

Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Contents

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1	Introduction	i
	The Purpose of this Document	i
	Consultation on the LDF	ii
	Community Engagement	ii
	Consultation on Issues and Options 2007	iii
	Sustainability Appraisal	iii
	Habitat Regulations Assessment	iv
2	Promoting Sustainable Development	1
	Design Quality	1
	Amenity	3
	Accessibility, Adaptability and Security	5
	Sustainable Travel	7
	Parking Provision	9
	Development in the Countryside	12
	Rural Buildings	15
	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	19
	Open Space and Recreational Land	21
	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	24
	Carbon Dioxide Reductions	26
	Flood Risk	29
	Water Management	32
	Air Quality Management	34
3	Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment	37
	Housing Density	37
	Housing Mix	39
	Homes in the Countryside	42
	Housing with Care	45
	Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space	49
	Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities	51
4	Supporting Prosperous Communities	54
	Office Development	54
	Industrial and Warehouse Development	56
	Redevelopment of Commercial Sites	58
	Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions	61
	Farm Diversification	64
	Retail and Leisure Development	66
	Town Centres and Retail Designations	68
	Key Local Services and Facilities	71
5	Protecting and Enhancing the Environment	74
	Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species	74
	The Great Fen Project	77
	Landscape Character	79
	Heritage Assets	81
	Public Art	85
6	Monitoring	88
7	Topics not taken forward from Issues and Options	89

Appendices		
1	Parking Provision	90
2	Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space	93
3	Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities	98
4	Established Commercial Areas	100
5	Town Centres and Retail Designations	111
6	Great Fen Project Maps	113
7	Landscape Character Areas	114
8	Conservation Area Boundaries	115
9	Organisations and Bodies Consulted	121
	Glossary	124

Contents

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1 Introduction

The Purpose of this Document

1.1 The Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD), which was previously known as the Development Control Policies DPD, will be part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will support the Core Strategy and the East of England Plan. It will set out the Council's policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire. The policies it contains will be used to assess and determine planning applications.

1.2 This document summarises the consultation process and sustainability appraisal processes so far. It details the Council's further development of issues describes how previous consultation results have influenced the development of draft policies which are presented for consideration by stakeholders. It describes the evidence and information the Council has used in its consideration of options and reasons for rejecting alternatives.

1.3 Each topic addressed is set out in the same way:

Heading	Description
Core Strategy Objectives and Policies	Set out here are the objectives and policies from the Core Strategy that the Council considers require policies in the Development Management DPD in order to facilitate delivery.
Options Development	The issues, options and questions raised in the Issues and Options consultation in May 2007.
Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal	<p>This section sets out a summary of the responses given including an indication of overall levels of support or opposition to the issues and options raised.</p> <p>Also set out is the Council's consideration of all responses received during the Issues and Options consultation period. This includes an analysis of any additional issues that were raised and any alternative approaches suggested by the Council or raised through the consultation process.</p> <p>A summary of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal is given. The appraisal was distributed for consultation alongside the Issues and Options document. This was the first stage of a systematic process that is integrated with the production of DPDs. The process assesses the extent to which emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives.</p>
Further Development of Options	This section identifies the factors that have influenced the choice of options and how the Council has come to the draft policy.
Draft Policy	The draft policy is presented. It should be noted that the wording is not considered to be finalised at this stage. Consultees should feel free to suggest alternative wording if they consider it appropriate. The wording will be changed where there are undesirable or unintended side effects and mitigation is needed or where the objectives could be more successfully achieved.
Alternative Options	This part considers alternative options that may be reasonable and the reasoning behind the discounting of alternative options where appropriate.
Summary of Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal	A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out on the draft policy. Recommendations arising from this will be taken into account and incorporated into the final version for the Proposed Submission consultation.

1 Introduction

Proposals Map (where applicable)	Where there is a need to identify areas that the policy would apply to they will be shown on the Proposals Map and is identified here.
Key sources	The table included here sets out the key sources of evidence and information that have influenced the selection of options.

1.4 In a number of cases the main decision has been whether the Development Management DPD should have a policy for a particular issue. National policy contained in PPS12: Local Spatial Planning is very clear that LDF documents should not repeat national planning policy. However where local circumstances suggest that a local interpretation of higher-level policy is appropriate, local authorities may include such approaches in their plans if they have sound evidence that it is justified.

1.5 Where the Council has evidence that a local interpretation is appropriate this is identified and has contributed to the draft policy. Where a local interpretation is not considered to be warranted because there is no or little evidence this is identified in 7 'Topics not taken forward from Issues and Options'.

Consultation on the LDF

1.6 One of the central aims of the LDF system is to improve the effectiveness of community involvement in the plan making process. When preparing LDF documents local authorities should extensively engage with stakeholders including local communities, with the minimum requirements set out in regulations ⁽¹⁾. The Council has incorporated into its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) many of the principles of community involvement that the Government has identified.

1.7 Changes were introduced in June 2008 with the revision of PPS12: Local Spatial Planning and revised regulations. These changes have increased flexibility in the methods that can be used to engage stakeholders and have reemphasised the importance of the initial stages of engagement for the LDF process.

1.8 The changes significantly affect the current stage for the Development Management DPD. Instead of the formal stage previously known as 'Preferred Options' this final stage of choosing appropriate options is now the last part of the more informal 'Issues and Options' stage. This means that the Council has more flexibility to engage with stakeholders in the most appropriate way for this document. As the Council had completed much of the preliminary work for this stage under the previous regulations, this phase will be similar to what would have happened for the Preferred Options under the old regulations. In acknowledgement that this is a substantial document and that stakeholders such as Parish and Town Councils would often appreciate more time 8 weeks is allowed for so that everyone can have a good opportunity to have their say.

Community Engagement

1.9 Following the adoption of the Local Plan amendment in 2002 the Council started work on reviewing the Local Plan. A 'key issues' consultation was carried out during the summer of 2003. This involved a consultation booklet and a series of seminars aimed at gathering local communities' views on development issues facing Huntingdonshire. The booklet and accompanying questionnaire, entitled 'Huntingdonshire Twenty16' was published in District Wide, the Council's quarterly magazine, which is distributed to every household and business in the district

1.10 The seminars were aimed at specific interest groups to facilitate discussion of the issues. The groups including representatives of the local business community, developers and house builders and youth town councils. Seminars were also held with Town and Parish Councils and environmental interest groups across the District.

1.11 The key findings from the consultation were:

1 Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and Amendment 2008

1. cafés, restaurants, pubs and places of entertainment should be encouraged in our town centres;
2. greater priority should be given to improving public transport, walking and cycle routes;
3. higher standards of insulation, energy and water efficiency should be promoted in new buildings; and
4. renewable energy production should be encouraged on suitable sites;

1.12 With the changes to the Planning System that introduced LDFs the Council were unable to take forward specific comments, but the issues raised provided a solid base on which to begin work on the LDF.

LDF Community Engagement

1.13 In response to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council commenced preparation of a combined Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD. Early in 2005 key stakeholders were consulted on the scope of potential policies to be incorporated. This was followed by consultation on Preferred Options in the summer of 2005.

1.14 The combined Core Strategy (2006) was submitted in April 2006 with a further 6 week consultation period. Unfortunately due to concerns about the limited detail for the directions of growth the Council were directed to withdraw the Core Strategy.

1.15 Government guidance was updated and it was advised that separate DPDs be produced for the Core Strategy, which sets out strategic policy and for Development Control Policies, which sets out local policies for managing development. With this in mind the Council set about preparing a separate Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPDs in 2007.

Consultation on Issues and Options 2007

1.16 To help people understand the range of matters which the Development Management DPD must tackle the Council published an 'Issues and Options Report' for consultation and comment in May 2007. Its purpose was to identify some of the issues facing the District and the choices which could be taken. It was intended to generate discussion and debate about the problems which the LDF will need to address and the opportunities for dealing with them. A list of those consulted is set out in Appendix 9 'Organisations and Bodies Consulted'. Some of the issues identified through 'Issues and Options' consultation have been recurring themes and have come through from responses received to the 'key issues' consultation and consultations for the withdrawn Core Strategy.

1.17 The Issues and Options document sought people's views on the issues the Council had identified and which options they preferred. They were also asked why they had chosen particular options and whether there were any improvements that could be made. Overall, respondents were generally supportive of the Council's proposed options in relation to the issues identified. More detail is set out in the topic sections of this document.

Sustainability Appraisal

1.18 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is required for all Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) which implements the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, requires SEA of a wide range of plans including LDFs. SEA and SA are very closely linked and are undertaken as a single process for LDF documents.

1.19 The District Council, working in partnership with Scott Wilson, previously produced a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report in 2005. In order to reflect updated government guidance⁽²⁾ and to try to simplify the process, the Council produced an updated Scoping Report in September 2007.

2 ODPM, 2005, Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents

1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1.20 The Scoping Report provides the basis for developing sustainability appraisal framework including the objectives that each policy is assessed against as part of the appraisal process. It sets out baseline information and indicators that have been drawn up from a review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies.

Initial Sustainability Appraisal

1.21 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal (Initial SA) of the Issues and Options Report used the original Scoping Report and sustainability objectives and was published for consultation alongside the Issues and Options Report. It assessed each proposed option against the sustainability objectives. Detail of the relevant conclusions of the Initial SA are included in the topic sections of this document.

Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal

1.22 The Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal assessed the sustainability of the draft policies. Each policy was assessed against the 18 SA objectives identified in the updated Scoping Report. The assessment process was carried out in house by members of the Development Plans Team and was reviewed internally. In some cases certain mitigation measures, usually rewording of policies, have been suggested. These will be taken forward into the Development Management DPD Proposed Submission document.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

1.23 Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive ⁽³⁾ require Appropriate Assessment to be carried out for plans and projects that are likely to affect a Natura 2000 site ⁽⁴⁾. Appropriate Assessment (AA) is a process which assesses the implications and potential affects of plans such as the LDF on the conservation objectives of the site, and determines whether or not policies or proposals will significantly affect the integrity of these objectives.

1.24 A Habitats Regulation Assessment will be required prior to submission of the Development Management DPD. The first stage of this is to complete a Screening Assessment which will identify whether significant effects are likely to impact upon the objectives of SPAs and SACs. This stage will be carried out following consultation on this document. If no significant effects are identified then no further assessment is required. However, if the Screening Assessment identifies a potential for significant effects then a full Appropriate Assessment will be carried out. The Appropriate Assessment will identify appropriate mitigation measures which will be incorporated into the Proposed Submission document.

3 Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

4 Natura 2000 sites are those identified as sites of Community importance under the Habitats Directive or classified as special protection areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive 79/409/EEC

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Design Quality

2.1 Developing a policy for design quality supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.

10. To conserve and enhance the special character and separate identities of Huntingdonshire's villages and market towns.

11. To ensure that design of new development is of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness

2.2 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire.

Options Development

2.3 The initial issues and options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Design Quality

Issue: The need to promote a high standard of design on development.

Option: Policies will indicate that proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design and will set out criteria which will be used to assess this. Policies will also require that planning applications will be accompanied by sufficient supporting information to demonstrate how design-related considerations have been addressed.

Question: What criteria would you like to see included in this policy?

Street Scene

Issue: The need to create a high quality public realm.

Option: Policies will indicate that proposals should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of streets and public spaces and will set out criteria which will be used to assess this.

Question: What criteria would you like to see included in this policy?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.4 A respondent said that they thought development and restoration must be sensitive to the local vernacular of the area. There were four comments made on the proposed option with one supporting, one objecting and two making observations. One respondent suggested that the second sentence is superfluous as it would repeat national guidance.

2.5 A number of criteria were suggested including the need to reflect the local environment and maximise protection of conservation areas and listed buildings; the need to use recognised sustainable building standards such as the Code for Sustainable Homes and follow advice contained in national guidance such as the Manual for Streets; use of Town and Village Design Statements and criteria to ensure that development respects their context visually and historically through thorough analysis. Criteria which respondents considered covered by requirements for Design and Access Statements were thought unnecessary. One respondent sought an explanation on how policies relating to design, street scene and transport impacts would relate to the requirement to produce Design and Access Statements.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

2.6 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option put forward in the Issues and Options document is in line with policy on sustainable communities and is supported by more specific material elsewhere in the document.

Further Development of Options

2.7 The Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment (2007) Supplementary Planning Documents provide detailed information on materials used locally, the character of development across the District and an assessment of the landform and geology which contributes to the materials used and the context of development. These two documents are considered to provide the evidence that a locally specific approach is appropriate.

2.8 The draft policy is intended to ensure the design of development responds appropriately to the local environment. It will work alongside requirements to produce Design and Access Statements. Well designed development responds to its context. The draft policy therefore identifies the Huntingdonshire Design Guide and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment and seeks to ensure local characteristics are enhanced.

2.9 The policy will also work within the framework set by policy CS1 of the Submission Core Strategy which emphasises the importance of sustainable energy and water use. This policy in turn works within the framework set by policies ENG1 and WAT1 of the East of England Plan.

Draft Policy: Design Quality

All development proposals will demonstrate consideration of the character and appearance of the surrounding environment and the potential impact of the proposal, at the design stage, by:

- i. responding appropriately to the design principles set out in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) or successor documents;
- ii. responding to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding townscape and landscape as identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents;
- iii. incorporating a clear network of routes that provide a good level of connectivity with the wider settlement and assist navigation through the proposed development;
- iv. incorporating (and/or connecting to) a network of open spaces and green corridors that provide opportunities for recreation and biodiversity;
- v. considering the requirements of users and residents that are likely to occur during the lifetime of the development and incorporating features that will promote social cohesion and inclusion;
- vi. incorporating indigenous plant species as part of landscaping schemes where appropriate; and
- vii. incorporating servicing and recycling requirements as part of a comprehensive design solution, which minimises visual intrusion.

Alternative Options

2.10 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

2.11 The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because it would not recognise the particular character of the townscapes and landscapes in the District. While the importance of design is recognised throughout national planning policy and guidance and much is done at a

national level by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment to improve the design of our built environment there is a clear role for design and townscape and landscape guidance at a local level. The Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) clearly identify a combination of characteristics which are unique to Huntingdonshire. It is therefore the Council's view that a specific design response is required.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.12 The draft policy is considered to meet a number of the SA objectives and is therefore sustainable. This draft policy is in line with government guidance on sustainable communities and is supported by other strategic policies in the emerging Core Strategy eg sustainable development and the spatial strategy. Explicit reference could be included to settlement character in point ii to help protect against inappropriate development that does not respect settlement character or context.

Table 1 Key Sources for Design Quality

National	Urban Design Compendium, English Partnerships/ Housing Corporation (2000) Urban Design Compendium 2, English Partnerships/ Housing Corporation (2007) Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation Tools, DCLG (2005), Environmental Quality in Spatial Planning, Countryside Agency, English Heritage and English Nature (2005), Manual for Streets, DfT (2008) Making design policy work: How to deliver good design through your local development framework, CABI (2005)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV7, ENG1
Local	Local Plan policy: En25, Local Plan Alteration policy: HL5 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: New and upgraded homes and other buildings which are well designed, well maintained and contribute to lowering carbon emissions, Submission Core Strategy policy: CS1 Huntingdonshire Design Guide, HDC (2007) Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment, HDC (2007)

Amenity

2.13 Developing a policy for amenity supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 8.** To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.
- 10.** To conserve and enhance the special character and separate identities of Huntingdonshire's villages and market towns.
- 11.** To ensure that design of new development is of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness

2.14 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire.

Options Development

2.15 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues and options:

Issue: The need to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Option: Policies will indicate that development proposals should not have an unreasonable impact on living conditions for existing or future occupiers in terms of access to daylight and sunlight, privacy, noise and disturbance, fumes and other pollutants and safety and security.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.16 No comments were received on this subject. Community consultation did not identify any alternative options.

2.17 An important role of the planning system, established by PPS1, is to protect the public interest by preventing harm to people and places potentially affected by development. Criteria can be used to judge whether a proposal could have a detrimental impact on amenity. It is not covered adequately by national guidance and so a local policy is justified.

2.18 The initial sustainability appraisal supported the option as such a policy would preserve elements of the status quo without harming the local economy in such a way as to deter development.

Further Development of Options

2.19 This draft policy sets out the criteria that will be used to assess whether a proposal will have an adverse impact upon amenity. Further guidance on how this can be achieved is contained in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide.

Draft Policy: Amenity

Development proposals should not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of an existing or future occupier within or nearby the site in terms of:

- i. Access to daylight and sunlight
- ii. Privacy
- iii. Noise and disturbance
- iv. Air quality, light spillage and other forms of pollution, including contamination of land, groundwater or surface water
- v. Safety and security
- vi. The resultant physical relationships being oppressive or overbearing

Alternative Options

2.20 Although established as a key role of the planning system the protection of amenity is only covered in general terms in PPS1. The Council considers amenity to be an important issue and while it has much in common with design, it is considered important to see it as a distinct issue. It is therefore considered appropriate to establish criteria that can be used to assess the aspects of amenity that are important locally. The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is considered inadequate.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.21 The draft policy is considered to be a key development control policy designed to protect public interest by preventing harm to people and places potentially affected by development. It addresses a number of issues which all impact upon quality of life and is inherently sustainable. The draft policy addresses social aspects of sustainable development as well as the environmental aspects, for example, protecting against harm from excessive noise and disturbance. It is not within the remit of this particular policy to consider economic issues.

Table 2 Key Sources for Amenity

National	Safer Places, DCLG/ Home Office (2004)
Regional	East of England Plan policy ENV7
Local	Local Plan policies: H30, H31, H34, H37, H38 Submission Core Strategy policy: CS1 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)

Accessibility, Adaptability and Security

2.22 Developing a policy for accessibility, adaptability and security supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.
- 5. To strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping leisure and tourism.
- 13. To secure developments which are accessible to all potential users, and which minimises risks to health as a result of crime (or fear of crime), flooding or pollution and climate change.

2.23 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire.

Options Development

2.24 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues and options:

Issue: The need to ensure places are accessible and safe to use for all groups in society.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to ensure proposals are appropriately located, enable easy access and minimise the risk of fear of crime.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.25 No responses were received on this subject. No alternatives were identified through the consultation process.

2.26 The initial sustainability appraisal supported the proposed option as it was considered to be sustainable. A draft policy will need to be worded carefully to show how providing for access is reflected in the design of developments complementing other policies on design, landscape and other transport matters.

Further Development of Options

2.27 National planning policy requires local planning authorities to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking, and cycling. This is important for all, but especially for those who do not have regular use of a car, and to promote social inclusion. A key aspect of planning for sustainable development is ensuring that places are safe to use for all groups in society. New development must also address the specific requirements of all potential user groups, such as people with disabilities, women, the young, the elderly and minority communities and be capable of adapting to their changing needs and circumstances. A criteria based approach provides the most appropriate way of indicating how these matters can be considered in the development process.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

2.28 Major development should consider an appropriate mix of uses and facilities (such as the availability of local shops and child care facilities) dependent on potential user groups, as well as the design of individual buildings and the layout of external areas. All such decisions will need to be informed by early consultation with potential users.

2.29 Our ageing society poses one of the greatest challenges. By 2026 older people will account for almost half (48 per cent) of the increase in the total number of households, resulting in 2.4 million more older households nationally than there are today. Including a requirement in the draft policy for development proposals to include elements of Lifetime Homes and Lifetime Neighbourhoods will help to ensure that there is enough appropriate housing available in future and that older people do not feel trapped in their own homes because their neighbourhoods are not suitably designed. The importance of taking action now is considered in detail in Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, DCLG/ DH/ DWP (2008).

2.30 Personal safety and social inclusion can be improved by careful consideration of the design of open areas. Careful selection of materials and design specification can also make significant differences to personal security, the fear of crime and the durability of development.

Draft Policy: Accessibility, Adaptability and Security

The location and design of new development should:

- i. enable ease of access to, around and within the proposal for all potential users, including those with impaired mobility;
- ii. maintain the existing network of rights of way and other routes with established public access;
- iii. maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- iv. incorporate appropriate and conveniently located facilities that address the needs of potential user groups;
- v. maximise the adaptability of buildings and spaces by incorporating elements of Lifetime Neighbourhoods and Lifetime Homes principles; and
- vi. minimise the extent to which users feel at risk from crime by:
 - a. Incorporating elements of Secured By Design ⁽⁵⁾ or similar standards;
 - b. enabling passive surveillance of public spaces and parking;
 - c. distinguishing clearly between public and private areas, and maximising the extent to which spaces are controlled (or perceived to be controlled) by occupiers; and
 - d. incorporating appropriate security measures, such as lighting, CCTV and hard and soft landscape treatments.

Alternative Options

2.31 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

2.32 The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because the combination of issues for Huntingdonshire is considered to warrant a locally specific policy.

5 See <http://www.securedbydesign.com/index.aspx>

2.33 The approach to security is considered to be important and the solutions that improve the feeling of safety will have much to do with successful design solutions. Reference to established standards such as Secured by Design is considered a reasonable approach as it provides consistency for developers as there are no exceptional local concerns justifying development of separate local standards. As it is considered appropriate to have a policy for design it is considered worthwhile to address the specific aspects of security too.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.34 The draft policy is considered to be sustainable and adequately reflects how access needs should be reflected in the design of developments. It will be complemented by the need for Design and Access Statements to accompany most applications for planning permission.

Table 3 Key Sources for Accessibility, Adaptability and Security

National	Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, DCLG/ DH/ DWP (2008) Safer Places - The Planning System and Crime Prevention, ODPM/ Home office (2004) Diversity and Equality in Planning, DCLG (2005) Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation Tools, DCLG (2005)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: T7, ENV7
Local	Local Plan policies: T18, En24 Local Plan Alteration policy: HL5 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Accessible services for all, objective: Develop improved access to services and facilities by community based transport Core Strategy policy: CS1 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)

Sustainable Travel

2.35 Developing a policy for sustainable travel supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

2.36 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement.

Options Development

2.37 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

2.38 Rights of way and other public routes

Issue: The need to maintain and enhance rights of way and other routes.

Option: Policies will indicate that development proposals should maintain, and where possible, enhance the network of rights of way and other routes.

Transport impacts

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Issue: The need to ensure safe access to the transport network, to prevent unacceptable impacts on the transport network and to promote sustainable forms of transport.

Option: Policies will set out criteria for assessing development proposals and will require an all modes transport assessment or transport statement.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.39 There was only one response supporting the option on rights of way and commenting that links for sustainable modes should be introduced between each of the major environmental enhancement schemes within the district.

2.40 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the options proposed were sustainable and in line with current national policy and guidance. The options were considered to contribute to the promotion of a shift to more sustainable modes of travel.

Further Development of Options

2.41 Government policy is to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes rather than to restrict vehicle ownership. The availability of safe, coherent and easily used cycle routes can have a significant impact on people's choice of transport mode.

2.42 More than half of all trips in Huntingdonshire are under 2 miles in length; for many people walking or cycling are a feasible alternative to using the car for such journeys. The Government's Manual for Streets, DCLG/ DfT (2007) is a valuable source of guidance and should be consulted when beginning to plan how new development will link with the existing network of streets cycle and foot paths. The draft policy will help facilitate a positive cycling and walking experience and contribute to objectives for the pursuit of healthy life styles.

Draft Policy: Sustainable Travel

Wherever possible development proposals should take the opportunity to extend, link or improve existing routes where this enables one or more of the following benefits to be delivered:

- i. improved access to the countryside and links to strategic green infrastructure provision by sustainable modes;
- ii. new circular routes and connections between local and long-distance footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes;
- iii. the provision of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to services and facilities;
- iv. the creation of coherent links between isolated parts of the the cycle and footpath network that promote ease of use; or
- v. improved connections with public transport interchanges.

Development proposals should not give rise to traffic that would compromise the function of the local or strategic road networks both in terms of volume and type of traffic generated.

Alternative Options

2.43 Following consultation the options available were identified as:

1. Rely on national and regional policy and guidance.
2. Draw up a locally specific policy that recognises the particular characteristics of Huntingdonshire.

2.44 Drawing up a more stringent local policy that requires development proposals to maintain, and where possible, enhance the network of rights of way and other routes has been identified as a reasonable alternative. However, this option would not recognise the rural nature of much of the district, the availability and suitability of sustainable transport modes and the continuing high car ownership.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.45 The draft policy is considered to be sustainable and in line with national guidance. It provides a locally specific policy aimed at encouraging people to travel by sustainable modes. This will help reduce congestion and improve air quality which are issues for the District.

Table 4 Key Sources for Sustainable Travel

National	Manual for Streets, DCLG/ DfT (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policies T1, T2, T3, T4, T6, T7, T8, T9, T13
Local	Local Plan policies: T10, T11, T18, T19, T20, T21 Sustainable Community Strategy objective: Appropriate level of managed car parking Submission Core Strategy Policy CS1, CS9 Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (appendix 8 St Neots and Huntingdon Market Town Strategies), Cambridgeshire County Council, (2006)

Parking Provision

2.46 Developing a policy for parking provision supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

2.47 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire.

Options Development

2.48 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to promote appropriate levels of car parking and to encourage cycling through the provision of bicycle parking.

Option: Policies will set out that development proposals should limit car parking and provide cycle parking and disabled parking to levels set out in the Council's parking standards.

Question: Car parking and cycle parking standards will be produced using the interim standards that accompany the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and benchmarking with other local authority standards. Do you agree this is an appropriate approach?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.49 Of the four respondents who commented on the option proposed three were in favour of the option as worded.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

2.50 Eighteen responses were received concerning the approach of using the interim standards. Five thought it was an appropriate approach and six objected. Other respondents observed that provision needs to be sufficiently flexible to recognise the difference between 'town and country' to avoid inappropriate forms of development in rural areas. One suggested that in areas with poor public transport accessibility the maximum standards should be treated as minimum. Others were concerned that the Interim Parking Standards were out of date and do not take into account latest government advice in PPS3 and PPS6.

2.51 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the option proposed at the Issues and Options stage was in accordance with national guidance and the levels of provision were largely unchanged from 2001. This option represents a balance between the competing objectives of promoting more sustainable modes of transport and efficiently using land versus providing for the local circumstances of high car ownership.

Further Development of Options

2.52 PPS3 (2006) advocates that residential parking policies should consider expected levels of car ownership balanced with the need to promote good design and make efficient use of land. The 2001 Census show that Huntingdonshire's car ownership levels are high; with over 43% of households having 2 or more cars compared to just under 30% of households in England. The distribution of this varies: 34.8% of households living in Market Town wards had 2 or more cars compared to 47.9% of households living outside the Market Towns. Although the Census is now dated it remains the most comprehensive data source on this issue and the proportions are not expected to change substantially.

2.53 The availability of car and cycle parking can have a significant impact on people's choice of transport. Careful control of the availability of car parking spaces in new non-residential developments can help to reduce car use and associated fuel consumption, pollution and congestion in areas where alternative travel forms are available. Lower levels of car parking provision can also facilitate higher development densities, with land that would otherwise have been used for parking being used for buildings or for other beneficial design elements such as open space. However, it is important to ensure adequate parking provision for people with impaired mobility for whom adequate parking in convenient locations is essential.

2.54 The availability of secure places to park cycles is an important factor that influences people's choice to cycle. Setting minimum cycle parking levels is important to promote cycling. In residential developments cycle storage should be at least as convenient as access to car parking, as identified in the Manual for Streets, DCLG/ DfT (2007). The draft policy will help facilitate a positive cycling experience and contribute to objectives for the pursuit of a healthy life style.

2.55 The maximum car parking provision is more restrictive for dwellings in town centres than for other areas. This recognises that town centres are generally better provided with public transport options and have services and facilities within walking distance.

2.56 Encouraging the shared use of car parking spaces, by taking advantage of activities where the peak demands do not coincide, will help reduce the overall number of spaces required and hence the amount of land-take involved. However, the proximity of public car parking in town centres should not result in the relaxation of the parking provided for new residential development where this would result in public spaces not being available for their intended purpose at times of peak demand.

2.57 Development with no or very limited car parking provision will only be supported where it is clear that accessibility for mobility impaired users and servicing is satisfactorily accommodated and there is clear justification for such an approach having consideration for the availability of alternative transport modes, highway safety and the preferences of potential users.

2.58 For residential development the level of provision should be carefully considered. A combination of allocated and unallocated spaces can give greater flexibility, as identified in Residential Car Parking Research, DCLG, (2007). The practicalities of allowing on-street parking should be considered as part of the overall design of developments.

2.59 The tables in Appendix 1 'Parking Provision' are based upon the Council's Interim Parking Standards (2001). They take into account national guidance where appropriate. However, some adjustments have been made as a result of:

- i. aligning the standards with relevant sections of the Use Classes Order; and
- ii. considering the particular characteristics of car ownership, accessibility to and the provision of services and facilities and considering standards employed by other authorities with a similar spatial structure to Huntingdonshire.

Draft Policy: Parking Provision

Development proposals will be considered acceptable where:

- a. the design of the proposal incorporates provision of car and cycle parking that accords with the levels set out in Appendix 1 'Parking Provision';
- b. the minimum levels of car parking for people with impaired mobility as set out are achieved; and
- c. parking facilities are shared where location and patterns of use permit.

Car free development or development proposals that make very limited car parking provision will only be supported where there is clear justification for the level of provision proposed having consideration for the availability of alternative transport modes, highway safety and the preferences of potential users. In all cases accessibility for mobility impaired users and servicing will be required.

Details of how highway safety has been considered, when deciding on the level of parking, should be submitted with development proposals as part of design and access statements.

Alternative Options

2.60 Following consultation two alternative options were identified:

1. Lower maximum parking provision levels to place a greater emphasis on ensuring efficient use of land.
2. A more flexible approach to better meet the needs of continuing high car ownership levels and limited accessibility in the rural parts of the District.

2.61 Lower maximum parking provision levels for all uses to place a greater emphasis on ensuring efficient use of land would not recognise the rural nature of much of the district, the availability of sustainable transport modes and the continuing high car ownership. The second approach is interpreted in the draft policy and standards put forward in Appendix 1 Parking Provision.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.62 The draft policy proposes car/cycle parking standards that are consistent with PPS3 and PPG13. These national standards have been used to create a locally specific policy. As the District is largely rural some people are reliant on cars to access facilities and amenities. It will be important to monitor this policy to ensure that it is not counter productive and discourage people visiting eg town centres and shops as a result of perceived parking constraints. It is important to ensure adequate monitoring proposals are in place for this policy to assess impact.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Table 5 Key Sources for Parking Provision

National	Manual for Streets, DCLG/ DfT (2007) Residential Car Parking Research, DCLG, (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policies T4, T9, T14
Local	Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (appendix 8 St Neots and Huntingdon Market Town Strategies), Cambridgeshire County Council, (2006) Local Plan policies: T20, T24, T25, T26, T27, T28 Sustainable Community Strategy objective: Appropriate level of managed car parking Submission Core Strategy Policy CS1 HDC Interim Parking Standards 2001 (amended 2007)

Development in the Countryside

2.63 Developing a policy for development in the countryside supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.
4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
7. To maintain and enhance the availability of key services and facilities including communications services.
8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.
10. To conserve and enhance the special character and separate identities of Huntingdonshire's villages and market towns.

2.64 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS2 Strategic Housing Development and CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy.

Options Development

2.65 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to conserve the character of the countryside.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to restrict development outside the settlements.

Question: What criteria should be used to assess proposals in the countryside?

Question: Should settlement boundaries be drawn or should the built-up framework criteria be used for a) Market Towns, b) Key Service Centres, c) Smaller Settlements?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.66 Of the twenty five responses received, 13 objected to the use of criteria, 2 indicated support and the remaining 10 made observations and suggestions. The perceived certainty and clarity provided by settlement boundaries was a recurrent theme. Alternative approaches were put forward such as having a mix of settlement boundaries for Market Towns and Key Service Centres and using the built up area for Smaller Settlements or other variations for the different types of settlements. One respondent also suggested that the option was contrary to PPS7.

2.67 One respondent considered that the policy should reflect the need to provide some development in the countryside to accommodate necessary tourism and visitor facilities adjacent to key environmental assets such as the Nene and Ouse Valleys. Others suggested that the criteria should allow only essential development for agriculture or countryside recreation and that criteria in PPS1 should be followed. It was also suggested that criteria would need to consider not just the location of rural development but the nature of that development too.

2.68 31 out of 33 respondents clearly identified a preference in response to the question of whether settlement boundaries should be drawn or whether the built-up framework criteria should be used for Market Towns, Key Service Centres or Smaller Settlements. There was equal support for settlement boundaries for Market Towns and Key Service Centres and for the retention of settlement boundaries around all settlements. 6 respondents indicated a preference for using a criteria based policy based on the built up area for all settlements. Concern was expressed that the use of a criteria based policy and the built up framework would be subjective and open to interpretation whereas settlement boundaries would provide certainty and clarity. However, other respondents suggested that using a criteria based policy of the built up area would give flexibility.

2.69 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the option is consistent with national guidance and seeks to protect against inappropriate development in the countryside. The alternative approaches of defining settlements on the proposals map or combining the two approaches have been carefully considered. Using the criteria based policy of the built-up area for all settlements is considered to be the most appropriate approach to protecting the countryside whilst providing opportunities for enabling development to occur where appropriate and where criteria are met.

Further Development of Options

2.70 It is national policy that development in the countryside should be strictly controlled, in order to conserve its character and natural resources. The draft policy indicates the limited circumstances in which development outside settlements will be allowed taking into account the particular characteristics of Huntingdonshire's rural economy. It seeks to prevent unnecessary development in the countryside to protect its quality and distinctiveness but make reasonable allowance for the needs of rural businesses, including tourism, to thrive. The range of uses set out here are all within the scope of uses allowed for within PPS7 and reflect the nature Huntingdonshire's rural economy. Additionally a number of established uses on specific sites and operational development associated with the specific use will be considered favourable in these named locations.

2.71 The Council's main concern in deciding on the approach to be taken is that with delineated boundaries there has been a perception that any form of development on any land within the boundary would be acceptable, despite the Local Plan stating that there is no presumption in favour of development within the boundaries. Delineated boundaries also can give rise to over-development where every piece of land within the boundary is developed, thus damaging the loose knit character of some settlements. It is acknowledged that there will be a few proposals which, because of their location, are difficult to determine with the criteria approach. However, it is the Council's view that a criteria based approach would provide both flexibility and protection against inappropriate development. Application of the criteria should result in development which is more appropriate to individual settlement form and character.

2.72 The distinction between settlements and areas of open countryside has been established by defining what constitutes the built-up area of Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements. It excludes loose knit and sporadic developments and agricultural buildings that often exist on the edge of settlements which do not form part of the continuous built up area and provide a transition to the open countryside.

2.73 Hamlets are considered to be part of the countryside where small scale development would not be appropriate as it would adversely affect their character and that of the countryside in which they sit. A note defining hamlets as loose groups of up to 30 dwellings, has been added to the justification of the policy.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

2.74 The Core Strategy sets out, in policy CS5, the Council's approach to the development of rural exceptions affordable housing. Limited proposals for homes for rural workers and affordable housing in line with policy CS5 are important ways to facilitate meeting the housing needs of the district's residents and are therefore included in this draft policy.

Draft Policy: Development in the Countryside

Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements are defined in Core Strategy policy CS3. Development will be limited to the built up area of these settlements in order to protect and enhance their character.

The built up area is defined as the buildings and curtilages that make up the main part of the settlement. Excluded from the definition of the built-up area are:

- a. individual buildings and areas of sporadic, dispersed or intermittent ribbon development that are clearly detached from the main part of the settlement;
- b. gardens, paddocks and other undeveloped land in the curtilage of buildings on the edge of the settlement, especially where the land relates more to the surrounding countryside than to the built up area of the settlement;
- c. woodland areas, hedges and other natural and semi-natural features that define or help to define a boundary to the settlement;
- d. agricultural buildings and associated land on the edge of the settlement where they do not form a logical part of the settlement or are of significantly different character; and
- e. areas of outdoor recreation and other formal open spaces on the edge of the settlements where their value as a facility for the settlement or their amenity means that they are desirable to be maintained in their current use.

All land outside of the built-up areas is defined as countryside. Development in the countryside, other than that permitted by the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended or successor documents, will be restricted to the following forms of development as provided for in relevant sections of the Local Development Framework:

- i. essential operational development for agriculture, horticulture or forestry;
- ii. development that is essential for the purposes of outdoor recreation, equine-related activities, mineral extraction, waste management facilities, infrastructure provision and national defence;
- iii. development required for new or existing outdoor leisure and recreational opportunities where a countryside location is justified;
- iv. exploitation of renewable energy sources;
- v. the alteration, replacement or change of use of, or extension to, existing buildings;
- vi. conservation or enhancement of specific features or sites of established landscape, wildlife, archaeological, geological, historic or architectural value;
- vii. the erection of outbuildings ancillary or incidental to existing dwellings;
- viii. limited and specific forms of residential, business and tourism development; and
- ix. land allocated for particular purposes.

In addition to these types of development, operational development at the following sites will be considered favourably:

Conington Airfield;

Littlehey Prison;

Wood Green Animal Shelter; and

Huntingdon Racecourse

Development proposals in the above categories will be required to fulfil further criteria as detailed by policies of this and other development plan documents.

Alternative Options

2.75 Following the consultation three alternative options have been identified:

1. The use of settlement boundaries for all settlements
2. The use of a criteria based policy for all settlements
3. A mix of settlement boundaries and a criteria based policy, with settlement boundaries used for the Market Towns and Key Service Centres and the criteria based policy used for Smaller Settlements.

2.76 The option of using defined settlement boundaries for all settlements is not considered to be appropriate because of the concerns the Council has. The main concern is that with delineated boundaries there has been a perception that any form of development on any land within the boundary would be acceptable. The Council does not see how this concern can be overcome as despite provision in the Local Plan, which states that there is no presumption in favour of development within the boundaries this perception persists.

2.77 Also of concern to the Council is that the loose knit character of some settlements will be damaged due to delineated boundaries giving rise to over-development, where every piece of land within the boundary is developed. It is therefore the Council's view that a criteria based approach would provide both flexibility and protection against inappropriate development.

2.78 The option to use a mix of delineated boundaries and criteria based policy with boundaries used to delineate the Market Towns and Key Service Centres and a criteria based policy used for Smaller Settlements is not considered to be appropriate. A combination of set boundaries and a criteria approach is considered to be potentially confusing. The issues identified for delineated boundaries would remain for Towns and Key Service Centres.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.79 The policy is considered to be sustainable and consistent with national policy. Restricting development outside of the built up areas should help protect open countryside. There is a cumulative effect insofar as restrictions in the countryside may result in development pressures in settlements. Such pressures will need to be adequately managed through other development control policies such as design quality to ensure that development is appropriate for its context and location.

Table 6 Key Sources for Development in the Countryside

Local	Local Plan policy En17 Local Plan Alteration policy: AH5 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: To make the best use of land Submission Core Strategy policy: CS2, CS3
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Rural Buildings

2.80 Developing a policy for rural buildings supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
7. To maintain and enhance the availability of key services and facilities including communications services.
8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.

2.81 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy and CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

2.82 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure that re-use and redevelopment of rural buildings is appropriate for the building itself and the area in which it lies.

Option: Policies will set out that re-use and redevelopment of rural buildings for business purposes will be preferable and will set out criteria against which which proposals will be assessed.

Question: What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.83 There was a suggestion that employment or tourism uses are unlikely to be viable in remote locations whereas residential use could be. The policy should also allow for residential conversions in situations where business or tourism use would not be compatible with the principles of sustainable development, in particular in terms of traffic generation. An alternative approach was suggested of setting a floorspace threshold whereby buildings over a certain size should not be considered appropriate for business use and allowing conversion to residential use without the need to demonstrate lack of commercial interest.

2.84 An alternative approach was suggested through the Issues and Options consultation of setting a floorspace threshold whereby buildings over a certain size should not be considered appropriate for business use and allowing conversion to residential use without the need to demonstrate lack of commercial interest. This would potentially increase the amount of residential development in the countryside. It could restrict the supply of premises available for business use as re-use for residential purposes will be more profitable in many circumstances.

2.85 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option is sustainable; redevelopment inevitably creates impacts and can increase traffic in the countryside, therefore it must be sensitive to local character if proposals for farm and rural diversification are to be pursued. If replacement for housing is considered appropriate priority should be given to affordable housing.

Further Development of Options

2.86 The Government supports the reuse and replacement of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives, as set out in PPS7: Sustainable Development in the Countryside.

2.87 The countryside in Huntingdonshire contains large numbers of farm buildings, mills and other structures, often of historic or visual interest that make an important contribution to the character of the area. Many of these buildings can be re-used for a variety of purposes, but it is important to ensure that any proposal is appropriate both for the building itself and for the area in which it is located. Re-use or replacement will not be permitted where

a building requires substantial work to maintain it in its current use, is in a ruinous condition or only its site remains, as this would be tantamount to constructing a new building in the open countryside where the previous structure has, in effect, disappeared (or is in the process of doing so).

2.88 An economic reuse is considered preferable in most cases, however there will be circumstances in which converting a building for business purposes is not possible, or is undesirable, for instance because of the volume of traffic that might be generated. The draft policy sets out criteria to judge proposals in these circumstances where the replacement of buildings is proposed. The draft policy responds positively to representations seeking residential conversion where business or tourism use would generate excessive traffic and therefore conflict with the principles of sustainable development.

2.89 Where residential use is proposed applicants should demonstrate that reuse or replacement for business purposes is not viable or would generate significant vehicle movements that would be inappropriate in that location or that would be likely to have a significantly adverse effect on highway safety.

2.90 Additional safeguards have been included to ensure that the re-use and replacement of buildings does not result in an increased scale of development or the loss of buildings that should be retained. Similarly proposals for replacement are required to make a clear improvement to the surrounding area so that the impact on the landscape.

2.91 Limits on retail proposals in order to sustain the vitality and viability of existing village services and limit unnecessary car-borne trips. However, farm shops can make a useful contribution to diversification schemes, where re-use or replacement is preferable to new buildings. Such proposals will be permitted provided their scale is limited and there is no conflict with other policies in the Local Development Framework.

2.92 For the re-use of modern farm buildings particular regard will be had to other policies in the development plan concerning the impact of development on its surroundings, including the scale and nature of traffic generated. These considerations apply to all proposals, but are particularly relevant to the re-use of modern buildings in the countryside, as many are very large and of utilitarian or industrial appearance rather than more traditional forms.

Draft Policy: Rural Buildings

Reuse of Rural Buildings for Business Purposes

Proposals for the reuse of buildings for business purposes, including tourist accommodation, equine related activities, homes for rural workers and farm related retailing, will be considered favourably where:

- i. the building is substantially intact or of established historic or architectural value and is of permanent and substantial construction;
- ii. the building is not in an isolated or remote location;
- iii. the proposal does not include substantial alteration of the building;
- iv. the proposal does not involve an increase in floorspace.
- v. the employment generated is of a scale and use that is consistent with the specific rural location;
- vi. proposals involving significant numbers of employees or visitors is, or can be made to be, accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, to a Key Service Centre or Market Town;
- vii. retail uses that involve the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding, are less than 250m² (gross) in floorspace; and
- viii. the proposal would not involve a substantial increase in car-borne or service vehicle traffic.

Reuse of Rural Buildings for Residential Uses

Proposals for the reuse of buildings for residential uses will be considered favourably where:

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

- a. the building is substantially intact or of established historic or architectural value and is of permanent and substantial construction;
- b. the building is not in an isolated or remote location;
- c. the proposal does not include substantial alteration of the building or an increase in floorspace; and
- d. it can be demonstrated that;
 - i. the amount or type of traffic that an economic or business use would generate would have a significantly adverse effect on the surrounding environment or on highway safety that cannot be mitigated; or
 - ii. reuse for a range of business purposes, including uses that would require minimal change to the fabric of the building, would not be viable; or
 - iii. the proposal is for the reuse of a building of established historic or architectural value that it is agreed would not be suitable for reuse for business purposes due to its historic or architectural value, form, scale, construction or location; or
 - iv. the residential uses is a subordinate part of a business reuse.

Replacement of Rural Buildings

Proposals for the replacement of buildings for business purposes will fulfil all of the criteria above for the reuse of buildings for business purposes (i to viii) with the exception of criterion iii. Additionally such proposals will bring about a clear and substantial improvement in terms of the impact on the surroundings, landscape and the type and amount of generated traffic and would not involve the loss of a building of established historic or architectural value.

Proposals for the replacement of non-residential buildings with residential dwellings will be considered under Core Strategy policy CS5: Rural Exceptions Housing, or in the case of proposals for homes for rural workers, under the criteria set out in Homes in the Countryside.

Alternative Options

2.93 The option of specifying a floorspace threshold under which viability of commercial development would not be required for residential reuse is not considered to be appropriate due to the problems with setting a threshold that would be appropriate in all cases. The policy applies to all rural buildings and due to the significant variation in types, bulk, form and construction it is considered that a floorspace threshold could not be set that would be appropriate in all cases.

2.94 Another alternative that has been considered would be to allow residential reuse without requiring commercial viability to be considered where the building is within a set distance of Key Service Centres and Market Towns. The reasoning being that within a set distance walking and cycling access to services and facilities that are used on a day to day basis would be possible. This is not considered to be an appropriate option due to two issues. There would be problems with setting a distance that would be appropriate both in terms of what is considered to be a reasonable distance that people would be willing to walk to services and facilities and in where to measure the distance to (to the actual service or facility or just the edge of the settlement). There would also be a question of whether to measure direct distances or via routes that people could safely use. Although it would potentially be possible to overcome these issues the approach is considered to be unnecessarily complicated considering the number of buildings that are likely to be affected.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.95 The draft policy is considered to be sustainable and provides a locally specific way to safeguard historic buildings and make the most of use of opportunities to reuse rural buildings in the most sensitive and appropriate way. The draft policy facilitates rural employment opportunities and helps to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in rural locations.

Table 7 Key Sources for Rural Buildings

National	Living buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings, English Heritage and the Countryside Agency (2006) The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A guide to good practice, English Heritage (2006)
Regional	East of England Plan policy SS4
Local	Local Plan policy: H29, E10, To3 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Protect and enhance urban and rural character; Conserve heritage assets Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS3

Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

2.96 Developing a policy for trees, woodland and hedgerows supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.

14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

16. To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity.

2.97 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement.

Options Development

2.98 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to minimise risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual or nature conservation value.

Option: In addition to the use of Tree Preservation Orders for important trees, policies will set out criteria to minimise the risk of harm to trees, hedgerow and other environmental features.

Question: What criteria would you like to be used to minimise risk of harm to environmental features?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.99 Respondents were supportive of the option put forward. One respondent did suggest that the List of Principal Important Habitats in section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) (CROW Act) should be referenced. 11 responses suggesting criteria were received. Two respondents felt that the criteria proposed in PPS7 and the East of England Plan should form the basis for any criteria to be included in a local policy. Another respondent suggested that employing the no net loss principle as a criterion and that Tree Preservation Orders

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

(TPO), conservation and preservation policies should be rigorously enforced. Other suggested criteria included historical integrity, visual impact, sustaining biodiversity, carbon footprint, impact on water table and preserving archaeological sites.

2.100 The initial sustainability appraisal supported the option of criteria to minimise the risk of harm to trees, hedgerows and other environmental features.

Further Development of Options

2.101 As the CROW Act is primary legislation there is no need to duplicate the list of important habitats. To do so would not add to the locally specific nature of a policy. Similarly, the criteria suggested by respondents which are based on national guidance have not been repeated. Other criteria that have been suggested will be covered elsewhere within the LDF and so do not need to be repeated in this policy.

2.102 Trees, small areas of woodland and hedgerows are frequently found within or adjacent to potential development sites. The Council is seeking to acknowledge their importance to the character and quality of the local environment. They also provide important habitats for a range of species, provide shelter and help reduce noise and atmospheric pollution. Veteran trees and Ancient woodland also have historic and nature conservation value. Together these features can help provide opportunities for recreation and support health and wellbeing.

2.103 To ensure that these benefits are retained, development proposals will be expected to avoid harm to trees, woodlands and hedgerows wherever possible, and if appropriate incorporate them within an appropriate landscape scheme. This can assist in integrating the scheme into the local environment, providing some mature, established elements within landscaping schemes. Mitigation, replacement or compensatory measures will be required when this cannot be achieved, to ensure that there is no loss of environmental value as a result of development.

2.104 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 to protect them. Where trees are covered by TPOs, the draft policy is intended to safeguard them from damage or destruction unless there are overriding reasons for the development to go ahead.

Draft Policy: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, and minimise the risk of, harm to trees, woodland or hedgerows of visual or nature conservation value, including ancient woodland and veteran trees. Where they lie within a development site, they should wherever possible be incorporated effectively within the landscape elements of the scheme.

Development proposals should not:

- a. result in the loss of trees or woodland which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order, which are designated as Ancient Woodland or which are considered worthy of protection; or
- b. give rise to a threat to the continued well-being of trees, woodlands or hedgerows of visual or nature conservation value; or
- c. involve building within the canopy or root spread of trees considered worthy of retention.

unless:

- i. there are sound arboricultural reasons to support the proposal; or
- ii. the work would enable development to take place in the public interest, and would bring benefits that outweigh the loss of the trees, woodland or hedges concerned.

Where the benefits of the development outweigh the harm resulting from the loss of trees, woodlands or hedgerows provision should be made for appropriate mitigation measures, reinstatement of features and/or compensatory planting, landscaping and habitat creation to ensure no net loss of valued features.

Alternative Options

2.105 Following consultation the options have been identified as:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Draw up policies with locally specific criteria

2.106 The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because it would not recognise the particular character of the trees, woodland and hedgerows in the district. While the importance of nature conservation and biodiversity is recognised in national planning policy and guidance, in PPS9, and the protection of trees with TPOs is established through primary legislation it is the Council's view that local recognition of the value of trees, woodland and hedgerows in the district is warranted. The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) clearly identifies a combination of characteristics which are unique to the landscape of Huntingdonshire and the role that trees, woodland and hedgerows play in defining the character of landscapes in the district is very important. It is therefore the Council's view that a specific policy is required.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.107 The draft policy is clearly sustainable and consistent with national policy. It provides a clear policy statement to ensure appropriate landscaping is incorporated into development and protect against loss of environmental value through a requirement for mitigation measures to be implemented if necessary.

Table 8 Key Sources for Trees, Hedgerows and Other Environmental Features

National	Tree Preservation orders: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice, DCLG (2000)
Regional	East of England Plan policy ENV5
Local	Adopted Local Plan policies: En18, En19, En20 Sustainable Community Strategy objectives: Protect and enhance the urban and rural character, Protect and enhance biodiversity and open space. Submission Core Strategy Policy CS1 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)

Open Space and Recreational Land

2.108 Developing a policy for open space and recreational land supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain and enhance the availability of key services and facilities including communications services.
14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

2.109 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Options Development

2.110 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to protect open space within settlements and outdoor recreation facilities and allotments.

Option: Policies will protect open space and recreation land.

Question: Would you prefer criteria based policy to be used to protect open space or would you prefer all open spaces to be identified and designated?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.111 Respondents were generally supportive of the proposed option with 2 out of 4 giving the option clear support. One respondent suggested that the text was too narrowly focused and it should encompass the principles for habitat creation projects and make reference to the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

2.112 7 out of 12 respondents clearly supported a criteria based policy as opposed to identifying and designating all areas of open space on a proposals maps. Supporters of a criteria based approach suggested that this approach would help ensure that no important areas of open space are overlooked when designating and mapping areas. Another respondent also suggested that a criteria based approach would give local people more chance to protect their own small spaces. One respondent suggested that areas of open space should be designated on a map but, prior to designation, a criteria based approach should be employed to assess the merits, value and use of space to justify its provision.

2.113 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the option of a criteria based policy is beneficial in terms of protecting the open character of land within and around all settlements, whether for recreation or other uses. However, open space standards as applied within urban areas may contribute to development pressures and need to be mitigated through design proposals, particularly those on housing density. As it would be difficult to identify all areas of open space in a sufficiently exhaustive and consistent manner across the district given Huntingdonshire's size and the variety of spaces involved, the appraisal rates the alternative option, of identifying and designating areas on the Proposals Map, as less sustainable. It may result in spaces that are 'missed' in the identification and designation process coming under pressure for development.

Further Development of Options

2.114 The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides the foundations for policies on green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity. The emphasis of the draft policy is on safeguarding open space and land with recreational value both within and outside the built up areas of settlements which are important in adding landscape value to the form of settlements.

2.115 The Council recognises that open space and recreational land can make an important contribution to the character and attractiveness of places and has an important role in improving quality of life, health and well-being and contributing towards sustainable development. PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation sets out the importance of providing adequate open space and requires local authorities to carry out an audit of existing open space, sports and recreational land and an assessment of existing and future need. This option is based on the outcomes of the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006) which should be referred to for detailed advice on the open space requirements of settlements in Huntingdonshire.

2.116 Many open spaces within Huntingdonshire's towns and villages make a significant contribution to their character and attractiveness. In this respect 'open space' within settlements includes land such as parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, undeveloped plots, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. It is important to prevent its loss where this would harm the visual quality of a settlement.

2.117 Equally, many such spaces play a vital role in providing opportunities for formal or informal recreation, as do parks, sports pitches and allotments. The preferred option also safeguards all such sites of recreational value, unless there would be no shortfall of recreation land when assessed against the Council's standards, any replacement facility provides net benefits to the community, and there would be no visual harm as a result of development.

2.118 The draft policy will increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

Draft Policy: Open Space and Recreational Land

Development proposals should not entail the whole or partial loss of open space within settlements, or of outdoor recreation facilities or allotments within or relating to settlements unless:

Any potential loss would not result in (or worsen) a shortfall of land used for informal or formal recreation unless it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer needed; and

Any replacement facility (or enhancement of the remainder of the existing site) provides a net benefit to the community in terms of the quality, availability and accessibility of open space or recreational opportunities.

There should be no harm to spaces which:

- a. contribute to the distinctive form and character of a settlement; or
- b. create focal points within the built up area; or
- c. provide the setting for important buildings or monuments; or
- d. allow views into or out of a settlement; or
- e. form part of an area of value for wildlife or recreation, including areas forming part of a 'green corridor' for wildlife or recreation.

Alternative Options

2.119 Following consultation the options identified are:

1. A locally specific criteria based approach.
2. Identify and designate all areas of open space and recreational land individually on the Proposals Map.

2.120 As national policy makes specific requirements of local authorities which can only be fulfilled by drawing up local planning policies relying on national policy and guidance is not a reasonable option.

2.121 As identified in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal, the alternative option of designating open space on the Proposals Map is considered to be a less sustainable option. Due to the nature of the District and the variation in types of open space it is considered to be impractical to identify all areas on the Proposals Map.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.122 This draft policy is clearly sustainable and consistent with national guidance. The draft policy forms a key component of and is complementary to other policies such as design quality to ensure a high quality public realm is created. This is particularly important given the levels of growth anticipated for the District. Although open spaces can be perceived as providing opportunities for people to engage in anti-social behaviour good management of open spaces can facilitate positive recreation facilities thereby diverting people from engaging in anti-social behaviour.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Table 9 Key Sources for Open Space and Recreational Land

National	Green Spaces, Better Places, DCLG (2002) Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17, DCLG (2002)
Regional	East of England Plan ENV1
Local	Local Plan policies: En14, En15, En16, R17 Sustainable Community Strategy objectives: Provide appropriate local green, recreational and open space, Protect and enhance biodiversity and open space Submission Core Strategy policy: CS9 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit, PMP for HDC (2006)

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

2.123 Developing a policy for renewable and low carbon energy supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 12.** To promote developments that conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help to reduce waste.
- 13.** To promote developments which are accessible to all potential users, and which minimise risks to health as a result of crime (or fear of crime), flooding or pollution and climate change.
- 16.** To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity.

2.124 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policies ENG1 Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance and ENG2 Renewable Energy Targets.

Options Development

2.125 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues and options:

Issue: The need to minimise the environmental impacts of renewable energy development.

Option: A criteria based policy will be included to minimise impact of renewable energy development on the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape and on sites of national and international importance for conservation and to require the removal of redundant equipment.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.126 The two responses received strongly supported the proposed option providing that adverse impacts on wildlife are avoided by the appropriate siting, design and operation of renewable energy generating schemes. No alternative approaches were suggested through the consultation process.

2.127 The initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that drawing up a locally specific policy was sustainable.

Further Development of Options

2.128 Climate change caused by carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions is predicted to lead to rising sea levels and increased risks of flooding which pose a significant threat to the District. It is important for development in the District to contribute to reducing this risk. Together with energy conservation measures, the

exploitation of renewable energy sources is central to the efforts to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and achieve reductions in CO₂ emissions. Research has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in the area, especially from biomass, waste, wind and solar sources.

2.129 Renewable energy proposals may be for free-standing energy generation plants or integrated within other developments. The publication of Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 675 (as amended by SI 2362) addresses the installation of domestic micro-generation equipment and removes the need for planning permission for many small scale renewable energy installations.

2.130 Government policy encourages renewable energy schemes unless the environmental impacts would outweigh the wider social, economic and environmental advantages that stem from exploiting generation potential. The criteria suggested in the draft policy are intended to act as safeguards to ensure the risk of adverse impacts is minimised. A range of issues 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.

2.131 A Supplementary Planning Document on Wind Power was adopted by the District Council in February 2006 which was consistent with PPS22 and draft policies in the East of England Plan. This document provides information on the relative sensitivity and capacity of the District's landscapes in relation to wind turbines, indicates criteria that would need to be taken into account for wind turbine proposals and provides guidance on potential mitigation measures.

2.132 Some types of renewable energy technology are developing rapidly, and it is recognised that sites and equipment may become obsolete. It is considered reasonable to require arrangements for the removal of any equipment should it cease to be operational 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 types.

Draft Policy: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Proposals for large scale or commercial renewable and low carbon energy generating schemes such as combined heat and power, wind turbines, biomass and solar systems will be considered favourably where:

- a. Careful siting and design ensures the scheme does not have an unacceptable impact, both in isolation or cumulatively with other similar developments, on the environment and local amenity;
- b. The siting and design of proposals to be located outside of built-up areas has regard to the capacity of the character of the surrounding landscape as identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents and the Wind Power SPD (2006) or successor documents;
- c. No harm is caused to sites or areas of national importance for conservation, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be shown that the overall value of the site or area would not be compromised, or that any harm is outweighed by the wider social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme;
- d. No harm is caused to sites of international importance for conservation (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and RAMSAR sites), unless no alternative sites exist and development is imperative in the public interest;
- e. Provision is made for mitigation and compensation measures, such as landscape works and habitat enhancement or relocation as appropriate; and
- f. Provision is made for the removal of any apparatus and reinstatement of the site to an acceptable condition, should the site become redundant.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Alternative Options

2.133 Following consultation the alternative options have been identified as:

1. Rely on national and regional policy and guidance
2. Draw up a locally specific policy

2.134 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because it would not recognise the particular character of the townscapes and landscapes in the District. While the importance of promoting renewable energy developments is recognised in the supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change and in PPS22: Renewable Energy these documents set out how local circumstances can be taken into account when determining planning applications. The Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) clearly identify a combination of characteristics which are unique to Huntingdonshire. In addition the Wind Power SPD identifies the capacity of the various landscape character types in the District with all types having a low capacity to accommodate large scale development. It is therefore the Council's view that a specific policy is required.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.135 The SA found the draft policy is consistent with national policy. The long term benefits of energy generation largely outweigh the short term visual detriments of renewable energy provision.

Table 10 Key Sources for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

National	Planning for Renewable Energy: A companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM (2004), PPS: Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1 Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement, DCLG (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policies ENG1, ENG2
Local	Sustainable Community Strategy objectives: Encourage renewable energy Submission Core Strategy policy: CS1 Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub Region, Cambridge Sub Regional Partners (2004) Huntingdonshire Carbon Reduction Programme, SEA/Renue for HDC (2008) Supplementary Planning Document: Wind Power, Huntingdonshire District Council, (2006)

Carbon Dioxide Reductions

2.136 Developing a policy for carbon dioxide reductions supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

2. To ensure that the type of dwellings built are suited to the requirements of local people, are resilient to projected impacts of climate change and that an appropriate proportion is 'affordable' to those in need.
12. To promote developments that conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help to reduce waste.
13. To promote developments which are accessible to all potential users, and which minimise risks to health as a result of crime (or fear of crime), flooding or pollution and climate change.
16. To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity.

2.137 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policy ENG1 Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance.

Options Development

2.138 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure development is built and constructed to maximise the sustainability of development.

Option: Policies will encourage compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Question: Do you agree that policies should encourage compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes?

Question: Do you think applicants should be required to submit a statement setting out how they have complied with this code?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.139 There was a mixed response. Overall support was demonstrated for use of the Code for Sustainable Design, although concern was expressed that it should be stronger and compliance enforced rather than voluntary. There was commendation of the Code offering a coordinated method of assessment for developers. Some developers opposed the option, preferring reliance on progressive changes being made to Building Control regulations to secure compliance. There were suggestions that sustainable design be addressed through separate detailed policies on water use and energy use.

2.140 No alternative approaches were put forward in the Issues and Options consultation paper as Option 3 was considered to be consistent with national and regional guidance. Since the Issues and Options consultation the Government have introduced mandatory assessment of new homes against the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Government still intends to amend Building Regulations by increasing the carbon performance of new homes so that by 2016 all new homes are zero carbon. As these changes take place developers will increasingly include renewable energy systems in order to meet the carbon emissions requirements. Policies that require some renewable energy ahead of the proposed zero carbon date of 2016 are seen as playing an important role in reducing the cost of such systems by increasing supply and installation and maintenance capacity.

2.141 East of England Plan policy ENG1 sets out the basis for local authorities in the East of England to include policies in their LDFs that require renewable or low carbon energy systems to be incorporated into development.

Further Development of Options

2.142 Climate change caused by CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions is predicted to give rise to rising sea levels and increased risks of flooding which pose a significant threat to the District. Therefore, it is important for the District to contribute to reducing this risk. Together with energy conservation measures, the exploitation of renewable energy sources is central to the government's efforts to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and achieve reductions in CO₂ emissions. Research has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in the area, especially from biomass, waste, wind and solar sources.

2.143 Renewable energy proposals may be for free-standing energy generation plants or integrated within other developments. All developments should consider the potential for local generation of energy from renewable sources of a scale appropriate to the development proposed. The publication of Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 675 (as amended by SI 2362) addresses the installation of domestic micro-generation equipment and removes the need for planning permission for many small scale renewable energy installations.

2.144 A Supplementary Planning Document On Wind Power was adopted by the District Council in February 2006 which was consistent with PPS22 and draft policies in the East of England Plan. This document provides information on the relative sensitivity and capacity of the District's landscapes in relation to wind turbines, indicates criteria that would need to be taken into account for wind turbine proposals and provides guidance on potential mitigation measures.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

2.145 It is clear from national planning policy that tackling climate change is a core activity for the development plan system. The East of England Plan sets out the approach that should be taken across the region to energy reduction in new development in policy ENG1. The policy also sets out how local councils should address this through their local development documents. While ENG1 requires a reduction in energy to be achieved through the use of renewable and low carbon technologies it is the Council's view that a more direct approach is appropriate. The Council therefore will require a reduction in CO₂ emissions.

2.146 The Council considers the 10% target of ENG1 to be appropriate in the absence of clear evidence that supports an alternative level. The threshold for housing development in ENG1 at 10 dwellings is however considered to be too high. Core Strategy policy CS3 sets out the indicative levels of development that are considered appropriate for the different types of settlement in the District. A threshold of 10 or more dwellings for this policy would mean that most housing development in smaller settlements would fall under the threshold for this policy. The Council considers a lower threshold to be appropriate for the District but currently has no clear evidence as to what threshold should be set. The Council will take a view based on consultation responses and include a revised threshold in the policy for the Proposed Submission document.

2.147 The Council has adopted the same approach to the threshold for commercial development as it has for other policies. Due to the size of development that is considered to be significant a threshold of 500m² rather than the standard definition of major development (1000m²) will be used. For more detail on the justification for this approach please see 'Office Development'.

2.148 This is an area of policy that has seen rapid change and is likely to continue to do so. The Council will therefore consider the options available to clarify how potential developers should go about complying with this policy. The Council will consider producing SPD for this subject.

Draft Policy: Carbon Dioxide Reductions

All units in developments of 10 or more dwellings or non-residential developments of 500m² or more should provide a reduction of at least a 10% in the carbon dioxide emissions from the development's predicted energy use, by way of renewable or low carbon technologies. Such provision should be made on site where possible, however locally based off site systems will be considered favourably where a higher percentage of carbon dioxide is saved.

Site specific factors including viability, remediation of contaminated land and other unusual development costs may be taken into account. Where a 10% reduction cannot be achieved on all buildings within the proposed development the Council's preference is to achieve a consistent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions on each building.

For non-domestic developments where the end user (and consequently the predicted energy requirements and CO₂ emissions) are not known, an approach that assumes the most likely use should be taken. Where several different end users are likely or an alternative approach is likely to be proposed, discussions should be undertaken with the Council before submission of a planning application.

Alternative Options

2.149 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national and regional policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

2.150 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate. While the importance of addressing energy use and carbon emissions is established in the supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change and in PPS22: Renewable Energy there is considered to be sufficient scope for a locally specific policy. The East of England Plan sets out the regional approach in policy ENG1 and readers are left in no doubt that they should expect to find policy coverage in a local authorities LDF. In addition the Council is convinced that reductions in carbon dioxide emissions rather than energy is a more appropriate and effective way of tackling climate change. It is therefore the Council's view that a specific policy is required.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.151 The sustainability appraisal concluded that the draft policy is sustainable and consistent with recent government and regional guidance. It would be useful to include in the supporting text explanations of renewable energy technologies and low carbon technologies as this would guide the implementation of the policy.

Table 11 Key Sources for Carbon Dioxide Reductions

National	Planning for Renewable Energy: A companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM (2004), Building a Greener Future: Towards Carbon Zero Development - Consultation, DCLG (2006), Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement, DCLG (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policy ENG1
Local	Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Encourage renewable energy; Improve energy efficiency and water efficiency of existing homes, commercial development and public buildings Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub Region, Cambridge Sub Regional Partners (2004) Huntingdonshire Carbon Reduction Programme, SEA/Renue for Huntingdonshire District Council (2008)

Flood Risk

2.152 Developing a policy for flood risk supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 12.** To promote developments that conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help reduce waste
- 13.** To secure developments which are accessible to all potential users, and which minimise risks to health as a result of crime (or fear of crime), flooding or pollution or climate change
- 16.** To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity

2.153 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policies WAT4 Flood Risk Management.

Options Development

2.154 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues and options:

Issue: The need to minimise the risk of flooding in new developments.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to ensure that development proposals minimise and manage the risk of flooding.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.155 The main concern in most of the comments related to the need to minimise flood risk in new development and existing built up areas. One respondent suggested that sustainability should also encompass water management. Other respondents suggested that decisions on flood risk should be made on the recommendation of the Environment Agency and that to require the same provisions for all development schemes would frustrate development. The use of SUDs is supported where reasonably practicable but should not necessary be imposed upon all development schemes.

Further Development of Options

2.156 Flooding is an important issue facing the District. Parts of some towns and villages have suffered from serious flooding during recent years. Most of the Fens area is at or below sea level and is dependent on the artificial flood defences and drainage constructed and maintained by the Environment Agency, Middle Level Commissioners and Internal Drainage Boards. Episodes of heavy rain are forecast to increase as a result of climate change, hence flood risks are expected to become greater. The damage caused by floods is costly, disruptive and distressing for those affected, so it is essential that new development does not add to the risk of flooding that already exists. At the same time adequate river flows and water supplies to fens are essential for conservation purposes. Therefore, it is important to ensure that new development does not result in a level of water abstraction which is environmentally damaging.

2.157 Development in areas at some risk of flooding will be unavoidable as large parts of all the major towns in the district are within such areas. However, the proposed approach indicates that mitigation measures will be required so that there is no net increase in risk. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) to manage surface water flows can be an important tool in minimising flood risk. SUDS can also assist pollution control through improved filtration and habitat creation within new developments. In view of these benefits SUDS should be employed where ground conditions permit. Further information on how SUDs can be incorporated into new development can be found in the *Huntingdonshire Design Guide* (2007).

2.158 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 District Council completed a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in 2004 to supplement this information. Recommended methodology on preparing these has since changed and a review is being undertaken. The revised SFRA is expected to be published soon and will be more closely aligned to the maps produced by the Environment Agency. Given that changes are likely to be made to the revised SFRA in order to make it more accurate and in line with EA advice, this policy will be revised for pre-submission. Applicants should always refer to the 'Proposed List of Local Requirements' (available on the Council's website) for more information on what is required prior to submitting a planning application.

2.159 Flood defence works can reduce the risk of flooding for specific areas but cannot eliminate risk completely. Under normal circumstances defended flood plains are not subject to major flooding, unless a flood event occurs that is greater than the standard of protection for which the defences were designed. In the Fens area the Middle Level Commissioners system of watercourses is designed to withstand a 1 in 100 year event. Most Internal Drainage Board systems protect agricultural land to a 1 in 20 year standard.

2.160 In 2007 a major flood defence scheme was completed in the St Ives area including a flood gate, embankments and a new surface water pumping station. These will work in tandem with the natural flood meadows adjacent to the River Great Ouse. The Environment Agency have not agreed to any let up in precautions since construction of the defences.

Draft Policy: Flood Risk

Development proposals should:

- a. not be in an area at risk from flooding, as defined by the Environment Agency or the Council's SFRA unless suitable flood protection/ mitigation measures can be agreed, satisfactorily implemented and maintained;
- b. not increase the risk of flooding to 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;
- c. make use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) to manage surface water run-off where technically feasible; and
- d. be informed by a flood risk assessment appropriate to the scale and nature of the development and the level of risk posed where they involve, or may impact upon, land at risk from flooding.

Alternative Options

2.161 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

2.162 No alternative options were generated by the consultation process. An alternative option would be to rely on national guidance however, given the high risk posed to the District by flooding on account of the topography of the district and surrounding area it is considered that a locally specific policy, referring to the Council's SFRA, is necessary.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.163 This draft policy is particularly important given the landscape character and resulting susceptibility to flooding within some parts of the District. The draft policy wording is consistent with national policy and provides flexibility in permitting development in areas of low risk providing appropriate mitigation measures are employed.

Designations for Proposal Map

2.164 Flood maps have been produced as part of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which is currently being updated. Flood maps are also available on the Environment Agency's website. Appropriate data will be portrayed on the Proposals Map.

Table 12 Key Sources for Flood Risk

National	Circular 04/06 The Town and Country Planning (Flooding) (England) Direction 2007
Regional	East of England Plan policy WAT4

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Local	Local Plan policy: CS9 Submission Core Strategy policies CS1, CS2, CS10 Sustainable Community strategy outcome: Ensure appropriate flood risk management measures are in place
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Water Management

2.165 Developing a policy for water management supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 12. To promote developments that conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help reduce waste
- 13. To secure developments which are accessible to all potential users, and which minimise risks to health as a result of crime (or fear of crime), flooding or pollution or climate change
- 16. To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity

2.166 Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policies WAT1 Water Efficiency and WAT3 Integrated Water Management.

Options Development

2.167 Although the initial Issues and Options did not specifically consider water management the following issues, options and questions raised are relevant as water management is linked to reducing water consumption and forms part of the Code for Sustainable Homes:

Issue: The need to ensure development is built and constructed to maximise the sustainability of development.

Option: Policies will encourage compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Question: Do you agree that policies should encourage compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes?

Question: Do you think applicants should be required to submit a statement setting out how they have complied with this code?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.168 One respondent identified that water management should be considered within the document.

2.169 The issue was not assessed as part of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal.

Further Development of Options

2.170 Following the publication of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the Core Strategy (June 2008) and the publication of the East of England Plan (May 2008) water management has been identified as an important issue that needs to be addressed locally within the Development Management DPD.

2.171 The HRA identified that water quality and water resources could be affected as a result of the Core Strategy as its spatial strategy may impact upon sensitive sites and therefore mitigation measures may be required. The Core Strategy does reflect the recommended mitigation measures and sets out phasing for major developments which may impact upon water quality or resources. This is particularly the case for St Neots as the emerging Water Cycle Strategy has identified that the current treatment infrastructure has insufficient capacity for development in its catchment and a new treatment works will be required which could impact upon water quality in the Ouse.

However, it was identified through the HRA process that no standards are referenced against which water minimisation can be measured. Rather than including these standards in the Core Strategy which is strategic in nature, it was considered more appropriate to include this detail in the Development Management DPD.

2.172 Huntingdonshire is in the driest region of England and Wales. This affects the amount of usable water per person which currently stands at nearly 700 cubic metres per person opposed to an average of nearly 1335. It is predicted that climate change will place increased pressure on water resources as the UK experiences drier and hotter summers so there is a need for a local policy which requires reductions in water use. This draft policy will complement future changes to the Building Regulations and the Code for Sustainable Homes.

2.173 Despite mandatory ratings under the Code for Sustainable Homes the Council considers that the need to reduce water consumption needs to be addressed through a locally specific policy which will ensure certain ratings are achieved. A draft policy has therefore been included which uses phased timescales to ensure that specific ratings are achieved by new residential development.

2.174 The need to achieve reductions in potable water consumption in non-domestic buildings has also been recognised by the Council as an important issue requiring a locally specific policy. However, given that there has been limited Government action on carbon reductions in non-domestic buildings compared to domestic buildings the draft policy sets out Council aspirations opposed to requirements. The Council is aware of the different BREEAM standards that exist for different types of non-domestic buildings (such as prisons and schools) and would encourage that applicants refer to these when developing proposals. The Government has indicated in its joint report with the UK Green Building Council *Carbon Reductions in Non Domestic Buildings* that it is keen to introduce national standards for reducing energy consumption in non-domestic buildings. The draft policy will be reviewed for proposed submission in the light of any changes in national guidance.

2.175 The floorspace area for commercial development has been reduced from what is considered to be major development as defined in the GDPO and successor documents. This is because of the rural nature of the District and the different requirements for commercial buildings. There is less likely to be demand for major developments and so a lower threshold would ensure that the policy can be implemented. The latter parts of the policy seek to go beyond what is set in the Code for Sustainable Homes and associated standards for non-domestic buildings.

Draft Policy: Water Management

Development proposals should:

- a. not have an adverse impact on, or result in an unacceptable risk to the quantity or quality of water resources;
- b. through the use of permeable surfaces, sustainable drainage systems, green roofs and other features ensure that water run off levels are maintained at pre-development levels wherever possible; and
- c. make the most efficient use of water resources by achieving water use minimisation:
 - i. For all residential development proposals under the Code for Sustainable Homes achieve at least a:
 - 1 star rating immediately
 - 3 star rating from April 2010
 - 6 star rating from April 2016
 - ii. Achieve an appropriate reduction in potable water use in non domestic buildings covering more than 500m²

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Alternative Options

2.176 Government guidance as set out in Supplement to PPS1 indicates that there will be situations where it is appropriate for local planning authorities to anticipate levels of building sustainability in advance of those set nationally. The Council considers that there is sufficient evidence to warrant a local policy that sets standards which are more advanced than those nationally in relation to domestic buildings. Given Huntingdonshire's location within the driest region of the UK the alternative of relying on national guidance and future revisions to Building Regulations is not considered to provide a sufficiently rapid response to the pressing need for water management in this area.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.177 The draft policy is sustainable and consistent with national guidance encouraging appropriate water management and, where possible, use of SUDs. It is in line with national advice regarding implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes. For car parking the policy could consider promoting the use of permeable surfaces.

Table 13 Key Sources for Water Management

National	Planning for Renewable Energy: A companion Guide to PPS22, ODPM, (2004), Building a Greener Future: Towards Carbon Zero Development - Consultation, DCLG, (2006), Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement, DCLG, (2007) The Code for Sustainable Homes, DCLG, (2006) Water Efficiency in New Buildings: A joint policy statement, DCLG/ DEFRA, (2007) Report on Carbon Reductions in New Non Domestic Buildings DCLG & UKGC, (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policies WAT1, WAT3
Local	Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Efficient water use; Increase energy efficiency Submission Core Strategy policy CS1 Core Strategy Habitats Regulation Assessment, Scott Wilson for HDC, (2008) Emerging Water Cycle Strategy for Huntingdonshire HDC, (2008) Growing Awareness A Plan for Our Environment HDC, (2008)

Air Quality Management

2.178 Developing a policy for air quality management supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

12. To promote developments that conserve natural resources, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and help reduce waste

16. To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating the adaptation of biodiversity

2.179 Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policies T1, ENG1 and ENG2.

Options Development

2.180 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised no issues, options and questions on this subject.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.181 No consultation responses were received on this subject. As the issue was not included within the initial Issues and Options document no Initial Sustainability Appraisal was carried out.

Further Development of Options

2.182 The Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Core Strategy assessed air quality for each of the SACs and SPAs considered. It concluded that air quality would not be negatively impacted upon as a result of the Core Strategy for all the sites as there are sufficient measures provided through policy CS1 to protect air quality and encourage sustainable travel.

2.183 There are currently 4 AQAMs designated in Huntingdonshire due to excessive annual mean levels of nitrogen dioxide. The largest of these is in Huntingdon covering an area around the ring road, Ermine Street and parts of Stukeley Meadows. A much smaller AQMA is designated in St Neots town centre focused on the High Street and part of New Street. These are near potential development so it is considered appropriate to include a local policy on air quality management. Emissions from heavy goods vehicles are the greatest contributor to high nitrogen dioxide levels in the District resulting in two smaller AQMAs being designated at Brampton in close proximity to the A14 and along the A14 from Hemingford to Fenstanton.

2.184 It is important that development proposals do not contribute further to existing air quality problems as this would increase the difficulty in bringing air quality within these areas up to acceptable levels. Equally it is important that people's health is not put at risk by increasing opportunities for exposure to raised levels of pollutants

2.185 The District Council is currently preparing an Air Quality Action Plan in conjunction with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council to address air quality on a wider scale. This will set out more detailed actions to try to address poor air quality.

Draft Policy: Air Quality Management

Development proposals within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area should not have an adverse effect on air quality within the AQMA. A formal assessment will be required where it is suspected that a development proposal is likely to result in a negative impact on air quality. Where the assessment confirms this is likely, planning permission will only be granted if suitable mitigation measures can be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement.

Development proposals within or adjacent to an AQMA will only be permitted where the air quality within the AQMA would not have a significant adverse effect on the proposed development or its users.

Alternative Options

2.186 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

2.187 Although established as an important role of the planning system the protection of public health and safety, including air quality, is only covered by national guidance in general terms. The Council considers air quality to be an important issue given the number of AQMAs and the high levels of car ownership in the District. Other policies in the LDF seek to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable travel options. However it is necessary to have a local policy that protects air quality in AQMAs through the use of planning controls which sets out appropriate mechanisms for achieving mitigation measures should they be required. The alternative option of relying on national guidance is not considered appropriate.

2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

2.188 The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the draft policy is a sustainable and locally specific policy which boosts limited national guidance.

Table 14 Key Sources for Air Quality Management

National	PPS23 Planning and Pollution Control
Regional	East of England Plan policies T1, ENG1, ENG2
Local	Core Strategy policy CCS1 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Encourage renewable energy; Reduce travel and emissions to air Core Strategy Habitats Regulation Assessment, Scott Wilson for Huntingdonshire District Council (2008) A Plan for our Environment (HDC, 2008)

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Housing Density

3.1 Developing a policy for housing density supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
2. To ensure that the types of dwellings built are suited to the requirements of local people, are resilient to projected impacts of climate change and that an appropriate proportion is 'affordable' to those in need.
3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.
11. To ensure that design of new development is of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness.

3.2 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and policy CS3 Settlement Hierarchy; and East of England Plan policy SS4 Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas and policy ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment.

Options Development

3.3 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure the density of development makes efficient use of land.

Option: A single net density for development purposes will be applied across the district.

Option: A range of densities will be applied for development proposals according to settlement type, character and amenities.

Question: Which option do you prefer and why?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

3.4 There was strong support for criteria specifying a range of densities according to settlement type and character allowing greater flexibility and enabling developments to respond to their local context; with 4 out of 6 respondents favouring this option. There was support for adhering to the national minimum density of 30dph but some concern that this would require more than 3 dwellings on some sites in smaller settlements. Concern was also raised that Design and Access Statements should clearly state the density chosen and justify that choice.

3.5 In response to the question *which option do you prefer and why?* 26 out of 31 respondents clearly indicated a preference for applying a range of densities. Respondents suggested that this approach is more flexible and would reflect the character of the District better. One respondent suggested that whatever option chosen, provision of open space and play areas must be taken into account.

3.6 Ensuring development makes efficient use of land by using appropriate densities is required by national and strategic guidance, therefore the two options above represent the full range of options. A single net density would ensure that a standard density is achieved in development across the district regardless of the type and character of settlements and the amenities available. The other alternative to use a range of densities. The latter option would ensure that settlements which are more sustainable have higher densities for development than settlements which are less sustainable.

3.7 The initial sustainability appraisal considered the first option listed above not to be sustainable because applying a standard net density fails to take into account the character and amenities of settlements and will not ensure development at higher densities in more sustainable settlements. The second option is clearly more

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

sustainable and consistent with the current governmental approach. It is designed to ensure that settlements which are more sustainable have higher densities for development. It also ensures the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to a diverse workforce.

Further Development of Options

3.8 PPS3: Housing urges local planning authorities to develop housing density policies which encourage the efficient use of land whilst promoting good design and reflecting local characteristics.

3.9 Responses from the stakeholders indicated support for a variety of minimum densities according to the scale and character of the settlement in which development was to take place. The draft policy suggests a range of minimum densities according to the settlement hierarchy proposed in the Core Strategy. Reflecting the concerns about taking the local context into account, a clause has been included allowing for exceptions where applying the minimum density requirement is not appropriate due to the character of the site and its surroundings or the need to incorporate an appropriate mix of uses; this is a material consideration but should be justified through the Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application.

3.10 Appropriate densities for new housing development will vary according to the type of settlement and the specific characteristics of the proposed site. Building at moderate to high densities wherever possible will enable best use to be made of development sites, and help safeguard the countryside from unnecessary development. Denser forms of development can also generate the 'critical mass' of people that may be needed to support local facilities. The actual density for any site will depend on its immediate context, individual site constraints, the type of development proposed and the need to deliver an appropriate mix of housing types and sizes to meet needs.

3.11 In locations with good access to a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities higher minimum densities are appropriate. This approach complements the settlement hierarchy for the district. Maximising the amount of housing in relatively sustainable locations should help to offer greater opportunities for people to make sustainable choices and limit the need to travel. Good access to high quality public transport should be considered to be any proposed site within easy walking distance of a railway station or a bus route with high frequency services to a city or market town.

3.12 This approach gives minimum required densities but higher densities may be incorporated where innovative design enables this to be integrated with the site's surroundings. The Design and Access Statement should explain the rationale for the density selected for a proposed development and how it relates to local physical and environmental characteristics, the location's accessibility and infrastructure capacity.

Draft Policy: Housing Density

To promote efficient use of land, dependant upon the location of a development site, the following net density ranges should be achieved within a residential development site, or the residential element of a mixed use site:

- a. Within or adjacent to Market Towns: at least 40 dwellings per hectare;
- b. Within or adjacent to Key Service Centres: at least 35 dwellings per hectare;
- c. Within Smaller Settlements and the countryside: at least 30 dwellings per hectare; or
- d. The maximum density possible which is in accordance with other policies of the Local Development Framework and consistent with:
 - i. the character of the site and its surroundings, and
 - ii. the need to accommodate other uses and residential amenities such as open space and parking areas.

Alternative Options

3.13 One alternative approach would be to have a single minimum density across the district, however this would not prioritise the efficient use of land in line with government policy and was not supported by stakeholders.

3.14 Another alternative would be to require significantly higher densities, particularly within the Market Towns, to give greater emphasis on making efficient use of land and maximising opportunities for sustainable modes of travel. However, significantly higher densities would be challenging to integrate with the current built form of Huntingdonshire's towns and villages and would be difficult to deliver successfully in the context of the local housing market.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

3.15 This found the draft policy to be sustainable and consistent with national policy. The policy facilitates a degree of discretion regarding densities and will enable the Council to encourage higher densities in more sustainable locations.

Table 15 Key Sources for Housing Density

National	Better Neighbourhoods: Making Higher Densities Work, CABI (2005) Strategic Housing Market Assessments: Practice Guidance, DCLG (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: SS4, ENV7
Local	Local Plan policies: AH1, AH2 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Make the best use of land Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1 and CS3 Cambridge Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment Huntingdonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2008)

Housing Mix

3.16 Developing a policy for housing mix supports Core Strategy objectives:

2. To ensure that the types of dwellings built are suited to the requirements of local people, are resilient to projected impacts of climate change and that an appropriate proportion is 'affordable' to those in need.
3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.
11. To ensure that design of new development is of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness.

3.17 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS2 Strategic Housing Development and CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy; and East of England Plan policy SS4 Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas and policy ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment.

Options Development

3.18 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues and options:

Issue: The need for new housing developments to reflect the economic and social needs of the district and promote the creation of sustainable communities.

Option: Policies will indicate that proposals should provide an appropriate mix of housing schemes according to their scale.

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

3.19 A total of five responses were received in relation to both the issue and option proposed. Some respondents argued that the provision of one and two bed properties is not based on sufficient evidence, with one respondent suggesting that the inference that there is an increased need for smaller household size is wrong. Instead, developers should be allowed to determine the most appropriate mix based on knowledge of local market conditions as a prescribed mix may lead to difficulties in deliverability and viability. One respondent suggested that a significant proportion of new dwellings should be designed to lifetime mobility standards.

3.20 The responses indicated that providing a mix of housing is an appropriate way of ensuring mixed sustainable communities. However, some respondents criticised the evidence on which the existing Market Housing Mix SPG is based and suggested that developer knowledge of local market conditions is a better way to ensure the appropriate mix is provided.

3.21 The option is clearly sustainable and designed to ensure the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to the needs of a diverse workforce. The need for appropriately sized and priced properties for smaller families and key workers is an implicit priority.

Further Development of Options

3.22 Providing for a mix of housing to help create sustainable and inclusive communities is a key government priority. PPS3 requires the use of Strategic Housing Market Assessments and other local evidence to guide the mix of housing types, sizes and tenures provided in a district to ensure new homes best contribute to the achievement of mixed sustainable communities. Due to the significance of the need for affordable housing in Huntingdonshire tenure requirements are addressed in the Core Strategy. Strategic Housing Market Assessments have been completed both for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the later reflecting the housing market in the north of the District.

3.23 The Cambridgeshire SMHA indicates that Huntingdonshire will see a total population growth of just 4,837 from 2006 to 2021. A decrease in the proportion of the population aged 0-15 and 30-55 is expected coupled with a 55% increase in those aged over 65 between 2006 and 2021. The increasing proportion of elderly residents is forecast to give rise to a massive increase in the proportion of single person households. In total, a rise of 8,900 households is forecast from 66,500 in 2006 to 75,400 in 2021 of which 8,000 are expected to be single person households. 500 additional households are expected to comprise couples, with or without children, 800 are forecast as other multi-adult households and a loss is expected of 400 lone parent households. Unfortunately the Cambridgeshire SHMA does not forecast through to 2026. The full text can be viewed at the Cambridgeshire Horizons website www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk. Further work is anticipated in 2009 which may provide greater detail on housing mix issues. If this becomes available it will be integrated into the pre-submission DPD.

3.24 The Peterborough SHMA covers a small part of Huntingdonshire within its 'southern fringe' area. Within the southern fringe the number of households is expected to grow from 19,000 in 2006 to 25,000 in 2026 and average household size to decline from 2.36 people per household in 2006 to 2.14 people per household in 2026. The Peterborough SHMA used a balanced housing market model to attempt to forecast housing mix requirements. It noted that although the overall tenure mix and type of dwelling can be forecast that way, it is very hard to get the size mix right because typically over half of most populations can afford to buy more housing than their household size actually requires.

3.25 The mix of dwelling sizes and types provided within new developments is vital in terms of its contribution towards creating sustainable, inclusive communities. Monitoring of residential developments built from 1991-2003 showed that although the proportion of one and two bedroom properties completed fluctuated slightly from year to year, properties with four or more bedrooms represented a fairly consistent 50% of Huntingdonshire's overall housing completions. The proportion of smaller properties built has increased since 2001 but still smaller properties

still remain a low proportion of the overall housing stock in many localities. The type of properties available also contributes to meeting the diversity of needs of residents. This approach should help to ensure development of more mixed communities in localities dominated by a single size, type or tenure of housing.

3.26 The changing household structure would imply a relative drop in the need for additional large family housing and a massive increase in demand for accommodation suitable for smaller households. However, it should be taken into account that although households comprising a single person or couple may be counted as technically needing only one bedroom accommodation, in reality the active demand is for at least two bedrooms as people aspire to more spacious living conditions.

3.27 As the proportion of elderly residents rises, many more people we start to require housing that can be adapted to their needs. One particularly important factor for social inclusion is enabling older residents to live in their own homes later in life. The Council's partners with responsibility for health care see distinct benefits to residents health when they can stay in their own home. Currently there is a shortage of suitable housing that has been adapted or is adaptable for people who have been to hospital. There is evidence to suggest that if patients had suitable housing to go to that their initial stay in hospital could be shorter and that they would recover more quickly and more fully. The Government has said that it wants to tackle this problem by increasing the number of homes that are built to the Lifetime Homes Standard. Elements of the Lifetime Standard have been incorporated into the Code for Sustainable Homes, however the Government has not yet put into action its aim of requiring all new homes to be built to the standard by 2013. Homes built to the standard should form part of the mix of housing as appropriate to the population in the district who are likely to require adaptability.

3.28 The draft policy introduces sufficient flexibility into the policy to ensure that appropriate mixes are provided in order to create sustainable mixed communities responsive to local market conditions. It has taken the outcomes of the SMHAs into account to ensure that housing supply is well matched to the type and size of households seeking accommodation whilst allowing developers to identify the details of what is most appropriate.

3.29 Some Parish Plans and Village Design Statements detail local aspirations for housing supply, often in regard to the mix of sizes considered desirable, the need for suitable homes for elderly 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.

Draft Policy: Housing Mix

A range of market and affordable housing types and sizes should be provided that can reasonably meet the requirements and future needs of a wide range of household types in Huntingdonshire, based on evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment or successor documents. The mix should contribute positively to the promotion of a sustainable and inclusive community taking into account the characteristics of the existing housing stock in the surrounding locality.

Proposals for major scale residential development (10 or more dwellings) will provide the required mix within the site.

Proposals for minor scale residential development (up to 9 dwellings) should contain a mix that meets these requirements as far as is practical.

Design and Access statements should be used to explain the reasoning behind the mix of housing proposed.

Alternative Options

3.30 Two alternatives arose from the initial issues and options consultation :

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1. Using a prescribed mix
2. Allowing developers to develop schemes of an appropriate mix most suited to current market conditions

3.31 The approach previously promoted through the Market Housing Mix SPG (2004) was to deliver a prescribed mix of housing within new schemes according to specific targets for different sized properties. Although providing very clear guidance some developers considered the approach to be too prescriptive and it is not sufficiently flexible to accord with the revised PPS3 published in 2006.

3.32 The mix of housing sizes, types and tenures could be left entirely to the market in response to representation suggesting that developers are best informed on local market conditions and that this would allow most flexibility to respond to changing market and economic conditions. This approach is not favoured as demand for housing typically outstrips supply in the District therefore it would be possible for some developers to concentrate on supplying solely the most profitable mix of housing sizes, types and tenures rather than responding to the assessed local need and contributing to the promotion of mixed sustainable communities.

3.33 The approach taken in the draft policy is based on national guidance which advocates undertaking a Strategic Housing Market Assessment as a basis for informing decisions on the most appropriate types and sizes of homes needed in an area.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

3.34 A clearly sustainable policy designed to ensure the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to the needs of a diverse workforce. The need for appropriately sized and priced policies for smaller families and key workers is an implicit priority. The lack of a prescriptive approach may raise issues when implementing the policy as negotiations will have to be made on a site by site basis with developers during the application process. The policy has been informed by evidence provided by the Cambridge Housing Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Table 16 Key Sources for Housing Mix

National	Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society, DCLG (2008) Strategic Housing Market Assessments: Practice Guidance, DCLG (2007)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: SS4, ENV7
Local	Local Plan policy: HL6 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Ensure an appropriate supply of new housing to at least meet RSS targets; To increase supply of affordable housing (including Key Worker housing) Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS3, CS4, CS6 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2008) Cambridge Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008) Peterborough Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)

Homes in the Countryside

3.35 Developing a policy for homes in the countryside supports Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.

11. To ensure that design of new development is of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness.

3.36 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy and CS7 Employment Land; and East of England Plan policy SS4 Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas and policy ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment.

Options Development

3.37 The initial Issues and Options consultation considered this topic in two parts. Firstly, the topic of alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside was raised for consultation via the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to restrict the intrusiveness of built development in countryside locations.

Option: Policies will be included that limit alterations and extensions that can be made to existing dwellings and restricts replacement dwellings built in the countryside.

Question: Do you think this option will sufficiently protect the character of the countryside?

3.38 Secondly, the topic of housing for agricultural and related workers was raised for consultation via the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: the requirement to provide housing that meets the needs of agricultural and related workers whilst protecting against sporadic development in the countryside.

Option: Policies will indicate that development proposals in the countryside should be restricted and ill set out criteria against which proposals will be assessed.

Question: What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

3.39 Of the 13 responses received 5 of those who indicated a clear preference agreed that the option would protect the character of the countryside while 5 clearly disagreed. One particular concern raised related to the evidence base to support the proposed option and that it was based on vague presumptions. One respondent argued that there is an underlying assumption that a replacement building cannot be an enhancement to the character of the countryside. Other respondents objected to a blanket approach being taken with a specific limit on floor area increase or percentage increase. One respondent objected to the option as proposed arguing that it is superfluous in light of the Planning White Paper which proposes less restriction than the current General Permitted Development Order. One respondent suggested that more information was needed, specifically in relation to the limitations and restrictions that would be applied.

3.40 The concerns raised by respondents related primarily to a lack of flexibility in the proposed option and assumptions on which the option is based.

3.41 Concern was expressed that additional policy above PPS7 should only be included if there are specific local circumstances to warrant further control of development in the countryside.

3.42 The initial sustainability appraisal recognised that the approach was sustainable and consistent with current policy. It was deemed to take a pragmatic view of the need to ensure rural workers' accommodation needs are provided for on an appropriate scale and location.

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Further Development of Options

3.43 The draft policy has been renamed 'Homes in the Countryside' to include criteria on new dwellings in the countryside and relaxation of occupancy conditions. This has facilitated a more holistic policy which clearly sets out the circumstances in which new dwellings may be permitted in the countryside as well as alterations, extensions and changes to occupancy conditions.

3.44 The option to limit alterations and extensions and restrict replacements is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. It has also been extended to address outbuildings associated with homes in the countryside which can significantly affect the level of impact the dwelling has on the countryside.

3.45 The countryside is defined as all parts of the district which fall outside of the built-up area of any settlements as defined in 'Development in the Countryside'.

3.46 To help conserve the character of the countryside and reduce opportunities for development in unsustainable locations limits need to be placed upon the extent to which existing dwellings may be enlarged. Otherwise, the ability to create much larger properties on existing plots could increase the intrusiveness of built development in countryside locations and the intensity of their use. Extensions will be judged against the size of the original building as existing in July 1948 or as first built since. For the same reason, new dwellings will be resisted where a previous residential use has in effect been abandoned, such that only the site of the previous dwelling remains. Similarly, any application for a replacement dwelling must be for a property which has lawful use as a dwelling house to avoid the replacement of shacks, caravans and other such structures. Advice on appropriate design principles is contained in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide.

Draft Policy: Homes in the Countryside

New dwellings

Proposals for new dwellings in the countryside will be determined in accordance with PPS7 or successor documents.

Proposals for new dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where accommodation for a full-time worker is required and there is an essential need for the employment to be in a countryside location. Such permissions will be subject to a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to essential need and to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or other rural enterprise, or a surviving partner of such a person, and to any resident dependents.

Extension to, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings

Proposals to alter, extend or replace an existing dwelling in the countryside should not:

- a. result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building subject to the need to provide satisfactory living standards;
- b. significantly increase the height or massing of the original dwelling;
- c. cumulatively increase the impact of the original dwelling on the surrounding countryside
- d. entail development where only the site of a previous dwelling remains or the previous dwelling has been abandoned.

Outbuildings

Proposals to erect, alter, extend or replace an outbuilding within the curtilage of a dwelling in the countryside should:

- a. be of an appropriate scale consistent with the dwelling to which it relates

- b. be well related to the dwelling to which it relates
- c. not have an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside

Relaxation of occupancy conditions

Proposals for the relaxation of an occupancy condition will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the dwelling is no longer required by:

- a. its associated enterprise; or
- b. those working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or a rural enterprise; or
- c. a surviving partner of such a person or any resident dependents.

When considering applications to relax such a condition the District Council will require evidence of the steps taken to market the dwelling for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting the occupancy condition.

Alternative Options

3.47 The alternatives have been identified as:

1. Proposals could be referred just to PPS7 for assessment against the national criteria
2. Significant increases in height and massing could be permitted.
3. Development on sites of abandoned dwellings could be permitted.

3.48 The first alternative would not allow for the range of rural enterprises relevant to Huntingdonshire to be specified. The others would not contribute to the aspirations of PPS7 in seeking a sustainable pattern of rural areas, the protection of the intrinsic character of the countryside and to restrict the intrusiveness of development. The alternatives are therefore not considered 'reasonable' as they contradict national guidance.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

3.49 The policy is clearly consistent with national guidance designed to prevent unsympathetic rural development. It is clearly motivated by local conditions and the need to carefully control development in the instances where it is needed. The policy could be re-worded with regards to the marketing element – leaving a building empty for 12 months is not making particularly efficient use of land. However, it is recognised that with the seasonal nature of some parts of the District's work will mean that a sufficient length of time will need to be elapse whilst efficient marketing occurs.

Table 17 Key Sources for Homes in the Countryside

Regional	East of England Plan Policy SS4, ENV7
Local	Local Plan policies: H26, H27, H28 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Protect and enhance the urban and rural character; conserve heritage assets Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1 and CS3 Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)

Housing with Care

3.50 Developing a policy for housing with care supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
3. To enable specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations

3.51 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS2 Strategic Housing Development and CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy; and East of England Plan policy SS4 Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas and policy ENV7 Quality in the Built Environment.

Options Development

3.52 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Retirement Housing

Issue: The need to provide housing to meet the specialist needs of the elderly.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to assess proposals for specialist retirement housing.

Question: Should the provision of retirement housing be allowed in locations and on a scale that would not otherwise be permitted for general housing?

Question: What sort of services do you think will be required to support elderly residents in retirement housing?

Nursing and Care Homes

Issue: The need to provide specialist accommodation and care to people in need.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to assess proposals for nursing and care homes.

Question: Should the provision of nursing and care homes be allowed in locations and on a scale that would not otherwise be permitted for general housing?

Question: What sort of services do you think will be required to support residents of nursing and care homes?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

Retirement Housing

3.53 There were high levels of recognition that retirement housing should be provided in close proximity to services with good access to medical, convenience shopping and public transport being considered the minimum essential by most respondents. The issue of accessibility to services was expanded in the following question which asked *what sort of services do you think will be required to support elderly residents in retirement housing?* Good public transport links appropriate to the needs of elderly groups was considered to be the most important service. This was followed by healthcare facilities, such as a doctor's and a local convenience shop. Dentists and post offices were also identified as desirable.

3.54 Concern was expressed over the definition of retirement housing. Respondents promoted provision of retirement housing integrated within mixed communities and expressed concern that retirement housing should remain protected as that, not absorbed within general market housing. An extra-care retirement village was advocated on the outskirts of Brampton. The rapid Health Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the consultation on the Core Strategy identified the preference for elderly people to live in dispersed locations to spread the load on local healthcare services.

3.55 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option was sustainable as it promoted the social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Nursing and Care Homes

3.56 6 out of 10 respondents supported the principle of allowing nursing and care homes in locations and on a scale that would not normally be permitted for general housing. Three respondents objected to this principle. The primary concern related to the need to have appropriate services and infrastructure in place prior to nursing or care homes being built.

3.57 A recurring issue was the need for services and facilities to be appropriate to the needs of the elderly. In terms of the appropriate types of services, responses were very similar to those made for retirement housing with healthcare being most important followed by public transport.

3.58 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option was sustainable as it meets the needs of a section of the population that may be disadvantaged in terms of health or income encouraging the provision of a supportive and inclusive environment. The only potential concern was that facilities will compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites.

Further Development of Options

3.59 After consideration of the comments received on the above two issues it was considered appropriate to merge them into one draft policy area addressing all aspects of housing that incorporates an element of care for the residents. For some people specialist residential accommodation and which provides care best meets their needs. This covers a range of uses such as care homes for the frail elderly or people with severe disabilities and hostels for social rehabilitation purposes.

3.60 Housing which is targeted at the active retired or over-55's but does not include any element of care will be considered in the context of any other market housing as PPS3 makes no distinction for this type of development.

3.61 The needs and mobility level of potential occupiers varies greatly, so it is inappropriate to specify in any detail the level of access to facilities that may be required. Generally, housing with care should be directed towards locations that are relatively sustainable to facilitate access by non-car modes to relevant facilities and services for residents and access for workers providing care. However, the draft policy also seeks provide opportunities for residents to live more rural lifestyles. It allows for housing with care to be developed in Smaller Settlements on a scale that would not otherwise be allowed for general housing. This recognises that specialist accommodation often requires a minimum number of units to be viable, and that a rural location may sometimes be appropriate for the care needs of residents. To ensure this concession is not abused larger schemes will be particularly carefully assessed against criteria for sustainable development and design quality.

3.62 *Ageing Well: Older Persons Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy, (HDC, 2005)* sets out the Council's preference to shift away from residential care towards extra-care accommodation which offers residents the opportunity to retain a level of independent living backed up with the security of 24 hour care and support when needed. It identifies three ways in each to achieve this: through the development of service based extra-care housing in dispersed stock, refurbishment of existing sheltered housing and residential care homes and through new build. It sets an indicative target for the provision of 360 extra-care dwellings by 2015/6, an increase of 308 over the 2004/5 level of provision of just 52 properties.

3.63 The Cambridgeshire SHMA predicts Huntingdonshire will have one of the highest levels of growth amongst its elderly population of all the districts in the Cambridge sub-region. From 2006 to 2021 the population aged 65-74 years is expected to increase by 6,870, those aged 75-84 years by 5,240 and those aged 85+ years by 1670. This is set within the context of an overall population growth of just 8,459. Of particular implication for this draft policy is the forecast for the population aged 85+ years to increase by 62% between 2006 to 2021 as this age group are likely to generate the greatest need for specialist accommodation and to place heaviest demands on support services.

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

3.64 The Cambridgeshire SHMA acknowledges the need to ensure a range of housing provision for elderly people who require support to increase independence and choice. Growth in extra-care housing is identified as fundamental given the forecast growth in the numbers of people aged over 80 and the desire to provide alternatives to institutional care. The Cambridgeshire SHMA recognises that in rural areas the standard model of extra-care housing, involving 30 or more units, may not be appropriate and advises that the potential to provide extra-care accommodation as part of sheltered housing schemes needs to be explored.

Draft Policy: Housing with Care

Proposals for the development of housing with care will:

- i. be located within the built-up areas of the Market Towns and Key Service Centres;
- ii. be located within the existing built-up areas of the Smaller Settlements where an operational need for such a location can be demonstrated; and
- iii. enable shops, public transport, community facilities and medical services to be reached easily for those without access to a car, as appropriate to the needs and level of mobility of potential residents.

Alternative Options

Two reasonable alternatives have been identified:

1. Nursing and care homes could be restricted solely to sites within Market Towns and Key Service Centres to ensure that new homes have adequate public transport access for residents, visitors and staff.
2. Allowing proposals outside the defined boundaries of Market Towns and Key Service Centres and outside the built-up limits of Smaller Settlements where it can be demonstrated that they have a particular requirement for a peaceful environment

The first alternative would not enable appropriate forms of development where a rural location could be beneficial to potential residents. The second approach is less restrictive however it would be incompatible with national guidance to focus residential development in urban areas.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

The policy is clearly sustainable and in line with government guidance on creating mixed and sustainable communities. Clearly meets the needs of sections of the population that may be disadvantaged in terms of health or income, encouraging development at sites that are more accessible and socially inclusive. The only potential concern is that facilities

will struggle compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites. The policy is worded such that accessibility and service provision will clearly be a consideration.

The only concern is that facilities may compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites.

Table 18 Key Sources for Housing with Care

National	Diversity and Planning: Research into Policies and Procedures, DCLG (2004)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: SS4, ENV7

Local	Local Plan policy: H43 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Appropriate lifestyle opportunities for older people; increased opportunities for vulnerable people to live independently Ageing Well: Older Persons Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy, (HDC, 2005) Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS3
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Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space

3.65 Developing a policy for outdoor sports and recreation facilities and open space supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 9. To identify opportunities to increase and enhance major strategic green space.
- 14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

3.66 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS10 Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements; and East of England Plan policy C1 Cultural Development.

Options Development

3.67 The initial Issues and Options consultation focused primarily on the protection of existing areas of open space and did not include an option on the provision of outdoor sports and recreation facilities and open space so no specific issues, options or questions were raised.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

3.68 A number of respondents identified the lack of consideration given to provision of outdoor sports and recreation facilities and open space as a short coming. Some also sought policies to enhance existing areas of open space. The omission of a requirement to provide open space and other sports related facilities was an oversight.

3.69 The consultation responses clearly highlighted a need for policies to provide new and enhanced outdoor and indoor recreation facilities and open space. It is common practise to seek contributions of sports and recreational facilities and open space in Section 106 agreements as part of the planning process. The only alternative to not having a policy on the provision of outdoor and indoor recreation facilities and open space is to rely on individual section 106 agreements which would not provide the same level of certainty.

3.70 This policy was not assessed within the SA process.

Further Development of Options

3.71 Although the Issues and Options consultation paper discussed the importance of open space and recreational land, it did not specifically require the provision of new facilities. This was an oversight as it has been common practise to seek contributions for sports and recreational facilities and open space in Section 106 agreements.

3.72 An *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006)* was conducted as required by PPG17 and the approach recommended by this represents a significant increase on the standards in the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan. The draft policy is based on the outcomes of the above study.

3.73 The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit should be referred to for detailed information on the supply or deficit of open space, sports and recreation facilities and advice on the requirements of particular settlements in Huntingdonshire. The standards aim to ensure that new homes do not result in overuse

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

of existing facilities and that facilities are appropriately located to meet the needs of residents of the new homes. When applying them, consideration should be given to what is already available in the village or neighbourhood within the accessibility standards set out above to contribute to balanced provision.

3.74 The local provision of sports, recreation and open space facilities contributes significantly to sustainable, active communities. They can help promote an area as an attractive place to live, may form a landscaping buffer within and between the built environment and can provide habitats for the promotion of biodiversity.

3.75 Outdoor sports facilities encompass a wide range of open space including both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that may be publicly or privately owned. In addition to traditional outdoor sports such as football and cricket which require extensive playing pitches there is a growing need for more diverse provision including low-key sporting facilities for example, outdoor gyms or bike trails, which can be integrated with less formal uses. Due to their diversity, it is unrealistic to set a single accessibility standard; a separate level has been set for artificial turf pitches and bowling greens to reflect their provision in strategic locations and local travel patterns.

3.76 Allotments and community gardens not only provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce but contribute to the long term promotion of healthy lifestyles, social inclusion and sustainability. Good quality allotments with appropriate ancillary facilities will help attract more people to use them. Responses to the survey of current allotment holders undertaken for the *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006)* indicated that walking was the preferred method of travel to allotments so a guide time of 15 minutes maximum walk is put forward, although it is acknowledged that allotment use is very much a demand-led activity and it will not always be feasible to have allotments within this range. Allotment land, or contributions towards it, will usually be passed to the appropriate town or parish council. Contributions may be sought and used for the improvement of existing facilities or towards purchase of land where there is a reasonable expectation of new allotments being provided.

3.77 Informal open space is sub-divided into three broad categories each offering different benefits to the community. Parks and gardens include urban parks, formal gardens and country parks which provide opportunities for informal recreation and community events. Natural and semi-natural open space includes woodlands, grassland, wetlands, scrubland, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation. Amenity open space includes informal recreation spaces and greenspaces most commonly found near housing and sometimes workplaces. It is often the only provision found in smaller settlements.

3.78 The *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006)* contains an audit of play facilities in the District, noting both quantity and quality and uses this to put forward a local standard for provision. Adequate play space for children and young people within new developments is essential to facilitate opportunities for physically active play and social interaction both of which contribute to achieving government aspirations for healthy, socially engaged young people. Provision needs to be local to reflect mobility limitations of children and young people of various age groups. Equipped play facilities should incorporate a mixture of well-maintained, imaginative equipment within an enriched play environment. Play equipment for older children should be clearly separated from that for younger children to promote independence for older children and safety for younger ones. Play space should be in a safe location with appropriate levels of overlooking whilst maintaining an adequate buffer zone between play facilities and housing to reduce disturbance to residents.

Draft Policy: Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Proposals for residential development will make provision for sports and recreational facilities and open space to meet the additional need generated by a development in accordance with the standards contained in Appendix 2 'Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space'. Where appropriate, provision will involve all or some types of open space within the development site.

Provision will be secured by condition or through S106 agreement which may include commuted payments towards off-site provision where facilities cannot reasonably be provided with the development site or where this secures the most appropriate provision for the local community.

New sports facilities should be designed to at least a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' as defined by Sport England and the appropriate sporting governing body.

Within the provision of overall open space requirements, 8 square metres space per person should be provided for children's and young people's play space. Play space and facilities may be incorporated into any category of informal open space provision, or provided in association with outdoor sports, pitches, courts and greens where appropriate. Play space and play areas will be sought in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 2 'Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space'.

All sports and recreational facilities and open space should incorporate ancillary facilities such as seating and litter bins, pathways and landscaping as appropriate to the scale and nature of the site. Ancillary facilities should enhance the local environment, contribute to visual amenity and provide appropriate play and recreation opportunities.

Alternative Options

3.79 National guidance requires the development of standards based on local assessment of levels of provision and need. The standards contained within the draft policy are based on the evidence provided by *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit (2006)*; it would be unreasonable to propose alternative standards for which there is no evidence.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

3.80 This concluded that policy is sustainable and is based on local evidence provided from the PNP Open Space, Sport and Recreational Needs Assessment and Audit (2006). It will ensure that in new residential development residents have appropriate access to open space and recreational facilities.

Table 19 Key Sources for Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space

National	Green Spaces, Better Places, DCLG (2002) Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17, DCLG (2002)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: C1
Local	Local Plan policies: En14, En15, En16, R17 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Provide good quality and quantity of indoor and outdoor sporting infrastructure; Improve access to countryside and green space Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS10 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit, PMP for HDC (2006)

Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities

3.81 Developing a policy for indoor sports and recreation facilities supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

15. To make best use of existing infrastructure and provide a framework for securing adequate land and infrastructure to support business and community needs.

3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

3.82 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement and CS10 Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements; and East of England Plan policy C1 Cultural Development.

Options Development

3.83 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised no issues, options and questions on this subject.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

3.84 The consultation responses clearly highlighted a need for policies to provide new and enhanced indoor recreation facilities as it did with outdoor recreation and open space.

3.85 This policy was not assessed within the initial SA process.

Further Development of Options

3.86 The *Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Standards Report* was completed in March 2008 to assist in guiding the future provision of a range of sports facilities in the District. It identifies the fact that Huntingdonshire has a significant quantity of sporting infrastructure, with the focus of provision being in Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Sawtry. There is a mixture of public and commercial sector provision providing varying levels of accessibility to sporting opportunities across the District.

3.87 The standards put forward are based solely on requirements to meet projected population growth which have been calculated using Sport England's nationally recognised model the 'Sport Facility Calculator'. Details of the calculations are contained within the *Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Standards Report (2008)*. The standards proposed allow for a small uplift in participation rates in line with that anticipated for the general population.

3.88 The *Sports Facilities Standards Report* also considered growth in demand arising from increased participation rates. If campaigns by the Government and other agencies to promote the health benefits of increased physical activity are successful, demand may increase further from within the existing population which will need to be funded separately, as the role of new development is only to contribute to meeting need generated as a result of that development. Part of this might also be met through increased access to existing facilities by opening more up on a community pay and play basis and through the Building Schools for the Future programme.

3.89 The rural nature of much of the District is a factor in terms of sustainable access to indoor sports facilities. Ideally new sports provision should be within a 20 minute walk time of its primary catchment to facilitate access by non-car modes of transport. A Sports Facilities Strategy is currently being produced to build on the information gained from the *Sports Facilities Standards Report*. This will complement Cambridgeshire Horizon's *Major Sports Facilities Strategy (2006)* which is currently being updated. It will provide a 10 year strategy looking at opportunities for change in sports provision to meet strategic need and identify priorities for investment.

3.90 The provision of opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity across the District gives the potential to contribute positively to improved health, reduced obesity and social inclusion amongst the community. The adoption of clear standards for indoor sports facilities will help to ensure appropriate provision to meet future need, particularly in areas where significant housing growth is anticipated. Appendix 3 'Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities' provides further guidance on the different types of indoor sports and recreation facilities that may be required dependent upon the scale of development proposed.

Draft Policy: Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for residential development will make provision for indoor sports facilities in accordance with the following standards:

Type	Quantity
Sports hall	51.2 sq m per 1000 population
Swimming pool	10.96 sq m of water per 1000 population
Fitness stations	3.6 stations per 1000 population
Indoor bowls	0.05 rinks per 1000 population

New sports facilities should be designed to at least a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' as defined by Sport England and the appropriate sporting governing body.

New sports facilities should be located within a 20 minutes walk time of their immediate catchment area, and where possible, should be linked to existing, or other proposed, community provision.

Alternative Options

3.91 National guidance requires the development of standards based on local assessment of levels of provision and need. The standards contained within the draft policy are based on the evidence provided by the detailed study of provision and need established in the *Huntingdonshire Sports Facilities Standards Report*; it would be unreasonable to propose alternative standards for which there is no evidence.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

3.92 The SA concluded that the policy is sustainable and it seeks to contribute to the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. It has been formulated from local evidence and studies

Table 20 Key Sources for Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

National	Green Spaces, Better Places, DCLG (2002) Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17, DCLG (2002)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: C1
Local	Local Plan policies: En14, En15, En16, R17 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Provide good quality and quantity of indoor and outdoor sporting infrastructure; Improve access to countryside and green space Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS9, CS10 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit, PMP for HDC (2006) Sports Facilities Standards Report (2008) Strategic Leisure Limited for HDC

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Office Development

4.1 Developing a policy for office development supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
15. To make best use of existing infrastructure and provide a framework for securing adequate land and infrastructure to support business and community needs.
17. To enable and prioritise the efficient reuse of sustainably located previously developed land and buildings and minimising the use of Greenfield land.

4.2 The policy will supports Core Strategy policy CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.3 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure office development is located to reduce the need to travel by private car.

Option: Policies will set out a sequential test for large office developments, smaller office developments will not be subject to this sequential test.

Question: What size threshold should be used to determine large scale office development?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.4 Responses were evenly split between those preferring a lower threshold of 0.5ha or 500m² and those preferring a threshold of 1ha or 1000m² (in line with DCLG definition). However, recurrent concerns included the need for all development to be located so as to reduce the need to travel and to protect the rural character of the District.

4.5 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option is clearly sustainable by ensuring that large scale industrial and warehouse developments are situated in sustainable locations. It also helps to create diverse employment opportunities by allowing small scale industrial and warehouse development in a wider range of locations

Further Development of Options

4.6 As part of work for the original Core Strategy, planning applications for employment uses were analysed in order to get a view about what size of development was significant for Huntingdonshire. The analysis concluded that as there were only limited numbers of applications for development over 1000m² a lower threshold would be more appropriate. It further concluded that a 500m² threshold would be appropriate to distinguish those proposals that would have a significant impact. The 500m² threshold was therefore put forward.

4.7 Office buildings tend to be used more intensively than other types of business premises (in terms of the number of workers per given area of floorspace). Hence to help reduce the need for travel by private car, it is important to locate large office developments in areas where there is good access by public transport. National

guidance suggests such proposals should be located in town centres wherever possible; as well as being accessible locations, this can help to support the vitality and viability of other town centre uses such as shops and restaurants. The extent of town centre boundaries are indicated on maps in Appendix 5.

4.8 Where a suitable town centre site is not available, the policy approach steers office proposals to the next most accessible locations. An exception is made to this where major urban extensions are proposed and the office development would form an integral element of the mix of uses contributing to the sustainability of the scheme by offering opportunities to walk or cycle to work. Finally, developments will be considered within established industrial estates, distribution and business parks as the concentration of people working at such locations may make public transport or other green travel initiatives viable.

4.9 The requirement to follow this sequential approach is not applied to small office schemes, as it is recognised that modest employment-generating uses can help promote sustainability by providing jobs in Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements and do not have the same potential impact as larger schemes in terms of trip generation. Nonetheless, it will be important to ensure that any increase in traffic that may be generated does not have an adverse impact upon the rural road network.

4.10 A draft PPS4: Sustainable Economic Development was published for consultation in December 2007 with a summary of key issues arising from the responses being published in August 2008. The implications of any new PPS4 will be taken into account when it is published.

Draft Policy: Office Development

Proposals for large office developments (more than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land should be located within the defined limits of the town centres wherever possible. Such developments may be acceptable on sites within the built up areas of the Market Towns where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. no sequentially preferable site is available and suitable, starting with sites within 300 metres of the edge of the defined town centre and locations with good access to high quality public transport, then out-of-centre locations; or
- b. the scale of development is inconsistent with the function and character of the defined town centre; or
- c. the proposal forms an integrated part of a mixed use urban extension; or
- d. the site is located on an established industrial estate, distribution or business park

Proposals for other office developments (less than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be allowed within the existing built up areas of the Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements subject to environmental and traffic considerations and other policies of the LDF.

Alternative Options

4.11 The alternatives are:

1. Rely on national and regional policy and guidance
2. Set a local policy that sets out where office development should be located using either the 500m² threshold or 1000m².

4.12 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate. While the importance of addressing sustainable office development is set out in PPG4: Industrial Commercial Development and Small Firms and in PPS6: Planning for Town Centres there is considered to be sufficient scope for a locally specific policy. The East of England Plan sets out the regional approach in policy E2 and in order to fulfil the requirements of this policy and to support the Core Strategy approach of pursuing the Low Carbon Future model a local policy is considered to be essential.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

4.13 The higher threshold of 1000 m² has not be used as, when set in the Huntingdonshire context, this would provide inadequate control as it would limit the use of the policy to very few proposals.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.14 The SA found that the policy is sustainable and supportive of other policies designed to reinforce the settlement hierarchy in the emerging Core Strategy and it is consistent with government guidance.

Designations on Proposals Map

4.15 As the draft policy refers to the defined limits of the town centres these will be identified. Their designation can be found in Appendix 5 'Town Centres and Retail Designations'.

Table 21 Key Sources for Office Development

National	Consultation draft PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development Proposed changes to PPS6, DCLG (2008) Planning for Economic Development, DCLG (2004)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: E1, E2, CSR1, CSR2, PB1
Local	Local Plan policies: E7, E8, E11 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Enhanced market towns that serve their surrounding area Employment Land Review, Warick Business Management Ltd on behalf of HDC, 2007 Submission Core Strategy policy: CS7

Industrial and Warehouse Development

4.16 Developing a policy for office development supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
15. To make best use of existing infrastructure and provide a framework for securing adequate land and infrastructure to support business and community needs.
17. To enable and prioritise the efficient reuse of sustainably located previously developed land and buildings and minimising the use of Greenfield land.

4.17 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.18 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure industrial and warehouse development takes place in appropriate locations.

Option: Policies will set out locations for large scale industrial and warehouse development in sustainable locations, and will allow small scale industrial and warehouse development in a wider range of locations.

Question: What size threshold should be used to determine large scale industrial and warehouse development?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.19 There was an even split of responses between those indicating support for a threshold of 0.5ha/ 500m² to reflect the nature of local employment premises and those who supported use of the DCLG definition of major employment development being 1 ha/ 1000m². Support was also expressed for the principle of expansion of the manufacturing employment base.

4.20 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the option was in line with national guidance and was sustainable.

Further Development of Options

4.21 The draft policy defines large industrial or warehouse development as that which is more than 500m² gross floorspace or on a site of more than 0.5ha. This is preferred to the larger threshold of 1,000m² or 1ha because in Huntingdonshire only a few proposals are above the larger threshold.

4.22 As well as being occupied less intensively than office buildings, industrial and warehouse developments are much more likely to generate heavy vehicle movements, making them less appropriate for town centre locations. Nonetheless, in order to prevent inappropriate building in rural areas and limit the loss of undeveloped land, it is important to site major industrial or warehouse schemes in urban locations or in places where similar development already exists. In all cases consideration should be given to reducing the need to travel, and increasing opportunities to make journeys by foot, cycle or public transport.

4.23 As with office developments, a more flexible approach is appropriate in relation to small industrial and warehouse schemes, which can also help to promote sustainability by providing jobs in rural areas. However, given their potential to generate heavy vehicle movements, it will be important to ensure that even small schemes will not have an adverse impact upon the rural road network.

4.24 Little Staughton Airfield Industrial Estate is subject to additional controls to limit the amount of development on the site, due to its isolated rural location and the poor quality of the surrounding road network. The maximum floorspace shown in the policy allows for a 5% tolerance for future development proposals, this is considered necessary to allow for environmental improvements within the site to occur in a planned manner.

4.25 A draft PPS4: Sustainable Economic Development was published for consultation in December 2007 with a summary of key issues arising from the responses being published in August 2008. The implications of any new PPS4 will be taken into account when it is published.

Draft Policy: Location of Industrial and Warehouse Development

Proposals for large industrial or warehouse development (more than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable subject to environmental and traffic considerations where the site is within:

- a. the built up area of a Market Town or Key Service Centre; or
- b. an established industrial estate, distribution or business park.

Proposal for other industrial or warehouse development (less than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable, subject to environmental and traffic considerations, in the above locations or where the proposal:

- a. is for the expansion of an established business; or
- b. is for the conversion or redevelopment of suitable existing buildings in the countryside and does not increase the total floorspace; or
- c. is on a site within the existing built-up area of a Smaller Settlement.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Industrial or warehouse proposal within the established industrial estate area of Little Staughton Airfield will not be permitted if they would increase the net floorspace above 18,520m².

Alternative Options

4.26 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate. While the importance of addressing sustainable industrial and warehouse development is set out in PPG4: Industrial Commercial Development and Small Firms there is considered to be sufficient scope for a locally specific policy. The East of England Plan sets out the regional approach in policy E2 and in order to fulfil the requirements of this policy and to support the Core Strategy approach of pursuing the Low Carbon Future model a local policy is considered to be essential.

4.27 Alternative approaches could be put forward that are more restrictive but given the competition from housing proposals for available sites this could increase the difficulty of making employment proposals a viable alternative and potentially have a detrimental impact on delivering employment opportunities.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.28 A sustainable policy that adopts a locational approach for industrial developments that is consistent with other policies for locating housing, retail, amenities etc. The nature of businesses that might be attracted is however not specified and concerns may arise from permitting development of a size that requires a high level of water consumption for its operations and cleaning etc unless it can be demonstrated that these needs can be met in a sustainable way.

The policy wording could stress the need to locate new industrial development at sites well served by the existing transport network – and ideally with good access to rail services. Good access for reducing the need to travel is mentioned in the supporting text but good access for goods, materials, customers etc is not mentioned currently and reference to this could be considered. It may be useful to set out which uses (not just industrial) that the Council may find particularly attractive at later stages of plan production although it is acknowledged that the Council would not want to prejudice any particular use over another.

Table 22 Key Sources for Industrial and Warehouse Development

National	Planning for Economic Development, DCLG (2004)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: E1, E2, CSR1, CSR2, PB1
Local	Local Plan policies: E7, E8, E11, E15 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Appropriate business infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy and reduce out commuting Submission Core Strategy policy: CS7 Employment Land Review (2007)

Redevelopment of Commercial Sites

4.29 Developing a policy for redevelopment of commercial sites supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.

6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.

15. To make best use of existing infrastructure and provide a framework for securing adequate land and infrastructure to support business and community needs.

17. To enable and prioritise the efficient reuse of sustainably located previously developed land and buildings and minimising the use of Greenfield land.

4.30 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.31 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure employment sites are not lost prematurely.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to ensure that development proposals do not result in the premature loss of employment sites.

Question: Do you agree that policies should be included to prevent the premature loss of employment land?

Question: What size threshold should we use for protecting employment sites?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.32 All respondents except one supported the principle of a policy to protect employment land. Concern was expressed that any policy should be sufficiently flexible to respond to market demands, not preclude mixed use developments of long term redundant employment sites and focus upon the retention of job opportunities.

4.33 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that support for the continued provision of a stock of brownfield land for business development in appropriate locations is sustainable and supports the retention of local employment opportunities.

Further Development of Options

4.34 National guidance encourages the re-use of industrial and commercial land for housing and mixed-use development, in circumstances where an oversupply of land for business purposes exists, or sites are no longer appropriate for business use. At the same time, the priority given to previously-developed land within larger settlements in finding sites for housing can lead to pressure for re-using industrial and commercial sites even when they are in active use. The unacceptable loss of business land can harm local firms (who may find it difficult to find suitable replacement sites), lead to a loss of local employment, create pressure for development at the edge of settlements, and increase the need to travel to work. The availability of local employment that is suited to the skills of the local workforce is particularly important given high levels of net out-commuting from Huntingdonshire.

4.35 The Employment Land Review analysed whether established industrial estates, distribution and business parks and outstanding allocations and planning permissions should be retained for equivalent uses. A small number of sites were considered to be unsuitable for retention which has been reflected in the established industrial estates, distribution and business parks which are now shown in Appendix 4 'Established Commercial Areas'.

4.36 The draft policy attempts to balance the emphasis in national policy on re-use of previously developed land before greenfield land with the need to ensure that housing, jobs, leisure and retail are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. It responds to the results of consultation by being flexible in relation to the market demand and referring to mixed use.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

4.37 It seeks to retain a compatible mix of uses and keep a balance between residential, employment and other uses to ensure that sustainable communities are retained and reasonable checks put in place to ensure that industrial and commercial sites are not lost prematurely. As well as applying to established industrial estates, distribution and business parks, it also covers other employment sites and buildings. Where the continued viability of the site for B1, B2 or B8 use is in question, applicants will be required to demonstrate that the site has been actively marketed at a realistic price for a continuous period of at least 12 months, or show that physical / operational constraints make it no longer suitable for any B1, B2 or B8 business uses. There is no threshold set as it is considered appropriate to consider all proposals for redeveloping a site in current employment use in the same way.

Draft Policy: Redevelopment of Commercial Sites

Proposals for uses other than those falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8, on established industrial estates, distribution or business parks as shown in Appendix 4 'Established Commercial Areas' will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. Continued use of the site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes is no longer viable, taking into account the site's characteristics and existing / potential market demand and there is sufficient land available elsewhere that is in use, was last used or is allocated for these uses; and
- b. An alternative use or mix of uses will give greater benefits to the community than continued employment use.

Proposals for uses other than those falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8, on other sites used (or last used) for employment purposes, including sui generis uses of an employment character, will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. Continued use of site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes is no longer viable taking into account the site's characteristics and existing / potential market demand; or
- ii. Use of the site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes gives rise to unacceptable environmental or traffic problems; or
- iii. An alternative use or mix of uses will give greater potential benefits to the community than continued employment use.

Alternative Options

4.38 The alternative options have been identified as:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance.
2. Draw up a locally specific policy.

4.39 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate. While the importance of addressing sustainable office development is set out in PPG4: Industrial Commercial Development and Small Firms there is considered to be sufficient scope for a locally specific policy. The East of England Plan sets out the regional approach in policy E2 and in order to fulfil the requirements of this policy and to support the Core Strategy approach of pursuing the Low Carbon Future model a local policy is considered to be essential.

4.40 The alternative of no restrictions on the re-use of industrial and commercial land for other purposes allowing the highest value use to prevail, supported by one respondent, is not proposed. This could be harmful to employment opportunities and local firms, particularly in urban areas where redevelopment for residential uses might allow for realisation of short-term profits. It could also increase the pressure for employment development on greenfield sites elsewhere and increase the need to travel for work.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.41 The policy has a number of strengths including contribution to a flexible planning approach. It supports the continued provision of a stock of brownfield land for business development in appropriate locations and covers a range of uses, taking in office developments that may generate large levels of commuter traffic but minimal goods movement to industrial uses where traffic balance is reversed.

Designations for Proposals Map

4.42 Safeguarded employment areas need to be defined on the Proposals Map. These are shown in Appendix 4 'Established Commercial Areas'.

Table 23 Key Sources for the Redevelopment of Commercial Sites

National	Consultation draft PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, DCLG (2008) Planning for Economic Development, ODPM (2004)
Regional	East of England Plan policy E2
Local	Local Plan policies: E2, E6 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Appropriate business infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy and reduce out-commuting. Submission Core Strategy policy: CS7 Employment Land Review, Warrick Business Management Ltd for HDC, (2007)

Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

4.43 Developing a policy for tourist facilities and visitor attractions supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

4. To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
5. To strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping, leisure and tourism
6. To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.

4.44 The policy will support Core Strategy policy CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.45 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to ensure tourism development is sustainable, conserves the countryside and is accessible by non-car modes of travel.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Option: Policies will set out where proposals for major and minor tourist facilities and touring caravan and camp sites can be located to ensure development is sustainable. They will also include criteria to ensure development is accessible by a choice of means of transport and to limit occupation to holiday and seasonal occupation.

Question: What size threshold should be used to determine major and minor tourist facilities?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.46 The Issues and Options indicated that there were no reasonable alternatives to the general policy approach to locating tourist facilities in the most sustainable locations as this was required by government guidance. The alternatives of defining significant development as that which is over 500m² in floorspace or a site of over 0.5ha or the national definition of major development of 1,000m² floorspace or sites over 1ha were offered.

4.47 There was overall support for developing tourism as a valuable sector of the local economy. Most respondents were happy to see the lower threshold suggested as a cut-off for developments, however, concern was raised that tourism attractions can have a very varied intensity of use and so size thresholds for determining suitability may not be appropriate. The provision of tourist accommodation in conjunction with rural attractions was advocated to reduce the need to travel to reach the site once in the area. Respondents considered that the policy should not constrain the expansion of existing tourist attractions in the countryside, specifically Huntingdon Racecourse.

4.48 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal concluded that the proposed option is sustainable and consistent with current policy.

Further Development of Options

4.49 Tourism and leisure are important contributors to the local economy, although there is further scope for growth of the sector, drawing particularly upon the district's environmental assets. It is important that tourism-related development takes place in a sustainable manner, conserves the countryside and promotes schemes in locations accessible by non-car transport. Directing most tourist-related development to the Market Towns and Key Service Centres will help strengthen their vitality and viability.

4.50 Tourism accommodation can take many forms ranging from substantial hotels, through smaller bed and breakfast establishments to holiday cottages and camp sites. PPS6 identifies hotels as a main town centre use and proposals for hotels should be considered in the light of the draft policy on retail and leisure development. This policy is intended to guide the attractions and facilities and the smaller tourist accommodation proposals which tend to arise within villages and the countryside reflecting the nature of visitor attractions in this area.

4.51 The draft policy contains a threshold of 500m² gross floorspace or 0.5 ha site area, in common with the approach to other policies and supported by most respondents. The draft policy primarily addresses tourist accommodation and the impact of leisure developments on the landscape. It promotes locating tourism facilities in the most sustainable places to increase accessibility by non-car modes. In response to the request about Huntingdon Racecourse, the policy allows for the expansion of existing tourist developments where there is a need for additional space, and the draft policy on development in the Countryside makes specific allowance for operational development there.

4.52 This draft policy applies both to accommodation for visitors and to attractions. It recognises that benefits can accrue from allowing existing facilities to expand, or through the conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings. Greater flexibility is also appropriate for small developments, which can help provide jobs in rural areas; as well as enabling such schemes within smaller settlements. Limited development in the countryside is allowed for if associated with farm diversification, strategic greenspace enhancement projects or waterways (these last two categories offering particular scope for broadening visits to Huntingdonshire). Increasing opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle through recreational activities is another spatial objective within the Strategy.

4.53 The draft policy recognises that touring caravan and camp sites are likely to be located outside urban areas, but includes necessary safeguards to ensure that the visual impact is minimised.

Draft Policy: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

Proposals for large tourist developments (more than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable where:

- a. the site is within the built up area of a Market Town or Key Service Centre; or
- b. the proposal is for the expansion of an existing tourist development on land adjacent to its current site; or
- c. the proposal is for the conversion or replacement of suitable existing buildings in the countryside and the proposal complies with other relevant policies.

Proposals for other tourist developments (less than 500m² gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable in the above locations or where the proposal:

- d. is on a site within the existing built-up area of a Smaller Settlement; or
- e. is adjacent or is well-related to a Market Town, Key Service Centre or Smaller Settlement and is to provide facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure.

Proposals for touring caravan or camp sites will be acceptable where:

- i. the site is adjacent or well-related to an existing settlement;
- ii. no adverse visual impact is caused on the surrounding landscape;
- iii. the site is, or can be served by adequate water and sewerage services; and
- iv. where safe physical access can be achieved.

The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted through the use of conditions or legal agreements to ensure a tourist use solely and not permanent residential use.

Proposals for visitor attractions that could attract large numbers of people should be accessible by a variety of means of transport, and offer access by non-car modes for all potential users.

Alternative Options

4.54 The options identified are therefore:

1. To rely on national policy and guidance.
2. To draw up a locally specific policy.

4.55 Due to the dispersed nature of national policy with no specific Planning Policy Statement for Tourism it is considered to be difficult to rely on the national policy as the main document is good practice guidance rather than policy. The particular combination of the rural character of much of the District with highly accessible urban areas in a wider regional sense means that there is significant basis for a local policy.

4.56 Tourist accommodation could be allowed in conjunction with major tourism attractions based in the countryside as sought by some representations advocating that this would reduce the need for car trips from the point of accommodation to the attraction. However, the purpose of focusing new accommodation predominantly in Market Towns and Key Service Centres is to ensure that visitors have access to other facilities such as restaurants, pubs and shops; the absence of these from close proximity to the attraction and any co-located accommodation is also likely to result in car trips simply in the reverse direction.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.57 The SA concluded that the policy is supportive of sustainable tourism and the promotion of greater opportunities for tourism within the District. The policy wording is such that tourist development is prevented in locations distant from local amenities and existing attractions.

Table 24 Key Sources for Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

National	Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, DCLG (2006)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: E6
Local	Local Plan policies: To2, To8, To9 Sustainable Community Strategy Outcome: Provide appropriate cultural, leisure and community infrastructure Submission Core Strategy policy: CS7 Cultural Strategy for Huntingdonshire 2007-1010, HDC (2007)

Farm Diversification

4.58 Developing a policy for farm diversification supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 4.** To facilitate business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out commuting.
- 6.** To enable business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and minimises or mitigates against adverse environmental impacts.
- 17.** To enable and prioritise the efficient reuse of sustainably located previously developed land and buildings and minimising the use of Greenfield land.

4.59 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.60 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to facilitate the appropriate diversification of farm-based operations to support agricultural businesses and sustain the rural economy.

Option: Criteria based policy to set out the circumstances in which developments forming part of a rural diversification scheme would be allowed including the criteria which need to be met if the proposed development is on previously developed land.

Question: Do you agree that development on previously undeveloped land in association with farm diversification should be allowed in limited circumstances?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.61 Almost all respondents considered that a supportive approach should be taken to farm diversification. The quality of the proposed scheme and protection of the farm's viability were considered to be more important than the size of the development required to facilitate it, provided there would not be excessive encroachment into the countryside.

4.62 The initial sustainability appraisal concluded that the option is clearly sustainable and promotes the rural economy and create a diverse workforce. It is, however, necessary to balance the inevitable impacts, particularly of increased car use, against the economic and community benefits in areas which are poorly served by other amenities and where unemployment and low wages are usually a concern. The alternative of prohibiting new buildings, being a stricter approach, is potentially more sustainable in terms of land protection but places more stringent limitations on the ability of farm businesses to diversify and so may be less sustainable in social and economic terms.

Further Development of Options

4.63 There is a need to facilitate the appropriate diversification of farm-based operations in order to support agricultural businesses and sustain the rural economy. Farm diversification can entail various types of related enterprise, ranging from food processing, farm shops, tourist accommodation and recreation facilities to the creation of workshops for letting to local firms. It is important to ensure that diversification schemes bring long-term and genuine benefits to individual farm operations and the wider rural area.

4.64 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 the most environmentally sensitive manner.

Draft Policy: Farm Diversification

Proposals for farm diversification schemes should make an ongoing contribution to sustaining the farm business as a whole and should not involve built development on previously undeveloped sites unless:

- a. the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings on the holding for the intended use is not feasible, or an opportunity exists to demolish an existing structure and re-build in a more appropriate location; and
- b. the proposed floorspace does not exceed 500m²; or
- c. in the case of retail uses the proposed floorspace does not exceed not more than 250m², and not more than 20% of the sales floorspace involves the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding.

Alternative Options

4.65 The options identified are therefore:

1. Rely on national and regional policy and guidance.
2. Draw up a locally specific that supports farm diversification while limiting encroachment of development into the countryside.

4.66 The alternative option of relying on national and regional policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate. While the importance of addressing sustainable development farming that is supported by associated commercial development is supported in PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas there is considered to be sufficient scope for a locally specific policy. The East of England Plan sets out the regional approach that seeks to promote and encourage the expansion of agri-environment schemes in policy ENV4. The Council is of the view that in order to fulfil the requirements of this policy and to support the Core Strategy approach of pursuing the provision of strategic green space and a coordinated network of green corridors a vibrant farming economy is necessary. A locally specific policy is considered to be essential.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

4.67 To maximise protection of the countryside from further development any additional building on previously undeveloped land could be prohibited, meaning that diversification projects could only utilise the existing built facilities associated with the farm. However, this would place a more stringent limitation on the ability of farm businesses to diversify, which could in itself harm the character of the countryside as healthy farm businesses are necessary if farmers are to be able to maintain their holdings.

4.68 Another alternative would be not to have a set size threshold. This would provide less certainty over the scale of proposals likely to be acceptable and could lead to diversification schemes escalating in size resulting in major developments in relatively unsustainable locations with potential to have a seriously detrimental impact on the surrounding countryside.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.69 The Sustainability Appraisal concluded that this was a sustainable policy consistent with government guidance. Implementation of the policy requires a trade off between the community and economic benefits that can be arise from farm diversification against the potential for increased car use that may be generated as a result.

Table 25 Key Sources for Farm Diversification

Regional	East of England Plan policy: E6
Local	Local Plan policies E10, To3 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Appropriate business infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy and reduce out commuting Submission Core Strategy policy: CS7

Retail and Leisure Development

4.70 Developing a policy for town centre uses supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.
5. To strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping, leisure and tourism.

4.71 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy and CS8 Land for Retail Development.

Options Development

4.72 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres.

Option: Criteria based policy to set out a sequential approach to the location of major and minor retail and leisure development and to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.73 There was one expression of support for retaining the focus on town centres. One representation concerned leisure seeking an exception to any sequential approach to be made for Huntingdon Racecourse. Existing facilities such as Huntingdon Racecourse will be considered not only in relation to this policy, but also others and the site's own planning history.

4.74 The need for a local policy to supplement national guidance was questioned.

4.75 No reasonable alternatives were identified in the Issues and Options document. The focus on town centres for such uses is required by national and strategic guidance.

4.76 The option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy.

Further Development of Options

4.77 PPS6 sets out a broad range of what are termed 'town centre uses' including retail, 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. A sequential test is set out to check that development proposals for such users outside of defined town centres cannot be accommodated within them on a suitable site within a reasonable timescale with the purpose underlying this of promoting sustainable communities and the vitality and viability of town centres. Town centres act as the retail, social and service core of their communities and offer the most accessible destinations for those who chose to travel by public transport or to walk or cycle. Where suitable sites within the town centres do not exist, and there is a need for the development, schemes should be located in the most sustainable locations possible in terms of accessibility.

4.78 A local policy is considered appropriate to set out limitations on scale and impact of any proposed development and to acknowledge the role of Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements. The Market Town town centres are complemented by a range of smaller scale retail and service facilities in Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements that concentrate primarily on meeting day to day needs for local residents. The continued provision and retention of these is encouraged in accordance with PPS6 to encourage easily accessible facilities. A draft update to PPS6 was published in July 2008 which proposes the removal of the requirement to demonstrate need for the development of a town centre use outside the town centre, however, it proposes to retain the sequential testing of location. A revised PPS6 is not expected to be published until 2009.

4.79 Greater flexibility can be allowed in locating smaller retail and leisure developments that are unlikely to have a detrimental impact upon the town centres, will attract fewer numbers of people, and which provide for neighbourhood or village shopping and leisure needs. Nevertheless, it is still important to locate these facilities where the best opportunities exist to reach them by non-car modes.

Draft Policy: Retail and Leisure Developments

Within the defined town centres of the Market Towns development proposals for retail and other town centre uses will be supported where:

- a. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the centre and its catchment area and it contributes to the provision of a safe environment; and
- b. there would be no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centre or other centres.

In Market Towns outside the defined town centre, development proposals for retail and other town centre uses will need to demonstrate that:

- i. no other site is available and suitable in accordance with the sequential tests set out in PPS6; and
- ii. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the locality and contributes towards the provision of a safe environment; and
- iii. the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of the town centre; or
- iv. the scale of development proposed is inconsistent with the function and character of the town centre or a need to be in the particular location can be justified; and;
- v. the site offers potential to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Within the existing built up areas of Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements development proposals for local shopping and other town centre uses as defined in PPS6 will be supported subject to environmental, safety and amenity considerations as set out elsewhere in the LDF where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the locality and contributes towards the provision of a safe environment; and
- b. the development would enhance existing provision in the locality; and
- c. the development would meet a clear local need.

Alternative Options

4.80 Following consultation the options have been identified as:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Draw up policies with locally specific criteria

4.81 The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because it would not recognise the particular character of the retail hierarchy in Huntingdonshire and the varying catchment areas of different Market Towns.

4.82 A policy reflecting local priorities is considered justified. An alternative approach to the draft policy presented above would be for a size threshold to be included for to limit the scale of development proposals outside the town centre. However, with the breadth of types of development classified as town centre uses by PPS6 this would need significant evidence and research to identify appropriate thresholds for each potential type of use.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.83 Clearly supportive and consistent with the settlement and housing hierarchies proposed within the emerging Core Strategy.

Designations for Proposals Map

4.84 Town centres need to be defined on the Proposals Map as the policy refers to town centres. This is shown in Appendix 5 'Town Centres and Retail Designations'.

Table 26 Key Sources for Retail and Leisure Development

National	Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation tools, DCLG (2005) Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion guide to PPG17, ODPM (2002)
Regional	East of England Plan policies: SS4, SS6, E5
Local	Local Plan policies: S7, S16 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Enhanced market town centres that serve their surrounding area. Submission Core Strategy policy: CS8

Town Centres and Retail Designations

4.85 Developing a policy for town centres and retail designations supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.

5. To strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping, leisure and tourism.

4.86 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy and CS7 Employment Land.

Options Development

4.87 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to retain retail uses within primary shopping areas.

Option: Policies will define town centres, primary shopping areas and primary shopping frontages and will limit the percentage of non-retail uses within primary shopping frontages.

Question: Do you agree that policies should define primary shopping frontages and limit the amount of non-retail development within these?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.88 Respondents overall supported the identification of primary frontages and limitations on non-retail development within these but sought recognition of commercial considerations. The policies should strengthen the retail offer in town centres with non-retail uses supporting their vitality and viability.

4.89 The identification of town centres is required by national and strategic guidance, and it is appropriate to draw their boundaries so as to reflect the role that they perform.

Further Development of Options

4.90 PPS6 strongly advocates the primacy of defined town centres for accommodating town centre uses to promote their vitality and viability and to ensure that such uses are concentrated in locations with good accessibility by a choice of means of transport. The explicit consideration given to the need for complementary non-retail outlets within town centres is important in order to maintain the diversity of towns and reinforce the day time and night time economies.

4.91 Defining the town centres and primary shopping areas is required by PPS6 and provides a clear basis for the operation of policies to guide the location of retail, leisure and business development, and to promote higher residential densities in places with good access to facilities. Identifying primary shopping frontages within the town centres is an important tool in maintaining their attractiveness as shopping destinations, as a concentration of retail facilities contributes strongly to the vitality and viability of a centre. It also helps to ensure the continued availability of a wide range of shops that can be accessed by a choice of transport modes.

4.92 The draft update to PPS6 (July 2008) acknowledges that in historic and smaller centres there will be limited capacity for new development and suggests that local authorities proactively expand town centre boundaries to accommodate the need for identified growth. It also encourages the diversification of uses in town centres as a whole and suggests that tourism, leisure and cultural activities are dispersed throughout the centre.

4.93 The options on this section take two forms. Firstly, there is a draft policy and its alternative approach which are intended to guide development within specified areas. Secondly, there are options over the precise boundaries of where the specified areas should cover. The areas reflect the definitions in PPS6 with options reflecting current and potential future circumstances.

4.94 The definition of primary shopping frontages is those areas which at the time of survey had more than 70% of ground floor units in current retail use. The draft policy recognises that there may be some non-retail uses appropriately located within primary shopping frontages, but suggests limits to ensure that these do not come to dominate. A concentration of non-retail uses in primary frontages can have an adverse impact upon their appearance

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

and role as core shopping areas. However, it does allow for a limited amount of non-retail use within primary frontages, in recognition of the fact that complementary activities (such as food and drink outlets and financial services) can support the attractiveness of these areas so long as they do not come to dominate them.

4.95 Maps are put forward in Appendix 5 'Town Centres and Retail Designations' indicating potential boundaries for town centres, primary shopping areas and primary shopping frontages. For Huntingdon two alternatives are proposed for the town centre boundary: one shows the town centre boundary drawn around the current concentration of such uses, the alternative is drawn around the potential town centre area as it might be expanded through developments that may be promoted through the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan. For St Neots the town centre boundary is also shown in its current form; two areas are put forward within an alternative boundary which could expand the town centre area to include existing leisure and car parking uses.

4.96 The viability of Ramsey as a Market Town is marginal but it serves as an important social, economic and community focal point for a wide catchment area. Its primary shopping area is very compact and has a range of commercial premises which contribute to its vitality and viability as a town centre. Due to its compactness the use of a primary frontage policy is less relevant in terms of protecting its central retail core. A line is indicated on the map for a primary shopping frontage as currently defined; an alternative would be to delete this.

Draft Policy: Town Centres and Retail Designations

Development proposals for retail, leisure, office, cultural and tourism facilities and other main town centre uses as defined in PPS6 should be within the defined town centres unless they accord with exceptions allowed for elsewhere in the LDF.

The shopping role of the town centres will be supported within the defined town centre boundaries with priority given to development within the defined primary shopping areas to strengthen their vitality and viability. Boundaries of town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages are defined on the proposals map.

Primary shopping areas are defined for each Market Town where retailing predominates but which incorporate a greater density of other Class A uses including restaurants, public houses, hot food take-aways and financial and professional services which contribute to the overall vitality and viability of the area. Within the primary shopping area development proposals:

- a. that contribute to the promotion of the evening economy will be supported as valuable additions to the vitality and viability of the area subject to public safety, environmental and amenity considerations
- b. should not prejudice the effective use of upper floors of the premises, including the retention of any existing separate entrances.

Within the primary shopping area of Ramsey the loss of any ground floor town centre use as defined in PPS6 to a non-town centre use will be resisted to protect the vitality and viability of Ramsey as a Market Town. Development proposals involving such a loss will be required to provide 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.

Primary shopping frontages have been identified in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots where at least 70% of ground floor units are shops (Class A1)⁶. Within primary shopping frontages a balance of shops and other uses will be maintained to ensure their vitality. Within primary shopping frontages development proposals should:

6 As defined in the Use Class Order 1987(as amended).

- i. not result in more than 30% of ground floor units in the defined primary frontage as whole being in other (non-A1) uses; and
- ii. not create a continuous frontage of three or more units in other (non-A1) uses.

Alternative Options

4.97 There could be no attempt to designate primary shopping frontages, allowing instead greater diversity of employment, services and facilities to be located throughout the town centres without distinguishing any particular locality where retail uses should predominate. However, this could reduce the concentration of A1 (shop) uses within the core shopping areas, thereby having a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of both these areas and the town centres as a whole.

4.98 Ramsey could be accorded no special measures to protect its remaining retail and service base.

4.99 The town centre boundaries they could be limited to areas reflecting the current situation of where town centre uses are concentrated or they could be proactively expanded into the areas indicated on the maps. Another alternative would be to adjust the town centre boundaries in the future to reflect where development has occurred after it has taken place.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.100 The policy is clearly consistent with government guidance and with the settlement hierarchy proposed in the Core Strategy. Central retailing areas provide the scope for convenience and comparison shopping, encouraging retailers to compete and thereby benefiting local residents while also providing market centres with a well defined heart. However, care will need to be taken to ensure that complementary activities are permitted to encourage visits after dark and ensure that centres are populated throughout the day and night. Some consideration may need to be given to setting the threshold at 70% of ground floor frontage and to whether overall retail floorspace should be considered. This may need to be evaluated based on data about frontage size.

Designations for Proposals Map

4.101 The boundaries of town centres needed to be defined on the Proposals map. Primary shopping frontages need to be defined on the Proposals Map as the policy sets standards in relation to them. These are shown in Appendix 5 'Town Centres and Retail Designations'.

Table 27 Key Sources for Town Centres and Retail Designations

National	Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation tools, DCLG (2005) Proposed Changes to PPS6: Town Centres - consultation draft
Regional	East of England Plan policy SS6
Local	Local Plan policies S12, S13 Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment Study (2005) & Update (2007) Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Appropriate re-developed and new floor space to enable an improved mix of retail, leisure, commercial, cultural and public facilities

Key Local Services and Facilities

4.102 Developing a policy for key local services and facilities supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

1. To enable required growth to be accommodated in locations which minimise the need to travel and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes, while catering for local needs.

4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

5. To strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping, leisure and tourism.
7. To maintain and enhance the availability of key services and facilities including communications services.

4.103 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS3 The Settlement Hierarchy.

Options Development

4.104 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to prevent the loss of local services and facilities in villages and Key Service Centres.

Option: Policies will require development proposals which result in the loss of a last remaining key facility to demonstrate that the facility is no longer needed as there is not public support for its retention.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.105 All respondents were supportive of retaining, and preferably enhancing, facilities in villages. There was some recognition of changing patterns of use and accessibility of competition making concentration in key locations most likely to ensure the maintenance of high standards of provision for the majority of the population.

4.106 The approach was well supported by the consultation responses.

4.107 The option is sustainable and designed to prevent any continuation of rural decline that has occurred. Retaining services is essential to maintaining the character of the district. The option does not preclude the closure of the last remaining amenity where there is no longer local support or custom but aims to prevent enforced changes of use where the amenity is still valued by the community.

Further Development of Options

4.108 National guidance (PPS7) requires local planning authorities to have policies for supporting the retention of key village facilities. If left to market forces, it could be that key services and facilities would entirely disappear from villages, particularly where the land is desirable for housing.

4.109 The draft policy is important to protect the sustainability of settlements and reduce any pressure to change the use or demolish these services. The loss of the last remaining shop, public house or other key facility in a village or neighbourhood can have a serious impact upon access to services (particularly for those without the use of a car), as well as increasing the need to travel and potentially harming the overall vitality of that community. Neighbourhoods within Market Towns have been incorporated as it has been identified that some are also vulnerable to the loss of key services and facilities.

4.110 In Key Service Centres, proposals that would result in a significant loss of facilities (even though this may not involve the last shop or service of a particular type), could also have a serious impact upon the vitality and viability of that centre as a whole. This is due to the role that these centres play in providing a range of facilities for the surrounding area. This is a role which could be undermined should significant losses occur. The draft policy contains safeguards to prevent the premature loss of such uses where a demand for them still exists, in order to maintain the availability of important local facilities wherever possible.

Draft Policy: Key Local Services and Facilities

Development proposals should not result in an unacceptable reduction in the availability of key services and facilities in a settlement, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored; and
- ii. there is little evidence of public support for the retention of that service or facility

When considering whether an unacceptable reduction would occur, consideration will be given to:

- a. whether the service or facility is the last of its type within the settlement (or within an individual neighbourhood within one of the Market Towns); or
- b. whether the loss of the facility would have a detrimental impact upon the overall vitality and viability of a Key Service Centre.

For the purposes of this approach, key services and facilities are considered to include local shops, public houses, religious establishments, education facilities, filling stations, public halls and health care facilities.

Alternative Options

4.111 The approach could be extended to cover the loss of any facility of this type in a village or Key Service Centre regardless of whether it is the last remaining. However, this would not be reasonable where several facilities of a particular type exist; the underlying purpose is to ensure that people living in rural areas do not suffer the unnecessary loss of key facilities rather than trying to provide a choice of them.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

4.112 The draft policy is considered to be consistent with government guidance and designed to prevent the steady depletion of rural amenity which is essential to the character and fabric of the settlement. It is also important to have smaller local concentrations of services and facilities within the suburbs of the larger towns, and the loss of these services and facilities will also be damaging to local community cohesion, while also increasing the number and lengths of trips made by residents to access services and facilities. The draft policy does not preclude the closure of last remaining services and facilities where there is no local support or custom but aims to prevent enforced changes of use on services and facilities that are still valued by the community but where the owner wishes to redevelop or re-use the site.

Table 28 Key Sources for Key Local Services and Facilities

National	Planning for Town Centres - Guidance on Design and Implementation Tools Proposed Changes to PPS 6 Consultation Draft, DCLG (2008)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: SS4
Local	Local Plan policy: S17 Sustainable Community Strategy outcomes: Increase access to services for young and older people in rural areas; Increase cycle and footway networks (particularly to key services in towns and villages); Develop improved access to services and facilities Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS3

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species

5.1 Developing a policy for biodiversity and protected habitats and species supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.

16. To reduce climate change and its effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions through the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources, reducing the amount of energy used, incorporating adaptation measures in development and facilitating adaptation of biodiversity.

5.2 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement and CS10 Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements and East of England Plan policies ENV1 Green Infrastructure and ENV3 Biodiversity and Earth Heritage.

Options Development

5.3 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Biodiversity

Issue: The need to promote biodiversity within development proposals.

Option: Policies will indicate that development proposals should conserve and create biodiversity habitats to help achieve Local Biodiversity Action Plan Targets.

Question: Do you think sufficient emphasis is being placed on the promotion of biodiversity?

Protected Habitats and Species

Issue: The need to minimise harm to sites of importance for biodiversity or geology.

Option: Policies will indicate that development proposals should not harm protected habitats or species.

Question: What criteria would you like to see used to protect sites of regional and local biodiversity or geological interest?

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

5.4 Respondents were positive about the proposed option and the need for new development to contribute to the biodiversity of a locality. Responses indicated that there should be a presumption against any development which would have a detrimental impact on protected sites and that criteria should distinguish between nationally important sites and those of local significance. Other observations included a need to reference the 1APP forms, suggesting that all biodiversity policies should accord with the requirements of the 1APP validation process. Furthermore, it was emphasised that HDC need to work in close association with relevant organisations such as the Wildlife Trust. One respondent suggested that the BAP Action Plan should undergo public consultation.

5.5 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal considered that conserving and creating biodiversity as suggested will provide protection appropriate for locally important assets and seek positive gain through mitigation and other measures. The need for a local policy to supplement national guidance was questioned within the SA. The ISA considered that the Option for protected habitats and species is consistent with national guidance and is supportive of objectives relating to habitat protection.

Further Development of Options

5.6 National planning policy for biodiversity is set out in PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) introduced the 'Biodiversity duty'. Local authorities are required to consider the protection of sites and species of international, national and local nature conservation importance in all in their activities. The importance of such sites within the District is indicated by the range of statutory designations that exist including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Other valuable semi-natural habitats such as ancient woodland, species-rich grassland, wetlands, roadside verges and wetlands provide high quality wildlife habitats in a countywide context. However, habitats such as these which include County Wildlife Sites (CWS) are not statutorily protected but provide important habitats to sustain a wealth of biodiversity. In 2007 Huntingdonshire was recorded as having approximately 120 CWS. The draft policy seeks to provide additional protection for designated areas and provides a good level of protection for non statutory designated areas such as CWS.

5.7 in 1994 the Government launched the *UK Biodiversity Action Plan* (UK BAP), a national strategy which identified broad activities for conservation work over the next 20 years, and established fundamental principles for future biodiversity conservation. Biodiversity Action Plans are also produced at local levels which set out action plans for habitats and species which are considered to be the most threatened at each level. Where a habitat is being enhanced or created priority should be given to achieving the targets set out in these action plans. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership coordinate the implementation of 45 Habitat and Species Action Plans which outline actions to help preserve and enhance important habitats and species in Cambridgeshire.

5.8 Proposals for development should consider the potential impact of the proposal on biodiversity and on sites of importance for geological conservation within the wider environment. Development can enhance biodiversity, for instance by habitat creation. The provision of landscape schemes with high biodiversity value to accompany proposals for new development is encouraged as this can aid the sustainability of the proposal. Where it is not possible to incorporate existing biodiversity into the proposal, and where the proposal is in the public interest, mitigation measures will be required. Mitigation can include reducing disturbance, harm and potential impacts and creating alternative habitats for affected populations.

5.9 When producing an assessment of habitats and species and details of any mitigation or enhancement the 'Biodiversity Checklist: Developers Guidance' or 'Biodiversity and Householder Planning Applications' produced by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership should be referred to (or any relevant successor documents). Further information on issues to be considered can be obtained from the Association of Local Government Ecologists at www.alge.org.uk/publications/index.php.

5.10 The draft policy combines the Issues and Options put forward on Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species. It refers to harm to protected habitats and species, including both direct impacts such as land take, and indirect impacts like changes to a watercourse, and the potential combination of such impacts. The draft policy distinguishes between sites of national or international importance and others and sets criteria for their protection in relation to development proposals. The decision on the need for development outweighing the potential harm to nature conservation interests will be made on a case by case basis using robust assessments. 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.

Draft Policy: Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species

A development proposal that could affect a site of value for biodiversity or geological conservation should:

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

- a. maintain and enhance biodiversity with priority being given to habitat creation which would help achieve Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan Targets; and
- b. provide for appropriate mitigation measures when the benefits of the development outweigh harm to biodiversity; which will be secured by condition or through a S106 agreement.

Development proposals must provide opportunities for the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity features within the design of development.

Development proposals should not harm sites of national or international importance for biodiversity or geology such as SSSIs.

A development proposal that could potentially damage County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, important species, ⁽⁷⁾Protected Roadside Verges or other landscape features of historic or nature conservation value will not be permitted unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development significantly outweigh the potential harm to nature conservation interests.

When the benefits of the development outweigh harm to protected habitats or species provision should be made for appropriate mitigation measures, reinstatement of features and/or compensatory work that will enhance or recreate habitats or relocate species on or off the site and which would ensure that the development would not adversely impact on the long term protection of the habitat or species. This will be secured by condition or through a S106 agreement involving works on or off the site as necessary.

Alternative Options

5.11 Following consultation two alternatives were identified:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Draw up a policy with locally specific criteria

5.12 The Initial Issues and Options consultation document distinguished between biodiversity and protected habitats and species. In the light of government advice in PPS12 that local policy should not repeat national guidance and that policy should respond to local circumstances it is considered appropriate to have a locally specific policy and, furthermore, combine the two policy areas in order to improve the effectiveness of the policy.

5.13 It is not considered appropriate to rely on national policy and guidance given that this policy helps to achieve local Biodiversity Action Plan targets which are specific to Cambridgeshire. The draft policy incorporates locally specific criteria for achieving BAP targets and criteria designed to ensure that these protected sites or species are given an additional degree of protection, at a level appropriate to their significance for biodiversity or geology, within the planning process.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

5.14 The draft policy is consistent with government guidance as it provides a basic level of protection for designated sites and those recognised for their conservation value. Although this draft policy only covers designated sites and those recognised for their conservation value, the policy on biodiversity and green infrastructure provides protection for undesignated sites.

Designations for Proposal Map

5.15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife Sites will be shown on the Proposals Map.

7 Species protected by legislation, or recognised as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England

Table 29 Key Sources for Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species

National	Circular 6/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System, DCLG (2006) Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: A Guide to Good Practice, DCLG (2006) UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994, HMSO)
Regional	East of England Plan policies ENV3, ENV4
Local	Local Plan policy: En22, En23 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Protect and enhance biodiversity and open space Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS8, CS10 Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (Cambridgeshire Horizons) Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, CCC (2001) Growing awareness A plan for our Environment (HDC, 2008)

The Great Fen Project

5.16 Developing a policy for the Great Fen Project supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

- 8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment
- 9. To identify opportunities to increase and enhance major strategic green space.
- 14. To increase opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle, by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking and cycling.

5.17 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement.

Options Development

5.18 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised no issues, options or questions on the subject.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

5.19 The Great Fen Project was not considered as an issue within the initial Issues and Options consultation document. However, one respondent suggested that there should be greater consideration given to projects such as the Great Fen.

5.20 The issue was not assessed as part of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal.

Further Development of Options

5.21 The Great Fen Project is a unique project of landscape restoration of national significance which is expected to attract many visitors to the area. Its size and 50 year timescale for implementation makes it stand out for special treatment. The aim of the project is to restore over 3,000 hectares of fenland habitat between Peterborough and Huntingdon. When finished, it will connect Woodwalton Fen National Nature Reserve and Holme Fen National Nature Reserve to provide many conservation benefits for wildlife and recreational benefits for people. The principle of the Great Fen Project is supported by policy ENV4 of the East of England Plan (2008) which encourages new wetland creation in response to climate change and to provide accessible and attractive green spaces for people to enjoy.

5.22 The Great Fen Project lies within the Fen Margin and Fens Character Areas as described in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007). In this area, the land is low-lying, at or below sea-level and the previous existence as wetlands contributes significantly to the current landscape. From the 17th

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

century the fenlands have been successively drained to produce rich and fertile agricultural land. However, the original wetland habitat is gradually being lost, and with it the important historic contributions to our understanding of past life. The Great Fen Project aims to return the land to its condition before it was drained, thus restoring the wetland habitat. Although some farming land will be lost, alternative economic opportunities such as recreation, tourism and reed and sedge harvesting will be created which will help boost the local economy. Land ownership is complex as not all the land is currently in the ownership of the project partners responsible for the project's implementation.

5.23 The District Council has commissioned consultants to undertake a landscape and visual assessment of the Project Area and surrounding landscape. This has enabled the District Council to identify a Landscape and Visual Setting Boundary for the land surrounding the project which is shown Great Fen Project Maps. The primary aim of this area is to protect the tranquillity of the Great Fen itself. It will help to protect the Great Fen against visual and noise intrusion from major structures such as wind turbine, telecommunications masts and any other major development located in close proximity to the project. Beyond this boundary major structures, although potentially visible from the Great Fen Project Area, are less likely to impact on the setting of the Great Fen Project.

5.24 The Landscape and Visual Boundary around the Great Fen Project Area will not automatically preclude development. However, potential impact on the Great Fen Project will be a material consideration when determining applications that fall within the boundary.

5.25 Through the planning process it will be necessary to ensure that the current use of the land during this time is carefully monitored to ensure that it is consistent with the forthcoming Masterplan for the area. This may require permitted development rights for specific farming or operational purposes to be restricted.

5.26 A Masterplan is being prepared for the Great Fen Project area. This will aid the planning process by ensuring that development associated with the project is located in the right place and the strategy is not prejudiced by development. The Masterplan will incorporate a vision for the Great Fen and analyse the constraints and opportunities of the area. It will draw together information on hydrology, geology, habitats, rights of way, and landscape context. The Masterplan will reflect the habitat creation and proposals, including a visitor centre, already agreed by the Great Fen Partnership and develop them appropriately. It will also put forward a draft action plan with costed projects and target phasing for them.

5.27 As a new drainage regime is being considered for the project area it is important to have planning control over the catchment area that feeds into the Great Fen as significant developments outside the project area could have a detrimental impact on its landscape and ecological qualities.

5.28 Due to the national significance of the Great Fen Project it is considered necessary to have a local policy to protect against potential detrimental impacts which may result from future development in the surrounding area. Although the Great Fen Project incorporates Woodwalton Fen which is statutorily protected, the policy reinforces this protection in planning terms and enables the wider area, to be suitably protected against inappropriate development. The draft policy seeks to protect against inappropriate development and ensure that proposals must deliver the implementation by being consistent with the Master Plan for the area.

Draft Policy: The Great Fen Project

Planning permission for development (including changes of use) will be granted for proposals which will deliver the implementation of the Great Fen Project as identified on the Proposals Map and which are consistent with the Master Plan for the project area. Applications should be accompanied by information which clearly explains how the proposals will make a positive contribution towards the implementation of the Master Plan and overall strategy for the Great Fen.

Proposals which lie outside the project area and within its zone of influence will only be permitted if they are compatible with the landscape, access and water quality aims of the strategy.

Alternative Options

5.29 Given the importance of the Great Fen and the local distinctiveness of the project it is necessary to have a locally specific policy to help deliver it. As the Master Plan and zone of influence of the Great Fen will be determined outside the scope of this DPD alternatives are limited. The alternative of relying on national guidance is not considered sufficient to ensure protection against inappropriate development within or in close proximity to the project area.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

5.30 The sustainability appraisal concluded that this is a sustainable policy which complements the Strategic Green Infrastructure policy in the Core Strategy.

Designations for Proposal Map

5.31 The boundary of the Great Fen Project Area needs to be defined on the Proposals Map. This boundary is shown in Appendix 6 'Great Fen Project Maps'.

Table 30 Key Sources for the Great Fen Project

Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV1
Local	Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Protect and enhance biodiversity and open space; Protect and enhance urban and rural character; Improve access to the countryside and green space Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1, CS9 Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) Defining the Landscape and Visual Setting of the Great Fen Project Area (LDA Design for HDC, 2008)

Landscape Character

5.32 Developing a policy for landscape character supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.

10. To conserve and enhance the special character and separate identities of Huntingdonshire's villages and market towns.

5.33 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire, and CS9 Strategic Green Space Enhancement and East of England Plan policy ENV2 Landscape Conservation.

Options Development

5.34 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised the following issues, options and questions:

Issue: The need to protect Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscape.

Option: Policies will set out criteria to protect landscape character.

Question: Do you think the criteria based approach to landscape character will provide sufficient protection?

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

5.35 Most respondents supported the use of a criteria-based approach citing the value of all types of landscape and the need for protection and enhancement. Respondents also indicated that criteria should be sufficiently flexible so as not to prohibit otherwise sustainable development proposals. The need for a local policy to supplement national guidance was questioned.

5.36 There was no support for the alternative approach of using a locally designated area which would be contrary to respondents' preferences to see all types of landscape valued.

5.37 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal indicated that having a criteria based policy was more sustainable than the alternative of retaining Areas of Best Landscape designations for specific local areas which could give rise to inappropriate development pressures on areas not covered by the local landscape designation.

Further Development of Options

5.38 As a predominantly rural district, Huntingdonshire's landscapes play a major role in shaping the character of our environment, stimulating leisure and tourism and supporting the overall 'quality of life'. The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) identifies a number of landscape character areas across the District. These range from the low-lying Fenland in the north east to the rolling uplands in the West. These landscape character areas have evolved and are continuing to change. It is important that both the quality and distinctive characteristics of these areas are conserved and enhanced when new development occurs.

5.39 National Guidance in *Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas* requires local authorities to ensure the quality and character of the countryside is protected and, where possible, enhanced. The most suitable approach is one which protects the distinctive character of all Huntingdonshire's landscape types rather than favours a particular selection, and provides clear criteria for making appropriate judgements. The criteria should be used in conjunction with the detailed advice available in the *Landscape and Townscape SPD (2007)* and any successor documents.

5.40 The draft policy refers to historic landscape features, these include ponds, trees, meadows and orchards as these all add value to the character of the area and help to make Huntingdonshire's landscape distinctive.

Draft Policy: Landscape Character

Development proposals outside the built up area of any Market Town or Key Service Centre should:

- a. respect and respond to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape as identified in the *Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)* or successor documents;
- b. avoid the introduction of harmful, incongruous or intrusive elements into views by reason of the development's siting, scale, form, colour or use of materials;
- c. employ landscape and boundary treatments that minimise the impact of any development on its setting;
- d. conserve and enhance natural or semi-natural vegetation characteristic of the area; and
- e. retain historic landscape features such as field patterns, watercourses, drainage ditches and hedgerows.

Where harm to local landscape character is unavoidable as a result of beneficial development positive mitigation measures will be required to be secured as part of any submitted landscaping scheme or by condition on any planning permission. This will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement involving works on or off-site as necessary.

Alternative Options

5.41 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

5.42 The alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate because the combination of issues for Huntingdonshire is considered to warrant a locally specific policy.

5.43 The retention of the Area of Best Landscape designation is not considered to be appropriate as it is contrary to national guidance which indicates that a character based assessment should be applied unless criteria based policies cannot afford sufficient protection. Furthermore, as local designations only cover areas identified on a map there is no protection offered for areas outside these designations. A criteria based policy, incorporating a character assessment is more comprehensive in its protection of Huntingdonshire's distinctive landscapes.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

5.44 The draft policy supports objectives of respecting and maintaining landscape character whilst (indirectly) maintaining the natural landscape features that help sustain and enhance biodiversity. The draft policy provides clear criteria for making appropriate judgements and is further enhanced by the Landscape and Townscape (SPD) (2007) which provides detailed advice on landscape character.

Designations for Proposal Map

5.45 None. Character Area Assessments have been carried out for the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment. A map showing landscape character areas is available in this document.

Table 31 Key Sources for Landscape Character

National	Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland, Countryside Agency/ Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Assessment (2002)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV2 Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, CCC (1991)
Local	Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Protect and enhance urban and rural character Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1 & CS9 Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD, HDC (2007)

Heritage Assets

5.46 Developing a policy for heritage assets supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

8. To maintain, enhance and conserve Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscapes, habitats and species and historic built environment.
10. To conserve and enhance the special character and separate identities of Huntingdonshire's villages and market towns.

5.47 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and East of England Plan policy ENV6 the Historic Environment.

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Options Development

5.48 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised no issues, options or questions on this subject.

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

5.49 It was clear that respondents felt the importance of the historic environment in contributing to the character and quality of the local environment should be acknowledged. One respondent indicated that there should be a local policy on conservation areas, listed buildings and historic parks and gardens. Respondents also indicated that policies should reference national guidance and include a presumption in favour of protecting important historic assets, whether designated or not with one respondent identifying that there should be a local list of historic parks and gardens. Some respondents also sought protection for Historic Parks and Gardens.

5.50 The matter was not assessed in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal as no option was proposed.

Further Development of Options

5.51 A draft Planning Policy Statement combining planning guidance on the historic environment and archaeology is expected shortly. The implications of this will be taken into account when preparing the proposed submission Development Management DPD.

Conservation areas

5.52 Conservation areas exist to assist the preservation and enhancement of areas of particular architectural or historic interest. Applications affecting conservation areas should meet the requirements set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 Planning and the Historic Environment* and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 which give detailed guidance on development affecting conservation areas. There are over 60 conservation areas designated in the District. The protection and enhancement of these areas is a key issue for the Council. For a number of settlements Conservation Area Character Statements have also been prepared which highlight the important features elements of each conservation areas to which applicants should have regard. The Council is currently undertaking a programme of Conservation Area Reviews, looking at their boundaries, character and general condition through the production of Conservation Area Appraisals. This also includes the revision of existing conservation areas and designation of new conservation areas.

5.53 The character of conservation areas is the product of various elements such as the mixture and style of buildings and materials, the extent and form of open spaces, views and features such as walls, and the amount of tree cover. This does not mean that there should be an embargo on new development in conservation areas, but it does require that their preservation and enhancement should be an important factor in determining planning applications.

5.54 It is particularly important that traditional features that contribute to their overall character are recognised and respected in development proposals. At the same time, new development does not have to mimic the past: 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 vital to ensure that new development complements and enhances its surroundings. Inappropriately large buildings and extensions and infilling leading to the loss of important open spaces, will be resisted.

5.55 The demolition of buildings within conservation areas can have a damaging effect by removing structures that contribute to their character or leaving unsightly gaps in the built-up environment. As with listed buildings, where buildings in conservation areas contribute positively to the street scene, there will be a presumption in favour of retention. However, where this is not the case, the criteria in PPG15 will ensure that demolition is allowed only when detailed plans for the site's redevelopment have been approved, to ensure that the scheme will preserve and enhance the character of the area.

5.56 Traditional shopfronts have also been included in the policy as they are an important feature of the District's heritage and make a valuable contribution to the character and quality of the environment of Market Towns and larger villages. Traditional shopfronts have very specific features and should respect the building in which it is situated. They are characterised by a traditional frame which consists of a fascia and cornice at the top and pilasters and consoles on either side. Cornices should never extend over two shopfronts and fascias should be aligned throughout a unified terrace by keeping to a constant depth. Pilasters and consoles help to define individual shop units. Consoles are often attractive decorative features and should be treated as a single coherent element and not painted in two halves. Other important elements of a traditional frame include windows and doors. The windows should fit the frame well and traditionally would be divided up into a number of different pane sizes to provide additional strength. Where possible window panes should be broken up through the use of mullions or vertical glazing bars. Doors should be sympathetic to the design of the shopfronts. Access should be level for disabled access and pushchairs. Painted timber is the preferred material for new shopfronts as it is versatile and easily maintained.

Historic Parks and Gardens

5.57 Huntingdonshire contains several historic parks and gardens which have been registered by English Heritage as being of national significance. As well as being an important part of our local heritage these sites merit special protection due to their wider value of as key examples of park or garden history. It is essential that the particular qualities of these sites are recognised and respected in any development proposals that might affect them.

5.58 Any development proposal should demonstrate a clear understanding of the park's or garden's historic importance and that it would not harm the overall condition of the park or garden or any features that contribute to its special interest. Where appropriate, it should support the long-term preservation of the park or garden and its setting through sensitive restoration, adaptation and re-use. PPG15 notes that no special protection is afforded to an historic park or garden by its inclusion in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and advises that a policy to protect them is necessary.

Listed Buildings

5.59 A key feature of the District's heritage are listed buildings of which there are nearly 2,800 in the District. Buildings 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 requires Listed Building Consent. The listing of buildings gives an indication of their importance. Grades I and II* indicate that a building is of great importance with Grade I designating a building of national importance and Grade II* covering buildings of more than local importance. The main aim of listing is to prevent alterations which are detrimental to the special character of a building or structure, including the interior. 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.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

5.60 Archaeological remains provide crucial links to the past and can provide useful information about local heritage. They are a finite resource and easily damaged or destroyed when development takes place unless appropriate steps are undertaken to identify and protect them. Sites of known national importance are designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments and are afforded significant protection through comprehensive national guidance in PPG16 and legislation.

5.61 The Council is proposing to rely on national guidance, currently contained in *PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment* and *PPG 16 Archaeology and Planning*, to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the District's heritage assets for Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The Council is however aware that significant changes are likely to be forthcoming, including a revised planning policy statement PPS15 to replace PPG15 and PPG16. As a result this draft policy may have to change significantly for the Proposed Submission DPD.

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

5.62 The policy has evolved to cover a wider range of issues than just conservation areas, as such, it is appropriate to have a policy entitled 'Heritage Assets' that covers conservation areas, traditional shopfronts and historic parks.

Draft Policy: Heritage Assets

Any proposal for development within or affecting a Conservation Area (including applications for Conservation Area Consent for demolition):

- a. will be determined in accordance with national guidance for the determination of applications relating to conservation areas; and
- b. should ensure that traditional shopfronts, made from a traditional frame are retained wherever possible irrespective of the use of the property, and new shopfronts utilise traditional materials such as timber or high quality contemporary materials that respect the character and proportions of the building and nearby properties

Any accompanying Design and Access Statement should describe how the proposal responds to the particular qualities of the surrounding landscape and townscape with reference to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents, and the conservation area as described in the relevant Conservation Area Character Statement as follows:

Abbots Ripton	Alconbury	Alwalton
Bluntisham	Broughton	Buckden
Earith	Fenstanton	Godmanchester (Post Street)
Godmanchester (Earning Street)	Hemingfords	Holywell
Houghton & Wyton	Huntingdon	Keyston
Kimbolton	Leighton Bromswold	Offord Cluny
Somersham	St Ives	Stonely
Warboys	Woodhurst	Yaxley

and any subsequent statements

The sub-division of large curtilages will be resisted where the sub-division will detrimentally affect the setting of a listed building, the qualities of a conservation area, trees considered to be worthy of protection or the design integrity of historic parks and gardens. In all other circumstances the sub-division of large curtilages will only be allowed where the resultant dwelling and its curtilage will be of a size and form that are sympathetic to the locality.

A development proposal within or affecting the designated historic parks or gardens at Elton Hall, Hilton Maze, Abbots Ripton Hall, Hamerton and Leighton Bromswold, or any subsequent designations, will only be permitted if it would not have an adverse impact on the historic or special features and characteristics of the registered historic park or garden. Where appropriate, mitigation measures will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement.

Alternative Options

5.63 The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

1. Rely on national policy and guidance
2. Develop a policy with locally specific criteria

5.64 Given the quantity and quality of historic assets in the District the alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate and is strongly opposed by English Heritage. There are important local features, for example, traditional shopfronts which contribute to the character and quality of the environment of Huntingdonshire's Market Towns and larger villages, which need to be covered by a locally specific policy. Developing a local policy enables such local issues to be addressed and also enables reference to Conservation Area Character Statements and Historic Parks and Gardens in the District to be made.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

5.65 Clearly sustainable in terms of preserving the character and setting of conservation areas. The important contribution that open space makes to the setting and character of conservation areas is mentioned within the supporting text.

Designations for Proposals Map

5.66 The boundaries of conservation areas and where Scheduled Ancient Monuments are located need to be defined on the Proposals map.

Table 32 Key Sources for Conservation Areas

National	Buildings in Context, English Heritage/ CABE (2001)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV6
Local	Local Plan policies: En5, En6, En7, En8, En9 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Enhance access to heritage; Protect and enhance urban and rural character. Submission Core Strategy policy: CS1 Conservation Area Character Statements, HDC (Various) Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment, HDC (2007) Huntingdonshire Design Guide, HDC (2007)

Public Art

5.67 Developing a policy for public art supports supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

11. To ensure that design of new development of high quality and that it integrates effectively with its setting and promotes local distinctiveness

5.68 The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS10 Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements.

Options Development

5.69 The initial Issues and Options consultation raised no issues, options or questions on this subject.

5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

5.70 There were no consultation responses received on the issue of public art and the matter was not assessed in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal.

Further Development of Options

5.71 Cambridgeshire Horizon's *Arts and Culture Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (2006)* aims to ensure that arts and cultural facilities are improved by opportunities created by new developments. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Arts Services Managers then developed a *Public Art Implementation Framework (2007)* which was endorsed by the District Council in May 2007. It seeks to promote the creation of original artwork of the highest standard, a high quality and well-designed public realm and involvement in artistic activity that addresses inclusion, creativity, diversity and innovation.

5.72 The provision of public art assists in enhancing the distinctiveness of developments and can aid the establishment of a sense of place and identity. It aids in enhancing the appearance of both buildings and their setting, the quality of the environment and can help promote culture and civic pride. Public art may take many forms including art installations and sculptures, seating, signage and landscape design or it may be integrated as a functional element of a development through metalwork, lighting, floor and window designs.

5.73 The District Council will encourage the provision of new works of art as part of any development scheme and, in determining planning applications, will consider the contribution made by any such works to the appearance of the scheme and to the amenities of the area.

5.74 The District Council would encourage the involvement of a lead artist(s) at an early stage of the design of relevant new developments. This will ensure that any artistic feature is incorporated into the scheme from the outset, rather than being added as an after-thought. The type and suitability of the artistic feature(s) incorporated will depend on the location and type of development proposed. Typically a contribution equivalent to at least 1% of the total cost of the development would be appropriate. An element for future maintenance may be required dependant upon the nature of the artwork proposed to ensure that it is maintained in a safe and attractive condition.

5.75 The draft policy builds upon CS10 in the Core Strategy and sets out in more detail the circumstances in which public art provision will be expected and the mechanisms by which it will be achieved. Further details on provision of public art within development schemes will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Document.

Draft Policy: Public Art

Development proposals comprising large, moderate or minor scale residential schemes or 500m² or more of commercial, retail, leisure and institutional buildings should make provision for the commissioning and installation of publicly accessible art, craft and design works. Contributions and commuted maintenance sums for up to 10 years will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement where appropriate.

Alternative Options

5.76 The provision of public art is not covered adequately in national guidance and therefore the Council considers it is necessary to have a local policy to ensure adequate weight is accorded to the issue reflecting the Council's commitment to ensuring new development is of a high quality and is locally distinctive. The alternative option would be to have a corporate policy on public art. However, a DPD policy is more likely to successfully deliver public art within development schemes.

Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

5.77 The draft policy is sustainable and is in accordance with government guidance on urban design. The policy ensures that provision for public art will be made as part of large, moderate or minor scale residential developments and commercial developments over 500m². It is locally specific and covers an area not well covered by national guidance.

Table 33 Key Sources for Public Art

National	Buildings in Context, English Heritage/ CABI (2001) By Design, DETR (2000)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV6 Arts and Culture Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridge Horizons, 2006) Public Art Implementation Framework (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Services, 2007)
Local	Local Plan policy: R18 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Provide arts and entertainment including exhibition space Submission Core Strategy policies:CS1 & CS10 Cultural Strategy 2007-2010, HDC (2007)

6 Monitoring

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

6 Monitoring

6.1 Monitoring and review are key aspects of the development plan system with its emphasis on delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities. Local Development Frameworks should be regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that components of the framework are updated to reflect changing circumstances nationally, regionally and locally. In the Core Strategy there should be a focus on implementation, setting out agreed delivery mechanisms to ensure that policies achieve desired results in the required time frame. However for Development Management the emphasis is more focused on site specific control of development and less focused on implementation and delivery. Monitoring will evaluate progress being made towards delivering the spatial vision and objectives through the implementation of policies. The results of such monitoring will provide the basis for a review to be undertaken.

6.2 In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) containing an assessment of Local Development Document preparation against milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), and the extent to which policies set out in Local Development Documents are being achieved and targets being met. The AMR will be the main mechanism for assessing the LDF's performance and effect. As well as linking with spatial objectives and policies, indicators in the AMR will also link to sustainability appraisal objectives in order to identify the significant effects of policy implementation. If, as a result of monitoring, areas are identified where a policy is not working, or key policy targets are not being met, this may give rise to a review of the Development Management DPD or other parts of the LDF.

6.3 For the Proposed Submission DPD the Council will develop a monitoring framework that sets out performance indicators and targets which will form the basis for identifying where the DPD needs to be strengthened, maintained or revised.

7 Topics not taken forward from Issues and Options

7.1 This section looks at the issues and topic areas that the Council has decided it will not take forward from Issues and Options unless sufficient reasons are expressed through further public participation for taking a different approach. In most cases this is because the issue is covered by national planning policy and there is considered to be little or no requirement for a locally specific policy.

Draft Objectives

7.2 The draft objectives in the Issues and Options have not been carried forward into Proposed Submission. It is considered that the Core Strategy objectives are appropriate for the Development Management DPD and an additional set would be superfluous.

Mixed development

7.3 The principle of mixed development is a key theme underpinning much government guidance. The issue is comprehensively covered by a number of different PPSs including PPS1, PPS1 Supplement Planning and Climate Change and PPS3. These emphasise the role that mixed development has in the creation of sustainable communities and patterns of sustainable urban and rural development to reduce the need to travel. The Council therefore felt that an additional policy on mixed development would be superfluous and repeat national guidance.

Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

7.4 This issue was considered within the Issues and Options document. However, following the publication of that consultation document government guidance advised that the issue should be considered within Core Strategies. The Council therefore included a policy on the accommodation of Gypsy and Travellers in the Submission Core Strategy. The Council is also preparing a separate Gypsy and Traveller Sites DPD.

Telecommunications

7.5 The Council does not consider that a locally specific policy can be justified. The issue is comprehensively covered by PPG8: Telecommunications. In the light of PPS12: Local Spatial Planning, including a policy on this issue would repeat national guidance and there are considered to be no locally specific issues that warrant drawing up a policy.

Appendix 1 Parking Provision

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Appendix 1 Parking Provision

Table 34 Parking Provision

Use Class and Nature of Activity	Maximum Car Parking Provision Staff / Residents ⁽¹⁾	Maximum Car Parking Provision Public / Visitors	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision
Retail & financial services			
A1: Retail (food)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 14m ²	1 cycle space per 75m ²
A1, A2: Retail (non-food) & Financial & professional services	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 20m ²	As A1: Retail (food)
Food & drink			
A3, A4, A5: Restaurants & cafes, pubs/bars & hot food takeaways	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 5m ²	1 cycle space per 25m ²
Business			
B1: Business	1 car space per 30m ²	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 50m ²
B2: General industrial	1 car space per 60m ²	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 80m ²
B8: Storage & distribution	1 car space per 100m ²	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 150m ²
Communal accommodation			
C1: Hotels & Guest Houses	1 car space per staff bedroom, plus up to 1 space for every 2 non-resident members of staff	1 car space per guest bedroom ⁽²⁾	1 cycle space per 5 guest bedrooms
C2: Residential institutions	1 car space for each resident member of staff, plus up to 1 space for every 2 non-resident members of staff	1 car space per 4 residents	1 cycle space per 4 members of staff
C3: Residential Dwellings			
Town centres (excluding Ramsey Town Centre ⁽³⁾)	1 car space per dwelling (average, per development)	1 car space per 6 units	1 allocated secure cycle storage space per bedroom
All other locations	2 car spaces per dwelling (average, per development)	1 car space per 4 units	1 allocated secure cycle storage space per dwelling ⁽⁴⁾
Community facilities			
D1: Non-residential institutions (museums,	1 car space for each member of staff	1 car space per 30m ²	1 cycle space per 4 members of staff, plus 1 space per 50m ²

Use Class and Nature of Activity	Maximum Car Parking Provision Staff / Residents ⁽¹⁾	Maximum Car Parking Provision Public / Visitors	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision
libraries, galleries, exhibition halls)			
D1: Non-residential institutions (public halls & places of worship)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 4 seats, or 1 space per 15m ²	1 cycle space per 10 seats, or 1 space per 30m ²
D1: Non-residential institutions (schools)	1 car space for each member of staff	1 car space per class, up to a limit of 10 spaces	5 cycle spaces per class for primary schools; 10 spaces per class for secondary schools
D1: Non-Residential institutions (clinics, health centres, surgeries)	Included in public / visitors provision	5 car spaces per consulting room	1 cycle space per 2 consulting rooms
D2: Assembly & leisure (cinemas & conference facilities)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 5 seats	1 cycle space per 75m ² , or 1 space per 10 seats
D2: Assembly & leisure (other uses)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 22m ²	1 cycle space per 75m ² , or 1 space per 10 seats

1. Parking based on number of staff should be calculated on the total number of staff on site at peak times, including times when shifts change
2. Additional parking can be provided for bars, restaurants and other facilities within hotels and guest houses that are available to the public, in line with provision for those uses, provided measures can be taken to ensure their availability for that use
3. Due to limited availability of public transport Ramsey Town Centre is to be consider with all other locations
4. Cycle parking for dwellings can be accommodated within garages, so long as there is sufficient space for a cycle as well as a car

In addition to the above, a minimum number of car parking spaces for the mobility impaired will be required at the level recommended by the Department for Transport ⁽⁸⁾ and set out in the following table:

Table 35 Parking for the mobility impaired

Nature of activity	Staff	Public / visitors
Existing business premises	At least one space for each disabled employee	At least 2% of car park capacity (minimum of one space)
New business premises	At least 5% of car park provision (minimum of one space)	Allowance included in requirement for staff
Shopping areas; leisure & recreational facilities; other places open to the public	At least one space for each disabled employee	At least 6% of car park capacity (minimum of one space) ⁽¹⁾

8 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: 2001 Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People, British Standards Institute (BSI) (2001)

Appendix 1 Parking Provision

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

1. Additional spaces may be required for hotels and other places that cater for large numbers of disabled people

Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Table 36 Outdoor sports and recreation facilities and open space standards

Type	Quantity	Accessibility - provision within
Outdoor sports, pitches, courts and greens	1.61ha per 1000 population including: i) at least 0.81ha per 1000 population available for community use, and ii) 0.04 artificial turf pitches per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m) for grass pitches and tennis courts or 15 minutes drive for artificial turf pitches and bowling greens
Allotments and community gardens	0.32ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
Informal open space:	1.8 ha per 1000 population comprising an appropriate combination of:	
- Parks and gardens	0.48ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
- Natural and semi-natural open space	0.23ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
- Amenity greenspace (excluding domestic gardens)	1.09ha per 1000 population	10 minutes walk (480m) or 15 minutes walk (720m) for specialist young people's facilities in urban areas

The following tables provide details of the different types of outdoor sports and recreation facilities that may be required dependent upon the scale of the development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

Table 37 Grass Pitches

Size	Minimum 2 adult football pitches, (2x 100m x 64m)
Additional Details	Built to NGB specifications Policy: a minimum of 2 sports pitches to be provided in any one place
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£112,000 per pitch
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£58,500 per pitch

Table 38 Outdoor Tennis Courts

Size	Minimum 2 courts
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications Macadam, fenced and floodlit In small villages 1 court may be fit for purpose
Age Range	All

Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Capital cost (at 2008)	£135,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£45,000 per two courts

Table 39 Outdoor Bowling Greens

Size	Minimum 4 lane/rinks
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications
Age Range	All – predominant usage adults and older adults
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (exc clubhouse)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£50,000

Table 40 Synthetic Turf Pitches

Size	100mx64m
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications Fenced and floodlit 3G rubber crumb or sand dressed depending on need In small villages or particular locations training size pitches may be fit for purpose (approx 50m x 30m)
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£740,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	Maintenance £60,000 Replacement Carpet £200,000

Table 41 Changing Rooms

Size	4 team changing pavilion
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£565,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£60,000

Table 42 Active Lifestyle Contribution

Size	Various
Additional Details	For example outdoor gyms, bike trails, water based recreation, walking projects
Age Range	All

Capital cost (at 2008)	£50,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£12,000

Table 43 Sport & Physical Activity Contribution

Size	Various
Additional Details	For example Sports Development/Physical Activity Community Development Officers & Development budgets e.g. holiday programmes, afterschool clubs, sports clubs development, over 50's activities, exercise referral, healthy lifestyle activities
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£600,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	15 years at £40,000 per year

Note: maintenance costs based on 15 year period

Play area specifications

The preferred option for play space provision requires 8 square metres per person which forms part of the open space requirement of 1.8ha per 1000 people. The following tables provide details of the different types of play areas that may be required dependant upon the scale of development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

Table 44 Local Area for Play

Equipment	No equipment unless there is an existing need
Size	Activity zone minimum 100 square metres. This excludes planting, fencing and footpaths.
Location	All houses to be within 1 minute walk (60 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway. overlooked by nearby houses.
Buffer	5 metres from dwellings
Additional details	Sufficient seating for parents/ carers. 1 metre depth landscape planting to develop children's senses. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range. No fencing greater than 600mm in height.
Age range	0-5
Capital cost (at 2008)	Equipped LAPs with equipment to the value of £15,450
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	Equipped LAPs to the value of £6,180

Table 45 Local Equipped Area for Play

Equipment	A minimum of 7 pieces of equipment (5 pieces for age range 5-8, 2 for age range 0-5)
Size	Activity zone minimum 400 square metres
Location	All houses to be within 5 minute walk (240 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway. Not overlooked by any houses.
Buffer	20 metres from any dwelling

Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Additional details	Sufficient seating for parents/ carers. Landscape planting to develop children's senses. No fencing greater than 1000 mm in height. 2 outward opening self-closing gates. Litter bins. Impact absorbing surfacing. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range.
Age range	0-8
Capital cost (at 2008)	Equipment to the value of £41,200
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£12,360

Table 46 Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play

Equipment	A minimum of 8 pieces of equipment. Also including either a hard surfaced area for 5 a side football (MUGA) or a wheeled activities area (WAGA). NEAP types are detailed below.
Size	Activity zone minimum 1000 square metres; divided into 2 sections.
Location	All houses to be within 15 minute walk (600 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from the boundary of the nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating. Landscape planting to develop children's senses. No fencing greater than 1000 mm in height around the play area. 2 outward opening self closing gates. Impact absorbing surfacing. Youth shelter. Bike racks. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range.
Age range	8-15
Capital cost (at 2008)	Play equipment to the value of £161,800
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£36,480

Table 47 Individual Multi Use Games Area

Equipment	
Location	All houses to be within 600 metre straight line distance. Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating area, bike racks
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (indicative cost)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£20,000

Table 48 Individual Wheeled Activity Games Area

Equipment	Equipment for the purpose of skating and bikes
Location	All houses to be within 600 metre straight line distance. Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating area, bike racks
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (indicative cost)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£20,000

NEAP type 1: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a hard surfaced area for the purpose of a MUGA, as defined above.

Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

NEAP type 2: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a hard surfaced area for the purpose of a WAGA, as defined above.

NEAP type 3: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a grassed area for the purpose of informal ball games. The developer will be required to install goal/ basketball posts for the benefit of the local children. The following table provides guidance on the play space and play areas likely to be required according to the population expected to be generated by a proposed residential development.

Table 49 Play space and area requirements

Population	Children's play space required (square metres)		Expected designated play areas	
	Range		LAP	LEAP
0-49	0	392		
50-99	400	792	1	
100-149	800	1192	2	
150-199	1200	1592	3	
200-249	1600	1992		1
250-299	2000	2392	1	1
300-349	2400	2792	2	1
350-399	2800	3192	3	1
400-449	3200	3592		2
450-499	3600	3992	1	2
500-549	4000	4392	2	2
550-599	4400	4792	3	2
600-649	4800	5192		3
650-699	5200	5592	1	3
700-749	5600	5992	2	3
750-799	6000	6392	3	3
800-849	6400	6792		4
850-899	6800	7192	1	4
900-949	7200	7592	2	4
950-999	7600	7992	3	4

Once a development has reached an expected population of 1,000 then a NEAP will be required as part of the open space play provision.

Appendix 3 Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Appendix 3 Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

The following tables provide details of the different types of indoor sports and recreation facilities that may be required dependent upon the scale of the development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

Table 50 Sports Halls

Size	Minimum 4 courts / 594sqm
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications In small village locations one, two or three court halls may be fit for purpose
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£2,765,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£150,000

Table 51 Swimming Pools

Size	Minimum 4 lane x 25m (212sqm) Recommended Community Pool 6 lane x 25 m (325sqm)
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications Needs to be fit for purpose
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£2,670,00 (5 lane x 25m)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£300,000

Table 52 Indoor Bowls

Size	Minimum 6 lanes
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications
Age Range	All – predominant usage adults and older adults
Capital cost (at 2008)	£1,555,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	

Table 53 Indoor Tennis

Size	Minimum 2 courts
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£700,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	

Table 54 Fitness Stations

Size	Minimum 20 stations
Additional Details	Built to industry specifications & IFI compliant

Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Appendix 3

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

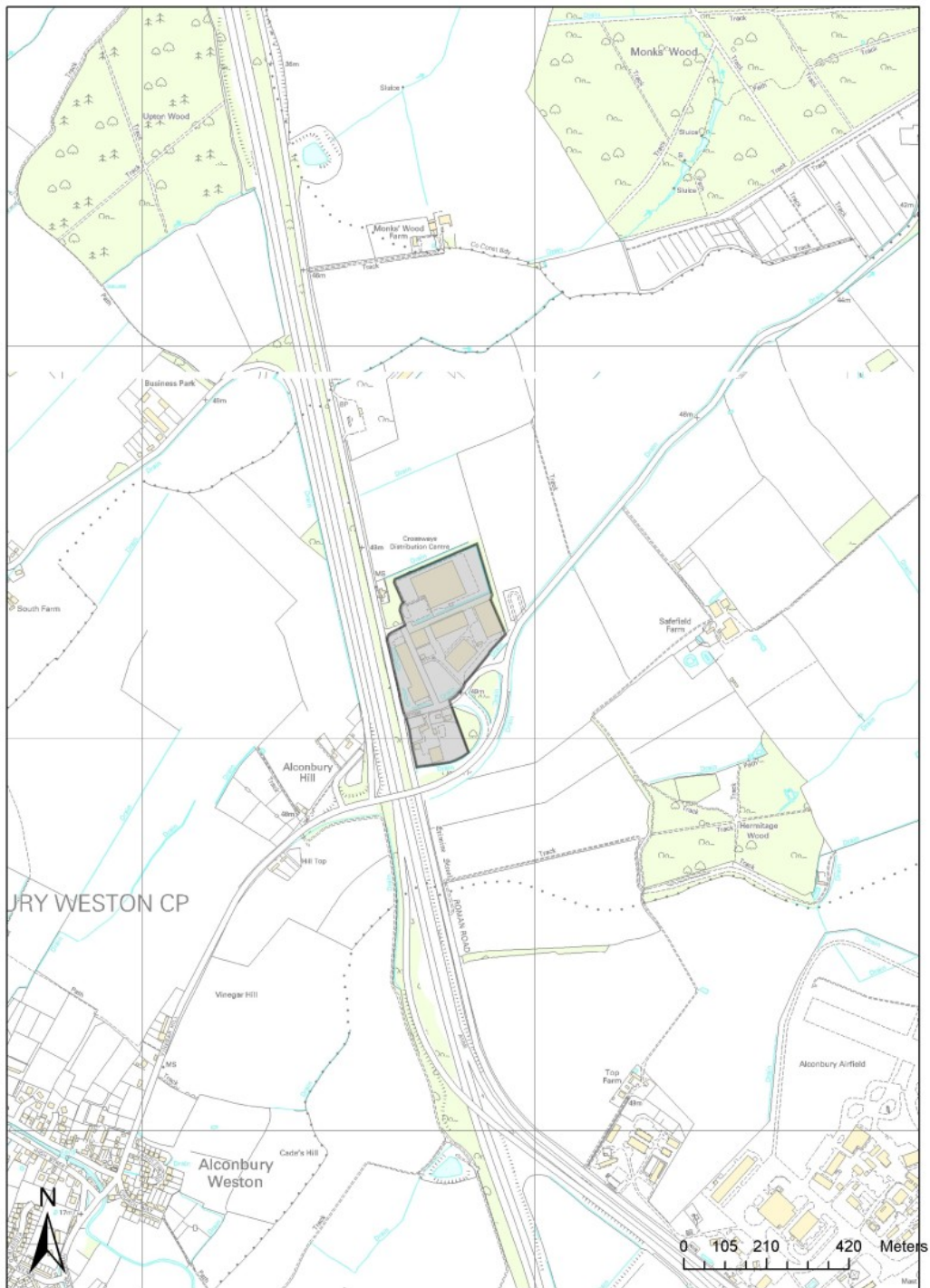
Age Range	14 plus
Capital cost (at 2008)	£400,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£300,000

Note: Maintenance costs based on 15 year period

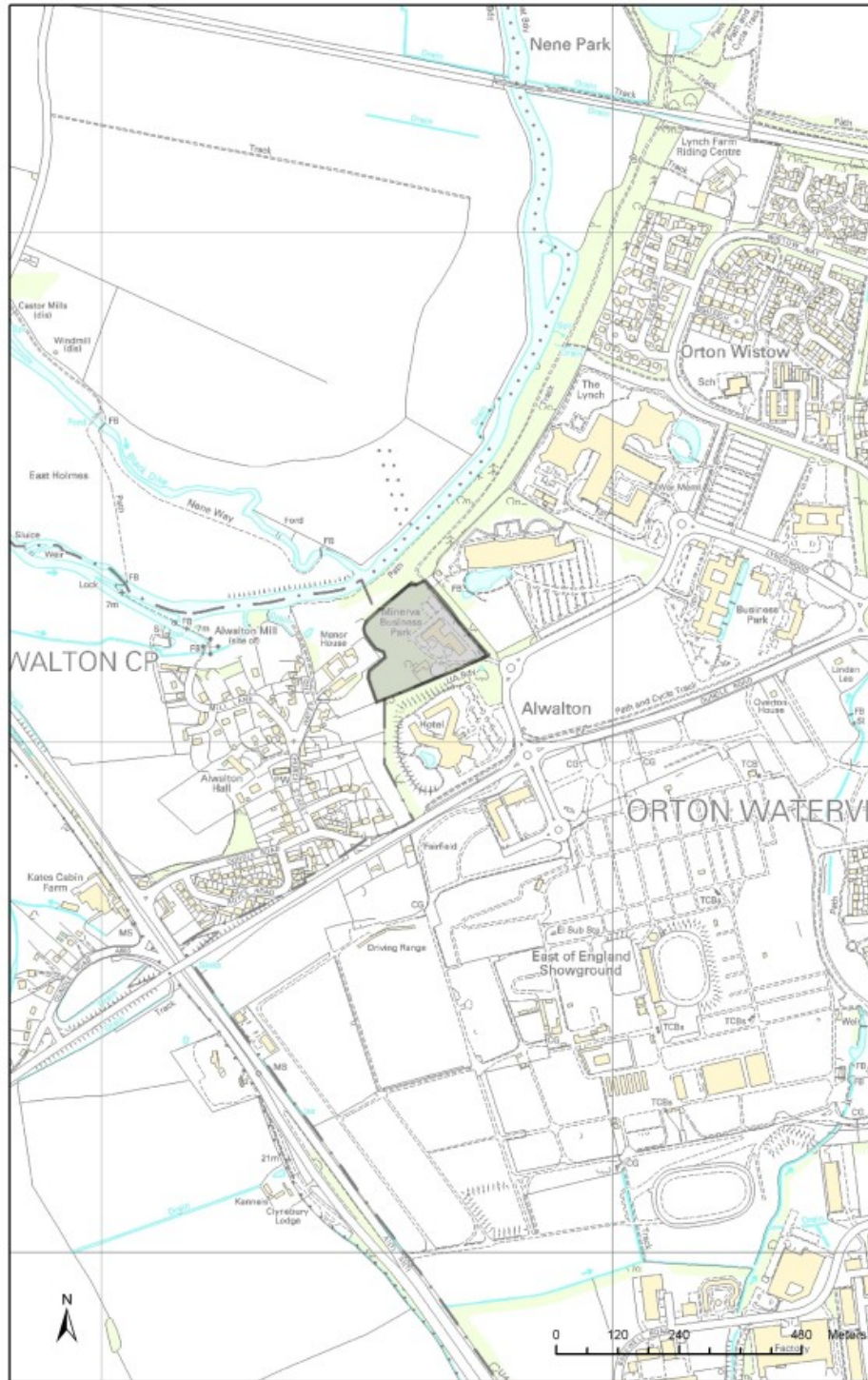
Capital costs from Sport England Planning Contribution Kitbag document 'Sport Facility Costs 2nd Quarter 2008'

Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Map 4.1 Alconbury Weston Commercial Area



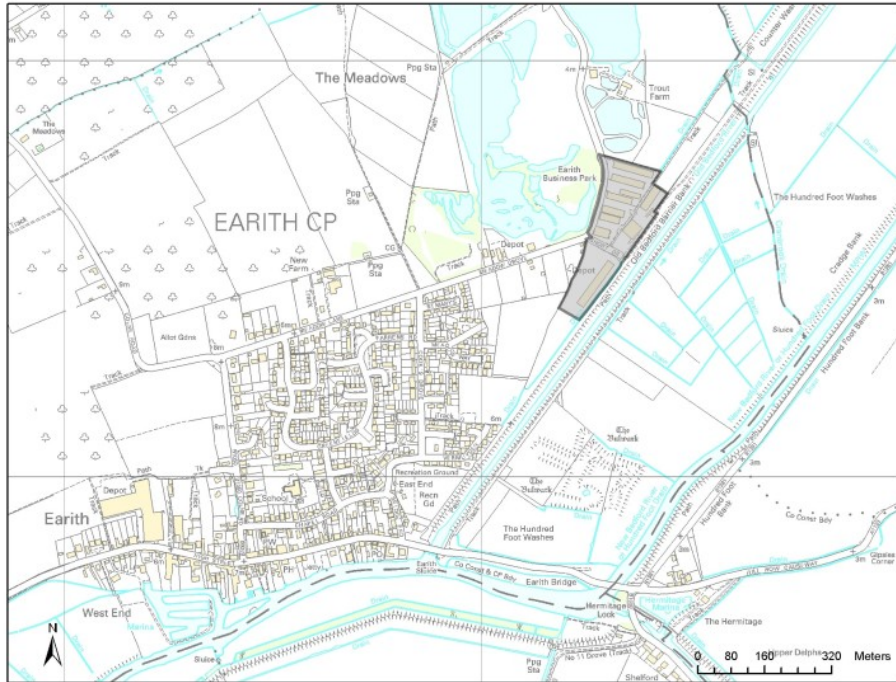
Picture 4.1 Alwalton Commercial Area



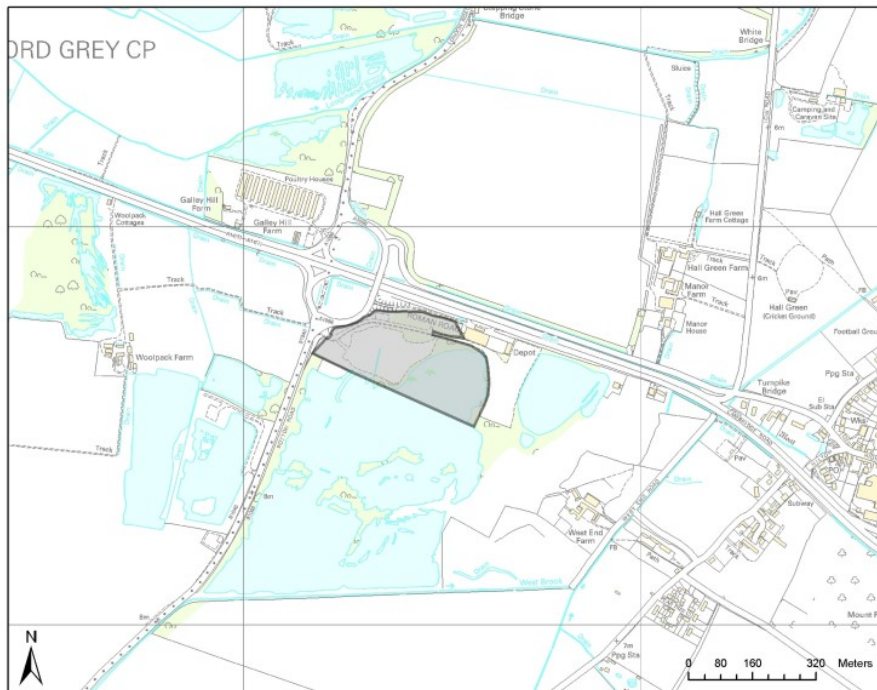
Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

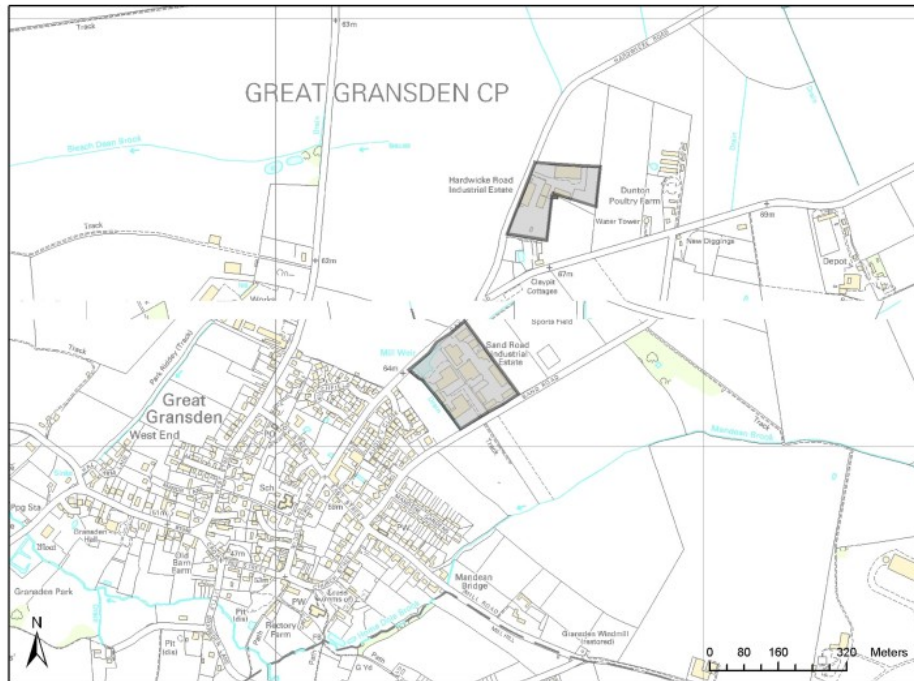
Map 4.2 Earith Commercial Area



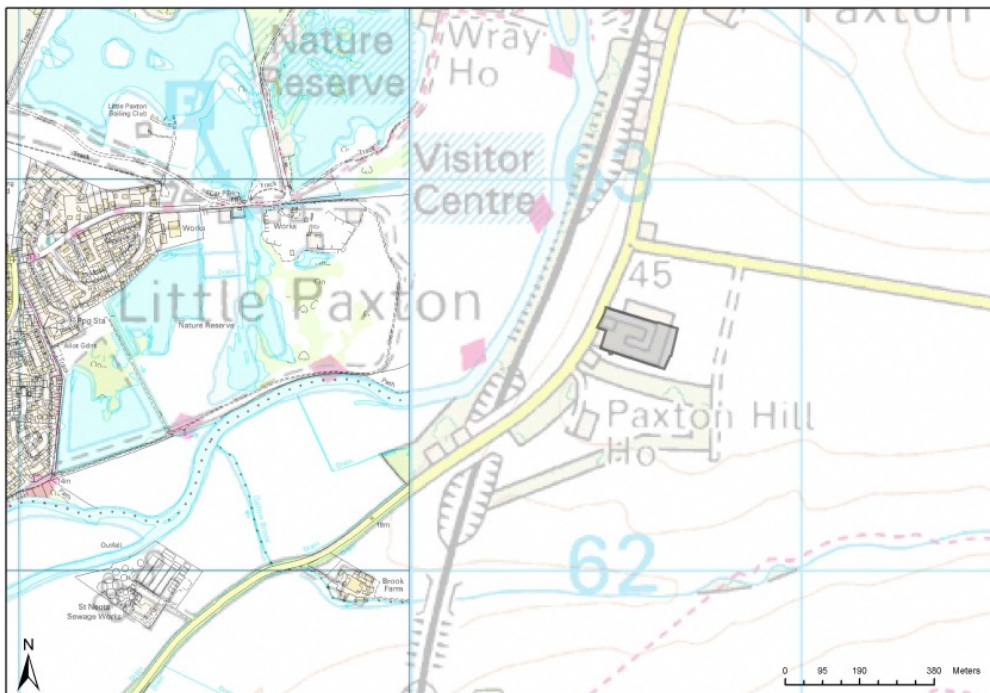
Map 4.3 Galley Hill Commercial Area



Map 4.4 Great Gransden Commercial Areas



Map 4.5 Great Paxton Commercial Area



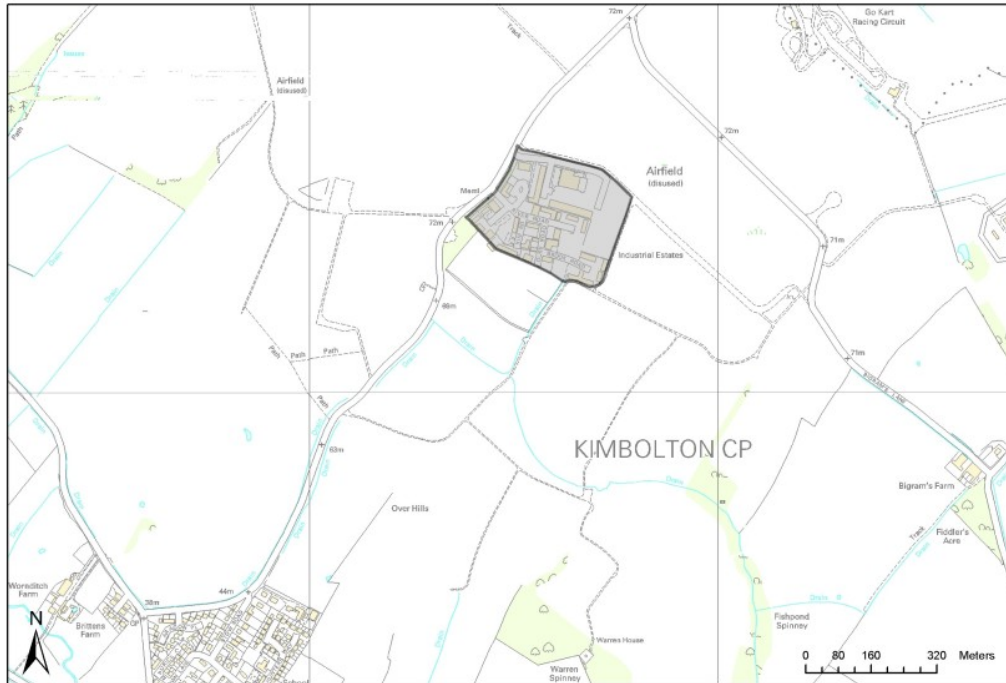
Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

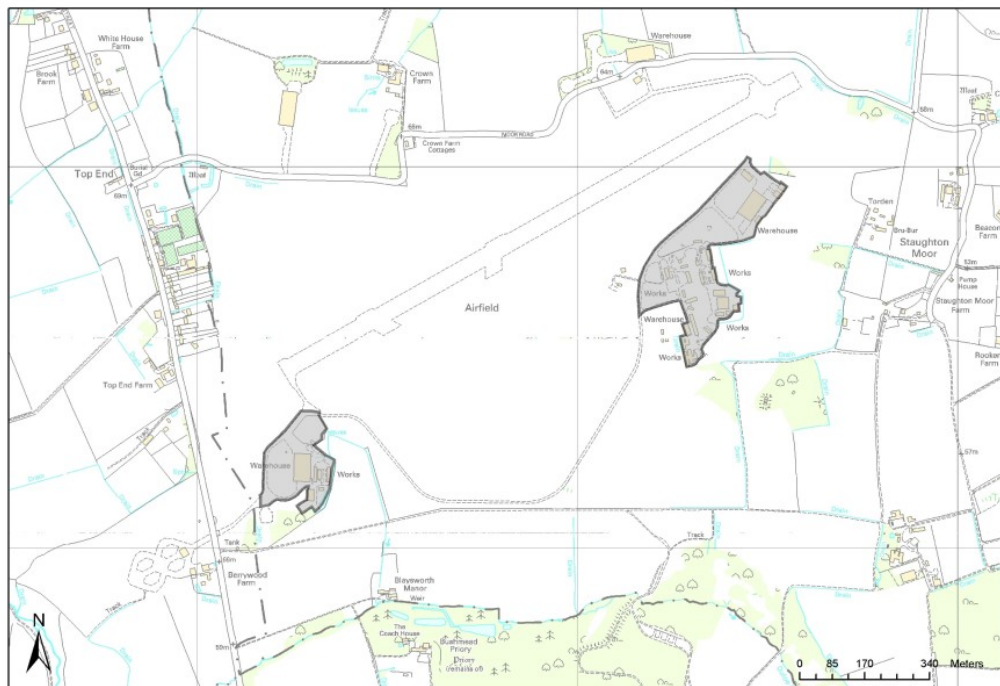
Map 4.6 Huntingdon Commercial Areas



Map 4.7 Kimbolton Commercial Area



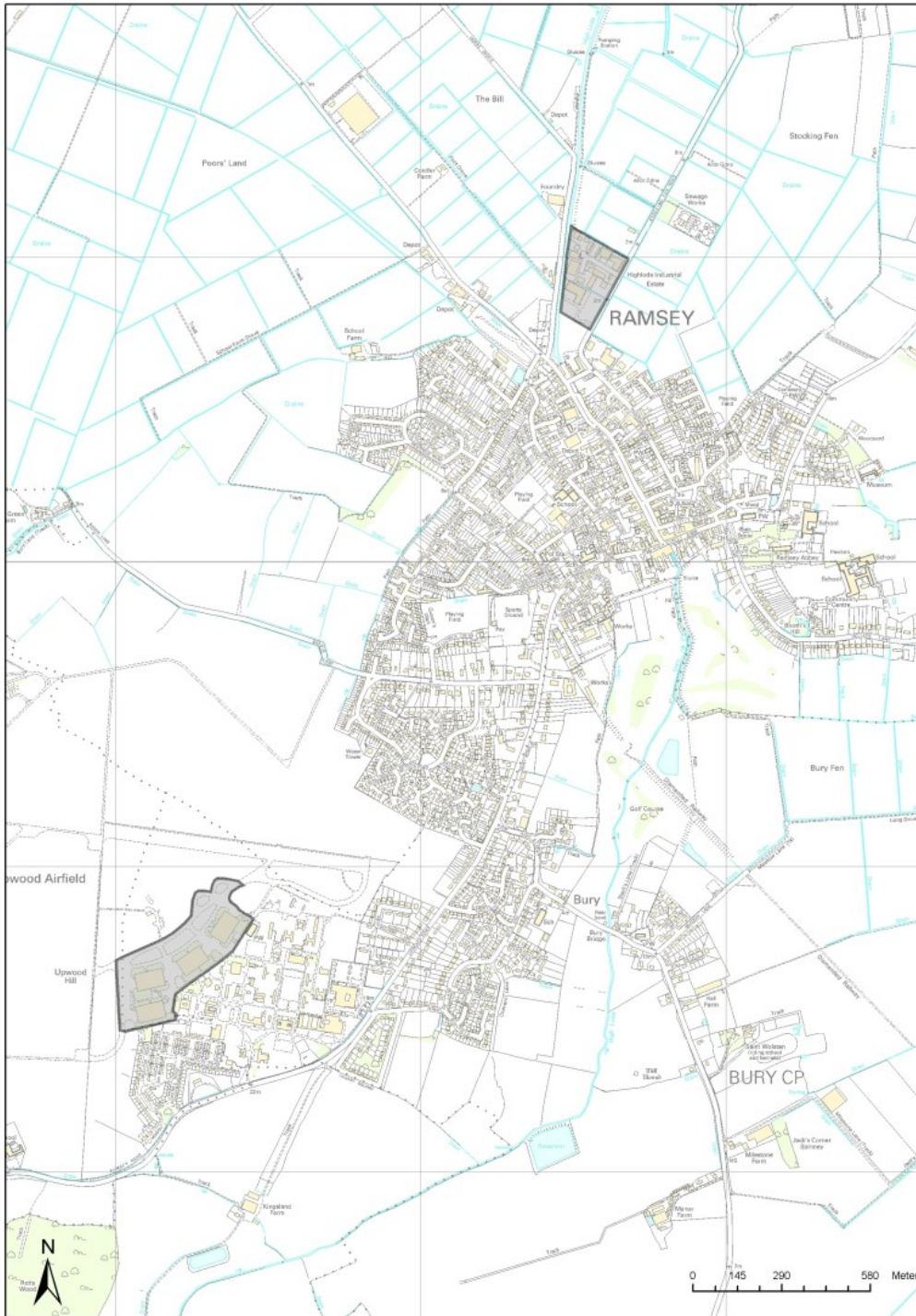
Map 4.8 Little Staughton Commercial Areas



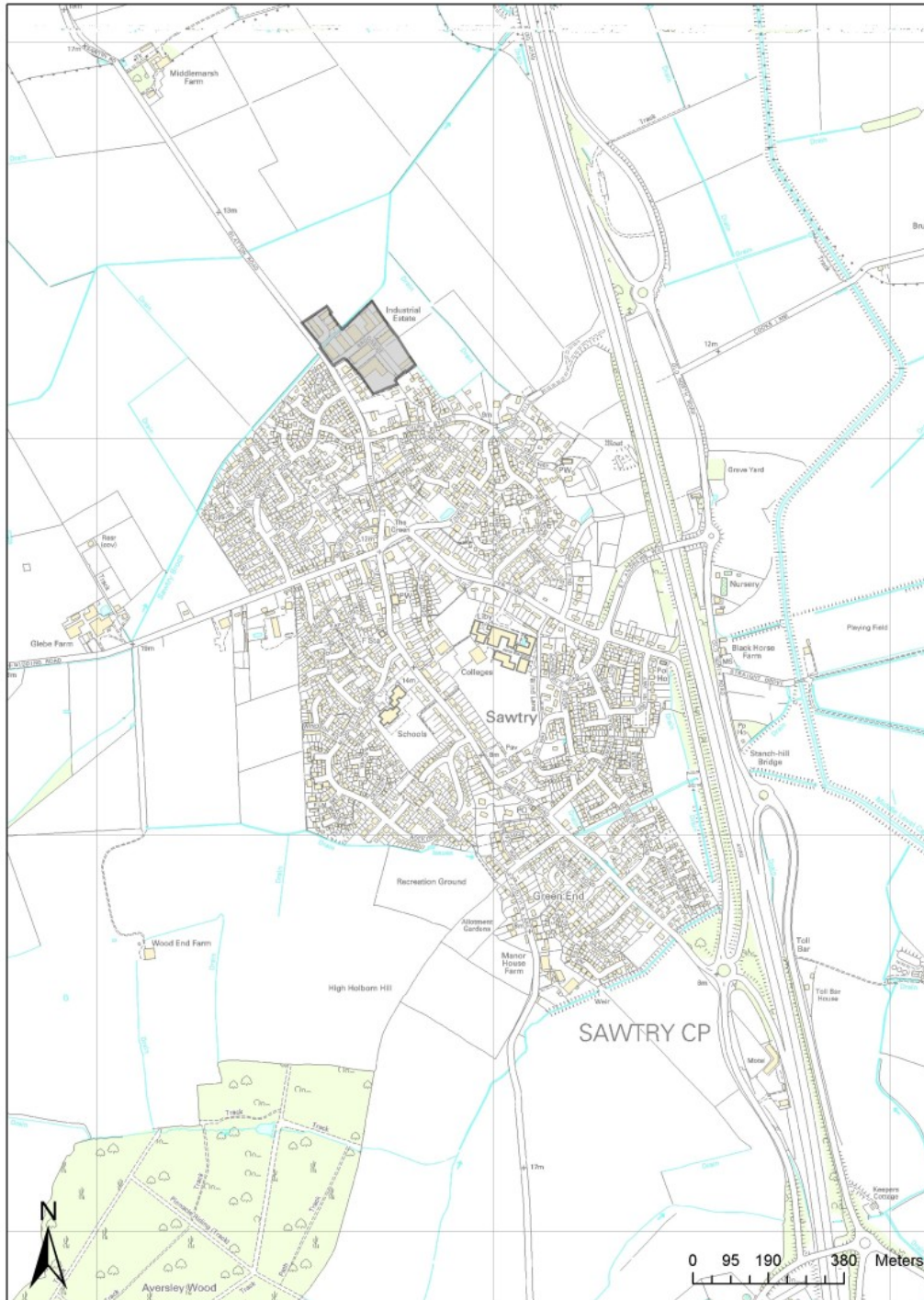
Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Map 4.9 Ramsey Commercial Areas



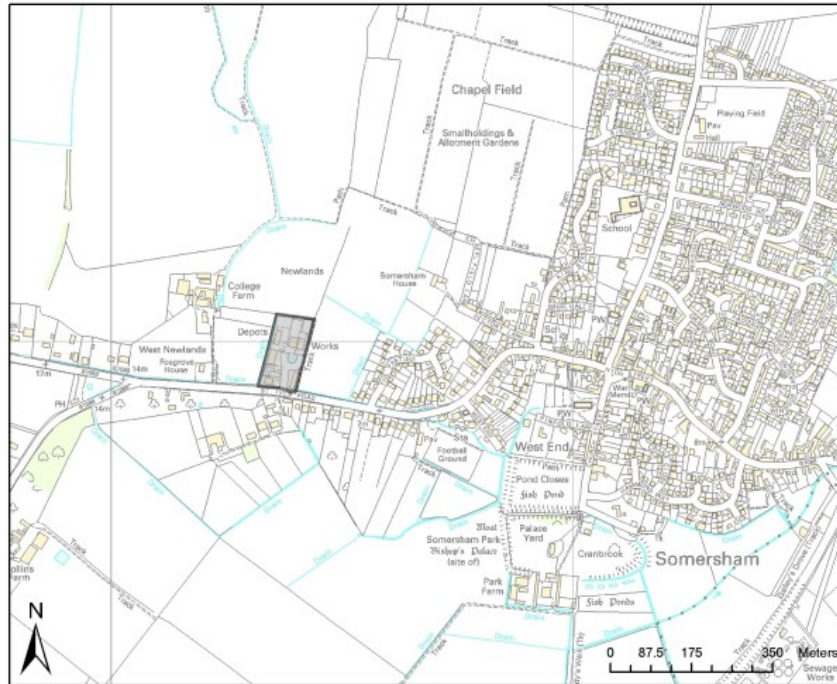
Map 4.10 Sawtry Commercial Area



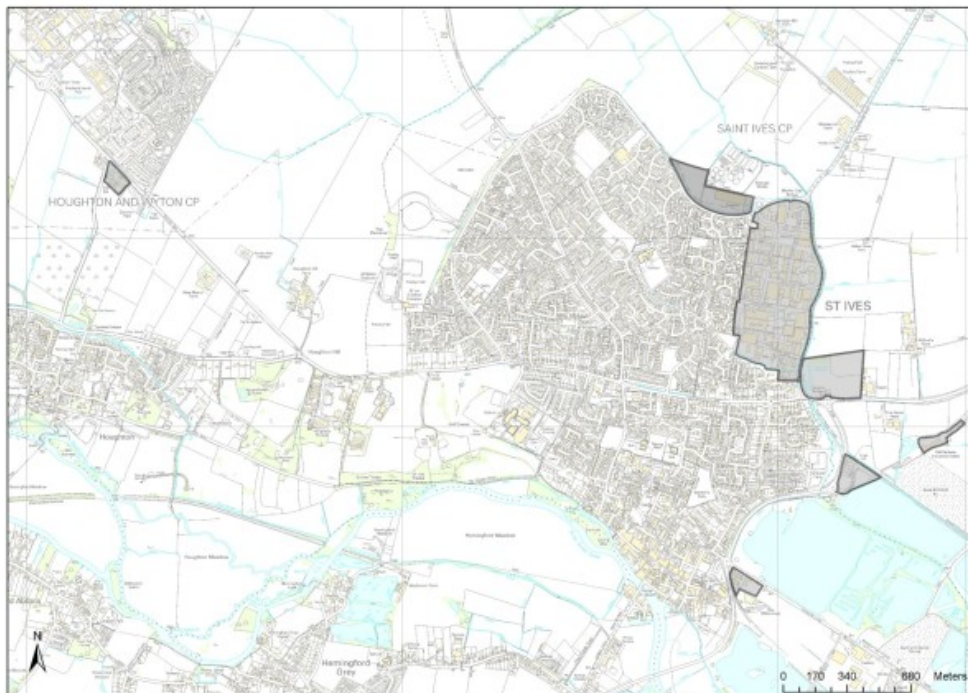
Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

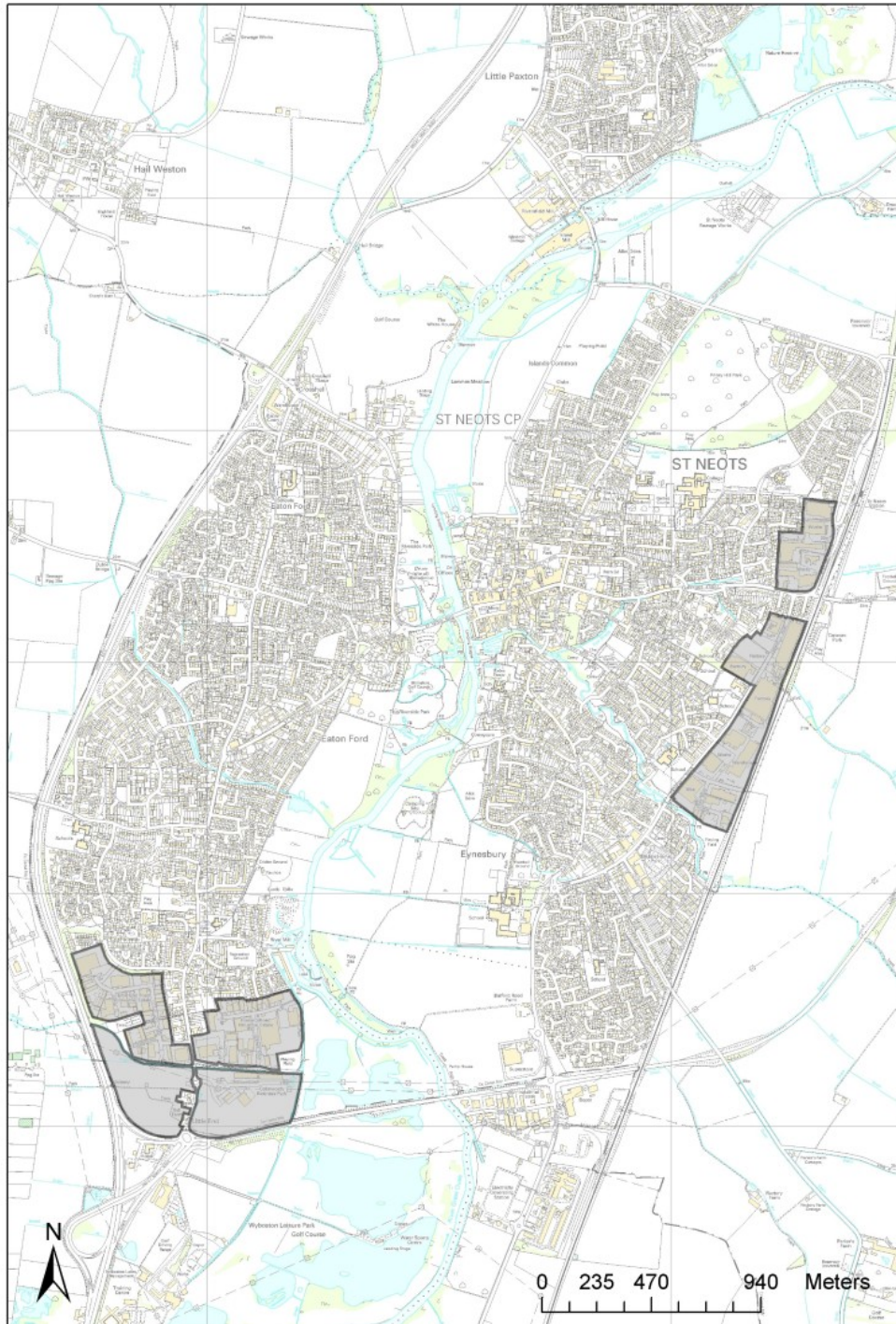
Map 4.11 Somersham Commercial Area



Map 4.12 St Ives Commercial Areas



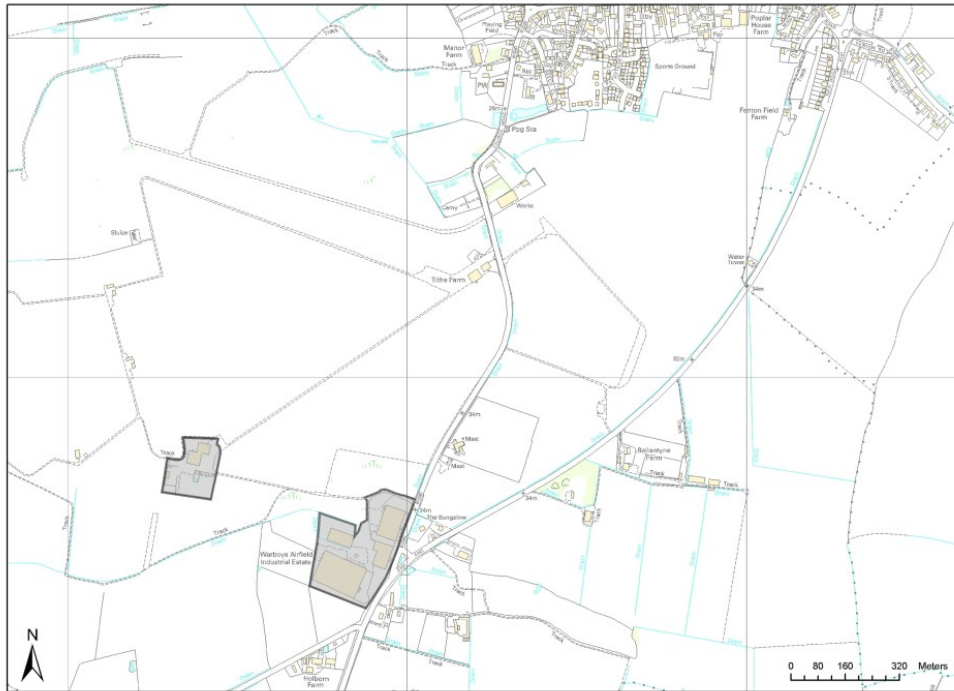
Map 4.13 St Neots Commercial Areas



Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Map 4.14 Warboys Commercial Areas

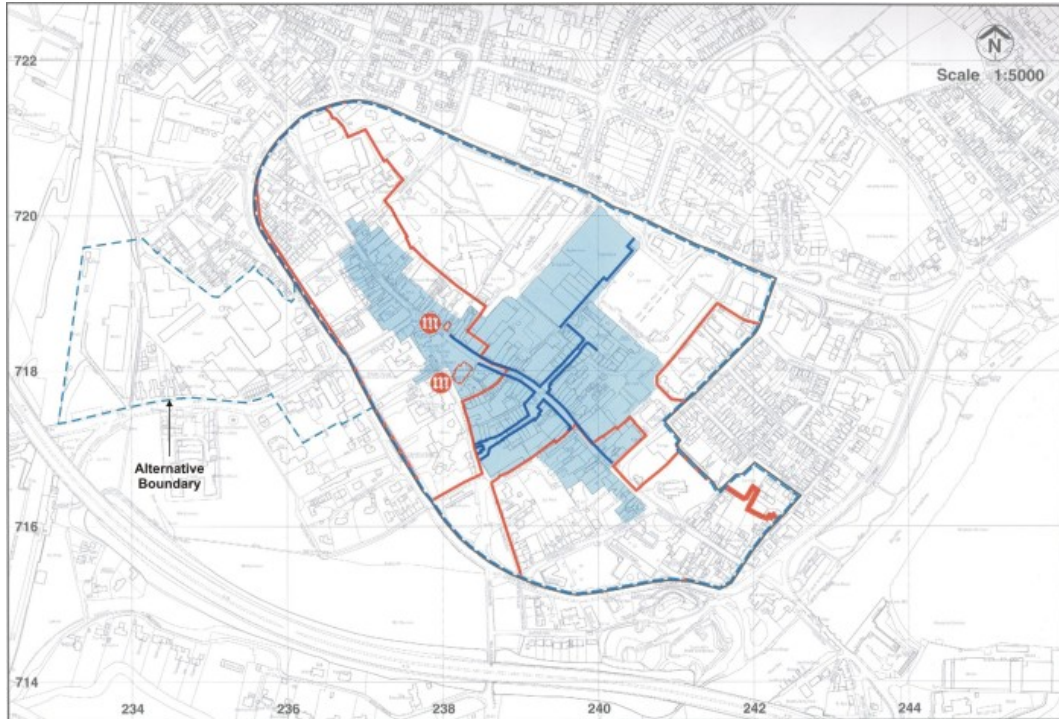


Map 4.15 Yaxley Commercial Areas

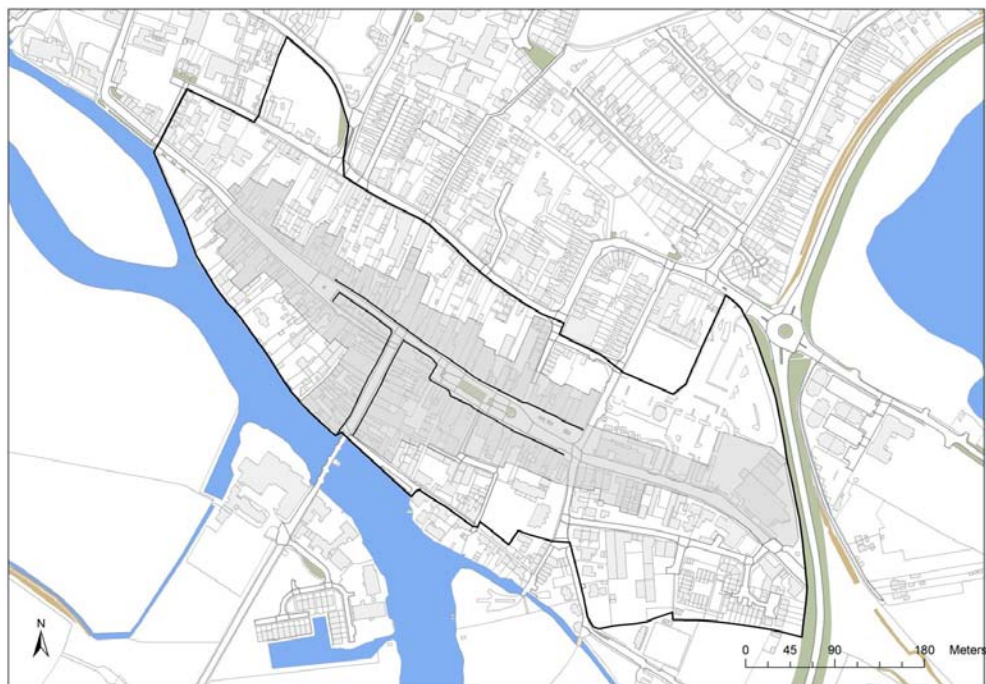


Appendix 5 Town Centres and Retail Designations

Map 5.1 Huntingdon Town Centre



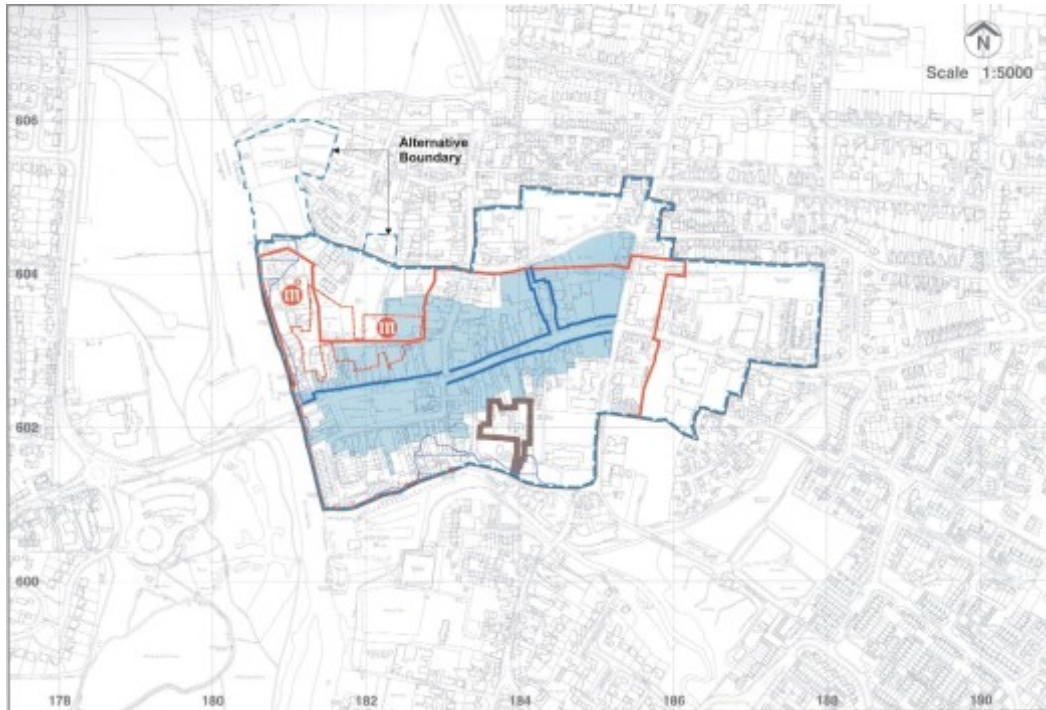
Map 5.2 St Ives Town Centre



Appendix 5 Town Centres and Retail Designations

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Map 5.3 St Neots Town Centre

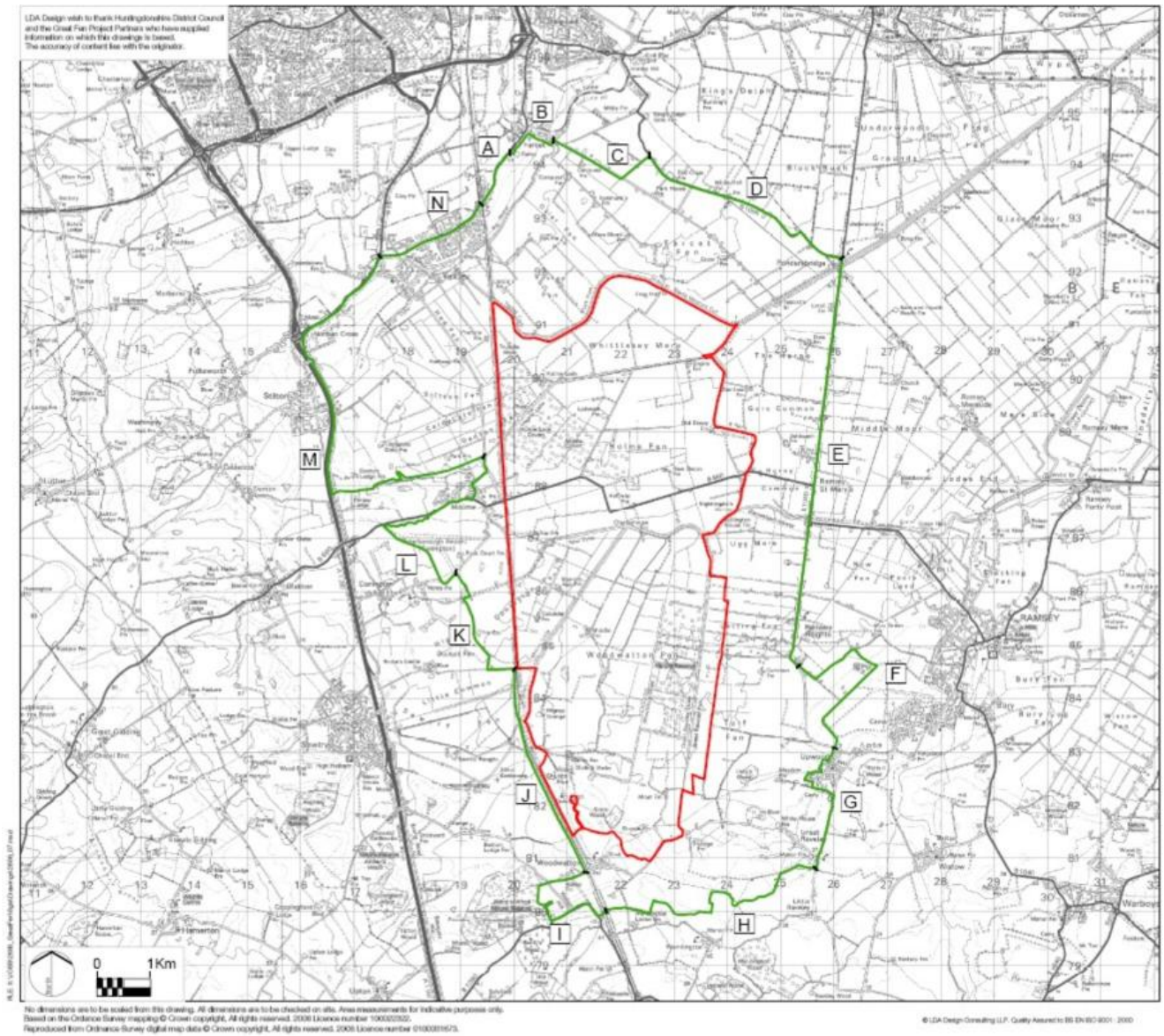


Map 5.4 Ramsey Town Centre



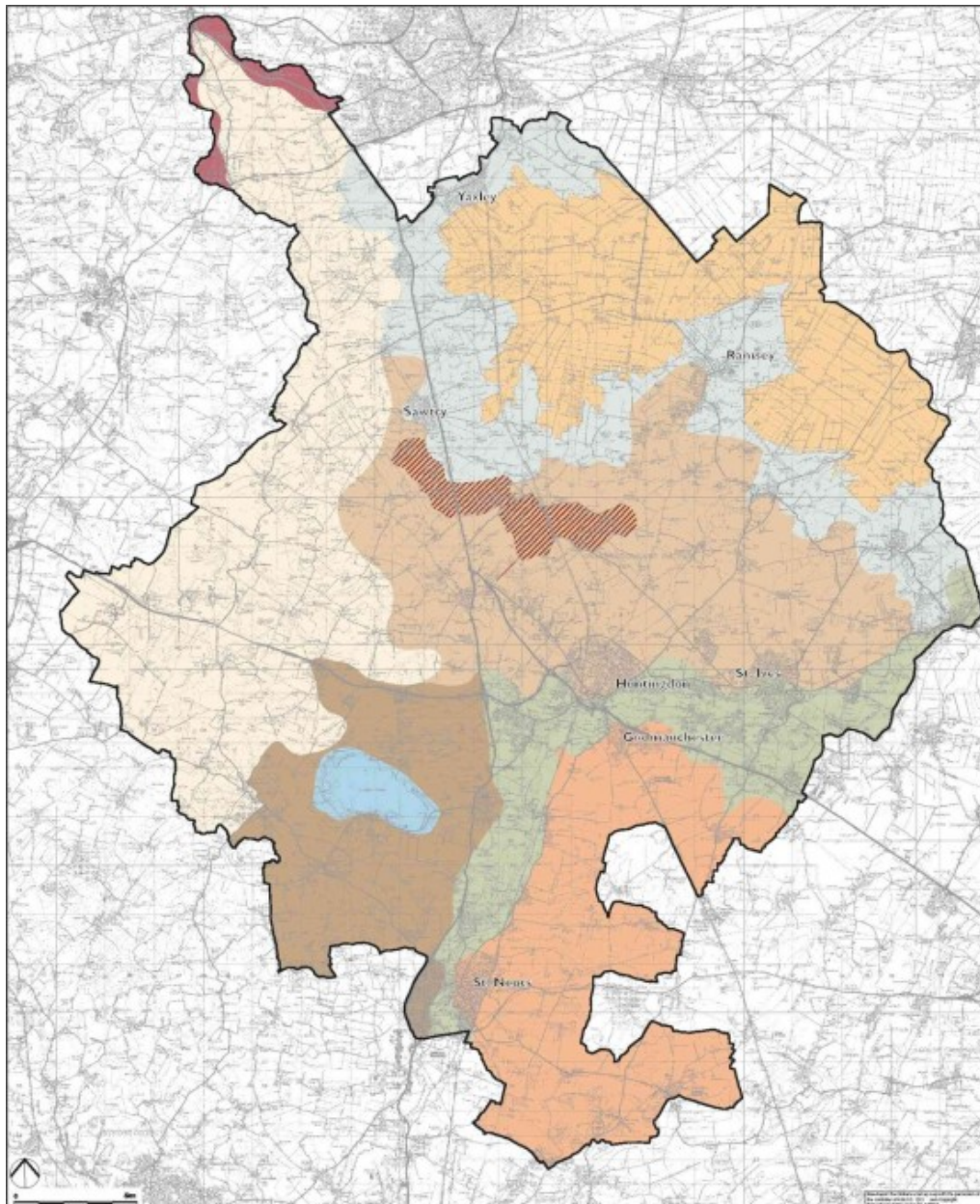
Appendix 6 Great Fen Project Maps

Picture 6.1 Great Fen Project Boundary and Setting Boundary













Appendix 7 Landscape Character Areas

Map 7.1 Landscape Character Areas



Landscape Character Areas Key

	The Fens		Northern Wolds
	Fen Margin		Grafton Water
	Central Claylands		Southern Wolds
	Ouse Valley		Nene Valley
	South East Claylands		Central Claylands sub area of extensive woodland

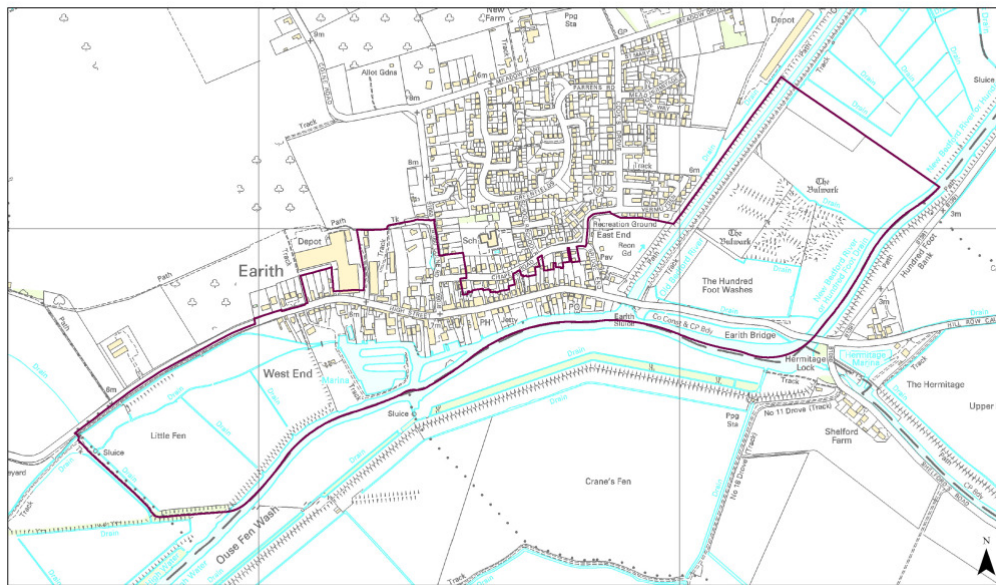
Appendix 8 Conservation Area Boundaries

8.1 The following maps show the conservation areas in the district which have changed since the publication of the Local Plan Proposals Map. Full details of all conservation area character statements and boundaries can be found on the Council's website:

<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Environment+and+Planning/Buildings/Conservation+Areas/>.

Map 8.1 Earith Conservation Area

The Earith Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on 12th June 2008



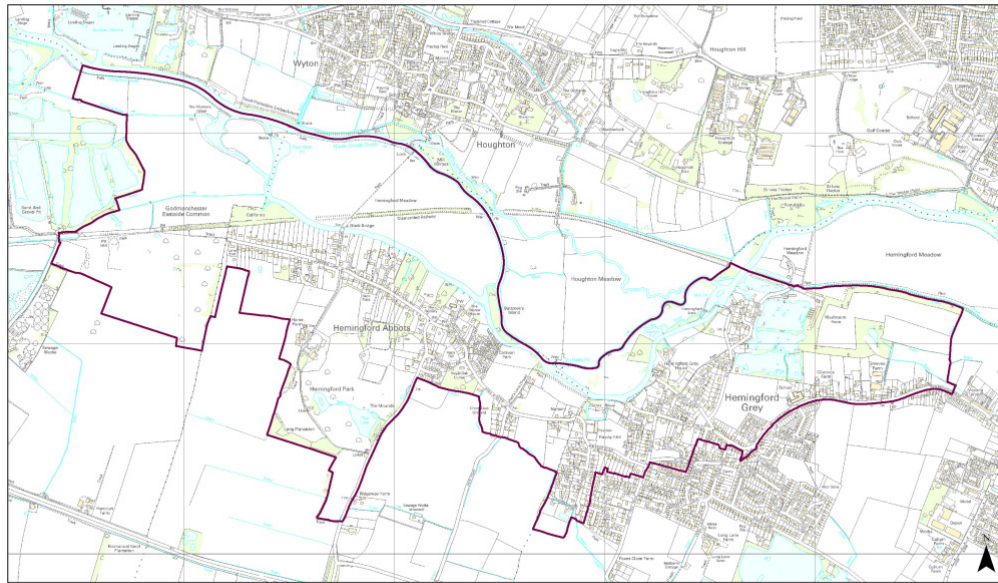
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Appendix 8 Conservation Area Boundaries

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

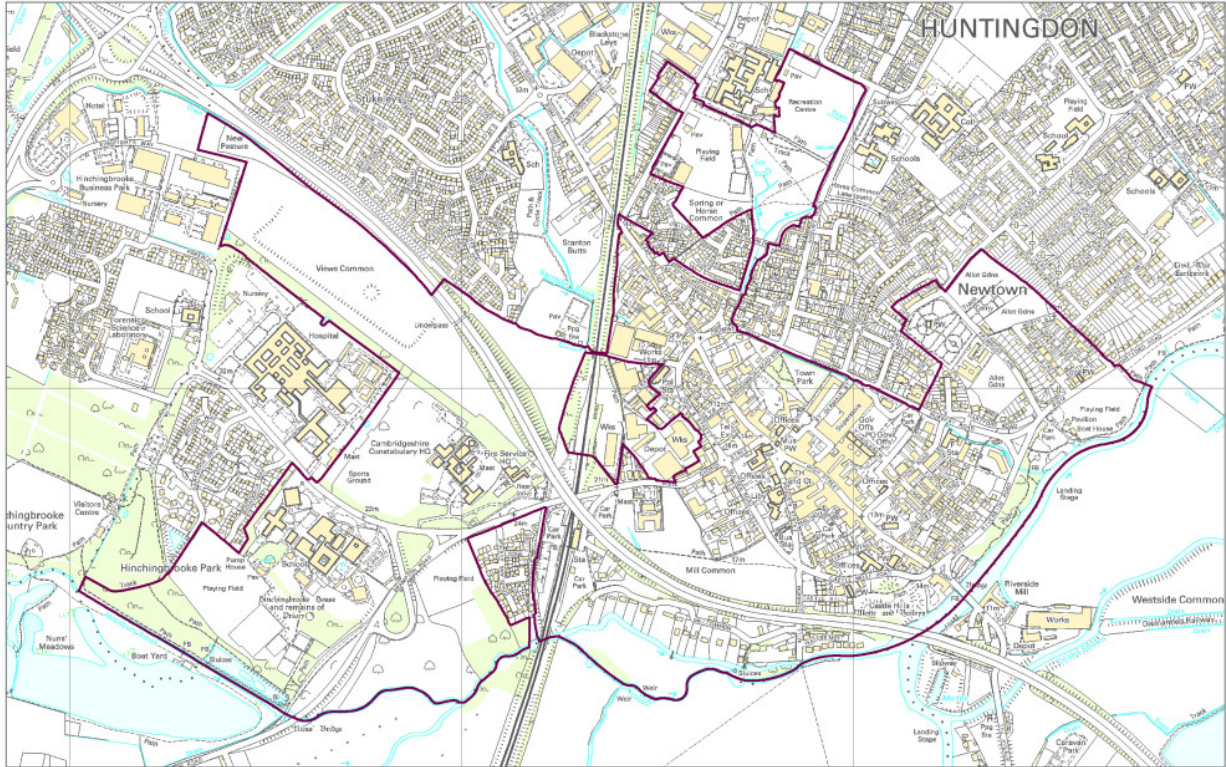
Map 8.2 The Hemingfords Conservation Area

The Hemingfords Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on 12th June 2008



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Map 8.3 Huntingdon Conservation Area



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Scale: 1:8000

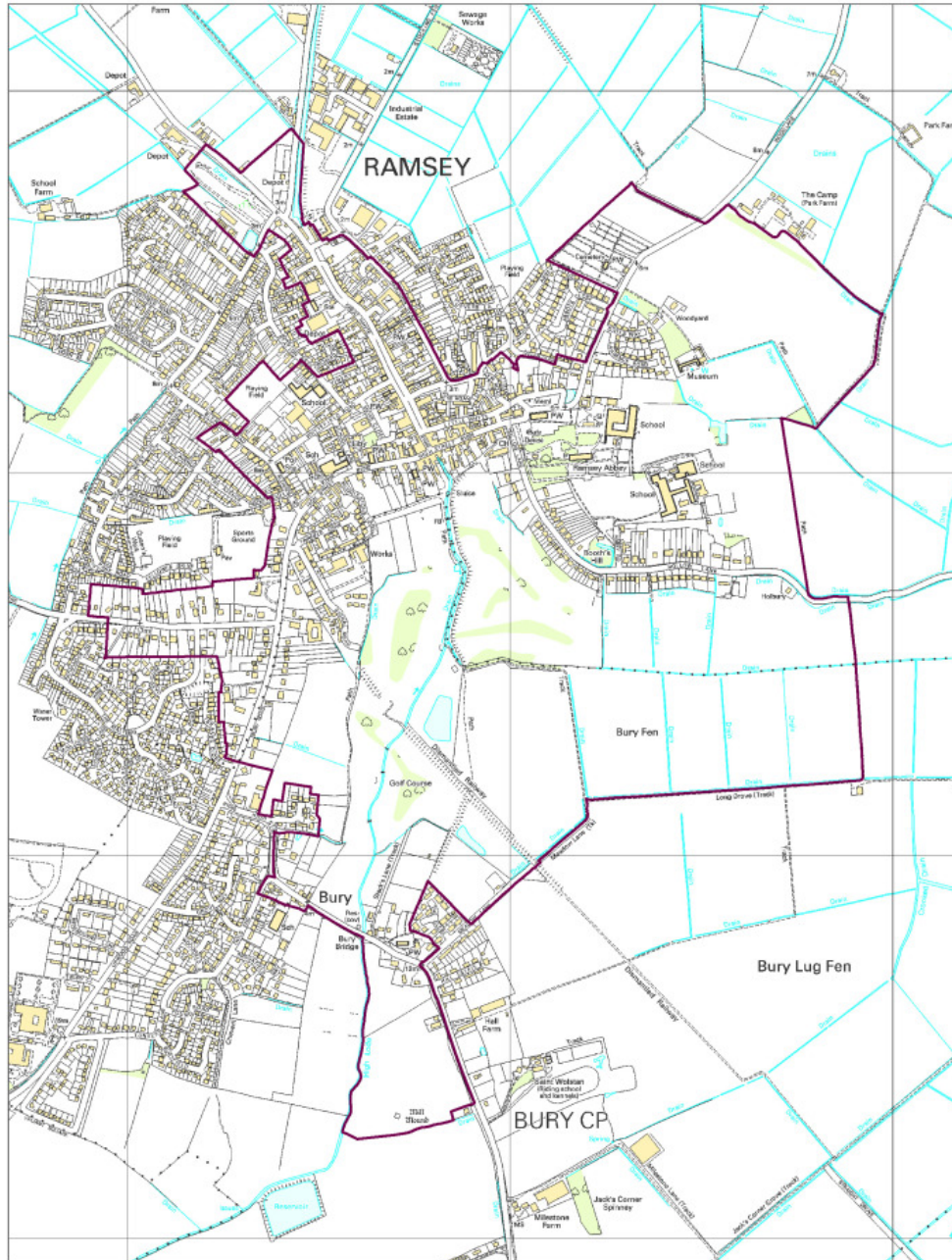


Huntingdon Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 13th December 2007

Appendix 8 Conservation Area Boundaries

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Map 8.4 Ramsey Conservation Area



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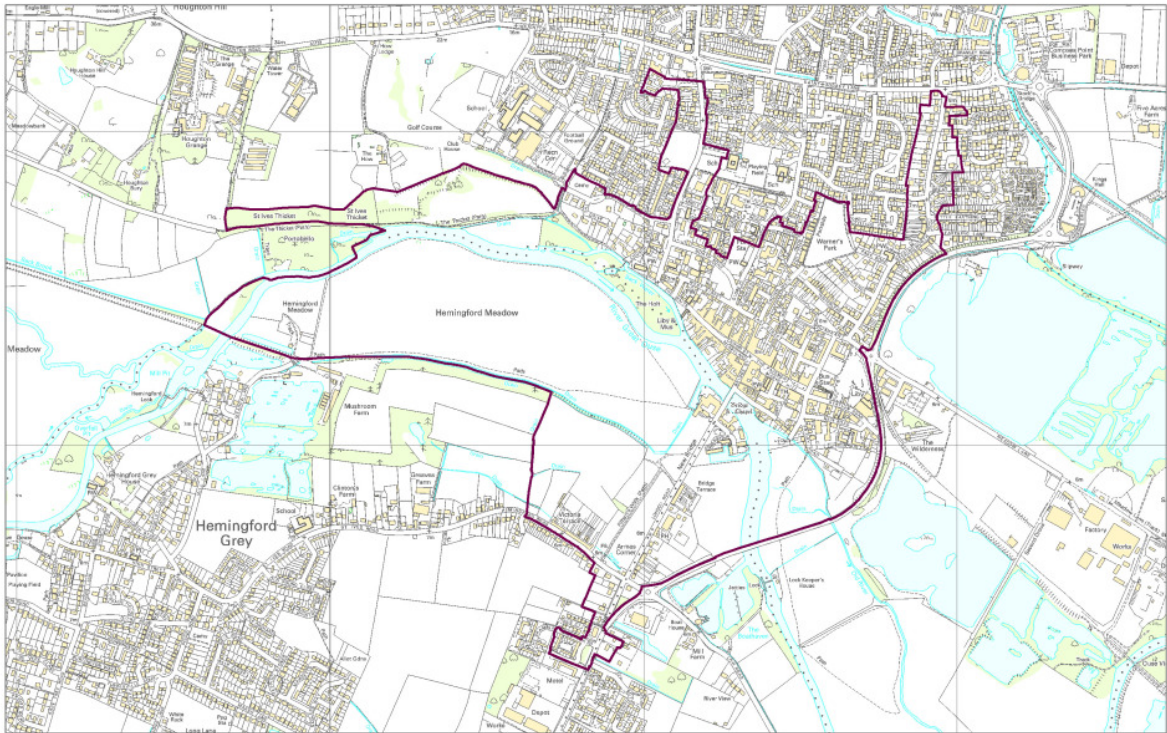
Scale: 1:9000



Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ramsey Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 15th December 2005

Map 8.5 St Ives Conservation Area



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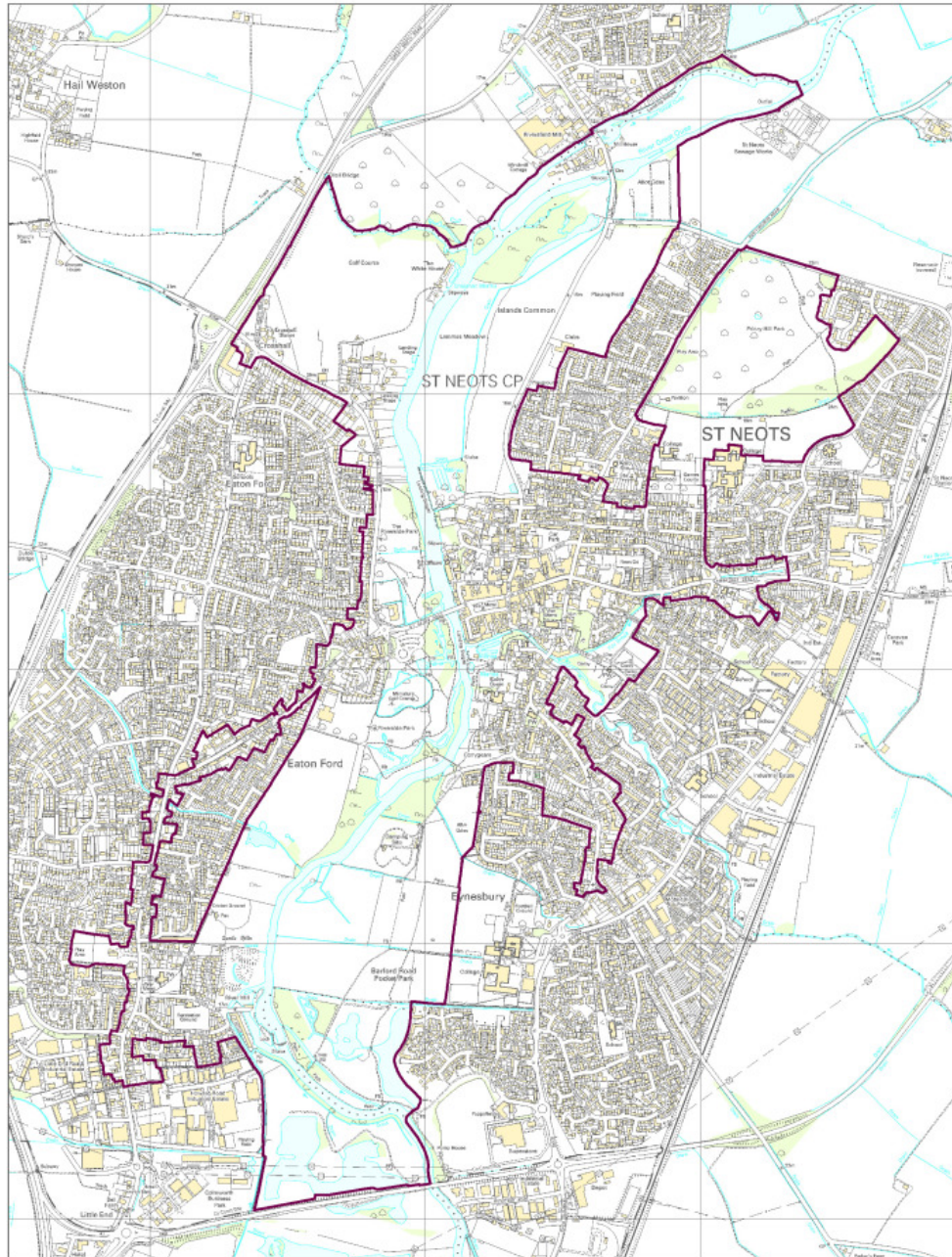
Scale: 1:10000

	Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL	St Ives Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 18th October 2007
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Appendix 8 Conservation Area Boundaries

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Map 8.6 St Neots Conservation Area



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Scale: 1:12500



Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

St Neots Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 19th October 2006

Appendix 9 Organisations and Bodies Consulted

Table 55 Specific Consultation Bodies

Environment Agency	Highways Agency
East of England Regional Assembly	Hinchingbrooke Health Care Centre NHS
Natural England	Anglian Water
Mobile Operators Association	East of England Strategic Health Authority
Network Rail	Greater Peterborough PCT
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Health Network	Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Sport England	East of England Development Agency
Cambridgeshire Horizons	East Midlands Development Agency
National Grid Property	Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust
Eon	Go East
N Power	BT
English Heritage	Cambridge Water
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership	All 84 Town and Parish Councils within the District

Table 56 Neighbouring Authorities

Mid Bedfordshire District Council	Northamptonshire County Council
Peterborough City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Bedfordshire County Council	East Northants District Council
East Cambs District Council	Fenland District Council
Bedford Borough Council	Cambridgeshire County Council

Table 57 Other Consultation Bodies

Cambridge Housing Society	Beds and Cambs Rural Support
Savills	Alexanders
Pegasus Planning Group	Somersham and District Day Centre
The Planning Bureau Ltd	Alconbury and Ellington Drainage Board
Great Ouse Boating Association	DLP planning
Charles Planning Ltd	British Horse Society Cambridgeshire
Carter Jonas	St Neots and District Chamber of Commerce
Henry Bletsoe & Son	Andrew S Campbell Associates
Cambridgeshire Bat Group	RPS Planning
Planning Potential	Meridian
Peacock and Smith	Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association
St Neots Youth Town Council	Anglia Support Partnership
Miller	Anchor Trust

Appendix 9 Organisations and Bodies Consulted

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Nash Partnership	St Neots Liberal Democrat Group
Croudace Homes Ltd	Bidwells
Januaries	Barton Wilmore
Four Seasons Day Centre	Vincent and Gorbing Chartered Town Planners and Architects
Guinness Trust	Flagship Housing
Aldwyck Housing Association	National Playing Fields Association
BryantHomes	Bluesky Planning
Middle Level Commissioners	CABE
Civic Society of St Ives	The Crown Estate
Dev Plan UK	Huntingdon and District Bus
David Wilson Estates	Fitch Butterfield Associates
Smith Stuart Reynolds	CPRE Cambridgeshire
Circle Anglia	Accent Nene Housing Association
Levvel Ltd	Countryside Properties
RSPB	Cambridgeshire Enterprise Services
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils	PeterboroughEnvironmentCity Trust
Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch	Huntingdon Mencap
Hunts Society for the Blind	Hunts MIND
Church Commissioners	Inland Waterway Association (Peterborough Branch)
Renewables East	George Wimpey
HallamLand Management	Woods Hardwick Planning
DavidWilsonHomes	Bewick Homes
RamseyTown Centre Partnership	Richmond Fellowship Employment and Training
Cheffins	Larkfleet Homes
Charles Planning	Huntingdonshire and Godmanchester Civic Society
Francis Jackson Estates	Granta Housing
Terence O'Rourke Ltd	Freight Transport Association
Swaversey District Bridleways Association	D H Barford & Co
Smiths Gore	The Gypsy Council
Huntingdon CAB	CountryLand and Business Association
Woodland Trust	Fisher German
Minster Housing Association	Kier Residential
Paul and Company	Phillips Planning
Rapleys	Atkins
AlsopVerrillTown Planning	Spacelab
Business Link East	Civic Trust
Home Builders Federation	Robert Doughty Consultancy Limited
HuntingdonTown Centre Partnership	Peterborough Diocese
Ely Diocese	John Martin & Assoc

Organisations and Bodies Consulted Appendix 9

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Jennifer Lampert Associates	British Wind Energy Assoc
Hargrave Conservation Society	Optical Activity
Davidson Business	Stamford Homes
JDI Solutions	Varrier Jones Organisation
Davidson Business	De Clifton
J & J Design	Axiom Housing Association
Friends of the Earth	Levitt Partnership
Cambs ACRE	Stewart Ross Associates
Disability Information Service Huntingdonshire	St Ives Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Hanover Housing Association	Jones Day Solicitors
Oxmoor in Bloom	Camstead Homes
Howard Sharp and Partners	Foxley Tagg Planning Ltd
FSB HUNTINGDONSHIRE	Luminus
ARUP	Housing 21
National Trust	CAMRA
Fairhurst	RPS Warren
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	Forestry Commission
Appletree Homes Ltd	Boyer Planning
Sustrans	Mono Consultants
Antony Asbury Assoc	Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum
Hutchinson's	Stilton Community Association
Harris Lamb Chartered Surveyors	Bloor Homes
Eversheds LLP	Peterborough Conservation Volunteers
Hartford Conservation Group	Planning Aid
The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire & Peterborough	

Government Departments

Department for Transport
OFSTED
Defence Estates Operations

Glossary

Adoption

The point at which the final agreed version of a document comes fully into use.

Affordable Housing

Housing available at a significant discount below market levels so as to be affordable to householders who cannot either rent or purchase property that meets their needs on the open market. It can include social-rented housing and intermediate housing.

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 tranquility.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Document produced each year to report on progress in producing the *Local Development Framework* and implementing its policies.

Areas of Strategic Greenspace Enhancement

Areas which have been identified as having opportunities to expand and create strategic greenspace.

Biodiversity

The whole variety of life on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their genetic variation and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Brownfield

Previously developed land (PDL). In the sequential approach this is preferable to greenfield land. Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition includes the curtilage of the development. Previously-developed land may occur in both built-up and rural settings. A precise definition is included in Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing'.

Built Up Area

Excludes buildings that are clearly detached from the main body of the settlement, and gardens and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings at the edge of the settlement, especially where those gardens relate more to the surrounding countryside than they do to the built up parts of the settlement. For the full definition of the built-up area please refer to the draft policy on Development in the Countryside.

Community Infrastructure

Facilities available for use by the community. Examples include village halls, doctors' surgeries, pubs, churches and children play areas. It may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

The power given to the Local Authority to acquire land for redevelopment which may include development by private developers.

Comparison Floorspace

Shops retailing items not obtained on a frequent basis. these include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Compulsory Purchase Order

The power given to the Local Authority to acquire land for redevelopment which may include development by private developers.

Conservation Area

A designated area of special architectural and/or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is a recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole.

Convenience Floorspace

Shops retailing everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/ magazines and confectionery.

Core Strategy

The main *Development Plan Document* containing the overall vision, objectives and policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.

County Structure Plan

An existing document containing strategic planning policies and proposals for the county. Under the new system it will be phased out and replaced by policies in the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

Curtilage

The area occupied by a property and land closely associated with that property. E.g. in terms of a house and garden, the garden forms the curtilage of the property.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

The Government department responsible for planning and production of planning guidance.

Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. The Development Plan includes the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

Development Plan Documents

A document containing local planning policies or proposals which form part of the *Development Plan*, which has been subject to independent examination.

European Sites

Consist of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and sites on draft lists for protection as outlined in Regulation 10 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

Examination

Independent consideration of the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* chaired by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, whose recommendations are binding.

Greenfield

Land which has not been developed before. Applies to most sites outside built-up area boundaries.

Habitat

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

Housing Needs Assessment

An assessment of housing needs in the local area. This assessment plays a crucial role in underpinning the planning policies relating to affordable housing. In addition, the information on local needs is required to determine the location of such housing and guide new investment.

Infrastructure

A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Issues and Options preliminary consultation document

The first stage in the production of *development plan documents*. The Council brings possible issues and options for the District into the public domain, in order to generate responses to aid the development of this 'Development of Options' document.

Key Workers

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers. This includes those groups eligible for the Housing Corporation funded Key Worker Living programme and others employed within the public sector (ie outside of this programme) identified by the Regional Housing Board for assistance.

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.

Local Development Document

The collective term for *Development Plan Documents*, the *Proposals Map*, *Supplementary Planning Documents* and the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

Local Development Framework

The collection of documents to be produced by Huntingdonshire District Council that will provide the new planning policy framework for the district.

Local Development Scheme

Sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents.

Local Strategic Partnership

A group of public, private, voluntary and community organisations and individuals that is responsible for preparing the Community Strategy.

Market Housing

Private housing for rent or sale where the price is set in the open market.

Major development

The creation of 10 or more dwellings on one site.

Material consideration

Factors that may be taken into account when making planning decisions.

Minor development

The creation of up to 9 dwellings on one site.

Mitigation measures

These are measures requested/ carried out in order to limit the damage by a particular development/ activity.

Mixed Use

The creation of a mix of uses on one site.

Moderate development

The creation of between 10 and 59 dwellings on one site.

Open Space and Recreational Land

Open space within settlements includes parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, undeveloped plots, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Outside built-up areas this includes parks, sports pitches and allotments.

Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)/ Planning Policy Statements (PPS)

Central Government produce Planning Policy Guidance Notes, to be replaced by Planning Policy Statements which direct planning in the country.

Preferred Options

Public consultation on the intended content of a *Development Plan Document*, prior to the DPD itself being drafted. It is a statutory stage of the Local Development Framework preparation for the District.

Previously Developed Land (PDL)

(See *Brownfield*.)

Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)

Plan covering the East of England as a whole, and setting out strategic policies and proposals for managing land-use change.

Registered Social Landlords

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.

Residential Infilling

The development of a small site within the built up area of a settlement by up to 3 dwellings.

Rural Exception Site

Sites solely for the development of affordable housing on land within or adjoining existing small rural communities, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing.

Sequential Approach

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses.

Settlement Hierarchy

Settlements are categorised in a hierarchy based on the range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the settlement, access to education and non-car access to higher-order centres.

Social rented

Social Rented Housing is housing available to rent at below market levels. Lower rents are possible because the Government subsidises local authorities and registered social landlords in order to meet local affordable housing needs.

Spatial Planning

Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning. It brings together and integrates policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.

Stakeholders

Groups, individuals or organisations which may be affected by or have a key interest in a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.

Statement of Community Involvement

Document setting out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing planning documents and making significant development control decisions.

Statement of Compliance

A report or statement issued by the local planning authority explaining how they have complied with the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2004 and their Statement of Community Involvement during consultation on Local Development Documents.

Statutory Development Plan

The Development Plan for an area which has been taken to statutory adoption. In other words, it has been through all the formal stages and has been approved by the relevant Government office and adopted by the Council.

Statutory Organisations

Organisations the Local Authority has to consult with at consultation stages of the Local Development Framework.

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 horizon.

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.

Strategic Greenspace

These are areas of greenspace that serve a wider population than just the District, for example Paxton Pits, The Great Fen and Hinchbrooke Country Park.

Submission

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* is published for consultation. At the same time it is submitted to the Secretary of State in advance of its *examination*.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in the *Local Plan* or *Structure Plan*. Under the new system this will be phased out and replaced by *Supplementary Planning Documents*.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in a *Development Plan Document*.

Sustainable Development

In broad terms this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set out five guiding principles for sustainable development in its strategy "*Securing the future - UK Government strategy for sustainable development*". The five guiding principles, to be achieved simultaneously, are: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance; and Using sound science responsibly.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic appraisal process. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable principles.

Tenure

Refers to the way in which a property is owned and/or occupied e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

Tests of Soundness

These are tests to ensure that the document produced is fit for purpose and can be considered as 'sound'. For further guidance please refer to 'Development Plans Examination - A Guide to the Process of Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan Documents' produced by the Planning Inspectorate (2005). The Council is aware that this guidance is out of date however it has not been replaced. More up to date advice along with guidance on other aspects of the planning process can be found on the Planning Advisory Service website at www.pas.gov.uk

Use Class Order

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use do not require planning permission.

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 site

A previously developed site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most "windfalls" are referred to in a housing context.

Zero Carbon Building

A building with net carbon dioxide emissions of zero or less over a typical year. This can be achieved where renewable energy systems generate energy and offset the carbon dioxide emissions that come from the use of the building during the year. The Government is intending to establish a national definition soon.