

Draft Development Management Policies

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Draft Development Management Policies

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Development Management

What is development management?

Development management is the process that the council uses to determine planning applications. This process used to be called 'Development Control' but the council's policy approach, which has worked successfully since 2007, has been to positively manage development rather simply control it. An initial set of development management policies was prepared and consulted on in 2007, and these have been used in determining planning applications since 2010.

What has changed?

The main change has been the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by the Coalition Government in March 2012. This replaces and streamlines an extensive set of previous detailed national planning policy. The draft development management policies in this document are designed to conform to the NPPF to ensure that the council is in a position to deliver sustainable development. Most of the draft policies in this document are evolutions of the current policies. In addition, there are some new policies that cover other relevant planning topics, including localism, and topics where previous detailed national policy has been replaced by the NPPF.

What is the status of this document?

This is a consultation document containing initial draft policies. It has been issued as part of the process for preparing a new Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The adopted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2009 will remain as the formal development plan until it is replaced by the new Local Plan. It is envisaged that this will happen in late 2014.

What do the draft development management policies cover?

The draft development management policies in this document cover the detailed issues that applicants for planning permission need to take into account to ensure that their planning application meets the council's requirements. In preparing the Local Plan, the council needs to make sure that its development management policies address the policy themes in the NPPF and appropriately cover the detail that was previously included in Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and other national planning policy documents.

What do we want to achieve?

The council wants to hear what people think of the draft development management policies in this document – whether they seem to be right, whether anything should be changed, and whether anything is missing. Comments are welcome from everyone who uses or has an interest in planning and sustainable development in Huntingdonshire – including individuals, local communities, developers, businesses, and statutory agencies and organisations that have particular project and policy delivery responsibilities.

What is the purpose of the draft policies?

The purpose of these draft policies is to:

- Promote discussion on development management issues in Huntingdonshire
- Seek comment on the suggested policy approaches
- Identify additional issues that might benefit from policy guidance

How is the document set out?

The document covers a series of planning policy and sustainable development topics in Huntingdonshire. The format for each topic includes a brief contextual explanation and a description of the purpose of each draft policy, followed by the draft policy and an explanation of the reasoning behind each policy. Although the policies are presented as they might appear in the finalised Local Plan this is only done to give a clear idea of how they would

work and is not the final version. It should be stressed that any of the draft policies may be changed or new ones introduced in the course of preparing the Local Plan and the council accepts no responsibility for third party decisions based on the information in this consultation document. Links to supporting material are contained within the text or as footnotes.

Sustainability Appraisal

The draft policies in this document largely evolve from those contained in the existing 'Development Management Development Planning Document (Proposed Submission)'. This was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, and further Sustainability Appraisal work will be carried out as part of the preparation of the next stage of consultation on a draft Local Plan (in 2013).

Building a strong, competitive economy

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.

Safeguarding local employment opportunities

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 1

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard existing established employment areas across the district. These areas are often subject to pressure from the promoters of other higher value uses such as new housing development. The council needs to balance the provision of employment across the district against other development pressures. Under this policy, developers would need to provide a full justification for promoting anything other than new and improved employment uses on the identified areas.

Draft Policy DM 1

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 sustainable development proposal for office and light industrial uses will be acceptable subject to environmental and travel considerations, and other industrial, warehousing, storage and distribution will also be acceptable subject to the same considerations, with a larger scale proposal being appropriate only where there are good transport networks.

Within Established Employment Areas a sustainable development proposal for use falling outside the defined 'B' use classes will be treated on its merits having regard to the sustainability of the proposal including:

- a. the scale of development in relation to the Established Employment Area and how the proposal affects the continuing viability of the Established Employment Area as a sustainable location for employment uses;
- b. the range and availability of land and buildings nearby for employment uses, considering existing and potential market demand; and
- c. the extent to which an alternative use or mix of uses can be demonstrated to give greater benefits to the community than the site in its current or most recent use.

Reasoning

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.

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.

Options

Areas that could be considered to be Established Employment Areas will be assessed as part of the plan production process and designated sites will be identified on the Local Plan proposals map when it is prepared. The starting point for considering areas to designate will be the areas identified in the Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010 which are included in 'Maps' and listed below. Most of these areas currently contain a range of business premises, but some have only a limited amount of infrastructure in place to support future development.

Is the list of established employment areas complete and are the boundaries correctly identified?

- Alconbury Hill - Crossways Distribution Centre
- Alwalton - Minerva Business Park
- Earith - Earith Business Park
- Fenstanton - Lakeside Technology Park
- Great Gransden - Sand Road Industrial Estate
- Great Gransden - Hardwicke Road Industrial Estate
- Great Paxton - Harley Industrial Park
- Huntingdon SPA - Cardinal Park, Godmanchester
- Huntingdon SPA - The Chord Business Park, Godmanchester
- Huntingdon SPA - Ermine Business Park
- Huntingdon SPA - Hinchingsbrooke Business Park
- Huntingdon SPA - St Peter's Road Industrial Area
- Huntingdon SPA - Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate
- Kimbolton - Bicton Industrial Park / Harvard Industrial Estate
- Little Staughton - The Airfield Industrial Estate
- Needingworth - Needingworth Industrial Estate
- Ramsey SPA - Highlode Industrial Estate
- Ramsey SPA - Upwood Air Park
- Sawtry - Brookside Industrial Estate
- Somersham - West Newlands Industrial Estate
- St Ives SPA - Meadow Lane Business Park
- St Ives SPA - Marley Road Industrial Area
- St Ives SPA - Parsons Green Business Park
- St Ives SPA - Somersham Road Industrial Area
- Wyton-on-the-Hill - Upland Estate
- St Neots SPA - Station Road Industrial Area
- St Neots SPA - Cromwell Road Industrial Estate
- St Neots SPA - Colmworth Business Park
- St Neots SPA - Howard Road Industrial Estate
- St Neots SPA - Little End Industrial Estate
- St Neots SPA - Alpha Drive Business Park
- Warboys - Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate
- Yaxley - Broadway Business Park
- Yaxley - The Eagle Business Park

The draft 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.

How could the role of such sites be recognised in the policy?

Building a strong, competitive economy

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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.

Does the draft policy get the balance right?

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

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.

Ensuring town centre vitality and viability

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 2

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

Draft Policy DM 2

Primary shopping frontages

Within *primary shopping frontages* a sustainable development proposal for new shopping or non-A1 uses will be acceptable where it will:

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

Primary shopping areas

Within the *primary shopping area* a sustainable development proposal that significantly contributes to the promotion of the area's economy will be acceptable where it contributes to the *vitality and viability* of the area.

Within the *primary shopping area* of Ramsey a sustainable development proposal involving the loss of a ground floor *town centre* use will be acceptable only where the applicant provides evidence that reasonable steps have been taken to market the property for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its *town centre* use.

Town centres

Within the *town centres* of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey a sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where it maintains and enhances the:

- a. *vitality and viability* of the area;
- b. existing distribution of retail, office, leisure, entertainment, arts, cultural facility or tourist attractions;
- c. range and quality of local facilities; and
- d. character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reasoning

Primary shopping frontages, where the towns' retail offer is focused, and *primary shopping areas*, which incorporate a range of retail and service uses, will be identified for the *town centres* of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

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Town centre uses include retailing, leisure, entertainment, office, cultural and tourist facilities and hotels, all of which are typified by potential users benefiting from good accessibility by a choice of means of transport. *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. Defining the town centres indicates that a range of new town centre uses may be possible to enhance the area.

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. *Primary shopping areas* cover a wider area incorporating a greater diversity of uses. These include ideal 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.

Ramsey serves as an important social, economic and community focal point for a wide catchment area and regeneration initiatives are working to boost its sustainability. Ramsey's *primary shopping area* is very compact and it has a range of commercial premises which contribute to its *vitality and viability* as a town centre. Particular measures are necessary to ensure that town centre uses are not lost unnecessarily.

A development proposal for retail and other town centre uses in a key service centre or small settlement will be considered under the 'Protecting Local Services and Facilities' draft policy DM 16.

Options

Areas that could be identified as Primary Shopping Frontages, Primary Shopping Areas and Town Centres will be assessed as part of the plan production process and designated sites will be identified on the Local Plan proposals map. The starting point for considering areas and frontages to designate will be those identified in 'Maps' in Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey.

Are the areas correctly identified or should the boundaries be amended?

Town centres are not the only places that act as a focus for service and facilities. Concentrations of shops and other services outside of town centres could be identified as local centres.

Should local centres be identified in the Local Plan and if so where should be defined as a local centre?

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

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.

Farm diversification

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 3

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria that the council expects to be met when farmers propose to diversify the activities on their land or buildings.

Draft Policy DM 3

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

- a. be complementary and appropriately subsidiary to the ongoing agricultural operations of the farm business;
- b. reuse or redevelop 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;
- c. not have a detrimental impact on any area of identified nature conservation importance;
- d. involve poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality
- e. ensure that the type and volume of traffic generated can be sustainably accommodated within the local highway network

Reasoning

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. 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. 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.

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.

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.

Water related tourism, sport and leisure development

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 4

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria that the council expects to be met when developers propose to use rivers, canals and lakes in the district for tourism, sport and leisure purposes.

Draft Policy DM 4

A sustainable development proposal for water related tourism, sport and leisure will be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. it will not impede navigation or lead to hazardous boat movements;
- b. it will not overload the capacity of the watercourse or water body;
- c. safe physical access to the site can be achieved;
- d. local water quality and quantity will not be adversely affected;
- e. biodiversity of the affected area of water and its margins will be maintained or enhanced; and
- f. it will not cause an adverse impact on its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape.

Reasoning

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.

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.

Boatyards and marinas are located across Huntingdonshire and they make a valuable contribution to the local economy in some locations. 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 'Residential moorings' draft policy DM 11.

Promoting sustainable transport

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. The council will therefore give support to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion but will also support patterns of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.

Sustainable travel

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 5

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.

Draft Policy DM 5

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where it is demonstrated that:

- a. opportunities are maximised for the use of sustainable travel modes;
- b. traffic volumes will not exceed the capacity of the local or strategic transport network, nor cause significant harm to the character of the surrounding area;
- c. the effect 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 will be required. A Travel Plan will also be required for larger developments as part of a Transport Assessment. The requirement for these should be agreed with the council prior to the submission of a planning application.

Reasoning

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.

Development proposals should also provide opportunities for people to use public transport both for local journeys, and to access the wider public transport network. Such provision will also have a significant effect on the choice of mode.

Promoting sustainable transport

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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.

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](#).

Parking provision

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 6

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.

Draft Policy DM 6

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where its design incorporates appropriate vehicle and cycle parking with a clear justification for the level of provision proposed, having consideration for the current and proposed availability of alternative transport modes, highway safety, servicing requirements, the needs of potential users and the *amenity* of occupiers of nearby properties. Reference should be made to the [Cambridgeshire Design Guide](#) or successor documents for advice on levels of provision in residential schemes and to the [Lifetime Homes standard](#) for parking space size requirements.

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 people with impaired mobility as set out in national guidance⁽¹⁾ will be required.

Reasoning

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 appropriate car and cycle parking provision, 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. Well designed and landscaped development will reduce the dominance of cars in public spaces.

1 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)

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'.

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 25m² of net internal floorspace of business development.

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.

Options

The NPPF gives support to the incorporation of facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Should the policy include some requirement for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles and if so how should such a requirement be expressed?

Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

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.

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. 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.

No local policy is required because the council will apply the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 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.

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 National Planning Policy Framework they will be processed without delay.

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.

Broadband

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 7

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.

Draft Policy DM 7

A sustainable development proposal will support the 'Connecting Cambridgeshire' broadband initiative to provide access to next generation broadband in urban and rural areas by ensuring that all residential and employment developments provide on-site infrastructure, including ducting to industry standards, to enable the premises to be directly served by fibre based broadband technology.

Reasoning

Uneven delivery of broadband across the district is an issue affecting business competitiveness and economic productivity in the district and can lead to rural areas being disadvantaged in terms of community integration, ensuring a vibrant economy, assisting with farm diversification and for 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.

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Allocating appropriate areas of land for housing development is one of the key roles of the Local Plan. However identifying land to be developed is only part of the process. There is clearly a role for policies to set out the ways in which housing should be developed so that residents can play an active part of the community they are part of.

Housing choice

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 8

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all new sustainable housing development in the district is built to at least minimum internal floor areas to ensure that residents have sufficient living space during their period of occupancy.

Draft Policy DM 8

A sustainable development proposal that includes housing development will be acceptable where:

- a. on larger sites, it delivers a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures responding to the advice and guidance provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough *Strategic Housing Market Assessments*, local assessments of housing need and demand or other relevant housing and demographic studies and the council's emerging Housing Strategy and Tenancy Strategy; and includes dwellings capable of being used as home workplaces where appropriate; and
- b. it complies with the Lifetime Homes and Lifetime Neighbourhood standards or successor documents⁽²⁾; and
- c. minimum internal floor areas are achieved:

	Dwelling Type ⁽¹⁾	Minimum internal floor area ⁽²⁾
Single storey homes	1 bedroom 2 person	50m ²
	2 bedroom 3 person	61m ²
	2 bedroom 4 person	70m ²
	3 bedroom 4 person	74m ²
	3 bedroom 5 person	86m ²
	4 bedroom 5 person	90m ²
Two storey homes	2 bedroom 3 person	74m ²
	2 bedroom 4 person	83m ²
	3 bedroom 4 person	87m ²
	3 bedroom 5 person	96m ²
	4 bedroom 5 person	100m ²
	4 bedroom 6 person	107m ²

2 See the Lifetime Homes [website](#)

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

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	Dwelling Type ⁽¹⁾	Minimum internal floor area ⁽²⁾
Three storey homes	3 bedroom 5 person	102m ²
	4 bedroom 5 person	106m ²
	4 bedroom 6 person	113m ²

1. For dwellings designed for more than 6 people, at least 10m² should be added for each additional person.
2. Floor areas will be measured in line with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' Gross Internal Floor Area methodology (RICS, GIFA) and included in design and access statements.

Reasoning

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.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SHMAs (2008 and ongoing reviews) 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 older people. The full text can be viewed at the [Cambridgeshire Horizons 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.

Parish Plans, Village Design Statements and Neighbourhood 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 can 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.

New housing in England provides some of the poorest internal space standards in Europe and the smallest average room sizes. The size of a home is one of the key factors in defining who can use the property. Housing size often determines comfort within a space and how much privacy is achieved within it. Good design and creative use of space can provide high-quality and appropriate densities. The council believes that clear and consistent guidance on the minimum acceptable internal floor areas appropriate in relation to occupancy is required to: prevent unsustainable housing types such as micro-flats that the next generation will not want; prevent smaller flats and houses which have limited space for adaptability and flexibility and do not support the needs of growing families; offer better value for money attracting the widest range of potential purchasers and to give children space at home to play and study.

Options

As a starting point for discussion the draft policy includes minimum sizes based on those introduced recently for London⁽³⁾.

Are these minimum floor areas appropriate or do you suggest a higher requirement on the basis that larger dwelling sizes are expected in Huntingdonshire than in London?

3 Contained within the London Housing Design Guide available from the [Greater London Authority website](#)

Affordable housing provision

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 9

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all new sustainable market housing development in the district contributes to the delivery of affordable housing to help address the district's identified housing needs.

Draft Policy DM 9

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

- a. includes 15 or more homes or 0.5ha 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.

The *affordable housing* provision should seek to deliver a target of 70% social rented accommodation.

The council will only consider an alternative mix or a lower level of provision 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. Evidence should be presented including a development *viability assessment*.

Affordable housing will be distributed throughout the proposed development comprising clusters of not more than 15 homes. 'Design and Quality' standards as set out by the Homes and Communities Agency⁽⁴⁾ should be applied regardless of whether Social Housing Grant has been secured.

Reasoning

It has become increasingly difficult for local people on modest incomes to gain access to suitable housing. A growing gap between average earnings and housing costs, a limited supply of new affordable properties and the loss of existing social housing through right to buy and right to acquire provisions have all contributed to the difficulties. The planning system has a key role to play in making more affordable properties available through securing contributions from market housing schemes and by enabling rural exceptions sites to come forward.

The Huntingdonshire Housing Strategy⁽⁵⁾ is informed by national guidance, local evidence from the Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)⁽⁶⁾ and other relevant surveys and analysis. The SHMA provides analysis of the level and type of housing need in the district. It reveals a high level of need for affordable housing, in excess of anticipated annual supply.

The council intends to produce a detailed affordable housing guidance note which, along with the council's emerging Tenancy Strategy, will provide additional guidance for developers. The draft target for affordable housing reflects that in the adopted Core Strategy 2009. Local evidence suggests that any target will not meet the need fully, but the target must be viable for developers.

4 See the 'Design and Quality' Standards document available from the Homes and Communities Agency [website](#)

5 Available from the council's [website](#)

6 Available at the [Cambridgeshire Horizons website](#)

Rural exceptions housing

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 10

The purpose of this policy is to enable the delivery of community supported small scale free-standing affordable housing projects mainly at the district's rural settlements.

Draft Policy DM 10

A sustainable development proposal for a rural exceptions housing scheme will be acceptable in or adjacent to a Key Service Centre or Small Settlement where:

- a. the number and type of homes is limited to those that can be justified by evidence of need for local people who are either currently or formerly resident, have an existing family or employment connection or some other connection agreed with the council, in the individual settlement or adjacent settlements;
- b. there is reasonable access to at least a basic range of local services appropriate to the form of housing proposed;
- c. has clear and demonstrable support from the local community;
- d. it is demonstrated through financial appraisal that any market housing element is essential to enable delivery of the affordable housing;
- e. it is demonstrated through the design and access statement that any market housing element is integrated in scale and design; and
- f. mechanisms are in place in order to ensure that the housing remains affordable in perpetuity.

Reasoning

In settlements that are unlikely to see significant housing development, housing need may go unmet if left to normal market forces as only larger schemes are targeted to supply a proportion of affordable housing. In order to try to tackle local housing need in these locations, exceptions to the normal planning policies may be made for development focusing on meeting specific local housing needs. Key Service Centres as well as Small Settlements are included in this policy because this is an enabling policy and the council is determined to tackle housing need across Huntingdonshire and both types are rural in character and housing need may need addressing.

In order for occupiers of new properties to be able to live as sustainably as possible they should have 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 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 Plans where they are available.

The council may consider integration of a small proportion of open market housing within *rural exception site* proposals where cross-subsidy is essential in order to make delivery of the affordable housing viable. However, in considering such schemes it would need to be satisfied that the development has community support and reflects local need in terms of scale, dwelling type and tenure mix. The applicant must demonstrate to the council's satisfaction that a mixed tenure scheme is essential to the delivery of the affordable element of the scheme. The arrangements set out in paragraph 4.27 of the council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document⁽⁷⁾ will be applied.

7 Available from the council's [website](#)

Residential moorings

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 11

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's criteria for considering planning applications for new residential moorings.

Draft Policy DM 11

A sustainable development proposal that includes a new residential mooring will be assessed on individual merit taking into account the availability of shops, services, community facilities and public transport. A proposal will be required to demonstrate that:

- 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 rubbish; and
- c. navigation and pedestrian use of any towpaths will not be impeded.

Reasoning

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.

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.

Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 12

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's criteria for considering planning applications for new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots.

Draft Policy DM 12

A sustainable development proposal for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots will be acceptable where it is considered that:

- a. the location has reasonable access to local health services and 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 seriously harmed;
- d. the health and safety of occupants are not put at risk including through unsafe access to sites, poor air quality, unacceptable noise 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. there is adequate space for operational needs including the parking and turning of vehicles;
- g. the site can be safely and adequately serviced by infrastructure.

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 | Draft Development Management Policies

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 contamination or heritage assets may also be applicable. The criteria recognise that sites may be located in rural areas. 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.

Further guidance is available in 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Good Practice Guide' (DCLG May 2008)⁽⁸⁾ 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.

8 Available from the DCLG [website](#)

Requiring good design

The choices made during the design stage of a new sustainable 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.

Good design and sustainability

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 13

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

Draft Policy DM 13

A sustainable development proposal will need to be designed to a high standard based on a thorough understanding of the site and its context. Such a proposal will need to:

- a. provide a strong sense of place in the case of small scale proposals through a design solution which reflects the surroundings, or in the case of large scale proposals through a masterplan which identifies how the place will develop;
- b. contribute positively to the local character of the built environment through sensitive siting, scale, massing, form and arrangement of buildings and use of colour and materials;
- c. use the principles of sustainable construction and embodied energy in the design of buildings, the selection of materials and construction methods;
- d. integrate with adjoining landscapes through the use of high quality landscaping and boundary treatments;
- e. have regard to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2007)⁽⁹⁾, Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007)⁽¹⁰⁾ and the Cambridgeshire Design Guide (2007) or successor documents;
- f. have regard to other relevant advice that promotes high quality design and sustainability including, but not limited to, *conservation area* character statements, *neighbourhood plans*, *village design statements*, *parish plans*, *urban design frameworks*, *design briefs*, *master plans* and any relevant national guidance

Homes

A sustainable development proposal for homes, including conversions and subdivisions that create new homes, will be acceptable where it achieves 'Code for Sustainable Homes'⁽¹¹⁾:

- level 4 up to April 2016; and
- level 6 after April 2016.

A sustainable development proposal for homes, including conversions and subdivisions that creates new homes, will use the criteria of the 'Building for Life' standard⁽¹²⁾ or equivalent successor standards.

A sustainable development proposal including 10 or more homes will be required to meet as a minimum the 'Building for Life' Silver (Good) Standard of 14 out of 20, or an equivalent in an equivalent successor standard. Where there are significant constraints to meeting this standard they should be detailed in the design and access statement for the proposal.

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

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

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

12 Available on the Building for Life [website](#)

Non-residential development

A sustainable development proposal for non-residential development will be acceptable where it seeks to achieve Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards or successor or equivalent standards:

- 'Very Good' up to April 2016;
- 'Excellent' from April 2016 to April 2019: and
- 'Outstanding' after April 2019.

Reasoning

The Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment (2007) already 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.

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).

It is acknowledged that for some proposals, such as for domestic extensions, the range of advice set out in this policy may not be relevant especially where the proposal is minor or only just above what is permitted under permitted development rights. However, applications will be considered with regard to how they achieve good design and sustainability.

Development will need to be designed to withstand the predicted impacts of climate change to ensure that throughout a building's anticipated lifespan it is practical and comfortable for users. Developers should also seek to minimise further CO₂ emissions during the construction and operational phases of development.

The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) has begun to deliver stepped improvements in energy and water efficiency, facilitate lower CO₂ emissions, less waste and *pollution* and more sustainable lifestyles. When the CSH was established a timetable for all homes built from 2016 to be zero carbon⁽¹³⁾ was initiated. The CSH requirements of the policy follow that timetable. Since the initiation of the timetable there have been a series of amendments to building regulations which mean that at the time of writing new homes are required to many of the requirements of CSH level 3. Further amendments to building regulations are expected to continue to increase the energy and water efficiency requirements for new homes.

It is recognised that there can be significant cost implications of meeting levels of CSH⁽¹⁴⁾, particularly levels 5 and 6. These higher levels almost always require grey water recycling or rain water collection to achieve the required level of water efficiency. As more homes are designed to these higher levels the costs of building to these levels is expected to reduce and the council will keep the costs of building to the CSH under review. From April 2016 homes should therefore be designed as far as possible to achieve level 6 of CSH but site specific issues will be considered including economic viability when development proposals are considered.

13 The definition of zero carbon homes includes all regulated energy uses but excludes energy use of plug-in appliances, often referred to as plug loads, which are not regulated

14 See the recent government report *Cost of building to the Code for Sustainable Homes* available from the DCLG [website](#)

There is currently no comparable nationally adopted sustainability code for non-residential buildings, however the long established Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards are widely used for assessing non-residential development. From 2019 non-residential buildings are expected to be zero carbon. In order to move towards that goal the policy includes a stepped requirement for non-residential development to achieve the BREEAM ratings; prior to April 2016 a 'Very Good' rating, which is broadly equivalent to the CSH level 3; from April 2016 to April 2019 to achieve an 'Excellent' rating, which is broadly equivalent to the CSH level 4; and from April 2019 onwards to achieve an 'Outstanding' rating, which is broadly equivalent to the CSH level 5.

The recent drought conditions and a number of publications, including the Huntingdonshire Watercycle Study, have emphasised the use of water as a high profile issue that needs to be addressed. The CSH requires particular levels of water use to be achieved at different levels.

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 twenty 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.

Quality of development

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 14

The purpose of this policy is to achieve a high standard of amenity across the district, and set out the elements that the council expects applicants to address in the design and access statement that must be submitted with their planning application.

Draft Policy DM 14

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where a high standard of *amenity* is provided for existing and future users of both the proposed development and its surroundings.

The applicant's design and access statement will need to demonstrate how the proposed development addresses:

- a. access to 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 of air pollution, *obtrusive light* and the contamination of land, groundwater or surface water;
- e. the extent to which people feel at risk from crime by incorporating Secured By Design⁽¹⁵⁾ principles;
- f. inclusion of and/or connection to *open spaces* and green corridors that provide opportunities for recreation, ecology and biodiversity;

15 Available on the Secured by Design [website](#)

Requiring good design

- g. provision of appropriate and conveniently located facilities that address the needs of potential user groups and promote social cohesion; and
- h. other requirements of users and residents that are likely to occur during the lifetime of the development.

Reasoning

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.

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.

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.

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)⁽¹⁶⁾ or successor documents.

Advertising

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 15

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's requirements for the design and location of advertisements, and its approach to discontinuing or removing inappropriate advertisements.

Draft Policy DM 15

A sustainable development proposal for an advertisement will be considered on its merits taking into account:

- a. the size, location and use of materials, colours and styles of lettering;
- b. safety; and
- c. the potential to detract from the character and appearance of a listed building or conservation area

The use of internally illuminated fascia signs or internally illuminated projecting box signs for advertisements within a conservation area or attached to a listed building will not be permitted.

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 the area.

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

The council will take action to secure the removal of an unauthorised sign or placard where they are detrimental to *amenity* and/or safety.

Reasoning

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.

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.

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.

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.

Generally, the internal illumination of a complete fascia is considered undesirable and will be resisted. Other forms of illumination may be appropriate depending on the location and use of the building.

Promoting healthy communities

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.

Protecting local services and facilities

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 16

The purpose of this policy is to maintain the sustainability of mixed use facilities in settlements and neighbourhoods by setting out the council's criteria for assessing the impacts of the loss of such facilities.

Draft Policy DM 16

The range and availability of land or buildings for local services and facilities in a settlement or neighbourhood is essential to maintain its sustainability. A proposal which involves the loss of these will only be acceptable where:

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

For the purposes of this policy local services and facilities include shops, public houses, places of worship, education facilities, filling stations, public halls and health care facilities.

A sustainable development proposal which anticipates such a loss will provide evidence that there is no community support for continuation of the service or facility and that reasonable steps have been taken to market the property for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its permitted use.

Reasoning

The purpose of this policy is to protect the sustainability, vitality and viability of rural settlements and neighbourhoods within the spatial planning areas. Local shops and other services play a vital role in promoting communities' sustainability by helping to meet everyday needs and reducing the need to travel. Facilities can act as a focus for many groups contributing to active and socially inclusive communities. Although the policy cannot prevent key services or facilities from closing, it can help ensure that the premises remain available for such uses.

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.

In Key Service Centres, proposals that would result in a significant loss of local services or facilities, could also have a serious impact upon the centre as a whole due to their role in providing a range of facilities for the surrounding area. The policy safeguards the loss of opportunities for such uses in order to maintain the availability of important local facilities.

Options

The draft policy provides for the change of use of local services in certain circumstances. 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 corner shops.

Should there be additional criteria aimed at protecting local services and facilities?

Protection of open space

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 17

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.

Draft Policy DM 17

Where proposed development would lead to 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,

this will only be acceptable where any potential loss has been appropriately mitigated against and/or compensated for.

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 the *open space* that is being lost.

Reasoning

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.

Huntingdonshire's Sports Facilities Strategy 2009-2014⁽¹⁷⁾ 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.

People's quality of life is improved by the existence of open spaces through opportunities for formal or informal recreation. The draft 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.

Local green spaces

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 18

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's criteria for considering small scale development on designated local green spaces.

17 Available on the council's [website](#)

Draft Policy DM 18

Local green spaces are designated areas of land within this Local Plan that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance. Within a local green space a sustainable development proposal will only be acceptable where it is for:

- a. essential operational buildings;
- b. provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport or recreation or for cemeteries;
- c. the extension or alteration of an existing building provided that it does not significantly increase the height or massing compared with the original building; or
- d. the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and does not significantly increase the height or massing compared with the original building.

Reasoning

Local green spaces can make a positive contribution to the character of a settlement and the quality of life enjoyed by residents. 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 historic significance, recreational or biodiversity value or for its tranquillity.

Options

Areas that could be identified as local green spaces will be assessed as part of the plan production process and designated sites will be identified on the Local Plan proposals map.

Do you have any suggestions for sites that are special to your community that could be identified as local green spaces?

Enabled exceptions

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 19

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

Draft Policy DM 19

A sustainable community based development proposal will be acceptable if it demonstrates overwhelming local community support and enables the implementation of locally prioritised community projects. Community projects that require a cross subsidy from related enabling development will be considered on their merits taking account of other policies of this plan and:

- a. the form and scale of development proposed
- b. where homes are proposed there is reasonable access to at least a basic range of local services appropriate to the form of housing; and
- c. detailed financial appraisal that shows the development proposed is sufficient for the specified project and no more.

Reasoning

The Localism Act 2011 devolves greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and gives local communities greater inputs into local planning decisions.

The Local Plan establishes the main strategic growth areas across the district in the period to 2036. The majority of new development will take place in the identified Spatial Planning Areas and Key Service Centres. 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.

Enabling development will be considered in cases where it is required to deliver community facilities that have been prioritised by local communities.

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 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.

The range of community projects that may be considered under this policy may include (but is not limited to):

- community based affordable housing
- 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 car parking

Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding

Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Integrated renewable energy

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 20

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's requirements for the inclusion of integrated renewable energy equipment in the design of new buildings in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Draft Policy DM 20

Large scale buildings

A sustainable development proposal for a building with a proposed floor area of 1000m² or more will be required to reduce emissions of CO₂ by 10% (over the requirements set by Building Regulations) through the installation of a building integrated solar photo voltaic system.

In circumstances where the installation of solar photo voltaic technology is not possible, the 10% reduction will be achieved through the installation of an alternative form of renewable or low carbon technology.

Homes

A sustainable development proposal for a new home, including a conversion or subdivision that creates a new home, or for a residential institution or supported housing will be acceptable where 10% of total emissions (regulated and unregulated) are met using either solar thermal, or photo voltaic, or a combination of these.

In circumstances where the installation of either of these technologies is not possible, the 10% reduction will be achieved through the installation of an alternative form of renewable or low carbon technology.

There are national targets to reduce CO₂ emissions driven by a desire to increase energy security, reduce fuel poverty and cut greenhouse gas pollution from the burning of fossil fuels. The Committee on Climate Change provides advice to Government on how to achieve the national carbon Budgets. In May 2011 the Government adopted the 4th Carbon Budget⁽¹⁸⁾ which requires a 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025 based on 1990 levels.

Applying the 4th carbon budget to Cambridgeshire emissions implies a 43% reduction between 2010 and 2025, which needs to be delivered through a combination of energy efficiency improvements, national electricity grid decarbonisation, local renewable energy deployment and transport measures. Requiring the installation of renewable energy capacity for new domestic and commercial developments will play a significant role in helping Cambridgeshire achieve these targets.

In formulating the draft policy an assessment has been made⁽¹⁹⁾ of the upfront costs of systems, savings to be made from their installation, carbon emissions reduction, ease of monitoring, level of occupant engagement required, avoiding overlap with the Building Regulations, end user acceptability and potential local economic impact.

18 More information can be found on the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) [website](#)

19 Details can be found in 'A review of 'Merton Rule' policies in four local planning authorities in Cambridgeshire' available in 'Supporting Document'

As a result of this process two technologies emerged as being the most clearly beneficial across a range of variables – solar photo voltaic (PV) and solar thermal. PV is the best option in terms of lifetime savings and carbon emissions reduction, whilst solar thermal can be delivered at a lower cost.

A well installed and properly used solar thermal system can supply 60% of a household's hot water requirements and displace 230kg CO₂ per year if displacing gas and 510kg CO₂ if displacing electricity.

For non-domestic buildings the policy is defined in terms of regulated emissions only, as in many cases the unregulated component of the energy demand will not be known at the point at which planning approval is sought. The methodology to be used for calculating emissions is the same as that for building regulations.

For new homes this policy applies to all new developments from one unit or more. Individual systems will be expected for each property wherever possible and not an average across the development. Emission reductions are defined in terms of total emissions (regulated and unregulated). The single approved methodology to be used for calculating unregulated emissions being that published in the technical guidance for the Code for Sustainable Homes⁽²⁰⁾.

Buildings that are exempt from Building Regulations and therefore are not required to assess CO₂ emissions will not be expected to comply with this policy.

Renewable and low carbon energy

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 21

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's approach to considering sustainable development proposals for renewable and low carbon energy generating equipment, including wind turbines and other technologies.

Draft Policy DM 21

A sustainable development proposal for a renewable or low carbon energy generating scheme will be acceptable where its siting and design ensures there is no demonstrable significant or substantial harm to:

- a. the environment and local amenity including noise levels and impact on a heritage asset or its setting both in isolation or cumulatively with other similar developments;
- b. a site of international or national importance for biodiversity; and
- c. the character and capacity of the surrounding landscape as identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD (2007)⁽²¹⁾ and the Wind Power SPD (2006)⁽²²⁾ or successor documents.

Where there is significant or substantial harm, this 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 site become redundant.

Reasoning

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 CO₂ 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.

20 Available from the Planning Portal [website](#)

21 Available from the council's [website](#)

22 Available from the council's [website](#)

Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding

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Research 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.

A *Supplementary Planning Document* on Wind Power was adopted by the Council in February 2006 and is currently being updated. 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*. The update seeks to clarify the guidance regarding impacts of wind turbine development taking into account changes and developments since the current 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 intend to clarify the specification of assessments and information that should be submitted with applications.

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 habitat*.

The Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund and Allowable Solutions

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 22

The purpose of this policy is to set out the options available to developers in meeting Zero Carbon requirements for development, including the option of contributing to the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund.

Draft Policy DM 22

Where compliance with Building Regulations necessitates the use of Allowable Solutions developers will have the option to:

- a. deliver their own allowable solutions projects locally;
- b. make a contribution to the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund; or
- c. offset via third-party allowable solution providers into a project selected from the local project list.

Reasoning

This policy is intended to reflect the recommendations set out in the Huntingdonshire District Council Cabinet report from 22 March 2012 regarding the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund.

In 2016 all new homes are expected to be zero carbon to comply with Building Regulations. A detailed arrangement for how this is to be achieved has been developed by the Zero Carbon Hub. It is recognised that for some developments either due to their size or their location delivering zero carbon on site is technically difficult or prohibitively expensive. The Zero Carbon Hub arrangements set a target for on-site CO₂ reduction, known as the carbon compliance level. Once the carbon compliance level has been met other solutions to achieve the remaining carbon requirements can be used, such solutions are known as 'allowable solutions'⁽²³⁾. These allowable solutions are grouped into three categories:

- On-site (but not duplicating carbon compliance measures) including such things as smart appliances or LED Street Lights for the site

23 The Zero Carbon Hub paper 'Allowable Solutions for Tomorrow's New Homes', available from the [Zero Carbon Hub website](#), sets out what constitutes an allowable solution

- Near-site – including options such as export of low carbon heat from a site based district heating scheme or retro-fitting of low/zero carbon technologies to local community buildings
- Off-site – options such as investment in district heating pipe-work to connect new loads to existing schemes or support new schemes

A full list of measures with potential to be listed as allowable solutions has been produced by the Zero Carbon Hub.

The Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund (CEF) project has looked at the potential to set up an innovative locally led fund which would channel developer investment from allowable solutions into local low carbon infrastructure projects. The establishment of the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund will be an effective mechanism for ensuring that the benefits of allowable solutions remain within Cambridgeshire, as opposed to being collected by Central Government and used elsewhere in the rest of the Country.

Arrangements for producing the local project list identified in the policy will be put in place ahead of the policy coming into effect in 2016. At the time of writing it is thought that a local list will be produced, maintained and managed on a Cambridgeshire basis in a similar way to the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Fund.

Flood risk and water management

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 23

The purpose of this policy is to set out the council's criteria for considering the acceptability of development in relation to the risk of flooding, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Draft Policy DM 23

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where:

- a. it is located in an area that is not at risk of flooding with reference to the Environment Agency 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, prove 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;
- 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;
- d. *sustainable drainage systems* (SuDS) are used in accordance with the Cambridgeshire SuDS Design and Adoption Manual and the Cambridgeshire SuDS Handbook (forthcoming)⁽²⁴⁾ or successor documents; and
- e. there is no adverse impact on, or unacceptable risk to, the quantity or quality of water resources.

Reasoning

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.

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

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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)⁽²⁵⁾ supplements this information.

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.

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)⁽²⁶⁾.

In support of the Local Plan a Water Cycle Study is being completed. The study will advise on policy content with regards to water management. As such this policy will be updated reflecting the study's advice once it has been completed.

25 Available from the council's [website](#)

26 Available from the council's [website](#)

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

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.

Biodiversity and protected habitats and species

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 24

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.

Draft Policy DM 24

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable 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 sustainable development 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⁽²⁷⁾.

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 sustainable development 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. 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.

Reasoning

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

27 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, Regionally Important Geological and geomorphological Sites (RIGS), Protected Roadside Verges or other landscape features of historic or nature conservation value

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such as ancient woodland, species-rich grassland and wetlands. In 2009 Huntingdonshire was recorded as having approximately 130 CWS although the number varies as new sites meeting the criteria are identified while others known to have deteriorated may be removed.

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.

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.

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.

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⁽²⁸⁾ (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](#).

Trees, woodland and related features

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 25

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.

Draft Policy DM 25

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable 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 applicant's design and access statement will set out how any of these features that lie within the site are to be incorporated effectively within the landscaping scheme for the proposal.

A sustainable development proposal should not affect any:

- a. tree or woodland that is subject to 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 the feature that would undermine that value;

unless:

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

- c. there are sound arboricultural reasons to support the proposal; or
- d. the proposal would bring benefits that outweigh the loss of the trees, woodland, hedges or hedgerows concerned and provision is made for appropriate *mitigation measures*, reinstatement of features and/or compensatory tree planting, landscaping or *habitat* creation to ensure the net loss of valued features is minimised.

Reasoning

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 act as CO₂ sinks 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.

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.

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.

Green infrastructure

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 26

The purpose of this policy is to set out council's approach to protecting and enhancing the district's green infrastructure.

Draft Policy DM 26

Green Infrastructure of both strategic and local importance will be protected and enhanced. A sustainable development proposal will:

- a. contribute towards the [Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)'s objectives of protecting, managing and enhancing existing *green infrastructure* within Huntingdonshire and of creating new *green infrastructure*;
- b. respond to the location of existing *green infrastructure* and support appropriate uses, functions and linkages through its layout and design; and
- c. not result in a detrimental effect on existing *green infrastructure* unless replacement provision is made that is of equal or greater value than that which will be affected.

Where development proposals give rise to a specific requirement for green infrastructure, provision will be required in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and the council's Developer Contributions SPD⁽²⁹⁾.

29 Available from the council's [website](#)

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

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Reasoning

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. Access to quality green space is a priority for the council as set out in Growing Success, the Corporate Plan. Green space forms an important part of the district's green infrastructure which can come under considerable pressure as a result of new development. Green infrastructure is essential to enhancing biodiversity by providing important green corridors for species and helping to protect against habitat fragmentation.

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 CO₂ and intercept rainfall which can help to reduce erosion and prevent flooding.

Focusing countryside enhancement efforts on the areas identified in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy will give maximum scope for consolidating and linking important habitats, and enabling complementary access improvements to be pursued. 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.

Ensuring a clean, green and attractive environment is a key priority of the council. The council aims to maintain existing areas of green infrastructure and provide new areas. One of the ways in which the council is fulfilling these aims is through the flagship Great Fen project. The plan seeks to facilitate the Great Fen through a place based policy in the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements document.

Grafham Water offers opportunities for water and land based recreation together. It also has scope for the creation of wildlife habitats and better links to nearby woodlands such as Brampton Wood as well as other links to green space, such as Hinchingsbrooke Country Park for people and wildlife through green corridors incorporating sustainable access routes where possible. A major focus of initiatives in this area will be the provision of improved linkages for biodiversity corridors and habitats. Extensions to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park will be identified as local green spaces along with the park itself.

The Great Ouse Valley is a distinctive lowland landscape of extensive areas of wetland, including major areas of water filled sand and gravel pits, such as Paxton Pits and Needingworth Quarry, and meadows, such as Portholme, which require sensitive agricultural management. The valley is close to centres of population and there needs to be a balance struck between the needs of recreation and biodiversity.

A number of areas of green infrastructure will be designated as 'Local green spaces' and will be protected.

Links with green infrastructure initiatives outside of Huntingdonshire are important. One of the aims of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is to create a well connected network of green corridors which integrates into the wider green corridor network of neighbouring areas.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

A huge amount of the character of Huntingdonshire is shaped by our 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.

Heritage assets and their settings

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 27

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.

Draft Policy DM 27

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where it avoids or minimises conflict with the conservation of any affected heritage asset and the setting of any heritage asset.

The applicant's design and access statement must identify any effect on a heritage asset or the setting of a heritage asset that a sustainable development proposal may have. Where such effects are identified a heritage statement will be required. The heritage statement will demonstrate how the interests of any heritage asset or the setting of a heritage asset is affected and how the proposal will:

- a. not have an adverse impact on the heritage asset or the setting of a heritage asset;
- b. protect, or where appropriate enhance, the asset or its setting;
- c. protect views into and out of the heritage asset and open spaces, trees or street scene which contribute to the setting of the asset;
- d. protect the architectural and historic interests of a listed building and where change of use is proposed the consequential impact on the fabric or character of the building is clearly identified;
- e. not have an adverse impact on the characteristics of a protected area, including a conservation area, a designated park or garden or a scheduled ancient monument, including important open spaces, trees, street scenes and views through the area; and
- f. before demolition of any identified heritage asset a feasibility study is prepared which considers any potential of retaining the asset and justifies the case for demolition.

Reasoning

Huntingdonshire benefits from extensive heritage assets with over 60 conservation areas, nearly 2,800 listed buildings, five registered historic parks and gardens⁽³⁰⁾ and over 50 scheduled ancient monuments. 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.

30 These are at Elton Hall, Hilton Maze, Abbots Ripton Hall, Hammerton and Leighton Bromswold

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

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A key feature of Huntingdonshire's heritage are listed buildings which are listed by English Heritage in recognition of their 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 to ensure that these important buildings do not fall into disrepair and encourages their repair and reuse. English Heritage maintains a national Heritage at Risk register which in 2009 identified three listed buildings within Huntingdonshire: Park Wall of Hinchbrooke House, Warren House in Kimbolton and St Andrew's Church in Woodwalton and 12 scheduled ancient monuments.

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.

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.

Ensuring appropriate infrastructure provision

Modern lives depend on the availability of services and facilities and the infrastructure that enables us to access them. Consequently the success of development will be dependant on appropriate and timely delivery of infrastructure.

Developer contributions

Purpose of Draft Policy DM 28

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 Section 106 agreements.

Draft Policy DM 28

A sustainable development proposal will be acceptable where it makes appropriate contributions towards the cost of providing *infrastructure*, and of meeting economic, social and environmental requirements, where these are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Applicable developments will be liable to pay the *Community Infrastructure Levy* (CIL) as set out in the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule⁽³¹⁾.

Site specific contributions in addition to the CIL will be calculated as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document or successor documents. The nature and scale of *planning obligations* sought will relate to the form of development and the impact it is considered to have upon the surrounding area. Provision may be required on or off site as set out in the Developer Contributions SPD⁽³²⁾ or successor documents. In determining *planning obligations*, viability and other material considerations including specific site conditions will be taken into account. The timing of provision of *infrastructure* and facilities will be carefully considered in order to ensure that appropriate provision is in place before development is occupied or comes into use.

Where appropriate, the requirements of individual sites are set out in other policies in this plan.

Subdivision of sites in order to avoid liability for contributions will not be accepted in any form. Requirements will be calculated on the complete developable area, rather than the area or number of homes/ floorspace of a particular proposal where the development proposes the sub-division of a larger developable area and be apportioned on a pro-rata basis.

Reasoning

Provision of adequate infrastructure within new 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.

The Community Infrastructure Levy mechanism allows local planning authorities to require contributions from new development in order to pay for the infrastructure that is, or will be, needed as a result of that new development. The [Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule 2012](#) sets out the charge per square metre that will apply to each category of new development where new floorspace is being created. Off-site works will normally be funded through CIL contributions.

31 Available from the council's [website](#)

32 Available from the council's [website](#)

Ensuring appropriate infrastructure provision

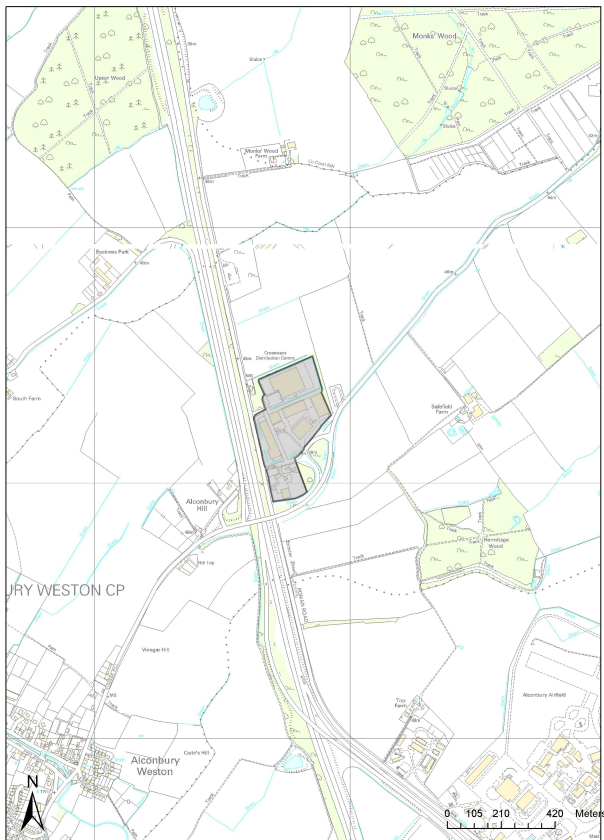
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Section 106 Agreements and planning conditions will also be used for local infrastructure requirements on a development site, such as site specific local provision of open space, connection to utility services, habitat protection, access roads and archaeological investigations. For large scale major developments (200 units or above) 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 \(2011\)](#).

Maps

Areas that could be identified as Established Employment Areas will be assessed as part of the plan production process and designated sites will be identified on the Local Plan proposals map. The starting point for considering areas to designate will be the areas identified in the Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010:

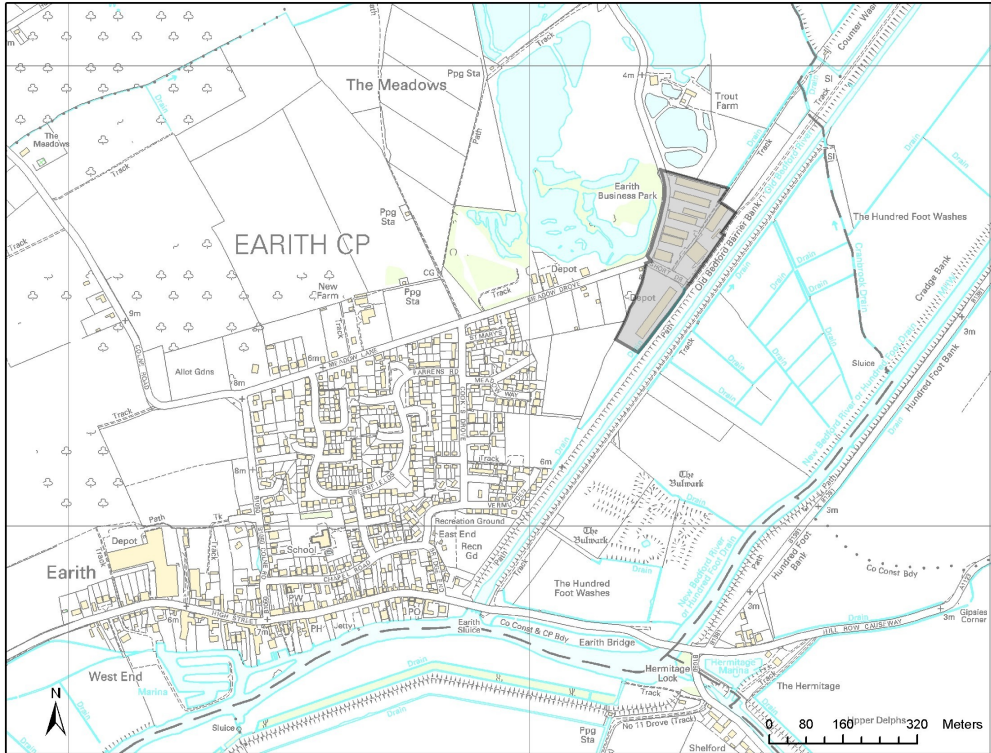
Map 1 Proposed Established Employment Area: Crossways Distribution Centre, Alconbury Hill



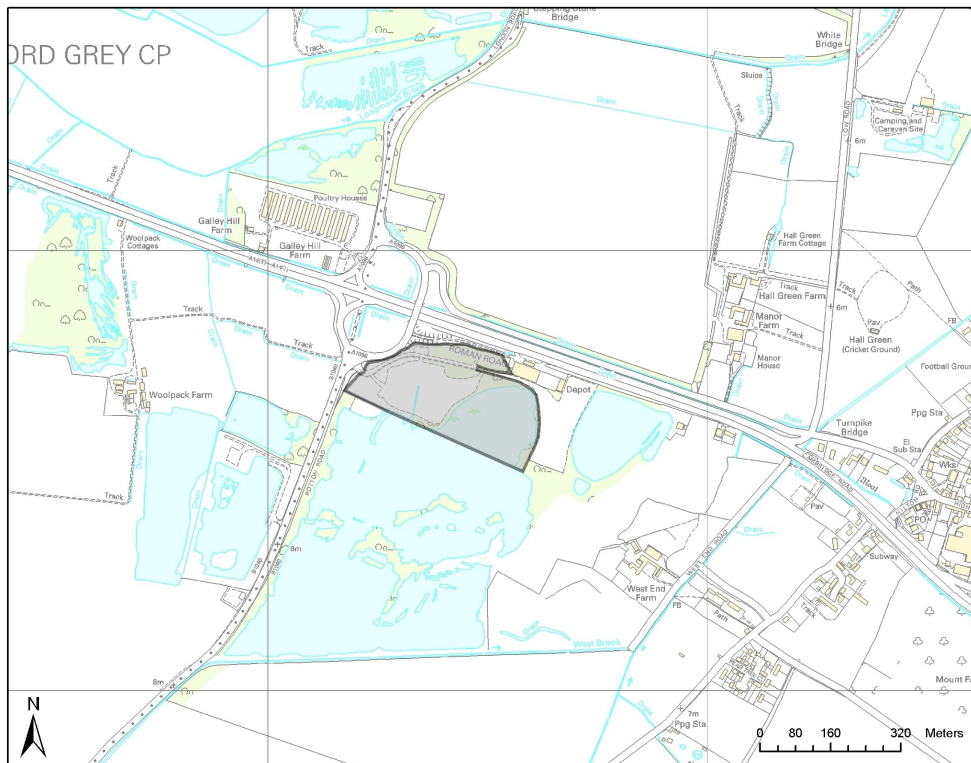
Map 2 Proposed Established Employment Area: Minerva Business Park, Alwalton



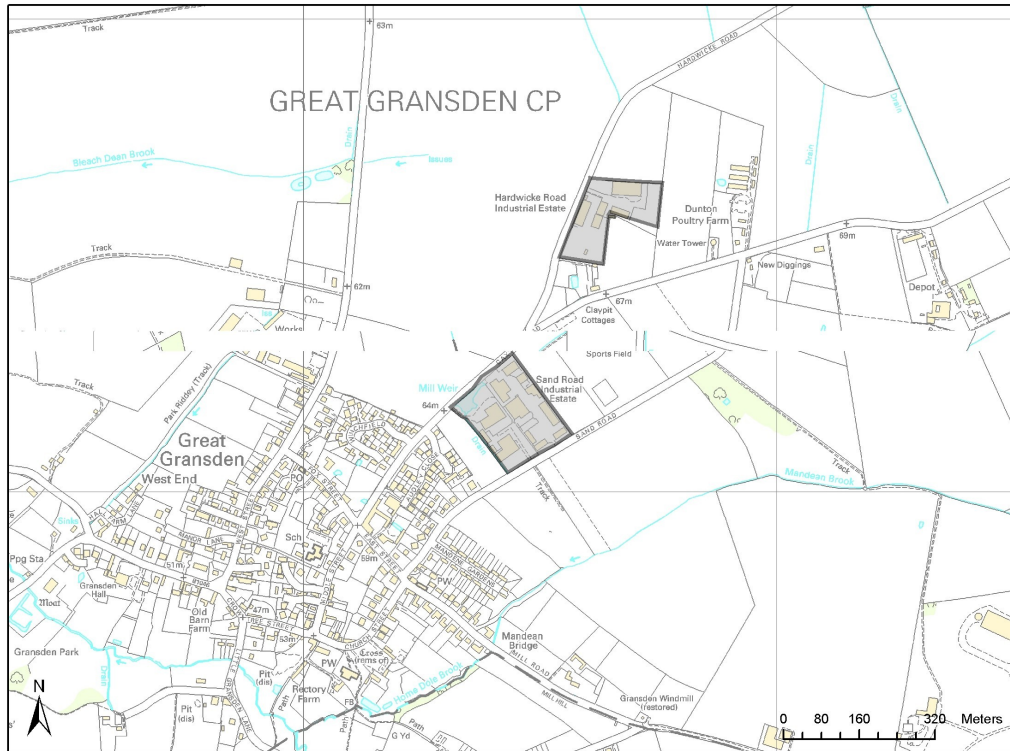
Map 3 Proposed Established Employment Area: Earith Business Park, Earith



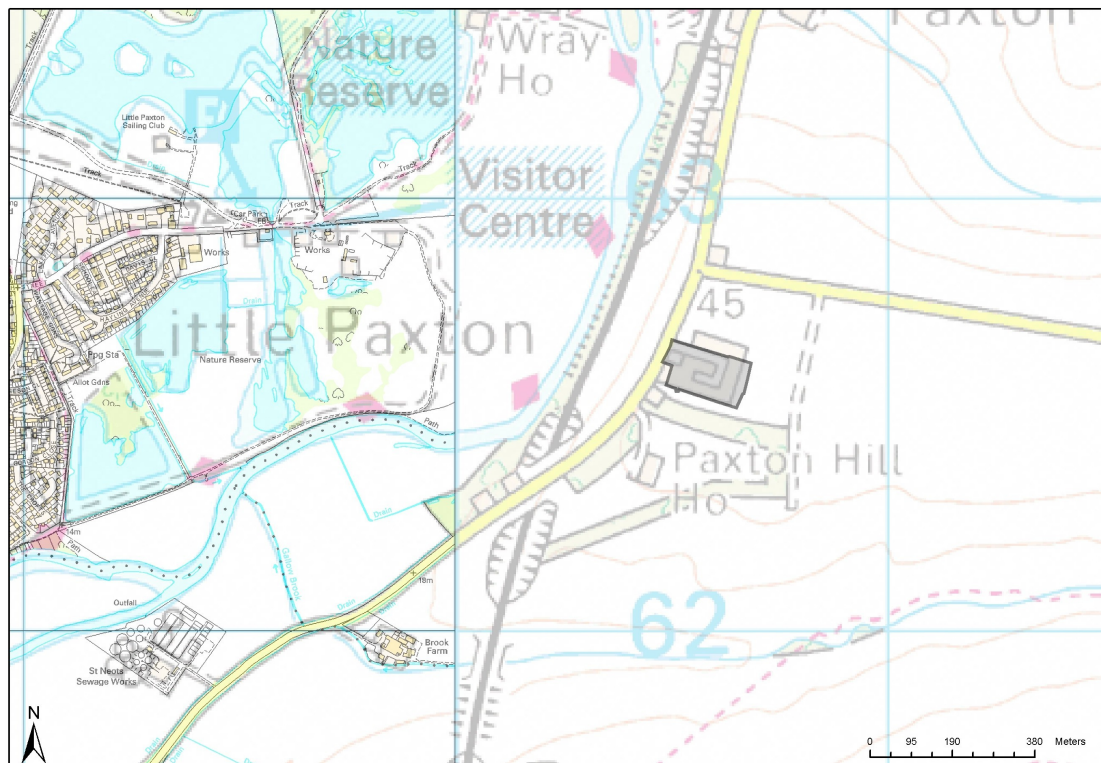
Map 4 Proposed Established Employment Area: Lakeside Technology Park, Fenstanton



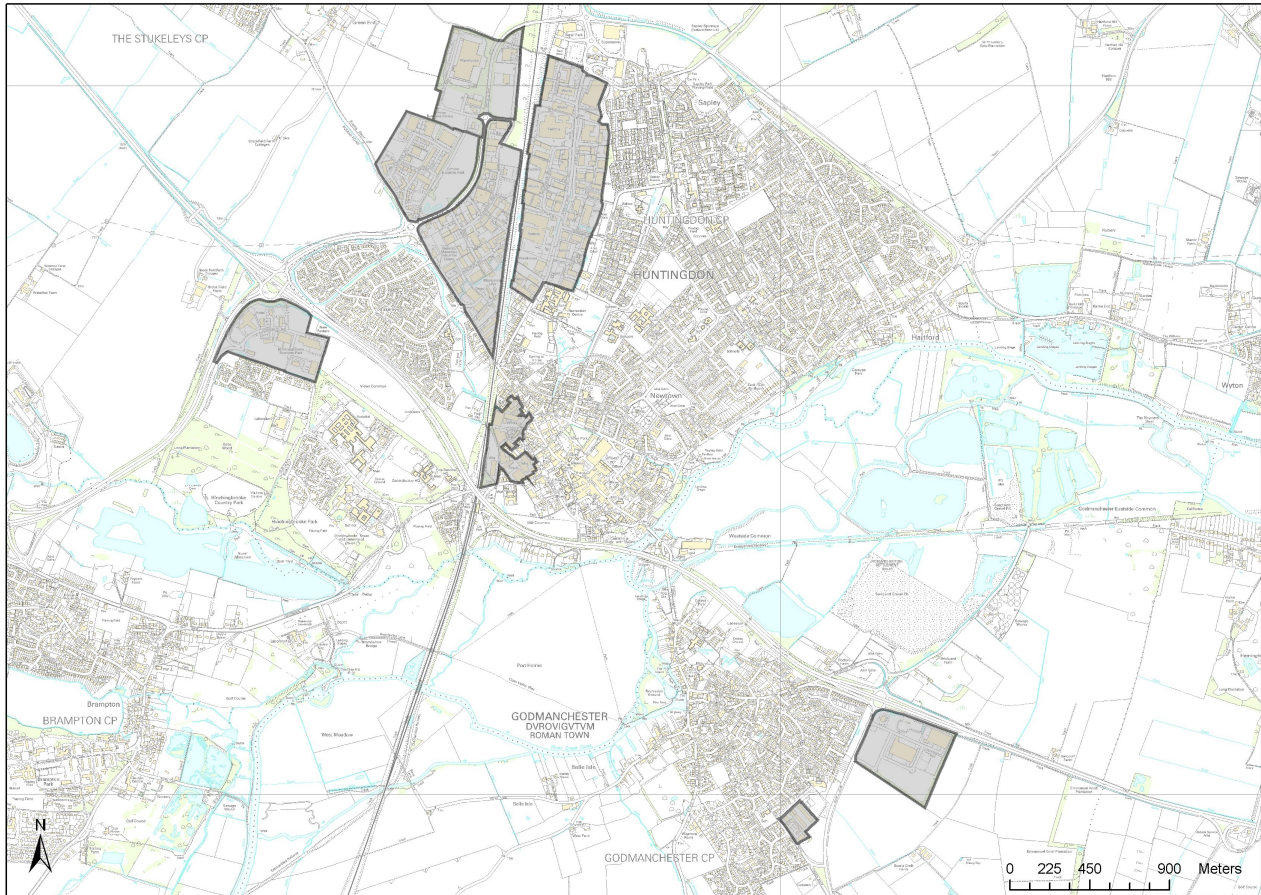
Map 5 Proposed Established Employment Areas: Sand Road Industrial Estate and Hardwicke Road Industrial Estate, Great Gransden



Map 6 Proposed Established Employment Area: Harley Industrial Park, Great Paxton

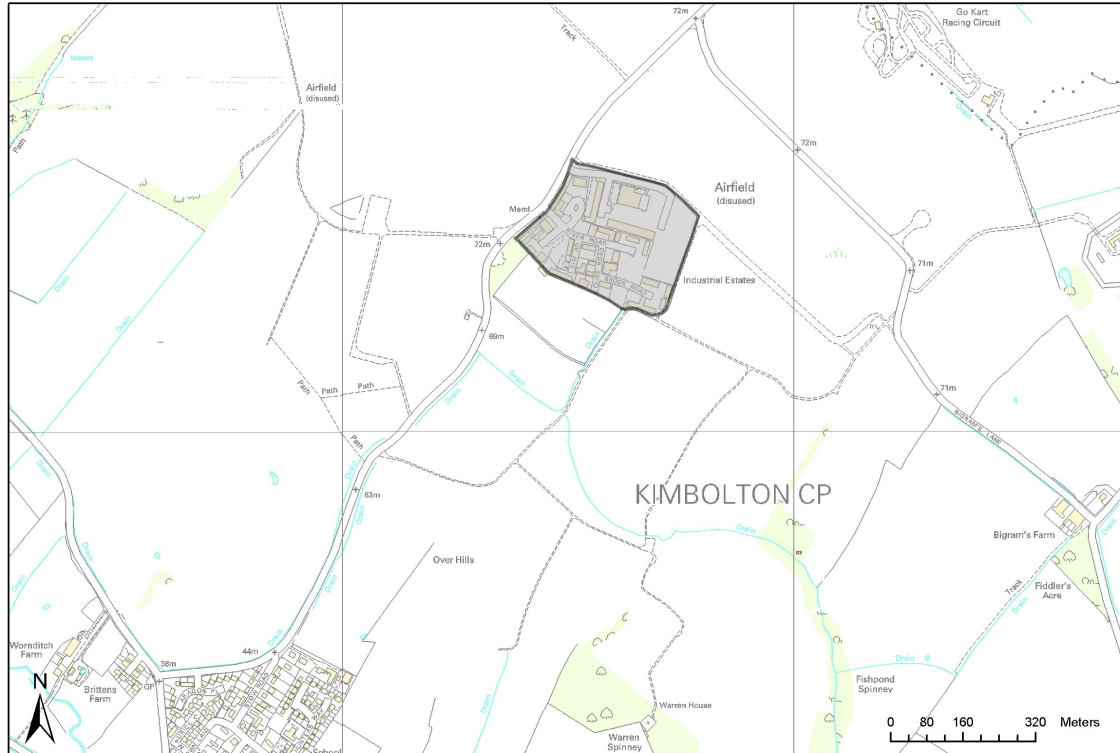


Map 7 Proposed Established Employment Areas: Cardinal Park and The Chord Business Park/ Roman Way Small Business Centre, Godmanchester; and Ermine Business Park, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, St Peter's Road Industrial Area and Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate Huntingdon

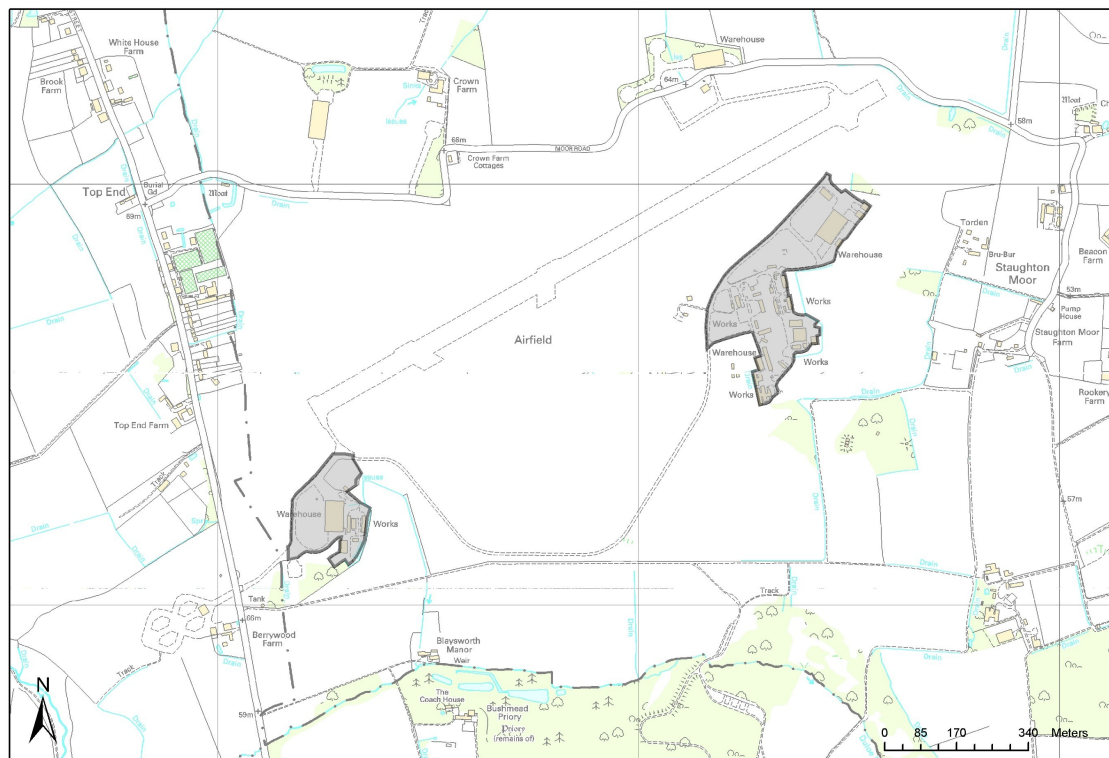


NB: Although the Huntingdon West area is included on the Huntingdon Map above it is **not** proposed as an Established Employment Area. For full details of the Potential Allocation for this area to the east of the railway please see the Potential Allocation (Mixed use) HU 19: George Street/ Ermine Street site in the Potential development sites: Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area document.

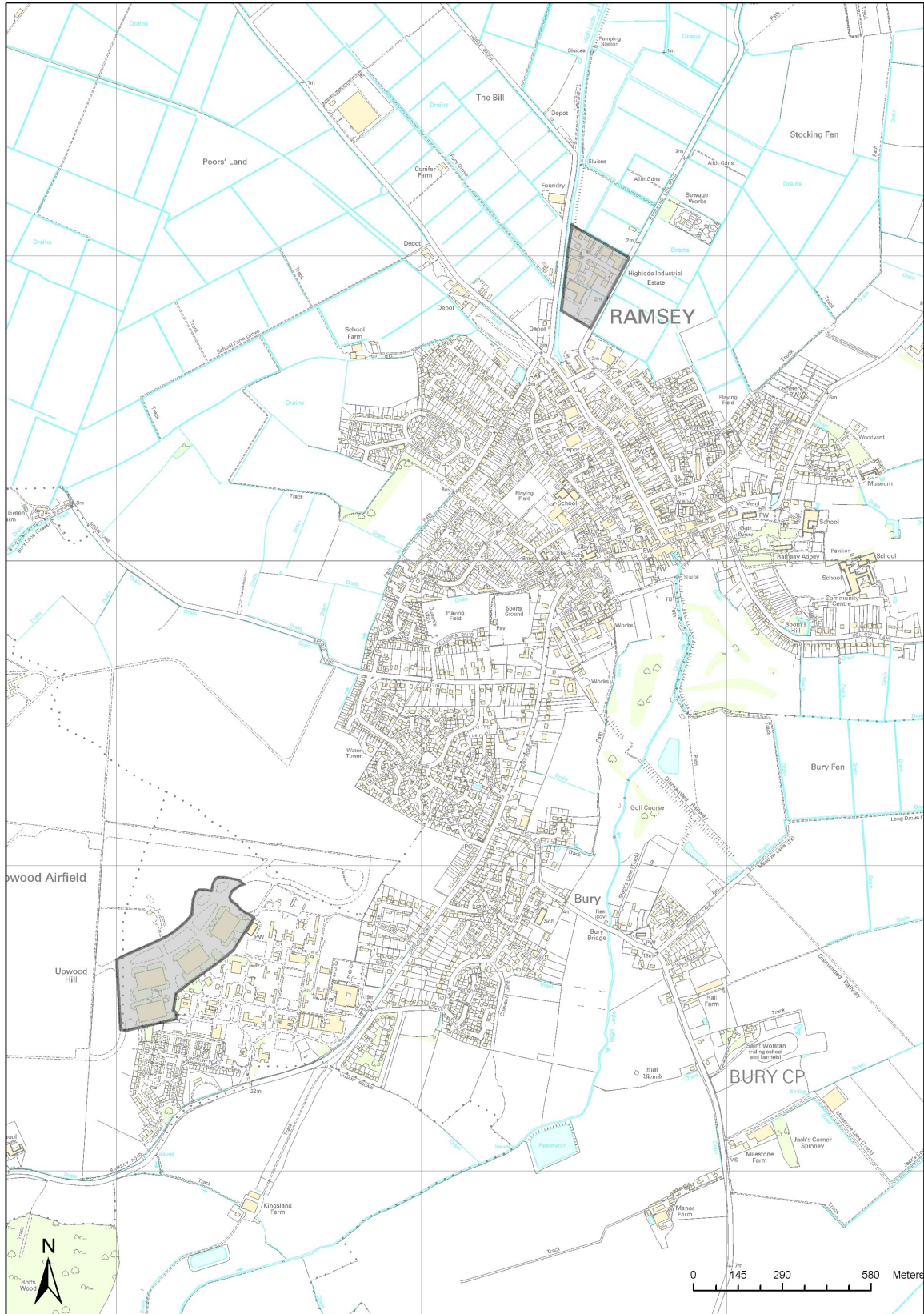
Map 8 Proposed Established Employment Area: Bicton Industrial Park/ Harvard Industrial Estate, Kimbolton



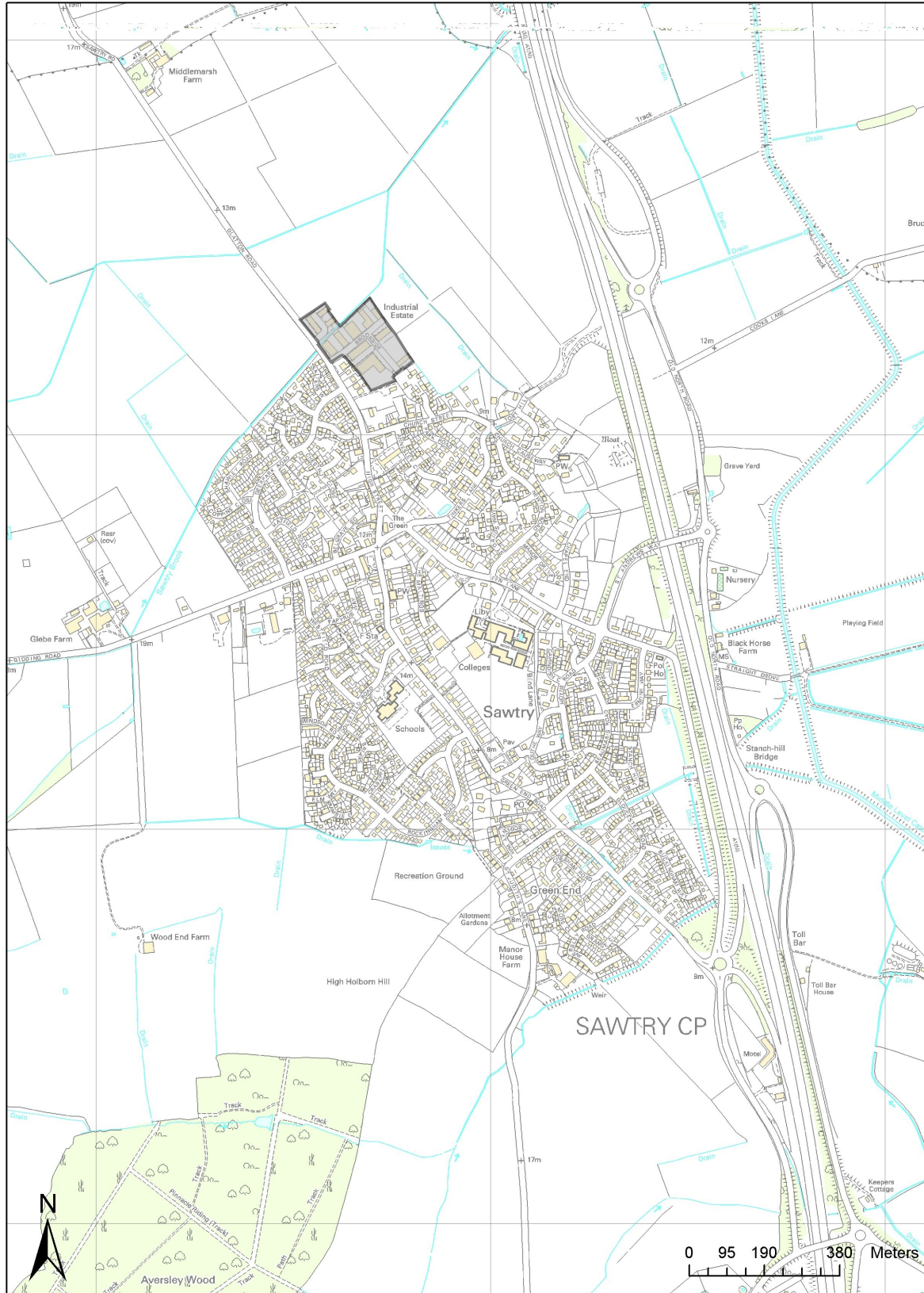
Map 9 Proposed Established Employment Area: The Airfield Industrial Estate, Little Staughton



Map 10 Proposed Established Employment Areas: Highlode Industrial Estate and Upwood Air Park, Ramsey

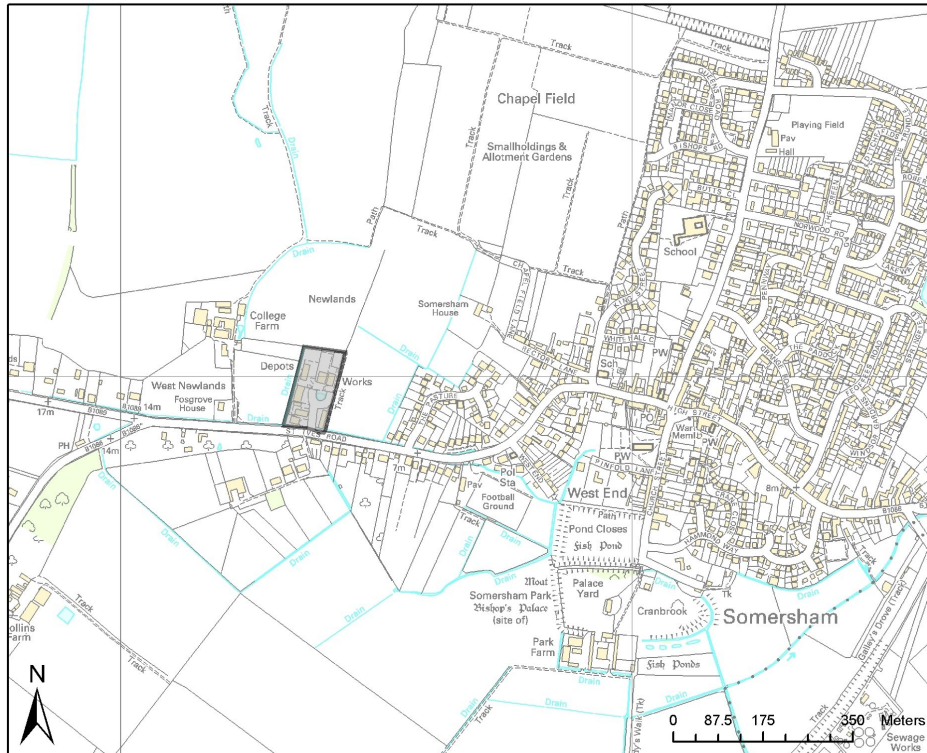


Map 11 Proposed Proposed Established Employment Area: Brookside Industrial Estate, Sawtry

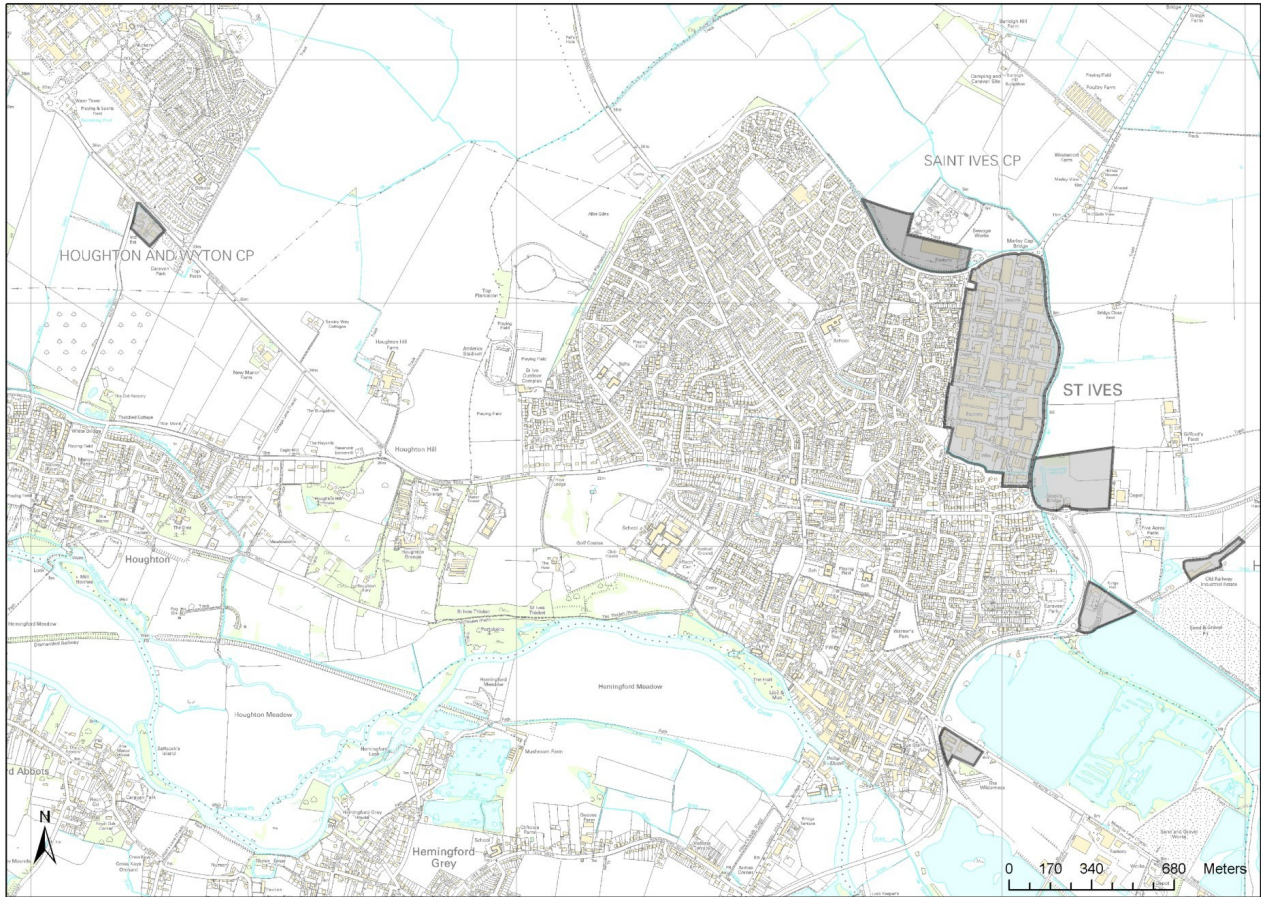


NB: Although not shown on the Sawtry map the area east of the A1(M) and the Old North Road is also proposed as an Established Employment Area.

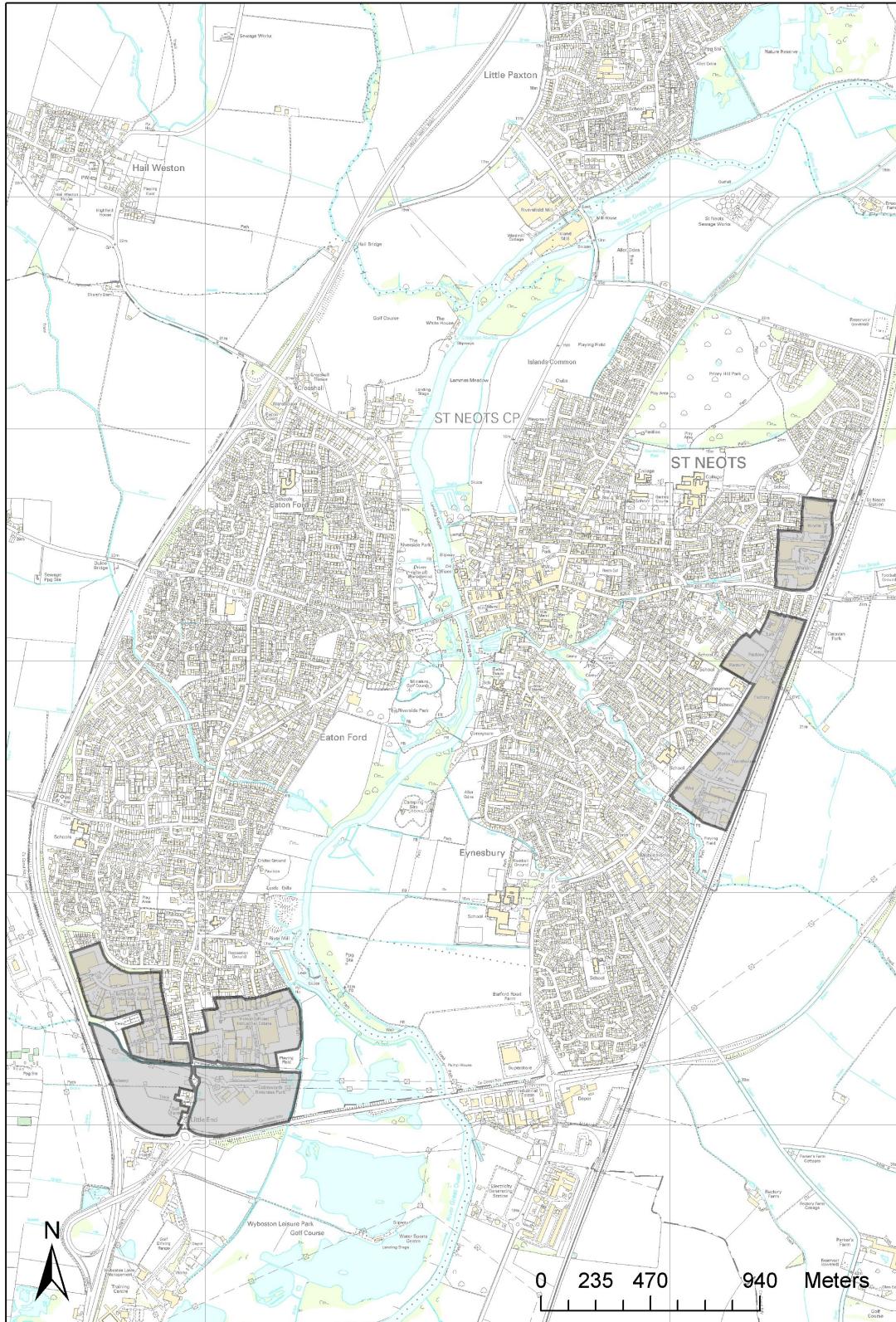
Map 12 Proposed Established Employment Area: West Newlands Industrial Estate, Somersham



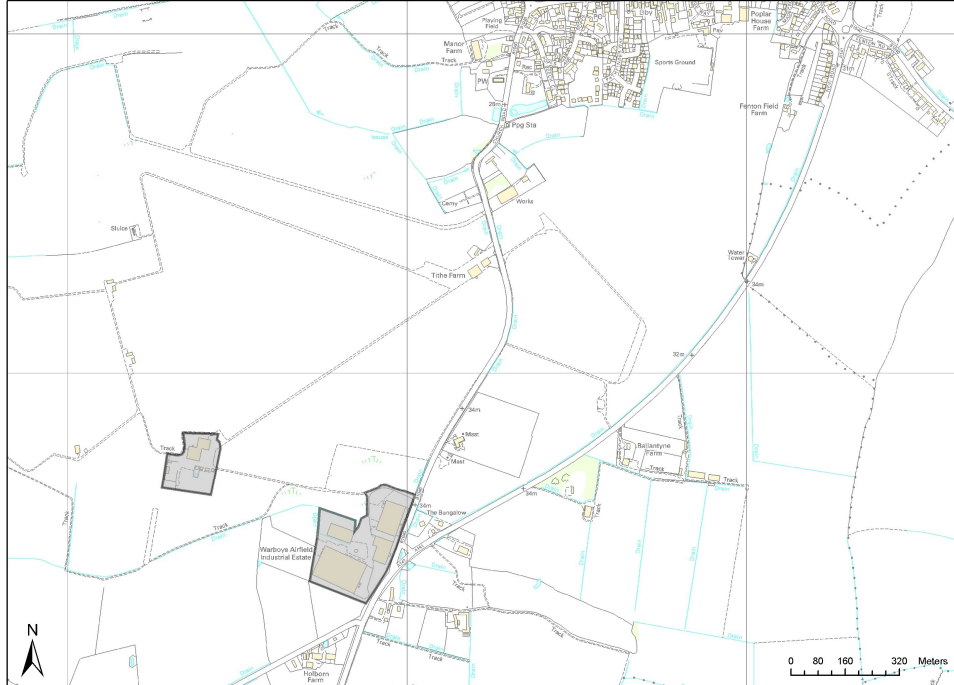
Map 13 Proposed Established Employment Areas: Needingworth Industrial Estate, Needingworth; The Meadow Lane Business Park, The Marley Road Industrial Area, The Parsons Green Business Park and The Somersham Road Industrial Area St Ives; and Upland Estate, Wyton-on-the-Hill



Map 14 Proposed Established Employment Areas: Station Road Industrial Area, Cromwell Road Industrial Estate, Colmworth Business Park, Howard Road Industrial Estate, Little End Road Industrial Estate and Alpha Drive Business Park, St Neots



Map 15 Proposed Established Employment Area: Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate, Warboys



Map 16 Proposed Established Employment Area: Broadway Business Park, The Eagle Business Park, Yaxley

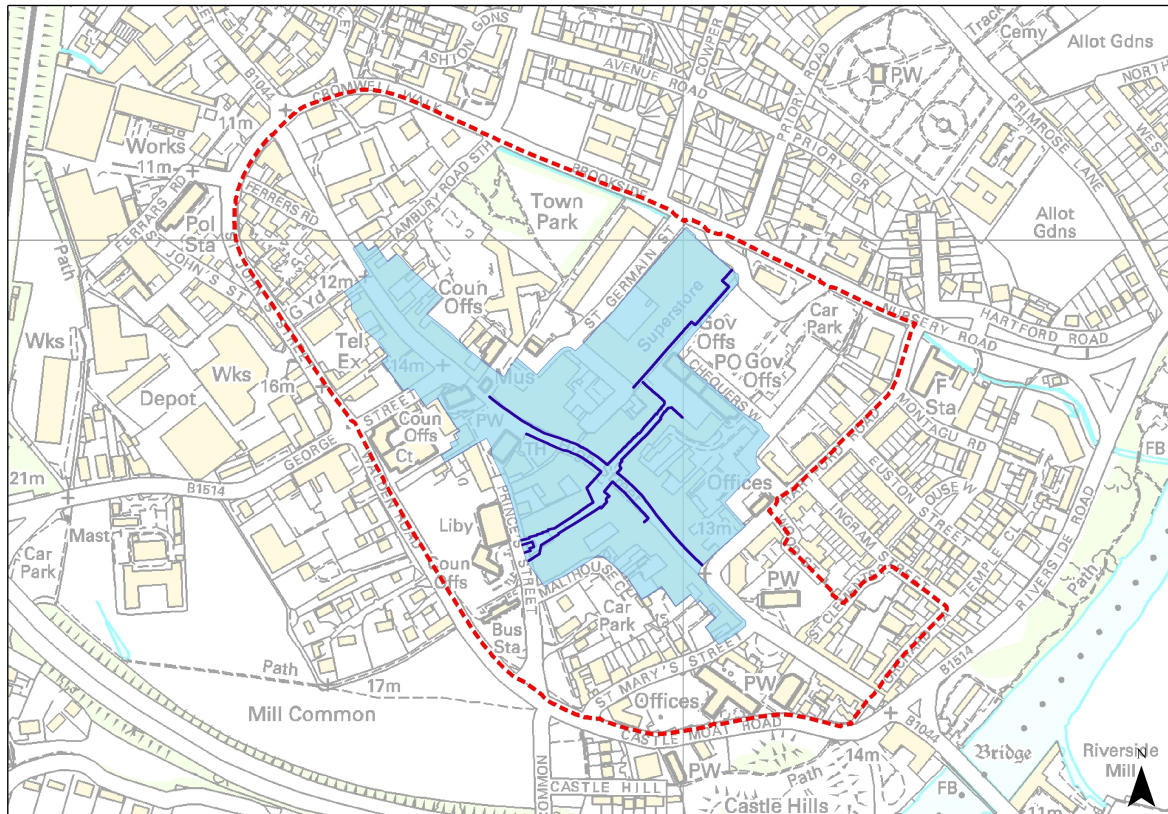


NB: Areas shown on the Yaxley map to the west of the railway are **not** proposed as Established Employment Areas. The Yaxley map will be redrawn to clearly show the full extent of the areas proposed for designation.

Primary Shopping Frontages, Primary Shopping Areas and Town Centres

Areas that could be identified as Primary Shopping Frontages, Primary Shopping Areas and Town Centres will be assessed as part of the plan production process and designated sites will be identified on the Local Plan proposals map. The starting point for considering areas to designate will be those identified in the Development Management DPD: Proposed Submission 2010:

Map 17 Huntingdon town centre, primary shopping area and primary shopping frontage

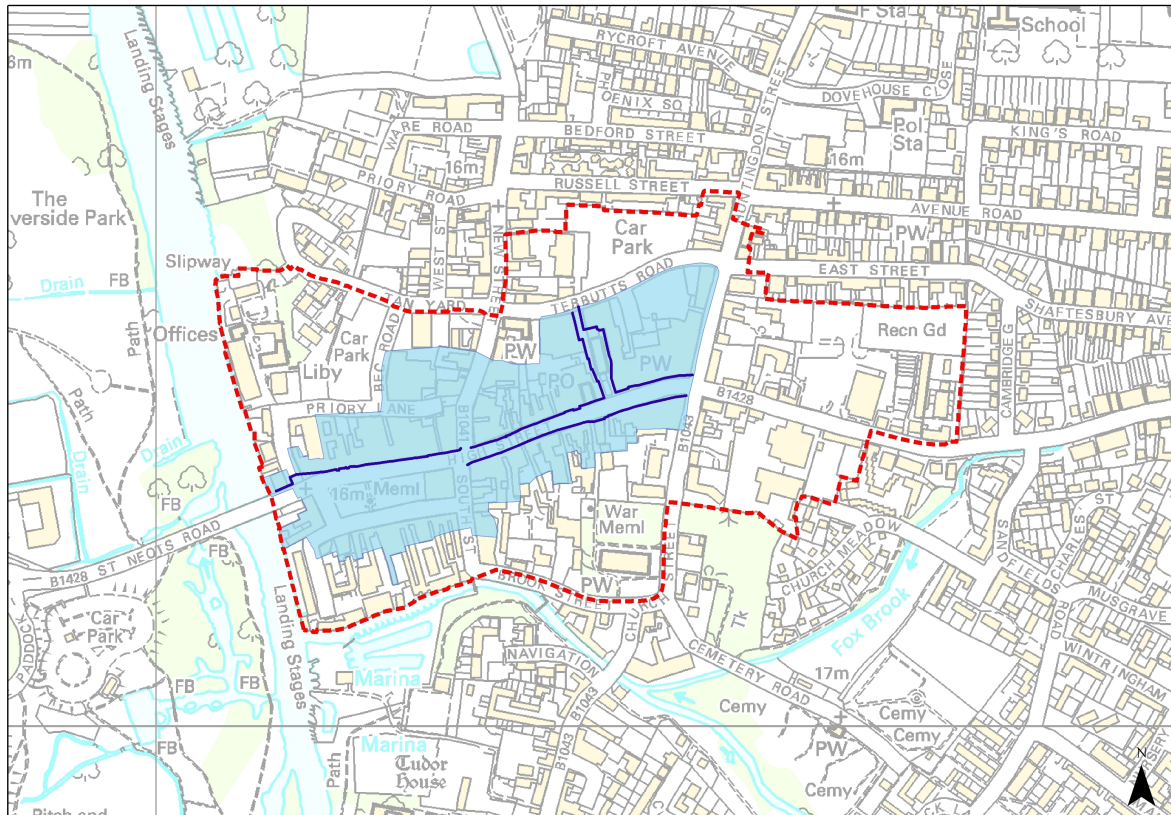


Options

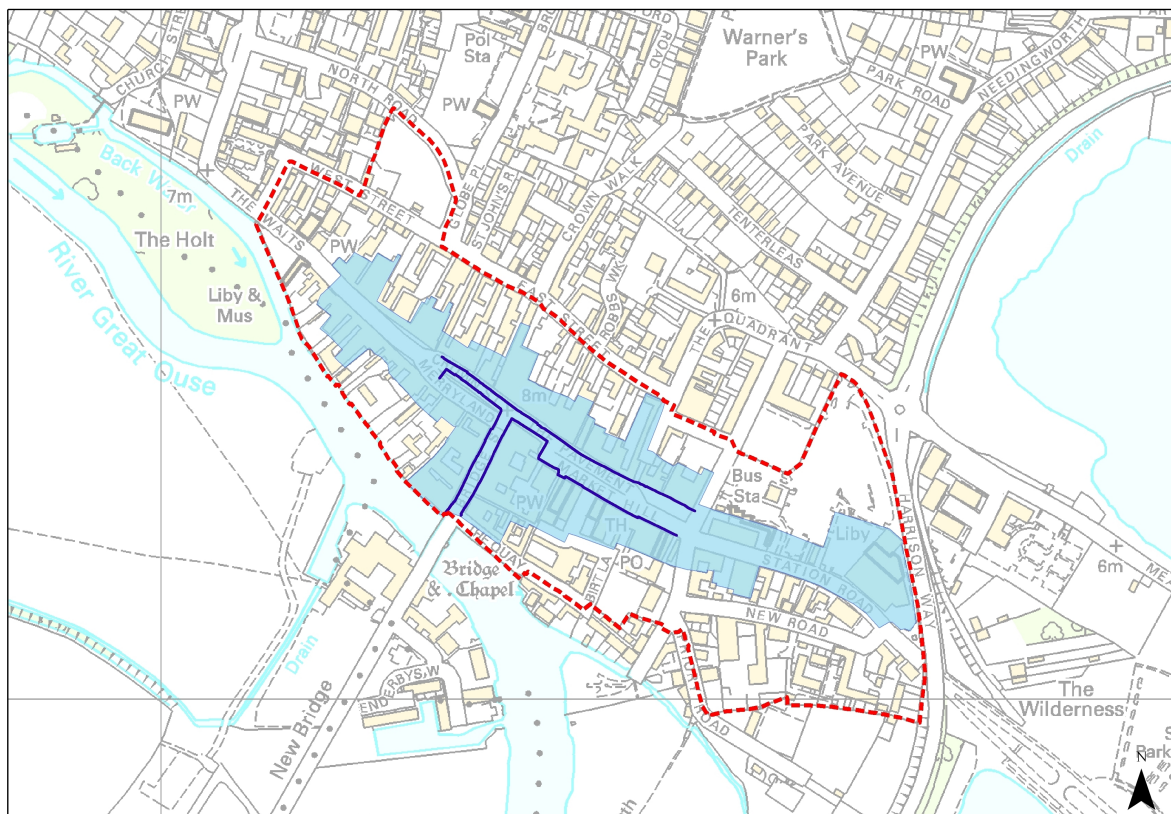
Should the town centre for Huntingdon include Huntingdon West? Retail development is allocated in the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan adopted in 2011 in the area north of George Street to the west of the town centre shown on the map above. For full details of the Potential Allocation for this area to the east of the railway please see the Potential Allocation (Mixed use) HU 19: George Street/ Ermine Street site in the Potential development sites: Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area document.

Do you think the town centre should include the proposed retail development at George Street/ Ermine Street?

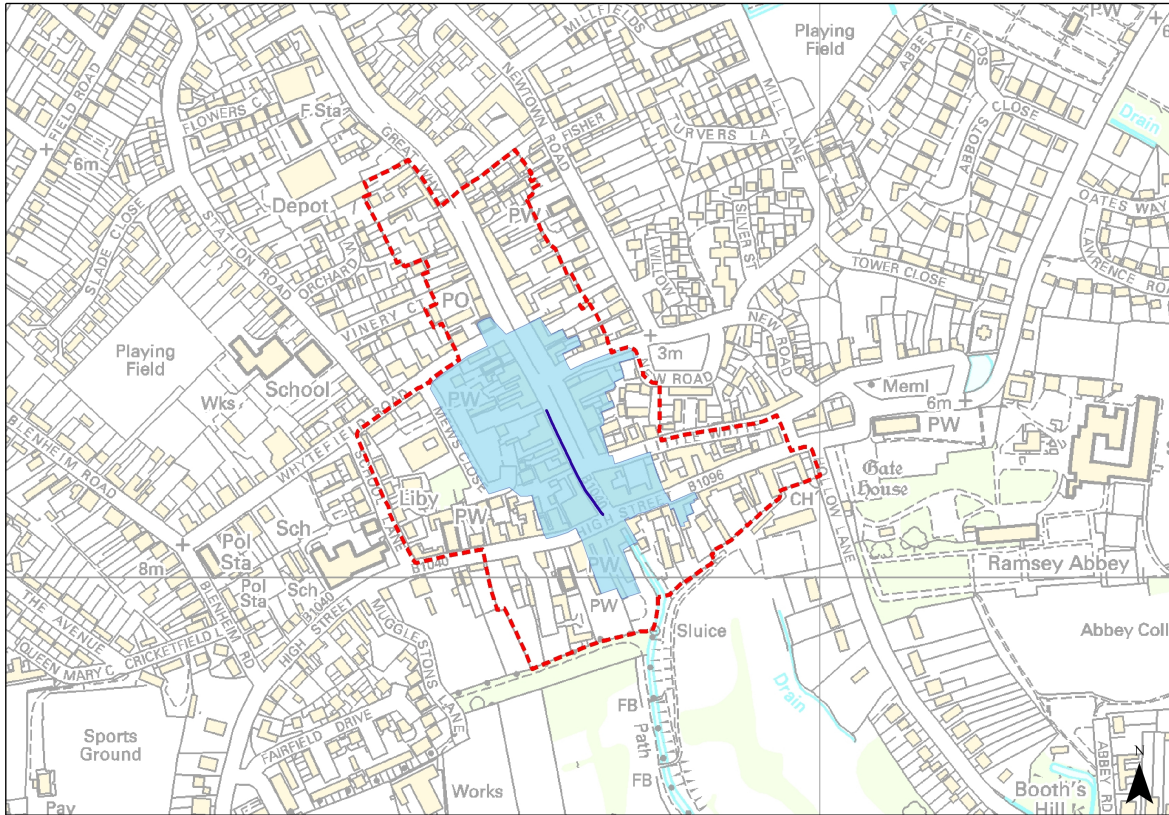
Map 18 St Neots town centre, primary shopping area and primary shopping frontages



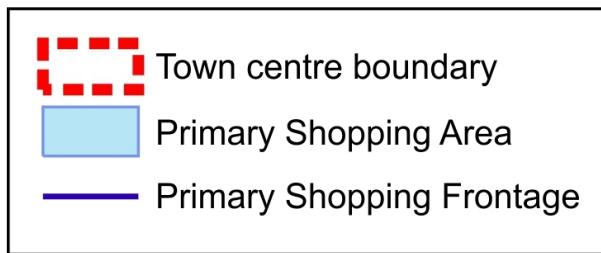
Map 19 St Ives town centre, primary shopping area and primary shopping frontages



Map 20 Ramsey town centre, primary shopping area and primary shopping frontage



Legend for town centre designations



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](#).

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 draft policy 8 in the 'Introduction and Strategy' 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.

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.

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, *neighbourhood plans* and the London Plan, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. (Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.)

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 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.

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 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 proposal 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.