in Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.79** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.



















# 4 Infrastructure and Delivery

Figure 2 Strategic Green Infrastructure Enhancement





## Key for Strategic Green Infrastructure

-  Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting
-  CCC Strategic Green Infrastructure
-  Nene Valley NIA Boundary
-  Alconbury Weald
-  Wyton-on-the-Hill
-  St Neots Eastern Expansion
-  St Neots Eastern Expansion Green Spaces
-  Central Claylands Sub Area of Extensive Woodland (Landscape Character Area)
-  Ouse Valley (Landscape Character Area)
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest
-  Huntingdonshire District Boundary
-  Alconbury Weald Green Links
-  Potential Green Links
-  Linkages to Neighbouring Green Infrastructure
-  Sub Regional and Local Corridors
-  South Peterborough Green Parks Access Links
-  South Peterborough Green Parks Proposed SPGP Extents
-  Great Fen Project Area

# 5 Development Strategy

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## 5 Development Strategy

5.1 This section sets out a series of policies that will provide a framework for determining development proposals that may come forward during the plan period on sites that are not allocated in the finalised Local Plan. These policies follow the strategic aim of concentrating development in the larger settlements that offer the best provision of services and facilities and to seek to protect the character of smaller settlements and the countryside.

### Spatial Planning Areas

5.2 The relationship between the district's four towns and the settlements that surround them is important. While each settlement possesses its own distinctive character and identity, there are strong functional, economic and social links between settlements. Smaller settlements therefore benefit from their proximity to larger settlements through greater sustainability than they would otherwise have if they were more isolated. The range of services in the towns is also supported by people who live in the villages that surround the towns. Within the areas of the market towns and their nearby settlements existing and future residents enjoy greater opportunities for a sustainable lifestyle. This relationship is defined in spatial planning terms as Spatial Planning Areas (SPAs).

5.3 There are four Spatial Planning Areas:

- Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area
- St Neots Spatial Planning Area
- St Ives Spatial Planning Area
- Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

5.4 Each SPA is defined through a description of the settlements and key areas that are considered to form part of it. The SPAs are not identified on a map specifically so that attention is focused on the wider spatial relationship rather than the simple geographic relationship. This approach is deliberate as it maintains flexibility in the strategy and does not artificially constrain sustainable development.

5.5 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's criteria for planning for a range of uses in the Spatial Planning Areas of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey.

#### Policy LP 8

##### Development in the Spatial Planning Areas

Four Spatial Planning Areas (SPAs) have been defined in Huntingdonshire:

**Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area** comprises Huntingdon, Brampton and Godmanchester as well as the Strategic Expansion Location of Alconbury Weald<sup>(17)</sup>. Huntingdon is the primary settlement within this SPA.

**St Neots Spatial Planning Area** comprises St Neots and Little Paxton. St Neots is the primary settlement within this SPA.

**St Ives Spatial Planning Area** comprises St Ives<sup>(18)</sup>. St Ives is the primary settlement within this SPA.

**Ramsey Spatial Planning Area** comprises Ramsey and Bury<sup>(19)</sup>. Ramsey is the primary settlement within this SPA.

17 See Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SEL 1 'Alconbury Weald (previously HU 29)'

18 Including the built-up area of the town which falls within the parish boundaries of Fenstanton, Hemingford Grey, Houghton and Wyton and Holywell cum Needingworth

19 Including the built-up area of the town which falls within the parish boundary of Upwood

A series of sites are allocated for development in this plan in order to achieve the spatial strategy. In addition to these other proposals will be supported where they are in accordance with policies of this plan and the following requirements.

### **Residential Development**

A proposal which includes housing, including residential institution uses<sup>(20)</sup> or supported housing, will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of an identified SPA settlement.

### **Economic Development**

A proposal which includes economic development will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of an identified SPA settlement. An appropriate location for a retail, office, leisure or tourism accommodation scheme will be determined through the application of the sequential approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>(21)</sup>. Where the proposal includes more than 600m<sup>2</sup> of net retail floorspace an impact assessment will need to be completed.

### **Other uses**

A proposal which includes a non-residential institutional use<sup>(22)</sup> or a tourism facility or attraction will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of an identified SPA settlement.

### **Mixed use development**

A mix of uses will be supported where each use accords with the applicable requirements detailed above.

### **Relationship of settlements within the Spatial Planning Area**

A proposal will be supported where it will not undermine the primacy of the primary settlement within the SPA or adversely affect the relationship between the settlements of the SPA whether this is through its scale or other impacts.

## **Reasoning**

- 5.6** The Huntingdon SPA has the widest range of facilities and employment in the district and is a sustainable location for promoting additional growth. Allocations will be made for new development including a major growth area at Alconbury Weald.
- 5.7** The St Neots SPA has a range of facilities and employment second only to the Huntingdon SPA and is a sustainable location for promoting additional growth. St Neots already has the largest population of any market town in Cambridgeshire and a major growth area to the east is proposed adding to the Loves Farm development. The policy aims to encourage sustainable growth and support new investment within the St Neots SPA. Additional shops and related town centre uses in the town centre are encouraged to ensure that it is attractive to the growing population.
- 5.8** The St Ives SPA has a smaller range of facilities and employment than the Huntingdon and St Neots SPAs but is still a sustainable location for promoting additional growth. A smaller number of land allocations are planned together with a growth area, St Ives West, which links with recent development in the area known as Green Acres and Slepe Meadow. The policy aims to encourage sustainable economic growth and support new investment within the St Ives SPA. Some new investment in retailing is expected within the town centre in order to ensure that it remains as an attractive centre for daily needs as well as specialist interests.

20 Falling within Class C2 of the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended

21 See NPPF paragraph 24

22 Falling within Class D1 of the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended



# 5 Development Strategy

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- 5.9** The Ramsey Spatial Planning Area has limited sustainability and as such the focus of planning policy is on ensuring that the area is allowed to improve and redevelop over time, making the best use of existing buildings, previously developed land and other resources. Allocations planned for new development reflect existing opportunities within the area. A range of uses are encouraged within Ramsey town centre so that it can continue to be able to offer a range of retail and commercial businesses.
- 5.10** Further development is also encouraged within the built-up area where there are vacant plots or opportunities to redevelop land. In addition to individual homes, provision is made for residential institutions and supported housing, which may include care homes for the elderly, disabled or vulnerable. Major new investment in retailing is expected within Huntingdon town centre and to the west of the existing town centre. Restaurants, hotels and leisure uses are encouraged and should look to locate within the town centres. Additional office space within town centres will help to ensure that services within the town centre are well used. Town centre uses will therefore be located in the town centre unless a sequential approach and impact assessment prove a different location is justified. A threshold of 600 m<sup>2</sup> has been determined locally based on analysis of retail properties within Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey town centres. The threshold is set such that the vast majority of retail properties within each town fall below the threshold.
- 5.11** Proposals for shops, offices, leisure and tourist accommodation facilities of a small scale outside of the town centre must be directly related to the local area. For example, a local corner shop may be expected to serve residential areas.
- 5.12** Non-residential institutions, which may include medical centres, day nurseries and schools, may be located on suitable sites in appropriate locations anywhere within the built-up area. Such sites will need to be large enough to cater for the use and associated car parking and well located on the transport network.

## Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

- 5.13** Huntingdon is the primary settlement within this SPA and is the focal point for services and facilities for surrounding settlements. Sustainable development proposals will not undermine Huntingdon's role within the SPA or adversely affect the relationship between the SPA's settlements whether this is through its scale or other impacts such as the extent to which trade is attracted to locations outside of the town centre of Huntingdon or the local centres within Brampton, Godmanchester and Alconbury Weald. This applies as much to development proposals located within the SPA as to those elsewhere in the district.
- 5.14** The Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area incorporates Huntingdon, Brampton and Godmanchester which are all related by their location in the River Great Ouse valley. It also now incorporates the former Alconbury airfield where Alconbury Enterprise Zone was designated in 2011 on 150ha along with land southeast together promoted as 'Alconbury Weald'. It excludes the Stukeleys which are partially surrounded by this area, to encourage a clear distinction between the Stukeleys and the proposed development at Alconbury Weald. Huntingdon is situated centrally in the district with Brampton to the south west and Godmanchester to the south east. All are accessible from the A14 with the A1 lying immediately to the west of Brampton.
- 5.15** The area is a key driver of the local economy, particularly in the retail, leisure and office sectors. The majority of services and facilities are concentrated in Huntingdon but are accessible to Brampton, Godmanchester, Alconbury Weald and beyond by public transport, cycling and walking. Further education and medical services are also provided in Huntingdon.

## Huntingdon

- 5.16** Huntingdon's historic core lies north of the River Great Ouse centred on the High Street. Major expansion to the town occurred to the north and east in the 1960s and 1970s bringing substantial housing and industrial areas and leading to the coalescence of the village of Hartford with Huntingdon. The East Coast Mainline Railway bisects the town on a north-south axis restricting linkages from the west to the town centre. The 1980s saw major housing growth at Stukeley Meadows to the north west of the town centre. The Hinchingsbrooke area to the west has a distinctive character with extensive public service buildings,

modern housing and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park formed from grounds formerly associated with Hinchingsbrooke House. The A14 bisects the south west of the town, much of it on an elevated carriageway. The River Great Ouse and its flood meadows form the southern and eastern boundaries to Huntingdon.

- 5.17** Huntingdon town centre provides the highest order retail facilities in the district. A natural extension to Huntingdon's town centre is possible to the west of the ring road, where an area for growth was established in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan adopted in 2011. A subsequent planning application has been approved for a new link road between George Street and Ermine Street which will enable new retail and mixed use development in the area and re-route some traffic currently using the ring road.

### **Brampton**

- 5.18** Brampton comprises two distinct areas. Firstly, the main village with its historic core running along The Green, High Street and on to Buckden Road with expansion, particularly to the west, since the 1960s. This is linked by linear development along Buckden Road to the second area, the soon to be redundant RAF Brampton, which lies south of the main village separated by a wedge of arable land.

### **Godmanchester**

- 5.19** Godmanchester lies immediately south of Huntingdon to the east of the River Great Ouse. Its historic core was shaped by the pentagonal layout established in Roman times. Major growth to the east occurred in the 1950s and 1960s with southern expansion following from the 1980s onwards. The Ouse valley flood meadows dominate the western boundary of Godmanchester with the A14 forming the northeastern boundary.

### **Alconbury Weald**

- 5.20** Alconbury Weald is located at the former Alconbury airfield and adjoining land to the north of Huntingdon close to Great and Little Stukeley. An enterprise zone was designated on 150ha and further land in the same ownership offers the potential for links with Huntingdon. See [Proposed Allocation \(Mixed use\) SEL 1 'Alconbury Weald \(previously HU 29\)'](#) for details.

## **St Neots Spatial Planning Area**

- 5.21** The St Neots Spatial Planning Area incorporates St Neots and Little Paxton. St Neots itself incorporates Eynesbury, Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford each of which retain their own distinct character; while Little Paxton remains separated to the north by the River Kym and St Neots Golf Club. Significant residential development is being built at Loves Farm to the east of St Neots and to the south of Little Paxton on the site of the former paper mill.
- 5.22** The River Great Ouse bisects St Neots and flows to the east of Little Paxton. The area is also characterised by the A1 and the A428 roads which in effect form the western and southern boundaries. The East Coast mainline railway historically formed the eastern boundary to development, but development beyond this has taken place at Loves Farm, and further development is planned as part of the St Neots East Urban Extension.
- 5.23** St Neots is the largest town in the county after Cambridge and plays a significant role in the local economy with several large established employment areas. Retailing is centred on St Neots High Street on the east side of the River Great Ouse. The established town centre provides a substantial range of comparison and convenience shopping facilities. The area boasts significant heritage assets with the entire St Neots town centre being designated as a conservation area.

## **St Ives Spatial Planning Area**

- 5.24** The St Ives Spatial Planning Area incorporates the town of St Ives and parts of the parishes of Hemingford Grey, Fenstanton, Houghton and Wyton, Wyton-on-the-Hill and Holywell-cum-Needingworth where they relate closely to St Ives. The area is smaller in scale than the Huntingdon and St Neots SPAs and retains



# 5 Development Strategy

the character of a small market town. St Ives has an attractive town centre with strong local character and supporting a number of prominent independent retailers combining to provide a successful small market town. Business and industrial estates are established towards the eastern side of the town. The Busway provides direct services to Cambridge with a park and ride facility from the east of the town.

- 5.25** St Ives is constrained by significant flood risk from the River Great Ouse. Many of the town's iconic buildings relate to the river such as the Mill and the town bridge. Much of its green fringe is also inextricably linked to the river such as the Hemingford Meadows which contribute to a strong visual gateway into town.

## Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

- 5.26** The Ramsey Spatial Planning Area includes Ramsey, Bury and part of RAF Upwood, but excludes the villages of Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Marys and Upwood. Although relatively small the town serves as a focal point for a widely spread rural population, providing town centre and related facilities, medical services, secondary education and leisure facilities.
- 5.27** Ramsey's historic core is centred around the Abbey to the east of the town centre. The traditional shopping area is focused on Great Whyte. In 2009 a superstore opened to the north of the town centre as part of the Ramsey Gateway project.
- 5.28** Bury lies to the south and is a small settlement with strong links to the former RAF Upwood airfield, which lies to the south-western of the village. Originally two distinct settlements Ramsey and Bury have now merged as a consequence of residential development to the south west of Ramsey. The junction of Upwood Road and the B1040 defines the point at which Ramsey and Bury merge. The urban area extends south west to include areas of housing formerly associated with RAF Upwood. The High Lode industrial area defines the northern edge of the town.
- 5.29** The elevated landscape to the south and west and the lower lying Fenland landscape to the north and east combine with the lack of significant vegetation to allow extensive views around the spatial planning area.
- 5.30** In comparison to the three other towns Ramsey is somewhat less sustainable
- 5.31** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Key Service Centres

- 5.32** Huntingdonshire has seven larger villages which currently provide focal points for local service provision across the district and are considered to be Key Service Centres that are not part of any of the spatial planning areas. These are Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley. Each is considered capable of accommodating some development sustainably, subject to appropriate parameters and contributions to services, facilities and infrastructure, and where services, facilities and infrastructure provision can be accommodated. All key service centres offer a range of services and facilities to meet the daily needs of their own residents and generally those of neighbouring small settlements. At the least these include: a primary school, a doctor's surgery, a bus service operating Monday to Saturday, a public hall and a convenience shop. In addition, other shops, a library and local employment opportunities are often available.

### Buckden

- 5.33** Buckden is located approximately 8kms south-west of Huntingdon, and 3kms east of Grafham Water. The historic core of the village is centred around Buckden Towers (formerly Buckden Palace) and extends to the west of the church where the village edge is now defined by the A1. The former Great North Road (now the High Street) is lined by many Georgian brick buildings which combine to create a distinctive centre to the settlement of high architectural quality and possessing a strong sense of place.



### Fenstanton

- 5.34** Fenstanton is situated some 3kms south of St Ives immediately north of the A14. It provides a primary school and range of services. Historically the village was associated with Hilton to the south, but the links between these are now limited to an overbridge and a pedestrian underpass due to the A14. Public transport has been reduced since the opening of the Busway.

### Kimbolton

- 5.35** Kimbolton is located 12kms north-west of St Neots and 3kms west of Grafham Water. The village lies in the valley of the River Kym and comprises two distinct parts. Its historic core is focused on High Street and East Street. High Street is lined by highly distinctive historic buildings leading towards the gateway of Kimbolton School to the south eastern end and St Andrews Church to the western end. The newer part of the village lies to the north of the River Kym which provides a green corridor running through the village. The extensive parkland associated with Kimbolton Castle surrounds the village to the east and south.

### Sawtry

- 5.36** Sawtry is located immediately west of the A1, midway between Huntingdon and Peterborough. Sawtry benefits from a secondary school as well as primary school provision and a leisure centre as well as a range of shops and services. Large post war housing estates dominate the southern and western parts of the village in particular although some parts retain a distinctive rural character. To the east of the village the planted road embankments and noise barriers along Bill Hall Way and the A1 screen the majority of views towards the village. Sawtry also benefits from a significant area of employment use development located on the eastern side of the A1 which provides local employment opportunities.

### Somersham

- 5.37** Somersham is located on the edge of the Huntingdonshire Fens approximately 6kms north east of St Ives. The historic core of the village is centred around the High Street and Church Street. South of the village the site of the Bishop's Palace is a scheduled ancient monument. Somersham has both state and private primary education and a range of shops, services and community facilities including extensive sports facilities. Over the last 50 years the village has more than doubled in size with development mainly to the north of the historic core.

### Warboys

- 5.38** Warboys is located approximately 11kms north east of Huntingdon and 6kms south of Ramsey. The focal points of the Baptist Church, Clock Tower and Weir provide distinctive local landmarks. It has a library, primary school, and a good range of shops. Warboys industrial estate is located on the former airfield to the south west of the village.

### Yaxley

- 5.39** Yaxley is situated on the north western edge of the Huntingdonshire Fens approximately 6kms south of Peterborough. The historic core of the village lies along its southern edge, with historic buildings along Main Street and Church Street, including St Peter's Church, the spire of which provides a notable landmark within the village and wider landscape. Yaxley has expanded considerably through post-war residential and industrial development, with housing estates dominating land to the north and north east of the historic core. It has a supermarket, a range of other shops, a library and good public transport services to Peterborough.

# 5 Development Strategy

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## Wyton Airfield and Wyton-on-the-Hill

- 5.40** A central part of the strategy of this plan includes development at the Strategic Expansion Location of Wyton-on-the-Hill. This relates to both the Huntingdon and St Ives spatial planning areas but does not fall clearly within either. Once the allocation set out in Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SEL 3 'Wyton Airfield and Wyton-on-the-Hill (previously WT 1)' is implemented Wyton-on-the-Hill will be treated as a Key Service Centre.
- 5.41** The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's criteria for planning for a range of uses in the Key Service Centres of Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley and for the Wyton-on-the-Hill Strategic Expansion Area once development set out in this plan has been completed.

### Policy LP 9

#### Development in Key Service Centres

Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley are defined as Key Service Centres. Wyton Airfield and the expanded Wyton-on-the-Hill will be a Key Service Centre once the allocation is implemented.

A series of specific sites are allocated in this Local Plan in order to maintain and promote sustainable growth within the Key Service Centres. In addition to these, sustainable development proposals located within a Key Service Centre will be acceptable where they are in accordance with other policies of this Local Plan and the following criteria.

#### Residential Development

A housing scheme, including a residential institution<sup>(23)</sup> and supported housing, will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of the Key Service Centre.

#### Employment Development

An employment scheme will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of the Key Service Centre, excluding a proposed office development in excess of 600m<sup>2</sup>.

#### Town Centre Uses

A retail, office, leisure or tourism accommodation scheme including 600m<sup>2</sup> or less of net floorspace will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of the Key Service Centre where the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the locality.

#### Other Uses

A non-residential institution<sup>(24)</sup> or tourism facility or attraction will be supported where it is appropriately located within the built-up area of the Key Service Centre.

#### Mixed Use Development

A mix of uses will be supported where each use accords with the specific requirements detailed above.

#### Enabled Exceptions

23 Falling within Class C2 of the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended

24 Falling within Class D1 of the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended

An enabled exceptions proposal, including housing, which is appropriately located within or adjacent to the built-up area of the Key Service Centre will be supported where it accords with the criteria set out in [Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'](#) or [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#).

## Reasoning

- 5.42 The policy recognises the status of Key Service Centres as having a greater range of services than Small Settlements. Some land allocations for further housing in these areas recognise that there are opportunities for further sustainable development which will help ensure that the services in these areas have a continuing market.
- 5.43 Proposals for development of retail, office, leisure or tourism accommodation may be appropriate within Key Service Centres where they are small in size and appropriately located. A maximum of 600m<sup>2</sup> of net floorspace reflects the level for development where an impact assessment will be required for retail development proposals in other policies. In many cases in predominantly residential areas only a much smaller shop or office will be directly related to the role and function of that area. Particular attention is required to ensure that such proposals do not adversely affect the town centres of the market towns.
- 5.44 Rural exceptions can be applied to Key Service Centres, despite in some cases being relatively large, as they are considered to be focal points in the rural areas. Affordable housing developments on the edge of these areas could provide for much needed additional housing for people with local connections. Local communities which identify and prioritise projects that could enhance the sustainability of their settlements could address the delivery of these through [Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'](#).
- 5.45 Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Small Settlements

- 5.46 Small Settlements are much less sustainable than the Spatial Planning Areas and Key Service Centres due to the need to travel to access services and facilities elsewhere. However, given the variation in size and location between them it is recognised that some are more sustainable than others and could sustainably accommodate development.
- 5.47 Huntingdonshire contains a large number of villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings in the countryside. The villages are diverse in terms of size and the range of services available. Some have a primary school, limited shopping facilities and weekday bus services while others have few or no services at all. However, other than those defined as Key Service Centres none offer a sufficient range of services and facilities to sustain daily living without the need to access services and facilities elsewhere. These places are defined for planning purposes as Small Settlements. Places with a scattered development form comprising no built-up area or containing less than 30 homes are considered to form part of the countryside.
- 5.48 The purpose of this policy is to identify the small settlements across Huntingdonshire where sustainable development proposals within the built-up area will be assessed on their merits.



# 5 Development Strategy

## Policy LP 10

### Development in Small Settlements

The following places are defined as Small Settlements:

Abbotsley, Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Alconbury Weston, Alwalton, Bluntisham, Brington, Broughton, Buckworth, Bythorn, Catworth, Chesterton, Colne, Conington, Covington, Diddington, Earith, Easton, Ellington, Elton, Farcet, Folksworth, Glatton, Grafham, Great Gidding, Great Gransden, Great Paxton, Great Raveley, Great Staughton, Great Stukeley, Hail Weston, Hamerton, Hemingford Abbots, Hemingford Grey, Hilton, Holme, Holywell, Houghton and Wyton, Keyston, Kings Ripton, Leighton Bromswold, Little Stukeley, Molesworth, Needingworth, Offord Cluny, Offord D'Arcy, Oldhurst, Old Weston, Perry, Pidley, Pondersbridge (part)<sup>(25)</sup>, Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Mary's, Southoe, Spaldwick, Stibbington, Stilton, Stonely, Stow Longa, Tilbrook, Upton, Upwood, Wansford (part)<sup>(26)</sup>, Waresley, Water Newton, Winwick, Wistow, Woodhurst, Woodwalton, Wyton-on-the-Hill<sup>(27)</sup>, and Yelling.

A proposal which is located within the built-up area of a Small Settlement will be considered on individual sustainability merits, taking into account whether it is in accordance with other policies of this Local Plan. Sustainability will be considered on issues including the:

- a. availability of services;
- b. availability of sustainable modes of transport;
- c. efficient use of land and existing infrastructure;
- d. in relation to new homes, whether the proposal contributes to the mix of housing type and size having regard to the current Strategic Housing Market Assessment; and
- e. effect on the character of the settlement and surroundings

An enabled exceptions proposal, including housing, which is appropriately located within or adjacent to the built-up area of the Small Settlement will be supported where it accords with the criteria set out in [Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'](#) or [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#).

### Reasoning

**5.49** The nature of small settlements has already been identified. Many of the villages retain their historic form and have particular heritage features. Development pressure can easily undermine the sensitive character of these settlements if it is not sympathetic to its local context and the size of the settlement. The policy does not set out a size limit for development as the scale of development will be limited to that which fits with the settlements character and is within the built-up area. Local communities which identify and prioritise projects that could enhance the sustainability of their settlements could address the delivery of these through [Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'](#).

**5.50** Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## The Relationship Between the Built-up Area and the Countryside

**5.51** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that a clear distinction is drawn between development within built-up areas and development in the countryside. A very restricted range of sustainable development is anticipated in the countryside in order to protect its rural character, its role in the district's green infrastructure and the importance of protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land.

25 The greater part of this settlement lies within the neighbouring authority of Fenland

26 The greater part of this settlement lies within the neighbouring authority of Peterborough

27 Land adjoining Wyton-on-the-Hill is allocated as a strategic expansion location; once this development is implemented the expanded settlement will attain the status of a Key Service Centre.

## Policy LP 11

### The Relationship Between the Built-up Area and the Countryside

#### Built-up Areas

All settlements defined as Key Service Centres<sup>(28)</sup>, Small Settlements<sup>(29)</sup> or as settlements that are part of a Spatial Planning Area<sup>(30)</sup>, are considered to have a built-up area.

The built-up area is defined as a continuous group of 30 or more houses. It excludes:

- a. gardens, paddocks, agricultural land and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built-up area of the settlement;
- b. outdoor sports and recreation facilities, other formal open spaces and agricultural buildings on the edge of the settlement

Most settlements have a single built-up area but where settlements historically comprise more than one distinct group of 30 or more houses, each will be treated in the same way. The built-up area of a settlement may include areas within another parish. In such areas the built-up area will be considered as a single entity rather than separate areas.

A series of specific sites are allocated in this Plan in order to promote sustainable growth in Huntingdonshire. Only once these allocations have been developed will they form part of the built-up area.

#### Countryside

The countryside includes all land outside built-up areas and those hamlets, groups of buildings and individual buildings that are clearly detached from the continuous built-up area of a defined settlement that are not themselves defined settlements.

New homes in the countryside will require special justification for planning permission to be granted. The requirements are set out in [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#). Other proposals located in the countryside will be expected to demonstrate that there are clear sustainability benefits for the proposal being located there. Sustainability benefits will depend on the use or uses proposed and how the proposal complies with applicable policies of this plan and the NPPF.

A series of specific sites are allocated in this Plan, many of which would, were it not for their allocation, be considered to be part of the countryside. Areas of open or green space that are brought forward as part of such sites will be treated as part of the countryside.

#### Reuse of Existing Buildings for Non-Residential Use

A proposal that includes the reuse of existing buildings in the countryside will be expected to demonstrate that:

- c. the building is of permanent and substantial construction, and is structurally capable of being converted; or
- d. the building is of historic or architectural value which the proposal will safeguard; and
- e. the proposal does not include substantial extension or alteration.

#### Replacement Buildings for Non-Residential use

28 See [Policy LP 9 'Development in Key Service Centres'](#)

29 See [Policy LP 10 'Development in Small Settlements'](#)

30 See [Policy LP 8 'Development in the Spatial Planning Areas'](#)

# 5 Development Strategy

A proposal that includes the replacement of an existing building in the countryside may be supported where the building to be replaced:

- f. is of permanent and substantial construction, but is not capable of being converted to the proposed use; and
- g. detracts substantially from landscape or townscape character or from the amenity of existing residents or the users of existing buildings.

Replacement buildings will be expected to be located in the same position as the building being replaced unless relocation would bring about benefits in terms of:

- h. its impact upon landscape or townscape character; or
- i. for the amenity of existing residents or the users of existing buildings; or
- j. releasing land of high agricultural value by replacement on that of lower agricultural value.

Modest increases in size or scale of the replacement building over that of the building being replaced will be supported.

## Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances, as set out in [Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'](#) and [Policy LP 26 'Homes in the Countryside'](#), a proposal that does not necessarily comply with the above requirements may be supported.

## Reasoning

- 5.52** The distinction between settlements and areas of open countryside has been established by defining what constitutes the built-up area of settlements within the Spatial Planning Areas, Key Service Centres and Small Settlements. This criteria based approach is considered to be the most appropriate as it resolves specific problems encountered with the delineated boundaries of the previous Local Plan. Importantly it resolves the perception that any form of development on any land within a drawn boundary would be acceptable and the pressure for every piece of land within the boundary to be developed and thus damaging the loose knit character of many settlements in Huntingdonshire by creating harder, more regular edges to settlements.
- 5.53** All the place based policies use the concept of the built-up area. The definition of the built-up area is therefore presented as part of this document to enable full consideration of the policies.
- 5.54** Huntingdonshire is characterised by large areas of countryside. The character of the countryside varies from low-lying fens to undulating claylands, upland areas and the main river valleys. There are areas of very productive farmland as well as green infrastructure and the Great Fen. The Great Fen will restore a more traditional landscape in part of the fenland area. The highest land lies across the western and southern parts of the district. The main river valley is that of the River Great Ouse which forms a broad valley with shallow sides and a wide floodplain.
- 5.55** Homes in the countryside were historically built predominantly for farmers. Some places with a scattered form of development are also now considered to be located within the countryside. Some settlements, for instance Ramsey St Mary, St Ives (St Ives London Road), and Great Staughton have developed historically with more than one main cluster of properties. Where this is the case each will be considered as a separate and distinct built-up area.
- 5.56** At the edge of many settlements properties can be found with extensive gardens, formal open spaces or associated land. The open nature of these areas can often mean that they relate as much or even more to the surrounding countryside than they do to the built-up parts of the settlement. A determination will need to be made on whether an area is within the built-up area where development is proposed.



**5.57** It is recognised that existing buildings in the countryside are a resource that should be reused where appropriate. Replacement is not as desirable and limits are included in the policy to ensure that buildings which have reached the end of their economic life do not have a value simply to enable a non-agricultural alternative use, and potentially adversely affect the character of the area and operation of a farm. Agricultural buildings generally do not require planning permission and therefore the policy is not directed at those buildings.

**5.58** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

**5.59** The Government, in 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (March 2012), requires local authorities to have a strategy to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Assessments of need are carried out from time to time. Evidence for the Local Plan<sup>(31)</sup> has identified an approximate need for an additional 2.5 permanent residential pitches per year or 64 additional pitches by 2036. There is no precise figure identifying need specifically for transit sites or Travelling Showpeople plots. It is anticipated that needs will be met through approvals to planning applications.

**5.60** 22 permanent residential pitches have been approved between April 2011 and April 2013. This almost equates to the approximate need for permanent residential pitches for the first 10 years of the Local Plan at 2.5 pitches per year. On this basis it is not considered necessary to allocate any sites and no sites have been suggested by landowners during the consultation for this Local Plan. Should monitoring indicate that sites are not being delivered such that the target for new pitches is not likely to be met this may result in a partial review of this Local Plan. The criteria to guide Local Plan allocations should they prove necessary are those in the policy below which will also be used in assessing individual applications.

### Policy LP 12

#### Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Provision will be made for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites to meet identified needs. A proposal for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, transit sites and Travelling Showpeople plots will be supported where it is considered that:

- a. the location has reasonable access to local health services and primary schools;
- b. there will not be a significant adverse effect on the amenity of nearby residents or the effective operation of adjoining uses;
- c. the character and appearance of the wider landscape is not significantly harmed;
- d. the health and safety of occupants are not put at risk including through unsafe access to sites, poor air quality, contamination or unacceptable flood risk;
- e. in rural areas, the nearest settled community would not be dominated and the number of proposed pitches or plots is appropriate to the proposed location;
- f. the site provides a suitable level of residential amenity for the proposed residents for example in relation to protection from noise and provision of play facilities;
- g. there is adequate space for operational needs including the parking and turning of vehicles;
- h. there are appropriate management arrangements in place where the site may have multiple owners or tenants or be used for transit purposes
- i. the site can be safely and adequately serviced by infrastructure.

31 'Target Options and GTANA - June 2012', available from the Council's [website](#)

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## Reasoning

- 5.61** The government's 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' (DCLG March 2012) includes a policy on how decisions are to be taken on planning applications which must be read in conjunction with this local policy. These specific criteria guide the location and design of Gypsy and Traveller sites recognising their particular characteristics. Other national or local policies such as those relating to vehicular access, contamination and heritage assets are also applicable. The criteria recognise that sites may be located in rural areas. Although previously developed land is preferred, it is recognised that a small number of sites on greenfield land will not affect overall countryside policy. Local health services and schools should ideally be within walking or cycling distance of any site. The effect on neighbours and on the landscape is of particular importance, and sensitive areas should be avoided. Sites that are small in size, to accommodate a single family group, are likely to better meet the criteria although they must be of sufficient size to accommodate large vehicles. It is anticipated that the need for new Gypsy and Traveller sites will be met primarily through the creation of additional small family sized sites of up to four pitches although some larger sites that already exist, or new sites of up to eight pitches, may be appropriate depending upon local circumstances.
- 5.62** Further guidance is available in 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Good Practice Guide' (DCLG May 2008)<sup>(32)</sup> which sets out the features needed to help ensure a site is successful, easy to manage and maintain, including site location, layout, size and the services and facilities needed to make it operate effectively.
- 5.63** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

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32 Available from the DCLG [website](#)

## 6 Requiring Good Design

- 6.1 As identified in the NPPF good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. The choices made during the design stage of a development can affect a wide range of issues from the value of the development through to its longevity. The quality of design is important not only for the environment but also in the benefits to the owners and users of the buildings. It also makes commercial sense as there is clear evidence that investing in design can add value to development projects.

### Quality of Design

- 6.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's criteria for requiring high standards of design for all development and the built environment.

#### Policy LP 13

##### Quality of Design

A proposal will need to be designed to a high standard based on a thorough understanding of the site and its context. A proposal will therefore be expected to demonstrate that it:

- a. provides a strong sense of place through a design solution which reflects the surroundings and in the case of large scale proposals<sup>(33)</sup> through a masterplan which identifies how the place will develop;
- b. contributes positively to the local character, appearance, form and pattern of development through sensitive siting, scale, massing, form and arrangement of new development and use of colour and materials;
- c. includes high quality hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments so that there is a distinctive environment for the development and to help integration with adjoining landscapes;
- d. respects and responds appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape, and avoids the introduction of incongruous and intrusive elements into views. Where harm to local landscape character as a result of necessary development is unavoidable, appropriate mitigation measures will be required;
- e. has had regard to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2007)<sup>(34)</sup>, Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007)<sup>(35)</sup> and the Cambridgeshire Design Guide (2007) or successor documents and other relevant advice that promotes high quality design or that details the quality or character of the surroundings including, but not limited to, conservation area character statements, neighbourhood development plans, village design statements, parish plans, urban design frameworks, design briefs, master plans and national guidance; and
- f. has engaged positively with independent Design Review during the pre-application stage as appropriate and has implemented recommendations from the process where possible.

##### Residential Development

A proposal for homes, including conversions and subdivisions that creates new homes, will be expected to demonstrate how they achieve the criteria of the 'Building for Life' standard<sup>(36)</sup> or equivalent successor standards in order to achieve high quality development.

33 Proposals that consist of 50 or more homes, 2,500m<sup>2</sup> net floorspace or 2ha total land area

34 Available from the Council's [website](#)

35 Available from the Council's [website](#)

36 Available on the Design Council CABA [website](#)



# 6 Requiring Good Design

A proposal including 10 or more homes will be expected to demonstrate how they meet the 'Building for Life' Silver (Good) Standard or higher, or an equivalent in a successor or equivalent standard. Where there are significant constraints to meeting this standard they should be detailed in the design and access statement for the proposal.

As part of meeting the needs of our ageing population and those of people with disabilities a proposal that includes 10 or more homes will be expected to demonstrate how it complies with the Lifetime Neighbourhood standards or successor standards<sup>(37)</sup>.

## Reasoning

- 6.3** The Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and the Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment (2007) detail the typical townscape features of the market towns, their structural traits, characteristic detailing of architectural style and materials used locally. In respect of landscape, there are nine character areas which broadly influence the scale and form of development across the District. Development proposals should complement the existing built form, respect the fundamental character of the landscape and not introduce incongruous elements.
- 6.4** The Cambridgeshire Design Guide (2007) focuses on streets and the public realm recognising the County's role as the Highways Authority. Successful new streets and public spaces should be created following the guidance in this document. More detailed information is available in a number of documents specific to local areas and further guidance is available at a national level to support creative approaches to development generally. For large scale development the principles of Garden Cities may be appropriate as set out in *Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today* (2012)<sup>(38)</sup>.
- 6.5** It is acknowledged that for some proposals, such as for domestic extensions, the range of advice set out in this policy may not be entirely applicable especially where the proposal is minor or only just above what is permitted under permitted development rights. However, the minor nature of a proposal is no exemption from the need for proper consideration of design and all applications will be considered with regard to how they achieve good design and sustainability.
- 6.6** Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Good quality housing design can improve social wellbeing and quality of life by reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and increasing property values. Building for Life promotes design excellence and celebrates best practice in the house building industry. The twelve Building for Life criteria embody the vision of functional, attractive and sustainable housing. Housing developments are scored against the criteria to assess the quality of their design. Since being founded in 2001 Building for Life has grown to be the preeminent national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Building for Life assessments score the design quality of planned or completed housing developments against the Building for Life criteria. Formal assessments can only be carried out by an accredited Building for Life assessor. All proposals including homes will be expected to refer to and apply the Building for Life criteria and those including 10 or more homes will be expected to achieve the Silver/ Good standard.
- 6.7** Lifetime neighbourhoods are those which offer everyone the best possible chance of health, wellbeing, and social, economic and civic engagement regardless of age. They provide the built environment, infrastructure, housing, services and shared social space that allow us to pursue our own ambitions for a high quality of life. They do not exclude us as we age, nor as we become frail or disabled.

37 See the Lifetime Homes [website](#)

38 Available from the Town and Country Planning Association [website](#)

- 6.8** The concept of Lifetime Neighbourhoods is not a new one, yet often important opportunities for development and regeneration go ahead with little consideration of age in their planning, creating neighbourhoods that will fail many residents in future. Most features of lifetime neighbourhoods will benefit all generations. For example, limited public transport will impede access to amenities at all ages. However it may be particularly damaging to older people who are most reliant on it.
- 6.9** Older people play a major social, economic and civic role alongside other generations. Lifetime neighbourhoods will reap an 'age dividend' of improved health, inclusion and participation.
- 6.10** As identified in earlier sections of this plan Huntingdonshire is expected to have a proportionally much older population in 2036 than it does now. Planning for lifetime neighbourhoods will help us work towards truly sustainable communities. The Lifetime Neighbourhoods standards will therefore be expected to be applied in all proposals that include 10 or more homes.
- 6.11** Other Relevant Advice includes Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2, see '[Sustainable Travel](#)' for details.
- 6.12** The NPPF requires local planning authorities to have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. Arrangements for design review are available through the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter partnership.
- 6.13** Please refer to the '[Important Note:](#)' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions

- 6.14** The purpose of this policy is to assist new developments respond to the challenge of climate change and ensure new buildings have reduced energy demands and are efficient to run.

### Policy LP 14

#### Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions

A proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that viable efforts to reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions have been incorporated. A hierarchical approach should be taken in order to achieve CO<sub>2</sub> reductions:

1. Reduce the need to use energy
2. Use energy efficiently
3. Obtain energy from low or zero carbon sources

#### Residential Development

A proposal that includes a new home, including a conversion or subdivision that creates a new home, or for a residential institution or for supported housing, will be required to meet the following standards. These requirements will not come into effect until successive updates to Part L of the Building Regulations become mandatory:

- At least full Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH)<sup>(39)</sup> (or an equivalent or successor standard) level 4<sup>(40)</sup>
- Zero Carbon if built after April 2016

#### Non-residential Development

39 More detail on CSH can be found on the Planning Portal [website](#)

40 Assuming that the update to Part L of the Building Regulations currently scheduled for 2013 is introduced as anticipated

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A proposal for major non-residential development will be required to meet Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM), standards or successor or equivalent standards, 'Excellent' as a minimum and will be required to be Zero Carbon if built after April 2019. Other non-residential developments will also be encouraged to meet this standard.

## Demonstration of Compliance

The submission of a Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM pre-assessment report (as applicable), will be required to demonstrate compliance. Conditions will be attached to planning permissions requiring submission of final code certificates and/ or post-construction BREEAM certificates and such conditions will not be discharged until compliance has been satisfactorily demonstrated.

## Sustainable Construction and Embodied Carbon

All proposals should reuse existing buildings rather than seek to construct new buildings in order to conserve embodied carbon. The replacement of an existing building will only be supported where the building to be replaced:

- a. is not capable of being converted to the proposed use
- b. is not of a permanent and substantial construction; or
- c. detracts substantially from landscape or townscape character or from the amenity of existing residents or the users of existing buildings.

All new development will be expected to minimise its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by using the principles of sustainable construction and embodied carbon in the design of buildings, the selection of materials and construction methods.

## Reasoning

- 6.15** In 2010, 31% of the UK's carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions came from the energy we use to heat, light and run our homes (DECC 2012). To address the issues of climate change, fuel poverty and fuel security it is important to ensure that homes are built in a way that reduces energy consumption and to increase the energy produced from naturally occurring renewable sources.
- 6.16** The government is promoting a hierarchical approach to achieve CO<sub>2</sub> reductions as part of the design process for new development. The first priority is to reduce energy demand through efficient building techniques such as:
- Passive Design – eg consideration of natural lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation in the layout of the building
  - Fabric efficiency – improved insulation to reduce heat demand, is one of the most effective ways of reducing a building's energy demand
  - Air tightness – Reducing opportunities for heat loss and the avoidance of thermal bridging and thus reducing heat demand
- 6.17** Where energy use cannot be avoided energy should be used efficiently through the use of:
- Efficient heating cooling and ventilation
  - Efficient lighting – All buildings can make use of low energy lighting such as LEDs. These can be used in conjunction with appropriate controls to reduce energy consumption further. For example, controls can be specified which enable all lights to be switched off from a single switch, thus avoiding lights being left on during the night or periods of in-occupancy. External lighting can be controlled through daylight sensors or timers to avoid lights remaining on during daylight hours.



- 6.18** Finally energy should be obtained from low or zero carbon sources. This could be done through generating energy using micro renewable energy systems (e.g. Solar PV panels for electricity generation or solar thermal panels for hot water) or linking with decentralised systems energy networks where they are available.
- 6.19** CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with constructing a building – as distinct from using it – are referred to as embodied carbon. Embodied carbon can be as much as the carbon emissions that come from using a building (from the energy used for heating, lighting, air conditioning etc) often referred to as 'operational carbon'.
- 6.20** Building Regulations are reducing operational emissions, but close attention also needs to be paid to reducing embodied carbon emissions in construction, if ambitious national targets carbon reduction targets are to be met.
- 6.21** Generally, buildings that are efficient in terms of the amount of materials used to construct them tend also to be efficient in terms of embodied carbon and construction cost. Additionally, it is often possible to use a cost effective alternative material that fulfils the required need but has lower embodied carbon. The use of locally sourced materials will reduce the need for travel and therefore reduce carbon emissions.
- 6.22** Developers can reduce embodied carbon by considering:
- Using less materials -
    - The overall efficiency of the building design in terms of, for example, rationalising the building form and avoiding over engineering the building structure
    - Ways of reducing waste – focusing on a few materials and opportunities for off-site construction; and
    - Planning to maximise the use of materials already available on site e.g. by reclaiming demolition and excavation materials and designing for ease of reconfiguration and deconstruction of the new building
  - Using alternative materials -
    - Inherently lower energy/ carbon intensity in production than their conventional equivalents e.g. organic materials in place of highly processed materials
    - Lower transport-related carbon emissions (shorter transport distances or more efficient delivery strategies such as flat-packing
    - Higher recycled content (or reclaimed products), and
    - High levels of durability and relatively low through-life maintenance
- 6.23** Once a development has met its mandatory carbon compliance target, residual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be offset through a variety of mechanisms called 'allowable solutions' which might include the following solutions:
- Further carbon reductions on site beyond the regulatory standard;
  - Energy efficient appliances meeting a high standard which are installed as fittings within the home;
  - Advanced forms of building control systems to reduce the level of energy use in the home
  - Exports of low carbon or renewable energy from a development to other developments: and
  - Investments in low and zero carbon community heat infrastructure
- 6.24** The Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF) project is an important part of the renewable infrastructure evidence base for Cambridgeshire. The CRIF demonstrates the potential for renewables, the possible economic benefits of their use and builds on the Department of Energy and Climate Change's East of England Renewable and low Carbon Energy Capacity Study to give structure to the future development of renewable energy in Cambridgeshire.

## 6 Requiring Good Design

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**6.25** The Huntingdonshire Detailed Water Cycle Study considered water supply issues and made policy recommendations. It advises that in order to move towards a more 'water neutral position' and to enhance sustainability of development coming forward, a policy should be developed that ensures all housing is as water efficient as possible, and that new housing development should go beyond Building Regulations and as a minimum reach Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3/4. Non-domestic building should as a minimum reach 'Good' BREEAM status. These recommendations have been incorporated into this policy. The study includes consideration of a wide range of cost effective measures that could be used in order to achieve these requirements.

**6.26** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

### Ensuring a High Standard of Amenity

**6.27** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that future residents and users of new developments and those affected by new development in their vicinity enjoy an adequate standard of living in terms of the physical environment created.

#### Policy LP 15

##### Ensuring a High Standard of Amenity

A proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for existing and future users and residents of both the surroundings and the proposed development. A proposal will therefore be expected to demonstrate how it addresses:

- a. availability of daylight and sunlight, particularly the amount of natural light entering homes, the effects of overshadowing and the need for artificial light;
- b. the design and separation of buildings with regard to the potential for overlooking causing loss of privacy and resultant physical relationships and whether they could be considered to be oppressive or overbearing;
- c. the predicted internal and external levels, timing, duration and character of noise;
- d. the potential for adverse impacts on air quality, particularly affecting air quality management areas;
- e. the potential for adverse impacts of obtrusive light and the contamination of land, groundwater or surface water; and
- f. the extent to which people feel at risk from crime by incorporating Secured By Design<sup>(41)</sup> principles.

#### Reasoning

**6.28** Good design and landscaping are essential to ensure that new development is successfully integrated into its local context. Good design and landscaping addresses social and environmental concerns as well as visual and functional ones. New developments should aspire to create places that are attractive, safe, accessible and respond well to the local environment. Development of all scales should make a positive contribution towards the quality of the built environment in Huntingdonshire, making it more attractive to residents, visitors and investors.

**6.29** Design is not solely a visual concern. It also has important social and environmental dimensions, such as the potential of a high quality public realm to contribute to public health, a more inclusive environment, quality of life and sustainability. The variety of architectural and historic design features in the District needs to be protected and enhanced to protect the local distinctiveness of Huntingdonshire. Good design will also ensure that buildings are 'future-proofed' to enable them to easily accommodate the needs of users.

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41 Guidance is available from the Secured by Design [website](#)

- 6.30** A common concern when development is proposed is that of its potential impact on neighbouring properties and places. More intensive forms of development make more efficient use of land and buildings, but the importance of careful design, layout and orientation to ensure proposals do not adversely affect others is increased. Such considerations apply equally to proposals to extend and alter existing buildings as they do to new developments. Protection and enhancement of amenity is essential to maintaining people's quality of life and ensuring the successful integration of new development into existing neighbourhoods. A vital part of this is to ensure that new development takes account of community and individual safety considerations and minimises opportunities for crime.
- 6.31** The policy sets out the criteria that will be used to assess whether a proposal will have a significant impact upon amenity. Further guidance on how this can be achieved is contained in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)<sup>(42)</sup> or successor documents.
- 6.32** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Advertising

- 6.33** The purpose of this policy is to ensure that advertisements are not overly dominant in their local environment and respect the character and nature of their surroundings.

### Policy LP 16

#### Advertising

Advertisements, including signs for shops and other town centre uses will be considered on their merits taking into account the size, location and use of materials, colours and styles of lettering, public safety and the potential to detract from the character and appearance of surroundings.

Advertising and signs proposed within a conservation area, to be attached to a heritage asset or in the setting of a heritage asset will be carefully considered, taking into account the impact of the proposal on heritage assets and their settings.

The use of internally illuminated fascia or projecting box signs for such proposals will be carefully considered. Where such signs are proposed within a conservation area, to be attached to a heritage asset or in the setting of a heritage asset they will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

#### Reasoning

- 6.34** Advertisements should be presented as simply and explicitly as possible. Materials and colour should be carefully selected, in order that the advertisement becomes a functional, integral part of the overall design, and not an ugly appendage.
- 6.35** Lettering should be part of the architectural design of the building and should reflect its age and character. It should be in proportion to the size of the fascia and should not be dominated by the background. The most satisfactory approach to providing signs is the use of individual letters, either by the traditional method of signwriters applying lettering to painted fascia or to the wall itself. Ornate and contrived styles will not be encouraged, as they can be difficult to read and incongruous with their surroundings.
- 6.36** Proposals for large plastic box fascias will be resisted on traditional buildings, even when they form part of a standard design of a corporate image of a large company. Care should be taken to integrate the proposed fascia with the building, and to avoid obscuring first floor windows or architectural details such as string courses, friezes and cornices.

42 Available from the Council's [website](#)



## 6 Requiring Good Design

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- 6.37** Projecting signs will only be permitted where it is considered that they will add to the visual interest of the street and are of appropriate materials and dimensions. Small plastic box signs internally illuminated are unlikely to be suitable. Careful regard will be paid to the position and size of the sign so as to avoid a clutter of unrelated fixtures obscuring the architectural quality of the street scene.
- 6.38** The internal illumination of a complete fascia is, in most circumstances, considered undesirable and will be resisted. Other forms of illumination may be appropriate depending on the location and use of the building.
- 6.39** The Council may require the discontinuance of any advertisement displayed with the benefit of deemed consent if it is considered to detract from the character or appearance of its surroundings.
- 6.40** Please note black-on-yellow temporary signs for new housing developments must by law be removed within 6 months of completion of the development. The Council will take action to secure the removal of an unauthorised sign or placard where they are detrimental to amenity and/ or safety.
- 6.41** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## 7 Promoting Sustainable Travel

- 7.1 Transport and travel policies have an important role to play in enabling sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. New technologies have a role in helping to reduce the need to travel. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving everyone a real choice about how they travel.

### Sustainable Travel

- 7.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria that the Council expects to be met, and the supporting documents required as part of a planning application, to ensure that developers fully consider how the opportunities and impacts of the range of travel and transport modes are addressed in their proposals for sustainable development.

#### Policy LP 17

##### Sustainable Travel

A proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that:

- a. opportunities are maximised for the use of sustainable travel modes;
- b. traffic volumes can be accommodated and will not cause significant harm to the character of the surrounding area;
- c. any adverse effects of traffic movement to, from and within the site including the effect of car parking is minimised;
- d. a clear network of routes is provided that provides connectivity and enables ease of access, to, around and within the proposal and with the wider settlement for all potential users, including those with impaired mobility; and
- e. safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes, including links to new and existing services, facilities, footpaths, bridleways and the countryside are provided where appropriate and if possible formalised as rights-of-way.

To demonstrate the likely impacts of a sustainable development proposal, and describe mitigation measures, a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement is likely to be required in accordance with the Council's planning application validation requirements.

#### Reasoning

- 7.3 The policy aims to enhance the choice of non-car based travel. The availability of safe, coherent and easy to use footpaths and cycle routes will have a significant impact on people's choice of transport mode. More than half of all trips in Huntingdonshire are less than two miles in length: for many people walking or cycling are a feasible alternative to using the car for such journeys. Development proposals should therefore give priority to high quality walking and cycling provision.
- 7.4 Development proposals should also provide opportunities for people to use public transport (and community alternatives to public transport) both for local journeys, and to access the wider public transport network. This may involve for example, agreements to facilitate new bus stops or designing a development so that there is a short pedestrian path to the nearest bus stop. Such provision will also have a significant effect on the choice of mode.

# 7 Promoting Sustainable Travel

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- 7.5 Advice on designing development to maximise the use of sustainable modes is available nationally in [Manual for Streets \(2007\)](#) and [Manual for Streets 2 \(2010\)](#). Guidance on sustainable travel in design is available for Cambridgeshire in the [Cambridgeshire Design Guide \(2007\)](#). These documents should be consulted when planning a development and its link with the existing network of streets, cycle paths, footpaths and public transport routes.
- 7.6 Information on producing Travel Plans is available on the Department for Transport website [Smarter Choices](#). This explains travel plans generally, and gives links to specific topics such as workplace travel plans. The Council, will expect a Travel Plan to accompany larger planning applications, for both non-residential and residential developments. Generally, these will be developments where a Transport Assessment is required or, in the case of residential developments, those of 60 or more dwellings. However, it may be necessary to submit a Travel Plan for smaller developments in order to address a particular local traffic problem associated with a planning application, which might otherwise have to be refused on local traffic grounds. The implementation of the Travel Plan will be secured as part of a planning permission, normally through a S106 agreement. For developers unfamiliar with workplace travel plans, detailed advice is available from the [Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership](#). It is also noted that the Travel for Work Partnership offers assistance in respect of developments in the A14 corridor through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.
- 7.7 Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Parking Provision

- 7.8 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new development provides sufficient parking to meet its needs and minimise impacts on existing neighbouring uses.

### Policy LP 18

#### Parking Provision

A proposal will be supported where it incorporates appropriately designed vehicle and cycle parking with a clear justification for the level of provision proposed, having regard to:

- the potential to increase the use of alternative transport modes including public transport, walking and cycling;
- highway safety;
- servicing requirements;
- the needs of potential users; and
- the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties.

Parking provision should be considered as an integral part of the design process and its impact on the surrounding townscape and landscape minimised. Reference should be made to the [Cambridgeshire Design Guide](#) and the [Huntingdonshire Design Guide](#) or successor documents and to the [Lifetime Homes standard](#).

Parking facilities may be shared where location and patterns of use permit. Careful consideration will be given to the siting and design of garaging, responding to the character and appearance of the area.

Minimum levels of car parking for disabled people as set out in national guidance<sup>(43)</sup> will be required.

43 Traffic Advisory Leaflet 05/05 – Parking for Disabled People, Department for Transport (2005), Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure, Department for Transport (2005) and BS 8300: 2009 Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People, British Standards Institute (BSI) (2009) or successor documents



## Reasoning

- 7.9** Levels of car ownership in Huntingdonshire are high compared with the national average as it is both a relatively prosperous and predominantly rural area. Many of Huntingdonshire's smaller settlements and countryside areas have no, or extremely limited, public transport services and reliance on private cars as the main mode of travel for journeys of any distance is likely to continue. In this context developers should seek to provide adequate car and cycle parking, create areas that are attractive and that encourage travel by sustainable modes and that promote the shift in priority away from motorists and towards pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. Developers should approach parking provision as an integrated part of the design process having regard to the character of the area, the appearance of the proposed development, and the location. In relation to location the amount of public transport available or opportunities for shared and on-street car parking should be considered. Well designed and landscaped development will reduce the dominance of cars in public spaces.
- 7.10** For residential development adequate car parking is important. A combination of allocated and unallocated spaces can provide flexibility in providing appropriate levels of car parking, as identified in [Residential Car Parking Research, DCLG, \(2007\)](#) and [Car Parking, What Works Where, English Partnerships](#). Recommended levels of car parking and design considerations for homes are set out in the [Cambridgeshire Design Guide \(2007\)](#). Residential parking is required to meet the design criteria set out in the [Lifetime Homes standard](#) as detailed in Quality of development.
- 7.11** Secure cycle parking is expected with all development to encourage cycling as an alternative for shorter journeys. Applications should identify the location of at least one secure cycle space per bedroom for homes. For business, at least one cycle space should be provided per 25m<sup>2</sup> of net internal floorspace of business development.
- 7.12** The level of car parking provision in non-residential development will vary according to the nature of the use. The availability of non-car alternatives will influence the need for car parking spaces. In areas where alternative travel choices are available, careful consideration of the availability of car parking spaces can help to reduce car use, particularly where this is combined with effective travel planning. However, it is important to ensure adequate parking provision for people with impaired mobility for whom adequate parking in convenient locations is essential.
- 7.13** The NPPF gives support to the incorporation of facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. Proposals should consider the inclusion of facilities for charging vehicles as part of the overall consideration of what the appropriate parking provision should be.
- 7.14** Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

# 8 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

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## 8 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

- 8.1** The Council is committed to securing positive and sustainable economic growth to facilitate job creation and prosperity. Planning has an important role in supporting sustainable economic growth. Therefore, the Council will plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century. As well as the need to allocate land for economic development there is an essential role in the strategy for the safeguarding of land and buildings that are already in use for employment purposes.
- 8.2** Town centres are the hub of economic activity in the form of retail, leisure and tourism but they are equally important as the focus for the social and cultural life of our towns. The Council is committed to promoting and enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centres of Huntingdonshire. Local shopping centres have not been defined due to the dispersed nature of shopping facilities in the majority of the key service centres and small settlements.
- 8.3** The rural parts of Huntingdonshire play an important role in the economy of the district. A huge range of activities make up our rural economy from agriculture through tourism and leisure to village and farm shops and other services that life in our rural areas depends on.
- 8.4** Planning can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. To support this, the Council aims to involve all sections of the community in the development of the Local Plan and in planning decisions, and to facilitate neighbourhood planning.

### Supporting a Strong Local Economy

- 8.5** The purpose of this policy is to safeguard existing established employment areas across Huntingdonshire. These areas are often subject to pressure from higher value uses such as new housing development. The Council needs to balance the provision of employment across the district against other development pressures.

#### Policy LP 19

##### Supporting a Strong Local Economy

Areas of land and buildings that contribute to the local economy and provide on-going strategic employment opportunities have been designated as Established Employment Areas. Within Established Employment Areas a proposal will be required to show how:

- a. it affects the role and continuing viability of the Established Employment Area in providing for employment opportunities and as an attractive and suitable location for employment uses;
- b. it affects the range, availability and suitability of land and buildings for employment uses in the nearest Spatial Planning Area or Key Service Centre that the Established Employment Area relates to, considering market issues including existing and potential demand and lead-in times; and
- c. the extent to which the use or mix of uses proposed can give greater benefits to the community than the current or most recent use.

#### Reasoning

- 8.6** Established Employment Areas have a key role in supporting the economy and contribute to the balance between residential, employment and other uses which is essential in the promotion of sustainable communities. The Council is committed to promoting sustainable economic growth and is therefore supportive of measures and proposals that enable employment areas to provide for businesses.

# Building a Strong, Competitive Economy 8

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- 8.7 Some areas may support ancillary additional uses which are not traditionally found within a business park, such as a restaurant or café. Such uses may help to make the area more sustainable by providing for the needs of business workers as well as others. In other areas, it may be that non-business uses are proposed because the area is demonstrably no longer viable as a strategic location for business, given other available land, and alternative uses may better benefit the area. In all cases where alternative uses are proposed, appropriate evidence will be needed to ensure that an employment area is not lost simply because there is a higher market demand for alternative uses such as housing, as it is essential that a supply of employment land of various types and in various locations should be maintained to encourage economic growth.
- 8.8 Established Employment Areas are identified on the maps in [Appendix B: 'Established Employment Areas'](#). These areas are:
- Alconbury Hill - Crossways Distribution Centre
  - Alwalton - Minerva Business Park
  - Earith - Earith Business Park
  - Fenstanton - Lakeside Technology Park
  - Great Gransden - Sand Road Industrial Estate and Hardwicke Road Industrial Estate
  - Great Paxton - Harley Industrial Park
  - Godmanchester - Cardinal Park and the Chord Business Park/ Roman Way Centre
  - Houghton and Wyton - Upland Industrial Estate
  - Huntingdon - Ermine Business Park, Hinchingbrooke Business Park, St Peter's Road Industrial Area and Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate
  - Kimbolton - Bicton Industrial Park/ Harvard Industrial Estate
  - Little Staughton - The Airfield Industrial Estate
  - Needingworth - Needingworth Industrial Estate
  - Ramsey - Highlode Industrial Estate and Upwood Air Park
  - Sawtry - Brookside Industrial Estate and Black Horse Business Park
  - Somersham - West Newlands Industrial Estate
  - St Ives - Meadow Lane Business Park, Marley Road Industrial Area, Parsons Green Business Park and Somersham Road Industrial Area, and Compass Point Business Park
  - St Neots - Station Road Industrial Area, Cromwell Road Industrial Estate, Colmworth Business Park, Howard Road Industrial Estate, Little End Industrial Estate and Alpha Drive Business Park
  - Warboys - Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate
  - Yaxley - Broadway Business Park and Eagle Business Park
- 8.9 The policy seeks to maintain the role of established employment areas in providing the majority of local employment opportunities but does not recognise the role of smaller areas of employment or single user sites. Such sites provide employment across Huntingdonshire and are a valuable part of the economy.
- 8.10 A healthy economy needs a certain amount of land and buildings to be available at any one time so that new firms can start up and firms can expand. However, land and buildings that remain vacant for extended periods of time detract from the economy and can fall into disrepair attracting vandalism and other antisocial behaviour. There needs to be a balance between maintaining a valuable stock of land and buildings to enable a growing economy and trying to preserve land and buildings for employment uses when there is no real prospect of economic reuse.
- 8.11 Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Town Centre Vitality and Viability

- 8.12 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the town centres of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey retain their roles as the focus for their communities and hinterlands, and remain the main places for town centre uses including retail, office, leisure, entertainment, arts, cultural and tourist facilities.



# 8 Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

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## Policy LP 20

### Ensuring Town Centre Vitality and Viability

A series of sites are allocated for development in this plan in order to achieve the spatial strategy. In addition to these, other proposals will be supported where they are in accordance with policies of this plan and the following requirements.

#### Town centres

The town centres of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey will be the major focus for all new main town centre uses. A proposal for a new main town centre use will be supported within a town centre where it would maintain and enhance the:

- a. vitality and viability of the town centre; and
- b. existing range, quality and distribution of retail, office, leisure, entertainment, arts, cultural facilities, community facilities or tourist attractions including those which contribute to creating a balanced evening economy offering entertainment as well as eating and drinking establishments.

#### Primary shopping areas

In the primary shopping areas (outside the primary frontages) a proposal will be supported for a new retail, financial and professional service, restaurant, café, drinking establishment or hot food take-away use. However, a proposal for another main town centre use may be supported where it would contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Markets add diversity and interest to the primary shopping areas of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey and contribute to their vitality and viability. A proposal which enhances the role of a market in its respective town centre economy will be supported.

#### Primary shopping frontages

In the primary shopping frontages a proposal for retail (A1) or restaurant/ café (A3) use will be supported. A proposal for another main town centre use may be supported within a primary shopping frontage where it will:

- c. make a positive contribution to local vitality and viability and encourage people into the town centre; and
- d. continue to provide an active frontage where there is an existing shopfront.

### Reasoning

- 8.13** The role of town centres is evolving rapidly, reflecting changes in consumer preferences regarding shopping, entertainment and leisure. Internet shopping and the trend for national retailers to concentrate in larger centres presents a strong challenge to market towns. Town centres are part of a complex mix of retail opportunities including traditional retail shopping, showroom-type stores with connections to internet shopping, as well as increasingly acting as focal points for leisure uses including cafés and restaurants.
- 8.14** Town centre uses include retailing, leisure, entertainment, office, cultural and tourist facilities and hotels, all of which are typified by potential users requiring good accessibility by a choice of transport methods. Town centres act as the retail, social and service core of their communities and offer the most accessible destinations for those who choose to travel by public transport or to walk or cycle. A range of additional town centre uses will be supported within the defined town centres to enhance their roles. Community facilities such as libraries, education, health and support services will also be supported in town centre

locations where this contributes to their accessibility to a wide range of potential users. All four of the town centres in Huntingdonshire are within conservation areas. Reference should therefore be had to [Policy LP 31 'Heritage Assets and their Settings'](#) for development proposals within town centres.

- 8.15** To promote vitality a mix of uses should be included as part of a proposal within a town centre where it is possible to do so. Reference should be made to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide<sup>(44)</sup> for advice on how best to incorporate a mix of uses in development proposals in town centre locations.
- 8.16** Each town centre boundary is mapped and within this a primary shopping area is defined which covers a smaller area generally comprising a mixture of retail and service uses. A smaller area again is defined within this to show primary shopping frontages. These are where the town's main shops are concentrated. The purpose of identifying primary shopping frontages is to maintain their attractiveness as the core shopping destination within the town and to reinforce the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 8.17** All street frontages within the primary shopping area but outside the primary shopping frontages should be considered as secondary shopping frontages. They provide locations for commercial premises requiring easy public access but which are unable or unwilling to compete in the primary shopping frontages market. Separate uses of upper floors, for example as flats or office space, of premises are common and development proposals should not prejudice their effective use.
- 8.18** Markets add vitality and diversity to the town centres and bring in additional customers and visitors to contribute to the local economy. All Huntingdonshire's towns support a traditional market one or two days a week. Farmers' markets are held fortnightly in Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives with a monthly farmers' market in Ramsey. Specialist markets, such as continental markets, are held on an occasional basis. Enhancements to markets will be encouraged where they add to the quality and diversity of opportunities available.
- 8.19** A development proposal for retail and other town centre uses in a key service centre or small settlement will be considered under [Policy LP 23 'Local Services and Facilities'](#).
- 8.20** Areas identified as Primary Shopping Frontages, Primary Shopping Areas and Town Centres have been identified on maps in [Appendix C: 'Town Centre Designations'](#).
- 8.21** Please refer to the ['Important Note.'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Rural Economy

- 8.22** The purpose of this policy is to promote a vibrant rural economy within the district's extensive countryside areas which supports businesses with a genuine need to be located in the countryside, assists farms to maintain their viability and minimises the impact of built development on the countryside.

### Policy LP 21

#### Rural Economy

#### Employment Development

A proposal for employment development falling within the 'B' use classes in the countryside will be supported where it is:

- a. within a defined Established Employment Area; or
- b. for the reuse of land in use or last used for employment purposes within the 'B' use classes or for the reuse of existing buildings; or

44 Details are intended to be included in the forthcoming update

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- c. for the expansion of an established business within its existing operational site; and
- d. where office<sup>(45)</sup> floorspace is limited to a maximum of 600m<sup>2</sup> (net).

## Operational Development

A proposal in the countryside will be supported where it is:

- e. for essential operational development for allocated mineral extraction or a waste management facility, infrastructure provision, national defence, renewable and low carbon energy generation or an economically viable rural enterprise such as an agriculture, horticulture, forestry or equine-related business; and
- f. in accordance with policies of the Cambridgeshire Waste and Minerals Development Plan.

A proposal to provide facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure or outdoor leisure or recreation in the countryside will be supported where a countryside location is justified and adverse effects are avoided on sites designated for their nature conservation value.

A proposal for essential operational development at Conington Airfield, Littlehey Prison, Wood Green Animal Shelter or Huntingdon Racecourse will be supported where it is in scale with existing development.

## Farm Diversification

A proposal for farm diversification will be supported where it makes an ongoing contribution to sustaining the farm business as a whole. A proposal should:

- g. reuse, convert or replace existing buildings where feasible; new building will only be acceptable where it is of a scale, character and location that is compatible with its setting, in terms of both its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape;
- h. be complementary and subsidiary to the ongoing agricultural operations of the farm business;
- i. not have a detrimental impact on any area of identified nature conservation importance;
- j. involve poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality; and
- k. ensure that the type and volume of traffic generated can be sustainably accommodated within the local highway network.

## Reasoning

- 8.23** Agriculture is still an important part of Huntingdonshire's economy but the Council is conscious that some farmers may need to diversify their activities to ensure the continued economic viability of their farm enterprise. The Council supports the principle of more varied employment opportunities in rural areas to help sustain the local economy. There are several established employment areas within countryside settings which provide relatively low cost business accommodation and support a wide range of employment opportunities. The policy looks to ensure their continued success tempered with recognition that their locations are less sustainable than those within established settlements.
- 8.24** The primary justification for employment related development in the countryside is where either a rural location is essential to the successful operation of the business or the business is dependent upon natural resources only available in limited locations. Operational development is defined as that which is necessary for the continued safe running of the use involved.
- 8.25** Farm diversification schemes should bring long-term benefits, including employment, to individual farm operations and the wider rural economy. Farm diversification schemes generally consist of non-agricultural commercial activity or schemes relating to new forms of agriculture. Well conceived farm diversification projects will be of an appropriate scale for the location and fit into the landscape. Diversification will, in most cases, involve changing the use of land and/or re-using (or redeveloping) existing buildings.

45 Use class B1a



Development on new sites will be discouraged unless it enables the clearance and replacement of a badly-sited or inappropriate structure or is small in scale and carried out in an exceptionally environmentally sensitive manner.

- 8.26 The Council is supportive of farm diversification schemes that are being promoted on a comprehensive basis to retain a viable agricultural unit by seeking additional incomes from other sources which still relate to the countryside. It is recognised that Huntingdonshire has large areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land which is of high value for food production and in most cases agricultural activity should be retained on those higher quality soils.
- 8.27 Industrial, commercial or office use of outbuildings is a frequent form of diversification which can be successful subject to the accessibility of the buildings to potential employees, therefore locations which are more accessible to public transport will be more appropriate.
- 8.28 Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Tourism, Sport and Leisure Development

- 8.29 The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria that the Council expects to be met when developers propose tourism, sport and leisure development including touring caravan and camping sites and tourist accommodation and water-related development.

### Policy LP 22

#### Tourism, Sport and Leisure Development

A proposal for tourism, sport or leisure development in the countryside will be supported where:

- a. it is in a location that is well-related to an existing settlement or there are demonstrable locational or sustainability reasons why it has to be located elsewhere;
- b. it has been appropriately designed and landscaped as set out in Policy LP 13 'Quality of Design';
- c. safe physical access from the public highway network can be achieved; and
- d. adequate water and sewerage services are or can be provided if required to serve the development.

#### Touring Caravan or Camping Sites and Tourist Accommodation

A proposal for a new touring caravan, camp site or tourist accommodation in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will be, or will form part of, an economically viable enterprise and that there is adequate demand for the proposal.

A proposal for the expansion of a touring caravan, camp site or tourist accommodation in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the existing business is an economically viable enterprise and that there is adequate demand for the expansion.

Where tourist accommodation is approved appropriate planning conditions will be used to prevent permanent residential use of the accommodation.

#### Water related Tourism, Sport or Leisure Development

A proposal for water related tourism, sport or leisure including a new or expanded marina will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- e. it will not impede navigation or lead to hazardous boat movements;
- f. it will not overload the capacity of the watercourse or water body;
- g. there is adequate demand to justify the creation of new berths or moorings;
- h. local water quality and quantity will not be adversely affected;

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- i. biodiversity of the water and its margins will be maintained or enhanced;
- j. it will not lead to any adverse impact on flood defences; and
- k. it will not cause an adverse impact on its immediate surroundings or the wider landscape including biodiversity.

## Reasoning

- 8.30** Huntingdonshire has a limited tourism offer primarily focused on water-based pursuits, countryside and heritage assets. The Council seeks to enhance the benefits to be obtained from tourism, sport and leisure development and will support proposals for high quality tourism development, particularly that promoting year round activities where they protect the natural or heritage assets of the district. Both tourist accommodation and attractions can promote economic benefits which support direct and indirect employment.
- 8.31** Proposals may be supported where a countryside location is justified such as those related directly to a heritage asset, a landscape or water feature or those needing to be located within an area of woodland. When considering the sustainability of the proposal, the value of the land for agriculture will be considered as areas of high grade agricultural land should preferably be avoided.
- 8.32** The district currently receives a high proportion of day visitors and one of the greatest challenges is to encourage overnight stays and longer breaks. Proposals for tourist accommodation, including touring caravan and camping sites, facilitate longer visitor stays with potential to increase the contribution of visitors to the local economy. There is however growth in this sector is limited so proposals, particularly for new build tourist accommodation, should ensure that they will be viable and are supported by well thought out research and business plans.
- 8.33** Huntingdonshire benefits from an extensive network of rivers, drainage canals and lakes which are already widely used for tourism, sport and leisure activities including boating, windsurfing, fishing and birdwatching. They also provide valuable wildlife habitats. Increased recreational use should only be facilitated where no significant environmental damage will result.
- 8.34** The level of public access to rivers and other bodies of water varies. Proposals which facilitate public access to waterside recreation opportunities will be encouraged where this can be achieved without having adverse impacts on water quality, nature conservation and the character of the surrounding landscape.
- 8.35** Boatyards and marinas are located across Huntingdonshire and they can make a valuable contribution to the local economy. Improvements will generally be considered favourably provided they demonstrate no detrimental impact on the watercourse or body of water which they serve or on any surrounding countryside. Residential moorings are considered separately under [Policy LP 27 'Residential Moorings'](#).
- 8.36** Tourist facilities and visitor attractions are considered by the NPPF to be primarily a 'main town centre use'. A development proposal for tourist related development will be considered under [Policy LP 20 'Ensuring Town Centre Vitality and Viability'](#) and [Policy LP 23 'Local Services and Facilities'](#) where appropriate.
- 8.37** Please refer to the ['Important Note:'](#) when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Local Services and Facilities

- 8.38** The purpose of this policy is to maintain the sustainability, vitality and viability of villages and individual neighbourhoods within market towns to promote healthy and inclusive communities.

## Policy LP 23

### Local Services and Facilities

A range of available land or buildings for local services and facilities in a settlement or neighbourhood of a market town is essential to maintain its sustainability. For the purposes of this policy local services and facilities include shops, public houses, places of worship, filling stations, public halls and community, cultural, education and health care facilities.

A proposal for an additional service or extension of an existing one will be supported where:

- a. it is of a scale to serve local needs without having an adverse impact on a designated town centre; or
- b. it involves a change of use to reinstate a local service or facility

A proposal which involves the loss of a local service or facility will only be supported where:

- c. there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored; or
- d. an equivalent service or facility will be provided in a location with an equal or better level of accessibility for the community it is intended to serve.

A proposal which anticipates such a loss will provide evidence that:

- e. there is insufficient community support for continuation of the service or facility; or
- f. reasonable steps have been taken to effectively market the property for its current use to establish whether there is any realistic prospect of maintaining the service or facility.

### Reasoning

- 8.39** Local shops, community facilities and other services play a vital role in promoting communities' sustainability by helping to meet everyday needs, reducing the need to travel and providing opportunities for social interaction helping to maintain active and socially inclusive communities. The policy is intended both to promote new services and facilities where they are appropriate to the needs of a community and to ensure the retention of current premises and land for such uses. It cannot prevent key services or facilities from closing but provides a window of opportunity for provision of a similar or alternative local service or facility where local support exists.
- 8.40** Provision of new services or facilities should be of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of the community where it is proposed. Commercial facilities should be of a scale in accordance with the development strategy to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the defined town centres. Provision of multi-purpose community buildings is encouraged as these can make efficient use of space and resources and provide opportunities for different elements of a community to interact. They can function as a community hub providing health services, libraries, children's centres, information and advice services, meeting space for voluntary and community groups and can incorporate commercial partners such as the post office or a local café.
- 8.41** The loss of local services or facilities can have a serious impact upon people's quality of life and the overall vitality of communities. With an increasing proportion of older people in the population access to locally based services will become increasingly important, reflecting lower mobility levels.
- 8.42** The availability of a combination of local services and facilities is what distinguishes a Key Service Centre from a Small Settlement. The loss of any one of these elements has the potential to detrimentally affect the role of the Key Service Centre in functioning as focal point for the surrounding area. Although the policy cannot prevent a facility or service from closing, it aims to safeguard the opportunity for a similar or alternative local service and facility to be provided from the existing premises or site unless there is insufficient community support or no similar alternative use comes forward. Effective marketing will in



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most cases need to be for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its permitted use with details kept of any offers received and detailed reasoning for declining them. However, in particular circumstances it may be appropriate for alternative arrangements to effectively establish whether there is any realistic prospect of maintaining the service or facility.

- 8.43** Provision of local services will continue to evolve in response to changing needs and delivery mechanisms. The policy allows for loss of an existing service or facility where this is to be provided in an alternative location giving equal or better accessibility to the community than the existing facility. Alternative provision may not be in the same format as the present supplier. Reference to the vitality and viability of local areas has not been included as the NPPF indicates that such concerns are for town centres only, rather than local shopping parades or individual shops.
- 8.44** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## 9 Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

- 9.1 National planning policy advocates that, through their Local Plans, local planning authorities should seek to meet the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing<sup>(46)</sup>. It requires that local planning authorities plan to deliver a mix of housing to meet the needs of current and future generations based on demographic trends and the needs of specific parts of the community. In doing so development should be enabled that offers a wide choice of high quality homes whilst broadening opportunities for home ownership and creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.
- 9.2 Allocating appropriate areas of land for housing development is one of the key roles of the Local Plan. However, this is only part of the process. The Local Plan aims to deliver not just the number of new homes required by 2036 but to promote an appropriate mix of sizes, types and tenures to meet people's requirements and to help promote sustainable communities in locations that people want to live in.

### Housing Mix

- 9.3 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all housing development in the district that offers a genuine choice of homes for residents which meet their requirements for different sizes and types of dwellings.

#### Policy LP 24

##### Housing Mix

A proposal that includes housing development will be supported where the sizes, types and tenures of housing responds to the advice and guidance provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategic Housing Market Assessments (as applicable), local assessments of housing need and demand or other relevant housing and demographic studies and the Council's Housing Strategy<sup>(47)</sup> and Tenancy Strategy<sup>(48)</sup>.

As part of meeting the needs of our ageing population and needs of people with disabilities all new build homes will be expected to comply with the Lifetime Homes standards or successor standards<sup>(49)</sup>.

A proposal that includes 200 or more homes should seek to make a proportion of plots available for self-build homes.

### Reasoning

- 9.4 Government policy advocates the development of mixed communities to promote social cohesion. At the same time, social diversity contributes to vibrant and mixed places. The balance and mixture of household and dwelling types with commercial and community facilities strongly influences the way a community develops and how sustainable it can be. The policy aims to achieve a mix of housing that can contribute to establishing inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods, while including sufficient flexibility to be responsive to local needs and market conditions.
- 9.5 The Cambridgeshire or Peterborough SHMAs (2008 and ongoing reviews), as applicable<sup>(50)</sup>, should be taken into account to ensure that housing supply is both marketable and meets the needs of potential residents. The SHMAs highlight the increasing proportion of households comprising a single person or

46 NPPF paragraph 47, DCLG 2011

47 Available from the Council's [website](#)

48 Available from the Council's [website](#)

49 See the Lifetime Homes [website](#)

50 The Cambridgeshire SHMA is applicable in all of Huntingdonshire with the exception of parishes in the north of the district that share a boundary with the Peterborough Council area where the Peterborough SHMA will be applicable

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older people. The full text can be viewed at the [Cambridgeshire Insight website](#) and the [Peterborough SHMA website](#). The proposed housing mix within a development should take account of the accommodation needs of the anticipated high proportion of single and older person households.

- 9.6** Parish plans, village design statements and neighbourhood development plans may set out local aspirations for housing supply, often in regard to the mix of sizes considered desirable, the need for suitable homes for older residents to downsize into and homes which facilitate local young people remaining close to where they grew up. Such documents provide a useful indication of local opinion on a desirable mix of housing sizes and types and will form a material consideration depending upon the level of public participation in their preparation.
- 9.7** Huntingdonshire has an ageing population, an issue affecting many districts across the country. The national guidance *Housing our Ageing the Population: Plan for Implementation 2012*<sup>(51)</sup> highlights the benefits of improved housing options for older people, including a reduction in health and social care costs as well as the release of family housing back into the available housing stock. Consideration will also be given to the toolkit provided in *Housing in later life: planning ahead for specialist housing for older people 2012*<sup>(52)</sup> when assessing proposed developments for specialist housing.
- 9.8** As identified above the Cambridgeshire SHMA also provides analysis of the housing needs of older people and should be referred to as a primary source of local information.
- 9.9** Housing and health have many links and the Cambridge sub-region housing board has agreed 7 broad housing priorities for Cambridgeshire:
- deliver new homes to support economic success.
  - enable better health and wellbeing through housing, affordable housing and housing-related support.
  - create mixed, balanced, sustainable and cohesive communities.
  - improve standards in existing homes and encourage best use of all housing stock.
  - extend housing choice and meet housing need.
  - prevent and tackle homelessness.
  - promote the benefits good partnership working can bring to housing-related issues.
- 9.10** The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment<sup>(53)</sup> also provides information and advice on housing and related health issues, in particular considering public health and housing, improving housing standards, extending choice and meeting need and tackling homelessness.
- 9.11** In meeting the objectively assessed housing need for Huntingdonshire up to 2036 this plan depends to a significant extent on a small number of very large sites. Such a reliance means that opportunities for people wanting to build their own homes are likely to be limited. In order to help address the limited nature of these opportunities this policy supports the provision of plots for self-build homes in proposals of 200 or more homes. It is suggested that 5% of the total number of homes should be provided as serviced plots for sale to people wanting to build their own homes. The plots should be spread across the development, they should be actively marketed and they should be reasonably priced reflecting prevailing market values for such plots. However, such provision should not be allowed to impact adversely on the supply of homes, so any plots that are not taken up by self builders within three years of becoming available should be developed by the main developer of the site. Reference should also be had to advice from the National Self Build Association which is available from their [website](#).
- 9.12** Please refer to the '[Important Note](#):' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

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51 More information is available from the Housing LIN [website](#)

52 Available from the Housing LIN [website](#)

53 JSNA available from the [Cambridgeshire Insight website](#)



## Affordable Housing Provision

- 9.13 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that proposals for market housing development in Huntingdonshire contribute to the delivery of affordable housing to help address identified housing needs.

### Policy LP 25

#### Affordable Housing Provision

In order to address the identified local need for additional affordable homes a proposal which includes housing development should seek to deliver a target of 40% affordable housing where the scheme:

- a. includes 10 or more homes or 0.3ha or more of land for housing development; or
- b. where it is located within any of the defined small settlements and includes 3 or more homes or 0.1ha or more of land for housing development.

To ensure mixed and sustainable communities affordable and market housing should be integrated across the development scheme.

The affordable housing provision should seek to meet identified affordable housing need in the district. The mix of house types and sizes for affordable housing will take into account the latest evidence from the Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and other local sources. The affordable housing provision may include specialist or supported housing schemes where an identified need exists.

Affordable housing provision should seek to meet identified needs through a target of 70% of new units being comprised of social or affordable rented properties with the balance comprising of intermediate housing. It is recognised that there may be circumstances where it is necessary or appropriate to deliver an alternative dwelling or tenure mix, or a lower level of on-site provision. An alternative dwelling or tenure mix or a lower level of provision may be supported where it can be demonstrated that the target is not viable due to specific site conditions or other material considerations affecting development of the site. A development viability assessment will be required to justify an alternative mix or level of affordable housing provision.

#### Reasoning

- 9.14 Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (replicated in the 'Glossary') and includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing which are provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Housing which is offered at low cost, but does not meet the above cannot be considered 'affordable housing'. However, Government advice is that low-cost market housing should be delivered as part of the overall housing mix.
- 9.15 There is a significant need for affordable housing within Huntingdonshire as demonstrated through the Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)<sup>(54)</sup>. A growing gap between average earnings and housing costs, a limited supply of new affordable properties and the historic loss of social housing through right to buy and right to acquire provisions have all contributed to the shortage of affordable housing. It is important that the Council maximises all opportunities to meet housing need and the planning system has a key role to play in this. Securing contributions from market housing schemes, enabling rural exceptions sites to come forward and pursuing other opportunities to develop much-needed new affordable

54 Available from the [Cambridgeshire Insight website](#)

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housing all form part of the Council's strategic approach. The Council works in partnership with developers, house builders, housing associations, land owners and others to deliver this aim. (see Huntingdonshire Housing Strategy<sup>(55)</sup> for more information).The is informed by national guidance, local

- 9.16** The Council will use evidence in the SHMA, and other local sources of information (including parish or neighbourhood surveys or housing register statistics) to agree with the developer a mix of house types, sizes and tenure on specific development schemes. In some cases it may be appropriate for supported or specialist accommodation to be included within a development, where a need exists. Examples include extra care for frail older people, or supported housing for people with a learning disability, mobility problems or other needs.
- 9.17** Where a developer suggests that a site is not viable with the dwelling and tenure mix set out in the policy the Council will seek to negotiate to reach a viable solution to enable development to proceed. In some exceptional cases it may be appropriate to accept an off-site contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing on alternative sites. A formal viability assessment will be required to support a change in tenure or a lower level of provision.
- 9.18** The Council intends to produce a detailed affordable housing guidance note which, along with the Council's Housing Strategy<sup>(56)</sup> and Tenancy Strategy<sup>(57)</sup>, will provide additional guidance for developers.
- 9.19** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Homes in the Countryside

- 9.20** The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to new homes in the countryside and the extension, alteration or replacement of existing homes in the countryside.

### Policy LP 26

#### Homes in the Countryside

A proposal that includes the creation of a new home in the countryside will only be supported where:

- a. there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work; or
- b. it helps meet an established need for affordable housing; or
- c. the proposal would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of a heritage asset; or the proposal would re-use an existing building; or
- d. the design of the home is of exceptional quality or is truly innovative in nature.

Such proposals will be expected to comply with other applicable policies of the plan and the requirements detailed below.

#### Homes for Rural Workers

Where a proposal in the countryside includes a new home it will be supported where:

- e. the proposed accommodation is essential to the proper functioning of an economically viable rural enterprise;
- f. the accommodation is for a full-time worker;

55 Available from the Council's [website](#)

56 Available from the Council's [website](#)

57 Available from the Council's [website](#)

- g. no suitable alternative accommodation exists (or could be made available) in the immediate vicinity or nearest settlement;
- h. the proposal looks to convert an existing building or, where it is not possible to convert an existing building, the proposal looks to replace an existing building; and
- i. the home is designed to be of a high standard.

Where the enterprise has been established for less than three years accommodation will only be permitted on a temporary basis to allow time for the enterprise to prove its viability.

Where a home is permitted it will be subject to a planning condition ensuring that occupation is limited to a qualifying person or the continuing residence of the surviving partner of a qualifying person and any resident dependants. A qualifying person is someone who is solely, mainly or was last working in a rural enterprise.

A proposal to remove such occupancy conditions will only be supported where evidence demonstrates that the dwelling is not needed for the enterprise to which it relates and has been appropriately marketed at a value reflecting the occupancy condition to meet the needs of another qualifying person from another rural enterprise.

### **Affordable Housing**

A proposal for affordable housing will be supported where it is located within or adjacent to a Key Service Centre or Small Settlement where it can be demonstrated that:

- j. it has clear support from the local community;
- k. siting and design have been carefully considered in order to minimise any potential adverse impacts on its surroundings, including the landscape, countryside, and the amenity of existing and future residents and users;
- l. the number and type of affordable homes is limited to that which can be justified by evidence of need for local people who are either currently or formerly resident in, or have an existing family, employment or some other connection agreed with the Council to, the settlement or an adjacent settlement;
- m. there is reasonable access to at least a basic range of services appropriate to the form of housing proposed; and
- n. mechanisms are in place to ensure that the affordable housing remains affordable<sup>(58)</sup>.

A project involving affordable housing may be cross subsidised where it complies with the applicable requirements of Policy LP 4 'Enabled Exceptions'.

### **Heritage Assets**

Any proposals involving the reuse of heritage assets or for enabling development must comply with the applicable requirements of Policy LP 31 'Heritage Assets and their Settings'.

### **Conversion or Replacement of Existing Buildings**

A proposal for the residential conversion of an existing building in the countryside or for the replacement of an existing building in the countryside will be supported where it is demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the building being used for non-residential purposes.

Such proposals will be expected to comply with the applicable requirements of Policy LP 11 'The Relationship Between the Built-up Area and the Countryside'.

### **Homes of Truly Exceptional or Innovative Design**

A proposal for a new home in the countryside that is of exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design will only be supported where the design:

58 Subject to the provisions of statutory instrument 623 of 1997 (available from the UK legislation [website](#))



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- o. is truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in Huntingdonshire;
- p. reflects of the highest standards in architecture;
- q. significantly enhances its immediate setting; and
- r. is sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Anyone considering a proposal of this kind will be expected to enter into pre-application discussions with the Council and to engage positively with independent Design Review, implementing recommendations from the process.

## Extension, Alteration or Replacement of an Existing Home

A proposal for extension, alteration or replacement of an existing home in the countryside will be supported where it does not significantly increase the height or massing compared with the original building<sup>(59)</sup> and does not significantly increase the impact on the surrounding countryside. Replacement homes will be expected to be located in the same position as that being replaced unless relocation would bring about benefits in terms of:

- s. the amenity of residents; or
- t. releasing land of high agricultural value by replacement on that of lower agricultural value.

A proposal for the erection, alteration, replacement or extension of an outbuilding which is ancillary to an existing home in the countryside will be supported where it is well related to the home, of a scale consistent with it and where it remains ancillary to the home.

## Reasoning

- 9.21** One of the few circumstances in which isolated residential development in the countryside may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable agricultural and certain other full-time workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work due to the nature and demands of the work concerned. Such permissions will be subject to a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to essential need and to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or other rural enterprise or a surviving partner of such a person and to any resident dependants.
- 9.22** When considering the removal of occupancy conditions appropriate marketing is essential but it has to be recognising that the market for such occupancy controlled accommodation is limited by the number of rural businesses nearby that have workers that would qualify for such accommodation. A tailored approach to marketing directly to qualifying businesses in the area is likely to be the most successful in finding out whether there is a need for such accommodation rather than non-targeted advertising even for a long period of time. Such targeted marketing will however need to be long enough to enable nearby qualifying businesses to respond properly.
- 9.23** Affordable housing in the form of 'Rural Exception Sites' can be used in order to deliver homes to meet local needs in key service centres and small settlements where little, if any, provision would come through mixed provision on market housing sites. At the national level, the 2008 Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing urges the need for more proactive engagement to bring forward sites for affordable homes to meet local needs in smaller rural communities (generally defined as settlements with populations under 3,000). This could include sites delivered through traditional mechanisms by Registered Providers (RPs), but also Community Land Trusts (CLTs) where land and facilities are owned in perpetuity by an independent non-profit making trust for the benefit of the local community.
- 9.24** In considering such schemes the Council would need to be satisfied that the development has community support and reflects local need in terms of scale, dwelling type and tenure mix. Proposed developments must be based on sound evidence of housing need. Given that housing permitted through this policy is

59 See '[Glossary](#)' for definition

an exception to normal countryside policies, it is important that it remains 'affordable', subject to the provisions of statutory instrument 623 of 1997. Only tenures which will remain affordable in the long term will be permitted in such schemes. The Council recognises the need to work with parish councils and local landowners to identify and bring forward suitable sites for such housing.

- 9.25** Where a proposal is for the residential reuse of a heritage asset in the countryside pre-application discussions will need to have established that residential use represents the optimal viable use of the heritage asset. Where a proposal is for enabling development in the countryside in order to secure the future of a heritage asset that includes a new home pre-application discussions will have established that there are no other viable options that would secure the future of the heritage asset and that any disbenefits that cannot be eliminated are outweighed by securing the future of the heritage asset.
- 9.26** Isolated new houses in the countryside will require special justification for planning permission to be granted. Very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide this special justification for granting planning permission. Such a design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking, for example, in its use of materials, methods of construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment, so helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas. The value of such a building will be found in its reflection of the highest standards in contemporary architecture, the significant enhancement of its immediate setting and its sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area.
- 9.27** To reduce the potential additional impact of built development in the countryside limits are needed on the extent to which existing homes may be enlarged and ancillary buildings erected. Extensions will be judged against the size of the original building.
- 9.28** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Residential Moorings

- 9.29** The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's criteria for considering planning applications for new residential berths and moorings and the conversion of existing leisure berths or moorings.

### Policy LP 27

#### Residential Moorings

A proposal that includes a new residential berth or mooring will be supported where:

- a. it is located within or adjacent to the built-up area of an existing settlement;
- b. adequate servicing is provided, including water supply, electricity, and disposal facilities for sewage and waste;
- c. use of any paths adjacent to the water body will not be impeded.
- d. it will not impede the use of leisure moorings or berths or navigation or lead to hazardous boat movements;
- e. it will not overload the capacity of the watercourse or water body;
- f. local water quality and quantity will not be adversely affected;
- g. biodiversity of the water, its margins and nearby nature conservation sites will be maintained or enhanced;
- h. it will not lead to any adverse impact on flood risk or flood defences or displacement of flood risk;
- i. it will not cause an adverse visual impact on its immediate surroundings or the wider landscape; and
- j. the proposal complies with the Middle Level Commissioners's moorings policy as applicable.

A proposal for the conversion of an existing leisure berth or mooring to residential use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is substantial over-provision of leisure berths or moorings in the surrounding area and the above criteria are met. Such conversions will be limited to a maximum of 20% of the total moorings/ berths in that location.

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## Reasoning

- 9.30** It is acknowledged that living on boats is a lifestyle choice for some residents and contributes to increasing the diversity of homes within the district. However, residential use of boats can create demand for facilities that are inappropriate in a rural riverside location, such as boardwalks for safe access or provision of water and pump-out facilities. There is also a risk of pollution and disturbance to wildlife.
- 9.31** New homes should be concentrated in sustainable locations and so the same principle will be applied to proposals for residential use of moorings. The policy aims to ensure that potential residents of houseboats benefit from the same level of access to services and facilities as those living in traditional housing and to protect the countryside from adverse impacts associated with permanent occupation, such as visual intrusion.
- 9.32** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.



## 10 Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

- 10.1** Protecting and enhancing the natural environment is of particular importance not only for sustaining biodiversity but also for maintaining the open space and green environment that adds so much to the quality of life in Huntingdonshire.
- 10.2** A huge amount of the character of Huntingdonshire is shaped by its heritage. From the earliest times when people began a settled existence the way they have used the land and built places in which to live and work has contributed to the character we see around us today. Conserving and enhancing our heritage is therefore essential to maintaining that character and the quality of life we enjoy.

### Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species

- 10.3** The purpose of this policy is to describe Council's basis for considering sustainable development proposals in relation to biodiversity and protected habitats and species, and to set out project and information requirements.

#### Policy LP 28

##### **Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species**

A proposal will be supported where it does not give rise to significant adverse impact on:

- a. a site of international importance for biodiversity or geology, unless there are exceptional overriding reasons of human health, public safety or environmental benefit;
- b. a site of national importance for biodiversity or geology, unless there are exceptional circumstances where the need for, and the benefits of, the development significantly outweigh its impacts on the site;
- c. protected species, priority habitats or species, or sites of local or regional importance for biodiversity or geology, unless the need for, and the benefits of, the proposal outweigh the impacts.

A proposal will be accompanied by a valid assessment of the likely impacts on biodiversity and geology, including protected species, priority habitats & species and on sites of biodiversity value<sup>(60)</sup>.

If adverse impacts are identified and they are proven to be unavoidable, every effort will be made to address them by minimisation, then by mitigation. Only where this cannot be achieved will consideration be given to alternative forms of compensation. The value of the site must not be compromised, both on its own or as part of the wider network of sites, to such an extent that the continuing value of the designation is called into question.

A proposal will aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Opportunities will be taken to achieve beneficial measures within the design and layout of development. Measures will be included that maintain and enhance existing features of biodiversity value and where possible seek to reverse the decline of species. Priority will be given to measures which assist in achieving targets in the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs), that provide opportunities to improve public access to nature and ensure the effective management of biodiversity or geological features, that contribute to the enhancement of ecological networks or enable the adaptation of biodiversity to climate change.

60 Including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites, sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), County Wildlife Sites, National and Local Nature Reserves, woodland, Local Geological Sites (LGS), Protected Roadside Verges, The Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area or other landscape features of historic or nature conservation value.

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## Reasoning

- 10.4** The importance of sites of international, national and local nature conservation interest within Huntingdonshire is indicated by the range of statutory designations that exist including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. County Wildlife Sites (CWS) are not statutorily defined but provide important habitats to sustain a wealth of biodiversity. These include valuable semi-natural habitats such as ancient woodland, species-rich grassland and wetlands. In 2011/12 Huntingdonshire was recorded as having approximately 135 CWS although the number varies as new sites meeting the criteria are identified while others known to have deteriorated may be removed.
- 10.5** The purpose of this policy is to provide additional protection for statutorily designated areas and a good level of protection for non-statutory designated areas such as CWS. It aims to prevent harm to protected habitats and species, including direct impacts such as land take, and indirect impacts like changes to a watercourse or air pollution and the potential combination of such impacts. It should be recognised that harm to a nature site could result at some distance from a proposed development site.
- 10.6** The Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire coordinates the implementation of Habitat and Species Action Plans which outline actions to help preserve and enhance important habitats and species in Cambridgeshire which are considered to be the most threatened at each level. Where appropriate, priority should be given to achieving the targets set out in these action plans.
- 10.7** A development proposal should seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and consider its potential impact on biodiversity and on sites of importance for geological conservation. Where existing buildings will be affected consideration should be given to the potential impact on protected and priority species that may use the building as part of their habitat. A development proposal should be accompanied by a landscape scheme with high biodiversity value as this can aid the sustainability of the proposal through habitat creation. It should be noted that knowledge of wildlife sites and their condition is constantly changing and decisions will be based on the most up to date information available.
- 10.8** When producing an assessment of habitats and species and details of any mitigation or enhancement the 'Biodiversity Checklist: Developers' and the 'Biodiversity Checklist: Householder' produced by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership<sup>(61)</sup> (or any relevant successor documents) should be referred to. Further information on issues to be considered can be obtained from the Association of Local Government Ecologists [website](#).
- 10.9** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Trees, Woodland and Related Features

- 10.10** The purpose of this policy is to set out Council's approach to considering the impacts of sustainable development proposals on trees, woodlands and related features.

### Policy LP 29

#### Trees, Woodland and Related Features

A proposal will be supported where it avoids the loss of, and minimises the risk of harm to trees, woodland, hedges or hedgerows of visual, historic or nature conservation value, including orchards, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees. The landscaping scheme for the proposal will incorporate any of these features that lie within the site and should link with any of these features on adjacent land/ nearby.

A proposal should seek to avoid affecting any:

61 Available from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership [website](#) under 'Partnership Publications'

- a. tree or woodland that is protected by a Tree Preservation Order if this would result in its loss, give rise to a threat to its continued well-being; or
- b. tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of visual, historic, cultural or nature conservation value, where it would result in damage to a feature that would undermine that value.

Where such a loss, threat or damage is proven to be unavoidable this will only be acceptable where:

- c. there are sound arboricultural reasons to support the proposal; or
- d. the proposal would bring benefits that outweigh the loss, threat or damage to the feature concerned and the loss, threat or damage is addressed through minimisation and provision of appropriate mitigation measures, reinstatement of features and/ or compensatory tree planting, landscaping or habitat creation to ensure the character of the landscape or townscape is protected as far as is possible.

## Reasoning

- 10.11** Trees, small areas of woodland, hedges and hedgerows provide important habitats for a range of species, provide shelter, help reduce noise and atmospheric pollution; they also store carbon dioxide, helping to mitigate against climate change. A hedge is generally found within a settlement and often has an amenity or ornamental role; a hedgerow is more commonly found in a rural setting although some old hedgerows remain within settlements and often provide field boundaries and may comprise a range of native species. They add to the character and quality of the local environment, can have historic value and can offer recreation opportunities supporting health and wellbeing.
- 10.12** To ensure that these benefits are retained, development proposals will be expected to avoid harm to trees, woodlands, hedges and hedgerows wherever possible, and wherever appropriate incorporate them within a landscape scheme. This can assist in integrating the scheme into the local environment, providing some mature, established elements within landscaping schemes. When this cannot be achieved, mitigation, replacement or compensatory measures will be required to ensure that there is no loss of environmental value as a result of development; these should be secured by condition or through a S106 Agreement.
- 10.13** Where specific trees or groups of trees are of particular value (such that their removal would have a significant impact upon the local environment and its enjoyment by the public), and are potentially under threat, the Council will make Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) to protect them. Where trees are covered by TPOs, the policy is intended to safeguard them from damage or destruction unless there are overriding reasons for the development to go ahead.
- 10.14** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Open Space

- 10.15** The purpose of this policy is to protect against the loss of open space, outdoor recreation facilities, areas of garden land and allotments unless appropriately mitigated or compensated for.

### Policy LP 30

#### Open Space

Proposals will be expected to include open space as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document<sup>(62)</sup> or successor documents and to provide or improve connections to open spaces and green infrastructure nearby.

62 Available from the Council's [website](#)



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A proposal should seek to avoid the whole or partial loss of an area of open space, an outdoor recreation facility, area of garden land or allotment that:

- a. contributes to the distinctive form, character and setting of a settlement or creates a focal point;
- b. is part of a heritage asset or provides the setting or part of the setting of a heritage asset; or
- c. is of particular value for wildlife, sport or recreation.

Where such a loss is unavoidable the proposal will be expected to include appropriate mitigation and/or compensation.

Mitigation and compensation must provide a net benefit to the community in terms of the quality, availability and accessibility of open space or recreational opportunities. Mitigation and compensation may include the enhancement of remaining open spaces in cases of partial loss or the enhancement of other existing facilities that would serve the same people as that being lost.

## Local Green Space

Local Green Spaces may be designated in Neighbourhood Development Plans where they accord with the criteria in the NPPF.

Where a proposal is located on land designated as a Local Green Space it will only be supported where it is for:

- d. essential operational buildings, such as for the storage of tools or machinery for the maintenance or upkeep of the Local Green Space;
- e. the extension or alteration of an existing building provided that it does not significantly increase the height, scale or massing compared with the original building; or
- f. the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use, does not significantly increase the height, scale or massing compared with the original building and is either sited in the same place as the original building or is sited where it has less impact than the original building on views into and out of the Local Green Space.

## Reasoning

**10.16** The current network of open spaces and recreation facilities within Huntingdonshire's towns and villages makes a significant contribution to their character and attractiveness. Open space takes many forms including parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, undeveloped parcels of land, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Many provide important recreational and sporting facilities and whatever their size, function and accessibility they all contribute to local amenity and biodiversity. It is important to prevent the loss of open space where this would harm the character of a settlement or the visual quality of the locality.

**10.17** Huntingdonshire's Sports Facilities Strategy 2009-2014<sup>(63)</sup> identifies a number of outdoor sports facilities which need to be preserved and maintained due to identified strategic need. Variations in under and over provision of outdoor sports facilities exist across the district and will be taken into account when proposals involving losses are considered. The Open Space Strategy provides additional guidance.

**10.18** People's quality of life is improved by the existence of open spaces through opportunities for formal or informal recreation. The policy will increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining recreation opportunities or where this is not possible by ensuring that new facilities are provided to compensate for any losses.

63 Available on the Council's [website](#)

- 10.19** In addition to the protection offered to open space by the first part of the policy, it is acknowledged that Local Green Spaces may be designated in Neighbourhood Development Plans. The process for preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan is set out in the Localism Act 2011 and subsequent regulations. To be considered as a designated Local Green Space an area should be local in character and in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves. A green space may be designated where it is of genuine historic significance, recreational or biodiversity value or for its tranquillity. Criteria for assessing local green spaces are set out in paragraph 77 of the NPPF.
- 10.20** While Local Green Spaces may be afforded specific protection, it is expected that the first part of the policy, together with management arrangements outside of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plan processes, will generally be sufficient to ensure the protection of open spaces.
- 10.21** Please refer to the 'Important Note:' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

## Heritage Assets and their Settings

- 10.22** The purpose of this policy is to protect and conserve the district's heritage assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas and related assets, and set out the Council's information requirements for inclusion within a heritage statement that accompanies a planning application or other application for consent.

### Policy LP 31

#### Heritage Assets and their Settings

Great weight is given to the conservation of any heritage asset; more weight is accorded to assets of greater significance.

A proposal which affects the special interest or significance of any heritage asset or its setting must demonstrate how it will conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the asset. Any harm must be fully justified and this harm will be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal. Substantial harm or loss will require exceptional justification. Harm to assets of the highest significance will require wholly exceptional justification.

A proposal will be required to show that:

- a. it has clearly identified all the heritage assets affected by the proposal and their special interests and significance, this is to be set out in a heritage statement;
- b. the design, siting, scale form and materials of any proposed development will be sympathetic to the special interests and significance of the heritage asset;
- c. it would not have an adverse impact on views of or from the heritage asset or of the open spaces, trees or street scene which contribute positively to any heritage assets and their setting;
- d. it clearly sets out how any alterations preserve the interests of a listed heritage asset; and
- e. where demolition of a heritage asset is proposed a feasibility study will be required to assess the potential for retention and reuse of the heritage asset and the case of demolition is clearly and convincingly justified. Where demolition is justified the developer will be required to record the asset before demolition takes place.

#### Reasoning

- 10.23** The Council is committed to the positive conservation of heritage assets in the district as they make an important contribution to the identity, distinctiveness and character of Huntingdonshire. A key feature of Huntingdonshire's heritage are listed buildings which are listed by English Heritage in recognition of their

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special architectural or historic interest and any works which affect the character of a listed building require Listed Building Consent. The Council also maintains a listed buildings at risk register<sup>(64)</sup> to ensure that these important buildings do not fall into disrepair and encourages their repair and reuse.

- 10.24** The protection and enhancement of the district's conservation areas is a key issue for the Council with an ongoing programme of review and preparation of conservation areas character statements. There is no embargo on development in conservation areas; carefully considered, high quality designs that provide a successful contrast with their surroundings can preserve and enhance character, as well as schemes that employ authentic historical forms and features. Careful treatment of the setting of a building is also vital to ensure that new development compliments and enhances its surroundings. Design and access statements should address the potential implications for heritage assets of any development proposals affecting a heritage asset.
- 10.25** Archaeological remains provide crucial links to the past and can provide useful information about local heritage. Appropriate steps must be undertaken to identify and protect them as they are easily damaged or destroyed when development takes place. To protect the integrity of archaeological remains preservation should take place in situ wherever possible.
- 10.26** Where the potential impact of a development proposal on any heritage asset is likely to be significant the need for appropriate assessment and evaluation requirements will vary depending on the nature of the asset likely to be affected. Guidance should be sought from English Heritage on the scale and nature of information required.
- 10.27** Please refer to the 'Important Note.' when considering development proposals in light of this policy.

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64 Available from the Council's [website](#)



## 11 Strategic Expansion Locations

- 11.1** A central part of the strategy of this plan is development in three Strategic Expansion Locations. Due to the scale of development being proposed and the nature of these locations they are presented together ahead of development sites in the Towns and Key Service Centres.

### **Alconbury Weald**

- 11.2** Alconbury Weald is located at the former Alconbury airfield and adjoining land to the north of Huntingdon close to Great and Little Stukeley. An Enterprise Zone has been designated on 150ha, and further land in the same ownership offers the potential of a new road link with Huntingdon. The site lies adjacent to the East Coast Mainline railway and could include a new railway station.

### **Eastern Expansion, St Neots**

- 11.3** The eastern expansion of St Neots on land to the east of the railway line was the largest direction of growth identified in the Core Strategy 2009. The Urban Design Framework developed by the Council and the key developer interests forms the basis of the proposed development site.

### **Wyton-on-the-Hill**

- 11.4** There is an opportunity to increase the size of Wyton-on-the-Hill to take advantage of the large area of land which is expected to be surplus to defence purposes. This could result in Wyton-on-the-Hill developing to become a much more sustainable settlement and more cohesive community.
- 11.5** There is an important distinction to be made between the airfield and the retained MOD technical area which has recently been the focus of significant investment and is a long term enduring location for MOD activities. The MOD acknowledges the potential suitability of the airfield site for development and the opportunity to integrate any possible future development with the existing settlement at Wyton-on-the-Hill. It is anticipated that the airfield will be confirmed as surplus to requirements. The Council intends to hold on-going discussions with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and other partners about the potential at Wyton airfield as the Local Plan emerges.

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## Alconbury Weald

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SEL 1

#### Alconbury Weald (previously HU 29)

A total area of approximately 575ha of land east of the A1(M) at the former Alconbury airfield and Grange Farm, Huntingdon is allocated for a mix of uses, the scale of which is to be determined before finalising the Local Plan, but development could comprise:

- approximately 5000 homes (with potential for some more homes in the longer term)
- 150ha of employment land
- approximately 4200m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace (Class A1) with a maximum of 1500m<sup>2</sup> in one store and other stores with a maximum of 500m<sup>2</sup> each, all contained within centres to be identified in the masterplan
- services (A2), restaurants (A3), and takeaways (A5) appropriate to the scale of development within centres to be identified in the masterplan
- educational and community facilities appropriate to the scale of development
- strategic green infrastructure incorporating publicly accessible natural green space and other open space appropriate to the scale of development
- transport infrastructure improvements appropriate to the scale of development including potential linkages to the Busway and the possible provision of a railway station



Successful delivery of development will require a comprehensive public master planning exercise produced or agreed with the Council that addresses:

- details of a phasing approach to ensure balanced delivery of industrial and commercial development with residential development
- integration of development with the existing structure of the airfield
- integration with Huntingdon while maintaining separation from nearby settlements
- protection of heritage assets and their settings
- a comprehensive approach to maintaining and enhancing character and creation of development with a distinctive sense of place
- establishment of a transport network that promotes sustainable travel modes
- satisfactory resolution of any additional traffic impact on the A14 having regard to a transport assessment and travel plan
- all retail to be complementary to the continuing vitality and viability of the town centre and not jeopardising the delivery of Chequers Court and Huntingdon West
- provision of additional site access from the south onto the A141 to avoid the need for unacceptable levels of traffic on the B1043 from Huntingdon and ensure greater connectivity with Huntingdon
- the mixture of uses to be incorporated, including social and community facilities and local centres to meet the needs arising from the proposed development



- the arrangement of different uses in a manner that minimises the need to travel
- differentiated densities of development depending on proximity to centres and the development of distinctive character areas
- design codes for the appearance of development proposals
- noise assessment and acoustic treatments in relation to the East Coast Main Line Railway
- retention of existing trees in accordance with a tree survey
- provision for habitats in accordance with an ecological assessment
- areas that contribute to the strategic green infrastructure network with reference to the existing strategic network and providing links between the development, Huntingdon and the Great Fen
- a comprehensive approach to providing publicly accessible green and open space throughout the development
- landscaping design recognising vistas, boundaries and appropriate visual screening from the surrounding countryside
- flood risk assessment and provision of sustainable drainage systems
- a decentralised low carbon energy network

Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.

## Development Guidance

At the time the Core Strategy (2009) was produced, potential redevelopment of Alconbury airfield was to be considered within the wider regional planning context of the East of England Plan. The Core Strategy consequently only identified the existing planning permissions for large scale storage and distribution uses and the temporary use of specific buildings and hard standing areas for B1, B2, B8 and sui generis uses. However the current government has removed the regional level from the development plan system with the effect that Alconbury airfield will not be comprehensively considered in that strategic context.

As part of the government's initiatives to promote economic growth a series of enterprise zones was designated in August 2011. Alconbury airfield was selected as the location for the enterprise zone for the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership area. The designation of the enterprise zone was one of the main factors that led the Council to start to draw up the Local Plan. In February 2012 the landowner was granted permission for enabling works for the enterprise zone.

The landowner has lodged a planning application 1201158OUT identifying development for the entire 575ha of land in their ownership. The application was available for consultation until 9 November 2012. This proposes to establish a development framework under which further detailed applications could be brought forward. A series of documents explain the application and the anticipated environmental effects of development. The application proposes some 5000 dwellings, 290,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace and associated other uses.

A range of dwelling numbers was considered as part of the Strategy and Policy Consultation which ran from 31 August until 23 November 2012. In response to emerging evidence on housing need in Huntingdonshire, the availability of additional sites, and having regard to the existing application, 5000 houses are proposed although the capacity of the site is considered to be greater. Depending on the future performance of the enterprise zone, the number of dwellings considered appropriate for the site may change in future.

In order to best provide for economic growth and facilitate easy access to employment opportunities, housing growth will need to be phased appropriately to ensure it is matched with development of industrial and commercial uses. It is expected that retail development will be limited to that which is necessary to serve day to day needs, as the additional population growth here should look to Huntingdon town centre for retail services in the same



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way as residents of Brampton and Godmanchester do. The allocations for development at Chequers Court and Huntingdon West will ensure that Huntingdon is well placed to provide the necessary retail facilities. Retail within Alconbury Weald is expected to be located at one 'hub' as well as three or four other locations.

Analysis of the site has divided it into nine areas based on landscape character and visibility. These are detailed in the Environmental Capacity Study. The scale and type of development will be guided by the characteristics of these areas.

A transport assessment and travel plan will be necessary having regard to the potential impact on roads, including the A14. To allow for all modes of travel a road access will be taken from the A141 to the south as this is expected to be the best way to serve development in the eastern parts of the site and avoid additional traffic on the B1043 through nearby settlements. Good links with Huntingdon will be important to the success of any development and should be provided to encourage integration.

Options for public transport provision should be thoroughly explored. The opportunity to incorporate a new railway station should be coordinated with Network Rail's proposed upgrading of the East Coast Mainline. Extensions to the Busway route should be explored fully to facilitate links to Huntingdon, the Strategic Expansion Location at Wyton-on-the-Hill and further afield to Cambridge and Peterborough. Additional bus routes, cycle and footpaths should be provided to major service and employment destinations.

A variety of densities of development along with local centres will help a distinctive character to emerge. The distinctive character will respect the heritage and historic character of the airfield. It is expected that development will be most dense closest to the district centre and other local service centres. Design codes will establish how variation in character through transitions in the use of materials and a changing dynamic of hard and soft landscaping features can be achieved without limiting the potential for variety and change. Appropriate design should ensure that development sits as a positive feature within the landscape. Residential development is expected to be set back from the East Coast Mainline Railway and existing major roads with necessary acoustic treatments incorporated in respect of areas affected by noise.

Given the scale of development there are opportunities to add significantly to the strategic green infrastructure network and provide significant open space for a wide range of uses. It is envisaged that green space provided on this site will link in with public rights of way to the south through Huntingdon to the Ouse Valley and beyond and northwards to the Great Fen. Enhancements to biodiversity will be encouraged through a network of green spaces and sustainable urban drainage systems that should be specifically designed to foster greater ecological diversity.

Development on this scale offers an unprecedented opportunity for a decentralised low carbon energy network. Such a network should be deployed throughout the development including the enterprise zone to take advantage of the widest range of uses to aid viability including employment uses as base heat loads.

Large areas of Alconbury airfield benefit from temporary planning permissions for a variety of employment uses which currently provide around 800 jobs. The Council is working with businesses affected by the proposals to explore opportunities to relocate within the local area.



## Eastern Expansion, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SEL 2

#### Eastern Expansion, St Neots (previously SN 1)

224ha of land east of Loves Farm and at Wintringham Park, Cambridge Road, St Neots is allocated for mixed use sustainable development in accordance with the St Neots Eastern Expansion Urban Design Framework 2010 to comprised:

- approximately 3700 homes
- approximately 25ha of employment land (Class B1, B2 and B8)
- a main centre of some 3ha containing offices (Class B1), approximately 4,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross retail floorspace (Class A1) including a supermarket with a maximum gross retail floorspace of 3,000m<sup>2</sup> and other A2 to A5 and ancillary uses
- a neighbourhood centre of some 0.3ha containing a maximum of 200m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace (Class A1) and other A2 to A5 and ancillary uses
- primary school provision
- community facilities
- strategic green space and open space



Successful development of the site will require:

- satisfactory resolution of the impact of additional traffic on the A428 having regard to a transport assessment and travel plan
- a masterplan completed as part of an outline application that addresses:
  - details of phasing and development
  - a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians
  - differentiated densities of development depending on proximity to centres
  - the mix of uses to be incorporated, including social and community facilities to meet the needs of the proposed development
  - the incorporation of retail shops appropriate to the area which are complementary to the continued vitality and viability of the town centre
  - the creation of an attractive St Neots East centre fronting Cambridge Road, designed in full in advance of any uses being established, identifying how the various uses will share communal spaces and contribute to a sense of place
  - the creation of a neighbourhood centre near to the underpass by Howitt's Lane
  - the creation of a landscaped business park with frontage to the A428
  - provision for habitats in accordance with an ecological assessment
  - areas that contribute to the strategic green infrastructure network, for example linking with the Ouse Valley and to the south
  - green and open space creation throughout the development and on the edges for a variety of recreational purposes
  - tree survey and provision for habitats in accordance with an ecological assessment



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- landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries, and green infrastructure networks
- design codes for the appearance of development proposals
- noise assessment and acoustic treatments in relation to the East Coast Main Line
- flood risk assessment and provision of sustainable drainage systems
- opportunities for a decentralised low carbon energy network where viable
- separation from the gas pipeline and high voltage electricity transmission line in accordance with National Grid requirements
- waste minimisation, re-use and recovery

Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.

## Development Guidance

The St Neots Eastern Expansion Urban Design Framework 2010 sets out a framework for urban growth in this area. As Loves Farm becomes built out this area will form a sustainable urban extension. In order to best provide for economic growth and facilitate easy access to employment opportunities, development of industrial and commercial uses will need to be phased in with housing growth

An assessment of the strategic highway network has been undertaken in connection with application 1300178OUT for Wintringham Park. While the A428 has been dualled east of Caxton Gibbet, and the A1 and A421 to the west are also dual carriageway, this part of the A428 is a single lane carriageway and currently experiences congestion at certain times of the day. In order to off-set the impact of introducing new access points on the A428 and to mitigate the impact of development on other off-site junctions on the route, improvements are anticipated at the roundabouts at Wyboston, Barford Road, Cambridge Road and Caxton Gibbet to address likely capacity issues.

The internal layout of the development will include new roads and public rights of way. A central landscaped spine road is anticipated from Cambridge Road through to Potton Road. Additional access along Cambridge Road will be needed, especially for the district centre and the area north of Cambridge Road. Links with the existing Loves Farm development should be provided to encourage integration. Cambridge Road itself should be improved as the gateway to St Neots town centre. Retail development in this area should not compete with, but instead complement the existing town centre. Despite the barrier of the railway line, connections are expected under the two bridges in the area between Cambridge Rd and Potton Rd. Some of the existing public rights of way will need to be relocated to correspond with expected travel routes.

The land should accommodate a variety of densities of development, a district centre, a local centre, a business park and smaller employment areas. It is expected that development will be most dense closest to the district centre and other services. Design codes will establish how the uses will be viewed and their interrelationships. Appropriate design should ensure that development sits as a positive feature within the landscape. Development is expected to be set back and necessary acoustic treatments incorporated in respect of areas affected by noise from the East Coast Mainline.

Given the size of the development there are opportunities to add to the strategic green infrastructure network and provide significant open space for recreational needs. It is envisaged that green space provided on this site will link in with public rights of way through St Neots to the Ouse Valley and that this site should link to additional green corridors out to South Cambridgeshire. Improved biodiversity and wildlife can be encouraged through a network of green spaces and sustainable urban drainage systems that are specifically designed to foster greater ecological diversity. These spaces will also address the potential for flooding and should result in little if any sensitive development within flood zones.



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In accordance with sustainable principles designed to limit the effects of this large area of new development on climate change, a decentralised low carbon energy network is envisaged. Such a network will be feasible if developed in conjunction with the neighbouring industrial and residential uses.

Part of the site is affected by overhead transmission lines and there are also gas pipelines near the railway line. Appropriate separation distances from these will need to be maintained, in accordance with advice from National Grid. It is recognised that the overhead transmission lines will not be placed underground as it is not considered feasible and there is little net benefit in visual terms due to the need to replace two pylons with larger terminal towers.

Reference should be made to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy regarding requirements to ensure that waste is appropriately managed and dealt with.

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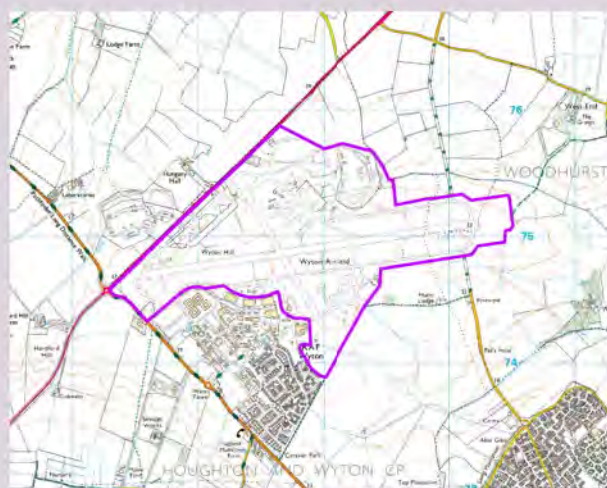
## Wyton Airfield and Wyton-on-the-Hill

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SEL 3

#### Wyton Airfield and Wyton-on-the-Hill (previously WT 1)

An area of approximately 285ha of land at Wyton airfield/Wyton-on-the-Hill is allocated for a mix of uses, the scale of which is to be determined before finalising the Local Plan, but development could comprise:

- approximately 3750 homes (with potential for some more homes in the longer term)
- approximately 10ha of employment land
- approximately 3000m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace (Class A1) with a maximum of 2000m<sup>2</sup> in one store
- services (A2), restaurants (A3) and takeaways (A5) within a defined centre
- enhanced primary school provision
- secondary school provision
- strategic green infrastructure incorporating publicly accessible natural green space and other open space appropriate to the agreed scale of development
- upgraded community facilities to meet needs arising from development and to serve the needs of the current community



Successful delivery of development on the site will require completion of a public master planning exercise produced or agreed with the Council that addresses:

- integration of development with the existing Wyton-on-the-Hill uses and adjoining housing
- a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians
- satisfactory resolution of additional traffic impact having regard to a transport assessment and travel plan
- access and layout
- design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposal
- the mixture of uses to be incorporated, including social and community facilities to meet the needs arising from development
- the location and design of a centre providing shops and related activities
- landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries and green infrastructure networks, paying particular attention to the relationship with nearby settlements
- a comprehensive approach to providing publicly accessible green and open space throughout the development
- provision for habitats in accordance with an ecological assessment
- sustainable drainage systems

Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.

## Development Guidance

Wyton airfield is considered to be a potentially appropriate sustainable location for sustainable development on previously developed land which could both contribute to the district's development requirements and create a much more cohesive and sustainable community at Wyton-on-the-Hill.

Initial capacity work indicates that the site could accommodate somewhere in the region of 3,750 to 4,500 homes, a secondary school, three primary schools, local shopping and community facilities. Part of the site, adjoining the existing operational part of RAF Wyton may be retained for future military requirements, potentially offering additional employment opportunities. The implications of this scale and nature of development have yet to be determined.

Infrastructure, especially highways capacity, will be a major constraint on the site; discussions with county highways and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) are at a very early stage and solutions have yet to be identified. A master planning exercise will explore opportunities for improving highway infrastructure that will have wider benefits. Further details will be incorporated in the Stage 4 Submission Local Plan following further discussions with the DIO and other partners.

Extensions to the Busway route should be explored fully to facilitate links to Huntingdon, St Ives, Alconbury Enterprise Zone and further afield to Cambridge and Peterborough. Additional bus routes, cycle and footpaths should be provided to major service and employment destinations.

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# 12 Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

## 12 Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

**12.1** The Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area incorporates Huntingdon, Brampton and Godmanchester which are all related by their location in the River Great Ouse valley. It also incorporates the former Alconbury airfield where an enterprise zone was designated in 2011 on 150ha along with land southeast together promoted as Alconbury Weald. It excludes the Stukeleys which are partially surrounded by this area to encourage a clear distinction between the Stukeleys and the proposed development at Alconbury Weald. Huntingdon is situated centrally in the district with Brampton to the south west and Godmanchester to the south east. The A14 cuts through the Spatial Planning Area and the A1 lies immediately to the west of Brampton.

### Huntingdon

**12.2** Huntingdon's historic core lies north of the River Great Ouse centred on the High Street. Major expansion to the town occurred to the north and east in the 1960s and 1970s bringing substantial housing and industrial areas and leading to the coalescence the village of Hartford with Huntingdon. The East Coast Mainline Railway bisects the town on a north-south axis restricting linkages from the west to the town centre. The 1980s saw major housing growth at Stukeley Meadows to the north west of the town centre. The Hinchingsbrooke area to the west has a distinctive character with extensive public service buildings, modern housing and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, formed from grounds formerly associated with Hinchingsbrooke House. The A14 bisects the south west of the town, much of it on an elevated carriageway. The River Great Ouse and its flood meadows form the southern and eastern boundaries to Huntingdon.

**12.3** A natural extension to Huntingdon's town centre is possible to the west of the ring road, where an area for growth was established in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan adopted in 2011. A subsequent planning application has been approved for a new link road between George Street and Ermine Street which will enable new retail and mixed use development in the area and re-route some traffic currently using the ring road.

**12.4** In addition to the potential allocations provision is made for sustainable development proposals through Policy LP 8 'Development in the Spatial Planning Areas'.

## North of Ermine Street, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 1

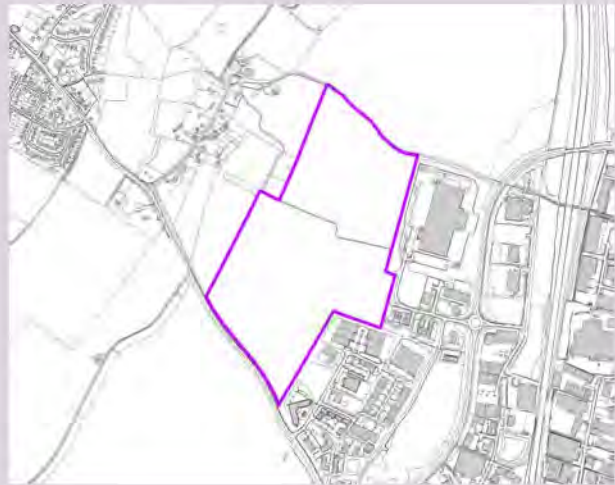
#### North of Ermine Street, Huntingdon

33ha of land north of Ermine Street is allocated for mixed use development to comprise approximately:

- 400 homes
- 2ha of employment land
- 16.5ha of strategic green infrastructure/ publicly accessible green space

Successful development of the site will require:

- satisfactory resolution of additional traffic impact on A14, A141 and Ermine Street having regard to a transport assessment and travel plan
- provision of strategic green infrastructure/ publicly accessible green space to minimise potential impact of development on Great Stukeley and Green End and to link with existing and planned green infrastructure in the surrounding area such that new homes are concentrated towards the southeast of the site and employment uses to the east adjacent to existing employment development
- completion of a public master planning exercise agreed with the Council that addresses:
  - provision of vehicular routes to be created
  - provision of a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians incorporating links to the surrounding area
  - provision of pedestrian and cycle access along the northern boundary to link into the bridleway "The Stukeleys 230/12"
  - design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposals
  - phasing of development
  - landscape design recognising vistas, long distance views, boundaries and green infrastructure networks



Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.



# 12 Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

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## Development Guidance

The adopted Core Strategy identifies a direction of growth for employment development to the northwest of Huntingdon that includes this site. Given the proximity of the Alconbury Enterprise Zone it is considered appropriate to review this direction of growth as its implementation will be affected in the light of incentives offered to businesses locating within the nearby Enterprise Zone. Consequently this site is proposed as a potential allocation for a mix of uses where development will primarily be comprised of housing.

The site is visible from surrounding areas due to its landscape form and change in levels across the site. There are long distance views to and from Hinchingsbrooke to the south and from Green End and Great Stukeley to the north and west. Consequently half of this site will be green infrastructure/ publicly accessible green space to protect the setting of Green End and Great Stukeley. Due to the site's location, size and relationship with the Stukeleys and proposed development nearby there is the potential to comprehensively plan for green infrastructure and link with the existing green infrastructure network and planned improvements nearby. A robust landscape management plan would be required for the whole site to help integrate it with its surroundings to mitigate against visual intrusion for Great Stukeley and Green End and to help maintain settlement separation.

Ermine Street (between the A141 roundabout and the site access) is predicted to operate close to capacity particularly in the peak periods when the long anticipated 'South of Ermine Street, Huntingdon' development is delivered, together with longer term wider background growth in traffic flows. Access for residential development will need to be considered in context with neighbouring developments, including the potential junction to the A141 for Alconbury Weald. Access to the site for employment use can be achieved from Washingley Road although pedestrian links are poor.

To facilitate pedestrian links with the wider area a pedestrian and cycle access route would need to be incorporated into development proposals to link into the existing public right of way (The Stukeleys Bridleway 230/12) on the northern boundary. A transport assessment and accompanying travel plan would be required to ascertain appropriate access and turning/ parking areas.

Due to the site's relative proximity to the A14 and also Ermine Street traffic noise is audible and a noise assessment will be required along with the incorporation of appropriate acoustic treatments into the design of any scheme as necessary.



## South of Ermine Street, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 2

#### South of Ermine Street, Huntingdon (previously HU 7)

54.2ha of land south of Ermine Street is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- approximately 1050 homes
- approximately 1,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross retail floorspace (Class A1) with a maximum of 400m<sup>2</sup> in one store and other stores with a maximum of 200m<sup>2</sup> each.
- a public house/ restaurant
- a primary school
- community facilities to meet needs arising from the development



Successful development of the site will require:

- satisfactory resolution of any impact caused by traffic generated from the allocation on the A14 in accordance with the Highways Agency's requirements
- satisfactory resolution of any impact caused by traffic generated from the allocation on the A141 and Ermine Street
- provision of a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians incorporating safe off-road routes connecting to Huntingdon and the Stukeleys, with a pedestrian and cycle bridge from the site over the A141 to the Stukeley Meadows area of Huntingdon
- phasing of development to ensure provision of infrastructure and services coincides with occupation of properties
- provision of safe and appropriate road access that can provide for the whole site and if link in with wider transport improvements
- design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposals
- landscape design recognising vistas, long distance views to and from nearby settlements, boundaries and green infrastructure networks, paying particular attention to the areas fronting the A14 and A141
- mitigation against the potential impact of noise from the A14 and A141 development proposals using separation rather than acoustic barriers
- provision of a mixture of uses including social and community facilities to meet the needs arising from development
- all retail to be complementary to the continuing vitality and viability of the town centre and not jeopardising the delivery of Chequers Court
- incorporation of a sustainable drainage system
- separation from the gas pipeline and electricity transmission line in accordance with National Grid requirements

### Development Guidance

To reduce the need to travel adequate community and retail facilities should be incorporated within the site to meet residents' everyday needs; in addition a public house/ restaurant (class A3 or A4) would be appropriate to provide local social opportunities.

## 12 Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

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Access and integration are major issues for this site with the need to assimilate the new development into the physical and social fabric of Huntingdon. This site is segregated from the main body of Huntingdon by a strategically important highway therefore safe routes between the site and town for pedestrians and cyclists should be provided in such a way that will not interrupt the flow of vehicles along this highway, which is its primary function. A foot/cycle bridge would be the optimum solution linking the south east of the site across the A141 to the Stukeley Meadows housing area. This should link with the existing public footpath to facilitate access to the wider countryside. Safe pedestrian and cycle routes should also be provided connecting the site with the Stukeleys. A transport assessment and travel plan will be necessary having regard to the potential impact on roads, including the A14 and A141.

The A14 and A141 define the site and both give rise to detrimental impacts in the form of noise and air pollution. To retain the open appearance of the site boundaries any development proposals should use separation coupled with careful layout and design to mitigate the potential harmful impacts of these factors. The site is highly visible in the local landscape and can be seen from several long distance viewpoints. It will require significant landscaping both to ameliorate the impact of development and to protect future residents from noise and air pollution.



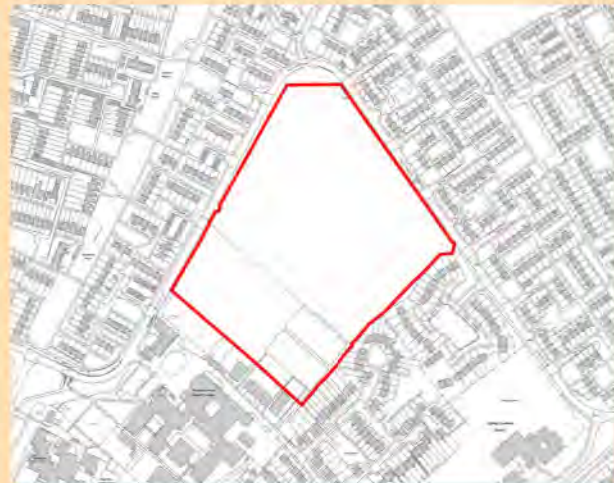
## California Road, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 3

#### California Road, Huntingdon (previously HU 11)

5.7ha of land at California Road is allocated for residential development of approximately 210 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of pedestrian routes through the site to improve pedestrian permeability
- provision of open space within the site for informal use and a play area as an integral part of development
- retention and enhancement of trees and shrubs on northern boundary
- provision of landscape planting on the south western boundary to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties



#### Development Guidance

The site sits in a prominent position within this northern residential part of Huntingdon and is surrounded by residential properties on three sides. This is a very prominent site with the potential to accommodate an attractive modern design.

The site provides low quality open space which is significantly underused. Potential development should improve the appearance of the area and incorporate high quality open space and play facilities giving usable space for the local community.

Pedestrian permeability will need to be a key design consideration in any development proposals in order to integrate the site with the local area and facilitate convenient pedestrian access to the town centre. There are several potential vehicular access points; a transport assessment will be required to ensure appropriate, safe accesses are established.

The lack of significant landscaping enhances the site's prominence as it is open to view. Landscaping will be an important issue for development proposals to minimise the potential for overlooking from the Regional College and enhance the integration of the new development into the locality. Potential development proposals would need to pay attention to the scale and massing of buildings to create a design that reflects the site's prominent position yet enhances the relationship with the surrounding residential development.

The proximity of Huntingdon Regional College may give rise to noise implications for new homes and a noise assessment and appropriate mitigation measures may need to be incorporated into the design of proposals. The site's potential for containing archaeological remains will need to be assessed through the completion of an archaeological assessment. As the site is greenfield it may provide some habitats for wildlife; a biodiversity and ecology survey will therefore be required along with the incorporation of necessary mitigation measures where appropriate.



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## Forensic Science Laboratory, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 4

#### Forensic Science Laboratory, Huntingdon (previously HU 15)

2.7ha of land at Huntingdon Forensic Science Laboratory, Christie Drive is allocated for a mix of uses to comprise:

- approximately 55 homes
- 1ha for Primary and Early Years education facilities

Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of appropriate access(es) to serve development
- provision of additional landscaping on the western boundary and separating the residential and education facilities



### Development Guidance

This site currently accommodates the Forensic Science Laboratory which closed in March 2012 due to national cuts. Redevelopment would offer the opportunity to improve the streetscene and the site's awkward relationship with the surrounding residential development. Cambridgeshire County Council have advised that there is a shortage of primary and early years education places and approximately 1ha of the site will be required for such uses. The in-catchment pressure for places at Cromwell Park primary school exceeds capacity by around 50% each year and this is not forecast to diminish. Pressure for pre-school places on the site is equally significant. There is no scope for expansion within the existing primary school site and greater efficiencies would be gained by expanding onto a portion of the adjacent land than seeking an alternative site.

The site should be subdivided into separate portions for residential use and for primary/ early years education use. The southern portion of the site is better suited to residential use and should be accessed off Christie Drive. Proposals should provide suitable set backs from the road to soften the approach along Christie Drive and consider a graduated scale of buildings to reflect the differentiation in building heights within the surrounding residential development.

The northern portion of the site provides better opportunities to be linked with Cromwell Park Primary School and development here should be accessed off Parkway or Cromwell Drive. Primary/ early years education facilities should be provided appropriate to the needs of the local community.

Development proposals should provide clear visual and physical links through to surrounding development to facilitate integration. A transport assessment will be required which includes consideration of the impact of additional traffic generation on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and enhanced pedestrian and cycleway facilities. Significant landscape enhancements would need to be provided between the housing development and the education facilities.

The proximity of the site to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Bobs Wood County Wildlife Site may necessitate a biodiversity/ ecology survey and report.



## South of Fern Court, Stukeley Road, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 5

#### South of Fern Court, Stukeley Road, Huntingdon (previously HU 16)

0.9ha of land south of Fern Court, Stukeley Road is allocated for development of approximately 70 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- consistency with the principles identified for the site in the West of Stukeley Road Urban Design Framework
- provision of a single vehicular access route into the site and enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities including pedestrian links to adjacent development
- separation from the gas pipeline in accordance with National Grid requirements
- provision of soft boundary treatment and appropriate landscaping along south western boundary fronting Stukeley Meadows
- provision of substantial landscaping buffer along the south eastern boundary between development and the railway



### Development Guidance

An urban design framework has been produced for this site; any potential development scheme should refer to this for guidance. The design of proposals would also need to consider the site's relationship with the recently completed development at Fern Court and provide appropriate physical and visual links through to this development to ensure they are well integrated with each other and with the wider area.

There are two existing access routes into the site from Stukeley Road which could be utilised to serve development. Both would require upgrading to meet current highway standards. A suitable transport assessment would be required and enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities will be required. Development proposals should make the best use of the site's relationship with Stukeley Meadows open space and the skate park.

The site's proximity to the railway and Stukeley Road means that it is significantly affected by noise; it may also be affected by noise from the adjacent skate park. Noise assessments would be required and the layout and design of any development proposal should incorporate appropriate noise attenuation measures to protect amenity of future residents. The site also falls within the Huntingdon air quality management area therefore air quality assessments would be required to ensure no deterioration of air quality occurs as a result of development. The historical use of the site means that there could be significant levels of contamination. Contamination assessments would be required and appropriate remediation measures carried out prior to development.

There are also two gas lines running along the south eastern boundary, one of which is high pressure. Appropriate mitigation measures such as an easement strip would need to be incorporated. A crime reduction statement may be required due to the proximity of the skate park.

The proximity of the site to Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve means that the site could support some protected species. A biodiversity and ecology survey and report would be required and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated. There is a protected walnut tree in the centre of the site and significant perimeter

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landscaping. A tree survey would be required and an appropriate landscape management plan would need to demonstrate how the landscaping would enhance the appearance of the site and help mitigate against some of the issues affecting this site such as noise.



## Constabulary Land, Hinchingsbrooke Park Road, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 6

#### Constabulary Land, Hinchingsbrooke Park Road, Huntingdon (previously HU 17)

4ha of Cambridgeshire Constabulary land at Hinchingsbrooke Park Road is allocated for a mix of uses to comprise:

- approximately 45 homes
- Non-residential institutional uses (D1).

Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of safe and appropriate road access that can provide for the whole site and if necessary link in with wider transport plans
- development being set in landscaped grounds reflecting the 'community campus' context
- a travel plan to cater for sustainable transport patterns
- a programme of work designed to investigate and if necessary protect, protected species, trees and archaeological sites



### Development Guidance

This land was allocated in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011. Given the surrounding uses of hospital, Police HQ and Hinchingsbrooke School development proposals should accentuate uses reflecting the 'community campus' identity of the area complemented with an element of residential use.

The site is part of the former grounds of Hinchingsbrooke House and retains many protected trees. A tree survey will be required and a landscaping scheme that reflects the significance of the established tree coverage and ensures appropriate boundary treatments. The trees on the frontage contribute strongly to the character of the area and will require retention and reinforcement as appropriate. There is tree belt with a public footpath separating this land from the hospital site which should be reinforced. The site also has potential for archaeological finds given its historic associations with Hinchingsbrooke House. It is anticipated that these restrictions will limit the capacity of the site for development.

If the viaduct carrying the A14 is removed in future, it is likely that a new road will be needed in this location linking to the A14 and that it could be used to access the site. Such a road was planned in the draft orders produced for the A14 in 2009 but abandoned in 2010 which had potential to form the eastern boundary of the site. A transport assessment will be required and access should be designed in accordance with current standards; enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities will also be required. Significant engineering works may be required given the location next to a busy signalised intersection.



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## West of Railway, Brampton Road, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) HU 7

#### West of Railway, Brampton Road, Huntingdon (previously HU 18)

2ha of land west of the railway is allocated for employment office uses (B1a, B1b) or non-residential institutional uses (D1). Successful development of the site will require:

- noise mitigation from the railway line
- development design appropriate to the prominent location and being set in landscaped grounds reflecting the Views Common context
- a safe and appropriate single point of access for the whole site



### Development Guidance

This site is currently partly vacant land and partly a temporary car park. The approach from Brampton Road is dominated by the A14 viaduct and scope for redevelopment is highly constrained until this is removed. A disused water tower and reservoir are on the site and planning permission has been granted for the conversion and extension of the water tower to an office building. The area was allocated in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011. A transport assessment will be required; access should be gained from Brampton Road with appropriate connections made into the public footpath to the west of the site.

High quality development is expected to reflect the location near the railway station as a gateway to Huntingdon town centre, and the 'community campus' style of development at Hinchingsbrooke Park. Landscaped grounds should also set development in a spacious setting adjacent to Views Common.

The approved water tower development anticipates 2252m<sup>2</sup> of office space over four floors added to the side of the water tower and three floors on top. The development is to include renewable energy technologies and be a key landmark building.

The remaining part of the site will present an interesting design challenge with development needing to respond to the constraints upon the area including noise from the railway and the relationship with the open environment of Views Common adjoining the site. More particularly, the development will need to be designed having regard to whether the viaduct carrying the A14 is retained or removed. The car park on the site is intended as a temporary use pending development for offices once the future of the viaduct is known. If the viaduct is retained, it is anticipated that some 3300m<sup>2</sup> of office space will be provided, but if it is removed, it is anticipated that some 6300m<sup>2</sup> of office space will be possible. This site is new land and could contribute to the district requirements for employment land.



## George Street/ Ermine Street, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 8

#### George Street/ Ermine Street, Huntingdon (previously HU 19)

Approximately 6ha of land in the George St/ Ermine St area is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- approximately 10,550m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace of which one store including canopy will be 9,455m<sup>2</sup> (approximately 5300m<sup>2</sup> net retail floorspace) and up to nine other stores totalling 1,095m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace.
- approximately 200 homes
- open space
- approximately 0.6ha employment (B1a)
- an additional long stay public car park
- other uses in accordance with a masterplan such as supported housing, residential institutions, live/ work units, restaurants, a hotel or leisure facilities



Successful development of the site will require:

- completion of a masterplan to address areas of development and surrounding areas
- all retail to be complementary to the continuing vitality and viability of the town centre and not jeopardising the delivery of Chequers Court
- provision of a new link road between George St and Ermine St
- satisfactory transport arrangements to ensure safe access
- integration with the town centre and railway station
- provision of related servicing, pedestrian and cycle links, cycle and car parking
- provision of open space
- separation from Barracks Brook in accordance with Internal Drainage Board requirements
- utilisation of sustainable drainage systems
- separation from the high pressure gas pipeline in accordance with National Grid requirements

### Development Guidance

This area was allocated in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011. Development of this area, together with the redevelopment of Chequers Court, should provide for a revitalised Huntingdon town centre.

A significant area for additional retailing is provided for, and planning permission (ref:1001750FUL) for a new Sainsburys supermarket and row of shops has been granted. The approval allows for more retail than envisaged in the policy (some 6,000m<sup>2</sup> net retail floorspace) and it is not anticipated that further retail will be provided within the allocated site.

A new link road between George Street and Ermine Street has been approved and is now being constructed. The link road will open up the area for development as well as allowing for improved movement about the town centre generally and reduced pressure on part of the Huntingdon inner ring road. Better provision for pedestrians to get across the inner ring road and George Street/ Brampton Road is required to help integrate this area with the town centre and the railway station.



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The re-opening of Handcroft Lane as a green corridor will recreate not only an important historic feature but also a link between the town centre and Views Common with access under the railway.

The northern part of the area should be redeveloped for housing having regard to its easy accessibility to the town centre. Approximately 130 homes are expected in the area. This new housing should integrate with the existing residential development on surrounding land.

Close to George Street, there is approximately 0.5ha which is not included in the Sainsbury application which could be used for an apartment building and 70 homes are factored into the allocation accordingly. A high quality building is required in this location to act as a gateway to the town centre next to the new supermarket.

The identified area includes land currently used as part of the police station and nearby offices. It is understood that these sites may be redeveloped later in the plan period. Town centre uses, principally new offices (B1a) are envisaged here. The Sainsbury application also provides for some 400m<sup>2</sup> gross office space.

In order to avoid unnecessary travel on the ring road, a further long stay car park in this area is promoted to better serve the north and west of Huntingdon. An area of land some 0.5ha in size is envisaged.

Open space should be provided to meet the needs of local residents and as a feature in the retail area. The Sainsbury application includes provision for a new plaza along Huntingdon Road to meet this requirement. Open space may also be provided along Handcroft Lane and Barracks Brook in the northern part of the area.

In addition to the uses identified, or alternatively, supported housing, residential institutions, live/ work units, restaurants, a hotel or leisure facilities may be appropriate within this area. A masterplan produced by the Council or a private developer could address these alternatives.

Given that the area is close to the town centre and previously developed, contamination needs to be remediated and archaeological investigations are required.

## Chequers Court, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Retail/ Town Centre Uses) HU 9

#### Chequers Court, Huntingdon (previously HU 22)

2.7ha of land at Chequers Court is allocated for a mixed use development to comprise:

- approximately 13,000m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace (class A1) (6,500m<sup>2</sup> additional to that which exist)
- at least one restaurant of 150m<sup>2</sup> (class A3)
- associated uses and car parking

Successful development of the site will be in accordance with the Chequers Court Planning Brief 2010 and require:

- an appropriate layout of buildings and surface car parking areas that takes account of the town centre location, Huntingdon conservation area, and adjacent businesses
- provision of a multi-storey car park of some 400 spaces
- improved pedestrian links and public spaces
- appropriate road accesses, a signal controlled pedestrian crossing and provision for a bus stop
- provision for service areas



#### Development Guidance

Key issues include the dominance of surface level car parking, a lack of high quality public realm areas, vehicular and pedestrian accessibility into the site and conflict through the wider area and appropriate design of servicing areas. Development will promote an enhanced public realm providing improved accessibility and movement through the site. The Chequers Court Planning Brief (2010) sets out the framework within which redevelopment of this area should proceed.

Permission was granted in 2012 for demolition of the old Chequers Court and replacement with a variety of retail units including a new supermarket; redevelopment of the existing Sainsbury's store; and a department store to replace the existing petrol filling station (1100979FUL and 1001761OUT). This is the key Huntingdon town centre site for which redevelopment has been anticipated for many years - it offers the opportunity to significantly revitalise the retail offer in Huntingdon town centre and boost the local economy.

The total additional retail floorspace provision provided for in the consents is approximately 6,500m<sup>2</sup>. The amount of floorspace within the existing Sainsbury's (4,500m<sup>2</sup>) is effectively replaced without any net change, therefore the additional retail is proposed in the remainder of the area as the majority of the floorspace in existing buildings was formerly used as offices. Most or all of these existing buildings should be demolished and replaced. These new buildings should provide some 4,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail space - a net addition of some 2,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail space. The new department store over two floors in place of the petrol filling station will total some 4,000m<sup>2</sup> in addition. Although provision is made for the entire 6,500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace to be A1 retail, part of it may be used for restaurants, or these may be provided in addition. At least one restaurant is anticipated in one 150m<sup>2</sup> unit with provision for outdoor seating in the area immediately facing the phase 1 development of Chequers Court.



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As part of proposals already approved, access to the ring road will be repositioned and a multi-storey car park built on the eastern corner of the site. Surface level car parking will be reorganised.

Pedestrian permeability around the western areas of the site is generally good and there is a clear link to the town centre via the Chequers Court footpath in the south western corner of the site. However, pedestrian access from the town centre to the north and east are poor. Pedestrian access to the town centre, as well as residential areas to the northeast and southeast will need to be improved. The pedestrian walkway linking the site to Newton's Court and its car park in the south of the site is unattractive and must also be improved.

Should there be additional or alternative proposals, they will need to provide information including an appropriate transport assessment to demonstrate how access and parking arrangements can be re-configured; a heritage statement given the Huntingdon conservation area; details of the scale and massing of buildings and improvements to the public realm; an air quality assessment given that the site lies within the Huntingdon air quality management area; a noise assessment due to proximity to the ring road; an archaeological assessment; contamination assessment and flood risk assessment. Additional or alternative proposals are expected to have a similar retail and restaurant focus to improve the attractiveness of the town centre.



## Fire Station, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 10

#### Fire Station, Huntingdon (previously HU 23)

0.4ha of land at Huntingdon Fire Station, Hartford Road is allocated for residential development of approximately 20 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- no development commencing until details of alternative premises for the Fire and Rescue Services have been agreed with the local planning authority
- provision of the main access from Hartford Road
- development proposals avoiding built development within the functional floodplain for Barracks Brook
- incorporation of the protected trees into a comprehensive landscaping scheme



#### Development Guidance

Alternative fire service arrangements would be required prior to the release of Huntingdon Fire Station site for redevelopment. Given its previous use land contamination is possible and appropriate investigations should be made and any necessary remediation works completed prior to redevelopment.

The site falls within the Huntingdon air quality management area as it lies near the Huntingdon ring road and adequate mitigation should be provided to prevent a detrimental impact on potential residents' quality of life. Access could be achieved from Hartford Road with the possibility of an entrance only access from Nursery Road being maintained, similar to current arrangements.

The northern edge of the site is vulnerable to flooding from Barracks Brook and a small portion falls within its functional floodplain, in addition the majority of the site falls within flood zone 3a so any design solution should make allowance for this. A flood risk assessment will be required to demonstrate how flooding issues will be addressed and mitigated.

It is situated within a conservation area and redevelopment would provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of the site which is of utilitarian design and does not relate well to the scale of surrounding residential properties. Several boundary trees are of sufficient importance to be protected by preservation orders; these may help provide character to landscaping proposals.



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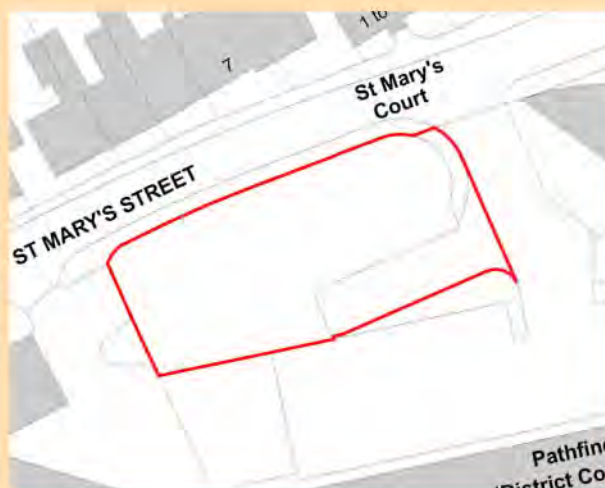
## St Mary's Street, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 11

#### St Mary's Street, Huntingdon (previously HU 25)

0.1ha of land at St Mary's Street comprising the former Council car parking area and Centenary House is allocated for residential development of approximately 14 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of a single access point to serve development from St Mary's Street
- provision of high quality development which links the adjacent Council Offices and Victorian terraces opposite, enhances the character of the conservation area and provides an active frontage to St Mary's Street



#### Development Guidance

This site offers an opportunity to create an attractive small scale residential development in a sustainable town centre location within the conservation area. Given the site's relationship with Pathfinder House careful design and appropriate landscaping would be required to ensure future residents' amenity is protected in terms of minimising the potential for overlooking. To link the site through from the large scale office block to the domestic scaled terraces opposite the design of any potential scheme would have to take into account the scale and massing of buildings south and north of the site. An active frontage along St Mary's Street should be intrinsic to any design.

The current access serving the Council offices should be used to serve potential development and appropriate parking provided within the site. The Council's offices generate some traffic throughout the day therefore a noise assessment will be required and appropriate noise attenuation measures may need to be incorporated into the design of any scheme.

The site lies within the Huntingdon air quality management area and would therefore require air quality assessments and any appropriate mitigation measures. Due to its previous use appropriate contamination assessments and potential remediation works may again be necessary.

Its location adjacent to the historic Castle Hill House and near to the scheduled ancient monument of Castle Hills means that significant archaeological remains could also be present on site. An appropriate archaeology assessment will be required.



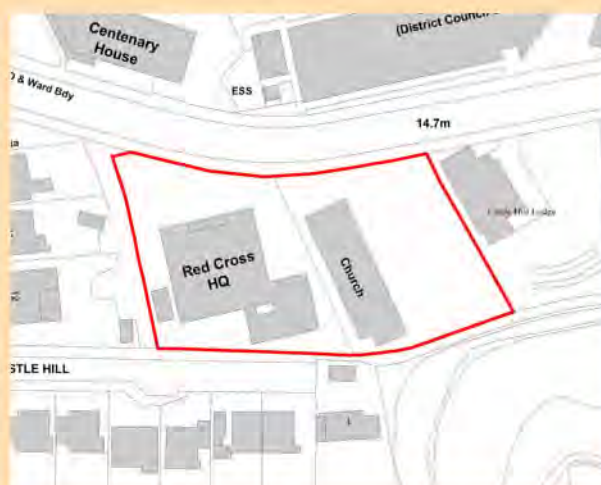
## Red Cross Site and Spiritualist Church, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 12

#### Red Cross Site and Spiritualist Church, Huntingdon (previously HU 26)

0.3ha of land at Red Cross and Spiritualist Church, Castle Moat Road is allocated for development for mixed uses to be comprised of a replacement Red Cross hall and approximately 10 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- no development commencing until details of alternative premises for the Spiritualist Church have been agreed with the local planning authority or a layout agreed which facilitates a comprehensive redevelopment of the site being delivered in two phases
- archaeological investigation prior to development
- any development proposals safeguarding and enhancing the character and setting of Castle Hills, a scheduled ancient monument and the conservation area



### Development Guidance

The site comprises previously developed land and is partially cleared ready for redevelopment. The Spiritualist Church has no plans to relocate at present but the site is allocated as a whole to ensure that any development scheme which is progressed independently on the Red Cross element is designed to facilitate a comprehensive scheme for the whole site should the Spiritualist Church become available.

It lies in close proximity to Huntingdon town centre and has excellent accessibility to key services and town centre employment opportunities. The site occupies a prominent position on Huntingdon ring road and a high quality scheme should be provided reflecting its visibility.

A scheduled ancient monument immediately adjoins the southern boundary of the site so any development should be sensitively designed to avoid detrimental impact on this. The site is likely to contain remains of archaeological significance which should be fully explored prior to redevelopment. A heritage statement would be required.

Its proximity to Huntingdon ring road air quality management area means that the site is exposed to air pollution so any design should mitigate against this where possible. Access arrangements from Castle Moat Road should take into account the speed and volume of traffic on the ring road and development proposals should ensure adequate turning and parking facilities within the site.

There are single and two storey properties to the east and south of the site and design and layout should ensure development proposals do not have a detrimental impact upon these.

The site is very sustainably located and is suitable for redevelopment for residential purposes, in whole or in part, dependent upon future availability.



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## Gas Depot, Mill Common, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 13

#### Gas Depot, Mill Common, Huntingdon (previously HU 27)

0.6ha of land at the former Gas Depot, Mill Common is allocated for residential development of approximately 20 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of a single vehicular access onto Mill Common
  - provision of pedestrian access from the north west of the site to the public footpaths connecting to the west
  - completion of land contamination remediation measures appropriate to residential development
  - built development being concentrated on the northern part of the site to minimise flood risk
- 
- development proposals not having a detrimental impact on flood storage capacity and flood flow rates
  - provision of high quality development which enhances the character of the conservation area and reflects the sensitive landscape setting of the site
  - retention of trees and shrubs on the south, west and north boundaries of the site to protect views to and from Portholme SSSI and Huntingdon Conservation Area
  - separation from the high pressure gas pipeline in accordance with National Grid requirements

#### Development Guidance

This site is sensitively located immediately north of Portholme SSSI and Alconbury Brook which are high value biodiversity assets. Appropriate ecological assessments should be undertaken and redevelopment should ensure no detrimental impact upon the ecological value of the adjacent sites. It is relatively well screened by trees and shrubs, other than on the eastern boundary, but development proposals would need to minimise the impact on the vista across Portholme into the conservation area. Redevelopment should maximise the potential to enhance the character of this part of the conservation area.

Some land contamination mitigation has already been completed on the site to bring it up to an adequate standard for employment use. However, further mitigation will be required to make the land suitable for residential use.

The southern side of the site is highly vulnerable to flooding with part being in the functional floodplain for Alconbury Brook and much of the site lies within flood zone 3a which impacts both on the proportion of the site that could be redeveloped and potential design solutions. However, a high proportion of the site is covered in hardstanding which reduces the impact of redevelopment on potential run-off rates for surface water. Development should be concentrated in the northern part of the site to minimise risk to potential residents. Pedestrian access should be incorporated providing an escape route to higher land.

A single vehicular access point should be provided from Mill Common with adequate parking and turning facilities provided within the site.

There is potential for noise to affect the site as an embanked section of the A14 runs close to the northern side; mitigation measures should be incorporated to address this.

The site's location is very sustainable with town centre services, employment and open space opportunities all in close proximity. This site has potential to be redeveloped for an attractive, sustainably located residential scheme.



## Tyrell's Marina, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 14

#### Tyrell's Marina, Huntingdon (previously HU 28)

0.3ha of land at Tyrell's Marina, Bridge Place is allocated for development for mixed uses to comprise commercial uses (class A2, A3, A4, A5) and approximately 15 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of vehicular access to The Avenue
- provision of pedestrian access from the north east of the site to Bridge Place
- built development creating a high quality building reflecting the visual prominence of the site and its proximity to the grade I listed and scheduled Huntingdon Town Bridge and grade II listed buildings at Riverside Mill and Bridge Place
- development proposals should maximise the opportunities offered by the attractive riverside frontage
- provision of a flood risk assessment demonstrating the proposals can be safely accommodated



### Development Guidance

The site has a unique river front location and offers the opportunity to create an extremely high quality development in this prominent, sensitive location. The exact mix of uses and quantity of floorspace should be determined by a design based solution. Proposed uses should ensure an active river frontage. The site comprises previously developed land and is predominantly covered in hardstanding. A flood risk assessment will be required to demonstrate that any proposed development is capable of being safely occupied for the expected lifetime of the property, that it will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and if possible will reduce overall flood risk.

An innovative design solution may be beneficial in overcoming the significant flooding constraints. This could include a vertical mix of uses with less vulnerable commercial uses on the ground floor and residential accommodation above in order to protect more vulnerable uses from higher flood risk. The frontage of the site floods on a regular basis and development proposals should both minimise risk to future users and reflect the need not to impede flood flow rates.

The A14 embankment dominates the southern edge of the site which has a strong visual impact; the site is also subject to noise and air pollution from the A14. Appropriate assessments and mitigation will be required to ensure adequate amenity for residents or users of properties resulting from any development proposals. Given its previous use as a boat yard ground contamination may be an issue which should be assessed and any relevant remediation undertaken appropriate to the proposed use.

Pedestrian access should be provided from the north eastern corner of the site to facilitate walking to Huntingdon. Vehicular access can be obtained under the A14 flyover to a shared route to The Avenue. Improvements may be required to ensure access meets current standards.



The juxtaposition of the site between the A14 flyover, the grade I listed bridge, and Riverside Mill and 3-5 Bridge Place both grade II listed, will be a significant challenge. It is also situated within conservation area. Any design proposals will need to consider the impact on the setting and character of these historic assets, respond to the variety of heights and massing involved and prevent excessive enclosure around the footbridge.

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## Main Street, Hartford

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 15

#### Main Street, Hartford

1.2ha of land at Main Street, Hartford is allocated for residential development of approximately 25 dwellings to include a mix of property types and sizes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of vehicular access to the site from Old Houghton Road or Main Street.
- built development should reflect its proximity to the Hartford Conservation Area, 12th Century All Saints Parish Church and 15th Century Manor House, also including a full archaeological evaluation of the site.
- facilitate and promote pedestrian, cycle and bus links to Huntingdon centre to increase sustainability.



#### Development Guidance

The site has natural frontage along the northern and eastern boundaries which should be retained and possibly enhanced to minimise visibility and reduce noise to the site from Main Street and the A1123. Vehicular access should be provided through Main Street on the north western corner of the site opposite Owl Way. Pedestrian and cycle routes should be implemented to facilitate access to Huntingdon town centre.

The site lies in flood zone 3a with climate change however in all other respects the site performs well in the sustainability appraisal. It is the last remaining parcel of land along Hartford Road contained within the A1123 and relates well to the existing built-up area. A flood risk assessment will be essential for the site with any development proposals setting out a detailed explanation of flood risk management and mitigation measures.

The site is also subject to some noise and air pollution from the A1123. Appropriate assessments and mitigation will be required to ensure adequate living conditions for residents or users of properties resulting from any development proposals.

The location of the site on the boundary of the built-up area and close adjacency to Hartford Conservation area will mean that any design proposals will need to consider the impact on the setting and character of these as appropriate.



## Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 16

#### Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon

16.5ha of Hinchingbrooke NHS Trust land at Hinchingbrooke Hospital is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- health service uses
- redeveloped staff accommodation
- community health care campus (D1 uses)
- approximately 50 homes

Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of safe and appropriate road access that can provide for the whole site and if necessary link in with wider transport plans
- a travel plan to cater for sustainable transport patterns retaining sufficient car parking to meet the needs of the site's primary role as a hospital
- a programme of work designed to investigate and if necessary protect, protected species



### Development Guidance

This land was part of the wider Hinchingbrooke Community Campus area considered in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011 although no allocations were made as there were no specific proposals or timeframes at that point. Scope exists for rationalisation of some land within the hospital site to make more efficient use of resources, provide additional community health services and improve quality of staff accommodation.

Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust have put forward four parcels of land within the hospital site for potential redevelopment for mixed-use development comprising health related uses, staff/ student accommodation, car parking, residential development and ancillary community uses.

Parcel A (existing staff accommodation): The redevelopment and refurbishment of the existing hospital residences to provide additional accommodation to meet the housing needs of related staff and students or possibly a sheltered housing scheme.

Parcel B (northern area of surface car parking): Redevelopment with multi-decked parking for staff and visitors.

Parcel C (southern area of surface car parking): The redevelopment of part of the existing car park for residential development could provide approximately 50 homes.

Parcel D (south of main hospital buildings): Provision of a community health campus.

This extensive site incorporates a variety of character areas and levels; many of the buildings are functional structures of no architectural merit interspersed with large areas of surface car parking. The northern boundary comprises a substantial protected tree belt separating the hospital site from Views Common, this should be

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protected and reinforced where necessary. The eastern boundary is separated from the Police Headquarters land by a narrower, more open tree belt and public footpath; opportunities to reinforce this tree belt should be explored in conjunction with the adjoining site to provide amenity benefits to both. Redevelopment of the north eastern portion of the site for new and improved staff accommodation has potential to improve the environmental quality of this part of the site as well as provide sustainably located homes for hospital staff.

The site frontage to Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and Parkway is mainly open with extensive areas of grass interspersed with planting and bunding which combine to reduce the impact of the hospital on the street scene. This should largely be protected within any redevelopment plans to maintain residential amenity for adjacent properties.

The hospital provides highly valued healthcare facilities for the district; addition of a community healthcare campus would reinforce this role. This should ideally be located close to the frontage with Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and public transport facilities for ease of access.

Rationalisation of the extensive surface car parking into a decked or multi-storey car park onto the current northern car park will need to be carefully designed to minimise impact on amenity of residents of Parkway and on Cromwell park School. The northern boundary comprises a protected tree belt and development should ensure no detrimental impact on this.

The land currently used for the main southern car park is at the same level as the adjoining Parkway and significantly higher than the hospital buildings from which it is separated by the main entrance road and a substantial area of landscaping. Subject to provision of adequate alternative car parking and appropriate access this land could be released for residential development.



## Hinchingbrooke Country Park Extension, Huntingdon

### Proposed Allocation (Recreation) HU 17

#### Hinchingbrooke Country Park, Huntingdon

44ha of land adjacent to Hinchingbrooke Country Park is allocated for recreational purposes. Successful delivery of the site will require:

- the provision of additional pedestrian paths through the land with bridges as necessary
- provision of interpretation boards, waymarking signs and bird watching hides
- management to improve the site's value for biodiversity
- flood management practices including potential closures during flooding
- a new car park off Huntingdon Road



#### Development Guidance

Hinchingbrooke Country Park consists of 70 hectares of woodland, meadows and lakes together with a number of facilities. Additional land is sought to provide for additional recreational activities and support improved biodiversity. The Council will look to lease or purchase this land when funds are available. The existing route around the eastern lake provides a loop that would ideally be replicated by paths around the western part. This could be achieved in stages with initial paths leading to bird hides enabling people to view the wildlife. Country park management of the island within the western lake would enable the lake to become a better habitat. The allocated land is currently farmed and is largely within the floodplain. Adding land to the country park which is currently within floodplain will ensure that the land is not used for an incompatible use. The country park will need to have flood management practices in place. Low-key recreational use is expected given the potential for flooding.

There is a significant demand for car parking during events at the country park. A car park located along Huntingdon Road, within the site, would cater for increased visitor numbers and avoid the need for all visitors arriving by car to use Hinchingbrooke Park Road.

This allocation replicates that in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011, which extended a previous allocation from the 1995 Local Plan.

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## Brampton

- 12.5** Brampton comprises two distinct areas. The main village has its historic core along The Green, High Street and Buckden Road and has expanded, particularly to the west, since the 1960s. This is linked by linear development to the second area, the soon to be redundant RAF Brampton, which lies south of the main village separated by a wedge of arable land.



## RAF Brampton

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 18

#### RAF Brampton (previously HU 30)

29ha of land at RAF Brampton is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- approximately 400 homes
- approximately 3.2ha of employment land
- approximately 400m<sup>2</sup> of gross retail floorspace (Class A1)
- community facilities to meet needs arising from the development
- accessible open space

Successful development of the site will be in accordance with the RAF Brampton Urban Design Framework and require:

- satisfactory resolution of any additional traffic impact on A14 and local roads having regard to a transport assessment and travel plan
- phasing of development, including the provision of employment uses, footpaths, cycle connections, public transport, open space, community facilities and affordable housing
- provision of a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians which facilitate integration with Annington Homes and Brampton village
- provision of access from the existing roundabout on Buckden Road and re-opening of Park Lane
- use of design codes to create distinctive character areas
- landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries, trees and green infrastructure networks, paying particular attention to the area around the northern boundary and views of the grade II listed Brampton Park House
- incorporation of sustainable drainage systems

Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.



### Development Guidance

The site offers the opportunity to develop a new mixed use neighbourhood for Brampton and integrate both itself and the adjoining former RAF housing better with the village of Brampton. A transport assessment will be required to indicate the ability of the surrounding highway network to accommodate the anticipated levels of traffic generation. The creation and enhancement of pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre will be necessary to provide safe routes to services and facilities. Although any development scheme is expected to be residential led it should also incorporate a significant amount of employment land to promote sustainable local employment opportunities.

It is anticipated that the employment development on this site will be comprised of approximately 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of office, research and development and light industrial floorspace (class 'B1'). Storage and distribution (class 'B8') uses will not form any part of development on this site. The employment uses should be concentrated in the north eastern part of the site where there is good access from the B1514. The employment area is new land that could contribute to the district requirements for employment land.

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A small convenience store and possibly one or two other small shops should be located close to the entrance to the site to allow for greatest accessibility all of the new community. More detailed guidance on this is provided within the UDF.

Brampton Park House is a substantial listed building used as the officers' mess which needs an alternative use that respects and protects its heritage. Given the viability challenges inherent in re-use of this building proposed uses will be considered on their merits with regard to achieving appropriate protection of the main listed building, related listed structures and the relationship with the historic parkland. Retention of the historic street lights, road name signage and pill boxes which are distinctive features will add to and help retain the character of the site.

The site also contains significant groups of trees which contribute to its character and landscape, many of which are protected by a tree preservation order. The mature tree belts on the northern, eastern and south eastern edges should be retained and reinforced. The tree lined roads contribute strongly to the existing character of the site and should also be retained and supplemented.

The central area of open space, marked out playing field and tennis courts should be retained as these will provide a useful facility for future residents and provide an open setting to Brampton Park House. A multi-use community building will be provided close to this central area including the provision of changing facilities for the sports facilities.

The site contains mineral resources that should be protected in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Core Strategy Policies CS26 and CS27. A waste strategy and audit will be required in conformity with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Core Strategy Policies CS7, CS16 and CS28.



## Park View Garage, Brampton

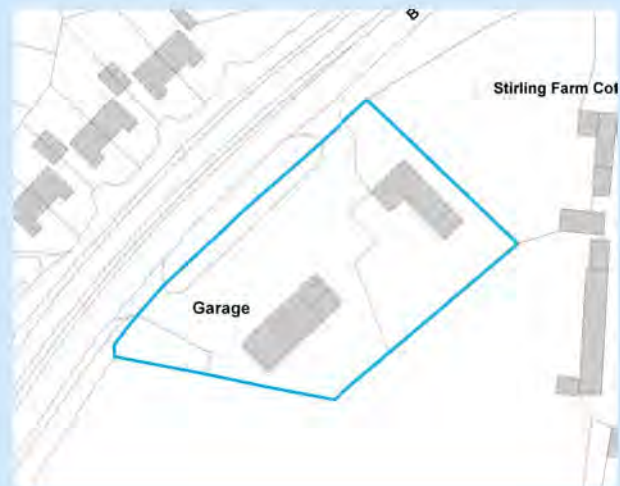
### Proposed Allocation (Employment) HU 19

#### Park View Garage, Brampton (previously HU 32)

0.4ha of land at Park View Garage, Brampton is allocated for employment development to be comprised of light industrial (class B1c) use.

Successful development of the site will require:

- incorporation of the protected trees into a comprehensive landscaping scheme
- the visual impact of any redevelopment being no greater than that of the existing use
- rationalisation to a single access point



#### Development Guidance

The site is outside the built-up area of Brampton, but has been in commercial use for many years. It is in a prominent location at the gateway to Brampton from the south, redevelopment proposals should therefore incorporate high quality design to improve the approach to the village. There are several protected trees within the site which would need to be incorporated into any potential development.

The site is previously developed and is predominantly covered in hardstanding which reduces the impact of redevelopment on potential run-off rates for surface water.

The site is detached from the village but additional services and facilities may be provided by the future redevelopment of RAF Brampton, opposite. There are presently two accesses to the site. Any redevelopment proposal should reduce this to a single point, in accordance with current standards complemented with adequate internal turning and parking.

The site has potential to provide high quality employment development in an appropriately landscaped setting. It is envisaged that development of this site will be comprised of approximately 1,700m<sup>2</sup> of light industrial floorspace (class B1c). As an established employment site this site is not new land and would not contribute to the district requirements for employment land but could contribute to job creation.

The site falls within the Station Farm/ Buckden Landfill Waste Consultation Area (Policy W8AX). Any proposals would therefore have to demonstrate compatibility with the nearby waste management uses protected through the waste consultation area.

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## Godmanchester

- 12.6** Godmanchester lies immediately south of Huntingdon to the east of the River Great Ouse. Its historic core was shaped by the pentagonal layout established in Roman times. Major growth to the east occurred in the 1950s and 1960s with southern expansion following from the 1980s onwards. The Ouse valley flood meadows dominate the western boundary of Godmanchester with the A14 forming the northeastern boundary.



## Bearcroft Farm, Godmanchester

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 20

#### Bearcroft Farm, Godmanchester (previously HU 34)

42ha of land is allocated for development of a mix of uses to comprise:

- approximately 750 homes
- approximately 5ha of land for employment uses (all 'B' classes except B8)
- a neighbourhood centre comprised of approximately 950m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace (Class A1/A2/A3/A5), of which not more than 700m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace is to be Class A1
- a primary school on 2.3ha of land
- an area of at least 2ha of accessible natural green space with comprehensive links to the wider green infrastructure network
- community facilities to meet needs arising from development



Successful development of the site will require:

- satisfactory resolution of any impact caused by traffic generated from development on the A14 in accordance with the Highways Agency's requirements
- satisfactory integration of development with the existing built-up area of Godmanchester
- completion of a public consultation exercise agreed with the Council that addresses:
  - phasing of development, including the provision of employment uses
  - access and layout
  - design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposals
  - landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries and green infrastructure networks, paying particular attention to the area around the eastern boundary
  - the mixture of uses to be incorporated, including social and community facilities to meet the needs arising from development
  - a sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians
  - sustainable drainage systems

Areas of the site developed for employment uses will be treated as an Established Employment Area and further development or redevelopment proposals will be determined in line with appropriate policies of this Plan.

### Development Guidance

The site lies in close proximity to the A14 and it is expected that traffic from development will use the trunk road. The Highways Agency's requirement for nil detriment or minimal impact to be demonstrated must be complied with. The A1198 currently acts as a significant barrier to integration of most of the site with the existing built-up

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area of Godmanchester. Effective solutions are likely to include substantial works to and around the road in order to appropriately address potential conflicts between through traffic and people travelling within Godmanchester by the full range of modes. Together these issues are considered to be the most difficult to overcome and the most critical to successful development of this site. Changes to the A1198 will need to be agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council.

Shopping facilities should meet local residents' basic needs but not have an impact on Huntingdon town centre. Other services and facilities should be included in the same neighbourhood centre to ensure a sustainable and balanced community. The net retail floorspace is anticipated to be some 600m<sup>2</sup>. Playing fields and play areas should be provided in accordance with policies elsewhere in the Development Plan. Godmanchester's two primary schools are currently running at or close to capacity with limited scope for expansion so primary school provision should be provided to meet the needs of this development (considered to be met with 1.5 forms of entry) and to provide scope for future capacity, subject to agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council.

It is anticipated that the employment development on this site will be comprised of office, research and development and light industrial floorspace. Alternatively a combination of business and general industrial (classes 'B1' and 'B2') uses may be appropriate. Storage and distribution (class 'B8') uses should not form part of development on this site. Land developed for 'B' uses will be treated as Established Employment Areas and will be subject to [Policy LP 19 'Supporting a Strong Local Economy'](#).

Boundary treatments along with development densities, building heights and their proximity to the eastern boundary will need to be carefully considered due to the gradual and complex change in levels around the eastern boundary and the potential for impact on views from the east and southeast.

There are known archaeological assets in the vicinity of this site and appropriate investigations should be carried out, followed by further recording, conservation or other work as applicable.



## Wigmore Farm Buildings, Godmanchester

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 21

#### Wigmore Farm Buildings, Godmanchester (previously HU 35)

0.7ha of land at Wigmore Farm Buildings is allocated for residential development of approximately 15 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of single access via existing access route into site in the northern corner
- upgrading of Silver Street between the site entrance and Duck End in agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council
- provision of pedestrian links to the adjacent development (Comben Drive) and area of open space
- provision of high quality development to reflect the site's sensitive location on the rural fringe of Godmanchester
- provision of landscaping adjacent to Silver Street on the western boundary



### Development Guidance

The section of Silver Street adjacent to this site has a rural character and has limited capacity to accommodate additional traffic. Development will need to reflect this character and capacity and should therefore be comprised of low density housing with well landscaped areas and open space.

A single access onto Silver Street will be provided. A transport statement would be required to ascertain what improvements would be necessary but it is thought that passing bays will be needed but widening between the site and Duck End cannot be ruled out. Foot and cycle path access into the new development to the south of the site will also need to be created.

Landscaping will be required to protect the rural character along Silver Street to provide extra screening therefore a landscape management plan may be required.

This area could support bat species due to the presence of particular tree species. A biodiversity and ecology survey and report would be required and appropriate mitigation measures incorporated into the design of potential development where necessary.

Evidence from adjacent development identified soil contamination and remediation work was required. A contamination assessment would therefore be required.

Due to the risk of flooding on site a flood risk assessment will need to be carried out and potential mitigation measures incorporated where necessary.



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## North of Clyde Farm, Godmanchester

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) HU 22

#### North of Clyde Farm, Godmanchester (previously HU 36)

2.2ha of land north of Clyde Farm, Godmanchester is allocated for residential development to be comprised of approximately 35 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- provision of a single vehicular access to Cob Place or alternatively Fishers Way
- provision of a pedestrian and cycle route to open space to the north
- development being limited to an approximately triangular shaped area in the eastern part of the site such that a set back from Silver Street, established by development to the north, is maintained.
- parts of the site which are not built on being established as open space and landscaped to maintain the countryside setting of Silver Street



### Development Guidance

Access to the site will need to be handled sensitively. The rural nature of Silver Street and its poor junction arrangement with Old Court Hall make it unsuitable for a significant increase in vehicular traffic so vehicular access should be gained from Cob Place, or alternatively Fishers Way. Pedestrian and cycle links to the open space to the north should be made, to link with the local network that has recently been improved.

The combination of flood risk and the encroachment into the open countryside mean that development should be limited to a roughly triangular area of the northeast section that maintains the set back from Silver Street established by development to the north. Those parts of the site which are not built on should be established as open space and landscaped to maintain the countryside setting of Silver Street and provide facilities for new residents.



## RGE Engineering, Godmanchester

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) HU 23

#### RGE Engineering, Godmanchester

Up to 3.8ha of land at RGE Engineering and public car park at The Avenue, Godmanchester is allocated for a mix of uses to comprise:

- approximately 70 homes
- retention of part of the public car park.

Successful development of the site will require:

- flood risk assessment with appropriate mitigation measures incorporated
- provision of high quality development to reflect the site's sensitive location on the urban/ rural fringe of Godmanchester and close proximity to the Huntingdon and Godmanchester conservation areas



#### Development Guidance

The site offers an opportunity to improve the appearance of this approach into Huntingdon, consolidate a cluster of housing which is well located with regard to access to services and provide homes in an attractive, sensitive location.

Due to the risk of flooding on site a flood risk assessment will need to be carried out and potential mitigation measures incorporated where necessary.

There may be an opportunity for provision of a cycle/ foot bridge across Cook's Stream to the dismantled railway line to link in with the network across the Ouse meadows.

The site submission also suggested that leisure or retail uses might be suitable as part of a mixed use development. While the site is close to Huntingdon Town Centre this would not be a practical location for retail uses due to the limited connectivity across the river and the majority of retail uses being located some distance from the site. Small scale convenience retail, sufficient to serve immediate surrounding residents only, might be appropriate, and may reduce trip frequency and distance. Similarly small scale leisure uses such as a gym may be appropriate. For any town centre use a transport impact assessment would be needed to ensure that no additional traffic would be generated and floorspace would need to be limited to that which can be justified by need from the immediate area and in any event no more than 600m<sup>2</sup> (net).

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## 13 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

**13.1** The St Neots spatial planning area incorporates St Neots and Little Paxton. St Neots itself incorporates Eynesbury, Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford each of which retain their own distinct character; while Little Paxton remains separated to the north by the River Kym and St Neots Golf Club. Significant residential development is currently occurring at Loves Farm to the east of St Neots and to the south of Little Paxton on the site of the former paper mill. The River Great Ouse bisects St Neots and flows to the east of Little Paxton. The area is also characterised by the A1 and the A428 roads which in effect form the western and southern boundaries, although there is some development to the south of the A428 within Bedford Borough. The East Coast mainline railway historically formed the eastern boundary to development, but development beyond this has taken place at Loves Farm, and further development is planned as part of the St Neots East Strategic Expansion.

### St Neots

**13.2** St Neots is the largest town in the county after Cambridge and plays a significant role in the local economy with several large established employment areas. Retailing is centred on St Neots High Street on the east side of the River Great Ouse. The area boasts significant heritage assets with the entire St Neots town centre being designated as a conservation area.

**13.3** The following sections set out a series of specific sites that could form potential allocations for the Local Plan. The purpose of these potential allocations is to promote sustainable growth within the St Neots Spatial Planning Area.

**13.4** In addition to the potential allocations provision is made for sustainable development proposals through Policy LP 8 'Development in the Spatial Planning Areas'.



## Loves Farm Reserved Site, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SN 1

#### Loves Farm Reserved Site, St Neots (previously SN 2)

1.0ha of land east of the East Coast Main Line at Loves Farm, Cambridge Road, St Neots is allocated residential development of approximately 41 dwellings. Successful development of the site will require:

- Development in accordance with the outline approval for Loves Farm
- An access point from Dramsell Rise to serve all new development
- Good urban design recognising the importance of this site to the townscape
- Levels which ensure no potential for flooding
- Protection of Fox Brook and associated vegetation
- Noise assessment and design to mitigate the effects of noise from the East Coast Main Line
- Avoidance of any harm to the adjoining Grade II listed milestone
- Separation from the high pressure and intermediate pressure gas pipelines located adjacent to the site



### Development Guidance

Development proposals should respond to the challenges of this gateway location into St Neots ensuring exceptional design. To date the site has been reserved while development of the remainder of Loves Farm has proceeded around it. The original size of the site has been reduced following the establishment of a service complex and footpath. The site is affected by the East Coast Main Line, busy road junctions, a gas pipeline and Fox Brook and development proposals will need to recognise these.

The site sits within a flood risk area due to Fox Brook. Flood risk was considered as part of the original outline approval. Appropriate floor levels will need to be established to ensure that buildings are not at risk of flooding.

Residential development, co-ordinated with the forms already under development in Loves Farm is anticipated. The design should take into account the results of a noise assessment particularly in respect of noise from the railway. A lesser scale of development is expected on the northern edge of the site adjoining Fox Brook and provision should be made for the protection of vegetation alongside the brook. An access to the site has been identified within the design of Dramsell Rise. The Grade II listed milestone located on Cambridge Rd adjacent to the site should not be affected by development. Appropriate separation distance from the gas pipeline along the railway line should be established with the National Grid.

A planning application for 41 dwellings was lodged in April 2013 referenced 1300389OUT.



# 13 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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## Former Youth Centre, Priory Road, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SN 2

#### Former Youth Centre, Priory Road, St Neots (previously SN 3)

0.48ha of land at the Former Youth Centre, Priory Road, St Neots is allocated for residential development of approximately 14 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- The north western part of the site which falls within the functional flood plain remaining undeveloped
- Retention of the Pill Box
- Retention of the majority of trees and hedges on the north and west boundaries of the site to protect views to and from Lammas Meadows and the River Great Ouse
- Design which recognises the Conservation Area location



### Development Guidance

Planning permission was granted in April 2012 for 14 houses on this site (1100379OUT). The outline permission provides details in respect of access. Vehicle access will be from the legal road running along part of the eastern boundary, Priory Road, and road improvements will be made as necessary. New fencing and pathway works for the footpath on the eastern side of the site should be addressed at the reserved matters stage.

Redevelopment could give rise to improvements to the character of the site and setting of the conservation area given its current untidy condition. The existing Type FW3/22 World War II pillbox should be retained as part of any redevelopment proposal as it forms part of the historic nationwide WWII "Ironsides GHQ Stop-Line".

The site comprises previously developed land, which is mainly hardstanding thus reducing the impact of redevelopment on potential run-off rates for surface water. However, the north western part of the site is vulnerable to flooding which impacts on the proportion that can be redeveloped and potential design solutions. A detailed flood risk assessment is necessary to support any proposal for development as has been accepted for the approval 1100379OUT.

The site is relatively well-screened by trees and hedges to its sensitive northern and western boundaries, and development proposals must minimise the impact on the vista across Lammas Meadows and towards the River Great Ouse.



## Huntingdon Street, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SN 3

#### Huntingdon Street, St Neots (previously SN 4)

0.6ha of land at 81-85 and 97a-c Huntingdon Street, St Neots is allocated for mixed use development to comprise approximately:

- 15 homes
- 0.25ha of employment

Successful development of the site will require:

- Rationalisation of accesses onto Huntingdon Street
- Appropriate design that enhances the character of the historic street and context
- Appropriate safeguarding of the amenity of surrounding uses



### Development Guidance

Given the location close to facilities, and a relative lack of constraints, a more intense use of the site is expected. Mixed redevelopment, incorporating some continued employment should be provided on the site.

The multiple access points onto Huntingdon Street will need to be rationalised in any redevelopment to ensure safety. It is expected that the site will continue to be accessed through the unadopted road for employment uses and that the access directly onto Huntingdon Street will be replaced with a standard residential street access in accordance with current standards.

Design considerations include having regard to the adjoining homes as well as establishing appropriate boundaries with business uses. New development should address the street, which is an important historic route into St Neots, and have regard to the adjoining Conservation Area. A continuous frontage is favoured to improve the street scene.

# 13 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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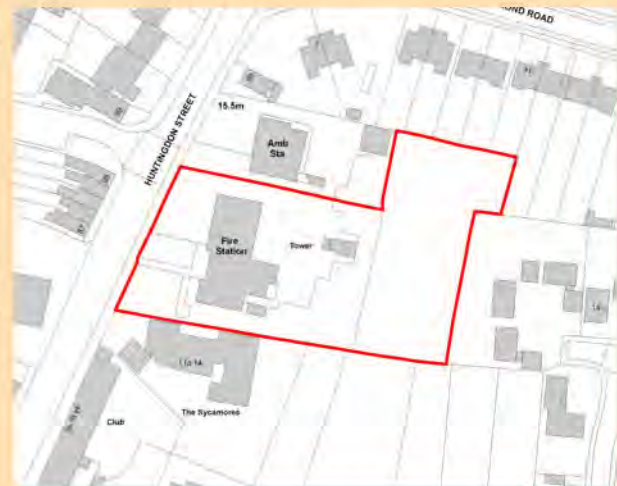
## Fire Station and Vacant Land, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SN 4

#### Fire Station and Vacant Land, St Neots (previously SN 5)

0.4ha of land encompassing the fire station and land to the rear on Huntingdon Street, St Neots is allocated for residential development of approximately 14 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- No development commencing until details of alternative provision for the fire service has been agreed with the local planning authority
- Provision of a single new access rationalising the existing access points on Huntingdon Street



### Development Guidance

Alternative fire service arrangements would be required prior to the release of St Neots Fire Station site for redevelopment. Although there are some other employment uses in the vicinity, a residential allocation is appropriate given adjoining residential uses.

The vacant land to the rear is owned by the Fire Service and is currently landlocked. A single access from Huntingdon Street is envisaged for the entire site to be designed in accordance with current standards.

Design considerations include the need to respect the townscape by addressing the Huntingdon Street frontage and recognising the backs of several house sites to ensure that overlooking does not occur. Appropriate boundary treatments will be required in relation to the neighbouring uses.

The site contains a number of protected trees and arboricultural assessment is expected. Significant trees should be retained where possible.



## Former Regional College and Adjoining Land, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SN 5

#### Former Regional College and Adjoining Land, St Neots (previously SN 6)

2.2ha of land at Huntingdon Street, St Neots is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- Supported housing or alternative use such as a community facility or employment (B1) on 0.5ha fronting Huntingdon Street
- Approximately 50 homes on the land to the rear or a combination of homes and educational or community facilities.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Satisfactory provision of access from Huntingdon Street for the various uses on site
- Satisfactory separation of the various uses on site using techniques such as fencing and boundary landscaping
- Retention of important trees, apart from those that need to be removed for access
- Retention and improvement of adjacent footpath links
- Design which recognises the conservation area location



### Development Guidance

The loss of open space, impact on protected trees, provision of access and form of development in the conservation area are key issues that any development proposals must address. Many of these issues were covered in the 2006 Longsands College urban design framework although circumstances have changed since that framework was produced. At the time of writing the land is in three parts with different public sector owners and is being considered within the Making Assets Count project.

Access will need to be appropriately located having regard to adjoining uses and it may be that more than one access point will be necessary having regard to the different ownerships. A transport assessment will be required to indicate whether any improvements are required to the road infrastructure.

A heritage statement will be required, having regard to the site's conservation area status and potential for archaeological remains. A focal building on the old swimming pool site could enhance the conservation area and provide an attractive streetscape along Huntingdon Street. Supported housing either in the form of a care home or sheltered flats could be designed to fit these requirements while also providing a needed facility in the area. Alternatively a community use or offices on this part of the site could sit well with the adjoining established uses. Opportunities for educational and community uses should also be investigated on the rear land which will also support housing.

Arboricultural assessment and an ecology survey is expected having regard to the protected trees and areas of open space. The pedestrian link known as 'Shady Walk' should be protected and appropriate improvements made to it to ensure continued use in the context of new development.



# 13 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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## St Mary's Urban Village, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SN 6

#### St Mary's Urban Village, St Neots (previously SN 7)

0.7ha of land at St Mary's Urban Village is allocated for development of mixed use development in accordance with the St Mary's Urban Village Urban Design Framework and Master Plan to comprise:

- Approximately 40 homes
- Retention of Brook House as offices
- Approximately 60m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace (class A1 - A2)

Alternatively the site may be developed for community uses.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of vehicular access points from Brook Street and pedestrian access points from High Street and Church Walk
- Provision of high quality development that enhances the character of the conservation area and safeguards and enhances the character and setting of Brook House, a grade II\* listed building and the nearby St Mary's Church, a grade I listed building
- Provision of a Flood Risk Assessment to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies



### Development Guidance

Any new development on this site must complement the existing road, pedestrian and cycle networks and movement patterns. Vehicular access points should be created at the south of the site, with pedestrian access to the north from the High Street and to the east from Church Walk.

This site is located within the conservation area and contains a mixture of buildings. Some of the existing buildings on site are in a poor state of repair and could be improved by appropriate redevelopment. The site includes Brook House, a grade II\* listed building, considered to be one of the finest buildings in St Neots. There are two other listed buildings within the site, and several adjacent, including St Mary's Church, and the view of the church tower could become a focal view in any redevelopment proposals. The site also contains some trees that should be retained. Development that harms views or a sense of the historic nature of this site should be resisted.

A small part of the site in the south lies within the functional floodplain. A flood risk assessment will be required. It is likely that a proportion of the site cannot be developed with any buildings, but it is necessary to incorporate this area into the site in order to ensure an appropriate design solution for the entire area is prepared.

At the time of writing planning applications 0900411FUL and 1201442FUL are pending on parts of the site.



## Cromwell Road Car Park, St Neots

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SN 7

#### Cromwell Road Car Park, St Neots (previously SN 11)

0.5ha of land used as a car park for Sealed Air Corporation on Cromwell Road is allocated for residential development of approximately 20 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Improvements to the existing access opposite the Bargroves Education Centre
- Noise attenuation measures incorporated in the design of the site or individual buildings
- Retention of trees and provision of additional landscaping
- Separation from the gas pipeline in accordance with National Grid requirements
- Provision of connections for the forthcoming local heat network together with heating and hot water systems that take account of it for each home instead of compliance with Integrated renewable energy policy DM 19.



### Development Guidance

Further to a planning application considered in 2010, residential development is deemed appropriate given that there is neighbouring housing to the south.

The site is currently accessed from a non-adopted road used by the Bargroves Education Centre and Samuel Pepys School as well as this car park. Improvements to the existing access are likely to be necessary to service the anticipated number of new homes in accordance with the Manual for Streets.

Appropriate boundary treatments with the neighbouring residential properties and the school will be expected, including noise attenuation measures. The trees which are currently part of the landscaping around the car park should be retained where possible and form part of the additional landscaping required for residential use of the site.

The site falls within a waste consultation area for the Marston Road Household Recycling Centre and Biffa Depot as set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework. Given the nearby residential activities, residential development on this site will not prejudice the continued operation of the waste facility.

The Cromwell Road area of St Neots has potential for a combined heat and power scheme with a local heat network. It is anticipated that such a scheme will be forthcoming in the early years of the Local Plan. Development of this site should take advantage of, and support, this opportunity through provision of connections for the local heat network.

# 13 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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## Little Paxton

- 13.5** Little Paxton lies to the north of St Neots. Residents look to St Neots town centre for its retail and restaurants, but the village has its own school and some other facilities. The Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, located to the north and east of the village on land formerly used for quarrying and agriculture, provides a major recreational resource for the District.
- 13.6** There are no sites considered suitable for allocation in Little Paxton at this time.



## 14 St Ives Spatial Planning Area

- 14.1** The St Ives Spatial Planning Area incorporates the town of St Ives and parts of the parishes of Hemingford Grey, Fenstanton, Houghton and Wyton, Wyton-on-the-Hill and Holywell-cum-Needingworth where they relate closely to St Ives. The area is smaller than the Huntingdon and St Neots SPAs and retains the character of a small market town. St Ives has an attractive town centre which retains a strong local character and supports a number of prominent independent retailers. Business and industrial estates are established towards the eastern side of the town. The Busway provides direct services to Cambridge with a park and ride facility from the east of the town.

### St Ives

- 14.2** St Ives is constrained by significant flood risk from the River Great Ouse. Many of the town's iconic buildings relate to the river such as the Mill and the town bridge. Much of its green fringe is also inextricably linked to the river such as the Hemingford Meadows which contribute to a strong visual gateway into town.
- 14.3** The following sections set out a series of specific sites that could form potential allocations for the Local Plan. The purpose of these potential allocations is to promote sustainable growth within the St Ives Spatial Planning Area.
- 14.4** In addition to the potential allocations provision is made for sustainable development proposals through Policy LP 8 'Development in the Spatial Planning Areas'.

# 14 St Ives Spatial Planning Area

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## St Ives West

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SI 1

#### St Ives West

47ha of land at St Ives West is allocated for a mix of uses to comprise:

- Approximately 22ha of green space
- Approximately 500 homes
- Approximately 450m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floor space (class A1)
- Community facilities to meet needs arising from the development.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Detailed master-planning to determine the layout of development
- Design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposals
- Phasing of development, including the provision of accessible green space
- Appropriate access including primary vehicular access to be via the Houghton Road/ Garner Drive junction
- Assessment of the surrounding road network and measures to address identified inadequacies that would come about as a consequence of development of this site
- A sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians
- Landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries and green infrastructure networks
- Social and community facilities to be incorporated
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Production of a management plan for all areas of open/ green space
- Safeguarding and enhancing the character of the conservation areas and Houghton Grange and the two lodges which are grade 2 listed buildings



#### Development Guidance

The form that development takes will need to respond positively to a number of issues; using landscape corridors that run north-south to frame areas of development; reinforcing the landscape backdrop of Houghton Road; connecting and linking the site with the rest of the town.

Southeastern parts of the site and the grounds of Houghton Grange lie within the St Ives and Houghton and Wyton conservation areas respectively. Development will need to take these conservation areas into account. The Houghton Grange County Wildlife Site to the southwest of the site and St Ives Thicket are excluded from the land identified for development but should be included within management plans for open and green space provided within the site. The River Great Ouse to the south of the site is also a County Wildlife Site.

Site constraints include tree preservation orders and the listed buildings. Additionally there are known archaeological assets in the vicinity of the site. Such assets should be comprehensively assessed with appropriate measures taken for their conservation and enhancement.



Contributing to the strategic green corridor along the River Great Ouse is a primary objective. The delivery of the green space in the southern parts of the site will need to ensure that existing public access is maintained whilst enhancing the existing biodiversity value. The area to be devoted to open space will be determined using existing building lines and trees as well as levels and slopes.

The area will be accessed from the A1123 using the junction with the Slepe Meadow development as well as from the Green Acres development. A transport assessment will be required along with measures to address any inadequacies that would arise.

Provision is made for a limited amount of retail space. A small local shop to meet the day to day convenience shopping needs in the area is expected.

Regard should be had to the Waste and Minerals Plan and supporting SPD. Specific reference should be had to policies CS28 relating to waste minimisation, re-use and resource recovery, CS16 relating to household recycling centres and the Waste Minimisation, Re-Use and Resource Recovery (RECAP) Waste Management Design Guide SPD.

Recreation and sports provision will need to be assessed and any shortcomings that would arise as a result of the development adequately addressed.

## Former Car Showroom, London Road, St Ives

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SI 2

#### Former Car Showroom, London Road, St Ives (previously SI 6)

1.2ha at the former car showroom, London Road is allocated for supported housing. Successful development of the site will require:

- Retention of the existing access route sited in the south western corner to enable access to the gas compound/sub-station and adjacent restaurant's car park
- Provision of amenity/ open space within the south eastern part of the site and which incorporates the gas valve compound and sub station
- Appropriate account taken of the site's location within the conservation area



### Development Guidance

The site's good, level accessibility to town by foot makes it a highly suitable location to meet the identified need in the southern part of St Ives for supported housing either in the form of a care home or sheltered flats. The former vehicle dealership on the site closed in 2009.

There are two existing accesses into the site; one in the north western corner and the other on the south western boundary which serves a Transco (National Grid) sub station and gas valve compound to which access must be retained.

The presence of these facilities, combined with the vulnerability to flooding means it would not be appropriate to develop the rear half of the site. Development proposals should be concentrated on higher land in the western front portion of the site which is potentially less vulnerable to flooding. The depth and appropriate scale and massing of development would be key design considerations in any development proposals in order to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. Due to its location with the conservation area and adjacent listed buildings a heritage statement would be required.

The whole site sits within the rapid inundation zone and the majority also falls within flood zone 3a with climate change allowance, although it is protected by modern flood defences. A flood risk assessment would be required as well as the incorporation of flood mitigation measures as necessary such as limiting site coverage or raising levels above the known flood levels. It is therefore considered that the sustainable location of the site and identified need for supported housing, outweigh the risks posed by potential flooding. Mitigation work will need to be appropriate to standards set by the Environment Agency.

Any development proposals should incorporate a significant area of open space and substantial landscaping to the rear of the site and around the gas valve compound and sub-station. Such proposals would serve to increase the amount of open space provision and make good use of otherwise undevelopable land. A landscape management plan will therefore be required as part of any potential development proposals.



Approximately half of this site falls within the Sand and Gravel Minerals Safeguarding Area. However given the proximity to other uses, including residential, it is unlikely to be a commercial resource. In the event that mineral is extracted as part of any future development it must be put to a sustainable use either on or off site. Any development proposal must address this issue with reference to the Cambridgeshire Waste and Minerals Core Strategy Policy CS26.

Appropriate account will also need to be taken of the sites location within the St Ives Conservation Area.

## Giffords Farm, St Ives

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) SI 3

#### Giffords Farm, St Ives

5ha of land at Giffords Farm, St Ives is allocated for employment development. Successful development of the site will require:

- Flood risk assessment and flood mitigation works as appropriate



#### Development Guidance

Representations received during the Stage 2; Strategic Options and Policies Consultation supported the need for additional land for employment uses in St Ives. Evidence was submitted that land and buildings currently available in and around St Ives is somewhat limited and is dominated by office space and there would seem to be more demand for more flexible 'light industrial' type accommodation. This site was put forward at Stage 2 and initial assessment would suggest that it is a suitable site. Work is currently underway on an employment land study for Huntingdonshire that will inform decisions about where and how much land is required for employment purposes. The study will not be finalised until after this current stage of consultation. This being the case this proposed allocation is limit to 5ha but it is accepted that this may need to be increased. It would appear that the best location for this would be adjacent to Compass Point to the north.

Approximately half of this site is considered to be at risk of flooding, being within either flood zone 3a (with climate change) or flood zone 3a. The extent of flood risk will need to be established through a flood risk assessment and suitable flood protection/ mitigation measures included as appropriate.



## Vindis Car Showroom, St Ives

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SI 4

#### Vindis Car Showroom, St Ives

2.7ha of land at Vindis Showroom, St Ives is allocated for residential development of approximately 50 dwellings. Successful development of the site will require:

- Flood risk assessment
- Green infrastructure elements and flood mitigation measures within the site be improved and maintained
- A design that reflects the recommendations of the Council's design brief (forthcoming)



#### Development Guidance

Following the relocation of the Vindis car showrooms to Huntingdon this site offers an opportunity for residential development that makes use of the prominent location to the south of a junction of the A1096.

The site is identified as being at risk of flooding within the flood zone 3a with climate change. As approximately half of the site is previously developed, redevelopment is considered to present opportunities to positively address flood risk. A flood risk assessment will be needed to establish the extent of risk and offer possible ways to address the risk.

The Council intends to produce a development brief for this site with the aim of achieving a high quality design that makes the most of the prominent location in this part of St Ives.

# 14 St Ives Spatial Planning Area

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## St Ives Football Club

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SI 5

#### St Ives Football Club

1.3ha of land at St Ives Football Club is allocated for development of approximately 50 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Appropriate alternative provision of the recreational facility
- Provision of appropriate access
- Substantial landscaping on the western boundaries



#### Development Guidance

Development of this site is dependent on suitable replacement facilities being secured and is essential for development proposals to be supported.

In order to achieve safe access to the site from the highway network it is likely that additional land will be required as the access, currently taken past the adjacent car park, is not considered to be suitable for the anticipated scale of development. This may be achievable in discussion with the Council as owners of land adjacent to the site. The football club currently provides a well used, centrally located facility and alternative provision will be necessary.

There is known archaeological potential in the vicinity which should be investigated. A programme of archaeological work may be required.

Access to the site is restricted by a very narrow private road with a sharp bend which will need to be upgraded to achieve a design that can cater for two way vehicle movement. Provision and upgrading of pedestrian and cycle way connections will also be necessary.

Substantial landscaping will be required on the western boundaries to help safeguard against disturbance from the adjoining leisure uses.



## 15 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

- 15.1** The Ramsey spatial planning area includes Ramsey, Bury and part of RAF Upwood, but excludes the villages of Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Marys and Upwood. Although relatively small the town serves as a focal point for a significant rural community, providing medical services, secondary education and leisure facilities.

### Ramsey

- 15.2** Ramsey's historic core is centred around the Abbey to the east of the town centre. The traditional shopping area is focused on Great Whyte; in 2009 a superstore opened to the north of the town centre as part of the Ramsey Gateway project. The High Lode industrial area defines the northern edge of the town.
- 15.3** Bury lies to the south and is a small settlement with strong links to the former RAF Upwood airfield, which lies to the south-western of the village. Originally two distinct settlements, Ramsey and Bury have now merged as a consequence of residential development to the south west of Ramsey. The urban area extends south west to include areas of housing formerly associated with RAF Upwood.
- 15.4** The elevated landscape to the south and west and the lower lying Fenland landscape to the north and east combine with the lack of significant vegetation to allow extensive views around the spatial planning area.
- 15.5** The following sections set out a series of specific sites that could form potential allocations for the Local Plan. The purpose of these potential allocations is to promote sustainable growth within the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area.
- 15.6** In addition to the potential allocations provision is made for sustainable development proposals through Policy LP 8 'Development in the Spatial Planning Areas'.

# 15 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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## South of the Foundry, Factory Bank, Ramsey

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) RA 1

#### South of the Foundry, Factory Bank, Ramsey

1.5ha of land south of the Foundry, Factory Bank is allocated for employment uses to comprise light industrial (class B1c), general industrial (class B2) or storage and distribution (class B8) uses.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a 20m wide maintenance access strip to the rear of the existing flood defence embankment
- Provision of access via the existing roundabout on St Mary's Road
- Improvements being made to Factory Bank/ Foot Drove sufficient to serve the site
- Production and implementation of a landscaping scheme that limits the impact of development on the surrounding Fenland landscape.



#### Development Guidance

The eastern boundary of the site runs along the bank of the High Lode drainage channel which is part of the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) systems. A 20 metre wide access strip is required for maintenance purposes by the MLC. The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the MLC will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. Additionally soakaway and similar infiltration type drainage solutions are unlikely to be suitable. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC. Discussion is ongoing between MLC and Anglian Water regarding discharges from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals.

Suitable access should be provided from the existing roundabout on St Mary's Road via Factory Bank and Foot Drove which are currently unmade and would require improvements that satisfy MLC, and a transport assessment provided to demonstrate highway network suitability.

Development of the site is anticipated to be comprised of light industrial and warehousing or general industrial floorspace.

The flat and open fenland landscape means that visibility of the site is an issue that will need to be addressed, although this is limited to the northwesterly direction. Reference to the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Document will be expected as part of the Design and Access statement of any proposed development.

The majority of the site falls within the Ramsey Waste Water Treatment Work Safeguarding Area (WWTWSA), so any development will require an odour assessment and must satisfy the requirements of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS31.

The northern tip of the site falls within a Waste Consultation Area, therefore any development must satisfy Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS30.



## Ramsey Gateway

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) RA 2

#### Ramsey Gateway

2.9ha of land at Ramsey Gateway is allocated for residential development of approximately 90 homes.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a single new access from the roundabout on St Mary's Road
- The design and layout of any development proposal reflecting the site's importance as a gateway to Ramsey and location within the conservation area
- Retention of trees along site boundaries to protect views to and from Northern Mill and Ramsey Conservation Area
- Retention of the existing Northern Mill building to act as a local landmark
- Separation from the high and medium pressure gas pipelines in accordance with National Grid requirements



#### Development Guidance

Development proposals should be in accordance with the principles set out in the Ramsey Gateway Urban Design Framework adopted November 2004.

The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. The use of soakaways or other infiltration devices will not provide an efficient means of surface water disposal at the site. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC. Discussion is ongoing between MLC and Anglian Water regarding discharges from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals. The site is within Ramsey, Upwood & Great Raveley IDB and surface water should be disposed of into its system. An unregulated discharge may be acceptable but the improvement of adjacent and off-site watercourses may be required.

The main point of access to any proposed development on this site should be taken from the new roundabout on St Mary's Road.

Redevelopment would have limited visual impact on the surrounding area as the site is partially screened by trees. Northern Mill has historic local significance and should be retained and converted to residential use and a suitable landscaping scheme provided to maintain its significance and setting which capitalise on the views in and out of the site to the Mill.



## Ramsey Gateway (High Lode)

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) RA 3

#### Ramsey Gateway (High Lode)

2.3ha of land at Ramsey Gateway (High Lode) is allocated for residential development of approximately 125 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a suitable access via the existing roundabout on St Mary's Road
- Navigation related improvements to Ramsey Basin
- The provision of a 20m wide maintenance access strip along High Lode required by Middle Level Commissioners
- The provision of a scheme for protecting any homes from the noise from the adjacent scrap yard, should a cessation of its use and removal not form part of a development proposal for the redevelopment of this site
- The design and layout of any development proposal reflecting the site's importance in the conservation area and as a gateway to Ramsey
- Provision of a pedestrian and cycleway bridge over High Lode to link the two parcels of land
- Separation from the high and medium pressure gas pipelines in accordance with National Grid requirements



#### Development Guidance

Development proposals should be in accordance with the principles set out in the Ramsey Gateway Urban Design Framework adopted November 2004.

Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) require a 20 metre wide access strip for maintenance and machinery along both sides of High Lode. MLC anticipate that the Great Fen Project will, as it develops, increase navigation on their system and may increase leisure, recreation and tourism use within Huntingdonshire and are therefore require navigation related improvements to Ramsey Basin. The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the MLC will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. The use of soakaways or other infiltration devices will not provide an efficient means of surface water disposal at the site. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC. Discussion is ongoing between MLC and Anglian Water regarding discharges from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals. The western part of the site lies within the Ramsey, Upwood & Great Raveley IDB and the eastern part within Ramsey IDB. The installation/improvement of positive water level management systems and off-site works may be required.

The site is in a prominent location at the northern gateway to Ramsey, so any development proposals will have a visual impact on the surrounding area, particularly as the western part of the site lies within the conservation area. Parts of the setting for this part of the conservation area are currently poor, so potential redevelopment provides the opportunity to enhance the setting, character and appearance of the conservation area. In particular, the opportunity to relocate the existing scrap yard to a more appropriate location for a use of that type would be



of benefit to the locality. However if the owner of the scrap yard is not prepared to include it as part of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme, attenuation measures would be required to adequately protect the amenity of future occupiers of new homes on the site, such as a landscaped cordon.

Given the flat topography of the area, careful consideration should be given to the boundary treatment of any site proposals, to ensure that development is appropriately sited within the landscape.

The site should be accessed via the existing roundabout on St Mary's Road, with suitable transport assessment provision to demonstrate the highway network is suitable. A new pedestrian and cycleway bridge would be required to ensure linkages are improved between the two parcels either side of High Lode.

The site offers the opportunity for the regeneration of areas of derelict and underused land, and has potential to provide an attractive residential environment in a riverside location appropriate to the setting of the conservation area.

# 15 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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## Field Road, Ramsey

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) RA 4

#### Field Road, Ramsey

5.2ha of land at Field Road, Ramsey is allocated for residential development of approximately 90 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a suitable new access from Field Road
- Improvement to pedestrian and cycle routes to link to existing networks, having regard to the existing public right of way on the site
- Retention of the woodland area to the west and north west of the site
- Boundary treatments to protect and enhance the amenity of neighbouring properties and to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding countryside



#### Development Guidance

The site is bordered on two sides by residential development, and substantial landscaping will be required to minimise the impact on neighbouring residents and the surrounding countryside. The woodland to the west and north west of the site provides a very attractive landscape setting and high quality screening, and must be retained.

This is a good location for residential development in sustainable transport terms. There is potential to create an appropriate access from Field Road, but there would need to be acceptable mitigation of the impact of additional generated traffic on Blenheim Road and Field Road. A transport assessment would be required. Footpath linkages should be retained to facilitate integration of the site into adjoining residential areas.

The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the MLC will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. Additionally soakaway and similar infiltration type drainage solutions are unlikely to be suitable. A drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC. Discussion is ongoing between MLC and Anglian Water regarding discharges from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals.



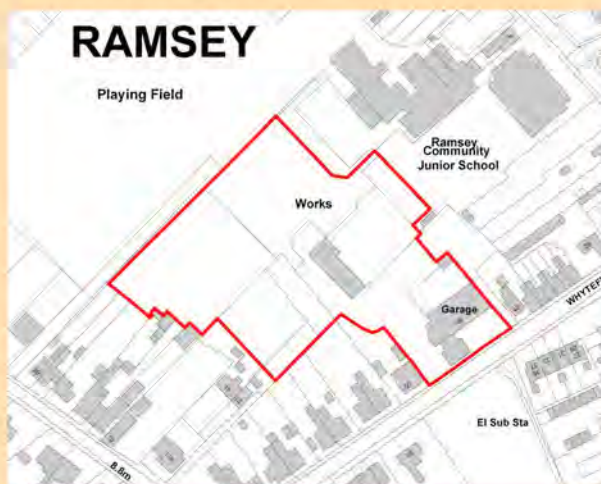
## Whytefield Road, Ramsey

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) RA 5

#### Whytefield Road, Ramsey

0.9ha of land at Whytefield Road, Ramsey is allocated for residential development of approximately 35 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable access
- Completion of land contamination remediation measures appropriate to residential development
- The design and layout of any development proposal reflecting the site's location within the conservation area
- Provision of a substantial landscaping buffer along the boundary with the primary school to protect against overlooking between the primary school and properties



#### Development Guidance

The site is considered to have potential to be redeveloped to provide an attractive, sustainably located residential scheme, appropriate to its position within Ramsey Conservation Area.

The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. The use of soakaways or other infiltration devices will not provide an efficient means of surface water disposal at the site. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC. Discussion is ongoing between MLC and Anglian Water regarding discharges from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals.

Given the existing and historical use of the site a contamination assessment would be required and appropriate mitigation undertaken if required to ensure the land is suitable for residential use.

The site has some boundary trees at present and any development proposals should retain and reinforce these, particularly along the boundary with the primary school to protect against overlooking of the playing fields; a crime reduction statement may also be required.

The site comprises previously developed land in close proximity to services, employment, open space and public transport, and is therefore a very sustainable choice for residential development. There would be a loss of employment on the site if it were to be redeveloped for housing, and given the site's former use as petrol station, there may be potential for contamination.



# 15 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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## RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House, Ramsey

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) RA 6

#### RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House, Ramsey (previously RA 7)

15.3ha of land at RAF Upwood and Upwood Hill House is allocated for development for a mix of uses to comprise approximately:

- 2ha of employment land (gross) to be comprised of business (class B1) uses
- 160 homes

Successful development of the site will require:

- Production of a schedule detailing the extent of existing buildings to be cleared and those to be retained to be agreed with the Council, that enables the character of the historic RAF use to be maintained and the environment, both on site and of the surrounding area, to be of a suitably high standard for the benefit of future users and residents
- Provision of a drainage strategy in agreement with relevant bodies
- Completion of a master planning exercise with the Council that addresses:
  - Phasing of site preparation and development
  - Access and layout
  - Design codes or conceptual appearance of development proposals
  - Landscape design recognising vistas, boundaries and green infrastructure networks
  - A sustainable transport network for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians



### Development Guidance

Of the 40 or so buildings that currently remain on site there would appear to be few which are of sufficient architectural merit and in a sufficiently intact state that refurbishment could be viable. Most of the other buildings appear to be in a condition that they could not be viably refurbished and would require demolition and clearing. It is also likely that the majority of the existing roads and hard standing will require clearing because of their poor condition.

There are a significant number of trees on the site many of which will be worthy of retention. A comprehensive arboricultural survey will be necessary, along with a management plan. New planting would be appropriate in keeping with the existing landscape character.

The water level/ flood risk management system is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges and consequently the MLC will not accept additional water to enter their managed system including the High Lode. Discussion is ongoing between Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) and Anglian Water regarding discharges



from existing outlets into MLC's system, and this may have future implications for development proposals. MLC require provision of an impact assessment advising of any adverse impacts on its system and any mitigation, together with a mechanism for the recovery of the cost of the future processing of the discharge.

It is thought that the best part of the site to be developed for employment uses will be in the west on land close to the southern most hanger buildings. Employment development is considered to have potential synergy with these existing large scale buildings which are being used for employment purposes. Care will need to be taken with siting and screening to safeguard against negative impacts on the existing residential area immediately to the south. In addition the area of existing buildings adjacent to the eastern boundary may be more suitable for office or other business type (class B1) uses rather than residential uses. It is envisaged that development of employment areas of this site will be comprised of approximately 10,000m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area of business (classes B1) uses.

A waste strategy and audit will be required in conformity with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Core Strategy Policies CS7, CS16 and CS28.

Upwood Hill House would appear to be in a significantly better condition than many of the other buildings and may be suitable for refurbishment. The immediate area surrounding Upwood Hill House is considered to be suitable for development in a way which respects its setting and former use.

# 16 Key Service Centres

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

## 16 Key Service Centres

- 16.1** Huntingdonshire has seven villages which provide focal points for local service provision across the district and are considered to be free-standing Key Service Centres. Each has a range of shops and services that can meet daily needs, a primary school, a doctor's surgery, community facilities, local employment opportunities and public transport services.
- 16.2** The following sections set out a series of specific sites that could form potential allocations for the Local Plan. The purpose of these potential allocations is to promote sustainable growth within the Key Service Centres.
- 16.3** In addition to the potential allocations provision is made for sustainable development proposals through Policy LP 9 'Development in Key Service Centres'.

### Buckden

- 16.4** Buckden is located approximately 8kms south-west of Huntingdon, and 3kms east of Grafham Water. The historic core of the village is centred around Buckden Towers (formerly Buckden Palace) and extends to the west of the church where the village edge is now defined by the A1. The High Street is lined by many Georgian brick buildings which combine to create a distinctive centre to the settlement of high architectural quality and possessing a strong sense of place.
- 16.5** There are no suitable sites identified as potential allocations in Buckden at this time.

### Fenstanton

- 16.6** Fenstanton is situated some 3kms south of St Ives immediately north of the A14. Historically the village was associated with Hilton to the south, but the links between these are now limited to an overbridge and a pedestrian underpass due to the A14. Public transport has been reduced since the opening of the Guided Busway.



## Cambridge Road, Fenstanton

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) FS 1

#### Cambridge Road, Fenstanton

3.9ha of land off Cambridge Road and north of the A14 at Fenstanton is allocated for development of:

- approximately 65 homes
- a village hall or other community facility

Successful development of the site will require:

- Satisfactory resolution of the impact of additional traffic on the A14 having regard to a transport assessment
- Provision of a new access into the site from the slip road
- Improvement to pedestrian and cycle routes to link to the existing networks, having regard to the existing public right of way on the site
- Retention of the approximately 0.5ha remnant orchard part of the site as open space and retention of other important trees as identified in tree and ecology surveys
- Retention of the existing pond on the site
- Provision of noise mitigation measures in relation to the adjoining A14
- Appropriate separation from the gas pipeline adjacent following advice from National Grid



#### Development Guidance

Although not as sustainable as development in market towns, a direction of growth was identified for Fenstanton as one of the key service centres in the Core Strategy 2009 and this site has been identified for potential development since that time in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. The site offers an opportunity to provide a village hall or other community facility within a reasonably accessible location.

The site is situated within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework. Cambridgeshire County Council has in this case confirmed that due to the small size and proposed policy restrictions for the site that mineral extraction is not expected.

The Highways Agency has indicated that this level of development will be acceptable given the intention to upgrade the A14. Access into the site is anticipated from the part of the slip road that is two-way. There should be no need for an access into the remnant orchard part of the site which should be retained as open space. A traffic management scheme on the A14 eastbound off slip may be required to reduce speeds so that vehicles are travelling at no more than 30mph on the section that is two way. The accessibility of the site for pedestrians should also be improved with the provision of pedestrian footways and crossing facilities linking the site with the centre of Fenstanton.

# 16 Key Service Centres

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

The site has a long boundary with the A14 and noise mitigation measures should be included in the design. The required open space, together with setbacks, landscaping and other measures designed to reduce the visual impact of the development, means that it is anticipated that the total amount of developable area is only some 50% of the site.



## Ivy Nursery, Fenstanton

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) FS 2

#### Ivy Nursery, Fenstanton

1.5ha of land at Ivy Nursery, Cambridge Road, Fenstanton, is allocated for residential development of approximately 30 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Satisfactory resolution of the impact of additional traffic on the A14 having regard to a transport assessment
- A single safe access into the site
- Design which allows for links to be made in future through to neighbouring land
- Retention of an area of trees at the front of the site of approximately 0.3ha and other trees in recognition of their heritage and habitat value
- Boundary treatments to protect and enhance the amenity of neighbouring properties and to minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding countryside
- Noise assessment and air quality assessment in relation to the nearby A14
- Separation from the intermediate gas pipeline located adjacent to the site following advice from National Grid



#### Development Guidance

This former nursery and orchard site containing one home is located adjacent to houses in Pitfield Close on the eastern edge of Fenstanton. To the east is land within the district of South Cambridgeshire covered by Policy SP11 of their Site Specific Proposals DPD 2010, amplified by the Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate SPD 2011. To the south-east is a motorway services complex including a restaurant, motel and service station and south-west are allotments. Open fields are located to the north and south.

The Highways Agency has indicated that this level of development will be acceptable given the intention to upgrade the A14. Improvement to the existing access to Cambridge Road is anticipated and the 30mph speed limit may need to be relocated beyond this site to ensure safe movement of traffic. The joint pedestrian and cycle way outside the site should also be upgraded.

Ecology and tree surveys are expected leading to retention of areas of trees, particularly at the front of the site which reduces the anticipated developable area of the site.

While the adjoining Pitfield Close development is largely screened from longer views by this nursery, development of this site will have wider visual effects. It is expected that existing buildings on the site will be removed. Boundary treatments involving landscaping should be incorporated in any development proposals to protect neighbours and minimise the effect on the countryside.



# 16 Key Service Centres

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## Former Dairy Crest Factory, Fenstanton

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) FS 3

#### Former Dairy Crest Factory, Fenstanton

3.2ha of land formerly comprising the Dairy Crest factory is allocated for mixed use development to comprise:

- Approximately 90 homes
- Approximately 0.5ha of employment land (Class B1)
- A village hall or other community facility
- Open space

Successful development of the site will require:

- Satisfactory resolution of the impact of traffic having regard to a transport assessment
- Provision of noise mitigation measures in relation to the adjoining A14
- Improvement to pedestrian and cycle links
- Sensitive design having regard to the Conservation Area designation over part of the site and adjoining land
- Retention and reuse of the listed building
- Retention of significant trees in accordance with an arboricultural assessment
- Identification of shared use car parking and open space for the various uses on the site



### Development Guidance

The Dairy Crest factory closed in early 2013 and has been put forward as a site to be allocated for alternative use. An urban design process involving a working group including District and Parish Councillors as well as the landowners has helped inform and shape this draft allocation.

The factory had its main access from the slip road from the A14. New development is expected to gain access from the High Street and Conington Road as well as the existing access on the slip road. Conington Road will need to be improved to accommodate new development, and pedestrian pavements provided along both sides. It is recognised that given that the site was recently functioning that new uses should be considered in relation to the 2012 traffic generation of the site. A traffic assessment will be required to consider the characteristics of the traffic movements proposed and how they can be catered for within the village and on the A14.

Mitigation measures for noise pollution from the A14 must be included in the design. A mix of uses is anticipated on the site. Residential development is envisaged on the northern and eastern parts of the site. Employment is anticipated along the southern part of the site closest to the A14 as employment uses are less noise sensitive, as well as being less sensitive to the potential for air pollution. Offices could also form a buffer between the A14 corridor and the residential environment to the north. It is anticipated that between 1,000m<sup>2</sup> and 2,000m<sup>2</sup> of B1 uses could be developed on the site. As the site formerly incorporated office use this would not be considered to be new employment provision.



It is anticipated that many of the factory buildings on the site will be demolished. However the listed building will remain as a feature of the site and it is anticipated that this can be reused for residential purposes. There may be opportunities to redevelop other existing buildings for new uses, for example a village hall or other community use. At the time of writing this site is being actively pursued as the location for a new Fenstanton Village Hall which may either be in a new or existing building. Some car parking and open space could be shared between the Village Hall, employment uses and residential visitor car parking.

The existing development of the site is on more than one level. New development must have regard to the finished levels of the site following demolition of buildings, and ensure that development on the new levels do not affect neighbouring property. Appropriate archaeological investigations are anticipated prior to decontamination of the site.

Redevelopment of the site will change its character enabling a more attractive setting with open space, trees and landscaping. Larger existing trees on the site should be retained where possible to enable the redevelopment to be immediately set in the most attractive environment possible.

# 16 Key Service Centres

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## Kimbolton

- 16.7** Kimbolton is located 12kms north-west of St Neots and 3kms west of Grafham Water. The village lies in the valley of the River Kym. Its historic core is focused on the High Street which is lined by highly distinctive historic buildings leading towards the gateway of Kimbolton School and St Andrews Church. The newer part of the village lies to the north of the River Kym which provides a green corridor running through the village. Extensive parkland associated with Kimbolton Castle surrounds the village to the east and south.



## West of Station Road, Kimbolton

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) KB 1

#### West of Station Road, Kimbolton (previously KB 2)

1.49ha of land west of Station Road, Kimbolton is allocated for residential development of approximately 20 dwellings. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of appropriate safe vehicular access to Station Road in accordance with the speed of the road, minimising loss of mature hedgerows
- Provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre and schools
- Provision of screening to the south and west to minimise impact on the surrounding landscape and existing listed buildings
- Provision of open space to west of site to protect view lines



#### Development Guidance

The site is located on the north west edge of Kimbolton fronting Station Road (B660) and forms part of the gateway to the village. Integrating the site with the rest of Kimbolton would be a major challenge to development.

There is potential for vehicular access to be created from Station Road, but this would need to be carefully assessed to minimise the loss of existing mature hedgerows, and be in accordance with the speed of the road. There may be opportunities for pedestrian and cycle links via the housing at Montagu Gardens to the north.

The views out from the site across the River Kym Valley and Kimbolton Castle should be protected and any development must be sensitively designed to protect the setting of the listed buildings to the west. Development should be restricted to the north and eastern part of the site, with open space to the west to protect the view lines. The mature hedgerow along the western boundary should be retained.

The site lies wholly within a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area. Given the size of the site and its proximity to residential development, it is unlikely to be worked as an economic resource. However in the event that mineral is extracted as part of any future development it must be put to a sustainable use either on or off site in accordance with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Policy CS26.

# 16 Key Service Centres

## Land adjacent Bicton Industrial Estate

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) KB 2

#### Land adjacent Bicton Industrial Estate, Kimbolton

1.3ha of land adjacent to Bicton Industrial Estate, Kimbolton is allocated for employment development to comprise light industrial (class B1c) use.

Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of satisfactory access from within the established employment area
- Provision of a tree buffer on the eastern and southern boundary to provide a screen to the surrounding countryside
- Safeguarding the adjacent county wildlife site



#### Development Guidance

The site is located adjacent to an established area of employment uses, but is bounded to the south and west by open countryside. The design and landscaping of any development will need careful consideration with regard to its setting and impact on the wider landscape, especially the nearby county wildlife site. Substantial planting will be required on the eastern and southern boundaries to minimise the impact on views from the surrounding countryside.

Although the location of the industrial estate is relatively unsustainable, in that access is almost exclusively by car, the estate successfully meets the needs of a range of businesses and makes a valuable contribution to the local economy. Access to the site should be provided through the established employment area.

As this is adjacent to rather than part of an established employment area this site is new land and would contribute to the district requirements for employment land.



## Sawtry

- 16.8** Sawtry is located immediately west of the A1, midway between Huntingdon and Peterborough. Sawtry benefits from a secondary school as well as primary school provision, and a leisure centre as well as a range of shops and services. Large post war housing estates dominate the southern and western parts of the village in particular, although some parts retain a distinctive rural character. Sawtry benefits from a significant area of employment use development located on the eastern side of the A1 which provides local employment opportunities.

## East of Brookside, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) SY 1

#### East of Brookside, Sawtry

4.0ha of land east of Brookside, Sawtry is allocated for employment development (Class B1, B2 and B8). Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a suitable access from Brookside only
- Provision of a 9m wide maintenance access strip for the open watercourse that borders the site
- Provision of a flood risk assessment and a drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies
- Adequate screening along the northern, southern and eastern edges to protect existing views, enhance views of the church and protect the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Retention of existing hedgerows as a landscape framework



#### Development Guidance

This greenfield site lies outside the village of Sawtry. The south western area is adjacent to the village edge and the character of this part is influenced by the small industrial estate to the west and housing which abuts it to the south. Further to the north and west, the land is perceived as part of the wider agricultural landscape between the A1 and Glatton Road, across which there are longer distance views.

A 9 metre wide maintenance access strip for the open watercourse that borders the site would be required. Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. It is unlikely that the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or infiltration devices, therefore a drainage strategy would be required, to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies. Part of the north western area of the site is vulnerable to flooding, so a Flood Risk Assessment will be required and appropriate flood mitigation measures may be necessary.

The Scheduled Ancient Monument and All Saints Church currently enjoy a largely rural setting on the edge of the village and any development of the site should be carefully designed to avoid encroachment on this setting. Any development should be compatible with the character of adjacent areas and incorporate boundary planting to enhance views and minimise impact on existing houses to the south. Development would not be appropriate beyond Sawtry Brook or across the elevated eastern area. There is limited potential for small-scale employment development in areas to the west adjacent to the existing village edge, next to the existing industrial area.

Integration with the existing village may be difficult to achieve. Access could potentially be created from the existing industrial estate (Brookside) and Glatton Road. Tort Hill would not be suitable for industrial usage as it is, and upgrading would not be appropriate because of the impact on existing residential properties.

The site falls within a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Brickclay Mineral Safeguarding Area, however Cambridgeshire County Council say it is unlikely to be worked as an economic reserve.



It is anticipated that employment development on this site will be comprised of office (B1a), research and development or light industry (B1b or B1c) or storage and distribution (B8). This site is new land that could contribute to the district requirement for employment land.

# 16 Key Service Centres

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## East of Glebe Farm, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SY 2

#### East of Glebe Farm, Sawtry

3.8ha of land east of Glebe Farm, Gidding Road, Sawtry is allocated for residential development of approximately 75 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable access and improvements to Gidding Road
- Provision of cycleway links to facilitate integration of the site into adjoining residential areas to the east, and pedestrian linkages retained
- Protection and enhancement of Sawtry Brook as a landscape and nature conservation feature



#### Development Guidance

The site is in a sustainable location within walking distance of local shops and health facilities, as well as indoor and outdoor sports facilities, a primary school and a secondary school. Local employment opportunities exist at the small employment area at Brookside. However, potential residents would need to access many services and facilities as well as employment opportunities at larger centres, especially Huntingdon and Peterborough. A robust travel plan should accompany any proposals for this site, including measures to encourage sustainable travel patterns both within and outside the village.

A 9 metre wide maintenance access strip for the open watercourse that forms the northern boundary of the site would be required by Middle Level Commissioners (MLC). Although the site falls within flood zone 1, part is known to be prone to flooding around Sawtry Brook. This will need to be addressed in any planning application. Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. It is unlikely that the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or infiltration devices, therefore a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies would be required.

Any development proposals should enhance the gateway into the village and incorporate additional planting to enhance the landscape and nature conservation value of the watercourse, without encroachment into the MLC maintenance strip, and provide a robust and attractive boundary to this edge of the village. Existing footpath linkages should be retained, and cycleway links provided to facilitate integration of the site into adjoining residential areas to the east.

The site falls within a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Brickclay Mineral Safeguarding Area although Cambridgeshire County Council say it is unlikely to be worked.

The eastern part of the site, which adjoins existing residential development, could potentially be suitable for residential development which reflects the existing pattern and character of development.



## West of St Andrew's Way, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SY 3

#### West of St Andrew's Way, Sawtry

2.83ha of land West of St Andrew's Way, Sawtry is allocated for housing development of approximately 50 dwellings. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of appropriate access from St Andrews Way
- Provision of substantial open space to the north of the site and suitable landscaping to protect the setting of All Saints Church and the Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Archaeological investigation and subsequent recording, conservation or other work as applicable
- Noise assessment and acoustic treatments in relation to the A1



#### Development Guidance

This site is situated adjacent to a scheduled ancient monument. The area retains a strongly rural feel and contributes to the historic character of the eastern village edge. The scheduled ancient monument and All Saints Church currently enjoy a largely rural setting on the edge of the village and any development of the site should be carefully designed to avoid encroachment on this setting and must be compatible with the character of adjacent areas. Substantial open space and landscaping would therefore be required to the north. Development to the east of the site should be restricted to retain the site's separation from the A1. Proximity to a scheduled ancient monument will require archaeological investigation followed by recording, conservation or other work as applicable.

Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. It is unlikely that the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or infiltration devices, therefore a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies would be required.

Access could potentially be formed with the elevated section of St Andrews Way, one of the main links out of the village and providing access onto the A1. A transport assessment would be required, indicating surrounding network adequacy with required improvements to infrastructure and details of any road improvements. A change in character of the current interchange/link road to indicate a residential environment may be appropriate.

The site falls within a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Brickclay Mineral Safeguarding Area, however Cambridgeshire County Council say it is unlikely to be worked.



# 16 Key Service Centres

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## South of St Andrew's Way, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SY 4

#### South of St Andrews Way, Sawtry

1.4ha of land at St Andrews Way, Sawtry is allocated for housing development of approximately 20 dwellings. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable access from St Andrews Way
- Noise assessment and acoustic treatments in relation to the A1
- Provision of substantial landscaping to protect the setting of All Saints Church and the Scheduled Ancient Monument



#### Development Guidance

This site is situated outside the village of Sawtry. The embankments of the A1 define the eastern boundary and traffic is clearly audible from within the site. Noise and air quality assessments would therefore be required to ensure adequate mitigation measures are incorporated. Development should be restricted to retain the site's separation from the A1 and the existing planting along the site boundaries should be retained. Any development proposals should minimise the impact on existing houses to the south, maintain the green character of the road approach into the village and not encroach on the setting of All Saints Church to the north east, and the Scheduled Ancient Monument to the north.

Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. It is unlikely that the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or infiltration devices, therefore a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies would be required.

Vehicular access to the site may be difficult to achieve from St Andrews Way without the loss of an established hedgerow along the boundary, and limited forward visibility along the road. A transport assessment would be required, indicating surrounding network adequacy with required improvements to infrastructure and details of any road improvements.

The site falls within a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Brickclay Mineral Safeguarding Area; however Cambridgeshire County Council say it is unlikely to be worked as an economic reserve.



## North of Black Horse Industrial Estate, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) SY 5

#### North of Black Horse Industrial Estate, Sawtry

1.6ha of land north of Black Horse Industrial Estate, Sawtry is allocated for employment development (class B uses). Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable access
- Provision of adequate landscaping to provide a screen to the north and east
- Provision of a flood risk assessment and a drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies
- Noise impact investigation



#### Development Guidance

The site is dominated by the A1(M) which lies almost immediately adjacent to the west with the Old Great North Road lying between the two. Noise and air quality assessments would be required to ensure adequate mitigation measures are incorporated. A transport assessment would be required, indicating the adequacy of the surrounding network, with required improvements to infrastructure.

Any development on the site should reflect the scale and design of surrounding buildings. Appropriate boundary treatments will be required to minimise the impact on the open nature of this land and on the existing development to the north and south.

Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. As part of the site is prone to flooding, a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy would be required. It is unlikely the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or other infiltration devices.

As this is adjacent to rather than part of an established employment area this site is new land and would contribute to the district requirements for employment land.

The site falls within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Brickclay Mineral Safeguarding Area, however it is unlikely to be worked as an economic reserve.



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## Bill Hall Way, Sawtry

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) SY 6

#### Bill Hall Way, Sawtry (previously SY 7)

1.7ha of land at Bill Hall Way, Sawtry is allocated for employment development (B1 uses). Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable vehicular access from Bill Hall Way
- Provision of pedestrian links to the village
- Provision of a flood risk assessment and a drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies
- Provision of areas of public open space
- Noise assessment and acoustic treatments in relation to the A1
- Provision of a 9 metre wide maintenance access strip for the open watercourse to the south of the site as required by Middle Level Commissioners



#### Development Guidance

The site lies outside Sawtry but is adjacent to the urban edge of the east of the village. It is distant from the services and facilities of Sawtry.

Surface water run off should be restricted to greenfield rates to reduce the risk of flooding, as Catchwater Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events. It is unlikely that the site will be conducive to the use of soakaways or infiltration devices, therefore a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies would be required.

Due to its proximity to the A1, the site is potentially suitable for small-scale employment development only. Noise and air quality assessments would be required to ensure adequate mitigation measures are incorporated. A vehicular access point could potentially be created using an existing entrance along Bill Hall Way, however this would not be conducive to achieving integration with the village. Pedestrian access only could potentially be achieved from Stanch Hill Road. A transport assessment indicating the adequacy of the surrounding network will be required.

Any development proposals should be set back from Bill Hall Way to maintain the green character of the road frontage. Areas of open space should be incorporated, linked to the open space along the public footpath through the residential area to the west. Opportunities exist to enhance the ecological value of the site through new planting and the creation of wetland areas adjacent to the existing watercourse.

It is anticipated that employment development of this site will be comprised of office (class B1a), research and development or light industrial (classes B1b and B1c) or storage and distribution floorspace (class B8). This site is new land that could contribute to the district requirements for employment land.



## Somersham

- 16.9** Somersham is located on the edge of the Huntingdonshire Fens approximately 6kms north east of St Ives. The historic core of the village is centred around the High Street and Church Street. South of the village the site of the Bishop's Palace is a scheduled ancient monument. Over the last 50 years the village has more than doubled in size with development mainly to the north of the historic core.

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## Newlands, St Ives Road, Somersham

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SM 1

#### Newlands, St Ives Road, Somersham

2.5ha of land at Newlands, St Ives Road, Somersham is allocated for development for mixed uses to comprise approximately:

- 0.8ha for supported housing
- 30 homes

Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of an appropriate single access to serve the supported housing and residential development
- Laying of a footway along the frontage linking with the existing footway network to the village
- Design which provides for lesser density and/or landscaping towards the north of the site reflecting the transition to open countryside and protecting the setting of the conservation area
- Provision of appropriate acoustic treatment to mitigate against adjoining industrial uses
- Retention of the frontage hedge except where removal is required for access
- Improved drainage to cater for development on the site



### Development Guidance

The site has potential to accommodate a mixed use development incorporating supported housing and residential development. It has reasonable access to facilities including access to two doctors surgeries and could cater for supported housing either in the form of a care home or sheltered flats.

Development proposals should provide a single point of access to serve all development of the site. Access arrangements would be subject to the completion of a transport assessment to ensure highway safety and should be in accordance with current standards. Provision of a new footpath to link the development to pedestrian routes to the village centre would be required to promote safety of future residents.

Development proposals should reflect the scale and massing of surrounding residential development which is characterised by spacious plots and development of one and two storeys. Development proposals should reflect the scale of development in the local area and provide adequate set back from St Ives Road. Development in the northern portion of the site should be designed at a lesser density or be landscaped having regard to the line of adjoining development and allow for a transition to the open countryside and protecting the setting of the conservation area.



Due to the proximity of the site to the industrial estate a noise assessment would be required and additional landscaping may be required to mitigate against noise generated from the industrial estate to the east. The presence of a protected tree on the south western boundary and existing landscaping on site would necessitate the completion of a tree survey. Enhanced landscaping on the eastern boundary may also be required to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

The slope on the site results in surface water along the St Ives Road frontage which is carried into a drain. Improved drainage on site and improvements to the existing drain should be made to accommodate development.

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## The Pasture, Somersham

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SM 2

#### The Pasture, Somersham

0.9ha of land at The Pasture, Somersham is allocated for housing development of approximately 20 dwellings. Successful development of the site will be in accordance with the forthcoming Design Brief for The Pasture and will require:

- Provision of appropriate access from The Pasture for approximately 15 dwellings and from Rectory Lane for approximately 5 dwellings
- Provision of a pedestrian and cycle link between The Pasture and Rectory Lane
- Sensitive development in light of the context reflected in the conservation area designation



#### Development Guidance

Any development of this site would need to demonstrate sensitivity to the surrounding context and respect the existing townscape which includes a number of character buildings in Rectory Lane as well as the grade 2 listed Somersham House (the Old Rectory), the grounds of which contain a number of protected trees. The eastern part of the site falls within the conservation area.

Although this is considered to be a good location in sustainable transport terms, Rectory Lane is a narrow road and provision for traffic to turn outside the site could be a public benefit achieved if this site is developed. The junction with King Street has restricted visibility and is close to the High Street. Access from Rectory Lane should be limited to approximately 5 dwellings in the eastern part of the site only. Approximately 15 dwellings could be provided in the western side of the site, and should be accessed from The Pasture only. A continuous link between Rectory Lane and The Pasture would not be acceptable for vehicles, however a pedestrian and cycle link should be provided as part of any development. The accesses should be in accordance with current standards.

The Council intends to produce a development brief for this site with the aim of achieving a high quality design that responds sensitively to the particular issue with this location. The design brief will be finalised prior to the submission of the Local Plan and this allocation amended accordingly if necessary.



## Somersham Town Football Ground and Pond Closes, Somersham

### Proposed Allocation (Mixed use) SM 3

#### Somersham Town Football Ground and Pond Closes

3.8ha of land at Somersham Town Football Club and Pond Closes is allocated for development for mixed uses to comprise approximately:

- 1.4ha currently used for the football club for 50 homes
- Public open space on the Pond Closes part of the site

Successful development of the site will require:

- Relocation of the Somersham Town Football Club to appropriate premises
- Improved access to the B1086 (utilising the existing access point) to serve the residential development
- Creation of public open space on Pond Closes together with an agreed management plan including improvements to the public footpath



#### Development Guidance

It is understood that there are realistic proposals for the relocation of Somersham Town football club within the time period of the Local Plan. Redevelopment of the football club land for housing is envisaged.

Pond Closes is the name for the former fish pond associated with the Bishop of Ely's Palace. It is part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument which extends to the south. It is separated from the football ground by a stream and an area of raised ground. There is a public footpath running along the northern edge. The land is low-lying (as a result of it being a former pond) and is affected by surface water. Formalising the use of this land for public open space is expected at the same time as the football ground is developed. A management plan should be prepared in conjunction with the Parish Council and English Heritage. Such a management plan would include provision for improvements to the public footpath running from Church Street along the northern part of Pond Closes to West End which should be extended into the football ground concurrent with development.

An appropriate buffer between residential development and Pond Closes is necessary to ensure that the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument is not affected. Development is therefore likely to be limited to approximately the eastern edge of the current football pitch.

Access to the football ground is currently by means of a relatively narrow bridge over a stream near the road frontage with the B1086. It is expected that this access can be widened to provide good visibility suitable for a development of up to 50 houses.

See '[Chatteris Road, Somersham](#)' for details of site for relocation.



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## Chatteris Road, Somersham

### Proposed Allocation (Recreation) SM 4

#### Chatteris Road, Somersham

5.0ha of land at Chatteris Road, Somersham is allocated for recreational purposes for the relocation of Somersham Town Football Club and associated facilities including a clubroom and covered stands for the main ground. Successful delivery of the site will require:

- Provision of appropriate access and parking
- Retention of the tree belt within the north eastern boundary of the site
- Buildings being set back from boundaries
- Considerate siting and design of floodlights to avoid obtrusive light
- Sustainable drainage and flood management



#### Development Guidance

It is understood that there are realistic proposals for the relocation of Somersham Town football club within the time period of the Local Plan. Redevelopment of the football club land for housing is envisaged and this site is allocated to ensure provision of an appropriate alternative location.

The site is bordered by drains and Colne Fields. The northern edge contains a tree belt which should be retained with development only on land to the south of this. The Cranbrook Drain along the road frontages is identified as a main river by the Environment Agency, and the land does not benefit from known flood defences. Given that the land is within a flood zone careful attention to drainage of the land will be required utilising sustainable urban drainage techniques.

The site is large enough to accommodate not only a main football pitch for the club, but also a reserve pitch and an all weather pitch for football, hockey and potentially other users. It is anticipated that buildings will be limited to those needed around the main football pitch on the southern end of the site. Floodlighting should be carefully designed to avoid obtrusive light which is defined to include pollution of the night sky, glare and light spill onto neighbouring properties.



## North of the Bank, Somersham

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) SM 5

#### North of the Bank, Somersham

2.1ha of land north of the Bank, Somersham is allocated for development for approximately 50 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- A comprehensive package of community benefits including enhancements to the local rights of way network, access to the Local Nature Reserve to the northwest and cycleway improvements
- Provision of appropriate access to The Bank, B1050
- Design which provides for lesser density and/or landscaping towards the north of the site reflecting the transition to open countryside
- Retention of the two trees on the site
- Building setbacks from the bus depot to the east and landscaping designed to screen it



#### Development Guidance

The site is on the eastern edge of Somersham on the northern side of the B1050 (The Bank which becomes Chatteris Road to the east). To the west, closer to the village centre, is an area of open space partly in County Woodland with a pedestrian access to the Local Nature Reserve. To the east is another area of open land, a residential property and a bus depot. On the southern side of the B1050 there is a strip of ribbon residential development. This site is an old agricultural/ horticultural holding that ceased to operate around 2000. Arable fields continue to the north in what appears to be the same ownership as the site line relates to the adjoining uses rather than any existing boundaries or features on the site.

The existing farm entrance is likely to be the appropriate location for a new access to serve the entire development. This should be improved as required for vehicle visibility to meet the needs of the scale of development. There is an existing footpath which passes the site entrance allowing for pedestrian access into the village centre but this may need to be improved. There is also an opportunity to link the site to the adjoining green infrastructure elements to the west which could enable a through link past the lake and to the pavilion for pedestrians and possibly cyclists. There are existing footpaths already in this location which are well used by the community. The site would need a detailed transport assessment to indicate the effects of the vehicle movements on local junctions. This should also highlight any deficiencies in the connectivity and put forward mitigation measures to make an acceptable development.

Careful site design is needed to ensure that development sits appropriately within the open landscape of the north. Landscaping and/ or a reduced density of development is expected at the northern edge. The site design should also seek to retain the two existing central trees to provide a natural feature. Development of this site should in no way result in pressure to limit the operations of the nearby bus depot which is lawfully established. Landscaping aimed at screening the bus depot will be expected.

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## Warboys

**16.10** Warboys is located approximately 11kms north east of Huntingdon and 6kms south of Ramsey. The focal points of the Baptist Church, Clock Tower and Weir provide distinctive local landmarks. Warboys industrial estate is located on the former airfield to the south west of the village.



## South of Farrier's Way, Warboys

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) WB 1

#### South of Farrier's Way, Warboys (previously WB 2)

4.6ha of land south of Farrier's Way, Warboys is allocated for residential development of approximately 70 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Appropriate vehicular access being made from Farrier's Way to serve the site
- Provision of landscaping on the southern boundary to provide a soft edge to the village and on the western boundary to maintain the character of the sports ground
- Provision of pedestrian and cycle access to the sports ground to the west



#### Development Guidance

The primary vehicle access to the site will need to be provided via an extension of Farrier's Way. An additional pedestrian and cycle access from Bencroft Lane may be possible. Pedestrian access should be provided to the open space south of Farrier's Way and the sports ground to the west, possibly provided together in the northwest corner of the site.

Landscaping along the southern boundary will be required to provide a soft edge to the village and to protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and future residents. Additionally landscaping along the western boundary between the site and the sports ground may need to be enhanced both to maintain the character of the sports ground and to protect the residential amenity of future residents.

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## West of Ramsey Road, Warboys

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) WB 2

#### West of Ramsey Road, Warboys

1.7ha of land West of Ramsey Road, Warboys is allocated for residential development of approximately 45 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Vehicular access being taken from Longlands Close
- Provision of landscaping on the western and northern boundaries to provide a soft edge to the village including retention and appropriate replacement of the mature trees in the boundary hedging
- Provision of high quality development that is complementary to the adjacent conservation area
- Retention of mature trees on the frontage to 21 Ramsey Road
- Retention of trees and open space in the southern part of the site adjacent to The Paddock



#### Development Guidance

The primary vehicle access should be provided via an extension of Longlands Close with pedestrian access through the existing 21 Ramsey Road. Provision of boundary landscaping will be of particular importance on this site to minimise intrusion into the countryside and retain a soft edge to the village. The mature trees within the frontage of 21 Ramsey Road contribute significantly to the character of this road and should be retained to minimise impact on the street scene. Development should be sensitive to the scale of properties to the south of the site and retain trees and open space along the southern boundary to reduce the impact on neighbouring homes.



## Rear of 64 High Street, Warboys

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) WB 3

#### Rear of 64 High Street, Warboys

0.4ha of land south of 64 High Street, Warboys is allocated for residential development of approximately 14 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Appropriate vehicular and pedestrian access being made from Forge Way to serve the site
- Provision of landscaping on the western boundary to ensure adequate residential amenity
- Retention and reinforcement of landscaping on the southern boundary to maintain the character of the sports ground



#### Development Guidance

The access to the site should be provided via an extension of Forge Way.

Provision of high quality development which enhances the character of the adjacent conservation area and listed buildings.

Landscaping along the western boundary will be required to protect the residential amenity of properties and future residents. Additionally landscaping along the southern boundary between the site and the sports ground may be required to protect the residential amenity of future residents.

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## Yaxley

**16.11** Yaxley is situated on the north western edge of the Huntingdonshire Fens approximately 6kms south of Peterborough. The historic core of the village lies along its southern edge, with historic buildings along Main Street and Church Street. Yaxley has expanded considerably through post-war residential and industrial development, with housing estates dominating land to the north and north east of the historic core. It has a supermarket, a range of other shops, a library and good public transport services to Peterborough.



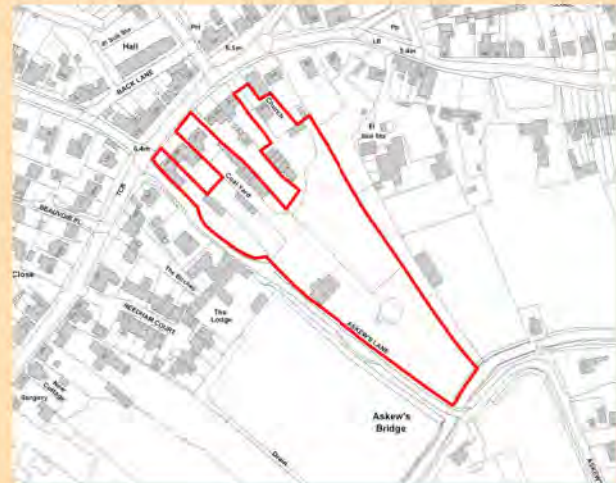
## Askew's Lane, Yaxley

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) YX 1

#### Askews Lane, Yaxley

1.2ha of land at Askew's Lane, Yaxley is considered to be suitable for residential development of approximately 15 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of suitable vehicular access to Askew's Lane or Main Street
- Provision of a Flood risk assessment and drainage strategy in agreement with relevant bodies
- Provision of a 20m wide maintenance access strip to Yards End Dyke



#### Development Guidance

Approximately half the site is previously developed, now vacant, and covered with hardstanding which reduces the impact of redevelopment on potential run-off rates. There may be the possibility of contamination on part of the site associated with its previous use as a coal yard which should be investigated and appropriate remediation conducted as part of any development proposals.

Askew's Lane is extremely narrow, and may not be suitable for upgrading sufficiently to serve in depth development, however access could potentially be provided from Main Street following demolition of existing home(s) within the site area.

Redevelopment would have a limited visual impact on the surrounding area as the site is well screened by vegetation, which is worthy of retention, however the need to obtain safe access arrangements may necessitate the loss of some of the trees/ hedges.

This is a sustainable site in a Key Service Centre and has potential to provide an attractive residential environment appropriate to its setting on the edge of a conservation area, although it is constrained by the problems of achieving safe access.



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## Land including Snowcap Mushrooms, Mere View, Yaxley

### Proposed Allocation (Housing) YX 2

#### Land including former Snowcap Mushrooms, Yaxley

2.3ha of land including the former Snowcap Mushroom Site, Mere View, Yaxley is allocated for residential development of approximately 60 homes. Successful development of the site will require:

- A form of development which addresses the adjacent steelworks and proximity of the site to the railway line to ensure adequate amenity for future residents. This may be achieved through providing landscaping, separation and noise attenuation measures.



#### Development Guidance

This brownfield site is currently in employment use, so redevelopment would potentially lead to a loss of jobs in this part of Yaxley and justification would be required for any such loss. However, redevelopment may offer the opportunity to improve the amenity of the existing neighbouring residents and the appearance of this area.

The site is mainly covered with hardstanding which reduces the impact of redevelopment on potential run-off rates for surface water. There are changes in levels throughout the site. There may be potential for contamination given the previous uses on the site which should be investigated and appropriate remediation conducted as part of any development proposals.

The current access road in the south east from Willow Road, a small loop road from Mere View, is in poor condition and is privately maintained. There is also a sloping access between existing residential properties from Broadway in the north into the mushroom factory. These accesses would require upgrading to achieve satisfactory access to potential residential development.

The site is in multiple ownership but would need to be redeveloped comprehensively due to the nature of uses in the vicinity and the impact on the living environment of future occupiers. In order to achieve an appropriate level of separation from the adjacent steelworks and railway line and the possible accompanying noise pollution, development may only be suitable in the south western part of the site.

The site lies within the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting Area so the impact of development on the surrounding landscape will need to be carefully considered, with particular consideration given to long distance views from and to the south.



## Yax Pax, Yaxley

### Proposed Allocation (Employment) YX 3

#### Yax Pax, Yaxley

3.2ha at Yax Pax, Broadway, Yaxley is considered to be suitable for employment development to comprise business (class B1) or general industrial (class B2) uses. Successful development of the site will require:

- Provision of a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy, to be produced in agreement with relevant bodies



#### Development Guidance

The water level/flood risk management system downstream of the site is sensitive to increased surface water/treated effluent discharges and there has been flooding in the area consequently the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) will not accept additional water to enter their managed system. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will therefore be required that satisfies the MLC.

The site lies within the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting Area and so the impact of development on the surrounding landscape will need to be carefully considered, with particular consideration given to long distance views from and to the south.

## Appendix A: Monitoring

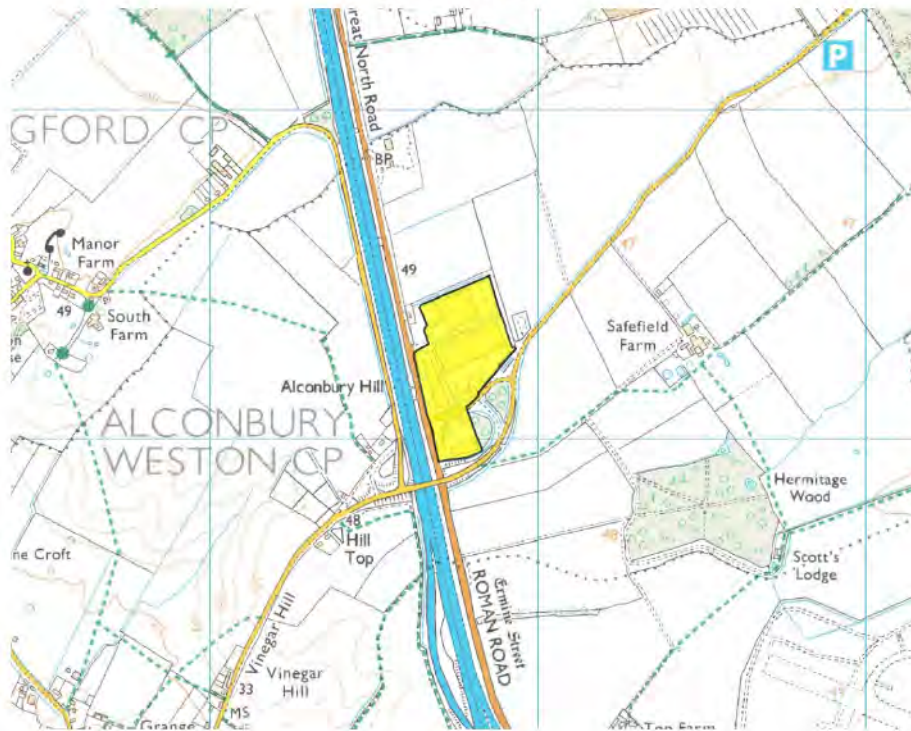
- A.1** The Local Plan covers the period to 2036, however it is likely to be subject to revision before that date in order to respond to changing local circumstances and/or changes in national policy.
- A.2** The Council will monitor the supply of land and implementation and effectiveness of policies through its Annual Monitoring Report, to be published in December each year. The report will contain appropriate indicators and targets to measure the performance of policies in the Local Plan. This will contain an updated housing trajectory reflecting annual completions and commitments as well as anticipated housing delivery rates to the end of the plan period. Should there be a major shortfall or other problem with land supply, or if other targets are not being met, this may indicate a need to review or partially review the Local Plan.
- A.3** In addition to the Annual Monitoring Report, individual monitoring reports on key issues, such as housing, employment and retail, will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after data becomes available.



## Appendix B: Established Employment Areas

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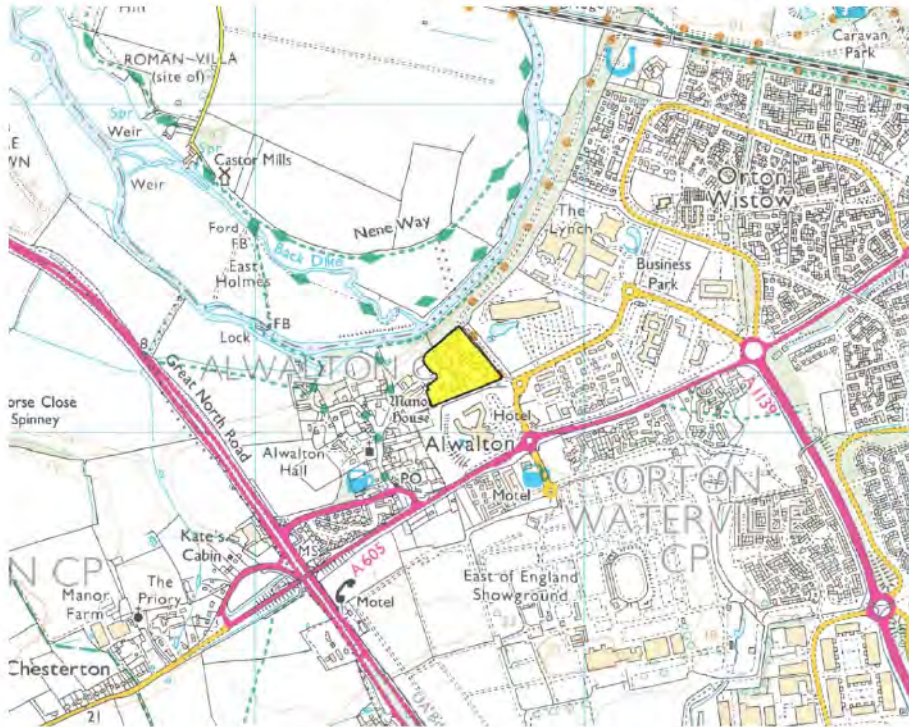
**Map 1 Established Employment Area: Crossways Distribution Centre, Alconbury Hill**



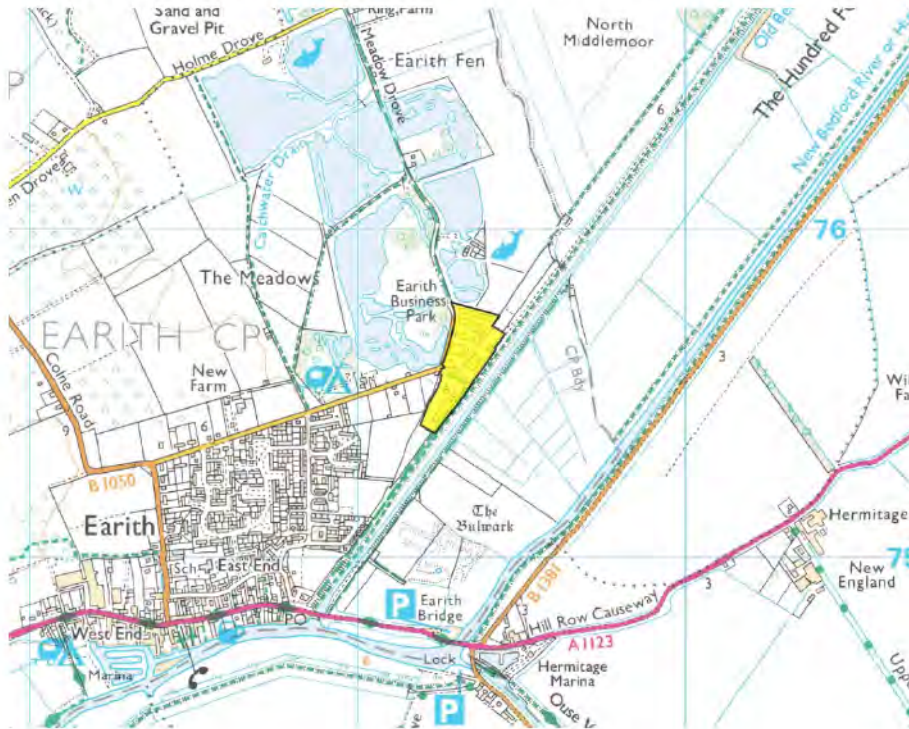
# Appendix B: Established Employment Areas

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**Map 2 Established Employment Area: Minerva Business Park, Alwalton**



**Map 3 Established Employment Area: Earith Business Park, Earith**

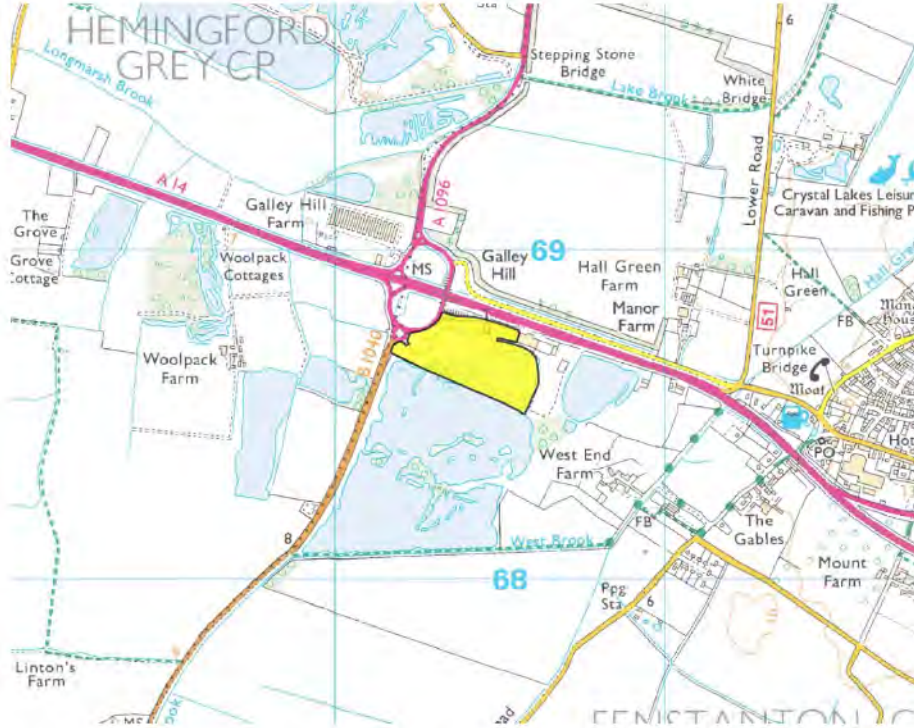




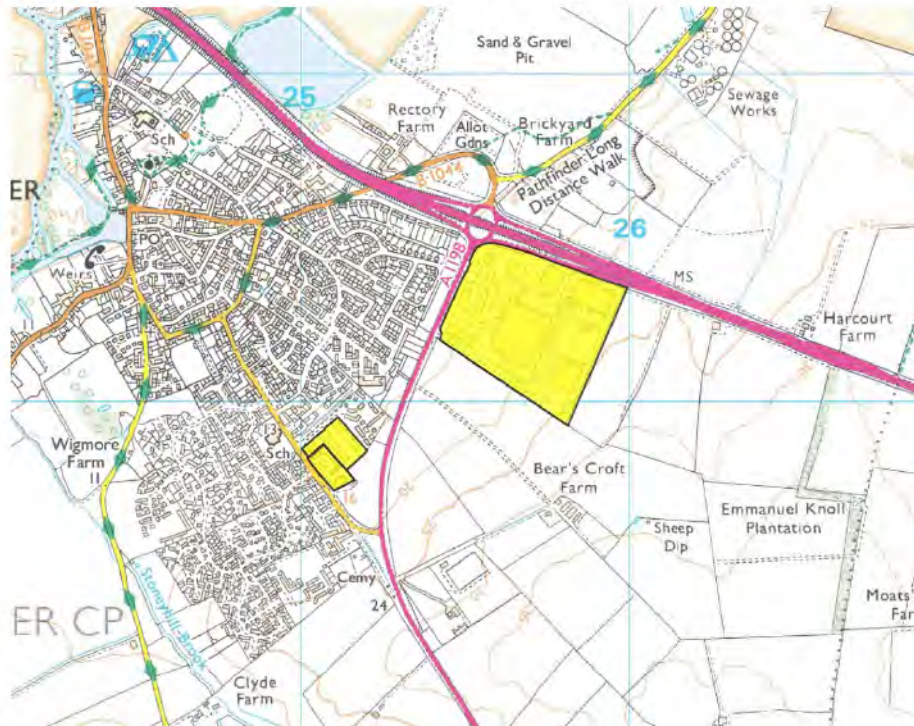
# Established Employment Areas Appendix B:

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**Map 4 Established Employment Area: Lakeside Technology Park, Fenstanton**



**Map 5 Established Employment Areas: Cardinal Park and The Chord Business Centre/ Roman Way Small Business Centre, Godmanchester**

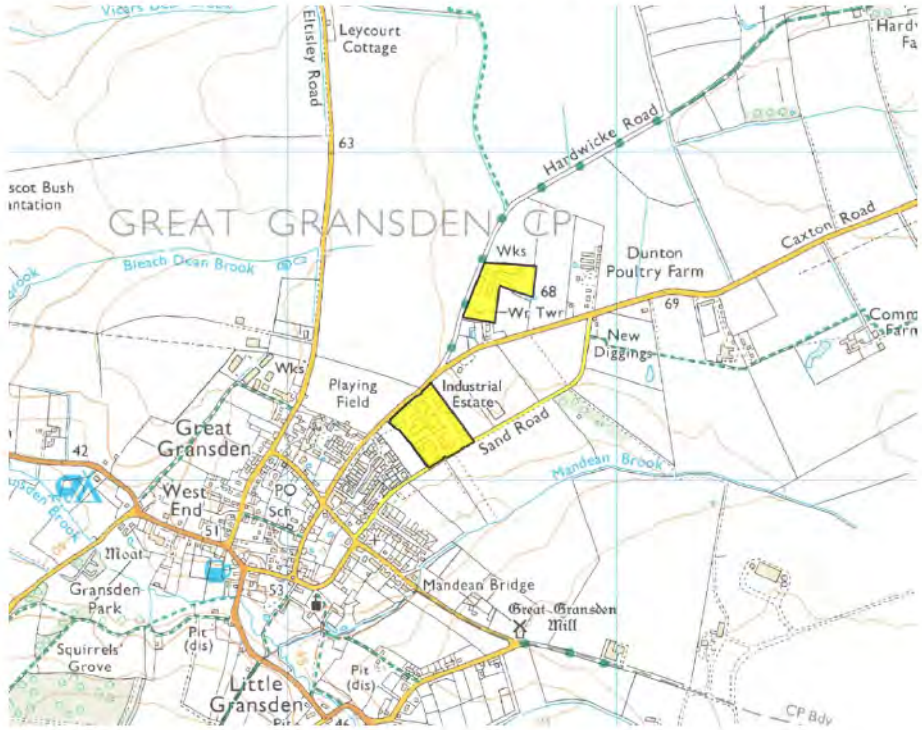




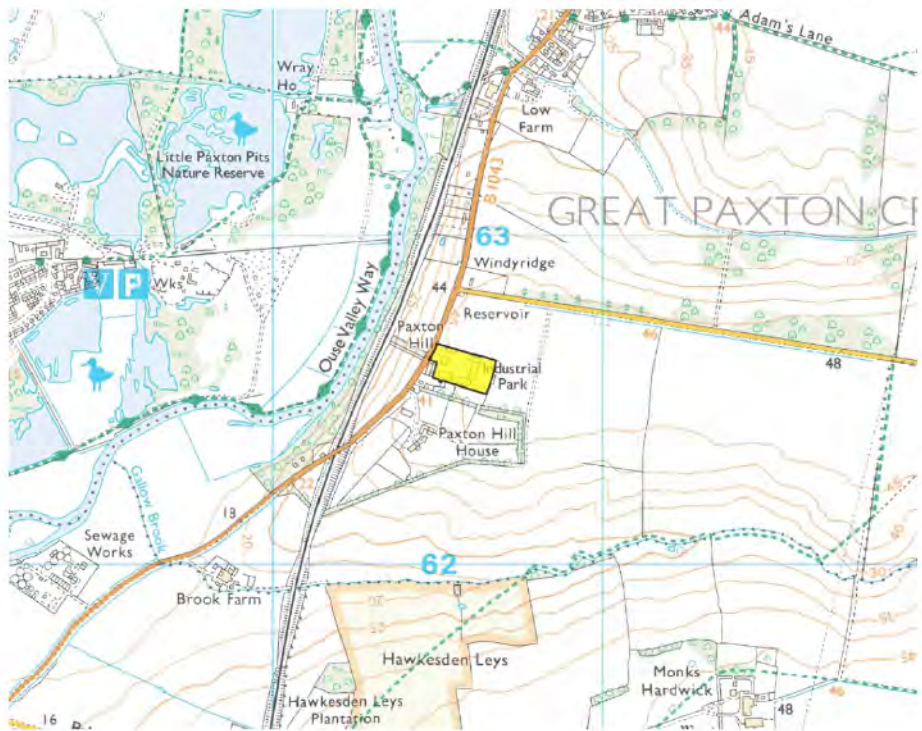
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**Map 6 Established Employment Areas: Sand Road Industrial Estate and Hardwicke Road Industrial Estate, Great Gransden**



**Map 7 Established Employment Areas: Harley Industrial Park, Great Paxton**

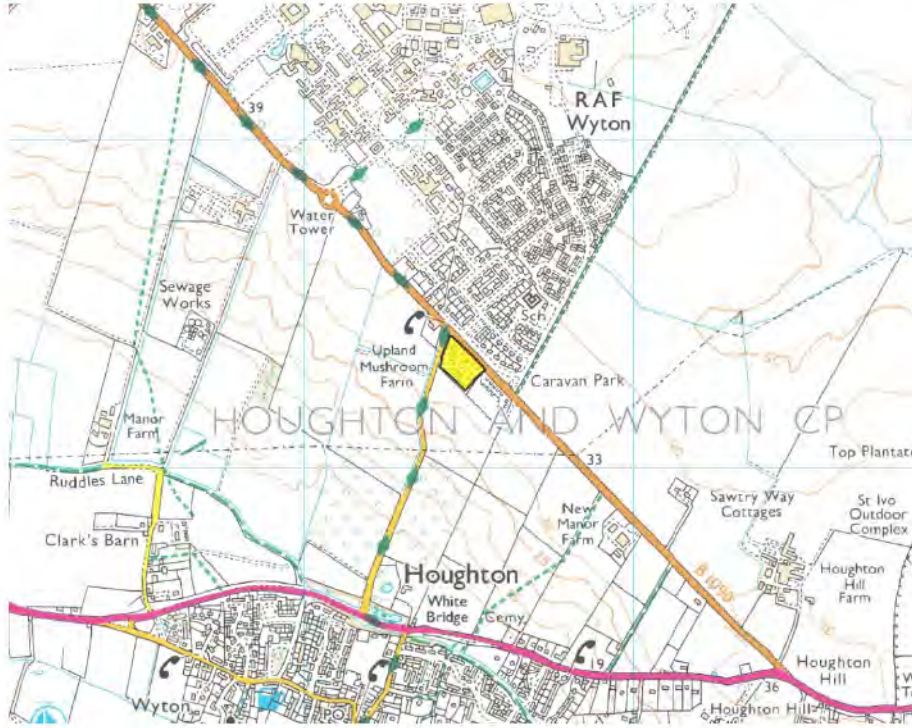




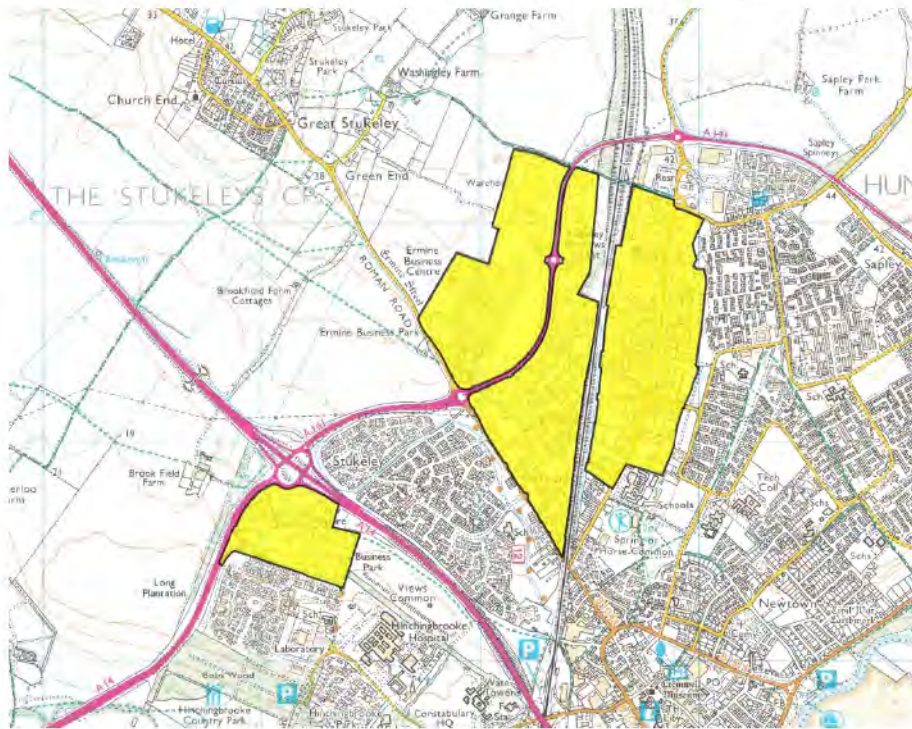
# Established Employment Areas Appendix B:

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**Map 8 Established Employment Areas: Upland Estate, Houghton and Wyton**



**Map 9 Established Employment Areas: Ermine Business Park, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, St Peter's Road Industrial Area and Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate, Huntingdon**

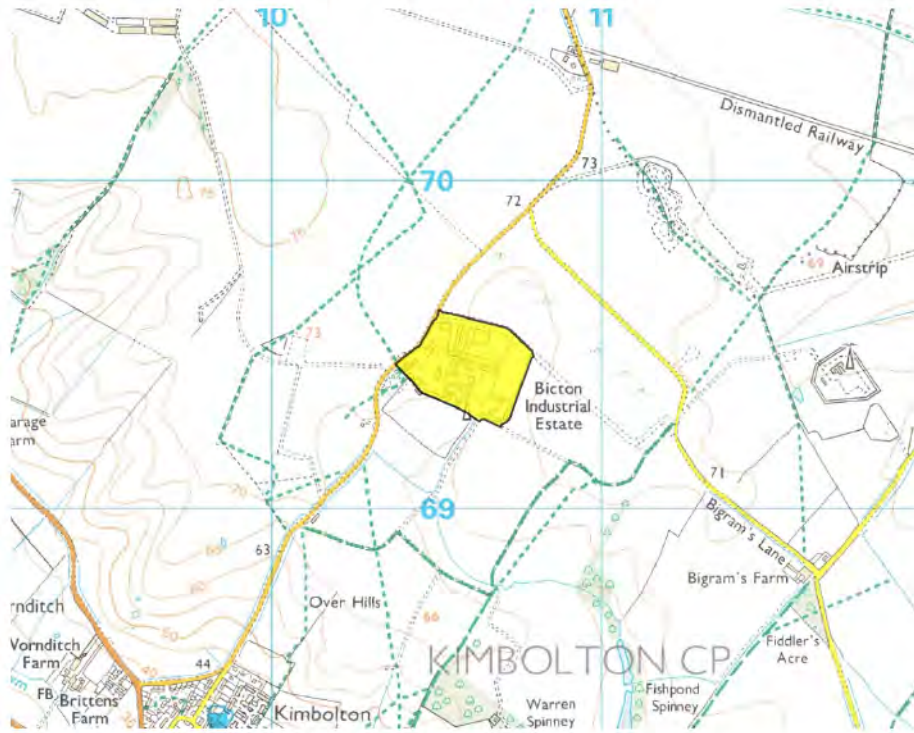




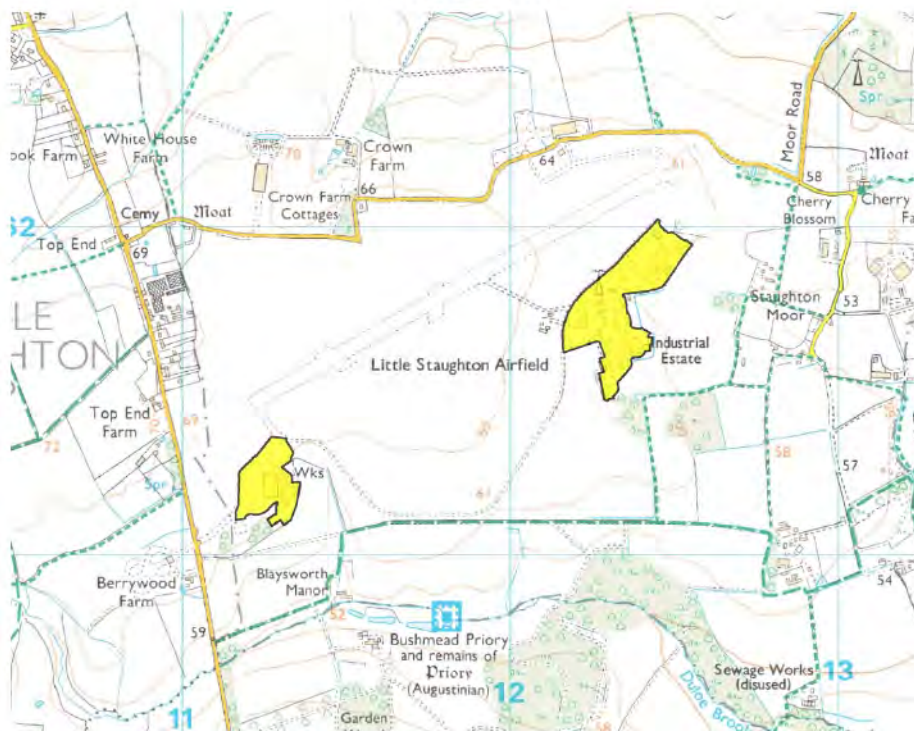
# Appendix B: Established Employment Areas

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**Map 10 Established Employment Areas: Bicton Industrial Park/ Harvard Industrial Estate, Kimbolton**



**Map 11 Established Employment Areas: The Airfield Industrial Estate, Little Staughton**

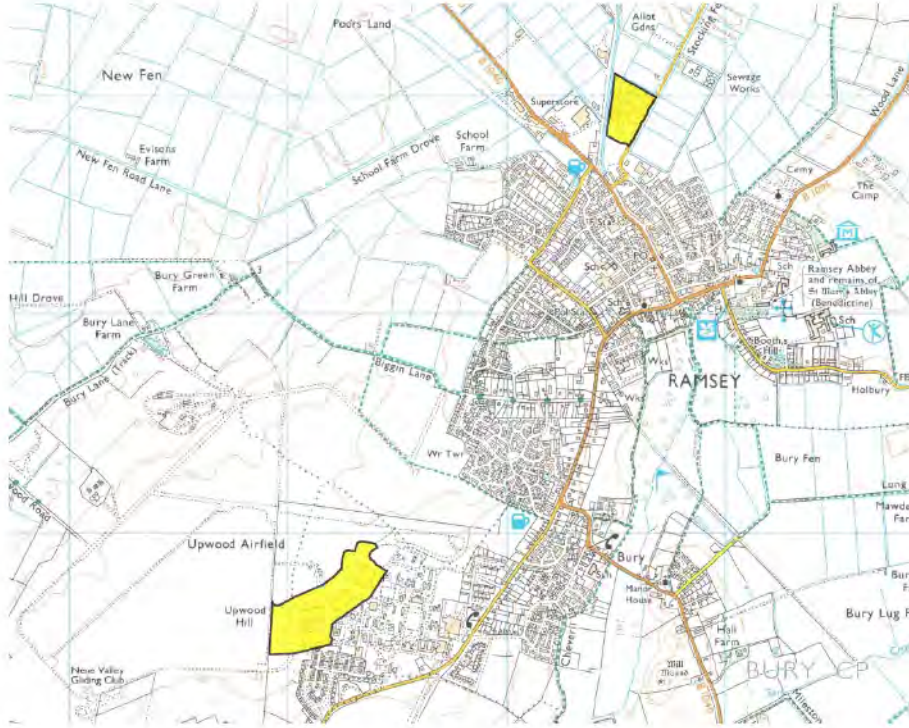




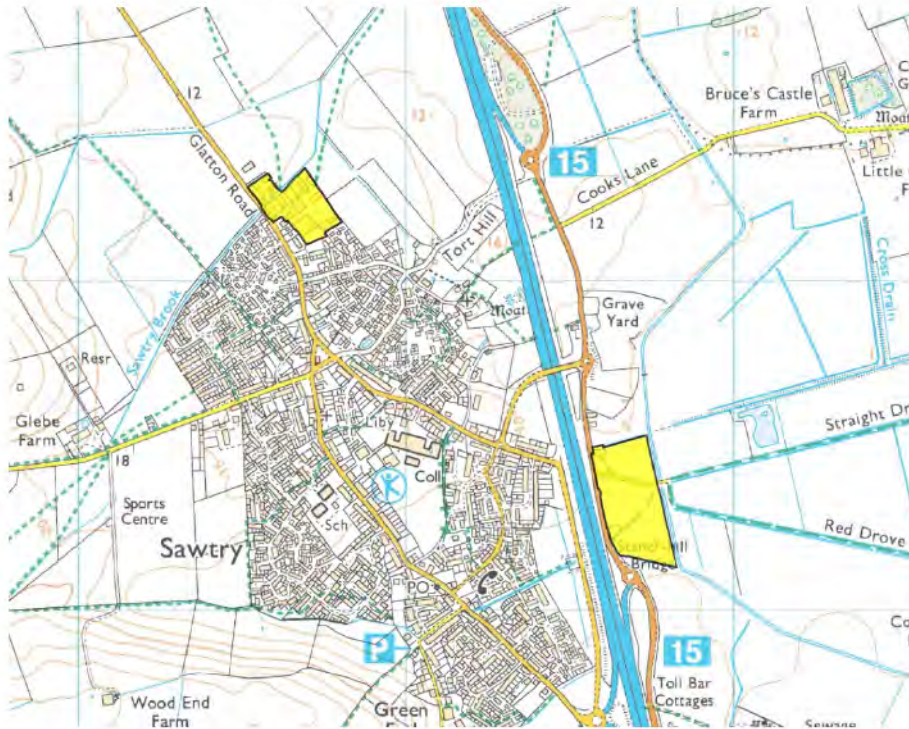
# Established Employment Areas Appendix B:

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**Map 12 Established Employment Areas: Highlode Industrial Estate and Upwood Air Park, Ramsey**



**Map 13 Established Employment Areas: Brookside Industrial Estate and Old North Road Employment Area, Sawtry**

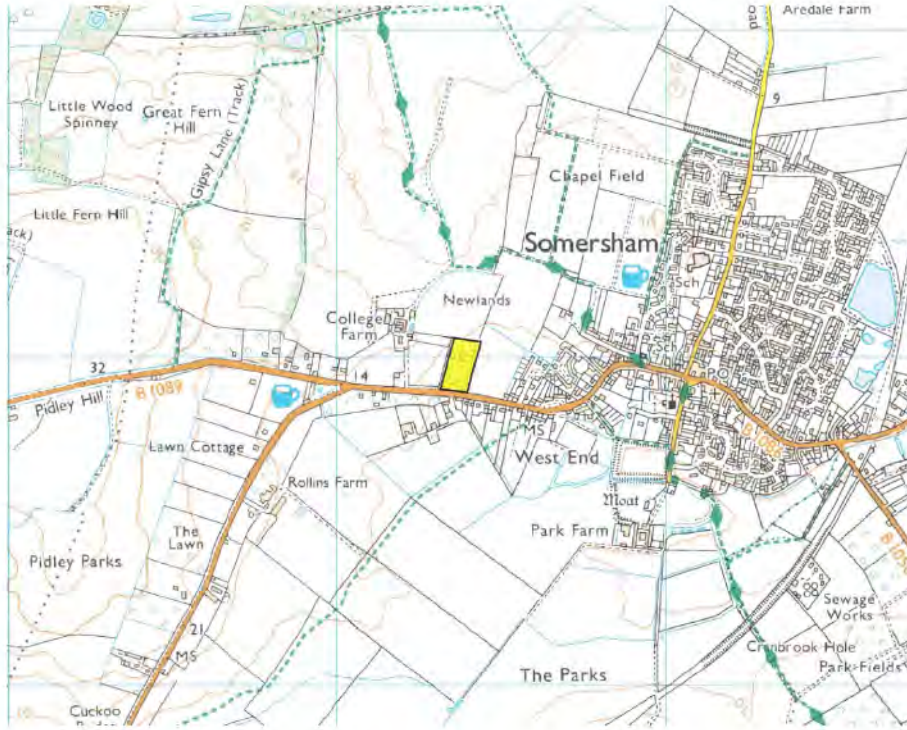




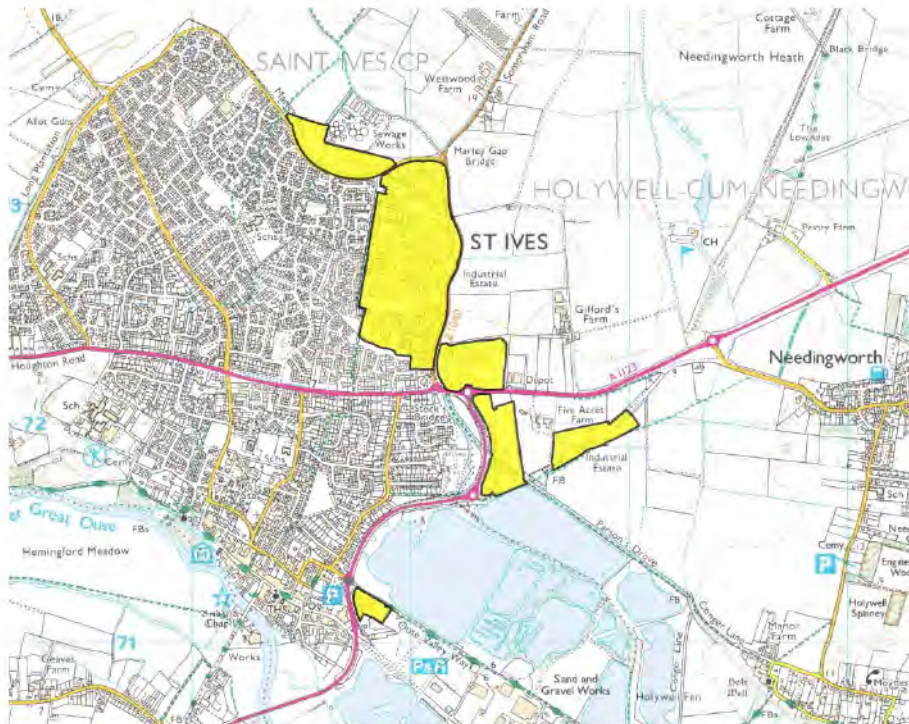
# Appendix B: Established Employment Areas

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**Map 14 Established Employment Areas: West Newlands Industrial Estate, Somersham**



**Map 15 Established Employment Areas: Needingworth Industrial Estate, Needingworth and The Meadow Lane Business Park, The Marley Road Industrial Area, The Parsons Green Business Park, the Somersham Road Industrial Area, and the Compass Point Business Park St Ives**

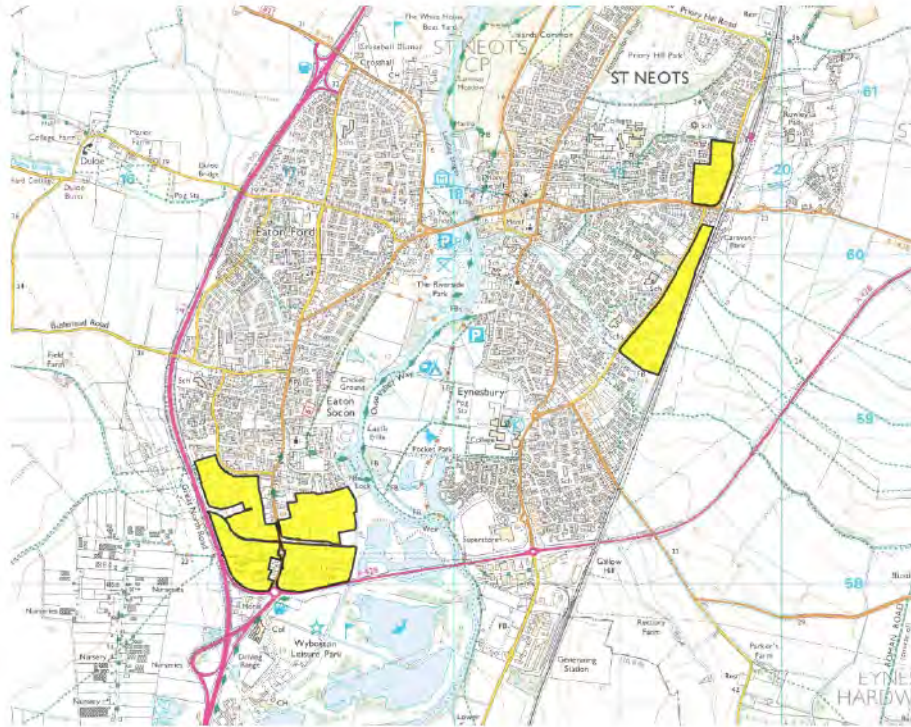




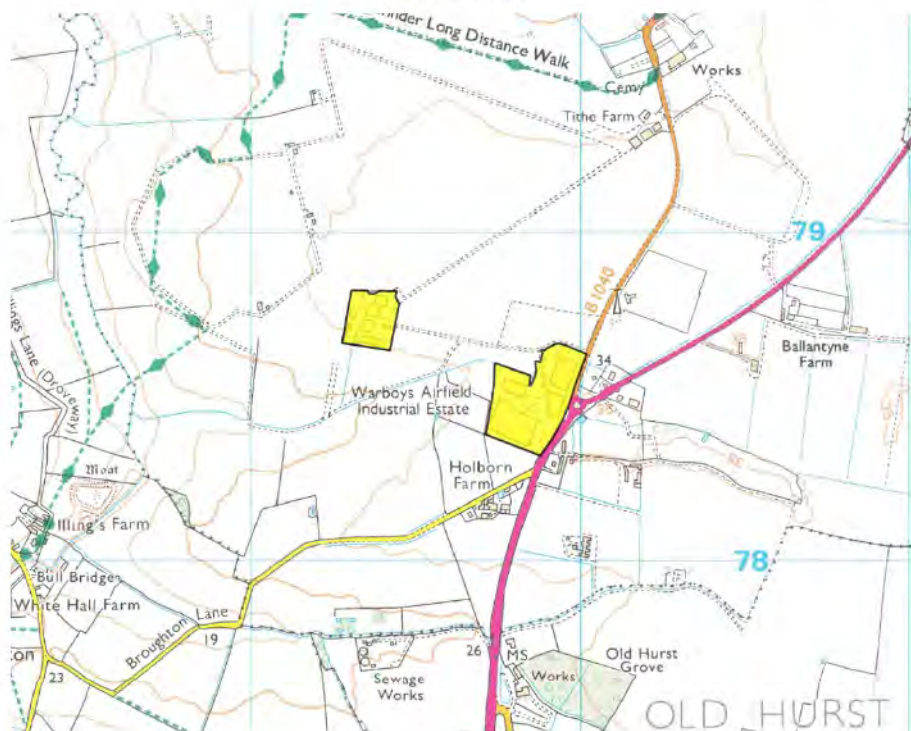
# Established Employment Areas Appendix B:

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

**Map 16 Established Employment Areas: Station Road Industrial Area, Cromwell Road Industrial Estate, Colm Business Park, Howard Road Industrial Estate, Little End Road Industrial Estate and Alpha Drive Business Park, St Neots**



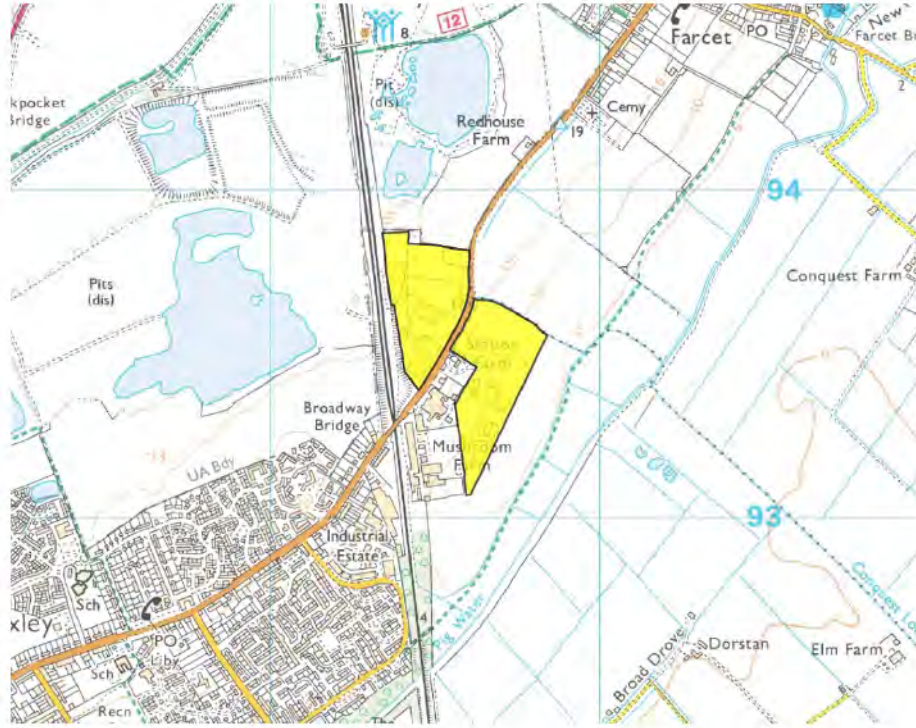
**Map 17 Established Employment Areas: Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate, Warboys**



# Appendix B: Established Employment Areas

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

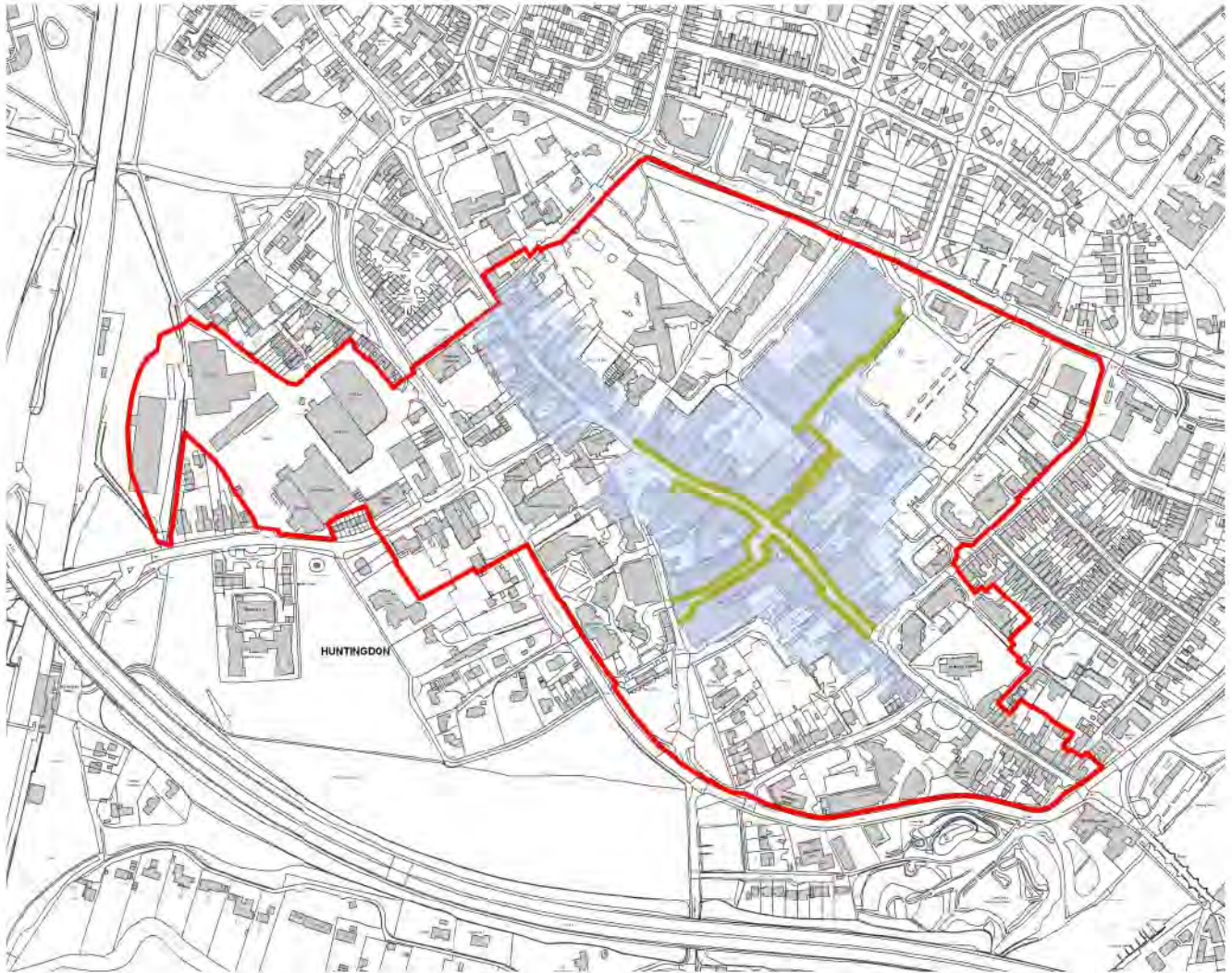
**Map 18 Established Employment Areas: Broadway Business Park and The Eagle Business Park, Yaxley**





## Appendix C: Town Centre Designations

Map 19 Huntingdon Town Centre Designations



Key

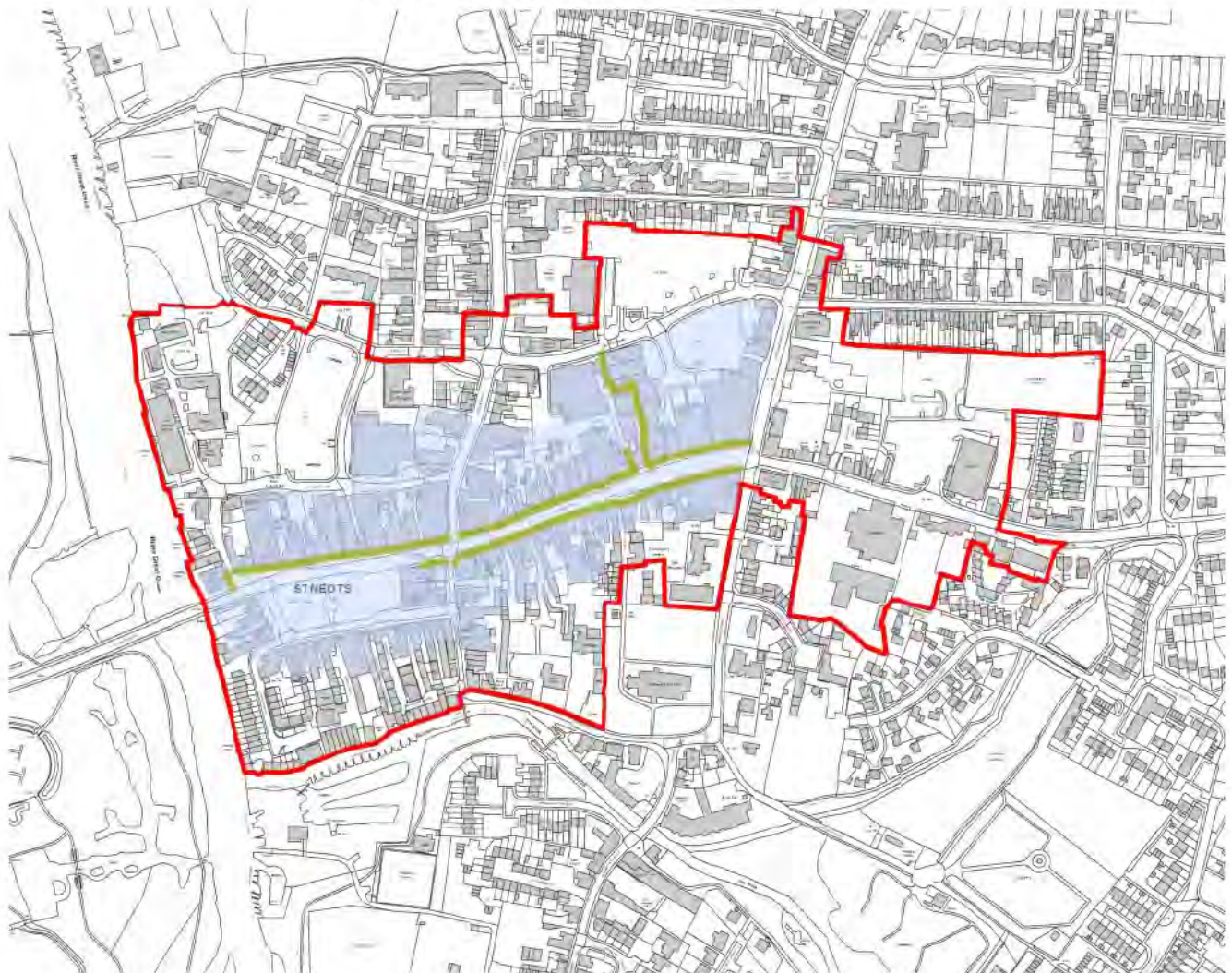
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Primary Shopping Area
-  Primary Shopping Frontage



# Appendix C: Town Centre Designations

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

Map 20 St Neots Town Centre Designations



Key

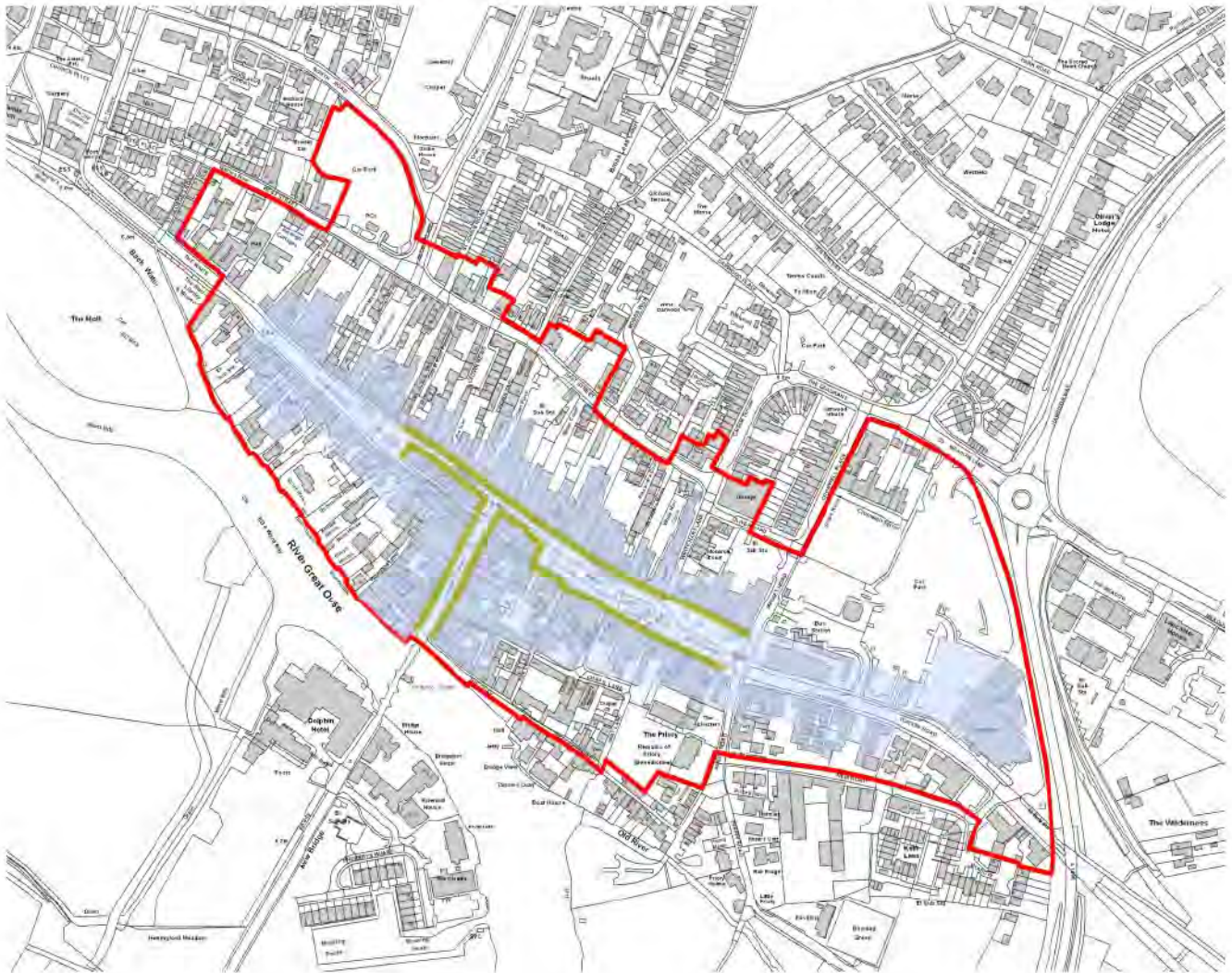
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Primary Shopping Area
-  Primary Shopping Frontage



# Town Centre Designations Appendix C:

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

### Map 21 St Ives Town Centre Designations



#### Key

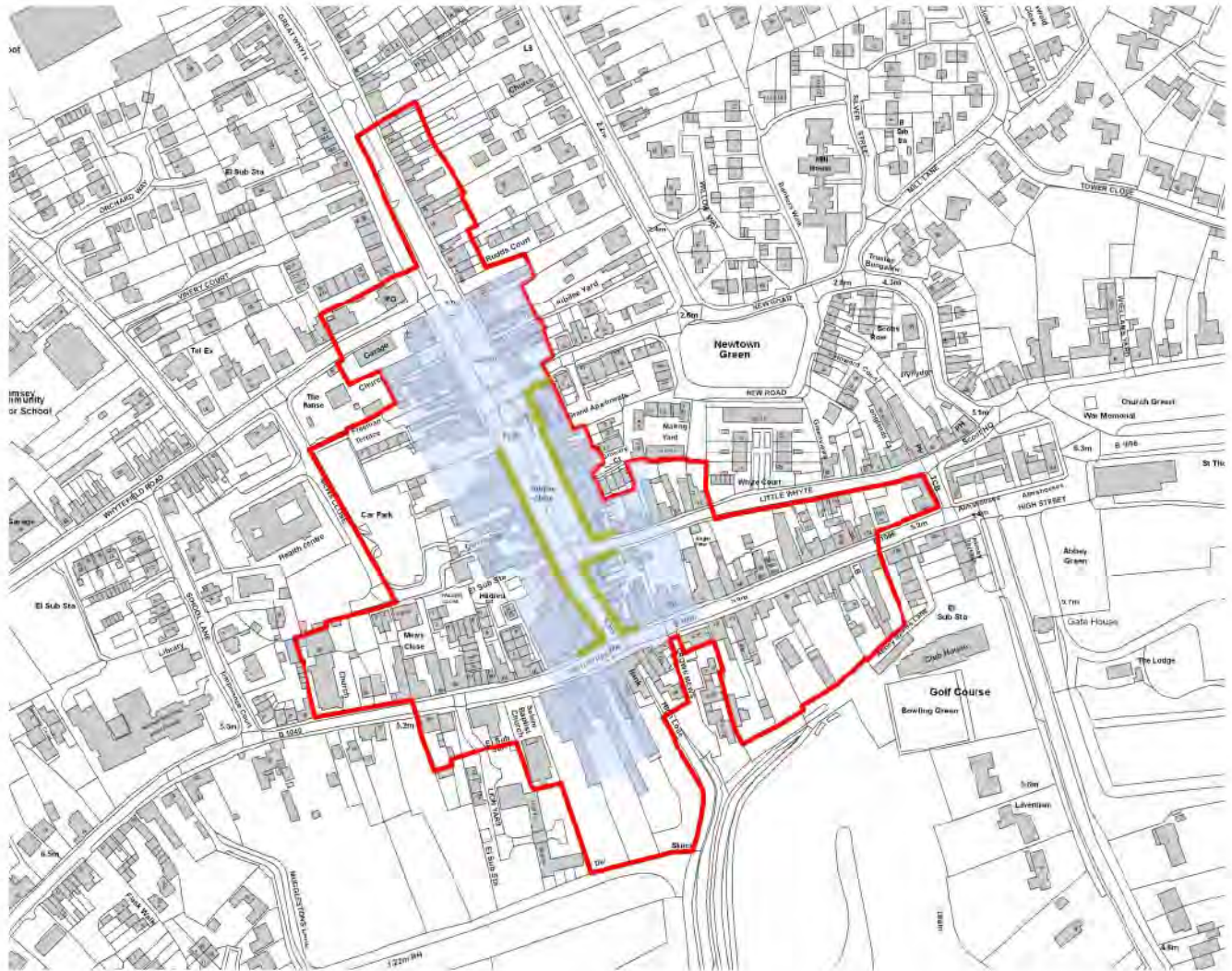
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Primary Shopping Area
-  Primary Shopping Frontage



# Appendix C: Town Centre Designations

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Huntingdonshire's Draft Local Plan to 2036: Stage 3

Map 22 Ramsey Town Centre Designations



**Key**

-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Primary Shopping Area
-  Primary Shopping Frontage



## Glossary

### Affordable housing

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private *registered providers* (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private *registered providers* of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.

Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as "low cost market" housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

### Aged or veteran tree

A tree which, because of its great age, size or condition is of exceptional value for wildlife, in the landscape, or culturally.

### Air Quality Management Areas

Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines. Information regarding the air quality management areas in Huntingdonshire can be found on the Council's [website](#).

### Allowable Solutions

Allowable Solutions are a wide range of carbon-saving measures that are available to developers to allow them, in addition to on-site building performance target to meet the Zero Carbon Housing policy of all housing achieving effectively zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from regulated energy use such as energy used for space heating and cooling, hot water, fixed lighting and ventilation, from 2016.

### Amenity

A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

### Ancient woodland

An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD.

### Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Document produced each year to report on progress in producing the *Local Development Framework* and implementing its policies.

### Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a *heritage asset* if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. *Heritage assets* with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

### Best and most versatile agricultural land

Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

### Birds and Habitats Directives

European Directives to conserve natural *habitats* and wild fauna and flora.

### Brownfield

See *previously developed land* (PDL)

**Built-up area**

The built-up *area* is defined for each settlement as the main group of existing non-agricultural buildings of a permanent nature and their immediate surroundings. See The Built-up area for the full definition.

**Climate change adaptation**

Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

**Climate change mitigation**

Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**Community Infrastructure Levy**

A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. Arrangements for the Community Infrastructure Levy for Huntingdonshire are set out in the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

**Community Right to Build Order**

An Order made by the *local planning authority* (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

**Comparison shopping**

Comparison shopping is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

**Conservation (for heritage policy)**

The process of maintaining and managing change to a *heritage asset* in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its *significance*.

**Conservation Area**

A designated area of special architectural and/or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is a recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole.

**Convenience shopping**

Convenience shopping is the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.

**Curtilage**

The area occupied by a property and land closely associated with that property. In terms of a house and garden, the garden normally forms the curtilage of the property, but fields and paddocks would be outside the curtilage.

**Decentralised energy**

Local *renewable and local low-carbon energy* usually but not always on a relatively small scale encompassing a diverse range of technologies.

**Development plan**

This includes adopted Local Plans and *neighbourhood development plans*, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Edge of centre**

For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the *primary shopping area*. For all other *main town centre uses*, a location within 300 metres of a *town centre* boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the *town centre* but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

**Environmental Impact Assessment**

A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

**European site**

This includes candidate *Special Areas of Conservation*, Sites of Community Importance, *Special Areas of Conservation* and *Special Protection Areas*, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.



**Green infrastructure**

A network of multi-functional *green space*, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Green spaces**

Publicly accessible spaces, including local parks, sports grounds, cemeteries, school grounds, allotments, commons and historic parks and gardens.

**Habitat**

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

**Heritage asset**

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of *significance* meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets (world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, protected wreck sites, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or conservation areas) and assets identified by the *local planning authority* (including local listing).

**Infrastructure**

A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity**

All international sites (*Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites*), national sites (*Sites of Special Scientific Interest*) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

**Landscape Character Assessment**

An assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

**Listed building curtilage**

Listed building curtilage is a legal term describing an area around a building, the boundary of which is defined by matters including past and present ownership and functional association and interdependency. The *setting of a heritage asset* will normally include, but generally be more extensive than, its curtilage.

**Local planning authority**

The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority apply to the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority and the Greater London Authority, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

**Main town centre uses**

Retail development (including retail warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities, the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

**Major development**

Development above a particular scale (10 or more homes for residential development) as defined in the General Development Procedure Order (2006) as amended.

**Mineral Safeguarding Area**

An area designated by Minerals Planning Authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

**Minor scale development**

Development up to a particular scale (10 or more homes for residential development) as defined in the General Development Procedure Order (2006) as amended.

**Mitigation measures**

These are measures requested/ carried out in order to limit the damage by a particular development/ activity.

**Neighbourhood Development Order**

An Order made by a *local planning authority* (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which Parish Councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

## Neighbourhood Development Plans

A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

## Obtrusive light

Light *pollution* that includes the brightening of the night sky (sky glow), uncomfortably bright light (glare) and light spilled beyond the area being lit (light intrusion).

## Older people

People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

## Open space

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual *amenity*.

## Original building

A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

## Out of centre

A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

## Out of town

A location *out of centre* that is outside the existing urban area.

## Planning condition

A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a *Local Development Order* or *Neighbourhood Development Order*.

## Planning obligation

A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

## Playing field

The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

## Pollution

Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general *amenity*. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.

## Previously developed land (PDL)

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the *curtilage* of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the *curtilage* should be developed) and any associated fixed surface *infrastructure*. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in *built-up areas* such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

## Primary shopping area

Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the *primary shopping frontage*).

## Primary and secondary shopping frontage

Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

## Priority habitats and species

Species and habitats of principal importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

## Ramsar sites

Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.



**Registered Providers**

These are independent housing organisations registered with the Housing Corporation under the Housing Act 1996. Most are housing associations, but there are also trusts, co-operatives and companies.

**Renewable and low carbon energy**

Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

**Rural exception schemes/ sites**

Small sites used for *affordable housing* in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of *affordable housing* units without grant funding.

**Setting of a heritage asset**

The surroundings in which a *heritage asset* is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the *significance* of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that *significance* or may be neutral.

**Significance (for heritage policy)**

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be *archaeological*, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a *heritage asset's* physical presence, but also from its setting.

**Special Areas of Conservation**

Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

**Special Protection Areas**

Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest**

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing development in an area, including the identification of specific housing sites with development potential over a 15 year time span.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

A study intended to review the existing housing market in an area, consider the nature of future need for market and *affordable housing* and to inform policy development.

**Submission**

Point at which a draft *development plan* is sent to the Secretary of State for examination.

**Supplementary planning documents**

Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the *development plan*.

**Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)**

Previously known as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, these cover a range of approaches to surface water drainage management including source control measures such as rainwater recycling, infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns, filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed and basins and ponds to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding.

**Sustainable transport modes**

Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

**Town centre**

Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the *primary shopping area* and areas predominantly occupied by *main town centre uses* within or adjacent to the *primary shopping area*. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing *out of centre* developments, comprising or including *main town centre uses*, do not constitute town centres.

**Transport assessment**

A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

**Transport statement**

A simplified version of a *transport assessment* where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full *transport assessment* is not required.

**Travel plan**

A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed.

**Use Classes Order**

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use require planning permission.

**Viability Assessment**

An assessment of viability considering assumed costs that may be incurred and values and income that may be generated (e.g. from completed house sales), which determines the residual land value and compares that value to a viability benchmark agreed by the Council or its nominated representative, namely Existing Use Value or Alternative Use Value plus a reasonable uplift.

**Vitality and Viability**

In terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.

**Windfall sites**

Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

**Zero carbon building**

A building with net carbon emissions of zero over a typical year.



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