

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **CORPORATE TRAINING SUITE, EASTFIELD HOUSE, HUNTINGDON** on **THURSDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2008** at **9:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN VENUE**

**APOLOGIES**

  
**Contact  
(01480)**

**1. MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

**Mrs H J Taylor  
388008**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from 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 overleaf.

**3. PERFORMANCE MONITORING** (Pages 5 - 18)

To consider and comment on a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives over the ensuing year.

**H Thackray  
388035**

**4. CUSTOMER SERVICE DEVELOPMENT IN ST. IVES AND ST. NEOTS** (Pages 19 - 40)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services on Customer Service Development in St Ives and St Neots.

**J Barber  
388105**

**5. DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD** (Pages 41 - 294)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for the Council's Development Control Policies.  
*The Development Management DPD and Sustainability Appraisal are attached to the agenda separately.*

**Ms C Bond  
388435**

**6. LETTINGS POLICY - DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES** (Pages 295 - 296)

To consider a report by the Head of Housing Services.

**S Plant  
388240**

**7. WEB STRATEGY (Pages 297 - 306)**

To consider a report by the IMD Development Manager seeking approval for the Council's Web Strategy.

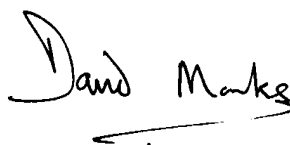
**J Taylor  
388119**

**8. COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CENTRE SAPLEY EAST  
(Pages 307 - 316)**

To consider a report by the Directors of Environmental & Community Services and of Central Services regarding for grant support from the East of England Development Agency's Investing in Communities Programme for the construction of a community enterprise centre in the Sapley East area.

**I Leatherbarrow  
388005**

Dated this 11 day of December 2008



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, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
  - (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 £25,000; 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](http://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.

This page is intentionally left blank

## 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, 20 November 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

Councillors P L E Bucknell, D B Dew,  
A Hansard, Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers  
and L M Simpson.

APOLOGIES Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K J Churchill and C R Hyams..

### **87. MR IAN LEATHERBARROW**

Members welcomed Mr Ian Leatherbarrow to his first meeting of the Cabinet in his new role of Corporate Director of Central Services.

### **88. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7th November 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **89. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillors I C Bates, P L E Bucknell, T V Rogers and L M Simpson declared personal interest in Minute No 95 by virtue of their age.

### **90. BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2009-2014**

Further to Minute No. 08/45 and by way of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the present position on the draft 2009/10 budget, the Medium Term Financial Plan for the period up to 2013/14 and the long-term financial forecast to 2023/24 together with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate Strategic Framework) thereon.

In discussing the contents of the report, Members emphasised the need to consider a range of potential scenarios, particularly given the uncertainty as to future levels of revenue support grant and the difficulties presented by the current economic downturn. Having referred to a question raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate Strategic Framework) regarding the funding of the Cambridgeshire County Council Accident Safety Scheme on the A141 Kings Ripton Road, Councillor T V Rogers, Executive Member for Finance and Environment reported that the District Council's contribution would be financed from the medium term bids for the Local Transport Plan (30K), Huntingdon Transport Strategy (5K) and Safe Cycle Routes (20K) with the balance of 20K from the LPSA reward funding not yet identified in the draft budget/MTP.

RESOLVED

that the draft budget and Medium Term (MTP) be recommended to full Council as the basis for the development of the 2009/2010 budget, the revised MTP to 2013/2014 and the financial strategy to 2023/2024.

**91. GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT: INITIAL ISSUES AND OPTIONS: PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES CONSULTATION**

Further to Minute No. 08/130 and by way of a report by the Heads of Planning and of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet was invited to consider the content of the Huntingdonshire Gypsy and Traveller Sites Development Plan Document: Initial Issues Consultation Document; Principles and Processes.

Members were advised of the background to the preparation of the document, its main aims and objectives, arrangements to produce a scoping report which will form the basis of an interim sustainability appraisal and to involve Members and Town/Parish Councils in a series of workshops prior to the formal consultation. Having been advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) had considered and supported the Document, the Cabinet

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Issues report for the Gypsy and Traveller Sites Development Plan Document be approved for public consultation;
- (b) that the Heads of Planning Services and of Housing Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, be authorised to finalise the Interim Sustainability Appraisals; and
- (c) that the Heads of Planning Services and of Housing Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, be authorised to make any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations of the Development Plan Document as may be considered necessary.

**92. HOUSING STRATEGY FOR THE CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the content of the third Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Strategy which runs from 2008 – 2011.

By way of background, Members were reminded that the Cambridge Sub-Regional comprises seven local authorities who work in partnership on housing issues that extend across local authority boundaries. The existence of the Strategy satisfies the Audit Commissions criteria for delivering an excellent service and enables

bids for funding for housing purposes to be made at regional level.

Having noted the deliberations of and conclusions reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) on the content of the Strategy and in expressing caution on the achievement of the Action Plan as a consequence of the current economic climate on the housing market, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Strategy 2008 – 2011 be approved.

**93. DECENT HOMES FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

Further to Minute No. 07/76 and by way of a report by the Heads of Housing Services, Environmental Management and Environmental and Community Health Services, (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were advised that the Council had been awarded a capital grant of £162,400 from the East of England Regional Assembly's Housing and Sustainable Communities Panel to help improve non-decent homes in the private sector.

In discussing how the grant should be used, Members were reminded that a previous award had been reserved for thermal efficiency improvement. Despite targeted publicity the take-up of this grant had been lower than anticipated. Nevertheless, Members were advised that the demand for these grants was expected to increase due to rises in fuel cost and the expansion of the scope of the grants. Having considered also the release of £75,000 to enable the Sustainable Homes Retro-fit scheme within the Medium Term Plan to proceed, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the 2008/09 grant of £162,400 be used in the current year for decent homes for vulnerable people – to rectify Category 1 hazards, and to provide thermal efficiency improvements; and that prior year grants be rephased as set out in paragraph 4.6 of the report now submitted for the same purposes;
- (b) that the programme for future years be reviewed once the basis and likelihood of the allocation of grant in future years is known; and
- (c) that £75,000 of the previous year's grant be used in the current year to fund the Sustainable Homes Retro-Fit Scheme.

**94. GREAT FEN PROJECT GOVERNANCE**

Further to Minute No. 07/55 consideration was given to a report by the Director of Environmental and Community Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking approval to enter into a Collaboration Agreement in respect of the Great Fen Project.

Members were advised that the Collaboration Agreement would strengthen the existing Memorandum Agreement by defining the relationship between the partners, setting out the projects aims and objectives and summarising certain managerial/financial matters. Having noted the reservations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) regarding certain aspects of the project and in particular the need for improved transparency and accountability and in noting the work to inform local residents of the project through relevant Parish Councils, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that arrangements for the District Council to enter into a Collaboration Agreement in respect of the Great Fen Project for a renewable five year fixed term be approved; and
- (b) that the detailed content of the draft Agreement be the subject of a future report to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) prior to its submission to the Cabinet.

**95. FREE SWIMMING FOR OVER 60'S AND UNDER 17'S**

A report by the Leisure Centre's Co-ordinator (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) was submitted summarising the Government's incentives for local authorities to offer free swimming for over 60's and under 17's.

In considering the benefits, disadvantages and risks associated with each incentive, along with the allocation being offered to the authority by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Cabinet were advised that free swimming for over 60's was both cost effective and manageable given the numbers likely to take up the offer. However, it was felt that free swimming for under 17's would have a significant impact upon admissions and the remuneration offered was not commensurate with the costs involved in providing the extra staff required for the anticipated demand. Having been advised that these sentiments had been conveyed to the DCMS, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the action taken by the Chief Officer Management Team to adopt the free swimming for the over 60's with effect from 1st April 2009 be endorsed.

Chairman



**CABINET**

**18<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

## **PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members performance management information on "Growing Success" – the Council's Corporate Plan, to Cabinet.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 In September 2008 the Council adopted an updated Plan which includes 37 short, medium and long term objectives to help achieve aims and ambitions for Huntingdonshire's communities and the Council itself. In addition the Council have identified a smaller number (8) of objectives which were considered to be a priority for the immediate future.

### **3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

- 3.1 Progress against all 37 objectives are reported to Chief Officer Management Team quarterly on a service basis. A progress report from each Division includes performance data in the form of achievement against a target for each of the objectives that those services contribute towards. This is supported by narrative on achievements, other issues or risks and budgeting information. In addition, a working group jointly appointed by the Panels continues to meet quarterly to monitor progress in the achievement of the Plan and to consider development issues.
- 3.2 Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels have an important role in the Council's Performance Management Framework and the process of regular review of performance data has been established. In adopting the updated version of Growing Success, and in particular in prioritising objectives, it was intended that Members should concentrate their monitoring on a small number of objectives to enable them to adopt a strategic overview while building confidence that the Council priorities are being achieved.
- 3.3 Executive members requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's deliberations were summarised and appended to this report. However, due to the timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's meeting and the distribution of the Cabinet agenda the Panels comments will now be circulated separately

### **4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

- 4.1 The following performance data is appended for consideration:  
**Annex A** - a summary of achievements, issues and risks relating to the objectives identified by the Heads of Service

**Annex B** - Performance data from services which contribute to the Council objectives. For each measure there is a target, actual performance against target, forecast performance for the next period and a comments field. The data is colour coded as follows:

- green – achieving target or above;
- amber – between target and an “intervention level (the level at which performance is considered to be unacceptable and action is required);
- red – the intervention level or below; and
- grey - data not unavailable

**Annex C** – Council Improvement Plan – a rolling plan of actions identified following internal or external reviews such as the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Use of Resources Assessment and the Annual Governance Statement.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet consider the results of performance for priority objectives.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Performance Management reports produced from the Council’s CPMF software system

Growing Success: Corporate Plan

**Contact  
Officer:**

**Howard Thackray, Policy & Research Manager**

** 01480 388035**

Objective		Comments from appropriate Head of Service
To help mitigate and adapt to climate change	Achievements:	Energy efficiency - Local energy efficiency events/promotions ongoing Renewable energy, HDC Solar grants scheme uptake encouraging (circa 20 installed) Travel and emissions to air - St Ives Outdoor Centre: new cycleway in progress. Island Common cycleway in progress with completion December 2008. Yaxley cycleway and Sallowbush to Oxmoor Lane cycleway works are due to start on site in February 2009 Adapting to climate change - Development of Countywide approach to reporting on NI 188 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
	Issues:	Develop further and convene Environment Forum
	Risks:	Closer integration of key findings of the Carbon appraisal of the Cambridge sub region LTDP and HDC LIF are critical to the delivery of long term carbon reduction measures to meet targets for: energy saving, combating climate change and meeting government targets NI 186 and 188 Ongoing lack of guidance from DEFRA means potential failure to report on NI 187 (fuel poverty).
To promote active lifestyles	Achievements:	Leisure - Swimming, despite the closure in St Neots, exceeds target (53%). Active card holder numbers remain on target and over 61,000 now hold Leisure cards. Leisure Development - Health Walks programme has proved increasingly popular with throughput 52% up on last year, school activities (festivals, clubs and events) are up 20% on last year. Overall throughput in Leisure Development activities as a whole are up 6% on last year and participants are up 23%
	Issues:	Leisure - An 18,000 admissions increase (2%) from last year but a 15,000 shortfall (2%) on half-year target. The extended closure of St Neots Pool (estimated 10,000 visits lost), and the delayed opening of the new facilities at Huntingdon have both contributed to this position Leisure Development Issues over the last few months have included staff turnover, recruitment difficulties, balancing new projects with existing programmes, and delays in lottery funded programmes due to external factors
	Risks:	Leisure - There is concern over effect of credit squeeze with a recent increased number of cancellations of Direct Debit for both swimming lessons and for Impressions/Advantage membership Leisure Development - The longevity of funding streams.
To achieve a low level of homelessness	Achievements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75 households were prevented from becoming homeless in Q2 of the year, compared to 33 in the same period last year.</li> <li>• 55 households were accepted as homelessness in Q2 compared to 34 in the same period last year.</li> <li>• A reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation, from 81 households at the start of the quarter to 77 at the end.</li> <li>• Huntingdon Law Centre has been commissioned to provide a County Court Advice and Support</li> </ul>

		<p>Desk for mortgage repossession hearings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
	Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review of the Register's new priority 'banding' system to ensure that it does not have an impact on the prevention of homelessness or restrict homeless households from moving on from temporary accommodation. To feed into a full review of Home-Link that will be carried out within 12 months of it being launched. This review will be carried out sub regionally.</li> <li>• RSL progressing the search to acquire a move on property to enable the provision of 'crash pad' emergency bed provision for young people at Paines Mill Foyer in St Neots (LAA Reward Grant funding).</li> <li>• Supporting Kings Ripton Court in Huntingdon with a second bid for Housing Corporation capital funding to provide 4 emergency units for young people and improved training facilities</li> <li>• Assess options for remodelling of Coneygear Court to provide self contained units rather than shared facilities.</li> <li>• Assess the options for providing a supported lodgings scheme for young people threatened with homelessness</li> </ul>
	Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National and/or local economic factors could increase demand.</li> <li>• Not delivering increased emergency accommodation facilities at Paines Mill Foyer and Kings Ripton Court in accordance with LAA reward grant.</li> <li>• RSL not successful in Housing Corporation bid to redevelop its homelessness hostel.</li> </ul>
To enable the provision of affordable housing	Achievements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secured £60k Housing Corporation Grant for two units at Whitwell Farm, Offord Cluny (total for year to date £1,178,000)</li> <li>• 50 affordable homes were completed (Total for the year to date 80 +14 Homebuy)</li> </ul>
	Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete village needs survey for Needingworth (delayed from last quarter because the Rural Housing Enabler was not in post)</li> </ul>
	Risks:	<p>Availability of Housing Corporation funding via the bidding process Potential impacts of a prolonged downturn in the housing/development market on the delivery of affordable housing</p>

**Community/Council Aim: A Clean, Green and Attractive place**  
**Objective: To help mitigate and adapt to climate change**

**Division: Planning**

**Divisional Objective: To encourage sustainable forms of development**

Key activity(s) only to deliver service objective	Key Measure	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Include sustainable policies within LDF (to set a sustainable policy framework)	Core Strategy – Adherence to LDF timetable, on target to be adopted by August 2009 (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1	1	Examination in public expected March 09	QRT

**Division: Environmental Management**

**Divisional Objective: To Lower Carbon Emissions**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Complete an annual review & update of Growing Awareness a plan for our environment & ensure that the MTP funding is committed by the Council to deliver on going carbon dioxide reduction	Year 1 actions identified in Environment Strategy on target (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1	1	Work to tie in Environment Strategy indicators with corporate and service plan indicators underway. Review of year 1 progress to be complete by September 2009.	QRT
Identify areas of joint working with stakeholders to help deliver aims of Growing Awareness.	HSP Environment Forum to meet at least twice annually (1=Yes, 0 = No)	1	1	1	Head of Environmental Management considering most appropriate format for reconvening the Environment forum during the current Financial Year.	QRT
Identify opportunities to reduce CO2 emissions from the Council's own operations	Production of HDC Carbon Management Plan by 31st March 2009 (on target 1=Yes, 0 = No)	1	1	1	Draft Carbon Management Plan to be prepared by 1st December 2008, presentation of 'the case for action' to COMT after this date, plan then finalised by 31st March 2009	QRT
	On target (1=Yes, 0=No) to achieve a 6% carbon saving from council estate.(cumulative quarterly measure)	1	1	1	Baseline CO2 production for 2007 has been established, Carbon Management Plan to be in place by 31st March 2009, will include a target for reducing the Council's Carbon emissions by 30% over five years, with year on year reductions identified	QRT
Oversee the implementation of the Environment Strategy projects	% of Environment Strategy Year 1 projects on target	75	77	75	Year one funded Environment Strategy Projects seven out of nine on track.	QRT
Promote energy efficiency and use of renewable energy to householders	Number of tonnes of CO2 saved through installation of energy efficiency measures and renewables in domestic properties (cumulative quarterly measure)				Target still to be agreed will report indicator from third quarter 08/09.	QRT
Promote Energy Efficiency to householders through the Warmer Homes For Life Scheme	% of applications for loft and Cavity Wall Insulation received under the scheme replied to within 5 working days	95	86	95	System now in place to ensure turnaround of applications within target timescale	QRT
Retro fit project - procurement of Housing stock	Retro fit project - procurement of Housing stock by March 09 (on	1	1	1	Short list of 6 potential	QRT

6

	target 1 = Yes, 0 = No)				properties has now been reduced to three possibilities (two of which will be purchased).  Two bedroom 1970s semi-detached, Chalet Bungalow (1970s), Victorian Solid wall property.  Planning to work in partnership with the Buildings Research Establishment (BRE) to deliver the project, tender currently being finalised.	
Undertake risk-based assessment of current vulnerabilities to weather and climate changes and identify adaptation responses	Local risk based assessment complete by Sept 09 to achieve level 1 of NI188 on target (1=Yes, 0 = No)	1	1	1	Plan to prepare a Local Climate Impact Assessment (LCLIP) showing the local impacts of severe weather incidents in the district over the last five years. This study will then inform the preparation of a local risk based assessment of council services, enabling compliance with the indicator.	QRT
Update existing and extend Travel Plans to all of the Council's employment sites and implement to achieve a modal shift away from single occupant car use	% of council employees travelling alone to work by car (previously 65%)	65			Annual measure data to follow	YRL

**Community/Council Aim: Healthy Living**

**Objective: To Promote healthy lifestyle choices**

**Division: Leisure**

**Divisional Objective: To Increase participation in healthy physical activities**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Maintain and improve standard of facilities and match facility provision with usage demand.	Number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council (1.75m per annum) cumulative quarterly target)	887,774	872,809		Admissions lower than expected over Summer holidays. Also late opening of new development at HLC, pool one month closed at SNLC, Astro pitch closed 6 weeks at SNLC.	QRT
Promotion and marketing of available activities	Number of active card holders by March 08	18,587	18,455			QRT

**Division: Lifestyles**

**Divisional Objective: To promote healthy lifestyle choices**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Provide a range of accessible leisure opportunities such as: a Holiday Activity Programme for <17 yrs (SCS measure)	Total throughput of school, outreach and holiday activity Programmes (cumulative quarterly target)	1,675	2,949			QRT
Provide and facilitate arts activities directly and in partnership	Throughput of people (target 8500 per ann) experiencing arts interventions as a result of Arts Service and Partner activities during 2008/09 (cumulative quarterly target)	6750	6993			QRT

Provide targeted schemes to enable vulnerable people to participate in physical leisure activities (inc Exercise Referral, Community Sports and Recreation Project, Community Sports Network and Active Life scheme.) (SCS measure 2.1.5)	Throughput on identified schemes (cumulative quarterly target)	7,750	8,929			QRT
Provide under-represented groups with the opportunity to participate in sport and active recreation (SCS measure)	Total throughput of activity programme for disabled participants and under-represented groups (cumulative quarterly target)	700	858			QRT
Support vulnerable people to be more active, Cardiac Rehabilitation programme and Health walks	Total throughput of the Cardiac Rehabilitation programme and Health walks in Huntingdonshire (cumulative quarterly target)	3600	4,688			QRT

**Community/Council Aim: Housing that meets the local need**

**Objective: To achieve a low level of homelessness**

**Division: Housing**

**Divisional Objective: To achieve a low level of homelessness**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
By helping to prevent people from becoming homeless by housing homeless people where appropriate	Numbers of households (135 annual target) prevented from becoming homeless each year to 2009 (cumulative quarterly target)	115	129		Achieving target will depend on external factors for the rest of the year (i.e. mortgage repossession rates). Having achieved 129 against a notional target for Q2 of 115, we are on track to achieve this target.	QRT
	(NI 156) No. of households living in temporary accommodation	76	77	64	Achieving target will depend on external factors for the rest of the year (i.e. mortgage repossession rates)	

**Community/Council Aim: Developing communities sustainably**

**Objective: To enable the provision of affordable housing**

**Division: Housing**

**Divisional Objective: To enable the provision of affordable housing**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
By maximising the land available for new affordable housing. By working in partnership with Housing Associations to bid for external funding. By making a financial contribution to pay for affordable homes to be built	(NI 155) Number of new affordable homes built by March 2009 (cumulative quarterly target)		64	286	The Countywide NI155 target is presently being disaggregated to district Council level (the target is set as a County target). 286 homes are projected for the district by the end of the financial year 2008/2009	QRT

**Division: Planning**

**Divisional Objective: Maximise provision of affordable housing on relevant development sites**

Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Develop Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD (to set policy framework)/Adopt Planning Obligations SPD (to set specific targets and thresholds)/Negotiate S106 Agreements (to deliver	% of housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable (in CSR)	40			Annual measure data to follow	YRL
	% of housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable (out of CSR)	29			Annual measure data to follow	YRL

required amounts of affordable housing)	% of affordable housing (commitments) on qualifying sites	40	29		<p>**Two of the qualifying sites are the allocation at East of the Railway St Neots, which is coming forward in several parcels over a period of time, and therefore difficult to monitor in quarters – some parcels have 100% affordable and others 0%. Another site had the affordable element agreed at outline stage which pre-dated PPS3 and would have been based on the then target of 29%</p> <p>***Only one qualifying site outside CSR, which had no affordable element as it was agreed the developer will instead provide a library and community meeting rooms (Ramsey Grand)</p>	QRT
---	---	----	----	--	--	-----



Objective		
To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns	Achievements:	Creative Exchange centre opens in November, (contributes towards employment and job growth in St Neots).
	Issues:	Development of Northern Gate (Ramsey Enterprise Centre)) may be affected by the economic climate and reduction in external funding
	Risks:	Contract being negotiated with NWES to manage the Creative Enterprise centre possible risk that year 1 external funding partner targets may not be met.
Effective Partnership	Achievements:	Sustainable Community Strategy and LAA: action/delivery plan phase under way LPSA – funding approved, money to be released quarterly linked to outcomes
	Issues:	SCS - Review underway on governance issues of Strategic Partnerships including implementation of Cambridgeshire Together and LAA structures Need to ensure/co-ordinate
	Risks:	HDC approach and further performance management development needed.
To be an employer people want to work for	Achievements:	Successful appointment to Training Advisor and Training Support Officer posts. Roll out of H & S Strategy & Action Plan under way. Programme agreed for review of People Strategy.
	Issues:	Resources needed to continue operational improvements including policy review and implementation of HR & Payroll systems may not be available. May need support to undertake strategic review of HR.
	Risks:	Vacancies may impact on achievement of improvement programme.
Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants	Achievements:	External Funding: review of strategy approved to maximise funding for Council underway.
	Issues:	Clear external funding action plans need to be identified at service level
	Risks:	Failure to achieve external funding means projects may not be able to proceed

Community/Council Aim: Developing communities sustainably						
Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns						
Division: Planning						
Divisional Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Develop strategic policy to promote well being of our market towns	Adoption of Core Strategy on target to be adopted by August 2009 (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1		Examination in public expected March 09	QRT
Division: Policy and Strategic Services						
Divisional Objective: To promote development opportunities in and around the market towns						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Implementation of the projects (that contribute market town development) in the Local Economy strategy	% of LES actions/milestones on track	90	100	100	Projects include , development of local supply chains, promotion of creative industry, digital needs of businesses and visitor promotion	QRT
Community/Council Aim: To improve our systems and practices						
Objective: Effective Partnerships						
Division: Policy and Strategic Services						
Divisional Objective: Develop and adopt a sustainable community strategy						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Develop and refine SCS action plans by March 09	on target (1=Yes, =No)	1	1	1		QRT
Deliver and measure performance against action plans for 09/10	% of SCS themed group action plans on target to be delivered in 2009/10	70			Will be available to measure from April 2009	QRT
Divisional Objective: Effective Partnership framework						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Develop, implement and monitor strategic/operational partnership review programme	Partnership review programme on target (1=yes, 0=No)	1	1	1	Review programme of Strategic partnerships agreed. Database of Operational/strategic partnerships being developed. Following evaluation of these a review programme will be created. Review of Governance arrangements on HSP completed. Governance review of CT (LAA Board) being implemented.	QRT

Community/Council Aim: To learn and develop						
Objective: To be and Employer People Wish to Work For						
Division: HR						
Divisional Objective: To attract and retain staff						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Policies and procedures that keep up to date with modern working patterns	Review programme on target for adoption by Dec 2008 (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	1	1			YRL
Recruitment package	% of posts filled within one round of recruitment	90	93			QRT
	% of filled posts (for permanent staff) at anyone time	97	99.3			
To ensure a culture in which staff are able to work to their full potential	Biennial staff survey – % level of satisfaction	80			Next survey due Autumn 2009, (71% Autumn 2007)	
Community/Council Aim: To maintain sound finances						
Objective: Maximise business and income opportunities including external funding and grants						
Division: Leisure						
Divisional Objective: Maximise leisure centre income						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Maximise leisure centre income	Actual income received compared to budget (cumulative quarterly target)	£2,384,000	£2,240,000		Late opening of new facilities at HLC (additional building works) and loss of swimming income at St Neots.	QRT
Maintain expenditure within budget	Actual expenditure compared to budget cumulative quarterly target	£3,407,000	£2,824,000			QRT
Division: Policy and Strategic Services						
Divisional Objective: To be aware of appropriate funding opportunities and communicate to the appropriate service						
Key Activity(s) only to deliver service objective:	Key Measure:	Target:	Actual	Forecast	Comments:	
Co ordinate and maintain a system of internal control via funding Database, liaise with appropriate officers, provide funding advice and assistance in compilation of bids, as required	% of bids which attract funding,( year to date)	70	76		21 bids submitted of which 16 were successful	QRT
	External Funding strategy on target to be completed by March 2009 (1=Yes, 0=No)	1	1			QRT

## Improvement Plan

## Annex C

(Note: the Council's Improvement Plan is updated and monitored frequently to reflect the development areas adopted through external inspection and compliance with statutory guidance.)

In progress

Completed

Subject	Area of Focus	Reference	Proposed Action	Outcome	Lead Members and Officer	Progress Sept 2008
Learning & Knowledge	Learning across the Council and making the most of learning opportunities to use research, consultation and knowledge to plan services.	CPA	Adopt systematic approaches to learning and sharing knowledge via the Council's intranet.	Council uses learning and knowledge and research effectively across the organisation to improve the delivery of services and achievement of priorities.	Member: Mike Simpson Officer: Dir Commerce & Technology support Head of IMD	All SharePoint sites have been set-up/migrated to latest version of SharePoint and search facility re-instated.
Capacity and Resources	Sustainability of spending plans, employee capacity, staff turnover.	CPA	Delivery of People Strategy	The Council has the right number of employees with the right skills to meet its priorities and objectives.	Member: Andrew Hansard Officer: Dir Central Services Support: Head of Personnel	People Strategy - 35 actions completed and 15 in progress
Financial Management - The Council manages performance against budgets	The Council should continue to develop its budget monitoring processes to ensure that it is appropriate for the Council and it meets the requirements of the UoR criteria which include the need to ensure monitoring is informed by a risk assessment.	Use of Resources 2007/08	Significant progress has been made but a formal risk assessment will be carried out to focus further developments. (by 31 March 08)			Budgets are already monitored monthly and relevant action is taken to deal with any problem areas. Budgets with more risk have been identified and are reviewed regularly by Managers and Accountants. Quarterly reports to Cabinet include a section on risks to the forecast outturn
Internal Control - Risk Management	Risk management training should be delivered to	Use of Resources 2007/08	All Heads of Service have received training. Further Member training	Raise awareness of risk and risk management		Completed in March 2008

Subject	Area of Focus	Reference	Proposed Action	Outcome	Lead Members and Officer	Progress Sept 2008
	appropriate officers and members prior to 31 March 2008.		provided in December 2007. Any Members who missed both training sessions will be briefed individually. (by 31 March 08)			
Systems of Internal Control	The Council should develop and implement an assurance framework. Once implemented, processes need to be put in place to ensure that this a fluid living document that is updated constantly for any changes in objectives, risks and assurances.	Use of Resources 2007/08	An assurance framework will be developed and agreed by the Corporate Governance Panel on 26 March 2008. (by 31 March 08)	Agreed systems/process in place to provide assurance that the council undertakes it's functions and responsibilities with integrity, openness and accountability.		Work started on enhancing the documents used to support the framework. Expectation that CGP will receive draft at March 2009 meeting.
	Internal Audit Managers opinion on the internal control environment.	Governance Assurance framework	Actions identified in the internal audit action plan are implemented as per the agreed audit timetable.	Improve the overall assurance opinion on the system of Internal control.		Monitored via Performance Management Framework and reported Qrt to COMT. 54% on time at 30 November
Governance	Equalities.	Governance Assurance framework	Implement and monitor Corporate Equality Action Plan.	Facilitate progress in relation to the Local Government Standard for Equalities.		Level 2 of the standard achieved. Progress to level 3 (by 2010) on target
	Consultation.	Governance Assurance framework	Adopt and implement consultation and engagement strategy.	Developing consultation and engagement with local communities.		Strategy adopted in Spring 08 Delivery of Consultation and Engagement strategy action plan
	Complaints System.	Governance Assurance framework	Review existing mechanisms for responding to harassment e.g. Open Out, corporate	A corporate complaints system that will enable transparent non-discriminatory reporting.		The corporate complaints system has been reviewed and is awaiting Management Team

Subject	Area of Focus	Reference	Proposed Action	Outcome	Lead Members and Officer	Progress Sept 2008
			complaints procedure, grievance procedure and Dignity at Work Policy.			approval
	Sustainable Community Strategy.	Governance Assurance framework	Working to develop a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).	Delivery of the outcomes identified in the SCS via the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership.		SCS adopted by Council in Sept 08
Data Quality	Data Quality	Use of Resources/VFM	Action identified in the Data Quality action plan are implemented as per the agreed timetable	To provide reliable, accurate and timely performance information with which to manage services, inform users and account for our performance		Data measure templates updated (not yet by all services) to reflect the contribution to the revised corporate plan

**Overview & Scrutiny (Service Delivery)**  
**Cabinet**

**2 December 2008**  
**18 December 2008**

**Customer Services in St Ives and St Neots**  
**(Report by Head of Customer Services)**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Members will recall that Cabinet at its meeting on 22 February 2007 approved the change in role of the former cash offices in St Ives and St Neots to satellite customer service centres. Since then, the new Customer Service Team has been established, consisting of all front line face-to-face services and the Call Centre, now managed under one Head of Service in accordance with the Customer Service Strategy approved by Members in February 2008.
- 1.2 Part of the Customer Service Strategy required officers to review services being delivered by the St Ives and St Neots Customer Service Centres. This report summarises the findings of a study by the Customer Service Manager and contains recommendations arising from the study.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 At present HDC offer a limited range of services from our existing Customer Service Centres.
- 2.2 Customers who require more than the limited range of services we provide in these two areas have to travel to Huntingdon to access them.
- 2.3 In St Neots the Customer Service Centre is in the Priory Centre and HDC also have a Tourist Information Centre in the Museum. Both locations have no High Street presence. This means that attracting new customers is difficult and customers are unsure of how to find the service centre.
- 2.4 In St Ives, a similar problem exists. Our Customer Service Centre is in the Town Hall, which is rather small and due to it being a listed building and in a conservation area means we are unable to apply any branding to the Centre.
- 2.5 In Huntingdon, Ramsey and Yaxley we provide an excellent range of services in one place tailored to the needs of those local communities. We have a successful presence with big shop windows promoting the range of services that customers can expect to receive which is very eye catching and encourages people to go in, as well as raising HDC's profile within those communities. The latest satisfaction surveys show that 99% of customers in Ramsey and Yaxley and 86% in Huntingdon rate the service as good or excellent. We have limited data on customer satisfaction in St Ives and St Neots as there are fewer customers using the service.

### **3. Results of the research**

3.1 Customer needs and expectations should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure we are continuously improving the delivery of customer services. In order to gain an insight into our customers we have analysed a range of information from surveys, staff consultation and customer profiling to establish if there is a need to change and our findings are as follows.

3.2 Our existing St Neots & St Ives Customer Service Centres service mainly recurrent users. They experience few customers coming in for a first time. As time moves on we can therefore expect the number of users to steadily decline unless we can make our services more relevant to more people. Our intended audience for the suggested improvements are:

- Benefit and Housing customers currently travelling to Huntingdon to access these services. This is estimated to be 3500 - 4000 customers each year from the survey conducted at the Huntingdon Customer Service Centre. (See Annex B).
- Older or less affluent customers who have a greater preference for services to be delivered face to face. The customer profiling data suggests this customer type accounts for approximately 5000 households across St Ives and St Neots. (See Annex C).

3.3 The services they would like to see locally:

- Housing and Benefit advice
- What's on & Tourism East Anglia advice
- Information regarding Planning applications
- The opportunity to speak to Councillors
- Local campaigns to support recycling, how to stay active, safety, money/debt advice
- Work with local partners such as Citizens Advice
- Transport information.

*(See Annex A – for the full survey results)*

### **4. Summary of the proposal**

4.1 In order to address our customer's demands we propose:

- To enable more Customer Service staff trained in housing and benefits to operate from St Neots & St Ives.
- To merge the tourist information work currently delivered by district council staff located at the St Neots Museum into each of the 5 customer service centres.



- Further develop the cross skilling of staff in our customer service centres to address the broader range of services proposed.
  - To further the issue of Councillors Surgeries to the relevant Member Working Group.
- 4.2 This may require some further remodelling of the offices in St Neots & St Ives both of which are less than ideal. We should also investigate an alternative location – approximately 85% of the customers surveyed in St Ives and St Neots would like a central location for the Customer Service Centre. (See Annex A) A separate paper will be developed later should it prove advantageous to relocate these offices to other locations in the centre of St Neots & St Ives.
- 4.3 Whilst considering alternative locations we will have regard to a number of criteria concerning the way we will deliver face-to-face services. These are:
- Services will be located on the ground floor with wheelchair and pushchair access.
  - Separate rooms will be provided for confidential meetings or interviews with customers. Back office specialists will also be able to use these facilities to speak privately with customers.
  - Opening times – We would initially like to open for our existing opening times but conduct further consultation to see if there is a customer demand to open for more days, out of hours and Saturday mornings.
  - Timescales – Realistic timescales to find appropriate premises to deliver the services required and fit out with the relevant technology would mean that this should be able to happen within two years (subject to suitable premises and funding being identified).

## **5. Staffing implications**

- 5.1 Due to the increased number of services that will be offered it is possible the job description for a number of staff would change. This will require support from the HR team and involve consultation with the appropriate staff and ELAG. Depending upon the extent of the changes we may also require the approval of the Employment Panel.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 We do not anticipate any additional costs as a result of increasing the range of services delivered at our existing St Neots & St Ives Customer Service Centres.
- 6.2 The relocation of staff from the St Neots Museum will result in a saving of the annual rental of that unit however this is likely to be offset by the cost of either remodelling the existing St Neots Customer Service Centre or relocating to another site.
- 6.3 Any proposal to relocate the Customer Service Centres will be subject to a detailed financial appraisal at that time.

## **7. Conclusion**

### **7.1 Increasing the range of services would:**

- Improve access to services for approx 32,000 residents in and around St Ives and St Neots. We could expect to see at **least** 4,000 customers across these sites each month.
- Enable partnership working to deal with more customer queries in one place and improve access to services.
- Improve customer service and customer satisfaction.
- Improve the reputation of the Council through a more visible presence.
- Reduce the number of journeys to Huntingdon by approximately 4,350 each year. (This number represents the customers currently travelling from St Ives and St Neots to Huntingdon.)

### **7.2 In the short-term, some progress towards these objectives can be made from existing premises. In addition, further opportunities may arise to relocate to more efficient premises, subject to a more detailed business plan.**

### **7.3 Cabinet should note that the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny (Service Delivery) Panel requested that the third recommendation (below) be amended to include a requirement for the Director of Commerce & Technology to consult relevant Ward Members when considering alternative accommodation.**

## **8 RECOMMENDATION**

### **8.1 It is therefore recommended that:**

- Cabinet note the proposed increased range of services in St Ives and St Neots.
- Cabinet approve in principle to the relocation of the St Neots Tourist Information Centre, merging staff into the main customer service team. What's on information will be provided by the teams in all six customer service locations.
- Cabinet approve the investigation of alternative accommodation in St Neots and St Ives with delegated authority given to the Director of Commerce & Technology in conjunction with the Executive Councillor for Customer Service to complete the move subject to the normal budgetary considerations.

## **Background Information**

Survey Results – St Ives & St Neots

Mosaic Data analysis – St Ives & St Neots

<b>Contact officers</b>	Michelle Greet	Julia Barber
	Customer Services Manager	Head of Customer Services
	01480 375882	01480 388105

## **Appendices**

### **Annex A – Survey results**

Using the opportunity to survey local people about their current use and future aspirations for a Customer Service Centre in St Ives and St Neots a survey was designed and sent to a random selection of 6000 customers in and around these areas. Over 1,600 responses were received and the findings are set out below.

A total of 1051 responses were received from St Ives area

A total of 599 responses were received from St Neots area

#### **Section 1 – The location of the Customer Service Centre**

84.9% of respondents would like the premises to be in the centre of **St Ives**

84.5 % of respondents would like the premises to be in the centre of **St Neots**

#### **Section 2 – Services required**

##### **St Ives**

The most popular services requested to be part of the customer service centre scoring 40% or more were:

Local Information	73.5%
Citizens Advice Bureau	73.5%
Bus/ Rail pass enquiries	71.1%
Transport information	70.7%
Police issues	58.8%
Recycling/Green Waste and refuse	58.2%
Health information	52.2%
Planning issues	46.1%
Leisure/Tourism information	45.4%
District Councillors surgery	44.1%
Council Tax and Housing Benefits	43.7%

##### **Ethnicity**

46% of respondents were White British

Less than 1% of respondents were from other Ethnic backgrounds

Over 50% of respondents chose not to say

##### **Age Group**

18 – 25	1.2%
26 – 35	3.3%
36 – 45	10.7%
46 – 55	11%
56 – 65	17%
Over 65	33.6%

## **Annex A – Survey results**

23.2% chose not to say

### **Employment status**

Full Time Employed	20%
Part Time Employed	2.7%
Self Employed	2.2%
Full Time Education	0.2%
Unemployed	1.7%
Permanently sick	0.3%
Retired	23.5%
Looking after the home	0.7%

48.7% chose not to say

## **Section 2 – Services required**

### **St Neots**

The most popular services requested to be part of the customer service centre scoring 40% or more were:

Citizens Advice Bureau	72.6%
Local Information	71.1%
Transport information	69.1%
Bus/ Rail pass enquiries	63.3%
Recycling/Green Waste and refuse	62.9%
Health information	55.8%
Police issues	54.9%
Leisure/Tourism information	49.9%
Council Tax and Housing Benefits	48.1
District Councillors surgery	40.1%
Planning issues	40%

### **Ethnicity**

46.9% of respondents were White British

Just over 1% of respondents were from other Ethnic backgrounds

Just over 50% of respondents chose not to say

### **Age Group**

18 – 25	0%
26 – 35	0.8%

36 – 45	4.1%
46 – 55	10.8%
56 – 65	19.8%
Over 65	41.1%

## **Annex A – Survey results**

23.4% chose not to say

### **Employment status**

Full Time Employed	13.3%
Part Time Employed	3.8%
Self Employed	2 %
Full Time Education	0 %
Unemployed	0.8%
Permanently sick	0.5%
Retired	30.4%
Looking after the home	0.7%

48.5% chose not to say

### **Survey summary**

The majority of responses were received from Retired resident over 65 and those in Full time employment aged 46 – 65 in St Neots and 36 – 65 in St Ives. Of the responses we received about ethnicity in both areas the majority of responses were from White British residents and only around 1% from other Ethnic backgrounds.

In both St Ives and St Neots a high percentage of responses (over 40%) highlighted a need for local provision of more services provided by HDC, e.g. benefits, planning, council tax queries, refuse queries, district councillor surgeries, bus and rail pass enquiries and other local information.

It also highlighted that residents would like a local presence for services provided by other organisations representing a great opportunity for partnership working. In particular a high percentage of responses (over 50%) were interested in police issues, health information, transport information and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

### **Conclusion**

These survey results in conjunction with other research provides a good starting point for the range of services to be offered locally in St Ives and St Neots but this would need to be reviewed to ensure we are always meeting the needs of the community. The survey only accounts for the opinions of 0.5% of the community in and around St Ives and St Neots and for this reason we have not used these results alone to base our recommendations for improvements.



## Annex B – Visitor Survey

Throughout the month of August 2008, staff from the Huntingdon Customer Service Centre recorded the number of customers travelling from St Ives and St Neots to get an indication of how many journeys could be saved by providing more services into these areas.

The table below shows the results of Huntingdon customers who were asked where they travelled from for the month of August. Not all customers were asked.

	Huntingdon	St Neots	%	St Ives	%
<b>Service</b>					
<b>Payments</b>	221	14	6	26	12
<b>Housing</b>	185	30	16	24	13
<b>Planning</b>	10	1	10	2	20
<b>Self serve PC's</b>	42			1	
<b>Other callers</b>	40	3	7.5	2	5
<b>Benefits</b>	716	70	10	190	26.5
<b>Totals</b>	1214	118	10%	245	20%

By conducting this research we have learnt that as many as 10% of customers had travelled from the St Neots area and 20% from the St Ives area. If this were the case for a whole year it would lead to approximately 1,400 customers travelling from St Neots and approx 2,950 customers travelling from St Ives.

The table above also highlights that a small percentage of customers travel from St Ives and St Neots to make payments when this is a facility available already these areas but this could be for the following reasons:

- Due to our current location customers are not aware of the presence of the Customer Service Centre in these locations and the services provided.
- They were in Huntingdon for other reasons and it was more convenient to use that Customer Service Centre.
- Due to St Ives Customer Service Centre only open 3 days per week.

Staff members in St Ives and St Neots have worked in these locations for many years and offered information regarding the areas for improvement for the areas based upon their experience. They highlighted the following:

- A need for a Benefits officer to work from St Ives and St Neots on set days each week.
- There is no job centre in either location at present and they believe if we could work in partnership with the job centre this would be a real asset to the community.
- Customers are often unsure if they are in the right place and they see very few new customers, as few as 2-3 each working day.

## **Conclusion**

The results above highlight a great opportunity to reduce the number of journeys to Huntingdon and improve access to services for at least 2,950 customers each year by adding Housing and Benefit services to the range of services provided in St Ives and St Neots.

It is clear from the staff consultation that having a Benefits service locally has been something that customers had been requesting for some time. The small number of new visitors suggests that we should review our location and presence.



## **Annex C - Mosaic background information**

In addition to the customer and staff consultation we have also used customer-profiling data from a company called Experian who specialise in using a range of data to effectively profile customers. We have used this data to give us an insight into the types of customers that prefer to use face-to-face services.

### **Mosaic Public Sector Data Sources**

54% of the data used to build Mosaic is sourced from the 2001 Census. The remaining 46% is derived from their Customer Segmentation Database. It includes the edited Electoral Roll, Experian Lifestyle Survey information and Consumer Credit Activity, alongside Post Office Address File, Shareholders Register, House Price and Council Tax information. All of this information is updated annually.

Qualitative research was also undertaken covering the whole of the UK. This validated the accuracy of Mosaic 'on the ground'. Experian employed a number of the UK's leading experts in the field of consumer psychology, human geography and economics to interpret the classification.

This research also links to a number of authoritative sources of the market research, including BMRB's Target Group Index (TGI), The British Crime Survey, MORI's Financial Research, The Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS), Forrester's Technographics and Internet User Monitor, the English and Welsh index of Multiple Deprivation, National Pupil Database, Health Survey for England and Hospital Episode Statistics.

Mosaic Public Sector classifies all citizens in the United Kingdom by allocating them to one of 61 Types and 11 Groups. The Groups and Types in these profiles paint a rich picture of UK citizens in terms of their socio-economic and socio-cultural behaviour.

## Annex C - Mosaic background information



### Mosaic Public Sector Descriptions

- A**
- Type 1 Financially successful people living in smart flats in cosmopolitan inner city locations
  - Type 2 Highly educated senior professionals, many working in the media, politics and law
  - Type 3 Successful managers living in very large houses in outer suburban locations
  - Type 4 Financially secure couples, many close to retirement, living in sought after suburbs
  - Type 5 Senior professionals and managers living in the suburbs of major regional centres
  - Type 6 Successful, high earning couples with new jobs in areas of growing high tech employment
  - Type 7 Well paid executives living in individually designed homes in rural environments
- B**
- Type 8 Families and singles living in developments built since 2001
  - Type 9 Well qualified couples typically starting a family on a recently built private estate
  - Type 10 Financially better off families living in relatively spacious modern private estates
  - Type 11 Dual income families on intermediate incomes living on modern estates
  - Type 12 Middle income families with children living in estates of modern private homes
  - Type 13 First generation owner occupiers, many with large amounts of consumer debt
  - Type 14 Military personnel living in purpose built accommodation

- C**
- Type 15 Senior white collar workers many on the verge of a financially secure retirement
  - Type 16 Low density private estates, now with self reliant couples approaching retirement
  - Type 17 Small business proprietors living in low density estates in smaller communities
  - Type 18 Inter war suburbs many with less strong cohesion than they originally had
  - Type 19 Singles and childless couples increasingly taking over attractive older suburbs
  - Type 20 Suburbs sought after by the more successful members of the Asian community
- D**
- Type 21 Mixed communities of urban residents living in well built early 20th century housing
  - Type 22 Comfortably off manual workers living in spacious but inexpensive private houses
  - Type 23 Owners of affordable terraces built to house 19th century heavy industrial workers
  - Type 24 Low income families living in cramped Victorian terraced housing in inner city locations
  - Type 25 Centres of small market towns and resorts containing many hostels and refuges
  - Type 26 Communities of lowly paid factory workers, many of them of South Asian descent
  - Type 27 Multi-cultural inner city terraces attracting second generation settlers from diverse communities
- E**
- Type 28 Neighbourhoods with transient singles living in multiply occupied large old houses
  - Type 29 Economically successful singles, many living in privately rented inner city flats
  - Type 30 Young professionals and their families who have gentrified terraces in pre 1914 suburbs
  - Type 31 Well educated singles and childless couples colonising inner areas of provincial cities
  - Type 32 Singles and childless couples in small units in newly built private estates
  - Type 33 Older neighbourhoods increasingly taken over by short term student renters
  - Type 34 Halls of residence and other buildings occupied mostly by students

- F** Type 35 Young people renting hard to let social housing often in disadvantaged inner city locations  
 Type 36 High density social housing, mostly in inner London, with high levels of diversity  
 Type 37 Young families living in upper floors of social housing  
 Type 38 Singles, childless couples and older people living in high rise social housing  
 Type 39 Older people living in crowded apartments in high density social housing  
 Type 40 Older tenements of small private flats often occupied by highly disadvantaged individuals
- G** Type 41 Families, many single parent, in deprived social housing on the edge of regional centres  
 Type 42 Families with school age children, living in very large social housing estates on the outskirts of provincial cities  
 Type 43 Older people, many in poor health from work in heavy industry, in low rise social housing
- H** Type 44 Manual workers, many close to retirement, in low rise houses in ex-manufacturing towns  
 Type 45 Older couples, mostly in small towns, who now own houses once rented from the council  
 Type 46 Residents in 1930s and 1950s council estates, typically in London, now mostly owner occupiers  
 Type 47 Social housing, typically in 'new towns', with good job opportunities for the poorly qualified
- I** Type 48 Older people living in small council and housing association flats  
 Type 49 Low income older couples renting low rise social housing in industrial regions  
 Type 50 Older people receiving care in homes or sheltered accommodation
- J** Type 51 Very elderly people, many financially secure, living in privately owned retirement flats  
 Type 52 Better off older people, singles and childless couples in developments of private flats  
 Type 53 Financially secure and physically active older people, many retired to semi rural locations  
 Type 54 Older couples, independent but on limited incomes, living in bungalows by the sea  
 Type 55 Older people preferring to live in familiar surroundings in small market towns  
 Type 56 Neighbourhoods with retired people and transient singles working in the holiday industry












- K** Type 57 Communities of retired people and second homers in areas of high environmental quality  
Type 58 Well off commuters and retired people living in attractive country villages  
Type 59 Country people living in still agriculturally active villages, mostly in lowland locations  
Type 60 Smallholders and self employed farmers, living beyond the reach of urban commuters  
Type 61 Low income farmers struggling on thin soils in isolated upland locations

## Annex C - Mosaic background information

The next two pages show how the population in St Ives and St Neots fit into each group.

### St Neots – Number and percentage of profile types












The table below shows the number and percentage of each profile type for St Neots and its close surrounding areas

Mosaic Public Sector Groups	Your area/file	%
 <b>A</b> Career professionals living in sought after locations	2,193	14.12
 <b>B</b> Younger families living in newer homes	3,891	25.05
 <b>C</b> Older families living in suburbia	2,611	16.81
 <b>D</b> Close-knit, inner city and manufacturing town communities	2,676	17.23
 <b>E</b> Educated, young, single people living in areas of transient populations	589	3.79
 <b>F</b> People living in social housing with uncertain employment in deprived areas	108	0.70
 <b>G</b> Low income families living in estate based social housing	130	0.84
 <b>H</b> Upwardly mobile families living in homes bought from social landlords	1,860	11.98
 <b>I</b> Older people living in social housing with high care needs	449	2.89
 <b>J</b> Independent older people with relatively active lifestyles	775	4.99
 <b>K</b> People living in rural areas far from urbanisation	249	1.60
Total	15531	100

## Annex C - Mosaic background information

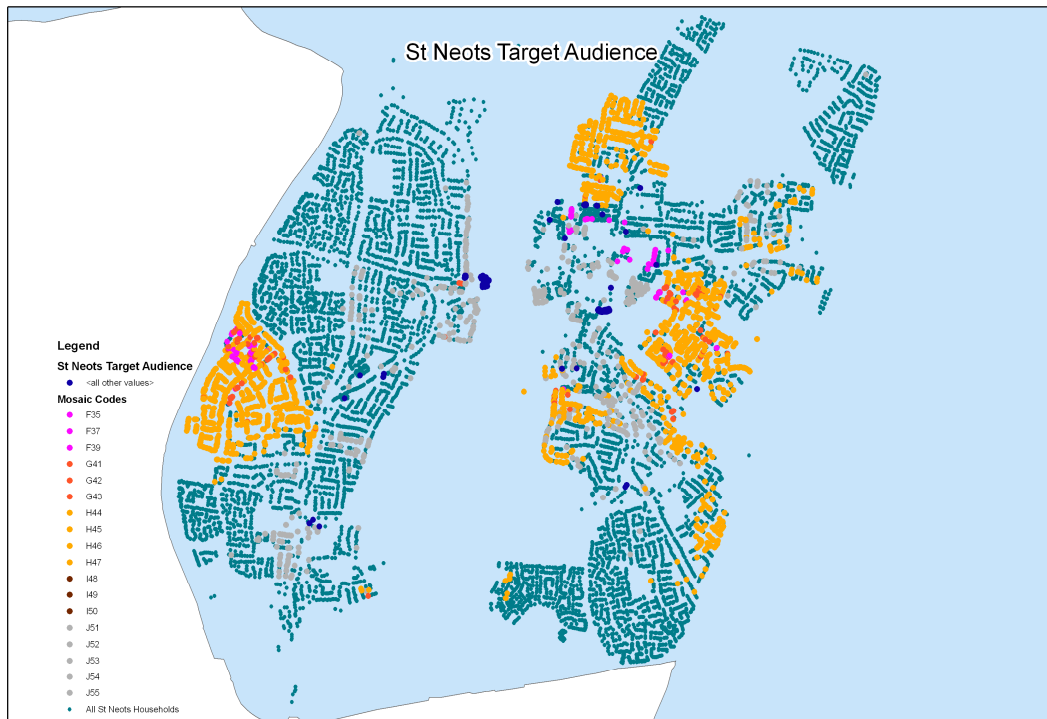
### St Ives – Number and percentage of profile types

The table below shows the number and percentage of each profile type for St Ives and its close surrounding areas

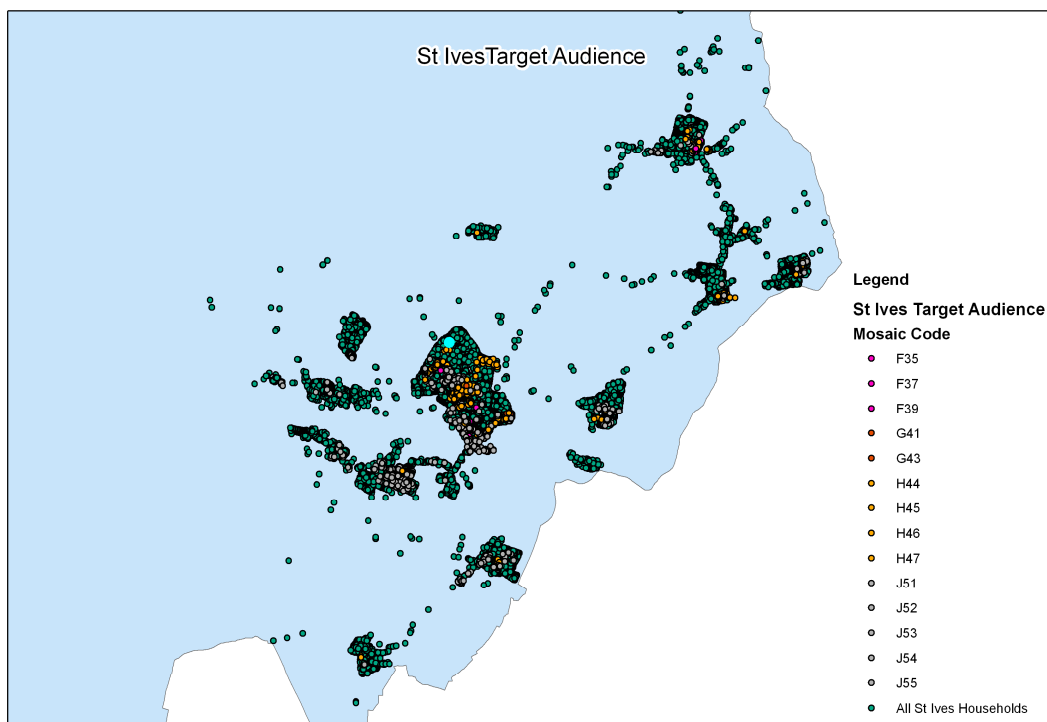
Mosaic Public Sector Groups	Your area/file	%
 <b>A</b> Career professionals living in sought after locations	3,707	22.76
 <b>B</b> Younger families living in newer homes	4,467	27.43
 <b>C</b> Older families living in suburbia	3,369	20.68
 <b>D</b> Close-knit, inner city and manufacturing town communities	1,269	7.79
 <b>E</b> Educated, young, single people living in areas of transient populations	646	3.97
 <b>F</b> People living in social housing with uncertain employment in deprived areas	15	0.09
 <b>G</b> Low income families living in estate based social housing	27	0.17
 <b>H</b> Upwardly mobile families living in homes bought from social landlords	419	2.57
 <b>I</b> Older people living in social housing with high care needs	382	2.35
 <b>J</b> Independent older people with relatively active lifestyles	1,107	6.80
 <b>K</b> People living in rural areas far from urbanisation	871	5.35
Total	16279	100

## Annex C - Mosaic background information

Mosaic – Map showing the location of different customer profiles in St Neots



Mosaic – Map showing the location of different customer profile types in St Ives





## Annex C - Mosaic background information

### Summary

Groups and types that prefer face-to-face services are:

F, G and I – These are the most deprived types with high levels of benefit take up and unemployment etc.

H and J – These groups prefer face-to-face contact in regards certain services. They will probably not be receiving all the same services as groups F, G and I.

More details about the number of these group types in St Ives and St Neots can be found below.

Profile type						
Area	F	G	I	H	J	Total
St Ives	15	27	382	419	1107	1950
St Neots	108	130	449	1860	775	3322

The above table give us an indication of how many households have a preference for face-to-face services. The table indicates that more households have a preference for face-to-face services in St Neots than in St Ives.

Using the customer profiles in Mosaic we have established that 12% of households in St Ives have a preference to receive services face to face and 21% of households in St Neots have a preference to receive service face to face. This is against 7% in St Ives and 11% in St Neots currently accessing the service.

The customer profile types are different in both areas, which is what we would expect. The profile types identified as preferring face-to-face services are generally the most deprived types with high levels of benefit take up and unemployment etc and more of these customer types appear to be in St Neots (F, G & I). The second type was generally from the older community in retirement or close to retirement (H & J), which appear to be the main customer group requiring face-to-face services in St Ives.

### Conclusion

The information we have taken from this data highlights that a significant number of households in St Ives and St Neots have a preference for face-to-face services and the customer most likely to use our services fall into two main categories:

- Deprived customers with high levels of Benefit take up and unemployment
- Older community in retirement or close to retirement

Mosaic data will be very useful to ensure we target them in the right way when promoting an increased range of services. Following the marketing of services in this way we will monitor the number of customers at each site to see if it has increased as a result of more effective marketing.

**CUSTOMER SERVICES IN ST IVES AND ST NEOTS**  
**(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery))**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) considered a report by the Head of Customer Services on the outcome of a review of customer services in St Ives and St Neots. Item No. 4 of the Cabinet Agenda refers.

**2. COMMENTS**

- 2.1 In noting the findings of the review of the services offered in St Ives and St Neots, the Panel expressed general support for the recommendations proposed within the report and made a number of additional comments, which are now set out.
- 2.2 The Panel discussed the evidence provided in the report to support the conclusions reached. A low number of residents have responded to the survey, which formed the study's main information base. Members have stated that even though a standard response rate has been elicited, it is important that the survey data is augmented by other research data.
- 2.3 The Panel has recognised the importance of providing customer services facilities that incorporate a private area to enable customers to talk openly in a confidential environment. Members also have supported a suggestion that the provision of other services and facilities should be considered, such as the Shopmobility Scheme. Members have stressed the importance of providing customer service facilities in an accessible location, which will be highly visible in St Ives and St Neots town centres, so as to attract passing customers.
- 2.4 As part of the discussion the Panel has acknowledged that there will be financial implications for St Neots Museum if the two current offices located in St Neots are amalgamated in one building. Nevertheless, the Panel has concurred with the suggestion that the customer service facility should be in a single unit as it will enable efficiency savings to be achieved.
- 2.5 In deciding on the location of the customer service facility in St Neots, the Panel has suggested that long term planning developments and proposals for St Neots should be taken into account as they are likely to affect how the town centre is construed. The view also has been expressed that users would prefer to see shops in the town centre and that it might be preferable to remain in the Priory Centre area. Moreover the Panel has suggested that clarification should be sought regarding the Town Council's position on the District Council's facility, which is currently located in the Priory Centre.
- 2.6 Generally, Members have stressed the importance of consulting ward councillors when alternative accommodation for the customer service centres is being considered and of informing them of proposals as they develop. In

addition, comment has been made that the option to pursue alternative accommodation is timely as it will enable negotiations on rent and rates to be undertaken with prospective landlords in a potentially advantageous market for the Council.

- 2.7 A further suggestion has been made that, given that they attract a high number and diverse range of customers, relocating the customer service centres to the Leisure Centres should be included in the range of options considered as part of the proposals.
- 2.8 Looking to the future, it has been suggested that the provision of outreach services in larger villages should be investigated as part of the proposals. Existing customer service facilities are already viewed positively by residents of surrounding villages. It was held to be important that this is done as part of the investigations as it might affect how they materialise and, as the St Ives office currently opens on three days each week, there might be scope to provide a full time service but use the remaining two days to provide a travelling service.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) as part of its deliberations on the report by the Head of Customer Services.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008.

**Contact Officer: Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer  
(01480 388006)**

COMT  
Cabinet

2 December 2008  
18 December 2008

## **DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD (Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council consulted on Issues and Options for the Development Control Policies DPD during May, June and July 2007 in conjunction with those for the Core Strategy to give stakeholders an initial picture of how the two documents would interrelate. Since then the Core Strategy has been given precedence leading to its submission in July 2008. With this in place the framework is now available in which to generate reasonable options for the Development Management DPD. The representations made on the Issues and Options Document have been taken into account in preparation of the attached document.

### **2 IMPACT OF NEW REGULATIONS**

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 came into force in June altering the procedures for public participation in the preparation of DPDs. The former Regulation 25 and 26 stages, commonly referred to as Issues and Options and Preferred Options, have been amalgamated into a single phase of ongoing public engagement in the development of any DPD. This amended Regulation 25 stage may encompass a variety of activities resulting in iterative changes to the proposed content of the DPD with no set time periods for consultation. This is expected to be the main phase of consultation and engagement where stakeholders are involved in the evolution of the DPD.
- 2.2 Submission arrangements have also been changed. Once the local authority is satisfied that there has been adequate public engagement in preparation of the DPD a Proposed Submission Document may be published with a formal consultation period of at least six weeks. Representations are invited on this which are intended to focus on issues of soundness, with the presumption that issues of content have been resolved through public participation under the amended Regulation 25 stage. Once the representations have been reviewed and summarised all documentation should be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

### **3 CONTENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS REPORT**

- 3.1 The draft document sets out the Council's detailed policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire, complementing the strategic framework established in the Core Strategy. In many instances it also sets out reasonable alternatives on how the draft policies might be taken forwards.

- 3.2 At present the draft document contains policies promoting sustainable development, housing, prosperous communities and protecting and enhancing the environment. Through this document stakeholders will be invited to engage further with the Council on the range of policies proposed and their specific content.
- 3.3 Many of the draft policies have evolved from those in the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement (2007). The draft policies reflect the representations received during the Issues and Options consultation and the Initial Sustainability Appraisal. They have also been updated to reflect changes in national guidance.

#### **4 NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Further public engagement on the Development Management DPD: Development of Options document and its accompanying sustainability appraisal will take place from January 2009 with a wide range of stakeholders. The proposed submission DPD will not be published until after the Inspector's report into the Core Strategy has been received.

#### **5 RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
1. Agree the content of the Development Management DPD: Development of Options for the purposes of consultation;
  2. Agree the content of the Sustainability Appraisal for the purposes of consultation; and
  3. Agree that any minor additional editing and updating which may be needed prior to publication be agreed by the Head of Planning Services after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Submission Core Strategy 2008  
Development Control Policies DPD Issues and Options Report 2007  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Study  
Employment Land Review  
Huntingdonshire Retail Study Update 2007  
Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment  
Green Infrastructure Strategy – Cambridgeshire Horizons

**Contact Officer: Clare Bond, Planning Policy Team Leader**  
**☎ 01480 388435**

# Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

# Contents

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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



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



## 1 Introduction

### The Purpose of this Document

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

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

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

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

# 1 Introduction

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

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

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

## Consultation on the LDF

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

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

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

## Community Engagement

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

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

**1.11** The key findings from the consultation were:

---

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

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

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

### LDF Community Engagement

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

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

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

### Consultation on Issues and Options 2007

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

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

### Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

---

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

# 1 Introduction

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

## Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

## Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal

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

## Habitat Regulations Assessment

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

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

---

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

### Design Quality

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

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

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

#### Design Quality

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

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

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

#### Street Scene

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

### Draft Policy: Design Quality

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

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

### Alternative Options

**2.10** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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



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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 1 Key Sources for Design Quality**

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

### Amenity

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

#### Draft Policy: Amenity

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

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

### Alternative Options

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 2 Key Sources for Amenity**

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

## Accessibility, Adaptability and Security

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: Accessibility, Adaptability and Security**

The location and design of new development should:

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

### **Alternative Options**

**2.31** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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

---

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 3 Key Sources for Accessibility, Adaptability and Security**

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

### Sustainable Travel

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

#### 2.38 Rights of way and other public routes

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

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

### Transport impacts

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Sustainable Travel

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

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

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

### Alternative Options

**2.43** Following consultation the options available were identified as:

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 4 Key Sources for Sustainable Travel**

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

## Parking Provision

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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



## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

### **Draft Policy: Parking Provision**

Development proposals will be considered acceptable where:

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

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

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

### **Alternative Options**

**2.60** Following consultation two alternative options were identified:

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

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

### **Summary of Sustainability Appraisal**

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

**Table 5 Key Sources for Parking Provision**

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

### Development in the Countryside

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

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

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

#### Options Development

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

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

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

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

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

#### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

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

### **Draft Policy: Development in the Countryside**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Conington Airfield;

Littlehey Prison;

Wood Green Animal Shelter; and

Huntingdon Racecourse

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

### Alternative Options

**2.75** Following the consultation three alternative options have been identified:

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

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 6 Key Sources for Development in the Countryside**

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

### Rural Buildings

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

**Question:** What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: Rural Buildings**

#### ***Reuse of Rural Buildings for Business Purposes***

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

- i. the building is substantially intact or of established historic or architectural value and is of permanent and substantial construction;
- ii. the building is not in an isolated or remote location;
- iii. the proposal does not include substantial alteration of the building;
- iv. the proposal does not involve an increase in floorspace.
- v. the employment generated is of a scale and use that is consistent with the specific rural location;
- vi. proposals involving significant numbers of employees or visitors is, or can be made to be, accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, to a Key Service Centre or Market Town;
- vii. retail uses that involve the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding, are less than 250m<sup>2</sup> (gross) in floorspace; and
- viii. the proposal would not involve a substantial increase in car-borne or service vehicle traffic.

#### ***Reuse of Rural Buildings for Residential Uses***

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### ***Replacement of Rural Buildings***

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

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

### **Alternative Options**

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

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



## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 7 Key Sources for Rural Buildings**

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

## Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

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

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

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

**2.104** Where specific trees or groups of trees are of particular value (such that their removal would have a significant impact upon the local environment and its enjoyment by the public), and are potentially under threat, the Council will make Tree Preservation Orders to protect them. Where trees are covered by TPOs, the draft policy is intended to safeguard them from damage or destruction unless there are overriding reasons for the development to go ahead.

### Draft Policy: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

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

Development proposals should not:

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

unless:

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

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

### Alternative Options

**2.105** Following consultation the options have been identified as:

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Open Space and Recreational Land

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

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Options Development

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

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

**Option:** Policies will protect open space and recreation land.

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: Open Space and Recreational Land**

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

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

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

There should be no harm to spaces which:

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

### **Alternative Options**

**2.119** Following consultation the options identified are:

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

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

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

### **Summary of Sustainability Appraisal**

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

**Table 9 Key Sources for Open Space and Recreational Land**

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

### Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

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

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

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

#### Options Development

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

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

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

#### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

#### Further Development of Options

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



exploitation of renewable energy sources is central to the efforts to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and achieve reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Research has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in the area, especially from biomass, waste, wind and solar sources.

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

**2.130** Government policy encourages renewable energy schemes unless the environmental impacts would outweigh the wider social, economic and environmental advantages that stem from exploiting generation potential. The criteria suggested in the draft policy are intended to act as safeguards to ensure the risk of adverse impacts is minimised. A range of issues will need to be considered, including the effects on amenity such as noise generation, shadow flicker and electromagnetic disturbance as well as the impact on the natural and built environment.

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

**2.132** Some types of renewable energy technology are developing rapidly, and it is recognised that sites and equipment may become obsolete. It is considered reasonable to require arrangements for the removal of any equipment should it cease to be operational in order to prevent unnecessary environmental intrusion. Where sites become redundant they should be returned to a state agreed by the Council. In appropriate circumstances this may include the creation of priority habitat types.

#### **Draft Policy: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy**

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Alternative Options

**2.133** Following consultation the alternative options have been identified as:

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 10 Key Sources for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy**

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

### Carbon Dioxide Reductions

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

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

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



## Options Development

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

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

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

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

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

## Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

## Further Development of Options

**2.142** Climate change caused by CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions is predicted to give rise to rising sea levels and increased risks of flooding which pose a significant threat to the District. Therefore, it is important for the District to contribute to reducing this risk. Together with energy conservation measures, the exploitation of renewable energy sources is central to the government's efforts to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and achieve reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Research has demonstrated significant potential for renewable energy generation in the area, especially from biomass, waste, wind and solar sources.

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

**2.145** It is clear from national planning policy that tackling climate change is a core activity for the development plan system. The East of England Plan sets out the approach that should be taken across the region to energy reduction in new development in policy ENG1. The policy also sets out how local councils should address this through their local development documents. While ENG1 requires a reduction in energy to be achieved through the use of renewable and low carbon technologies it is the Council's view that a more direct approach is appropriate. The Council therefore will require a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

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

**2.147** The Council has adopted the same approach to the threshold for commercial development as it has for other policies. Due to the size of development that is considered to be significant a threshold of 500m<sup>2</sup> rather than the standard definition of major development (1000m<sup>2</sup>) will be used. For more detail on the justification for this approach please see 'Office Development'.

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

### **Draft Policy: Carbon Dioxide Reductions**

All units in developments of 10 or more dwellings or non-residential developments of 500m<sup>2</sup> or more should provide a reduction of at least a 10% in the carbon dioxide emissions from the development's predicted energy use, by way of renewable or low carbon technologies. Such provision should be made on site where possible, however locally based off site systems will be considered favourably where a higher percentage of carbon dioxide is saved.

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

For non-domestic developments where the end user (and consequently the predicted energy requirements and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) are not known, an approach that assumes the most likely use should be taken. Where several different end users are likely or an alternative approach is likely to be proposed, discussions should be undertaken with the Council before submission of a planning application.

### **Alternative Options**

**2.149** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 11 Key Sources for Carbon Dioxide Reductions**

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

### Flood Risk

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

**2.158** The Environment Agency publishes Indicative Floodplain Maps of vulnerable low lying areas to show where the annual likelihood of flooding is greater than 1% in any year for fluvial inland flooding (equivalent to 1 flood event in 100 years). These maps do not take into account any existing flood defences but show what land could be vulnerable to flooding at this frequency and are thus termed the indicative floodplain maps. The District Council completed a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in 2004 to supplement this information. Recommended methodology on preparing these has since changed and a review is being undertaken. The revised SFRA is expected to be published soon and will be more closely aligned to the maps produced by the Environment Agency. Given that changes are likely to be made to the revised SFRA in order to make it more accurate and in line with EA advice, this policy will be revised for pre-submission. Applicants should always refer to the 'Proposed List of Local Requirements' (available on the Council's website) for more information on what is required prior to submitting a planning application.

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

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

**Draft Policy: Flood Risk**

Development proposals should:

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

**Alternative Options**

**2.161** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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

**Summary of Sustainability Appraisal**

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

**Designations for Proposal Map**

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

**Table 12 Key Sources for Flood Risk**

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Water Management

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Water Management**

Development proposals should:

- a. not have an adverse impact on, or result in an unacceptable risk to the quantity or quality of water resources;
- b. through the use of permeable surfaces, sustainable drainage systems, green roofs and other features ensure that water run off levels are maintained at pre-development levels wherever possible; and
- c. make the most efficient use of water resources by achieving water use minimisation:
  - i. For all residential development proposals under the Code for Sustainable Homes achieve at least a:
    - 1 star rating immediately
    - 3 star rating from April 2010
    - 6 star rating from April 2016
  - ii. Achieve an appropriate reduction in potable water use in non domestic buildings covering more than 500m<sup>2</sup>

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Alternative Options

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 13 Key Sources for Water Management**

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

### Air Quality Management

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

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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



### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Air Quality Management

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

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

### Alternative Options

**2.186** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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

## 2 Promoting Sustainable Development

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 14 Key Sources for Air Quality Management**

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

### Housing Density

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

**Question:** Which option do you prefer and why?

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Housing Density

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

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

## Alternative Options

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

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

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Table 15 Key Sources for Housing Density

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

## Housing Mix

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

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

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

## Options Development

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

**3.29** Some Parish Plans and Village Design Statements detail local aspirations for housing supply, often in regard to the mix of sizes considered desirable, the need for suitable homes for elderly residents to downsize into and homes which facilitate local young people remaining close to where they grew up. Such documents can provide a useful indication of local opinion on a desirable mix of housing sizes and types.

### **Draft Policy: Housing Mix**

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

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

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

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

### **Alternative Options**

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 16 Key Sources for Housing Mix**

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

### Homes in the Countryside

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

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



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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Question:** What criteria should be used to assess proposals?

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Homes in the Countryside**

##### ***New dwellings***

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

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

##### ***Extension to, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings***

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

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

##### ***Outbuildings***

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

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

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

### **Relaxation of occupancy conditions**

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

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

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

## **Alternative Options**

**3.47** The alternatives have been identified as:

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

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

## **Summary of Sustainability Appraisal**

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

**Table 17 Key Sources for Homes in the Countryside**

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

## **Housing with Care**

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Options Development

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

#### Retirement Housing

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

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

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

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

#### Nursing and Care Homes

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

#### Retirement Housing

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

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

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

### **Nursing and Care Homes**

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

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

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

### **Further Development of Options**

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

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

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Draft Policy: Housing with Care

Proposals for the development of housing with care will:

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

### Alternative Options

Two reasonable alternatives have been identified:

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

**Table 18 Key Sources for Housing with Care**

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



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

## Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

**3.70** This policy was not assessed within the SA process.

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: Outdoor Sports and Recreation Facilities and Open Space**

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



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

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

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

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

## Alternative Options

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

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

## Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities

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

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

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

## 3 Delivering Housing and a Healthy Living Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Options Development

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

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

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

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

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

### Alternative Options

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Table 20 Key Sources for Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

#### Office Development

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

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

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

#### Options Development

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

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

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

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

#### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

4.4 Responses were evenly split between those preferring a lower threshold of 0.5ha or 500m<sup>2</sup> and those preferring a threshold of 1ha or 1000m<sup>2</sup> (in line with DCLG definition). However, recurrent concerns included the need for all development to be located so as to reduce the need to travel and to protect the rural character of the District.

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

#### Further Development of Options

4.6 As part of work for the original Core Strategy, planning applications for employment uses were analysed in order to get a view about what size of development was significant for Huntingdonshire. The analysis concluded that as there were only limited numbers of applications for development over 1000m<sup>2</sup> a lower threshold would be more appropriate. It further concluded that a 500m<sup>2</sup> threshold would be appropriate to distinguish those proposals that would have a significant impact. The 500m<sup>2</sup> threshold was therefore put forward.

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Office Development**

Proposals for large office developments (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land should be located within the defined limits of the town centres wherever possible. Such developments may be acceptable on sites within the built up areas of the Market Towns where it can be demonstrated that:

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

Proposals for other office developments (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be allowed within the existing built up areas of the Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements subject to environmental and traffic considerations and other policies of the LDF.

#### **Alternative Options**

**4.11** The alternatives are:

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

**4.13** The higher threshold of 1000 m<sup>2</sup> has not be used as, when set in the Huntingdonshire context, this would provide inadequate control as it would limit the use of the policy to very few proposals.

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Designations on Proposals Map

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

**Table 21 Key Sources for Office Development**

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

## Industrial and Warehouse Development

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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



### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

**4.19** There was an even split of responses between those indicating support for a threshold of 0.5ha/ 500m<sup>2</sup> to reflect the nature of local employment premises and those who supported use of the DCLG definition of major employment development being 1 ha/ 1000m<sup>2</sup>. Support was also expressed for the principle of expansion of the manufacturing employment base.

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

### Further Development of Options

**4.21** The draft policy defines large industrial or warehouse development as that which is more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace or on a site of more than 0.5ha. This is preferred to the larger threshold of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or 1ha because in Huntingdonshire only a few proposals are above the larger threshold.

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

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Location of Industrial and Warehouse Development

Proposals for large industrial or warehouse development (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable subject to environmental and traffic considerations where the site is within:

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

Proposal for other industrial or warehouse development (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable, subject to environmental and traffic considerations, in the above locations or where the proposal:

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Industrial or warehouse proposal within the established industrial estate area of Little Staughton Airfield will not be permitted if they would increase the net floorspace above 18,520m<sup>2</sup>.

### Alternative Options

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

**Table 22 Key Sources for Industrial and Warehouse Development**

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

### Redevelopment of Commercial Sites

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

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



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

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### **Draft Policy: Redevelopment of Commercial Sites**

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

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

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

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

### **Alternative Options**

**4.38** The alternative options have been identified as:

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Designations for Proposals Map

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

**Table 23 Key Sources for the Redevelopment of Commercial Sites**

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

### Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

**4.46** The Issues and Options indicated that there were no reasonable alternatives to the general policy approach to locating tourist facilities in the most sustainable locations as this was required by government guidance. The alternatives of defining significant development as that which is over 500m<sup>2</sup> in floorspace or a site of over 0.5ha or the national definition of major development of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace or sites over 1ha were offered.

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

**4.51** The draft policy contains a threshold of 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace or 0.5 ha site area, in common with the approach to other policies and supported by most respondents. The draft policy primarily addresses tourist accommodation and the impact of leisure developments on the landscape. It promotes locating tourism facilities in the most sustainable places to increase accessibility by non-car modes. In response to the request about Huntingdon Racecourse, the policy allows for the expansion of existing tourist developments where there is a need for additional space, and the draft policy on development in the Countryside makes specific allowance for operational development there.

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions**

Proposals for large tourist developments (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable where:

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

Proposals for other tourist developments (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable in the above locations or where the proposal:

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Alternative Options**

**4.54** The options identified are therefore:

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

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 24 Key Sources for Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions**

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

### Farm Diversification

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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



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

### Further Development of Options

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

**4.64** Diversification will, in most cases, involve changing the use of land and/or re-using (or redeveloping) existing buildings. Development on new sites will be discouraged unless it enables the clearance and replacement of a badly-sited or inappropriate structure or is small in scale and carried out in the most environmentally sensitive manner.

#### Draft Policy: Farm Diversification

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

- a. the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings on the holding for the intended use is not feasible, or an opportunity exists to demolish an existing structure and re-build in a more appropriate location; and
- b. the proposed floorspace does not exceed 500m<sup>2</sup>; or
- c. in the case of retail uses the proposed floorspace does not exceed not more than 250m<sup>2</sup>, and not more than 20% of the sales floorspace involves the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding.

### Alternative Options

**4.65** The options identified are therefore:

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

**Table 25 Key Sources for Farm Diversification**

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

### Retail and Leisure Development

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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



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

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

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

#### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Retail and Leisure Developments

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

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

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Alternative Options

**4.80** Following consultation the options have been identified as:

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Designations for Proposals Map

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

**Table 26 Key Sources for Retail and Leisure Development**

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

### Town Centres and Retail Designations

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

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

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: Town Centres and Retail Designations**

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

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

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

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

Within the primary shopping area of Ramsey the loss of any ground floor town centre use as defined in PPS6 to a non-town centre use will be resisted to protect the vitality and viability of Ramsey as a Market Town. Development proposals involving such a loss will be required to provide evidence that reasonable steps have been taken to market the property for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its town centre use.

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

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

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

### Alternative Options

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Designations for Proposals Map

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

**Table 27 Key Sources for Town Centres and Retail Designations**

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

### Key Local Services and Facilities

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

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

## 4 Supporting Prosperous Communities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

### Options Development

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

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

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

**4.106** The approach was well supported by the consultation responses.

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Key Local Services and Facilities**

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



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

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

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

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

## Alternative Options

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

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

## Table 28 Key Sources for Key Local Services and Facilities

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

#### Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species

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

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

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

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

#### Options Development

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

##### Biodiversity

**Issue:** The need to promote biodiversity within development proposals.

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

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

##### Protected Habitats and Species

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

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

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

#### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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



### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Draft Policy: Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species**

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

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

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

### Alternative Options

**5.11** Following consultation two alternatives were identified:

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

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

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

### Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

### Designations for Proposal Map

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

---

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

**Table 29 Key Sources for Biodiversity and Protected Habitats and Species**

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

### The Great Fen Project

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

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

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

#### Options Development

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

#### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

#### Further Development of Options

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

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Draft Policy: The Great Fen Project**

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

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

## Alternative Options

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

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

## Designations for Proposal Map

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

**Table 30 Key Sources for the Great Fen Project**

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

## Landscape Character

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

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

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

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

## Options Development

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

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

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

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

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

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

#### Draft Policy: Landscape Character

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

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

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



## Alternative Options

**5.41** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

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

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

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

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

## Designations for Proposal Map

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

**Table 31 Key Sources for Landscape Character**

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

## Heritage Assets

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

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

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Options Development

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

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

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

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

### Further Development of Options

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

#### *Conservation areas*

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

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

**5.54** It is particularly important that traditional features that contribute to their overall character are recognised and respected in development proposals. At the same time, new development does not have to mimic the past: carefully considered, high quality designs that provide a successful contrast with their surroundings can preserve and enhance character, as well as schemes that employ authentic historical forms and features. Careful treatment of the setting of a building is vital to ensure that new development complements and enhances its surroundings. Inappropriately large buildings and extensions and infilling leading to the loss of important open spaces, will be resisted.

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



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

### *Historic Parks and Gardens*

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

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

### *Listed Buildings*

**5.59** A key feature of the District's heritage are listed buildings of which there are nearly 2,800 in the District. Buildings are listed by English Heritage in recognition of their special architectural or historic interest and any works which affect the character of a listed building requires Listed Building Consent. The listing of buildings gives an indication of their importance. Grades I and II\* indicate that a building is of great importance with Grade I designating a building of national importance and Grade II\* covering buildings of more than local importance. The main aim of listing is to prevent alterations which are detrimental to the special character of a building or structure, including the interior. The Council also maintains a Listed Buildings at risk register to ensure that these important buildings do not fall into disrepair and encourages their repair and reuse.

### *Scheduled Ancient Monuments*

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

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

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

### Draft Policy: Heritage Assets

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

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

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

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

and any subsequent statements

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

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

## Alternative Options

**5.63** The reasonable alternatives identified following consultation were:

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

**5.64** Given the quantity and quality of historic assets in the District the alternative option of relying on national policy and guidance is not considered to be appropriate and is strongly opposed by English Heritage. There are important local features, for example, traditional shopfronts which contribute to the character and quality of the environment of Huntingdonshire's Market Towns and larger villages, which need to be covered by a locally specific policy. Developing a local policy enables such local issues to be addressed and also enables reference to Conservation Area Character Statements and Historic Parks and Gardens in the District to be made.

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

**5.65** Clearly sustainable in terms of preserving the character and setting of conservation areas. The important contribution that open space makes to the setting and character of conservation areas is mentioned within the supporting text.

## Designations for Proposals Map

**5.66** The boundaries of conservation areas and where Scheduled Ancient Monuments are located need to be defined on the Proposals map.

**Table 32 Key Sources for Conservation Areas**

National	Buildings in Context, English Heritage/ CABE (2001)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV6
Local	Local Plan policies: En5, En6, En7, En8, En9 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Enhance access to heritage; Protect and enhance urban and rural character. Submission Core Strategy policy: CS1 Conservation Area Character Statements, HDC (Various) Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment, HDC (2007) Huntingdonshire Design Guide, HDC (2007)

## Public Art

**5.67** Developing a policy for public art supports the delivery of Core Strategy objectives:

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

**5.68** The policy will support Core Strategy policies CS1 Sustainable Development in Huntingdonshire and CS10 Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements.

## Options Development

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

## 5 Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Consultation Responses and Initial Sustainability Appraisal

**5.70** There were no consultation responses received on the issue of public art and the matter was not assessed in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal.

### Further Development of Options

**5.71** Cambridgeshire Horizon's *Arts and Culture Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (2006)* aims to ensure that arts and cultural facilities are improved by opportunities created by new developments. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Arts Services Managers then developed a *Public Art Implementation Framework (2007)* which was endorsed by the District Council in May 2007. It seeks to promote the creation of original artwork of the highest standard, a high quality and well-designed public realm and involvement in artistic activity that addresses inclusion, creativity, diversity and innovation.

**5.72** The provision of public art assists in enhancing the distinctiveness of developments and can aid the establishment of a sense of place and identity. It aids in enhancing the appearance of both buildings and their setting, the quality of the environment and can help promote culture and civic pride. Public art may take many forms including art installations and sculptures, seating, signage and landscape design or it may be integrated as a functional element of a development through metalwork, lighting, floor and window designs.

**5.73** The District Council will encourage the provision of new works of art as part of any development scheme and, in determining planning applications, will consider the contribution made by any such works to the appearance of the scheme and to the amenities of the area.

**5.74** The District Council would encourage the involvement of a lead artist(s) at an early stage of the design of relevant new developments. This will ensure that any artistic feature is incorporated into the scheme from the outset, rather than being added as an after-thought. The type and suitability of the artistic feature(s) incorporated will depend on the location and type of development proposed. Typically a contribution equivalent to at least 1% of the total cost of the development would be appropriate. An element for future maintenance may be required dependant upon the nature of the artwork proposed to ensure that it is maintained in a safe and attractive condition.

**5.75** The draft policy builds upon CS10 in the Core Strategy and sets out in more detail the circumstances in which public art provision will be expected and the mechanisms by which it will be achieved. Further details on provision of public art within development schemes will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Document.

#### Draft Policy: Public Art

Development proposals comprising large, moderate or minor scale residential schemes or 500m<sup>2</sup> or more of commercial, retail, leisure and institutional buildings should make provision for the commissioning and installation of publicly accessible art, craft and design works. Contributions and commuted maintenance sums for up to 10 years will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement where appropriate.

### Alternative Options

**5.76** The provision of public art is not covered adequately in national guidance and therefore the Council considers it is necessary to have a local policy to ensure adequate weight is accorded to the issue reflecting the Council's commitment to ensuring new development is of a high quality and is locally distinctive. The alternative option would be to have a corporate policy on public art. However, a DPD policy is more likely to successfully deliver public art within development schemes.

## Summary of Sustainability Appraisal

**5.77** The draft policy is sustainable and is in accordance with government guidance on urban design. The policy ensures that provision for public art will be made as part of large, moderate or minor scale residential developments and commercial developments over 500m<sup>2</sup>. It is locally specific and covers an area not well covered by national guidance.

**Table 33 Key Sources for Public Art**

National	Buildings in Context, English Heritage/ CABI (2001) By Design, DETR (2000)
Regional	East of England Plan policy: ENV6 Arts and Culture Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridge Horizons, 2006) Public Art Implementation Framework (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Services, 2007)
Local	Local Plan policy: R18 Sustainable Community Strategy outcome: Provide arts and entertainment including exhibition space Submission Core Strategy policies: CS1 & CS10 Cultural Strategy 2007-2010, HDC (2007)

### 6 Monitoring

**6.1** Monitoring and review are key aspects of the development plan system with its emphasis on delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities. Local Development Frameworks should be regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that components of the framework are updated to reflect changing circumstances nationally, regionally and locally. In the Core Strategy there should be a focus on implementation, setting out agreed delivery mechanisms to ensure that policies achieve desired results in the required time frame. However for Development Management the emphasis is more focused on site specific control of development and less focused on implementation and delivery. Monitoring will evaluate progress being made towards delivering the spatial vision and objectives through the implementation of policies. The results of such monitoring will provide the basis for a review to be undertaken.

**6.2** In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) containing an assessment of Local Development Document preparation against milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS), and the extent to which policies set out in Local Development Documents are being achieved and targets being met. The AMR will be the main mechanism for assessing the LDF's performance and effect. As well as linking with spatial objectives and policies, indicators in the AMR will also link to sustainability appraisal objectives in order to identify the significant effects of policy implementation. If, as a result of monitoring, areas are identified where a policy is not working, or key policy targets are not being met, this may give rise to a review of the Development Management DPD or other parts of the LDF.

**6.3** For the Proposed Submission DPD the Council will develop a monitoring framework that sets out performance indicators and targets which will form the basis for identifying where the DPD needs to be strengthened, maintained or revised.

### 7 Topics not taken forward from Issues and Options

**7.1** This section looks at the issues and topic areas that the Council has decided it will not take forward from Issues and Options unless sufficient reasons are expressed through further public participation for taking a different approach. In most cases this is because the issue is covered by national planning policy and there is considered to be little or no requirement for a locally specific policy.

#### **Draft Objectives**

**7.2** The draft objectives in the Issues and Options have not been carried forward into Proposed Submission. It is considered that the Core Strategy objectives are appropriate for the Development Management DPD and an additional set would be superfluous.

#### **Mixed development**

**7.3** The principle of mixed development is a key theme underpinning much government guidance. The issue is comprehensively covered by a number of different PPSs including PPS1, PPS1 Supplement Planning and Climate Change and PPS3. These emphasise the role that mixed development has in the creation of sustainable communities and patterns of sustainable urban and rural development to reduce the need to travel. The Council therefore felt that an additional policy on mixed development would be superfluous and repeat national guidance.

#### **Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

**7.4** This issue was considered within the Issues and Options document. However, following the publication of that consultation document government guidance advised that the issue should be considered within Core Strategies. The Council therefore included a policy on the accommodation of Gypsy and Travellers in the Submission Core Strategy. The Council is also preparing a separate Gypsy and Traveller Sites DPD.

#### **Telecommunications**

**7.5** The Council does not consider that a locally specific policy can be justified. The issue is comprehensively covered by PPG8: Telecommunications. In the light of PPS12: Local Spatial Planning, including a policy on this issue would repeat national guidance and there are considered to be no locally specific issues that warrant drawing up a policy.

## Appendix 1 Parking Provision

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Appendix 1 Parking Provision

Table 34 Parking Provision

Use Class and Nature of Activity	Maximum Car Parking Provision Staff / Residents <sup>(1)</sup>	Maximum Car Parking Provision Public / Visitors	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision
<b>Retail &amp; financial services</b>			
A1: Retail (food)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 14m <sup>2</sup>	1 cycle space per 75m <sup>2</sup>
A1, A2: Retail (non-food) & Financial & professional services	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 20m <sup>2</sup>	As A1: Retail (food)
<b>Food &amp; drink</b>			
A3, A4, A5: Restaurants & cafes, pubs/bars & hot food takeaways	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 5m <sup>2</sup>	1 cycle space per 25m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Business</b>			
B1: Business	1 car space per 30m <sup>2</sup>	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 50m <sup>2</sup>
B2: General industrial	1 car space per 60m <sup>2</sup>	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 80m <sup>2</sup>
B8: Storage & distribution	1 car space per 100m <sup>2</sup>	Included in staff provision	1 cycle space per 150m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Communal accommodation</b>			
C1: Hotels & Guest Houses	1 car space per staff bedroom, plus up to 1 space for every 2 non-resident members of staff	1 car space per guest bedroom <sup>(2)</sup>	1 cycle space per 5 guest bedrooms
C2: Residential institutions	1 car space for each resident member of staff, plus up to 1 space for every 2 non-resident members of staff	1 car space per 4 residents	1 cycle space per 4 members of staff
<b>C3: Residential Dwellings</b>			
Town centres (excluding Ramsey Town Centre <sup>(3)</sup> )	1 car space per dwelling (average, per development)	1 car space per 6 units	1 allocated secure cycle storage space per bedroom
All other locations	2 car spaces per dwelling (average, per development)	1 car space per 4 units	1 allocated secure cycle storage space per dwelling <sup>(4)</sup>
<b>Community facilities</b>			
D1: Non-residential institutions (museums,	1 car space for each member of staff	1 car space per 30m <sup>2</sup>	1 cycle space per 4 members of staff, plus 1 space per 50m <sup>2</sup>



Use Class and Nature of Activity	Maximum Car Parking Provision Staff / Residents <sup>(1)</sup>	Maximum Car Parking Provision Public / Visitors	Minimum Cycle Parking Provision
libraries, galleries, exhibition halls)			
D1: Non-residential institutions (public halls & places of worship)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 4 seats, or 1 space per 15m <sup>2</sup>	1 cycle space per 10 seats, or 1 space per 30m <sup>2</sup>
D1: Non-residential institutions (schools)	1 car space for each member of staff	1 car space per class, up to a limit of 10 spaces	5 cycle spaces per class for primary schools; 10 spaces per class for secondary schools
D1: Non-Residential institutions (clinics, health centres, surgeries)	Included in public / visitors provision	5 car spaces per consulting room	1 cycle space per 2 consulting rooms
D2: Assembly & leisure (cinemas & conference facilities)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 5 seats	1 cycle space per 75m <sup>2</sup> , or 1 space per 10 seats
D2: Assembly & leisure (other uses)	Included in public / visitors provision	1 car space per 22m <sup>2</sup>	1 cycle space per 75m <sup>2</sup> , or 1 space per 10 seats

1. Parking based on number of staff should be calculated on the total number of staff on site at peak times, including times when shifts change
2. Additional parking can be provided for bars, restaurants and other facilities within hotels and guest houses that are available to the public, in line with provision for those uses, provided measures can be taken to ensure their availability for that use
3. Due to limited availability of public transport Ramsey Town Centre is to be consider with all other locations
4. Cycle parking for dwellings can be accommodated within garages, so long as there is sufficient space for a cycle as well as a car

In addition to the above, a minimum number of car parking spaces for the mobility impaired will be required at the level recommended by the Department for Transport <sup>(8)</sup> and set out in the following table:

**Table 35 Parking for the mobility impaired**

Nature of activity	Staff	Public / visitors
Existing business premises	At least one space for each disabled employee	At least 2% of car park capacity (minimum of one space)
New business premises	At least 5% of car park provision (minimum of one space)	Allowance included in requirement for staff
Shopping areas; leisure & recreational facilities; other places open to the public	At least one space for each disabled employee	At least 6% of car park capacity (minimum of one space) <sup>(1)</sup>

8 Traffic Advisory Leaflet 05/05 – Parking for Disabled People, Department for Transport (2005), Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure, Department for Transport (2005) and BS 8300: 2001 Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People, British Standards Institute (BSI) (2001)

1. Additional spaces may be required for hotels and other places that cater for large numbers of disabled people

## Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

**Table 36 Outdoor sports and recreation facilities and open space standards**

Type	Quantity	Accessibility - provision within
Outdoor sports, pitches, courts and greens	1.61ha per 1000 population including: i) at least 0.81ha per 1000 population available for community use, and ii) 0.04 artificial turf pitches per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m) for grass pitches and tennis courts or 15 minutes drive for artificial turf pitches and bowling greens
Allotments and community gardens	0.32ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
Informal open space:	1.8 ha per 1000 population comprising an appropriate combination of:	
- Parks and gardens	0.48ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
- Natural and semi-natural open space	0.23ha per 1000 population	15 minutes walk (720m)
- Amenity greenspace (excluding domestic gardens)	1.09ha per 1000 population	10 minutes walk (480m) or 15 minutes walk (720m) for specialist young people's facilities in urban areas

The following tables provide details of the different types of outdoor sports and recreation facilities that may be required dependent upon the scale of the development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

**Table 37 Grass Pitches**

Size	Minimum 2 adult football pitches, (2x 100m x 64m)
Additional Details	Built to NGB specifications Policy: a minimum of 2 sports pitches to be provided in any one place
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£112,000 per pitch
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£58,500 per pitch

**Table 38 Outdoor Tennis Courts**

Size	Minimum 2 courts
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications Macadam, fenced and floodlit In small villages 1 court may be fit for purpose
Age Range	All

## Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Capital cost (at 2008)	£135,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£45,000 per two courts

**Table 39 Outdoor Bowling Greens**

Size	Minimum 4 lane/rinks
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications
Age Range	All – predominant usage adults and older adults
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (exc clubhouse)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£50,000

**Table 40 Synthetic Turf Pitches**

Size	100mx64m
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications Fenced and floodlit 3G rubber crumb or sand dressed depending on need In small villages or particular locations training size pitches may be fit for purpose (approx 50m x 30m)
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£740,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	Maintenance £60,000 Replacement Carpet £200,000

**Table 41 Changing Rooms**

Size	4 team changing pavilion
Additional Details	Built to Sport England or NGB specifications
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£565,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£60,000

**Table 42 Active Lifestyle Contribution**

Size	Various
Additional Details	For example outdoor gyms, bike trails, water based recreation, walking projects
Age Range	All

Capital cost (at 2008)	£50,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£12,000

**Table 43 Sport & Physical Activity Contribution**

Size	Various
Additional Details	For example Sports Development/Physical Activity Community Development Officers & Development budgets e.g. holiday programmes, afterschool clubs, sports clubs development, over 50's activities, exercise referral, healthy lifestyle activities
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£600,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	15 years at £40,000 per year

**Note:** maintenance costs based on 15 year period

### Play area specifications

The preferred option for play space provision requires 8 square metres per person which forms part of the open space requirement of 1.8ha per 1000 people. The following tables provide details of the different types of play areas that may be required dependant upon the scale of development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

**Table 44 Local Area for Play**

Equipment	No equipment unless there is an existing need
Size	Activity zone minimum 100 square metres. This excludes planting, fencing and footpaths.
Location	All houses to be within 1 minute walk (60 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway. overlooked by nearby houses.
Buffer	5 metres from dwellings
Additional details	Sufficient seating for parents/ carers. 1 metre depth landscape planting to develop children's senses. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range. No fencing greater than 600mm in height.
Age range	0-5
Capital cost (at 2008)	Equipped LAPs with equipment to the value of £15,450
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	Equipped LAPs to the value of £6,180

**Table 45 Local Equipped Area for Play**

Equipment	A minimum of 7 pieces of equipment (5 pieces for age range 5-8, 2 for age range 0-5)
Size	Activity zone minimum 400 square metres
Location	All houses to be within 5 minute walk (240 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway. Not overlooked by any houses.
Buffer	20 metres from any dwelling

## Appendix 2 Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Additional details	Sufficient seating for parents/ carers. Landscape planting to develop children's senses. No fencing greater than 1000 mm in height. 2 outward opening self-closing gates. Litter bins. Impact absorbing surfacing. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range.
Age range	0-8
Capital cost (at 2008)	Equipment to the value of £41,200
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£12,360

**Table 46 Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play**

Equipment	A minimum of 8 pieces of equipment. Also including either a hard surfaced area for 5 a side football (MUGA) or a wheeled activities area (WAGA). NEAP types are detailed below.
Size	Activity zone minimum 1000 square metres; divided into 2 sections.
Location	All houses to be within 15 minute walk (600 metre straight line distance). Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from the boundary of the nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating. Landscape planting to develop children's senses. No fencing greater than 1000 mm in height around the play area. 2 outward opening self closing gates. Impact absorbing surfacing. Youth shelter. Bike racks. Sign to indicate its use for children and age range.
Age range	8-15
Capital cost (at 2008)	Play equipment to the value of £161,800
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£36,480

**Table 47 Individual Multi Use Games Area**

Equipment	
Location	All houses to be within 600 metre straight line distance. Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating area, bike racks
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (indicative cost)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£20,000

**Table 48 Individual Wheeled Activity Games Area**

Equipment	Equipment for the purpose of skating and bikes
Location	All houses to be within 600 metre straight line distance. Beside a pedestrian pathway along well used route.
Buffer	30 metres from nearest dwelling
Additional details	Seating area, bike racks
Capital cost (at 2008)	£100,000 (indicative cost)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£20,000

NEAP type 1: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a hard surfaced area for the purpose of a MUGA, as defined above.

NEAP type 2: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a hard surfaced area for the purpose of a WAGA, as defined above.

NEAP type 3: An area of 1000 square metres designated for children's play containing at least 8 pieces of equipment. The NEAP will also contain a grassed area for the purpose of informal ball games. The developer will be required to install goal/ basketball posts for the benefit of the local children. The following table provides guidance on the play space and play areas likely to be required according to the population expected to be generated by a proposed residential development.

**Table 49 Play space and area requirements**

Population	Children's play space required (square metres)		Expected designated play areas	
	Range		LAP	LEAP
0-49	0	392		
50-99	400	792	1	
100-149	800	1192	2	
150-199	1200	1592	3	
200-249	1600	1992		1
250-299	2000	2392	1	1
300-349	2400	2792	2	1
350-399	2800	3192	3	1
400-449	3200	3592		2
450-499	3600	3992	1	2
500-549	4000	4392	2	2
550-599	4400	4792	3	2
600-649	4800	5192		3
650-699	5200	5592	1	3
700-749	5600	5992	2	3
750-799	6000	6392	3	3
800-849	6400	6792		4
850-899	6800	7192	1	4
900-949	7200	7592	2	4
950-999	7600	7992	3	4

Once a development has reached an expected population of 1,000 then a NEAP will be required as part of the open space play provision.

## Appendix 3 Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

### Appendix 3 Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities

The following tables provide details of the different types of indoor sports and recreation facilities that may be required dependent upon the scale of the development proposed. Capital and maintenance costs are indicative at 2008 prices and inflation should be allowed for when calculating costs in future years.

**Table 50 Sports Halls**

Size	Minimum 4 courts / 594sqm
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications In small village locations one, two or three court halls may be fit for purpose
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£2,765,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£150,000

**Table 51 Swimming Pools**

Size	Minimum 4 lane x 25m (212sqm) Recommended Community Pool 6 lane x 25 m (325sqm)
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications Needs to be fit for purpose
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£2,670,00 (5 lane x 25m)
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£300,000

**Table 52 Indoor Bowls**

Size	Minimum 6 lanes
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications
Age Range	All – predominant usage adults and older adults
Capital cost (at 2008)	£1,555,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	

**Table 53 Indoor Tennis**

Size	Minimum 2 courts
Additional Details	Built to Sport England and NGB specifications
Age Range	All
Capital cost (at 2008)	£700,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	

**Table 54 Fitness Stations**

Size	Minimum 20 stations
Additional Details	Built to industry specifications & IFI compliant



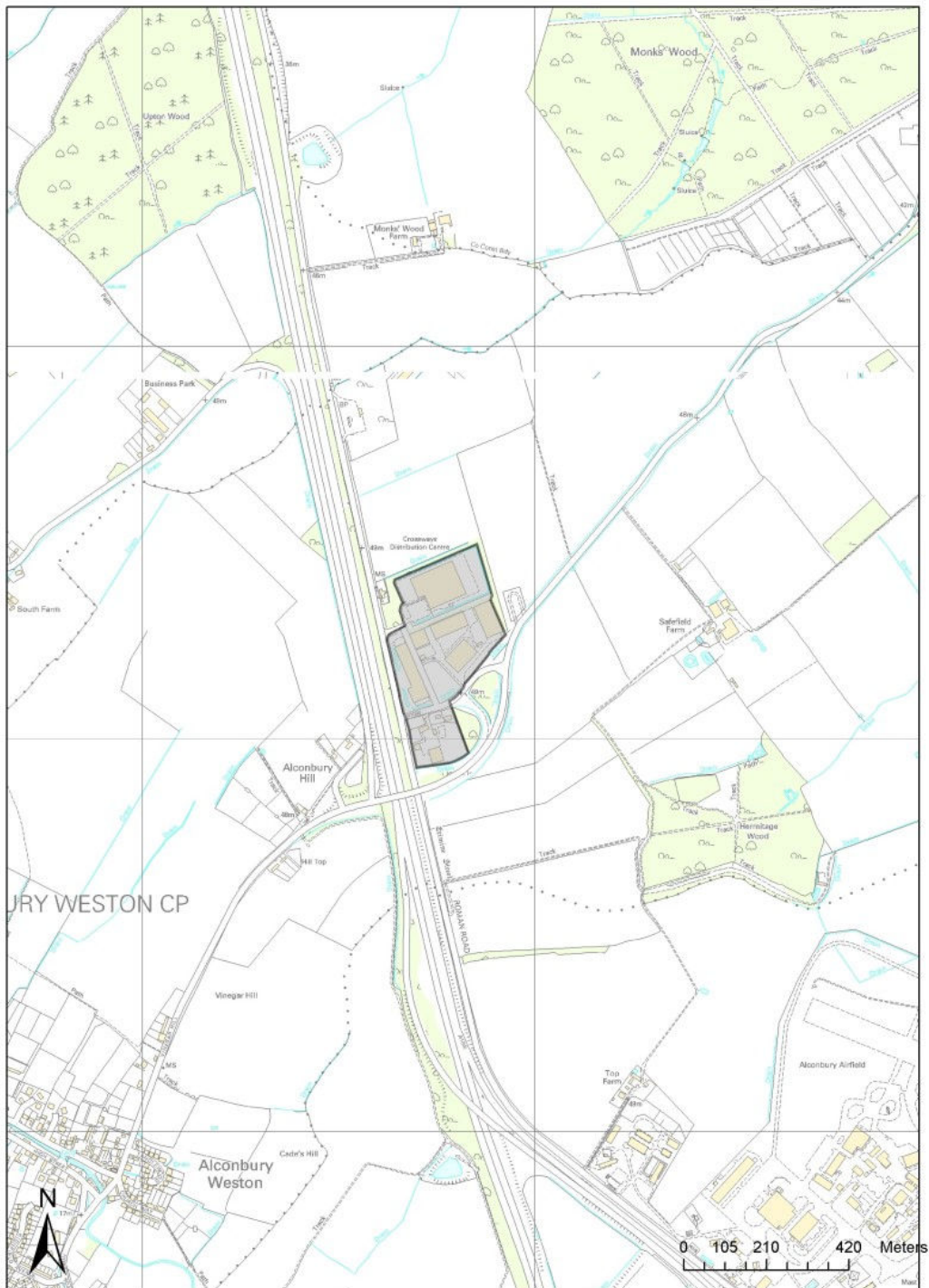
Age Range	14 plus
Capital cost (at 2008)	£400,000
Maintenance cost (at 2008)	£300,000

**Note:** Maintenance costs based on 15 year period

Capital costs from Sport England Planning Contribution Kitbag document 'Sport Facility Costs 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2008'

Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Map 4.1 Alconbury Weston Commercial Area



Picture 4.1 Alwalton Commercial Area

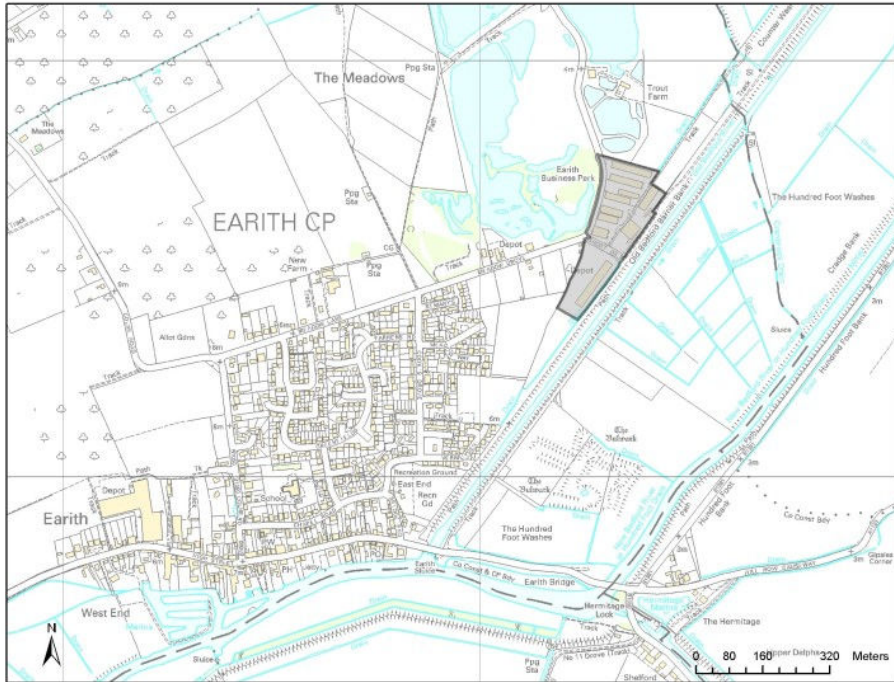




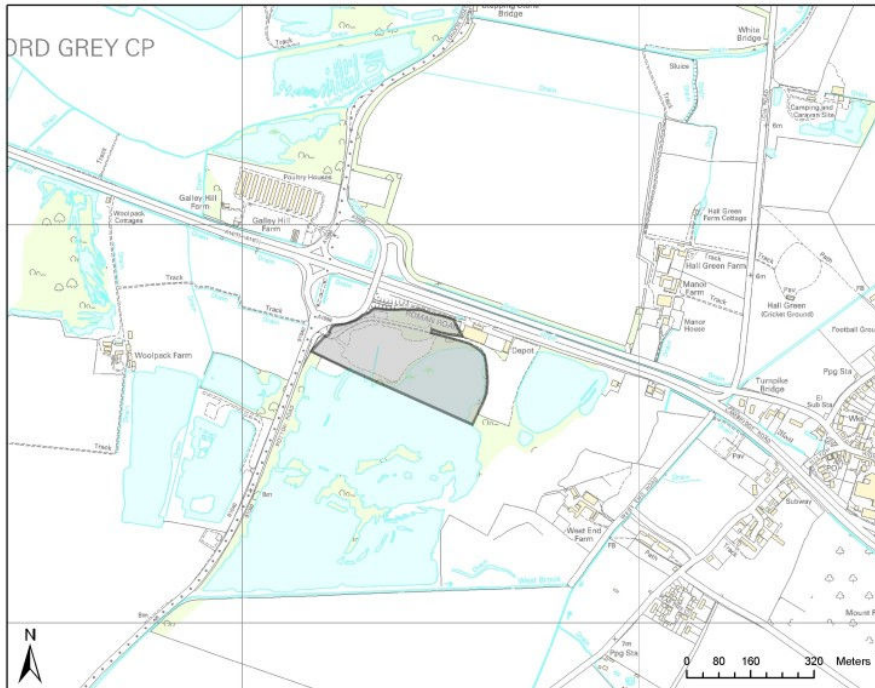
# Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

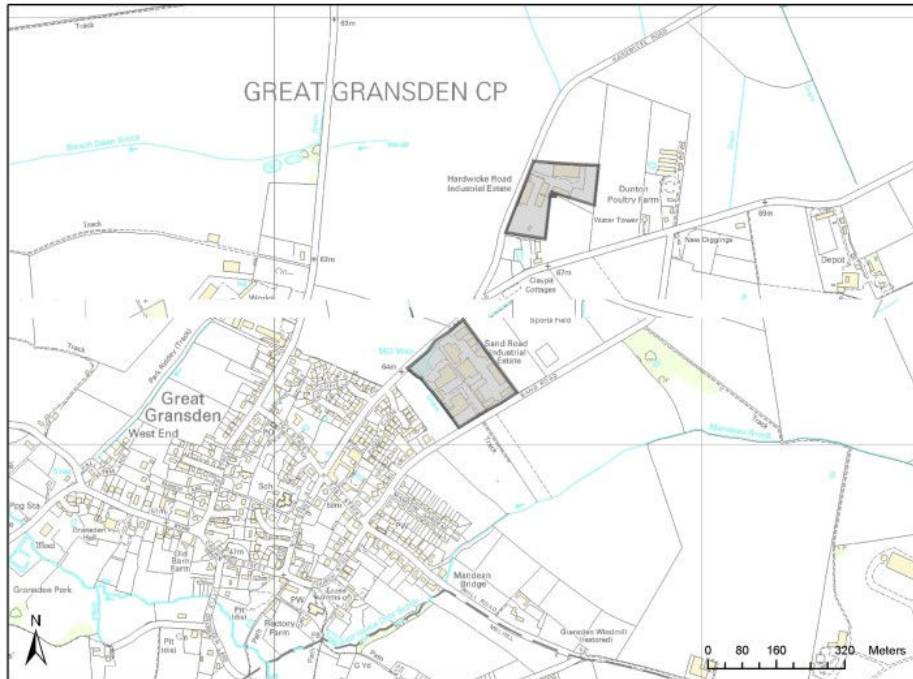
### Map 4.2 Earith Commercial Area



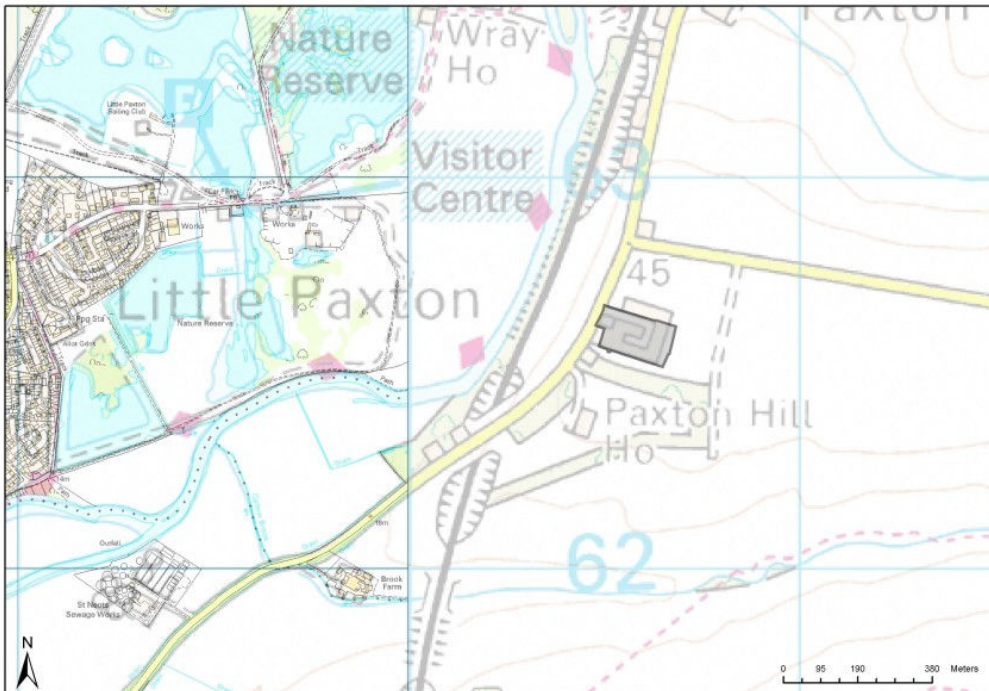
### Map 4.3 Galley Hill Commercial Area



Map 4.4 Great Gransden Commercial Areas



Map 4.5 Great Paxton Commercial Area

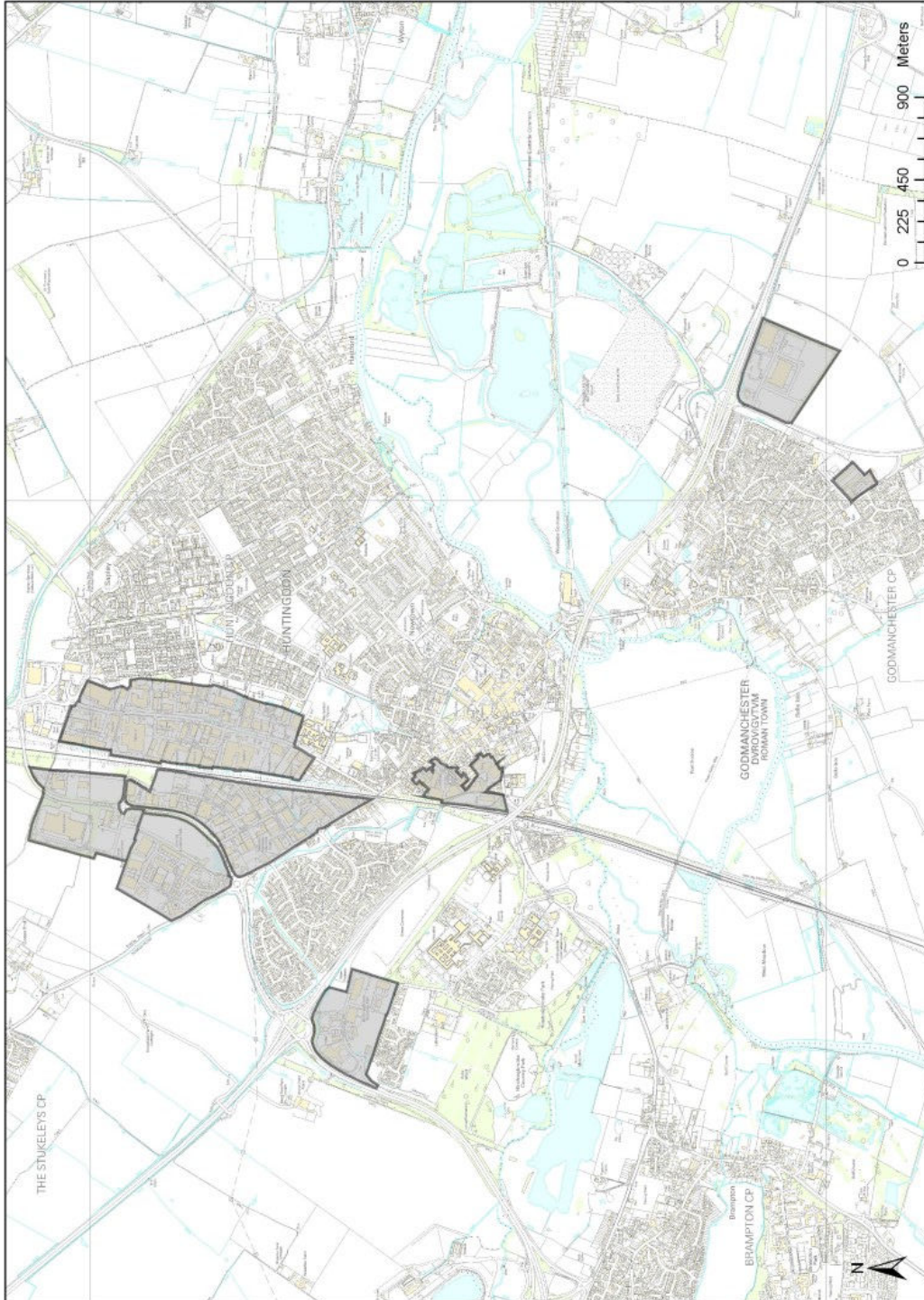




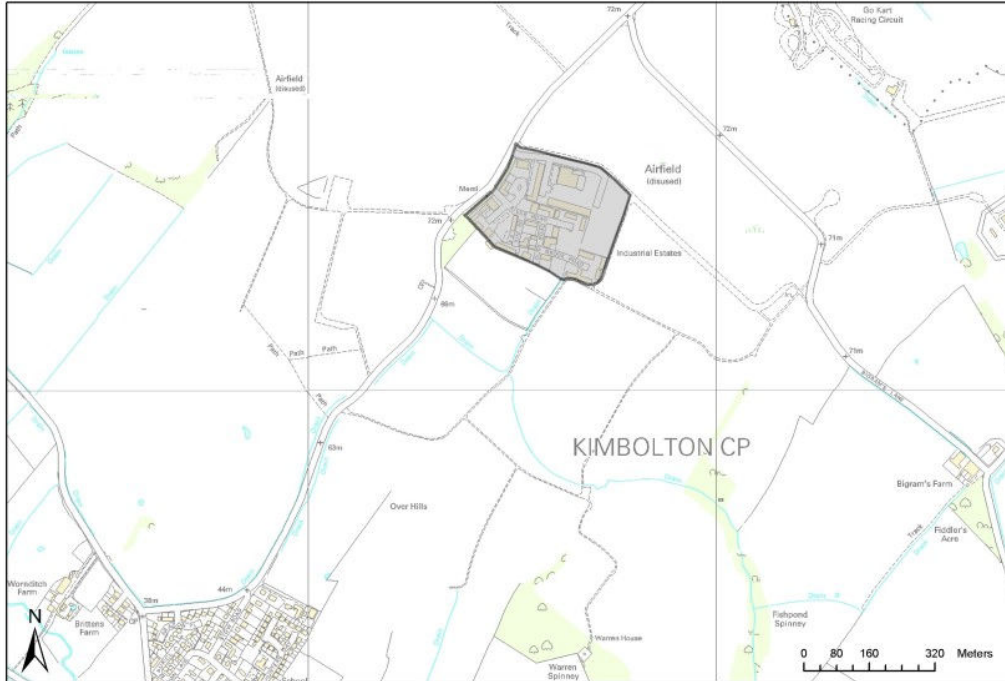
# Appendix 4 Established Commercial Areas

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

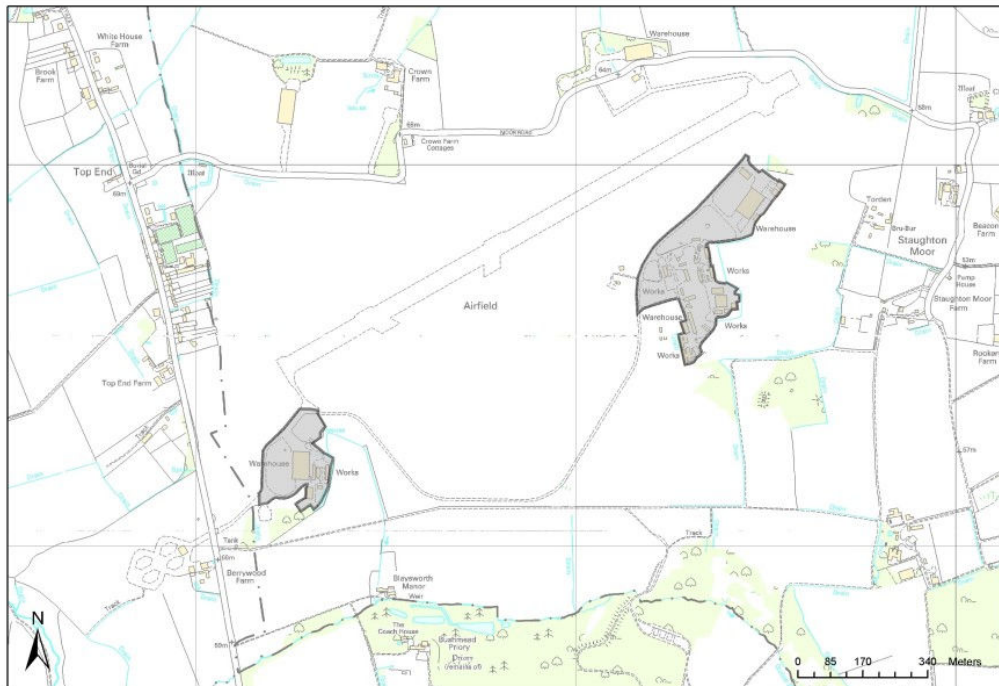
Map 4.6 Huntingdon Commercial Areas



Map 4.7 Kimbolton Commercial Area

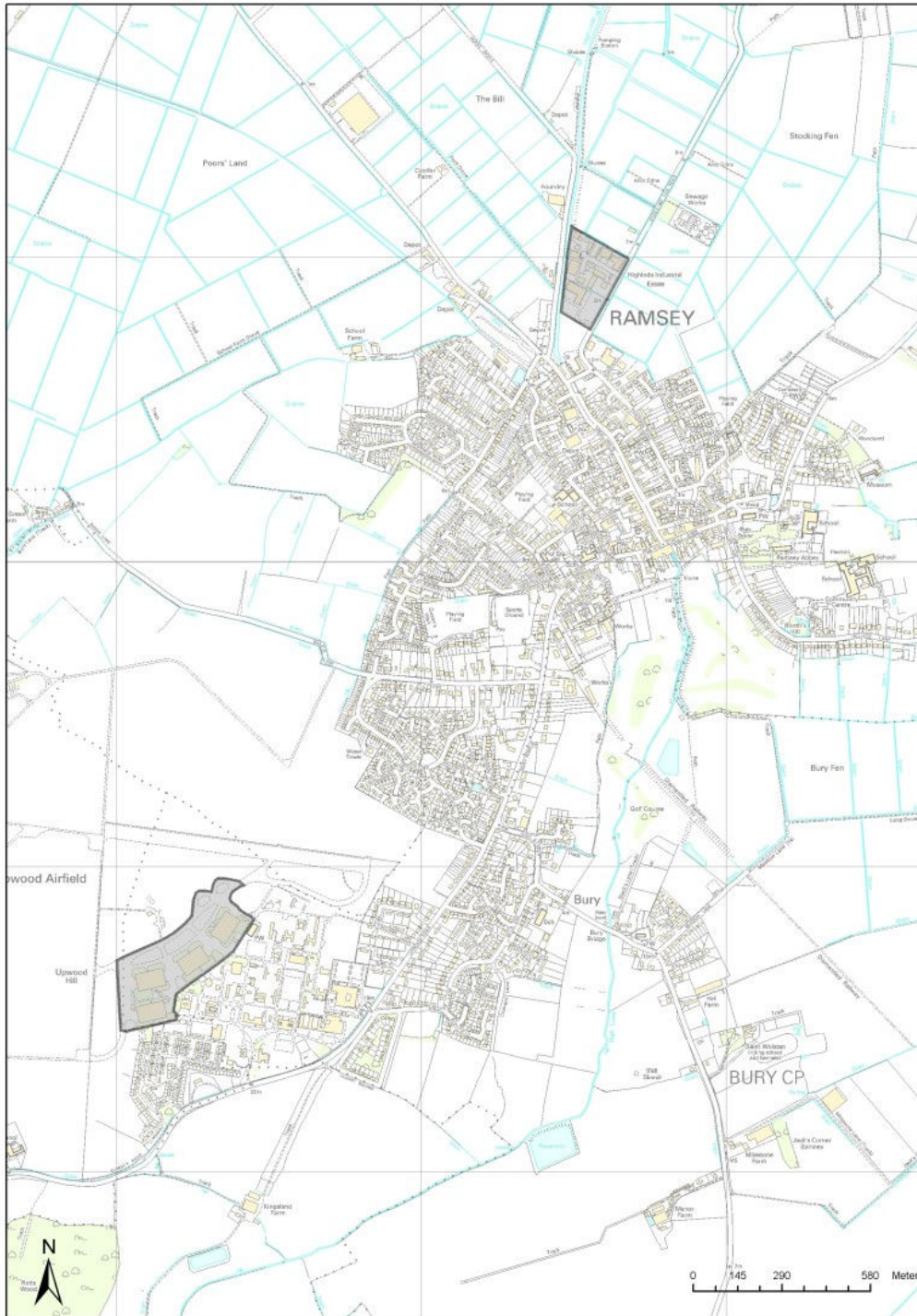


Map 4.8 Little Staughton Commercial Areas



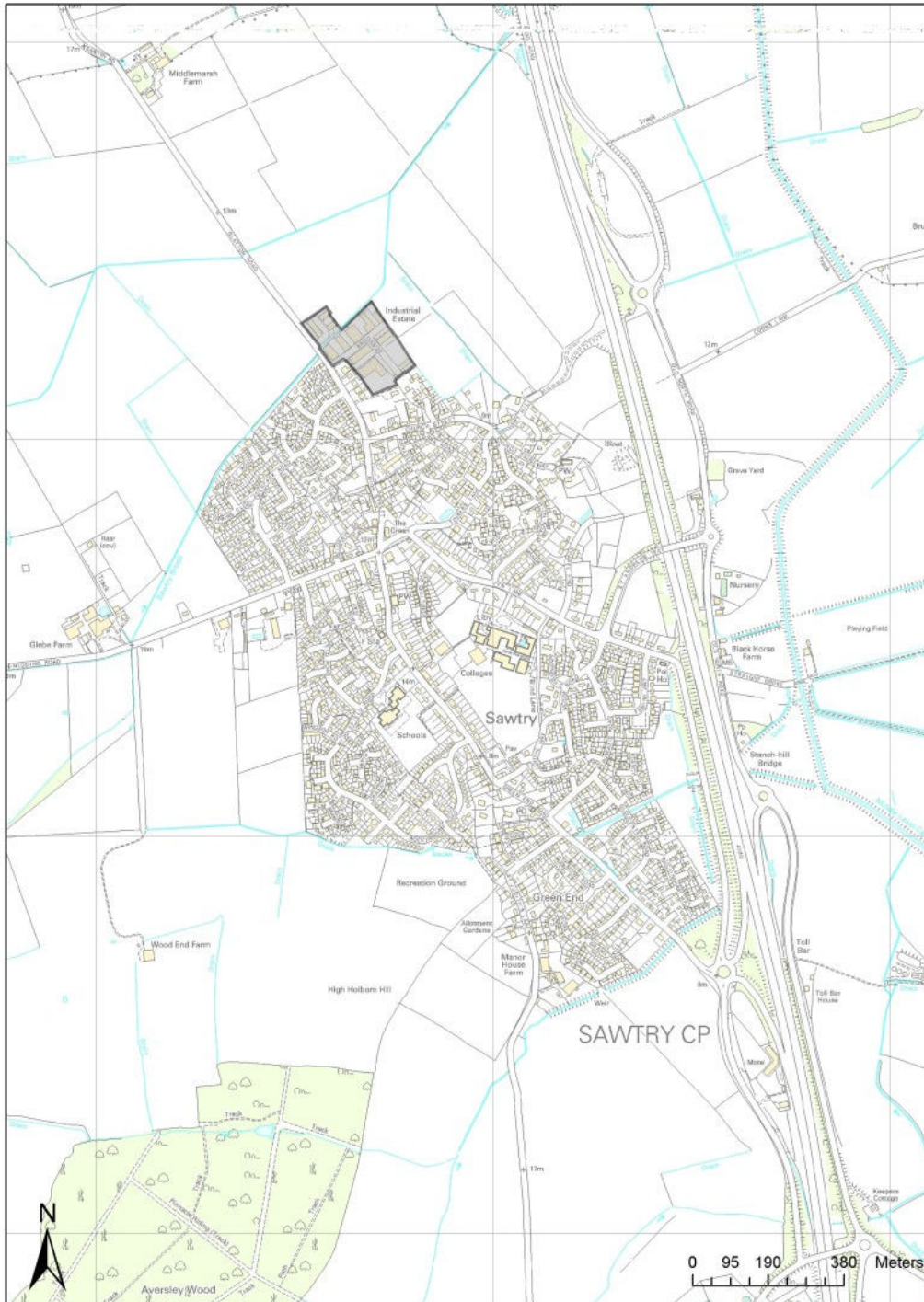


Map 4.9 Ramsey Commercial Areas





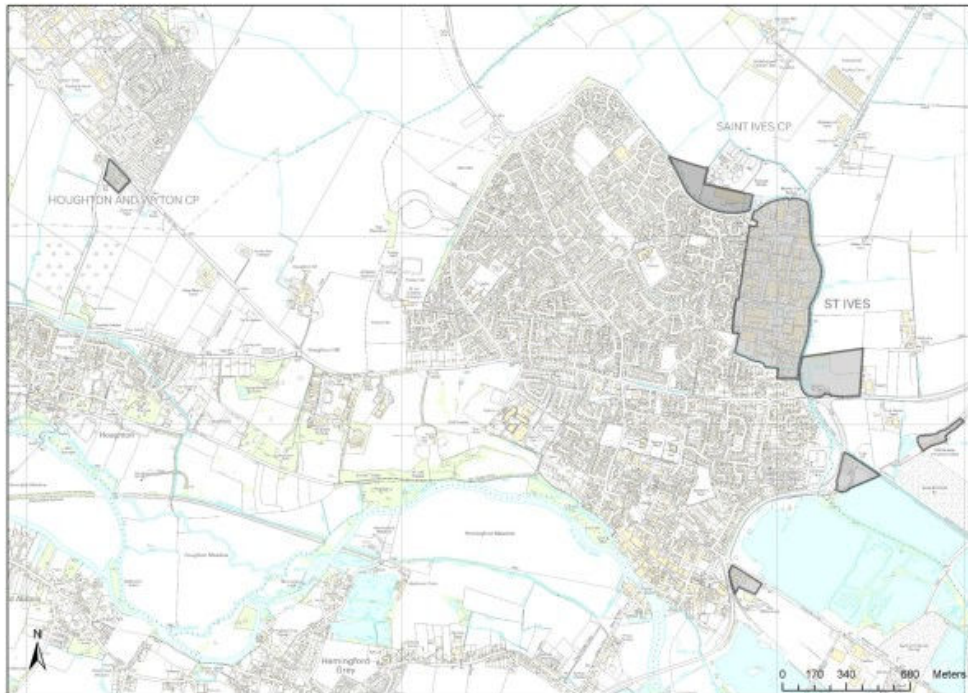
Map 4.10 Sawtry Commercial Area



Map 4.11 Somersham Commercial Area

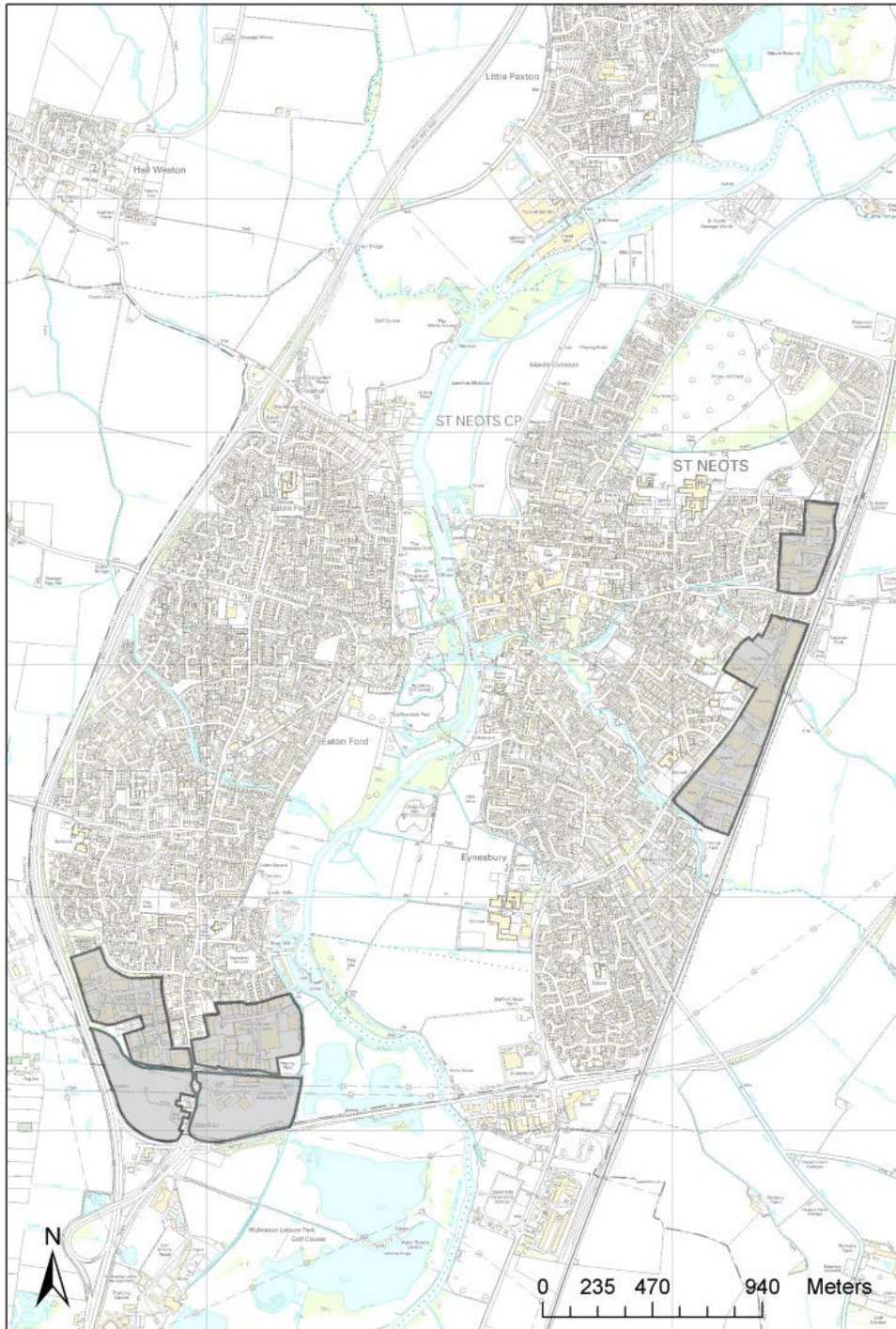


Map 4.12 St Ives Commercial Areas

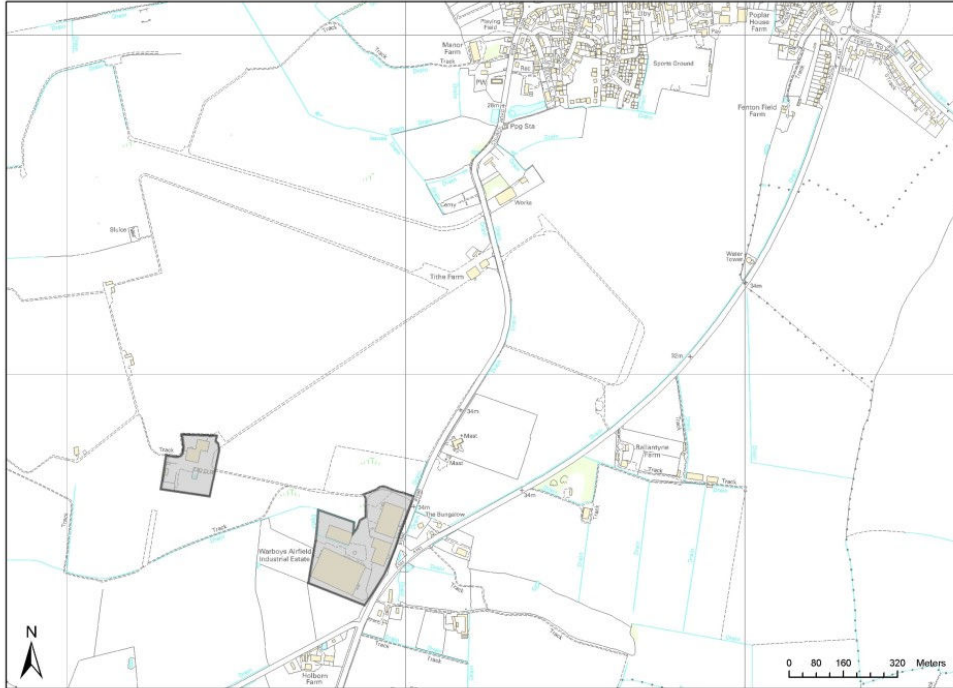




Map 4.13 St Neots Commercial Areas



Map 4.14 Warboys Commercial Areas



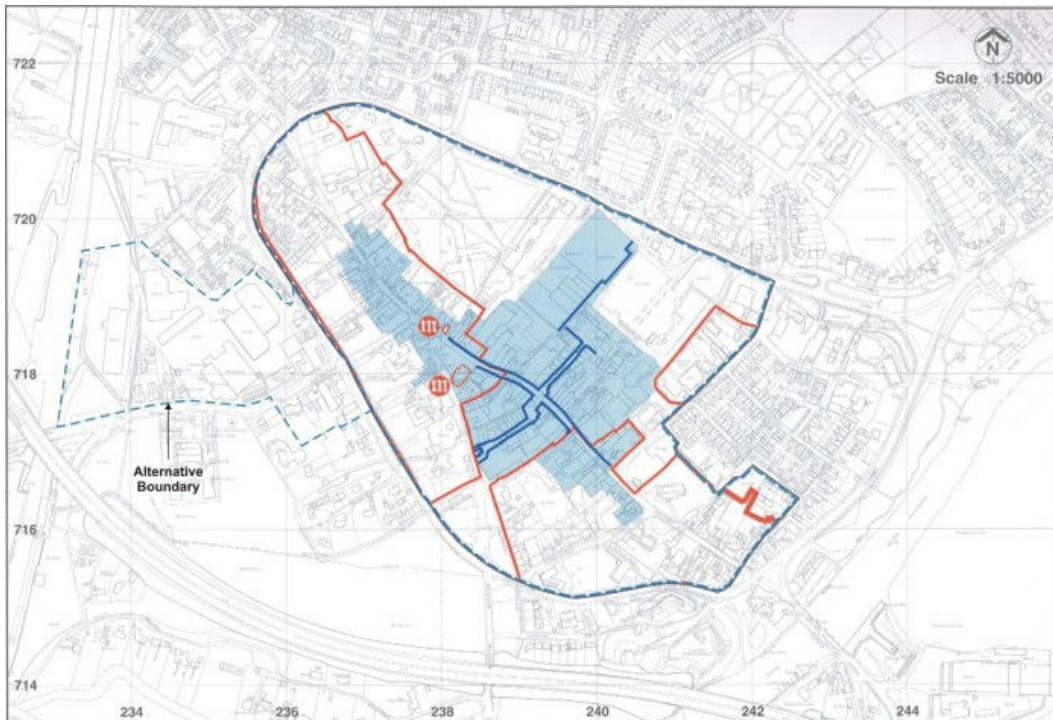
Map 4.15 Yaxley Commercial Areas





## Appendix 5 Town Centres and Retail Designations

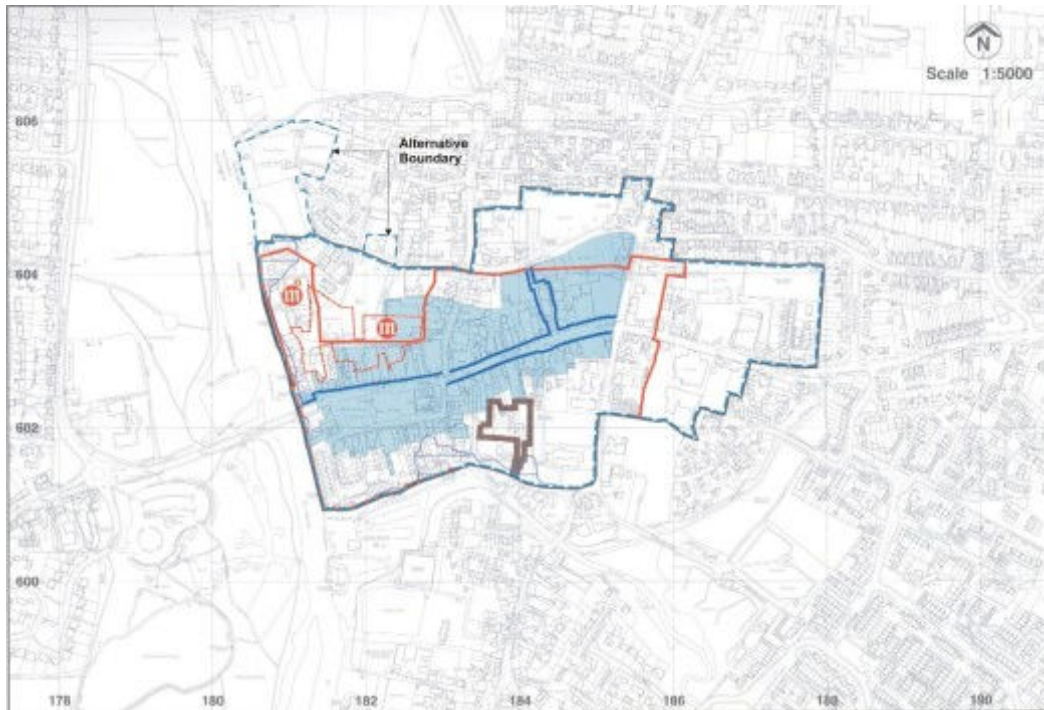
Map 5.1 Huntingdon Town Centre



Map 5.2 St Ives Town Centre



Map 5.3 St Neots Town Centre



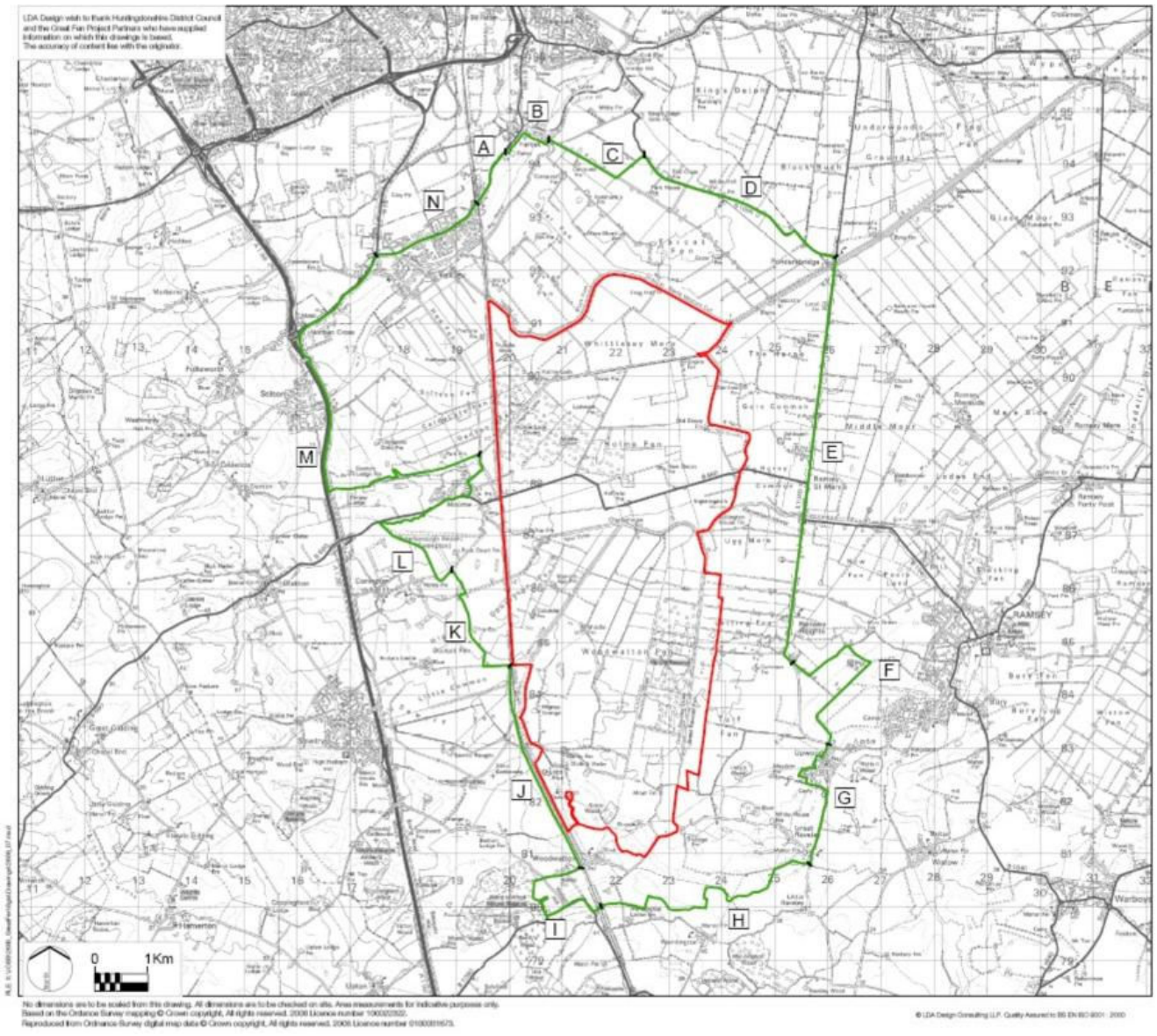
Map 5.4 Ramsey Town Centre





## Appendix 6 Great Fen Project Maps

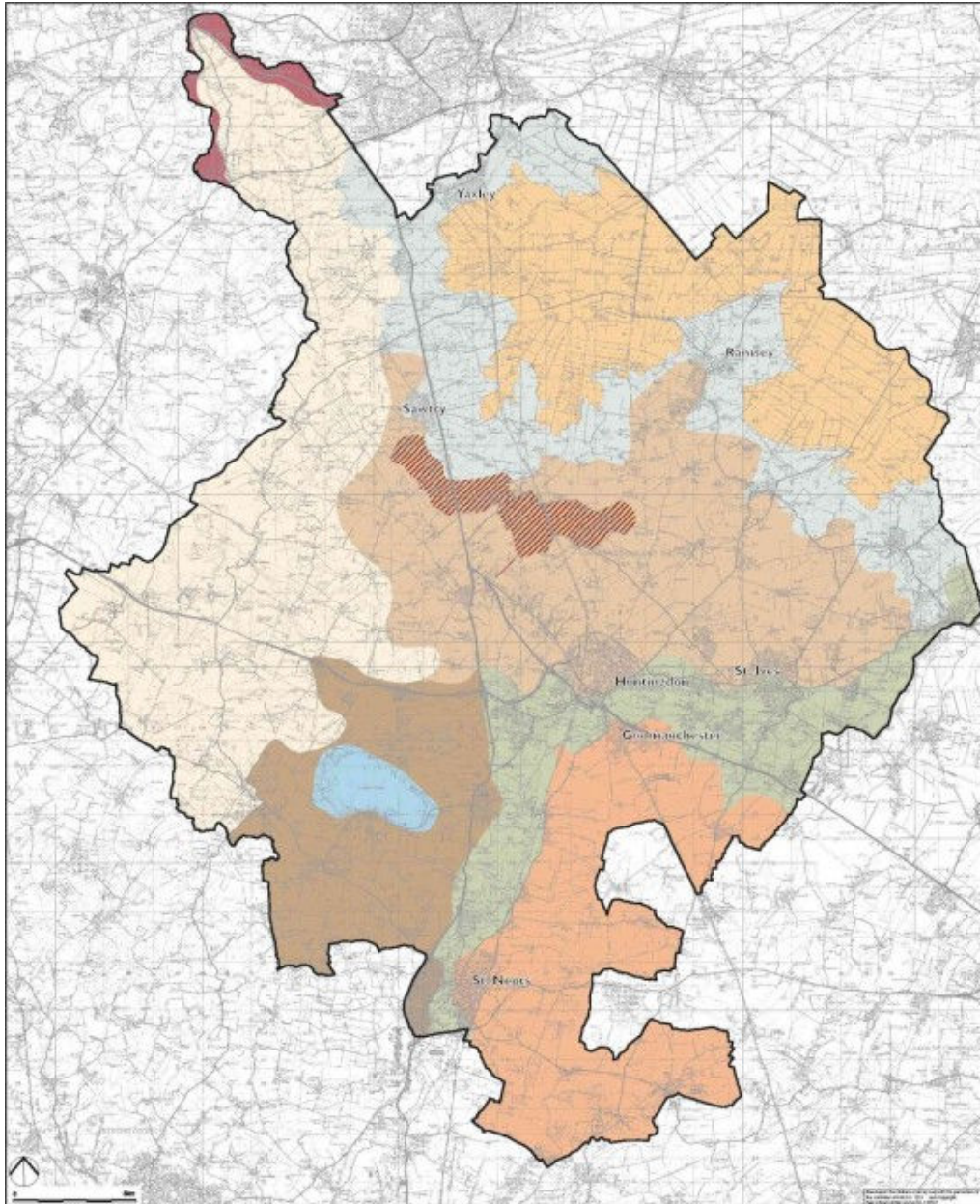
Picture 6.1 Great Fen Project Boundary and Setting Boundary







Appendix 7 Landscape Character Areas

Map 7.1 Landscape Character Areas



Landscape Character Areas Key

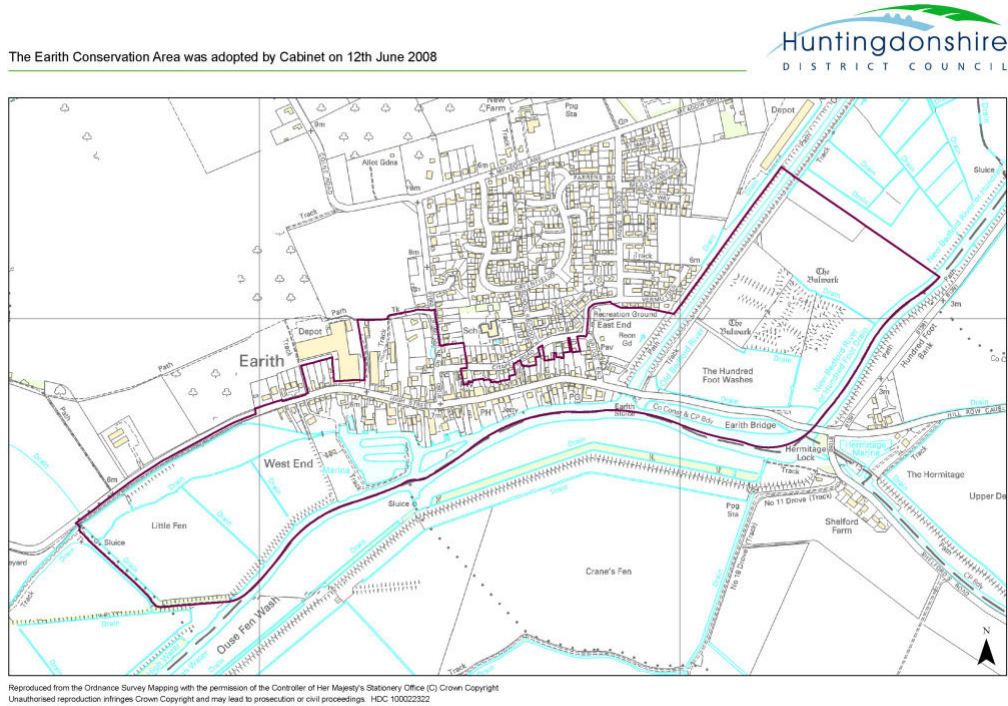
- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  The Fens             |  Northern Wolds                                   |
|  Fen Margin           |  Grafham Water                                    |
|  Central Claylands    |  Southern Wolds                                   |
|  Ouse Valley          |  Nene Valley                                      |
|  South East Claylands |  Central Claylands sub area of extensive woodland |

## Appendix 8 Conservation Area Boundaries

**8.1** The following maps show the conservation areas in the district which have changed since the publication of the Local Plan Proposals Map. Full details of all conservation area character statements and boundaries can be found on the Council's website:

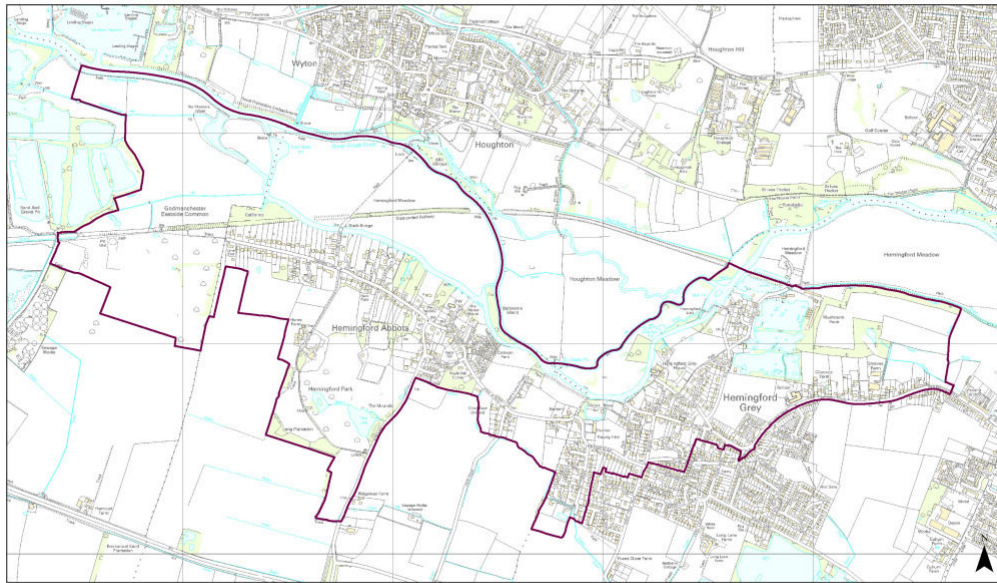
<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/Environment+and+Planning/Buildings/Conservation+Areas/>.

**Map 8.1 Earith Conservation Area**



### Map 8.2 The Hemingfords Conservation Area

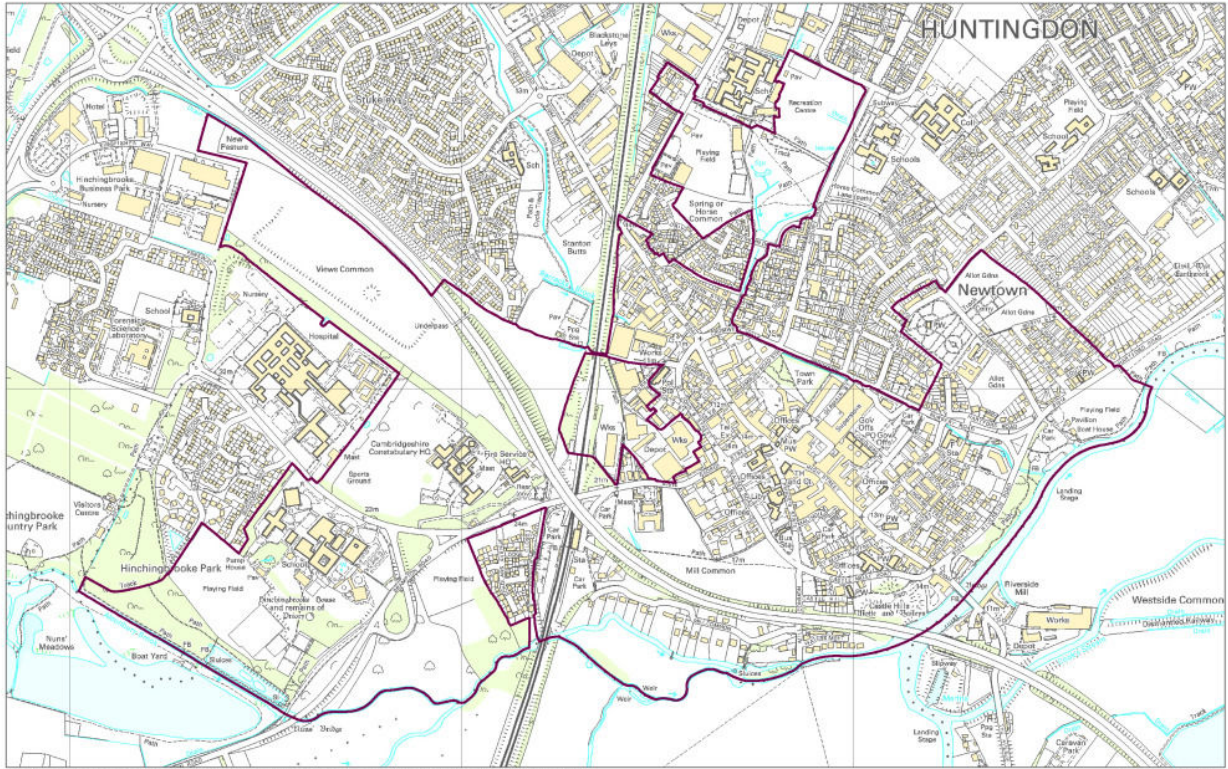
The Hemingfords Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on 12th June 2008



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. HDC 10002232



Map 8.3 Huntingdon Conservation Area

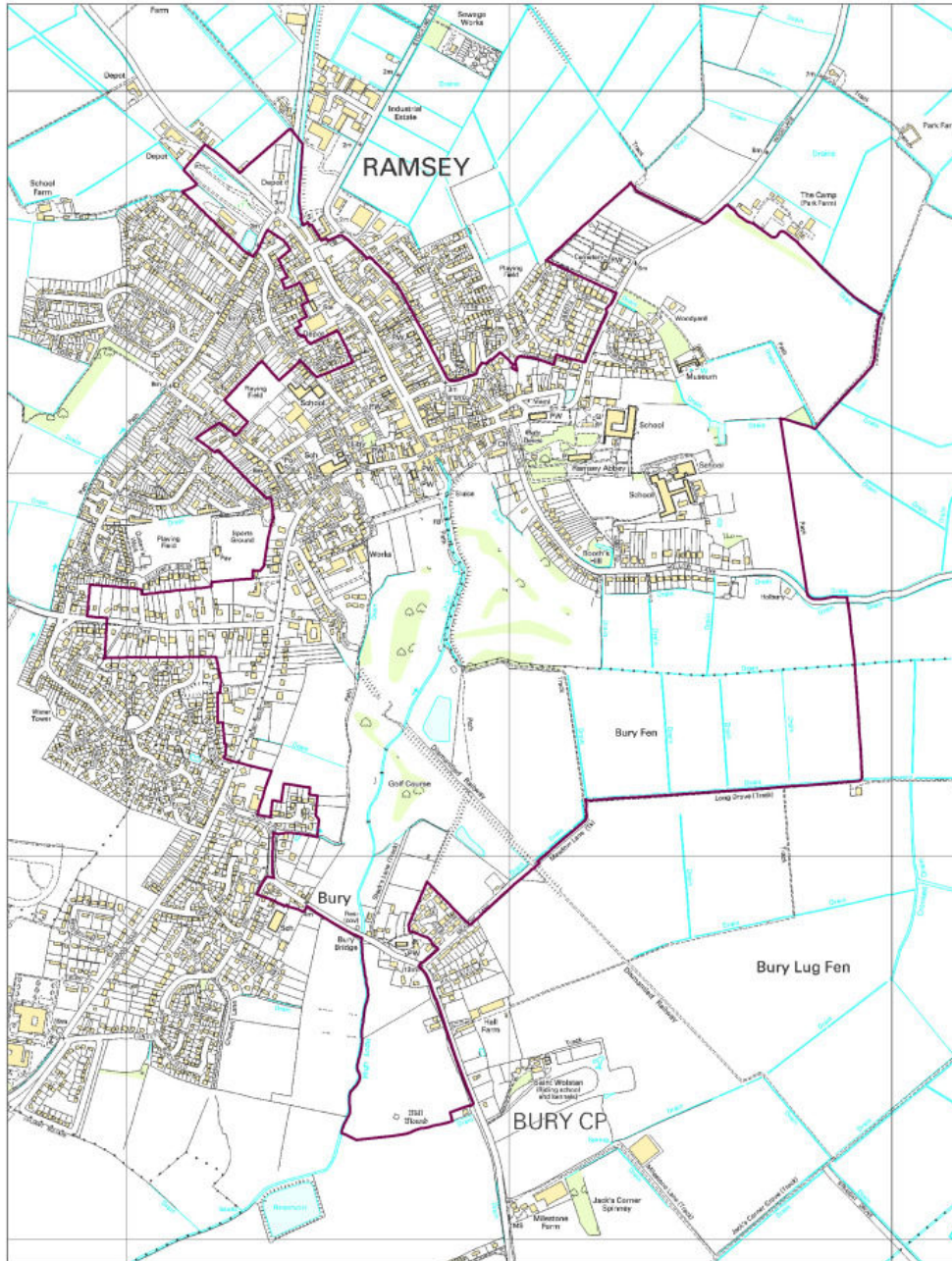


Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright  
Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. HDC 100022322

Scale: 1:8000

	<b>Huntingdonshire</b> DISTRICT COUNCIL	Huntingdon Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 13th December 2007
--	--	---

Map 8.4 Ramsey Conservation Area



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. HDC 100022322

Scale: 1:9000

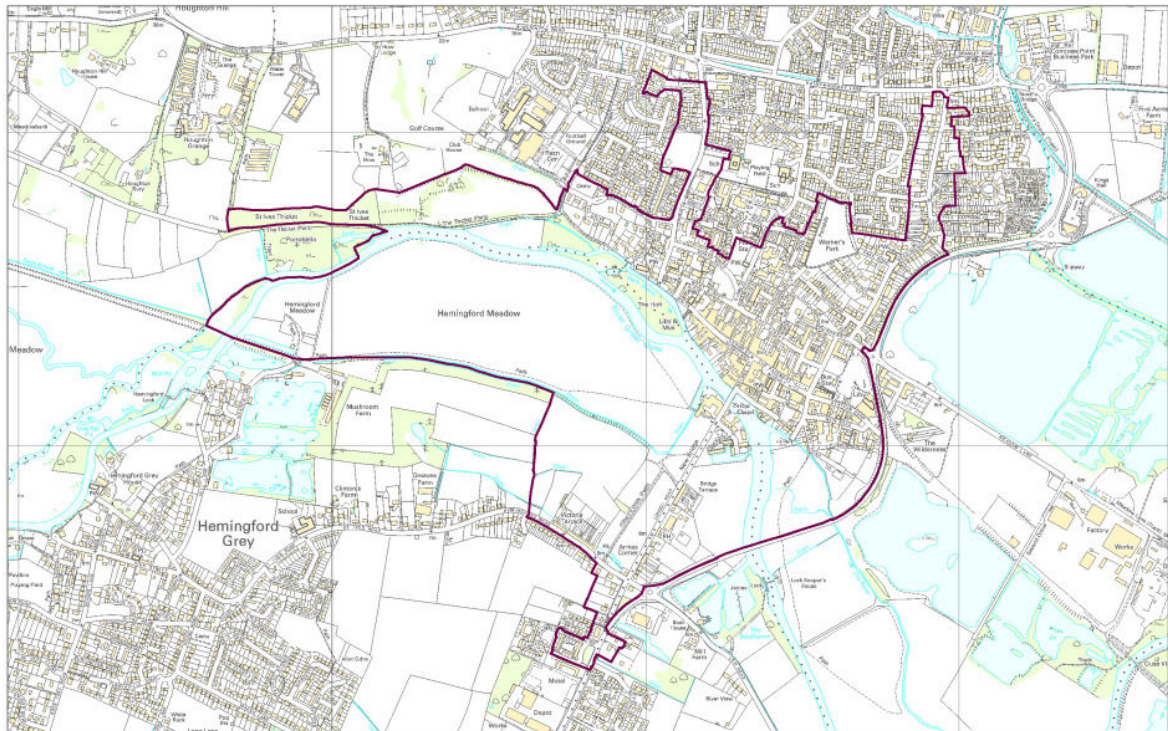


**Huntingdonshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ramsey Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 15th December 2005



Map 8.5 St Ives Conservation Area

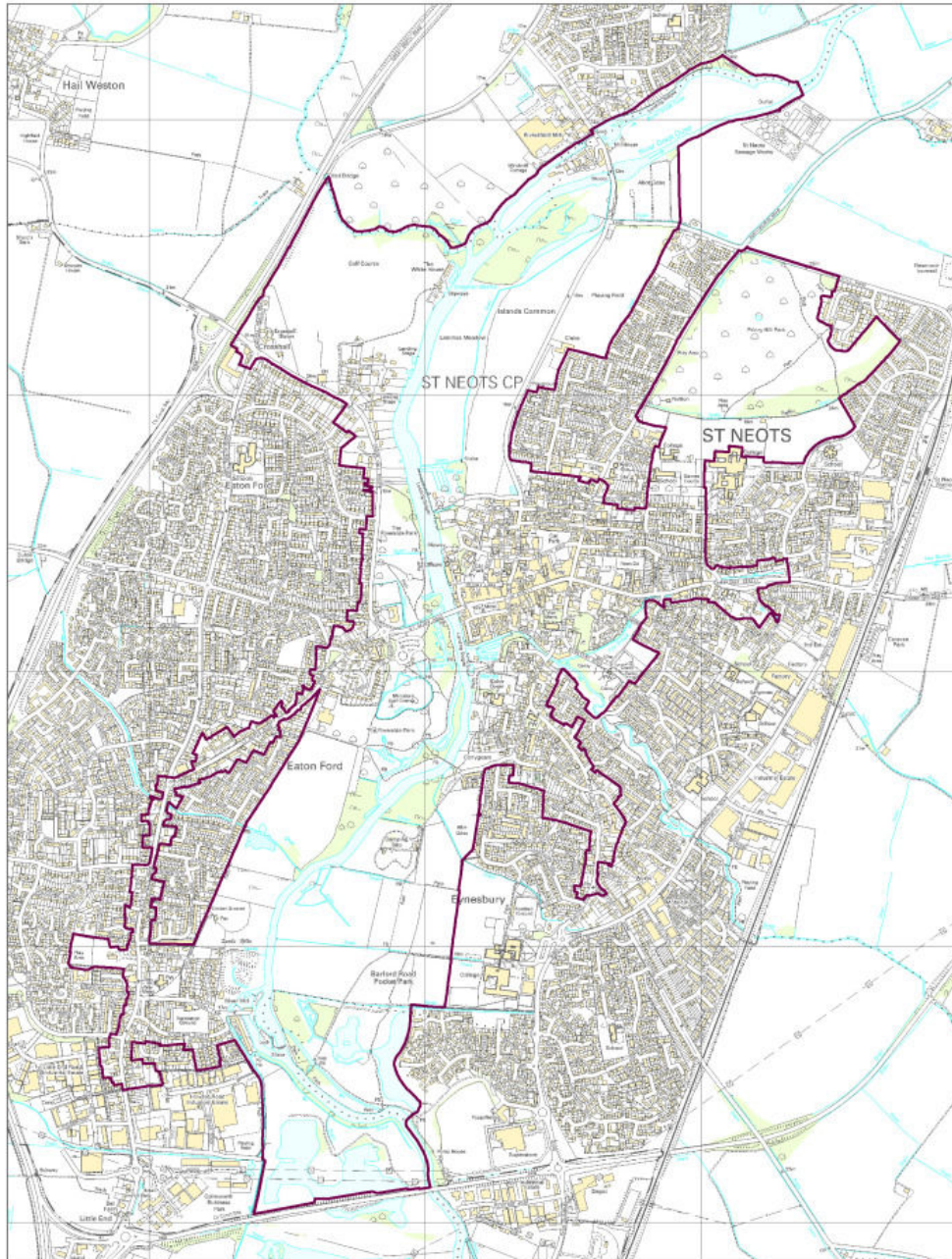


Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright  
Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. HDC 10002232

Scale: 1:10000

	<b>Huntingdonshire</b> DISTRICT COUNCIL	St Ives Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 18th October 2007
--	--	---

### Map 8.6 St Neots Conservation Area



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office (C) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. HDC 100022322

Scale: 1:12500



**Huntingdonshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

St Neots Conservation Area was adopted by Cabinet on the 19th October 2006



## Appendix 9 Organisations and Bodies Consulted

**Table 55 Specific Consultation Bodies**

Environment Agency	Highways Agency
East of England Regional Assembly	Hinchingbrooke Health Care Centre NHS
Natural England	Anglian Water
Mobile Operators Association	East of England Strategic Health Authority
Network Rail	Greater Peterborough PCT
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Health Network	Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Sport England	East of England Development Agency
Cambridgeshire Horizons	East Midlands Development Agency
National Grid Property	Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust
Eon	Go East
N Power	BT
English Heritage	Cambridge Water
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership	All 84 Town and Parish Councils within the District

**Table 56 Neighbouring Authorities**

Mid Bedfordshire District Council	Northamptonshire County Council
Peterborough City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Bedfordshire County Council	East Northants District Council
East Cambs District Council	Fenland District Council
Bedford Borough Council	Cambridgeshire County Council

**Table 57 Other Consultation Bodies**

Cambridge Housing Society	Beds and Cambs Rural Support
Savills	Alexanders
Pegasus Planning Group	Somersham and District Day Centre
The Planning Bureau Ltd	Alconbury and Ellington Drainage Board
Great Ouse Boating Association	DLP planning
Charles Planning Ltd	British Horse Society Cambridgeshire
Carter Jonas	St Neots and District Chamber of Commerce
Henry Bletsoe & Son	Andrew S Campbell Associates
Cambridgeshire Bat Group	RPS Planning
Planning Potential	Meridian
Peacock and Smith	Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association
St Neots Youth Town Council	Anglia Support Partnership
Miller	Anchor Trust

## Appendix 9 Organisations and Bodies Consulted

Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009

Nash Partnership	St Neots Liberal Democrat Group
Croudace Homes Ltd	Bidwells
Januarys	Barton Wilmore
Four Seasons Day Centre	Vincent and Gorbing Chartered Town Planners and Architects
Guinness Trust	Flagship Housing
Aldwyck Housing Association	National Playing Fields Association
BryantHomes	Bluesky Planning
Middle Level Commissioners	CABE
Civic Society of St Ives	The Crown Estate
Dev Plan UK	Huntingdon and District Bus
David Wilson Estates	Fitch Butterfield Associates
Smith Stuart Reynolds	CPRE Cambridgeshire
Circle Anglia	Accent Nene Housing Association
Levvel Ltd	Countryside Properties
RSPB	Cambridgeshire Enterprise Services
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils	PeterboroughEnvironmentCity Trust
Cambridgeshire Countryside Watch	Huntingdon Mencap
Hunts Society for the Blind	Hunts MIND
Church Commissioners	Inland Waterway Association (Peterborough Branch)
Renewables East	George Wimpey
HallamLand Management	Woods Hardwick Planning
DavidWilsonHomes	Bewick Homes
RamseyTown Centre Partnership	Richmond Fellowship Employment and Training
Cheffins	Larkfleet Homes
Charles Planning	Huntingdonshire and Godmanchester Civic Society
Francis Jackson Estates	Granta Housing
Terence O'Rourke Ltd	Freight Transport Association
Swaversey District Bridleways Association	D H Barford & Co
Smiths Gore	The Gypsy Council
Huntingdon CAB	CountryLand and Business Association
Woodland Trust	Fisher German
Minster Housing Association	Kier Residential
Paul and Company	Phillips Planning
Rapleys	Atkins
AlsopVerrillTown Planning	Spacelab
Business Link East	Civic Trust
Home Builders Federation	Robert Doughty Consultancy Limited
HuntingdonTown Centre Partnership	Peterborough Diocese
Ely Diocese	John Martin & Assoc

## Organisations and Bodies Consulted Appendix 9

**Huntingdonshire LDF | Development Management DPD: Development of Options 2009**

Jennifer Lampert Associates	British Wind Energy Assoc
Hargrave Conservation Society	Optical Activity
Davidson Business	Stamford Homes
JDI Solutions	Varrier Jones Organisation
Davidson Business	De Clifton
J & J Design	Axiom Housing Association
Friends of the Earth	Levitt Partnership
Cambs ACRE	Stewart Ross Associates
Disability Information Service Huntingdonshire	St Ives Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Hanover Housing Association	Jones Day Solicitors
Oxmoor in Bloom	Camstead Homes
Howard Sharp and Partners	Foxley Tagg Planning Ltd
FSB HUNTINGDONSHIRE	Luminus
ARUP	Housing 21
National Trust	CAMRA
Fairhurst	RPS Warren
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	Forestry Commission
Appletree Homes Ltd	Boyer Planning
Sustrans	Mono Consultants
Antony Asbury Assoc	Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum
Hutchinson's	Stilton Community Association
Harris Lamb Chartered Surveyors	Bloor Homes
Eversheds LLP	Peterborough Conservation Volunteers
Hartford Conservation Group	Planning Aid
The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire & Peterborough	

### **Government Departments**

Department for Transport  
 OFSTED  
 Defence Estates Operations

## Glossary

### **Adoption**

The point at which the final agreed version of a document comes fully into use.

### **Affordable Housing**

Housing available at a significant discount below market levels so as to be affordable to householders who cannot either rent or purchase property that meets their needs on the open market. It can include social-rented housing and intermediate housing.

### **Amenity**

A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquility.

### **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)**

Document produced each year to report on progress in producing the *Local Development Framework* and implementing its policies.

### **Areas of Strategic Greenspace Enhancement**

Areas which have been identified as having opportunities to expand and create strategic greenspace.

### **Biodiversity**

The whole variety of life on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their genetic variation and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

### **Brownfield**

Previously developed land (PDL). In the sequential approach this is preferable to greenfield land. Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition includes the curtilage of the development. Previously-developed land may occur in both built-up and rural settings. A precise definition is included in Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing'.

### **Built Up Area**

Excludes buildings that are clearly detached from the main body of the settlement, and gardens and other undeveloped land within the curtilage of buildings at the edge of the settlement, especially where those gardens relate more to the surrounding countryside than they do to the built up parts of the settlement. For the full definition of the built-up area please refer to the draft policy on Development in the Countryside.

### **Community Infrastructure**

Facilities available for use by the community. Examples include village halls, doctors' surgeries, pubs, churches and children play areas. It may also include areas of informal open space and sports facilities.

### **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**

The power given to the Local Authority to acquire land for redevelopment which may include development by private developers.

### **Comparison Floorspace**

Shops retailing items not obtained on a frequent basis. these include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

### **Compulsory Purchase Order**

The power given to the Local Authority to acquire land for redevelopment which may include development by private developers.

**Conservation Area**

A designated area of special architectural and/or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is a recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and the need to protect not just individual buildings but the character of the area as a whole.

**Convenience Floorspace**

Shops retailing everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/ magazines and confectionery.

**Core Strategy**

The main *Development Plan Document* containing the overall vision, objectives and policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.

**County Structure Plan**

An existing document containing strategic planning policies and proposals for the county. Under the new system it will be phased out and replaced by policies in the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

**Curtilage**

The area occupied by a property and land closely associated with that property. E.g. in terms of a house and garden, the garden forms the curtilage of the property.

**Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)**

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

**Development Plan**

The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. The Development Plan includes the *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Development Plan Documents*.

**Development Plan Documents**

A document containing local planning policies or proposals which form part of the *Development Plan*, which has been subject to independent examination.

**European Sites**

Consist of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and sites on draft lists for protection as outlined in Regulation 10 of the Habitats Regulations 1994.

**Examination**

Independent consideration of the soundness of a draft *Development Plan Document* chaired by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, whose recommendations are binding.

**Greenfield**

Land which has not been developed before. Applies to most sites outside built-up area boundaries.

**Habitat**

The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

**Housing Needs Assessment**

An assessment of housing needs in the local area. This assessment plays a crucial role in underpinning the planning policies relating to affordable housing. In addition, the information on local needs is required to determine the location of such housing and guide new investment.

**Infrastructure**

A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

### **Issues and Options preliminary consultation document**

The first stage in the production of *development plan documents*. The Council brings possible issues and options for the District into the public domain, in order to generate responses to aid the development of this 'Development of Options' document.

### **Key Workers**

Essential public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and social workers. This includes those groups eligible for the Housing Corporation funded Key Worker Living programme and others employed within the public sector (ie outside of this programme) identified by the Regional Housing Board for assistance.

### **Landscape Character Assessment**

An assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

### **Local Development Document**

The collective term for *Development Plan Documents*, the *Proposals Map*, *Supplementary Planning Documents* and the *Statement of Community Involvement*.

### **Local Development Framework**

The collection of documents to be produced by Huntingdonshire District Council that will provide the new planning policy framework for the district.

### **Local Development Scheme**

Sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents.

### **Local Strategic Partnership**

A group of public, private, voluntary and community organisations and individuals that is responsible for preparing the Community Strategy.

### **Market Housing**

Private housing for rent or sale where the price is set in the open market.

### **Major development**

The creation of 10 or more dwellings on one site.

### **Material consideration**

Factors that may be taken into account when making planning decisions.

### **Minor development**

The creation of up to 9 dwellings on one site.

### **Mitigation measures**

These are measures requested/ carried out in order to limit the damage by a particular development/ activity.

### **Mixed Use**

The creation of a mix of uses on one site.

### **Moderate development**

The creation of between 10 and 59 dwellings on one site.

### **Open Space and Recreational Land**

Open space within settlements includes parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, undeveloped plots, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Outside built-up areas this includes parks, sports pitches and allotments.



**Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)/ Planning Policy Statements (PPS)**

Central Government produce Planning Policy Guidance Notes, to be replaced by Planning Policy Statements which direct planning in the country.

**Preferred Options**

Public consultation on the intended content of a *Development Plan Document*, prior to the DPD itself being drafted. It is a statutory stage of the Local Development Framework preparation for the District.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL)**

(See *Brownfield*.)

**Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)**

Plan covering the East of England as a whole, and setting out strategic policies and proposals for managing land-use change.

**Registered Social Landlords**

These are independent housing organisations registered with the Housing Corporation under the Housing Act 1996. Most are housing associations, but there are also trusts, co-operatives and companies.

**Residential Infilling**

The development of a small site within the built up area of a settlement by up to 3 dwellings.

**Rural Exception Site**

Sites solely for the development of affordable housing on land within or adjoining existing small rural communities, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing.

**Sequential Approach**

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses.

**Settlement Hierarchy**

Settlements are categorised in a hierarchy based on the range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the settlement, access to education and non-car access to higher-order centres.

**Social rented**

Social Rented Housing is housing available to rent at below market levels. Lower rents are possible because the Government subsidises local authorities and registered social landlords in order to meet local affordable housing needs.

**Spatial Planning**

Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning. It brings together and integrates policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.

**Stakeholders**

Groups, individuals or organisations which may be affected by or have a key interest in a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.

**Statement of Community Involvement**

Document setting out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing planning documents and making significant development control decisions.

### **Statement of Compliance**

A report or statement issued by the local planning authority explaining how they have complied with the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2004 and their Statement of Community Involvement during consultation on Local Development Documents.

### **Statutory Development Plan**

The Development Plan for an area which has been taken to statutory adoption. In other words, it has been through all the formal stages and has been approved by the relevant Government office and adopted by the Council.

### **Statutory Organisations**

Organisations the Local Authority has to consult with at consultation stages of the Local Development Framework.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

A study intended to assess overall potential for housing development in an area, including the identification of specific housing sites with development potential over a 15 year horizon.

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

A study intended to review the existing housing market in an area, consider the nature of future need for market and affordable housing and to inform policy development.

### **Strategic Greenspace**

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

### **Submission**

Point at which a draft *Development Plan Document* is published for consultation. At the same time it is submitted to the Secretary of State in advance of its *examination*.

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in the *Local Plan* or *Structure Plan*. Under the new system this will be phased out and replaced by *Supplementary Planning Documents*.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in a *Development Plan Document*.

### **Sustainable Development**

In broad terms this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set out five guiding principles for sustainable development in its strategy "*Securing the future - UK Government strategy for sustainable development*". The five guiding principles, to be achieved simultaneously, are: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance; and Using sound science responsibly.

### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic appraisal process. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable principles.

### **Tenure**

Refers to the way in which a property is owned and/or occupied e.g. freehold, leasehold, shared equity or rented.

**Tests of Soundness**

These are tests to ensure that the document produced is fit for purpose and can be considered as 'sound'. For further guidance please refer to 'Development Plans Examination - A Guide to the Process of Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan Documents' produced by the Planning Inspectorate (2005). The Council is aware that this guidance is out of date however it has not been replaced. More up to date advice along with guidance on other aspects of the planning process can be found on the Planning Advisory Service website at [www.pas.gov.uk](http://www.pas.gov.uk)

**Use Class Order**

Planning regulations outlining a schedule of uses to which a given premises or building can be put. Some changes of use do not require planning permission.

**Vitality and Viability**

In terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.

**Windfall site**

A previously developed site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most "windfalls" are referred to in a housing context.

**Zero Carbon Building**

A building with net carbon dioxide emissions of zero or less over a typical year. This can be achieved where renewable energy systems generate energy and offset the carbon dioxide emissions that come from the use of the building during the year. The Government is intending to establish a national definition soon.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development  
of Options

# Contents

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

1	Introduction	1
2	Methodology	2
	<b>Issues and Options Consultees</b>	<b>8</b>
3	Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context	10
	<b>Relevant Plans and Programmes</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>Sustainability Issues in Huntingdonshire</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Sustainability Appraisal Objectives</b>	<b>21</b>
4	Plan Issues and Options	24
	<b>How the findings of the ISA influenced Preferred Options</b>	<b>25</b>
5	Implementation and Conclusion	33
	Appendices	
1	1 SA Framework	34
2	2 Detailed assessments of draft policies	35
3	3 Indicators and baseline data	92
4	4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)	97
5	5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework	106



## 1 Introduction

**1.1** This report comprises the draft Sustainability Appraisal which accompanies the Development Management DPD: Development of Options.

**1.2** The Council is currently in the process of producing its Local Development Framework as a result of recent changes to the planning system. The Core Strategy has now been submitted and will be considered by a planning inspector at hearings in March 2009. The Development Management DPD must be in conformity with the Core Strategy and provides detailed policies against which planning applications will be assessed.

### **Purpose of Sustainability Appraisal**

**1.3** The Council is required, by law <sup>(1)</sup>, to carry out Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of local development documents which comprise the LDF. Government guidance 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents' (November 2005) (hereafter referred to as SA Guidance) recommends that the two requirements are met through a single combined process. This document therefore incorporates both the SA and SEA requirements, and throughout these two processes will be referred to as 'Sustainability Appraisal' (SA). Its overarching aim is to achieve sustainable development.

**1.4** The purpose of the SA was to assist Huntingdonshire District Council's Development Plans Team prepare the Development Management DPD: Development of Options document for consultation by carrying out the following:

- Identifying the key sustainability issues facing the District
- Assessing the likely effects of the Preferred Options on these issues
- Putting forward recommendations that might mitigate against these effects

**1.5** In order to keep this report to a manageable size it has been considered necessary to cross-reference other reports detailing earlier stages of the analysis, rather than incorporating large amounts of duplicate text into this version. It is therefore recommended that this draft Final SA is read alongside the SA Scoping Report 2007, the Development Control Policies Issues and Options Paper and the ISA of the Issues and Options paper and the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report and its accompanying draft Final SA.

**1.6** This report does not represent an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/42/EEC. A separate report will be compiled by Scott Wilson Ltd, on behalf of the Council, to meet the requirements of the aforementioned legislation.

---

1 Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

## 2 Methodology

### Purpose of Sustainability Appraisal

**2.1** The Council is required, by law <sup>(2)</sup>, to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of local development documents which comprise the LDF. Government guidance 'Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents' (November 2005) (hereafter referred to as SA Guidance) recommends that the two requirements are met through one process. This SA incorporates both the SA and SEA requirements, and throughout the document these two processes will be referred to as 'Sustainability Appraisal' (SA). Its overarching aim is to achieve sustainable development.

**2.2** The purpose of the SA was to assist Huntingdonshire District Council's Development Plans Team prepare its Development Control Policies Preferred Options report for consultation by carrying out the following:

- Identifying the key sustainability issues facing the District
- Assessing the likely effects of the Preferred Options on these issues
- Putting forward recommendations that might mitigate against these effects

**2.3** In order to keep this report to a manageable size it has been considered necessary to cross-reference other reports detailing earlier stages of the analysis, rather than incorporating large amounts of duplicate text into this one. It is therefore recommended that this draft Final SA is read alongside the SA Scoping Report 2007, the Development Control Policies Issues and Options Paper and the ISA of the Issues and Options paper and the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report and its accompanying draft Final SA.

**2.4** This report does not represent an Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/42/EEC. A separate report will be compiled by Scott Wilson Ltd, on behalf of the Council, to meet the requirements of the aforementioned legislation.

### How was the SA carried out?

**2.5** Preparation of the SA process, including producing the Scoping Report and the Initial SA carried out as part of Issues and Options consultation has been completed in house by members of the Development Plans Team.

**2.6** The draft Final SA has been produced alongside preparation of the Preferred Options Report and has informed development of the Preferred Options. The SA process was carried out during February 2008. The draft Final SA report accompanies the Development Control Policies Preferred Options Report and forms pre-submission public participation <sup>(3)</sup>.

**2.7** The Planning Officer responsible for carrying out the SA appraised the policies in the Preferred Options Report against the SA framework developed in the Scoping process (see Appendix 1) and produced a number of detailed appraisal matrices (see Appendix 2) from which conclusions were drawn (see section 6). Once complete, the draft report was reviewed in house by other officers and recommended changes to the Preferred Options report made, before undergoing consultation alongside the Development Control Policies Preferred Options Report.

**2.8** SA guidance sets out the various stages and tasks involved in completing the SA process. This SA report comprises the third phase of SA processes that have been carried out by Huntingdonshire District Council including:

- Scoping Report for SA (stages A1-A4)

---

2 Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

3 Regulation 26 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

- Initial SA of Development Control Policies DPD Issues and Options paper (a list of consultees to whom this was sent is set out in table 1.2)
- Draft Final SA of Development Control Policies DPD Preferred Options Report

## Relationship between Sustainability Appraisal and the Development Plan

**2.9** The production of a Scoping Report is the first stage in incorporating the Sustainability Appraisal process within the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework. The full process varies for the production of Development Plan Documents (DPD) or Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). However for both of these processes, sustainability appraisal is an integral part of the plan preparation process. SA Guidance sets out guidance on how to carry out SA as an integral part of plan making. The stages involved in carrying out a sustainability appraisal of a DPD are set out in Table 2.1.

**2.10** The purpose of the Scoping Report is to set the context and objectives, and decide on the scope of the sustainability appraisal. This process generated a set of sustainability appraisal (SA) objectives that form the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Framework used to appraise the policies contained in the Development Control Policies Preferred Options Report.

**2.11** The preparation of this draft Final SA report is covered by Stage C and consultation on the Report covered under Stage D. It should be stressed that this is an iterative process and the tasks and stages overlap and inform each other.

**Table 1 Stages involved in the SA of a DPD**

<b>DPD Stage 1: Pre-production - Evidence gathering</b>
SA stages and tasks
Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A1: identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainable development objectives</li> <li>• A2: Collecting baseline information</li> <li>• A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems</li> <li>• A4: Developing the SA framework</li> <li>• A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA</li> </ul>
<b>DPD Stage 2: Production</b>
SA Stages and tasks
Stage B: Developing and refining the options and assessing effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA framework</li> <li>• B2: Developing the DPD options</li> <li>• B3: Predicting the effects of the draft DPD</li> <li>• B4: Evaluating the effects of the draft DPD</li> <li>• B5: Considering the ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects</li> <li>• B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPD</li> </ul>
<b>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C1: Preparing the Report</li> </ul>
<b>Stage D: Consulting on Preferred Options of the DPD and SA Report</b>

# Methodology

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D1: Public participation on the Preferred Options of the DPD and the SA report</li> <li>• D2 (i): Appraising significant changes</li> </ul>
<b>DPD Stage 3: Examination</b>
SA Stages and tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D2(ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations</li> </ul>
<b>DPD Stage4: Adoption and monitoring</b>
SA Stages and tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• D3: Making decisions and providing information</li> </ul>
<b>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring</li> <li>• E2: Responding to adverse effects</li> </ul>

**2.12** The Council, in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Scott Wilson Ltd previously produced a Scoping Report in 2005 which was issued for consultation in 2005. This Scoping Report has recently been up-dated and revised to be in accordance with SA guidance and has been sent out to all the statutory environmental bodies and a number of other organisations for consultation. The updated Scoping Report (2007) sets out the following:

### **Stage A1: Review of plans, policies and programmes**

**2.13** Identification of international, national, regional and local documents with the regional and local documents reviewed in more detail in terms of identifying key objectives or strategies. This review led to the development of key themes for which baseline data (Stage A2) was required.

### **Stage A2: Baseline data**

**2.14** Data was collated according to the themes identified in A1. This led to an understanding of key issues (Stage A3).

### **Stage A3: Key issues**

**2.15** Sets out the identification of key issues in the District with a consideration of how the LDF could address the issues. Indicators from the A2 baseline data were identified which were considered appropriate to measure sustainability of the LDF.

### **Stage A4: SA Objectives**

**2.16** From understanding the key issues identified in Stage A3, a SA Framework, including SA objectives was developed. These objectives are the main tool for appraising the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan: Options. Appendix 6 of the SA Scoping Report sets out the SA Framework which will be used to assess all local development plan documents and forms the basis of the monitoring framework.

## Difficulties encountered in writing the SA

**2.17** Timing and resources have been significant challenges throughout the SA process, from beginning the Scoping process to writing the draft Final SA report. The baseline data collated as part of the Scoping process presented specific problems as, in some cases, data was simply not available. The recent update of the Scoping Report has made the baseline data more reliable, but there still remain gaps in data collection which present challenges when carrying out SA of local development documents.

**2.18** A particular difficulty encountered when carrying out the Initial SA as part of Issues and Options consultation on the Development Control Policies, was that options presented were not specific. This made carrying out the SA, specific by its nature, difficult. Lack of information on the exact type of location of development presented problems, particularly when assessing impacts on, for example, biodiversity. The subsequent recommendations or mitigation measures offered within the ISA were often very broad. Similar issues have been encountered when carrying out this draft Final SA however, as the policy becomes more detailed so too can the SA process. Issues surrounding gaps in data collection still presented challenges.

## Judgements and Assumptions

**2.19** Throughout the SA judgements of the effects have had to be made. Attempts to remedy this have been made by ensuring an external review of the Scoping process and ensuring an internal review was carried out for the draft Final SA.

**2.20** This draft Final SA has been undertaken on the basis of the likely effects of the implementation of the Council's Preferred Options. Judgements have therefore been made on the basis of:

- The current sustainability issues and trends facing the region
- The likely influence of the Preferred Options on these trends compared to other factors such as government policies, market forces and funding priorities
- The powers available to the planning system to achieve what the Preferred Options DPD sets out to achieve

**2.21** Throughout the SA process, the cumulative and synergistic effects have been looked at in accordance with government SA guidance. Where reference is made to 'long term effects,' this is assumed to cover the lifespan of the plan period. Short and medium timescales will vary according to particular types of effect, but are assumed to occur within the plan period and approximately take effect during the first 5-10 years (short term) and during years 10-15 (medium) with long term effects assumed to occur thereafter.

## Outline of Development Control Policies DPD content and objectives

**2.22** The Core Strategy will set the framework for how Huntingdonshire will develop up to 2026. It will contain strategic policies to manage growth and guide new development. It forms the lead document in Huntingdonshire's Local Development Framework which will comprise a suite of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. These all have to be consistent with the Core Strategy once it is adopted. Having undertaking Regulation 26 pre-submission public participation <sup>(4)</sup> in 2007, the Core Strategy is now moving towards submission stage. <sup>(5)</sup>

**2.23** The Development Control Policies DPD builds upon the strategic content of the Core Strategy, providing more detailed advice through a suite of policies for use in determining planning applications for the District.

---

4 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

5 Regulation 27 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

# Methodology

**2.24** Preparation of Development Control Policies Preferred Options has been informed by the consultation responses and the Initial SA of the Issues and Options paper. The Preferred Options report sets out the Council's Preferred Options and policies. It has been set out in two volumes – volume one takes the form of a draft plan with policies and their reasoned justification and volume two records the development of policies, including the results of community involvement and conclusions drawn from the Initial SA. This second volume comprises the audit trail of plan development.

**2.25** The Development Control Policies Preferred Options report sets out the following policies:

<b>Promoting Sustainable Development</b>
DC1: Design quality
DC2: Amenity
DC3: Accessibility, adaptability and security
DC4: Car and cycle parking
DC5: Development in the countryside
DC6: Biodiversity
DC7: Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features
DC8: Protection of open space and recreational land
DC9: Renewable energy
DC10: Flood risk
<b>Delivering housing and a healthy living environment</b>
DC11: Housing density
DC12: Housing mix
DC13: Dwellings in the countryside
DC14: Extra care housing, nursing and care homes
DC15: Provision of sports and recreational facilities and open space
<b>Supporting prosperous communities</b>
DC16: Location of office development
DC17: Location of industrial and warehouse development
DC18: Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites
DC19: Location of tourist facilities
DC20: Farm diversification
DC21: Location of retail and leisure development
DC22: Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages
DC23: Retention of key local services and facilities
<b>Protecting and enhancing the environment</b>
DC24: Re-use and redevelopment of rural buildings
DC25: Protected habitats and species
DC26: Great Fen Project
DC27: Landscape character



DC28: Conservation areas
<b>Monitoring and implementation</b>
DC29: Phasing
DC30: Monitoring

**2.26** As the primary aim of the Development Control Policies DPD is to guide implementation of the Core Strategy DPD it was considered appropriate not to include separate objectives to those contained in the Core Strategy: Preferred Options Report. The compatibility appraisal of the Core Strategy DPD objectives and the SA objectives therefore stand for the Development Control Policies DPD. This matrix can be found on page 56 of the Core Strategy draft Final SA.

### Requirements of the SEA Directive

**2.27** Annex 1 of the SEA Directive <sup>(6)</sup> sets out the information that must be provided in the Environmental Report. This is set out in the table below and the information which has been included within this SA Report has been identified.

Environmental Requirements (as set out in Annex 1 of SEA Directive)	Where covered in the SA Report/Scoping Report (2007)
a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programmes and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Section 2 of this report outlines the policies contained in the Development Control Policies DPD, Table 3.1 lists relevant programmes reviewed and Appendix 2 of the Scoping Report details the relationship to the Plan
b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	Detailed in Section 4 of the Scoping Report
c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	Detailed in Section 4 of the Scoping Report and summarised in Table 3.2 of this report
d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC (The Birds Directive) and 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive)	Detailed in Section 4 of the Scoping Report and summarised in Table 3.2 of this report
e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	Identified during the context review of the baseline data and reflected in the Plan policies (Section 2)
f) the likely significant effects <sup>(7)</sup> on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population,	Appendix 2 with summary provided in Section 4 of this report, including Table 4.2

6 Directive 2001/42/EEC

7 These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects

# Methodology

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	
g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Appendix 2 of this report
h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Sections 3 and 4 of this report (informed by Appendix 6 which details the ISA of policy options and alternatives. Also Volume 2 which details the consultation responses received)
i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10;	Section 5 and Appendix 5 of this report
j) a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Accompanies this report

## Issues and Options Consultees

**Table 4 Issues and Options consultees**

<b>Statutory consultees and other agencies</b>	<b>Health care and welfare bodies</b>
Environment Agency	Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust
English Heritage	East of England Strategic Health Authority
Highways Agency	Cambridgeshire ACRE
Natural England	
<b>Regional governmental bodies</b>	<b>Other national or regional bodies</b>
Government Office for the East of England	East of England Tourist Board
	Sport England
<b>Local authorities</b>	<b>Infrastructure and service providers</b>
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Cambridge Water Company
Fenland District Council	Anglican Water Services
Peterborough City Council	Network Rail
Cambridgeshire County Council	TRANSCO
Northamptonshire County Council	National Grid
East Northamptonshire District Council	Mobile Operators Association
Bedford Borough Council	
Mid Bedfordshire District Council	

Parish and Town Councils in Huntingdonshire	
Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils	
<b>Biodiversity and rural affairs</b>	<b>Housing Associations and other bodies</b>
CPRE Cambridgeshire	Cambridge Housing Society
The British Horse Society	Luminus
Wildlife Trust	Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association
Cambs and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership	Muir Group Housing Association
The Ramblers Association	Nene Housing Association
	Granta Housing Society
	The Guinness Trust
	CABE
<b>Other local groups and bodies</b>	<b>Other local groups and bodies (cont)</b>
Huntingdon Town Centre Partnership	St Ives Town Centre Initiative
St Neots Town Centre Initiative	Civic Trust
Ramsey Town Centre Initiative	Cambridgeshire Horizons

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

## 3 Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

### Review of relevant plans, programmes and policies

**3.1** The Development Control Policies DPD needs to take into account a wide range of other plans, policies and programmes. These may contain policy objectives or specific requirements that need to be addressed through the new plan. Identifying and reviewing these documents is an important element of the SA process, as it can help to shape the objectives against which emerging policies should be appraised, as well as pointing to particular issues and problems that need to be tackled.

**3.2** The review of plans and programmes is relevant in setting the context for the Development Control Policies Preferred Options – table 3.1 lists the relevant plans and policies and appendix 2 of the Scoping Report (2007) contains a detailed review of these.

### Collection of baseline data and description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics likely to be effected

**3.3** Collection of baseline information is fundamental to the SA process to provide a background to and evidence base for identifying both sustainability problems in Huntingdonshire and alternative ways of dealing with them. The baseline information has informed the development of the SA Framework and provides the basis for monitoring effects of plans.

**3.4** Appendix 3 sets out the baseline information that has been collected. The baseline data is presented in the form of indicators and identifies the current situation for the District and also a comparator – usually Cambridgeshire or the East of England which was collated from District, County and Regional monitoring.

### Difficulties and limitations in collecting and analysing the data

**3.5** The Council's difficulties in collecting the baseline data are consistent with those of other authorities and reflect some deep-rooted problems with the reliability of information sources informing this process. A number of specific problems were identified:

#### **3.6** *Data availability/ applicability*

- Data for some indicators is not available because it is derived from external sources which do not monitor it, or which have not yet established monitoring systems. (The same limitation applies to government sustainability targets, many of which are not yet defined.)
- The same issue affects data at sub-District level and their absence may reflect the high cost of data collection and / or monitoring to the Council or other bodies such as the Environment Agency
- Boundaries of natural features (landscape areas; river catchments) extend beyond the administrative boundaries so that data on some larger continuous features is difficult to collect

#### **3.7** *Data quality/ comparability*

- Time series data are very limited and if they exist often only a couple of data points are available
- The best or most consistently monitored data is for contextual indicators, whereas recent LDF monitoring guidance identifies the need to prioritise local outcome indicators which monitor the impacts of the DPD as directly as possible

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

## Summary of information collected and reviewed

**3.8** The review of relevant plans and programmes highlighted a number of key characteristics and sustainability issues facing Huntingdonshire, a summary of which can be found in table 3.2. The social, economic and environmental issues that are likely to be affected by the draft policies is presented in Table 4.2.

## The SA Objectives

**3.9** The SA Framework developed as part of the Scoping process (Appendix 1) has been used to assess the sustainability of each option. This Framework includes the SA objectives along with targets and indicators that make up part of the monitoring and review process - table 3.3 sets out the objectives and decision aiding questions.

**3.10** It is important that the SA Framework reflects local circumstances that can be influenced by the new development planning system. The SA Objectives are used to appraise each policy or option, the detailed matrices for which can be found in Appendix 2 and summaries in section 4.

## Relevant Plans and Programmes

**Table 5 Relevant Plans and Programmes**

International
European Landscape Convention (2007)
Commitments arising from the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg (2002)
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EEC (2002)
European Strategy on Sustainable Development (2001)
Directive on Electricity Production from Renewable Energy Sources 2001/77/EC (2001)
The Sixth Environmental Action Programme of the European Community 1600/2002/EEC
The UN Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals (2000)
European Spatial Development Perspective (May 1999)
EC Council Directive 99/31/EC on Landfill of Waste (1999)
European Biodiversity Strategy (1998)
Kyoto Protocol (1992)
EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (1992)
Air Quality Framework Directive 96/92/EC (1996)
EC Council Directive 85/337/EEC & 97/11/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of certain Public and Private Projects in the Environment (1985)
EC Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (1979)
Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)
Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979)
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971)

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

National
Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable, DCLG (July 2007)
Eco Town Prospectus, DCLG (July 2007)
Circular 04/2007: Planning for Travelling Showpeople, DCLG (2007)
Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development, DCLG (2006)
Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, DCLG (2006)
Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (ODPM, 2005)
A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM 2005)
Securing the Regions' Future - Strengthening the Delivery of Sustainable Development in the English Regions, DEFRA (2006)
Climate Change, the UK Programme 2006, HM Government (2006)
Local Quality of Life Indicators - A Guide to Local Monitoring to Complement the Indicators in the UK Government Strategy, The Audit Commission (Aug 2005)
Securing the Future - Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, DEFRA (March 2005)
One Future Different Paths - the UK's Shared Framework for Sustainable Development, DEFRA (March 2005)
Delivering Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier, DoH (March 2005)
Sustainable Communities: Homes for All, ODPM (2005)
Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity, ODPM (2005)
Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices White Paper, DoH (Nov 2004)
The Future of Transport: A Network for 20230 White Paper, DfT (July 2004)
Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future - Creating a Low Carbon Economy, DTI (2003)
Working with the Grain of Nature - A Biodiversity Strategy for England, DEFRA (2002)
Transport Ten Year Plan, DfT (2000)
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, DETR (2000)
Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (DCLG 2005)
Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change (Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1) (DCLG 2007)
Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (DCLG 2006)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, (DoE 1992)
Consultation Draft Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development (DCLG, 2007)
Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres, (ODPM 2005)
Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (ODPM 2004)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 8: Telecommunications (DETR, 2001)
Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM, 2004)



# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (ODPM 2005)
Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (ODPM 2004)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (DETR 2001)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (DoE 1994)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (ODPM 2002)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 19: Outdoor Advertisement Control (DoE 1992)
Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (ODPM 2004)
Planning for Renewable Energy A Companion Guide to PPS22 (ODPM 2004)
Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control (ODPM 2004)
Planning Policy Guidance Note 24: Planning and Noise (ODPM, 2001)
Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (DCLG 2006)
Development and Flood Risk A Companion Guide to PPS25 'Living Draft' (DCLG 2006)
<b>Regional</b>
Sustainable Communities in the East of England (ODPM 2003)
A Sustainable Development Framework for the East of England (EERA 2001)
Our Environment, Our Future: Regional Environment Strategy for the East of England (EERA 2003)
A Better Life: The role of Culture in the sustainable development of the East of England, (Living East 2006)
A Shared Vision The Regional Economic Strategy for the East of England (EEDA 2004)
EEDA Corporate Plan 2005/06-2007/08 (EEDA 2005)
Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England RPG6 (GO-East 2000)
The East of England Plan - The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes to the Draft Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (GO-East Oct 2007)
Draft Revision to Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England Secretary of State's Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes Report of the Habitats Directive Assessment (RPS 2007)
Sustainability Appraisal of the East of England Proposed Changess RSS (ERM 2006)
East of England Regional Waste Management Strategy, East of England Waste Technical Advisory Body (2002)
Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the East of England (East of England Tourist Board 2004)
Framework for Regional Employment and Skills and Action (FRESA) (EEDA 2003)
Regional Social Strategy (EERA 2004)
Sustainable Futures: The Integrated Regional Strategy for the East of England (EERA 2005)
Regional Housing Strategy 2005-2010 (EERA 2005)
Healthy Futures - A Regional Health Strategy for the East of England 2005-2010 (EERA 2005)
Affordable Housing Study: The Provision of Affordable Housing in the East of England 1996-2021 (2003)

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

East of England Affordable Housing Study Stage 2: Provision for Key Workers and Unmet Housing Need (2005)
Water Resources for the Future: A Strategy for the Anglian Region (EA 2001)
Towns and Cities Strategy and Action Plan (EEDA 2003)
Towards Sustainable Construction: A Strategy for the East of England (EP, CE GO-East, PECT 2003)
Living with Climate Change in the East of England (East of England Sustainable Development Roundtable 2003)
Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan, Summary of Draft Plan (EA 2007)
<b>County/Sub Regional</b>
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (Saved Policies) (CCC & PCC 2003)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan (CCC & PCC 2003)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste, Core Strategy Development Plan Document Preferred Options (CCC & PCC 2006)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste, Site Specific Proposals Development Plan Document Preferred Options (CCC & PCC 2006)
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (CCC 2006)
Environment and Strategy Action Plan (CCC 2002)
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Waste Management Strategy 2002-2022 (CCC 2001)
A County of Culture - A Cultural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2002-2005
Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (CCC 1991)
Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (CCC 2001)
Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan (CCC 2004)
Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridge Sub Regional Partners 2004)
Balanced and Mixed Communities - A Good Practice Guide (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)
Sustainable Construction in Cambridgeshire - A Good Practice Guide (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)
Major Sports Facilities Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)
The Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region (Cambridgeshire Horizons 2006)
Cambridgeshire Local Area Agreement 2006-2009
Tackling Climate Change in Cambridgeshire (CCC 2005)
Cambridgeshire Environment Report 2005 (CCC 2005)
Cambridgeshire Horizons Business Plan 2004/07 (2004)
A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire 2006-2010 (Cambridgeshire ACRE)
Public Library Position Statement 2003 (CCC 2003)
Prospects for Learning (CCC 2001)
Greater Cambridge and Peterborough Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2007)
Cambridgeshire Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010 (CCC 2005)

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Cambridgeshire Sub Regional Housing Strategy (CCC, ECDC, FDC, FHDC, HDC, StEDC, SCDC 2004)
The Big Plan Cambridgeshire's Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 (CCYPSP 2006)
<b>District</b>
Ageing Well in Huntingdonshire A Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People (HDC 2005)
Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008 (HCSP 2005)
Draft Access Strategy Huntingdonshire PCT (2002)
Draft Strategic Service Development Plan (Hunts PCT 2002)
Huntingdonshire Community Strategy (HDC 2004) & emerging Sustainable Community Strategy (2008)
Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Strategy 2006-2011 (HDC 2006)
Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Needs Assessment Update (2006) & Housing Needs Survey 2002
Huntingdonshire Local Delivery Plan (PCT 2003)
Cultural Strategy for Huntingdonshire 2007-2010 (HDC)
Local Economy Strategy Mid Term Plan 2008-2015 (HDC)
Equality and Inclusion Strategy (HDC 2005)
Huntingdonshire District Council Update of Retail Assessment Study (2007) and Retail Study (2005)
Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Land Availability Study (Oct 2007)
Huntingdonshire District Council Design Guide SPD (June 2007)
Huntingdonshire District Council Landscape and Townscape Assessment (June 2007)
Huntingdonshire District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment ( 2004)
Conservation Area Statements (Various)
Employment Land Review (2007)
Huntingdonshire District Council Open Space, Sport and Recreational Needs Assessment (PMP 2006)

## Sustainability Issues in Huntingdonshire

Table 6 Key Sustainability Issues in Huntingdonshire

Sustainability Issue	Implications for LDDs	Evidence base	Policy context
<b>Land, water and resources</b>			
Growth pressures will put increased demands on Greenfield land.	Need to prioritise development on previously developed land (PDL) and ensure that where necessary only the most sustainable Greenfield sites are developed	For Huntingdonshire the percentage of housing completed on PDL was 55.3% for 2005/06	PPS3: Housing (2006) states that the national annual target that at least 60% of new housing should be provided on PDL

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Development needs to make efficient use of land.	Need make sure the density of development makes efficient use of land	In 2005/06 the average density of residential development in Huntingdonshire was 36.33	PPS3: Housing sets a national indicative minimum of 30dph
Development may put an additional strain on water supply	Future development will need to be underpinned by adequate infrastructure and measures taken to ensure the efficient use of resources incorporated through sustainable design	In 2005/06 160 litres per head per day were consumed in unmetered households in the Anglian region and 128 litres per head per day in metered households	Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (2002)  Water Resources for the Future: A Strategy for the Anglian Region, Environment Agency (2001)  Policies relating to water in Proposed Changes to the Draft East of England Plan (2006)
<b>Biodiversity</b>			
The impact of new development on biodiversity needs to be considered	New developments should maximise the potential for biodiversity and reconnecting habitats that have become fragmented	86.2% of SSSI's across the District are in a favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, ODPM (Aug 2005)  Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan (2006)  Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan, Cambridgeshire County Council (2004)
<b>Landscape, townscape and archaeology</b>			
New development needs to maintain and enhance the District's historic and architectural heritage	National policy will be used to protect listed buildings, conservation areas and sites of archaeological interest	In the District 13.1% of Listed Buildings were at risk in 2005/06. 21% of the Conservation Areas in the District were covered by an up-to-date character assessment in 2005/06. (Up-to-date character assessment has to be reviewed within 5 years of publication.)	PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment, DoE (1994)  PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning DoE (1990)  Policy on protected and enhancing the historic environment in the Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan (2006)  Huntingdonshire Conservation Area Statements

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

			<p>Huntingdonshire District Council's Corporate Plan 2007/08 -Growing Success stresses that heritage assets and conservation areas need to be maintained and enhanced</p> <p>The Huntingdonshire Community Strategy emphasizes the need to improve the quality and distinctiveness of the local environment and protect historic sites as well as understand the heritage of the landscape</p>
<b>Climate change and pollution</b>			
<p>There is a high risk of flooding in some areas of the District and new development may put additional pressure on land drainage systems and lead to an increase in flooding. Flooding is likely to increase as a result of climate change</p>	<p>Need to ensure that new developments incorporate methods/solutions in their design to reduce the risk of flooding, for example the use of sustainable drainage systems where appropriate</p>	<p>In 2005/06 there was one instance of planning permission being granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality</p>	<p>Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (2002)</p> <p>PPS25 Development and Flood Risk, DCLG (2006)</p> <p>Flood risk management policy in Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan (2006)</p>
<p>The pattern of development in the District has encouraged private car use leading to congestion and air pollution being problems in some areas. New development will need to be accommodated in sustainable locations to minimise the need to travel</p>	<p>Need to ensure that development is accommodated in sustainable locations to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable travel modes</p>	<p>In 2005/06 76.8% of completions were in Market Towns and Key Service Centres</p>	<p>PPG13 Transport, DETR, (2001)</p> <p>Transport Ten Year Plan, DfT (2000)</p> <p>The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 White Paper, Dft (July 2004)</p> <p>Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan (2006)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006-11 Cambridgeshire County Council, (March 2006)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire District Council Travel Plan, HDC</p>

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<p>Development will place increased pressure on existing landfill sites and household waste processing centres</p>	<p>Need to ensure that new developments make adequate provision for recycling facilities</p>	<p>In 2005/06 25% of household waste was sent for recycling in the District</p>	<p>EC Council Directive 99/31/EC on the landfill of Waste (1999)</p> <p>PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management, ODPM (July 2005)</p> <p>UK Waste Strategy, DEFRA (2000)</p> <p>Waste management policies in the Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan, (2006)</p> <p>East of England Regional Waste Management Strategy, East of England Waste Technical Advisory Body, (2002)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan, Cambridgeshire County Council (2003)</p> <p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste LDF – Preferred Options (November 2006)</p>
<p>Development will increase the demand for energy from non-renewable energy sources and increase carbon dioxide emissions</p>	<p>Opportunities for renewable energy sources should be encouraged and used to their full potential. Developments should make provision to provide a percentage of on-site energy requirements from renewable sources</p>	<p>There is currently no data available for the % of predicted energy requirements from on-site renewable energy technologies on major developments</p>	<p>Kyoto Protocol</p> <p>Directive on Electricity Production from Renewable Energy Sources 2001/77/EEC (2001)</p> <p>PPS22: Renewable Energy, ODPM (2004)</p> <p>PPS: Planning and Climate Change, Supplement to PPS1 (consultation draft) DCLG, (2006)</p> <p>Climate Change, the UK Programme 2006, HM</p>



# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

			<p>Energy White Paper: Our Energy Future</p> <p>Proposed Changes to draft East of England Plan, (2006)</p> <p>Living with Climate Change in the East of England Sustainable Development Roundtable (2003)</p> <p>Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub-region, Cambridge Sub-regional Partners (2004)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Community Strategy (2004) - increasing sources of renewable energy is key objective</p>
Need to reduce health inequalities across the District	Need to ensure equal access to facilities for all members of the community across Huntingdonshire. Some urban areas of market towns, in particular Huntingdon North Ward and Eynesbury Ward in St Neots both experience higher levels of relative deprivation and are in the 10% most deprived wards in Cambridgeshire. (Although these wards are less deprived than the most deprived areas nationally.)	Across the District in 2005/06 there were 36 urban wards with a primary school and 18 with a doctor's surgery	<p>Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation White Paper, DoH (1999)</p> <p>Healthy Futures – A Regional Health Strategy for the East of England 2005-2010, EERA (Dec 2005)</p>
New development will put pressure on existing open space in some settlements	Need to ensure that existing open space is protected and enhanced, and adequate and readily accessible open space is provided through new development	In 2005/06 in Huntingdonshire there was 1.61ha of sports pitches available for public use per 1000 population	<p>PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, ODPM (2002)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire District Council Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Assessment and Audit, PMP, (2006)</p>

## Inclusive communities

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<p>High average house prices are pricing key workers/first time buyers out of the area</p>	<p>Future development must include adequate affordable housing</p>	<p>In Huntingdonshire 50.4% of housing completions on eligible sites within the Cambridge Sub region were affordable and 42.8% of housing completions on eligible sites outside the Cambridge Sub region were affordable in 2005/06</p>	<p>PPS3 (2006) states that local development documents should set a plan wide target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided</p> <p>Proposed Changes to the draft East of England Plan (2006) sets out the regional housing provision. In Huntingdonshire the minimum additional number of homes to be achieved during April 2006 to March 2021 is 8,310. In order to be consistent with PPS3 local planning authorities need to plan for a continuous supply of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption of housing allocation DPDs. It also stresses that opportunities for maximising higher growth rates should be taken.</p> <p>Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Strategy 2006-2011, HDC, (2006)</p> <p>Huntingdonshire Community Strategy (2004) stresses the need to provide housing that meets local needs</p>
<p>New development will need to be accommodated in sustainable settlements with good access to facilities and services</p>	<p>Need to ensure that access to facilities and services is taken into account when considering the scope for development in different locations</p>	<p>34.9% of rural households within Cambridgeshire were located within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better public/ community transport service in 2005/06</p>	<p>PPG13: Transport, DETR, (2001)</p> <p>Regional Transport Strategy, Proposed Changes to draft East of England Plan, (2006)</p> <p>Regional Transport Strategy, Development of Options Report, Faber Maunsell, EERA (2002)</p>

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

			Huntingdonshire Community Strategy (2004) sets out a priority to work towards easy and affordable access to services and facilities
Economic activity			
There is a high incidence of out commuting across the district and identified skills shortages among skilled and basic occupations	Need to ensure employment provision is accommodated in sustainable locations and meets the needs of all groups	The 2001 Census results show that 35.3% of employed people living in the District commute out of the District to work	PPG13: Transport, DETR (2001) Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011 (CCC) Huntingdonshire Community Strategy (2004) recognises the challenge of out commuting
The provision of employment development will need to be sustainably located so as to reduce the need to travel between work and home and provide local employment opportunities to help limit out commuting	Need to ensure employment provision is accommodated in sustainable locations and meets the needs of all groups	Across Huntingdonshire 529.87ha of employment land was available in 2005/06	PPG4: Industrial, commercial development and small firms, DoE Huntingdonshire Community Strategy identifies measures to help strengthen the vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's economy through increasing investment and creating local employment opportunities Huntingdonshire Employment Land Review (2007)

## Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

Table 1 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

Sustainability Topic / SEA Topic	SA Objective	Decision aiding questions
Land, water and resources <i>Soil and water</i>	1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/ amenity value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it use land that has been previously developed?</li> </ul>

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it use land efficiently?</li> <li>Will it protect the best and most versatile agricultural land?</li> </ul>
	2. Minimise the use of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it reduce water consumption?</li> <li>Will it conserve ground water resources?</li> </ul>
Biodiversity <i>Biodiversity fauna and flora</i>	3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity & green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity & green infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it help achieve Biodiversity Action Plan Targets?</li> <li>Will it conserve species, reverse their decline and help to enhance diversity?</li> <li>Will it reduce habitat fragmentation?</li> <li>Will it protect sites designated for their nature conservation interest?</li> </ul>
Landscape, townscape and archaeology <i>Cultural heritage and landscape</i>	4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it protect or enhance sites, features or areas of historical, archaeological, or cultural interest (including conservation areas, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and scheduled ancient monuments)?</li> <li>Will it maintain and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character?</li> <li>Will it maintain and enhance the character of settlements?</li> </ul>
	5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality of design and use of sustainable construction methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it improve the satisfaction of people with their neighbourhoods as places to live?</li> <li>Will it lead to developments built to a high standard of design?</li> </ul>
Climate change and pollution  <i>Climate factors &amp; Air</i>	6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it minimise risk to people and property from flooding, storm events or subsidence?</li> <li>Will it improve the adaptability of buildings to changing temperatures?</li> </ul>
	7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (for example air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?</li> <li>Will it improve air quality?</li> <li>Will it reduce traffic volumes?</li> <li>Will it reduce levels of noise or noise concerns?</li> <li>Will it reduce or minimise light pollution?</li> <li>Will it reduce, diffuse and point source water pollution?</li> </ul>
	8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it reduce household waste?</li> <li>Will it increase waste recovery and recycling?</li> </ul>
	9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it increase accessibility to cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways?</li> <li>Will it help improve the quality of cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways?</li> </ul>
	10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?</li> </ul>
Healthy communities <i>Population and human health</i>	11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles, including travel choices?</li> </ul>
	12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will it increase the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space?</li> <li>Will it maintain and, where possible, increase the area of high quality green space in the District?</li> <li>Will it protect and enhance open spaces of amenity and recreational value?</li> </ul>

# Sustainability Objectives, Baseline and Context

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

	13. Reduce and prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it reduce actual levels of crime?</li> <li>• Will it reduce the fear of crime?</li> <li>• Will it contribute towards a cohesive community?</li> </ul>
Inclusive communities <i>Population and human health</i>	14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of local services and facilities including education, health, training and leisure opportunities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it improve the availability of key local services and facilities, including health, education and leisure (shops, post offices, pubs etc)?</li> <li>• Will it encourage engagement with community activities and increase the ability of people to influence decisions?</li> <li>• Will it improve accessibility by means other than the private car?</li> <li>• Will it support and improve public transport?</li> </ul>
	15. Redress inequalities related to gender, age, disability, race, faith, sexuality, location and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it improve relations between people from different backgrounds or social groups?</li> <li>• Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion for those areas and groups most affected?</li> <li>• Will it promote accessibility for all members of society, including the elderly and disabled?</li> </ul>
	16. Ensure all groups have access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it support the provision of a range of house types and sizes, including affordable and key worker housing, to meet the identified needs of all sectors in the community?</li> <li>• Will it reduce the number of unfit homes?</li> <li>• Will it address the particular needs of the travelling community?</li> </ul>
Economic activity <i>Economic development</i>	17. Improve access to satisfying work, appropriate to skills, potential and place of residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it encourage business development?</li> <li>• Will it support the growth of sectors that offer scopes to reduce out-commuting?</li> <li>• Will it improve access to employment, particularly by means other than the private car?</li> <li>• Will it encourage the rural economy and support farm diversification?</li> </ul>
	18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will it facilitate business development and enhance competitiveness?</li> <li>• Will it enable tourism opportunities to be exploited?</li> <li>• Will it support the vitality and viability of market town centres?</li> </ul>

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

## 4 Plan Issues and Options

### Main options and policies considered and how they were identified

**4.1** The range of options and alternative approaches was determined by the Council during plan development. The Council identified options considered relevant and appropriate, however the detailed content of the plan and its position in the wider plan structure limited the number of alternatives that were proposed. Specific constraints were:

- Strategic policy in the emerging East of England Plan eg renewable energy targets
- National planning guidance (PPSs, PPGs and Circulars - it was considered inappropriate to propose options that deviated from current practice
- Other plans and strategies which influenced the production of the Development Control Policies DPD (eg Sustainable Communities Strategy - a full list of the review of relevant plans and policies can be found in Appendix 1)

**4.2** The Council considered that these conditions therefore limited the number of policy areas for which it was possible to define relevant and appropriate alternative options. The development of policies (including alternative options considered and the results of public participation) is recorded in Volume Two of the Preferred Options report and should be read alongside this SA. The Initial SA of the Issues and Options paper assessed the reasonable alternatives considered appropriate at that stage of plan development and included in Appendix 4 is a summary of these assessments. How the ISA informed the Preferred Options is included in Table 4.1 of this draft Final Sustainability Report.

**4.3** The SEA Regulations and SA guidance require that options and alternatives are given consideration and following section provides a summary of the alternatives considered and is derived from the Initial SA of the Development Control Policies Issues and Options paper (summaries of which are provided in appendix 4). The Initial SA indicated that restricting development outside the settlements by using criteria based policy was clearly sustainable. It raised the issue of whether or not the use of development boundaries should be retained or policies to restrict development should be use the built up framework criteria. As a result of the policy taken forward into the Preferred Options report, planning decisions will be guided by the use of criteria based policy based on restricting development to the built up area unless certain criteria set out in the policy are met.

**4.4** In relation to housing density the SA identified the most sustainable policy as being the application of a range of densities on development proposals across the District. The alternative option proposed a single net density for development proposals. Although not strictly contravening government policy, PPS3 encourages Local Authorities to set out a range of densities, and this has been taken forward into the Preferred Options report.

**4.5** The Issues and Options paper proposed that the criteria should be set out to protect landscape character. The reasonable alternative – to retain Area of Best Landscape (AoBL) –was identified as being overly prescriptive and insufficient to protect against development pressures in those areas not designated as AoBL . The criteria based policy was therefore considered to be more sustainable and consistent with government guidance and was carried forward into the Preferred Options report.

**4.6** A criteria based policy for protecting open space and recreational land was considered to be more sustainable than the reasonable alternative which proposed identifying all these sites on a Proposals Map. Although this alternative would afford protection to those identified sites, those not identified on the Map could come under development pressure as a result of not being protected. By using a criteria based policy the open character of the land can be protected and this policy has been carried forward into the Preferred Options report.



# Plan Issues and Options

**4.7** Two concerns that were raised from the Initial SA related to retirement housing and provision of suitable accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The primary concern raised in relating to retirement housing was the potential competition that may result between facilities with other land uses for the most accessible sites. In terms of the policy for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling showpeople, in accordance with government guidance, this has been moved to the Core Strategy. The conclusions drawn from the Initial SA of the Development Control Policies Issues and Options paper were that this policy would need careful wording – this concern has been dealt with appropriately in the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report. Further information on how which policies from the Issues and Options paper were taken forward into the Preferred Options is contained in table 4.1

## Preferred policy approaches

**4.8** A number of policies have not been carried forward from the Development Control Policies Issues and Options paper as there should be a minimum of repetition between national and regional policy. Where it is considered that a policy area is adequately covered by national or regional policy there is no need to address it within local development documents unless local circumstances warrant it. Volume two provides more information on the assessment of alternatives and should be read alongside this SA. Table 4.1 identifies how the SA process has influenced preparation of the Preferred Options DPD and sets out those policies not carried forward into the Preferred Options Report.

**4.9** The appraisal process can only give an indication of likely effects and therefore can only present a limited judgment on the sustainability of each policy. The appraisal process was undertaken in house and used professional judgment and the baseline information against the SA Framework of objectives. A number of changes were made for improving the sustainability of the Development Control Policies and changes were made where appropriate. More detail on each policy and the initial findings are set out in table 4.3 of this report.

## How the findings of the ISA influenced Preferred Options

**Table 2 How the findings of the ISA influenced development of the Preferred Options DPD**

Policy Area (in Issues and Options)	Proposed Mitigation Measure identified in the ISA	Incorporated into Preferred Options Y/N? (Where?)	Commentary
<i>Draft objectives</i>	The draft objectives were not appraised. This was an omission from the Initial SA.	N	The draft objectives have not been carried forward as the Core Strategy Preferred Options Spatial Objectives apply also to the Development Control Policies DPD Preferred Options.
<b>Promoting sustainable development</b>			
<i>Design quality</i>	Suggests that the proposed policy is in line with government policy on sustainable communities and is supported by more specific material elsewhere in the DPD	Y(DC1)	Policy taken forward into Preferred Options report. The preferred approach clearly sets out the design standards expected to create a high quality public realm. It also cross references other supporting information and guidance produced by the Council (such as the Design Guide) in helping applicants to achieve good design.

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<i>Amenity</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable.	Y(DC2)	The policy taken forward into the Preferred Options is more explicit in its requirement to ensure the amenity of existing and future residents is protected. This policy provides a criteria based approach to protecting amenity.
<i>Accessibility, adaptability and security</i>	Identifies the policy as sustainable yet suggests that the policy will need to be carefully worded to show how access arrangements will be reflected in the design of developments.	Y(DC3)	The policy in the Preferred Options report reflects the measures recommended in the ISA. The policy is a criteria approach and provides detail on access arrangements and the incorporation of appropriate security measures.
<i>Car and cycle parking</i>	Clearly sustainable and consistent with current government advice. No mitigation measures proposed.	Y(DC4)	The policy in the Preferred Options Report outlines a criteria approach to considering car and cycle parking with parking standards included in an appendix.
<i>Development in the countryside</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable and consistent with government guidance. However, it does recognise that there may be a cumulative effect as restrictions on development in the countryside may give rise to development pressures within settlements. Suggests that the policy will require careful wording to ensure that the specific circumstances in which development will be permitted in the countryside are clear.	Y(DC5)	A criteria approach has been incorporated into the Preferred Options report to define the limited circumstances where development in the countryside may be permitted. A clear definition of what constitutes the built up area is included within the policy to clarify the Council's approach.
<i>Biodiversity</i>	Suggests that the policy addresses wider biodiversity concerns and protects features on development sites and is consistent with national guidance and sustainable.	Y(DC6)	Taken forward into the Preferred Options report. PPS9 states that criteria-based policies should be established in local development documents against which proposals for any development on, or affecting, such sites will be judged. The preferred approach clearly provides protection for biodiversity by requiring assessments of habitats and species and appropriate mitigation

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

			measures where anticipated harm may occur.
<i>Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features</i>	Initial SA identifies the policy as being sustainable.	Y(DC7)	Policy taken forward into Preferred Options report. The preferred approach clearly protects against the risk of harm to trees, woodlands and hedgerows. The policy has been amplified to cover ancient woodlands and veteran trees.
<i>Open space and recreational land</i>	Suggests that using criteria based policy to protect open space and recreation land is more sustainable and effective than identifying individual sites on a Proposals Map.	Y (DC8) <i>Protection of open space and recreational land</i>	The policy in the Preferred Options report provides detail criteria to protect against inappropriate loss of open space.
<i>Renewable energy</i>	Initial SA identifies the policy as being sustainable – particularly as it supports objectives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.	Y(DC9)	Policy taken forward into the Preferred Options report. PPS 22 states that criteria based policies to reflect local circumstances should be set out in local development documents in addition to those at the regional or national level. The potential for the District to contribute to renewable energy provision is recognised with the report 'Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub Region' (2004). The criteria set out in the preferred approach are intended to act as safeguards to ensure the risk of adverse effects is minimised.
<i>Flood risk</i>	Identifies the policy as being a straight forward, protective policy.	Y(DC10)	Policy taken forward into the Preferred Options report. PPS25 indicates that local development documents should set out policies to control the risk of flooding. Due to the risk of flooding that is posed to the District this policy protects against a net increase risk of flooding from new development through the use of appropriate mitigation measures eg SUDS.
<b>Delivering housing and a healthy living environment</b>			
<i>Housing density</i>	Identifies the favoured policy approach as applying a range	Y(DC11)	Policy included in the Preferred Options report is a

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

	of densities to development proposals according to settlement type, character and amenities. Suggested that the second option – to apply a single net density to proposals – was not as sustainable.		criteria based approach which identifies net density ranges that should be applied in Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements.
<i>Mix of property sizes</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable. The policy is designed to ensure the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to the needs of a diverse workforce. The need for properties for smaller families and key workers is an implicit priority.	Y(DC12) <i>Housing mix</i>	The policy included in the Preferred Options Report clearly sets out the requirement for development to have an appropriate mix of housing. It is based on upon the evidence provided in the Strategic Market Housing Assessment or successor documents.
<i>Alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable however, suggests that the policy will require careful wording to ensure that the limits placed on extensions or alterations are clear so as to adequately conserve the character of the countryside.	Y(DC13) <i>Dwellings in the countryside</i>	The policy in the Preferred Options report covers new dwellings and occupancy conditions as well as alterations, replacements and extensions. It provides a clear criteria based approach to help conserve the character of the countryside and protect against inappropriate development.
<i>Retirement housing</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable and meeting the needs of a vulnerable group potentially disadvantaged in terms of income or health. Identifies a potential concern that facilities will compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites.	Y(DC14) <i>Extra care housing, nursing and care homes</i>	The policy in the Preferred Option recognises that open market retirement housing is one of the many house types covered by PPS3. The policy therefore addresses the issue of extra care housing and specialist accommodation in conjunction with nursing and care homes. It provides clear criteria against which planning applications can be assessed.
<i>Nursing and care homes</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable as it promotes social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Suggests that careful wording of the policy will be required to ensure that the criteria is clear in order to maximise the opportunities for development of nursing and care homes.		
<i>Provision of Sports and Recreational Facilities and Open Space</i>	Not previously included in the Issues and Options Paper.	Y(DC15)	The policy clearly sets out the standards for provision of sports and recreational facilities and open space expected.

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<b>Supporting prosperous communities</b>			
<i>Location of office development</i>	Identifies different thresholds that could be used for assessing large scale office development. Suggests that a smaller threshold would reflect local circumstances and apply to more proposals to ensure that more office developments are located in sustainable locations.	Y(DC16)	Criteria based policy setting out sequential tests for location of large office development.
<i>Location of industrial and warehouse development</i>	Policy is sustainable as it helps to create diverse employment opportunities by allowing small scale industrial and warehouse development in a wider range of locations.	Y(DC17)	Criteria based policy for proposals for large industrial or warehouse development.
<i>Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites</i>	Identifies proposed policy as being more sustainable than the reasonable alternative as it supports the continued provision of a stock of brownfield land for business development. The reasonable alternative, on the other hand, is not consistent with current government policy and may result in more inappropriate development	Y(DC18)	Criteria based policy approach to protect premature loss of established employment sites.
<i>Location of tourist facilities</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable. It promotes tourism facilities in the most sustainable places to increase accessibility by non car modes.	Y(DC19)	Criteria based policy which clearly sets out the circumstances where large tourist development on unallocated land will be acceptable.
<i>Farm diversification</i>	Policy is clearly sustainable as it promotes the rural economy and the creation of a diverse workforce. It is identified as being more sustainable than the reasonable alternative which proposes that any building on previously undeveloped land in association with farm diversification schemes could be prohibited. Although offering greater protection for the countryside, it may impact upon the rural economy.	Y(DC20)	Policy sets out the criteria against which proposals will be assessed.
<i>Location of retail and leisure development</i>	Policy is clearly sustainable.	Y(DC21)	Criteria based policy included in the Preferred Options report

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

			which sets out the circumstances where proposals for large retail and leisure developments may be allowed.
<i>Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages</i>	Policy is sustainable as designating town centres and primary frontages will promote the vitality of town centres. This policy is preferred over the reasonable alternative which proposes no delineation of primary shopping frontages which is contrary to government guidance.	Y(DC22)	Criteria based policy approach used to enhance the attractiveness and economic vitality and viability of Huntingdonshire's town centres.
<i>Retention of key local services and facilities</i>	Policy is sustainable. It is designed to prevent the rural decline that has occurred over the last two decades. The policy does not preclude the closure of the last remaining amenities where there is no local support but aims to prevent enforced changes of use on amenities still valued by the community.	Y(DC23)	Criteria policy approach to protect the last viable local services and facilities within a settlement.
<b>Protecting and enhancing the environment</b>			
<i>Re-use and redevelopment of rural buildings</i>	Policy is sustainable and consistent with government policy. Suggests that if redevelopment for housing is considered appropriate priority should be given to affordable housing.	Y(DC24)	Criteria based policy approach identifying a preference for re-use or redevelopment for economic purposes opposed to residential use.
<i>Protected habitats and species</i>	Identifies the policy as being consistent with national guidance and supportive of objectives relating to habitat protection	Y(DC25)	Taken forward into the Preferred Options report. The preferred approach clearly distinguishes between sites of national or international importance and others and identifies potential protection or mitigation measures that can be taken for development proposals.
<i>Great Fen Project</i>	Policy not included in Issues and Options paper.	(DC26)	Policy supports the development of the Great Fen Project.
<i>Landscape character</i>	Identifies the criteria based policy as being the most sustainable option compared to retaining existing	Y (DC27)	Taken forward into Preferred Options. Preferred approach clearly sets out the ways in which development proposals can avoid harm to the



# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

	designations of Areas of Best Landscape		landscape and protect Huntingdonshire's historic and distinctive features.
<i>Sustainable Design</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable	N	Policy considered but not carried forward into Preferred Options as it is covered by national policy.
<i>Street Scene</i>	Identifies the policy as being sustainable. However, it suggests that the policy will need to be carefully worded to ensure all the potential impacts are recognised.	Y(DC1)	Policy integrated within Design quality.
<i>Transport impacts</i> : proposes a criteria based policy for assessing development proposals inc a requirement for a transport assessment or statement	Suggests that the policy is sustainable – particularly in terms of promoting economic activity as a result of the District's location on the strategic road network. It does however recognise that the policy fails to encourage a modal shift, although this is complemented to some degree, by policies on car and cycle parking standards	N	Covered by national policy.
<i>Historic parks and gardens</i> : sets out criteria to ensure that development does not harm historic parks or gardens	Identifies the policy as being sustainable.	Y(DC28)	Policy integrated with conservation area policy.
<i>Housing for agricultural workers</i> : criteria based policy for assessing proposals for housing for agricultural and related workers	Identifies the policy as being sustainable and taking a pragmatic view of the need to ensure rural workers' accommodation needs are provided for on an appropriate scale and location.	N	Repeats national guidance.
<i>Mixed development</i> : encourages mixed development within sustainable locations	Sustainable as it brings together jobs and homes thereby reducing the need to travel. Suggests that careful wording will be required to ensure an appropriate type of business is permitted in live/work units.	N	Repeats national guidance.
<i>Rights of way and other public routes</i> : seeks to maintain and enhance the network of rights of way and other routes	Sustainable.	N	Repeats national guidance.
<i>Telecommunications</i> : sets out criteria to minimise the	Identifies the policy as being sustainable and particularly important given the flat nature	N	Repeats national guidance.

# Plan Issues and Options

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

environmental impact of telecommunications	and open nature of the eastern half of the district and its position on the strategic road network.		
--	---	--	--

## 5 Implementation and Conclusion

### Monitoring proposals

**5.1** Current government guidance requires the draft Sustainability Report to make proposals for monitoring to detect the effects of plan policies. In practice the Council retains responsibility for monitoring the LDF and also the effect of individual DPD policies. Its monitoring plan cannot be finalised until the DPD has been adopted, and therefore our contribution at this stage is to propose an outline monitoring programme (see Appendix 6) based on the indicators listed in the Scoping Report, adapted to reflect any issues identified during the SA.

**5.2** The initial monitoring framework relates to the Development Control Policies DPD only. A separate framework has been developed for the emerging Core Strategy.

**5.3** Separately, the Council is responsible for developing an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which monitors the extent to which local development documents are being achieved and targets being met. The SA Framework will be monitored through the AMR, thus the targets and indicators in the SA Framework are largely derived from the AMR.

### Conclusion

**5.4** The Preferred Policies have been assessed using the SA Framework and, taking account of the judgments and assumptions that are inherent in such assessments, have been found to be sustainable. Where appropriate the recommendations that arose from the SA process have been incorporated into the relevant policies.

# 1 SA Framework

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

## 1 1 SA Framework

# 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

## 2 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

### Key for assessments

+	<b>Positive effect: policy has been identified as having a potentially positive effect</b>
-	<b>Negative effect: policy has been identified as having a potentially negative effect</b>
?	<b>Uncertain effect: effect could be positive or negative, mitigation measure(s) may be recommended</b>
~	<b>Neutral effect: no relationship identified between the policy or SA objective</b>

**2.1** An indication of whether the effect may be short, medium or long term (as defined in section 1) is given in the commentary where appropriate.

**Table 7 Appendix 2: Detailed assessments of Draft Policies**

Promoting sustainable development		
Draft Policy: Design quality		
<p>All development proposals will demonstrate consideration of the character and appearance of the surrounding environment and the potential impact of the proposal, at the design stage, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. responding appropriately to the design principles set out in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) or successor documents;</li> <li>ii. responding to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding townscape and landscape as identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents;</li> <li>iii. incorporating a clear network of routes that provide a good level of connectivity with the wider settlement and assist navigation through the proposed development;</li> <li>iv. incorporating (and/or connecting to) a network of open spaces and green corridors that provide opportunities for recreation and biodiversity;</li> <li>v. considering the requirements of users and residents that are likely to occur during the lifetime of the development and incorporate features that will promote social cohesion and inclusion;</li> <li>vi. incorporating indigenous plant species as part of landscaping schemes where appropriate; and</li> <li>vii. incorporating servicing and recycling requirements as part of a comprehensive design solution, which minimises visual intrusion.</li> </ul>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	The Design Guide makes explicit reference to the need to make efficient use of land and resources.
2. Minimise use of water	+	The Design Guide promotes efficient use of water and resources.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	The Design Guide sets out important design principles including the need to make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area. It also identifies a number of considerations including the need to identify existing features such as SSSIs, or County Wildlife Sites. It explicitly emphasises the importance of ecology and the need to complete a biodiversity checklist. Explicit reference is made within the policy to improve opportunities for biodiversity.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	One of the key principles of the Design Guide and Landscape and Townscape Assessment.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Key principle.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	The need to minimise flood risk (as a sustainability issue) is a key consideration in the Design Guide and the use of SUDs is encouraged where appropriate.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Explicit reference is made in the Design Guide for the need to consider sustainability and climate change including promoting renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	+	Explicit reference is made to this objective within the policy wording.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Reference is made to the need to create sustainable travel opportunities in the Design Guide. This policy is also complemented by the spatial strategy in the emerging Core Strategy.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	+	See comments for objective 7.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	Implicit assumption that by promoting sustainable modes of transport (eg cycling) and green corridors (eg foot paths) within the design of development then healthy lifestyles will also be encouraged.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Explicitly referenced in policy wording.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	The need for development to be safe is an underlying principle of the Design Guide.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	Making development accessible to all users is a key principle of the Design Guide.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	Design quality will provide a range of house types and contribute towards decreasing the number of unfit homes.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy wording meets a number of the SA objectives and is therefore sustainable. This policy is in line with government guidance on sustainable communities and is supported by other strategic policies in the emerging Core Strategy eg sustainable development and the spatial strategy. Explicit reference could be included to settlement character in point ii to help protect against inappropriate development that does not respect settlement character or context.</p>		

Draft Policy: Amenity		
<p>Development proposals should not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of an existing or future occupier within or nearby the site in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Access to daylight and sunlight</li> <li>ii. Privacy</li> <li>iii. Noise and disturbance</li> <li>iv. Air quality, light spillage and other forms of pollution, including contamination of land, groundwater or surface water</li> <li>v. Safety and security</li> <li>vi. The resultant physical relationships being oppressive or overbearing</li> </ul>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	This policy explicitly addresses issues which can have a profound impact upon quality of life. For example, there is good evidence for a causal relationship between environmental noise and air pollution both of which can impact upon health and quality of life
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	Implicitly supportive as by protecting against, for example, noise and disturbance or air pollution, the policy will contribute towards the promotion of healthy lifestyles.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Ensuring developments are safe and secure is a key concern of the policy.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> This is a key development control policy designed to protect public interest by preventing harm to people and places potentially affected by development. It addresses a number of issues which all impact upon quality of life and is inherently sustainable. The policy addresses social aspects of sustainable development as well as the environmental aspects, for example, protecting against harm from excessive noise and disturbance. It is not within the remit of this particular policy to consider economic issues.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Accessibility, adaptability and security

The location and design of new development should:

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

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Implicitly supportive as ensuring spaces and places are accessible and safe to use are integral to promoting a high quality of life. Ensuring conveniently located facilities are incorporated into development can contribute to generating a sense of community well being as it is local facilities that can reinforce social networks of support
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	Implicitly supportive as improving access to public transport and footpaths, cycleways and bridleways may encourage more people to use sustainable modes of travel.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Contributes by improving access provision to cycle ways, footpaths and bridleways for all sectors of the community.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	A principal objective of this policy.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	As above.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	As above.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	As above.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Addressing access problems and security concerns will indirectly support business by encouraging people to visit shops and create more opportunities

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		for a diverse workforce by meeting the needs of, for example, disabled people.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	As above.
<b>Recommendations:</b>		
This policy is sustainable and adequately reflects how access needs should be reflected in the design of developments. It will be complemented by the need for Design and Access Statements to accompany most applications for planning permission.		

Draft Policy: Sustainable Travel		
Wherever possible development proposals should take the opportunity to extend, link or improve existing routes where this enables one or more of the following benefits to be delivered:		
i. improved access to the countryside and links to strategic green infrastructure provision by sustainable modes;		
ii. new circular routes and connections between local and long-distance footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes;		
iii. the provision of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to services and facilities;		
iv. the creation of coherent links between isolated parts of the the cycle and footpath network that promote ease of use; or		
v. improved connections with public transport interchanges.		
Development proposals should not give rise to traffic that would compromise the function of the local or strategic road networks both in terms of volume and type of traffic generated.		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Bridleways, footpaths and cycleways can double as biodiversity corridors and provide vital links for habitats to help reduce habitat fragmentation.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	Indirectly, as a well landscaped public right of way can enhance landscape character and are useful tools in adding to the context of an area.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	A key aim of the policy is to reduce traffic volumes and improve air quality by encouraging people to travel by foot or cycle.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Primary objective.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Travelling by foot and cycle more frequently has beneficial links to health.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	The policy explicitly seeks to improve access to green infrastructure and the countryside.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	A key aim of the policy is to improve accessibility to services and facilities by means other than the private car.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is sustainable and in line with national guidance. It provides a locally specific policy aimed at encouraging people to travel by sustainable modes. This will help reduce congestion and improve air quality which are issues for the District.		

### Draft Policy: Parking Provision

Development proposals will be considered acceptable where:

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

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

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

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	In general the policy prevents over-provision of parking (though not specifically to meet this objective), and more stringent standards in central sites will contribute to making the best use of limited brownfield land stock
2. Minimise use of water	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Policy seeks to reduce car parking and therefore benefit local distinctiveness.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	?	Difficult to assess – limiting the amount of car parking in order to increase, for example, open space would significantly reduce the risk of flash floods caused by surface level water as the amount of impermeable ground cover is reduced. However, if car parking was limited to make way for additional housing, the amount of impermeable ground cover would not be significantly altered and therefore not as effective in minimising risk of flooding. However, the use of sustainable design features such as SUDs and permeable surfacing materials could help mitigate against the risk of flooding.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Reducing car parking can help influence people's travel behaviour and encourage them to consider more sustainable modes of travel thereby reducing congestion, traffic volumes and air pollution.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Policy supports sustainable travel modes by attempting to change peoples travel behaviour.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Reducing car parking can help alter people's travel behaviour and may encourage more sustainable modes of travel such as cycling and walking as part of a healthy lifestyle. Important to recognise that encouraging healthier lifestyles would also need to be reinforced by campaigns etc. It does also not address the need to improve other transport modes (eg public transport) to help contribute to a reduction in car travel.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Secure on site parking reduces opportunities for damage to vehicles and theft of cycles and promotes highway safety.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	Not a principal objective but implicitly supportive as limiting car parking can help alter travel behaviour. However it does not address the need to improve other transport modes (eg public transport) to help contribute to a reduction in car travel.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b>            The policy proposes car/cycle parking standards that are consistent with PPS3 and PPG13. These national standards have been used to create a locally specific policy. As the District is largely rural some people are reliant on cars to access facilities and amenities. It will be important to monitor this policy to ensure that it is not counter productive and discourage people visiting eg town centres and shops as a result of perceived parking constraints. It is important to ensure adequate monitoring proposals are in place for this policy to assess impact.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Development in the countryside

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

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

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

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

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



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

- vii. the erection of outbuildings ancillary or incidental to existing dwellings;
- viii. limited and specific forms of residential, business and tourism development; and
- ix. land allocated for particular purposes.

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

Conington Airfield;

Littlehey Prison;

Wood Green Animal Shelter; and

Huntingdon Racecourse

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

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	The primary purpose of this policy. It supports the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy by seeking to make best use of land within settlements.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Depends on design principles but intrinsically supportive as this policy helps to prevent inappropriate development outside of market towns, key service centres and smaller settlements.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Helps keep undeveloped land, outside of built up areas open to absorb water.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Indirectly beneficial (particularly in conjunction with the spatial strategy in the Core Strategy which seeks to concentrate development in the most sustainable locations). By locating development in accessible and sustainable locations, thereby helping to prevent sprawl, it may contribute towards reducing the need to travel.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	See comments for objective 7. Although this policy is not proactive in facilitating the provision of improved modes of sustainable transport, by locating appropriate development in sustainable locations can offer opportunities to contribute to reducing the need to travel.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Beneficial in terms of locating development so as to reduce the need to travel. Provided areas of open space are adequately protected by other policies (namely policy on protection of open space and recreational land) and publicly accessible.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Policy does not improve open space but helps to maintain it (particularly through potential contributions arising from development).
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Policy helps to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for crime to occur in isolated dwellings.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	See comments for objective 7.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	Policy facilitates the development of rural exceptions sites as it reduces unrealistic aspirations of landowners on the outskirts of villages.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Exceptions allow for housing essential to the efficient operation of a range of rural businesses
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Limiting peripheral development policy implicitly supports the vitality and viability of larger settlements and contributes to maintenance of a thriving rural economy
<p><b>Recommendations:</b>  The policy is sustainable and consistent with national policy. Restricting development outside of the built up areas should help protect open countryside. There is a cumulative effect insofar as restrictions in the countryside may result in development pressures in settlements. Such pressures will need to be adequately managed through other development control policies such as design quality to ensure that development is appropriate for its context and location.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Rural Buildings

#### *Reuse of Rural Buildings for Business Purposes*

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

- i. the building is substantially intact or of established historic or architectural value and is of permanent and substantial construction;
- ii. the building is not in an isolated or remote location;
- iii. the proposal does not include substantial alteration of the building;
- iv. the proposal does not involve an increase in floorspace.
- v. the employment generated is of a scale and use that is consistent with the specific rural location;
- vi. proposals involving significant numbers of employees or visitors is, or can be made to be, accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, to a Key Service Centre or Market Town;
- vii. retail uses that involve the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding, are less than 250m<sup>2</sup> (gross) in floorspace; and
- viii. the proposal would not involve a substantial increase in car-borne or service vehicle traffic.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

### **Reuse of Rural Buildings for Residential Uses**

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

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

### **Replacement of Rural Buildings**

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

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

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	?	The impact is likely to be minimal. The policy provides opportunities for development in the countryside which doesn't necessitate using undeveloped land. Re-using rural buildings for business or residential purposes is likely to have a positive landscape character impact and could be beneficial for the local economy.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Indirect positive impact as rural buildings can provide habitats for wildlife. Ensuring the sensitive reuse with consideration for biodiversity could enhance opportunities for wildlife.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Rural (historic) buildings make an important contribution to the character of the landscape. They help to illustrate the history of farming and the settlement. Reuse can help to maintain local distinctiveness.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Rural buildings are important in generating a sense of place and identity which can help foster civic pride and community spirit.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	Although initially beneficial in reusing the building the ongoing levels of recycling are unlikely to be more than for any other policy.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	?	Effect would be dependent upon the reuse of the building. If the reuse were for business purposes that would provide additional services or facilities for a local village then there may be a reduction in the need to travel to access some services or facilities. However, if reuse were for residential purposes this may not reduce the need to travel.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	?	As with other assessments provided for renewable technology provision there may be tensions between the historic character of the building and the ability to incorporate renewable technologies. However, the reuse of rural buildings is inherently sustainable as it reduces the use of embodied energy and recycles materials.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Indirect potentially positive effect as rural buildings provide important habitats for wildlife and may provide opportunities for people to access wildlife.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Bringing rural buildings into viable use may help to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour that may occur in derelict buildings.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	?	See comments for SA Objective 9.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Potentially beneficial if the reuse is for business purposes and can provide local employment opportunities.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	As above. Reuse of rural buildings for business purposes can benefit the local economy and provide tourist opportunities.
<b>Recommendations:</b> Policy is sustainable and provides a locally specific way to safeguard historic buildings and make the most of use of opportunities to reuse rural buildings in the most sensitive and appropriate way. Policy facilitates rural employment opportunities and helps to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in rural locations.		

### Draft Policy: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow

#### Policy wording

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

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

Development proposals should not:

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

unless:

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

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

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	This policy will directly support biodiversity by protecting trees, hedgerows and woodlands which provide habitats for a variety of species.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Existing landscape features such as important trees and hedgerows play a key role in generating urban form and character. Retention of important trees, woodland and hedgerows also helps to promote local distinctiveness.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Trees are integral to the character of many areas, particularly urban areas, as they soften the landscape and make areas more attractive and liveable.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Dependent on the variety of trees incorporated into developments and the ongoing management of areas with trees and hedgerows. If suitable variety of trees were appropriately located trees can have significant ecological benefits including intercepting rainfall which reduces soil erosion and flooding. However, there is a need for ongoing management to ensure that debris and leaves do not interfere with water drainage.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Trees and hedgerows can have significant ecological benefits as they improve air quality by absorbing some polluting gases and trapping particulate pollution. They can also screen out noise and light and help with urban cooling.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	Indirectly supportive as promotion of biodiversity can contribute to the maintenance of cycle ways, footpaths and bridleways which can double up as green corridors and are an important part of the green infrastructure.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Trees, woodland and hedgerows add visual interest to areas of open space and therefore improve the quality of open spaces. Protecting trees, woodland and hedgerows will help foster biodiversity and therefore provide opportunities for people to access wildlife.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is clearly sustainable and consistent with national policy. It provides a clear policy statement to ensure appropriate landscaping is incorporated into development and protect against loss of environmental value through a requirement for mitigation measures to be implemented if necessary.		

### Draft Policy: Open space and recreational land

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

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

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

There should be no harm to spaces which:

- a. contribute to the distinctive form and character of a settlement; or
- b. create focal points within the built up area; or
- c. provide the setting for important buildings or monuments; or
- d. allow views into or out of a settlement; or

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

e. form part of an area of value for wildlife or recreation, including areas forming part of a 'green corridor' for wildlife or recreation.		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Indirectly beneficial as the policy protects land with high amenity and environmental value.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Supportive as open spaces form part of the network of green infrastructure and can help facilitate habitat creation.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Open and recreational space provides a key facet of urban amenity and can contribute to local distinctiveness. They also make up part of the culture and heritage of an area and are an important asset to the community
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Open and recreational spaces provide an important resource for social recreation and relaxation that contribute to individual and community well being
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Open spaces can help to reduce the volume and rate of surface water run off as they are permeable. They can also play a role in sustainable urban drainage.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Indirectly beneficial as open spaces with trees can help ameliorate pollution as they absorb pollutant gases
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	The provision of recreational and open spaces is an important part of helping to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Primary objective.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	?	Open space can provide opportunity for anti-social behaviour but appropriate management can minimise this as open spaces can provide opportunities for positive recreation activities diverting people from engaging in anti-social behaviour.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	The provision of recreational and open space provides opportunities for people to access leisure resources. They are also an important community asset and can be venues for local events such as performances or local festivals



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	Open space is assumed to be accessible to all
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> This policy is clearly sustainable and consistent with national guidance. The policy forms a key component of and is complementary to other policies such as design quality to ensure a high quality public realm is created. This is particularly important given the levels of growth anticipated for the District. Although open spaces can be perceived as providing opportunities for people to engage in anti-social behaviour good management of open spaces can facilitate positive recreation facilities thereby diverting people from engaging in anti-social behaviour.</p>		

Draft Policy: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy		
<p>Proposals for large scale or commercial renewable and low carbon energy generating schemes such as combined heat and power, wind turbines, biomass and solar systems will be considered favourably where:</p> <p>a. Careful siting and design ensures the scheme does not have an unacceptable impact, both in isolation or cumulatively with other similar developments, on the environment and local amenity;</p> <p>b. The siting and design of proposals to be located outside of built-up areas has regard to the capacity of the character of the surrounding landscape as identified in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents and the Wind Power SPD (2006) or successor documents.</p> <p>c. No harm is caused to sites or areas of national importance for conservation, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be shown that the overall value of the site or area would not be compromised, or that any harm is outweighed by the wider social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme;</p> <p>d. No harm is caused to sites of international importance for conservation (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and RAMSAR sites), unless no alternative sites exist and development is imperative in the public interest;</p> <p>e. Provision is made for mitigation and compensation measures, such as landscape works and habitat enhancement or relocation as appropriate; and</p> <p>f. Provision is made for the removal of any apparatus and reinstatement of the site to an acceptable condition, should the site become redundant.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	?	Highly dependent on the nature of the scheme proposed.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	?	Although outside of the planning system remit, there is the potential for degradation of land and soil quality resulting from some forms of renewable eg biofuel crops

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		are essentially monoculture and could impact upon biodiversity.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	?	Explicit provision is made for the protection of conservation including scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings. Although the protective measures implied by the policy wording are assumed to be visual more than anything else, the policy can positively contribute to achievement of this objective.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	Issues relating to noise and visual impact may arise which could effect people's satisfaction with their neighbourhoods. It is recognised that environmental noise can have a profound impact on quality of life. However, the impact is assumed to be largely neutral as the protective measures included in the policy and other policies relating to amenity will help protect against visual/amenity issues.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Contributes slowly to reduction of greenhouse gases. Effect assumed to increase over time as technologies improve and the District's capacities to accommodate and utilise renewable energy sources increases
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	+	Primary objective.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	

**Recommendations:** Consistent with national policy. The long term benefits of energy generation largely outweigh the short term visual detriments of renewable energy provision.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<b>Draft Policy: Carbon Dioxide Reductions</b>		
<p>All units in developments of 10 or more dwellings or non-residential developments of 500m<sup>2</sup> or more should provide a reduction of at least a 10% in the carbon dioxide emissions from the development's predicted energy use, by way of renewable or low carbon technologies. Such provision should be made on site where possible, however locally based off site systems will be considered favourably where a higher percentage of carbon dioxide is saved.</p> <p>Site specific factors including viability, remediation of contaminated land and other unusual development costs may be taken into account. Where a 10% reduction cannot be achieved on all buildings within the proposed development the Council's preference is to achieve a consistent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions on each building.</p> <p>For non-domestic developments where the end user (and consequently the predicted energy requirements and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) are not known, an approach that assumes the most likely use should be taken. Where several different end users are likely or an alternative approach is likely to be proposed, discussions should be undertaken with the Council before submission of a planning application.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	?	There may be tensions between promoting renewable and low carbon technologies and preserving and enhancing the historic environment eg installation of solar panels. This is an issue which, with careful planning and negotiation, can be overcome.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	In order to reduce carbon emissions sustainable design principles will need to be employed it is assumed that these principles will be incorporated alongside the installation of renewable and low carbon technologies.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Primary objective.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Primary objective.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	Not the primary objective of the policy but it is assumed that utilising low carbon and renewable technologies will encourage residents and users of the buildings to engage in a low carbon lifestyle and reduce their waste production.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	A primary objective

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	+	A primary objective.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is sustainable and consistent with recent government and regional guidance. It would be useful to include in the supporting text explanations of renewable energy technologies and low carbon technologies as this would guide the implementation of the policy.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Flood risk

Development proposals should:

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

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Implicitly supportive as the policy restricts greenfield development in flood risk areas.
2. Minimise use of water	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Policy encourages use of SUDs where technically feasible which can contribute to habitat creation eg ponds.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Policy protects floodplains which are an important part of the historic landscape character of many of our settlements.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	The policy promotes the use of SUDs as a way to manage surface water run off which can enhance the attractiveness of the environment.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Primary objective.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Minimising flood risk should reduce the likelihood of water borne pollution events.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Policy protects flood meadows which are well used as open space and for recreational purposes.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> This policy is particularly important given the landscape character and resulting susceptibility to flooding within some parts of the District. The policy wording is consistent with national policy and provides flexibility in permitting development in areas of low risk providing appropriate mitigation measures are employed.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Water Management

Development proposals should:

- a. not have an adverse impact on, or result in an unacceptable risk to the quantity or quality of water resources;

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

- b. through the use of permeable surfaces, sustainable drainage systems, green roofs and other features ensure that water run off levels are maintained at pre-development levels wherever possible; and
- c. make the most efficient use of water resources by achieving water use minimisation:
- i. For all residential development proposals under the Code for Sustainable Homes achieve at least a:
- 1 star rating immediately
  - 3 star rating from April 2010
  - 6 star rating from April 2016
- ii. Achieve an appropriate reduction in potable water use in non domestic buildings covering more than 500m2

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	+	One of the main objectives of this policy.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Policy is beneficial as SUDs can provide wetland habitats that are good for biodiversity.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Indirectly beneficial as SUDs can provide important visual amenity benefits by providing the setting for development
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Indirectly beneficial as SUDs can provide many amenity and visual benefits. Open space is known to have positive benefits on physical and psychological well being.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Primary objective
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	There may be a slight beneficial (indirect) impact as SUDs help slow and reduce storm water run off and associated landscaping has a role in reducing air pollution.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	The indirect benefits of SUDs in providing green areas and habitats for biodiversity can help improve

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		psychological well being and contribute towards a healthy lifestyle.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	SUDs have the potential to contribute to increasing open space where ponds and reed beds are created.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is sustainable and consistent with national guidance encouraging appropriate water management and, where possible, use of SUDs. It is in line with national advice regarding implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes. For car parking the policy could consider promoting the use of permeable surfaces.</p>		

Draft Policy: Air Quality Management		
<p>Development proposals within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area should not have an adverse effect on air quality within the AQMA. A formal assessment will be required where it is suspected that a development proposal is likely to result in a negative impact on air quality. Where the assessment confirms this is likely, planning permission will only be granted if suitable mitigation measures can be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement.</p> <p>Development proposals within or adjacent to an AQMA will only be permitted where the air quality within the AQMA would not have a significant adverse effect on the proposed development or its users.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Positive effect assumed as helping to reduce levels of air pollution will be beneficial for biodiversity. It is however acknowledged that the impacts may be relatively small given that the policy is locationally specific.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Primary objective.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Reducing air pollution will be beneficial for health although it is acknowledged that the contribution of this policy (on its own) may only be relatively small. This policy is intended to work alongside HDC's forthcoming Air Quality Action Plan.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is a sustainable and locally specific policy which boosts limited national guidance.		

### Delivering housing and a healthy living environment

#### Draft Policy: Housing density

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

- a. Within or adjacent to Market Towns: at least 40 dwellings per hectare;
- b. Within or adjacent to Key Service Centres: at least 35 dwellings per hectare;
- c. Within Smaller Settlements and the countryside: at least 30 dwellings per hectare; or

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<p>d. The maximum density possible which is in accordance with other policies of the Local Development Framework and consistent with:</p> <p>i. the character of the site and its surroundings, and</p> <p>ii. the need to accommodate other uses and residential amenities such as open space and parking areas.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	One of the principal objectives of this policy, aiming to reverse the trend of building larger and lower density homes. Building at higher densities makes more efficient use of land.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	Applying good design principles will ensure that densities reflect the context and character of an area.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	A close knit, preferably mixed use pattern of building can create a vibrant and enriching urban environment. Research has shown that there is no correlation between urban quality and density. Achieving appropriate densities is important to generate a critical mass of people and sustain local services which provide opportunities for people to interact and meet
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	-	Increasing densities can lead to a reduction in permeable surfaces with a higher risk of run off flooding.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Intrinsic benefit from locating people closer to work, services, transport facilities and its impact on travel choice.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	+	Higher densities makes the collection of recycled material more cost effective but it can reduce the potential to compost. This issue is countered by HDC's commitment to collecting compost waste.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	See comments for objective 7.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	+	Higher densities are associated with energy efficient building forms (eg terraces) and economies in the provision of infrastructure, including potential heat mains from CHP stations
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Improved proximity to services can encourage adoption of healthier travel choices
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Open space provision is calculated on a population basis, therefore increased density may potentially result in a higher proportion of public open space being provided.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Higher densities provide opportunities for surveillance by overlooking public spaces. This policy should be considered alongside the policy on Accessibility, Adaptability and Security.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Implicitly supportive as denser forms generate a critical mass of people necessary to sustain local services and facilities. Locating denser forms of development in closer proximity to services and facilities can also facilitate more sustainable modes of transport which are not reliant on cars.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	In principal higher densities allow for the integration of different types of housings which could prevent stigmatisation of neighbourhoods or segregation of areas according to price. This policy complements the policy of housing mix, and affordable housing provision in this regard
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	See above
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	

**Recommendations:** A sustainable policy which is consistent with national policy. The policy facilitates a degree of discretion regarding densities and will enable the Council to encourage higher densities in more sustainable locations.

### Draft Policy: Housing mix

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

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

Proposals for minor scale residential development (up to 9 dwellings) should contain a mix that meets these requirements as far as is practical.

Design and Access statements should be used to explain the reasoning behind the mix of housing proposed.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	Implicitly supportive as the policy moves away from large properties to those smaller in size and, in conjunction with policy 11, higher in density therefore assumed to make more efficient use of land.
2. Minimise use of water	~	Not primary objective of policy although new development will inevitably increase water and energy consumption. However, complementary policies on design quality as well as other

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		mitigation measures outside the remit of planning (eg Building Regulations) will help encourage water efficiency.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Assumed that smaller homes will integrate better into existing settlements (particularly villages) as the architectural style is more likely to be in keeping with local vernacular opposed to more recent larger houses that have been built. Complemented by policies on design and amenity etc. Effect is likely to increase over time as the effects of policy implementation can be monitored.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	By providing a range of house sizes and types it is assumed that it will contribute to the creation of a diverse mix of residents within the development area and a vibrant community. This will also help to reduce segregation by house type and tenure and should contribute to creating a sense of community. Smaller households are more likely to reflect the local vernacular and the context of the surrounding area.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	See comments for objective 2.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	This policy (in conjunction with policy 11 Housing density) is a way of achieving higher densities within developments located around in accessible and sustainable locations thereby contributing to a reduction in the need to travel by private car.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	Indirectly beneficial as the impacts will be the same for objective 9. However, the provision of housing in sustainable locations will not necessarily result in changing travel patterns – a change in behaviour needs to be encouraged through other complementary measures such as campaigns and improved public transport which are largely outside the remit of the planning system.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Implicitly supportive if it makes better use of allocated space and gives more flexibility in designing the other components of new settlement or development.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	See comments for objective 9. In addition, the implicit promotion of higher densities through this policy will help contribute to the

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		generation of the critical mass of people required to support local facilities.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	By providing a range of house sizes and types it is assumed that it will contribute to the creation of a diverse mix of residents within the development area and a vibrant community. This will also help to reduce segregation by house type and tenure and help reduce inequalities relating to income and location
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	Supportive insofar as smaller property size will enable some lower income groups, not eligible for affordable housing, to get on the property ladder. It is assumed to have no direct impact in relation to affordable housing provision as the policy applies to market housing mix only.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	

**Recommendations:** A clearly sustainable policy designed to ensure the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to the needs of a diverse workforce. The need for appropriately sized and priced policies for smaller families and key workers is an implicit priority. The lack of a prescriptive approach may raise issues when implementing the policy as negotiations will have to be made on a site by site basis with developers during the application process. The policy has been informed by evidence provided by the Cambridge Housing Sub Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

### Draft Policy: Homes in the countryside

#### ***New dwellings***

Proposals for new dwellings in the countryside will be determined in accordance with PPS7 or successor documents.

Proposals for new dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where accommodation for a full-time worker is required and there is an essential need for the employment to be in a countryside location. Such permissions will be subject to a condition ensuring the occupation will be limited to essential need and to a person solely or mainly working, or last working in the locality in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or other rural enterprise, or a surviving partner of such a person, and to any resident dependents.

#### ***Extension to, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings***

Proposals to alter, extend or replace an existing dwelling in the countryside should not:

- a. result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building subject to the need to provide satisfactory living standards;
- b. significantly increase the height or massing of the original dwelling;
- c. cumulatively increase the impact of the original dwelling on the surrounding countryside
- d. entail development where only the site of a previous dwelling remains or the previous dwelling has been abandoned.

#### ***Outbuildings***

Proposals to erect, alter, extend or replace an outbuilding within the curtilage of a dwelling in the countryside should:

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

- a. be of an appropriate scale consistent with the dwelling to which it relates
- b. be well related to the dwelling to which it relates
- c. not have an adverse impact on the surrounding countryside

### **Relaxation of occupancy conditions**

Proposals for the relaxation of an occupancy condition will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the dwelling is no longer required by:

- a. its associated enterprise; or
- b. those working, or last working, in the locality in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or a rural enterprise; or
- c. a surviving partner of such a person or any resident dependents.

When considering applications to relax such a condition the District Council will require evidence of the steps taken to market the dwelling for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting the occupancy condition.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Allowing replacement or extension to existing dwellings in the countryside to meet identified need will help minimise the need for new dwellings in the countryside.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Key aim of this policy. The aim is to conserve character and form by ensuring that the scale, design and materials of any new dwellings reflect the local context, character and vernacular.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	As above
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	?	Assumed that locations for agricultural dwellings will not be particularly sustainable. However, the negative effects of location need to be balanced against potential gains for the rural economy through, for example, the establishment of a rural enterprise.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	-	Building in the countryside will inevitably make access harder as locations will be more remote than town centres or within key service centres. Despite this policy promoting the creation of rural enterprises these will tend to be commercial and not serve to increase the facilities and services available.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	Effect is largely assumed to be neutral as the number of instances where development is permitted will be small. However, it is recognised that the provision of housing for agricultural and related workers will help redress rural inequalities.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	Properties with occupancy conditions are usually lower cost than market housing. Allows updating to extend to meet modern standards.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	There may be instances where access to satisfying work is increased through, for example, farm diversification or the establishment of rural enterprises and this will help reduce out commuting to a degree and potentially enable access to work by means other than the private car.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	The development of rural enterprises will support the local economy and enable more efficient use of land to live and work in close proximity.
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is clearly consistent with national guidance designed to prevent unsympathetic rural development. It is clearly motivated by local conditions and the need to carefully control development in the instances where it is needed. The policy could be re-worded with regards to the marketing element – leaving a building empty for 12months is not making particularly efficient use of land. However, it is recognised that with the seasonal nature of some parts of the District's work will mean that a sufficient length of time will need to be elapse whilst efficient marketing occurs.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Housing with Care

Proposals for the development of housing with care will:

- i. be located within the built-up areas of the Market Towns and Key Service Centres;
- ii. be located within the existing built-up areas of the Smaller Settlements where an operational need for such a location can be demonstrated; and
- iii. enable shops, public transport, community facilities and medical services to be reached easily for those without access to a car, as appropriate to the needs and level of mobility of potential residents.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	Effect assumed to be neutral as development will only be permitted within the built up areas and other policies will protect against inappropriate development of Greenfield or open space
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Explicit reference is made in the policy wording for services to be accessible for those without private cars. The policy ensures development of this nature will only be located in sustainable locations with an appropriate range of services.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Development will be provided in sustainable locations with good accessibility to footpaths, cycleways and public transport to encourage more sustainable travel behaviour.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Direct access to care and support services should contribute to a reduction in the fear of crime.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Makes clear provision for siting where access needs for residents are a priority.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	One of the primary objectives of the policy as it seeks to accommodate the needs of the elderly, severely disabled and people requiring social rehabilitation.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	+	Benefits sectors of the population that is disadvantaged in terms of overall health or income.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is clearly sustainable and in line with government guidance on creating mixed and sustainable communities. Clearly meets the needs of sections of the population that may be disadvantaged in terms of health or income, encouraging development at sites that are more accessible and socially inclusive. The only potential concern is that facilities will struggle compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites. The policy is worded such that accessibility and service provision will clearly be a consideration.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Outdoor Sports and Recreational Facilities and Open Space

Proposals for residential development will make provision for sports and recreational facilities and open space to meet the additional need generated by a development in accordance with the standards contained in Appendix 2 'Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space'. Where appropriate, provision will involve all or some types of open space within the development site.

Provision will be secured by condition or through S106 agreement which may include commuted payments towards off-site provision where facilities cannot reasonably be provided with the development site or where this secures the most appropriate provision for the local community.

New sports facilities should be designed to at least a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' as defined by Sport England and the appropriate sporting governing body.

Within the provision of overall open space requirements, 8 square metres space per person should be provided for children's and young people's play space. Play space and facilities may be incorporated into any category of informal open space provision, or provided in association with outdoor sports, pitches, courts and greens where appropriate. Play space and play areas will be sought in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 2 'Outdoor Sports & Recreation Facilities and Open Space'.

All sports and recreational facilities and open space should incorporate ancillary facilities such as seating and litter bins, pathways and landscaping as appropriate to the scale and nature of the site. Ancillary facilities should enhance the local environment, contribute to visual amenity and provide appropriate play and recreation opportunities.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	?	Effect will depend on location of housing development
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Provision of open space will have a positive effect on maximising opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Provision of open space is important to provide a setting for development and create a sense of place.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Open space increases the amount of permeable land and therefore will help to allow greater levels of surface water run off.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Accessibility targets should positively reduce the need to travel and encourage walking to facilities.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Provision of open space and recreational facilities contributes to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Primary objective
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	?	Although open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities can provide opportunities for anti-social behaviour good management can ensure that there are opportunities to engage in positive recreation activities which may divert people from anti social behaviour.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Improves access to leisure facilities and opportunities to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations</b> : A sustainable policy based on local evidence provided from the PNP Open Space, Sport and Recreational Needs Assessment and Audit (2006). It will ensure that in new residential development residents have appropriate access to open space and recreational facilities.</p>		

### Draft Policy: Indoor Sports and Recreational Facilities

Proposals for residential development will make provision for indoor sports facilities in accordance with the following standards:

Type	Quantity
Sports hall	51.2 sq m per 1000 population
Swimming pool	10.96 sq m of water per 1000 population

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Type	Quantity
Fitness stations	3.6 stations per 1000 population
Indoor bowls	0.05 rinks per 1000 population

New sports facilities should be designed to at least a minimum playing standard of 'fit for purpose' as defined by Sport England and the appropriate sporting governing body.

New sports facilities should be located within a 20 minutes walk time of their immediate catchment area, and where possible, should be linked to existing, or other proposed, community provision.

SA Objective	Impact	Commentary
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	Effect is dependent on the location of housing development.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Policy explicitly states that facilities should be located within 20 minutes walk of the immediate catchment area.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	+	Not a primary aim of the policy but energy intensive uses such as gyms and swimming pools can offer the opportunity to use renewable and low carbon technologies (such as CHP).
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Primary aim of the policy
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Dependent on costs but provides positive recreation opportunities and therefore a potential reduction in anti social behaviour.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	The policy seeks to improve access to leisure facilities by means other than the private car.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<b>Recommendations:</b> A sustainable policy which seeks to contribute to the pursuit of healthy lifestyles. It has been formulated from local evidence and studies.		

### Supporting prosperous communities

#### Draft Policy: Office Development

Proposals for large office developments (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land should be located within the defined limits of the town centres wherever possible. Such developments may be acceptable on sites within the built up areas of the Market Towns where it can be demonstrated that:

- no sequentially preferable site is available and suitable, starting with sites within 300 metres of the edge of the defined town centre and locations with good access to high quality public transport, then out-of-centre locations; or
- the scale of development is inconsistent with the function and character of the defined town centre; or
- the proposal forms an integrated part of a mixed use urban extension; or
- the site is located on an established industrial estate, distribution or business park.

Proposals for other office developments (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be allowed within the existing built up areas of the Market Towns, Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements subject to environmental and traffic considerations and other policies of the LDF.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	One of the primary objectives of the policy is to minimise development on Greenfield land.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

2. Minimise use of water	~	Unsustainable in absolute terms due to additional water consumption, otherwise location has little impact on this objective.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Other policies such as those for protected habitats and species and biodiversity will protect against inappropriate development which may harm designated sites and this policy works alongside. This policy is explicitly supportive of enhancing and conserving habitats as it limits encroachment beyond current urban boundaries.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	As above – other policies such as those on Conservation Areas will protect against inappropriate development. This is explicitly referred to in the policy wording bullet point two.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	The policy identifies a sequential test which promotes development within the built up areas of Market Towns, therefore it will implicitly promotes satisfaction with the neighbourhood.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	See comments for SA Obj 2
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Supportive as by locating office development within accessible, built up areas of Market Towns it will maximise opportunities for people to reduce the need to travel and travel by alternative means.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Focus on accessible locations offers opportunities to travel to work by cycle and foot.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	Although policy promotes development within accessible, locations within the built up areas, this may place pressure on existing sites of open space. It is assumed that other policies relating to open space and recreational land will protect inappropriate development that may lead to a reduction in the quantity of open space.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	The primary objective of this policy – improves accessibility of any services being provided at the development and means the workforce has convenient access to central shops and other facilities.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	A central location will be more accessible to a greater proportion of people via, for example, public transport than one in a periphery location.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Addresses the decision making criteria apart from farm diversification.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Specific objective of supporting town centre vitality.
<b>Recommendations:</b> Policy is clearly sustainable and supportive of other policies designed to reinforce the settlement hierarchy in the emerging Core Strategy and it is consistent with government guidance.		

<b>Draft Policy: Location of Industrial and Warehouse Development</b>		
<p>Proposals for large industrial or warehouse development (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable subject to environmental and traffic considerations where the site is within:</p> <p>a. the built up area of a Market Town or Key Service Centre; or</p> <p>b. an established industrial estate, distribution or business park.</p> <p>Proposal for other industrial or warehouse development (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable, subject to environmental and traffic considerations, in the above locations or where the proposal:</p> <p>a. is for the expansion of an established business; or</p> <p>b. is for the conversion or redevelopment of suitable existing buildings in the countryside and does not increase the total floorspace; or</p> <p>c. is on a site within the existing built-up area of a Smaller Settlement.</p> <p>Industrial or warehouse proposal within the established industrial estate area of Little Staughton Airfield will not be permitted if they would increase the net floorspace above 18,520m<sup>2</sup>.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Supports overall objective of development focused on brownfield land and is consistent with the settlement hierarchy set out in the emerging Core Strategy.
2. Minimise use of water	?	Certain industrial developments are potentially heavy users of water.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Generally beneficial if it reduces land take and impacts in the countryside.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Policy makes it clear that it aims to prevent development in inappropriate locations and would focus land use change on sites already affected by the typical impacts of these forms of industrial activity.



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	Not addressed directly in terms of decision making criteria.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	?	New development is likely to add to emission levels unless raw materials and products can be moved by rail, although it is assumed that the scale of impact would be controlled by EIA of planning applications to limit or mitigate the impact of any growth in road traffic. Otherwise the policy aims to direct development to accessible locations affecting movement of materials and commuter traffic
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	?	Some industrial uses are likely to generate high levels of waste.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Supportive as the most sustainable and accessible locations are prioritised including those within the built up area of Market Towns and existing, safeguarded employment areas.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	Assumed that such developments do not provide services required by the general public.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	The supporting text specifically mentions consideration for reducing the need to travel and travelling by cycle or foot.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Supports development and desirability of a diverse economy and work force.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Will facilitate business development if it contributes to the supply of adequate land at appropriate sites. Separation of industrial land uses from others will indirectly support town centre vitality while helping to ensure the local economy has a diverse base. Also provides for appropriate development in smaller communities and rural areas to support their vitality.
<b>Recommendations:</b>		

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

A sustainable policy that adopts a locational approach for industrial developments that is consistent with other policies for locating housing, retail, amenities etc. The nature of businesses that might be attracted is however not specified and concerns may arise from permitting development of a size that requires a high level of water consumption for its operations and cleaning etc unless it can be demonstrated that these needs can be met in a sustainable way.

The policy wording could stress the need to locate new industrial development at sites well served by the existing transport network – and ideally with good access to rail services. Good access for reducing the need to travel is mentioned in the supporting text but good access for goods, materials, customers etc is not mentioned currently and reference to this could be considered. It may be useful to set out which uses (not just industrial) that the Council may find particularly attractive at later stages of plan production although it is acknowledged that the Council would not want to prejudice any particular use over another.

### Draft Policy : Redevelopment of Commercial Sites

Proposals for uses other than those falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8, on established industrial estates, distribution or business parks as shown in Appendix 4 'Established Commercial Areas' will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

a. Continued use of the site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes is no longer viable, taking into account the site's characteristics and existing / potential market demand and there is sufficient land available elsewhere that is in use, was last used or is allocated for these uses; and

b. An alternative use or mix of uses will give greater benefits to the community than continued employment use.

Proposals for uses other than those falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8, on other sites used (or last used) for employment purposes, including sui generis uses of an employment character, will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

i. Continued use of site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes is no longer viable taking into account the site's characteristics and existing / potential market demand; or

ii. Use of the site for B1, B2 or B8 purposes gives rise to unacceptable environmental or traffic problems; or

iii. An alternative use or mix of uses will give greater potential benefits to the community than continued employment use.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Clearly supports the objective of efficient use of land resources by preventing premature redevelopment but enabling redistribution of the stock of brownfield land (actual and potential) to meet other targets.
2. Minimise use of water	~	Assumes no long term change.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Likely to be positive if re-use prevents sprawl onto surrounding rural land. Redevelopment also offers opportunities to 'design for biodiversity' by, for example, creating green roofs or nest boxes.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	~	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	Assessment viewed as largely neutral due to a number of unknown variables. However, redevelopment offers the scope to introduce more energy efficient materials in new buildings, although that is not the specific purpose of this policy.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Comments are similar to those above however, the assessment is seen as positive if existing development is in the most accessible locations, reducing commuting distances and therefore meeting favourably the majority of the decision making criteria.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	Supports the retention of existing linkages between residential to employment areas rather than redevelopment pushing employment to the outskirts of settlements.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	See comments for SA obj 6.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	Change from B1, B2 or B8 to open land is assumed to be unlikely, therefore effect assumed to be neutral. However, change of use to housing would require provision of open space.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	

**Recommendations:** The policy has a number of strengths including contribution to a flexible planning approach. It supports the continued provision of a stock of brownfield land for business development in appropriate locations and covers a range of uses, taking in office developments that may generate large levels of commuter traffic but minimal goods movement to industrial uses where traffic balance is reversed.

### Draft Policy : Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions

Proposals for large tourist developments (more than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) on unallocated land will be acceptable where:

a. the site is within the built up area of a Market Town or Key Service Centre; or

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

- b. the proposal is for the expansion of an existing tourist development on land adjacent to its current site; or
- c. the proposal is for the conversion or replacement of suitable existing buildings in the countryside and the proposal complies with other relevant policies.

Proposals for other tourist developments (less than 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, or 0.5ha site area) will be acceptable in the above locations or where the proposal:

- d. is on a site within the existing built-up area of a Smaller Settlement; or
- e. is adjacent or is well-related to a Market Town, Key Service Centre or Smaller Settlement and is to provide facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure.

Proposals for touring caravan or camp sites will be acceptable where:

- i. the site is adjacent or well-related to an existing settlement;
- ii. no adverse visual impact is caused on the surrounding landscape;
- iii. the site is, or can be served by adequate water and sewerage services; and
- iv. where safe physical access can be achieved.

The occupation of new tourist accommodation will be restricted through the use of conditions or legal agreements to ensure a tourist use solely and not permanent residential use.

Proposals for visitor attractions that could attract large numbers of people should be accessible by a variety of means of transport, and offer access by non-car modes for all potential users.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	The policy wording is focused on tourist accommodation and provides clear protection against encroachment onto agricultural land.
2. Minimise use of water	?	Larger tourism and leisure facilities could have sizeable demand for water whereas the policy wording largely concerns the consumption of land resource. The limited range of tourism facilities within the District suggests that this impact may grow over time.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Implicitly supportive as constraining development to existing areas will help limit urban encroachment.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	See comments for SA obj 3. This policy is also complemented by other policies on conservation areas and design.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Provision of travel choice supports this objective, although it may be more practical and effective for developments with built up areas or at their edge. Might be appropriate to require provision of travel plans to accompany proposals to develop larger sites where the volume of traffic would be greater and where there is more scope to provide public transport access that is economically viable.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	Tourist development is likely to increase waste accumulation however, this policy will be complemented by the policy on design which requires appropriate recycling facilities.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	A primary objective as mentioned in the policy wording.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	Effect assumed to be neutral as the potential to maximise renewable energy sources and technologies will depend on the type of tourist development.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Supportive as the policy is also assumed to provide for outdoor recreation and leisure facilities.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	As above. Key tourist attractions across the District include areas of strategic greenspace enhancement such as the Great Fen Project.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Clearly supportive.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	Although access for mobility impaired is not specifically mentioned it is assumed that this policy will work alongside policies on accessibility as well as domestic and EU legislation. The emphasis on travel choices provides for those without access to a car – many of whom are those on low incomes or the elderly.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	The majority of tourist accommodation is purpose built and therefore would have little impact on this objective.
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	All proposals contributing to a growth in sustainable tourism (and leisure) support business development and diversification of the economy.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Beneficial. Effects assumed to build over time as there are currently a limited range of tourism facilities available in the District.
<b>Recommendations:</b> Supportive of sustainable tourism and the promotion of greater opportunities for tourism within the District. The policy wording is such that tourist development is prevented in locations distant from local amenities and existing attractions.		

**Draft Policy: Farm diversification**

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Proposals for farm diversification schemes should make an ongoing contribution to sustaining the farm business as a whole and should not involve built development on previously undeveloped sites unless:

- a. the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings on the holding for the intended use is not feasible, or an opportunity exists to demolish an existing structure and re-build in a more appropriate location; and
- b. the proposed floorspace does not exceed 500m<sup>2</sup> or in the case of retail uses not more than 250m<sup>2</sup> and does not involve the sale of produce other than unprocessed goods from an associated agricultural holding.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Primary objective with appropriate exclusions.
2. Minimise use of water	~	As above, although the effect for some changes of use could be more pronounced.
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	?	Depends on the nature of land use change. If confined to the area of existing buildings the effect would be minimal, however more extensive leisure related development must not be allowed to damage or destroy areas of woodland, hedgerows etc.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Maintenance of landscape and townscape character is a clear priority.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	Appropriate design is implied.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	?	Some diversification proposals might increase rural traffic and this would need to be weighed against the benefits to the rural economy, recognising that it is unlikely to be practical to provide public transport access except to very large scale developments.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	Due to the relatively small numbers of diversification proposals anticipated, it is assumed that the effect will be largely negative. It is however, recognised that the location of many farm diversification proposals implies that accessibility by foot, cycle and public transport will not always be possible.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Indirect contribution from recreational redevelopment

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	?	Depends on the nature of the development.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Assumed to have a positive effect as farm diversification proposals tend to encompass specific purposes, more often than not related to education opportunities or training such as workshops or farm shops. It will, however, be dependent upon the development proposed.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	Although accessibility for those without a car may prove to be an issue, this is offset by the employment benefits to the rural population.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Primary objective - provides employment for rural workers and helps to sustain the rural economy.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	See above.
<b>Recommendations:</b> A sustainable policy consistent with government guidance. Implementation of the policy requires a trade off between the community and economic benefits that can be arise from farm diversification against the potential for increased car use that may be generated as a result.		

### Draft Policy: Retail and Leisure Development s

Within the defined town centres of the Market Towns development proposals for retail and other town centre uses will be supported where:

a. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the centre and its catchment area and it contributes to the provision of a safe environment: and

b. there would be no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centre or other centres.

In Market Towns outside the defined town centre, development proposals for retail and other town centre uses will need to demonstrate that:

i. no other site is available and suitable in accordance with the sequential tests set out in PPS6; and

ii. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the locality and contributes towards the provision of a safe environment; and

iii. the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of the town centre; or

iv. the scale of development proposed is inconsistent with the function and character of the town centre or a need to be in the particular location can be justified; and;

v. the site offers potential to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport.



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

Within the existing built up areas of Key Service Centres and Smaller Settlements development proposals for local shopping and other town centre uses as defined in PPS6 will be supported subject to environmental, safety and amenity considerations as set out elsewhere in the LDF where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. the scale and type of development proposed is directly related to the role and function of the locality and contributes towards the provision of a safe environment; and
- b. the development would enhance existing provision in the locality; and
- c. the development would meet a clear local need.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Directs growth primarily within built up areas and places restrictions on urban edge or out of town development.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Supportive insofar as it limits the possibility of out of town development.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Supported by the need to ensure that development fits into the local setting.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	As above.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Depends on location but the criteria emphasises promotion of sustainable locations which can be accessed by foot, cycle and public transport.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	?	New development will add to waste generation and commercial development is a particularly high generator of waste. However, the policy on design quality (and the requirement to provide appropriate recycling facilities) will complement achievement of this objective as will Council initiatives to promote recycling in the commercial sector.
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	A key objective of the policy to promote development in sustainable locations which are easily accessible by foot, cycle or public transport.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	See comments for objective 9

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	?	Potentially competing for urban space and therefore requirement to locate retailing and other uses centrally adds to development pressure. The issue would have to be addressed through sensitive urban design and reflects the cumulative impact of several government policies.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Primary objective.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	Supportive due to promotion of accessible locations and sustainable travel modes (not car dependent).
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	A primary objective.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Strongly supportive.
<b>Recommendations:</b> Clearly supportive and consistent with the settlement and housing hierarchies proposed within the emerging Core Strategy		

### Draft Policy: Town centres and Retail Designations

Development proposals for retail, leisure, office, cultural and tourism facilities and other main town centre uses as defined in PPS6 should be within the defined town centres unless they accord with exceptions allowed for elsewhere in the LDF.

The shopping role of the town centres will be supported within the defined town centre boundaries with priority given to development within the defined primary shopping areas to strengthen their vitality and viability. Boundaries of town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages are defined on the proposals map.

Primary shopping areas are defined for each Market Town where retailing predominates but which incorporate a greater density of other Class A uses including restaurants, public houses, hot food take-aways and financial and professional services which contribute to the overall vitality and viability of the area. Within the primary shopping area development proposals:

a. that contribute to the promotion of the evening economy will be supported as valuable additions to the vitality and viability of the area subject to public safety, environmental and amenity considerations

b. should not prejudice the effective use of upper floors of the premises, including the retention of any existing separate entrances.

Within the primary shopping area of Ramsey the loss of any ground floor town centre use as defined in PPS6 to a non-town centre use will be resisted to protect the vitality and viability of Ramsey as a Market Town.

Development proposals involving such a loss will be required to provide evidence that reasonable steps have been taken to market the property for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its town centre use.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<p>Primary shopping frontages have been identified in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots where at least 70% of ground floor units are shops (Class A1) (7). Within primary shopping frontages a balance of shops and other uses will be maintained to ensure their vitality. Within primary shopping frontages development proposals should:</p> <p>i. not result in more than 30% of ground floor units in the defined primary frontage as whole being in other (non-A1) uses; and</p> <p>ii. not create a continuous frontage of three or more units in other (non-A1) uses.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Supports the need for a well defined urban centre and recognises the need for diversity within the centre to promote vitality and viability. The promotion of A1 uses ensures that frontages remain active although allowing complementary activities that do not fall within this use class will promote a mix of uses and add to vibrancy of the town centre as well as ensuring the area is populated at all times of the day.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Ensuring there is an appropriate mix of uses and that areas can be populated at all times of the day increases the natural surveillance of an area and makes it safer.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Implicitly supportive of policies to focus retailing and companion land uses in the most accessible locations near to transport hubs.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	See comments for obj 7.
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Promotes healthy lifestyles through the promotion of sustainable travel modes and opportunities to travel by foot or cycle. In order to maximise these opportunities they may need to be accompanied by fiscal incentives to discourage car use (such as car parking charges) to

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		really encourage people to make sustainable travel choices.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~	
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Attracting the right mix of uses can generate greater activity and surveillance.
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	Primary objective
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	By locating retail and other uses within town centres accessible to all the policy is supportive of redressing inequalities (relating to travel) for those without access to a car which tend to be those on low incomes and the elderly.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Will provide an attractive environment for the retail sector.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Primary objective.

### Recommendations:

The policy is clearly consistent with government guidance and with the settlement hierarchy proposed in the Core Strategy. Central retailing areas provide the scope for convenience and comparison shopping, encouraging retailers to compete and thereby benefiting local residents while also providing market centres with a well defined heart. However, care will need to be taken to ensure that complementary activities are permitted to encourage visits after dark and ensure that centres are populated throughout the day and night. Some consideration may need to be given to setting the threshold at 70% of ground floor frontage and to whether overall retail floorspace should be considered. This may need to be evaluated based on data about frontage size.

### Draft Policy: Key Local Services and Facilities

Development proposals should not result in an unacceptable reduction in the availability of key services and facilities in a settlement, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. there is no reasonable prospect of that service or facility being retained or restored; and
- ii. there is little evidence of public support for the retention of that service or facility

When considering whether an unacceptable reduction would occur, consideration will be given to:

- a. whether the service or facility is the last of its type within the settlement (or within an individual neighbourhood within one of the Market Towns); or
- b. whether the loss of the facility would have a detrimental impact upon the overall vitality and viability of a Key Service Centre.

For the purposes of this approach, key services and facilities are considered to include local shops, public houses, religious establishments, education facilities, filling stations, public halls and health care facilities.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

SA Objective		Impact	Commentary
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~		
2. Minimise use of water	~		
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~		
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	A primary objective of this policy.	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	As above.	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~		
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Implicitly supportive, if only on a small scale, as it means residents have basic services on their doorstep and reduces the need to travel further into town centres.	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~		
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	See comments for obj 7.	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~		
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Implicitly supportive as it maximises opportunities for people to access facilities on foot and cycle. It will also contribute to sustaining social and community infrastructure which is an important part of enhancing health.	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	~		
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	+	Supportive in the long term if retention of local facilities maintains vitality and protects against out-migration. By helping to ensure that local facilities and services are sustained it will encourage more activity to occur on the streets and ensure that areas are well populated throughout the day thereby generating surveillance. Some facilities and services that will be covered by this policy may include those specifically for certain sectors of the population eg youths which may help to cut down on anti-social behaviour that some youths may be associated with.	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	+	A primary objective of this policy.
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	+	Protecting against the loss of key services within a locality will contribute to reducing the rural inequalities regarding service provision that persist in many rural areas.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	+	Supportive insofar as it promotes the rural economy, although it does not address the other decision making criteria.
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	Promoting rural amenities can help support tourism and leisure initiatives and protecting against the loss of key services in local areas is unlikely to detract from the vitality and viability of town centres.
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> Clearly consistent with government guidance and designed to prevent the steady depletion of rural amenity which is essential to the character and fabric of the settlement. It is also important to have smaller local concentrations of services and facilities within the suburbs of the larger towns, and the loss of these services and facilities will also be damaging to local community cohesion, while also increasing the number and lengths of trips made by residents to access services and facilities. The policy does not preclude the closure of last remaining services and facilities where there is no local support or custom but aims to prevent enforced changes of use on services and facilities that are still valued by the community but where the owner wishes to redevelop or re-use the site.</p>		

### Protecting and enhancing the environment

#### Draft Policy: Biodiversity and Protected habitats and species

A development proposal that could affect a site of value for biodiversity or geological conservation should:

- a. maintain and enhance biodiversity with priority being given to habitat creation which would help achieve Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan Targets; and
- b. provide for appropriate mitigation measures when the benefits of the development outweigh harm to biodiversity; which will be secured by condition or through a S106 agreement.

Development proposals must provide opportunities for the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity features within the design of development.

Development proposals should not harm sites of national or international importance for biodiversity or geology such as SSSIs.

A development proposal that could potentially damage County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, important species, Protected Roadside Verges or other landscape features of historic or nature conservation value will not be permitted unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development significantly outweigh the potential harm to nature conservation interests.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

<p>When the benefits of the development outweigh harm to protected habitats or species provision should be made for appropriate mitigation measures, reinstatement of features and/or compensatory work that will enhance or recreate habitats or relocate species on or off the site and which would ensure that the development would not adversely impact on the long term protection of the habitat or species. This will be secured by condition or through a S106 agreement involving works on or off the site as necessary.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Policy protects against development on valuable Greenfield sites.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	A primary objective.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Implicitly supports the maintenance of natural landscape features
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	~	
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	Complements renewable energy policy which seeks to protect inappropriate development in designated sites.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	Not primary aim of the policy however, it is recognised that opportunities to access wildlife and biodiversity, as well as open space, favourably impacts upon health.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Policy protects against inappropriate development on protected sites unless the benefits of development outweigh the harm caused.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	



## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is consistent with government guidance as it provides a basic level of protection for designated sites and those recognised for their conservation value. Although this policy only covers designated sites and those recognised for their conservation value, the policy on biodiversity and green infrastructure provides protection for undesignated sites.</p>		

Draft Policy: The Great Fen Project		
<p>Planning permission for development (including changes of use) will be granted for proposals which will deliver the implementation of the Great Fen Project as identified on the Proposals Map and which are consistent with the Master Plan for the project area. Applications should be accompanied by information which clearly explains how the proposals will make a positive contribution towards the implementation of the Master Plan and overall strategy for the Great Fen.</p> <p>Proposals which lie outside the project area and within its zone of influence will be permitted if they are compatible with the landscape, access and water quality aims of the strategy.</p>		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	The policy protects against inappropriate development within the Great Fen Project that does not form part of the approved strategy for the area. This will help to minimise further development on the best agricultural land.
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	A primary objective of this policy is to promote green infrastructure and biodiversity within the Great Fen area and related projects.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Policy will help promote reinstatement of historic landscape.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	As obj 4
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	+	Promotion of wetland habitat will aid flood management.
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	+	The project aims to develop infrastructure such as boat moorings and cycle paths.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	+	Promoting access to biodiversity is beneficial to health and the development of green infrastructure links which double up as green corridors such as cycle paths may help encourage sustainable (and therefore also healthy) travel choices.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	A primary aim
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	+	The Great Fen Project provides opportunities for exploiting tourism in this area.
<b>Recommendations:</b> A sustainable policy which complements the Strategic Green Infrastructure policy in the Core Strategy.		

<b>Draft Policy: Landscape character</b>		
Development proposals outside the built up area of any Market Town or Key Service Centre should:		
a. respect and respond to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape as identified in the Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents;		
b. avoid the introduction of harmful, incongruous or intrusive elements into views by reason of the development's siting, scale, form, colour or use of materials;		
c. employ landscape and boundary treatments that minimise the impact of any development on its setting;		
d. conserve and enhance natural or semi-natural vegetation characteristic of the area; and		
e. retain historic landscape features such as field patterns, watercourses, drainage ditches and hedgerows.		
Where harm to local landscape character is unavoidable as a result of beneficial development positive mitigation measures will be required to be secured as part of any submitted landscaping scheme or by condition on any planning permission. This will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement involving works on or off-site as necessary.		
		<b>Commentary</b>
<b>SA Objective</b>	<b>Impact</b>	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	+	Policy is supportive of this objective by helping to prevent urban creep and conserving natural and semi natural vegetation
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Implicitly supportive.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Primary aim of the policy.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Supportive as the 'design' of the natural environment and built fabric are to be preserved, though the option does not preclude appropriate development.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	+	Will assist in dispersal of airborne pollutants and help to prevent urban impacts (noise, light etc) penetrating far into the rural surroundings.
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	?	The policy does not preclude appropriate development and, as the policy concerns development outside of market towns and key service centres it is assumed that locations are unlikely to be as sustainable as those within the built up areas of these settlement hierarchies
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Maintains open space and access although this does not necessarily involve publicly accessible land.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

**Recommendations:** Supports objectives of respecting and maintaining landscape character whilst (indirectly) maintaining the natural landscape features that help sustain and enhance biodiversity. The policy provides clear criteria for making appropriate judgements and is further enhanced by the Landscape and Townscape (SPD) (2007) which provides detailed advice on landscape character.

### Draft Policy: H heritage Assets

Any proposal for development within or affecting a Conservation Area (including applications for Conservation Area Consent for demolition):

a. will be determined in accordance with national guidance for the determination of applications relating to conservation areas; and

b. should ensure that traditional shopfronts, made from a traditional frame are retained wherever possible, and new shopfronts utilise traditional materials such as timber or high quality contemporary materials that respect the character and proportions of the building and nearby properties

Any accompanying Design and Access Statement should describe how the proposal responds to the particular qualities of the surrounding landscape and town scape with reference to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007) and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007) or successor documents, and the conservation area as described in the relevant Conservation Area Character Statement as follows:

Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Alwalton, Bluntisham, Broughton, Buckden, Earith, Fenstanton, Godmanchester (Post Street), Godmanchester (Earning Street), Hemingfords, Holywell, Houghton & Wyton, Huntingdon, Keyston, Kimbolton, Leighton Bromswold, Offord Cluny, Somersham, St Ives, Stonely, Warboys, Woodhurst, Yaxley and any subsequent statements

A development proposal within or affecting the designated historic parks or gardens at Elton Hall, Hilton Maze, Abbots Ripton Hall, Hamerton and Leighton Bromswold, or any subsequent designations, will only be permitted if it would not have an adverse impact on the historic or special features and characteristics of the registered historic park or garden. Where appropriate, mitigation measures will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement.

The sub-division of large curtilages will be resisted where the sub-division will detrimentally affect the setting of a listed building, the qualities of a conservation area, trees considered to be worthy of protection or the design integrity of historic parks and gardens. In all other circumstances the sub-division of large curtilages will only be allowed where the resultant dwelling and its curtilage will be of a size and form that are sympathetic to the locality.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	
2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	+	Can be beneficial if it preserves well established open space within urban and suburban areas.
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Primary aim of this policy.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	Supports objectives 4 and 3 which add to the creation of an attractive environment.

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	?	There may be potential conflict between protecting built and cultural heritage and promoting use of renewable technologies such as solar panels.
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Supportive as policy covers open space within conservation areas as well as buildings. Policy also covers historic parks and gardens which are publicly accessible.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<b>Recommendations:</b> Clearly sustainable in terms of preserving the character and setting of conservation areas. The important contribution that open space makes to the setting and character of conservation areas is mentioned within the supporting text.		

### Draft Policy: Public Art

#### Policy wording

Development proposals comprising large, moderate or minor scale residential schemes or 500m<sup>2</sup> or more of commercial, retail, leisure and institutional buildings should make provision for the commissioning and installation of publicly accessible art, craft and design works. Contributions and commuted maintenance sums for up to 10 years will be secured by condition or through a Section 106 agreement where appropriate.

		Commentary
SA Objective	Impact	
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	~	

## 2 Detailed assessments of draft policies

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

2. Minimise use of water	~	
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure.	~	
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including the archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character	+	Public art helps reinforce the distinctiveness and generates a sense of identity. It is an important aid in promoting the setting of a building and its context and contributes to the character of an area.
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	+	The provision of public art can make an important contribution to fostering civic pride and a sense of identity. This is an important part of ensuring people's well being and sense of satisfaction with a place.
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	~	
7. Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants (eg air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	~	
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	~	Indirectly public art can help promote recycling campaigns as public art can be made from recycled objects and can generate interest and a high local media profile..
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways).	~	
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies.	~	
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	~	
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	+	Public art can help enhance amenity areas by enlivening a space and making it more interesting.
13. Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	~	
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including health and education)	~	
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	~	
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent and affordable housing	~	
17. Improve access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	~	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	~	
<p><b>Recommendations:</b> The policy is sustainable and is in accordance with government guidance on urban design. The policy ensures that provision for public art will be made as part of large, moderate or minor scale residential developments and commercial developments over 500m2. It is locally specific and covers an area not well covered by national guidance.</p>		

## 3 Indicators and baseline data

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

### 3 3 Indicators and baseline data

Table 3 Appendix 3: Indicators and baseline data

Objective	Indicator	Current situation		Assessment	Data sources
		Huntingdonshire	Comparator		
1. Minimise development on Greenfield land and maximise development on land with the least environmental/amenity value	% dwellings completed on previously-developed land	Ave 55.3% (05/06)	East of Eng: 71% 2005/06	Favourable situation. Lower than for the region but improving significantly.	District monitoring; EERA <sup>(1)</sup>
2. Minimise use of water	Water use per household	No data available at present.	No data available at present.	No data available at present.	Water consumption data available by water company regions. A method of estimating water consumption at the County level is being investigated
3. Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and green infrastructure	% SSSIs in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition  Change in areas of populations of biodiversity importance:  1. Change in priority habitats 2. Change in areas designated for their intrinsic value inc sites of international, national, regional, sub regional or local significance	Not previously monitored	No corresponding comparator	No data available at present	Regional and District monitoring
4. Maintain, protect and enhance the distinctiveness of the built environment (including	% Listed buildings 'at risk'	13.1% (2006)	East of Eng: 1.8% (2006)	Unfavourable situation. Figure has increased, although this is partly due to	District monitoring; English Heritage



## 3 Indicators and baseline data

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

archaeological heritage) and historic landscape character				an audit at Hinchingsbrooke School	
5. Creation of an attractive environment through high quality design and use of sustainable construction methods	% residents who are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	81% (2006)	Cambridgeshire: 80% (2006)	Unfavourable situation. Higher than for the county but decreasing	Quality of life survey (no regional comparator) QoL18/LIB133, QoL 19. <sup>(2)</sup> Data in 'current situation' and 'trend' columns are not directly comparable
	% major housing sites meeting local 'Building for Life' standard	No data available at present.	No data available at present.	No data available at present.	Monitoring framework needs to be developed
6. Manage and minimise flood risk taking into account climate change	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to advice of Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality	2 (2004/05)	Cambridgeshire: (2004-2005) 8	Favourable situation. A third fewer permissions are granted than compared to Cambridgeshire.	District monitoring, County monitoring
7. Reduce emissions of green house gases and other pollutants (for example air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)	CO2 emissions	1708 (2004)	Cambridgeshire: 5956 (2004)	Favourable situation	District level data from DEFRA
8. Reduce waste and encourage re-use and recycling	% of household waste which have been sent for recycling	21.13 (2005)	Cambridgeshire: 19.47 (2005)	Favourable situation. The percentage of household waste recycled for Huntingdonshire is higher than that of the county	District monitoring and County monitoring (BVPI)
9. Reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport (public transport, cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways)	Amount of new residential development within 30 mins public transport time of GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, areas of employment and a major retail centre	No data available at present	Was not previously monitored	Unable to complete assessment	County Council monitoring
10. Maximise the use of renewable energy sources and technologies	Renewable energy capacity installed by type (GW/h)	(2005) Onshore wind: 1.79 Water: 0.095	(2005) Cambridgeshire & Peterborough: Onshore wind: 7.571	All the water power for the county is located in Huntingdonshire.	District and county council monitoring

### 3 Indicators and baseline data

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

		Methane from landfill: 18.33	Water: 0.095 Methane from landfill: 61.29		
	% of predicated energy requirement from on site renewable energy technology on major development	Data not collected this year	Data not collected this year	No data is available at present therefore it is not possible to make an assessment.	N/A
11. Encourage healthy lifestyles	% of residents with limiting long term illness	13.5% (2001)	East of England: 16.2% (2001)	Favourable situation. Lower than the region as a whole.	Census of Population
	% of rights of way that are rated 'easy to use'	64.7% (2006)	Cambridgeshire: 62% (2006)	Favourable situation.	District and County Council monitoring. Data in 'current situation' and 'trend' columns are not directly comparable due to different data sources.
12. Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space and improve opportunities for people to access wildlife	Ha of strategic open space per 1,000 people	9.8 ha/ 1000 people	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: 4.8 ha/ 1000 people	Favourable situation. Almost twice as much as for Cambridgeshire.	Strategic Open Space study (no regional comparator)
	Number of sports pitches available for public use per 1,000 people	1.61 ha/ 1000 people (2006)	No data available at present.	Unable to make assessment at present	District monitoring (no regional comparator)
13. Reduce and prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime	% of residents feeling 'safe' or 'fairly safe' outside in the local area after dark	56% (2006)	Cambridgeshire: 54% (2006)	Favourable situation. Marginally higher than for Cambridgeshire	Quality of Life Survey
	Violent crime per 1000 population	14.7% per 1000 population (2004)	East of England: 17% (2004)	Favourable situation. Significantly lower than England and Wales and East of England region.	Huntingdonshire Crime and Disorder Audit 2004
14. Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (including education , health, transport, training and leisure opportunities)	% parishes (or urban wards) with access to: (a) general store; (b) surgery; (c) primary school	(a) 44.8% (2006) (b) 20.7% (2006) (c) 41.4% (2006)	No data available at present	Mixed situation. Increase in access to general store but decrease in access to primary school	Village Facilities Survey

## 3 Indicators and baseline data

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

	% adults who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	15% (05/06)	Cambridgeshire 17% (05/06)	Unfavourable situation. Lower than for Cambridgeshire and decreasing	Quality of life survey (no regional comparator) <sup>(3)</sup> QoL23/LIB137
15. Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	% residents who feel the local community is somewhere where people from different backgrounds can live harmoniously	50% (05/06)	Cambridgeshire: 52% (05/06)	Unfavourable Situation. Lower than for Cambridgeshire and decreasing.	Quality of life survey (no regional comparator) <sup>(4)</sup> QOL25/LIB139
	% of employees in the top 5% of earners that are women	14.29% (2005)	Cambridgeshire: 42.46%	Difficult to assess as the figures for Huntingdonshire may have been manipulated from the data collected for Cambridgeshire as a whole, plus the population for Huntingdonshire is comparatively smaller.	BVPI indicators (District and County)
	% of employees in the top 5 % of earners that are from ethnic minorities	0% (2005)	Cambridgeshire: 1.23%	As above.	BVPI indicators (District and County)
	% employees in the top 5% of earners with a disability	Not previously monitored	No comparator as this indicator is not yet available.	No data available therefore unable to make an assessment.	As above.
16. Ensure all groups have access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing	% dwellings completed that are 'affordable'	24.3% (02/03)	Cambridgeshire: 12% (2003)	Favourable situation. Higher than for Cambridgeshire.	District monitoring <sup>(5)</sup>
17. Help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	Unemployment rate, % (male & female)	1.5% (2004)	Eastern: 2.3% (2004)	Favourable situation. Lower than for the region and remaining the same.	Nomis / CCC Research Group <sup>(6)</sup>
	Employment land available (land supply by type) (ha)	529.87 (2006)	East of Eng: 2,139.50 (2006)	Favourable situation – the land available for employment has continued to rise since 2005.	Regional monitoring / district monitoring
	Amount of employment land lost to residential development (ha)	-3.9212 (2006)	East of Eng: 117, 776 (2006)	Not previously monitored for region therefore unable to make an assessment. The amount of land lost	Regional monitoring / district monitoring

## 3 Indicators and baseline data

Huntingdonshire LDF | Sustainability Appraisal for Development Management DPD Development of Options

				to residential development has increased since 2005.	
18. Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	Annual net increase (or decrease) in VAT registered firms, %	+1.3% (2002) NOMIS	Eastern: +0.2% (2002) NOMIS	Favourable Situation. The number of firms has continued to rise.	NOMIS / CCC Research Group
	Economic activity rate, % (male & female)	85.6% (Mar 02 – Feb 03)	Eastern: 81.5 (Mar 02 – Feb 03)	Favourable Situation. Higher than for the Eastern Region and increasing.	Census of Pop / NOMIS / CCC Research Group
	Amount and % of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres (sqm)	Indicator changed	Indicator changed	Unable to make an assessment as the indicator has recently changed.	District and regional monitoring.

1. (1), (2), (4)
2. (3)
3. (2)
4. (3)
5. (3)
6. (1), (2)

1. Local Quality of Life Counts
2. Quality of Life Counts
3. Audit Commission Voluntary Quality of Life Indicators
4. Best Value Performance Indicator

# Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

## 4 4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

### Appendix 4: Assessment of alternatives (taken from the ISA of Core Strategy Issues and Options paper)

Policy Area	Landscape Character – Option 1
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out criteria to protect landscape character	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 1 is clearly sustainable with no obvious draw backs. It is not clear what benefits retaining the AoBL would have over option 1. The AoBL designation provides a simple prescriptive designation to ensure appropriate development in parts of the district. This is some what misleading if it is suggests that there is more scope for development in other locations and therefore option one would provide better protection.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 1 should be favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Landscape Character – Reasonable alternative
<b>Summary of option:</b> Area of Best Landscape is retained	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Does not afford as much protection on sites not designated under AoBL therefore could give rise to inappropriate development pressure on these sites.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 1 should be favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Sustainable design
<b>Summary of option:</b> encourage compliance with the code for sustainable homes	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> This option is clearly sustainable. In particular it supports objectives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the use of non-renewable energy sources.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None.	

Policy Area	Renewable energy
<b>Summary of option:</b> minimises the landscape impacts of renewable energy development	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> This option is clearly sustainable. In particular it supports objectives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the use of non-renewable energy sources.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None.	

Policy Area	Flood risk
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out criteria to minimise and manage the risk of flooding	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> A straightforward protective option.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features
-------------	---

## 4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria to minimise the risk of harm to trees, hedgerows and other environmental features
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Clearly acceptable and sustainable
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None

Policy Area	Protected habitats and species
<b>Summary of option:</b> protects important habitats and species	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is consistent with national guidance and is supportive of objectives relating to habitat protection.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Biodiversity
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out requirements for development affecting biodiversity, providing basic protection appropriate for locally important assets, and seeking positive gain through mitigation and other measures.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> This policy addresses wider biodiversity and protects features on development sites. The approach is consistent with national policy and is clearly sustainable.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Design quality
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out criteria to assess design quality	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is in line with policy on sustainable communities and is supported by more specific material elsewhere in the document	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Street scene
<b>Summary of option:</b> ensures a positive contribution to the character and appearance of streets.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable. However, careful consideration will need to be given to future wording of the policy to ensure all potential impacts are recognised	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Transport impacts
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out criteria for assessing development proposals including a requirement for an appropriate transport assessment or transport statement	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. The district's position on the strategic road network means that the option supports the economic activity component of sustainable development. Although it does not deal specifically with the need to manage the modal shift complementary policies on car and cycle parking further encourage this shift.	

# Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

**Proposed mitigation measures:** None

Policy Area	Development in the countryside
<b>Summary of option:</b> sets out criteria to restrict development outside the settlements.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy although there is a cumulative effect as restrictions on development in the countryside may give rise to development pressures within settlements. Careful wording of any policy will be required to ensure the specific circumstances in which development will be permitted in the countryside are clear.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Housing density – Option 12
<b>Summary of option:</b> a single net density to be applied for development proposals across the district.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 12 is not sustainable as applying a standard net density fails to take into account the character and amenities of settlements and will not ensure development at higher densities in more sustainable settlements	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 13 should be favoured over Option 12.	

Policy Area	Housing density – Option 13
<b>Summary of option:</b> a range of densities to be applied for development proposals according to settlement type, character and amenities.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 13 is clearly sustainable and consistent with the current governmental approach. It is designed to ensure that settlements which are more sustainable have higher densities for development than settlements which are less sustainable. It also ensures the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to a diverse workforce	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 13 should be favoured over Option 12.	

Policy Area	Historic parks and gardens
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria to ensure development does not harm historic parks and gardens.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Re-use and re-development of rural buildings
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option encourages the re-use and re-development of rural buildings for business purposes using criteria to assess proposals.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current government policy. Re-development inevitably creates impacts and can increase traffic in the countryside, therefore it must be sensitive to local character if proposals for farm and rural diversification are to be pursued. If re-development for housing is considered appropriate priority should be given to affordable housing	



# 4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

**Proposed mitigation measures:** None

Policy Area	Alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option limits the impact of alterations and extensions on existing dwellings and restricts new houses being built in the countryside	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Careful wording of the policy will be required to ensure that the limits placed on extensions or alterations are clear so as to adequately conserve the character of the countryside	

Policy Area	Mix of property sizes
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option encourages the provision of an appropriate mix of housing schemes according to their scale	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and designed to ensure the broadening of the local economy is supported by a mix of accommodation appropriate to the needs of a diverse workforce. The need for appropriately sized and priced properties for smaller families and key workers is an implicit priority.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Housing for agricultural workers
<b>Summary of option:</b> Criteria based methodology for assessing proposals for housing for agricultural and related workers.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. It takes a pragmatic view of the need to ensure rural workers' accommodation needs are provided for on an appropriate scale and location	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Careful wording of the policy is required to ensure the criteria against which proposals are assessed are clear and evidence of need is provided	

Policy Area	Retirement housing
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria for specialist retirement housing.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. It meets the needs of a section of the population that may be disadvantaged in terms of health or income, encouraging the provision of a supportive and inclusive environment. The only potential concern is that facilities will compete with other land uses for the most accessible sites and it is not clear how the Council could ensure that adequate provision can be made at least at some locations	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Nursing and care homes
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria for nursing and care homes.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable as it promotes social inclusion of vulnerable groups.	

# Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

**Proposed mitigation measures:** Careful wording of the policy will be required to ensure that the criteria is clear in order to maximise the opportunities for development of nursing and care homes.

Policy Area	Accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option establishes requirement to meet accommodation needs of this sector and the criteria to be used in assessing suitable sites	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. It makes appropriate provision of land and utilities while respecting the rights of others living near proposed sites.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> The policy will need to be worded carefully to ensure that the needs of this sector of the population are met	

Policy Area	Accessibility, adaptability and security
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option requires the provision of access arrangements for everyone	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> The policy will need to be worded to show how access needs should be reflected in the design of developments in order to complement other policies on design and street scene	

Policy Area	Amenity
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria to ensure development will not have an unreasonable impact on living conditions.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and is a straightforward option which preserves the status quo without harming the local economy by imposing restrictions that would deter development	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Mixed development
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option encourages mixed development within sustainable locations.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. This option is implicitly sustainable as it brings jobs and homes closer together for some residents, while also making use of available space. However, careful wording is required to ensure an appropriate type of business use is permitted in live/work units or in locations where new homes are provided in settlement centres	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Open space and recreational land – Option 25
<b>Summary of option:</b> Criteria based policy will protect open space and recreation land.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 25 is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. This option is beneficial in terms of protecting the open character of land within and around all settlements, whether for recreation or other uses. However, open space standards as applied within urban areas will contribute to development pressures and need to be mitigated through design proposals, particularly those on housing density.	

# 4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

**Proposed mitigation measures:** Option 25 is favoured over the reasonable alternative

Policy Area	Open space and recreational land – Reasonable alternative
<b>Summary of option:</b> All open spaces to be identified and designated on proposals map	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> As it would be difficult to identify all areas of open space in a sufficiently exhaustive and consistent manner across the district given Huntingdonshire's size and the variety of spaces involved, the reasonable alternative is less sustainable as it may result in spaces that are 'missed' in the identification and designation process coming under inappropriate development pressure.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 25 is favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Retention of key local services and facilities
<b>Summary of option:</b> Proposes controls to prevent the loss of remaining village facilities unless there is clear evidence they are no longer supportable	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. It is designed to prevent the rural decline that has occurred over the last two decades. Rural amenities are essential to the character and fabric of the settlement and efforts to encourage leisure and tourism would be more problematic in a countryside where there is no convenient access to the most basic of services. Retaining services is essential to maintaining the character of the district as a whole. The option does not preclude the closure of last remaining amenities where there is no local support or custom (i.e. such that a commercial business is no longer viable) but aims to prevent enforced changes of use on amenities that are still valued by the community but where the owner wishes to re-use or re-develop the site	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Car and cycle parking
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option limits car parking and promotes provision of cycle parking and disabled parking to standards set in the Council's parking standards	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Rights of way and other public routes
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option seeks to maintain and enhance the network of rights of way and other routes	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with recent policy on green transport and encouraging healthier travel choices.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Location of office development
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out sequential test for large office developments but not for smaller office developments.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. The text implies that there is a reasonable alternative for this option which outlines thresholds which could be used to define large office developments by which proposals will then be assessed. A smaller threshold will reflect local circumstances and apply to more proposals to ensure that more office developments are located in sustainable locations. As threshold size has yet to be determined it is	

# Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

not clear if a separate distinction could be made explicit in a separate assessment and therefore an alternative for this option has not been appraised.

**Proposed mitigation measures:** None

Policy Area	Location of industrial and warehouse development
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out locations for large scale industrial and warehouse development in sustainable locations and allows small scale industrial and warehouse development in a wider range of locations.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable ensuring that large scale industrial and warehouse developments are situated in sustainable locations. It also helps to create diverse employment opportunities by allowing small scale industrial and warehouse development in a wider range of locations. The text implies that there is a reasonable alternative for this option which outlines thresholds which could be used to define large scale industrial and warehouse developments by which proposals will then be assessed. A smaller threshold will reflect local circumstances and apply to more proposals to ensure that more large scale and warehouse developments are located in sustainable locations. As threshold size has yet to be determined it is not clear if a separate distinction could be made explicit in a separate assessment and therefore an alternative for this option has not been appraised	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites – Option 31
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets criteria to protect against premature loss of employment sites	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 31 is clearly sustainable and supports continued provision of a stock of brownfield land for business development in appropriate locations. The option is broad and covers a range of land uses, taking in office developments that may generate large levels of commuter traffic but minimal goods movement, to industrial sites where the traffic balance is reversed. It supports the retention of local employment opportunities.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 31 is favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites -Reasonable alternative
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option proposes the removal of restrictions on re-use of industrial and commercial land	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> The reasonable alternative is clearly less sustainable as it implies a return to a more laissez faire approach to planning which is not consistent with current policy which favours explicit controls and objectives designed to create sustainable communities. Without examples of likely re-development scenarios it is difficult to assess whether or not alternative would result in inappropriate development. Loosening the controls on development does not guarantee that change will occur as other policies in the development plan document protect against inappropriate development. However, in the current context of the planning system, this alternative is significantly less sustainable and, if care is not taken, may result in more instances of inappropriate development.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 31 is favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Location of tourist facilities
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria to ensure proposals for major and minor tourist facilities are sustainable.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. The option primarily addresses tourist accommodation and the impact of leisure developments on the landscape. It promotes locating tourism facilities in the most sustainable places to increase accessibility by non car modes. Although impact on energy use and water are not	

# 4 Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

explicitly mentioned in the text, it is assumed that other policy options on sustainable design and renewable energy would provide protection against inappropriate development.

**Proposed mitigation measures:** None

Policy Area	Farm diversification – Option 33
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria outlining the circumstances in which developments forming part of a rural diversification scheme will be permitted.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 33 is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. Option aims to promote the rural economy and create a diverse workforce. It is however, necessary to balance the inevitable impacts, particularly increased car use in rural areas, against the economic and community benefits in areas that are poorly served by other amenities and where unemployment and low wages are usually a concern. Overall it provides controls on the scale of development that could be considered and therefore will promote a more sustainable approach that will help sustain the rural economy and protect the countryside.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 33 is favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Farm diversification – Reasonable alternative
<b>Summary of option:</b> Proposes that any building on previously undeveloped land (i.e. agricultural land) in association with farm diversification schemes could be prohibited	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> The reasonable alternative, being a stricter approach, is potentially more sustainable in terms of land protection and might be appropriate to prevent the large scale loss of land to uses that are not associated with agriculture. Nevertheless, it also places more stringent limitations on the ability of farm businesses to diversify and may have implications for the rural economy	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 33 is favoured over the reasonable alternative	

Policy Area	Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages – Option 34
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option defines town centres, primary shopping areas and primary shopping frontages and limits the percentage of non retail uses within primary shopping frontages.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option 34 is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy. Designating town centres and primary shopping frontages will promote the vitality of town centres as it provides a well defined heart to the town and facilitates sustainable travel options which links transport policy with planning. Centralising retail areas contributes to the vitality and viability of town centres as amenities and services are concentrated in one locality. The explicit consideration given to the need for complementary non retail outlets within town centres in the text is important in order to maintain the diversity of towns and reinforce the day time and night time economies. It is however recognised that these complementary uses must not detract from the retail uses.	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> Option 34 is favoured over the reasonable alternative.	

Policy Area	Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages – Reasonable alternative
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option offers no attempt to designate primary shopping frontages	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Although the reasonable alternative potentially gives greater scope for non retail outlets, this could lead to a loss of concentrated retail uses which is detrimental to town centre vitality. Defining primary frontages can	

# Assessments of alternatives (taken from ISA of Development Control Policies Issues and Options)

help protect against such a detrimental affects. Not designating town centres and primary frontages is contrary to national policy in PPS6 and therefore not a viable option

**Proposed mitigation measures:** Option 34 is favoured over the reasonable alternative

Policy Area	Location of retail and leisure development
<b>Summary of option:</b> Criteria based policy that sets out sequential approach to the location of large and minor retail and leisure development.	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and consistent with current policy	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

Policy Area	Telecommunications
<b>Summary of option:</b> Option sets out criteria to minimise environmental impact of telecommunications	
<b>Summary of assessment:</b> Option is clearly sustainable and particularly important given the flat and open nature of the eastern half of the district and its position on the strategic road network where mobile telecom masts have proliferated in recent years	
<b>Proposed mitigation measures:</b> None	

# 5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

## 5 5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Appendix 5: Performance targets indicators and targets to be included in the monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
Land, water and resources							
% of new dwellings completed at 40 or more dph within or adjacent Market Towns	Local output, Significant effects	8, 12	1	Housing density	95% <sup>(8)</sup>	District Council, Private sector, Housing associations	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
% of new dwellings completed at 35 or more dph within or adjacent Key Service Centres	Local output, Significant effects	8, 12	1.1	Housing density	95% <sup>(9)</sup>	District Council, Private sector, Housing associations	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
% of new dwellings completed at 30 or more dph in Smaller Settlements	Local output, Significant effects	8, 12	1	Housing density	95% <sup>(10)</sup>	District Council, Private sector, Housing associations	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
% of all new dwellings completed at less than 30 dwellings per hectare (dph)	Core output, Significant effects	8, 12	1	Housing density	0%	District Council, Private sector, Housing associations	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
Renewable energy capacity installed by type (mw):	Core output, Significant effects	11	7, 10	Renewable energy	Maximise the overall provision of renewable energy capacity	District Council, Private sector	Sustainable development checklists. Energy Efficiency initiatives. Building Control
1. bio fuels							
2. onshore wind							

- 8 to allow for a small proportion of sites where this density would be inappropriate to the character of the site/surroundings or the need to accommodate other uses
- 9 to allow for a small proportion of sites where this density would be inappropriate to the character of the site/surroundings or the need to accommodate other uses
- 10 to allow for a small proportion of sites where this density would be inappropriate to the character of the site/surroundings or the need to accommodate other uses



# Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation agencies
3.	water						
4.	solar energy						
5.	geothermal energy						
<b>BIODIVERSITY</b>							
Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance:  1) change in priority habitats and species (by type)  2) change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional, sub-regional or local significance	Core output, Significant effects	8, 9	1, 3, 12	Biodiversity, Landscape character, Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features	Maintain areas and populations of biodiversity importance	District Council, Cambs Biodiversity Partnership, English Nature, RSPB	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Countryside Services Initiatives, 50 Year Wildlife Vision for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
% of SSSIs in 'favourable or unfavourable recovering condition'	Local output, Significant effects	8, 9	3	Protected habitats and species, Landscape character	95% by 2010	District Council	Countryside Services initiatives
<b>LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND ARCHAEOLOGY</b>							
Major housing sites meeting 'Building for Life' equivalent standards	Local output, significant effects	10, 11, 12, 13	4, 5, 10, 13	Design quality, Accessibility, adaptability and security	60% to achieve Silver Standard equivalent	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
% of Conservation Areas in District covered by an	Local output, Significant effects	10, 11	4	Conservation areas	75% by 2012	District Council	Conservation Team via SPDs

## 5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
up to date Character Assessment							
% of rural buildings that are re-used and re-developed for non-residential uses	Local output, Significant effects	6	4	Re-use and re-development of rural buildings, Farm diversification	Minimise the percentage of rural buildings that are re-used and re-developed for non-residential uses	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions and SPDs
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION</b>							
No. of planning permissions granted contrary to advice of Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality	Core output, Significant effects	13	6, 7	Flood risk	0	District Council, Environment Agency	D.C. decisions
<b>HEALTHY COMMUNITIES</b>							
Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard	Core output	8, 9, 14	3, 12	Protection of open space and recreational land	Maximise the amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard	District Council	Countryside Services initiatives
Amount of sports pitches, open space and recreational facilities available for public use per 1000 population	Significant effects, Local output	8, 9, 14	11, 12, 14	Provision of sports and recreational facilities and open space	As identified in policy wording	District Council, County Council, Town and Parish Councils, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Huntingdonshire Open Space Assessment
<b>INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES</b>							
Completed dwellings by number of bedrooms and dwelling type	Local output, significant effects	2	15, 16	Housing mix	Maximise the range of dwelling sizes and types	District Council, Private sector, Housing associations	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs

# Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
Number of parishes (or urban wards) with: a) general store b) surgery c) primary school	Local output, Significant effects	1, 7	14, 15	Retention of key local services and facilities	No reduction	District Council	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
Provision of extra care housing, nursing and care homes	Local output	1, 3	15, 16	Extra care housing, nursing and care homes	To achieve an increase in provision in accordance with targets set out in 'Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People'	District Council, Private sector, Primary Care Trust	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs Housing, Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People
<b>ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES</b>							
Amount of floorspace developed for employment (net sqm): 1. B1a 2. B1b 3. B1c 4. B2 5. B8	Core output, Significant effects	4, 6, 15	17, 18	Location of office development, Location of industrial and warehouse development	Maximise the amount of floorspace developed for employment	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Local Economy Strategy
Amount of floorspace developed for employment which is in employment or regeneration areas (net sqm):	Core output	4, 6, 15	17, 18	Location of office development, Location of industrial and warehouse development	Maximise the amount of floorspace developed for employment in employment or regeneration areas	District Council, Private sector, Ramsey Area Partnership	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Local Economy Strategy

# 5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
1.	B1a						
2.	B1b						
3.	B1c						
4.	B2						
5.	B8						
Employment land available (ha):	Core output, Significant effects	4, 6, 15	17, 18	Location of office development, Location of industrial and warehouse development	Ensure sufficient provision of employment land in line with Core Strategy targets	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Local Economy Strategy
1.	B1a						
2.	B1b						
3.	B1c						
4.	B2						
5.	B8						
Losses of employment land (land which was available for employment in the previous monitoring year but has been lost to completed non-employment uses in the current monitoring year) in ha:	Core output	4, 6, 15	17, 18	Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites	Minimise losses of employment land	District Council, Private sector, Ramsey Area Partnership	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
1) In employment/ regeneration areas							

## Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
2) In total							
Amount of employment land lost to residential development (land which was available for employment in the previous monitoring year but has been lost to completed residential development in the current monitoring year) in ha:	Core output	4, 6, 15	17, 18	Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites	Minimise losses of employment land to residential development	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs
Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development (gross internal floorspace in sqm): 1. A1 2. A2 3. B1a 4. D2	Core output, Significant effects	5, 7	14, 17, 18	Location of office development, Location of tourist facilities, Location of retail and leisure development	In accordance with Core Strategy targets	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Local Economy Strategy, Tourism Strategy
Amount and % of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres (gross internal floorspace in sqm): 1. B1a 2. A1	Core output, Significant effects	5, 7	14, 17, 18	Location of office development, Location of tourist facilities, Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages, Location of retail and leisure development	Maximise the proportion of completed retail, office and leisure development located in town centres	District Council, Private sector, Town Centre Partnerships	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs, Local Economy Strategy, Tourism Strategy

## 5 Performance indicators and targets to be included in monitoring framework

Indicator	Indicator type	Related spatial objective(s)	Related SA objective(s)	Related policy wording	Target	Responsible agencies	Implementation
3.	A2						
4.	D2						
Amount of completed non-residential development within Use Class Orders A, B and D complying with car-parking standards set out in LDF	Core output	15	9	Car and cycle parking	100%	District Council, Private sector	Through D.C. decisions, SPDs and UDFs Local Transport Plan, Car Parking Strategy, HDC Capital Programme

**CABINET**

**18 DECEMBER 2008**

## **LETTINGS POLICY – DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO HEAD OF HOUSING SERVICES**

**(Report by the Head of Housing Services)**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to correct an omission in the Council's Lettings Policy to give delegated authority, to the Head of Housing Services, to award priority to applicants with exceptional circumstances, where those circumstances are not adequately covered by policy.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council's Lettings Policy was last reviewed and adopted in June 2007, in advance of the move to the Home-Link Choice Based Lettings scheme. The policy provides the framework for how the letting of housing association properties in the district are to be carried out.
- 2.2 The policy provides a means of assessing the individual circumstances of each person applying to the Council's Housing Register and for applying a priority to applications, however, the council should not 'fetter its discretion' by a blanket policy that does not allow the flexibility to consider exceptional circumstances as and when they arise.
- 2.3 The previous Lettings Policy included an exceptional circumstances delegation to the Head of Housing Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health. Not including this delegation in the new policy was an oversight.
- 2.4 The true test of policy is its application over time. The choice based letting scheme commenced in February 2008. A review of the new Lettings Policy has just commenced and is expected to report back by the end of February 2009. It is anticipated that a few refinements will need to be made to the policy and some unexpected consequences of the policy will need to be addressed. Any changes to policy will need to be approved by Cabinet.
- 2.5 In the interim to any policy changes to be approved by Cabinet there needs to be a fast track process to correct any unforeseen consequences of the change in policy that would disadvantage an individual's opportunity for being housed in comparison with other applicants and their priority. The appropriate route would be to delegate authority to the Head of Housing Services.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Cabinet agree to insert a section into the Lettings Policy that states:

Delegated authority is given to the Head of Housing Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health, to:



- award priority to applicants with exceptional circumstances, where those circumstances are not adequately covered by policy; and
- in the interim to Cabinet's considerations of proposed changes to policy, to correct any unforeseen detrimental consequences of policy that would disadvantage an individual's opportunity for being housed in comparison with the priority of other applicants.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

HDC Lettings Policy

**Contact Officer: Steve Plant**  
 **01480 388240**

**CABINET**

**18<sup>TH</sup> DEC 2008**

**COMT**

**28TH OCTOBER 2008**

## **Web Strategy 2009-11**

**(Report by the Head of Information Management)**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Council has had a website since April 1999. Initially a promotional site giving basic details about the Council and its services, it has been developed into a comprehensive set of pages and services.

There are now over 2000 pages of content on the website managed by over 140 Officers from across the Council. Everyday nearly 2000 people use the website and in the last Annual Residents' survey the website achieved the highest level of satisfaction of all customer service channels (89% rated it as "fair or above" for access to services).

From humble beginnings, only 9 years ago, the website has become a highly effective and popular way for customers to access Council information and services.

### **2. PURPOSE**

Following this success, and also having regard to both increasing customer expectations and rapid development of web technologies, it is timely to update the Council's Web Strategy.

The strategy will have a life of approximately three years and includes the action plan required to achieve its objectives. It reinforces existing good practice and performance already in evidence across the Council.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is asked to approve the Web Strategy 2009-11

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Web Strategy 2009-11**

**Contact Officer:**

**John Taylor, IMD Development Manager (01480) 388119  
Chris Hall, Head of IMD (01480) 388116**

This page is intentionally left blank

# Web Strategy 2009-11: Greater Insight, Better Service

## Vision

The Council's website will continue to be a channel of choice for many customers, where information and services are easy to find and use. It will be delivered by Officers who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their role – with the outcome that we continue to achieve consistently high levels of customer satisfaction.

## Contribution to the Council's Corporate and Strategic Framework

The Council has many roles, but to achieve the aims and objectives in our corporate plan, Growing Success, we are committed to consistent and sustained customer service. Using the Council's website to provide accessible and high quality services will contribute to many of these objectives, and later in this document this is explored in more detail.

In addition to the objectives in Growing Success, a series of strategic policies, including the Corporate Equality Policy, Customer Service Strategy, Consultation and Engagement Strategy and Communications and Marketing Strategy, all contain objectives and activities which require effective use of the website and/or contribute towards the approach adopted within this strategy.

These strategies and policies are mutually supportive and are inherently connected in terms of the objectives they are seeking to promote.

## Background

### Where are we now?

The Council has had a website since April 1999. Initially a promotional site giving basic details about the council and its services, it developed into a comprehensive set of pages and services. There are now over 2000 pages of content on the website managed by over 140 web authors and editors from across the Council. In addition to this content, applications such as Public Access (for planning, building control and licensing) or Modern.gov (for committee minutes and councillor details) allow customers the option of 'self-service'.

There are 49 HDC and 29 non-HDC services (e.g. links to the County Council or NHS) available from our 'Online Services' pages. We've had some significant successes; we were amongst the first authorities in the Country to go live with Public Access, allowing customers to follow the progress of planning applications on line. We have also been cited as an example of best practice for accessibility of information, and have consistently performed amongst the top 20% of District councils in the national SOCITM<sup>1</sup> Council website survey.

We know a great deal about what our customers think of the website, and we are developing new ways to find out more, for example:

- We ask customers at our Customer Service Centre for their views on the web and we've found many wanted easier access to our online services, but didn't want to read press releases.
- By conducting a survey of telephone callers who hadn't used our website, we were able to find out that the main reasons for not using it.

---

<sup>1</sup> SOCITM – the national body for public sector IT, over 1900 members from 550 different organisations including 98% of all UK local authorities

Two major reasons came to light – either they didn't have access to the internet or they preferred to use the telephone.

Every day nearly 2000 people use the website, and 80% of them (data from our online feedback survey) are satisfied with the service they receive. In the last Annual Residents survey the website achieved the highest level of satisfaction of all customer service channels (89% at fair or above for access to services). From a humble beginning, only 9 years ago, the website has become a highly effective and popular way for our customers to access Council information and services.

### **Where do we want to be?**

Having made these achievements and having regard to increasing customer expectation and good practice in this field the time is right to update our strategy.

The strategy will have a life of approximately three years and includes a broad action plan required to achieve its objectives. It reinforces existing good practice and performance already present across the Council.

### **Knowing our customers better - Customer Insight**

The Customer Service Strategy highlighted the need for the Council to develop a deeper understanding of its customers. To do this, it needs to get maximum value from the information it gathers, and be able to bring different information sources together to build a richer, more comprehensive, picture of its customers. This is Customer Insight.

The website is a key customer service channel. Therefore the Web Strategy, and how is it delivered, must be driven by knowledge of our customers. Each customer facing service must consider the needs of its customers in terms of the website, both as part of strategic and day-to-day activity. The Web Team will support this activity by providing data relating to the website, allowing services to prioritise effort and deliver information and services that customers want to use.

### **Encouraging customers to use the Website**

The Council will find ways to encourage relevant customers to switch to using the web. By doing this we actively encourage greater access to services, at a cheaper cost to the Council, and free resources to deliver services to those customers most in need. This encouragement will take the form of campaigns, and each customer facing service will be responsible for delivering campaigns to help make this happen, supported by the Communications & Marketing Team. Each Service will need to be clear about the impact of the website in service delivery.

In order to increase the use of the website the Council will seek to provide innovative new services via the website – especially where there is a clear impact on the objectives of Growing Success. We will also need to be careful our website is not duplicating information or services provided by other organisations.

Whilst some examples of how the website could be developed are provided below, the delivery of these new services sits best with individual services, supported by the technical expertise of IMD, and the marketing advice provided by Policy & Strategic Services:

- ***A clean, 'green' and attractive place*** – We could expand existing content to do more to promote the Environment Strategy, ensuring consistent messages are present across the entire site. We could also allow customers to report fly tipping or vandalism using online forms that feed direct into our business systems.
- ***Safe, vibrant and inclusive communities*** - The Council could introduce new ways for customers to take part in representative and democratic activities or to encourage citizens to become Councillors. Increasing the use of forums to give customers the ability to ask questions, debate and comment on HDC Plans and policies.

### **Getting more right first time**

Ensuring we answer customer enquiries first time is important. It means the customer receives an excellent level of service, and the Council does not spend effort dealing with avoidable and repeated customer contact. For the website this means training our staff to provide information and services that meet customers needs – underpinned by a strong level of customer understanding.

### **Tailoring the website**

A greater understanding of the needs of customers is likely to increase then need to build services around those needs. This will reduce costs and lead to greater satisfaction. Consideration will be given to personalising the content for particular customers, such as businesses, residents or visitors (see Appendix 2 for how this may look). This may also extend to allowing customers to securely access an enhanced range of council services via the website (for example checking their Council Tax balance), and work will be instigated to develop these ideas.

### **Maintaining strong foundations**

To deliver an excellent website the Council needs to have reliable IT systems. During the lifetime of this strategy the current Content Management System will no longer be supported by Microsoft, and a new system will have to be implemented. Improvements to the management of the servers that provide the Website may also be delivered; giving the Council better disaster recovery options should anything untoward happen to the IT infrastructure.

### **Allocating the right resources**

Currently some services dedicate significant resources to the website, in others this is less so. Over the course of this strategy each Head of Service will ensure this is reviewed, and were relevant, job descriptions of Officers will be changed to ensure accountabilities for supporting the website are recorded. Similarly KPAs will be set for those Officers who support the website; ensuring good performance in this key area is recognised in appraisals.

As the website has grown there has been a subsequent increase in the amount of time spent supporting the website by the Web Team. This has started to restrict the amount of time to deliver new developments. Over the lifetime of this strategy, some elements of support work will be transferred to the IMD HelpDesk – thereby releasing resources to deliver new services via the website.

### **Meeting the needs of all**

The Council has a duty to ensure the services it provides do not exclude any group of customers, and this remains a high priority. The website has a screen-reader function enabling access to blind customers or people who find

reading difficult. Web content is checked to ensure it is accessible, and our performance is assessed each year in a national survey. Our website also contains links to allow customers to translate pages into other languages.

Over the lifetime of this strategy the website will continue to have an Equality Impact Assessment, and the appropriate web content standards will continue to be met.

### **Sharing Service**

The Council will explore the opportunity to share service delivery with other Councils. It may be that we can host websites on behalf of others, or we may be able to provide technical advice to them. This may produce some cost savings, as well as potentially increasing the resilience of service delivery by creating larger teams.

### **Generating Revenue**

Members have approved the trial of advertising via the website. Over the lifetime of this strategy this will be delivered, and an evaluation made of the income generated, together with any impact on customer satisfaction.

### **Action Plan**

This strategy is supported by a three-year action plan which will help to ensure a consistent approach across the whole of the Council. The Council's Head of IMD will be responsible for the monitoring and implementation of the plan and will work with other services to make sure this happens.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are critical to ensuring that we achieve the objectives. To ensure we are making progress we will monitor our performance against local (and national, if any) measures. We will also collect and publish evidence of good practice throughout the Council.

This strategy and action plan will be reviewed annually so that we can set specific targets for the future. A comprehensive review of the strategy will be undertaken every three years.

### **Resources required**

Much of the work in this strategy can be delivered by existing resources. Indeed moving customer activity from channels such as face to face or telephone, to the website, should create efficiencies within the organisation. There are already examples of significant customer uptake of web based services such as online [Planning Applications](#), or customers choosing to apply for housing using the [Home-Link](#) service.

But there are more opportunities. Shortly the Council will be able to receive payments from customers via the website, and a campaign should be delivered to promote this new service – releasing resources within Customer Service to deal with other customer enquiries. Estimating uptake is difficult, but we know that currently 25% of advisor time in the Call Centre is devoted to taking payments over the phone – so the opportunity is significant.

Providing shared services may offer the opportunity to reduce the costs of providing the website, and if advertising proves successful this income stream could also serve to balance the costs of providing the website – although the amounts in question may be relatively small.



However some elements of this strategy may require additional resources. At this stage this is difficult to predict. However, once new and innovative ways to use the website are identified, additional investment would need to be presented and assessed in a business case.

### **Risks**

The following risks are created by this strategy:

- Some services may struggle to support the delivery of this strategy. However the provision of support from relevant internal services should mean the change can be introduced.
- The Council serves a wide range of customers, tailoring the website to meet these needs may overcomplicate the website. Careful analysis should ensure this risk is minimised.
- Timing the delivery of change is important and it may be that resources could be overloaded. Careful management of change will reduce the likelihood of this happening.

As other risks come to light these will be managed.

## Action Plan 2009-2012

Objective	Actions	Measures	Target	By Whom
Improve our insight into what customers want from the website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Web team to supply data on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usage and survey of customer satisfaction</li> <li>Annual customer usability assessment</li> <li>Annual SOCITM report</li> <li>Accessibility Assessment</li> </ul> </li> <li>Services to improve understanding of customers needs</li> </ul>	<p>Web team to ensure all sources of data are available</p> <p>All Services to have attended a Customer Service Insight workshop run by Customer Service Department (a recommendation of the Customer Service Strategy).</p>	<p>By Mar 2009</p> <p>Mar 2010</p>	<p>IMD Web Team</p> <p>Led by Head of Customer Service.</p>
Encourage relevant customers to switch to this channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver campaigns to encourage targeted customers to switch channel (e.g. web payments)</li> <li>Include a link to the Council's home page, or other relevant pages, in e-mails.</li> <li>Include our website address in printed material.</li> </ul>	<p>% Of selected transactions (e.g. payments) completed online compared to other channels</p> <p>% Increase in amount of website use</p>	TBA – need to assess current level	Led by Services, campaigns supported by Policy & Strategic Services
Improve the quality of information and services provided via the web, especially by providing new and innovative services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ongoing training to editors and authors to ensure the content they are responsible for meets customers needs</li> <li>Services to review and respond to data gathered for web data collected for NI14 'Unavoidable Contact'</li> <li>Each Service to be clear about the impact of the website in service delivery</li> </ul>	<p>% Of customers satisfied that web-based information meets their needs</p> <p>% of contacts that are avoidable (for selected services)</p> <p>Service Plans to have an objective for the web</p> <p>The content of the Service Plans will be collated into a single document, and presented to COMT</p>	<p>80%</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>80%</p> <p>Mar 2010</p>	<p>IMD Web Team</p> <p>All Editors &amp; Authors</p> <p>Customer Facing HoS Head of IMD</p>
Increase the personalisation of our website (where our customer insight tell us to)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop 'MyCouncil' – a framework that will allow us to develop content and applications that can be customised and displayed on the main page of the website</li> </ul>	Website to have content tailored to different users	Sep 2011	IMD Development Manager

Objective	Actions	Measures	Target	By Whom
	according to the needs of the customer			
Ensure the website continues to be delivered via a technically robust infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration of Content Management System to Microsoft SharePoint Server 2007.</li> <li>• Virtualisation of servers where possible to increase resilience</li> </ul>	<p>Availability of website - % uptime</p> <p>Virtualisation in place</p>	99.8%	IMD Dev Manager IMD Ops Manager
Improve the understanding of Officers about their role in creating and maintaining content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver training to new authors and editors, and offer ongoing support to existing ones</li> <li>• HoS to make this skill part of relevant job descriptions</li> <li>• Managers to make this part of KPAs for relevant Officers</li> </ul>	% of Authors & Editors who feel their work on the web is recognised by their service`	50% by Mar 2010	Heads of Service and Personnel
Increase the amount of time spent developing the website and reduce the support load on the Web & Systems Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce support load by documenting and handing over support to the IMD HelpDesk.</li> </ul>	% time released to development through handover of support tasks	TBA	IMD Development Manager
Improve the accessibility of the website for all customers regardless of gender, race or disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the website meets the AA level for accessibility and that continued compliance is assured by undertaking regular audits</li> <li>• Ensure new software meets these requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>% of web Pages complying with AA</p> <p>Achievement of Equality Standard for Local Government</p>	<p>98%</p> <p>Level 3 by 2010</p>	<p>All Authors and Editors</p> <p>Head of IMD</p>
Explore the opportunities to host websites of , or provide web based services to, other Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach other Local Authorities to consult with them on options.</li> <li>• Investigate licensing issues, security arrangements and resource requirements</li> </ul>	Business Case produced	Mar 2011	IMD Development Manager
Develop the opportunities to create advertising revenue from our website, whilst maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial the use of outsource advertising, and if successful continue with it</li> </ul>	<p>Ratio of revenue versus cost</p> <p>Customer satisfaction remains high</p>	<p>Return outweighs cost</p> <p>80%</p>	IMD Development Manager

## My Council – Draft Layout

### Tabbed interface

Allows visitors to choose if they are a business, resident or visitor. This tailors the page to show relevant topics of interest.

### News and Notices

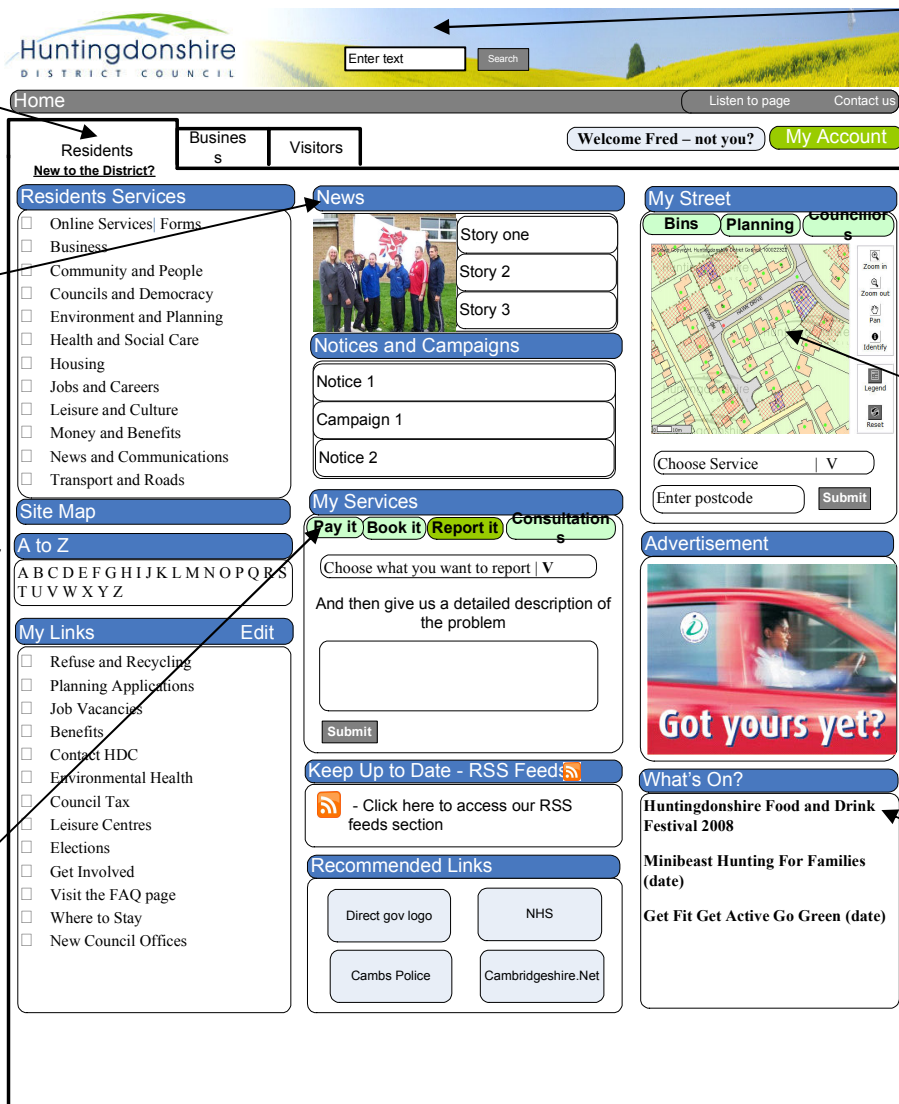
News now takes up less space on the front page – customers want services more than news... Notices allow us to keep key messages on the front page for longer.

### Service Directory A to Z and Quick Links

These menus remain as they are well used and provide navigation to the text based content of the site

### My Services

This section gives links to services, simple reporting eforms, links to book services and to e-forums where customers can discuss topics



### Search

Search is moved to the centre of the page to make it more visible.

### My Account

The “welcome” and “My Account” links allow customers to set a Visitor type preference, postcode and house number (if they have one) so we can tailor services

### My Street

This section allows customers to view nearest facilities using a map based view. It allows access to view their bin collection calendar, nearby planning applications and details of their local councillor

Much of this information is available on the website at present but is spread amongst a number of pages

### What's On?

This is an example of a MyCouncil “Web Part” – a block of content that in this case is relevant to Visitors and Residents but would not appear by default to Businesses.

**COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CENTRE – SAPLEY EAST**  
**(Report by the Directors of Environmental & Community Services**  
**and of Central Services)**

**1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

1.1 The Oxmoor area of Huntingdon has been the focus of sustained urban regeneration. The Oxmoor Opportunities Partnership (OOP), in which this Council was a key player, aimed to meet a five point plan proposed by the Oxmoor Community Action Group. The Partnership made a successful bid for Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funding from the Government through which programmes were managed and funded between 2000 and 2007.

1.2 The five point strategy was:

- To create a safe place to live
- Support families
- Focus on young people
- Promote greater access to services and information
- Improve the local environment.

1.3 Considerable change has come about as a result of this work and there are notable achievements outlined in the SRB Evaluation Report. However, the report concluded as follows:

***“The success of the OOP so far is fragile. Much of what is required is to continue the work that has been done so far and which requires longer than the SRB term to achieve. Two main changes are needed to make this success permanent:***

- ***OOP should concentrate on capacity building to allow the community to take the lead;***
- ***Employment should be one of the key elements of that work.”***

1.4 The Council, with its partners Luminus and the County Council, has made arrangements for the regeneration work to be continued through a Neighbourhood Management Approach (also being established in Eynesbury and Ramsey).

## **2. PHYSICAL REGENERATION**

- 2.1 A key ingredient of the SRB programme was to improve the physical condition of the area and to make provision, through a plan, for necessary facilities and infrastructure. These aspects were brought together in the Oxmoor Action Plan, drawn up after a 'Planning for Real' exercise, with local people. Critical to the Plan was a new "Heart for Oxmoor", whereby a new centre on the site of the former Sapley Square would be created. Phase 1 of the centre, which included the Oak Tree Health Centre, the Maple Centre and shops, has radically transformed the facilities and the environment. Phase 2 on the site of the eastern part of the former Sapley Square and surrounding land provides an opportunity to add much needed facilities and investment to address outstanding issues from the original plans.
- 2.2 An extensive consultation exercise has recently been carried out offering different options for the redevelopment of the eastern part of the former Sapley Square together with other adjacent used and unused/underused land, with the objective of drawing up a Master Plan. The result of this consultation is summarised in paragraph 4 below.
- 2.3 To follow up the employment and capacity issues identified in the SRB Evaluation Report, Luminus, on behalf of the Partnership, were awarded a Bursary by EEDA to examine the feasibility of the development of a local enterprise centre and to develop an application capital grant. This feasibility work involved key stakeholders and the local community and has identified a vision for and the scope of a scheme, an appropriate legal status (a Community Interest Company (CIC)), capital grant and revenue potential. As a result, a significant grant of £600k has been identified in EEDA's Investing in Communities Programme.
- 2.4 The Council has previously agreed that any sums it receives from land sales on the Oxmoor will be reinvested to provide community benefits and regeneration.
- 2.5 This report proposes that Council should be a key partner in setting up a CIC to deliver a Community Enterprise Centre (and potentially other community assets) within the Sapley Square East development area in accordance with the emerging Master Plan.

## **3. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

- 3.1 Annex A shows the extent of the programme of engagement with the community that was undertaken between 9th September and 19th October 2000.

- 3.2 As part of that exercise, the local community consider three alternative development options including:
- up to 60 new homes and the upgrading and reconfiguration of existing housing for the elderly;
  - faith buildings and community managed workspaces (for social enterprises, voluntary organisations and business start ups);
  - safer routes through the area; and
  - more useable open space.
- 3.3 Residents were asked to place 'issue' cards to communicate their likes and dislikes about the area and the three options for the possible development. They were also invited to respond to a series of questions and vote for their preferred option.
- 3.4 A total of 605 issue cards were placed on the three options: 367 for likes and 238 for dislikes. These issues fell into six topic groups as follows:

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Likes</b>	<b>Dislikes</b>
Faith Buildings and Community Facilities	159	73
Access and Car Parking	22	83
Residential and Supported Housing	63	36
Oak Drive	53	32
Open Space and Play Area	68	9
Pub	2	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>238</b>

- 3.5 Community facilities and faith buildings proposals elicited 232 (38%) of all the issue cards placed during the consultation and shows there is clear support for a range of developments including more community facilities in the consultation area.

#### **4. THE CASE FOR MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- 4.1 In 2007 an evaluation of the investment committed under the Single Regeneration Budget was carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council's Research Group. The Research Group found that in comparison with 2000, Oxmoor's physical environment was much improved and the fear of crime, reported crime and antisocial behaviour had all been reduced. However it found the programme had had little effect on employment opportunities.
- 4.2 To achieve permanent success, the study concluded the (regeneration) work would need to continue and the priorities for the Neighbourhood Management Team (as the successor body to the Oxmoor Opportunities Partnership) should be to:



- build capacity for the community to take the lead; and
- improve employment opportunities, particularly among longer standing residents.

4.3 The findings and recommendations of the SRB Evaluation Report suggest:

- the need to put assets and decision making into the hands of local people so the regeneration process can continue over a generation; and
- the need to tackle the deeply entrenched culture of worklessness and low expectations in sections of the community on any level by improving ambitions and providing a greater range of opportunities.

4.4 The Council's Local Economy Strategy provides for an increase in jobs and access to employment to support growth in the District generally and to address the specific needs of more deprived communities. Mainstream economic development activity is generally focused on larger development opportunities in and around commercial centres of the market towns, skill development and business support. To address the economic needs of the District as a whole, this activity needs to be supported by specific interventions in particular communities. The development of community-based enterprise centres in contrast with the general business-focused enterprise centres is an accepted element of regeneration schemes across the country. They provide small-scale employment, skill and learning opportunities which can be focused on particular community needs and address particular issues, such as long-term worklessness. They provide a visible sign of an enterprise culture and provide links to mainstream economic development activities allowing for the "growing on" or referral of business opportunities. They can also provide a continuing form of revenue income for investment in community based activities. This approach supports the delivery of the Local Economy Strategy and the activities of the Council and our partners.

## **5. A COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CENTRE**

5.1 It is therefore intended to include a Community Enterprise Centre in the draft Master Plan for the final stage of consultation.

5.2 The concept is that the Centre would provide:

- A 400 sq m scheme over two floors with an estimated build cost of £1.2m, including fees but excluding land, which would have a high quality of design, appropriate to its setting. The building would also be constructed to

reduce carbon emissions and be resistant to climate change.

- The ground floor could provide accommodation for retailing and community focused activities for social enterprises and other not-for-profit organisations. Initial ideas include:
  - Retail 'returned' furniture and electrical goods (which otherwise would be sent to landfill). This would be similar to a scheme already operating in Fenland District by the Ferry Project (a charitable subsidiary of the Luminus Group).
  - A new social enterprise, supported by the Ferry Project, to provide meals for the Oak Foundation's proposed extra day-care home;
  - A hair and beauty salon for Huntingdonshire Regional College trainees to gain experience of working for customers;
  - Offices/advice centres for voluntary organisations that require accommodation alongside others using the reception services and meeting rooms provided at the Maple Centre.
- The first floor could be used for serviced accommodation for micro enterprises, social enterprise or other voluntary organisations.

5.3 Funding would be from the Council re-investing the value of its sale (or long lease) of the land, EEDA grant, grants and contributions from other partners or bodies and a commercial loan, if required.

5.4 EEDA have indicated that they would give high priority to such a scheme with a likelihood of £300k grant in 2009/10 followed by a similar sum in 2010/11, subject to any Government reductions in their funding

5.5 Part of the EEDA grant would cover the value of the Council's land (in the order of £150k) which the Council would then contribute to the building cost.

## **6. A COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY**

6.1 It is proposed that the Community Enterprise Centre (and potentially other assets) be owned and run by a Community Interest Company.

- 6.2 A company of this nature has limited liability, has to be established for community benefit and “locks in” assets for that purpose. This approach maximises the potential for grants and ensures that the surpluses are used for community benefits. Thus the grant provider and funders are converting capital sums into an ongoing stream of revenue support to the community.
- 6.3 Subject to their own decision making processes the Company would be made up of 5 organisations, each having an equal vote. These would probably be:
- Hunts Forum for Voluntary Organisations
  - Huntingdon Regional College
  - Ferry Project
  - Cambridgeshire Charitable Foundation (This body manages a number of community grant schemes from private business but also the County Council’s Community Grants.)
  - Huntingdonshire District Council.
- 6.4 The Council would hold no more than 20% control of the company - a legal restriction of this type of body - but to satisfy EEDA grant conditions will be the accountable body. This will mean that the Council would keep the accounts and organise the meetings on behalf of the Company for which it would charge them an annual fee.
- 6.5 There would be a need for a robust business plan which is made easier by the anchor elements provided by the Ferry Project, as set out in paragraph 5.2 ante.

## **7. TIMESCALE**

- 7.1 The table below shows the relationship between the EEDA, Investing in Communities, grant programme timetable and that of the planning consultation. It demonstrates that the Cabinet will have to conclude the second stage of consultation and Cabinet will have approved the Master Plan for the area before a formal application for grant would have to be finalised. Up until that point EEDA require Council support for the proposed community enterprise centre, subject to the Master Plan outcomes.

2009	Investing Communities	in	Planning Consultation
January	EEDA decision on whether grant would be included in their plan – in principle		Consultation 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage
February			
March			Cabinet Report seeking agreement to Master Plan
April	Formal application for Grant		

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Oxmoor residents and organisations have supported developments, including additional community facilities, on the Sapley East area. There are no strong objections to this part of the regeneration scheme.
- 8.2 There are strong arguments to support a community enterprise centre to meet the continuing problems of higher than average unemployment levels. It matches well with the needs identified in the Local Economy Strategy. A centre would also provide increased skill and learning opportunities and additional community opportunities.
- 8.3 To maximise current and future funding opportunities for the community, the community enterprise centre should be owned and controlled by a Community Interest Company.
- 8.4 The Council would probably be the “accountable body” for the Community Interest Company and will have a 20% stake in it,
- 8.5 Significant grants are included in the Investing in Communities Programme, but require Cabinet support before January 2009.
- 8.6 Cabinet will be considering a final report in March on the Sapley East Master Plan before EEDA make a final decision on the grant.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** —
- to endorse the application for grant support from the East of England Development Agency’s Investing in

Communities Programme for the construction of a community enterprise centre in the Sapley East area;

- to reaffirm the previous decision to reinvest the proceeds of the disposal of land in this regeneration scheme to produce future community benefits;
- to support the principle of establishing a community interest company which will own and manage the proposed community enterprise centre and other assets if opportunities arise;
- to authorise the Director of Environmental & Community Services to –
  - obtain agreement in principle from appropriate organisations to form a community interest company; and
  - work with those organisations to prepare a robust business plan to demonstrate the viability of the community enterprise centre;
- to consider a Master Plan for the regeneration of the Sapley East area and a business plan for the community enterprise centre before final decisions are made in March/April 2009.

#### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985**

Source Documents:

1. Sapley East consultation exercise files in Planning Division.
- 2.
- 3.

**Contact Officer:**

**Steve Couper**, Head of Financial Services ☎ 01480 388103

## ANNEX A

<b>Time and Date</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Venue</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> September	Oxmoor Community Action Group St Barnabas Church and Learning Centre Trustees	St Barnabas Church Hall St Barnabas Church Hall
10 <sup>th</sup> September	Moor Play Norfolk and Essex Road Residents Association	Medway Christian Centre Medway Christian Centre
11 <sup>th</sup> September	Medway Court residents	Medway Court
13 <sup>th</sup> September	Boot and Buckles	Medway Centre
14 <sup>th</sup> September	Medway Christian Fellowship Huntingdonshire Community Group	Medway Centre Medway Centre
15 <sup>th</sup> September	Darby and Joan Police Amateur Boxing Club	Medway Centre Medway Centre
17 <sup>th</sup> September	Open session Neighbourhood Management Board	Maple Centre Maple Centre
18 <sup>th</sup> September	Huntingdon Town Council	Town Hall
23 <sup>rd</sup> September	Oak Tree Centre users	Oak Tree Centre
3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Safer Neighbourhood Panel	Oak Tree Centre
24 <sup>th</sup> September	Jehovah Witnesses	Kingdom Hall
26 <sup>th</sup> September	BRJ Club members	BRJ Club
3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Youth Advisory Committee	Huntingdon Youth Centre
6 <sup>th</sup> October	Open session	Maple Centre
18 <sup>th</sup> October	Huntingdon Community Church Shareout	St Barnabas Church Hall
19 <sup>th</sup> October	Apple Fair	Coneygear Park

This page is intentionally left blank