

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **THE CABINET ROOM, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 26 APRIL 2007** at **11:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

APOLOGIES


**Contact
(01480)**

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th April 2007.

**Mrs H J Taylor
388008**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive Members' declarations as to personal and/or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda item. Please see notes 1 and 2 below.

3. FINANCIAL MONITORING – REVENUE BUDGET (Pages 5 - 8)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services outlining spending variations.

**S Couper
388103**

4. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING – 2006/07 (Pages 9 - 20)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services highlighting variations from the approved Capital Programme for 2006/07.

**S Couper
388103**

5. MEDIUM TERM PLAN - REQUEST FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDS (Pages 21 - 24)

By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services to consider a request for the release of funding for a Corporate ICT Systems Officer..

**S Couper
388103**

6. HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL CONSULTATION FEEDBACK (Pages 25 - 30)

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services to consider a response to the Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust's consultation: 'Seeking Sustainable Health Services for the People of Huntingdonshire'.

**S Lammin
388280**

7. DOG CONTROL ORDERS (Pages 31 - 34)

To consider a report by the Public Health Manager regarding the introduction of Dog Control Orders to replace existing dog control provisions and the implications for the District Council.

**J Allan
388281**

8. PLAY STRATEGY (Pages 35 - 38)

To consider a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services seeking approval for the Council's Play Strategy.

**Mrs S Lammin
388280**

9. ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR CORE STRATEGY, DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS AND HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN (Pages 39 - 206)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for the Council's Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Documents and the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan.

**R Probyn
388430**

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To resolve:

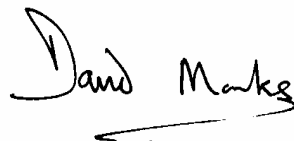
that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to terms proposed in the course of negotiations for the acquisition or disposal of property.

11. CALL-IN: LAND AT WESTWOOD ROAD, ST. IVES

To receive a oral report by the Director of Central Services on the outcome of the call-in, by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support), of the decision of the Cabinet relating to the sale of land at Westwood Road, St Ives.

**P Watkins
388002**

Dated this 19 day of April 2007



Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*

- (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, a partner, relatives or close friends;*
 - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
 - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000; or*
 - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*
2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

Please contact Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk /e-mail: if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk (under Councils and Democracy).

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit and to make their way to the base of the flagpole in the car park at the front of Pathfinder House.

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 5 April 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

Councillors P L E Bucknell, Mrs J Chandler, A Hansard, Mrs P J Longford, Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and L M Simpson.

174. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th March 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

175. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Bates declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minutes Nos. 181 and 182 by virtue of his family relationship with the company involved and his membership of the Cambridgeshire County Council respectively. Councillor Bucknell declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No 181 by virtue of his friendship with the applicant. Both Councillors left the meeting for the duration and voting on the respective items of business.

176. INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

Further to Minute No. 06/170 and by way of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was invited to consider the content of an interim planning policy statement.

Having been reminded that the statement would provide the framework for continuity of the development control function, whilst changes to the core strategy were made, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to endorse the content of the Interim Planning Policy Statement.

177. GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

By way of a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was invited to consider the contents of the Gender Equality Scheme together with an associated action plan..

Members were advised that the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as

amended) would place a duty on public bodies to promote gender equality with effect from 6th April 2007. Having been informed that the scheme would integrate with current Race and Disability and Equality Schemes, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the draft Gender Equality Scheme and associated Action Plan be approved.

178. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUEST FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDS

With the aid of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a request for the release of funding for three Medium Term Plan schemes.

In considering a request to release £67,000 for flexible working, Executive Councillors intimated that they would welcome further information to be circulated separately on revenue costs for this project. Having referred also to the need to ensure that spending projections for projects were regularly reviewed, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the relevant funding be released for the installation of broadband for Members and the award of disabled facilities and discretionary housing repair loans/grants.

179. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to negotiations for the disposal of land or property.

180. PRIORY PARK, ST. NEOTS

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) seeking approval for the proposed disposal of Council-owned land at Priory Park, St Neots as part of the Urban Design Brief and Masterplan for the Longsands Quarter. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the disposal of the land at Priory Park, St Neots be approved and the Director of Central Services authorised, after consultation with Members of the Cabinet, to approve terms for the sale.

181. STUKELEY ROAD, HUNTINGDON

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) seeking approval for the proposed disposal of Council-owned land at Stukeley Road, Huntingdon.

RESOLVED

that the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Resources, Welfare and IT and for Finance and for Leisure, be authorised to approve terms for the sale of land at Stukeley Road, Huntingdon.

182. WESTWOOD ROAD, ST. IVES

By way of a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the proposed disposal of Council-owned land at Westwood Road, St Ives.

RESOLVED

that the disposal of the land at Westwood Road, St Ives be approved and the Director of Central Services authorised, after consultation with Members of the Cabinet, to approve terms for the sale.

Chairman

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FINANCIAL MONITORING – REVENUE BUDGET (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1. 2006/07 Budget – As at March 2007

- 1.1 Cabinet received its last revenue monitoring report at its meeting on 11th January 2007. This report updates that forecast but, despite the year having ended, it is still only a forecast because a number of year-end adjustments still need to be made.
- 1.2 It is now expected that the outturn will be lower than reported in January, giving a forecast outturn of £16,086k against the original budget of £18,305k. The main variations are shown in the table in Annex A and include continued efforts to minimise spending. Revenue reserves will consequently rise from their opening balance of £18.1M to £18.8M.
- 1.3 A significant variation was due to the Government's announcement in March of the allocation of the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme Grant (LABGI) for 2006/7 of £454k compared with £33k for 2005/6. This Grant has been received as a result of our success in supporting the economic development of the district as measured by increased rateable values.
- 1.4 In the last few days notification of a reduction in the rateable value of Pathfinder House has been received which reflects the lower "rental" value of the building. It is backdated to when the scaffolding was erected and amounts to £170k.
- 1.5 Part of the lower net spending this year will be off-set by the carrying forward of funding for specific projects to next year in accordance with the Code of Financial Management. Last year this amounted to £139k.

2 Budget Monitoring

- 2.1 In the report to Cabinet on 20th July 2006 there were recommendations as to how the budget monitoring process could be improved. Quarterly meetings between Directors and their Heads of Service to review both revenue and capital spending to date and the forecast for the year are now operating routinely and COMT discussed the overall position earlier this month.
- 2.2 This greater emphasis on budget monitoring has encouraged Heads of Service to be more realistic about their forecast outturn; this is reflected in the size of the item in Annex A for "other variations" which it is made up of numerous adjustments on many services. Whilst improvements are emerging there is still a need to identify some of these variations earlier in the year so they can be reflected in the financial forecast.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet note the variations in the Council's income and expenditure.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

Source Documents:

1. Cabinet and Council Reports
2. Budgetary control files.

Contact Officers: Eleanor Smith, Accountancy Manager (01480 388157)
Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services (01480 388103)

Annex A

	Expenditure	Income	Recharge to capital	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Original Budget	59,421	-40,334	-782	18,305
Unspent budget brought forward from 2005/06	139			139
Less reimbursed expenditure	23,788	-23,788		0
Adjusted Budget	35,772	-16,546	-782	18,444
Items reported up to 11 January	120	-394	-219	-493
Subsequent Variations				
Increased recharge to capital			-167	
Reduced interest		92		
LABGI 2006/7		-454		
LABGI 2005/6 (received 2006/7)		-33		
General contingency not required	-140			
Deferred projects	-365			
Reduced commutation adjustment	120			
Increased recovery of summons costs		-45		
Less maintenance required on waste collection vehicles	-100			
NNDR rebate on Pathfinder House	-170			
Other variations	-603			
total	-1,258	-440	-167	-1,865
Total variations	-1,138	-834	-386	-2,358
	-3.2%	-5.0%		-12.8%
Forecast net spending				16,086

FUNDING	
Government Support	-10,891
Collection Fund adjustment	74
Council Tax	-5,961
Surplus taken to reserves	692

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CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING – 2006/07 (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report highlights the variations between the February 2006 approved capital programme and that approved at the February 2007 Council meeting. It then assesses the level of subsequent scheme deferrals and other necessary adjustments. This is still only a forecast of the outturn as various year-end adjustments still remain to be finalised.

2. MONITORING INFORMATION

2.1 The Budget approved in February 2006 and subsequent adjustments are shown below:-

	2006/07 Capital Expenditure		
	Gross Budget £000	External Contributions £000	Net Budget £000
Approved Budget (February 2006)	20,389	5,924	14,465
Deferrals from 2005/06	+3,110	+40	+3,070
Supplementary Estimate (June 2006)			
Mobile Home Park - Remediation	+437	0	+437
	23,936	5,964	17,972
Variations Already Reported	-5,045	-1,759	-3,286
Approved Medium Term Plan – February 2007	18,891	4,205	14,686
Further Forecast Variations			
Disabled Facilities Grants – saving (para 2.3)	-450	0	-450
Repair Assistance Grants - saving (para 2.3)	-37	0	-37
Heart of Oxmoor – capital receipt timing (para 2.4)	0	-1,414	+1,414
Huntingdon Tourist Kiosk (para 2.5)	+30	0	+30
Non-reclaimable VAT saving (para 2.6)	-123	0	-123
Increase in revenue funded staff charged to capital (para 2.7)	+173	0	+173
Adjustment to deferrals (Annex B)	-1,535	-1,535	0
Current Forecast	16,949	1,256	15,693

2.2 Annex A provides comments about individual schemes. If more information on specific schemes is required it can be obtained from the relevant Head of Service.

2.3 As a result of recruitment and funding problems of Occupational Therapists at the Primary Care Trust, referrals to the Authority for Disabled Facilities Grants have slowed considerably and it is now expected that a further £450k will not now be required. The Repairs Assistance Grants budget has also been adjusted to reflect the expected outturn.

2.4 The external contribution (capital receipt for the land sale in Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon) of £1,414k for the Heart of Oxmoor project included in the MTP for 2006/07 was actually received at the

end of 2005/06 and therefore included in that years accounts. The MTP needs to be adjusted to compensate for this.

- 2.5 The Huntingdon Tourist Kiosk project approved by Cabinet on 5th February 2005 was omitted from the Tourism Services Review Bid (659) in the 2006/07 MTP. A £30k adjustment is therefore required.
- 2.6 The provision for non-reclaimable capital VAT has been reviewed and can now be reduced in both this year (£123k) and future years.
- 2.7 Recharges of revenue funded staff to capital are now expected to amount to £392k, £173k more than in the MTP. This is marginally offset by the interest on the increased capital sum.
- 2.8 The deferrals to 2007/08 that have been identified since the MTP was prepared are shown in Annex B. The net position is already approaching the £1.5M provision included in the MTP.

3 REVENUE IMPLICATIONS 2006/07

- 3.1 The impact of the deferrals and the other variations, described above, since the budget was approved in February 2007, reduce the net revenue expenditure by £112k in 2006/07 but then lead to the subsequent increases shown below.

Revenue Impact	Para.	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000
Disabled Facilities Grant	2.3	-11	-22	-22	-22
Repairs Assistance Grant	2.3	-1	-2	-2	-2
Heart of Oxmoor	2.4	71	71	71	71
Huntingdon Tourist Kiosk	2.5	1	2	2	2
Non-reclaimable VAT	2.6	-3	-11	-17	-20
Revenue transferred to Capital	2.7	-167	9	9	9
TOTAL FORECAST VARIATION		-112	47	41	38

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet:
 - i) Note the monitoring report at Annex A.
 - ii) Note the latest variations and their estimated capital and revenue impact.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Capital programme and monitoring working papers.
Previous Cabinet and Committee reports on capital expenditure.

Contact Officer – Steve Couper ☎ 01480 388103

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

	COMPLETION		Variation (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's		COMMENTS
	Approved /Actual	Forecast		Approved for year	Year End Forecast	

PORTFOLIO: Environment & Transport**Car Parks**

02/166/B	Cambridge Road Car Park, St Neots			0	0	0		
480	Car Parking Strategy Implementation	31-Mar-07	30-Sep-07	26	180	58	-122	Riverside Car Park - planning application withdrawn. Strategy being assessed.
480	Riverside Car Park, St Neots - Barriers	30-Jan-07	28-Mar-07	0	27	27	0	

Environmental Health

02/235/A	Herne Rd, Ramsey St Marys - STW Replacemt	28-Feb-07	28-Feb-08		0	1	1	Ownership of the works being resolved. This scheme slipped back to 2007/08
701	Wood Walton Sewage Treatment Works	30-Mar-07	30-Aug-07	21	50	10	-40	Discussions are being held with Luminus as to ownership of this site

Environmental Improvements

03/431.03	Area Joint Committee Small Scale Imps (05/06)	31-Mar-06	31-Mar-06	0	30	30	0	
03/431.04	Area Joint Committee Small Scale Imps (06/07)	30-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	0	112	112	0	Schemes being designed by County
02/050/A	Great Whyte/Little Whyte, Ramsey - Env Imp Ph	30-Sep-05	30-May-07	86	164	164	0	Due to delays with AJC approval, scheme will not start until Jan 07
02/241/B	Heart of Oxmoor	28-Jan-07	28-Jul-07	25	-589	1029	1618	Work commenced on St Benedicts Court 18 April 06 - completed in August 2006 - final phases being completed
01/049/A	Huntingdon Town Centre - Phase 2	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	484	484	0	Holme complete. Catworth works in progress additional works agreed. Ramsey and St Ives TC have withdrawn their
01/157.04	Small Scale Imps - District Wide (06/07)	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	66	66	0	

Public Conveniences

03/302/A	New Public Conveniences	31-Dec-06	31-May-07	21	247	150	-97	Building Contract for Tebbuttts Road and Riverside, St Neots commenced on 5th February 2007.
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Public Transport Support

03/400.03	Bus Shelters - Extra Provision (06/07)	30-Mar-07	30-Sep-07	26	4	0	-4	Discussion being held with parish Councils and County regarding new locations
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Transportation

00/003.04	Accessibility Improvements/Signs (06/07)	28-Feb-07	28-Mar-07	4	29	29	0	
03/366/A	Cycle Route - Views Common, Huntingdon	30-Oct-03	06-Mar-06	122	1	1	0	Complete.
03/361.01	Huntingdon Market Town Transport Strategy	31-Mar-05	30-Oct-05	30	0	0	0	

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

Active Schemes	COMPLETION	Approved	Forecast /Actual	Variation (weeks)	Approved for year	NET EXPENDITURE £000's		COMMENTS
						Year End Forecast	Projected Variance	
03/361.02	30-Mar-06	30-Mar-06	30-Mar-06	0 ****	0	0	0	Complete
03/361.03	30-Mar-07	30-Jun-07	30-Jun-07	13	146	46	-100	
01/095.03	30-Mar-06	30-Mar-06	30-Mar-06	0 ****	17	17	0	
01/095.04	30-Mar-07	30-Jun-07	30-Jun-07	13	87	87	0	
02/132/A	28-Feb-05	28-Jun-07	28-Jun-07	121	15	0	-15	Work planned to start in march 2007 now we have Network Rail agreement
02/132.01	30-Mar-06	30-Jun-07	30-Jun-07	52	15	0	-15	Work planned to start in march 2007 now we have Network Rail agreement
02/132.02	30-Mar-06	30-Jun-07	30-Jun-07	65	16	0	-16	Work planned to start in march 2007 now we have Network Rail agreement
03/363.02	30-Mar-07	30-Mar-08	30-Mar-08	52	0	0	0	Strategy not being carried out yet - delay by County
01/152.04	30-Mar-07	30-Sep-07	30-Sep-07	26	225	25	-200	Schemes being designed by County.
03/362.01	30-Mar-07	30-Mar-08	30-Mar-08	52	-5	10	15	
03/351/A	30-Mar-08	30-Mar-09	30-Mar-09	52	0	0	0	Scheme being designed by County - monies are contribution to scheme - start in Island Common cycleway - design progressing
02/250.02	31-Mar-05	30-Mar-08	30-Mar-08	156	81	81	0	
Watercourses								
		30-Mar-04	30-Mar-07	156	43	43	0	Dependant on claim from insurance companies which has been received but refuted. Now passed to our insurers
PORTFOLIO: Finance Administration								
					1445	2470	1025	
					0	160	0	
03/999.04				0	140	17	-123	
Housing Benefits								
626		31-Mar-06	30-Jun-07	65	163	163	0	Dates provided are those agreed by Revenue Services Management in the Project Board Meeting of 23/01/07.
					463	340	-123	

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

PORTFOLIO: Headquarters & Information Technology

Information Technology

	COMPLETION		Variation (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
	Approved	Forecast /Actual		Approved for year	Year End Forecast	Projected Variance	
495 Corporate Electronic Document Management	31-Mar-08	31-Dec-08	39	230	210	-20	awaiting approval of new profile by Council. Changes reflect the changed priority due to the implementation of a Customer Service Centre in the new HQ
03/301.00 Customer First - Programme Wide	31-Mar-07	31-Jan-09	96	12	12	0	
03/301.20 Customer First - People and Facilities	31-Mar-07	05-Dec-06	-17 ****	77	77	0	M164 closed. New code for TCSC set up and carry over moved to that budget
03/301.30 Customer First - Technical Infrastructure	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-08	52	234	131	-103	A range of supporting projects are planned for 2006-07, incl. Back Office integration and CSC work
03/301.10 Customer First - Transaction Delivery	31-Mar-07	30-Jan-09	95	110	110	0	Key date 2 = release 2 into call centre Key date 3 = release 3 into the call centre Changes reflect the changed priority due to the implementation of a Customer Service Centre in the new HQ building. 2006/7 projects underway to deliver new services to the Call Centre. Assumes that system replacement budget picks up on-line payments work. Also that Planning is the last release in to the call centre in 06/07 and that there is a reduction in effort into the call centre in Q1 of 2007. BA effort to be used by EDM, etc
03/301.15 Cyclical Review of Business Systems (06/07)			0	18	18	0	
03/301.11 Leisure System Development	31-Mar-05	01-May-07	91	23	18	-5	Purchase order was placed with Gladstone for Interface (£4k). Internal development work is underway (A James) - completion planned for Sept. Online bookings project will be managed by Joe Bedingfield, awaiting approval for start up but priority for completion in 06/07. This bid consisted of several projects and substantial competition has taken place. Online bookings module still not available to
03/301.08 Operations Business System Personnel/Payroll System	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	121	86	28	-58	
	31-Oct-05	30-Jun-07	86	22	11	-11	This will see completion of Phase 1 - decision on future of Phase 2 of project to be taken in 2007-08
03/301.04 Planning Application Review	31-Mar-04	31-Mar-06	104	0	0	0	Awaiting software enhancements to Uniform for listed buildings and

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

Scheme Ref	Scheme Name	COMPLETION		Variation (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
		Approved /Actual	Forecast		Approved for year	Year End Forecast	Projected Variance	
03/301.15	Uniform	31-Mar-07	31-Dec-09	0	12	12	0	Delayed pending specification of requirements for new HQ building. Likely to be used for VOIP roll-out, which will be linked to Accommodation strategy. Phased implementation will take us through to completion of new HQ. 25% confident project will complete in timescales. Project not yet scoped, so unable to attach much confidence to prediction.
494	Voice and Data Infrastructure				121	31	-90	

Office Accommodation

03/300/A Pathfinder House Imps and One Stop Shop

31-Mar-06	31-Mar-08	104	6383	6383	0	0	Contract let with MacAlpine. Work on Operations centre commenced.
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Total for Portfolio 7041 -287

PORTFOLIO: Housing & Public Health

CCTV

00/020.03 CCTV - Camera Replacements (06/07)

03/312/A CCTV - Digital Services

30-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	0 ****	13	10	-3
28-Feb-07	28-Feb-07	0	52	0	-52

Crime Reduction

00/036.04 Crime and Disorder - Lighting Improvements

31-Mar-07	28-Dec-06	-14 ****	23	26	3
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Housing Support

443 Common Housing Register

03/309.00 Disabled Facilities Grants (06/07)

03/381.00 HRAs and RENs (06/07)

Mobile Home Park - Remediation

637 Oxmoor Housing Sites

Social Housing Grant (Contingency) (06/07)

30-Mar-06	30-Mar-06	0	9	9	0
31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	676	226	-450
30-Aug-07	30-Aug-07	0	200	163	-37
		0	845	845	0
		0	247	247	0
		0	1245	1245	0
Total for Portfolio			3310	2771	-539

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

	COMPLETION		Variation (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS	
	Approved /Actual	Forecast		Approved for year	Year End Forecast	Projected Variance		
PORTFOLIO: Leisure								
Leisure Events and Facilities								
446	Football Improvements - St Ives		0	0	5	5	St Ivo - Outdoor Centre On hold pending Planning Applications by Developers. Possibility of additional grant funding from Football Foundation - consideration being given to 2nd full size Synthetic pitch	
02/058/A	Grafham Water Centre Partnership Contribution	31-Mar-05	31-Mar-07	104	20	20	0	Project is completed but still awaiting invoice from County Council despite several requests. Official opening due to be held in Spring 2007
00/999.03	Local Leisure Project Grants (05/06)	31-Mar-06	31-Mar-07	52	0	0	0	
00/999.04	Local Leisure Project Grants (06/07)	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	80	125	45	
Leisure Policy and Development								
00/001/B	St Neots Tennis Initiative Partnership	01-Mar-02	30-Aug-06	234	35	35	0	Project complete in November 06.
Parks and Open Spaces								
446	Football Improvements - St Neots		52	253	90	90	-163	Two schemes (St Neots & St Ives) St Neots - Priory Park Grant awarded from Football Foundation. Tenders returned within budget. Building to commence in April 07.
01/121/A	Pilot Linear Park Development	30-Nov-03	30-Apr-06	126 ****	33	7	-26	
03/369.03	Play Equipment (05/06)	31-Mar-06	31-Dec-06	39	44	44	0	Schemes being designed
03/369.04	Play Equipment (06/07)	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	54	4	-50	
01/107/A	Various Parks - Signs	30-Dec-03	31-Jul-06	134	9	0	-9	Order placed. Fabrication completed and galvanised, awaiting painting.
02/004.03	Young People's Activity Parks (05/06)	31-Mar-06	31-Mar-07	0	34	6	-28	Schemes dependant on Partnership Funding.
02/004.04	Young People's Activity Parks (06/07)	31-Mar-07	31-Mar-07	0	50	0	-50	

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

26 March 2007

Active Schemes 2006/07

COMPLETION NET EXPENDITURE £000's

Approved Forecast /Actual Variation (weeks) Approved for year Year End Forecast Projected Variance

COMMENTS

Recreation Centres

00/022/A CCTV - Improvements at Leisure Centres 31-Jul-05 30-Jun-08 39 13 12 -1
 Expenditure on Sawtry - completion due July 06. Remainder allocated for improvements at St Neots when final scheme is approved. St Neots cannot be completed this year - carry forward until advised.

03/336/A Huntingdon Leisure Centre - Impressions 31-Mar-06 30-Sep-07 8 125 125 0
 Internal expansion plans being drawn up. Feasibility study complete. New equipment installed w/c 10/05/06. Remainder of capital to be invested 07/08. Carry forward required

01/135.01 Leisure Centres - Disabled Facilities 31-Mar-04 30-Dec-06 78 6 6 0
 £19k carried forward pending return of Disabled provision reports on all Centres. Any unused funds to be carried forward.

02/134.02 Leisure Centres - Future Maintenance (05/06) 31-Mar-06 30-Mar-07 0 **** 210 210 0
 Delivery of programme (05/06) to be between Centre Management, Internal HDC teams, and external providers Full implementation of scheme delayed till all invoices received from year 2. Any residue to be carried fwd to 06/07 Estimated of 211k - essential spend required at St Neots

02/134.03 Leisure Centres - Future Maintenance (06/07) 31-Mar-07 31-Mar-07 0 282 282 0
 Condition Survey procured and undertaken.

02/262/B Sawtry - Fitness Studio 01-Apr-05 16-Jul-06 67 **** 429 359 -70
 Survey results received June 30 2006 Tenders complete Commenced 12th Sept 05. 40 week contract. Starts with replacement hard play area, then moves to building works. Still issues on car/coach park with no progress on College grant application. Completion on 07/07/06 Opened 16/07/06

PORTFOLIO: Operations

Operations Services

02/192.04 Vehicles Fleet Replacement (06/07) 31-Mar-07 31-Mar-07 0 362 362 0

Waste Management

602 Optional Wheeled Bins for Dry Recyclables 31-Mar-06 31-Mar-06 0 **** 114 114 0

Total for Portfolio 1677 1332 -347

Active Schemes 2006/07

	COMPLETION		Variation (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
	Approved /Actual	Forecast		Approved for year	Year End Forecast	Projected Variance	
PORTFOLIO: Planning Strategy							
Planning Policy and Conservation							
01/077/A	Hunt Town Cent Dev - Planning Dev Issues	30-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	0	123	30	-93
03/358.01	Rural Renewal NE Hunts - Pump Priming (05/06)	30-Mar-06	30-Nov-06	35 ****	24	24	0
03/358.02	Rural Renewal NE Hunts - Pump Priming (06/07)	30-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	0	25	25	0
02/224/A	Town Centre Developments	28-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	0	40	0	-40
Total for Portfolio					212	79	-133
PORTFOLIO: Resources & Policy							
Economic Development							
657	Creative Industries Centre, St Neots	30-Mar-08	30-Mar-08	0	10	10	0
03/365/A	Huntingdon Boatyard Improvements	28-Feb-04	28-Aug-07	160	66	3	-63
643	Oak Tree Health Centre Oxmoor Huntingdon	30-Mar-06	28-Jul-06	17 ****	928	928	0
Information Technology							
03/301.04	Land Charges Application Review	31-Mar-04	09-Mar-07	153	53	53	0
450	Photocopiers Replacement	31-Mar-06	30-Oct-06	30 ****	27	27	0
01/124/A	Replacement of Printing Equipment/Systems	31-Mar-03	30-Nov-03	34 ****	0	0	0
Total for Portfolio					1084	1021	-63
Total all Portfolio					15995	15528	-467

For the provision of Services to the Boatyard and also looking at small schemes in the park for localised imps

Land Charges are looking to go live on 09/03/07. This date has been agreed with the supplier(CAPS) and is considered achievable.

RECONCILIATION WITH CABINET REPORT

	Approved Budget £000	Forecast £000
Annex A Total	15,995	15,528
Not included		
Deferrals provision not included in Annex	-1,500	-242
Revenue to Capital not included in Annex	188	361
Waste Performance & Efficiency Grant	-68	-68
Use of Planning Delivery Grant	55	55
Huntingdon Tourist Kiosk	0	30
Other	16	29
Totals (para 2.1)	14,686	15,693

ANNEX: MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT - DEFINITIONS

Active Schemes 2006/07 All schemes with approved funding (gross or net) in the year to which the report relates or which have a predicted

'current' or 'actual' completion date within the year.

		COMPLETION				NET EXPENDITURE £000's				COMMENTS
		Approved Date	Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance			
PORTFOLIO:	ENVIRONMENT									
CCTV										
019	CCTV - Alarm Actuated Camera Position	31-Dec-02	0	0	40	40	0			
<i>Project appraisal reference</i>	<i>Name of scheme</i>	<i>The date given for the completion of the project in the original project appraisal or in a subsequently approved revised project appraisal.</i>	<i>The currently predicted or actual (for completed schemes) time in weeks by which completion will vary from the approved date.</i>	<i>The currently predicted or actual time in weeks by which completion will vary from the approved date or extend beyond the period for which a 'deferral' has been authorised.</i>	<i>Net amount included in MTP for the current year together any approved slippage from the previous year.</i>	<i>The overall net cost of the scheme based on historic actuals and future approved.</i>	<i>The projected difference between the approved total net cost of the scheme and the actual net expenditure to deliver the scheme.</i>	<i>Brief narrative describing any deferral, slippage or financial variance.</i>		
<i>Projects are allocated to portfolio holders and then grouped by function.</i>		<i>For appraisals that relate to an annually recurring sum the approved date is assumed as the end of March for the year being reported on.</i>	<i>To qualify as a 'deferral' the delay/acceleration must have been approved in advance by a project board (which includes a Chief Officer).</i>	<i>Schemes where deferral/slippage is based on an 'actual' completion date are distinguished in the report by ***.</i>		<i>For annually recurring sums this is the current year funding only. These are indicated in the report by #.</i>				

ANNEX B

Expected deferrals to 2007/08	Gross Budget	External Contributions	Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000
Wood Walton Sewage Treatment Works	-40	0	-40
New Public Conveniences	-97	0	-97
CCTV – Digital Services	-52	0	-52
Sawtry Leisure Centre - Impressions	-70	0	-70
Local Leisure Project Grants	45	0	45
Play Equipment Replacement	-50	0	-50
Activity Parks	-78	0	-78
Football Improvements	-1,384	-1,226	-158
Business Systems	-74	0	-74
Corporate EDM	-20	0	-20
Customer First	-103	0	-103
Voice and Data Infrastructure	-90	0	-90
Automated Form Processing in Benefits	3	0	3
Flexible Working	10	0	10
Town Centre Developments	-40	0	-40
Huntingdon Town Centre Development	-93	0	-93
Huntingdon Boatyard Improvements	-63	0	-63
Sapley Square	0	-204	204
Bus Shelter Provision	-4	0	-4
Car Parking Strategy	-122	0	-122
Safe Cycle Routes	-305	-105	-200
Huntingdon Transport Strategy	-100	0	-100
St Ives Transport Strategy	15	0	15
Railway Stations Improvements	-46	0	-46
<i>Provision for further deferrals</i>	<i>-277</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-277</i>
	-3,035	-1,535	-1,500
Less provision already made in MTP	-1,500	0	-1,500
TOTAL ADJUSTMENT	-1,535	-1,535	0

CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

MEDIUM TERM PLAN REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

(Report by the Head of Financial Services)

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Cabinet to decide whether to release funds for the MTP scheme detailed in the attached annexes.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council agreed in December 2005 *that, having regard to the implications for future spending and Council Tax levels, Directors review with appropriate Executive Councillors the need for schemes/projects included in the MTP but not yet started and that specific prior approval be sought and obtained from the Cabinet before such schemes/projects are implemented.*
- 2.2 Officers have identified the schemes that they wish Cabinet to consider releasing funding for and have discussed them with the relevant Executive Councillor.
- 2.3 Annex A summarises and the following Annexes detail these requests.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is recommended to release the funds shown in Annex A.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

None

Contact Officer:

Steve Couper

Head of Financial Services ☎ 01480 388103

	Net Revenue Impact (£'000)						Net Capital (£'000)					
	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012
SUMMARY												
Annex B 736 - Corporate ICT Systems Officer		25	33	33	33	33						
Total amount for which release now requested		25	33	33	33	33						

MTP Bid No. – 736 - Corporate ICT Systems Officer

Project Officer – Chris Hall (IMD)

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Capital							
	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000
Approved Net Budget Already released		25 0	33 0	33 0	33 0	33 0	33 0							
Amount for which release now requested		25	33	33	33	33	33							

Justification for Release

Over the last few years there has been growing dependence on corporate computer systems such as those provided by **CAPS Uni-form** (Planning, Licensing, Public Access, LLPG, Land Charges & Building Control and currently being implemented in Operations and Estates) and the **Electronic Document Management** system (Anite@Work – currently in Benefits, Housing, Licensing and scheduled for deployment in Planning, Accountancy and many other parts of HDC).

Such systems require system management to run efficiently and to help ensure their functionality and development is exploited to maximum effect. External grants (such as the Planning Delivery Grant) and meeting government legislation changes (such as BS7666 standards) may be at risk in future years if, for example, the CAPS Uni-form systems are not properly supported. For some specialised systems, for example, the Benefits system, systems management is achieved through a mixture of IMD general system management and end-user administration. However, for large corporate systems (eg Uni-form & EDM) more specialised and dedicated system management is required. In recognition of this need several departments clubbed together and, using a mixture of short-term grant & revenue funding, managed to fund a post for a period of 1 year.

This one year appointment has proved very successful and has minimised the downtime and subsequent user disruption that has affected CAPS Uniform users (in particular) in the past. The temporary post holder has proved herself to be very effective in the role and it would be very much in the Council's interests to retain the services of this particular Officer.

The purpose of this release request is to fund the retention of a staff member who is now trained and operating effectively, thus avoiding disruption to service and costs in recruiting a replacement.

The alternative to this post would be to use a support consultancy service on an ad hoc basis when problems occur which may well be of greater cost to the Council as well as incurring disruption to users and, consequently, the public.

For further details please see the original MTP submission (736).

CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

HIINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL CONSULTATION FEEDBACK REPORT (Report by Head of Environmental and Community Health Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the proposed wording of the response to Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust's consultation: 'Seeking Sustainable Health Services for the People of Huntingdonshire'.

2. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 The consultation document sets out a range of proposals for the future services currently provided by Hinchingsbrooke Health Care NHS Trust (HHCT). It also explains how the proposals may fit with the financial recovery plans of both HHCT and Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust (the PCT).
- 2.2 Formal consultation started on Tuesday 20 February 2007 and concludes on Tuesday 22 May 2007.
- 2.3 In addition to the published consultation documents, Members have had the opportunity to hear presentations about the proposals: on 1 February and 15 March 2007. These presentations formed part of the PCT's effort to consult widely on the proposals. The PCT has also arranged seven public meetings during the course of the consultation process (between 20 March and 20 April 2007).
- 2.4 The consultation process allows for views to be submitted on-line, in writing or in person. It is intended to provide feedback in writing. The PCT has included within the consultation document a tabulated questionnaire which allows free-text. This format has been used and is intended to be attached to a covering letter to help the PCT in the analysis of the numerous responses that are expected.

3. THE PROPOSED RESPONSE

- 3.1 A draft of the proposed letter is attached (Annex 1). This letter has with it suggested comments within the completed questionnaire.
- 3.2 The letter states that Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) is anxious that any service changes in relation to Hinchingsbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust should not, as far as possible, reduce the quality and accessibility of services for residents in Huntingdonshire. It also confirms that it is a key objective of HDC that the future of the hospital be secured.
- 3.3 The questionnaire return confirms that of the four options offered the Council's preference is for Option 2. Both the letter and the questionnaire raise some reservations in relation to the proposals within Option 2. These reservations include the dissolution of HHCT as a Trust.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Members are RECOMMENDED to agree the content of the consultation response (attached) and consent to the response being submitted to the PCT before 22 May 2007.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consultation documents:

Seeking Sustainable Health Services for the People of Huntingdonshire – Formal Consultation Document (February 2007) Cambridgeshire PCT
www.hinchingbrooke.nhs.uk/future

Seeking Sustainable Health Services for the People of Huntingdonshire – Summary Consultation Document (February 2007) Cambridgeshire PCT
www.hinchingbrooke.nhs.uk/future

Notes of briefings:

Outcomes from the briefing on Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Huntingdonshire DC, 1 February 2007.

Briefing for elected Members at Huntingdonshire District Council: Consultation on Hinchingbrooke Hospital NHS Trust, 15 March 2007.

**Contact Officer: Dr Susan Lammin – Head of Environmental and
Community Health**
☎ 01480 388280

**FAO: Ms. Karen Mason
Acting Director of Communications and Public Involvement
Heron Court
Ida Darwin
Fulbourn
Cambridge
CB1 5EE**

27 April 2007

Our Ref: SL/

Dear Karen,

SEEKING SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE PEOPLE OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

Thank you for opportunity to, comment as part of the formal consultation process, on the range of proposals for the future of services currently provided by Hinchingsbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust (HHCT). I should say at the outset that Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) is anxious that any service changes in relation to Hinchingsbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust should not, as far as possible, reduce the quality and accessibility of services for residents in Huntingdonshire. The recent petition to preserve services at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital attracted in excess of 50,000 signatures. Therefore it is a key objective of HDC that the future of the hospital be secured. The Council is mindful that the future of the hospital hinges on the Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust's (PCT) commissioning plans and their willingness to commission services from HHCT.

There is considerable demand for reassurance about the process, the nature, and robustness of data informing the PCT's proposals. For example:

- The £14.5M identified savings are dependant on increased efficiencies at the Hinchingsbrooke site but there is no indication, within the consultation document, of the robustness of the estimate nor the difficulties that must be overcome in realising the savings.
- The £2.5M PCT investment in community-based services is said to be based on projected commissioning costs yet no allowance has seems to have been made for any structural alterations to buildings that may be necessary to host these services within the community.
- No allowance seems to have been made for costs incurred during any lag in the implementation of the plan, to allow recruitment of adequate numbers of community-based staff.

There is also a desire for evidence that consideration of the wider social impact of decisions relating to hospital services has been as inclusive as possible. Hinchingsbrooke Hospital is part of a wider network of interdependent services and support. For example: the established public transport links to the hospital are unlikely to be available to all of the community-based clinics.

In relation to process, serious concern has been expressed that in considering Hinchingsbrooke in isolation and in advance of the comprehensive strategic review by the Strategic Health Authority (SHA), a situation is being created whereby HHCT could be subject to two stringent

reviews in a very short period. The cumulative effect of implementing adjustments from serial reviews could have a serious negative impact on hospital services. Reassurance is sought that any modifications to services arising from this review will be accepted by the SHA and **not subject to further reductions in the context of the strategic review**. It is possible that if the strategic impacts of the Hinchingsbrooke review-recommendations could not be demonstrated to have been properly considered then elected-Member(s) may formally object and may ask the Scrutiny Panel to call in any relevant decision(s).

There are some unresolved concerns around any future dissolution of the HHC Trust. A significant amount of saving has been attributed to this dissolution in the proposals; yet no firm proposals for alternative governance arrangements have been offered. Members are concerned that amalgamation with either Peterborough or Addenbrookes Hospital Trusts is not attractive for preserving the local interest. A merger with the PCT Provider Trust may be more attractive but the provider arm of PCT does not have Trust status yet and there are no indications of the investment that would be required to achieve such an arrangement.

It is also a matter of concern that no assumptions about future population growth have been made, yet Huntingdonshire is in a growth area. Both of the new settlements: Cambourne and Northstowe are within Hinchingsbrookes catchment. Northstowe in particular has seen the planned development increase by a further 2000 homes. It is expected that west-of-Cambridge communities will rely on Hinchingsbrooke Hospital services as Addenbrookes Hospital relieves pressure from Hertfordshire's growth. Huntingdonshire is an area included in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a growth-area post-2021. Members would wish to have some reassurance about the robustness of the forward-planning included in the proposals. In order to keep Members informed we would welcome periodic briefings as work progresses.

The templates for responses are attached to this letter as appendices. I hope this information proves useful to the PCT in planning for services for residents in Huntingdonshire.

Yours sincerely

**IAN BATES
LEADER
HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Huntingdonshire District Council has the following comments to make on **Option 1**:

The financial affordability of this option has not been demonstrated, as Option 1 delivers a shortfall of £4.1m in cost reductions over the next 3 years. Therefore, this Option is not compatible with Huntingdonshire District Council's key objective that the future of the hospital be secured.

Please circle below the statement that best represents your view of the level of support you feel for these proposals

Strongly agree / agree / no opinion / **disagree** / strongly disagree

Huntingdonshire District Council has the following comments to make on **Option 2** (the PCT's preferred option which includes the principle of dissolution of HHCT as a corporate entity):

The option of remodelling the service is the one, of the four options offered, that is most appealing to Huntingdonshire District Council. The provision of broadly the same range of services at lower volumes by changing the emphasis of service delivery between hospital and community settings is the proposal that comes closest to the Council's wish that service changes in relation to Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust should not, as far as possible, reduce the quality and accessibility of services for residents in Huntingdonshire.

There are some unresolved concerns around any future dissolution of the HHC Trust. A significant amount of saving has been attributed to this dissolution in the proposals; yet no firm proposals for alternative governance arrangements have been offered. Members are concerned that an amalgamation with either Peterborough or Addenbrookes Hospital Trusts is not attractive for preserving the local interest. A merger with the PCT Provider Trust may be more attractive but the provider arm of PCT does not have Trust status yet and there are no indications of the investment that would be required to achieve such an arrangement.

There is considerable demand for reassurance about the process, the nature, and robustness of data informing the PCT's proposals. There is a wish for reassurance that implementation of this option will significantly improve the financial viability of Hinchingbrooke Hospital. There is also a desire for evidence that consideration of the wider social impact of decisions relating to hospital services has been as inclusive as possible.

It is also a matter of concern that no assumptions about future population growth have been made, yet Huntingdonshire is in a growth area. It is expected that west-of-Cambridge communities will rely on Hinchingbrooke Hospital services as Addenbrookes Hospital relieves pressure from Hertfordshire's growth. Huntingdonshire is an area included in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a growth-area post-2021. Members would wish to have some reassurance about the robustness of the forward-planning.

Please circle below the statement that best represents your view of the level of support you feel for these proposals

Strongly agree / **agree** / no opinion / disagree / strongly disagree

Of the options offered this is the preferred option of HDC however the Council has reservations

Huntingdonshire District Council has the following comments to make on **Option 3** (which includes the principle of dissolution of HHCT as a corporate entity):

Proposals which include the transfer of significant elements of patient services to other hospitals and significantly reducing activity on the hospital site is not compatible with Huntingdonshire District Council's key objective that the future of the hospital be secured. It is the Council's view that such a change would reduce the quality and accessibility of services for residents in Huntingdonshire.

There are some unresolved concerns around any future dissolution of the HHC Trust. A significant amount of saving has been attributed to this dissolution in the proposals; yet no firm proposals for alternative governance arrangements have been offered. Members are concerned that an amalgamation with either Peterborough or Addenbrookes Hospital Trusts is not attractive for preserving the local interest. A merger with the PCT Provider Trust may be more attractive but the provider arm of PCT does not have Trust status yet and there are no indications of the investment that would be required to achieve such an arrangement.

Please circle below the statement that best represents your view of the level of support you feel for these proposals

Strongly agree / agree / no opinion / **disagree** / strongly disagree

Huntingdonshire District Council has the following comments to make on **Option 4** (which includes the principle of dissolution of HHCT as a corporate entity):

Proposals which include the closure of all services on the hospital site (except Treatment Centre activity) is completely opposed to Huntingdonshire District Council's key objective that the future of the hospital be secured. It is the Council's view that such a change would reduce the quality and accessibility of services for residents in Huntingdonshire.

There are some unresolved concerns around any future dissolution of the HHC Trust. A significant amount of saving has been attributed to this dissolution in the proposals; yet no firm proposals for alternative governance arrangements have been offered. Members are concerned that an amalgamation with either Peterborough or Addenbrookes Hospital Trusts is not attractive for preserving the local interest. A merger with the PCT Provider Trust may be more attractive but the provider arm of PCT does not have Trust status yet and there are no indications of the investment that would be required to achieve such an arrangement.

Please circle below the statement that best represents your view of the level of support you feel for these proposals

Strongly agree / agree / no opinion / **disagree** / strongly disagree

The statement that best represents the basis on which you are responding:

Organisation: (approx. no. of people your organisation is responding on behalf of: Residents of Huntingdonshire likely to require Hinchingsbrooke Hospital services (population base: 167,000)

CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

DOG CONTROL ORDERS (Report by Head of Environmental & Community Health Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (CNEA) introduced the concept of Dog Control Orders to replace the present system of byelaws and the enforcement provisions of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 which is repealed.
- 1.2 In addition to replacing the existing dog control provisions the CNEA has extended the powers available and established two levels of enforcement authority; primary authorities such as the District Council and secondary authorities such as Town and Parish Councils.

2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The use of dog control orders is governed by two sets of regulations, the Dog Control Order (Procedures) Regulations 2006 and the Dog Control (Prescribed Offences and Penalties, etc) Regulations 2006. The former sets out the procedures to be followed when making, amending or revoking dog control orders and the schedules to the latter describe the form of the orders and the five offences that can be the subject of a Dog Control Order:
 - ◆ Failure to remove dog faeces;
 - ◆ Not keeping a dog on a lead;
 - ◆ Not putting, and keeping, a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer;
 - ◆ Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded; and
 - ◆ Taking more than a specified number of dogs onto land.
- 2.2 Primary and secondary authorities must consult each other before making dog control orders and proposed orders must be advertised in a local newspaper. If a dog control order is likely to affect open access land, the relevant authority must also be consulted.
- 2.3 All responses/representations following consultation/advertisement must be considered before dog control orders are made and the orders cannot become effective until at least 14 days after they are made. A further advert must be placed in a local newspaper at least seven days before the orders come into force and the orders must be placed on the Council website.
- 2.4 Preliminary discussions with Town and Parish Councils have established that all secondary authorities in Huntingdonshire wish the District Council to make the orders and they, as the secondary authorities, will be consulted on the draft proposals. In any event, any dog control order made by the District Council has supremacy over an order made by a secondary authority for the same land.

- 2.5 Guidance from DEFRA emphasises that Councils should adopt a balanced approach when making dog control orders, carefully considering the needs of both dog owners and others. DEFRA consider that failure to do so would leave the orders vulnerable to challenge in the courts. In practice, they say that dog owners should have access to land where they can exercise their dogs and that other people should be able to enjoy reasonable access to land without interference from dogs.
- 2.6 It is proposed that the Council makes four dog control orders designed to repeat all existing dog controls and extend the areas covered to new developments that have been established since the previous controls were put in place. The four dog control orders that are considered necessary and proportionate to the needs of the area are:
- ◆ Failure to remove dog faeces;
 - ◆ Not keeping a dog on a lead;
 - ◆ Not putting, and keeping, a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer; and
 - ◆ Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded.

Copies of the four draft orders and associated maps are located in the Members' Room.

- 2.7 Advantages of the new system of dog controls are that, unlike byelaws, it is not necessary to have the orders confirmed by the Secretary of State and orders can be amended, subject to further consultation procedures.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 All existing Byelaws and designations made under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 remain in force until the new orders are made. When the new dog control orders are made any existing dog control byelaws (for the same offence on the same land) and designations made under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 lapse and are replaced by the new orders.
- 3.2 It is a legal requirement that, where practicable, warning signs summarising the order must be placed on land to which a new order applies and where an order applies to a large area of land, for example, in relation to dog fouling, warning signs must be provided at regular intervals. This will require the replacement of existing warning signs throughout the District and the Environmental Health budgets can cope with this necessity in respect of District Council signs. Secondary authorities will be responsible for replacing their existing signs.
- 3.3 The new orders can be enforced by prosecution or by fixed penalty notices. The penalty for an offence established in dog control orders is a maximum fine of level 3 on the standard scale (currently £1,000). Alternatively, the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty may be offered in place of prosecution. The level of the fixed penalty notice can be set locally but there is a default level of £75 and many local authorities are adopting that level, with the incentive of a reduction to £50 if the fixed penalty is paid within 10 days of issue.

- 3.4 There are defences/exemptions in all dog control orders of:
- (a) Having a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with an order; or
 - (b) Acting with the consent of the owner or occupier of the land, or of any other person or authority which has control of the land.

There is no specific exemption for working dogs but clearly they will normally be working on land with consent. Specific exemptions are made in particular cases for assistance dogs such as those used as guide dogs for the blind.

Being unaware of a dog's defecation, or not having a device or other suitable means of removing the faeces is specifically excluded from the definition of reasonable excuse under the regulations.

- 3.5 Fixed penalties for offences under dog control orders can be issued by authorised officers, including:
- ◆ Employees of primary and secondary authorities who are authorised for this purpose but employees of secondary authorities must first satisfy certain conditions linked to training before they can be so authorised.
 - ◆ Any person authorised (including employees of that person) in writing by a primary or secondary authority in pursuance of arrangements made by that person and the relevant authority.
 - ◆ Police Community Support Officers and other persons accredited by the Chief Police Officers under the Police Reform Act 2002.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The four proposed dog control orders are necessary and proportionate to the needs of the area and will provide effective dog control measures, if adopted.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that Members:

- 5.1 Note the content of this report and approve the form and content of the four dog control orders and the associated maps attached to the orders.
- 5.2 Delegate authority to the Director of Operational Services to appoint authorised officers to enforce the dog control provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, including the issue of fixed penalty notices.
- 5.3 Authorise the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services to advertise the draft orders and to confer with all statutory consultees on the content of the draft orders.
- 5.4 Authorise the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health, to make the dog control orders subject to consideration of consultation responses and representations.

- 5.5 Authorise the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health, to amend or revoke dog control orders, subject to the necessary advertisement and consultation requirements of the CNEA.
- 5.6 Authorise the enforcement of dog control orders by either prosecution or by the issuing of fixed penalty notices.
- 5.7 Authorise the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health, to initiate legal proceedings for offences under dog control orders.
- 5.8 Authorise the adoption of a fixed penalty notice of £75 for offences under adopted dog control orders with an incentive of a reduction to £50 if the fixed penalty is paid within 10 days of issue.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
The Dog Control Order (Procedures) Regulations 2006
The Dog Control (Prescribed Offences and Penalties, etc) Regulations 2006

Dog Control Orders and associated maps in the Members' Room

Contact Officer: John Allan
 **01480 388281**

CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

PLAY STRATEGY REPORT **(Report by Head of Environmental and Community Health Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is a preliminary report with outcomes clearly dependent upon funds been made available by the Big Lottery. The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval for the proposed Play Strategy and also to seek approval in principle for the submission of a bid to the Big Lottery Fund, in October 2007, for funds to allow implementation of some of the proposals.

2. THE STRATEGY

- 2.1 This 'Play Strategy' will form part of the District Council's Culture Strategy, which is currently being developed. The Culture Strategy will also include strategies and action plans for Open Spaces, Arts and Culture, Recreation and Leisure Development and Recreation Centre Services.
- 2.2 The 'Play Strategy' provides an opportunity for the authority to access The Big Lottery funding where it identifies schemes that meet the funding criteria. Additionally it will enable the authority to communicate a vision for future play development that will enable access to funds arising from the growth agenda.
- 2.3 Presently there is no lead officer within the authority for 'play' and no capacity to take on additional work in this area has been identified. If the strategy and action plan submitted to The Big Lottery are not successful so that it proves impossible to fund a Play Co-ordinator post, then many of the proposed actions cannot be delivered. In the absence of the necessary external funding the strategy will provide a vision. The vision will serve as a guide to those developments that can still be delivered as part of the authority's normal business, eg allocation of capital via S106, grant aid for play/village hall provision.
- 2.4 The Big Lottery Fund announced details of its new £155 million children's play initiative in March 2006. The amount of funding made available for Huntingdonshire District Council to access is £300,184. The aim of the fund is to create, improve and develop children's and young people's local play spaces.
- 2.5 It is a condition of The Big Lottery Fund award that prior to any funds being made available to an authority that local authority must have in place a play strategy. The 'Play Strategy' must identify and establish clear policies for play. These policies will be the basis on which access will be created and improved and by which all children will be provided with the chance to enjoy a range of quality play and recreation opportunities.
- 2.6 This strategy has been informed by a range of consultations with children, young people and parents (see Appendix 1) and takes account of local and national policy initiatives and organisational priorities (see Appendix 2). The strategy has to be submitted to The Big Lottery Fund

by the end of October 2007 with an action plan detailing how the allocated funds will be spent over a three-year period.

2.7 The attached strategy document sets out the following:-

- ◆ Purpose of the Strategy;
- ◆ Vision for the strategy;
- ◆ Definition of play;
- ◆ Core values; and
- ◆ Key points identified.

3. THE ACTION PLAN

3.1 The strategy has to be submitted to The Big Lottery Fund by the end of October 2007 if funding is to be sought from this source. The submission must include an action plan detailing how the allocated funds will be spent over a three-year period. Following the various consultation exercises and workshops undertaken with individuals and partner agencies a number of initiatives were identified that could be undertaken with The Big Lottery funding.

3.2 The ideas that may be necessary to develop in the action plan include: appointment of a Play Co-ordinator; further engagement with children and young people in specific areas; continued support for successful established schemes; and an improvement programme for those areas identified as lacking suitable play equipment.

3.3 Play Co-ordinator: For delivery of the 'Play Strategy' there is a need for a co-ordinator to work with partners to move the initiative forward. Currently there is no corporate officer-lead for play issues and therefore it is proposed the authority appoint a Play Co-ordinator. This post-holder will be able to lead the implementation of the strategy and support council officers in developing other projects; particularly those related to spatial planning and linked to the growth agenda. The proposed post would be Full-Time with an initial contract linked to the length of the Big Lottery funding award.

3.4 Further engagement: To refine proposals to meet identified needs further engagement will be needed with children and young people, in specific geographic areas, eg Yaxley, Sawtry and Ramsey (OCYPS area). This work will be necessary to involve them in refining the needs assessment and generating and testing proposals for delivery of improvements. This work could be commissioned from partner agencies.

3.5 Continuation and support for successful established schemes: There is already some specific play provision; either mobile/portable equipment or holiday schemes already established in key priority areas, eg Oxmoor and Eynesbury. The Action plan would seek to retain and build on this success rather than replace schemes with new initiatives.

- 3.6 Improvement programme: For those areas identified as short of equipment consideration will be given to an improvement programme, eg Stilton and Stukeley Meadows skate park initiatives.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Members are requested to agree the content of the draft play strategy (attached).
- 4.2 Members are requested to agree in principle the proposed main points for the action plan, as set out in points 3.3 to 3.6 of this report. Also to consent to officers costing the initiatives, being mindful of the limits of the Big Lottery Fund award.
- 4.3 Members are requested to accept that a further report be provided to Cabinet this summer. This report to set out an action plan (with costs) detailing how allocated Big Lottery funding would be spent over a three-year period.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consultation documents set out in Appendix 1 of strategy document.

Contact Officer: Daniel Smith – Community Manager
 **01480 388377**

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CABINET

26 APRIL 2007

ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR CORE STRATEGY, DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS (DPDs) AND HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN

(Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to consult on the attached documents.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 It was intended that proposed amendments to the Core Strategy 2006 were to be considered by Cabinet in February and were to address the concerns expressed by Go-East and the Planning Inspectorate. Members will be aware the Core Strategy submitted in April 2006 is now going to be issued with a direction to withdraw. We have been advised that we need to split the document into two separate development plan documents: one to address the core strategy and one to provide development control policies. A revised timetable has been incorporated into the local development scheme to accommodate this which was approved by Cabinet on 15 March 2007. It is now our intention to proceed to regulation 25 Issues and Options consultation in May on two DPDs:

- Core Strategy DPD
- Development Control Policies DPD

- 2.2 This will be followed by regulation 25 Issues and Options consultation in June on the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (AAP). This should avoid overloading consultees and will focus on a smaller area.

3 CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 The Issues and Options consultation on the first two documents will be closely based on material in the previous Core Strategy which has already been subject to considerable consultation.
- 3.2 The Core Strategy will comprise chapters 1-3 of the previous Core Strategy to which we are proposing the addition of issues relating to affordable housing, energy and water use, redundant airfields and large scale military sites and areas of strategic green space enhancement. The

Development Control Policies DPD will basically comprise chapters 4-10, plus appendices of the previous Core Strategy with the possible omission of issues which are addressed by other legislation such as conservation and listed buildings.

- 3.3 A few further changes are proposed in response to issues which gave rise to significant representations during the previous consultation periods as follows. Details are to follow.

Core Strategy DPD

Issue	Change
Settlement hierarchy	Potential replacement of the categories of Key Centres (potential growth) and Key Centres (limited growth) by a single category of Key Service Centre in line with the hierarchy in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).
Scale of development	Revising the settlement hierarchy would have implications for the scale of development allowed in different settlements. Potential introduction of another category of scale of housing permitted, for instance moderate growth of 10-60 houses. This could be applied to Key Service Centres to form a distinction between them and Market Towns.
Redundant airfields and large scale military sites	Potential incorporation of the issue of the most appropriate scale and nature of use of former airfields and military sites . The Panel Report into the RSS concluded Alconbury is one of a number of candidate locations for future development and that its solution needs to emerge through the first review of the RSS which could be highlighted in this consultation.

Development Control Policies DPD

Sustainable design	Potential incorporation of up to date guidance on sustainable construction and design for new homes following the launch of the Code for Sustainable Homes in 2006.
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4 HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 An Area Action Plan is scheduled in the Local Development Scheme for the western part of Huntingdon as significant land use changes are likely to come forward over the next 15 years. These include: mixed use redevelopment of the Ermine Street/ George Street area, potential changes to the road system as a result of the A14 improvements, and the need to guide development of the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus including an extension to the country Park. It is a very sustainable location for additional growth to be focussed and could provide opportunities to incorporate facilities ranging from additional retail, employment and housing to recreational space.
- 4.2 The Huntingdon West AAP sets out a draft vision and objectives for the area which draw on work towards the Core Strategy, the Corporate Plan, the Community Strategy and national guidance. The majority of the document sets out a series of issues relating to potential ways of developing the area and options concerning material that could be incorporated into the Huntingdon West AAP. These are complemented by a succession of questions throughout the draft consultation paper designed to elicit people's opinions.
- 4.3 It is intended to progress this document to regulation 25 consultation in June. This is only required by regulations to involve key stakeholders. However, the Statement of Community Involvement advocates greater public consultation for DPDs containing site specific proposals including the possibility of using exhibitions and presentations to reach a wider audience.

5 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Regulation 25 consultation will be undertaken throughout May and June accordingly. The representations received will then be considered, responses considered and preferred options consultation material prepared. It is intended that preferred options consultation on the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPDs will commence in November 2007 and on the Huntingdon West AAP in December 2007.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That the Cabinet approve the following documents for consultation with stakeholders :-

- Core Strategy DPD 2007- Issues and Options
- Development Control Policies DPD- Issues and Options
- Huntingdon West AAP- Issues and Options

Background papers:

Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2006

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks

A companion guide to PPS12

CONTACT OFFICER- enquiries about this report to Richard Probyn 01480 388430

Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council

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1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

1 Introduction

1.1 In April 2006, Huntingdonshire District Council published a Submission Core Strategy as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF). The Submission Core Strategy set out the spatial vision, objectives and policies for managing development across Huntingdonshire. The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, with a six week period allowed for representations to be made with regard to the document.

1.2 Following prolonged discussion on the content of the Core Strategy with the Government Office for the East of England and the Planning Inspectorate, and in the light of further guidance issued on the required spatial content of Core Strategies, the Secretary of State made a direction under Section 22(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for the Council to withdraw the document. We have been advised to replace the Submission Core Strategy (2006) with two separate documents: one to address the core spatial strategy and one to provide development control policies.

1.3 To ensure compliance with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 12 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 these replacement documents will be subject to full consultation. Within the parameters set by national and regional guidance all issues, options and approaches to be taken to managing development in Huntingdonshire are re-opened for debate.

1.4 The representations received during the previous consultation periods cannot be brought forward to this document. However, they have been used to inform some of the options put forward in this consultation paper.

1.5 This Issues and Options paper is the first stage in the preparation of a completely new Core Strategy. It aims to seek opinions on the issues that need to be addressed in the Core Strategy and what the objectives of the document should be. It raises many potential options on how issues could be tackled and seeks suggestions on alternative options and approaches that could be adopted.

1.6 Regulation 25 consultation will be undertaken throughout May and June with key stakeholders. The representations received will then be considered and used to guide preparation of preferred options consultation material for full public consultation. This will be followed by:

- Public consultation on preferred options (November 2007)
- Submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State (April 2008)
- Consultation on the submission document (April-May 2008)
- Independent Examination - Hearing (November 2008)
- Adoption (June 2009)

Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment

1.7 Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process which is carried out during the production of Development Plan Documents to ensure that policies and proposals contribute towards relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. Sustainability Appraisal incorporates the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' (SEA) required as a result of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment.

1.8 The Council has produced an Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the options included in this Issues and Options report. This accompanies the Issues and Options report and will assist the consultation process and test and refine any policies and proposals prior to preparation of the preferred options.

1.9 In addition to Sustainability Appraisal, amendments made to the UK Conservation (Habitats and etc) Regulations 2006 require an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC for all land use plans likely to have a significant effect on a European site. To satisfy the requirements Appropriate Assessments should be undertaken before adoption of a DPD. European sites consist of Special Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS). This will be carried out if it is considered that any aspect of the Core Strategy warrants it.

How to get involved

1.10 It is important that we get your views on the issues and options in this report. Copies of the document have been sent to key stakeholders and are available at the District Council Offices at Pathfinder House. An interactive version of the document is also available on the Council's website.

1.11 You can comment on the document on-line via our interactive version at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> or e-mail your comments to us at ldf@huntsdc.gov.uk or write to us at the following address:

1.12 Planning Division
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN.

Role of the Core Strategy

1.13 The Core Strategy will set the framework for how Huntingdonshire will develop up to 2021 and beyond. It will contain strategic policies to manage growth and guide new development. This paper sets out Huntingdonshire District Council's initial thinking on what it considers are the key issues for the Core Strategy to address and what we may need to do as a consequence. We would like to receive your comments on this paper. We understand that there may be other issues that are important to you which you consider need to be addressed in the Core Strategy and would be pleased for you to raise them with us.

1.14 Huntingdonshire District Council will be preparing a series of planning documents, collectively known as the local development framework, to guide growth and change in the district up to at least 2021. The main components will be:

- Core Strategy Development Plan Document
- Development Control Policies Development Plan Document
- Huntingdon West Area Action Plan
- Planning Proposals Development Plan Document
- Gypsy and Traveller Sites Development Plan Document

1.15 These will be complemented by Supplementary Planning Documents on specific issues such as developer contributions to affordable housing and planning obligations as appropriate.

1.16 The Core Strategy will set out the key elements of the planning framework for Huntingdonshire to 2021 and beyond. It will have:

- a vision of how Huntingdonshire will develop to meet the needs of our residents and business communities, now and in the future

1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

- strategic objectives for the area to achieve the vision - to help guide and manage the growth at an acceptable level
- a spatial strategy which will help direct growth to locations where it can be sustainably accommodated and will identify an area of significant change
- core policies to establish overall development principles and to set the scene for more detailed policies to be used in assessing proposals for development - planning applications will be considered against the core policies as well as the detailed ones
- details of how the local development framework will be monitored and how the implementation of the Core Strategy will be assessed

1.17 It will not include detailed development control policies or identify specific potential development sites. These will be dealt with separately as identified above.

1.18 The Core Strategy will provide the local context for considering the long term social, economic, environmental and resource impacts of development. The key role of the Core Strategy will be to guide the spatial aspirations of the District Council and other service providers and stakeholders to ensure that the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors are met and a sustainable future is ensured for Huntingdonshire.

Linkages to other documents

1.19 The spatial vision for Huntingdonshire will be informed by the regional and local context set by other policy documents including the Regional Spatial Strategy and Huntingdonshire's Community Strategy.

1.20 The proposed changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy sets out the overall spatial vision for the east of England as:

Statement 1

'By 2021 the East of England will be realising its economic potential and providing a high quality of life for its people, including by meeting their housing needs in sustainable and inclusive communities. At the same time it will reduce its impact on climate change and the environment, including through savings in energy and water use and by strengthening its stock of environmental assets.'

(Modified text of Regional Spatial Strategy incorporating proposed changes, paragraph 2.2, December 2006)

1.21 The Huntingdonshire Community Strategy was produced by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and adopted by the Council in 2004. The Community Strategy sets out the long-term vision for the development of communities in Huntingdonshire as:

Statement 2

'A place where future generations have a balanced and good quality of life and can enjoy:

- continued economic success;
- opportunities for all; and
- an environment that is protected and improved.'

1.22 The Community Strategy sets out a framework for delivering this vision. It identifies outcomes needed to achieve the vision, these are:

1.23 Supporting continued economic success

- a stable, buoyant and balanced local economy;
- a balanced housing market; and
- improved and sustainable infrastructure for communities

1.24 Promoting opportunity for all

- a healthy population;
- easy and affordable access to services and facilities;
- good opportunities for learning;
- good cultural and leisure opportunities; and
- vibrant, confident and effective communities

1.25 Protecting and improving our environment

- a high quality built and natural environment;
- low crime; and
- low fear of crime

1.26 For each of these outcomes the Community Strategy sets out measures to assess success, headline targets, short term objectives to achieve the outcomes and priority actions needed. The vision will be delivered by public, private and voluntary organisations. This Core Strategy will play a key role in delivering the aspects of the Community Strategy that concern the development and use of land. The Community Strategy will be updated during the preparation of the Core Strategy and revisions will need to be taken into account at subsequent stages.

Other plans and strategies

The Core Strategy's vision, objectives and policies seek to address the spatial implications of a wide range of environmental, social and economic concerns, so that it provides an overall framework for managing the pattern of change in Huntingdonshire. This 'spatial planning' approach demands that a wide range of other plans and programmes are considered during its production. The most significant influences include: the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, Housing Strategy for Huntingdonshire, Local Economic Strategy for Huntingdonshire, emerging Huntingdonshire Environment Strategy, emerging Huntingdonshire Cultural Strategy, 50 Year Wildlife Vision for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and a series of visions, action plans and urban design frameworks

1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

for Huntingdonshire's market towns which contain proposals for the redevelopment and enhancement of selected areas. These have been produced by the council in consultation with local communities (or, in Ramsey, by the coalition of local organisations that form the Ramsey Area Partnership).

Analysis of environmental, social and economic issues

In addition to the research that underpins these other documents, the Core Strategy has been informed by a range of studies being produced by the District Council to support the Local Development Framework. Those of most relevance to the Core Strategy are listed below, and the completed studies can be viewed on the Council's web site:

- Housing Land Availability Assessment (forthcoming 2007)
- Employment Land Review (forthcoming 2007)
- Urban Capacity Study (2003)
- Housing Needs Survey (2003) and Update 2006
- New Homes Survey (2003)
- Landscape & Townscape Assessment (2004)
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2004)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2004)
- Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment Study (2005) and Update 2007

2 Vision and Objectives

The need for a vision

2.1 The spatial vision for Huntingdonshire should flow from the visions sets out in the Regional Spatial Strategy and Huntingdonshire's Community Strategy. The Core Spatial Strategy will provide the spatial expression of these for the district and will direct future development to help achieve their visions and objectives.

Issue 1

The need to define a vision for Huntingdonshire to guide the overall philosophy of the Core Strategy.

Option 1

The spatial vision for Huntingdonshire could be:

'Huntingdonshire will continue to provide a good quality of life as a place which offers:

- continued economic success;
- opportunities for everyone to gain access to suitable homes, jobs and services; and
- an attractive environment which is conserved and enhanced.'

Question 1

Do you consider this an appropriate vision for the district?

Question 2

Are there other aspects it should incorporate?

Objectives of the Core Strategy

2.2 A series of spatial objectives will be required in the Core Strategy. These will summarise its key policy directions and help provide a framework for developing appropriate indicators and targets for monitoring purposes. The objectives will be devised within the context established by the Regional Spatial Strategy's objectives.

Issue 2

To define a series of objectives for the Core Strategy to provide a focus for what it aspires to achieve.

2 Vision and Objectives

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Option 2

To minimise the impact on climate change by:

- enabling required development to be accommodated in locations which limit the need to travel whilst catering for local needs
- promoting developments that conserve natural resources and minimise greenhouse gas emissions

Option 3

To increase housing opportunities for people by:

- ensuring that the quantity and types of dwellings built meet the requirements of local people
- ensuring that an appropriate proportion of new housing is affordable to those in need
- enabling the specialist housing needs of particular groups to be met in appropriate locations

Option 4

To realise the economic potential of Huntingdonshire and its residents by:

- facilitating business development in sectors that have potential to meet local employment needs and limit out-commuting
- enabling business development in rural areas, in locations and on a scale which helps to provide local jobs, limits commuting and avoids adverse environmental impacts
- strengthening the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres as places for shopping and leisure

Option 5

To improve the quality of life for local people by:

- providing a framework for securing adequate land and infrastructure to support business and community needs
- increasing opportunities for pursuing a healthy lifestyle by maintaining and enhancing recreation opportunities and encouraging walking, cycling and horse riding

Option 6

To improve and conserve Huntingdonshire's environment by:

- enhancing the distinctive identities of our villages and market towns
- enhancing our characteristic landscapes, habitats and species
- promoting areas of strategic greenspace enhancement

Reasonable alternatives?

2.3 There are an infinite number of objectives that could be proposed for the Core Strategy. However, once it is adopted the Core Strategy and the Regional Spatial Strategy will form the development plan for the district. Therefore, it is logical that the objectives of the Core Strategy form a local interpretation of the Regional Spatial Strategy's objectives.

Question 3

Do you agree with the suggested objectives?

Question 4

Are there any additional objectives we should include?

3 The overarching issue of sustainable development

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

3 The overarching issue of sustainable development

3.1 The promotion of a sustainable future is a key responsibility for the Council. It is now a legal requirement that plans reflect the overarching objective of promoting sustainable development. It should influence all aspects of the Core Strategy to shape our approaches to managing growth to ensure that the needs of our residential, business and interest communities are met whilst not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Issue 3

The requirement to promote sustainable development to ensure that the needs of our residential, business and interest communities are met whilst not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3.2 The Core Strategy will provide the local context for considering the long term social, economic, environmental and resource impacts of development for at least the next 15 years. It will contribute to the promotion of sustainable communities and provision of opportunities for local residents and businesses to adopt sustainable practices.

Option 7

Policies will indicate that all development proposals should contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development.

Criteria could be set out to assess how a development proposal will achieve this. These could reflect social, economic and environmental issues including how the proposal would contribute to minimising the impact on climate change.

An assessment could be required to accompany any proposal for major development to demonstrate how these have been met.

Reasonable alternatives?

3.3 None. The promotion of sustainable development is required by national and strategic guidance, and criteria are necessary to indicate how this objective will be interpreted.

Question 5

What criteria do you consider most important in assessing how a development proposal will contribute to sustainable development?

Question 6

Should those promoting a major development be required to complete an assessment to show how they have addressed these criteria?

4 Spatial strategy

4.1 Huntingdonshire is at the centre of the Cambridge to Peterborough growth area and managing the opportunities and pressures from growth will be a fundamental issue for the Core Strategy. Our towns, villages and countryside offer diverse and attractive environments in which to live and work, each having their own distinctive character and role in the district. Huntingdon and St Neots are major housing, employment and service centres for the district, with St Ives and Ramsey playing similar roles at a smaller scale. The District Council has witnessed considerable growth in the towns and villages during the 1970's, 80's and 90's and regeneration opportunities in the older estates and in the town centres are now apparent.

4.2 The district's location between Cambridge, Peterborough and Bedford gives rise to both opportunities and constraints providing competition for employment, retail and leisure facilities. The Core Strategy will be a spatial representation of the most sustainable options arrived at from the interplay of infrastructure and transport together with housing, employment and retail requirements. It will be one where a fair proportion of previously developed land is utilised. The amount and direction of growth will then feed into the proposed Huntingdon West Area Action Plan (an area of change/ redevelopment) and the Planning Proposals DPD.

Infrastructure

4.3 Significant enhancement is proposed of the transport links between Cambridge and the market towns that surround it, achieved through the implementation of the County Transport Plan. High quality public transport services will be developed in the Cambridge-Huntingdon corridor (to include a guided bus route between Cambridge and St Ives and on street bus priority measures between St Ives and Huntingdon) and along the A428 between Cambridge and St Neots. These measures will be complemented by major road improvements in these corridors, including a new route for the A14 between Ellington and Fen Drayton. The District Council supports the route which will pass to the south of Brampton and Godmanchester, improving traffic flows and road safety on this key strategic route. Removal of the railway viaduct at Huntingdon as part of the scheme will also enable improved local road access to Huntingdon town centre. The District Council and County Council are also working towards promoting improvements to the A428 between the A1 and Caxton Gibbet. Delivery of these improvements will influence the distribution and phasing of residential and employment development.

4.4 Market town transport strategies exist to promote packages of integrated highway, public transport, cycling and walking improvements in Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. A park & ride site will be developed at St Ives (in association with the proposed guided bus route). Consideration may be given to a second site serving Huntingdon and Godmanchester. At Yaxley, traffic on the A15 will be relieved through construction of a western peripheral road at Hampton, joining the A15 south of Yaxley with the Fletton Parkway in the north.

4.5 Improved access will be made from villages to the market towns and Peterborough, with better public and community transport services and further development of local and long-distance cycle routes. At the same time, significant improvements in the accessibility of services will be made possible through the increased availability and use of information technology (such as broadband internet access).

Housing requirements

4.6 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy has confirmed an allocation of 11,200 new houses to be built in Huntingdonshire for the period 2001 – 2021. The housing numbers allocated to a district should be regarded as a minimum target to be achieved. Of these 8,500 houses have already been built or committed for the period 2001-2006 (of which 5,350 are in Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey), see appendix one. This leaves a balance of 2,700 homes to be found. The thrust of settlement policy set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

4 Spatial strategy

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Structure Plan (2003) and the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (December 2006) has shifted towards an urban focus with greater emphasis on re-using previously developed sites. This stance will need to be followed through in the Core Strategy.

4.7 PPS3 specifies that local planning authorities should set out their policies and strategies for housing delivery that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption. It is anticipated that the Core Strategy will be adopted in mid-2009. To ensure a 15 year supply the strategy would need to consider housing delivery up to 2024. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy addresses this issue and advises that the annual average rate of housing required for 2006-2021 should continue to be sought during the early years after 2021. For Huntingdonshire this means that provision of a further 550 homes per year would be required from 2021 until 2024. To achieve this, land for a further 1650 homes will be required over and above the balance of 2700 homes to be found as advised by the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Employment requirements

4.8 To support continuing economic growth, the strategy must address the requirement to bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in the right locations to meet expected needs for industrial and commercial development, taking into account accessibility and sustainable transport needs and provision of essential infrastructure. However, the scale of employment land needed for the period to 2021 will be the product of a complex series of factors shaping the demand for new accommodation and supply of new and existing employment land and property. It is anticipated that the main factors will concern: overall national economic growth; local labour supply and demand and changing conditions for business competitiveness, most notably the need to reduce CO₂ emissions and unsustainable modes of transport for employees and the distribution of goods. Appendix one shows employment land completions since 2002.

Retail requirements

4.9 The spatial strategy will need to set out the relevant centres in which the search for sites for retailing will take place together with an indication of the quantity needed in each centre to ensure their continuing viability and vitality. At present a high proportion of money spent by residents on comparison goods goes to Cambridge, Peterborough and Bedford rather than being spent in shops in our market towns and villages. The Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment Study (2005, as updated 2007) suggests a target of 20,000 sq m net additional comparison floorspace and 3,900 sq m net additional convenience floorspace. This proposed figure allows for a slight increase in the proportion of expenditure retained locally as a result of more attractive retail opportunities being offered.

4.10 Opportunities for regenerating and strengthening the role of town centres exist and can be achieved by policies to promote further retail development. Where necessary in planning for growth up to 2021 it may be appropriate to extend the town centre after exhausting redevelopment sites in the centre.

Spatial planning areas

Issue 4

Identification of areas where development could be focused to promote sustainable opportunities for access to jobs, services and facilities.

4.11 Huntingdon and St Neots are identified in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) as locations for future growth in the Cambridge sub-area. In spatial planning terms the relationship between market towns and nearby settlements is an important consideration. The following descriptions reflect the economic and social relationships between settlements within the district.

4.12 Huntingdon area: this includes Huntingdon, Brampton and Godmanchester and had 31,000 residents in 2005. The area is a key driver of the local economy. The Housing Land Availability Assessment (HLAA) recently completed by the Council identified that this area offers significant opportunities for development. The realignment of the A14 could have implications for development opportunities, particularly post 2015.

4.13 St Neots area: this includes St Neots and Little Paxton and had a population of 31,200 in 2005. Coupled with land in Bedfordshire around Wyboston, the area is also a key driver of the local economy. The HLAA recently completed by the Council identified that this area offers significant opportunities for development.

4.14 St Ives: is smaller in scale than Huntingdon and St Neots with a population of just under 16,000 in 2005. It offers fewer opportunities for sustainable development options. The HLAA identified a limited number of suitable sites with flooding being a major constraint. However, St Ives is within the prosperous Cambridge sub-region and will see significant changes in accessibility with the completion of the guided bus route.

4.15 Ramsey area: this includes Ramsey and Bury, but excluding Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside and Ramsey St Marys, and had a population of around 8,000 in 2005. Major housing growth was discounted by the Inspector during the 2002 Local Plan alteration due to Ramsey's poor sustainability. It has relatively poor transport infrastructure and, despite previous allocations, has limited employment opportunities.

Option 8

To use the spatial planning areas described above when identifying strategic directions of growth. These would be used for assessing potential development sites for allocation within the Planning Proposals DPD or the Huntingdon West AAP.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.16 Strategic growth allocations could be focused only within the four largest towns in the district. However, the HLAA has identified limited brownfield land availability in some of these settlements. Limiting allocations only to sites within and around these settlements would limit the opportunity to maximise the re-use of brownfield sites which are located within the spatial planning areas but outside the market towns.

Question 7

Do you agree with the approach of considering potential Market Towns in conjunction with the adjoining settlements identified above solely for the purpose of assessing strategic development allocations?

Settlement hierarchy

4.17 The settlement hierarchy will provide a framework for managing the scale of new development in different locations. Its purpose will also be to preserve the character, scale and form of villages and to protect the openness of the countryside. It will steer most new development towards those larger settlements that offer the best access to services and facilities (both now and for the foreseeable future). This could help reduce the need to travel, as well as making good use of existing infrastructure and previously-developed land in urban areas.

4 Spatial strategy

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Issue 5

The need to define an appropriate settlement hierarchy to manage non-allocated growth in different types of location.

4.18 The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003) identifies four settlements in Huntingdonshire that merit Market Town status: St Neots, Huntingdon, St Ives and Ramsey. These are designated on the basis of the range of facilities and employment opportunities they offer compared to other settlements in the district. Huntingdon, and parts of adjoining neighbouring parishes, provide far more jobs in comparison to the size of its potential workforce than elsewhere in the district, making it the most sustainable location for any further housing growth.

4.19 Although Ramsey and Bury clearly supports its designation as a Market Town, the availability of employment is comparatively poor (although efforts to address this are being made through the Ramsey Area Partnership). This is reflected in the Structure Plan and draft Regional Spatial Strategy which indicates that the scale of any new housing development in Ramsey should be relatively small.

4.20 Guidance to assist the identification of Key Service Centres is contained in the Regional Spatial Strategy (proposed changes, December 2006) and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan. Key Service Centres are defined as large villages with a good level of services such as a primary school within the village, a secondary school within the village or easily accessible by public transport, primary health care facilities, a range of shops and services that can meet day-to-day needs, local employment opportunities and a frequent public transport service to higher order settlements. Several of the potential Key Service Centres are closely associated with potential Market Towns and could offer particularly sustainable opportunities for access to jobs, services and facilities. Others are more free-standing and further development could help make them more self-contained. The HLAA showed considerable variation in the number of houses different settlements in this category could accommodate. The Employment Land Review identified available allocated employment land in Fenstanton, Yaxley and Sawtry.

Option 9

The Core Strategy will need to identify a settlement hierarchy for use in determining the scale of non-allocated development appropriate in different locations.

The hierarchy could:

- identify Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey and Bury as 'Market Towns'
- identify Brampton, Buckden, Fenstanton, Godmanchester, Kimbolton, Little Paxton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley as 'Key Service Centres'
- list other villages as 'Smaller Settlements'

Reasonable alternatives?

4.21 The hierarchy could be changed in a number of ways to facilitate a wider or tighter distribution of growth. This was an issue which raised significant responses to consultation on the original submitted Core Strategy (April 2006). Various suggestions have been raised involving more or less different categories within the hierarchy. A significant alternative is the previously proposed distinction between two categories of Key Centre in an attempt to distinguish further between additional growth and ease of access to shops, services and employment facilities.

4.22 A further alternative is to base the settlement hierarchy on the physical capacity of different settlements to accommodate growth, taking into account their form, character and land availability, rather than access to services and facilities. However, this would not ensure that national and regional policies to reduce the need to travel are being addressed most effectively.

Question 8

Do you agree with the overall approach taken to the settlement hierarchy?

Question 9

Do you agree with the identification of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey and Bury as 'Market Towns'?

Question 10

Do you agree with the identification of Brampton, Buckden, Fenstanton, Godmanchester, Kimbolton, Little Paxton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley as 'Key Service Centres'?

Options for growth

4.23 We need to make fundamental choices on whether the district should pursue a very intense urban focus for new growth or a more dispersed approach; whether priority should always be given to re-use of brownfield land or whether in some circumstances developing greenfield land with very good access to services and facilities is preferable. Rather than put forward a particular choice the options are deliberately left wide open to incorporate a number of possible alternatives.

Issue 6

The need to identify strategic directions of growth to guide where sites will be allocated for development.

4.24 A series of maps follows in this section which indicate possible directions of growth from each of the larger settlements in the district. These are coded alphabetically and provide an indication of the possible scale of development that could be accommodated. The maps indicate a wide range of alternatives not all of which will be needed to achieve the scale of growth required in the Regional Spatial Strategy. They show possible directions for housing, employment and mixed use development.

4.25 It is likely that many growth areas will accommodate a mixture of housing and employment uses to help develop balanced, sustainable communities and provide viable transport choices. However, to best ascertain people's preferences housing, employment and retail are discussed separately below.

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Housing options for growth

Huntingdon and St Neots areas

Option 10

Policies could propose that the Huntingdon area should get most of the growth.

Option 11

Policies could propose that the St Neots area should get most of the growth.

Option 12

Policies could propose both areas to grow at a similar rate.

Question 11

What proportion of growth should be focused in the two main urban areas?

Question 12

Which of these options would you prefer and why?

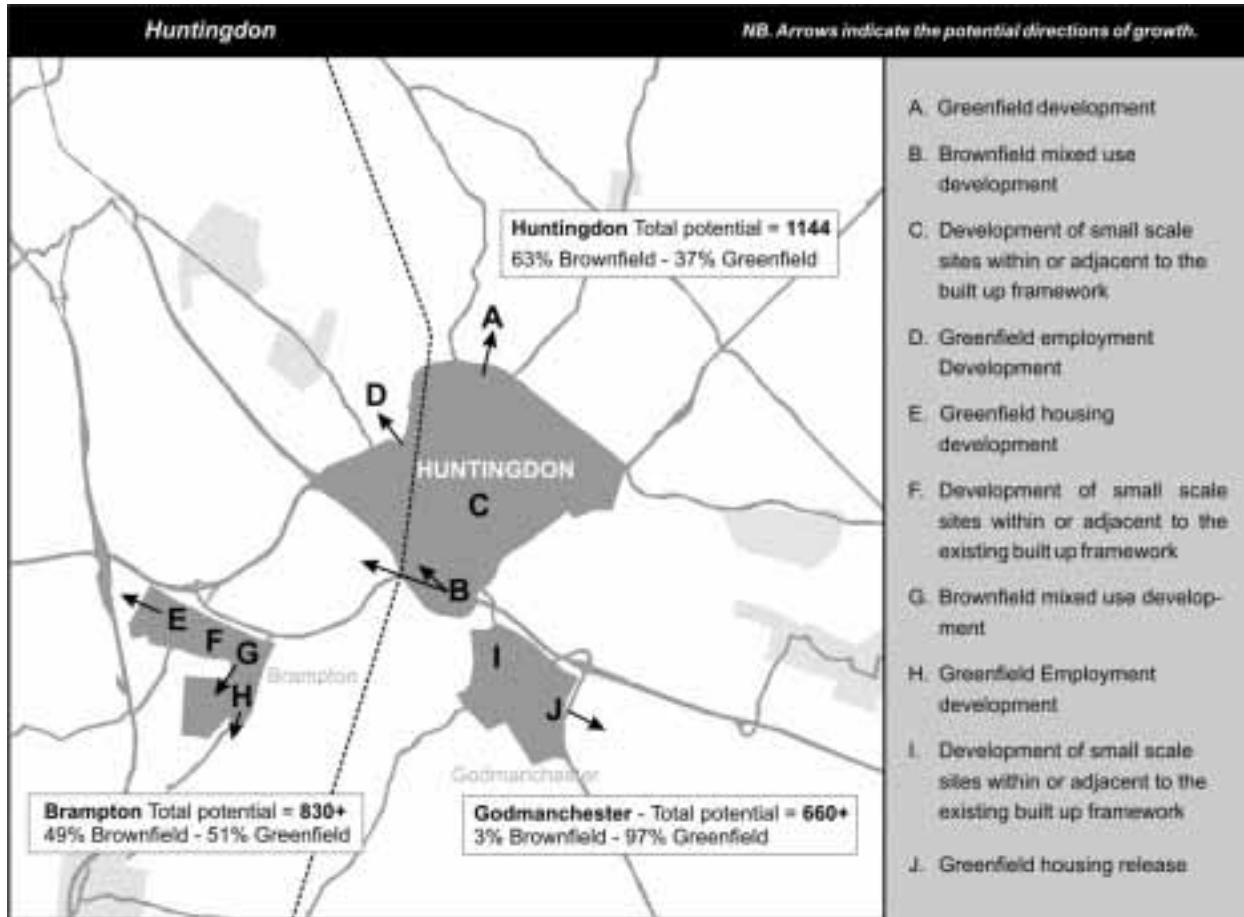
Question 13

Are there any other options which should be considered?

Question 14

To achieve your chosen option which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

Map 4.1 Huntingdon

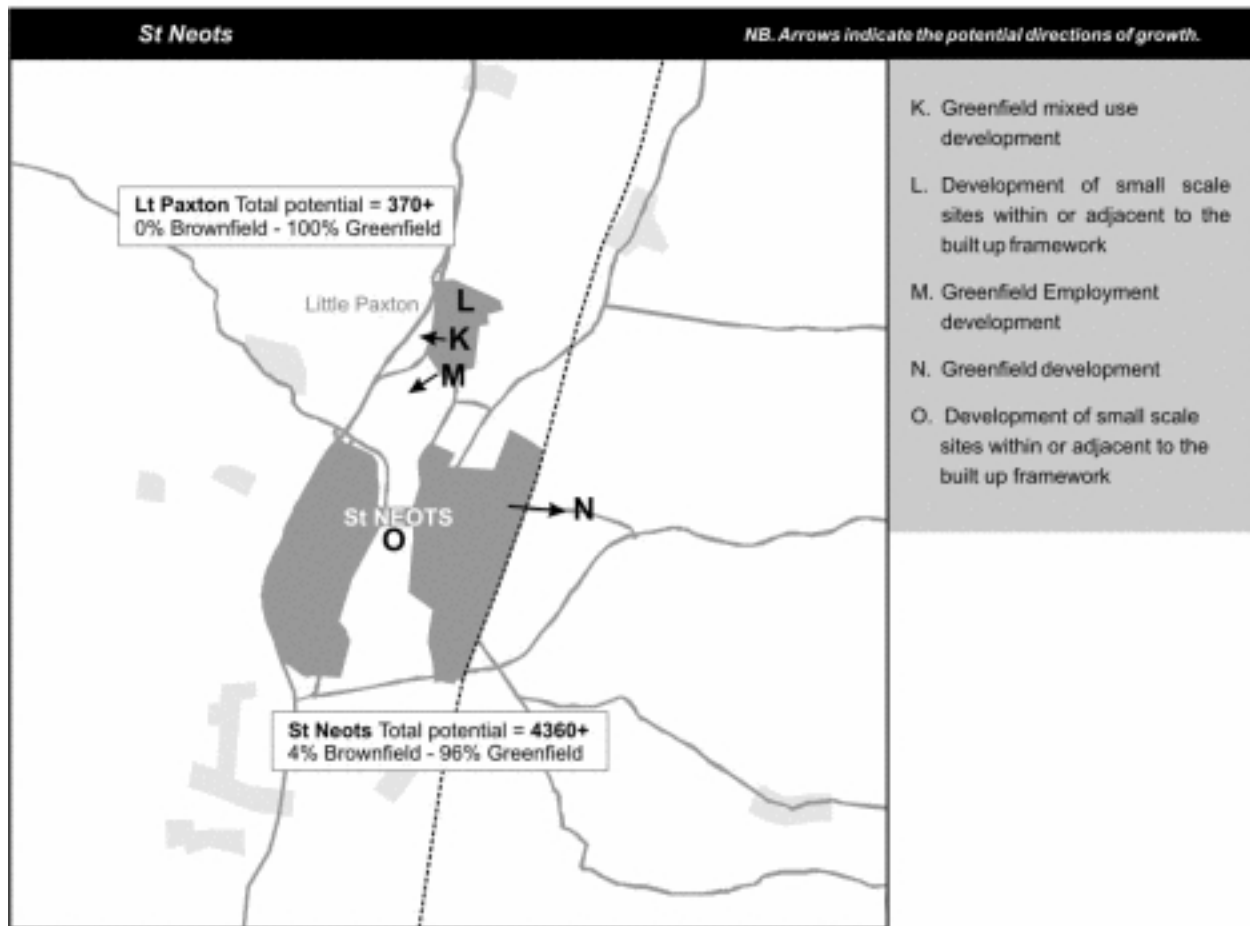


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Map 4.2 St Neots



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St Ives and Ramsey

4.26 Strategic guidance indicates that St Ives and Ramsey should receive a smaller level of growth. When considering development in these two locations the following options have been identified.

Option 13

Strategic directions of growth could allow growth only within the existing built framework in Ramsey and/ or St Ives.

Option 14

Strategic directions of growth could allow growth within small-scale extensions to Ramsey and/ or St Ives.

Question 15

Which of these options would you prefer and why?

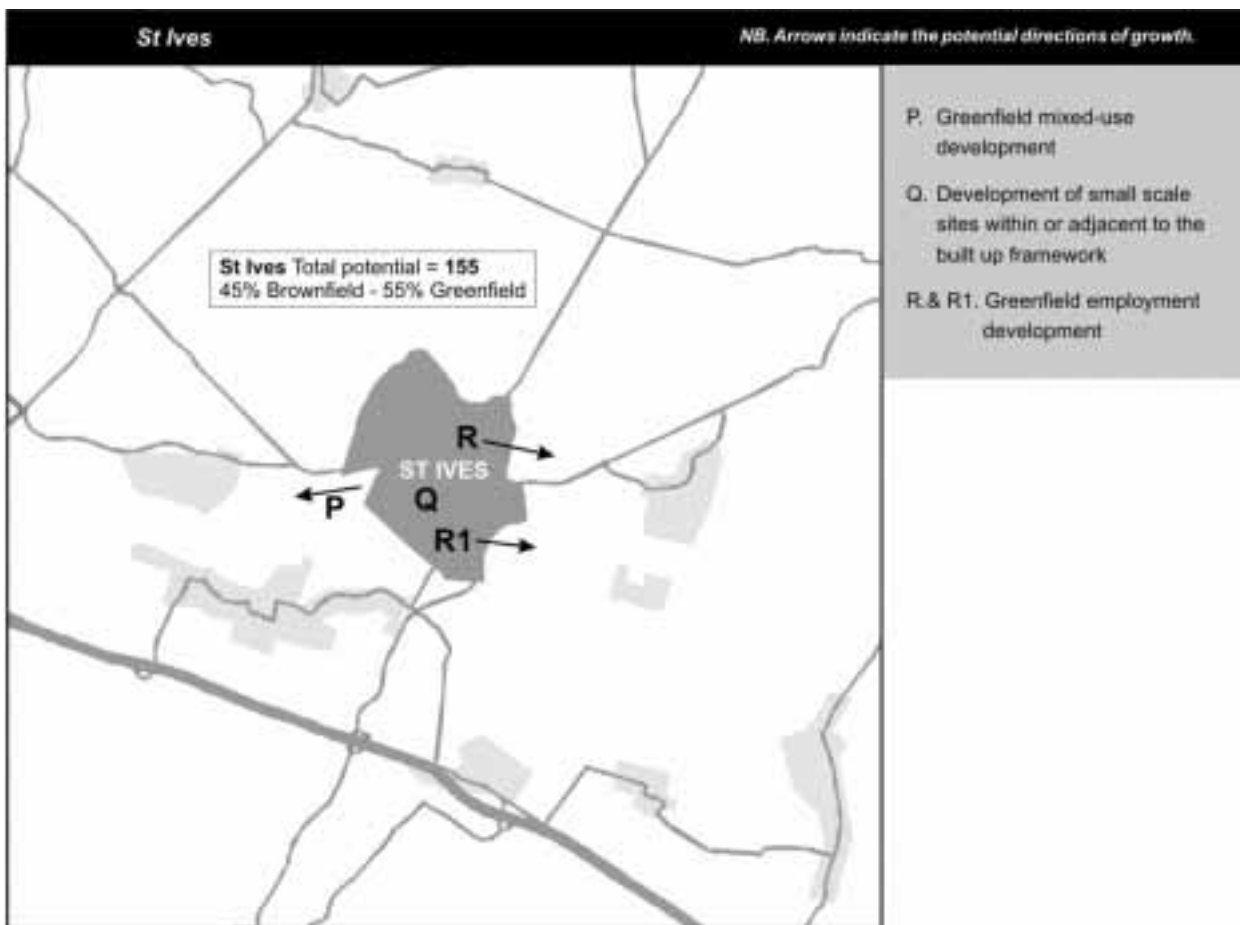
Question 16

Are there any other options which should be considered?

Question 17

Which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

Map 4.3 St Ives

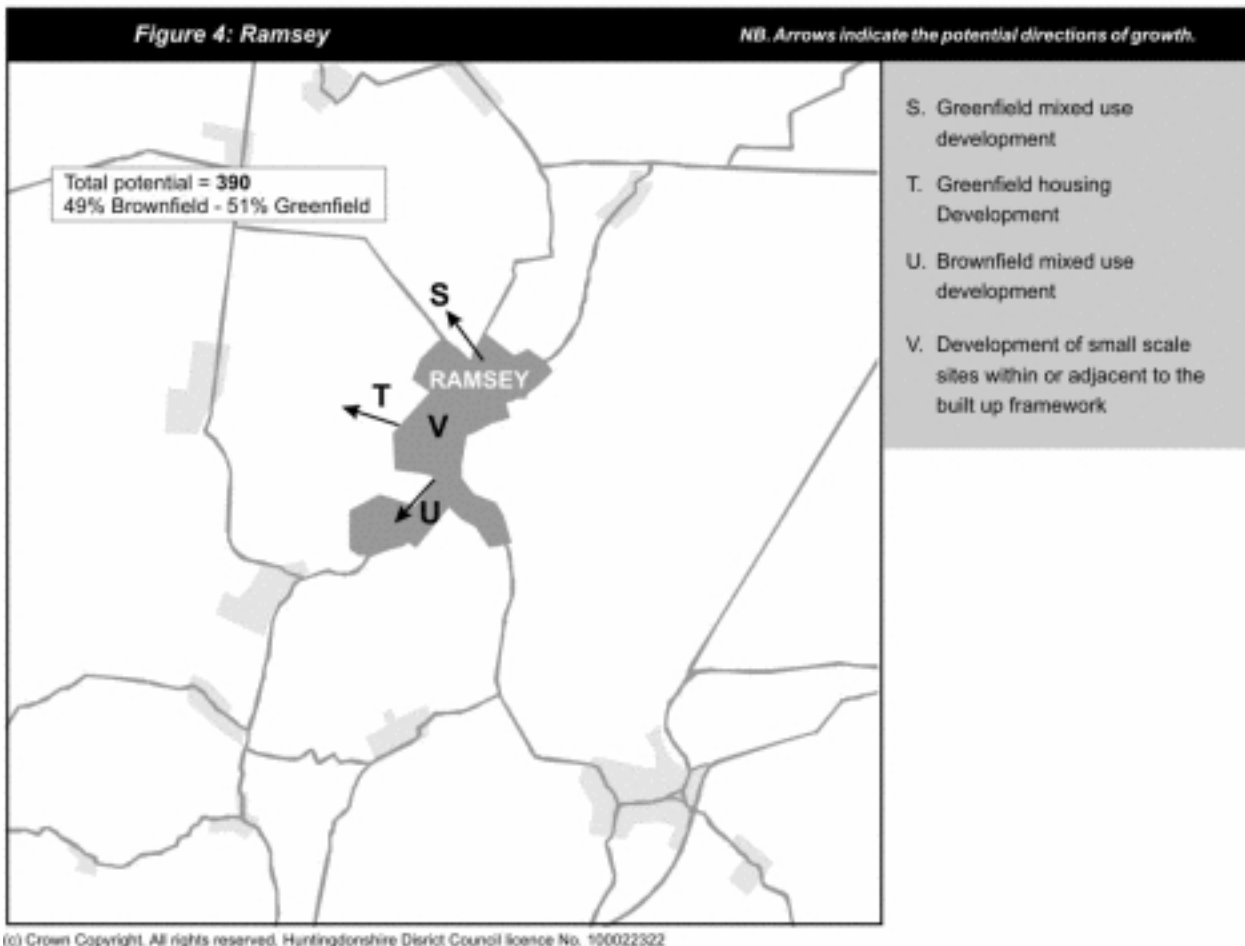


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Map 4.4 Ramsey



Key Service Centres

4.27 When considering development in possible Key Service Centres that are not closely linked with a Market Town the following options have been identified.

Option 15

Development could be distributed across all Key Service Centres broadly in proportion to their existing size and level of facilities.

Option 16

Development could be more limited in those settlements which have recently received high levels of growth.

Question 18

Which of these options would you prefer and why?

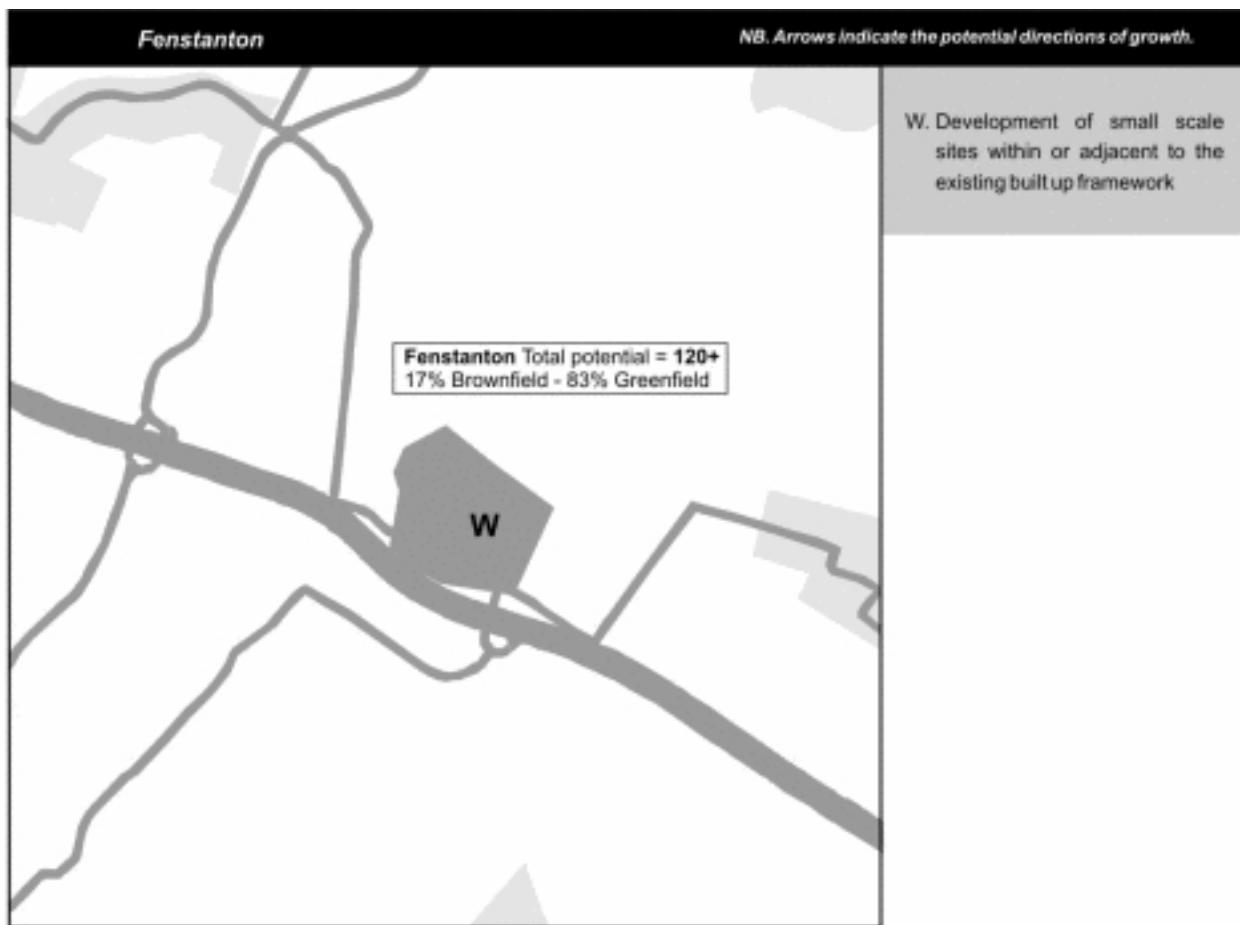
Question 19

Are there any other options which should be considered?

Question 20

Which of the directions of growth shown on the maps would you rather see developed?

Map 4.5 Fenstanton

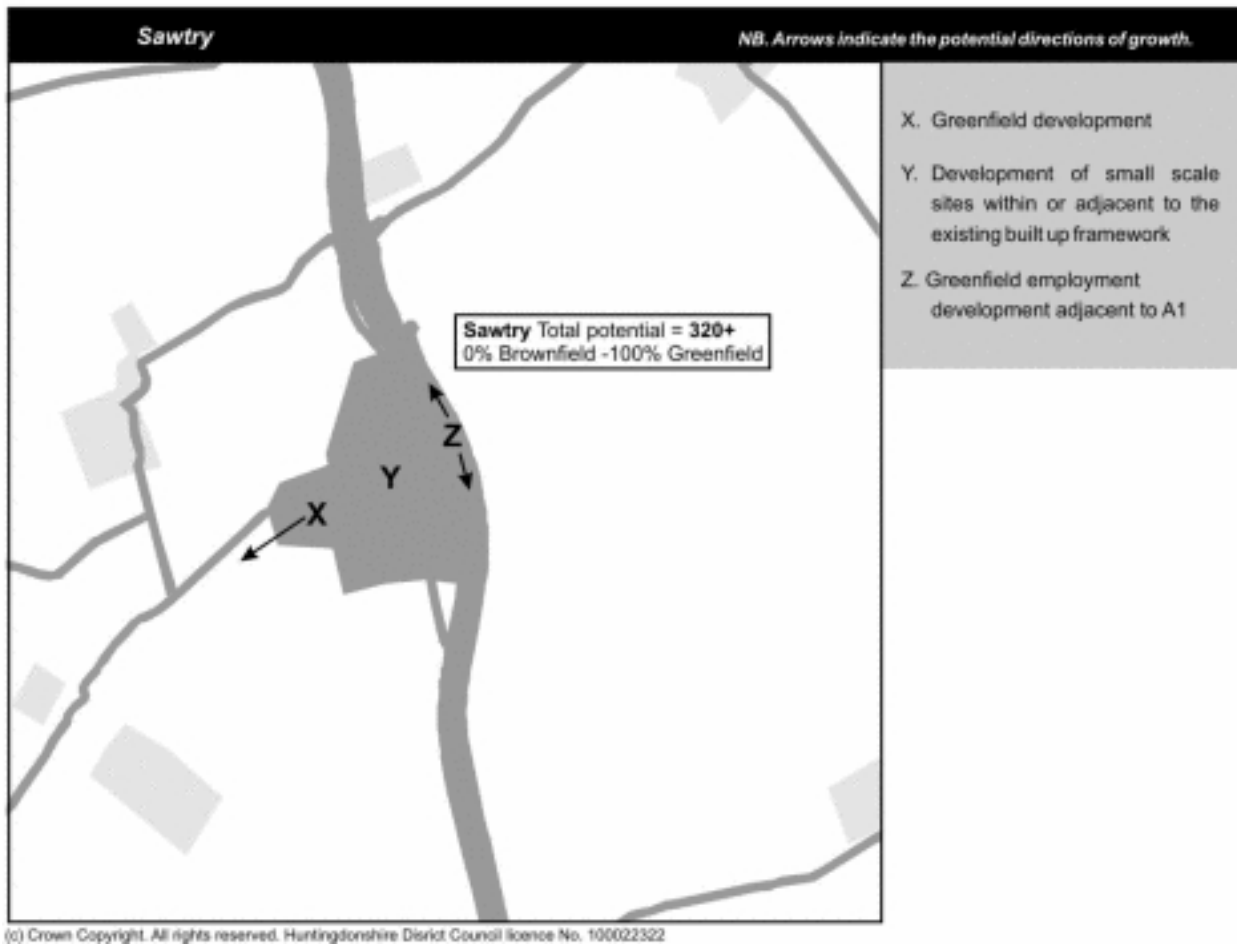


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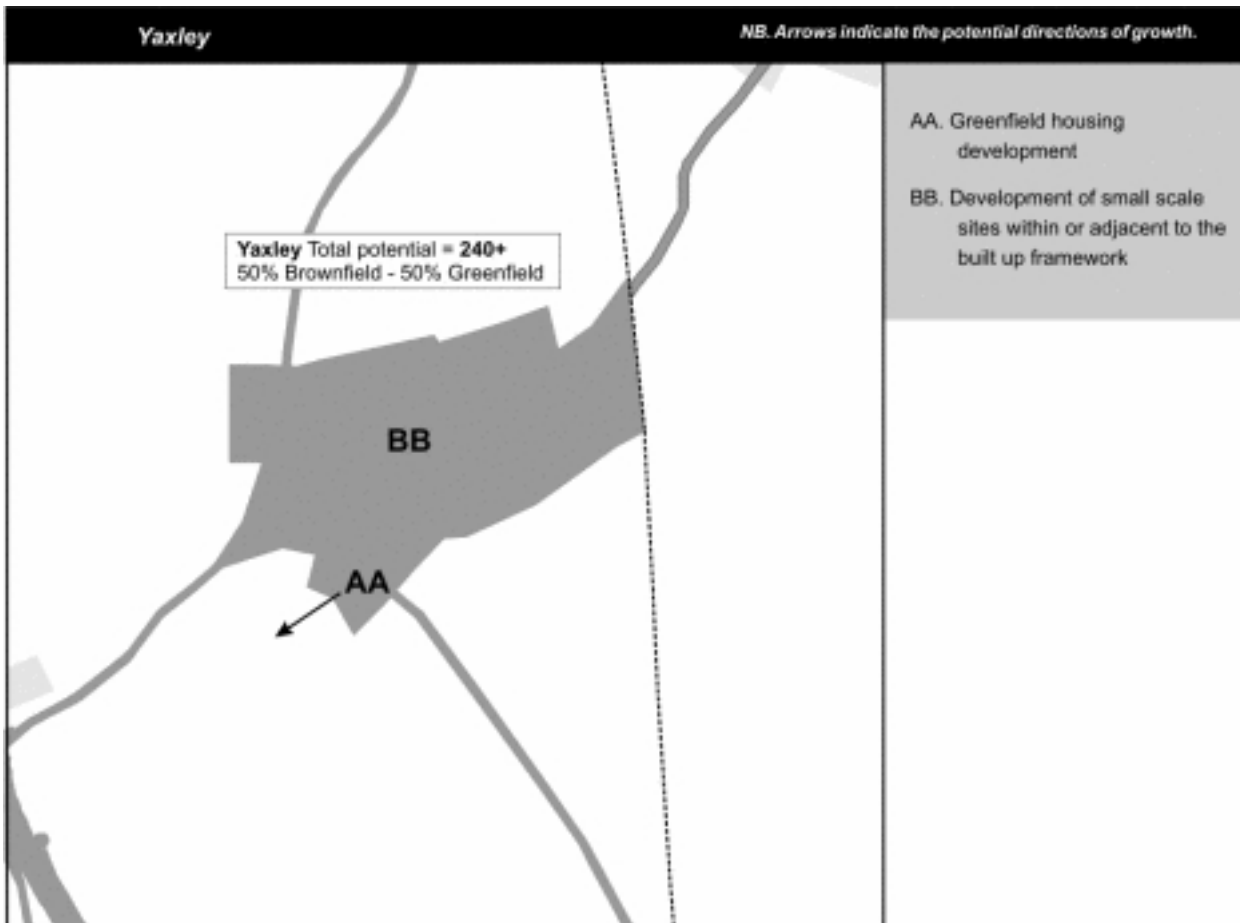
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Map 4.6 Sawtry



Map 4.7 Yaxley



Employment options for growth

Overall scale

4.28 There are a number of ways in which the overall scale of employment land need can be calculated. One approach is to project recent trends; the most significant alternative is to take into account the impact of changing economic, social and environmental conditions.

Option 17

The Core Strategy could plan for a net requirement of 130 ha. This is based on a projection of development trends over the five years from 2002. It assumes continued relatively high rates of economic growth, no constraints on the availability of labour and no concessions to climate change.

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Option 18

The Core Strategy could plan for a net requirement of 70 ha. This is based on an acknowledgment of constraints to the availability of labour and the impacts of climate change: the policy, business and environmental imperatives to site large scale warehouses at multi modal locations and replace older CO₂ emitting stock with zero carbon buildings.

Question 21

Which of these of options would you prefer and why?

Question 22

Are there any other options which should be considered?

Overall distribution

4.29 There are many ways that the additional employment land could be distributed across the district. We need to consider how much of the total should be located to follow population growth and how much should be located in accordance with market demand for locations in the Huntingdon area, the St Neots area and St Ives as opposed to other areas where a number of allocations remain either undeveloped or not brought forward for development.

Option 19

Development could be distributed in locations to follow population growth.

Option 20

Development could follow the market preference for location in the Huntingdon area, the St Neots area and to a lesser extent St Ives.

Question 23

Which of these options would you prefer and why?

Question 24

Are there any other options which you think we should consider?

Question 25

To achieve your chosen option which of the directions of growth shown would you rather see developed?

Retail options for growth

Overall scale

4.30 The Retail Assessment Study Update (2007) suggested that the Core Strategy should endeavour to increase the proportion of available expenditure which is spent locally. One way of encouraging this is to provide a greater quantity and choice of shops for people to use which has the added benefit of reducing the need to travel further afield for certain purchases. A target is suggested of 20,000 sq m net of additional comparison retail floorspace and a further 3,900 sq m net of convenience floorspace in the district for the period 2006-2021. This is based on the aspiration of a slow, steady increase in the proportion of expenditure being retained locally.

Option 21

The Core Strategy could plan for a target of 20,000 sq m net additional comparison retail floorspace and 3,900 sq m net additional convenience floorspace.

Option 22

The Core Strategy could plan for a higher target.

Option 23

The Core Strategy could plan for a lower target.

Question 26

Which of these options do you prefer and why?

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Question 27

If you prefer a lower or higher target what should it be and why?

Overall distribution

4.31 A target of 20,000 sq m net additional comparison floorspace is suggested above. The Retail Assessment Study identified comparatively strong demand from retailers wishing to open in Huntingdon and an encouraging level of interest in St Neots which has traditionally been considered less attractive by investors. The distribution given in the option below was suggested by the Retail Assessment Study. Government guidance dictates that new retail facilities should be in town centres and edge of centre and out of centre locations only considered where this cannot be reasonably achieved. The Retail Assessment Study suggested that although the level of quantitative need for convenience floorspace appears low there may be opportunities for provision based on qualitative grounds in order to increase the range of facilities available. In particular it noted the need for a discount foodstore in Huntingdon town centre. Compared with other centres Huntingdon is the higher order centre where pressure for further retail development is greatest. It also has more opportunities to regenerate and thus strengthen the range of uses on the back of retail expansion with sites in the town centre and sites beyond the town centre.

Option 24

Development could follow the market preference resulting in around 12,000 sq m net of comparison retail growth in Huntingdon, around 6,000 sq m net in St Neots and 2,000 sq m net in other settlements.

Option 25

Development could be distributed equally between St Neots and Huntingdon and a lesser amount allowed in St Ives and Ramsey

Question 28

Which of these options would you prefer and why?

Question 29

Are there any other options which you think we should consider?

5 Other strategic issues

A clean, 'green', attractive place

Areas of strategic greenspace enhancement

Statement 3

Corporate Plan Objectives: 1) to lower carbon emissions, 2) to protect and improve wildlife habitats

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) improve the diversity of our natural environment, 2) improve access to the countryside, 3) improve the understanding of the countryside and the heritage of the landscape, 4) support communities in protecting and valuing open spaces and historic sites, 5) improve access to opportunities for physical and cultural enrichment that promote good health and mental well-being, 6) develop the tourist product

5.1 Huntingdonshire's countryside needs to respond to changing economic and environmental circumstances. Improving the biological, visual and recreational value of the countryside brings obvious environmental and social gains, but can also benefit the local economy through increased visitor spending. It is something that should be addressed by all proposals within or adjoining the countryside and some particular opportunities for significant enhancement have been identified.

5.2 These possible areas of 'strategic greenspace enhancement' reflect the target areas for habitat creation identified in the Structure Plan and the Biodiversity Partnership for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's 50 Year Wildlife Vision. They include:

- the Great Fen Project area (wetland habitat creation)
- the Fen Edge Woodland (woodland and hedgerow creation)
- the Grafham – Brampton Woodlands (woodland and hedgerow creation)
- the Ouse Valley (wet grassland and hay meadows creation)
- the South Cambridgeshire Boulder Clay Woodlands (woodland and hedgerow creation)

Issue 7

The need to identify areas of 'strategic greenspace enhancement' and to promote environmental, economic and social gains within these areas.

5.3 Focusing countryside enhancement efforts on these areas will give maximum scope for consolidating and linking important habitats, and enable complementary access improvements to be pursued. Within the defined areas, it will be important to ensure that development proposals do not conflict with this vision and, when development does occur, that the design, landscaping and any community benefits contribute to its realisation.

5 Other strategic issues

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Option 26

Policies will define areas of Strategic Greenspace Enhancement and identify green corridors connecting them and indicate how development proposals could contribute to improving their biodiversity, landscape and recreational value.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.4 None. The identification of areas for large-scale habitat enhancement is required by strategic guidance, while ensuring that development proposals contribute positively to its achievement is necessary if the objective is to be achieved.

Energy Use

Statement 4

Corporate Plan Objective: to lower carbon emissions

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) increase sources of renewable energy, 2) promote a more sustainable use of natural resources

5.5 The Government is committed to a 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions (over 1990 levels) by 2010, and a 60% reduction by 2050. The design and construction of new development can make an important contribution to meeting this objective, both in terms of using energy efficiently and by making appropriate use of renewable energy technology. In this context, it is appropriate to ask that all development schemes incorporate measures to maximise energy efficiency, so far as scheme viability and proven available technology permit.

Issue 8

The need to reduce CO₂ emissions

5.6 National planning policy allows local authorities to include policies in local development documents that require a percentage of energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments.

Option 27

Policies will promote energy efficiency and will set a requirement for the percentage of energy to come from on-site renewable energy developments

Reasonable alternatives?

5.7 None. This approach is required by regional and national policy and guidance.

5.8 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets out a requirement for 10% of energy to be produced from on-site renewable energy sources.

Question 30

Should the plan require 10% of energy requirements to be met by on-site renewable energy sources or should a higher target be required? If a higher target should be required what should this target be?

5.9 A size threshold needs to be set to identify which developments the requirement for on-site renewable energy will be required. The draft Regional Spatial Strategy sets a threshold of 50 dwellings or 1,000m². However a lower threshold of 10 dwellings or 500m² would increase the number of schemes which would utilise renewable energy technologies and would increase the contribution made to reducing CO₂ emissions.

Question 31

What size threshold should be used to determine whether on-site renewable energy technologies will be required?

Housing that meets local needs

Scale of growth

Statement 5

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate supply of new housing

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs, 2) realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.10 To encourage the development of sustainable communities within Huntingdonshire policies need to allow for a variable scale of residential development in settlements of different types in line with the settlement hierarchy. This will promote the greatest levels of development in locations offering the most sustainable choices for future residents.

Issue 9

To identify the appropriate scale of housing permissible on unallocated sites to ensure development is concentrated in sustainable locations.

5.11 A variable scale of residential development in accordance with the settlement hierarchy could be promoted to encourage the development of sustainable communities within Huntingdonshire.

5 Other strategic issues

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Option 28

Policies will define the scale of housing development of different types. This could be defined as:

- Major development: 60 or more dwellings
- Moderate development: 10-59 dwellings
- Minor development: up to 9 dwellings
- Residential infilling: development of a small site within the built-up framework or defined limits of a settlement by up to three dwellings.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.12 In the previously submitted Core Strategy just three categories of housing development were proposed: major - 10 or more dwellings, minor - up to 9 and infill up to 3. This could be simpler to interpret, but allows less flexibility. A significant number of representations opined that the major category was too broad and the minor category too restrictive. However, the definitions of each category could be changed in many different permutations.

Question 32

Do you agree with the four categories suggested for scale of housing growth?

Question 33

Should any other categories be considered and if so, what should these be?

Location of housing growth

Statement 6

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate supply of new housing

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs, 2) realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.13 To ensure the promotion of sustainable communities the scale of development permitted should reflect the level of access to shops, services and employment opportunities available in a location. Thus, locations with best access such as Market Towns would be permitted larger scale developments than Smaller Settlements which, by virtue of their more limited services, offer a less sustainable residential environment for most people and hence would be less appropriate for substantial numbers of new dwellings. This would only be applied to consideration of sites that are not allocated in the Development Proposals DPD or the Huntingdon West AAP.

Option 29

Policies need to define the location of developments of differing scales. This could be that housing development on unallocated sites could be limited to the following:

- within the defined limits of Market Towns: major, moderate and minor housing development, and residential infilling
- within the defined limits of Key Service Centres: moderate and minor housing development and residential infilling
- within the built-up framework of Smaller Settlements: residential infilling
- within the countryside: limited and specific forms of housing development with an essential need to be in the countryside

Reasonable alternatives?

5.14 The previously submitted Core Strategy proposed two categories of Key Centre and allowed for major development proposals in the larger of these. This made no distinction between the scale of development permissible in Market Towns and the six largest Key Centres. A greater amount of development could be permitted in Key Service Centres by allowing major housing schemes and in Smaller Settlements by allowing minor housing schemes in some or all of them. Either approach would lead to a more dispersed form of development contrary to strategic policies which require most new housing to be located in larger settlements. There is no evidence that greater dispersal would have a significant effect in retaining village facilities, and it would be likely to increase the need to travel. Encouragement of greater levels of development in the countryside would be contrary to national guidance.

Question 34

Do you agree with the level of development permissible in:

- a. Market Towns
- b. Key Service Centres
- c. Smaller Settlements
- d. the Countryside?

Question 35

Should minor development proposals of up to 9 dwellings be permitted in Smaller Settlements where it can be demonstrated that the settlement concerned offers at least a basic range of services and public transport appropriate to the form of the housing to be provided and it secures the most sustainable solution for the site?

Question 36

Are there any other options that should be considered?

5 Other strategic issues

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Affordable housing

Statement 7

Corporate Plan Objectives: 1) to ensure an appropriate supply of new housing, 2) to enable the provision of affordable housing, 3) to achieve a low level of homelessness

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs, 2) realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.15 It has become increasingly difficult for local people on low to modest incomes to gain access to suitable housing. A growing gap between average earnings and housing costs, a limited supply of new affordable properties and the loss of existing social housing through 'right to buy' / 'right to acquire' provisions have all contributed to this problem. The planning system has a key role to play in making more affordable properties available, through securing contributions from market housing schemes and by enabling rural 'exceptions' sites to come forward. It is necessary to define the scope of what constitutes 'affordable housing' in order to develop policies specifying where and when its provision will be required.

Issue 10

The need to set target(s) and thresholds for affordable housing that reflects local circumstances.

5.16 PPS3 sets out up to date definitions of affordable housing, distinguishing between social rented and intermediate housing tenures. It acknowledges that to be deemed 'affordable' housing must be made available at a cost low enough for eligible households to afford when compared to local incomes and house prices. It specifies that low cost homes for sale can contribute towards the supply of intermediate housing but specifically excludes low cost market housing from the definition of affordable housing.

5.17 Housing Needs Surveys in the district have shown a significant demand for affordable housing, far exceeding that likely to be built. Thus, it is important to ensure that provision caters for priority needs. The Housing Needs Surveys have advised that a district-wide target should be set to enable the Council to respond to its responsibility at a district-wide level in order to meet need where it can best do so. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment is currently being undertaken and outcomes will be taken into account in preparing later stages of the Core Strategy as appropriate.

Option 30

Policies will set a target of 40% of all housing on eligible sites throughout the district to be provided as 'affordable housing'.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.18 Targets could be set at 40% within the Cambridge sub-region and 30% within the rest of the district of the total number of dwellings on eligible developments. The average target of 35% included in the Regional Spatial Strategy could be used but this is an average for the region and within Huntingdonshire the need for affordable homes is greater than elsewhere in the region. A further variation would be to increase the thresholds to 50% for the Cambridge sub-region and 40% elsewhere. This would bring Huntingdonshire in line with the targets sought in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City and have the advantage of promoting a consistent approach throughout the wider area. However, the housing market in Huntingdonshire differs from that in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City and this approach would not reflect the variation in house and land prices.

Question 37

Do you agree that a target should be set of seeking 40% of all housing on eligible sites throughout the district to be provided as 'affordable housing'?

5.19 PPS3 sets a national indicative minimum site size threshold of 15 dwellings. Policies will need to set thresholds to assess whether sites should be eligible for affordable housing requirements. In determining these it should be borne in mind that the majority of development will be directed to Market Towns, followed by Key Service Centres. The higher the threshold is set the lower the number of sites where affordable housing can be required. However, the need for affordable housing has to be balanced with the viability of its provision.

Option 31

Thresholds could be set only requiring the provision of affordable housing on sites for 15 or more houses wherever they are located.

Option 32

Thresholds could be set requiring the provision of affordable housing on sites categorised as major or moderate development wherever they are located.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.20 Many permutations could be developed of site size threshold and different types of location. In particular, it may be appropriate to relate the thresholds for seeking affordable housing to the scale of development permissible in different categories within the settlement hierarchy. Option 23 above adheres strictly to PPS3 guidance with no recognition of local circumstances. Option 24 attempts to respond to the high level of local need for affordable housing and the concentration of housing development in Market Towns and Key Service Centres as the only locations where it is suggested that developments of 10 or more houses will be permitted.

Question 38

Which option do you prefer and why?

5 Other strategic issues

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

5.21 PPS3 also states that lower thresholds can be set where viable and practicable, including in rural areas. These are in addition to 'rural exceptions' sites allowed solely for affordable housing in small rural communities.

Option 33

Policies could set a threshold for seeking affordable housing on development sites of less than 15 houses in Smaller Settlements.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.22 The previously submitted Core Strategy suggested a minimum site size threshold of 3 dwellings to try to generate provision of some affordable housing on infill sites within Smaller Settlements. A number of concerns were expressed over the viability and management implications of providing affordable housing at such a low threshold.

Question 39

Do you think a threshold should be included for seeking affordable housing on sites of less than 15 houses in Smaller Settlements? If so, what should be the minimum site size eligible for seeking affordable housing?

Question 40

Do you think some other combination of targets and thresholds more appropriate? If so, please suggest what it should be.

Rural exceptions housing

Statement 8

Corporate Plan Objectives: 1) to ensure an appropriate supply of new housing, 2) to enable the provision of affordable housing, 3) to achieve a low level of homelessness

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs, 2) realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.23 House prices in many of our villages are unaffordable to many local people leading to significant demand in some for provision of affordable housing to prevent people having to move away or to enable those with local connections to return.

Issue 11

The need to provide affordable housing in Smaller Settlements to meet local needs.

5.24 Although the suggested settlement hierarchy steers most new housing towards the Market Towns and Key Service Centres, it is important to have a mechanism for addressing affordable housing needs that arise within the district's rural areas. Exceptions could be made to the normal limits on development in such locations just for affordable housing for local people. It is important that occupiers of the new properties have access to at least a basic level of facilities appropriate to their needs to help reduce the need to travel, for instance a food shop and also a primary school where the houses will be occupied by families.

Option 34

Policies will set out criteria to assess proposals in locations or on a scale that would not otherwise be acceptable where the development is solely to provide affordable housing to meet local needs.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.25 No allowance could be made for 'rural exception' sites, but this would not enable identified needs for affordable housing in rural areas to be addressed.

5.26 Exception sites could be allowed at all rural settlements, regardless of the level of facilities available within them. However, this would mean that some residents of the new properties would not have easy access to a basic level of services and facilities, increasing their need to travel (and contrary to the need to promote a more 'sustainable' pattern of development).

Question 41

Should the provision of affordable housing be allowed in locations and on a scale that would not otherwise be permitted for general housing where it is solely to provide for local needs?

Question 42

Should 'rural exceptions' housing be concentrated in settlements with at least a basic level of services or should it be encouraged wherever there is need?

Question 43

Should sites for 'rural exception' housing be allocated in the Planning Proposals DPD?

5 Other strategic issues

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Access to services and transport

Infrastructure requirements

Statement 9

Corporate Plan Objectives: 1) to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport, 2) to make town centres and key settlements accessible, 3) to enable residents to take an active part in their communities, 4) improve access to and the provision of services in rural areas

Community Strategy Objectives: realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.27 Development can place additional demands upon physical infrastructure and social facilities, as well as having impacts upon the environment. In many cases planning obligations will be required, so that provision is made for the necessary improvements to services and facilities, or to secure compensatory provision for any loss or damage created (e.g. a loss of open space). Obligations may also be necessary for wider planning objectives to be secured – in particular, the provision of affordable and key worker housing where this is justified.

Issue 12

The need to ensure appropriate, timely provision of any infrastructure requirements associated with new development.

5.28 The detailed framework for calculating and negotiating obligations will be set out in separate Supplementary Planning Documents, which will be updated on a regular basis. Huntingdonshire forms part of a wider growth area, and some of the items for which contributions will be required may be strategic in nature (such as strategic open space). The formulae will allow for contributions from individual developments to be pooled where appropriate, but in all such cases the nature and scale of contributions sought will be related to the size of scheme and the extent to which it places additional demands upon the area.

Option 35

Policies will require development proposals to contribute towards the cost of providing infrastructure, and of meeting social and environmental requirements, where this is necessary to make a scheme acceptable in planning terms.

Criteria will be proposed to allow assessment of the scale and nature of development proposals where contributions are likely to be required.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.29 None. Existing national guidance (Circular 5/2005) requires development plans to set out policies indicating the circumstances in which planning obligations may be sought and indicates that formulae and standard charges may be used where appropriate.

Question 44

What criteria should be used to determine if contributions are necessary?

A strong, diverse economy

Re-using military sites

Statement 10

Corporate Plan Objectives: 1) to encourage a strong business community which supports new enterprise, 2) to support town centres to be economically viable and vibrant, 3) to encourage the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents, 4) to promote development opportunities in and around the market towns

Community Strategy Objectives: 1) maintain business confidence to increase investment which creates opportunities to work locally and reduces out commuting, 2) ensure an appropriate provision of land for business, 3) development and promote the market towns, 4) develop the rural economy, especially the Ramsey area, 5) realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development

5.30 The most appropriate future use of redundant military sites is expected to be a significant issue in Huntingdonshire with large areas of land potentially becoming available for re-use during the lifetime of the Core Strategy. The Panel Report into the Examination in Public of the Regional Spatial Strategy considered representations made on Alconbury airfield suggesting mixed use development of warehousing and 3,000 houses but concluded that 'the solution for Alconbury needs to emerge from full consideration of all the relevant issues and should be reflected in the first review of the RSS'. Indeed, Alconbury Airfield is one of many sites put forward for consideration for major development that the Panel recommended should be re-considered at the first review of the RSS.⁽ⁱ⁾ As a result of this RAF Alconbury is not identified as a strategic site in the RSS (Proposed changes, December 2006).

5.31 New employment uses have recently been established on part of RAF Upwood with other areas still potentially available for development. Significant redevelopment for military use is anticipated at RAF Wyton, however, the actual airfield part of the base is likely to become redundant. The site is being considered for possible relocation by Marshalls but no decision is expected from them until 2008. It is also possible that RAF Brampton may be surplus to military requirements after 2011.

Issue 13

The need to identify the most appropriate future use of military sites which are, or become, redundant.

i East of England Plan December 2004, Examination in Public, Report of the Panel Volume 1, page 66, June 2006

5 Other strategic issues

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

5.32 Earlier consultation showed no clear preference among local people for Alconbury's future use. Due to its relatively poor sustainability and transport links large scale housing growth has been ruled out at RAF Upwood so alternatives are needed. Options could include employment uses, leisure or restoring some of it to countryside. RAF Brampton is much more sustainably located and may have potential for significant mixed use redevelopment.

Option 36

Policies could set out the strategic approach to re-use of military sites and include criteria against which to assess potential suitability of different types of use.

Option 37

The Core Strategy could state that due to the potential scale of development that could be accommodated consideration of the future of Alconbury Airfield should await consideration at the first review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Question 45

What uses would you like to see RAF Upwood put to?

Question 46

Should the future of Alconbury Airfield await consideration at the first review of the Regional Spatial Strategy ?

Question 47

Disregarding the potential timing of any redevelopment, what uses would you like to see Alconbury Airfield put to?

Question 48

What uses would you like to see the airfield part of RAF Wyton put to?

Question 49

If it becomes available, what uses would you like to see RAF Brampton put to?

6 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 Framework

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.

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.

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.

The Core Strategy

6 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

This document which is a *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.

Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. Under the new system 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 inquiry into the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* or *Draft Statement of Community Involvement*, 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

This is 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 the 'Preferred Options' development documents.

Key Workers

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers.

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.

Major development

The creation of 10 or more dwellings within 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.

ODPM - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Government department responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

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.

6 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

Residential infilling

The development of a small site within the built-up framework or defined limits 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 Greenspace

These are areas of greenspace that serve a wider population than just the District, for example Paxton Pits, The Great Fen and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

Submission

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* (or the draft *Statement of Community Involvement*) 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 held e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

Tests of Soundness

These are tests to ensure that the document produced is 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).

Use Class Orders

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use 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.

7 Appendix One

Huntingdonshire District Council | Core Strategy 2007 - Issues and Options

7 Appendix One

Housing Completions and Commitments

Settlements	Completions 2001-2006	Commitments 2001-2006
Market towns		
Huntingdon*	509	1655
Ramsey and Bury	261	196
St Ives	118	308
St Neots	715	1591
Key Service Centres		
Brampton	31	49
Fenstanton	145	19
Godmanchester	73	243
Little Paxton	85	560
Sawtry	15	23
Yaxley	404	416
Buckden	77	34
Kimbolton	3	7
Somersham	10	40
Warboys	49	43
Total	2495	5184
Rural Areas		
	410	476
Total	2905	5660
Progress towards Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) housing requirements, as at 31.3.2006		
*includes developments technically in The Stukeleys parish at Hinchingsbrooke and Northbridge		

Employment Land Completions

New Employment Land Completions Since 2002

Market Areas	Light Industrial	Offices	Warehousing	Total	Available
Central Hunts:					
Huntingdon	8.78 ha (23,383 sq m)	5.5 ha (16,880 sq m)	12.14 ha (35,537 sq m)	26.4 ha	15 ha
St Ives	0.35 ha (1,649 sq m)	1.9 ha (7,703 sq m)	Nil	2.25 ha	12 ha
Rural	Nil	Nil	4.07 ha (9,300 sq m)	4.07 ha	-
South Hunts:					
St Neots	2.8 ha (10,546 sq m)	1.68 ha (4,276 sq m)	5.7 ha (23,253 sq m)	10.2 ha	13.4 ha
Kimbolton	1.72 ha (6,223 sq m)	Nil	0.86 ha (3,110 sq m)	2.58 ha	1.6 ha
North Hunts:					
Alwalton	Nil	1.68 ha (5,054 sq m)	Nil	1.68 ha	-
Sawtry	4.39 ha (18,560 sq m)	Nil	Nil	4.39 ha	2.5 ha
Total	18.04 ha (60,361 sq m)	10.76 ha (33,913 sq m)	22.77 ha (71,200 sq m)	51.6 ha	
Warboys					0.9 ha
Yaxley					14 ha*
Somersham		Negligible			2.4 ha*
Ramsey					16.9 ha*
Earith					0.5 ha
Spaldwick					0.8 ha*
				TOTAL	80 ha
				*unlikely to come forward	-34 ha
				Total available	46 ha

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Development Control Policies Development Plan Document - Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council

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Huntingdonshire District Council | Development Control Policies Development Plan Document - Issues and Options

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has introduced new types of plan for shaping and guiding development, and new procedures for preparing them. The Local Development Framework (LDF) will replace the Huntingdonshire Local Plan in setting out planning policies and proposals for the area. The LDF will comprise a number of documents to be produced over a period of time.

1.2 The emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) will set out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and core policies for the district and all other development plan documents must be in conformity with it. The emerging Core Strategy draws on strategies produced by the local authority and other organisations that have implications for the development of land.

1.3 This Development Control Policies DPD will set out local policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire. The policies in this document will be used to assess and determine applications for development in the district. It is therefore important that policies in the Development Control DPD contribute towards the achievement of the Council's wide aims and objectives, including those set out in the Council's Corporate Plan *Growing Success* and in the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy*, as well as being in conformity with the emerging Core Strategy.

1.4 The *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* was produced by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and adopted by the Council in 2004. It sets out the long-term vision for the development of communities in Huntingdonshire and a framework for delivery of this vision. The *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* was produced following extensive consultation.

1.5 *Growing Success*, the Council's Corporate Plan, is our plan of how we will achieve our part of the Community Strategy. It is based on detailed research and importantly what our communities have told us. *Growing Success* identifies the aims we will be working towards as a Council.

1.6 The aims set out in *Growing Success* and the outcomes identified in the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* represent what people have told us they want. The issues and options in this report therefore aim to contribute towards the achievement of these aims and outcomes and have been linked to the more detailed objectives contained in each of these documents.

1.7 Each chapter of this Issues and Options report relates to one of the six community aims set out in *Growing Success*;

- A clean, 'green' and attractive place
- Housing that meets local need
- Safe, active and inclusive communities
- Healthy living
- Access to services and transport
- A strong, diverse economy

1.8 Within each chapter there are issues relating to these aims and options for addressing these issues. The report aims to identify all relevant issues and reasonable options for addressing these. However if you feel there are issues and/ or options which have not been included then we would like to hear from you.

1.9 This Issues and Options report forms the first stage in the production of the document. This stage will be followed by:

- Public consultation on preferred options (November 2007)

1 Introduction

- Submission of plan to the Secretary of State (July 2008)
- Consultation on the Submission plan (July 2008)
- Independent examination - Hearing (February 2009)
- Adoption (September 2009)

1.10 The issues and options contained in this paper have already been subject to extensive consultation as they were originally included in the Core Strategy which was submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2006 and subsequently withdrawn in April 2007.

1.11 The issues in this paper should be specific to Huntingdonshire and should not repeat national guidance, therefore where an issue is adequately dealt with by national guidance it has not been included in this report.

Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment

1.12 Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process which is carried out during the production of Development Plan Documents to ensure that policies and proposals contribute towards relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. Sustainability Appraisal incorporates the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' (SEA) required as a result of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment.

1.13 The Council has produced an Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the options included in this issues and options report. This Initial Sustainability Appraisal accompanies the issues and options report and will assist the consultation process and test and refine any policies and proposals.

1.14 In addition to Sustainability Appraisal, amendments made to the UK Conservation (Habitats and etc) Regulations 2006 require an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC for all land use plans likely to have a significant effect on a European site. To satisfy the requirements, Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken before adoption of a DPD. European sites consist of Special Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS). The Development Control Policies DPD contains general policies rather than site specific proposals, therefore the Council consider it is not possible to assess the implications of these policies on specific international sites, this would need to be done when dealing with site specific proposals.

Question 1

Do you agree that Appropriate Assessment is not relevant to this DPD?

How to get involved

1.15 It is important that we get your views on the issues and options contained in this report. Copies of this document have been sent to key stakeholders and are available at the District Council Offices at Pathfinder House. An interactive version of the document is also available on the Council's website.

1.16 You can comment on the document on-line via our interactive version at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> or e-mail your comments to us at ldf@huntsdc.gov.uk or write to us at the following address:

1.17 Planning Division
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street
Huntingdon PE29 3TN

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Statement 1

Community Strategy Outcome: A high quality built and natural environment.

2.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. Issues raised included the loss of greenfield land and the need to minimise the environmental effects of development. The following chapter identifies issues and options relating to the need to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, the need to ensure new development is designed and built to a high standard and the need to minimise the risk of flooding.

Landscape character

Statement 2

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the diversity of our natural environment.

2.2 National Guidance in Planning Policy Statement 7 requires local authorities to ensure the quality and character of the countryside is protected and, where possible, enhanced.

2.3 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 & Townscape Assessment* 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.

Issue 1

The need to protect Huntingdonshire's characteristic landscape.

Option 1

Policies will set out criteria to protect landscape character.

Reasonable alternatives?

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

2.4 The existing 'Area of Best Landscape' designation which covers parts of the district could be retained as an alternative, or in addition to, the criteria-based approach. However, it is government policy that such local designations should be maintained only where criteria-based policies would not provide sufficient protection. The policy approach outlined above requires all proposals within or adjoining the countryside to be assessed carefully for their potential landscape impact, regardless of whether they are in an area that might be regarded as 'best'. Therefore it protects the distinctive character of all Huntingdonshire's landscapes, and provides clear criteria for making appropriate judgements.

Question 2

Do you think the criteria based approach to landscape character will provide sufficient protection? (please give reasons)

Sustainable design

Statement 3

Corporate Plan Objective: to lower carbon emissions.

Community Strategy Objective: to promote a more sustainable use of natural resources.

2.5 It is important that buildings are designed and constructed to maximise sustainability of development. This can be done through a number of measures including:

- The incorporation of energy efficient devices, energy efficient materials and on-site renewable energy sources
- The incorporation of water efficiency measures
- The use of locally sourced materials and materials of low embodied energy in construction
- The incorporation of sustainable drainage or rainwater holding facilities
- The incorporation of household recycling and composting facilities
- Layouts which maximise the benefits of solar gain

Issue 2

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

2.6 In 2006 the Government launched The Code for Sustainable Homes. This is a voluntary code which sets a national standard for sustainable construction and design for new homes. Using the Code homes are given a star rating to rate the overall sustainability of the home. It is important that the achievement of the standards within this Code are encouraged to ensure that development is sustainable.

Option 2

Policies will encourage compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.7 None. The above option is consistent with national and regional guidance.

Question 3

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

Question 4

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

Renewable energy

Statement 4

Corporate Plan Objective: to lower carbon emissions.

Community Strategy Objective: to increase sources of renewable energy.

2.8 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 in relation to biomass, wind and waste energy and solar power.

2.9 Government policy encourages renewable energy schemes unless the environmental impacts would outweigh the wider social, economic and environmental advantages that stem from making greater use of renewable energy potential. A criteria based policy can be applied to ensure that the risk of adverse impacts is minimised. A range of issues will need to be considered, including the effects upon amenity such as noise generation, shadow flicker and electromagnetic disturbance, as well as the impact upon the natural and built environment.

2.10 Renewable energy technology can change rapidly, hence it is reasonable to require arrangements for the removal of any equipment should it cease to be operational, in order to prevent unnecessary environmental intrusion (especially where masts and associated structures are situated in the open countryside). Appropriate conditions will be imposed where feasible.

Issue 3

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

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Option 3

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.11 None. This approach is required by national and strategic guidance.

Flood risk

Statement 5

Community Strategy Objective: to reduce the impact of flooding.

2.12 Flooding is an important issue facing the district. Parts of some towns and villages have suffered from serious flooding during recent years, and episodes of heavy rain are forecast to increase as a result of climate change. 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.

Issue 4

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

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, 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.

2.13 To determine whether a flood risk assessment would be required for their proposal applicants should refer to PPS 25, and the Environment Agency's guidance on flood risk. The 1:10, 1:100 and the 1:1000 flood risk zones are shown on the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps.

Option 4

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.14 None. Avoiding and managing flood risk is a requirement of national and strategic guidance. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate way to minimise flood risk in new developments.

Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features

Statement 6

Corporate Plan Objective: to protect and improve wildlife habitats.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the diversity of our natural environment.

2.15 Many development sites contain or adjoin features such as trees, small areas of woodland, hedgerows, ponds and old boundary walls. These can be of great importance to the character and quality of the local environment. Often they are attractive in their own right, but they can also provide important habitats, focal points, a link with the past and contribute to the overall 'sense of place'. It is particularly important in Huntingdonshire that trees are given a high level of protection because the district has a low number of trees compared with other areas of the Country. Old drainage ditches and road verges are also particularly significant within Huntingdonshire, and play an important role in providing 'green corridors' for wildlife.

2.16 To ensure that these benefits are retained, development proposals should avoid harm to such features wherever possible, and if necessary incorporate them within an appropriate landscape scheme. 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.

Issue 5

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

2.17 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 (TPOs) to protect them.

Option 5

In addition to the use of TPOs for important trees, policies will set out criteria to minimise the risk of harm to trees, hedgerows and other environmental features.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.18 None. The approach taken to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment is required by national and regional guidance. A failure to do so would cause significant and detrimental harm to the character of Huntingdonshire's environment.

Question 5

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

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Protected habitats and species

Statement 7

Corporate Plan Objective: to protect and improve wildlife habitats.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the diversity of our natural environment.

2.19 The range and vitality of habitats and species is central to the operation of natural processes and our overall quality of life. The need to consider this in all development proposals is highlighted by the criteria relating to the pursuit of sustainable development outlined in the emerging Core Strategy. Huntingdonshire contains many sites and species that are afforded special protection due to their particular importance. Within the planning process it is important that these sites are given additional protection at a level appropriate to their significance for biodiversity or geology.

Issue 6

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

2.20 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

2.21 The following option refers to harm to protected habitats and species; this includes both direct e.g land take, and indirect impacts e.g changes to a watercourse and the potential combination of such impacts.

Option 6

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.22 None. The approach taken to protect sites of national or international importance is required by national and strategic guidance. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate means to protect these sites.

2.23 National planning guidance gives the highest protection to sites of international and national importance but also requires local authorities to protect sites of regional and local biodiversity or geological interest through the use of criteria based policies to judge proposals against. Sites to be protected include County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, important species⁽ⁱ⁾ and protected roadside verges.

i species protected by legislation, or recognised as being of principle importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England

Question 6

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

Biodiversity

Statement 8

Corporate Plan Objective: to protect and improve wildlife habitats.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the diversity of our natural environment.

2.24 Biodiversity in developments and within green spaces which are used by wildlife and appreciated by people has an important role to play in improving quality of life and creating a sense of well-being.

2.25 Proposals for development should consider the impact of the proposal on biodiversity. Where possible, biodiversity should be incorporated into 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 should be required. Mitigation can include reducing disturbance, harm and potential impacts and creating alternative habitats for affected populations.

Issue 7

The need to promote biodiversity within development proposals.

2.26 Biodiversity Action Plans have been produced at national and 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.

2.27 When producing an assessment of habitats and species and details of any mitigation or enhancement applicants should refer to the 'Biodiversity Checklist: Developers Guidance' or 'Biodiversity and Householder Planning Applications' produced by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership.

Option 7

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.28 None. The protection of biodiversity is a requirement of national and regional guidance. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate way to promote biodiversity and help achieve local biodiversity objectives.

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Question 7

Do you think sufficient emphasis is being placed on the promotion of biodiversity? (please give reasons)

Design quality

Statement 9

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure good quality in the built environment.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.29 A high standard of design is essential for the creation of attractive and successful places. The planning system has a key role to play in encouraging schemes that will make a positive contribution to the area, by promoting an understanding and application of key design considerations.

Issue 8

The need to promote a high standard of design in development.

2.30 This can be achieved through the inclusion of a criteria based policy that sets out basic principles which need to be addressed if developments are to display character, complement their surroundings, and provide attractive and sustainable environments for users. As well as being of critical importance for all new projects, criteria can also be relevant when considering alterations and extensions to existing buildings.

2.31 More detailed guidance on the design process and principles is provided by the *Huntingdonshire Design Guide* (2006). Some settlements have also produced *Village Design Statements (VDS)* which set out local design aspirations for individual settlements and can help provide guidance on the preferences of residents.

Option 8

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.32 None. This approach is required by national and strategic guidance.

Question 8

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

Street scene

Statement 10

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure good quality in the built environment.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.33 The character of streets and other public spaces has a major impact upon the quality of our environment. It derives from many factors, design criteria are fundamental but so too are many other influences such as the nature of shop fronts, street furniture, lighting and signage.

2.34 Making street frontages 'active' adds interest, safety, life and vitality to the public realm. Street frontages provide the setting for buildings and help to make an essential contribution to what constitutes the character of an area. The quality of the built environment is greatly enhanced by considering site planning and the integrated use of hard landscaping (e.g. paving, street furniture). However, careful thought needs to be given to the scale, position and potential impact of signage, lighting and street furniture: the objective should be to minimise visual 'clutter' whilst also ensuring that places are safe, convenient and comfortable to use.

2.35 Shop fronts are important visual components of both individual buildings and the street scene. Many are changed or renewed frequently, and it is essential that the design and materials relate effectively to the scale and character of the premises and their neighbours. Solid security shutters can harm the vitality of town and village centres outside opening hours by obscuring shop displays, attracting graffiti and creating a 'fortress' effect. Hence it is important to promote the use of more subtle security measures wherever possible.

Issue 9

The need to create a high quality public realm.

Option 9

Policies will indicate that development 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.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.36 None. The promotion of good design is required by national and strategic guidance, and this must include clear criteria designed to ensure that appropriate regard is paid to the quality of the public realm.

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Question 9

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

Transport impacts

Statement 11

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure good quality in the built environment.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.37 It is important that development does not have an unacceptable impact on the transport network, and that opportunities are taken to promote sustainable forms of travel. The ability to achieve a suitable connection to the highway is a basic planning consideration. It is essential that access is planned and designed to be safe for vehicle users, cyclists and pedestrians, both on and off-site. Equally, an applicant should demonstrate that their proposal will not overload the surrounding road network.

2.38 Road traffic can have a significant effect on the environment of both rural and urban areas, and this will also need to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of development. Close attention will need to be paid to proposals that could generate a large net increase in trips, movements of heavy vehicles, or high levels of on-street parking in the surrounding area.

2.39 Where a proposal could have significant transport implications a full transport assessment would be required; this should identify potential impacts and propose suitable mitigation measures. In the case of minor developments a simpler 'transport statement' which identifies potential trip levels and addresses any localised transport issues will be more appropriate.

2.40 When a development scheme could have significant transport impacts, the preparation of a travel plan enables options for promoting sustainable forms of movement to be explored, including measures to promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport. Early implementation of a travel plan is beneficial as it helps people make sustainable travel choices as soon as development is occupied.

Issue 10

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 10

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.41 The requirement for safe access to the highway network, and for the traffic volumes generated to be within the capacity of the highway network, is required by national and strategic guidance.

Development in the countryside

Statement 12

Corporate Plan Objective: to minimise the development of greenfield land.

Community Strategy Objectives: to promote a more sustainable use of natural resources.

2.42 It is government policy that development in the countryside should be strictly controlled in order to conserve its character and natural resources. The plan needs to contain a policy which sets out the limited circumstances in which development outside settlements will be allowed.

Issue 11

The need to conserve the character of the countryside.

Option 11

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.43 None. Controlling development in the countryside is a requirement of national and strategic guidance.

Question 10

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

2.44 In order to assess whether a proposal is outside of a settlement the plan needs to define the distinction between settlements and the open countryside. This can be done in two ways; a line could be drawn around the settlement to give a clear delineation between the settlement and the countryside or a criteria based policy referring to the built-up framework could be used to assess each proposal on its own merits. The built-up framework is the existing built form. It excludes buildings that are clearly detached from the main body of the settlement, 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.

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2.45 The advantage of drawing settlement boundaries is that these provide certainty as to whether a piece of land is within the settlement or the countryside. However, adding settlement boundaries may imply that development within these boundaries is, in principle, acceptable, using the built-up framework criteria this can be avoided as each proposal is assessed individually.

2.46 The approach to drawing or not drawing settlement boundaries could be different depending upon the place of a settlement in the settlement hierarchy, for example settlement boundaries could be drawn around Market Towns and Key Service Centres, where most growth is likely to occur, and Smaller Settlements could use the built-up framework criteria.

Question 11

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.

Housing density

Statement 13

Corporate Plan Objective: to minimise the development of greenfield land.

Community Strategy Objectives: to promote a more sustainable use of natural resources.

2.47 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.

Issue 12

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

2.48 Planning Policy Statement 3 sets a minimum national density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Exceptionally, there may be instances where applying the minimum density requirement is not appropriate due to the character of the site and its surroundings; this is a material consideration but would need to be justified through a design statement submitted with a planning application. National planning guidance allows local planning authorities to set density targets appropriate to the plan area, this could be through a target for the whole area or for a density range reflecting the location and character of the area and amenities available.

2.49 In locations with good access to a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities higher minimum densities are appropriate. 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.

Option 12

A single net density for development proposals will be applied across the district.

Option 13

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

Reasonable alternatives?

2.50 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. Option 12 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. Option 13 uses a range of densities which can be applied to development. The type and character of a settlement as well as the amenities available will be taken into consideration when applying a net density. This option would ensure that settlements which are more sustainable have higher densities for development than settlements which are less sustainable.

Question 12

Which option do you prefer and why?

Listed buildings

Statement 14

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.51 Listed buildings are of national importance, representing the best of our historic and architectural built heritage. Huntingdonshire contains nearly 2,800 listed structures, and it is vital that any works affecting them are guided by an appreciation of both their importance and the planning controls that apply.

2.52 Applications affecting Listed buildings should meet the requirements set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 which give detailed guidance on development affecting Listed buildings.

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2.53 There is a presumption in favour of preserving listed buildings and their features of architectural or historic interest. The best way of securing their upkeep is usually to keep them in active use. Applications for alternative uses will need to be supported with detailed information on the building and details of any alterations which may be required to accommodate the new use.

There is rarely a good reason for allowing the demolition of a listed building, but PPG15 recognises the very limited circumstances in which total or partial demolition may be necessary and ensures that demolition is allowed only as a last resort (and that neglect cannot be used to justify the loss of listed structures). Where the demolition of a listed building is considered acceptable, the Council will require applicants to arrange the recording of features that would be lost in the course of the works. The requirement that detailed plans for reconstruction / redevelopment are agreed is to make certain that a suitable replacement will be erected.

2.54 The Council will monitor the condition of listed buildings to ensure that support and control from the local authority is applied at the appropriate time. The Council will maintain a register of Buildings at Risk

Conservation areas

Statement 15

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.55 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 (PPG15) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 which give detailed guidance on development affecting conservation areas.

2.56 The character of conservation areas is often the product of various elements such as the mixture and style of buildings, the extent and form of open spaces 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.

2.57 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.

2.58 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.

Sites of archaeological interest

Statement 16

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

2.59 Archaeological remains constitute an important part of the area's heritage. They are a finite resource, and easily damaged or destroyed when development takes place. Known sites of national importance are designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, but the majority of sites do not enjoy this degree of protection. Indeed, most archaeological remains exist below ground, so their extent and significance may not be known in advance.

2.60 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG16) sets out the approach to protecting sites of archaeological importance and this DPD should not repeat national guidance.

Question 13

In relation to sites of archaeological importance are there any issues which are not addressed in PPG16 that you would like addressed in this DPD?

Historic parks and gardens

Statement 17

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.61 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 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.

2.62 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.

Issue 13

The need to protect historic parks and gardens.

2 A clean 'green' attractive place

Option 14

Policies will set out criteria to ensure development proposals do not harm historic parks and gardens.

Reasonable alternatives?

2.63 None. This approach is required by national and strategic guidance.

Re-use and re-development of rural buildings

Statement 18

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment of our towns and villages.

2.64 Huntingdonshire contains large numbers of old farm buildings, mills and other structures that are of historic or visual interest and these buildings 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 lies.

2.65 Many proposals for the conversion of modern farm buildings are also received. In such cases particular regard will be had to other policies in the Local Development Framework 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 most are large and of utilitarian appearance.

2.66 The re-use and re-development of existing buildings in the countryside for business purposes is encouraged by national guidance. However, there may be limited circumstances in which converting a building in the countryside for business purposes is not possible, or is undesirable due to the volume of traffic that might be generated. Appropriate criteria can be used for judging proposals in those circumstances. Where residential use is proposed applicants should demonstrate that re-use or re-development for business purposes is not viable or would generate significantly more vehicle movements than a residential alternative.

2.67 The re-development of buildings can range from partial reconstruction to its complete replacement. Additional safeguards are needed to ensure that this does not result in an increased scale of development or the loss of buildings that should be retained. Re-development will not be permitted where a building 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).

2.68 Strict limits on re-use or re-development for retail purposes will be imposed given the need 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 farm diversification schemes and will be permitted provided their scale and range of goods is limited and there is no conflict with other policies in the Local Development Framework .

Issue 14

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

Option 15

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

Reasonable alternative?

2.69 None. The re-use or re-development of existing buildings in the countryside for business purposes is encouraged by national guidance, subject to appropriate criteria being included in plans or supplementary guidance.

Question 14

What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

Alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside

Statement 19

Corporate Plan Objective: to conserve and enhance local heritage.

2.70 To help conserve the character of the countryside, 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. 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. Advice on appropriate design principles is contained in the *Huntingdonshire Design Guide*.

Issue 15

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

Option 16

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

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Reasonable alternatives?

2.71 None. The protection of the character of the countryside is required by national guidance. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate means to conserve the intrinsic character of the countryside and restrict the intrusiveness of built development.

Question 15

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

3 Housing that meets local need

Statement 20

Community Strategy Outcome: a balanced housing market.

3.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* has highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. A particular issue that people raised is the affordability of housing, although this issue is covered in the emerging Core Strategy, it is recognised that the availability of housing is a key issue. The following chapter looks at how we can provide a balanced housing market across the district; it covers issues and options relating to the location of housing, housing for agricultural workers, retirement housing and nursing and care homes and accommodation for travellers, gypsies and travelling showpeople.

Mix of property sizes

Statement 21

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate mix of new housing.

Community Strategy Objective: ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs.

3.2 To ensure the private housing market meets the needs of as wide a section of the community as possible, it is important that new development proposals consider the needs of all household types. Both the Housing Needs Survey Update 2006 and housing completions 1999-2006 indicate a dearth in the provision of one and two bedroom properties suitable for smaller households.

3.3 Within major residential development proposals a range of accommodation sizes and types should be provided to meet the needs of different household types. Proposals for minor and infill residential schemes should consider the mix of properties in the vicinity and how the development proposal can contribute to developing a mixed and sustainable community. Potential developers should consider the changing demographic composition of the district's residents and refer to the most up to date assessments of housing need and supply when submitting an application in order to determine an appropriate mix of dwellings to meet the future needs of the community where development is proposed.

Issue 16

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

3.4 A Strategic Market Housing Assessment is being carried out for Cambridgeshire, this assessment will identify the long term need and demand for market and affordable housing. This assessment will be used to inform policies on the mix of housing required in new development.

3 Housing that meets local need

Option 17

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

Reasonable alternatives?

3.5 None. Achieving a good mix of housing is a requirement of national guidance therefore the above option represents the most appropriate means to ensure mixed, sustainable communities are created.

Housing for agricultural and related workers

Statement 22

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate mix of new housing.

Community Strategy Objectives: realise the benefits to economic, social and environmental well being from housing and employment development.

3.6 It will often be possible for workers in agricultural and land-based occupations to live in a town or village near to their business location. However, occasionally the nature of agricultural and some other rural businesses make it essential for someone to live on, or in close proximity to the business. The construction of new dwellings in the countryside to meet the housing needs of such workers requires special justification as it is important to avoid sporadic development in the countryside.

3.7 A criteria based policy could be used to consider where a new dwelling in the countryside is claimed as being necessary. A clear evidence of need would need to be provided.

Issue 17

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

Option 18

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

Reasonable alternatives?

3.8 None. Restricting development in the countryside is a requirement of national guidance. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate means to protect the countryside whilst supporting agricultural and related business.

Question 16

What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

Retirement housing

Statement 23

Corporate Plan Objective: to support opportunities for the vulnerable to live independently.

Community Strategy Objectives: ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs and support vulnerable people to lead active lives and live independently in their own homes.

The number of elderly people is expected to increase significantly in the period to 2021, and provision needs to be made to help meet their particular housing needs. This policy concerns housing for elderly people who wish to continue to live independently but with access to levels of support appropriate to their needs.

Schemes for retirement housing should be designed with flexibility in mind to enable people to remain for their lifetime. The entrance area, communal areas and at least some living units should be designed to wheelchair user standards. A communal lounge is desirable to facilitate social interaction.

Issue 18

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

It is important that such developments are located so that elderly households can have access to a suitable range of facilities. Residents of such developments are more likely to shop locally (and are less likely to travel by car) than other occupiers.

The option below facilitates the provision of high quality sustainable living environments that will meet residents needs as they become older and frailer.

Option 19

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

Reasonable alternatives?

The provision of housing for the elderly is encouraged in national guidance. The above option enables provision to be made for specialist retirement housing. However, in order to provide greater choice for potential residents and opportunities to maintain a relatively rural lifestyle, it may be appropriate to have retirement housing schemes in more rural locations and on a scale that would otherwise not be permitted for general housing. Locations will be assessed against the settlement hierarchy to ensure they have access to a range of essential services that

3 Housing that meets local need

limit car borne trips. It is however, acknowledged that the provision of communal facilities and support services can require development of a sufficient scale to be viable. To ensure that this is not abused larger proposals for rural locations will be assessed against criteria for sustainable development and design.

Question 17

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

Question 18

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

Nursing and care homes

Statement 24

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate mix of new housing.

Community Strategy Objective: ensure the availability of a range of decent housing to meet local needs.

Nursing and care homes entail the provision of specialist residential accommodation and care to people in need. This covers a range of uses such as care homes for the elderly, centres for those with severe disabilities and hostels for social rehabilitation purposes. The nature and mobility of occupiers varies greatly, so it is inappropriate to specify in any detail the level of access to facilities that may be required. Nonetheless, it is important that nursing and care homes are directed towards locations that are relatively sustainable, enabling access by non-car modes to relevant facilities and contributing to the best possible quality of life for their residents.

Issue 19

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

The option below facilitates the provision of specialist accommodation which meet the changing needs of residents in sustainable locations. To provide choice and opportunity for residents, it may be appropriate to develop nursing and care homes in locations and on a scale that would not otherwise be permitted 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 in addressing the care needs of residents. To ensure this is not abused, larger schemes in rural locations will be carefully assessed against criteria for sustainable development and design quality.

Option 20

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

Reasonable alternatives?

The provision of housing that meets specialist needs of specific groups such as the disabled, is encouraged in national guidance. The above option enables provision to be made for nursing and care homes. However, in order to provide greater choice for potential residents and opportunities to maintain a relatively rural lifestyle, it may be appropriate to have nursing and care homes in more rural locations on a scale that would not otherwise be permitted for general housing. Locations will be assessed against the settlement hierarchy to ensure they have access to a range of essential services in order to limit car borne trips. It is however, acknowledged that the provision of communal facilities and support services can require development of a sufficient scale to be viable. To ensure that this is not abused larger proposals for rural locations will be assessed against criteria for sustainable development and design.

Question 19

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 20

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

Accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople

Statement 25

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure an appropriate supply of new housing.

3.9 National guidance indicates that authorities should allocate sites to meet the identified accommodation needs of gypsies, as well as setting out appropriate criteria for making decisions about sites where allocations have not been made.

Issue 20

The need to ensure identified accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople are adequately met.

3 Housing that meets local need

3.10 It is recognised that many gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople prefer to buy and manage their own sites, often living in relatively small family groups. Private sector provision of sites will be encouraged and the need for allocations will be considered through preparation of a separate DPD. There is, however, still a role for provision of public sites and sites managed by registered social landlords to help meet the needs of those who cannot develop their own sites or prefer to rent, as well as transit sites and emergency stopping places.

3.11 Gypsies and travellers are defined in Circular 01/2006 wherein it is acknowledged that traditional patterns of working are changing, resulting in the community generally becoming more settled, although the ability to travel remains an integral part of gypsy and traveller culture. Organised groups of travelling showpeople are specifically excluded from the definition of 'gypsies' used by Circular 01/2006, but their way of life and accommodation requirements are similar. Hence it is appropriate to address their requirements within the same policy.

3.12 It is recognised that gypsy sites need to be situated in places which meet the current working patterns of gypsies and travellers and these may include countryside locations. However, issues of sustainability are important and decisions about the acceptability of particular sites need to take into account access to essential services and the impact on the settled community in the vicinity in order to promote coexistence between potential residents and the local community.

Option 21

Policies will set out criteria to ensure sites are provided which meet the identified accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

Reasonable alternatives?

3.13 None. The provision of sites to meet identified accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers is a requirement of national and strategic guidance. The above option represents the most appropriate means to meet the identified accommodation needs of this group. The need for allocations will be considered in the context of preparing a separate DPD.

Question 21

Do you think a criteria based approach will adequately meet the identified accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople? (please give reasons)

Question 22

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

4 Safe, active and inclusive communities

Statement 26

Community Strategy Outcomes:

- **Vibrant , confident and effective communities**
- **Good opportunities for learning**
- **Good culture and leisure opportunities**
- **Low crime**
- **Low fear of crime**

4.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* has highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. This research highlighted that although the majority of people in the district enjoy a high quality of life there are some communities which have more needs than others. It also highlighted that these are a few communities where crime is relatively high and has a detrimental effect on daily life. This chapter looks at how we can achieve safe, active and inclusive communities and identifies issues and options relating to accessibility, security, amenity and mixed use development.

Accessibility, adaptability and security

Statement 27

Corporate Plan Objectives: to work to ensure that communities are inclusive and to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

Community Strategy Objectives: to reduce anti-social behaviour and create a safe environment.

4.2 A key aspect of planning for sustainable development is ensuring that places are accessible and safe to use for all groups in society. Criteria are required to help guide and assess new development in relation to this. In part they require measures to minimise the risk of crime (and the fear of crime) for all users. 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 ethnic communities and be capable of adapting to their changing needs and circumstances.

4.3 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.

Issue 21

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

4 Safe, active and inclusive communities

Option 22

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

Reasonable alternative?

4.4 None. Local planning authorities are required to include policies on access, while national guidance indicated that community cohesion and the needs of all groups in society should be addressed. A criteria based policy provides the most appropriate way of indicating how these matters can be considered in the development process.

Amenity

Statement 28

Corporate Plan Objective: to protect the health of individuals.

Community Strategy Objective: to improve the quality of the built environment of our towns and villages.

4.5 The Council seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers. An important role of the planning system 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 upon amenity. Further guidance on how this can be achieved is contained in the *Huntingdonshire Design Guide*.

Issue 22

The need to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers.

Option 23

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.6 None. Safeguarding amenity is an important planning function, and one which needs clear criteria to articulate the key matters that need to be assessed.

Mixed development

Statement 29

Corporate Plan Objective: to ensure that people feel safe and have a sense of community.

Community Strategy Objective: to promote social inclusion.

4.7 Mixed development provides an essential element of the Government's aim to promote and create socially inclusive communities. It can be a mix of uses within an individual building (for example ground floor retail and upper floor residential), a series of different use functions grouped together in several buildings or as a predominant characteristic across an urban area, readily identifiable by a mix of functions.

4.8 A mix of uses within an area can help to create diverse and interesting places, reduce the need to travel between home, work, and services, and cut the risk of crime by ensuring that the area is populated at all times of the day. It can be achieved in various ways: by incorporating an appropriate mix of uses in the development of large sites, through the incremental redevelopment of small sites in ways which increase diversity, and by including a mix of compatible uses within individual buildings where suitable opportunities arise such as utilising vacant space above retail units. A compatible mix of uses will be dependent on the character and function of the location. However, within new neighbourhoods a compatible mix of uses may be residential (including live/work units), economic, retail, sport and leisure, education and health.

4.9 Live/work units are a particular form of mixed use development which combine residential and business uses in one property. They are attractive to people establishing or seeking to expand a business while working from home, and may be appropriate in a variety of locations: for example, as an element within large new residential and mixed-use developments, or within established mixed-use areas such as town centres. It is essential that the residential element of the live/work unit should complement the work aspect of the unit.

Issue 23

The need to foster sustainable, inclusive communities.

4.10 This option indicates the importance of pursuing mixed development where possible, and highlights particular opportunities that exist within Huntingdonshire.

Option 24

Policies will indicate that mixed development will be preferable in appropriate sustainable locations.

Reasonable alternatives?

4 Safe, active and inclusive communities

Huntingdonshire District Council | Development Control Policies Development Plan Document - Issues and Options

4.11 None. Mixed use development is promoted in national guidance as contributing to the creation of sustainable communities. The above option therefore represents the most appropriate way to promote sustainable and inclusive communities.

5 Healthy living

Statement 30

Community Strategy Outcome: A healthy population.

5.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* has highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. The provision of open space and recreational land is a key factor in the promotion of healthy, sustainable communities. Although the majority of residents in Huntingdonshire enjoy a good quality of life and life expectancy in the district is higher than the national average, it is recognised that this is not true across the district for all communities - there are health inequalities experienced by different communities in parts of Huntingdonshire. The following chapter looks in detail at the issues and options for the provision of open space and recreational land.

Open space and recreational land

Statement 31

Corporate Plan Objectives: to promote healthy lifestyle choices and to ensure good quality in parks and green spaces.

Community Strategy Objectives: promote healthy lifestyles, promote the contribution of the environment to health and support communities in protecting and valuing open spaces and historic sites.

5.2 Open space and recreational land can make an important contribution to the character and attractiveness of places and have an important role to play in improving quality of life, health and well-being and contributing towards sustainable development. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 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.

5.3 Many open spaces within Huntingdonshire's towns and villages make a significant contribution to their character and attractiveness. For the purpose of this document '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.

5.4 Equally, many such spaces play a vital role in providing opportunities for formal or informal recreation, as do parks, sports pitches and allotments located outside the built-up areas. It is important to safeguard 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.

Issue 24

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

5 Healthy living

Option 25

Policies will protect open space and recreation land.

Reasonable alternatives?

5.5 The approach taken to safeguarding land of recreational value is required by national and regional guidance. There are two approaches which could be used to identify open space and recreation land that should be protected. A criteria based policy could be to assess whether spaces should be protected or these spaces could be identified on the Proposals Map. Identifying these sites on the Proposals Map would give certainty about the areas covered by the policy. However, it would be difficult to do this in a sufficiently exhaustive and consistent manner across the whole district, given Huntingdonshire's size and the variety of spaces involved. As a result, spaces that 'missed' being designated would come under inappropriate pressure for development. The use of a criteria based approach avoids this risk, and means that the character of spaces will need to be given full and careful consideration if their development is proposed.

Question 23

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

6 Access to services and transport

Statement 32

Community Strategy Outcome: Easy and affordable access to services and facilities.

6.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* has highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. Issues that were raised include the lack of an adequate range of services in many rural areas, in particular public transport, congestion on the A14 and around market towns on local roads at peak times. The following chapter looks at how we can provide easy and affordable access to services and facilities; it covers issues and options relating to the retention of key local services and facilities, car and cycle parking, rights of way and other public routes.

Retention of key local services and facilities

Statement 33

Corporate Plan Objective: to make town centres and key settlements accessible.

Community Strategy Objective: improve access to and the provision of services in rural areas.

6.2 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.

6.3 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. This is due to the role that these centres play in providing a range of facilities for the surrounding area – a role which could be undermined should significant losses occur. It is important to use 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.

Issue 25

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

Option 26

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.

6 Access to services and transport

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Reasonable alternatives?

6.4 National guidance (PPS7) requires local planning authorities to have policies for supporting the retention of key village facilities. The policy 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.

Car and cycle parking

Statement 34

Corporate Plan Objectives: to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport and to make town centres and key settlements accessible.

Community Strategy Objective: improve travel routes for pedestrians, cyclists and those with mobility difficulties.

6.5 The availability of car and cycle parking can have a significant impact on people's choice of transport. Limiting car parking spaces in new developments, alongside encouraging the use of more sustainable transport modes, can help to reduce car use and associated fuel consumption, pollution and congestion. Car parking can occupy a great deal of space, affecting both the appearance and the density of new development. Local authorities should develop residential parking policies which taking account of expected levels of car ownership, the importance of good design and the need to use land efficiently. The one exception to the use of maximum standards is the provision of spaces for people with disabilities, for whom adequate parking in convenient locations is essential.

6.6 It is important to set minimum bicycle parking standards because the availability of a secure place to park cycles is a key determinant in whether people choose to use this method of transport.

6.7 Encouraging the shared use of car parking spaces, particularly in town centres, by taking advantage of activities where the peak demands do not coincide, can 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 standard for new residential development where this would result in public spaces not being available for their intended purpose.

Issue 26

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

Option 27

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

6.8 None. This approach is required by national and strategic guidance.

Question 24

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?

Rights of way and other public routes

Statement 35

Corporate Plan Objective: to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objective: improve travel routes for pedestrians, cyclists and those with mobility difficulties.

6.9 Rights of way and other routes with established public access such as permissive paths and the national cycle network are key assets, linking residential areas to services, facilities and places of employment, and providing many informal recreation opportunities. There is considerable scope for their use to increase. A 10 year vision for the public path network in the county is set out in the Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan. Within Huntingdonshire, 72% of all trips are fewer than five miles in length, and 50% fewer than two miles in length, suggesting that car-borne trips could be reduced if the quality and convenience of routes is improved, particularly in conjunction with improvements to associated facilities such as secure cycle parking. In addition, the growing interest in healthier lifestyles and outdoor pursuits places increasing demands upon the existing network, especially in popular parts of the countryside.

It is important to prevent any adverse impact upon the existing rights of way network, or upon other routes with established public access, unless very good reasons exist for closure or diversion and suitable alternative routes are provided where feasible. Equally, opportunities should be taken to link, extend or improve the quality of footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes where possible.

Issue 27

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

Option 28

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

Reasonable alternatives?

6 Access to services and transport

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None. The safeguarding and creation of convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists is required by national and strategic guidance.

7 A strong, diverse economy

Statement 36

Community Strategy Outcomes:

- **A sustainable, buoyant and balanced local economy**
- **Improved and sustainable infrastructure for communities**

7.1 Detailed research and consultation in the preparation of *Growing Success* and *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* has highlighted a number of issues which were raised by people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. The district is generally a prosperous area with high levels of economic growth. However, the Council recognises that this general picture does not apply to all individuals and all communities. Rural areas in particular, often rely on employment opportunities characterised by lower wage opportunities. A particular issue that the district faces is people commuting out of the district to work. The following chapter looks at how we can help promote a sustainable, buoyant and balanced local economy and improved and sustainable infrastructure for communities. It covers issues and options relating to the location of office, industrial and warehouse development, redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites, the location of tourist facilities, farm diversification, town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontage, the location of retail and leisure development and telecommunications.

Location of office development

Statement 37

Corporate Plan Objectives: to encourage the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents, to support town centres to be economically viable and vibrant, to promote development opportunities in and around the market towns and to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objectives: develop and promote the market towns and ensure an appropriate provision of land for business.

7.2 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 relatively good access by public transport. National guidance suggests that such proposals are most appropriately 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. Where a suitable town centre site is not available, policies could steer office proposals to the next most accessible locations.

7.3 Small office schemes do not need to follow the sequential approach, as it is recognised that modest employment-generating uses can help to provide jobs in rural areas, 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.

7 A strong, diverse economy

Issue 28

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

Option 29

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

Reasonable alternatives?

7.4 The requirement to adopt a sequential approach to locating office developments is required by national guidance (PPS6).

7.5 A threshold needs to be set to assess what constitutes a large office development to which the sequential test applies. This could be 1ha or 1000m², in line with the DCLG definition for major development, or a lower threshold of 0.5ha or 500m² which may be more appropriate in the local context given the need to steer high-density forms of employment towards the most sustainable locations.

Question 25

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

Location of industrial and warehouse development

Statement 38

Corporate Plan Objectives: to encourage a strong business community which supports new enterprise, to encourage the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents and to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objective: ensure an appropriate provision of land for business.

7.6 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.

7.7 As with office developments, a more flexible approach is appropriate in relation to small industrial and warehouse schemes, which can also help to provide 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.

Issue 29

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

Option 30

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

7.8 None. National and strategic guidance indicates the importance of focusing such schemes on urban areas and previously-developed sites, and taking account of access by non-car modes

7.9 A threshold needs to be set to assess what constitutes large scale industrial and warehouse development. This could be 1ha or 1000m², in line with the DCLG definition of major development but this would limit it to only the very large proposals. A more local threshold of 0.5ha or 500m² may be more appropriate as developments above this threshold are more likely to harm the character of rural areas.

Question 26

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

Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites

Statement 39

Corporate Plan Objectives: to encourage a strong business community which supports new enterprise, to encourage the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents and to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objectives: maintain business confidence to increase investment which creates opportunities to work locally and reduces out commuting and develop further opportunities for local people to improve or gain work related skills.

7.10 Government 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

7 A strong, diverse economy

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.

7.11 It is important to balance the Government's emphasis 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. The Council would like to retain a compatible mix of uses and keep a balance between residential, employment and other uses ensuring that sustainable communities are retained by putting reasonable checks in place to ensure that industrial and commercial sites are not lost prematurely.

Issue 30

The need to ensure employment sites are not lost prematurely.

Option 31

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

Reasonable alternatives?

7.12 No restrictions could be placed on the re-use of industrial and commercial land for other purposes, but this could be harmful to local firms and employment opportunities, increase the pressure for development outside urban areas, and increase the need to travel to work.

Question 27

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

7.13 A size threshold would need to be included in policies to set out which sites will be protected. A 1ha or 1,000m² threshold, in line with the DCLG definition of major development, could be used. However a lower threshold of 0.5ha or 500m² would increase the extent to which the need for employment sites' retention could be checked prior to their conversion to other uses.

Question 28

What size threshold should we use for protecting employment sites?

Location of tourist facilities

Statement 40

Corporate Plan Objective: to support more opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objectives: develop the tourist product and develop existing and new opportunities for cultural and leisure activities.

7.14 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, and in particular to conserve the countryside and promote schemes in locations accessible by non-car modes. Directing most tourist-related development to the Market Towns and Key Service Centres will help to achieve these ends.

7.15 Policies should apply both to accommodation for visitors and to attractions and should recognise that benefits can accrue from allowing existing facilities to expand, or through the conversion or re-development 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 if associated with farm diversification, strategic green space enhancement projects or waterways (these last two categories offering particular scope for broadening visits to Huntingdonshire).

Issue 31

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

Option 32

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

7.16 None in relation to the overall approach to locating tourist facilities in the most sustainable locations, limiting the impact on the countryside and promoting accessibility by non-car modes as this is required by national and strategic guidance.

7.17 A threshold needs to be set to assess what constitutes major and minor tourists facilities. This could be 1ha or 1000m², in line with the DCLG definition of major development but this would limit it to only the very large proposals. A more local threshold of 0.5ha or 500m² may be more appropriate as developments above this threshold are more likely to harm the character of rural areas.

7 A strong, diverse economy

Question 29

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

Farm diversification

Statement 41

Community Strategy Objective: develop the rural economy, especially the Ramsey area.

7.18 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 providing 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.

7.19 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.

Issue 32

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

Option 33

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

7.20 Any building on previously undeveloped land in association with farm diversification schemes could be prohibited in order to maximise protecting of the countryside from further development. However, this would place a more stringent limitation on the ability of farm businesses to diversify, which in itself could harm the character of the countryside as healthy farm businesses are necessary if farmers are to be able to maintain their holdings.

Question 30

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

Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages

Statement 42

Corporate Plan Objectives: to support town centres to be economically viable and vibrant and to promote development opportunities in and around the market towns.

Community Strategy Objective: develop and promote the market towns.

7.21 Huntingdonshire's town centres perform a variety of functions. As well as providing a wide range of shops and services, they are centres of employment, entertainment and tourism, and a focus for public transport routes. They also offer opportunities for providing housing in locations where the need to travel is minimised. Maintaining the vitality and viability of these centres is important if these functions are to be retained and enhanced.

7.22 Defining the town centres and primary shopping areas 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.

7.23 A concentration of non-retail uses in primary frontages can have an adverse impact upon their appearance and role as core shopping areas. However, policies can 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.

Issue 33

The need to retain uses within primary shopping areas.

Option 34

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.

Reasonable alternatives?

7 A strong, diverse economy

7.24 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.

7.25 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.

Question 31

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

Location of retail and leisure development

Statement 43

Corporate Plan Objectives: to support town centres to be economically viable and vibrant, to make town centres and key settlements accessible and to support opportunities for residents to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Community Strategy Objective: develop and promote the market towns.

7.26 Directing large retail and leisure developments to the town centres helps to underpin their vitality and viability and limits the need to travel by car. It also means that services and facilities are accessible to those who do not have access to private transport. 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. Proposals should not have an adverse impact upon town centre facilities as it is important to safeguard against harm to the centres of Huntingdonshire's market towns.

7.27 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 will in some cases provide for neighbourhood or village shopping needs. Nevertheless, it is still important to locate these facilities where the best opportunities exist to reach them by non-car modes.

Issue 34

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

Option 35

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

Reasonable alternatives?

7.28 None. This approach is required by national and strategic guidance.

Telecommunications

Statement 44

Corporate Plan Objective: to work to ensure that communities are inclusive.

Community Strategy Objective: improve access to and the provision of services in rural areas.

7.29 Modern telecommunications are an important part of life for local communities and make a significant contribution to the national economy. They have a specific role in promoting sustainable communities, by helping to counteract the effects of relative remoteness in rural areas, and limiting the need to travel for work, information/learning and shopping. It is government policy to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. Policy should reflect this advice by setting out appropriate criteria to guide the location and design of necessary development.

7.30 As telecommunications technology changes rapidly, it is likely that some equipment will become redundant over time. Hence it is reasonable to impose conditions requiring its removal should this occur, in order to prevent unnecessary environmental intrusion (especially where masts and associated equipment are situated in the open countryside).

Issue 35

The need to ensure the environmental impact of telecommunications equipment is minimised.

Option 36

A criteria based policy will ensure that impact of telecommunications development is minimised and that redundant equipment is removed.

Reasonable alternatives?

7.31 None. This approach is required by national guidance.

8 Glossary

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8 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 Framework

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.

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.

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.

The Core Strategy

This document which is a *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.

Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. Under the new system 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 inquiry into the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* or *Draft Statement of Community Involvement*, 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

This is 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 the 'Preferred Options' development documents.

Key Workers

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers.

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.

8 Glossary

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.

Major development

The creation of 10 or more dwellings within 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.

ODPM - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Government department responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

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 framework or defined limits 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 Greenspace

These are areas of greenspace that serve a wider population than just the District, for example Paxton Pits, The Great Fen and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

8 Glossary

Submission

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* (or the draft *Statement of Community Involvement*) 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 held e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

Tests of Soundness

These are tests to ensure that the document produced is 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).

Use Class Orders

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use 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.

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdonshire District Council

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1 Introduction

What is the AAP

1.1 National planning guidance recommends Area Action Plans be produced for areas where significant levels of change or conservation are needed. Huntingdonshire District Council has therefore decided to prepare an Area Action Plan for Huntingdon West which will provide a framework for development in the short, medium and long term. It is needed because significant land-use changes are likely to come forward, including mixed-use redevelopment of the Ermine Street/ George Street area, changes to the road system as a result of the A14 improvements, and the need to guide development of the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus including an extension to the Country Park.

1.2 The Area Action Plan, once adopted, will form part of the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework and will be in conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy. It will also need to be consistent with the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy which is also in production.

What will the AAP include

1.3 The Area Action Plan will include site specific allocations and general policies for the area. It will:

- consider land uses
- consider the form of development
- set out specific standards which will be applied to the area.

1.4 The Area Action Plan will need to take into account:

- existing and surrounding uses
- the impact of proposals on other parts of the town
- transport links
- impact on landscape, amenity and the existing built environment, including listed buildings and the conservation area.

1.5 Further detail on the proposals included in the Area Action Plan will be provided in the form of a master plan.

Purpose

1.6 This Issues and Options document is the first formal stage in the production of the Area Action Plan. Its purpose is to give the opportunity to comment on the key issues identified and on the options identified to address these issues. It also gives the opportunity to raise additional issues and to put forward alternative options. The representations made will be considered and used to help produce the Preferred Options paper which will set out the Council's favoured approach to development of the area.

Next Steps

1.7 The Area Action Plan will go through a number of stages in its production. The first of these is this Issues and Options document. It will be followed by:

- Preferred Options Consultation (December 2007)
- Draft Plan Submission to the Secretary of State (September 2008)

1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

- Consultation on the Submission Plan (September 2008)
- Consultation on site allocation objections put forward by objectors
- Independent examination - Hearing (February 2009)
- Adoption (December 2009)

How to get involved

1.8 It is important that we get your views on how Huntingdon West should be developed. Copies of this document have been sent to key stakeholders and are available at Libraries and Access Points across the District and at the District Council Offices at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. An interactive version of the document is also available on the Council's website.

1.9 You can comment on the document online via our interactive version at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> or email your comments to us at ldf@huntsdc.gov.uk or write to us at the following address:

Planning Division
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

2 Local and Policy Context

Area Covered & Description

2.1 The site covered by the Area Action Plan is illustrated on maps 2.1 and 2.2. It comprises approximately 247 hectares of land encompassing the Ermine Street/ George Street area, Huntingdon railway station, Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.

2.2 The Ermine Street/ George Street area is one where there is potential for major redevelopment. It is located immediately west of the town centre and east of the railway line. The site is currently in mixed use including factories, offices, car parking and housing.

2.3 The remainder of the site lies to the west of the town. It is bounded by the A14 to the north and west, and Huntingdon/Brampton Road to the south. This section comprises the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus, that is, the Fire Service HQ, Cambridgeshire Constabulary HQ, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke School and Hinchingsbrooke House. Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Land to the south west is also included within the Area Action Plan as is Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and adjacent housing and Huntingdon railway station.

2.4 Map 2.1 identifies potential areas of change within Huntingdon West. Map 2.3 shows the 1:100 year floodplain and County Wildlife Sites within this area.

2.5 The local landscape character areas comprise:

- the Ouse Landscape⁽ⁱ⁾ underlying the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus in the western section of the area
- Central Claylands⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ underlying the Ermine Street/ George Street area on the eastern boundary of the Area Action Plan.

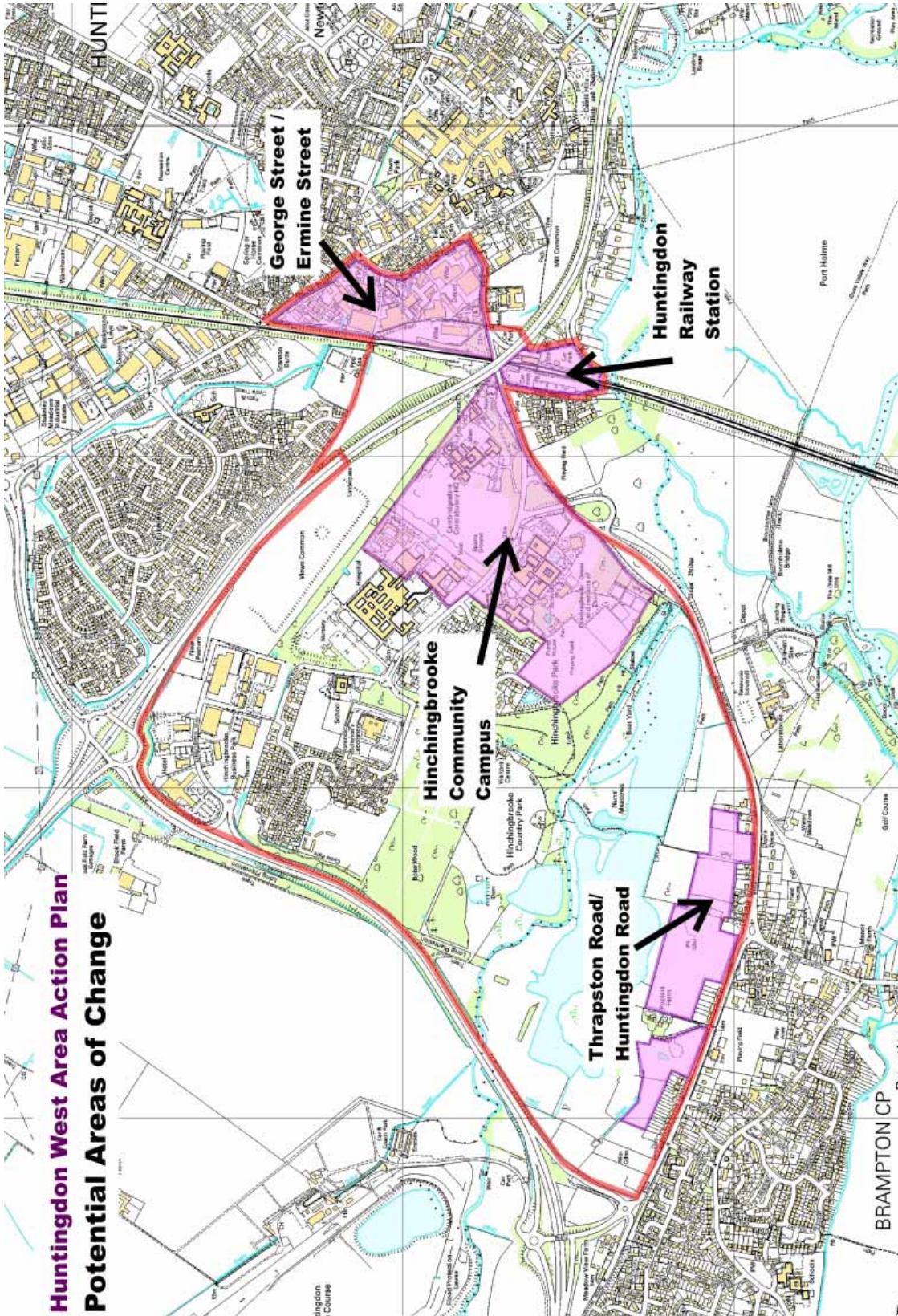
2.6 Understanding the landscape is important to formulating policies that are sensitive to, and protective of, their locality. These landscapes influence the architecture and wildlife.

i as defined in the Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2006

ii as defined in the Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2006

2 Local and Policy Context

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options



Map 2.1 Potential areas of change

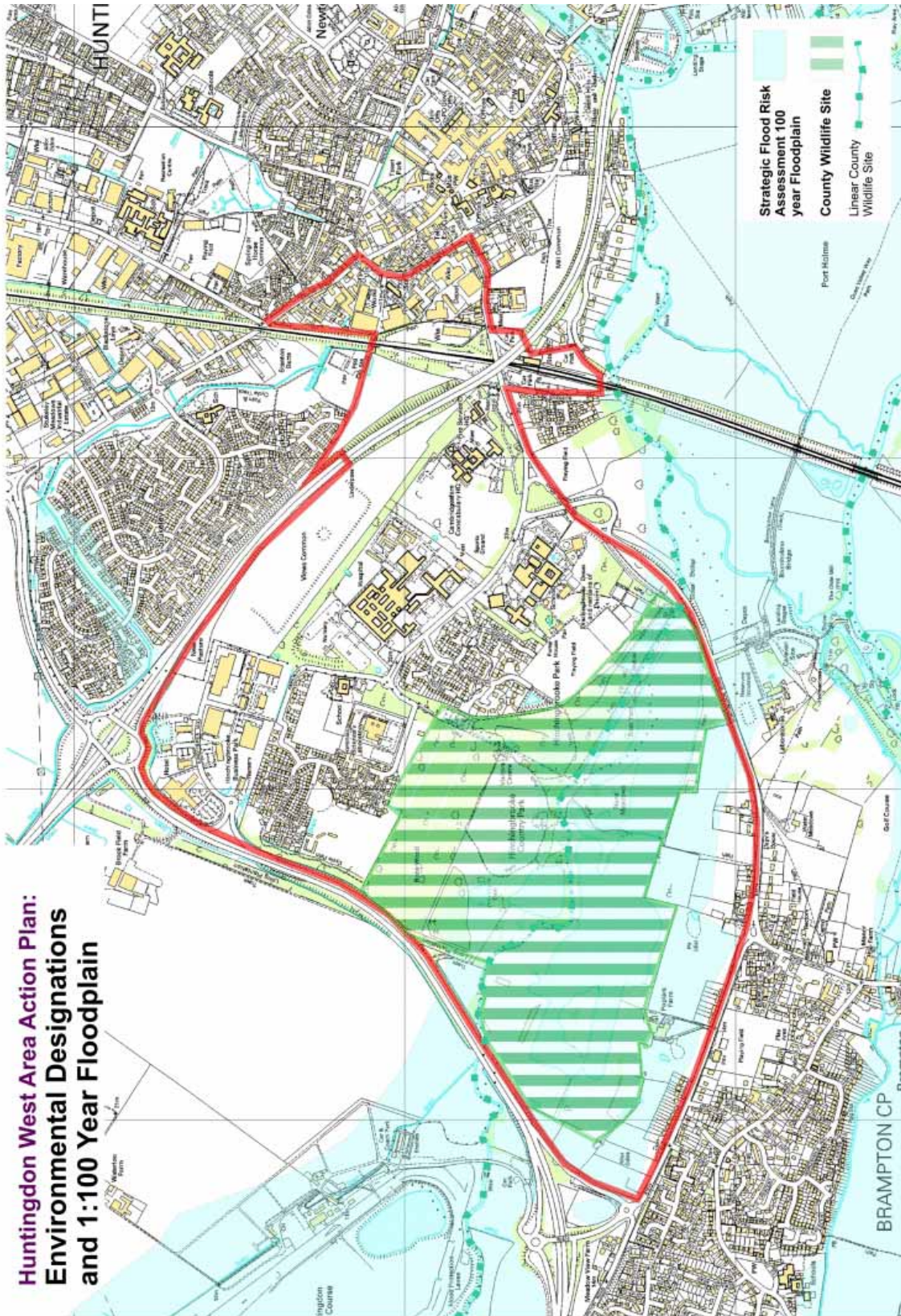


Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Map 2.2 Huntingdon West aerial photo

2 Local and Policy Context

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options



Map 2.3 Environmental designations

Why does Huntingdon West need an Area Action Plan

2.7 There are a number of reasons why Huntingdon West requires an Area Action Plan. Huntingdon's existing town centre has reached capacity and to maintain Huntingdon town centres role as a principal retail and employment centre and enable the town's economy to grow, this needs to expand. Within Huntingdon West there are two sites which are close to the town centre which, following government guidance, are the next sequentially preferential locations for town centre uses.

2.8 The Huntingdon West area is in a very sustainable location. It is close to the town centre, railway station and public transport routes and within it there are a number of facilities including the hospital and Hinchingsbrooke School. It is therefore a suitable location for additional growth to be focused and for additional facilities to be provided.

2.9 Congestion on the Huntingdon ring road is a significant problem and an Area Action Plan will help to address this issue in the context of additional development in Huntingdon West. In addition to this the potential removal of the viaduct between Huntingdon and Godmanchester as part of the proposed A14 improvements may provide the opportunity for re-configuration of the road system in Huntingdon West.

2.10 The population of Huntingdon is growing and therefore there is an increasing need for recreational space. Within Huntingdon West there are opportunities to increase the amount and quality of recreational space at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and at Views Common.

Question 1

Do you agree that the area defined on map 2.1 is the correct area for the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan to cover?



3 Vision and Objectives

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

3 Vision and Objectives

Draft Vision

3.1 The draft vision for the Area Action Plan draws on the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy*, the Corporate Plan '*Growing Success*' and the Government's vision for sustainable development in *Securing the Future, delivering the UK's Sustainable Development Strategy*.

3.2 The creation of cleaner, safer, greener and healthier communities is an important part of the sustainable development agenda. The Community Strategy's vision for Huntingdonshire is to be a 'place where future generations have a balanced and good quality of life'. To support this vision *Growing Success* sets out that the Council will strive to: make the most of opportunities that come from growth by promoting the development of sustainable communities, enable people to realise their full potential and have access to suitable jobs, homes and services, work towards a balance between social, economic and environmental needs and maintain 'excellent' standards.

3.3 The following draft vision has been produced as a starting point. We are seeking your views on whether this is the right vision for the area.

Vision Statement

Option 1

Huntingdon West will create a vibrant new quarter for the town by rejuvenating this part of the town which will contribute towards the character of Huntingdon. It will provide an attractive green gateway into the town and will be characterised by high quality greenspace with enhancement of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Views Common.

The Ermine Street/ George Street and Railway Station area will be transformed into a thriving area offering modern office development, a range of high quality residential developments, a retail centre which will complement the existing town centre and enhance the vitality and viability of Huntingdon, and a high quality transport hub.

The Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus could become a hub for educational and other community institutional uses and associated employment development.

The Thrapston/ Huntingdon Road area in Brampton could be a location for high quality development which will be sensitive to the location and will help maintain the separation between Huntingdon and Brampton.

Huntingdon West will be an exemplar for sustainable living where development will link living, working and leisure and will be built to a high standard with excellent pedestrian, cycle and public transport links to the surrounding area.

Question 2

Is this the right vision for Huntingdon West?

Question 3

If not, what do you think the vision should be?

Draft Objectives

3.4 To realise the vision a set of objectives need to be developed. The following draft objectives draw on the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy, the Corporate Plan, the Community Strategy and on national planning objectives.

Option 2

Sustainability

Objective 1 - To ensure development is sustainable

Objective 2 - To maximise the re-use of previously developed land

Objective 3 - To protect, preserve and enhance wildlife and biodiversity

Function

Objective 4 - To create an appropriate mix of uses

Objective 5 - To ensure that development complements the existing town centre and strengthens its vitality and viability

Objective 6 - To enhance opportunities for recreation

Local Distinctiveness

Objective 7 - To create an attractive new gateway into the town

Objective 8 - To ensure a green gap is retained between Huntingdon and Brampton

Objective 9 - To create a high quality built environment

Objective 10 - To protect and enhance the landscape

Objective 11 - To retain the setting of Hinchbrooke House

Accessibility

Objective 12 - To maximise walking, cycling and use of public transport

Objective 13 - To improve links with the surrounding area

Implementation

Objective 14 - To determine appropriate phasing for development

Objective 15 - To identify funding requirements

Objective 16 - To secure appropriate infrastructure

Reasonable alternatives?

3.5 No other reasonable alternatives have been identified as these objectives are essential to ensure development of the area is consistent with national and strategic objectives.

3 Vision and Objectives

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Question 4

Do you agree that these objectives are appropriate and all relevant issues are addressed?



4 Key Issues and Options

4.1 Huntingdonshire faces a number of issues in the period up to 2021. The District needs to meet the targets set out in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and national planning policy. Huntingdon West offers opportunity to contribute towards the achievement of these. The main issues which have been identified are:

Issue 1

How can the Area Action Plan contribute towards achieving sustainable development and re-using previously developed land?

4.2 The Area Action Plan needs to consider the principles of sustainable development⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ as outlined in the Government's *Securing the Future, delivering UK sustainable development strategy*.

Issue 2

How can the Area Action Plan contribute towards providing housing for all members of the community?

4.3 The draft RSS requires Huntingdonshire to provide 11,200 homes between 2001 and 2021. Huntingdon and the neighbouring market towns of St Neots and St Ives are part of the Cambridge Sub-Region defined in draft RSS14 and the Structure Plan. The Cambridge Sub-Region included Cambridge and the ring of market towns which surround it.

4.4 The provision of affordable housing is a priority set out in the Council's Housing Strategy 2006-11. Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, such as key worker housing. In 2006 an update to the Huntingdonshire Housing Needs Assessment (2002) highlighted a need for an additional 585 affordable units per annum in the District to address the current shortfall, 4 of which should be for Key Worker households. The emerging Core Strategy will include a requirement for affordable housing which will be applied in Huntingdon West. A Market Housing Assessment is being prepared for the Cambridge Sub-Region which will estimate housing need and demand in terms of affordable and market housing, determined how the distribution of need and demand varies across the Sub-Region and consider future demographic trends and identify the accommodation requirements of specific groups. The Market Housing Assessment is expected to be completed in spring/ summer 2007.

4.5 Higher densities where appropriate can assist the provision of sustainable development as they promote sustainable travel patterns and help make local services viable. Developing at higher densities also ensures more efficient use of land.

Issue 3

How can the Area Action Plan contribute to the provision of employment opportunities?

iii World Commission on Environment & Development, 1987

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

4.6 The Employment Land Review (HDC, 2007) identified a net take-up of just over 8 hectares of new employment land per annum in the District over the five years from 2002 and identified 32 hectares of new and deliverable employment land available for development. To support economic growth it is important that sufficient land is brought forward in suitable locations to accommodate this growth. Huntingdon West includes sites which are in close proximity to the town centre and the railway station which could be suitable to meet some of the District's employment land needed to 2021 and could offer a unique quality environment that is not available in other sites.

Issue 4

How can the Area Action Plan contribute to future shopping opportunities in the town?

4.7 In 2006 an update to the Huntingdonshire Retail Assessment (HDC, 2005) identified an aspirational target of 20,000 sq.m additional comparison shopping floorspace across the District by 2021; this is the equivalent of 5.1 Huntingdon Sainsburys' or 14.3 Huntingdon Waitrose's. It suggests that around 12,000 sq.m of this should be in Huntingdon; this is the equivalent of 3 Sainsburys' or 8.6 Waitrose's. Huntingdon West provides an opportunity to accommodate some of this additional floorspace.

4.8 In terms of convenience shopping the assessment identified a modest requirement of around 3,900 sq.m of additional floorspace in the latter part of the plan period, this is equivalent to 1 Huntingdon Sainsburys.

Issue 5

How can the Area Action Plan address the reconfiguration of the road system to meet the needs of Huntingdon West and the wider town?

4.9 There are two important issues to consider in relation to the road system. The first is the rerouting of the A14 between Ellington and Fen Drayton. Although this has not yet been finalised, the viaduct which currently runs over Views Common and the Railway Station may be removed if the decision is taken to create a three lane A14 south of Huntingdon. If this viaduct is removed the existing A14 could become a local road between Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and Cambridgeshire Constabulary Headquarters to join the local road network at Brampton Road.

4.10 The second is the opportunity to create a link road in the Ermine Street/ George Street area to relieve congestion on the ring road. This new link road is proposed in the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy as part of the proposed town centre and ring road measures. The Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy is included in appendix 8d of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006). The potential for the Ermine Street/ George Street link road is not dependent upon the removal of the viaduct between Huntingdon and Godmanchester and could go ahead even if this does not take place.

4.11 The proposed new road layout is shown on map 4.1.

Issue 6

What additional infrastructure is needed in Huntingdon West?

4.12 It is important that development is supported by adequate infrastructure. Development in Huntingdon West should not put added pressure on existing infrastructure. Therefore, the provision of additional infrastructure will be required in line with the Council's forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Contributions.

Issue 7

How can the Area Action Plan help address the shortfall of car parking in Huntingdon?

4.13 Car parking is a key issue in Huntingdon. A report undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council by consultants identified an immediate need for short-term parking provision and in the long term the need for long-stay charging. The study found that at peak time on and off street parking is at effective capacity and the loss of parking at Pathfinder House and that associated with development at Princes Street will place an immediate short-term problem on the available public parking. To address these issues the study recommended that 165 spaces be provided within the ring road and that outside the ring road further provision should be investigated at Bridge Place and/ or Brampton Road north of Huntingdon Railway Station. In addition to this west of the town centre was seen as a possible area for short-term parking, subject to landowner negotiations, and also as part of a longer term strategy for parking in this area. The Area Action Plan needs to consider allocation of public car parks within Huntingdon West. In addition to the shortage of car parking for the town centre, there are also issues with the amount of parking at Huntingdon Railway Station being inadequate and with rail users parking in spaces provided for the town centre; this issue also needs to be addressed through the Area Action Plan.

Issue 8

How does the Area Action Plan ensure the various elements of the plan link together?

4.14 The Area Action Plan is split into various geographical and topic based sections and options are provided for development within each of these. However, when considering these options the balance of development in the whole area needs to be considered to ensure that development is complementary throughout the whole area. Therefore each section should not be considered in isolation.

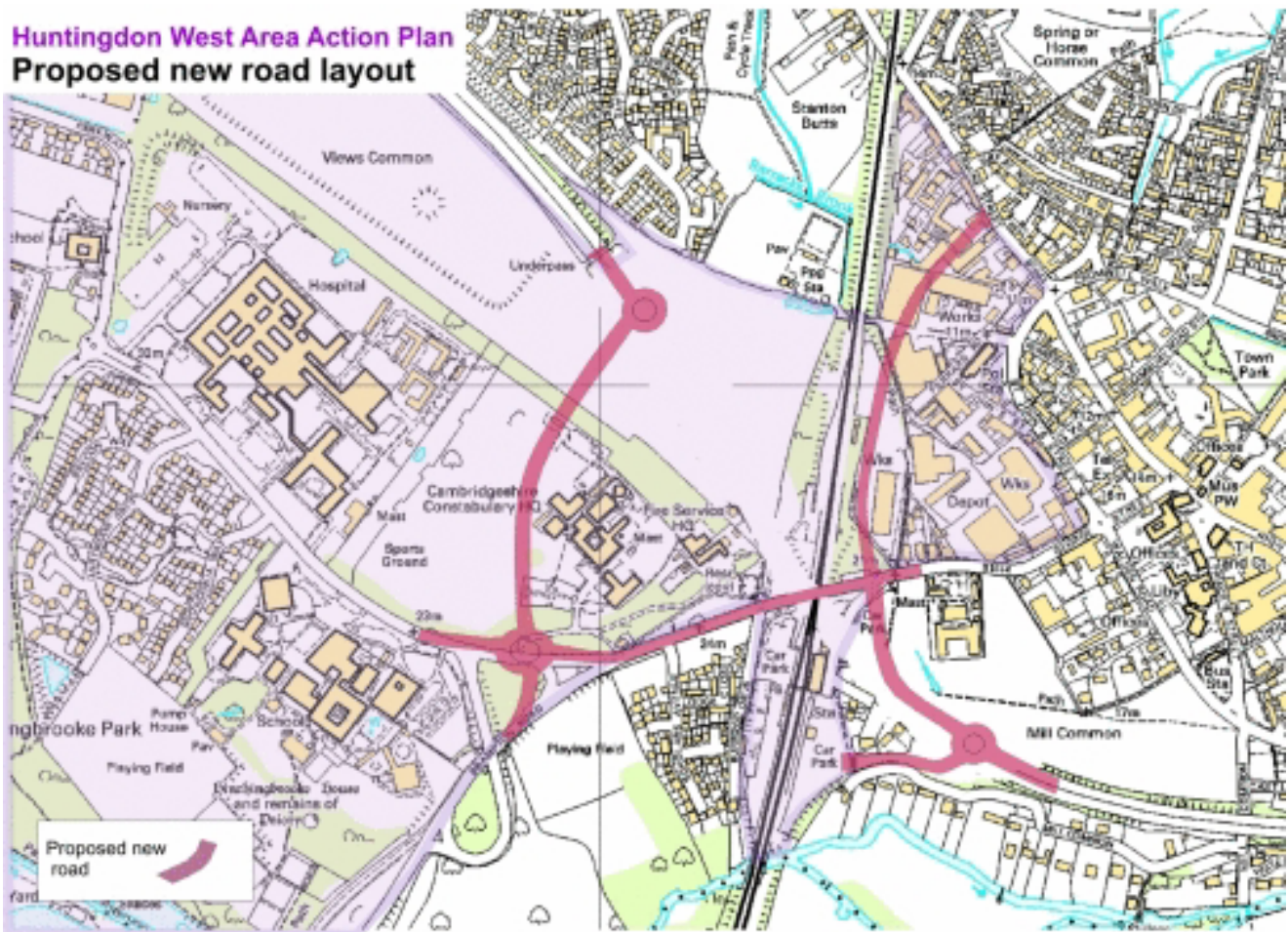
Question 5

Do you agree that these are the key issues which the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan needs to consider?

4.15 The following sections of the Area Action Plan look at these issues in more detail and address Area Action Plan wide uses as well as site-specific issues.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options



Map 4.1 Road layout

Sustainable Development

Energy

4.16 A key factor in achieving sustainable development is a reduction in use of energy and in use of energy from non-renewable energy sources. The emerging Core Strategy will set out a requirement for the percentage of energy to be provided by on-site renewable energy sources. In addition to this requirement, within Huntingdon West there are also opportunities to reduce further the carbon footprint of development. This could include the use of a decentralised energy supply such as combined heat and power or district heating schemes. Combined heat and power re-uses by products that are normally wasted into the atmosphere and generates heat and power simultaneously and can achieve a 35% reduction in energy use. Combined heat and power plants can be fuelled using a variety of fuels including gas, biomass, coppice wood and forestry waste.

Option 3

In addition to renewable energy requirements set out in the Core Strategy, the Area Action Plan will strongly support, and if possible, require the provision of decentralised energy supplies to meet the energy needs of a significant proportion of new developments.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.17 No reasonable alternatives have been identified as the above option is consistent with national and regional policy and guidance.

Question 6

Do you agree the above option is appropriate?

4.18 In addition to the use of decentralised heating systems it is also important that new developments are designed and constructed to maximise sustainability of development. This can be done through a number of measures including:

- The incorporation of energy efficient devices, energy efficient materials and on-site renewable energy sources, such as solar panels
- The incorporation of water efficiency measures
- The use of locally sourced materials and materials with low embodied energy in construction
- The incorporation of sustainable drainage or rainwater holding facilities
- The incorporation of household recycling and composting facilities
- Layouts which maximise the benefits of solar gain

4.19 In 2006 the Government launched The Code for Sustainable Homes. This is a voluntary code which sets a national standard for sustainable construction and design for new homes. Using the code homes are given a star rating to rate the overall sustainability of the home. Within Huntingdon West it is important that the achievement of the standards within this code are encouraged to ensure that development is sustainable.

Option 4

Within Huntingdon West compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes will be encouraged.

Reasonable alternatives?

4.20 No reasonable alternatives have been identified as the above option is consistent with national and regional policy and guidance.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Question 7

Do you agree with the above option?

4.21 Achievement of the highest star rating within the Code for Sustainable Homes requires a zero carbon development. This means that there are zero net emissions of carbon dioxide from all energy use in the home.

Question 8

Do you think the Area Action Plan should allocate a site for a zero carbon development?

Movement

4.22 The Area Action Plan needs to consider how people and goods move within Huntingdon West and between this area and other parts of Huntingdon. Policies in the Area Action Plan should promote sustainable forms of travel within Huntingdon West and create good links with surrounding areas.

Reconfiguration of the Road Network

4.23 As discussed in the key issues section there is an opportunity within the Ermine Street/ George Street area to create a new link road to help relieve congestion on the ring road and to allow better circulation around the town. At the moment the way the Huntingdon ring road operates creates unnecessary vehicle movements for traffic due to the need to navigate the one way system. A link road between Ermine Street and George Street would enable traffic to flow in the opposite direction to the ring road and would therefore provide a link between the northern entry to the town and the western area of Huntingdon. This would reduce the amount of traffic travelling around the ring road. The new link road could run from George Street, opposite the station entrance, to Ermine Street adjacent to the Travis Perkins site, see map 4.1. At this point Ermine Street is narrow with a built-up frontage and the junction width and traffic generated would need to be taken into account.

Question 9

Do you agree that a new link road is essential for redevelopment of the Ermine Street/ George Street site?

4.24 Congestion is also a significant problem along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road particularly at peak times of day, the majority of traffic is generated by people working at or visiting the Hospital or picking children up from Hinchingsbrooke School. If the rerouting of the A14 results in the removal of the viaduct and the reconfiguration of the road network as shown on map 4.1 then there may be opportunities to improve the flow of traffic along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road.

Question 10

Could the reconfiguration of the road network create an opportunity for improvements to traffic flows along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road? If yes how could this be done?

Public Transport

4.25 There are a number of public transport routes which serve Huntingdon West although in some cases, such as the bus service to the Hinchbrooke Business Park, these are limited to certain times of the day.

Question 11

Should provision of public transport in Huntingdon West be extended and if so how would you like it to change?

4.26 As part of the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy a new bus/rail interchange is being created at Huntingdon Railway Station. This interchange will allow buses to enter the station and to turn around and wait in a bus only turning area. Buses will still be unable to turn left out of the station due to the angle of the exit onto Brampton Road but a new stairway is being created to provide access between the railway station and a bus lay-by on Brampton Road. The Area Action Plan needs to consider how proposals in Huntingdon West could help improve access to the station for public transport services, for example the creation of the link road between Ermine Street and George Street could enable a roundabout to be built with direct access to the railway station. A link road between Ermine Street and George Street would also improve bus links between the north of the town and railway station.

Question 12

How could we better integrate the railway station with other public transport services?

4.27 As part of the programme of public transport improvements in the County a high quality public transport corridor is being created between Huntingdon and Cambridge. The Guided Bus is proposed in the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006) and was one of the main recommendations coming out of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study. Between Cambridge and St Ives a guideway will be built along the disused railway line between Cambridge and St Ives and on-road bus priority measures will be introduced between St Ives and Huntingdon. Construction of the Guided Bus has started and it is scheduled to open early in 2009. As part of the bus priority measures a contra-flow bus lane is currently being created along Walden Road to allow buses travelling along George Street to turn right along Walden Road to the bus station. This will mean buses no longer have to go all the way around the ring road and should save approximately 10 minutes journey time.

Question 13

How should the bus priority measures serving the Guided Bus reflect the proposals contained in the Area Action Plan?

Walking and Cycling

4.28 The Area Action Plan should maintain existing pedestrian and cycling links and improve pedestrian and cycling links within the Area Action Plan area and between this area, the town centre and surrounding areas. New walking/ cycling routes are a key concept of the Huntingdon Vision (2006). Map 4.2 illustrates a number of areas where improvements to the walking and cycling network could be made including:

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- Between Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and the rest of the Hinchingsbrooke development
- Between Brampton and Huntingdon via an extension to the Country Park
- Between Ermine Street/ George Street area and the town centre and links to Stukeley Meadows and Views Common
- Between Brampton and Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus/ Hinchingsbrooke Business Park
- Between residential development adjacent to Hinchingsbrooke Business Park and the town centre
- Between Hinchingsbrooke Campus and the town centre

Option 5

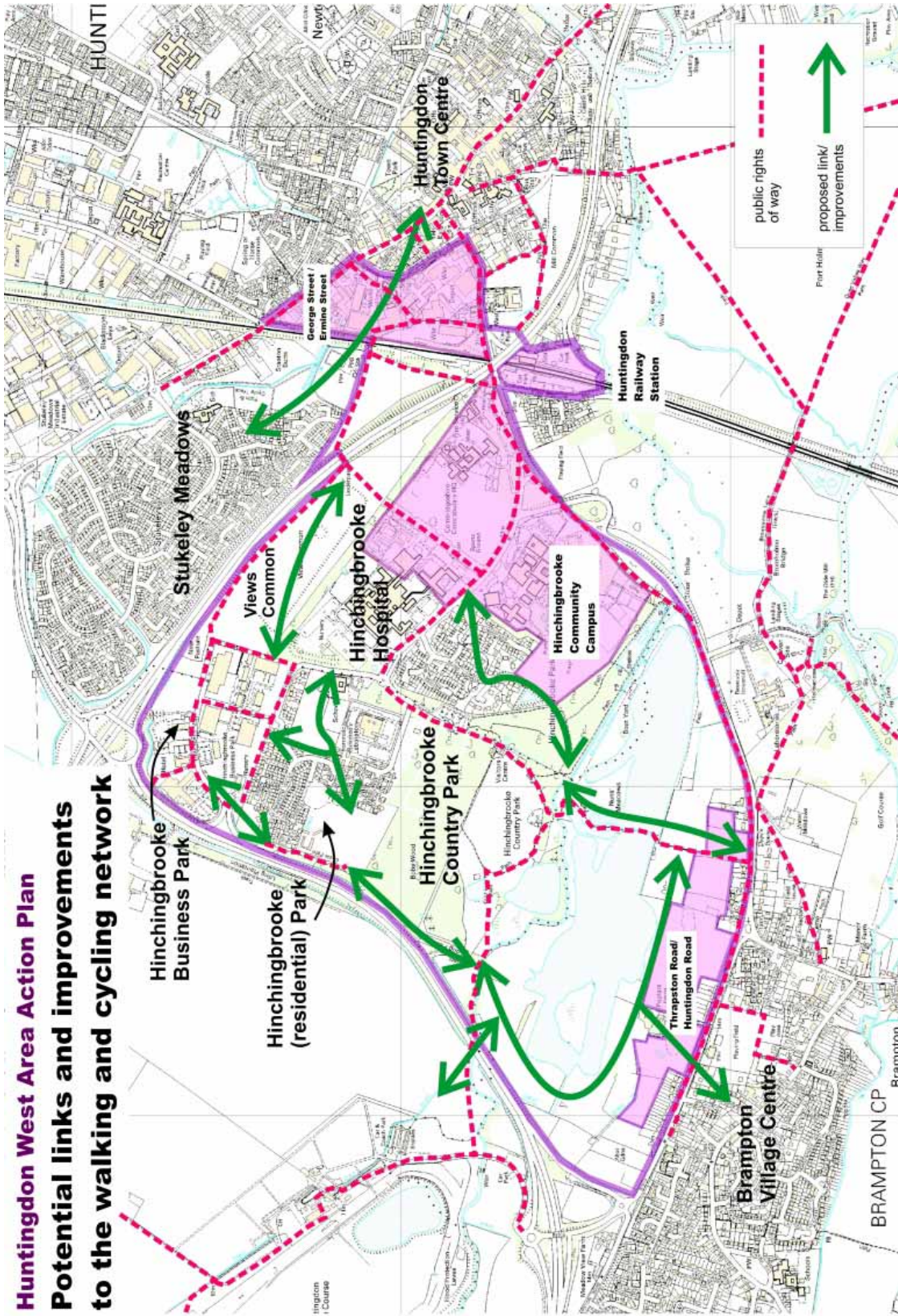
The Area Action Plan will include new and improved walking and cycling links within the development and to surrounding areas

Reasonable alternatives?

4.29 No reasonable alternatives have been identified because walking and cycling are sustainable forms of transport and there is potential for the number of trips made by walking and cycle to increase around the town. This will result in a fewer number of shorter trips being made by car.

Question 14

Are there other areas where walking and cycling links need to be improved?



Map 4.2 Future walking and cycling links

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Green Space

4.30 The Area Action Plan needs to consider how the environment in and around Huntingdon West can be protected and enhanced.

Biodiversity

4.31 Biodiversity is the wealth of wildlife in terms of numbers of species and their habitats and covers species considered to be rare as well as common place. The Area Action Plan includes a County Wildlife Site (CWS) - Hinchingsbrooke Gravel Pits, which covers the southern area of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, around the lakes. The on-going management of the Park and its habitats is crucial to protect and enhance biodiversity within and outside of the Park.

4.32 Urban spaces can also provide a haven for wildlife. There are two types of urban spaces, green areas within the built environment, such as parks, and the built development. A range of measures can be incorporated into new development to encourage biodiversity such as green roofs, nesting and roofing boxes, wildlife friendly landscaping and sustainable drainage systems. Re-development within Huntingdon West provides an opportunity to encourage biodiversity through creative design.

4.33 The promotion of biodiversity is interlinked with encouraging green infrastructure. The provision of improved linkage between existing and proposed green infrastructure resources is key to encouraging biodiversity corridors and habitats. Footpaths, cycleways and bridleways can double as biodiversity corridors.

Question 15

How and where within Huntingdon West would you like to see biodiversity enhanced and created?

Question 16

How much emphasis should be placed on the enhancement and creation of biodiversity habitats?

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

4.34 Hinchingsbrooke Country Park covers an area of roughly 70 hectares of grassland, meadows, woodland and lakes and is home to a wealth of wildlife. The Park is now at capacity and it could be beneficial to expand the Country Park to offer greater opportunities to local residents. This extension could run south of Alconbury Brook to include an additional section of Hinchingsbrooke Lakes. This would enable walks/ footpaths to be created around the lakes and would improve links between Brampton and the Country Park and the Hinchingsbrooke area. This would provide a good link for people living in Brampton and work at Hinchingsbrooke Business Park.

Question 17

Do you think the Country Park needs to expand?

Question 18

If yes, how far should the Country Park expand?

Question 19

How can the Country Park be improved (e.g. what additional features would you like included)?



Views Common

4.35 Views Common is an important area of green open space which is home to a wealth of wildlife. As part of the proposals to re-route the A14 the viaduct, which currently bisects Views Common, may be removed. This would make the Common more visually attractive and enhance its status as an important area of green space.

Question 20

Do you agree that Views Common is an important green space?

Question 21

If the A14 viaduct is removed should this area remain an important green space?

4.36 Views Common is owned by the Freeman of Huntingdon, it is not access land ^(iv) and the public do not have the right to roam under the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000. However, there are a number of footpaths which cross the Common which people are allowed to use. A new footpath has been created across Views Common and a hard surface link has been created on land at the Police HQ to link this with Hinchingsbrooke

iv as defined in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 1(1)

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School. This footpath completes a pedestrian route from Stukeley Meadows to Hinchingsbrooke Road and follows on from a link between Handcrofts Lane, Lake Way and Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. This pedestrian route will improve linkages in this area of the Area Action Plan and forms an important part of the green infrastructure.

Question 22

Would you like to see Views Common become a public open space?

4.37 The Common is currently used for cattle grazing which helps to maintain the land. There may be opportunities to enhance the landscape of the area through, for example, leveling the land and improved landscaping, better management which could link to the Country Park, reducing the sound from the road network and re-seeding the area to improve the flora and fauna.

Question 23

How do you think Views Common could be improved (eg land levelling, new management and re-seeding to improve the flora and fauna)?



Open Space and Recreation

4.38 People living and working within Huntingdon West should have adequate access to open space and recreational facilities. These facilities help create a high quality living environment and enable people to lead healthy lifestyles.

4.39 A forthcoming supplementary planning document on Planning Contributions will set standards for provision of open space, facilities for children and young people and allotments. In addition to this provision should also be made for strategic open space. Strategic open space includes open spaces which are important at a regional and sub-regional level such as Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and the corridors which link these. In Huntingdon West Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and links to it could be extended and improved.

4.40 The main issue to consider is whether open space should be provided within sites where development will take place or whether some of the open space and recreational facilities should be provided through provision off site, either within Huntingdon West or the immediate vicinity, or through improvements to an existing area or facility.

Question 24

How would you like to see open space and recreation facilities provided in Huntingdon West?

Design

4.41 The Area Action Plan can emphasise the need for a high quality of urban design. This can be achieved by developing a clear set of design principles and factors which need to be taken into account when developing and redeveloping the area. The following design principles have been developed taking into account national and regional policy and local issues.

Option 6

Draft Design Principles:

- Development should promote community security by ensuring buildings overlook streets, open spaces and recreation areas
- Layout of development should promote walking and cycling
- Development should create attractive frontages
- Development should create a high quality public environment
- Development should be sympathetic to existing development in terms of layout, form, height, detail and materials
- Layout of development should maximise solar gain
- Development should include landmark buildings and focal points and should enhance views into and out of the site
- Development should promote a mix of uses that creates activity within the development site

Question 25

Do you agree that design principles should be included in the Area Action Plan?

Question 26

Do the design principles above address all issues or are there any other principles which should be included?

4.42 There is the opportunity for the Area Action Plan to designate landmark buildings to help create an attractive entrance into Huntingdon and to provide attractive views and vistas.

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Question 27

Within Huntingdon West where would you like to see landmark buildings located?

For example:

- a. Along Brampton Road/ George Street into Huntingdon
- b. At key locations within the site
- c. In the Ermine Street/ George Street area
- d. At Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus
- e. At the Railway Station
- f. On the sites along Thrapston/ Huntingdon Road

Ermine Street/ George Street area

4.43 This area includes the land between Ermine Street, George Street, the railway line and the ring road, as shown in Map 4.3. Currently, the site is in mixed use, with a significant proportion of this in commercial/industrial use alongside residential. The site is classified as previously developed land and redevelopment will therefore make efficient use of land. The site also offers a prime sustainable location as it is close to the town centre with good public transport links. Using the site for mixed use redevelopment can contribute to sustainability, as this promotes sustainable travel patterns and a diverse and vibrant locality.



Huntingdon West Area Action Plan
Map to show Ermine Street/ George Street Area

Map 4.3 Ermine Street/ George Street area

4 Key Issues and Options

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4.44 This area requires comprehensive redevelopment and it provides the opportunity to link the town centre with the railway station and beyond. The area has previously been the subject of an urban design framework^(v) which appraised various land use options on the site. Given the existing uses and location of the site, development will be mixed use, with various options for that mix.

4.45 Because of the historical and existing uses of the site and other uses in the surrounding area there are a number of significant constraints including contamination, noise, environmental and built heritage and existing vehicular and pedestrian routes. These are shown on the diagrams below. When considering redevelopment it is important that these constraints are taken into account.

Contamination of land

4.46 As a result of the industrial use of the land the site is in an area of moderate sensitivity to chemical contamination of groundwater and surface water resources. There are also high levels of metal concentrations in ground soil across the site. The level of some metal concentrations are considered to be sufficiently high to present a hazard to future residents.

4.47 Employing appropriate contamination remediation methods can remove the risk associated with contaminated land^(vi). As the majority of contamination in this area is soil based, appropriate remediation methods may include the removal of a certain amount of soil and replacement with clean fill material. Soil removal may also be appropriate to mitigate groundwater contamination in some circumstances.

4.48 Despite there being evidence of contamination on some of the land between Ermine Street and George Street, development is considered to be beneficial and should be encouraged subject to appropriate remediation methods being implemented.

4.49 Issues of contamination will be an important consideration when allocating land. Map 4.4 shows the levels of possible contamination in this area.

Noise

4.50 The main sources of noise pollution are from the east coast mainline railway and the A14. Noise primarily affects the existing industrial area between Ermine Street and George Street. The north western edge of the area between Ermine Street and George Street abuts the railway line. The noise produced by the railway line is particularly acute where it moves onto the embankment. Any development scheme proposed for this area must therefore take into account the noise and possible vibration originating from the railway line.

4.51 Towards the southern section of the area between Ermine Street and George Street heavy traffic noise from the A14 will need to be considered, as will the lesser traffic noise originating from the ring road to the east.

4.52 The impact of noise is an important consideration in determining the design and layout of a development scheme which can help alleviate the impact of noise. Map 4.5 shows noise corridors in this area.

Environmental and Built Heritage

4.53 This includes Listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Tree Preservation Orders. There are 19 Listed Buildings in the Ermine Street/ George Street area as shown on map 4.6, these include the Alms Houses and the Old Post Office on George Street, No's 14, 16 and 18 St John's Street, 81 High Street and 14 and 32-36 Ermine Street. A small section in the north east of the Ermine Street/ George Street area is in the conservation area and this runs along the eastern edge of the area, a proposed extension to the conservation area includes a much

v The Civic Trust (2002) West of Huntingdon Town Centre Urban Design Framework
vi as defined in PPS23 Annex 2, para 2.5

larger section of the site as shown on map 4.6. There are also four tree preservation orders within the Ermine Street/ George Street area. New development in the area will need to be integrated sensitively, and take into account the character and setting of areas of importance. Map 4.6 shows areas of high, medium and low values landscape as identified in the West of Huntingdon Town Centre Urban Design Framework (Civic Trust, 2002).



Access and Links

4.54 Map 4.7 shows the existing pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes in the Ermine Street/ George Street area. The main vehicle routes run around the site, vehicle routes into the site are all dead ends. There are therefore opportunities to improve connectivity through redevelopment of the area. There are several existing pedestrian routes which link to the surrounding area. These need to be taken into account when considering the form of new development in this area.

Future Access and Links

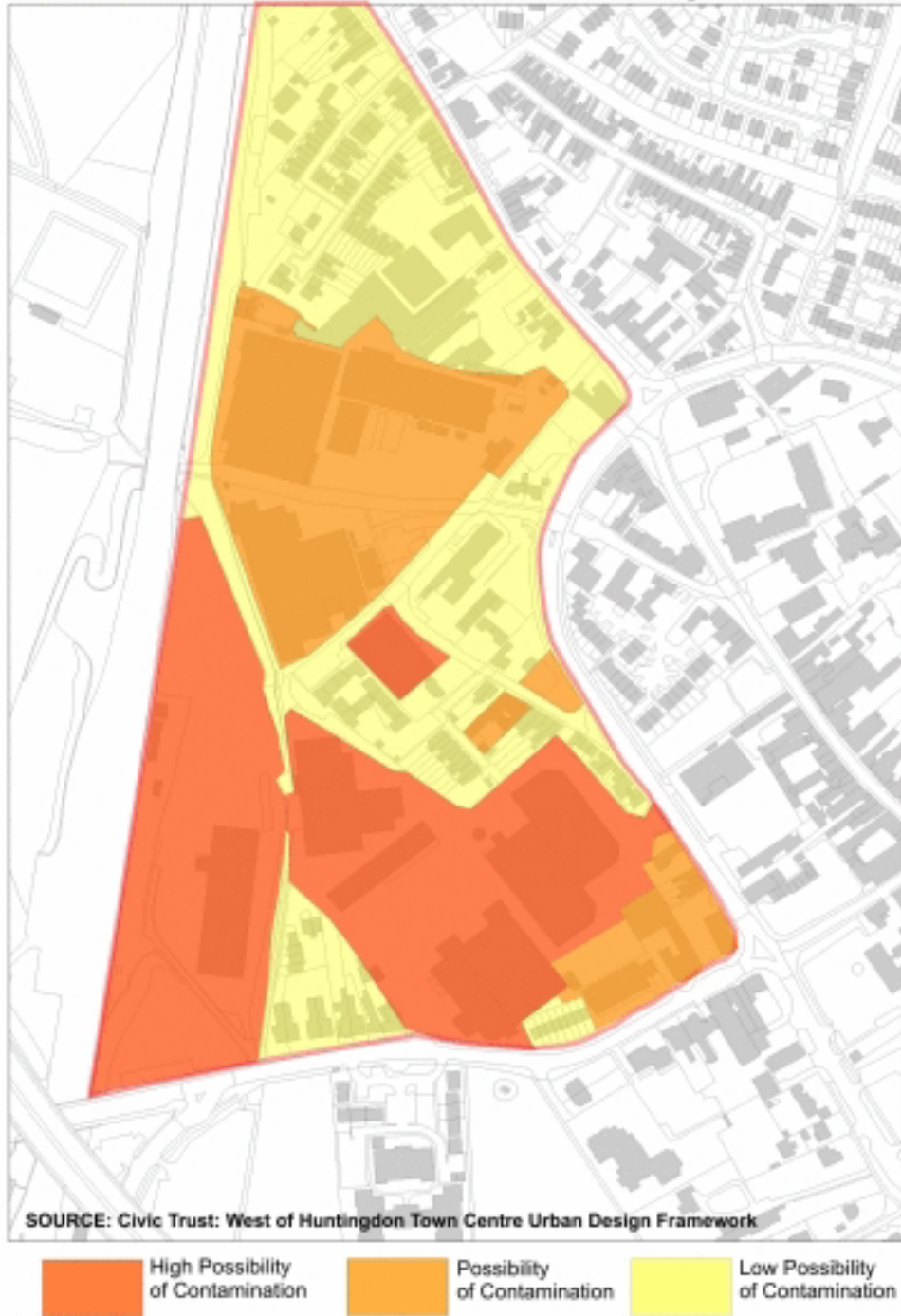
4.55 Map 4.8 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. This would create a link road between Ermine Street and George Street which would reduce traffic on the Huntingdon Ring Road and would create a link between the north and west of the town.

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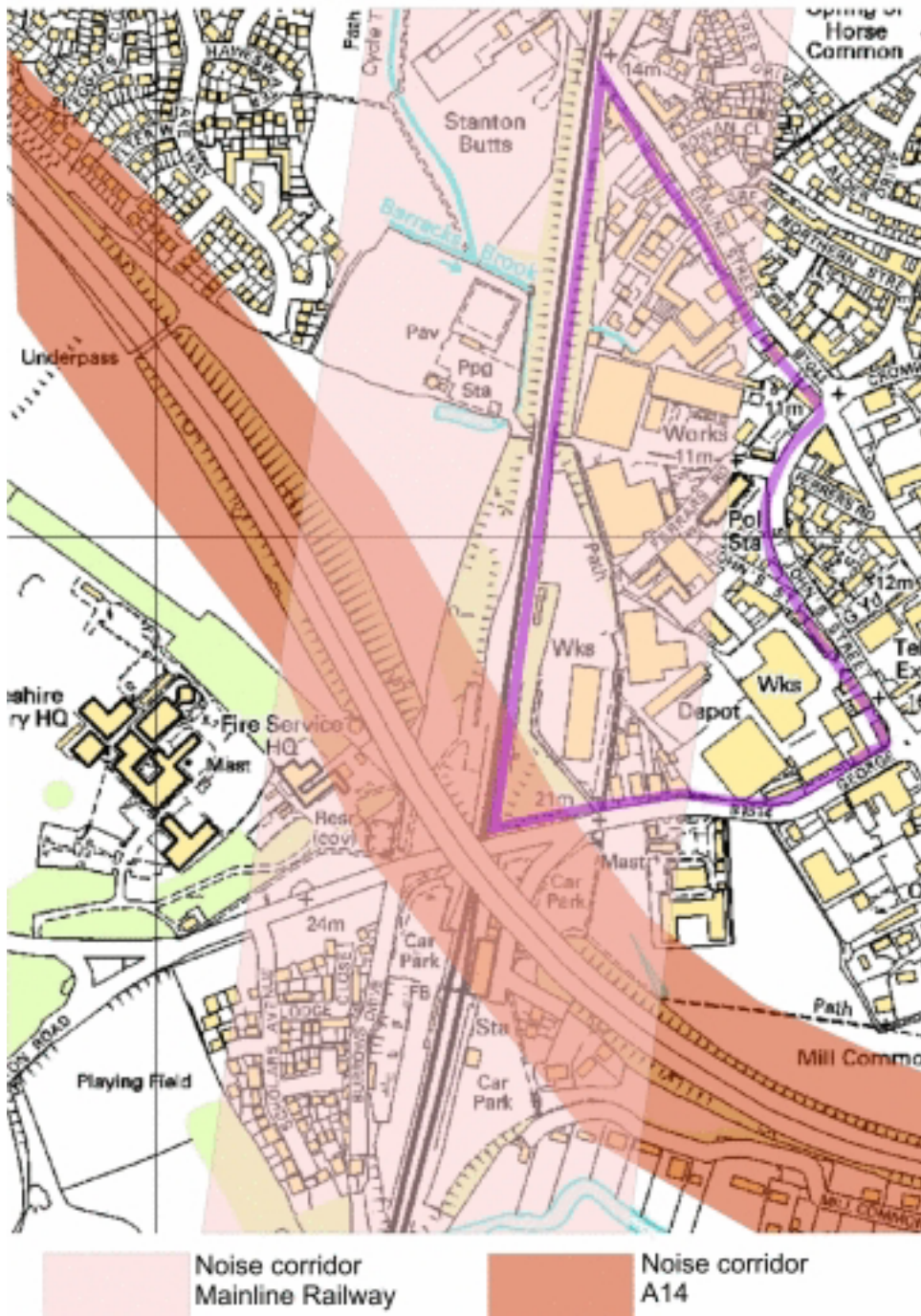
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Land Contamination in Ermine Street /George Street Area



Map 4.4 Contamination

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Noise Constraints Ermine Street/ George Street Area



Map 4.5 Noise

4 Key Issues and Options

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Townscape and Built Heritage Ermine Street/ George Street Area

Map 4.6 Built heritage

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Access & Links in Ermine Street Area / George Street



Map 4.7 Access and links

4 Key Issues and Options

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Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.8 Proposed new road layout

Overall development of the site

4.56 Taking into account the constraints identified above there are several options for how the site could be developed. The Urban Design Framework (2002) highlighted that there is a strong market for residential development in this area but there are also opportunities for other types of development to be located in this area. The key issues to consider are whether this should become a residential quarter or an extension to the town centre.

Question 28

What should the Ermine Street/ George Street area's primary function be?

- Residential or
- Business (including retail and employment)

Residential development

4.57 The proximity of the site to the town centre, railway station and local employment makes this a sustainable location for residential development. In relation to residential development there are several issues which need to be considered including the amount and density. The sections below cover these issues.

Question 29

Do you think this is a suitable location for residential development?

Question 30

If yes, where should this be located?

4.58 The emerging Huntingdonshire Core Strategy will include targets and thresholds for the provision of affordable housing. The targets and thresholds included this will be applied within Huntingdon West.



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Density

The emerging Development Control Policies Development Plan Document will set out density ranges for development. The Ermine Street/ George Street area is close to the town centre and railway station and would therefore require higher densities to ensure the land is used efficiently. The following photos show examples of different densities:



Picture 4.1 58 dwellings per hectare



Picture 4.2 80 dwellings per hectare

Key Issues and Options 4

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Picture 4.3 75 dwellings per hectare



Picture 4.4 137 dwellings per hectare

Question 31

Which of these densities would you like to see in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

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Employment Development

4.59 Employment development includes business, industrial and storage and distribution. The Council considers that office development would be the most appropriate use given the proximity to the town centre and railway station.

Question 32

Do you think this is a suitable location for employment development?

Question 33

If yes, where should this be located and what type?



Live/ work units

4.60 Live/ Work units provide accommodation for both residential and business use. The use of live/ work units differs from ordinary home working in the nature and intensity of the business use involved. Ordinary home working is secondary to the domestic use where as live/ work units have more space devoted to the work use or they may be able to accommodate more workers.

4.61 Live/ work units can play an important role in creating sustainable communities through the reduction in car travel and can help the establishment or expansion of small businesses. Live/ work units may be suitable in a variety of locations including within established mixed use areas such as town centres or in large new mixed use developments. It is therefore appropriate that the inclusion of this type of accommodation is considered in the Ermine Street/ George Street area.

Question 34

Should live/ work units be located within the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Retail and leisure development

The relationship between the Ermine Street/ George Street area and other shopping areas in the town needs to be considered and it is important that any shopping and leisure development in this part of the town needs to complement the town centre rather than detract from it. The retail study update (2006) advised that after Chequers Court the next sequentially preferable location for shopping development is the Ermine Street/ George Street area but that it should only be developed following the implementation of the Chequers Court improvement scheme. The study considers that Ermine Street/ George Street should be earmarked as a longer-term (post 2011) opportunity for shopping uses as part of a comprehensive mixed-use development. The retail study identified a need for 12,000 sq.m, approximately 3 Huntingdon Sainsburys or 8.6 Huntingdon Waitrose, of additional comparison shopping floor space, approximately 4600 sq.m (50,000 sq ft) of this could be provided within the existing town centre. Therefore the remaining amount, approximately 8300 sq.m (89,000sq ft), the equivalent of 2 Huntingdon Sainsburys or 6 Huntingdon Waitrose, needs to be found elsewhere.

4.62 The Area Action Plan needs to make decisions about the type (e.g. large retailers, specialist shops, trade store etc), and quantity of retail development which could be located in the Ermine Street/ George Street area.

Question 35

Do you agree that this area is an appropriate location for shopping development; if not, where within Huntingdon do you think shopping development should be located?

Question 36

What type of shopping development would you like to see in this area?

- Large supermarket
- Large DIY type stores
- Smaller budget supermarket
- A range of comparison shops selling, for example, clothes, household furniture etc

Question 37

How much shopping development would you like to see in this area?

4.63 In addition to retail development Planning Policy Statement 6 also encourages a number of other uses to be located near to the town centre, these include:

- Leisure, entertainment facilities and more intensive sport and recreation facilities (including restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, health and fitness centres)
- Arts, culture and tourism (including theatres, museums, hotels and conference facilities)

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Question 38

Which of these other uses would you like to see in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Car Parking

4.64 The Huntingdon Town Vision (2006) and the Steer Davies Gleave Parking Study identify the Ermine Street/ George Street area as a location for additional public car parking. The advantage of using this area is that it could be reached by two feeder roads and would therefore reduce the amount of traffic travelling around the ring road to get to other long stay car parks. It would also be needed to serve any new shopping development in this area.

Question 39

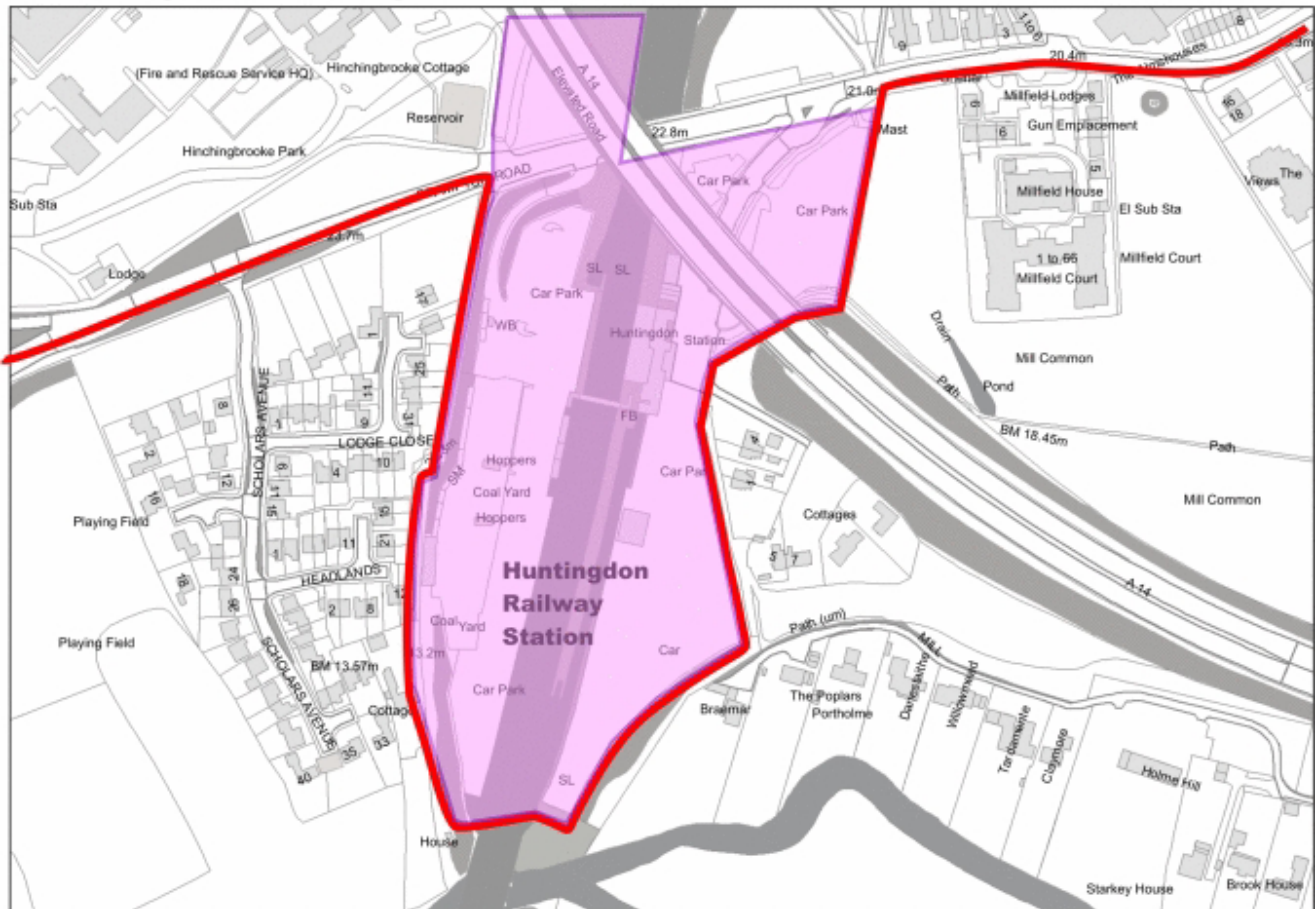
Do you think that additional public car parking should be provided in the Ermine Street/ George Street area?

Question 40

If you do not think public car parking should be provided in this location, where in Huntingdon should it be provided?

Huntingdon Railway Station

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Huntingdon Railway Station Area



Map 4.9 Huntingdon Railway Station

4.65 Huntingdon railway station, see map 4.9, provides good quality links with London, Peterborough and St Neots. The location of the railway station is currently dominated by the A14 viaduct but if this viaduct was to be removed as part of the rerouting of the A14 there would be an opportunity to enhance this area and to provide a more attractive gateway into Huntingdon.

4.66 Car parking is currently an important issue at the railway station and the train operating company is investigating the possibility of increasing car parking at the railway station.

Question 41

Do you think this is an appropriate location for additional levels of car parking to be provided for people using the station?

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4.67 There is an area of land north of the station north of Brampton Road shown on map 4.9 which is currently unused. The land could be used to provide additional car parking for the Railway Station and town centre.

Question 42

Do you think it would be appropriate to use this land for additional car parking for the railway station and/ or the town centre?

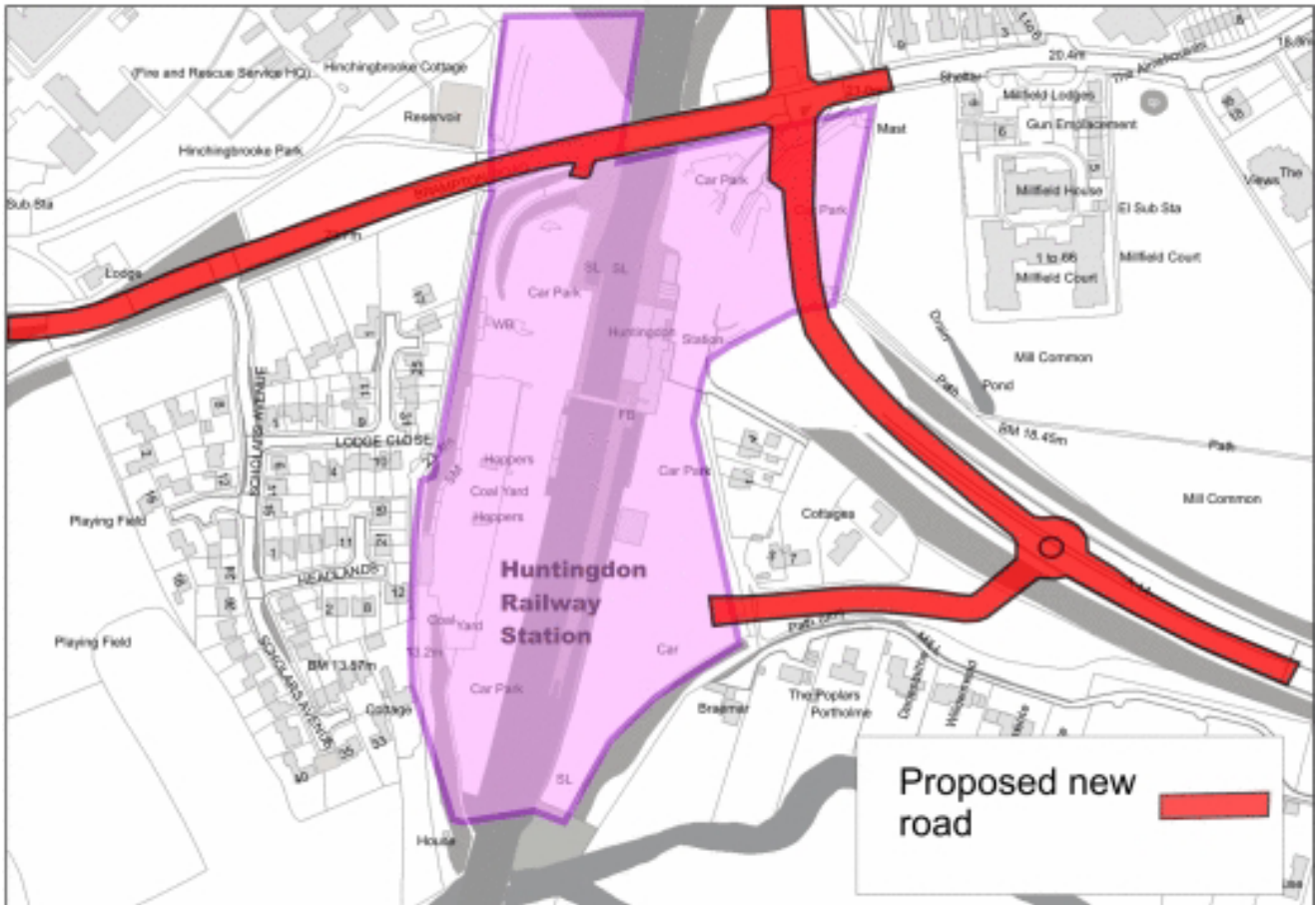
4.68 Map 4.10 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. The reconfiguration of the road system allows an additional access to be created into the Railway Station car park. These changes to the road system could result in the reconfiguration of the area in front of the station. As part of this additional development could take place, for example commercial development.

Question 43

Do you think this would be an appropriate location for a landmark commercial building?



Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.10 Reconfiguration of the road network

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Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Hinchingbrooke

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Hinchingbrooke Campus Area



Map 4.11 Hinchingbrooke Community Campus

4.69 The Hinchingbrooke Community Campus includes Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Hinchingbrooke School, the Fire Headquarters and the Police Headquarters and associated playing fields, see Map 4.11.

4.70 There are a number of issues which affect the opportunities for development on this site, these include:

- the future of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and the need in the future for this to reduce in size, in particular the future of the wards adjacent to the playing fields which are surplus to requirements.
- the A14 and whether this is down-graded and the viaduct over Views Common and the Railway Station is removed. If this is the case then the down graded A14 would run through the site from Views Common down to Brampton Road, see map 4.15 This would significantly affect the availability of land within the site.

4.71 There are also a number of constraints which need to be considered. These include the landscape setting, the environment and built heritage and access and links.

Landscape Setting

4.72 The Hinchingsbrooke landscape is one of the most important historic elements in the Huntingdon landscape, map 4.12 shows an extract of the area from the 1809 Ordnance Survey. Hinchingsbrooke House was built in the 16th Century and the landscape remains largely unchanged since this time. The best preserved parts of the Hinchingsbrooke landscape are the former pleasure grounds and gardens and the Rose and Yew gardens. These features form the core of the landscape area and are of more than local importance. Beyond this core area features are more patchy but lend character to the local landscape. It is important that any development in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus is sensitive to this historic landscape.

Environment and built heritage

4.73 Listed buildings within the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus are focused around Hinchingsbrooke School. There are a number of listed structures including Hinchingsbrooke House, the Brewhouse and laundry at Hinchingsbrooke House and gates, walls and a well at Hinchingsbrooke House and Hinchingsbrooke park as shown on map 4.13. The majority of the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area is included in a proposed extension to the Conservation Area and the whole area is covered by a blanket Tree Preservation Order. New development in the area will need to take into account the character and setting of these features.



Access and links

4.74 Map 4.14. shows the existing pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area. These need to be taken into account when considering development in the area.

Future Access and Links

4.75 Map 4.15 shows the potential reconfiguration of the road system if the viaduct is removed as part of the rerouting of the A14. This new road layout includes a link between the downgraded A14 and Brampton Road and potentially offers the opportunity to help relieve congestion on Hinchingsbrooke Park Road as discussed earlier.

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Historic Map, extract from 1809 Ordnance Survey



Source: Huntingdon County Record Office.



Huntingdon, at the end of the 18th Century, was a coaching town along the route south to London, along Ermine Street.

Commons: The Views

The town of Huntingdon has historically been surrounded by "commons", open land administered by the Borough of Huntingdon. This land was rented for grazing. It was also once Medieval strip farming (arable crops), part of the open fields of Huntingdon which fed the larger town. In 1850 the Views was divided into **Views Common** and **Mill Common**.

Hinchinbrooke House and Park

Originally a medieval nunnery, at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 the property was obtained by the Cromwell family. The church and priory buildings were then converted into a country residence. In the 17th century the Montagues, who became the Earls of Sandwich after the Restoration, brought the land and the house and park has evolved with the successive generations. In 1967 the 10th Earl of Sandwich sold the house to the District Council and it became part of Hinchinbrooke school.

Map 4.12 Historic context

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Built Heritage Hinchingsbrooke Campus Area

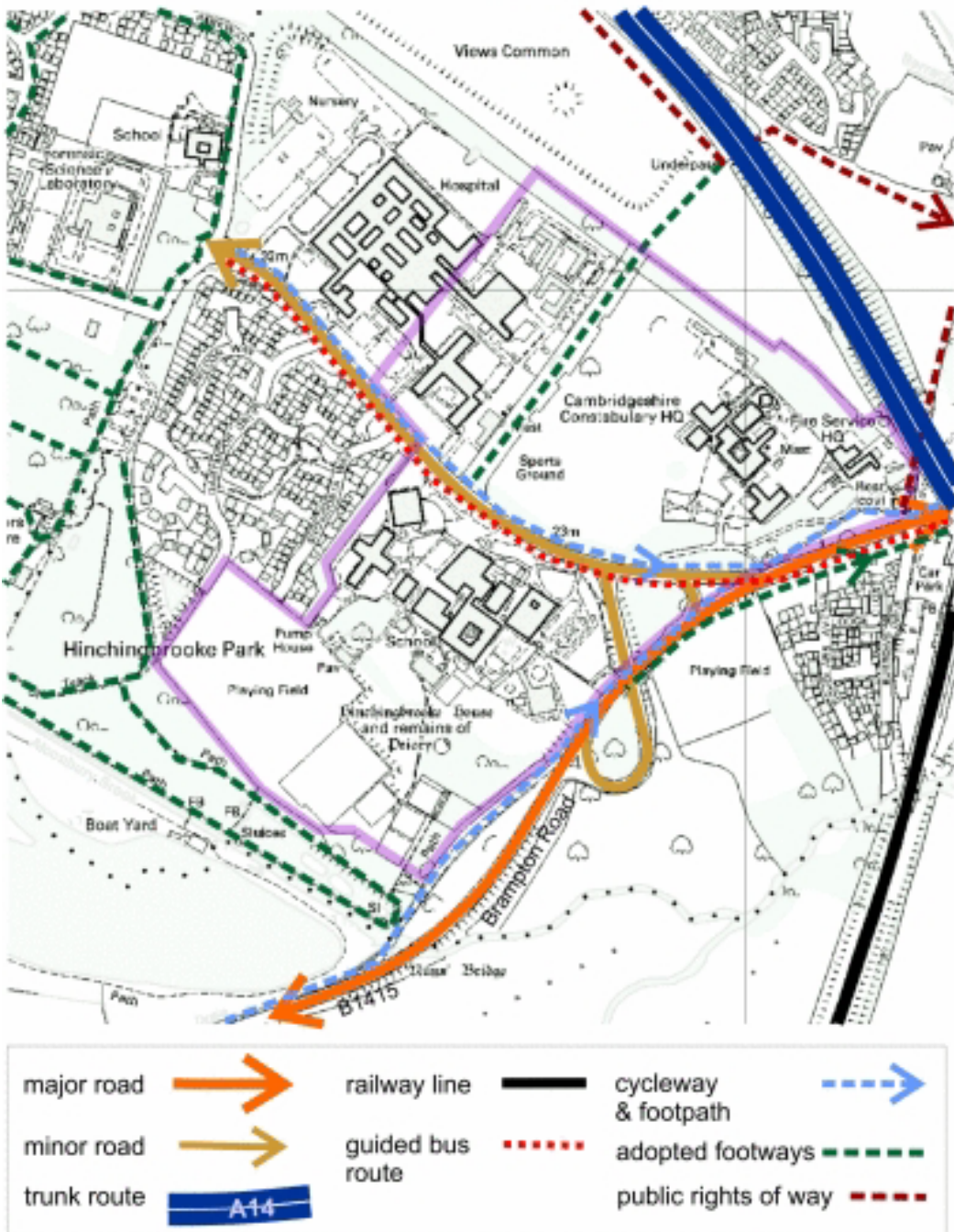


Map 4.13 Environment and built heritage

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Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Access and links in Hinchingsbrooke Campus Area



Map 4.14 Access and links

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Proposed new road layout



Map 4.15 Future access and links

4 Key Issues and Options

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Overall development of the site

4.76 The key issue to consider in this area is whether further development should be of an institutional nature or whether other uses should be incorporated. It is important that any development is able to fully integrate with existing uses.

Question 44

Should further development be primarily institutional, residential or employment?

Institutional uses

4.77 The Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus is dominated by institutional uses, such as the hospital, school and police headquarters.

Question 45

Do you think there should be additional institutional use in this area?

Question 46

If yes, where would you like these to be and what type of institutional use? e.g. additional education uses

Employment development

4.78 Employment development includes business, industrial and storage and distribution. The Council consider that office development would be the most appropriate use given the proximity to the railway station.

Question 47

Do you think this is a suitable location for employment development?

Question 48

If yes, where should this be located and what type?

Residential Development

4.79 In terms of residential development there are several options to consider including the location of housing and density.

Question 49

Do you think there should be further residential development in this area?

Question 50

If yes, where should this be located?

Car parking

4.80 Car parking in this area is already at full capacity. The Huntingdon Town Centre Vision (2006) identified this as a location for additional public car parking spaces.

Question 51

Do you think additional public car parking should be provided in the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus area to serve the town centre?

Question 52

If you think that additional public car parking should be provided in this location who should this additional car parking be provided for? (i.e. town centre users, people using the school or hospital or for people using the Guided Bus)

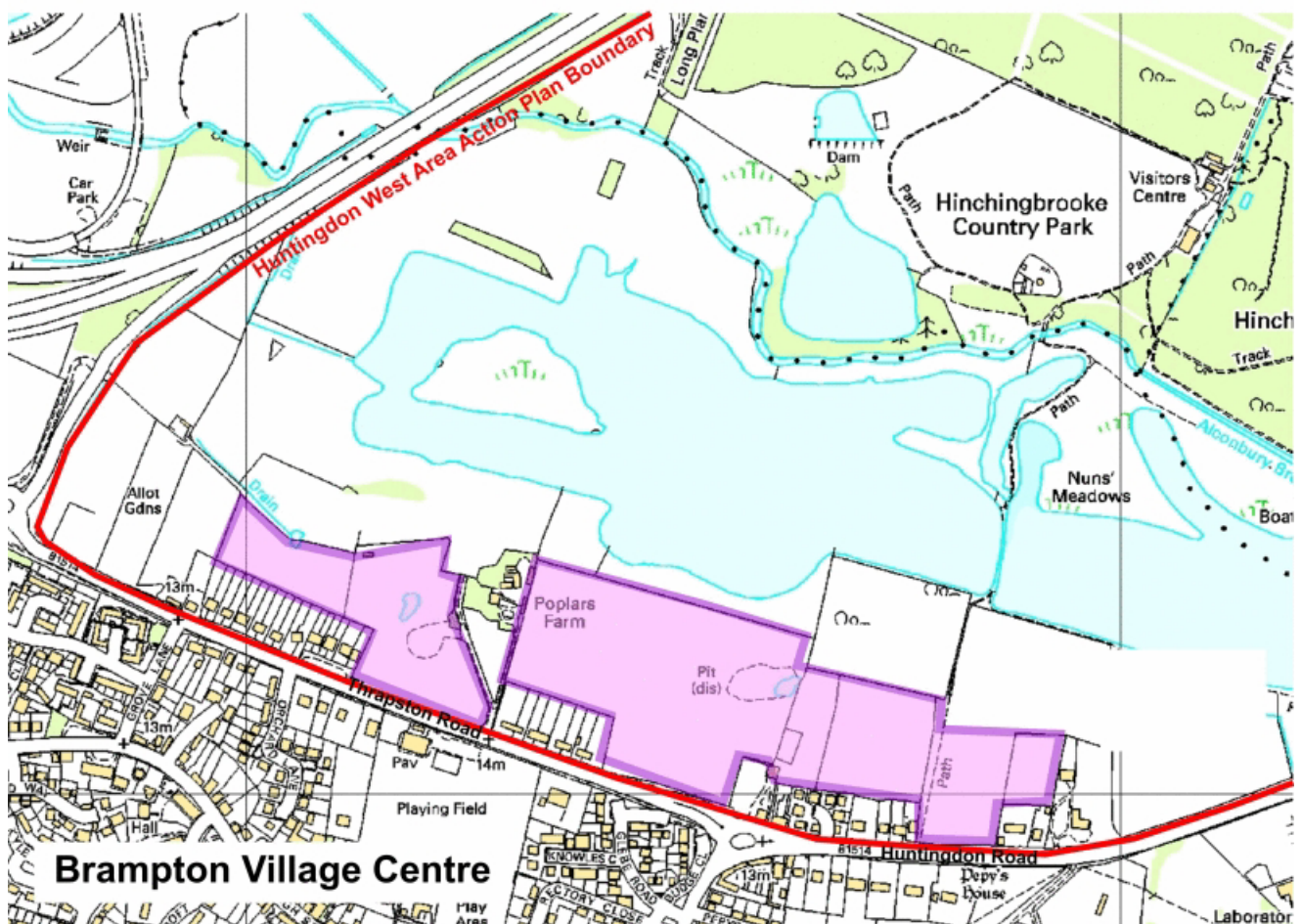
4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road, Brampton

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan

Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road Area



Map 4.16 Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road sites

4.81 Along Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road, Brampton there are several sites which overlook the Country Park (see map 4.16). The Area Action Plan needs to consider whether these sites are suitable for development and if so what type of development.

Residential development

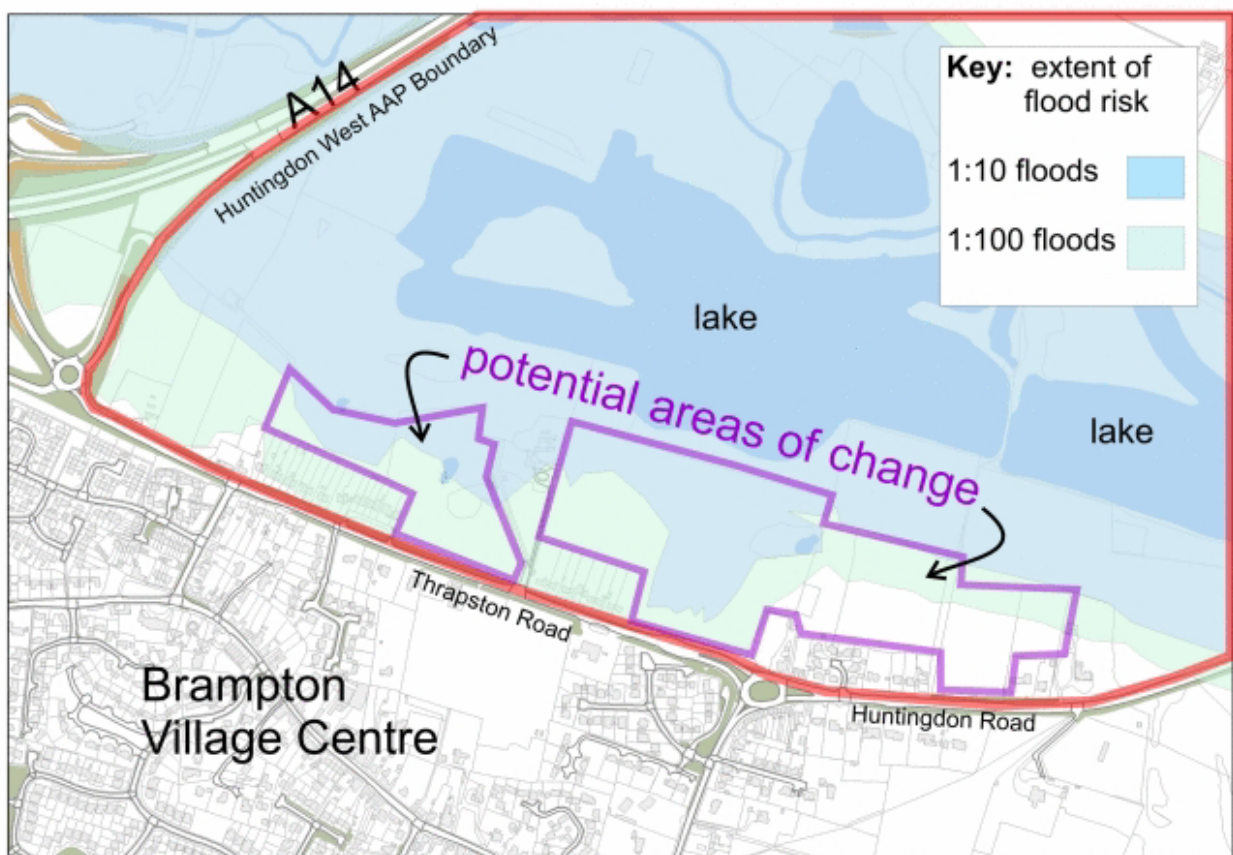
4.82 These sites have been put forward by developers for residential development and were included in the Council's recently completed Housing Land Availability Assessment. These sites are relatively close to services in Brampton but are separated from the village by Thrapston Road/Huntingdon Road which is a busy road leading into Huntingdon. It would therefore be difficult to integrate the sites into the village. Two of these sites and a section of the third are in the 1:100 year floodplain as shown on map 4.17. PPS 25 states that residential development

should not be allowed within the 1:100 year floodplain unless the exceptions test is met; these sites would not pass this test. Therefore, only the site which is not in the 1:100 year floodplain should be considered for residential development.

Question 53

Do you think the site which is not in the 1:100 year floodplain is an appropriate location for residential development?

Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road Area



Map 4.17 Flood risk

4 Key Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Employment development

4.83 These sites are in a prestigious location overlooking Hinchingsbrooke Country Park with good access to the railway station and Huntingdon town centre and may have potential to be developed for high quality employment developments such as a high quality business park or science park. A development of this type would link with the wider economy of the Huntingdon area and would therefore not need to be as closely integrated into the village as residential development, although it would provide employment opportunities for residents living in Brampton.

Question 54

Do you think these sites are appropriate locations for employment development?

Question 55

If yes, which of the sites would you like to see developed for employment development?

Car parking

4.84 It is currently possible to access Hinchingsbrooke Country Park on foot from Brampton but vehicle access is limited to the Hinchingsbrooke side of the Country Park. It may be possible to create an additional surface level car park on one of these sites to provide access to the Country Park from the Brampton side. This would enable visitors travelling from this direction to park on this side to save them driving through the Hinchingsbrooke estate. This car park could also be used as a tourist information point to promote tourism.

Question 56

Do you think that it would be appropriate for one of these sites to be used as a surface level car park to give an additional access to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park?

Question 57

If yes, which of these sites would you like to see developed for a surface level car park?

Alternatives

4.85 This Issues and Options paper attempts to identify all relevant issues and reasonable options for addressing these. However, if you feel there are relevant issues or reasonable options which have not been considered then please put these forward.

5 Phasing and Implementation

5.1 The phasing and implementation of the Area Action Plan is vital to ensure the proposals contained in it are delivered and therefore need to be considered early in the process. Delivery of the Area Action Plan will involve a wide range of partners from the public and private sector. It is therefore important that development is phased to ensure that infrastructure is provided at the right time and in the right place. The timescale for the Area Action Plan is from adoption of the plan to 2021.

Phasing

5.2 The re-routing of the A14 and subsequent removal of the viaduct are beyond the scope of this Area Action Plan; therefore phasing and implementation of the proposals need to take account of this but not be dependent upon it. The A14 is scheduled to be completed in 2015, but redevelopment of the area will take place prior to this.

5.3 In terms of phasing the Area Action Plan needs to determine which projects should take place before the A14 is finished (before 2015) and which should take place after the A14 is finished (post 2015). The following schedule is based on those projects which need to take place once the A14 has been completed and those which can take place prior to this.

Before 2015	Post 2015
Redevelopment of Ermine Street/ George Street area	Improvements to Railway Station
Creation of Ermine Street to George Street link road	Improvements to Views Common
Improvements to footpath and cycle path network	Reconfiguration of roads through Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus
Developments at Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus (dependent upon when part of hospital is available for redevelopment)	
Development at Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road	
Extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park	
Improvements to parking at the Railway Station	

Question 58

Do you agree that this schedule is appropriate? If not how should it be changed?

Funding

5.4 The Council is producing a Planning Contributions SPD. This SPD will set out the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required with new development, including open space and will be the basis for section 106 agreements. In Huntingdon West contributions will be sought towards the following infrastructure:

5 Phasing and Implementation

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

Option 7

- Ermine Street to George Street link road
- Improvements to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
- Improvements to Views Common
- Open Space and recreation
- Education - improvements or extensions to existing schools
- Affordable Housing
- Car parks, footpaths, cycleways, highways and public transport
- Community facilities
- Environmental improvements
- Health and social care
- Drainage/ flood prevention
- Waste recycling facilities

Question 59

Do you think this list is appropriate and is there any other infrastructure you think should be required in this area?

Construction Strategy

5.5 The Area Action Plan will need to consider how construction waste and spoil will be dealt with. Within the Ermine Street/ George Street area there is a significant amount of existing buildings and hardstanding which will need to be removed before redevelopment can take place. A considerable amount of contamination remediation work will also need to take place. The key issue is whether spoil and waste are transported elsewhere or whether the materials can be incorporated into the new development. For example, hardstanding could be crushed to provide aggregate for foundations. In terms of sustainability it is preferable for waste materials to be recycled and used on-site and for spoil to be used for on-site landscaping or transported short distances for appropriate disposal.

Question 60

Do you agree that waste materials should be recycled and used on-site?

Question 61

Do you agree that spoil should be used for on-site landscaping or where this is not possible transported short distances for appropriate disposal?

6 Glossary

Access land

Mapped areas of mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land which, under the Countryside Right of Way Act 2000, the public are allowed to freely walk on without the need to stick to paths.

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.

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'.

Carbon footprint

Indicates the impact of development on the environment by measuring the levels of carbon dioxide emitted.

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.

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.

The Core Strategy

This document which is a *Development Plan Document* containing the overall vision, objectives and policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.

6 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

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*.

County Wildlife Site

Areas of land rich in wildlife that are statutorily protected.

Decentralised energy system

Generates heat and electricity in smaller, more localised units.

Density

Density is a measure of the number of dwellings which can be accommodated on a site. The minimum density is 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) as set out in PPS3 Housing.

Department for Communities and Local Government

The Government department responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

Development Plan

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. Under the new system 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 inquiry into the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* or *Draft Statement of Community Involvement*, 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.

Green Infrastructure

The sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and green linkages.

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

This is 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 the 'Preferred Options' development documents.

Key Workers

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers.

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.

Major development

The creation of 10 or more dwellings within 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 development

Development comprising two or more uses as part of the same scheme. Mixed use development can help create vitality and diversity and can help reduce the need to travel, which is more sustainable.

ODPM - Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Government department formerly responsible for planning and the production of planning guidance.

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.

Permissive Right of Way

These are routes where a landowner allows access over their land without dedicating it as a right of way.

6 Glossary

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Planning Obligation

A binding legal agreement requiring a developer or landowner to provide or contribute towards facilities, infrastructure or other measures, in order for planning permission to be granted. Planning Obligations are normally secured under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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.

Section 106

See Planning Obligations.

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.

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 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* (or the draft *Statement of Community Involvement*) 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 held e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

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.

Zero carbon development

Development that achieves zero net carbon emissions from energy use on site on an annual basis.

1 Appendix 1

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdon West Area Action Plan - Issues & Options

1 Appendix 1

National Policy

- 1.1** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local authorities to prepare a Spatial Planning Strategy in the form of a Local Development Framework which comprises a portfolio of Local Development Documents.
- 1.2** The Government sets out national policy in Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) which are replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs).
- 1.3** Sustainable development is an overarching objective within the planning system. The Government set out its vision for achieving sustainable development in its strategy '*A Better Quality of Life, a Strategy for Sustainable Development*' in 1999 and has recently reviewed and updated this in a new strategy '*Securing the Future, delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy*' (2005).

Regional Policy

- 1.4** The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (RSS14) covers the period to 2021. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration and expansion and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. It is at an advanced stage of preparation with Proposed Changes published in December 2005. This is expected to be improved in summer 2007. The Area Action Plan will be in conformity with the RSS14.
- 1.5** The following Draft RSS14 policies have helped guide the production of the emerging Core Strategy but are also particularly relevant to the Area Action Plan; Policy SS1, Policy SS2, Policy SS4, Policy SS6, Policy E2, Policy H1, Policy H3, Policy T1, Policy T4, Policy T8, Policy T9, Policy T13, Policy T14, Policy ENV1, Policy ENV3, Policy ENV6, Policy ENV7, Policy ENG1, Policy WAT2, Policy WAT4, Policy WM6, Policy CSR1, Policy CSR2 and Policy CSR4.
- 1.6** RSS14 will, once finalised, replace most of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003. The Structure Plan provides the strategic policy framework for planning and development that will take place locally up to 2016. It guides more detailed local plans that are produced by Local Planning Authorities within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. The Council has requested that some of the Structure Plan policies that will not be replaced in the final RSS be saved. Saved policies that are most relevant to the Area Action Plan include; Policy P1/3, Policy 5/2, Policy 7/3, Policy 8/2, Policy 8/9, Policy P9/1, Policy P9/4 and Policy P9/9.

Local Policy & Related Plans

The overarching document in the LDF is the Core Strategy which sets out the Council's overall approach to development. Alongside this a Development Control DPD will set out key policies that will be used for determining planning applications.

- 1.7** The Area Action Plan will also need to have regard to the *Huntingdonshire Community Strategy* which sets out a long term vision for Huntingdonshire and a series of outcomes and results needed to achieve this.

Supporting Documents

- 1.8** A number of background documents will inform the production of the Area Action Plan:

- The *Huntingdon Town Centre Vision: Vision, Spatial Strategy and Action Plan (2006)* looks at the potential for development on fourteen sites across the town, including a site in Huntingdon West.
- The *Urban Design Framework for West of Huntingdon Town Centre*, produced in 2002 by the Civic Trust focuses on the potential redevelopment of the Ermine Street/George Street area.
- The Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy is in appendix 8d of the *Cambridgeshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (2006)* and aims to provide a programme of integrated transport initiatives for Huntingdon and Godmanchester.

Sustainability Appraisal & Appropriate Assessment

1.9 The Area Action Plan will need to undergo sustainability appraisal (SA). This is a systematic process which is carried out during the production of the plan to ensure that the policies and proposals contribute towards relevant environmental, social and economic objectives

1.10 The SA process incorporates the 'strategic environmental assessment' (SEA) required as a result of the European Directive 2001/42/EC for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment

1.11 The Council has produced an Initial Sustainability Appraisal of the options included in this Issues and Options document. Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of the process of developing the Area Action Plan. It will assist the consultation process and test and refine any policies and proposals. The Council has produced a Scoping Report which identifies appropriate high-level objectives for appraising policies and examines 'baseline' conditions in the District.

1.12 In addition to the sustainability appraisal, amendments made to the UK Conservation (Habitats & C) Regulations 2006 require an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC for all land use plans likely to have a significant effect on a European site. To satisfy the requirements, Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken before adoption of a DPD. European sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS). The only European site which is within the vicinity of Huntingdon West is Port Holme which is a SAC and is located approximately 500m south/ south east of Huntingdon West.

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